

# **Paul's Personal Appeal for Onesimus**

**Study Guide for Philemon**

by Andy Sochor

# **Philemon**

## **I. Introduction**

- A. Recipient: Philemon – a Christian in Colosse
- B. Author: Paul
- C. Time of writing – around 60AD (about same time as Ephesians & Colossians)

## **II. Greeting (1:1-3)**

- A. Written by Paul, while imprisoned
  - 1. With Timothy
  - 2. Doesn't mention his apostleship like he does in other letters
- B. Written to Philemon
  - 1. Apphia our sister – possibly Philemon's wife?
  - 2. Archippus our fellow soldier
    - a. Preacher (Col. 4:17)
    - b. Possibly Philemon's son?
  - 3. The church in his house
- C. Salutation – grace & peace

## **III. Paul's thankfulness for Philemon (1:4-7)**

- A. Paul remembered Philemon in his prayers
  - 1. For his love & faith toward the Lord and the saints
  - 2. That the fellowship of his faith may become effective
- B. How Philemon helped others
  - 1. Paul had much joy and comfort in his love
  - 2. The hearts of the saints were refreshed through him

## **IV. Appeal on behalf of Onesimus (1:8-16)**

- A. Paul's confidence in Philemon's faithfulness (1:8-9)
  - 1. Paul had the right to order Philemon
  - 2. But knowing his character, he appealed to him in love
- B. The case of Onesimus (1:10-16)
  - 1. Converted by Paul while in prison (1:10)
  - 2. Formerly useless to him – now useful to both (1:11)
  - 3. Paul sending Onesimus back to Philemon (1:12)
    - a. Paul wished to keep him to help him in prison (1:13)
    - b. Did not want to keep him without Philemon's permission (1:14)
  - 4. Separated from Philemon for a while (1:15) – runaway slave
  - 5. Returning as a slave & a brother (1:16)

V. Philemon's indebtedness to Paul (1:17-22)

A. Accept Onesimus as he would Paul (1:17-19)

1. Paul promised to repay for any wrong (1:18-19)

2. Paul reminds Philemon of his indebtedness to him (1:19)

B. Philemon to be a benefit to Paul (1:20)

1. He would go above and beyond what Paul asked (1:21)

2. Asked to prepare a lodging for Paul (1:22)

VI. Closing (1:23-25)

A. Greetings from others – Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke (1:23-24)

B. Farewell (1:25)

### **Questions on Philemon**

1. What characteristics did Philemon possess that made Paul speak so highly of him (v. 5-7)?

2. On what basis did Paul make his appeal (v. 9)?

3. What was Onesimus' relationship with Philemon (v. 16)?

4. What was Onesimus' relationship with Paul (v. 10)?

5. How was Philemon now to treat Onesimus (v. 16-17)?

6. Does this chapter condone or condemn the practice of slavery? Explain.