

Wenstrom Bible Ministries
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**Colossians: Colossians 4:9-Onesimus Will Accompany Tychicus and Share
Task of Informing the Colossians About Paul's Situation in Rome**

Lesson # 113

Colossians 4:7 As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. **8** *For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts **9** and with him **Onesimus**, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your number. They will inform you about the whole situation here. (NASB95)

“**And with him Onesimus**” is composed of the following: (1) preposition *sun* (σύν), “**with**” (2) proper name *Onēsimos* (Ονήσιμος), “**Onesimus.**”

The proper name *Onēsimos* means “useful” or “helpful” and was a common name for slaves in the first century in the Roman Empire.

Paul employs the meaning of his name as a play on words in Philemon 11.

This name identifies the individual who was Philemon's runaway slave who was evangelized by Paul in Rome during his first Roman imprisonment.

The proper name *Onēsimos* is the object of the preposition *sun*, which means “along with” since it functions as a marker of accompaniment indicating that Onesimus would accompany Tychicus.

Together, they would provide the Colossian Christian community information with regards to Paul's circumstances in Rome.

“**Our faithful and beloved brother**” is composed of the following: (1) adjective *pistos* (πιστός), “**faithful**” (2) conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” (3) adjective *agapētos* (ἀγαπητός), “**beloved**” (4) noun *adelphos* (ἀδελφός), “**brother.**”

The noun *adelphos* means “brother” referring to Onesimus.

The word refers to a “fellow-believer, fellow-Christian, spiritual brother” emphasizing with the faithful believers in Colossae their common familial relationship with Paul, Timothy, their companions in Rome, Epaphras, Tychicus and Onesimus.

This word is modified by the adjective *pistos* which means “faithful” and is describing Onesimus’ service on behalf of Jesus Christ and His body, the church as remaining a loyal servant of Jesus Christ.

This adjective describes him as firmly adhering to Paul’s apostolic teaching.

The noun *adelphos* is also modified by the adjective *agapētos* which means “beloved” indicating the eternal spiritual relationship that existed between Onesimus, Tychicus, Paul, Timothy, their companions in Rome, Epaphras and the Colossians as a result of all of them exercising faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

It describes the personal love and affection Paul, Timothy, their companions in Rome, Epaphras and Tychicus had for Onesimus indicating that they were all dear friends.

The noun *adelphos* is functioning as a dative in simple apposition indicating that it specifically identifies which Onesimus Paul was referring to since his name was a common name for slaves in the first century in the Roman Empire.

“**Who is one of your number**” is composed of the following: (1) nominative masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὃς), “**who**” (2) third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* (εἶμι), “**is**” (3) preposition *ek* (ἐκ), “**from**” (4) genitive second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σὺ), “**your.**”

The relative pronoun *hos* means “who” referring to Onesimus because it agrees in gender (masculine) and number (singular) with the proper name *Onēsimos*, “**Onesimus.**”

The verb *eimi* means “to belong to a particular group of people” indicating that Onesimus exists in the state or condition of belonging to the Colossian Christian community.

The genitive second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* means “all of you” and refers of course to the Colossian Christian community as a corporate unit.

This word is the object of the preposition *ek*, which functions as a partitive preposition indicating that this word *su* is the whole of which the head noun is a part indicating that Onesimus is a part of the Colossian Christian community.

“They will inform you about the whole situation here” is composed of the following: (1) adjective *pas* (πᾶς), **“whole”** (2) personal pronoun *su* (σύ), **“you”** (3) verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω), **“they will inform about”** (4) definite article *ho* (ὁ), **“the situation”** (5) adverb *hōde* (ἔδε), **“here.”**

The verb *gnōrizō* means “to cause someone to know something, to cause information to be known by someone.”

It refers to Tychicus and Onesimus causing the Colossians to receive information with regards to all of Paul’s circumstances in Rome.

The future tense of this verb *gnōrizō* is a predictive future tense indicating that Tychicus and Onesimus “will certainly” cause the Colossians to know all about Paul’s circumstances in Rome.

The plural form of the personal pronoun *su* means “all of you” referring to the Colossian Christian community as a corporate unit.

This word functions as a dative of advantage expressing the idea that the Colossians will benefit from Tychicus and Onesimus providing them information regarding Paul’s circumstances in Rome.

The accusative neuter plural form of the definite article *ho* means, “circumstances, situation.”

This article is modified by the adjective *pas* which is indicated by the fact that they both are in the accusative neuter plural form.

This adjective means “entire” since the word denotes the totality of Paul’s circumstances in Rome in exhaustive detail.

The adverb *hōde* means “here” and refers of course to the location of Paul’s house arrest when he wrote this epistle, which was Rome.

Colossians 4:7 Tychicus, a beloved brother, as well as a faithful servant and in addition, a fellow-servant of the Lord, will for your benefit certainly provide you information with regards to all my circumstances 8 I have sent him to all of you for this express purpose, namely that each of you would know our circumstances so that your hearts would be encouraged. 9 I have sent him along with Onesimus, a faithful as well as beloved brother, who is one of you. They will certainly provide all of you information with regards to the entire situation here. (My translation)

Colossians 4:9 completes a subsection of the final section of this epistle which began in Colossians 4:7.

Colossians 4:7-9 contains a reference to the messengers who carried this epistle to the Colossians, namely Tychicus and Onesimus and also contains a commendation of these two men.

More than likely, these two men would have traveled from Rome to Colossae by way of Ephesus and Laodicea.

Ephesians 6:21-22 and Philemon 23-24 indicate that they carried not only Paul's personal letter to Philemon but also the Ephesian epistle which is probably referred to in Colossians 4:16 as Paul's epistle to the Laodiceans.

The apostle Paul informs the Colossians that along with Tychicus, Onesimus would provide them detailed information regarding his house arrest in Rome while he awaited his appeal trial before Caesar.

He also provides the Colossians a two-fold commendation of Onesimus.

He describes him as **“a faithful and beloved brother.”**

By calling him a **“brother,”** Paul is communicating the idea that this man was a “fellow-believer, fellow-Christian, spiritual brother.”

With this word, he is emphasizing with the faithful believers in Colossae their common familial relationship with himself, Timothy, their companions in Rome, Epaphras, Tychicus and Onesimus.

“**Faithful**” is describing Onesimus’ service on behalf of Jesus Christ and His body, the church as remaining a loyal servant of Jesus Christ.

It describes him as firmly adhering to Paul’s apostolic teaching.

“**Beloved**” indicates the eternal spiritual relationship that existed between Onesimus, Tychicus, Paul, Timothy, their companions in Rome, Epaphras and the Colossians as a result of all of them exercising faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

It describes the personal love and affection Paul, Timothy, their companions in Rome, Epaphras and Tychicus had for Onesimus indicating that they were all dear friends.

The last thing Paul says about Onesimus was that he was a Colossian.

Paul’s epistle to Philemon also indicates that he was in fact a runaway slave of another Colossian, namely Philemon.

Onesimus ended up in Rome by the providence of God and was evangelized by the apostle Paul.

He responded to the apostle’s presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ by exercising faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior.

Paul asserts in the Philemon epistle that Onesimus was useful to him and has great affection for him.

In this letter, to Philemon, Paul requests that Philemon accept Onesimus his runaway slave as a brother in Christ and welcome him into the fellowship of the Colossian church.

The apostle’s two-fold commendation of Onesimus is another clear indication that Paul wanted the Colossian Christian community to accept him as a brother in Christ and welcome him into their fellowship.

Philemon 10-19 gives us great insight into Paul’s attitude toward Onesimus and how much he valued this runaway’s slaves service on his behalf while he was awaiting his appeal trial before Caesar.