



A Changed Man (Philemon 1)

Exactly the Way it is Supposed to Be!

“**Paul**, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, **and Timothy** our brother, To Philemon our beloved friend and fellow laborer, to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Philemon 1:1-3 NKJV

“I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, **hearing of your love and faith** which you have **toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints**, that the **sharing of your faith** may become effective by the acknowledgment of **every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus**. For we have **great joy and consolation in your love**, because **the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you**, brother.” Philemon 1:4-7 NKJV

Philemon 1:1-7

☑ *Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother...*

Philemon 1:1

☑ Authors

- ☑ It would seem that Timothy (to whom Paul addressed Timothy 1 and 2, is helping an aged Paul write this letter.
- ☑ *“I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, **hearing of your love and faith** which you have **toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints,**” Philemon 1:4-5
NKJV*

☑ Love and Faith

- ☑ This often forgotten letter is written to a man who has an amazing testimony. Can you imagine the Apostle Paul, the most prolific writer of the New Testament, officially recognizing how you show up in the faith community? We know that everything begins with Faith (*“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained **like precious faith** with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:” II Peter 1:1 NKJV*) and culminates with Love, if you are fully manifesting that faith. (*“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, **add to your faith** virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness*

*brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness **love.**"* ||
Peter 1:5-7 NKJV)

☑ **That which you've done to the least of your brothers...**

☑ How is this love and faith manifesting?

☑ It is showing up in the two places that it matters most, toward Y'shua and toward the brothers in the faith.

☑ There is no better way to learn this, other than the words of Y'shua Himself!

☑ *““When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.**’ “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You*

*drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, **inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.**’” Matthew 25:31-40 NKJV*

☑ *“that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the **acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.**” Philemon 1:6 NKJV*

☑ **Philemon knows it is not about him...**

☑ Paul compliments him and at the same time acknowledges that humans without Christ produce nothing good. He also makes the awesome distinction that Philemon knows this, which makes his testimony pure, and all the more powerful.

☑ **On your own, there is nothing good!**

☑ In me (on my own) there is nothing good!

☑ *“For I know **that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells**; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.” Romans 7:18 NKJV*

☑ We all fall short!

- ☑ *“for **all have sinned and fall short** of the glory of God,”*
Romans 3:23 NKJV
- ☑ It’s Christ in me that is anything good!
- ☑ *“I have been crucified with Christ; **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”* Galatians 2:20 NKJV
- ☑ James gets in on the action—All good things come from Him (not yourself)!
- ☑ *“**Do not be deceived**, my beloved brethren. **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father** of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. **Of His own will He brought us forth** by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”* James 1:16-18
NKJV

- ☑ *“For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.”*
Philemon 1:7 NKJV
- ☑ **When you bless the saints—it blesses me!**
- ☑ Paul is just the quintessential leader. Can you recognize the Christ-like position he takes here? Can you see the

example he sets, even in a simple letter? When you bless your brothers in the faith, you are also blessing me. Of course this is the very heart of Christ. But, Paul takes it a step further; as he understands that we are supposed to stand in for Christ as His ambassadors. Yes, you bless Christ when you bless others, but you also bless me when you bless others.

☑ *“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.”* II Corinthians 5:20 NKJV

☑ What does that look like?

☑ *“Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”*

Matthew 25:40

☑ See KEM Sermon [New Wineskins II](#), where you will learn that, as Christians, you are not only authorized by Christ to live an overcoming life, but that you are also authorized to authorize others!

From Slave to Beloved Brother

“Therefore, though **I might be very bold in Christ to command you** what is fitting, **yet for love’s sake I rather appeal to you**—being

such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ— **I appeal to you for my son Onesimus**, whom I have begotten while in my chains, **who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me. I am sending him back.** You therefore **receive him**, that is, my own heart, whom I wished to keep with me, that **on your behalf he might minister to me** in my chains for the gospel. **But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary. For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose**, that you might receive him forever, **no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother**, especially to me but how much more to you, **both in the flesh and in the Lord.**”

Philemon 1:8-16 NKJV

Philemon 1:8-16

☑ *“Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ **to command you** what is fitting, yet for love’s sake **I rather appeal to you—** being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ—” Philemon 1:8-9 NKJV*

☑ **A new brand of leadership...**

☑ There are two types of leadership—one that lords over subjects and one that serves. Y’shua’s brand was obvious!

☑ *“And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise **Lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’** But not so among you; **on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.** For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.”*

Luke 22:25-27 NKJV

☑ **Paul was not there—but the Spirit revealed this to him!**

☑ At the Last Supper table!

☑ *“**So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.**”* John 13:12-17 NKJV

☑ Paul saw this all in the Spirit...

- ☑ *“For **I received from the Lord** that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus **on the same night in which He was betrayed** took bread;”* I Corinthians 11:23 NKJV
- ☑ **So, what does Paul do?**
 - ☑ He appeals to Philemon, rather than command him!
- ☑ *“**I appeal to you** for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, **who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.**”* Philemon 1:10-11 NKJV
- ☑ **Onesimus**
 - ☑ Paul loves to call his spiritual children “sons” and Onesimus has become such a son. He acknowledges how valuable he has been, as a disciple, and also that at one point he was quite useless to Philemon. He now declares that Onesimus is not only valuable to him, but will be of great value to Philemon, if he accepts him back.
- ☑ **Stay tuned to discover what the relationship between Onesimus and Philemon once was!**
- ☑ *“**I am sending him back.** You therefore **receive him**, that is, my own heart, whom I **wished to keep with me, that on your***

behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel.”

Philemon 1:12-13 NKJV

☑ **I am sending him back to you and here is my request...**

☑ Receive him! I acknowledge that he may not have left you under the best of circumstances, but I am asking you to take him back. **He’s a changed man!** And consider this; I would love to keep him as he has been such a value to me, as a prisoner for the Gospel. And that is what you should take into consideration. Yes, he left you, but look how important he was to me. Think of it this way. Because he was in your house, and left you to serve me, it is a credit to you that I have been served.

☑ *“But **without your consent I wanted to do nothing**, that your good deed might **not be by compulsion**, as it were, **but voluntary.**” Philemon 1:14 NKJV*

☑ **And even after saying all this, I make no demands...**

☑ Even with how strongly I feel about Onesimus returning to you, and even though I have a position of great authority, I make no demands. I am actually seeking your consent, as I’d rather it be a voluntary gesture on your part than insistence on my part. This is how real serving leadership works.

☑ So, who was Onesimus to Philemon anyway?

☑ “For **perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose**, that you might **receive him forever, no longer as a slave** but more than a slave—**a beloved brother**, especially to me but how much more to you, **both in the flesh and in the Lord.**”

Philemon 1:15-16 NKJV

☑ **Onesimus was Philemon’s slave!**

☑ This is where it gets complicated. It would seem that Onesimus was a slave who maybe left Philemon’s employment on bad terms, likely without permission. That can cause some bad blood. Yet, Paul is encouraging Philemon, even revealing a deeper reason why God had Onesimus do so. It was all for the purpose of serving Paul. That’s a big deal. If you can recognize this Philemon, then you should be able to receive him back into your fold, no longer as a slave, but as a free man, a brother. And not just a brother in the Spiritual sense, but as a brother in the natural. In other words, as an equal, both in the Spirit and in the flesh.

Put it on My Account—if that's What it Takes!

“**If then** you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me. **But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account.** I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that **you owe me** even your own self besides. Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord. **Having confidence in your obedience,** I write to you, knowing that **you will do even more than I say.** But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.” Philemon 1:17-22 NKJV

“Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.” Philemon 1:23-25 NKJV

Philemon 1:17-25

☑ *“If then you count me as a **partner, receive him as you would me.** But if he has wronged you or owes anything, **put that on my account.**” Philemon 1:17-18 NKJV*

☑ Consider him my proxy...

☑ If it makes it any easier, think of him as standing in for me, as my representative among your community.

☑ Put it on my account

☑ I understand their are practical implications here as well. So, if he actually owes you anything, put it on my tab. I'll cover all his expenses if that's what it takes in the natural to have a clean slate.

☑ *"I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. **I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides.** Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord."* Philemon 1:19-20 NKJV

☑ **If it helps, let me remind you of something...**

☑ Let me jog your memory "Phil"; Yes, I will repay you anything you've lost because of Onesimus' actions. But, it might serve you best to remember your own life prior to meeting me. In other words, I was instrumental in bringing you to Christ, and the life you now live, you wouldn't have if it wasn't for that. That should count big time as you weigh your decision.

☑ **Plus...It would give me great joy!**

☑ This is the type of fruit in ministry that makes all the persecution worth it. What an amazing testimony this will be. This type of reconciliation doesn't happen anywhere else. This circumstance would turn out very badly in a secular setting! But, we are different. We now

live in an upside down kingdom, and our outcomes should be quite the opposite of the world's outcomes!

- ☑ *“**Having confidence in your obedience**, I write to you, knowing that **you will do even more than I say.**” Philemon 1:21 NKJV*
- ☑ **I’m pretty confident you’ll do the right thing!**
- ☑ As a matter of fact, I’m convinced you will do even more than I am hoping for. Why? Because that is simply how the Lord works. He always gives us more than we can imagine.
- ☑ **I wrote about that to the Ephesians!**
- ☑ *“Now to Him who is able to **do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us**, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”*
Ephesians 3:20-21 NKJV
- ☑ *“But, meanwhile, also **prepare a guest room for me**, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.” Philemon 1:22 NKJV*
- ☑ **Let’s believe in this as well...**

- ☑ I know you are praying for me, so let's believe that I will be released from prison and will also be able to join you. Keep the bed warm and the pillows fluffed because, "... *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*" James 5:16 NKJV

- ☑ *"Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."* Philemon 1:23-25 NKJV

- ☑ **There are a lot of us in the fight...**

- ☑ You are not alone in the battle!

NEXT WEEK

No Other Doctrine (I Timothy 1:1-11)