

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

"EVERY NAME MATTERS" | COLOSSIANS 4:7-18 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

- Do you stay for the credits at the end of a movie? Why or why not?

"Tychicus: The Faithful Messenger and Onesimus: The Transformed Life" Colossians 4: 7-9

Tychicus is described as faithful, which earns Paul's trust. Onesimus, a former fugitive, is now described as a beloved brother.

- What does it take to earn the description of faithfulness?
- How can Christ followers do a better job of seeing other Christians as brothers and sisters instead of as their failures?

"Aristarchus: The Faithful Companion, Mark: The Restored Servant, and Epaphras: The Praying Warrior" Colossians 4: 10-13

Aristarchus shared Paul's chains, while Mark had been restored after quitting on Paul. Epaphras was known for praying hard.

- What are ways to share in someone's struggle, especially in prayer?
- What are ways to try again and not give up in serving God?

"Luke: The Beloved Physician, Demas: A Sobering Reminder, and Archippus: Finish Your Ministry" Colossians 4: 14-17

Luke's medical skills opened doors for ministry. Demas eventually deserts Paul and Archippus is challenged to finish his ministry.

- How does being willing to serve God with what you have lead to other ministry opportunities?
- What are reasons people struggle to finish what God has called them to do?

"Paul: Grace to the End" Colossians 4: 18

Paul reminds people the Gospel is worth suffering for and that Grace is what carries us all.

- How have you experienced God's grace lately?
- How can you encourage someone else who is suffering for the gospel?

REFLECTION AND APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Every name in this passage points to Jesus' grace. Jesus works through ordinary people and uses a team of faithful followers to advance the gospel.

- What team or group is God calling you to be a faithful member of to help advance His gospel?
- Who can you serve and encourage this week as part of being a faithful member of the body of Christ?
- Thank Jesus for the people who encourage and help you live out your faith.

Every Name Matters

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those watching online 10am.
- B. Slide1-4 AP: REAL. FHC. CMCA. GriefShare.
- C. 2 Highlights: Missions Prayer Today at 1:30pm in the Agape Room.
Church Prayer: next Sun, 1:30pm in the Agape Room.
- D. Slide5 Prayer: Q:#1 in The Westminster Shorter Catechism: What is the chief end of man?
Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever.
Father, we were created for Your glory. *May our every thought, word, and action today honor/glorify Your name.* **Teach** us to find our greatest joy not in the gifts You give, but in You Yourself.

II. Slide6 Intro: Every Name Matters

- A. Paul did not operate in isolation. He was a team player. He was a highly relational leader. He had the genius of friendship. [he names about 60 individuals in his letters]
 - 1. To be a good missionary (like Paul), you need to know the gospel, to be bold, to be led by the Holy Spirit, & you need to work well w/co-workers.
- B. Paul **traveled** with his friends. He **worked alongside** his friends. He got persecuted with his friends. He **sang** in prison with his friends. He **disagreed** with his friends, and he **reconciled** with his friends. We need gospel friendships!
- C. Most people see a list of names and assume, *The letter is over!* But Paul intentionally ends with **people** - because the gospel is always about people.
- D. Colossians **begins** with the supremacy of Christ over all creation and **ends** by showing how *that supreme Christ works through ordinary believers*.
 - 1. Great theology always produces ordinary faithfulness.
- E. Theme: The gospel advances through ordinary-faithful-people.
- F. Slide7 Do you normally stay for the credits at the end of a movie?

1. Most people leave as soon as they begin to roll. **But** those credits represent *hundreds of people* whose names most of us will never know.
2. The **stars** may receive the **applause**, **but** the movie could never have been made without *the countless people behind the scenes*.

G. Paul ends Colossians with what looks like **the credits**, **but** these names *aren't* an afterthought. They remind us that *God's kingdom has always advanced* through *ordinary people* who simply remained faithful.

1. Remained Faithful *serving wherever God had placed them*.
None of these people are famous today, except because Scripture preserved their names.
2. Yet every one of them mattered. Perhaps *that's exactly Paul's point ...*
God knows every name! [*I wonder who you will relate to the most?*]

III. Slide8 I. TYCHICUS: THE FAITHFUL MESSENGER (7-8)

A. 7 **Tychicus** will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. 8 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts,

B. Paul introduces Tychicus (Tee-key-KOS) with 3 simple descriptions: *Beloved. Faithful. Fellow servant.*

1. He **wasn't** an apostle. He **wasn't** a church planter. He **wasn't** a preacher whose sermons were recorded. **Yet** Paul entrusted him with delivering **this very letter**, along with Ephesians and likely Philemon.
2. Imagine carrying the inspired Word of God hundreds of miles. God often entrusts His greatest work to *dependable people*.
 - a) **Talent** may get *attention*, **faithfulness** earns trust.

C. Can people depend on **me**? If someone described my life would *faithful* hit the list?

IV. Slide9 II. ONESIMUS: THE TRANSFORMED LIFE (9)

A. 9 and with him **Onesimus**, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

B. Paul calls Onesimus, *our faithful and beloved brother*.

1. What makes this remarkable is **knowing his story**. Onesimus had been a runaway slave, he had stolen from Philemon, he had become a fugitive. Then he met Christ.

2. Now Paul no longer introduces him *by his failures*, he introduces him as a brother. [Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother. O Holy Night]

C. The Gospel doesn't merely *forgive our past*, it gives us a new identity.

1. One of Satan's favorite tactics is to keep reminding us **who we were**. One of God's greatest gifts is reminding us **whose we are**.

D. Illustration: Think of a rough piece of driftwood. Most people see something washed up and worthless. A skilled craftsman sees what it can become.

1. Christ sees people that way. He doesn't simply *clean them up*. He **transforms them** into something beautiful.

V. Slide 10 III. ARISTARCHUS: THE FAITHFUL COMPANION (10)

A. 10 **Aristarchus** my fellow prisoner greets you,

B. Paul calls him: *my fellow prisoner*.

1. **Aristarchus stayed with Paul** through *riots, dangerous journeys, shipwrecks, and imprisonment*.

a) He probably sang: **Through many dangers, toils and snares**, I have already come; 'Tis **grace** that brought me safe thus far, And **grace** will lead me home. (Amazing Grace)

2. Some people have the gift of speaking, others have the gift of **staying**.

a) In a world where **people** *easily walk away*, **faithful presence** becomes a powerful ministry. [God uses *ordinary people* in **partnership**]

- b) Job's friends were at their best during the 1st 7 days when they simply sat with him. Sometimes the greatest gift we can offer someone *isn't advice* it's our presence

VI.Slide11a IV. MARK: THE RESTORED SERVANT (10b,11)

- A. 10b and **Mark** the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him), 11 and **Jesus** who is called **Justus** (nothing known of this man - *unsung heroes*). These are the only men of the circumcision (Jews) among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, & they have been a comfort to me.
- B. Mark (John Mark) *may* have the *most encouraging story* in the passage.
1. Mark, Cousin of Barnabas (the encourager: voted the most huggable in HS).
 2. **Mark was the young missionary who quit.** The one who **abandoned** Paul and Barnabas. The disagreement became so sharp that the missionary team split. Many people assumed Mark's usefulness was over. **But Grace had other plans!**
 3. **Now** Paul writes, *If he/Mark comes to you, welcome him.*
 - a) Years later Paul would say, **Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.** (2 Tim.4:11)
 4. **Slide11b Failure** was part of Mark's story, it *wasn't the end* of his story!
 5. Maybe like Mark **YOU** failed morally, *or* failed relationally, *or* ministerially. Maybe you had a lapse of judgment *or* a wisdom issue.
 - a) **God** wasn't done with **Mark** *and* He's not done with **you**. Mark got to write one of the books of the Bible - *that's a good recovery right! He restores the years that locust has eaten.* [God will restore what was lost due to *devastation*, symbolized by locusts, offering both **physical** *and* **spiritual** renewal]
- C. **Our greatest failure** never has to become **our final chapter**.

VII.Slide12a V. EPAPHRAS: THE PRAYING WARRIOR (12-13)

- A. 12 **Epaphras**, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully

assured in all the will of God. 13 For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. [1st we saw **Christians** don't exist in isolation, **but now churches** don't exist in isolation either] **unity**.

B. Paul says *pastor* Epaphras is *always struggling on your behalf in his prayers*

1. The word **struggling** was used of **athletes competing** in the arena.
 - a) **Slide12b** Prayer isn't passive. Prayer is **spiritual labor**.
2. **Notice what he prayed for.** **Not** comfort, **not** prosperity, **not** easier circumstances. He prayed, *that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God*. [those are prayers worth praying]

C. Perhaps *the greatest battles* in the church are **won** by people whose names never appear on a stage.

VIII. Slide13 VI. LUKE: THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN (14a)

A. 14 **Luke** the beloved physician greets you,

B. **Luke reminds us that God uses every vocation.** He served Christ with the gifts God had already given him. His medical training became **Kingdom ministry**. Eventually he also **wrote** the Gospel of Luke **and** the Book of Acts.

1. **God doesn't ask everyone to become pastors.** He calls doctors, teachers, mechanics, business owners, engineers, receptionists, artists, and countless others **to honor Him** where **He** has placed them.
2. **Your occupation** can become your ministry when it is *surrendered to Christ*.

IX. Slide14 VII. DEMAS: A SOBERING REMINDER (14b)

A. 14 Luke the beloved physician greets you, **as does Demas**.

B. **This is sobering.** Here Paul simply mentions *Demas* and nothing more.

1. But later Paul writes these heartbreaking words, *Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me...* (2 Tim.4:10)

- a) **Not** every story finishes well. It's a serious reminder that beginning well isn't enough. The Christian life is a marathon - **Finish well!**

X. Slide15 **VIII. ARCHIPPUS: FINISH YOUR MINISTRY (15-17)**

- A. 15 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to **Nympha** and the church in her house. 16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. 17 And say to **Archippus**, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord."
- B. Paul recognizes **Nympha** as hosting a church in her home. **Sometimes we land harder on *gender roles* than Paul did.** Paul honors **Nympha** for hosting the church in her home. (Like Lydia in Acts)
1. **Also** listen to ***the sharing of letters*** back in that 1st century.
- C. Paul gives **one final challenge** to Archippus, *See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.*
1. **We aren't told what Archippus' ministry was.** Apparently everyone in Colossae already knew. **That's not the point. The point is to **finish!****
- D. **Don't compare your assignment with someone else's. Don't envy** another person's platform. **God** isn't asking you to do someone else's ministry. **He's** asking you to faithfully **complete** yours CM Saints.

XI. Slide16 **IX. PAUL: GRACE TO THE END (18)**

- A. 18 I, **Paul**, write this greeting with my own hand (e.i. authenticity). Remember my chains. **Grace** be with you.
- B. Paul wraps up with, *Remember my chains.* - He doesn't ask for pity, he reminds them that the Gospel is worth suffering for.
- C. Then his final words, ***Grace be with you.*** - **Grace** opened the letter. Grace closes the letter. **Grace** carried Paul. **Grace** would carry them. **Grace** still carries us!

XII.Slide17a CHRIST CONNECTION

A. Every name in this passage ultimately points us to **Jesus**.

1. **Tychicus** was faithful because **Jesus** is perfectly faithful. **Onesimus** was transformed because **Jesus** makes sinners new. **Mark** was restored because **Jesus** restores failures. **Epaphras** interceded because **Jesus** continually intercedes for us. **Luke** cared for hurting bodies because **Jesus** is the Great Physician who heals broken souls. **Paul** endured suffering because **Jesus** first endured the cross.

B. Slide17b The hero of this passage isn't **the people**. The hero is **Christ** working through *ordinary people*.

C. Ask yourself, where has God called **me** to be faithful?

1. Has Christ **rewritten** my story like Onesimus? Am I helping **restore** someone like Mark? Am I **praying earnestly** for others like Epaphras? Am I serving Christ through my **everyday vocation** like Luke? Am I committed to **finishing** what God has called me to do like Archippus?

D. Calvary Murrieta has been built by *ordinary people*: Faithful Calvary Kid's teachers. Prayer warriors. Nursery workers. Missionaries. Parents. Greeters. And Faithful friends. People whose names may never appear in history books, but their names are known in heaven.

1. The Supreme Christ that we have learned about throughout this book - delights in working through **ordinary people**.
 - a) The One who holds galaxies together also knows **your name**. He knows **your story**. He knows **your gifts**. He knows **your struggles**. And He has entrusted **you** with a place in His mission. [*Just make yourself *available* to Him!]

E. Keywords: names, ordinary, people.