

**Wednesday March 8th
Prayer Breakfast for
Legislators and Staff
7:30 -8:30 AM
Legislators Cafeteria**

Capitol Commission Bible Studies are non-partisan, non-denominational. They meet weekly.

- Legislator Only Bible studies, Tuesdays. 7:30 AM LOB 414
Capital Contact: Kathy Voss, Sandersonla@ncleg.net

Capitol Community Small Group Bible Studies

- Women - Mondays, NOON, LB 2nd Floor
Jean Yost small group facilitator;
Capital Contact: Laura Sullivan McNeillla@ncleg.net

- Men, NOON, LB Chapel; Brad Harbaugh facilitator
Capital Contact: Laura Sullivan McNeillla@ncleg.net

I pray that these Bible studies will be edifying to you. My sole intent is to serve you, and to be a resource to you for pastoral care, counsel, and prayer. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.

– Rev. Brad Harbaugh, North Carolina State Minister

Introduction:

Two men, Tychicus and Onesimus, left Rome in AD 62 and carried three letters. The letters were addressed to Philemon, the church at Colosse, and a letter to the church at Ephesus. Ephesus was on the way to Colosse, to get to Colosse, Tychicus and Onesimus would have naturally sailed to Ephesus, and then struck east for the Lycus valley along the main Roman road to the Euphrates.

These letters would give key instruction to protect the message of the gospel. These letters would challenge the church to live their faith out loud. It was a hostile time. This decade would end with Rome besieging and destroying Jerusalem. The Roman world did not fully understand the difference between Christianity and Jewish religion. History reveals that these letters would help the weak sect of people known as “like Christs” (or Christians) to ultimately through their transformed lives to change the entire Roman world. Not with sword, but with the powerful truth that a broken person can be reconciled to God through faith in Christ. If the enemy of truth would have known the ultimate impact of these letters coming from a prisoner named Paul, he would have apprehended these two men and seized the documents. But God did not allow that to happen.

Often, how God wrote the Bible is passed over in our reading of it. But God used some amazing behind-the-scenes people

who were faithful to their mission to accomplish some highly important tasks according to God’s plan. You could say, “Little is much when God is in it!”

Regardless of your position in the Capitol Community, have you **ever felt as if your task was small? Or insignificant?** Consider that when you think of Tychicus, the courier, for he emulates ‘little is much when God is in it’. All through the Bible there are no great people but just ordinary people doing small things trusting a great God! Tychicus was faithful in doing a small task. He was the courier and representative of Paul.

Tychicus is not mentioned in Philemon, but is mentioned in Colossians, Ephesians, Titus 3:12, 2 Timothy 4:12 and is more than likely the brother alluded to in 2 Corinthians 8:16-24. He is first introduced with Trophimus as the Asians, Acts 20:4. Trophimus was from Ephesus, Acts 21:29, so Tychicus who seems to have a geographic connection with Trophimus, more than likely is from the same area.

What characterized this man? These two texts reveal the answer.

Paul writing to the church at Colosse:
Colossians 4:7–9 (ESV)

“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, 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.”

Ephesians 6:21 (ESV)

“So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything.”

They were penned as God the Spirit moved and guided Paul to write the very words of God onto the page. The Bible, held in our hands today, is God’s breath, *theo-pneustos*, on the page, (2 Timothy 3:16). God’s word is powerful. It creates, renews, transforms, and illumines. The verses on the pages of the Bible are equal to what the finger of God wrote in stone on Mt Sinai.

Do you think Tychicus the courier knew all that he carried? The name Tychicus means chance, or child of fortune. You might think God took a tremendous chance with these important letters! Yet does God really ever take a chance? Not really! God has preserved His word. There is no chance with Tychicus. I Thessalonians 5:24 says “Faithful is He (God) who calls you who also will do it.” Concerning the will of God in our lives it is important to know that God wants us to get where God wants us to go more than we want to get where God wants us to go. God decrees and it will absolutely happen. Yet, God seemingly from our perspective takes great chance with individuals to carry out his tasks. Think of the “risk” of Christ calling “uneducated” fisherman to be his

leaders who would carry out the great commission. No committee or board meeting today would approve of such a decision. Yet God chose these men to do a task they alone could not do. He placed the Holy Spirit in them (Acts 2) and empowered them to carry out the task that was commissioned.

Do you see yourself as one whom God is taking a chance with? Do you often think God is risking his reputation through you? One thing that is important to realize is that God the Son died for you on purpose and is calling you to know Him on purpose. Scripture is clear. “God’s call and His gifts are irrevocable,” Romans 11:29. That does not sound like a lot of chance. He does not get flustered or fret over His plan. His will will be done! If you know Christ personally, the true Shepherd will lead you personally in paths of right living for His name sake (Psalm 23:3).

Tychicus had to walk the steps and carry the “mail”! This was faithfully saying “yes Lord!” This took many daily decisions of obedience. **Obedience is born out of a deep trust of a person.** If you have ever stood on a stump and allowed yourself to fall into the hands of others, there was a calculated trust in those people that allowed you to “let go” and “lean back”. You responded to the call to fall back because of trust. Obedience is born out of that kind of trust! Perhaps the greatest action in a believer’s life is deepening our trust of God by getting to know him more!

Ephesians 6:21 points out five qualities that reveal Tychicus had great trust in God and his servant Paul.

- “Faithful” – a derivative of the word “trust or believe,” this word pertains to being trusted, dependable, reliable. It is the characteristic of a disciple of Christ who carried on the work of discipleship, 2 Tim. 2:2.
- “Servant” – someone who waits on or attends to the needs of another. This was the characteristic of the greatest leader, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a great reminder of the call to be others focused.
- “Beloved” – this word is derived from the type of love that describes God’s essence. God loves without expectation of anything in return.
- Field Representative – Tychicus made known everything about the Apostle Paul to the churches in Ephesus, Colosse, Laodicea and other churches in Western Asia Minor. This verb means “cause to know”. Truth and honesty were integral to the position Tychicus held for Paul. Paul had great trust in Tychicus to represent him.
- Tychicus reveals a deep trust of God in his action. He was in a powerful position representing not only Paul, but the gospel.

How important was this position of answering the questions of the churches and representing the Apostle Paul? How critical would this have been to the commission given by Christ? (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19, 20)

Would you agree with me that each believer is in this position? You are a field representative of God!

- 2 Corinthians 5:20 “We are ambassadors for Christ....”

- **Matthew 6:9 “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...” Literally, help me to make your name hallowed.**

How do you feel with this responsibility?

You might be saying statements like feeling inadequate, humbled, or even like a failure. Paul pointed out the power of Tychicus’s faithful representation. It was his inner strength “in the Lord.”

Tychicus was a faithful minister “in the Lord.” Paul wrote to the Galatians about that inner strength. He said, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me, (Gal 2:20a).” Christ’s Spirit lives in each believer. The letter that Tychicus carried spoke much about the believers’ relationship to the Holy Spirit and the privilege of being in Christ. The entire first section of the letter to the church in Ephesus focuses on “in Him, in Christ, in the Lord.” The letter to Ephesus begins... Ephesians 1:1 (ESV) I Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus.”

This mysterious phrase “in Christ or in the Lord” is in contrast to being “dead in sin”, Ephesians 2:1. There was a time when Tychicus moved from being dead in his sin to alive in Christ. When did Tychicus come to be “in the Lord?” The Bible does not indicate but the letter Tychicus carried to the Ephesians describes when that occurs in every believer.

Ephesians 1:13 (NIV) *“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.”*

Ephesians will open up this truth, and teach how to grow and live while being strong in the Lord.

You are beginning to understand just how important the letters to Ephesus and Colosse would have been to believers in that day hungry to grow in their understanding of the great God and the salvation that had transformed them.

Tychicus, in the Lord, carried out little tasks faithfully and God did something great!

“Little is much when God is in it” happens when the “big” in me humbly follows the call of God.

CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDIES

MONDAY (6TH OF MARCH) @ 12:00PM – 1:00PM, LB 2ND FLR.

MONDAY (6TH OF MARCH) @ 12 NOON – 12:45PM, CHAPEL



Little Tasks Made Great by God

February 27-March 3, 2017

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