

An All-Star Cast

The brief letter to Philemon features cameo appearances by some very big names. All the folks who send greetings in verses 23–24 are mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.

- *Epaphras* (Col. 1:7; 4:12): the missionary who evangelized Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis.
- *Mark* (Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37, 39; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11; possibly 1 Pet. 5:13): also known as John Mark, a relative of Barnabas; Paul has troubles with him in Acts, but letters ascribed to Paul indicate that they are on good terms at a later point in his ministry; he is identified in church tradition as the author of the Gospel of Mark.
- *Aristarchus* (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2; Col. 4:10): from Thessalonica, a long-time companion of Paul who was sometimes imprisoned with him.
- *Demas* (Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:10): a sometime companion of Paul who, according to 2 Timothy, later deserted him.
- *Luke* (Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; possibly all of the “We Passages” in Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16): known as the “beloved physician,” he is traditionally identified as the author of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts and as a companion of Paul on portions of his first and third missionary journeys and his voyage to Rome.
- And, of course, in verse 1, the letter's cowriter, *Timothy* (Acts 16:1, 3; 17:14–15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4; Rom. 16:21; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; 2 Cor. 1:1, 19; Phil. 1:1; 2:19; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 3:2, 6; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:2, 18; 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:2).