

THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

“Pauline Compatriots”

Colossians 4:10, 11

Context

1. Scripture includes all the information the Holy Spirit wants the believer to know (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Some of this involves some apparent minor personalities (cf. vv. 7, 9).
2. It will always remain a divine mystery that God employs what the world refers to as castoffs (cf. 1 Cor. 26-29).
3. The closing verses of this book records some wonderful information about little known leaders in the early church. Here are three of them:

LEADER #1 Aristarchus -- Man with a heart.

Here is a brother who is:

- a. A man of involvement v. 10

Scripture teaches about him:

1) At Ephesus. Acts 19:29. This is the account of the Diana riot. Aristarchus got “caught” in the fracas.

2) At Asia. Acts 20:4. Aristarchus is one of many who was with Paul on his return to Asia.

3) At sea. Acts 27:2. Aristarchus is one who boarded the ship for Rome with Paul.

4) At Rome. Col. 4:10. Aristarchus is with Paul while in prison.

- b. A man of attendance v. 10

The use of the original for “fellow prisoner” seems to imply Aristarchus may have alternated with Epaphras to voluntarily stand by Paul in prison. He was a faithful friend to the apostle.

- c. A man of comfort v. 11

The phrase clearly is a reference to all three men in the context. The relative pronoun classifies them, hence the men are categorized. Aristarchus is included.

LEADER #2: Marcus -- A man with a future.

Here is a brother who is:

- a. A man of relation v. 10

Marcus is probably the son of Mary (Acts 12:12). He penned the Gospel under his name. He is designated a cousin to Barnabas, a matter explaining the events of Acts 15:36-41.

- b. A man of mission. Acts 13:2, 5.

Marcus is listed as a part of the mission team from Antioch. Regretfully, he left the effort early on in the journey (Acts 13:13).

- c. A man of contention. Acts 15:36-41.

Marcus became a bone of contention between Paul and Barnabas upon the 2nd missionary journey. Apparently the cleavage over Marcus was very intense.

- d. A man of restoration. 2 Tim. 4:11.

The Greek term used in this passage shows that Marcus is actually useful or serviceable to Paul. This is in direct contrast to the Acts 15 episode (cf. Jonah and Peter as comebacks!).

- e. A man of commendation v. 10.

While the full significance of the phrase “touching whom ye received command-ments” may be unclear, the word of Paul (the Holy Spirit) is: “Receive him!” Hence, Marcus must be taken in with hospitality and friendliness.

LEADER #3: Justus -- A man with a name.

Here is a brother who is:

- a. A man of mention v. 11

There it is -- the name of our Saviour, Jesus. His surname was Justus (cf. Acts 1:23; 18:7 -- probably not the same). He must have had wonderful parents to give him such an incredible name!

- b. A man of distinction v. 11

This is a phrase found elsewhere only in two other N.T. books (Gal. 2:12; Titus 1:10). It has reference to all three men -- Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus. The noun classifies them all as Jews (cf. Gen. 17).

- c. A man of promotion v. 11

Praise God for the man’s labor “unto” the kingdom of God. There is no higher calling, but to be such a “fellow worker.” Here is a man with eternity before him. Glory!

- d. A man of consolation v. 11

The aorist passive verb does not have a specific connotation, but the noun “comfort” does. It notes genuine physical help. Paul needed that in the prison and he got it!

Conclusion

What do these leaders teach us (me!). Think on these lessons:

1. Aristarchus teaches to bear the burden of others.
2. Marcus teaches there is a second opportunity for service.
3. Jesus teaches we have a name to bear for our Lord.

God help me to learn these lessons. Amen.