

Colossians 4:7–9

⁷ Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me.

⁸ I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts,

⁹ with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you all things which are happening here.

Tychicus and Onesimus *Colossians 4:7-9*

INTRO:

This is the story of the two men who were charged with carrying Paul’s letter to the Colossian believers. The first person gives us an example to emulate. He was faithful, loved, trusted, and committed to Christ. The second person reminds us that God is still in the business of saving and transforming people. He can make anyone useable for His glory.

I. The Brother Who Became a Slave (v. 7-8)

II. The Slave Who Became a Brother (v. 9)

I. The Brother Who Became A Slave (v. 7-8)

Colossians 4:7-8 *“Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow slave in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts,”*

A. Tychicus was not as well-known as a Pauline assistant as Timothy and Titus were, but he does appear several times in the letters of Paul and in the book of Acts. He first appears as one of those trustees who traveled with Paul to Jerusalem with the gift of the churches (**Acts 20:4**). He also is mentioned in four of Paul’s letters. He has been a replacement preacher and the letter bearer of the Ephesian letter also.

Ephesians 6:21 *“But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you.”*

B. Paul’s description of Tychicus is instructive. He said three things about him in our text in Colossians.

1. Tychicus is a **“beloved brother.”** He is someone who knew the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord and his commitment to Christ made him loved by fellow believers like Paul. For this reason the Colossians should love him too. Not because he was personally attractive, but precisely because he was a brother in Christ.

2. He was a **“fellow servant.”** The word translated **“servant”** is the word from which we get the word deacon. Because Tychicus loved the Lord Jesus he loved and wanted to serve God’s people. So even though Tychicus had never been to Colosse, like the Apostle Paul, Paul knew he would naturally love the people of the church and they would love him.

3. Finally, he was a **“fellow slave.”** Like Paul himself, Tychicus recognized he was not his own, he was bought with a price. He did not belong to himself, he belonged to Jesus. Remember how Paul sometimes described himself in his letters.

Romans 1:1 *“Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.”*

Tychicus was a servant to the people of God in the Colossian church because he was a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. Tychicus was supposed to be more than a simple postman.

vs.7-8 *“[Tychicus] will tell you all the news about me. I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts,”*

Apparently they did not know either Tychicus or Paul personally. They knew Paul by reputation and because he had ministered to Epaphras, their pastor. It was natural they wanted to know more about Paul and what was going on in his life. Tychicus’ job was to inform them. He also was charged with the responsibility to encourage them spiritually.

II. The Slave Who Became a Brother (v. 9)

Colossians 4:9 *“With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you all things which are happening here.”*

A. While Tychicus was not known to the Colossians, Onesimus was known to them. Who is this Onesimus? There is a second letter that Tychicus and Onesimus were carrying at the same time they delivered this letter to Colossi, they carried a letter to Philemon who was Onesimus’ master. Onesimus was a slave.

B. Remember Paul had written in **Colossians 3:11** that our transformation in Christ was not effected by our position in the world.

“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.”

Onesimus was the embodiment of this truth. He was a slave who had been transformed in Christ through the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

C. Onesimus was a runaway slave. Somehow he met the Apostle Paul and had been completely saved and transformed by Christ. He was now coming home to face his master and Paul wrote the letter to Philemon to intercede for his brother in Christ, Onesimus.

1. Onesimus was once a rebellious slave, but now he is transformed.

Philemon 10–11 *“I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.”*

2. Paul underlined to Philemon his own confidence in the sincerity of Onesimus’ transformation in Christ.

Philemon 15–16 *“For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.”*

3. This shows us why Paul described this slave who became a brother in this way in our text, ***“Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother.”*** No doubt everyone in the church knew how useless Onesimus was before he ran away. Paul wanted the church in Colosse and us to know the Onesimus who returned was a changed man because,

2 Corinthians 5:17 *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

This is the account of two lives we would do well to emulate. Are we someone who is a beloved brother? Are we people whose relationship with Christ is so real that others know that Christ loves us and we are loved by God?

Are we a faithful servant of the Lord and of His Church? Do we desire to minister and share with those who name the name of Christ.

Are we folks who recognize that we belong to Lord and thus are committed to His will?