



“There may be no document in all history
that has done more to
remedy the evil of
slavery
than Paul’s letter to Philemon.”

- Wayne Jackson
Christian Courier

“A Brief Look at the Social Justice Movement, and the Final Exam on Philemon”

Book of Philemon

November 22, 2020

SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

Definition: A movement designed to bring about justice, equality, and inclusion for the oppressed.

History: In the secular world, it is as old as mankind.

Recently –

The gathering storm started with racism in the 50’s and 60’s, feminism in the 70’s and 80’s, LGBTQA+ in the 90’s to the present.

In the Church:

- the 40’s and 50’s brought us the “social gospel.”
- In the past 50 years, the Church has gradually allowed the Social Justice train to inch its way down the tracks and into the Church.



6 Terms used in SJM:

Woke – to become aware of the social justice that exists in our world and to become active to change it.

Intersectionality – classifications such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another but intersect in the lives of the disadvantaged.

Ex. A minority and a woman.

White Privilege - unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices given to people solely because they are White.

Theory of Change – deals with how to change and transform society through legislation, government, protests, etc.

Systemic Racism – racism against minorities that runs through all of society.

Oppression - The use of power to disenfranchise and marginalize groups of people, usually minorities, for the benefit of another in order to dominate the culture and society.

Egalitarianism – all people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities.

The problems from a secular world view:

minority inequality	universal healthcare
women's rights	income inequality
LGBTQA+ rights	sex trafficking
access to abortion	child welfare
climate change	dignity
equal access to education	fairness

The solution from a secular view:

Pass laws and legislation to secure equal rights for everyone.

The problem from a biblical view:

- Sin.
- The curse.
- It will not end. Result - frustration.

The solution from a biblical view:

Micah 6:8

8 And what does the Lord require of you

But to do justice, to love kindness,

And to walk humbly with your God?

- The solution is in the gospel of salvation found in Jesus Christ.
- Without the gospel in Philemon, everything falls apart –
 1. No salvation for Onesimus.
 2. No repentance.
 3. No changed life.
 4. No acceptance of Onesimus by Philemon.
 5. No reconciliation.
 6. No forgiveness.
 7. No elevation of Onesimus in status from a slave to a brother.
 8. No unity.
 9. No payment of damages.
 10. No hope for the future.

What is the gospel?

- What the gospel is not:
 1. The gospel is NOT fixing social injustices in this world.
 2. The gospel is NOT acknowledging “white privilege” and turning from it.
 3. The gospel is NOT reparations.
 4. The gospel is NOT redeeming the culture.
 5. The gospel is NOT loving others or seeking justice.

*Think about it: Jesus Christ did not die and rise again to solve the social injustices in this world. He died to save sinners.

4. Where ever the gospel is preached and lives are changed, you see individuals, families, societies, cultures, affected by it for the good. Philemon - Onesimus.
- William Wilberforce took up the cause of social justice for the slaves of the British empire.
 - Amy Carmichael took up the cause of social justice for children who were being prostituted in India.
 - E.C. Bridgeman took up the cause of social justice for Chinese peasants, who were being purposely addicted to opium by English merchants.
 - Nursing, hospitals, orphanages, have been started.
 - The poor have been fed and housed.

Acts 4:32-35

32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.

33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

34 For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales

35 and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.

The gospel is the offer of salvation to mankind who is separated from God by sin and under the wrath and condemnation of God resulting in eternal punishment in Hell.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? 10 THINGS -

1. Salvation is not saving the world from the **results** of sin. Salvation is saving from sin itself – its penalty, its power, and ultimately it's presence.
2. Salvation deals with a much deeper issue - the issue of the heart which is the heart of the issue.

Jer 17:9

9 "The heart is more deceitful than all else

And is desperately sick;

Who can understand it?

Matt 15:19

19 "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.

3. Salvation changes lives – thoughts, attitudes, motives, decisions, understanding, it moves people to love and compassion for the oppressed, the abused, the marginalized, the disadvantaged.

*Those things occurred because of the gospel, not a SJM.

5. Without the gospel, social justice is meaningless - just a political talking point to be bantered back and forth.
6. Why should the Church surrender to and join with a secular movement, when the Church has the only solution to the to the sinful behaviors that exists in our world?
7. The ground is level at the foot of the cross. Everyone comes equally to Christ for salvation – men, women, the rich, the poor, the disadvantaged and all ethnic groups (nations, peoples, tribes, and tongues). Red and yellow, black and white – they are precious in His sight. Not “color blind” but “color blessed.” We are to celebrate our diversity that God has given to us. Everyone has something to contribute. (Unlike Corinth over spiritual gifts.)
8. But here lies the problem – you must humble yourself and repent for salvation and man doesn't want to do that. He thinks he can solve the injustices of this world on his own.
9. Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, equality, and unity are all found in salvation.
10. The world is changed by the gospel one person at a time.

Why would the Church allow this in and corrupt its message?

1. It's lost its identity.
2. It does not understand the message of the gospel nor the power of the gospel.

Gal 1:6-9

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!



FINAL EXAM

BOOK OF PHILEMON

1. **The author of Philemon is**
 - A. Philemon
 - B. Onesimus
 - C. Paul
 - D. Archippus
2. **The letter of Philemon was written from**
 - A. Ephesus
 - B. Thessalonica
 - C. Philippi
 - D. Colossae
 - E. None of the above.
3. **Philemon's wife's name was**
 - A. Sophia
 - B. Apphia
 - C. Priscilla
 - D. Juanita

“The gospel is the good news of what God has done, especially in Christ Jesus, especially in his cross and resurrection; it is not what we do. Because it is news, it is to be proclaimed. But because it is powerful, it not only reconciles us to God, but transforms us, and that necessarily shapes our behavior, priorities, values, relationships with people, and much more. . . . to preach moral duty without the underlying power of the gospel is moralism that is both pathetic and powerless”

- Don Carson

4. T or F Onesimus became a believer through Philemon.
5. Paul's appeal to Philemon was based on _____ not _____.
6. Paul uses the Greek word "splangchna" to describe what –
- A. The heart.
 - B. The mind.
 - C. The spleen.
 - D. All of the inward parts of a person.
7. T or F Philemon had a history of abusing slaves and that is why Paul wanted to keep Onesimus at his side.
8. Possible penalties for a runaway slave after being returned to his owner included
- A. Branding on the forehead.
 - B. Death.
 - C. Wire neck band.
 - D. Humiliation.
 - E. All of the above.
9. Name at least 6 things Paul uses to appeal to Philemon.
10. What does Paul use to guarantee that he will pay for the damages caused by Onesimus?
11. What 5 guys does Paul name at the end of Philemon and what is significant about each one?
12. Give 3 applications for your life from the book of Philemon.
13. List as many similarities as you can comparing the book of Philemon to the act of salvation?
14. The major theme of _____ runs through both the book of Philemon and the act of salvation.
15. Why is slavery not condemned in the book of Philemon or in the entire Bible?

**End of exam.
Answers follow.**

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9. Name at least 6 things Paul uses to appeal to Philemon.

- 1. Philemon's past.
- 2. Onesimus' conversion.
- 3. Paul will cover the damages.
- 4. Paul's imprisonment.
- 5. Paul's confidence in Philemon
- 6. Paul's coming to visit Philemon and Onesimus.

10. What does Paul use to guarantee that he will pay for the damages caused by Onesimus?

His handwriting.

11. What 5 guys does Paul name at the end of Philemon and what is significant about each one?

Epaphras – hard working, pastored 3 churches with major problems.

Mark – given 2nd chance, wrote gospel of Mark.

Aristarchus – faithful, trustworthy, faced death, bold in his witness.

Demas – on the fringe, dropped out for the world.

Luke – solid believer, wrote 2 NT books, stable, willing to sacrifice.

4. T or F Onesimus became a believer through Philemon.

5. Paul's appeal to Philemon was based on love not law.

6. Paul uses the Greek word "splangchna" to describe what –

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12. Give at least 3 applications for your life from the book of Philemon.

- 1. Delicate situations need to be handled gently and carefully by me.
- 2. Risk is part of my Christian life.
- 3. Grace must always my first approach.
- 4. Spiritual maturity can take an explosive situation and turn it into a God honoring, God glorifying exaltation of the work of God in the lives of believers.
- 5. I must always remember, this world is changed one life at a time.

13. List as many similarities as you can comparing the book of Philemon to the act of salvation?

God's providence	Payment for sin
Love and not law	Justification
Reconciliation	Forgiveness
Substitution	Adoption
Expiation	Perfection
Propitiation	Conversion
Penalty for sin	Celebration forever

14. The major theme of GRACE runs through both the book of Philemon and the act of salvation.

15. Why is slavery not condemned in the book of Philemon or in the entire Bible?

- 1. We are not called to overthrow or demolish cultural institutions.
- 2. People are the problem – change people = change institution.