

132 - Tychicus, Beloved and Faithful in the Lord - Ephesians 6:21-22 - 2017-03-19

Call to Worship: 1 Samuel 2:1

Scripture Reading: Nehemiah 13:1-14

Sermon: "Tychicus: Beloved and Faithful in the Lord" Ephesians 6:21-22

Benediction: 1 Samuel 2:2

Ephesians 6:21-22 But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, **Tychicus**, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; (22) whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts.

## INTRODUCTION

We draw very near the end of this letter now. With the exhortation to pray, and specifically to pray for him, the apostle Paul really has finished the substance of the letter. But he has a few more things to say in conclusion.

One thing he needs to do in these closing lines, which he does also in the letter to the Colossians, is mention the man who is the courier bringing the letter to the church. In mentioning this man, Tychicus, the apostle uses a two-part formula of words that is wonderfully instructive to us.

## TEXT

Ephesians 6:21-22

## BODY

For the first term, "beloved brother," we will examine how the concept grows through this letter to the Ephesians, so that by the time it is used in chapter 6, we can see what the apostle means by it.

For the second term, "faithful minister in the Lord," we will examine how the concept is expressed in Paul's other letters, to understand how the apostle is using it in this letter.

### I. Beloved Brother

For this first term, “beloved brother,” we will look at how the concept grows through this letter to the the Ephesians

A. Chapter one

1. Ephesians 1:3-6 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, (4) just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, (5) having predestined us to **adoption as sons** by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, (6) to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us **accepted in the Beloved [G25 agapo]**.
  - a) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
    - (1) has adopted us as sons
    - (2) has exercised His grace toward us in the Beloved
  - b) this does not exactly say the saints are brothers, but shows the basis on which we are considered brothers
2. Ephesians 1:15-16 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, (16) do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:
  - a) the Ephesians have been reported to Paul as having those two great things
    - (1) faith in the Lord Jesus
    - (2) love for all the saints
  - b) so the Ephesians understand and practice the command of our Lord Jesus, that we love the saints as He has loved us

B. Chapter two

Ephesians 2:13-19 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (14) For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, (15) having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, (16) and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. (17) And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. (18) For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. (19) Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

1. We are now members of the household of God
2. Again this does not say, “brothers” specifically

C. Chapter four

1. We all have God the Father in common: Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

(5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism; (6) **one God and Father of all**, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

2. We all are to love one another
  - a) Eph 4:2 bearing with one another in love
  - b) Eph 4:15 speaking the truth in love
  - c) Eph 4:16 the body edifying itself in love
3. So, see that believers in Christ are portrayed as those who have a common Father and who love one another

D. Chapter five

1. Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God as ~~dear~~ [beloved] children.
  - a) We are alike God's children
  - b) We are alike God's beloved children
2. Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us
  - a) Christ has loved us
  - b) we are to walk in love toward one another

E. Chapter six

1. Ephesians 6:10 Finally, **my brethren**, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
  - a) Here Paul refers to the saints as his brethren
  - b) after all he has written already, that makes perfect sense, that Paul would refer to the saints as brethren

F. Those who are the saints, the Christians, the disciples of Jesus Christ

1. are brothers because adopted to Himself by God the Father as sons through Jesus Christ
2. are beloved brothers because God the Father has shown His grace to us in His Beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ

G. So, when Paul refers to Tychicus as "beloved brother," he is commending Tychicus to the Christians as one

1. who, like us,
  - a) has received adoption as a son of God through Jesus Christ
  - b) has become a member of the household of God
  - c) and so, like each of us, should be considered a brother
2. who, like us,
  - a) has received the grace of God through Jesus Christ the Beloved
  - b) has become a beloved child of God,
    - (1) beloved of God
    - (2) beloved of the children of God
  - c) and so, like each of us, should be loved by us as he already is loved by Paul

II. Faithful Minister in the Lord

For this second term, "faithful minister in the Lord," we will examine how the concept is expressed in Paul's other letters, to understand how the apostle is using it in this letter.

- A. Paul believes that God is **faithful**, and so you can be sure that by our Lord Jesus Christ, God will keep you to the end, when our Lord Jesus Christ will come back, and you will be blameless before God in Christ Jesus.
  - 1. 1 Corinthians 1:7-9 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, (8) who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (9) God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
  - 2. So, if any disciples is “faithful,” he is faithful because God is faithful
- B. Paul believes that whether we are faithful or not, Christ Jesus remains faithful.
  - 1. 2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.
  - 2. So, although certain men are faithful, whether they are faithful or not, Christ Jesus is faithful
- C. Paul uses this term “faithful” to mean a servant who shows he can be trusted as a steward of what Christ the master has entrusted to him.
  - 1. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. (2) Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found **faithful**.
- D. He believes that a man is faithful not of himself, but by the mercy of the Lord Jesus
  - 1. 1 Corinthians 7:25b . . . I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made ~~trustworthy~~ [faithful].
- E. He believes that He has been put into the ministry by Christ Jesus our Lord because Christ counted Paul faithful.
  - 1. 1 Timothy 1:11b-12 . . . the glorious gospel of the blessed God ~~which~~ was committed to my trust. (12) And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,
- F. He believes that those who have been put in to the ministry by Christ Jesus our Lord should commit what they have been entrusted with to other faithful men, who will be able to teach others, also.
  - 1. 2 Timothy 2:1-2 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2) And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
- G. He refers in some of his letters to certain men by name, calling them “faithful minister” “in the Lord” or “of Christ” to commend these men to the churches as such.
  - 1. Epaphrus: Colossians 1:7 as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a **faithful minister of Christ** on your behalf,
  - 2. Tychicus

- a) Colossians 4:7 Tychicus, a beloved brother, **faithful minister**, and fellow servant **in the Lord**, will tell you all the news about me.
  - b) Ephesians 6:21 But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and **faithful minister in the Lord**, will make all things known to you;
- H. It is clear from mention of Tychicus in other places that Paul sees him in this way
  - 1. Titus 3:12 As soon as I send Artemas or **Tychicus** to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, because I have decided to winter there.
  - 2. 2 Timothy 4:12 I sent **Tychicus** to Ephesus.
- I. The purpose of this commendation is that the churches will know to listen to the preaching and teaching of these faithful ministers
  - 1. if they are tempted to listen to false teachers, listen to these instead
  - 2. if they want to listen to true teachers, but don't know who they are among all the teachers, they can know these are the ones
  - 3. the Lord Jesus Himself warned that false prophets, false teachers, will come, and they will look like sheep; Paul re-issued that warning very firmly to the Ephesian elders last time he was with them
  - 4. the Ephesians are known to have taken those warnings seriously, and rejected false teachers
  - 5. in order for Tychicus to be accepted as a true Christian preacher and teacher, rather than suspected of being a wolf in sheep's clothing, the apostle Paul commended Tychicus to the believers as a "faithful minister"

### III. APPLICATION

- A. Give glory to God for making Tychicus fit this description
  - 1. this was by God's grace
  - 2. this was by adoption by God
  - 3. this was by the work of Christ on our behalf
- B. Take comfort in Christ making Tychicus fit the description "beloved brother"
  - 1. if you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, you are a beloved brother
    - a) you are loved by the brothers
    - b) you are loved by God through Jesus Christ
- C. Aspire to fit the description "beloved brother"
  - 1. become a beloved brother
    - a) the adoption is through faith in Jesus Christ, so believe!
  - 2. make yourself known as a beloved brother
    - a) speak of your faith in Christ
    - b) be baptized
    - c) obey the Lord Jesus
    - d) love the brothers
- D. Aspire to fit the description "beloved brother and faithful minister"
  - 1. no one will think of you as a "faithful minister" without first seeing you as a "beloved brother"

2. no one will consider you a “faithful minister” without first seeing you as faithful in general
    - a) this just makes sense
    - b) this is what the Lord Jesus said: Matthew 25:23 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.'
- E. Heed the warning implicit in this endorsement
1. Not all who make some connection to Christ’s churches are beloved brothers; without being censorious or judgmental, take care to make such a distinction
  2. Not all who have something to say, or even who can say it well, are faithful ministers; take care to make such a distinction

## CONCLUSION

Interesting that we read in Nehemiah how he prayed that God would not forget the good deeds that he had done for the house of God. Indeed God caused a record to be placed in the bible of all the good Nehemiah did for the people and temple and city of God. And look how the Lord also memorialized the faithful servant Tychicus!

We do not now give all praise and glory to Nehemiah and to Tychicus. Instead, seeing what faithful servants Nehemiah and Tychicus were, we give praise to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let it be, then, that God remembers to His saints all the good deeds you have done for the house of God---all the love you have shown for God and for the brothers, and all the faithfulness you have exhibited in serving Christ---not for your own glory, but that your good deeds may give honor to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

- F. Paul used the term “brother” to differentiate between those who are Christians and those who are not.
1. 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. (10) Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. (11) But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person.

### **In the Plural, Used in Giving Some Solemn Exhortation**

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my **beloved brethren**, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my **beloved** and longed-for **brethren**, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

James 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

James 1:19-20 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; (20) for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

James 2:5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

EB:

As much as to say: "I want your prayers, set as I am for the defence of the gospel and in circumstances of difficulty and peril. But Tychicus will tell you more about me than I can convey by letter. I am sending him, in fact, for this very purpose."

### **Tychicus**

Gill:

Tychicus was of Asia, who accompanied the apostle in his travels, and went with him to Rome, from whence he sent him to several places to relate his case, and to know the state of the churches, Col\_4:7

JRY:

Interesting that we read in Nehemiah how he prayed that God would not forget the good deeds that he had done for the house of God. Indeed God caused a record to be placed in the bible of all the good Nehemiah did for the people and temple and city of God. And look how the Lord also memorialized the faithful servant Tychicus!

### **beloved [G27 *agapetos*] brother [G80 *adelphos*]**

Gill:

He calls him "a beloved brother": he was a "brother", because he was a partaker of the same grace, was of the same family and household of God, and was of the same function, being a minister of the Gospel, and was a "beloved" one: he was beloved of God and Christ, and of all the saints that knew him, and especially a brother beloved of the Apostle Paul; and where there is brotherhood, there should be love

JRY:

The more you act like a Christian, the more you are beloved to other Christians. There is the easy, good feelings you have toward someone who is sweet. But better is the

### **In the Singular, As Here, Used in Endorsing Someone**

Our Lord Jesus taught us that God the Father is our Father, having adopted us His sons in Jesus Christ. Being adopted of God the Father, we Christians are all brothers.



- When the writes about a Christian who is a woman, she is referred to as “our sister.”
- When the apostle needs to make clear that he means both men and women, he writes, “a brother or a sister.”
- And sometimes when you say, “the brothers,” you might mean the disciples who are men.
- But speaking generally of the whole church, all the Christians, the bible calls them “the brothers.”

Paul knows that the disciples of Jesus Christ hold one another to be brothers in the Lord.

Acts 9:17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Paul knows that loving the brothers is so integral a part of being a disciples of Jesus Christ that to say “a Christian” is almost to say, “someone who loves the brothers.”

Paul knows that the disciples of Jesus Christ, despite their sure love for the brothers, don't immediately know whether or not to consider someone a brother. The testimony of someone known to them can help the disciples consider a fellow disciples a brother.

Acts 9:26-28 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. (27) But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. (28) So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out.

So when Paul wants someone to consider a certain person to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, he might write a letter and call that person “a beloved brother.”

Philemon 1:15-17 For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, (16) no longer as a slave but more than a slave--a **beloved brother**, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. (17) If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me.

Ephesians 6:21 But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a **beloved brother** and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you;

Colossians 4:7-9 Tychicus, a **beloved brother**, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. (8) I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts, (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.

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2 Peter 3:15 and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our **beloved brother** Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

### **faithful [G4103 *pistos*] minister [G1249 *diakonos*]**

Calvin:

It is not easy to say, whether this refers to the public ministry of the church, or to the private attentions which Paul had received from Tychicus. This uncertainty arises from these two expressions being connected, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord. The former refers to Paul, to whom the second may be supposed also to apply. I am more inclined, however, to understand it as denoting the public ministry; for I do not think it probable that Paul would have sent any man who did not hold such a rank in the church, as would secure the respectful attention of the Ephesians.

Poole:

minister is here taken in a large sense, for any that labour in the gospel, such as were not only ordinary pastors, but evangelists and apostles themselves.

Gill (on Colossians 1:7)

one whom Christ had made a "minister" and not man, who was qualified, and sent forth, and made successful by him in his service; and who preached none but Christ, and him crucified, in the business of salvation: and he was a "faithful" one; one that sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; nor to please men, but his master; who concealed no part of his message, but freely and fully declared the whole; he was faithful to Christ, who put him into the ministry, and to the souls of men, to whom he ministered:

Ephesians 6:21 But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you;

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

Colossians 1:7 as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,

### **What Paul means by “faithful minister”**

Trusting and trusty or trustworthy

Believing and faithful

Paul believes that God is **faithful**, and so you can be sure that by our Lord Jesus Christ, God will keep you to the end, when our Lord Jesus Christ will come back, and you will be blameless before God in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:7-9 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, (8) who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (9) God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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He believes that those who have been put in to the ministry by Christ Jesus our Lord should commit what they have been entrusted with to other faithful men, who will be able to teach others, also.

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