

Philemon 1:10-25 (Teaching)

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Date: 04 January 2026

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[0 : 00] Good evening. Good evening. The Lord hasn't changed my mind on anything, so we will finish up Philemon tonight.

! Amen. This book of Philemon, I said last week, I really felt led to teach it as opposed to preaching. Last week, we covered the first nine verses. We talked about a lot last week. We covered the greeting from Paul to Philemon, and talked about the people that were in Philemon's house and the church that was in his house, and talked about Archippus and Atvia, and talked about how Paul was commending Philemon on basically everything.

How he stated nothing negative, but he was going to pray for him anyway. And, you know, praise God for that, and I praise God that there's people like that now. They're praying for me regardless of whether, you know, everything's going good in my life or whether, you know, everything's not going so well in my life.

And I told you all last week that when we covered verses 8 and 9 that that was kind of the introduction to why Paul was writing the letter to Philemon that he was.

[1 : 29] The first seven verses was nothing but him commending Philemon on everything that he had done, everything he was doing, and so on. In verses 8 and 9, we're going to read them just for context tonight.

Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such in one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

So he's telling Philemon here, and a lot of people think that if you read some commentaries on Philemon and some study Bible commentaries, a lot of people think that Paul is asserting power in what he's saying.

That's not what he's doing at all. I told you all last week he is appealing to, he's appealing with love, and he's appealing to the heart of Philemon.

And we're going to see that tonight in these last 16 verses. I spent right at an hour up here last week, I didn't know that until after I was finished. And that was to cover nine verses, we're covering 16 tonight.

[2 : 41] Amen. Amen. I'm just kidding. Be comfortable. Y'all, no, I'm kidding. We're going to cover it a little bit differently, but I don't expect to be up here no hour and a half or two hours.

But just in case, just in case, that might happen. Amen. So all that being said, Philemon in verse 10, he says, I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds, which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me.

Back to verse 10 again. He says, I beseech thee. Again, he is not asserting any type of apostolic authority. He's not asserting any type of power. He's not saying, because I'm older and you're younger, because I've been in the walk longer than you have.

He's not saying anything along those lines. He plainly says here in his letter, I beseech thee. Folks, it's the same way as when we beseech the Lord. We don't make demands of God.

Right. And Paul here is not making demands of Philemon or toward Philemon to free Onesimus.

[3 : 57] That's exactly what this whole letter is revolving around. Onesimus was a runaway slave. He belonged to Philemon. Now, folks, I'm not a proponent of slavery. Don't you all hear me wrong? But we got to remember this was 2,000 years ago.

This was a different culture. It was different people and things were different then. We have to keep that in mind. I'm not a proponent of slavery of any kind.

So don't hear any of this wrong that I teach here tonight. But he says, I beseech thee for my son.

Now, Onesimus was not the physical son of Paul, but he was a spiritual son.

We can rightfully assume that Paul come into contact with Onesimus. And because of Paul's preaching of the gospel, Onesimus got saved.

I understand the work of the Holy Spirit. I understand he had to have his work in all of it and everything. But this is why Paul could say this. It was because of he preaching the gospel, the Holy Spirit doing his work.

[4 : 59] When the gospel was preached, convicting the heart, showing Onesimus who he was, what he had done wrong, and showing him who God was and that he could be saved. And Onesimus essentially receiving salvation.

That's why Paul refers to him as a son. He is a spiritual son. This isn't the only time that Paul does such a thing in Scripture.

In fact, the entire Corinthian church, he told them, he said, you might have 10,000 instructors in Christ, but you have not many fathers. He says, but I have begotten you.

How? By the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. So he's telling the entire Corinthian church, I have begotten you. But he's not laying claim to salvation came from him, came from Paul.

But he's saying, I preach the gospel to you. And that's how he can interpret Onesimus here and the entire Corinthian church as being spiritual sons and spiritual daughters.

[6 : 02] So he says, I beseech thee for my son Onesimus' sake, or for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds. So he come into contact with Onesimus while he was in bonds, while he was in prison.

Did Onesimus escape or run away from Philemon and do something, you know, do a breaking and entry or a burglary or a theft or whatever the case is, and wind up in prison?

Scripture does not tell us. Nor does extra biblical history tell us. All we know is that Paul was in bonds when he spiritually begat Onesimus.

Verse 11. Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me. So before Christ, this is the context we're talking about here.

Not, you know, before he ran away, but before Christ, Onesimus was unprofitable. Why was he unprofitable?

[7 : 08] Well, because he didn't have crops. Now folks, this does not give us license, nor does it give us any type of permission to completely brush off the world and say, I want no dealings with you.

Now, we don't go to the same places the world goes to. We don't act in the same way as the world acts. We don't talk in the same way as the world talks. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. We are to be new creatures in Christ. But how will the world hear the gospel if we completely shun them?

So this scripture is not saying if someone is unprofitable to the kingdom, unprofitable for the sake and for the spread of the gospel, that we should completely ignore them.

That's not what I'm saying. That's not what scripture says. He's not only profitable to me, Philemon, in my bonds currently as he's writing this letter, but he's profitable to you as well.

[8 : 15] How so? Because Onesimus is now a brother in Christ to Paul and to Philemon. However many miles away that they were from one another, Onesimus was profitable.

But folks, this shows us something. This shows us that before Christ, you, and before Christ, I, we were unprofitable to God.

Right. Completely unprofitable to God and to the kingdom. Now, can God use unprofitable vessels? Can he use people who are unsaved?

Absolutely. God used Pharaoh in the book of Exodus. Pharaoh wasn't saved, but God used them.

God can use whomever he wants to, whenever he wants to, however that he wants to, because he is God.

And because he is sovereign over this entire universe. But folks, as far as the gospel is concerned, and as far as eternity is concerned, as far as all these things are concerned, we were unprofitable.

[9 : 17] It's just like Psalms chapter 1 describes the wicked man, describes the unrighteous man as chaff. Chaff is useless. It is useless. It's what's, when the grain is thrown up in the air, the chaff is what's blown away, and nobody cares where it goes, where it lands, or anything else about it.

And that's how scripture describes wicked people, as chaff. And chaff is unprofitable. But here, Paul says, which in time past, speaking of Onesimus, which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me.

Folks, we are now profitable. If you are born again, if you are a child of God, you are profitable to God. You are profitable to me. You are profitable to you. Me being a born again child of God, I am profitable to you.

It's a two-way street. You know, if I'm profitable to you, you're likewise to me. We're profitable to each other. Think of it like this.

You guys have worked on cars. Think of it like this. You got a car that hasn't run in years because the engine's locked up. Sitting there, it's rusted through.

[10:30] All the cylinders are locked up. You can throw as many fresh coats of paint on there as you want to. You can paint that car up so pretty. You can invite your friend, your family over and say, look at it.

Ain't she abused? But she still ain't running. Amen. How's she going to run if there's a change made from the inside out? Right.

You've got to disassemble the engine. Sometimes the whole stinking power train. Yeah. Right. But you've got to disassemble that engine. You've got to free up those cylinders.

Probably have to have it machined. The whole block machine. Put new pistons in it. New rings. New valves. Three angle valve job. All this other good stuff.

But that happens from the inside out. Folks, God does the exact same thing with us. God completely dismantles us. Amen. He gets rid of our pride.

[11:27] He gets rid of our unbelief. And that's when God can save us. Right. God cannot save anybody in pride. The pride must leave first.

Because pride will constantly say, I don't need God. I don't need the gospel. I don't need light. I'm comfortable in this darkness. Just leave me alone. That's what pride says.

And God dismantles us. He completely rebuilds us from the inside out. But unfortunately, there's a lot of churches with a lot of professing Christians in them.

Yeah. That have dolled themselves up. And made themselves look the part. And they may even act the part. Right. But they're not in the family of God.

Yeah. And sooner or later, sooner or later, their actions will show that. Right. Just like John says in 1 John chapter 2. He says, they went out from us, but they were not of us.

[12:23] Right. They were never part of us. They were never part of the church. They were never a believer to begin with. That's not me. That's scripture that says that. Amen.

Which in time past was to thee unprofitable. It was to you, Philemon, unprofitable. But now, profitable to thee and to me as a brother in Christ.

Christ is exactly what Paul is getting at here. We have no right whatsoever as believers to look down our nose on other believers.

Amen. None whatsoever. Now, we may not particularly like to associate with some. We might not particularly like to hang out with some. But folks, if they are a true believer in Christ, regardless of how loud their mouth might get, regardless of what they might talk about, whether it interests us or not.

There's all kinds of reasons I've heard Christians give that they don't want to associate with other Christians. Regardless of any of that, we still cannot look down our nose because God saved them out of sin and God saved us out of sin.

[13:34] If we look down our nose at them, folks, we're treading on Pharisee territory and doing that. That is not something I want to be called.

Because Christ himself had nothing good to say about the Pharisees. Nothing good to say about them. Verse 12. Whom I have sent again, thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels, whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel.

So verse 12 again. Whom I have sent again. So Paul is sending Onesimus back. Now, this doesn't really tell us, Scripture doesn't tell us, what Onesimus' reaction to that was.

But we can rightfully assume because it's not written about that there wasn't much fuss being made by Onesimus to go back. And folks, that is a sign of true regeneration.

That is a sign of true regeneration. Why? Because that's repentance. That's repentance. Okay, I've done wrong. Now, I've got to do right because I've been saved.

[14:48] Not to be saved, but because I have been saved. And again, he says, whom I have sent again, thou therefore you, Philemon, therefore receive him, receive Onesimus, that is, mine own

bowels.

What is Paul saying here? Receive him, that is, mine own bowels. Receive him. Paul is expressing the love that he has for Onesimus in saying this.

Receive him, that is, mine own bowels. Receive him like you're receiving mine own heart is exactly what Paul is saying here. And folks, we should have the same attitude toward fellow believers in Christ.

I've said before, and I'm sure every one of you all would agree with, there's some that are easier to love than others. Right. But, we need to have love for all believers.

For all believers. We're all part of one big family. If we've been born again into the family of God.

They said, receive him, that is, mine own bowels.

[15:57] Receive him as you would be receiving my own heart. My love for Onesimus is coming with him. I'm sending him to you. And folks, think about how this would have made Paul feel.

One person. One person, Onesimus. That Paul felt that he could count on. One that he truly loved.

Now, we get to the end of this letter and he names off a few other people, yes.

But, he's sending someone away that was profitable to him. We covered that just a verse or two ago. But, he's sending him away. Now, Paul, again. Paul, being the aged.

Paul, being an apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul, having the very personal experience with Christ that he had on the Damascus road. Could have said, hey, Onesimus has been saved.

But, I'm keeping him here. He's doing me some good. But, Paul didn't do that. He is sending Onesimus back. Folks, grace does not erase accountability.

[17:05] It does not get rid of accountability. Just like, I mean, think of it this way. There have been many people go to prison. Many people go to prison over murder.

Let's use that as the example. And, many people have professed to be saved after they have entered into prison. I'm not so naive as to think that all of those have been truly saved. But, many have professed it.

But, I'm sure that some have been. Right. But, they still had to pay for what they did. Folks, I committed sin in my life.

You've committed sin in your life. And, sometimes we commit sin that we continue to pay for for the rest of our lives. I know that I've used the example here before that God will save the alcoholic.

And, he will yank that bottle away from the alcoholic's lips. But, he might not do anything about the cirrhosis. Right. God will save the prostitute. He may not remove the STDs.

[18:07] Right. There's still accountability. Even though grace has been received. So, grace does not negate accountability for us. Verse 13 again.

Whom I would have retained with me. That in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel. Now, this phrase here, in thy stead.

This hints at the doctrine of substitution. Now, not the doctrine of substitution as far as one being, one giving their life on behalf of another.

But, it still hints at that doctrine. In thy stead. Again, he says, whom I would have retained with me. I would have kept Onesimus with me. That in thy stead he might have ministered unto me.

Remember, he's writing to Philemon. He's saying, in your stead. Because you're not here to minister to me, Philemon. I would have liked to have retained Onesimus here with me.

[19:09] But, something else that this is intimating to us. That Paul is intimating to Philemon. Is the faith and the confidence that he has in Philemon.

That he, if he were there and Onesimus wasn't. That Philemon would be ministering to Paul. Paul, he would be helping him. He would be serving him.

He would be encouraging to him. And folks, we need to be an encouragement to one another. We need to be an encouragement to one another in this church. We need to be an encouragement to other Christians and other churches.

We need to be an encouragement to all believers. Again, we have no right whatsoever to look down our nose at any believers. And we need to be an encouragement to all believers.

we need to help them we need to minister to them whom I would have retained with me that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel he is expressing the confidence that he had in Philemon that he would minister that Philemon would have ministered unto Paul the exact same way with the exact same gospel and the exact same bonds that Onesimus has and I hope I hope that I have that kind of that people have that kind of thought about me I would hope that

people would have that kind of thought about me verse 14 but without thy mind would I do nothing that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity but willingly so but without thy mind without your input in other words without your permission Philemon again Paul could have asserted authority in this letter but he never does because he wanted

[21 : 00] Philemon to act how Philemon should act because of the gospel he said again he says but without thy mind would I do nothing that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity but willingly he wants Philemon to act how he knows that he should act as a child of God so he's telling him here I'm not asserting authority I'm not screaming about authority I'm not screaming about power and I'm not demanding that you do anything because I don't want you to do this because Paul told you to I want you to do this because you want to because you have received grace because you have been saved because you've been forgiven I want you to likewise forgive Onesimus we don't know exactly everything that Onesimus done we know that he was a runaway slave that's obvious from the scriptures we can assume that he probably caused some financial loss to

Philemon not only because there was a price paid for slaves but some people say that you know he stole he may or may not have scripture doesn't tell us there's all kinds of things that we can assume happen but regardless Paul wants Philemon and Paul has confidence in Philemon to forgive Onesimus of the trespass against him against Philemon and to receive him as a brother in Christ and he does not want him to do it because he feels like he has to folks God doesn't want us to do anything because we feel like we have to and unfortunately there's a lot of church goers that do that they go to church on Sunday because that's what they do on Sunday and I say shame on those church goers you go to church to worship God you go to church to fellowship with those of like precious faith you go to church to exalt the name of Christ you go to church to hear the word of God preached you go to church to hear the gospel one more time to hear the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation that was powerful enough to redeem your soul these are the reasons amongst many others that we go to church not because that's just what we do on Sunday that's what we do on the Lord's Day and unfortunately there's a lot of people that do that there's a lot of people that do that again the last part of that verse he says not be as it were of necessity but willingly

I want you to do this because you want to because of what you've received and what had Philemon received we know from the first seven verses of the letter to Philemon we know that he was a brother in Christ so he had received grace he had received salvation he had received redemption he had been reconciled all these things had happened to Philemon and Paul wants Philemon to forgive and receive Onesimus in the same manner that Philemon was forgiven and received of God through Christ that's what this is all getting at verse 15 for perhaps he therefore departed for a season that thou shouldst receive him forever here we have the doctrine of the providence of almighty God this is exactly what Paul is getting at here for perhaps now from the human perspective from yours and my perspective it would be a perhaps but in

God's perspective God knew exactly what was going on he knew that Onesimus was going to run away he knew that Onesimus was going to somehow wind up in contact with brother Paul and he knew that Onesimus was going to be saved God knows all God is absolutely 100% omniscient there is nothing that he does not know he says for perhaps he therefore departed for a season that thou shouldst receive him forever forever now this gets sticky that thou shouldst receive him forever is this is Paul saying that he can be your slave forever no no that's not what he's getting at and even if that was what he's getting at that would have fell apart the moment that Philemon or Onesimus either one died forever means he is now a brother in Christ you receive him as a brother in

Christ and he is your brother in Christ forever that goes from this life on into the next and on and on and on throughout eternity for perhaps he therefore departed for a season maybe just maybe in the human perspective he departed from you just so that you Philemon could receive him as a brother forever forever what a thought folks I think back on my life yeah and I think about the wrongs that I've done and I ain't gonna voice about those or anything I think it's a shame when people get into arguments in church over who was the worst sin yeah and I think on my life and I think of some of the things that I've done before Christ and shamefully even more shamefully some of the things I've done since Christ but I think about the sin that I've been forgiven of especially before Christ and I hear people all the time say if I could just go back to when I was 10 or 15 or 20 and change this or change that my life would be so much better folks and with the doctrine of divine providence now

God does not cause sin so don't hear that wrong

[27 : 38] God is not the maker of sin and he is not the causer of sin sin comes from the heart of man the Bible makes that very plain very clear but God is sovereign and God is providential and God governs all of history and he governs all the outcomes of our lives so when people say I'd like to go back to when I was 20 I would have done this over I would have done this differently not me because I know that everywhere I went everything that happened to me everything that I've ever done eventually led me to God in his providence regardless of how bad it was regardless of what kind of sin it was eventually eventually it led me to God and God saved my soul I wouldn't change a thing in my past like I said as bad as some of it was and y'all could say the same thing it led me to

God and it led me to repentance and it led me to belief in the gospel which led me to salvation I wouldn't change a bit of it I would not change a bit of it for perhaps he therefore departed for a season that thou shouldest receive him forever verse 16 not now as a servant again what did we just say in verse 15 he wasn't talking about receiving him back as a slave forever verse 16 not now as a servant but above a servant a brother beloved specially to me but how much more unto thee both in the flesh and in the Lord so Paul here is saying exactly what we kind of already covered in verse 15 not to receive him back as a slave Paul is nudging Philemon he's saying not to receive him back as a slave but to receive him back as a brother he says not now not now as a servant but above a servant a brother beloved specially to me a brother beloved specially to me

Paul he's already talked about expressed his love for Onesimus in the previous verses we said to receive receive him as he was receiving his bowels we're receiving his heart he says especially to me but how much more unto thee how much more unto you Philemon he's a brother to me but how much more to you and he says both in the flesh and in the Lord I'm sending him back is what Paul is saying he is now a brother in the Lord and I have the utmost confidence Philemon that this is how you're going to accept him again he's not demanding that Philemon accept Onesimus this way he is stating though that because of the gospel because of the gospel of Jesus Christ and because of the salvation that Philemon has that Philemon is going to make the right decision and folks the gospel should govern every one of our lives your life and my life it should govern everything about us both in the flesh and in the Lord verse 17 if thou count me therefore a partner receive him as myself if you

Philemon count me as your partner count me as your brother count me as a help a friend an encourager if you count me as a partner receive him as myself receive him as you would receive me if I showed up at your door Philemon or when Onesimus shows up at your door you receive him the same way it would be if I was the one standing at your door right you receive him in with love you receive him in with gratitude you receive him in with praise unto God you receive him receive him period don't turn him away certainly don't turn him back into a slave you receive him as you would receive me and this is another hint at the doctrine of substitution another hint at it

I said not as far as one giving their life for another but it is another hint verse 18 if he hath wronged thee or oweth thee out put that on mine account I Paul have written it with mine own hand I will repay it albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides back to verse 18 folks verses 18 and 19 are really the heart of this letter and quite frankly my opinion not that verses 1 through 17 are insignificant because they're not verses 18 and 19 I think are the biggest reason that we hold this little personal letter not a letter as we talked about last week that was written to churches to be read in a church and passed on to another church or anything along those lines it's a personal letter that one man is writing to another verses 18 and 19 I believe are the main reasons that we have this in the closed canon of scripture because this covers the doctrine of imputation a very important doctrine as far as the

[33 : 32] Christian life is concerned as far as the gospel is concerned as far as the bible is concerned the doctrine of imputation is found in these two verses again verse 18 if he hath wronged thee or with thee all put that on my account Paul is not dismissing the sin that Onesimus committed against Philemon he has not downplayed it he's not downgraded it he's not gotten rid of it and he's not even tried to close Philemon's eyes to it he's not dismissed it at all but he's saying whatever he's done whatever wrong he has done whatever he owes you put that on my account folks it is the same way with us with Jesus Christ he that knew no sin became sin for us that's our sin imputed to the perfect spotless blameless faultless lamb of God he became sin that knew no sin our sin was imputed to him but that verse continues in

Romans chapter 5 he became sin that knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him our sin our wickedness our transgression our iniquity our evil was imputed to Christ and his righteousness on the flip side of that coin is imputed to us folks I don't care how long you've been a Christian I don't care how long you've been saved I don't care how many songs you've sung how many sermons you've preached I don't care how much scripture you can quote I don't care about any of that if you stand before God outside of Christ and outside of his righteousness you will be consumed by the holiness of God but with his righteousness imputed to us after our sins were imputed to him we can stand before

God justified we can stand before God righteous not in ourselves though we are in Christ and Christ is in us according to the scriptures if I'm before God and I'm in Christ Christ is well pleased with the finished work of Jesus Christ if I'm in Christ there's no condemnation to be found in me Romans 8 and 1 there's therefore now no condemnation to them that be in Christ Jesus I'm safe I'm safe it is not me though it is not me it is Christ Christ made me safe from the wrath of God Christ made me safe from the holiness of God folks the holiness of God is the very thing that will consume us and we will be consumed in his wrath but it will be his holiness again if he hath wronged thee or oweth thee out

Paul write in 2 philemon put that on mine account if that's not the doctrine of imputation I don't know what is verse 19 I Paul have written it with mine own hand folks this was we can read that and just breeze right on past it and go to the next line this is important though hermeneutically this is important in the day that this was written that's the same thing as signing a legal IOU saying that I have written this with mine own hand most of what Paul wrote was dictated to other people for them to write Paul spoke the words they wrote it down but Paul says I have written this I have written this letter I have written this thing that I just stated here in verse 18 that if Onesimus owed you anything to put it on my account I've written it with my own hand this is

Paul saying this is my guarantee and folks Jesus Christ raising from the dead on the third and glorious and appointed morning was our guarantee he was the first fruits of what was guaranteed to come from what I read in first Corinthians chapter 15 he was the first fruits of the dead and if he's the first fruits there's a guaranteed harvest that's to come yet leaving here one by one a few a day several a day whatever the case is the folks say it's going to be a big harvest one day after a while Christ was the first fruits of all!

[38 : 38] He is our guarantee not ourselves and not our works not what we have done not how well we dress not how well we act it is crossed and crossed alone is the reason that we have a guarantee to spend eternity with the father I Paul have written it with mine own hand I will repay it albeit I do not say to thee this is funny the rest of this verse is actually exactly what he says he's not going to say how be albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides we can rightfully assume that Philemon received the gospel and received salvation because Paul preached preached the gospel Philemon heard the gospel the Holy Spirit done his regenerating work and

Philemon became a child of God and that's what Paul is getting at in this he says albeit I do not say to thee he says I'm not going to mention that you owe me because I preached the gospel to you now this isn't Paul being arrogant so don't read this wrong it's not him being arrogant it's not him being cocky it's not him placing himself above Philemon he says albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides I'm not going to bring this up but wait a minute I am wait just a minute I will bring it up exactly exactly what this gets at but he says that thou owest unto me even thine own self you owe me yourself Philemon you owe!

me the aged Paul the apostle you owe me yourself why else would Paul have said that if he had not also begotten spiritually begotten Philemon so verse 20 and folks that's pretty typical of Paul's writing Paul was very sharp with his writing but every bit of it was laced with love and that's how every sermon should be preached that's how every sermon should be preached it needs to be sharp it needs to be to the point it needs to be on the level that any 10 or 12 year old can understand it regardless of if there's no way in the congregation but you know 90 year old people it needs to be where a 12 year old can understand it but it needs to be sharp and it needs to be laced in love and by sharp I'm not saying hurtful I'm saying it needs needs needs to be to the point yay brother let me have joy of thee in the

Lord refresh my bowels in the Lord yay brother let me have joy of thee in the Lord let me hear this good news let me hear that you have done exactly as I have nudged you to do let me have joy of

thee in the Lord refresh my bowels in the Lord we talked about this last week in verse 7 I believe it is for we have great joy and consolation in thy love because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee brother we talked about this how the bowels and again we have to consider when this was written 400 years ago when it translated into English seat of the feelings the heart in other words is what he's getting at says yea brother let me have joy of thee in the Lord refresh my bowels in the Lord refresh my heart let me hear that you have received

Onesimus just as you should have just as you should receive Onesimus as a brother and not just a slave not just property verse 21 having confidence in thy obedience folks I've already brought this up the confidence that Paul had in Philemon and that's what he was getting at in all this was the confidence that he had in Philemon to do what was right to allow the gospel to govern his life to govern the decisions that he had to make just having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee knowing that thou will also do more than I say having confidence in thy obedience and your obedience Philemon I wrote unto thee knowing that thou will also do more than I say brother [43 : 41] CJ touched on this this morning thou also do more than I say folks those of us that have received grace should never ask God what is the bare minimum that I need to do for you because God gave it all Christ gave it all we should do more than the bare minimum and we should be willing!

and excited and wanting to do more than just the bare minimum for God here Paul again he says that thou will also do more than I say what does he say what does Paul say to receive Onesimus as a brother as above a brother we read just a few verses ago and not just a piece of property but Paul is expressing his confidence that Philemon is going to do more than that now what that more was who knows who knows scripture doesn't tell us it doesn't tell us what happened once Onesimus was sent back to Philemon so we don't know there's some extra biblical texts out there that are very outlandish and I don't recommend anybody reads that the outlandish things that I've read tells me there's no historical record whatsoever of what happened with

Onesimus and Philemon but Paul has confidence though that Philemon is going to go above and beyond what Paul has asked of him but with all prepare me also a lodging for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you again this is touching on the doctrine of the divine providence of God says but with all prepare me also a lodging where was Paul again folks this is one of the prison letters he was in prison he was in bonds some say he was under house arrest with this one some say he was actually in prison with this one I don't know I wasn't!

there but either! he was in bonds but Paul says but with all prepare me also a lodging Paul is confident Paul is confident that he is going to make it back to Philemon he's going to make it back to him someday somehow it's going to happen he says prepare for me also a lodging he says for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you I'm confident about Philemon not only in your obedience in the previous verse and not only that you're going to do more than what I've said but I'm also confident you're going to be praying for me again last week in the first nine verses we saw where Paul was praying for Philemon now Paul is saying Philemon I've got confidence that you're going to be praying for me and I'm going to be delivered unto you

I'll make it to your place sometime somehow and it'll be through your prayers that's done now it's through the providence of God that that happens and it's through the helping hand of God that that happens yes but folks don't ever doubt the power of your prayers!

[47 : 28] God has performed I believe CJ talked on this this morning as well you think about the big stuff that he's done CJ brought up the parting of the Red Sea and there's many other accounts speaking the universe into existence for that matter the most powerful thing in my opinion that God does is save undeserving souls that is the most powerful thing that he does it was and the thing is though it was nothing for God to speak and for all the planets to go out into the solar system for the solar system to be made to begin with for the stars to go out and for God to know each one of the stars by name and for the planets!

to go out where they are including our own for the moons! to go out where they are including our own for all these things to happen God spoke those things into existence while salvation my opinion is the most powerful thing that God does it's nothing for him to do it's not hard in other words for him to do it it was hard on Christ physically Christ suffered things that you and I have!

enduring we would have never endured what he did much of a tough fellow as I used to think that I was I couldn't have endured that but it is while it is a powerful thing salvation is a powerful thing it's not difficult for God to do that Charles Spurgeon said one time that no sinner in hell could ever say I

came to Christ and he rejected me right right I know a few Spurgeon quotes that's among my favorites yeah that's true I mean even Jesus said that he that comes unto me I will know I shall know why I cast out no sinner that's in hell now can can say I came to Christ and he rejected me with all prepare me also a lodging for

I trust that through your prayers I shall be given to you Paul expressing his confidence of Philemon to one prepare him a lodging for when he does show up but two that his prayers! are going to be! that Paul gets out of the bonds it's amazing to me all the places that Paul went and you can read about many of those in the book of Acts but all the missionary journeys that he went on and the people that he remembered the people that he prayed for individually the churches that he prayed for I mean folks I couldn't I've been saved it'll be 17 years next month I've been saved 17 years and I couldn't name you all the churches that I've been to in 17 years Paul went on journey after journey after journey to town to all these other places he knew these churches he knew people within the churches people running it just happened to me and missy just a couple of days ago is it sand a lady comes up and she like you probably don't remember me

[51 : 07] I go to such and such church and she spoke about my teaching or preaching or something and we walked off and I told missy I have no idea who that was and missy was like oh yeah I remember and god bless my wife I'm glad she did but Paul remember all these folks that tells me that Paul's heart was right and Paul had a heart for praying for churches and praying for individuals and praying for pastors and praying for other missionaries and all these other things Paul had a heart for that and he wanted to remember those things so that he could pray for them individually and it amazes me when I hear people now doing that it amazes me when I read about it in scripture but he says for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you verses 23 through 25 there there salute the Epaphras my fellow prisoner in

Christ Jesus Marcus Aristarchus Demas Lucas my fellow laborers the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit amen so he says there salute the Epaphras now the word there can throw some confusion into this he is not saying there with you Philemon he's saying with him with Paul now not all these were necessarily in prison but they were all they all had contact with Paul obviously by what he phrases here or by what he says here there salute the Epaphras my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus he calls him his fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus he could have said that about the rest of these if he's talking about just spiritually just being a slave or a prisoner to Jesus Christ but this is the only one that he says that about so we can pretty rightfully assume that Epaphras was in prison with Paul but he says there salute the Epaphras my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus Epaphras was a very well beloved companion of Paul Epaphras prayed fervently actually for the church at Colossi you can read about that in the book of Colossians but and again if you read Philemon if you're just reading Philemon or just reading Colossians I recommend that you read the two of them together but verse 24 Marcus this would be John Mark this would be Mark the writer of the gospel of Mark it says Marcus and Mark folks is one of the most amazing things about Mark and you read about in the book of Acts is even though Mark took some missteps in the beginning of ministry

God still used him and he still just as brother Mark just said turned out to be profitable for the kingdom and folks I've taken missteps and if you're honest with yourself you've taken missteps maybe not in ministry but in your Christian walk you've went to the left or the right you've strayed off of the straight and narrow but praise God God don't just flick us to the side amen God even though Mark again done done badly in the first part of his ministry we'll just phrase it like that that's a very in a nutshell paraphrase God still used him in ministry used him mightily says

Marcus Aristarchus Aristarchus was another fellow companion to Paul you read about him in the book of Acts as well he stuck with Paul through trials you see him a couple of times when things are getting real heated with the disciples preaching the gospel and Aristarchus is right there in the middle of him in the book of Acts Demas Demas is an unfortunate event in scripture yeah Demas left Paul eventually you read about that in 2nd Timothy for the love of this present world but again you go to 1st John 2nd chapter they were not from us but they were not of us so Demas left Paul he stuck there with him you read about him a few times in scripture a handful of times but when it come down to the wire he showed his true colors and he left the ministry he left

[56 : 25] Paul he left it all for the love of this present world Lucas my fellow laborers which that covers all of my fellow laborers but Lucas of course would be the beloved physician and long term companion of Paul's the writer of Acts the writer of the gospel of Luke all these people had contact

with Paul folks this well first contextually considering the letter to Philemon Paul is telling Philemon here these men they're sending their greetings to you so obviously Philemon knew every one of them he knew Demas he knew Lucas he knew Mark he knew Aristarchus he knew them all because they're sending their greetings to him as well Paul is saying they're here with me they know what's going on with

Onesimus they're aware of this letter and they're all praying for you and they've all got the same confidence that I have in you now I said Demas it's a different story all together but folks this tells me grace is a community receivers of grace are in a community together we're not I mean we can we can divide ourselves up by denominations been done for years been done for decades been done for centuries for that matter but all in all we're part of one big saved community and we need to keep that in mind some of them are like aristarchus some people in the community are like aristarchus they're right there with you they're right there when things are getting heated and threats are being made and all these other things some of them are like

Mark they stumble and fall and misstep they're in the beginning but they get stronger and stronger and stronger as time goes on some of them unfortunately are like demons and they show their true colors but regardless it's all community it's all community the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit this isn't the first time that Paul mentions this to Philemon we talked about it last week in his greeting verse 3 it says grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ we talked about the multiplication of grace that he was praying for Philemon and we go back to that in the last verse the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit he's praying for grace and I understand he done this for most of the letters that he wrote closed with a similar ending to them but folks

Philemon was going to need grace and Paul was praying for a multiplication of that grace why was Philemon going to need grace because his property at that time Onesimus had run away had run away and now he was coming home and Philemon would need grace to accept him back into that home not only or not as a slave but as a brother and folks you and I need grace for the exact same things I've seen people in my short time as a Christian leave the faith I've seen people that just appeared to be absolutely on fire for God as it's commonly phrased and their fire goes out and you don't see them anymore

I've seen preachers do it but if they come back home if they come to the father and they're being received folks you and I need to receive them the same way how many times have you had to go back to the father how many times have you found yourself in sin regardless of how big or how little you might consider it how many times have you had to go and ask forgiveness yeah and folks we need to be willing to receive people back in and he ends this with amen so be it so be it now all this brings us to a question the entire letter of philemon brings us to a question and I kind of already covered it does the gospel that you claim govern how you live does the gospel that you claim govern how you forgive does the gospel that you claim govern your life as a whole and if so does your life line up with what thus saith the word of god if the gospel you claim to believe governs your life yet your life does not line up with this scripture you've believed the false gospel people

[62 : 31] Paul knew the gospel that philemon had heard I said we can rightfully assume that Paul preached that gospel to philemon because of what we read here and philemon got saved under the preaching of Paul not because of any power of Paul but because of the power of almighty god and his gospel into salvation but the question is there does the gospel you claim to believe govern your life and if so does your life line up with this scripture I'm not saying perfectly it never will not on this side of eternity but does it line up or have you believed a gospel that allows you to do what you want when you want with whom you want how you want and leave god completely out of it Paul had confidence in

Philemon because he had confidence in the gospel that Philemon heard and Philemon got saved under that gospel and Paul encouraged Philemon to make his choices based on that gospel based on salvation based on the forgiveness that he Philemon had received that's what Paul was encouraging Philemon to do so that brings us to the end of Philemon anybody got any questions or comments on any of that all right god bless y'all i appreciate your time your attention and to to to to to to to to to!