

**Col 4:10-13**  
**“Precious People” (Pt. 2)**

**Introduction**

What is the key to ministry?

The word that keeps coming up in this area, is **Faithfulness!**

**1 Cor 4:2** Moreover it is **required in stewards** that one **be found faithful**.

**“Faithfulness in ministry”**; or **“one who just keeps on keeping on”!**

Doing what he/she is supposed to do and when they are supposed to do it.

God doesn't tell us that we need to “be famous, successful, or rich”, but just simply “BE FAITHFUL”!

**Last time:** We asked the question,

**“If your name was written in the Bible, what would they say about you?”**

- It sure would be cool to have your name in the Bible.
- But even though your name may be written in the Bible, that doesn't mean He is talking about you. But for sure, our names are written in heaven, and God has the records on us.
- We talked about how we will all be standing before the Lord, who will look at our works for reward.

**1 Cor 4:5**

4 For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; **but He who judges me is the Lord**.5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts.

**Then each one's praise will come from God.**

Last time we looked at 2 Faithful men:

**#1 - Tychicus**

**Col 4:7** Tychicus, a beloved brother, **FAITHFUL minister**, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me.

**#2 - Onesimus**

**Col 4:9** with **Onesimus, a FAITHFUL and beloved brother**, who is one of you. They will make known to you all things which are happening here.

One day when we stand before the Lord, we all desire to hear the Lord say,

**Matt 25:23**

23 "His lord said to him, **'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been FAITHFUL over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'**

Today we are going to look at 4 more names, and we will learn 3 new areas about being Faithful:

1. To be faithful in **“Trials”**
2. To be faithful to **“Restart”**; **Start Again or Start Over**
3. To be faithful to **“Continue on in the Ministry”**
4. To be faithful to **“Labor in Prayer”**.

**Hopefully by the end of the message today we will all be encouraged in the areas we need encouragement in, and that God will help all of us to be more faithful in the various areas we need to be.**

**4:10a #3 - Aristarchus (Air-ee-stark-us) – who was faithful in “Trials”!!**

**Col 4:10**

10 **Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you**, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him),

**A. Aristarchus**

- A Macedonian of Thessalonica (**Acts 27:2**), having grown up in Thessalonica.
- He was a “Jewish convert” of Thessalonica.
- He traveled with Paul on his 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary trips.
- Was most likely one of the believers of Thessalonica, who was accused of turning the world upside down (**Acts 17:6**),
- He was one of Paul’s traveling companions who was **dragged into the theater at Ephesus (Acts 19:29)**,
- **He also accompanied Paul to Asia (Acts 20:4)**,
- And subsequently (**Acts 27:2**) **to even Rome**.
- He stayed with Paul even all the way to Rome (**Philemon 1:24**) through very difficult travels, including shipwrecks (**Acts 27:32; Ch. 27-28**).
- And he was called, Paul's "**fellow laborer**" (**Philemon 1:24**)
- As he was spoken here in (**Col 4:10**) as Paul's "**fellow prisoner**,"
- **Aristarchus was Paul’s fellow prisoner at the time when Paul wrote** the letter to the Colossians.

**B. my fellow prisoner greets you**,

The Greek word for "**fellow prisoner**" is **literally, a fellow captive, an image from prisoners taken in warfare, or one taken as prisoner after battle**. Which makes sense, because Paul often referred to his companions as being "**fellow soldiers**" (Phil 2:25, Philemon 1:2).

**Note:** Alford Meyer in his commentary suggest that, “Paul's friends possibly voluntarily took turns to share in Paul’s imprisonment”.

Proverbs states about such friends:

**Prov 17:17**

17 **A friend loves at all times,**

**And a brother is born for adversity.**

**Prov 18:24**

24 A man who has friends must himself be friendly,

**But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.**

*Both of these Proverbs are true of Aristarchus.*

**4:10b #4 - Mark – cousin of Barnabas – One who was faithful to Start Again; Restart**

**Col 4:10**

10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, **with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him)**,

**A. with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him)**,

- He is also called “John” Mark” – “**Mark**” is a **Latin** name, “**John**” is **Jewish**.
- He is a cousin of Barnabas (we learn here in Colossians).
- His family was quite involved in the early church from the very beginning. The church in Jerusalem met at his mother’s house. (**Acts 12:12**)
- When Paul and Barnabas began their first missionary journey he went with them as a helper (**Acts 12:25; 13:5**).
- But when things started to get tough at Pamphylia, Mark abandoned the team.

**Acts 13:13**

13 Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and **John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem**.

- When Paul and Barnabas were going to start their second missionary journey, they had a huge argument over whether or not to take Mark with them. Paul didn’t think Mark was very trustworthy, but Barnabas wanted to take Mark. Paul and Barnabas ended up parting ways, with Barnabas taking Mark with him to Cyprus (**Acts 15:37-39**).
- Mark will also spend time with the apostle Peter and became very close.

**1 Peter 5:13**

13 She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, **greet you; and so does Mark my son**.

- Tradition has it, that Mark wrote his gospel (i.e. Gospel of Mark), from Peter’s account.
- We know that Mark was reconciled with Paul.

**Philemon 24 as do Mark**, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, **my fellow laborers**.

- At the end of Paul’s life, Mark was in Ephesus with Timothy, but Paul wanted his presence in Rome with him.

**2 Tim 4:11**

11 Only Luke is with me. **Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry**.

- Tradition has it that Mark eventually went to Alexandria, where he started a church. He died as a martyr in AD 64 in the eighth year of the reign of Caesar Nero.

**Note:**

- John Mark started in the ministry but failed.
- Don’t despair, precious people; We have a God of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chance, (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, etc.)
- John Mark blew it badly but came back to be a great Minister of God.
- It’s not too late to “Restart”, today is a great day to restart.

**Quote: Warren Wiersbe**

“John Mark is an encouragement to everyone who failed in their first attempt to serve God.

**Quote:** “Conversion takes but a moment, but growth takes a life time”.

**4:11 #5 – Justus – one who was faithful to “Continue on in the Ministry”**

**Col 4:11**

**11 and Jesus who is called Justus.**

These are my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision; they have proved to be a comfort to me.

**A. and Jesus who is called Justus.**

- Jesus who is called Justus, the name means “Righteous”.
- Justus from the Latin
- Jesus is Greek (Jesous) –(yee-shua)
- the same name Joshua in the English or
- Jesús in the Spanish,
  - it was and is a common name even today.
  - The English speaking church has stayed with the Greek Annunciation, but with a transliteration annunciation,

**B. Justus – the Jew**

We do not know much about this guy. We know he was a Jew.

There are so many unknown people to us in the body of Christ, but yet who were of great value to the Lord who just kept on being Faithful.

Justus was a great comfort to Paul because he was part of the few Jews who came to the Lord, entered the ministry, and continued with Paul, even through his prison years, and remained loyal to Paul and his message of Grace.

As we read about Paul’s ministry through the Book of Acts, we see that mostly the Jews hated Paul, and rejected the message of Jesus. But fewer yet are of the Jews who believed and then went on to become ministers, and fewer yet, who continued to think well of Paul.

- Even Timothy was backing off from Paul – his Father in the faith  
**2 Tim 1:8a**  
 8a Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, **nor of me His prisoner**, ...
- Notice other close friends of Paul from the Church of Ephesus, cancelling Paul.  
 2 Timothy is Paul’s last letter, and right before he goes before Nero.  
**2 Tim 4:16**  
 16 At my first defense **no one stood with me, but ALL forsook me.** May it not be charged against them.  
  
**2 Tim 1:15-18**  
 15 This you know, **that ALL those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.**  
 16 **The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus**, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; 17 but when he arrived in Rome, he sought

me out very zealously and found me. 18 **The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day**--and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus.

**C. These are my “ONLY” fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision;**

There were very few Jews who continued with Paul and remained faithful to him.

This implies that **Epaphras, Luke, and Demas (Col 4:12,14)** were **NOT** of the circumcision.

**D. they have proved to be a comfort to me.**

- **Justus, Marcus, Aristarchus, Onesimus** were all tremendous blessings to Paul.
- All three **fellow workers** with a Jewish heritage.
- And these did a great work, they **proved to be a comfort** to Paul.

**4:12-13 #6 - Epaphras – who is one who was faithful to “Labor in Prayer”.**

**Col 4:12-13**

12 **Epaphras**, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, **always laboring fervently** for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

13 For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis.

**A. Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you,**

Many think this is the founding pastor of the Church at Colosse.  
He Greets you!

**B. always laboring fervently for you in prayers,**

- Prayer is hard work!
- Epaphras labored fervently in prayer.
- The idea of “**Labor fervently**” in the Greek is (agonizomai) - we get our English word “agonize”
- Here is the idea of such pain that it was like, “**one of giving birth**”; **going through pain to bring forth such prayer.**
- Sometimes that’s what it takes.

**Finney’s prayer:**

"The great evangelist Charles Finney never counted on his theology, messages, preaching style, logic, or methods to save souls.

He looked rather to mighty travelling prayer and the resulting powerful work of the Holy Spirit to bring about a sweeping conviction on the city that would bring many to salvation.

- Through the story of Charles Finney we learn about his partner, Daniel Nash, a powerful intercessory prayer warrior.
- We see the role of intercessory prayer in its effectiveness on evangelism
- Through Daniel Nash’s weeks of Prayer before Charles Finney’s crusade, in which were many hours, days and weeks of groaning in prayer.

Do you ever feel like not praying?

Am I the only one who begins to pray, but then gets distracted and succumbs to the list of other things to tend to first?

- Such wasn't the case with Epaphras.
- He labored in prayer until there was a breakthrough, a birth of renewal and revival in the hearts and lives of those for whom he prayed.
- He was Laboring-Fervently in Prayer.

This Greek word (agonizomai) also has the idea of competition in athletics to win the prize. Paul says of an athletic competition:

**1 Cor 9:25** (It's like a wrestling in prayer)

25 And everyone who **competes** (agonizomai) (**KJV- strives for mastery**) for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.

Paul later uses the word, that all the believers would together (agonizomai).

**Rom 15:30**

30 Now **I beg you**, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you **strive together** (syn-agonizomai) with me in prayers to God for me,

**C. that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.**

The Greek word (teleios) – complete, to be mature, to be fully developed.

The true pastor is always wanting people to grow and develop into mature believers.

That's a great prayer to pray for anyone.

**D. For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you,**

Epaphras prayed well because he cared well. If he lagged in **zeal**, he certainly would have lagged in prayer.

**E. and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis.**

**The churches in the "Lycus Valley"** - Colosse, Laodicea and Hierapolis.

When he heard of this heresy threatening the churches he began to get fervent in prayer.

He was not just concerned about his own church, but for the body of Christ.

<b>Conclusion</b>
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Let us all be like **Epaphras**

**Heb 11:6**

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that **He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**

**Gal 6:9**

9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, **for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.**

**Jesus said,****Matt 21:13**

13 And He (Jesus) said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' ....

**Paul taught,**

First priority for any church:

**1 Tim 2:1**

Therefore I exhort **first of all** that **supplications, prayers, intercessions,** and giving of thanks be made for all men,

Especially in a time of spiritual warfare:

**Eph 6:18**

18 **praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication** for all the saints--

**Who else prayed like Epaphras - always laboring fervently****Jacob****Gen 32:24-28**

24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man **wrestled with him until the breaking of day.**

25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of **Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.**

26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

27 So He said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob."

28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."

**Elijah – (I Kings 18:42-45)****James 5:16-18**

16..... The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

**Moses****Ex 17:8-14**

8 Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. 9 And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow **I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand.**" 10 So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek.

And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 **And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.**

12 **But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.**

13 So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "**Write this for a memorial in the book** and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

Let us be like 80 year old Moses who was willing to left his hands in prayer until the job was done!!!

Jesus

**Luke 22:44**

44 And being in agony, **He prayed more earnestly**. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

**Heb 5:7-8**

7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with **vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save** Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,

8 **though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered**.

**God's word to all of us:**

**Jer 33:3**

3'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

Today we looked at 4 more names, and we saw these men to be Faithful:

1. **Aristarchus** was faithful in "**Trials**"
2. **John Mark** was faithful to "**Restart**"; **Start Again or Start Over**
3. **Justus** was faithful to "**Continue on in the Ministry**"
4. **Epaphras** was faithful to "**Labor in Prayer**".

They were good examples of the type of precious people that we find in the Church today.