

Putting Christ First: Ministering Together

Colossians 4:7-18

The Couriers (v. 7-9)

- Paul ends his letter by telling the Colossians who he is entrusting this correspondence to
- Tychicus: One of Paul's traveling companions (Acts 20:4)
 - Delivered the Letters of Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Titus
 - He is described by Paul as a beloved brother, a faithful minister and a fellow servant
- Onesimus: The servant that Paul wrote to Philemon about
 - Who met Paul in his prison, and came to Christ (Phm. 10)
 - Paul became deeply attached to him (v. 12, 15)
- These men were not just passive letter-carriers
 - They were fellow ministers of the gospel who would often elaborate on the letter (see Eph. 6:21-22)

Ministry Partners (v. 10-15)

- Paul goes on to extend greetings from all those who are ministering with him
- 3 Jewish coworkers
 - Aristarchus: A Thessalonian who was possibly imprisoned with Paul (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:29; Rom. 16:7; Phlm 23)
 - Justus: Whose Hebrew name was Jesus*
 - Mark: Barnabus' cousin over whom Paul and Barnabus split company (see Acts 15:37-39)
 - But he reconciled with Paul (2 Tim. 4:11)
 - And later worked with Peter in Rome (1 Pet. 5:13)
 - Where he wrote the Gospel which bears his name
- 3 Gentile coworkers
 - Epaphras: The local convert who brought concerns to Paul which prompted the letter
 - Luke: The doctor who wrote the book of Acts and the Gospel which bears his name
 - Demas: Who later abandons Paul (2 Tim. 4:9)
- Those working locally
 - The church in Laodicea: Paul's desire is to encourage fellowship between the local churches
 - Colossae and Laodicea are less than 12 miles apart
 - Nympha and the church which gathered in her home
 - *Possibly* a wealthy widower who opened her large home for local Christians to meet in

The Church Universal (v. 16-18)

- Again, Paul encourages the church to be working outside of just its immediate community
- He also encourages them to encourage their brother Archippus to do what God has called him to do

- He closes the letter with a greeting in his own hand
 - Since normally he used a scribe

So What?

- We are not called to live and minister alone
 - We need partners
 - Both in our congregation and in others
 - And even those with whom we have had issues in the past
- And we need to encourage each other in the ministries to which we are called

Meditation Verse: *Colossians 2:6-7*