

Philemon

The goal of this Bible Class is to give the students a working knowledge of the book of Philemon. It is based on an expository approach to teaching the Bible, preparing the students for the worship of our Savior. The material in the lesson is to be viewed by the teacher as thematic suggestions to help with preparation. While the lesson is not intended to be read to the class word for word, the main ideas should be the substance of what is taught. The teacher, in preparation for the class, should consider reading through the whole curriculum before beginning the class, as well as the book of Philemon several times. This will provide the instructor with a broad and comprehensive understanding of the book as it is being taught.

It is important that the instructor be not only knowledgeable about the material, but also able to teach it with enthusiasm and conviction. Students best learn from teachers that are themselves excited about the scriptures. The use of maps, diagrams, white boards etc. is extremely helpful. Some of these have been provided in the curriculum. It is suggested that the class be conducted in an interactive manner. This can be accomplished by having them read short portions of the scripture texts, asking them questions, and wholeheartedly encouraging them to ask questions. All students should be encouraged to bring a Bible to class.

The inclusion of the Westminster Shorter Catechism as part of the curriculum is designed to help the students acquire a broad understanding of Christian doctrine along with the specific Bible teaching. The Elders of the church will coordinate the specific questions and answers to be used in the class.

It will become evident to the teacher that this course curriculum, while not dealing with every verse and concept in the book of Philemon, is comprehensive and deeply theological. It is designed to help the students understand the book in their wider biblical context, with emphasis on its place in the redemptive history of God's covenant people. The students will be confronted with and asked to understand and remember fairly difficult concepts. It should be remembered that children are able to comprehend much more than we often give them credit for. While this class will be a challenge for both the teacher and the students, the rewards for the efforts of those in the class will be surprising and exciting.

In preparation for these lessons, it would also be helpful to consult some of the following:

Heil, John Paul, "The Chiastic Structure and Meaning of Paul's Letter to Philemon";

Biblica

82 (2001) 178-206

Hendrickson, William, *New Testament Commentary, Colossians, Philemon*, (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House, 1964)

Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, (Peabody, MS, Hendrickson Publishers, 1991)

Wright, N.T., *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries – Colossians and Philemon*, (Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986)

Philemon – Reconciliation to Profitability

Objective – To introduce the students to the authorship, historical and theological context, main teachings and literary flow of the book of Philemon whose theme is one of reconciliation for the good of the work of the Kingdom of God.

❖ **Greetings** – Pray with the students for the Lord’s blessing on their class this term

❖ **Attendance and Accountability**

Introduce yourself

Introduce your substitute teacher

The teacher is asked to take attendance at the beginning of each class period in order to provide encouragement and extra help to students when they miss a class.

Make sure all class members know each other’s **names**.

Requirements – Writing utensils, Bibles, a good night’s sleep

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism** – Briefly go over the question(s) and answer(s) for this quarter.

❖ **Memory verses** – Philemon 10-12 – I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who was once unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and me. I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart.

❖ **Lesson – Philemon**

I. Introduction to Philemon (Have one or several students read this whole letter aloud)

A. Authorship – Paul - In verse 1 of Philemon, Paul (along with Timothy) identifies himself as the author of this letter. Paul’s name is mentioned two other times in Philemon (see 9, 19) and, in verse 19, Paul says that he wrote the letter with his own hand.

B. Summary – While in prison in Rome, Paul met and converted Onesimus. Onesimus is a slave from Colossae who has run away (and possibly stolen) from Philemon, his master, who was earlier converted under Paul’s ministry. Paul is sending Onesimus back to his master with the letter of appeal to Philemon to accept his slave back as a Christian brother and to forgive any wrong that Onesimus had done to him. Paul’s ultimate desire seems to be for Philemon to release Onesimus to return to Paul to help him with his ministry.

C. Themes – Though Paul does not give any direct doctrinal instruction in it, his letter to Philemon is filled with many wonderful gospel themes and applications:

- **Thanksgiving** – Paul expresses thanksgiving towards the Lord concerning Philemon (v. 4)
- **Praise** – Paul praises the Lord and Philemon (v. 4-7) and Onesimus (v. 10-15)
- **Prayer** – Paul prays for Philemon (and perhaps the church in his home – v. 4) and asks Philemon to pray for him (v. 22)
- **Love** – Paul expresses love towards Philemon and Onesimus and Philemon has expressed

- love towards the Lord and the saints (v. 5)
- Justice – Paul sends Onesimus, the runaway slave, back to Philemon his master (v. 12)
- Salvation – Both Onesimus and Philemon were brought to Christ through Paul’s ministry (v. 10,19)
- Sovereignty – Paul states that perhaps God had allowed Onesimus to run away so that Philemon could receive him back as a beloved brother in Christ (v. 15)
- Forgiveness – Paul urges Philemon to receive Onesimus back and to forgive his debt (v. 12-16)
- Reconciliation – Paul seeks to bring Philemon and Onesimus together as brothers in Christ (v. 16)
- Substitutionary atonement – Paul offers to repay Philemon for whatever debt Onesimus owes him (v. 18)
- Fathers/Sons/Brothers – Paul is a spiritual father, both to Philemon (v. 19) and to Onesimus (v. 10). Paul calls Timothy (v. 2) and Philemon (v. 7, 20) his brother and urges Philemon to consider Onesimus his brother as well (v. 16)

D. Historical Context – Three times in Philemon, Paul calls himself a prisoner (see vs. 1,9,23). In verse 13, Paul indicates that he is in “chains for the gospel”. **Paul likely wrote this letter during his first imprisonment in Rome**, a two year period somewhere between 59-64 A.D. Many Bible scholars place the date of the writing of Philemon around **60 A.D.** Timothy, Mark, Luke and other believers are with Paul in Rome. (see v. 1, 22-24)

E. Geographical Context – If Archippus, who is mentioned in verse 1 of Philemon, is the same person mentioned in Colossians 4:17, then it would seem that the intended readers were in **Colossae**.

F. Biblical Context - In his letter to Philemon, Paul says that he is sending Onesimus back to Philemon, and in Colossians 4:9, Onesimus is identified as one who will be coming to Colossae with Tychicus (the one who delivered the letter to the Colossians). Thus it is likely that **Paul wrote Philemon at the same time that he wrote the letter to the Colossians**.

G. Audience - In verse 1, Paul addresses his letter primarily to **Philemon**. However, it is also written to Apphia (perhaps Philemon’s wife), Archippus (perhaps another relative of Philemon, some say his son), and to the church that met in Philemon’s house.

II. Outline of Philemon

A simple, three part outline for Philemon that is easy to memorize could look like this:

Philemon - Greeting and praise – Verses 1-7

Philemon – Be reconciled to Onesimus - Verses 8-19

Philemon - Praise and farewell – Verses 20-25

For the purposes of study and application, we will use a nine part chiastic outline of Philemon developed by John Paul Heil. **(Be sure each student has a copy of this outline)**

We will go through this outline first in its verse order as an overview of the book. We will then use the various matching sections of the outline to consider the letter in more detail.

III. Philemon - Overview (Go through this section rather briskly! Alternately, the teacher could skip this section and proceed immediately to section IV)

A. Paul's Greeting - Verses 1-3 – Paul identifies himself as the author of this letter and as a “prisoner of Christ Jesus” (probably in Rome). He (along with Timothy) addresses his letter to Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and to the church that meets in Philemon’s house. Paul gives them his customary greeting, “Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”.

B. Philemon's Love - Verses 4-7 – Paul thanks the Lord for Philemon’s faith and love which has been evident in the way Philemon has shared his faith and has given himself in service to the saints. He also expresses the desire that the Lord would use their partnership in the faith to do many good deeds in the Kingdom of God.

C. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus - Verses 8-10 – Paul prefaces his request by stating that, although (as an apostle) he could command Philemon to obey his request, yet, for love’s sake, Paul would rather appeal to Philemon regarding Onesimus, who has come to faith in Jesus under his ministry.

D. Onesimus, Paul's Heart - Verses 11-13 - Paul tells Philemon that Onesimus has become dear and profitable to him and that he is sending him back to Philemon to be reconciled to him, perhaps for the purpose of later rejoining Paul in his ministry of the gospel

E. Paul's Appeal to Philemon - Verse 14 - Paul says that he didn’t want to compel Philemon to receive Onesimus back as a brother in Christ (and perhaps to release Onesimus to return to Paul), but he is urging Philemon to do this voluntarily.

D' Onesimus, Philemon's Brother Verses 15-17 – Paul tells Philemon that perhaps the Lord allowed Onesimus to escape in order that Philemon might be able to receive him back as a brother in Christ. Paul urges Philemon to receive Onesimus as he would Paul himself.

C' Paul's Intercession for Onesimus - Verses 18-19 – Paul intercedes for Onesimus before Philemon, offering to take any rebuke, punishment, or debt that Onesimus owes Philemon onto himself. He urges Philemon to remember that he owes his new life in Christ to Paul.

B' Philemon's Obedience - Verses 20-22 – Paul urges Philemon to bring joy and refreshment to him by granting his request and he expresses confidence that Philemon will do even more than Paul asks. He then goes on to ask Philemon to prepare a room for him in the event of his release from prison.

A' Paul's Farewell - Verses 23-25 – Paul ends his letter to Philemon by sending greetings from some of the saints who are in Rome with him and with a benediction that is similar to his opening greeting: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen”

IV. Philemon – Outline Correlations and Details

A. Paul’s Greeting - Verses 1-3 / A’ Paul’s Farewell - Verses 23-25

The book-ends (beginning and end) of Paul’s letter to Philemon emphasize two great truths of the gospel:

1) Grace and Peace - Notice the similarity between the greeting (v. 3) and the benediction (v. 25) that Paul gives to Philemon and the saints in Colossae (**Have a student read these verses**). It is only by the **grace** of God in Jesus that we are saved from our sins, sanctified to live holy lives and empowered for the Kingdom work He has for us to do. Through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus we now have **peace** with God and all other Christians.

2) Fellowship - Paul uses the word **“fellow”** four times in these two sections. All Christians are fellow prisoners of the Lord Jesus, fellow workers/soldiers in His Kingdom and brothers and sisters in the Lord. We are the body of Christ!

It is on the basis of these two truths that Paul can make his appeal to Philemon regarding Onesimus, who has become his brother in Christ.

The name **“Philemon”** means “one who kisses another in friendship” – In a sense, this is what Paul will ask Philemon to do regarding Onesimus.

B. Philemon’s Love - Verses 4-7 / B’ Philemon’s Obedience - Verses 20-22

The Lord has done a great work, both in Philemon’s own life, and through his life to other Christians. The Greek word translated “hearts” in verses 7, 12, and 20 (“bowels” in the King James version) is *splagchnon* (“of the spleen”) which refers to the seat of kind affections such as benevolence, mercy and love. Philemon has **refreshed the hearts** of the saints and has brought great **joy** to Paul and his fellow workers in Rome (v. 7) and Paul thanks the Lord for this and prays that, through their partnership (“sharing” NKJV) in the faith, many more will be blessed and won to Christ (v. 6). Near the end of his letter, Paul urges Philemon to once again give him **joy** and **refreshment of heart** in the Lord by granting his request concerning Onesimus (v. 20).

Paul trusts so much in the work of the Holy Spirit in Philemon’s life that he can say with confidence that Philemon will do even more than he asks! (v. 21). Many Bible commentators believe that this may refer to Paul’s desire that Philemon would not only be reconciled to Onesimus, but that he would also joyfully send Onesimus back to Paul to help him in the work of the gospel in Rome. We too must be willing to be reconciled to our brothers and sisters in Christ and so release them from any debt they owe us to do the gospel work that the Lord has for them.

Notice also the emphasis that Paul places on **prayer**, both for Philemon (v. 4) and for himself that he might soon be released from prison and once again be able to have fellowship with Philemon and stay at his house (v. 22). Our lives ought to be marked by consistent, fervent prayer for one another, asking the Lord to bless and empower each other for the work we have to do in His Kingdom.

C. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus - Verses 8-10 / C' Paul's Intercession for Onesimus – Verses 18-19

In these two sections we learn that both Philemon (v. 19) and Onesimus (v. 10) owe their new life of faith in Jesus Christ to Paul. Paul is a spiritual father and a true representative of Jesus to both of these men and thus is in position to direct their reconciliation.

And, like Christ, Paul:

1) Exerts his authority in love (v. 8-9) – Because of his position as an apostle in the church and as Philemon's spiritual father, Paul could command Philemon to obey his request. But like Jesus, Paul acts out of love for Philemon, his spiritual son, and appeals to him instead.

2) Lays down his life (v. 18) – Like Jesus, Paul is willing to lay down his own life and sacrificially give to Philemon anything that he thinks Onesimus owes him, whether it be repentance, or restitution (recall Mark 10:45 and John 3:16).

However, in verse 19, Paul reminds Philemon that he has been used directly by the Lord to bring salvation to Philemon. The Lord, through Paul has been merciful to Philemon and has laid his debt of sin onto Jesus. Philemon ought to be willing to forgive Onesimus' debt as well, not requiring a strict repayment of it, either from Onesimus or from Paul.

D. Onesimus, Paul's Heart -Verses 11-13 / D' Onesimus, Philemon's Brother Verses 15-17

The name "Onesimus" means "**profitable**" or "useful" and Paul uses this interesting fact in his persuasion of Philemon. Since running away, Onesimus has been "**unprofitable**" to Philemon (and to God) (v. 11). However, since coming to faith in Jesus, Onesimus has become "**profitable**" to Paul (v. 11), so much so that Paul calls him "my own heart". He would like to keep Onesimus with him to help him in his ministry. Onesimus' conversion has also made him "**profitable**" to Philemon (v. 11), both as a repentant runaway slave and now as a fellow laborer in the Kingdom of God. Now both Onesimus and Philemon can be referred to as "beloved friend" of Paul's and a "fellow laborer" in the ministry (recall v. 1).

(Have a student read verses 15-17) In these verses Paul reminds Philemon of the sovereignty of God in this whole matter and proposes a possible Divine purpose in all of it. Philemon has lost a slave but gained a brother in the Lord, and a fellow worker in the Kingdom, a very "profitable" trade-off! On the basis of this wonderful turn of events, Paul exhorts Philemon, as a partner with him in the ministry of the gospel, to receive Onesimus as if he were Paul himself! (v. 17) Just as Jesus reconciled us to Himself, so too Paul is reconciling Philemon to Onesimus! We too ought to make every effort to be reconciled to our brothers and sisters in Christ whom we are estranged from and to make every effort to strengthen those bonds of love, for the glory of the Lord and the furtherance of His Kingdom!

E. Paul's Appeal to Philemon - Verse 14

The center of the book of Philemon seems to be verse 14 in which Paul shifts his emphasis from Onesimus back to Philemon. In verse 6 Paul had prayed that much **good** would come from Philemon's ministry. Now in verse 14, Paul says that the *specific* **good** deed that

Philemon can do is to receive Onesimus as a brother in Christ and to release him to minister with Paul. It seems important to Paul that this good deed on Philemon's part ought to be voluntary and not by compulsion. This good deed seems to also point forward verse 21 where Paul has in Philemon that he expresses in verse 21 that Philemon will do even more **good** things than Paul asks of him.

Whatever Kingdom work we do for Jesus ought to be out of our love and gratitude to Him for all He has done for us and out of a deep love for his people as well. As we do this we can be sure that "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (will indeed) be with (our) spirit(s) (v. 25)

❖ **Pray / Prep for Worship**

Philemon – A Chiasm¹

A. Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy *our* brother, To Philemon our beloved *friend* and fellow laborer,² to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: ³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. ⁴I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers,⁵ hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints,⁶ that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. ⁷For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

C. ⁸Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting,⁹ 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—¹⁰I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains,

D. ¹¹who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me. ¹²I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart,¹³ whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel.

E. ¹⁴But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

D' ¹⁵For perhaps he departed for a while for this *purpose*, that you might receive him forever,¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷If then you count me as a partner, receive him as *you would* me.

C' ¹⁸But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides.

B' ²⁰Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord. ²¹Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. ²²But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.

A' ²³Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,²⁴ as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. ²⁵The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

1. Heil, John Paul; "The Chiastic Structure and Meaning of Paul's Letter to Philemon"; *Biblica* 82 (2001) 178- 206

Philemon – Reconciliation to Profitability

Objective – To introduce you to the authorship, historical and theological context, main themes and literary flow of the book of Philemon whose theme is one of reconciliation for the good of the work of the Kingdom of God.

- ❖ Greetings
- ❖ Attendance and Accountability
- ❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism
- ❖ Memory verse – Philemon 10-12 – I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who was once unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and me. I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart.

❖ Lesson – Philemon

I. Introduction to Philemon

A. Authorship – _____ was the earthly author of Philemon

B. Summary – While in prison in Rome, Paul met and converted Onesimus. Onesimus is a slave from Colossae who has run away (and possibly stolen) from Philemon, his master, who was earlier converted under Paul’s ministry. Paul is sending Onesimus back to his master with the letter of appeal to Philemon to accept his slave back as a Christian brother and to forgive any wrong that Onesimus had done to him. Paul’s ultimate desire seems to be for Philemon to release Onesimus to return to Paul to help him with his ministry.

C. Themes

Thanksgiving	Justice	Reconciliation
Praise	Salvation	Substitutionary Atonement
Prayer	Sovereignty	Fathers / Sons / Brothers
Love	Forgiveness	

D. Historical Context

- Paul likely wrote this letter during his first imprisonment in _____ around the year _____ A. D.

E. Geographical Context

- The intended readers of this letter lived in _____.

F. Biblical Context - Paul likely wrote Philemon at the same time that he wrote his letter to the _____.

G. Audience - Paul addresses his letter primarily to _____. However, it is also written to Apphia (perhaps Philemon’s wife), Archippus (perhaps another relative of Philemon, some say his son), and to the church that met in Philemon’s house.

II. Outline of Philemon

Greeting and praise – Verses 1-7

Be reconciled to Onesimus - Verses 8-19

Praise and farewell – Verses 20-25

III. Philemon - Overview

IV. Philemon – Outline Correlations and Details (See chiastic outline handout)

A. Paul’s Greeting - Verses 1-3 / A’ Paul’s Farewell - Verses 23-25

1) Grace and Peace

2) “Fellow” - ship - Paul uses the word _____ four times in these two sections.

- The name “**Philemon**” means “one who _____ another in friendship” .

B. Philemon's Love - Verses 4-7 / B' Philemon's Obedience - Verses 20-22

- Philemon has _____ the hearts of the saints and has brought great _____ to Paul and his fellow workers in Rome (v. 7)
- Near the end of his letter, Paul urges Philemon to once again give him _____ and _____ of heart in the Lord by granting his request concerning Onesimus (v. 20).
- Our lives ought to be marked by consistent, fervent _____ for one another, asking the Lord to bless and empower each other for the work we have to do in His Kingdom.

C. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus - Verses 8-10 / C' Paul's Intercession for Onesimus – Verses 18-19

- In these two sections we learn that both _____ (v. 19) and _____ (v. 10) owe their new life of faith in Jesus Christ to Paul.
- _____ is willing to sacrificially give to Philemon anything that he thinks Onesimus owes him, whether it be repentance, or restitution (recall Mark 10:45 and John 3:16).

D. Onesimus, Paul's Heart -Verses 11-13 / D' Onesimus, Philemon's Brother Verses 15-17

- The name "Onesimus" means _____ or "useful"
- Since running away, Onesimus has been _____ to Philemon (and to God) (v. 11).
- However, since coming to faith in Jesus, Onesimus has become _____ to Paul and to Philemon.
- Paul would like to keep _____ with him to help him in his ministry (v.13).
- In verse 15, Paul tells Philemon that Onesimus' running away was have been a part of _____ plan.
- In verses 16-17, Paul tells Philemon that he should receive Onesimus as a beloved _____.

E. Paul's Appeal to Philemon - Verse 14

- Paul wishes that Philemon's receiving of Onesimus (and possibly send him back to Paul) would not be by compulsion but _____.

❖ Pray / Prep for Worship

Philemon – Reconciliation to Profitability (Answer Key)

Objective – To introduce you to the authorship, historical and theological context, main themes and literary flow of the book of Philemon whose theme is one of reconciliation for the good of the work of the Kingdom of God.

- ❖ Greetings
- ❖ Attendance and Accountability
- ❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism
- ❖ Memory verse – Philemon 10-12 – **I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who was once unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and me. I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart.**

❖ Lesson – Philemon

I. Introduction to Philemon

A. Authorship – **Paul** was the earthly author of Philemon

B. Summary – While in prison in Rome, Paul met and converted Onesimus. Onesimus is a slave from Colossae who has run away (and possibly stolen) from Philemon, his master, who was earlier converted under Paul’s ministry. Paul is sending Onesimus back to his master with the letter of appeal to Philemon to accept his slave back as a Christian brother and to forgive any wrong that Onesimus had done to him. Paul’s ultimate desire seems to be for Philemon to release Onesimus to return to Paul to help him with his ministry.

C. Themes

Thanksgiving	Justice	Reconciliation
Praise	Salvation	Substitutionary atonement
Prayer	Sovereignty	Fathers/Sons/Brothers
Love	Forgiveness	

D. Historical Context

- Paul likely wrote this letter during his first imprisonment in **Rome** around the year **60** A. D.

E. Geographical Context

- The intended readers of this letter lived in **Colossae**.

F. Biblical Context - Paul likely wrote Philemon at the same time that he wrote his letter to the **Colossians**.

G. Audience - Paul addresses his letter primarily to **Philemon**. However, it is also written to Apphia (perhaps Philemon’s wife), Archippus (perhaps another relative of Philemon, some say his son), and to the church that met in Philemon’s house.

II. Outline of Philemon

Greeting and praise – Verses 1-7

Be reconciled to Onesimus - Verses 8-19

Praise and farewell – Verses 20-25

III. Philemon - Overview

IV. Philemon – Outline Correlations and Details (See chiasmatic outline handout)

A. Paul’s Greeting - Verses 1-3 / A’ Paul’s Farewell - Verses 23-25

1) Grace and Peace

2) “Fellow” - ship - Paul uses the word **fellow** four times in these two sections.

- The name “**Philemon**” means “one who **kisses** another in friendship” .

B. Philemon's Love - Verses 4-7 / B' Philemon's Obedience - Verses 20-22

- Philemon has **refreshed** the hearts of the saints and has brought great **joy** to Paul and his fellow workers in Rome (v. 7)
- Near the end of his letter, Paul urges Philemon to once again give him **joy** and **refreshed** of heart in the Lord by granting his request concerning Onesimus (v. 20).
- Our lives ought to be marked by consistent, fervent **prayer** for one another, asking the Lord to bless and empower each other for the work we have to do in His Kingdom.

C. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus - Verses 8-10 / C' Paul's Intercession for Onesimus – Verses 18-19

- In these two sections we learn that both **Philemon** (v.19) and **Onesimus** (v. 10) owe their new life of faith in Jesus Christ to Paul.
- **Paul** is willing to sacrificially give to Philemon anything that he thinks Onesimus owes him, whether it be repentance, or restitution (recall Mark 10:45 and John 3:16).

D. Onesimus, Paul's Heart -Verses 11-13 / D' Onesimus, Philemon's Brother Verses 15-17

- The name "Onesimus" means **profitable** or "useful"
- Since running away, Onesimus has been **unprofitable** to Philemon (and to God) (v. 11).
- However, since coming to faith in Jesus, Onesimus has become **profitable** to Paul and to Philemon.
- Paul would like to keep **Onesimus** with him to help him in his ministry (v.13).
- In verse 15, Paul tells Philemon that Onesimus' running away was have been a part of **God's** plan.
- In verses 16-17, Paul tells Philemon that he should receive Onesimus as a beloved **brother**.

E. Paul's Appeal to Philemon - Verse 14

- Paul wishes that Philemon's receiving of Onesimus (and possibly send him back to Paul) would not be by compulsion but **voluntary**.

❖ Pray / Prep for Worship

Philemon – Student Evaluation

1) Fill in the outline of Philemon

Greeting and _____ **– Verses 1-** _____
Be _____ **to Onesimus - Verses 8-** _____
Praise and _____ **– Verses 20-** _____

2) Who wrote the book of Philemon? _____

3) Where was Paul when he wrote this letter? Circle one

- a) In Corinth c) In prison in Rome
b) In Jerusalem d) In Egypt

4) Onesimus had been a _____ of Philemon before he met Paul.

5) True or False – Both Onesimus and Philemon had become Christians through the ministry of Paul

6) True or False – Paul refuses to send Onesimus back to Philemon and wants Philemon to let Onesimus stay with him.

7) True or False – Paul says that perhaps Onesimus' running away from Philemon was a part of God's plan

8) True or False – Paul wants Philemon to forgive Onesimus and receive him as a brother in Christ

Philemon – Student Evaluation – Answer Key

1) Fill in the outline of Philemon

Greeting and Praise – Verses 1- 7

Be Reconciled to Onesimus - Verses 8-19

Praise and Farewell – Verses 20-25

2) Who wrote the book of Philemon? **Paul**

3) Where was Paul when he wrote this letter? Circle one

a) In Corinth **c) In prison in Rome**

b) In Jerusalem d) In Egypt

4) Onesimus had been a **slave** of Philemon before he met Paul.

5) **True** or False – Both Onesimus and Philemon had become Christians through the ministry of Paul

6) True or **False** – Paul refuses to send Onesimus back to Philemon and wants Philemon to let Onesimus stay with him.

7) **True** or False – Paul says that perhaps Onesimus' running away from Philemon was a part of God's plan

8) **True** or False – Paul wants Philemon to forgive Onesimus and receive him as a brother in Christ