



**Tertius of Iconium:  
Apostle Paul's Secretary**

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this epistle, greet you in the Lord."*

## Tertius of Iconium: Apostle Paul's Secretary

- Rom. 16:22 - "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord."
- Tertius of Iconium (also Tertios) acted as an amanuensis (a literary assistant, one who takes dictation or copies manuscripts) for Paul the Apostle, wrote down his epistle to the Romans

# Paul Used Scribes To Write Down His Dictation

- Jer. 36:1-8 - “Now it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: 2 Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day. 3 It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. 4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote on a scroll of a book, at the instruction of Jeremiah, all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him. 5 And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am confined, I cannot go into the house of the LORD. 6 You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written at my instruction, the words of the LORD, in the hearing of the people in the LORD'S house on the day of fasting. And you shall also read them in the hearing of all Judah who come from their cities. 7 It may be that they will present their supplication before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way. For great is the anger and the fury that the LORD has pronounced against this people. 8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading from the book the words of the LORD in the LORD'S house.”

## Paul Used Scribes To Write Down His Dictation

- Paul did it to authenticate the writing,
- As a mark of his own personal interest in his readers' wellbeing,
- And as a precaution against forgeries by false teachers
  - 1Cor. 16:21 - "The salutation with my own hand--Paul's"
  - Col. 4:18 - "This salutation by my own hand--Paul. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Amen."

## Paul Used Scribes To Write Down His Dictation

- Philemon 19 - “I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay...”
- 2Thes. 3:17 - “The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write.”
- Gal. 6:11 - “See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!”

## Paul Used Scribes To Write Down His Dictation

- Peter used a scribe
  - 1Peter 5:12 - “By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.”
- The use of a scribe had no impact on the authority of the scriptures.

# Paul Used Scribes To Write Down His Dictation

- “The fact that the Biblical writers used a scribe or an amanuensis to write down their words does not affect Bible authority. The words and thoughts were Paul's own which the Holy Spirit directed. The scribe only recorded his words. The same holds true for the writings of the prophet Jeremiah and of Peter. The actual written words were the ones the Lord had given them. ... The fact that they did not actually do the physical writing has nothing to do with the Divine inspiration of the finished product. It was Paul's work guided by the Holy Spirit. The same is true for the writings of the prophet Jeremiah and the Apostle Peter. The key is where the words originated, not who put them into written form.”

*([https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don\\_stewart\\_1243.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart_1243.cfm))*

## Paul Used Scribes To Write Down His Dictation

- “It was common in rabbinic literature to mention the name of an amanuensis. (*Edwards, Romans: Understanding the Bible Commentary Series, 361*)
- “The sender of a letter in antiquity, after dictating most of it, frequently wrote the last few words in his own hand.” (*F. F. Bruce, Romans, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, 265*)



# What Kind Of Man Was Tertius?

- His greeting, which was permitted by the Holy Spirit, is very brief and to the point.
- His greeting implies humility. He did not inflate his role as companion and aid to the apostle
  - 1Cor. 1:26, 29 - “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called... 29 That no flesh should glory in His presence.”

# What Kind Of Man Was Tertius?

- His greeting suggests an interest in the Roman disciples.
- His greeting underlines the fellowship they share in the Lord.
  - 1Peter 2:17 - “...Love the brotherhood...”
  - 1Peter 5:9 - “...Knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”

# How Important Was Tertius' Work?

- His role as a scribe was very humble, but as necessary as Paul's inspiration and zeal.
- There is dignity, reward, and empowerment in subordinate work
  - Mark 9:41 - "For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

# How Important Was Tertius' Work?

- 1Cor. 16:15-18 - "I urge you, brethren--you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints-- 16 that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us. 17 I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. 18 For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men."

# How Important Was Tertius' Work?

- His role as a subordinate required integrity and careful attention to detail.
- His role as a subordinate did not require an ongoing public profile. His focus was on his work and his support of the apostle's inspiration

# The Epistle To The Romans

- The Epistle to the Romans is Paul's magnum opus; the weightiest, longest, and most influential of the apostle's writings.
- It is the only letter that he wrote to a church that he did not begin

# The Epistle To The Romans

- Rom. 1:10-12, 15 - "Making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established-- 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me... So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also."
- Rom. 15:24, 28 - "Whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while... Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain."

# The Epistle To The Romans

- Some of Paul's company was with him in Corinth when he wrote Romans:
  - Timothy, Luke, Jason, and Sosipater
- A few Corinthian disciples sent their greetings as well:
  - Gaius the host, Erastus the city treasurer, and Quartus



# How Much Work Was Involved In Writing Romans?

- “Some have approximated an amanuensis’ pace to be 11 words per minute. Given the time necessary to take normal dictation in antiquity, Paul may have taken over eleven hours to dictate this letter to Tertius.
- “Given the cost of papyrus and of the labor required (though Tertius, a believer, would have donated his services), scholars estimate the cost of Romans at 20.68 denarii, which is roughly \$2,275.00 in US currency.
- “The travel time to deliver a letter from Corinth to Rome by sea would have been about ten days; the same letter would have taken about two months to travel by land from Corinth to Rome.
- “In other words, Paul did not simply offer this project as an afterthought; Romans is a carefully premeditated work.” (*Keener, Romans: New Covenant Commentary Series, 1-2*)

# Tertius Modeled Integrity

- Integrity is honesty, faithfulness, sincerity, and innocence; free from dishonesty and deception.
- “Integrity is telling myself the truth. And honesty is telling the truth to other people.” (Spencer Johnson)
- Integrity is integrating faith and morals into daily actions.
- Integrity pleases God. Integrity simply means “You can count on me, I'll keep my word, I'll be true. I am not for sale at any price.”
- Integrity is aged Polycarp about to be executed but offered his release if he would denounce his faith in Christ. He answered without wavering, “Eighty and six years have I served my Lord and He has done me no ill. I cannot recant.”

# Tertius Modeled Integrity

- Wisdom and integrity
  - Prov. 10:9 - “He who walks with integrity walks securely,  
But he who perverts his ways will become known.”
  - Prov. 28:6 - “Better is the poor who walks in his integrity  
Than one perverse in his ways, though he be rich.”
  - Prov. 11:3 - “The integrity of the upright will guide them,  
But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.”
  - Prov. 21:3 - “To do righteousness and justice Is more  
acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.”

# Tertius Modeled Integrity

- Integrity and the Law of Christ
  - 1Peter 3:16 - “Having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.”
  - Col. 3:23 - “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men”

# Tertius Modeled Integrity

- Luke 16:10 - “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.”
- 2Cor. 8:21 - “Providing honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”
- Titus 2:7 - “In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility”

# Tertius Modeled Integrity

- “I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions.”  
*(Lillian Hellman)*
- “If it is not right do not do it; if it is not true do not say it. Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one.”  
*(Marcus Aurelius)*
- “Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody’s going to know whether you did it or not.” *(Oprah Winfrey)*
- Phil. 4:8 - “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-- meditate on these things.”