"FOR THE BRETHREN"

Ephesians 6:21-24
9-13-2023

INTRODUCTION:

***Do something for your brothers in Christ!**

What can I do for my brothers in Christ?

I. Display a <u>FAITHFUL EXAMPLE</u> of a "brother" in Christ (v. 21-22)
(Model the Example of Tychicus)

A. A <u>beloved</u> brother (v. 21)

B. A <u>faithful</u> brother (v. 21)

C. A <u>ministering</u> brother (v. 21)

D. A <u>humble</u> brother (v. 22)

E. An <u>encouraging</u> brother (v. 22b)

II. Desire the <u>BEST</u> for your "brothers" in Christ (v. 23-24)
(Wish God's Blessings like Paul)

A. Desire <u>peace</u> for them (v. 23)

B. Desire <u>love</u> for them (v. 23)

C. Desire <u>grace</u> for them (v. 24)

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INTRODUCTION:

"What an encouragement it is to be a part of the family of God! Nowhere in the New Testament do we find an isolated believer." Wiersbe, p. 175).

Christians comprise a family. Having been adopted into God's family by the new birth, we are brothers and sisters in Christ! The term "brother" or "brethren" occurs many times in the New Testament, denoting the family relationship we have with each other.

What should we do for the brethren?

1. Do good to them (Gal. 6:10 - *"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."*

2. Be willing to lay down our lives for them (I Jn. 3:16 - *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.")*.

3. Meet their needs (Rom. 12:13 - *"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.")*.

Paul concludes this great epistle (which has as its major theme the Church, a family of God) by describing a "brother" and by sending wishes to the "brethren" at Ephesus.

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V. 21
Since the Ephesian Church was started by the Apostle Paul on his second (Acts 18:18-19) and third (Acts 19:10 - 3 years) missionary journeys, they were no doubt very concerned about the man who was instrumental in leading them to Christ, and discipling them (Acts 20:17-38).

***"Tychicus"* -** a believer in Christ from Asia who accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:4) right up to Paul's imprisonment at Rome.

A. A <u>beloved</u> brother (v. 21)

"A beloved brother" - beloved by God and Paul, because he is a brother.

No doubt Paul was so close to this man because of his love for the Lord and His work.

B. A <u>faithful</u> brother (v. 21)

"Faithful minister" - a consistent, reliable, dependable servant.

Note: What makes Tychicus so faithful is that he is still serving God by serving Paul even while Paul is in prison. He is still faithful, even though there is no glory, no fancy ministry, no limelight, no big drive-in crowd of people.

God does not measure ministry like so many do today -- the number of bodies, bucks, and buildings -- but He measures it be faithfulness.

Proverbs says, *"Most men will proclaim every man his own goodness, but a faithful man, who can find?"*

"Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians sometime in AD 60–61, around the same time he wrote Colossians and Philemon, as he sent all three letters by the hand of Tychicus, accompanied by Onesimus (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7–9; Philemon 1:10–12). It was during this time that Paul sat in Rome undergoing his first Roman imprisonment (Ephesians 3:1; 4:1), making Ephesians one of the four epistles commonly known as the Prison Epistles. The others are Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon". (Chuck Swindoll)

What is most amazing is that Tychicus was entrusted with the Holy Spirit inspired book of Ephesians and the other "prison epistles." If he does not faithfully deliver them, we would never have this portion of God's Word!

Tychicus could be trusted as "a faithful brother" to safely deliver these most important documents over a very long, difficult and potentially dangerous journey!

C. A <u>ministering</u> brother (v. 21)

"In the Lord" - i.e. in the Lord's work. Many serve (in the White House, mayor's cabinet, in the corporate office, at the department store, etc.), but the greatest privilege is to serve in the Lord's ministry.

D. A <u>humble</u> brother (v. 22)

"Shall make known to you" - Paul, as a missionary, did not live a secret life, nor did he keep his needs and burdens, successes and victories, to himself.

He reported to the churches who prayed for him, supported him and encouraged him, like Godly missionaries do today.

How would Paul communicate with the church which was so far away? He didn't have a telephone, UPS service, or a fax machine -- but he had a faithful brother!

"Whom I have sent" - implied is a willingness to go. In these words we find the <u>humility</u> of a man who is willing to take orders and do the bidding of his spiritual leader. Tychicus is willing to do the lowly task of being a messenger.

Tychicus frequently was sent on such missions by Paul (II Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12).

No job is too small for a humble servant of God.

Faithfulness is not measured by the "bigness" of your task, but by your consistent, reliable, dependable, "stick-to-it-iveness" to your task.

E. An <u>encouraging</u> brother (v. 22b)

It's interesting (and rebuking) that "the man in chains sought to comfort others" (MacArthur, p. 385) through a man who could give such comfort - Tychicus.

II. Desire the BEST for your "brothers" in Christ (v. 23-24)

(Wish God's Blessings like Paul)

Paul's concluding words express in brief his desire or wishes for the Ephesian saints. No wishes could be greater or more needed by brothers and sisters in Christ.

The blessings Paul wishes on the Ephesians reflect some of the "themes of this rich epistle. Certainly
peace (cf. 1:2; 2:14-15, 17; 4:3; 6:15)
love (cf. 1:15; 4:2, 15-16; 5:25, 28, 33)
and faith (cf. 1:15; 2:8; 3:12, 17; 4:5, 13; 6:16)
are recurring touchstones in the thought of this great letter" (MacArthur, p. 385).

A. Desire peace for them (v. 23)

"Peace" - the peace of God (Phil. 4:7)

NOTE: No one can have the peace of God until they first have peace with God (Rom. 5:1).

The peace is "to the brethren" because the unsaved cannot experience the peace of God.

To have a life filled with peace is a priceless blessing.

Peace means:
--freedom from government intrusion and opposition;
--freedom from Satanic oppression,
--freedom from family turmoil,
--freedom from fear
--freedom from chaos and confusion
--freedom from emotional and physical unrest
--freedom from doubt and uncertainty

B. Desire love for them (v. 23)

"Love" - an unconditional decision to do what is right for someone else.

Love for God and love for our neighbor

"Love with faith" - True love is always anchored in faith. Love is the action that faith inspires. Love is the outgrowth of faith.

One must have "faith" before he can have agape love.

Love is not misdirected, misapplied sentiment, but it is unselfish behavior that is directed by a knowledge and belief in God's Word.

"From God" - God is the only source of true love. If you don't' get it from Him, you don't get it at all!

"God is love" and He wants to give it to you. Is it your prayer, "God give me Your love?"

Loving others is a matter of simply letting God love them through you!

"The Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" - the Father and Son are both the source of love because they are both divine (deity).

No angel can dispense love. *"Love is of God"* (I John)

C. Desire grace for them (v. 24)

"Grace" is not only needed to become a Christian, but to live as a Christian.

Salvation is by grace, but so is sanctification.

"that love our Lord Jesus Christ" - implied: If you do not love Him (ie. if you are not saved - cp. Rom. 8:28 - not a true brother), you should not, indeed cannot, have the grace for living the Christian life.

CONCLUSION:

"Amen" - so be it! May it be done on my brethren.