

# Speaking to the soul



## Family of God

**Tychicus will give you a full report about how I am getting along. He is a beloved brother and faithful**

**helper who serves with me in the Lord's work. I am also sending Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, one of your own people. Colossians 4:7,9**

You learn a lot about people through the way they speak about others. I love how Paul speaks so warmly of his friends. Tychicus was clearly someone he trusted completely and who gave Paul wonderful support in his ministry. He is mentioned five times in the New Testament and always receives glowing praise from Paul. In his second letter to Timothy, we learn that the apostle sent Tychicus to take over from Timothy in Ephesus so that Timothy could be released to spend some time with Paul before his death.

It's vital that we all have people we can trust completely. That's fundamental to the way in which the Church, the body of Christ, works. Like Paul, we need to celebrate those who stand shoulder to shoulder with us. I thank God for the trustworthy people who have been a blessing to me throughout my ministry. Some have had high-profile roles and their contribution has been clear for all to see, but many others have quietly got on with the work God has called them to do. I thank God for all of them, and for the blessing they have been to my life.

The family of God includes all kinds of people, and I am so glad that Paul referred to Onesimus. We get to know this man better in Paul's letter to Philemon. Onesimus was a slave and something had gone wrong in his relationship with Philemon, his master, and he had run away to Rome, where Paul met him. Wonderfully, Onesimus became a follower of Christ, so here Paul identified him as a faithful and beloved brother. There must have been plenty of raised eyebrows from the Colossian Christians when they read that, but

everything had now changed because he had become a Christian brother.

As we serve God, we should not only thank him for those who have proved to be faithful and dependable over the years, but also remember that he is continually bringing new people into his family.

### **QUESTION**

If you had been in the church in Colossae, how do you think you would have responded to the news that Onesimus had become a Christian?

### **PRAYER**

Loving God, thank you for the gift of faithful brothers and sisters within your Church. Help me to always be faithful and encouraging to them. Amen

*Photo: Starscape over Durham Cathedral*



