

THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS
“Archippus -- Man with a Ministry”
Colossians 4:17

Introduction

1. God has forever sealed His Word of revelation through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
2. Our firm belief is that the totality of Scripture, as accepted in the Canon, is completely given by God (plenary inspiration) and is accurate (inerrancy).
3. Believing this high view of Scripture forces us to accept every vestige of the Bible including lists of names, places, and figures. Hence, the apostolic partners of Colossians (4:7-17) are there because God put them there. Review them:

a. Tychichus	--	Man with a Message
b. Onesimus	--	Man with a Past
c. Aristarchus	--	Man with a Heart
d. Marcus	--	Man with a Future
e. Justus	--	Man with a Name
f. Epaphras	--	Man with a Passion
f. Luke	--	Man with a Gift
g. Demas	--	Man with a Bias
h. Nymphos	--	Man with a Church

4. We come now to the final one in the text: Archippus. He is included because of his ministry. Look at the facts in Scripture about him:-

1. He was a SOLDIER (Philemon 1:2)
Sunstratiote

- a. In Honor

Historically the Greek term employed indicated a soldier was equal in honor to the commander-in-chief!

- b. In Prison

The reference may be to his stickability with Paul in his prison experience -- a soldier as a “fellow” (Greek preposition).

- c. In Gospel

The Gospel is like military service. Archippus is made out to be that fellow-soldier who was in the good fight (Phil. 1:27, 30; 2 Tim. 2:3; 4:7). Apparently he fought with Paul to maintain the faith. In the spiritual fluky (unsteady, uncertain) spirit of our day, we need some fellow-soldiers like Archippus and Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25) both of whom are referred to by this term.

2. He was a MEMBER (Text)

While some have thought Archippus was from Laodicea, most view him as associated with the church at Colosse. This fits Paul’s word here.

3. He was a WORKER (Text)

Diakonian

This entire verse is introduced by an aorist imperatival verb (eipate) expressing what is to be “told” to Archippus.

- a. Told to OBEY (“take heed to the ministry”)

Blepe

- 1) The verb

- a. Meaning -- to see, perceive, consider, take care.
- b. Mode -- imperative, therefore a command. Object must be considered.
- c. Tense -- present. Calls for constant vigilance.
- d. Voice -- active, hence personal involvement.
- e. Person -- singular pointing to individual responsibility.

- 2) The noun

The term “ministry” has a specific significance. It’s prevailing usage in the N.T. is spiritual service of an official nature (cf. Ro. 11:13; 2 Cor. 4:1; 6:3; Eph. 4:12; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:5, 11). What an amazing support is given here for the traditional “call to the ministry!” Away with those who reject this Biblical concept. God -- send us men whom Thou dost call and in whose hearts there is a desire (reach after i.e. orgetai). Scripture says they “desire” (epithumei i.e. set one’s heart upon) a “good work.” Amen!

- b. Told to ACKNOWLEDGE (“which you received”)

Paralabes

- 1) Meaning -- to take to one’s self, take along with.
- 2) Mode -- indicative. Matter of fact.
- 3) Tense -- aorist, hence a point of time. A completed act once for all! (1 Tim. 4:14).
- 4) Voice -- active suggesting “to receive” in charge or possession.
- 5) Person -- singular = individualistic

- c. Told to ENJOY (“in the Lord”)

en kurio

Here is a direct statement that the “ministry” is not some innate ability, but something provided “in the Lord.” By virtue of one’s position, there is the joy of divine service. You must be in the sphere (Lord) to know the joy.

- d. Told to UTILIZE (“that you fulfill”)

Hina auten plerois

While the official status of Archippus is not known, he is told to get with it and do it. He may have been sick, aged, or near the end of his “ministry.” Alternatively, “to fulfill” may be taken as God’s word to Timothy through Paul (2 Tim. 4:5).

Conclusion

Archippus is not found in Scripture to fill space. He is a man with a ministry. When we get to glory, we’ll know what happened to him. Meanwhile, what assignment has God given you (Ro. 12:3-8). Are you “fulfilling” your divine order? So be it.