

Philemon

¹ This letter is sent from Paul, prisoner of Jesus Christ, and from our brother Timothy, to Philemon, our good friend and co-worker;

² to our sister Apphia, to Archippus who fights alongside us, and to your house church.

³ May you have grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I always thank my God for you, remembering you in my prayers,

⁵ because I hear of your trust in the Lord Jesus and your love for all believers.

⁶ I pray that you will put the generous nature of your trust in God into action as you recognize all the good things we share in Christ.

⁷ Your love, my dear brother, has brought me much happiness and encouragement. You have really inspired those of us who believe!

⁸ That's why even though I'm brave enough in Christ to order you to do your duty,

⁹ I would rather ask you this favor out of love. Old Paul, now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus,

¹⁰ is appealing to you on behalf of Onesimus who became my adopted son during my imprisonment.

¹¹ In the past he was of no use to you, but now he's useful to both you and me!

¹² I send him to you with my fondest wishes.*

* **1:12** Literally, "heartfelt affections."

¹³ I'd have preferred to keep him here with me so that he could have helped me as you would have done while I am in chains for telling the good news.

¹⁴ But I decided not to do anything without your permission. I didn't want you to be forced to do good, but to do so willingly.

¹⁵ Maybe you lost him for a while so that you could have him back forever!

¹⁶ He's not a servant anymore, because he's more than a servant. He's a specially-loved brother, particularly to me, and even more to you, both as a man and as a fellow-believer in the Lord.[†]

¹⁷ So if you consider me as a colleague working together with you for the Lord,[‡] welcome him as if you were welcoming me.

¹⁸ If he has done you any wrong, or owes you anything, charge it to my account.

¹⁹ I Paul am signing this with my own hand: I will repay you. Of course I won't mention what you owe me, including your very self!

²⁰ Yes, brother, I'm expecting this favor from you in the Lord; please make me happy in Christ.

²¹ I'm writing about this to you because I'm convinced you'll do as I ask—in fact I know you'll do even more than I've asked!

²² In the meantime please have a room ready for me, for I hope to be able to return to see you

[†] **1:16** Literally, “in the flesh and in the Lord.” [‡] **1:17** “A colleague working together with you for the Lord.” The word in Greek is “partner,” but this needs explaining because of modern usage.

soon in answer to your prayers.

²³ Epaphras who is here in prison with me sends his greetings,

²⁴ as do my co-workers Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke.

²⁵ May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.

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