



## “The Book of Philemon: A Picture of our Salvation”

### Philemon 1-25

November 15, 2020

#### Philemon

- 1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,  
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.
- 4 I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers,
- 5 because 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.
- 7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.
- 8 Therefore, 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 —
- 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,

#### Salvation involves 3 individuals –

God

Jesus Christ

Unbeliever

#### In Philemon there are 3 individuals –

Philemon – represents God

Paul – represents Jesus Christ

Onesimus – represents the unbeliever.

**\*In both instances the goal is reconciliation.**

- 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.

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.

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

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.

#### 1. It begins with a person.

##### In the book of Philemon:

- Philemon begins with the attributes of Philemon (4-7).
- His love that he has toward God and the saints.

##### In the act of salvation:

- Salvation begins with the person of God and His attributes.
  - Holiness
  - Justice
  - Righteousness
  - Love
  - Grace
  - Mercy
- All of God's attributes operate fully all of the time. God is never out of balance.

#### Hab 1:13

13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil,

And You can not look on wickedness with favor.

#### Rom 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

#### Eph 2:4

4 But God, being rich in **mercy**, because of His great **love** with which He loved us,

#### Eph 2:8

8 For by **grace** you have been saved

### 2. The appeal for reconciliation is on the basis of love rather than law.

#### In the book of Philemon:

- The appeal to Philemon is from love not law (8).
- Salvation is on the basis of love rather than law.

#### Rom 8:3

3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son

#### Heb 10:1

1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

#### John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

#### Rom 5:8

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

### 4. God's sovereignty and providence are the determining factors in bringing about reconciliation.

#### In the book of Philemon:

- God sovereignly and providentially brought Onesimus to Paul, 1,300 miles away in Rome where Paul led him to the Lord. (10)

#### In the act of salvation:

- God sovereignly and providentially brings the unbeliever to salvation in Christ.

#### John 6:44

44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him;

#### Acts 9:3

3 As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him;

#### Acts 16:14

14 A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira . . . and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

### 6. Payment for sin is required.

#### In the book of Philemon:

- Onesimus must pay for damages.
- Payment must be made.
- Removal of the debt must occur.
- Satisfaction that the debt has been paid in full must be the outcome.
- With no ability to pay, Onesimus must rely on an outside source to satisfy the debt owed to Philemon. Someone would need to substitute for Onesimus.
- Paul was the substitute.
- Paul paid the debt that was owed. (18)
- He covered it in full.
- Paul by grace offers to Philemon the full payment of damages done to him by Onesimus.
- If Philemon accepts Paul's offer, several things will happen:
  1. Onesimus will be forgiven of the wrong he did and the debt he owed.
  2. Onesimus will be reconciled in his relationship with Philemon. (15)
  3. Onesimus will be viewed as if Paul were there in his place. (17)
  4. Onesimus will come back as a changed man. (11,16)

### 3. The law has been broken.

#### In the book of Philemon:

- Onesimus broke the law by escaping and stealing and was deserving of death.

#### In the act of salvation:

- The unbeliever has broken God's Law and is guilty, deserving of death.

#### Is 24:5

5 The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant.

#### Ps 119:126

126 It is time for the Lord to act,

For they have broken Your law.

#### Rom 6:23

23 For the wages of sin is death,

### 5. For reconciliation to take place, there must be change:

#### In the book of Philemon:

- Onesimus must be born again by repenting and believing. (10)
- This will lead to reconciliation with Philemon.

#### In the act of salvation:

- The unbeliever must repent of their sin and believe in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.
- This will lead to conversion, reconciliation, and justification.

#### Matt 3:2

2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

#### Mark 6:12

12 They went out and preached that men should repent.

#### Acts 26:19-20

19 "So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, and then through out all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

#### Rom 10:9

9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

#### In the act of salvation:

- The unbeliever must pay the penalty for his/her sin.
- The unbeliever has no ability to pay.

#### Isa 43:13

13 "Even from eternity I am He,

And there is none who can deliver out of My hand;

#### Ps 49:5

5 No man can by any means redeem his brother

Or give to God a ransom for him —

#### Acts 4:12

12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

#### Eph 2:8

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that **not of yourselves,**

- Jesus Christ through His **SUBSTITUTIONARY, VICARIOUS ATONEMENT** paid the debt in full.

**Isa 53:4-6**

4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore,  
 And our sorrows He carried;  
 Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,  
 Smitten of God, and afflicted.  
 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions,  
 He was crushed for our iniquities;  
 The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,  
 And by His scourging we are healed.  
 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray,  
 Each of us has turned to his own way;  
 But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all  
 To fall on Him.

**1 Peter 2:24**

24 And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross,

**2 Cor 5:21**

21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf,

- Christ satisfied the debt owed to God the Father = **PROPTIATION.**

**1 John 2:1-2**

1 And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

2 and He Himself is the **propitiation** for our sins;

**1 John 4:10**

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

**Rom 3:24-25**

24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

25 whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** in His blood through faith.

“Till on that cross as Jesus died,  
 The wrath of God was **satisfied**;  
 For ev'ry sin on him was laid —  
 Here in the death of Christ I live.”

- *In Christ Alone*

- If the unbeliever receives God's offer of salvation, several things will happen:

**1. The unbeliever is FORGIVEN and the debt is paid.**

**Isa 1:18**

18 "Though your sins are as scarlet,  
 They will be as white as snow;

**1 John 1:9**

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**2. The unbeliever is RECONCILED to God.**

**2 Cor 5:18**

18 Now all these things are from God, who **reconciled** us to Himself through Christ . . .

**Rom 5:10-11**

10 For if while we were enemies we were **reconciled** to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been **reconciled**, we shall be saved by His life.

11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the **reconciliation**.

- Christ removed the blot of sin on the unbeliever's life through His death on the cross = **EXPIATION.**

**Ps 103:12**

12 As far as the east is from the west,  
 So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

**Isa 6:6-7**

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand,  
 which he had taken from the altar with tongs.

7 He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven."

**John 1:29**

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

**Col 2:13-14**

13 When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

- The result of Christ's work on the cross and the unbeliever's faith in what Christ has accomplished on the cross for him/her = **JUSTIFICATION.**

**Rom 5:1**

1 Therefore, having been **justified** by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**Rom 3:28**

28 For we maintain that a man is **justified** by faith apart from works of the Law.

**Gal 2:16**

16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be **justified** by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

**3. The unbeliever is ADOPTED as a child of God.**

**Rom 8:15**

15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

**Eph 1:5**

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

**4. The unbeliever will be seen positionally as God views Christ in His PERFECTION.**

**Heb 5:9**

9 And having been made **perfect**, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

**Heb 10:14**

14 For by one offering He has **perfected** for all time those who are sanctified.

**5. The unbeliever is a changed person through his/her CONVERSION to Christ.**

**2 Cor 5:17**

17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; **the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.**

## **Eph 4:22-24**

22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit;

23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and **put on the new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

7. **As the result of reconciliation, a future of joy and fellowship will be enjoyed forever.**

**In the book of Philemon:**

- Philemon, Paul, and Onesimus will enjoy sweet fellowship together when they reunite. (22)

**In the act of salvation:**

- God the Father, God the Son, and the believer will dwell and fellowship together for all eternity.

**Ps 23:6**

6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**Rev 21:3-4**

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,

4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

It does not surprise us that the  
story of Philemon and  
the plan of salvation run parallel  
because it is all by

**GRACE.**