

Study of Colossians – Colossians 4:7–18 Bellevue Church of Christ – Fall 2013

I. Commendations (7-9)

Tychicus

-A Gentile believer from Asia Minor
-Ministry partner of Paul

-Act 20:4

-2Ti 4:12

-Tit 3:12

-Probably delivered the Colossian and Ephesian letters (Eph 6:21-22) along with the personal letter to Philemon.

II. Greetings (10-15)

Aristarchus

-A Jewish missionary companion from Thessalonica

-He was with Paul in...

*Ephesus (Acts 19:29)

*Jerusalem (Acts 20:4)

*Rome (Acts 27:2)

Jesus Justus

-Know nothing beyond the mention of him here.

*Paul had few Jewish coworkers at that point

*Paul endured opposition from his own people (Acts 13:45; 14:19; 17:5)

*Paul lamented their resistance to the gospel message (Rom 9:1-2; Phil 3:18).

Demas

-Though he accompanied Paul at the time of this letter, Demas later deserts Paul and goes to Thessalonica (2Ti 4:10)

Nympha

-Know nothing beyond the mention of her here.

III. Instructions (16-17)

IV. Benediction (18)

Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a *beloved brother* and *faithful minister* and *fellow servant* in the Lord.

⁸I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that *you may know how we are* and that *he may encourage your hearts*,

⁹and with him **Onesimus**, our faithful and beloved brother, *who is one of you*. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

¹⁰**Aristarchus** my *fellow prisoner* greets you, and **Mark** the *cousin of Barnabas* (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him),

¹¹and Jesus who is called **Justus**. *These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.*

Same word used in 1:29 & 2:1

¹²**Epaphras**, *who is one of you*, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, *always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.*

¹³For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in *Laodicea* and in *Hierapolis*.

¹⁴**Luke** the beloved physician greets you, as does **Demas**.

Nearest neighbors of Colossae

¹⁵Give my greetings to the brothers at *Laodicea*, and to **Nympha** and the *church in her house*.

"church" is always the people

¹⁶And when this letter has been read among you, *have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.*

¹⁷And say to **Archippus**, "*See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.*"

¹⁸I, Paul, *write this greeting with my own hand*. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Onesimus

-A slave who accompanied Tychicus to Colossae.

-Paul likely had led him to Christ in (Phm 10).

-He likely ran away from his owner, Philemon.

-He is returning to Colossae to be reconciled to Philemon. (along with the Paul's letter to Philemon)

(John) Mark

-His mother hosted a church in her home (Acts 12:12)

-He accompanied Paul and Barnabas during the 1st missionary journey (Acts 13:5), but later deserted them (Acts 13:13).

-When Barnabas wanted John Mark to accompany them on the 2nd missionary journey, Paul refused. Because of this disagreement, Paul and Barnabas parted company (Acts 15:37-39).

-Mark later joined Paul in his missionary work, and Paul commended him to others (2 Tim 4:11; Phm 24).

-The Gospel of Mark is attributed to John

Epaphras

-A Gentile Believer from the church at Colossae who likely planted the church there (1:7)

-He possibly became a believer through Paul's ministry in Ephesus and Asia (Acts 19:10).

Luke

-Missionary Companion of Paul (Act 16:11; 20:6)

-The Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts are attributed to him.

Archippus

-Mentioned only here and in Phlm 2, where he is included as part of Philemon's household.

Paul regularly wrote the final greeting in his own hand (2 Th 3:17)

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Tychicus

TYCHICUS (Τυχικός, *Tychikos*). A believer from Asia Minor (Acts 20:4) and contemporary of Paul.

Tychicus in Acts

In Acts 20:1–6, Tychicus is listed among a larger group of believers, including Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy and Trophimus. In Acts 20:4, Tychicus and Trophimus are further described in most manuscripts as being from Asia Minor. However, Codex Bezae (D) has “and the Ephesians, Eutychus, and Trophimus” instead of “and the Asians, Tychicus, and Trophimus.” This is a minority reading and is generally not accepted. Acts 20:5 mentions “these” who went on ahead—likely referring to Tychicus and Trophimus, not the larger group (Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 666).

Tychicus in Paul’s Letters

Tychicus is mentioned in the closing paragraphs of four of Paul’s letters:

- (Eph 6:21) After introducing Tychicus as a messenger who will relate Paul’s latest activities, Paul refers to him as “my beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord.”
- (Eph 6:21–22) Tychicus is described as one who will tell them everything and encourage their hearts.
- (Col 4:7) Tychicus is again described as a “beloved brother and faithful minister.” In this verse, he is also a “fellow servant.”
- (Col 4:8) Paul describes Tychicus’ purpose to inform the Colossians of his activities and to “encourage their hearts.”

The similar language in Eph 6:21–2 and Col 4:7–8 may support a textual relationship between Ephesians and Colossians. One author would probably use similar language to describe the same person, particularly in a close temporal succession.

Tychicus in the Pastoral Letters

The Pastoral Letters mention Tychicus twice:

- (Titus 3:12) Paul tells Titus that either Tychicus or Artemas will arrive to relieve him
- (2 Tim 4:12) Tychicus has been sent to Ephesus, likely to relieve Timothy.

Chronology is important in understanding the references to Tychicus in the Pastoral Letters. The composition order is likely 1 Timothy, Titus, then 2 Timothy. In Titus 3:12, Paul is uncertain whether he will send Tychicus or Artemas to Crete. In 2 Timothy 4:12, Artemas was probably sent to Crete, allowing Tychicus to be sent to Ephesus as Timothy’s replacement.

Tychicus in Corinthians

Second Corinthians 8:18 describes: “With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel.” Tychicus may be “the brother” from 2 Cor 8:18. Lightfoot argues: “It is probable indeed that Tychicus, together with others mentioned among St Paul’s numerous retinue on this occasion, was a delegate appointed by his own church according to the Apostle’s injunctions (1 Cor 16:3, 4) to bear the contributions of his brethren to the poor Christians of Judaea; and if so, he may possibly be the person commended as the brother οὗ ὁ ἑπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ διὰ πασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν (*hou ho epainos en tō euangeliō dia pasōn tōn ekklesiōn*) (2 Cor 8:18): but this will depend on the interpretation of the best supported reading in Acts 20:5 οὗτοι δὲ προσελθόντες ἔμενον ἡμᾶς ἐν Τρωάδι (*houtoi de*

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proselthontes emenon hēmas en Trōadi)” (Lightfoot, *Saint Paul’s Epistles*, 231–32).

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TYCHICUS. An Asian—the ‘Western’ Text says an Ephesian—who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem, doubtless as a delegate of his church, with the collection (Acts 20:4; cf. 1 Cor. 16:1–4). He was the apostle’s personal representative—probably (taking ‘sent’ as an epistolary aorist) the bearer of the letters—to the Colossians (Col. 4:7–9) and Ephesians (Eph. 6:21–22), and, should *EPHESIANS be a circular letter, to other Asian churches as well. Paul seems to have considered him a possible relief for Titus in Crete (Tit. 3:12), and to have sent him to Ephesus (bearing 2 Tim.?) just when Timothy was needed elsewhere (2 Tim. 4:12). These commissions reflect that trustworthiness which Paul commends (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7). His designation as a ‘minister’ in these contexts probably relates to service to the church, possibly to service to Paul, most improbably to the status of *DEACON. Some who have questioned the authenticity of Eph. have connected Tychicus with its origin (cf. W. L. Knox, *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, 1939, p. 203; C. L. Mitton, *Epistle to the Ephesians*, 1950, p. 268).

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Acts 20:4 (ESV)

⁴ Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus.

2 Timothy 4:12 (ESV)

¹² Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

Titus 3:12 (ESV)

¹² When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

Ephesians 6:21–22 (ESV)

²¹ So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. ²² I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

¹ Brannan, R. (2012). Tychicus. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.)*The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

² Walls, A. F. (1996). Tychicus. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.)*New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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Onesimus

ONESIMUS. A runaway slave belonging to Philemon, an influential Christian at Colossae. He made the acquaintance of Paul, while the latter was a prisoner, either at Rome or Ephesus (according to the view which is taken of the provenance of Colossians). He was converted by the apostle (Phm. 10), and became a trustworthy and dear brother (Col. 4:9). His name, which means ‘useful’, was a common name for slaves, though not confined to them; and he lived up to it by making himself so helpful to Paul that the latter would have liked to have kept him to look after him as, Paul feels, Philemon would have wished (Phm. 13). But the apostle felt constrained to do nothing without Philemon’s willing consent; so he returned the slave to his former owner, with a covering note the canonical *PHILEMON. In this the apostle plays on the slave’s name by describing him as ‘once so little use to you, but now useful indeed, both to you and me’; and hints, tactfully but clearly, that he expects Philemon to take Onesimus ‘back for good, no longer as a slave, but as more than a slave—as a dear brother, very dear indeed to me and how much dearer to you, both as man and as Christian’ (Phm. 15–16, NEB). Nevertheless, Paul admits that sending him back is like being deprived of a part of himself (Phm. 12).

The mention of Onesimus is one of the links which bind together Colossians and Philemon, and shows that they were sent from the same place at the same time. Some scholars believe that the Onesimus known to Ignatius and described by him in his Epistle to the Ephesians as ‘a man of inexpressible love and your bishop’ was none other than the runaway slave. This hypothesis, though not impossible, would seem improbable on chronological considerations. It is urged in its support that it supplies a reason why Philemon was preserved as a canonical book. On the other hand, its close connection with Colossians, and its importance for the light it throws on the Christian treatment of slaves, would seem to provide adequate reasons for its canonicity.

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Philemon 10 (ESV)

¹⁰ I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became in my imprisonment.

³ Tasker, R. V. G., & Martin, R. P. (1996). Onesimus. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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Aristarchus

ARISTARCHUS (Ἀρίσταρχος, *Aristarchos*). A “Macedonian traveling companion of Paul” (Acts 19:29).

Aristarchus and Gaius were seized by the Ephesians during the riot of the silversmiths (Acts 19:29). He was a native of Thessalonica (Acts 20:4; 27:2).

Aristarchus accompanied Paul from Greece (Acts 20:4) and to Rome (Acts 27:2). In Col 4:10, Paul calls him his “fellow prisoner.” Paul mentions him again in the Letter to Philemon (Phlm 24). In both of these letters, Aristarchus sends greetings of his own.

According to tradition he was martyred during the persecution of Nero.⁴

ARISTARCHUS. All the references undoubtedly relate to the same person. The first, Acts 19:29, describes him as already Paul’s fellow-traveller when seized by the Ephesian mob (though it has been argued that this is proleptic). In Acts 20:4 he accompanies Paul to Jerusalem, probably as an official Thessalonian delegate with the collection; and in Acts 27:2 he is on Paul’s ship from Caesarea. W. M. Ramsay argued that he could have travelled only as Paul’s slave (*SPT*, pp. 315f.), though Lightfoot’s suggestion still deserves mention, that the manner of reference indicates that he was on his way home to Thessalonica. However (assuming a Roman origin for Colossians), he rejoined Paul, and became his ‘fellow prisoner of war’ (Col. 4:10), possibly alternating with Epaphras in voluntary imprisonment (*cf.* Col. 4:10–12 with Phm. 23–24). On the ‘Ephesian imprisonment’ theory he will have gone home after the riot and the writing of Colossians (*cf.* G. S. Duncan, *St Paul’s Ephesian Ministry*, 1929, pp. 196, 237ff.). His association with the collection has suggested an identification with the ‘brother’ of 2 Cor. 8:18 (Zahn, *INT*, 1, p. 320). The most natural reading of Col. 4:10–11 implies a Jewish origin.

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Acts 19:29 (ESV)

²⁹ So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul’s companions in travel.

Acts 20:4 (ESV)

⁴ Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus.

Acts 27:2 (ESV)

² And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica.

⁴ Hunter, S. F. (2012). Aristarchus. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.)*The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

⁵ Walls, A. F. (1996). Aristarchus. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.)*New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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(John) Mark

JOHN MARK According to Church tradition, John Mark was the author of the Gospel of Mark. He is identified as the son of Mary (Acts 12:12), a cousin of Barnabas (Col 4:10) and a missionary companion of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:5).

His Hebrew name was John—Mark was his Greek or Roman name (Acts 12:12). In first century Palestine, it was common for a man to have two names: one Hebrew name, by which he was known to friends and relatives, and a Greek name, by which he was known in the business world (Barclay, *Introduction*, 151).

Mark likely was a common name in the first century and there may have been more than one prominent person in the early church who had this name. Consequently, it is difficult to know if the references to someone named Mark, outside the book of Acts, refer to the same person (1 Pet 5:13; Phlm 24; Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; compare the John Mark in Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:37, 39).

John Mark in the Book of Acts

John Mark first appears in connection with his mother in the book of Acts (Acts 12:12). Normally, Mark would have been identified with his father, such as “Mark son of,” but he is not acknowledged in this way. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume his father was dead when the New Testament was written. The book of Acts indicates many Christians met at his mother Mary’s house for prayer (Acts 12:12). It is presumed that Mary was relatively well-off, for she had a house large enough for “many” to meet in prayer. Further, it had a courtyard, an outer gate, and a servant to open it.

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch from Jerusalem, John Mark was with them (Acts 12:25). Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey to serve as their “helper” (Acts 13:5 NIV). The word translated as “helper” designates one who is a servant or attendant. It was used to describe an assistant to doctors, army officers, priests, and politicians (Stott, *The Message*, 219).

When Paul, Barnabas, and Mark arrived at Perga in Pamphylia, Mark returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Numerous suggestions have been proposed to explain Mark’s decision to leave Paul and Barnabas (see Stott, *The Message*, 220), but they are conjectures. Mark’s departure later caused Paul to refuse his participation on their next missionary endeavor (Acts 15:36–39). A disagreement ensued between Paul and Barnabas about the decision not to include Mark. As a result, Paul chose Silas to go with him and Mark accompanied his cousin Barnabas to Cyprus.

Mark in the Rest of the New Testament

Mark’s name is mentioned four other times in the New Testament. In his first letter, Peter refers to an individual named Mark as “his son” (1 Pet 5:13). This designation probably does not indicate a family relationship. According to rabbinic tradition, Peter’s reference to Mark as “my son” may imply that Mark was Peter’s disciple (b. Sanh. 19b; see also Clement, *Strom.* 1.12–13).

Mark is referenced a few times by Paul in his letters—an indication that their relationship was reconciled. For example, in the book of Colossians, Mark is identified as a source of comfort to Paul (Col 4:10–11). This person is John Mark—he is referred to as the cousin of Barnabas (Col 4:10). Second Timothy also implies that Paul and Mark at some point overcame whatever personal obstacle kept them from collaborating previously. Paul asks Timothy to get Mark and bring him to Paul, because Mark was helpful to him in his ministry (2 Tim 4:11). An individual named Mark is also mentioned in the closing of Paul’s Letter to Philemon (24).

John Mark as the Author of the Gospel of Mark

Church tradition identifies Mark as the author of the second Gospel of the New Testament. The Gospel of Mark is an anonymous composition. It was not signed and the contents do not state

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the identity of the author. The title was likely added at a time when a collection of the gospels was circulating among the various churches in the latter part of the first century, or the early part of the second century. It became necessary to distinguish between the gospels.

The earliest assertion of Mark's authorship of the second Gospel comes from Papias, a bishop of Hierapolis, at the start of the second century (ca. AD 110–150). Papias' remarks concerning the second gospel's author come from his five-volume work entitled *Interpretation of the Lord's Sayings*. Although this work is lost, *Sayings* is preserved by the fourth-century historian and bishop of Caesarea, Eusebius Pamphili (ca. AD 260–340) in his composition *Ecclesiastical History* (3.39.15). Papias' comments in *Sayings* identify Mark as the author of a body of literature containing the words and deeds of Jesus. In addition, he also states that Mark received the information he scribed into his literary work from Peter's teaching. It does seem that Mark was well acquainted with Peter (Acts 12:12–17).

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DAVID SEAL⁶

MARK (JOHN). Traditional author of the second Gospel, apparently a Jew and a native of Jerusalem. His Heb. name was the OT *yōhānān*, 'Yahweh has shown grace' (cf. 2 Ki. 25:23, etc.), shortened in English to the familiar 'John'. The reason for his adopted Lat. name of 'Marcus' is uncertain; sometimes Jewish families that had been captured as slaves in war, and later freed, took, as 'freedmen', the name of the Roman family to which they had been enslaved; but this is unlikely in his case, the more so as Marcus is a praenomen, not a family name. It was not uncommon for 1st-century Jews to bear a Gk. or Rom. name in addition to their Heb. name, 'in religion'; see Acts 1:23 for another such 'surname', again Lat. and not Gk. in origin. The same phenomenon is common among Jews today. If his early nickname of *kolobodaktylos*, 'stumpy-fingered', is a genuine tradition (see the anti-Marcionite prologue to Mark, dating from the later 2nd century, which is the earliest evidence for it), then it may refer either to a physical peculiarity on the part of the author or to some strange stylistic features of the Gospel which have puzzled critics of all ages. It may, however, be only a late conjecture, due to the confusion of 'Marcus' with the Lat. adjective *mancus*, 'maimed'.

Scripture gives some very clear evidence about his family, and there are also several conjectures of varying degrees of probability. His mother, named Mary, was related to Barnabas (Col. 4:10), the wealthy Levite from Cyprus, who was a landowner (Acts 4:36) and, whatever his country of origin, was a resident of Jerusalem in the days of the opening chapters of Acts. Mary herself appears to have been a woman of wealth and position, as well as a Christian; certainly her house was large enough to house a number of people, boasted at least one maidservant and was used as a meeting-place by the apostolic church even in time of persecution (Acts 12:12). It is significant that Peter, released from prison, has no doubt as to where he will find the Christians gathered. John Mark's father is nowhere mentioned in Scripture, and, from the fact

⁶ Seal, D. (2012). John Mark. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

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that the house of Acts 12:12 is called Mary's, it has been inferred, probably correctly, that he was dead by that date, and Mary a widow. To John Mark himself there is no certain early reference, although the young man of Mk. 14:51, who saved himself by ignominious flight, is usually taken to be Mark. (Was he sleeping in a hut on the family property, guarding the fruit?) It would be neither safe nor customary for an author to mention his own name in such circumstances (*cf.* Jn. 21:24 for similar deliberate anonymity). Less likely, as partly dependent on the above tentative identification, is the theory that the Last Supper of Mk. 14 actually took place in John Mark's house; the shadowy 'goodman of the house' of v. 14 would thus be John Mark's father, still alive then, although dead before the date of Acts 12:12.

John Mark apparently remained at home until brought to Antioch by Barnabas and Paul, who were returning from a relief mission to Jerusalem (Acts 12:25). When the two departed to Cyprus on the first missionary journey some time later he accompanied them, as travelling companion and attendant on the two older men (Acts 13:5). When, however, the party reached Perga, on the mainland of Asia Minor, John Mark left them, and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13), while Barnabas and Paul continued alone. Paul apparently regarded this as desertion, and thus, when Barnabas suggested Mark as a travelling companion for the second journey, he refused point-blank (Acts 15:38). With both men, the attitude towards John Mark was no whim, but a point of principle (*cf.* Acts 9:27 and 11:25 for the character of Barnabas), so a separation was inevitable, Barnabas taking Mark back to Cyprus with him, and Paul taking Silas instead.

After that, Mark is lost to view in Acts, but appears spasmodically in the Epistles. By the date of Col. 4:10 he is in the company of Paul the prisoner, presumably at Rome; Paul is apparently intending to send him on a mission to Colossae, so that he must have forgiven and forgotten the past. Phm. 24 also mentions him among the same apostolic group, which includes Luke. By the time of writing 2 Tim. 4:11 Mark is now away with Timothy, but there has been no rift; presumably this means that Paul had sent Mark on the mission to Asia Minor envisaged above, if Timothy was indeed in Ephesus.

In the Petrine correspondence there is one significant mention, in 1 Pet. 5:13, where the wording shows the 'paternal' relationship existing between the older and younger disciples. If, as is probable, 'Babylon' in this verse stands for 'Rome', then the tradition of the Roman origins of Mark's Gospel may well be true. The tradition that Mark later founded the church of Alexandria (Eusebius, *EH* 2. 16) lacks support. As 'Mark' was the commonest of all Roman names, some have argued that the biblical references concern more than one person. But, in such cases, the Bible differentiates (*e.g.* Jn. 14:22), so we may reject the objection. For Bibliography, see *MARK, GOSPEL OF.

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Acts 12:12 (ESV)

¹² When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

Acts 13:5 (ESV)

⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.

⁷ Cole, R. A. (1996). Mark (John). In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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Acts 13:13 (ESV)

¹³ Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem,

Acts 15:37–39 (ESV)

³⁷ Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹ And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus,

2 Timothy 4:11 (ESV)

¹¹ Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.

Philemon 24 (ESV)

²⁴ and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

Jesus Justus

Jesus Justus (Ἰησοῦς Ἰουστὸς, *lēsous ioustos*). A Jewish companion of Paul who was present when the apostle wrote the letter to the Colossians (Col 4:11).⁸

JUSTUS. A Latin name. Lightfoot (on Col. 4:11) notes its frequency among Jews and proselytes, often combined with a Jewish name (*cf.* **1** and **3** below, and see Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, pp. 315f.), and suggests that it was meant to denote obedience and devotion to the Law.

1. A name of Joseph Barsabbas, one of the two conceived as the possible apostolic successor to Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:23). By the context he was thus a consistent disciple from John the Baptist's time. Papias had a story of his survival of a heathen ordeal by poison (Eusebius, *EH* 3. 39. 9; *cf.* Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1891, p. 531, for another authority). On the name 'Barsabbas' ('son of—*i.e.* born on—a Sabbath?'), see H. J. Cadbury in *Amicitiae Corolla*, ed. H. G. Wood, 1933, pp. 48ff. If it is a true patronymic, Judas Barsabbas (Acts 15:22) could be a brother.

2. Gentile adherent and neighbour of the synagogue in Corinth. When Christian preaching split the synagogue, the house of Justus became Paul's centre (Acts 18:7). The mss variously render his other name as Titus or Titius, or omit it altogether (accepted as the original reading by Ropes, *BC*, 3, P. 173). Following the hint of Rom. 16:23, Ramsay, and, more fully, E. J. Goodspeed (*JBL* 69, 1950, pp. 382ff.) identify him with *GAIUS of Corinth, rendering his name 'Gaius Titius Justus'. The guess that he was the Titus of Paul's letters has nothing but its antiquity to commend it.

3. Alias Jesus, a valued Jewish co-worker of Paul (Col. 4:11). Nothing more is known of him. It has been conjectured that his name has accidentally dropped out from Phm. 24 (*C. J. Davey*. E. Amling, *ZNW* 10, 1909, p. 261).

A. F. WALLS.⁹

⁸ Halcomb, T. M. W. (2012). Jesus Justus. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

⁹ Walls, A. F. (1996). Justus. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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Paul’s Jewish Coworkers

Acts 13:45 (ESV)

⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.

Acts 14:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

Acts 17:5 (ESV)

⁵ But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd.

Romans 9:1–2 (ESV)

¹ I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— ² that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

Philippians 3:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Epaphras

EPAPHRAS. In Col. 1:7; 4:12; Phm. 23, one of Paul’s friends and associates, called by him his ‘fellow slave’ and ‘fellow prisoner’. The name is abbreviated from Epaphroditus, but Epaphras is probably not to be identified with the Epaphroditus of Phil. 2:25; 4:18 (as he is by T. R. Glover, *Paul of Tarsus*, 1925, p. 179). We gather that Epaphras evangelized the cities of the Lycus valley in Phrygia under Paul’s direction during the latter’s Ephesian ministry, and founded the churches of Colossae, Hierapolis and Laodicea. Later he visited Paul during his Roman captivity, and it was his news of conditions in the churches of the Lycus valley that moved Paul to write the Epistle to the Colossians.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. J. B. Lightfoot, *St Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, 1879, pp. 29ff.

F. F. BRUCE.¹⁰

Colossians 1:7 (ESV)

⁷ just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf

Acts 19:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

¹⁰ Bruce, F. F. (1996). Epaphras. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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Struggling

76 ἀγωνίζομαι (*agōnizomai*): vb.; ≡ Str 75; TDNT 1.135; LN 39.29—**1.** LN 50.1 **compete**, fight, struggle, with an emphasis on effort (1Co 9:25); **2.** LN 68.74 **make effort**, strive to do with intensity and effort (Lk 13:24; Jn 18:36; Col 1:29; 4:12; 1Ti 4:10; 6:12; 2Ti 4:7+)¹¹

Colossians 1:29–2:1 (ESV)

²⁹ For this I toil, **struggling** with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

¹ For I want you to know how great a **struggle** I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face,

Luke

LUKE (Λουκᾶς, *Loukas*). Occasional traveling companion of Paul. The books of Luke and Acts are attributed to him.

Luke in the New Testament

Luke appears three times in the New Testament:

- (Phlm 24)—Paul lists Luke among his coworkers along with Mark, Aristarchus, and Demas.
- (Col 4:14)—Paul sends a greeting to the Colossians from Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas. As the author states that Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus who is called Justus are his only Jewish coworkers, Luke, Epaphras, and Demas are likely Gentiles (Carson, Moo, Morris, *Introduction*, 115).
- (2 Tim 4:11)—The author notes that Luke is the only coworker currently with him.

The New Testament documents provide little information concerning Luke. The canonical writings support four points about him:

1. Paul considered him a coworker.
2. He was a physician.
3. He was a Gentile.
4. He was occasionally one of Paul’s traveling companions.

Authorship of Luke—Acts

While Luke and Acts are anonymous compositions, by the end of the second century the Luke of the New Testament was presumed to be the author of these two works (Brown, *Introduction*, 267). This is still debated.

“We” Sections of Acts. The “we” sections of Acts are sometimes listed as evidence for Luke’s authorship of Acts and the Gospel of Luke. On four occasions in Acts, the author stops narrating events in the third person and uses the first person (16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16). These sections may reflect the author’s eyewitness account of the action (Hengel, *Acts*, 116–17; Hemer, “First Person”; Guthrie, *Introduction*, 116–17). Assuming that the author was accompanying Paul during the time recounted in these sections, it is unlikely that he would have named himself in these passages of Acts. This excludes Silas, Timothy, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Tychicus, and Trophimus as possible authors. As Acts ends with a “we” section,

¹¹ Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

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the author may have been present with Paul in Rome, and was probably a person who is named in the prison epistles (Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon) but not Acts. This narrows the potential pool of authors to Mark, Jesus Justus, Epaphras, Demas, Epaphroditus, and Luke.

However, the “we” sections do not necessarily reflect the author’s eyewitness testimony or demand Lukan authorship. A theory of authorship based on the “we” sections only narrows the pool of potential authors; it is not conclusive. Those maintaining anonymity explain these passages in other ways:

- Robbins states that they are modeled after a Graeco-Roman literary device (e.g., Robbins, *We-Passages*). Porter, however, argues that “... no truly suitable literary parallels to these ‘(’)we’ passages have been found in all of ancient Greek literature” (Porter, *The “We” Passages*, 548–58; see also Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 18–20).
- Porter argues that the unknown author drew upon sources for the “we” passages, or that these sections were interpolated by a later redactor (see Porter, *The “We” Passages*, 571–72). The author admits to using information in his composition that has been handed down from previous generations of believers (Luke 1:1–2; see also Wedderburn, “We-Passages;” Barrett, “Acts,” 4).
- Pervo offers an analysis of the “we” sections that includes elements of both the literary and source theories (Pervo, *Acts*, 392–96; also Campbell, “Narrator”).

Relationship between Acts and the Pauline Epistles. The primary objection to Lukan authorship is based on apparent discrepancies between Acts and the Pauline epistles, particularly Galatians. If the author of Luke—Acts was a companion of Paul, historical and theological differences should not exist (Barrett, “Acts,” 4; Knox, “Acts;” Walker, “Acts;” Porter, “Companion?;” Porter, “When and How?;” Enslin, “Luke and Paul;” Enslin “Once Again;” Goulder, “Did Luke?”). Guthrie lists several inconsistencies (Guthrie, *Introduction*, 119–22; Brown, *Introduction*, 268, 324):

- Paul’s statement that no person played a role in his conversion, while in Acts, Ananias does just that.
- Paul’s accounts of his Law contrasts several stories in Acts, including Timothy’s circumcision and Paul’s vow.

Self-Depiction of the Author of Luke—Acts

Luke and Acts provide several indications of how the author wished his reader(s) to view him.

Eyewitness Testimony. The author of Luke—Acts claims that the information in his writings was “handed over” or “delivered” to him by eyewitness (Luke 1:2). For much of the material in Luke—Acts, the author was not an eyewitness to the events described. However, the author portrays himself as an eyewitness to certain events in the “we” sections of Acts (Bruce, *Acts*, 18). In these places, the author may want the reader to believe that he was personally involved in the events recorded, which would add veracity to the accounts (Droge, “Anonymously?” 496). Hemer concludes that the level of detail contained in the “we” sections indicates that the author was, in fact, present with Paul on the apostle’s journeys (Hemer, “First Person”). Josephus emphasizes the importance of eyewitness evidence in ancient writings; in J.W. 1.3, he claims that his account of the Jewish war with Rome is based on his own experience in the revolt, and is therefore more accurate than other histories. The author’s claims to have relied on firsthand testimony were meant to add credibility to the writings.

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Luke the Physician and Medical Terminology in Luke—Acts. In the late 19th century, Hobart proposed that Luke—Acts contained an unusually large amount of medical terminology when compared to the other gospels, especially in the stories of healing miracles (Hobart, *Medical Language*). He argued that this demonstrates the author of Luke—Acts was Luke, the beloved physician (Col 4:14). While this thesis found many adherents, Cadbury demonstrated that the majority of the terminology was also found in the Septuagint (LXX) and in the writings of Josephus. Cadbury concludes that the medical terminology could have been used by any educated author in the Graeco-Roman world (Cadbury, *Style*, 39–51; also Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–14*, 52).

Writing Style of the Author of Luke—Acts

The author's writing style reveals his desire to compose an orderly narrative that was convincing to the recipient (Luke 1:1–4; see Alexander, *Preface*). Additionally, the author's reliance on the LXX demonstrates his indebtedness to the scriptural tradition of Hellenistic Judaism. The author of Luke—Acts composed historical works that he intended for his recipient(s) to understand as credible and persuasive accounts.

Trustworthy, Orderly Narrative. In the prologue to the Gospel (Luke 1:1–4), the author states that he relied on source material derived from earlier narratives of the Jesus story, as well as testimony from eyewitnesses and servants of the word. He states that he orders this source material in such a way that his account will verify what his intended recipient, Theophilus, had previously been taught (Luke 1:4; Conzelmann, *Acts*, 40). The author does not merely repeat his source material, but orders it accurately for his reader (Luke 1:3). The author's assertions resemble those of Thucydides who states, "But as to the facts of the occurrences of the war, I have thought it my duty to give them, not as ascertained from any chance informant nor as seemed to me probable, but only after investigating with the greatest possible accuracy each detail, in the case both of the events in which I myself participated and of those regarding which I got my information from others" (*History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.22.2–3).

There are two key indications that the author has rearranged his source material in the narrative. Luke—Acts follows a broadly geographic outline. The Gospel is structured around Jesus' journey to Jerusalem: Jesus' ministry begins in Galilee (Luke 3:1), moves toward Samaria (Luke 9:51; note the author's omission of material from Mark 6:45–8:26 which tells of Jesus' northward movement away from Jerusalem), and ends in Jerusalem (Luke 19:28). This pattern reverses itself in Acts: the Church begins in Jerusalem (Acts 1:6), moves to Judaea and Samaria (Acts 8:4), and finally to the ends of the earth (Acts 9:32; 28:17–31).

Additionally, there are numerous examples of repeated stories and motifs in the two works. This repetition points to the author's creating a cohesive story, which gives the impression of continuity between Jesus and the early church (Acts 1:1; Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*). Instances of repetition include:

- The ascension (Luke 24:50–53; Acts 1:6–9).
- The chief priests' opposition to Jesus and the early church is a consistent motif (Luke 9:22; 19:47; 22:2–4; 23:10; Acts 4:23; 9:14; 25:2).

The author's penchant for repeating stories and motifs points to his decision to recast the stories in order to draw parallels with earlier stories and build a consistent, cohesive narrative. For example, there are many parallels between Jesus', Peter's, and Paul's miraculous activity (see Mattill, "Jesus—Paul Parallels;" Moessner, "Parallels"). All three:

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- cure paralytics (Luke 7:22; Acts 3:1–10; 14:8–20).
- perform exorcisms (Luke 4:31–37; Acts 5:14–16; 16:18).
- raise the dead (Luke 7:11–17; Acts 9:36–43; 20:7–12).

Speeches in Acts. Thucydides also sheds light on the author’s use of speeches in Acts when he writes, “As to the speeches that were made by different men, either when they were about to being the war or when they were already engaged therein, it has been difficult to recall with strict accuracy the words actually spoken, both for me as regards that which I myself heard, and for those who from various other sources have brought me reports. Therefore the speeches are given in the language in which, as it seemed to me, the several speakers would express, on the subjects under consideration, the sentiments most befitting the occasion, though at the same time I have adhered as closely as possible to the general sense of what was actually said” (History of the Peloponnesian War, 1.22.1). The author of Acts seems to follow this same pattern, drawing upon his sources for this material and not claiming to have been present for the speeches. The speeches are thus compositions based on recollections of what the speakers said, not transcriptions.

Dependence on the Septuagint (LXX). The author of Luke—Acts may have desired to be seen as continuing the biblical story of Israel contained in the LXX. The author was likely well acquainted with the LXX and patterned his own writings after the historical narratives of the LXX:

- Between 80 and 90 percent of Luke’s vocabulary is also found in the historical writings of the LXX (Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–14*, 113; Haenchen, *Acts*, 72).
- The author frequently “Hebraizes” his Greek due to dependence on the LXX (Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–14*, 113).
- He also includes a large number of Semitic phrases in the writing, especially introductory and infinitival formulae (see Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–14*, 113–25 for an extensive survey of this phenomenon).

Theological Concerns

While the author of Luke—Acts narrated historical events, the subject matter of that history is inherently theological. Central themes embedded in the historical accounts in Luke—Acts reveal the author’s theological concerns.

Salvation. Salvation is a main theme of Luke and Acts:

- Both God and Jesus are called “Savior” (Luke 1:47, 69; 2:11; Acts 5:31; 13:23).
- Jesus embodies salvation (Luke 2:30; 3:6; Acts 4:12; 28:28)
- Jesus makes salvation available (Luke 1:69, 77; 19:9).
- The message about Jesus frequently includes an offer of salvation (Acts 13:26, 47; 16:17).
- Salvation entails rescue from enemies (Luke 1:71) and forgiveness of sins (Luke 1:77; see Johnson, *Luke*, 23; Carson, Moo, Morris, *Introduction*, 128).
- Salvation is available for all people (Acts 1:8).

Worldwide Expansion of the Church. The expansion of the Church is also a theme:

- The disciples will be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).
- Opposition to the expansion of the Church is met with prayer and results in the Church’s continued growth (Acts 4:24; 7:59–8:1; 12:5; 16:25; 18:9–10).

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- The primary means of expansion is the proclamation of the word of God and the good news of Jesus (Acts 2:1–41; 8:4; 10:34–48; 16:10; 28:30–31).
- This mission is empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; 2:4; 7:55; 8:15–17; 10:44; 11:15; 13:2; 15:28; 19:6; 20:22).

Holy Spirit. In Luke, the Holy Spirit descends on/fills people (Luke 1:15, 41, 67; 2:25–27; 3:22; 4:1; 11:13) in order to empower them for specific tasks (Luke 4:14, 18; 12:12; 24:49). This continues in Acts as the Holy Spirit guides and impels the mission of the Church (Acts 2:1–4; 4:28–31; 8:15–17, 29, 39; 10:19; 11:15; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 20:22). From Luke’s perspective, the Holy Spirit is the source of power for individual believers and various churches.

Kingdom of God. In Luke, the kingdom is simultaneously the eternal kingdom of Christ (Luke 1:33; 22:30; 23:42) and the kingdom of God (Luke 9:27; 11:2; 12:31–32; 22:29). The messages of Jesus and the early church focus on the kingdom of God (Luke 4:43; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11, 60; 16:16; Acts 1:3; 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31).

- The kingdom does not consist of miracles (Luke 17:20–21), though they indicate its close proximity (Luke 10:9; 11:20).
- It belongs to the poor (Luke 6:20; 18:24–25).
- It also belongs to those who are like children (Luke 18:16–17).

The Role of Theophilus

The author of Luke—Acts names Theophilus as the original recipient of the works (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1). He is addressed as “most excellent,” and was likely a person of high social standing (see Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25). However, the name Theophilus was common in the Graeco-Roman period—the identification of this particular Theophilus is unknown.

Josephus may shed some light on the relationship between the author of Luke—Acts and Theophilus. Josephus dedicates his later writings to one “most excellent” Epaphroditus, a man who loved learning and was curious about the matters discussed in Josephus’ latter works (Ant. 1.8; Life 430; Ag. Ap. 1.1; 2.1, 296). His Ant. 1.8–9 may indicate that Epaphroditus commissioned Josephus to write *Jewish Antiquities*, *Life*, and *Against Apion*. As the one who commissioned the works, Epaphroditus may have funded their production. Goodspeed, noting dedications similar to Luke 1:3 found in Cicero and Pliny the Younger, suggests Theophilus may have served as the publisher of Luke—Acts (Goodspeed, *Greek Notes*, 84). Theophilus may have funded the project, served as its publisher or both (Alexander, *Preface*, 188–200; more broadly Gold, *Literary Patronage*).

The Person of Luke in Early Christian Texts

In the late second and early third centuries, Christian authors built up traditions about Luke. These traditions are based partly on inferences gleaned from information about Luke found in the New Testament and partly on the various authors’ apologetic interests. There are five key texts which reflect these traditions. These texts have played a key role in ascribing authorship of Luke—Acts to the Luke mentioned in the New Testament (see Haenchen, *Acts*, 3–14; Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 30–48).

Muratorian Canon, lines 2–8. The Muratorian Fragment is a copy of a canonical list that dates to circa AD 170–180 (Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–14*, 37). The text states, “(2) The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. (3) Luke, the well-known physician, after the ascension of Christ, (4–5) when Paul had taken with him as one zealous for the law, (6) composed it in his own name, according to [the general] belief. Yet he himself had not (7) seen the Lord in the flesh; and

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therefore, as he was able to ascertain events, (8) so indeed he begins to tell the story from the birth of John” (Metzger, *Das Muratorische Fragment*).

This text makes several claims about Luke:

- He composed his writing for Theophilus.
- He wrote the Gospel shortly after the ascension.
- The events recorded in Acts took place during the author’s lifetime.

So-called “Anti-Marcionite Prologue”. This text, dating to the late second century, states, “Indeed Luke was an Antiochene Syrian, a doctor by profession, a disciple of the apostles: later however he followed Paul until his martyrdom, serving the Lord blamelessly. He never had a wife, he never fathered children, and died at the age of eighty-four, full of the Holy Spirit, in Boetia. Therefore—although gospels had already been written—indeed by Matthew in Judaea but by Mark in Italy—moved by the Holy Spirit he wrote down this gospel in the parts of Achaia, signifying in the preface that the others were written before his, but also that it was of the greatest importance for him to expound with the greatest diligence the whole series of events in his narration for the Greek believers, so that they would not be led astray by the lure of Jewish fables, or, seduced by the fables of the heretics and stupid solicitations, fall away from the truth. And so at once at the start he took up the extremely necessary [story] from the birth of John, who is the beginning of the gospel, the forerunner of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was a companion in the perfecting of the people, likewise in the introducing of baptism and a companion in martyrdom. Of this disposition the prophet Malachi certainly makes mention. And indeed afterwards the same Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles. Later the apostle John wrote the Apocalypse on the island of Patmos, and then the Gospel in Asia” (Pearse, “The ‘Anti-marcionite’ Prologue”; for critical edition see Regul, *Die Antimarcionitischen Evangelienprologe*, 15–34; see Haenchen, *Acts*, 10–11 for more information).

Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haeresus*. In the late second century, Irenaeus maintains that the faith passed down to his generation is contained in the four canonical gospels, one of which is by “Luke also, the companion of Paul ... (Adversus Haeresus, 3.1.1 in Roberts and Donaldson, eds., *Irenaeus*, 258–59). Furthermore, Irenaeus goes on to add that “Luke was inseparable from Paul, and his fellow-labourer in the gospel,” citing several of the “we-sections” of Acts as proof for this claim and concluding that “as Luke was present at all these occurrences, he carefully noted them down in writing, so that he cannot be convicted of falsehood or boastfulness ...” (Adversus Haeresus, 3.14.1 in Roberts and Donaldson, eds., *Irenaeus*, 316–17). Irenaeus was thus the first author to base a claim of Luke’s authorship of Luke—Acts on the “we-sections” noted above.

Tertullian’s *Adversus Marcionem*. Tertullian states, circa AD 207–208, “I lay it down to begin with that the documents of the gospel have the apostles for their authors, and that this task of promulgating the gospel was imposed upon them by our Lord himself. If they also have for their authors apostolic men, yet these stand not alone, but as companions of apostles or followers of apostles ... from among the apostles the faith is introduced to us by John and by Matthew, while from among apostolic men Luke and Mark give it renewal.... Now Luke was not an apostle but an apostolic man, not a master but a disciple, in any case less than his master, and assuredly even more of lesser account as being the follower of a later apostle, Paul, to be sure ...” (Adversus Marcionem, IV.2 in Evans, *Tertullian*, 262–63; for additional information see Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–14*, 39–40).

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Bodmer Papyrus (P75). Papyrus Bodmer XIV/XV is a fragmentary copy of the Gospels dating to circa AD 175–225. On the leaf that contains the ending of the Gospel of Luke, a scribe has added the words “gospel according to Luke.” This further illustrates Luke’s association with the third Gospel in the early church.

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¹² Dicken, F. E. (2012). Luke. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

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LUKE. Among the companions of Paul who send their greetings in his letter to Colossae there appears 'Luke (Gk. *Loukas*) the beloved physician' (Col. 4:14); the way in which he is described suggests that he had given medical care to Paul, no doubt during the latter's imprisonment. In Phm. 24, probably written at the same time, he is described as a fellow-worker of Paul, which suggests that his help in the work of the gospel was not confined to his medical skill. There is a third reference to him in what appears to have been one of Paul's last messages: 'Luke alone is with me' (2 Tim. 4:11), and this confirms the close link between the two men. He is generally thought to have been a Gentile, but E. E. Ellis (pp. 51–53) has argued that Col. 4:11 refers to a particular group within the wider circle of Jewish Christians, and that consequently Luke may have been a Jewish Christian of the Dispersion.

Irenaeus (c. AD 180) is the first person to refer clearly to Luke and to name him as the author of the third Gospel and Acts. The same tradition is found in the Muratorian Canon and the so-called anti-Marcionite Prologue to the Gospel of Luke. The last of these documents speaks of Luke as coming from Antioch in Syria, and as serving the Lord without the distractions of a wife or family until he died at the age of 84 in Boeotia; the earliness and reliability of this tradition are uncertain.

The tradition that Luke was the author of Lk. and Acts can probably be traced back to earlier in the 2nd century. The fact that Marcion, a fanatical follower of Paul's theology, chose Lk. as the one Gospel which he recognized, probably implies that he regarded it as the work of a companion of Paul. Acts contains a number of passages written in the 1st person plural which describe events from the point of view of a companion of Paul (Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–21:18; 27:1–28:16). The fact that the author of Acts made no attempt to rewrite these passages in the 3rd person is best explained by identifying him as their original author. Of the possible companions of Paul, known to us from his Epistles but not named in Acts, Luke stands out as the probable composer of Acts and hence of Lk. This identification is found in a variant reading of Acts 20:13 ('But I Luke, and those who were with me, went on board') which may go back to early in the 2nd century.

The argument from the internal evidence of Acts is strong. It is confirmed by the external evidence of 2nd-century tradition cited above, and especially by the fact that no other candidate for the authorship of Acts was ever suggested. The claim that the tradition rests on a deduction from the NT evidence and has no independent value is pure hypothesis. There is more force in the objection that the picture of the early church in Acts, and of Paul in particular, are not such as might be expected from a companion of Paul, but this objection can be answered (F. F. Bruce, *NBCR*, pp. 968–973).

The literary style of Lk. and Acts demonstrates that their author was a well-educated person with considerable gifts of expression. The traces of medical language and the interest in medical matters displayed in them are consistent with authorship by the 'beloved physician'. Luke's gifts as a historian have been recognized by many scholars who have viewed his work against its classical background and compared him favourably with the best of ancient historians.

Luke's admiration for Paul comes out clearly in the course of Acts. Through his close contact with him and with other Christian leaders, and as a consequence of his visits to Jerusalem and Caesarea (*cf.* Acts 21:17ff.), Luke had ample opportunities to gain first-hand knowledge about the life of Jesus and the history of the earliest Christian church. He could rightly claim in the prologue to his Gospel that he was well qualified for his task, having carefully and thoroughly investigated all the relevant facts, as they were handed down by responsible witnesses in the church (Lk. 1:1–4).

The picture which emerges is of a self-effacing man possessed of strong human sympathies who regarded himself as a servant of the Word. With his considerable literary, historical and

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theological gifts, he was well fitted to recount the story of the beginnings of Christianity in a new way, adapted to the needs of the second generation in the church.

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Acts 16:11 (ESV)

¹¹ So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis,

Acts 20:6 (ESV)

⁶ but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

Demas

Demas (Δημᾶς, *Dēmas*). Companion who deserted Paul because of his love of worldly things (Col 4:14; 2 Tim 4:10; Phlm 24).¹⁴

DEMAS. A co-worker with Paul in the first imprisonment, sending greetings in Phm. 24 and Col. 4:14. In the latter he alone is mentioned without commendation. There follows the pathetic notice of his desertion in the second imprisonment (2 Tim. 4:10; Parry neatly renders 'left me in the lurch'). Paul's words, 'in love with (*agapēsas*) this present world', suggest that personal interest, not cowardice, took Demas to Thessalonica: perhaps he was a Thessalonian. The name is not uncommon; it may be a pet-form of Demetrius. John Chapman (*JTS* 5, 1904, pp. 364ff.) argued that Demas, restored, is the Demetrius of 3 Jn. 12; but this is as conjectural as is the ugly portrait of Demas in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

A. F. Walls.¹⁵

2 Timothy 4:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

Nympha

NYMPHA Nymphas (Νύμφαν, *Nymphan*). A Christian woman in Laodicea in whose house believers gathered for worship. (Col 4:15)

Nympha was probably well-off—a small house would not have been large enough for a community of believers to meet.¹⁶

¹³ Marshall, I. H. (1996). Luke. In (D. R. W. Wood, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

¹⁴ Halcomb, T. M. W. (2012). Demas. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

¹⁵ Walls, A. F. (1996). Demas. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

¹⁶ Wentz, L. (2012). Nympha. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

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NYMPHA, NYMPHAS. Owner of a house in Laodicea (or possibly somewhere else near Colossae) in which a church met (Col. 4:15). Though many MSS read ‘his house’, as AV, most of the best read either ‘her house’ (cf. RSV, NEB) or ‘their house’ (cf. RV). The name is in the accusative and, unaccented, could represent a masculine Nymphas (pet-form for Nymphodorus?) or a feminine Nympha (cf. J. H. Moulton, *Grammar*, 1, p. 48, for alleviation of the cause of Lightfoot’s reserve). On either rendering the reading ‘their house’ is so hard to explain that it may well be correct. Perhaps it refers back to ‘the brethren which are in Laodicea’ (Lightfoot proposes a Colossian family there, or, alternatively, that *autōn* stands for ‘Nymphas and his friends’).

Nympha(s), like *PHILEMON and *ARCHIPPUS, displays Paul’s friendships (made in Ephesus?) in an area he had not visited (cf. Col. 2:1).

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Archippus

ARCHIPPUS (Ἀρχιππος, *Archippos*). A member of the church in Colossae.

Paul addresses him as “our fellow soldier” (Phlm 2 ESV). He may have been a member of Philemon’s household.

He may have held an official position in the church (Col 4:17).¹⁸

ARCHIPPUS. ‘Fellow soldier’ of Paul and Timothy (Phm. 2); the phrase implies previous service together (cf. Phil. 2:25). He is addressed with Philemon and Apphia in a manner suggesting that he may have been their son. This does not necessarily exclude the early suggestion (cf. *Theodore of Mopsuestia*, ed. Swete, I, p. 311) based on the context of Col. 4:17, and adopted with divergent conclusions by Lightfoot and Goodspeed, that the ‘ministry’ that the Colossians must exhort him to fulfil was exercised in nearby Laodicea; but the context does not demand, and may not support, this. Even if he ministered at Colossae, and the charge is to root out the heresy there (cf. W. G. Rollins, *JBL* 78, 1959, pp. 277f.), it is curious that the *church* is bidden to convey it. Even more dubious is J. Knox’s suggestion that Archippus was host to the Colossian house-church, the owner of Onesimus and the principal addressee of Philemon. The expressions in Col. 4:17 imply the reception of a tradition, and can hardly be interpreted in terms of the release of Onesimus. The precise nature of the ministry is unknown, but perhaps Paul’s old comrade-in-arms, while still linked with his home church, was again on missionary service. The solemn charge need not imply actual dereliction (cf. 2 Tim. 4:5). (*PHILEMON, EPISTLE TO)

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Philemon 2 (ESV)

² and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:

¹⁷ Walls, A. F. (1996). Nympha, Nymphas. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.) *New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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Final Greetings

2 Thessalonians 3:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.