



PART 4

EPILOGUE

Chapter Twelve

THE MEASURE OF A LEADER'S SUCCESS

THE TEAM HE BUILT

Luke

Luke apparently wasn't a preacher. There's no record that he ever taught, except through his writing. He doesn't appear to have been a theologian. He was a friend who acted as a personal aide and secretary to Paul and as a historian under the Holy Spirit's inspiration. So the expression "**only Luke**" does not in any way minimize his value, but simply means that Paul was left with no one other than his personal attendant. For the work that needed to be done, he needed Timothy as well.

Leadership and ministry are greatly enriched by a personal confidant. There probably wasn't anything in Paul's life that Luke didn't know. Luke attended to Paul when the apostle was ill. He stayed with him through every ordeal. He had seen his response in every kind of situation. Theirs was not a nine-to-five association; they had traveled together and worked together for years. Luke was Paul's companion, and he was his closest friend.

These men were all key players in the team Paul had built. They and others like them represented the very heart of Paul's network of beloved people.

THE TRIALS HE SUFFERED

As Paul continued his catalog of people who played a significant role in his life and ministry, he named a few people who, in one way or another, were reminiscent of various trials he had suffered.

Mark



The first of these, Mark, had at one time been a severe personal disappointment and a source of great grief to Paul, but he had since recovered his relationship with the apostle and was now a useful and important fellow laborer. Paul told Timothy,

2 Timothy 4:11 (NASB)

¹¹“Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.”

Mark is first mentioned in [Acts 12:12](#) (where he’s called “**John whose surname was Mark**”).

Acts 12:12 (NASB)

¹²“And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.”

Luke recorded that many believers had gathered in his mother’s home to pray for Peter, who had been imprisoned by Herod. It may be that the church regularly met in Mark’s mother’s home.

Mark himself was one of the bright, promising young lights in the Jerusalem church. He was chosen to accompany Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey. Shortly into the trip, however, according to [Acts 13:13](#), he abandoned the team.

Acts 13:13 (NASB)

¹³“Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.”

Apparently, the hardship was too much for him. He was still immature and didn’t have the courage or the character for the rigors of missionary life, so he went home.

Paul had little tolerance for weak, cowardly, or uncommitted men. Therefore, a few years later, when Paul and Barnabas were preparing to depart on their second missionary journey, Paul had no interest in taking Mark with them again.

He did not want someone who would be excess baggage, someone who might have to be pushed or carried and might slow them down. This resulted in a sharp dispute between Paul and Barnabas. (According to [Colossians 4:10](#), John Mark was a relative of Barnabas.)

Colossians 4:10 (NASB)

¹⁰“Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and *also* Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him).”

Luke recorded what happened:

Acts 15:37-40 (NASB)

³⁷“Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also.

³⁸But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

³⁹And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from



**one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.
40 But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace
of the Lord.”**

In other words, Paul and Barnabas split over Mark. Barnabas went with Mark, and Paul took Silas. Providentially, this turned out to be a blessing because it resulted in two fruitful missionary teams instead of one, but at the time of the rift with Barnabas, Paul clearly did not anticipate that Mark would ever prove useful.

About twelve years later, when Paul was under house arrest in Rome, he wrote to the church at Colosse. In that epistle, Paul sent this greeting:

Colossians 4:10 (NASB)

10 “Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him).”

Moreover, he added,

Colossians 4:11 (NASB)

11 “And also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.”

Apparently, Mark had proved himself and was back in Paul’s good graces with companionship restored.

After that, according to **1 Peter 5:13**, Mark also spent time with Peter.

1 Peter 5:13 (NASB)

13 “She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.”

Probably it was during that time, at the request of the Roman church, that he wrote his gospel, which strongly reflects the perspective of Peter.

Perhaps when Peter was martyred, Mark returned to labor alongside Paul. He evidently served him well and seems to have been well-known to Timothy. And some twenty years after his original failure, Mark was still faithful. So Paul told Timothy to bring him, **“for he is useful to me for ministry.”**

Useful, because although he had once been the cause of disappointment and conflict for the apostle Paul, he had long since proved himself trustworthy, again and again. Now he was a living reminder of the triumph that comes even through trials. What’s more, he was a native Roman. He knew the Roman church and had been part of that flock from the beginning. He could be of great help to Paul in the final days of the apostle’s life.

Indeed, one of the great joys in Christian ministry and spiritual leadership is to see someone restored to usefulness after experiencing failure.

Tychicus



The next name in Paul's catalog is Tychicus. **"Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus"** ([2 Timothy 4:12](#)).

2 Timothy 4:12 (NASB)

¹²**"But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus."**

Tychicus is mentioned four other times in Scripture. We learn from [Acts 20:4](#) that he came from Asia Minor and accompanied Paul to Jerusalem with the offering for the poor saints there. He is also mentioned in [Ephesians 6:21](#),

Acts 20:24 (NASB)

²⁴**"But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God."**

Ephesians 6:21 (NASB)

²¹**"But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you."**

[Colossians 4:7](#), and [Titus 3:12](#).

Colossians 4:7 (NASB)

⁷**"As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information."**

Titus 3:12 (NASB)

¹²**"When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there."**

In each case, his special task was to deliver the epistles that Paul wrote. He carried the manuscript of the Ephesian epistle to Ephesus, Colossians to Colossae, and Titus to Crete. In this case, it seems likely that he was also the one delivering [2 Timothy](#) to Ephesus.

Three of these four epistles were written from prison. So Tychicus was apparently, like Luke, one of those who filled a role made necessary by the trials Paul suffered. Because Paul's feet were shackled with chains, Tychicus became Paul's feet for him, delivering vital personal messages to churches Paul himself could not personally visit. But they were more than personal messages; they were the autographs of some of the most important books in the New Testament canon.

Tychicus was given great responsibility, delivering the Word of God to churches; therefore, he must have been a loyal and trustworthy man. He himself was evidently not a preacher, but he was nonetheless an important messenger of the truth.

The network of my own ministry is filled with people like Tychicus. I thank God for the people around me who work to disseminate the preaching of God's Word. Most of them do not do what I do, but they make it possible for the message to reach the uttermost parts of the world,



by the printed page, through tapes, and on the radio. Every leader needs people like Tychicus. Such people are a wonderful support through every kind of trial.

Carpus

Next on Paul's list is Carpus. Paul told Timothy, **“When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments”** ([2 Timothy 4:13 NASB](#)). While Tychicus was the faithful one who traveled for Paul, Carpus was the faithful one who stayed home and played host to the apostle.

Carpus apparently lived in Troas and gave Paul a place to stay during his travels. Paul wanted Timothy to pick up Mark, stop in Troas on the way to Rome, and bring the personal effects Carpus had kept for him.

Troas was north and west of Ephesus in Asia Minor. Paul evidently expected Timothy to travel overland to Greece, then take a ship across the Adriatic to Italy.