

Archippus the Procrastinator?

It has become a bit of a puzzle and source for jokes in New Testament studies: What was Archippus's unfinished task?

Archippus appears to have been a family member of Philemon who lived in or near Colossae. Paul calls him a "fellow soldier" in his personal letter to Philemon (v. 2).

In Colossians, he is the only member of the community to be mentioned by name, and this is only because he is to receive a private message from Paul: "Say to Archippus, 'See that you complete the task you received in the Lord'" (4:17).

Is this simple encouragement or a discreet rebuke? Has Archippus been slow to fulfill some duty? This was, and remains, a private matter, but interpreters throughout the ages have taken the word to Archippus as a directive for all procrastinators.