

# **TYCHICUS: A MODEL SOLDIER**

## **Ephesians 6.21-22: Tychicus is a good example of the “Christian Soldier”**

**Theme:** Be like Tychicus, a faithful minister in the tasks you've been given to do in the ministry.

**After Paul finishes the body of his Epistle, he mentions Tychicus. He's sending the letter with him.**

- And Paul also says Tychicus is a messenger to let the Ephesians know the ministry and how he's doing.
- Tychicus is a messenger. But, he's also a bit more than that...

**Remember that Ephesians 6 is about spiritual warfare.**

- And the last major passage we studied (v10-20) dealt specifically with our enemy, our armour, and our Mission (to speak the gospel boldly, as we ought).
- Then, after that (right here at the end of his letter) Paul mentions Tychicus.
  - ✓ Like we've seen, Tychicus is the messenger who is delivering this letter.
  - ✓ But, Tychicus is also Paul's “*beloved* brother.”
  - ✓ And Tychicus is, according to the Apostle Paul's own inspired testimony, a “faithful minister.”
- Tychicus is an outstanding example of a “Christian soldier.”
  - ✓ And so I think it's worth our time to see if there is anything we might be able to learn from what the Bible says about this guy named Tychicus...

### **I. Tychicus and His Background: Who is this guy...?**

#### **A. Tychicus first shows up as a member of Paul's Third Missionary Team.**

1. (Acts 19.1, 8-10) Paul gets to Ephesus and spends about two years there establishing the church.
2. (Acts 20.1) After those two years (and the resulting riot by the silversmiths over their idol-making business), Paul leaves Ephesus (in Asia Minor) for Macedonia (to the north and west of Ephesus, in Europe).
3. (Acts 20.2) After a time preaching in Macedonia, Paul heads south to Greece.
4. (Acts 20.3) He spends three months preaching in Greece and then heads back north into Macedonia.
5. (Acts 20.4) It's there and then when we see Tychicus show up for the first time in Scripture. Here he joins up with Paul's missionary team.
6. (Acts 20.5-6, 13-16, 17ff) Tychicus is with Paul when he delivers his famous exhortation to the Ephesian pastors.
  - a) So here we see that Tychicus is known by the Ephesian church (at least by the leaders).
  - b) (Acts 20.36-38) These Ephesian leaders were concerned about Paul and his safety.
  - c) (Eph 6.21-22, esp. v22b) And so now we can understand why Paul specifically said that Tychicus would comfort them by letting them know he was okay.

#### **B. Tychicus is sent by Paul with two letters for two churches.**

1. Obviously, he's sent with the Ephesian letter for the church at Ephesus.
2. (Col 4.7-9) But Paul also sent his letter to the Colossians by the hand of Tychicus.
  - a) Colosse was east of Ephesus on the same commercial trade route. So, it appears that Paul wanted to take advantage of that route and send both letters with Tychicus.

- b) (Col 4.9) Notice that Paul mentions that Onesimus is traveling with Tychicus.
  - (1) (Phm 10-12) Onesimus was Philemon's runaway slave that Paul sent back after he (Onesimus) converted to Christ.
  - (2) (Phm 1-3) Apparently the church at Colosse (or at least part of it) met at Philemon's home.
  - (3) So, Tychicus visits Colosse first, drops off the Colossian Epistle and Onesimus, and then proceeds on to Ephesus with their Epistle.
- 3. This helps us to understand when Paul wrote and sent his letter to the Ephesians.
  - a) Obviously (as we've seen before) Paul was in prison in Rome when he wrote.
  - b) At the same time, he sent Tychicus with Onesimus and the Epistle to the Colossians.
  - c) (Col 4.7-12) Paul mentions his imprisonment in the Colossian letter, also (and note the names he mentions: Aristarchus, Epaphras, etc. ).
  - d) (Phm 22-24) We see some of the same people mentioned in the letter Paul sent to Philemon by the hand of Onesimus.
  - e) Also notice: (Phm 22) Paul was clearly anticipating being freed from prison.
    - (cc 2Tim 4.6-8) This is very different than what we see in Paul's later (Second) Epistle to Timothy. He was in jail at Rome fully expecting to die.
  - f) Summary, Review, and Conclusion:
    - (1) Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, therefore, appear to have been written during Paul's first imprisonment (the one we see in the final chapters of the Book of Acts).
    - (2) So, Tychicus was with Paul in Rome during those final events we see in Acts.
    - (3) Paul was freed from prison for a time (when he probably wrote 1 Timothy and Titus) and then went back to prison a second time where he died (like we see in 2 Timothy).
- 4. And all of this helps us see Tychicus in a little bit more detail...

### **C. Tychicus was the “Swiss Army Knife” of Christian ministry.**

- 1. Swiss Army Knife: The original “multi-tool” that had everything from a knife, fork, and spoon, to stuff today like a USB jump drive.
  - a) It has just about everything you need... for almost any task!
  - b) And that is a pretty good description of this guy, Tychicus...
- 2. During Paul's First Imprisonment: We've already seen that Tychicus was entrusted with two Epistles and the runaway slave and new convert, Onesimus.
- 3. Between the Two Imprisonments:
  - a) (Titus 3.12) Paul ends up in Nicopolis (south of Macedonia) and wants Titus to come visit him there. One of the candidates Paul had in mind as a replacement for Titus was Tychicus.
  - b) (Titus 1.5) Paul had left Titus on Crete as a kind of “regional missionary,” sent to establish elders/leaders in that area's local churches. So, he was working with several churches on Crete.
  - c) Paul's consideration of Tychicus as a replacement for Titus shows us that Tychicus was capable of being that “missionary” and of doing that work of establishing leadership in churches.
  - d) But, it looks like Paul ended up sending Artemas because Tychicus was soon after sent to Ephesus to relieve Timothy...
- 4. Paul's Second Imprisonment:
  - a) Paul's freedom didn't last long and he finds himself back in a Roman prison the second time.
  - b) (2Tim 4.6) This is when he wrote 2 Timothy knowing he was going to die.

- c) (2Tim 4.9) Paul wants Timothy to come to him (in prison, in Rome).
  - d) (2Tim 4.10-12) And who does Paul send to Ephesus with the letter (2Timothy) to replace Timothy so he could come visit him? Tychicus.
    - (1) Paul sent Tychicus to be the interim pastor at Ephesus so that the senior pastor, Timothy, could come to Rome.
    - (2) (1Tim 1.3) Remember why Paul left Timothy in Ephesus: To teach sound doctrine as senior pastor (1Tim 5.17; there were other pastors/elders in that church as well).
  - e) Tychicus, then, was not only capable of bring a *missionary* like Titus on Crete, but he was also capable and qualified to be the *pastor-teacher* of the church at Ephesus in Timothy's absence.
5. (Eph 6.21) Now we understand a little more of why Paul said what he did about Tychicus:
- a) Tychicus was a “beloved brother”: Paul had a special, brotherly affection for this man.
    - He was close to him and endeared to him because of the time they spent together doing all sorts of different ministry and missions activities.
  - b) Tychicus was a “faithful minister in the Lord”: I'd say he was! And it appears that he was faithful in *many* different aspects of the ministry, too!
  - c) Tychicus was a “fellowservant in the Lord”: (Col 4.7) What Paul did, Tychicus did (he was right there with Paul, learning from Paul how to do the same thing).
  - d) Talk about a valuable man in the ministry! Wow!

#### D. [Review] Tychicus had quite a background.

1. He was trained, experienced, and capable in just about all aspects of Christian ministry.
2. We'd be safe in saying that Tychicus was the “Jack-of-all-trades”—the Swiss Army Knife—of Christian ministry (capable and qualified of doing just about anything the Apostle Paul did).
3. ***But don't miss this:*** In Ephesians 6.21-22 he's just a messenger boy—he's Paul's “Step-and-Fetch-it” boy to deliver a letter and a message.
  - And that would bring us to the second main point we need to make about Tychicus...

## II. Tychicus and His Task: What's Paul want him to do...?

### A. (v21a) Paul sent Tychicus to give a report to the Ephesians of “all things.”

1. Obviously there would be reports of the ministry: Evangelism, church planting, edification of the saints, leadership development.
2. (v22, esp. v22b) But Paul also knew the Ephesians were worried about his personal state, and so he sent Tychicus to comfort them (to tell them he was okay and doing well).
3. That's it (at least during Paul's first imprisonment): Tychicus was a messenger boy.
4. How would you feel if that were you...?
  - a) Here you are, a fellowservant of the Apostle Paul.
  - b) You've traveled with Paul, trained with Paul, labored in the ministry alongside of Paul.
  - c) You are capable and qualified to be the senior pastor of a large church with multiple elders on a pastoral team.
  - d) You are capable and willing to be a foreign missionary, and work with multiple local churches in leadership development (establishing pastors in those congregations).
  - e) You are the “go to” guy for anything, the theological Swiss Army Knife of Christian ministry!
  - f) And your task is... to deliver a letter and tell people that Paul is okay.
5. And this shows us one more very important aspect of Tychicus's character: ***Humility***.

## B. Tychicus was Humble

1. He wasn't too proud or too full of himself and his own importance to not be willing to do whatever needed to be done in the ministry.
2. As portrayed in the Bible, Tychicus was humble—he was meek and submissive, modest in his own estimation of his importance.
  - a) A lot of times we get puffed up in ourselves because we think we know more than most, or we think we can do more than most in the ministry.
  - b) But, you never see that in Tychicus.
    - (1) You never see him in competition for a position, title, or recognition.
    - (2) You never see him get bitter and bent out of shape because he didn't get the position, title, or recognition that maybe he deserved or earned.
    - (3) You see him always as the capable and willing servant in the ministry, ready to do whatever task needs to be done... even if that means being Paul's step-and-fetch-it messenger boy.

### Conclusion:

#### **The name *Tychicus* means *fortuitous* (bringing good fortune).**

- I think that name is very fitting for this man!
- Tychicus was well prepared over years of training and experience on Paul's missionary team.
- Tychicus was capable and qualified to do just about any ministry in the Body of Christ.
- And most importantly, Tychicus had a willing disposition to do whatever needed to be done (no task, however insignificant, was beneath him).
- I would count if very fortuitous... I would count myself very fortunate... to have a fellowservant in the ministry like Tychicus. Wouldn't you?

#### **So, here's our practical application of Ephesians 6.21-22: Where are those believers today who are willing to be like Tychicus?**

- Tychicus is a model Christian soldier—a good example to follow.
- Are you diligent and disciplined in your preparation for the ministry? Tychicus was.
- Do you have the initiative to prepare yourself (in Scripture and ministry skills) for whatever ministry task that might arise? Tychicus did.
- And, most importantly (and most difficult), do you have the level of humility to do whatever task might be given to you to do, regardless of your ability to do more? Tychicus did.

#### **Sadly, most Christians will never rise to the level of Tychicus.**

- Why? Because the price is too high. It costs... and it costs a lot.
  - ✓ It will cost you time and effort.
  - ✓ It will cost you your pride and your reputation (doing those menial tasks “beneath” you).
  - ✓ Sometimes it will cost you your career, and for some even their families.
- But, I think what trips most of us up is that it will definitely cost us our comfort.
  - ✓ And so many today are simply not willing to sacrifice that (their comfort and comfortable lifestyle) on the altar of the Great Commission.
  - ✓ And I say: ***Let's be different. Let's be like Tychicus.***