

Monday

March 23

Church Connectivity

In a world connected by the internet, social media, and countless devices, it is difficult to imagine the challenge that Paul faced in helping churches feel they were a part of something bigger than their own local congregations.

WE ARE GOING TO Read Colossians 4:10, 11.
AND LEARN THE WAYS, Besides sending news back
and forth through emissaries (Col. 4:7-9), ~~what~~
~~other ways did~~ THAT Paul encouraged
connectivity? In view of some of the problems
Paul has addressed in this epistle, what message
might be conveyed through these greetings?

"Ar-is-tarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth
you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas,
(touching whom ye received commandments: if he
come unto you, receive him;) and Jesus, which is
called Justus, who are of the circumcision.
These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom
of God, which have been a comfort unto me."
Colossians 4:10-11 KJV

With these greetings, Paul creates and
fosters connectivity among fellow believers. We
learn here that Mark was Barnabas's cousin. Paul
thus paves the way for Mark's probable visit to
Colossae. Ar-is-tarchus is described literally
as a "fellow prisoner-of-war"; that is, he was
imprisoned with Paul.

STRONGS 164= FROM AICHME (A SPEAR) AND A
DERIVATIVE OF THE SAME AS [259](#); PROPERLY, A
PRISONER OF WAR, I.E. (GENITIVE CASE) A
CAPTIVE:-

They were both soldiers with "the armour of God" (Eph. 6:10, 11), fighting to set Satan's captives free for service in the kingdom of God (see 2 Tim. 2:1-4). Jesus/Justus (Jewish and Roman names that sound very similar in Greek, like Saul/Paul) is also commended to them as a trustworthy fellow laborer in the gospel.

PAUL AFFIRMS THIS MILITARY LANGUAGE AGAIN IN 2 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

2 Timothy 2:1-4 KJV

Paul makes a point of mentioning that Ar-
is-starchus, Mark, and Justus are Jewish
believers ("of the circumcision"). He then goes
on to mention three Gentiles: Epa-phras, Luke,
and Demas (Col. 4:12-14). It is significant
that, despite some tensions in the church
between Jews and Gentiles, these coworkers are
able to labor effectively together, unitedly and
harmoniously. By saying "only," though, Paul
seems to imply a certain disappointment that
more Jewish Christians have not stood by him in
his sufferings. Nevertheless, it is significant
that by this time, John Mark, who had some years
before deserted Paul and Barnabas during their
first missionary journey (Acts 13:13), proves
not only loyal but a "comfort" to Paul Acts
15:36-40).

Threats to unity are nothing new. In recent
years, the Adventist Church has undergone
profound changes as it has spread globally, and

forces have hammered away at its unity. This stress on unity can be felt at every level of the church.

How can you, at your local church, work to lessen the things that threaten our unity? What are these tensions at the local level, and what can be done about them?

TRUTH OF THE WORD - JOHN 17 -

"I HAVE MANIFESTED THY NAME UNTO THE MEN WHICH THOU GAVEST ME OUT OF THE WORLD: THINE THEY WERE, AND THOU GAVEST THEM ME; AND THEY HAVE KEPT THY WORD. NOW THEY HAVE KNOWN THAT ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER THOU HAST GIVEN ME ARE OF THEE. FOR I HAVE GIVEN UNTO THEM THE WORDS WHICH THOU GAVEST ME; AND THEY HAVE RECEIVED THEM, AND HAVE KNOWN SURELY THAT I CAME OUT FROM THEE, AND THEY HAVE BELIEVED THAT THOU DIDST SEND ME."

JOHN 17:6-8 KJV

JOHN 17:14-19 KJV

JOHN 17:14-19 KJV

I HAVE GIVEN THEM THY WORD; AND THE WORLD
HATH HATED THEM, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT OF THE
WORLD, EVEN AS I AM NOT OF THE WORLD. I PRAY NOT
THAT THOU SHOULDEST TAKE THEM OUT OF THE WORLD,
BUT THAT THOU SHOULDEST KEEP THEM FROM THE EVIL.
THEY ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, EVEN AS I AM NOT OF
THE WORLD. SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH: THY
WORD IS TRUTH. AS THOU HAST SENT ME INTO THE
WORLD, EVEN SO HAVE I ALSO SENT THEM INTO THE
WORLD. AND FOR THEIR SAKES I SANCTIFY MYSELF,
THAT THEY ALSO MIGHT BE SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE
TRUTH." JOHN 17:14-19 KJV

"NEITHER PRAY I FOR THESE ALONE, BUT FOR
THEM ALSO WHICH SHALL BELIEVE ON ME THROUGH
THEIR WORD; THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE; AS THOU,
FATHER, ART IN ME, AND I IN THEE, THAT THEY ALSO
MAY BE ONE IN US: THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE
THAT THOU HAST SENT ME." JOHN 17:20-21 KJV

"FOR FIRST OF ALL, WHEN YE COME TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH, I HEAR THAT THERE BE DIVISIONS AMONG YOU; AND I PARTLY BELIEVE IT. FOR THERE MUST BE ALSO HERESIES AMONG YOU, THAT THEY WHICH ARE APPROVED MAY BE MADE MANIFEST AMONG YOU."

1 CORINTHIANS 11:18-19 KJV

"STUDY TO SHEW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD, A WORKMAN THAT NEEDETH NOT TO BE ASHAMED, RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH."

2 TIMOTHY 2:15 KJV

SHARE INSPIRED STUDIES THAT CAN HELP
RELIEVE DISUNITY

PRAYER - PRAYER CONSISTENT AND CONTINUAL
PRAYER FOR HOLY SPIRIT LED UNITY

OUTREACH - KEEP REACHING OUT AND SOWING THE
GOSPEL SEED - KEEP FOCUSED ON CHRIST'S
COMMISSION

PERSONAL DEVOTIONAL TIME - BE SURE AND
SURRENDER TO CHRIST DAILY AND GAIN SPIRITUAL
STRENGTH FROM THE VINE

SOP

THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO CONTROVERSY OR AGITATION AMONG GOD'S PEOPLE SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE THAT THEY ARE HOLDING FAST TO SOUND DOCTRINE. THERE IS REASON TO FEAR THAT THEY MAY NOT BE CLEARLY DISCRIMINATING BETWEEN TRUTH AND ERROR. WHEN NO NEW QUESTIONS ARE STARTED BY INVESTIGATION OF THE SCRIPTURES, WHEN NO DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ARISES WHICH WILL SET MEN TO SEARCHING THE BIBLE FOR THEMSELVES TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY HAVE THE TRUTH, THERE WILL BE MANY NOW, AS IN ANCIENT TIMES, WHO WILL HOLD TO TRADITION AND WORSHIP THEY KNOW NOT WHAT.

I HAVE BEEN SHOWN THAT MANY WHO PROFESS TO HAVE A KNOWLEDGE OF PRESENT TRUTH KNOW NOT WHAT THEY BELIEVE. THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE EVIDENCES OF THEIR FAITH. THEY HAVE NO JUST APPRECIATION OF THE WORK FOR THE PRESENT TIME. WHEN THE TIME OF TRIAL SHALL COME, THERE ARE MEN NOW PREACHING TO OTHERS WHO WILL FIND, UPON EXAMINING THE POSITIONS THEY HOLD, THAT THERE ARE MANY THINGS FOR WHICH THEY CAN GIVE NO SATISFACTORY REASON. UNTIL THUS TESTED THEY KNEW NOT THEIR GREAT IGNORANCE. AND THERE ARE MANY IN THE CHURCH WHO TAKE IT FOR GRANTED THAT THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY BELIEVE; BUT, UNTIL CONTROVERSY ARISES, THEY DO NOT KNOW THEIR OWN WEAKNESS. WHEN SEPARATED FROM THOSE OF LIKE FAITH

AND COMPELLED TO STAND SINGLY AND ALONE TO EXPLAIN THEIR BELIEF, THEY WILL BE SURPRISED TO SEE HOW CONFUSED ARE THEIR IDEAS OF WHAT THEY HAD ACCEPTED AS TRUTH. CERTAIN IT IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN AMONG US A DEPARTURE FROM THE LIVING GOD AND A TURNING TO MEN, PUTTING HUMAN IN PLACE OF DIVINE WISDOM.

GOD WILL AROUSE HIS PEOPLE; IF OTHER MEANS FAIL, HERESIES WILL COME IN AMONG THEM, WHICH WILL SIFT THEM, SEPARATING THE CHAFF FROM THE WHEAT. THE LORD CALLS UPON ALL WHO BELIEVE HIS WORD TO AWAKE OUT OF SLEEP. PRECIOUS LIGHT HAS COME, APPROPRIATE FOR THIS TIME. IT IS BIBLE TRUTH, SHOWING THE PERILS THAT ARE RIGHT UPON US. THIS LIGHT SHOULD LEAD US TO A DILIGENT STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES AND A MOST CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE POSITIONS WHICH WE HOLD. GOD WOULD HAVE ALL THE BEARINGS AND POSITIONS OF TRUTH THOROUGHLY AND PERSEVERINGLY SEARCHED, WITH PRAYER AND FASTING. BELIEVERS ARE NOT TO REST IN SUPPOSITIONS AND ILL-DEFINED IDEAS OF WHAT CONSTITUTES TRUTH. THEIR FAITH MUST BE FIRMLY FOUNDED UPON THE WORD OF GOD SO THAT WHEN THE TESTING TIME SHALL COME AND THEY ARE BROUGHT BEFORE COUNCILS TO ANSWER FOR THEIR FAITH THEY MAY BE ABLE TO GIVE A REASON FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN THEM, WITH MEEKNESS AND FEAR. . 5T 707.1-5T 707.3