



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Saints in the Shadows

Date: August 25, 2024

Scripture Text: Colossians 4:7-18

Notes:

Paul wraps up his letter to the Colossian Christians by recognizing the work of his co-laborers for Christ. These are individuals who have faithfully served alongside Paul in the good times and bad. It is a good example of how a church should function. Everyone faithfully serving Christ while they support and edify one another. It's not about personal recognition, but for Jesus to be glorified. As we conclude the book of Colossians, we pause to focus on this set of saints in the shadows and the impact they had on the kingdom of God and the ministry of Paul.

I. Tychicus (Colossians 4:7-8)

We first hear of Tychicus in [Acts 20:4](#) while Paul was on his third missionary journey. He is an example of faithfulness in little things which led to greater things. He was sent to inform the Colossians of Paul's circumstances and encourage them. He was probably the carrier of this letter to the Colossians as well as the letter to the Ephesians ([Eph. 6:21](#)). In later years Tychicus was a relief minister for Titus ([Titus 3:12](#)). As Paul approached death, he sent Tychicus to care for the church at Ephesus ([2 Tim. 4:12](#)).

- What are the ways Paul describes Tychicus in [Col. 4:7-8](#)?
- How would you describe Tychicus in three words or less?
- Our culture sees humbleness as a weakness. How can humility be a strength in the Kingdom of God?

II. Onesimus (Colossians 4:9)

Accompanying Tychicus is Onesimus, the runaway slave from Colosse. We read his story in the Book of Philemon. The story of Onesimus is a story of grace and hope. He was a slave that became a *faithful and beloved brother*. Only by the power of the gospel can such a radical and absolute change take place.

- Onesimus was open to letting Christ change and mold him for ministry. How pliable are you? How is Christ shaping you for ministry?
- What are characteristics of a 'faithful' person?

III. Aristarchus (Colossians 4:10)

Aristarchus, Paul's fellow prisoner, was always there when Paul needed him. Aristarchus was with Paul during a riot in Ephesus ([Acts 19:29](#)) and he was with Paul when he was shipwrecked ([Acts 27:2](#)). Adversity did not lessen his commitment or affection.

- Who do you know with similar characteristics to Aristarchus?
- Why is putting others needs ahead of our own so difficult, but important ([Phil. 2:3-4](#))?



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Notes:

IV. Mark (Colossians 4:10) - Mark abandoned Paul on his first missionary journey; as a result, Paul refused to take him along on the next trip ([Acts 15:37-39](#)). The ministry of Mark appeared to be over, but Barnabas, his cousin, nurtured and encouraged him. He was with Paul as this letter to the Colossians was written. At the end of Paul's life, he said Mark was useful to him ([2 Tim. 4:11](#)).

- After Mark stumbled, God was still able to use him, and he was an effective minister for Christ as he worked alongside Paul. What does it mean that God is a God of second chances?
- How have you benefited from second chances God has given you?

V. Jesus called Justus (Colossians 4:11) - Jesus called Justus, also brought comfort to Paul. Little else is known about Jesus (Jewish name) Justus (Roman name) except that he was a source of encouragement to Paul.

- Who is someone who has been an encouragement to you?
- How can you be an encouragement to others?

VI. Epaphras (Colossians 4:12-13) - Epaphras was from Colosse. He was mentioned earlier ([Col. 1:7](#)) as the man responsible for bringing the gospel to the Colossians. He prayed continually, fervently, and with purpose.

- Epaphras was a pray-er. He prayed for the growth and maturity of the Colossian church. How can you pray similarly for Morningside?

VII. Luke (Colossians 4:14) - Luke was a doctor, historian, author, and companion to Paul.

- Luke used his giftings for the ministry of Christ. How are you using your giftings?

VIII. Demas (Colossians 4:14) - Demas was still at Paul's side, but unfortunately, Demas became a worldly defector. At the end of Paul's life, Demas fell in love with the world and forsook Paul ([2 Tim. 4:10](#)).

- What precautions can you take not to be enticed by the world?

IX. Nympha (Colossians 4:15) - Nympha hosted the Laodicean church in her house. She used her resources for God's kingdom.

- How do use your resources for God's kingdom?

X. Archippus (Colossians 4:17) - Archippus may have been the son of Philemon and the pastor of the church that met in their home ([Phlm. 1:2](#)). He is challenged to complete the work he received in the Lord.

- What work have you been called to by God?
- What temptations might hinder your completion of this work?

All these mentioned in the closing verses were faithful companions of Paul. But Paul was not their focus. They were focused on serving Christ and Paul's ministry benefitted by their faithfulness. How can the ministry of Morningside benefit from your faithful service to Christ?