

Set Free By Christ
The Letter to Philemon

Intro: In this, the shortest and most personal of Paul's letters, he commends the faith and charity of Philemon; and sends back to him his fugitive servant, Onesimus, whom he had led to faith in Christ, in connection with his Roman imprisonment.

I. Paul's Greeting 1-3

- A. The author: Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus (1a)
- B. The addressee: Philemon (1b-2)
 - 1. Beloved brother and
 - 2. Fellow worker for Christ
- C. The salutation: *grace and peace* = shalom (3)

II. Paul's Praise of Philemon 4-7

- A. Paul's thanksgiving (4-5; cf. Col 1:3-4)
- B. Paul's prayer (6; cf. Col 1:9-14)
- C. Paul's testimony (7)

III. Paul's Plea for Onesimus 8-17

- A. The basis of his plea: **LOVE** (8-9)
- B. The object of his plea: Onesimus, his child in the faith (10-11)
 - account**
- C. The reason for his plea (12-14)
 - 1. The reality of his plea (15-16)
 - 2. *The request: "Accept him as you would me"* (17)



Charge their sin to My

IV. Paul's Pledge to Philemon 18-20

- A. Paul's commitment to pay Onesimus' debt (18-19a)
- B. Paul's confidence that Philemon will exceed his request (19b-21)

V. Paul's Parting Salutation 22-25

- A. Paul's personal plans (22)
- B. Paul's personal greetings (23-24)
- C. Paul's parting benediction (25)

Applications:

1. **Love should be the measure of our Christian profession (Col 3:12-17; Jam 2:8).**
2. Whereas I was formerly *a useless self-serving sinner*, I am now ***Useful to Christ Jesus!***
3. The Book of Philemon provides a wonderful model on how to practice the fine art of affirmation through the use of positive words. *Paul affirms Philemon's love and faith for the Lord Jesus, and for all the saints—other believers* (v. 5; cf. Col 1:3-4).