

“GOD'S FAITHFUL SECOND STRING”

Col. 1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae:

Colossians 4:7-14

I. TWO ARE FAITHFUL COMMUNICATORS. (7-9)

A. TYCHICUS (*the Faithful*) vss. 7-8

1. Described as "a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord"
 - a. We read of him in **Acts 20:4**, **Act 20:4** And he was accompanied by Sopater.. And Aristarchus and Secundus, and Gaius, Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus.
 - b. Again in **Eph. 6:21-22**, where he performed the same duties as outlined in **Col. 4:7-8**
Eph 6:21-22 But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts.
 - c. He continues to serve Paul as a messenger. **Tit 3:12** When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. **2 Tim. 4:12** But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.
2. He might have been one of the brethren referred to in **2 Cor. 8: 23**, who were called "messengers of the churches, a glory of Christ"

B. ONESIMUS (*the Fugitive*) vs. 9

1. Also "a faithful and beloved brother"
2. Who was from Colossae (cf., "who is one of you")
3. We learn from the Epistle to Philemon that Onesimus was a runaway slave who was converted by Paul and sent back to Philemon
4. He, too, was serving as a messenger for Paul [Because of men like these, the influence of the apostles was able to spread much farther than if they were by themselves. And that also means the influence of the gospel spread much farther! Next, we read of...]

II. THREE ARE FAITHFUL COMFORTERS. vss. 10-11

A. ARISTARCHUS (*the Fearless*) vs. 10a

1. A "fellow prisoner"
2. He also had been a fellow traveler of Paul - **Acts 20:4**
 - a. Who nearly lost his life to the riot in Ephesus - **Acts 19:29**
 - b. Who sailed with Paul to Rome - **Acts 27:2**
3. And was now in Rome with Paul, sending greetings

B. MARK (*the Forgiven*) vs. 10b

1. The writer of the second Gospel, he was the cousin (nephew) of Barnabas
 - a. The church in Jerusalem met in his mother's house - **Acts 12:12**
2. Even now, he is included with those who Paul said "proved to be a comfort to me"
3. Started out with Paul and Barnabas on their first journey, but then turned back - **Acts 13:1-13**
4. He later became a bone of contention between Paul and Barnabas - **Acts 15:36-41**
 - a. But eventually proved "profitable" to Paul for service - **2 Tim. 4:11**
5. Now received instructions to welcome him.

C. JESUS, CALLED JUSTUS (*the Friendly*) vs. 11

1. Little is known of this man, except that he was a Jew ("of the circumcision") and a "fellow worker for the kingdom"
2. He, too, was a comfort to Paul [No man can produce what they are capable of producing, unless they receive the right kind of encouragement. Just as Barnabas (the "son of encouragement" - **Acts 4:36**) had been the one to encourage a young man who made a mistake (i.e., John Mark) and made him profitable, so now that young man with two others were comforting the apostle Paul in his trials. With such comfort, Paul was able to continue his work while awaiting trial before Caesar. Now let's notice...]

III. ONE IS A FAITHFUL CALLER UPON THE LORD. vs. 12-13

A. EPAPHRAS (*the Fervent*), Perhaps the person who started the church at Colossae - **Col. 1:7-8**

1. We well spoken of: **Col. 1:7** just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,
2. He was from Colossae ("one of you")
3. He cared deeply for them and those in Laodicea and Hierapolis
4. He too was a "fellow prisoner" (**Philemon 23**); what could he do for those so far away?
5. He could at least pray for his brethren! And pray he did...!
 - a. He prayed "constantly" ("always")
 - b. He prayed "fervently" ("laboring fervently")
 - c. He prayed "personally" ("for you")
 - d. He prayed "with a goal in mind" ("that you may stand perfect and complete...")
 - e. Paul himself realized, and often solicited the prayers of others on his behalf. **2 Thess. 3:1-2**
Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as *it did* also with you; 2 and that we will be rescued from perverse and evil men; for not all have faith.

IV. TWO ARE FAITHFUL BY CONTRAST. vs. 14

A. LUKE (*the Famous*), THE "BELOVED PHYSICIAN"...

1. A fellow traveler with Paul on a number of his journeys - **Ac 16:10; 20:5; 27:1** (note the personal pronoun "we")
2. He was used by the Holy Spirit to write over half of the New Testament!
 - a. He penned both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts
 - b. In total volume, they constitute the majority of the New Testament
3. He was faithful to Paul to the end - **2 Tim. 4:11**

B. DEMAS (*the Faulty*), WHO LATER FORSOOK PAUL...

1. At the time Colossians and Philemon was written, Demas was a "fellow laborer"
2. But not long after, it was said of him, "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world" - **2 Tim. 4:10**

CONCLUSION

1. Demas serves as a sober reminder of the need to remain steadfast to the end - cf. also **Rev. 2:10**
2. But the others in this passage remind us that the spread of the gospel during the first century was not accomplished through the efforts of great men like Paul and the twelve apostles alone
3. It was greatly assisted by humble men and women willing to serve as "**God's Second String**"
 - a. Who served as messengers, comforters, prayer warriors, and servants to those in positions of

- greater influence than themselves (7-14)
- b. Who opened their hearts and their homes to the service of the church, as did Nymphas (15)
4. If the gospel is to spread today, there is also a need for **"God's Second String"**!
- a. Are we willing to do whatever we can in service to the Lord, whether it be great or small?
- b. Then let Paul's closing remarks to a man named Archippus serve as an admonition to us as well: **"Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it." - Col. 4:17**
5. Whatever our calling, whatever our ability, let us be faithful to the Lord! As Paul closed his epistle to the Colossians in his own personal handwriting (18), so we close this series of sermon outlines: **"Grace be with you. Amen"** If we truly let Jesus be our **"All-Sufficient And Pre-Eminent Savior"**, then God's grace will certainly be with us!