

**This book is a letter that the  
Apostle Paul wrote to his friend  
Philemon. We call this book  
Philemon**

*Philemon 1-3*

*I, Paul, am writing this letter to you, Philemon, and to those with you. May God bless you(pl).*

<sup>1</sup> *I, Paul, am a prisoner who serves Christ Jesus. I am here with Timothy, our fellow believer. I am writing this letter to you, Philemon, our dear friend and fellow worker.*

<sup>2</sup> *I am also writing to your wife, Apphia, and to Archippus, who is like [MET] our fellow soldier because he serves Christ steadfastly together with us. I am also writing this to the congregation that meets/gathers in your (sg) house.*

<sup>3</sup> *I pray that God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ will continue to act kindly toward you all and will continue to cause you to have inner peace.*

*I thank God and rejoice greatly because you have shown that you love God's people.*

*Philemon 4-7*

<sup>4</sup> *I always thank my God when I pray for you (sg), because I hear people say that you love all God's people [CHI]*

<sup>5</sup> *and that you continue to trust in the Lord Jesus.*

<sup>6</sup> I pray that as a result of your knowing all the good things *that God/Christ has done for us*, you may ◀be effective/influence many others▶ as you tell others what you believe, in order that *they may honor Christ*.

<sup>7</sup> I have rejoiced greatly and have been greatly encouraged because you, my dear friend, have acted lovingly toward God's people by encouraging them [SYN].

*Because I know that you love God's people, I request, rather than command you, to do what you ought to do for my spiritual son Onesimus.*

*Philemon 8-11*

<sup>8</sup> So *I have a request/favor to ask of you*. I am completely confident *that I have authority to command you to do what you ought to do, because I am an apostle of Christ*.

<sup>9</sup> But because *I know that you love God's people*, I request this instead of *commanding you to do it*. It is I, Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner *because I serve Christ Jesus, who am requesting it*.

<sup>10</sup> I request that you *do something for someone who has become like my own son because I told him about Christ [MET] while I have been a prisoner [MTY] here. His name is Onesimus*.

<sup>11</sup> Although *his name, as you know, means 'useful'*, formerly he was useless to you. But now he is useful both to you and to me!

*I am sending Onesimus back to you. He is as dear to me as my own self, and he will now be*

*even dearer to you than he is to me.*

*Philemon 12-16*

<sup>12</sup> Although ◀he is *as dear to me as I love him as much as I love*▶ [MET] my own self [MTY], I am sending him back to you.

<sup>13</sup> I would like to have kept him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf, while I am a prisoner [MTY] *because of my preaching* the message about Christ.

<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, because *I had not yet asked you and you had not yet permitted me to keep him here with me*, I decided not to *keep him here*. *I decided that I should not do anything without your permitting it. I decided that you should help me only if you really want to help me.*

<sup>15</sup> Perhaps the reason that *God permitted Onesimus to be separated from {to leave} you for a little while was that he would believe in Christ, and as a result you would have him* ◀back/with you▶ forever!

<sup>16</sup> *You will no longer have him only as a slave. Instead, you will have him as someone who is more than a slave. You will have him as a fellow believer!* He is especially dear to me, but he certainly will be more dear to you *than he is to me* (OR, I love him very much, but you will certainly love him more than I do), *because now he not only belongs to you but he also belongs to the Lord.*

*If you consider me to be your partner, receive Onesimus as you would receive me. I guarantee to repay you whatever Onesimus owes you.*

*Philemon 17-19*

<sup>17</sup> So, if you consider me to be your partner *in God's work*, receive him as you would receive me.

<sup>18</sup> If he has wronged you in any manner or if he owes you anything, ◀charge that to me/tell me so that I can pay you▶.

<sup>19</sup> I, Paul, am now writing this in my own handwriting: I will repay you what he owes you, although I might mention to you that you owe me even more than Onesimus may owe you, because it was the result of my telling you about Christ that God saved you.

*Please encourage me in this matter as you encourage other believers in Christ.*

*Philemon 20*

<sup>20</sup> ◀Yes/I say it again▶, my dear friend, because you and I both have a relationship with the Lord, I want you to do this for me. Encourage me [SYN] *by receiving Onesimus kindly, just like you encourage others who believe in Christ.*

*I have written this letter to you confident of your compliance with my request.*

*Philemon 21*

<sup>21</sup> I have written *this letter* to you, confident that you will do what I am requesting you to *do*. *In fact*, I know that you will do even more than what I am requesting *you to do*.

*Also, keep a guest room ready for me.*

*Philemon 22*

<sup>22</sup> Also, keep a guest room ready for me *to stay in*, because I confidently expect that as a result

of your prayers *for me*, I will be released *from prison and will come to you all*.

*My other fellow workers greet you(sg). May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you(pl) spiritually.*

*Philemon 23-25*

<sup>23</sup> Epaphras, who is *suffering* with me in prison because of *his serving* Christ Jesus, ◀sends his greetings to you/wants you to know that he is thinking fondly about you▶.

<sup>24</sup> Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, who are my *other* fellow workers, also ◀send their greetings to you/want you to know that they are thinking fondly about you▶.

<sup>25</sup> *I pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will* ◀continue to work kindly in all your lives/kindly keep accomplishing what he desires within you▶.

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Dialect: American

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2025-04-18

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PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 18 Apr 2025 from source files dated 18 Apr 2025

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