

Colossians 4:7-18, “The Deserter and the Wrestler”

Introduction:

Some background on other people mentioned in this passage is in the footnotes.¹

1. John Mark the Deserter, v10

Colossians 4:10 “My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)”

Background on John Mark: Acts 12:12, Colossians 4:10, Acts 12:25, 13:5, 13:13, 15:37-39

- i. The kindness of Barnabas, Acts 15:39
- ii. The sternness of Paul, Acts 15:40, 2 Timothy 4:11.
- iii. The influence of Peter, 1 Peter 5:13.

Simon Peter and John Mark - the epitome of second chances!

2. Epaphras the Wrestler, vv12-13

Col 4:12 “Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. 13 I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis.”

Background on Epaphras: Colossians 1:7, Philemon :23.

- i. He prayed with purpose

‘Wrestling’: aspazetai - to engage in intense struggle, involving physical or nonphysical force against strong opposition — ‘to struggle, to fight.’

- ii. He worked with zeal

Working hard - “zeal”: polos - hard work, implying accompanying pain and distress, ‘burdensome labour.’ See also, Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 2:3-4.

The North-West Week

Friday - an “everyone” week with Children’s Ministry. A class on discipling & deeper relationships focussing on what the Bible teaches on **“How to Listen”**.

Sunday 5th - Church Service, 11am. **Andrew Agerbak** speaking.

Reminders

- Children’s Ministry workers communion 10.40 upstairs every Sunday
- Sunday announcements to be in by Friday evening

¹ Tychicus is also mentioned in Eph 6:21-22. Paul speaks warmly of him to the church. He was an Asian who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem with the collection (Acts 20:4; cf. 1 Cor. 16:1-4). He was the apostle’s personal representative—probably the bearer of the letters—to the Colossians and Ephesians (Eph. 6:21-22), and, should Ephesians be a circular letter, to other Asian churches as well. Paul seems to have considered him a possible relief for Titus in Crete (Tit. 3:12), and to have sent him to Ephesus just when Timothy was needed elsewhere (2 Tim. 4:12). These commissions reflect that trustworthiness which Paul commends (Eph. 6:21...).

On Onesimus, see the book of Philemon. An Onesimus became bishop of Ephesus by the early second century, although it is not certain if it is the same one Paul mentions here. Presumably he is traveling back to be reunited with Philemon. Could be a tricky time. Perhaps this is why Paul emphasises that Onesimus is a ‘brother’. The welcome of the church as a whole would help the reconciliation with Philemon.