

Paul's Fellow Workers

Names make up big sections of the Bible (Genesis 5:1-32; Ezra 2:1-70; 10:18-44; Nehemiah 3:1-32; 1 Chronicles 1-9; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38; Hebrews 11:1-32).

Paul concludes many of his epistles by listing the names of fellow disciples and co-workers in the cause of the gospel (Romans 16:1-15; 2 Timothy 4:9-22; Titus 3:12-13; Philemon 23-24).

Colossians 4:7-18 contains a list of familiar names. Barnabas is the "son of encouragement" (Colossians 4:10). Luke is the writer of one of the gospels and Acts (Colossians 4:14). Onesimus is a big part of Paul's letter to Philemon.

Consider some other names in Paul's list that deserve our attention.

Mark (Colossians 4:10)

- Mark is the inspired writer of the Gospel of Mark. He was the cousin of Barnabas, and the Jerusalem church often assembled in his mother's home (Acts 12:12).
- He also abandoned Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 15:36-39). This frustrated Paul, and he refused to allow Mark to travel with him on the second journey.
- Barnabas allowed Mark to redeem himself. Mark would grow in his faith, and Paul regained confidence in him (2 Timothy 4:11).
- Our mistakes don't have to define us. We can all grow and mature. We need to always be willing to learn from our mistakes and strive to accomplish better service for the Lord!

Epaphras (Colossians 4:12-13)

- Epaphras was a bondservant of Jesus. He may have planted the church in Colosse (Colossians 1:7).
- Like Barnabas, Epaphras was also a great encourager of brethren (Colossians 4:12). He also prayed fervently for the saints. He prayed for their spiritual progress and maturity.
- We need more Epaphras' in the church! The church can't ever have too many disciples who encourage and pray for others.

Demas (Colossians 4:14)

- Paul also mentions Demas in Philemon 24 and 2 Timothy 4:10.
- The book of 2 Timothy was written in 67 A.D. Since Colossians was written in 63 A.D., this means that Demas fell away sometime between those four years.
- What happened to Demas can happen to any Christian (1 Corinthians 9:26-27).
- The devil is real, active, and continues seeking to destroy the people of God spiritually!

Archippus (Colossians 4:17)

- Archippus is only mentioned one other time in the New Testament (Philemon 2).
- Paul reminded him to stay focused and keep working for the Lord. He urged him to "take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."
- Sometimes we need a similar reminder! There are times when we can begin to slack off, become lazy, distracted, and need to be reminded of the commitments we have in the kingdom of God.

Conclusion:

Every name mentioned by Paul was a kingdom citizen. Are you also part of the Lord's kingdom?

- Shawn Jeffries