

Our final lesson will be a character study. **Who** Christ is, what He does, & how He affects our lives is what the gospel—and this study in Colossians—is all about. **In** this epistle Paul referred to certain Christians who are familiar to us, but he also mentioned names that are lesser known. **Research** these people & give examples of how they were affected in their lives by Christ & the gospel.

1. Tychicus – “Beloved brother, faithful minister & fellow servant”

(Tik'-i-kus; Tuchikos, lit. “chance”): **Mentioned** 5 times in the New Testament; an Asiatic Christian, a friend & companion of the apostle Paul.

Acts 20:4 – **He** was from Asia, & one of several men who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem with the collection for the poor saints (**Acts 24:17**).

Eph 6:21-22; Col 4:7-8 – **He** was with Paul in Rome during his first imprisonment. **Paul** affectionately called him a “beloved brother & faithful minister & fellow servant in the Lord”. **He** was an important link between Paul & the churches.

He delivered Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, which also went to the Laodiceans (& vice versa). **He** then proceeded to Colosse, with Paul’s letter to the church in that town. **In** Colosse Tychicus would plead the cause of Onesimus who had accompanied him from Rome.

Titus 3:12 (possibly from Ephesus) –**This** passage may refer to the interval between Paul’s first & second Roman imprisonments. **Titus** was preaching in Crete, but Paul intended to send either Artemas or Tychicus to him so that Titus could meet with Paul at Nicopolis.

2 Tim 4:12 – **Paul** wrote this from Rome not long before his execution. Timothy worked with the church in Ephesus (**1 Tim 1:3**), so the coming of Tychicus would enable Timothy to rejoin Paul at Rome (**2 Tim 4:9, 21**). (ISBE)

Some make Tychicus the first “brother” in **2 Cor 8:16-24**, & Trophimus the other. **Luke** seems more probably the former, as “his praise in the Gospel” as Paul’s companion was “throughout all the churches.” **If** Tychicus were meant, remarkable integrity will be among his prominent graces. (Fausset’s)

2. Onesimus – “Faithful & beloved brother – One of you”

(O-nes'-i-mus; literally, “profitable,” “helpful”): **He** was a slave belonging to Philemon of Colosse.

Onesimus was not a Christian when he left Philemon & ended up in Rome. **In** Rome he somehow came into contact with Paul, who was then in his own hired house, in military custody.

How & why did He meet Paul? **We** don't the *how*, but *why* he sought out Paul, it may have been due to the pangs of conscience. **Maybe** he couldn't forget that his master's house in Colosse was the place where the Christians met in their weekly assemblies. **Neither** could he forget how Philemon had often spoken of Paul.

Paul taught Onesimus & he was converted to the Lord. **He** became a helper to Paul, & now that Onesimus was a brother he would be an even better servant to Paul & Philemon.

Col 4:7-9 – **Paul** entrusted the letter of Colossians to the joint care of Tychicus & Onesimus. **Paul** referred to Onesimus as “a faithful & beloved brother, who is one of you.”

Philem 10-16 – **Paul** also furnished Onesimus with this letter, which would vouch for the change that had taken place in his life. (ISBE)

3. Aristarchus – “Paul's fellow prisoner”

(Ar-is-tar'-kus; “best ruler”):

Acts 19:29 – **He** is mentioned along with Gaius as having been seized during the riot in Ephesus stirred up by the silversmiths.

Acts 20:4; 27:2 – **They** are designated “men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel.” **He** was a native of Thessalonica. **He** was one who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem with the collection for the saints. **He** went with Paul to Rome.

Col 4:10; Philem 24 – **There** he attended Paul & shared his imprisonment

According to tradition he was martyred during the persecutions of Nero. (ISBE)

4. (John) Mark – “Useful for ministry”

(**Mark**): Roman name, (**John**): Jewish name:

1 Peter 5:13 – **He** was converted through Peter’s influence.

Acts 12:25 – **Mark** began his service in Antioch, having been brought there by Barnabus & Saul from Jerusalem.

Acts 12:12; Col 4:10 – **His** mother’s name was Mary. **He** was a “cousin” to Barnabas of Cyprus. **His** mother’s home was a meeting place for the saints, including men like James & John, & James the brother of the Lord. **Mark’s** kinship with these men, his knowledge of church history & divine teaching account for his being able to write an account of the gospel & to be chosen to travel with Barnabus & Saul on their 1st preaching tour.

Acts 13:5, 13 – **He** started out with Barnabus & Saul on their 1st preaching tour, but after their work in Cyprus, he returned to Jerusalem. **Why** did he leave them? Homesickness, or anxiety for his mother’s safety, or home duties, or the desire to rejoin Peter, or fear of the perils incident to the journey, WE DO NOT KNOW.

I speculate that maybe he & Barnabus were not as enthusiastic about the gospel to the Gentiles as was Paul (Acts 13:5, 13 – Jewish name used; Gal 2:13).

Acts 15:38-39 – **We** hear nothing further of Mark until the 2nd preaching tour, 2 years later, when Paul’s unwillingness to take him with them led to the rupture between Paul & Barnabus. **He** is here called Mark, & in that quiet way Luke may indicate his own conviction that Mark’s attitude had changed. **He** had learned from the discussions in the council at Jerusalem & from subsequent events at Antioch.

Col 4:10-11; Philem 24 – **About** 11 years elapse before we hear of him again. **He** is at Rome with Paul. **The** breach is healed. **He** is now one of the faithful few among Jewish Christians who stand by Paul.

2 Tim 4:11 – **Mark** returns to Asia Minor, & Paul asks Timothy, who is at Ephesus, to come to him, pick up Mark by the way, & bring him along, & as a final tribute he says of John Mark “for he is useful to me for ministry”. (ISBE)

5. Justus – “Paul’s fellow worker”

Col 4:11 – **Called** also Jesus, a Jewish Christian mentioned in connection with Mark by Paul as being his “only fellow workers” at Rome when he wrote to the Colossians, A.D. 64. (Unger’s)

6. Epaphras – “Faithful minister of Christ”

(Ep’-a-fras): **A** contracted form of Epaphroditus

Philem 23 – **He** must not, however, be confounded with the messenger of the Philippian church (**Phil 2:25; 4:18**). **He** was with Paul during a part of his 1st Roman imprisonment, joining in Paul’s greetings to Philemon.

Col 1:4-7 – **He** was instrumental in establishment & building up of the church at Colosse.

Col 4:12-13 – **Paul** testified, “He hath much labor for you, & for them in Laodicea, & for them in Hierapolis”. (ISBE)

7. Luke – “Paul’s beloved & loyal physician”

(Loukas): apparently an abbreviation for Loukanos:

He traveled extensively with Paul, & authored the gospel of Luke & Acts of the Apostles. **Paul** mentioned Luke three times by name, but Luke does not mention his own name in the Gospel or in the Acts.

He was believed by the early Christian writers to have come directly from heathendom to Christianity. **He** may or may not have been a Jewish proselyte.

Acts 16:10-12, 40 – **He** first appears with Paul at Troas at the time of the Macedonian call. **After** crossing over to Macedonia, Luke remained in Philippi when Paul & Silas left to continue their work in Thessalonica, Berea, Athens & Corinth. **It** is assumed that Philippi was his home.

Col 4:14 – **He** was Paul’s medical adviser, & doubtless prolonged his life & rescued him from many a serious illness.

Philem 24 – **He** was with Paul during most of his 1st Roman imprisonment (being mentioned in Colossians & Ephesians, but not in Philipians).

2 Tim 4:11 – **He** was with Paul during his 2nd Roman imprisonment. **His** devotion to Paul in this time of peril is beautiful.

Is he possibly the brother of Titus? **2 Cor 8:16-18** – “But thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. 17 For he not only accepted the exhortation, but being more diligent, he went to you of his own accord. 18 And we have sent with him the brother [could read “his” brother, i.e. the brother of Titus; Luke being the brother of Titus] whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches.” (ISBE)

8. Archippus – “Paul’s fellow soldier”

(ar-kip’-us):

Col 4:17 – “And say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.” **He** held some official position in the church.

Philem 2 – “to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, & to the church in your house.” (ISBE)

(af’-i-a), (ap’-fi-a): **Probably** the wife of Philemon & believed to be the mother or sister of Archippus. (ISBE).

9. Demas – “A lover of this world”

Contracted from DEMETRIUS, or Demarchus:

Col 4:14; **Philem 24** – **Paul’s** companion & “fellow laborer,” along with Mark & Luke during his first Roman imprisonment.

2 Tim 4:10 – **He** declined in faith by Paul’s second imprisonment. **Love** of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye & the pride of life; perhaps worldly ease & home comforts was his snare. His life is a sad contrast to “all them that love Christ’s appearing” (**2 Tim 4:8**). (Fausset’s)

10. Nymphas – “A generous servant”

(nim'-fas):

Col 4:15 – A Christian in the nearby city (to Colosse) of Laodicea.

Nymphas (male) or Nympha (female): **A** Christian of importance to the church of Laodicea, for he (she) had granted the use of his (her) house for the weekly meetings of the church. **This** fact also shows that Nymphas was a person of some means.

The church in Laodicea must have been large & influential: “Thou sayest, I am rich, & increased with goods, & have need of nothing” (**Rev 3:17**).