



Philemon

Paul strongly recommends that Philemon accept his runaway slave as a brother, not a slave.

Author: Paul

In Philemon – Jesus is our Mediator

Philemon 25 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

TEACHER: 1 CHAPTER

Philemon was a wealthy Christian from Asia Minor, married to Apphia, and the 2 of them set up a church in their home after Paul led them both to Christ. According to early church records, they were martyred when Nero killed many in the church at Colossae during the 1st general persecution of the Christians. Philemon headed the church in Gaza up to that point. Paul opens with his customary salutation.

The reason Paul was writing to Philemon was Paul had converted a gentleman named Onesimus to Christ. Paul would soon find out that Onesimus was the runaway slave of Paul's friend Philemon. It is important to note that this was not slavery as we think of slavery in our history in America. This was a case of indentured servitude. Indentured servitude was a voluntary, or sometimes court ordered servanthood to pay off a debt. If ones family was poor, you could hire yourself on as a servant to a rich family, work for several years and receive a lump sum, or have your debts paid when the service was completed. Onesimus ran from his obligation before the debt was paid. Let's read.

STUDENT:

CH. 1

¹ From Paul, a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy—

To our friend and fellow worker Philemon, ² and the church that meets in your house, and our sister Apphia, and our fellow soldier Archippus:

³ May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. (GNT)

TEACHER:

As we just read, another prison epistle. Archippus mentioned here by Paul was, according to 4th century Apostolic Constitutions, would eventually be in charge of the churches in Laodicea and Phrygia. Paul lauds Philemon's love and faith.

STUDENT:

⁴ Brother Philemon, every time I pray, I mention you and give thanks to my God. ⁵ For I hear of your love for all of God's people and the faith you have in the Lord Jesus. ⁶ My prayer is that our fellowship with you as believers will bring about a deeper understanding of every blessing which we have in our life in union with Christ. ⁷ Your love, dear brother, has brought me great joy and much encouragement! You have cheered the hearts of all of God's people. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Paul next says that even though he could order him, he is requesting from him to do what is right.

STUDENT:

⁸ For this reason I could be bold enough, as your brother in Christ, to order you to do what should be done. ⁹ But because I love you, I make a request instead. I do this even though I am Paul, the ambassador of Christ Jesus, and at present also a prisoner for his sake. ¹⁰ So I make a request to you on behalf of Onesimus, who is my own son in Christ; for while in prison I have become his spiritual father. ¹¹ At one time he was of no use to you, but now he is useful both to you and to me. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Paul feels that this would be a blessing to both Paul and Philemon. Paul is hoping that Philemon can forgive Onesimus.

STUDENT:

¹² I am sending him back to you now, and with him goes my heart. ¹³ I would like to keep him here with me, while I am in prison for the gospel's sake, so that he could help me in your place. ¹⁴ However, I do not want to force you to help me; rather, I would like for you to do it of your own free will. So I will not do anything unless you agree. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Paul further explains that it may even have been the hand of God that set the events in motion.

STUDENT:

¹⁵ It may be that Onesimus was away from you for a short time so that you might have him back for all time. ¹⁶ And now he is not just a slave, but much more than a slave: he is a dear brother in Christ. How much he means to me! And how much more he will mean to you, both as a slave and as a brother in the Lord! (GNT)

TEACHER:

Paul calls in an old favor, reminding Philemon that he was saved through Paul's ministry.

STUDENT:

¹⁷ So, if you think of me as your partner, welcome him back just as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to my account. ¹⁹ Here, I will write this with my own hand: *I, Paul, will pay you back* (I should not have to remind you, of course, that you owe your very self to me.) ²⁰ So, my brother, please do me this favor for the Lord's sake; as a brother in Christ, cheer me up! (GNT)

TEACHER:

Paul shows his confidence that Philemon will do as Paul requests.

STUDENT:

²¹ I am sure, as I write this, that you will do what I ask—in fact I know that you will do even more. ²² At the same time, get a room ready for me, because I hope that God will answer the prayers of all of you and give me back to you. (GNT)

TEACHER:

As he closes, notice that 2 gospel writers are with Paul in Rome. Mark and Luke.

STUDENT:

²³ Epaphras, who is in prison with me for the sake of Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings, ²⁴ and so do my co-workers Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke.

²⁵ May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. (GNT)

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NEXT LESSON HEBREWS

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*May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
give you grace and peace.*

Philemon 1:3

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



The GLORY GOSSIP Gals

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Adding a gossip section to the Sunday Bulletin at Pilgrim Church in GreenBlow, PA upped readership by 33%.

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



After Randy fell asleep in church AGAIN.. Practical Joke playing Pastor Pete leaves the note.. JESUS HAS RETURNED! scaring Randy into believing he was LEFT BEHIND.

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



12.7% of coffee drinkers will make an ill timed exit during the Sunday morning service.

