



Everyday Principles for Everyday Players

PHILEMON 1-25

The Preliminaries

- ▶ An illustration
- ▶ The Principles in the Illustration:
 - ▶ The providence of God
 - ▶ Christ requires that we be people of integrity
 - ▶ Christ requires that we trust Him
 - ▶ Christ requires that we forgive others, as the Father has forgiven us

Philemon 1-25

Some Context

- ▶ Onesimus was a slave who belonged to Philemon, a slave-owner and a believer, probably from the Church in Colossae.
- ▶ Onesimus took something of value from Philemon and ran away to Rome to hide.
- ▶ While there, he met up with Paul, and apparently had a life changing experience as Paul presented the Gospel to him.

Some More Context


- ▶ With his new found outlook on life, and recognizing that a previous wrong needed to be corrected, Onesimus was now being sent back to Philemon to “face the music”.
- ▶ Apparently (Maybe or Possibly) Paul had involvement in converting Philemon as well.
- ▶ Because Paul was an Apostle, he could have easily directed Philemon to forgive Onesimus and set him free.

Nearing the End of the Context

- ▶ However, he did not do this.
- ▶ The Book offers several examples of how Paul persuaded Philemon to “do the right thing”, in light of Onesimus’ changed life, rather than demand any action be taken.
- ▶ In doing this in this manner, the Apostle was essentially teaching two underlings in one act.

The Last Bit o' Context

- ▶ Onesimus, by being sent back was learning that we needed to trust God and be accountable for our actions. Philemon, on the other hand was getting tutored in forgiveness.



Digging a Little
Deeper in
Philemon 1-25

Philemon 1a

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

Philemon 1b-3

To Philemon our beloved *brother* and fellow worker, ² and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: ³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon 4-7

⁴I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints; ⁶*and I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake. ⁷For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Philemon 8-9

⁸Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to order you *to do* what is proper, ⁹ yet for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*—since I am such a person as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—

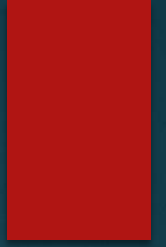
Philemon 10-16

¹⁰ I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, ¹¹ who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me. ¹² I have sent him back to you in person, that is, *sending* my very heart, ¹³ whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel; ¹⁴ but without your consent I did not want to do anything, so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion but of your own free will. ¹⁵ For perhaps he was for this reason separated *from you* for a while, that you would have him back 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.

Philemon 17-20

¹⁷ If then you regard me a partner, accept him as *you would* me. ¹⁸ But if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account; ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand, I will repay it (not to mention to you that you owe to me even your own self as well). ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

A Comparison of the Players



A Comparison of the Players



A Comparison of the Players

Philemon	A slave-owner entitled to the services of his slave	

A Comparison of the Players

Philemon	A slave-owner entitled to the services of his slave	
Onesimus	A slave who owes a debt, and runs away	

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Philemon	A slave-owner entitled to the services of his slave	
Onesimus	A slave who owes a debt, and runs away	
Paul	One who offers to pay the debt of the slave	

A Comparison of the Players

Philemon	A slave-owner entitled to the services of his slave	The Father
Onesimus	A slave who owes a debt, and runs away	
Paul	One who offers to pay the debt of the slave	

A Comparison of the Players

Philemon	A slave-owner entitled to the services of his slave	The Father
Onesimus	A slave who owes a debt, and runs away	You and I
Paul	One who offers to pay the debt of the slave	

A Comparison of the Players

Philemon	A slave-owner entitled to the services of his slave	The Father
Onesimus	A slave who owes a debt, and runs away	You and I
Paul	One who offers to pay the debt of the slave	Christ

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Philemon 21

²¹ Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.

Philemon 22-25

²² At the same time also prepare me a lodging, for I hope that through your prayers I will be given to you. ²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, ²⁴ as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers. ²⁵ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

What Are the Everyday Principles for Everyday Players?

- ▶ The Principles in the Illustration:
 - ▶ The providence of God
 - ▶ Christ requires that we be people of integrity
 - ▶ Christ requires that we trust Him
 - ▶ Christ requires that we forgive others, as the Father has forgiven us

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Points to Ponder

Our God loves us, and He wants us to grow. Consequently, we can expect that there will be circumstances in our life that bring us to situations in which opportunities for success will be presented. We need to recognize these, and do what is pleasing to the Lord.

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Points to Ponder

Just because we have responded to the gospel appropriately doesn't mean that we are no longer required to do what is expected of us. "Facing the Music" may be difficult, but our God is strong enough to get us through some difficult circumstances.

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In our daily walk, we may be asked to do some things that we won't particularly enjoy. Once again, our God sees this, and walks with us on our way. We need to remember that we can do all things through our God who strengthens us.

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Points to Ponder

Our lives are what they are because Jesus paid a debt that we owed, but could not pay. We need to acknowledge the reality of this, and forgive others as opportunity presents itself.