

**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).

¹ *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.*

² *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.*

³ *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

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

⁵ *and that you continue to trust in the Lord Jesus.*

⁶ 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*.

⁷ 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

⁸ 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*.

⁹ 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*.

¹⁰ 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*.

¹¹ 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

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.*

¹⁴ 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.*

¹⁵ 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!*

¹⁶ *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

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

¹⁸ 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▶.

¹⁹ 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

²⁰ ◀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

²¹ 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

²² 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

²³ 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▶.

²⁴ 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▶.

²⁵ *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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