

## Philemon;

A case study for understanding the reunion of the Church with the Father, through Christ.

Philemon is about reconciliation and relationships between Christians. Onesimus (which means “useful”) was a slave of a believer named Philemon in Colossae. Apparently Onesimus had stolen from Philemon and fled. At some time while Paul was under arrest, Onesimus met him and became a Christian. Paul apparently wrote this letter at the same time as Colossians and gave it to Onesimus to carry back to Philemon (see Col 4:9). Paul appealed to Philemon to accept Onesimus back into his household, but as a brother in the Lord rather than a slave. In Paul's estimation, Onesimus was far more “useful” (v. 11) now that he was a Christian. Paul even promised to pay whatever debt Onesimus might owe Philemon.

Phm 1:1 From: Paul, a prisoner of the Messiah Jesus, and Timothy our brother. To: Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, [a believer of some wealth]

Phm 1:2 to Apphia our sister, [wife of Philemon] to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house.

Phm 1:3 May grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, be yours!

Phm 1:4 I always thank my God when I mention you in my prayers,

Phm 1:5 because I keep hearing about your love for all the saints and the faith that you have in the Lord Jesus.

Phm 1:6 I pray that your partnership in the faith may become effective as you fully acknowledge every blessing that is ours in the Messiah.

Phm 1:7 For I have received considerable joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed, brother, through you. [Phil is doing a great job]

Phm 1:8 For this reason, although in the Messiah I have complete freedom to order you to do what is proper, [because Phil is doing well, Paul is going to make a request out of love instead of force. Just like God wants us to do what is right because HE first loved us, freedom of choice]

Phm 1:9 I prefer to make my appeal on the basis of love. I, Paul, as an old man and now a prisoner of the Messiah Jesus, [“take into account my sacrifice on your behalf”]

Phm 1:10 appeal to you on behalf of my child Onesimus, [a runaway slave] whose father I have become during my imprisonment.

Phm 1:11 Once he was useless to you, but now he is very useful both to you and to me.

Phm 1:12 As I send him back, it's like I'm coming along with him.

Col 1:27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

So... Philemon is in the role of God, the master; Onesimus is in the role of the repentant believer; and Paul is in the role of Christ, the mediator between God and man.

1Ti 2:5 There is one God. There is also one mediator between God and human beings—a human, the Messiah Jesus.

Heb 9:15 This is why the Messiah is the mediator of a new covenant; so that those who are called may receive the eternal inheritance promised them, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the offenses committed under the first covenant.

Phm 1:13 I wanted to keep him with me so that he could serve me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel. [Paul loved Onesimus like Christ loves the church]

Phm 1:14 Yet I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that your good deed might not be something forced, but voluntary. [“Thy will be done”]

Phm 1:15 Perhaps this is why he was separated from you for a while, so that you could have him back forever, [this is illustrated by the Tower of Babel event,]

Gen 11:7 Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.”

Gen 11:8 So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.

Gen 11:9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

Deu 32:8 When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. [the watchers from the angelic council, intended to be guides but became gods]

Deu 32:9 But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob [Israel] his allotted heritage.

Isa 54:6 For the LORD has called you [Gentiles] like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God

[divorce was required in cases of adultery, according to Mosaic Law]

[Worshiping other gods is compared to adultery and fornication throughout scripture]

Isa 54:7 For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you.

Isa 54:8 In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer.

Isa 54:14 In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and [you shall be far] from terror, for it shall not come near you.

Isa 54:15 If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you.

Isa 54:16 Behold, I have created the smith [Jesus] who blows the fire of coals [shakes things up] and produces a weapon for its purpose. [the Church] I have also created the ravager [spoiler] to destroy [bind]; [the Holy Spirit to restrain evil until the end times]

Isa 54:17 no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.”

[God wants us to reconcile with HIM]

Phm 1:16 no longer as a slave but better than a slave—as a dear brother, especially to me, but even more so to you, both as a person and as a believer.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Rom 8:17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Phm 1:17 So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.

Phm 1:18 If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge it to my account.

1Pe 1:18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold,

1Pe 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,

Phm 1:19 I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. (I will not mention to you that you owe me your very life.)

Phm 1:20 Yes, brother, I desire this favor from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in the Messiah!

Phm 1:21 Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you because I know that you will do even more than I ask.

Phm 1:22 Meanwhile, prepare a guest room for me, too, for I am hoping through your prayers to be returned to you.

Phm 1:23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in the Messiah Jesus, sends you greetings,

Phm 1:24 as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

Phm 1:25 May the grace of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, be with your spirit! Amen.