

perfect (mature) and *complete* (fully furnished) in all will of God. He had a great zeal (spiritual passion) for the Colossian believers as well as those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. He prayed earnestly for their spiritual growth.

- 2) It would take work and dedication, but you could pray like Epaphras. **Parents**, your children need you to pray for them like that. **Children**, your parents need you to pray for them like that. **We** need to so pray for each other!

7. Luke

- a. He sent greetings to the church at Colossae.
- b. He was a physician and was with Paul there in Rome.
- c. He was loved by Paul. Luke was one of the silent heroes in Paul's ministry. Nothing is said about him preaching, but he often travelled with Paul, perhaps to minister to his frequent physical needs. He also wrote the book of Acts which documents for us many of Paul's travels. He served the Lord in a practical way with his doctor and writing skills. Paul names him among his dearly loved friends. **If God has not called you to preach, you can still serve the Lord in many practical ways.**

8. Demas

- a. He sent greetings to the church at Colossae.
- b. He was with Paul there in Rome. Nothing more is said of Demas here, but later, just before Paul's execution, Paul wrote, "**For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica ...**" (2 Timothy 4:10). **Today he is only remembered for that disgraceful choice.** He lost his good reputation.

Conclusion: When Paul wrote, these eight men each had a good reputation or testimony for Christ. We have noted qualities of faithful service, servant hood, faithfulness to God, sacrifice, comforting assistance, confession & renewal, fervent praying and practical support. These are qualities you can have in your life. They are worthy ambitions. Yes, they require surrender of self and sacrifice, but they could describe your life. Why not ask God to help you develop that kind of good reputation!

Song: Only One Life, 395

A Good Reputation

23 April 2017 PM - Colossians 4:7-15 - Col16 - Scott Childs

Introduction: When people think of us, they think of our reputation. In the mind of every person who knows us there is a database of information. That information is based on our attitudes, appearance, words and actions. It is based on whether we are kind or cruel, helpful or hurtful, cheerful or grumpy, calm or angry, fair or unreasonable, generous or selfish, moral or immoral. It is also based on what others have said about us. This is true even of children. (Proverbs 20:11) "**Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.**"

One foolish sin can ruin a good reputation. Sometimes it can be eventually recovered but other times it is ruined for life. **Only a foolish person will say, "I don't care what people think of me."** Jesus said, (Matthew 5:16) "**Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**" We must very careful how we live, that we might maintain a good reputation and testimony for Christ.

Transition: As Paul closes the letter to the Colossian church, he mentions eight men and gives a brief description of each one's reputation or testimony for Christ. I believe we can benefit much from these descriptions if we will make the applications.

1. Tychicus (v.7-8)

- a. He was a brother in Christ.
- b. He was a beloved brother in Christ. He was dear to Paul and Paul loved him.
- c. He was a faithful minister.
 - 1) A **faithful** person is one who is trustworthy. He is dependable. He keeps his word. He is punctual. He is prepared. He is stable.
 - 2) The word "**minister**" is often translated servant. A minister for the Lord is one who serves the Lord.
 - 3) God has given us various duties, **marital** duties, **parental** duties, **childhood** duties, **occupational** duties, **witnessing** duties, **teaching** duties, **song leading** duties, **piano playing** duties, **ushering** duties, **church kitchen** duties, etc. Are

you faithful at the duties God has given you to do?

- 4) To be a faithful minister of Christ, what qualities do you think God is looking for in your life?
- d. Tychicus was a *fellow servant*. Paul was a servant of the Lord and so was Tychicus. This word is stronger than the word “minister”. This refers to a bond slave. These men had given up their goals in life so they could do God’s will.
- e. He was Paul’s trusted spokesman.
 - 1) Paul trusted him to tell the Colossians about things pertaining to him.
 - 2) He sent him to gather information about them for Paul. He was discerning.
 - 3) He sent him to encourage their hearts. He was an encourager. That is a quality that we all need more of.

2. Onesimus

- a. He too was a brother in Christ.
- b. He was a beloved brother in Christ. Paul loved him. He was dear to Paul because he had been a blessing to him.
- c. He was *faithful* – a faithful Christian. Perhaps his faithfulness centred on his walk with the Lord, his daily time with the Lord in the Bible and prayer or on learning and defending the doctrines of the Bible. *As God evaluates your walk with Him, how faithful does he find you to be?*
- d. Paul also trusted him to tell them how he was doing.

3. Aristarchus

- a. He sent greetings to the church at Colossae.
- b. He was of the circumcision – a Jew (v.11).
- c. He was a *fellow prisoner*. He had travelled extensively with Paul during his missionary trips. Now it appears that he was in prison with Paul. Whether he was in prison to aid Paul or because he too had been arrested for the sake of Christ, we do not know. He had sacrificed and suffered much for the cause of Christ.
- d. The words of verse 11 apply to **Aristarchus, Marcus** and **Jesus**. He was a fellow worker unto the kingdom of God.
- e. He had been a comfort to Paul. This “*comfort*” comes from a different root word than the one in verse 8. It describes

comfort, relief or assistance in time of need. He was a comforting help to Paul.

- f. Aristarchus’s willingness to suffer reminds me of the hymn, Have I Done My Best for Jesus. “I wonder have I done my best for Jesus, Who died upon the cruel tree? To think of His great sacrifice at Calvary! I know my Lord expects the best from me.”

4. Marcus

- a. He sent greetings to the church at Colossae.
- b. He was Barnabas’ sister’s son, John Mark. He had deserted Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary trip.
- c. Paul had sent special commandments concerning him. They were to receive him. Evidently, Mark had gotten right with Paul and he had forgiven him. He did not want the Christians to reject him. Mark later wrote the Gospel of Mark. *He is evidence that if we confess our sins and change our ways, God will forgive and use us again.*
- d. He was of the circumcision – a Jew (v.11).
- e. He was a fellow worker unto the kingdom of God (v.11)
- f. He too had been a comfort to Paul.

5. Jesus, which is called Justus

- a. He sent greetings to the church at Colossae.
- b. He was of the circumcision – a Jew (v.11).
- c. He was a fellow worker unto the kingdom of God (v.11)
- d. He had been a *comfort* to Paul. While this is all that we know about him, it is significant that Paul names him among his comforting helpers.

6. Epaphras

- a. He was a native of Colossae.
- b. He was a servant of Christ. This identifies his complete devotion to Christ in heart and in deed.
- c. He sent greetings to the church at Colossae.
- d. He was a man of *continual fervent prayer*.
 - 1) He laboured in prayer for the Colossian believers. The word “*laboured*” describes a struggle like an athletic competition. He put his whole heart into his prayers. He so prayed in order that the Colossian believers may stand