

# **BOOK OF PHILEMON**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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- A. Written by the apostle Paul, from prison in Rome, probably at same time the Colossian letter was written, About 61 - 63 A.D.
  - B. Deals specifically with a private, domestic matter.
  - C. The principal may be stated as follows: 'what impact will the world and its social standards have on the church and what influence will the church have on the world and how will this influence be exerted.'
  - D. A plea for the reconciliation of two of God's children.
    - 1. One a slave....the other his master.
    - 2. But many things about reconciliation in other areas can be learned.
  - E. **Christianity does not remove moral, financial and legal obligations it sanctifies them and establishes additional reasons why should be honored.**
  - F. It is also a repudiation of the dogma of the social gospel.
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## **The Support For The Appeal**

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- A. His authority.
  - B. His age
  - C. His imprisonment.
  - D. His relation to both Philemon and Onesimus.
  - E. His offer to pay for Onesimus' wrong (whatever it was).
  - F. His hope that Philemon will rejoice his heart.
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## **HIS AUTHORITY**

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- A. V. 8....but rather I beseech ....”
  - B. Authority is a motivating force whether in the home, the church or community
  - C. And it is desperately needed.
  - D. But we notice that Paul here appeals to love. Loving husband, father...etc.
  - E. Christ has all authority as our King- We view it through His love (Jn. 3;16).
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## **HIS AGE**

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- A. “Being such a one as Paul the aged”
  - B. This must have made some impression Philemon.
  - C. HIS IMPRISONMENT:
    - 1. Philemon would have known the reason for Paul's imprisonment.
    - 2. Paul desired Philemon to pray for the Roman government to release him so that he might come to Philemon v. 22.
    - 3. Could he pray for the release of Paul, his brother, and have no compassion for Onesimus, him brother?
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## **HIS RELATION TO BOTH**

- A. Onesimus becoming a child of God made him a brother in the Lord of the one who was his master in the flesh.
  - B. Name “Onesimus” means “helpful” or “profitable”.
  - C. Paul makes a play on the words when he talks of previous unprofitableness but “now is profitable.”
  - D. Paul could have rationalized..how God’s providence had sent Onesimus, how he needed him...etc.
  - E. But remember his love for Philemon and his responsibility.
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## **OFFER TO PAY**

- A. Pay for what?
  - B. Be difficult to get from Colossae to Rome without some funds and goods from some place.
  - C. Paul implies in the letter that the slave has wronged the master or owed him.
  - D. Maybe he had stolen from Philemon.
  - E. Or perhaps he had been sent to Rome by Philemon and just didn’t return.
  - F. We don’t really have any way of knowing..but there was a debt and Paul wanted to pay that debt.
  - G. Paul wanted their reconciliation enough he was willing to pay the cost.
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## **I HAVE HEARD**

- A. Text: *“I thank my God always, making mention of thee in my prayers, hearing of thy love, and of the faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints:”* (vs 4,5).
  - 1. An oft used statement in the New Testament. “I have heard”.
  - 2. We use it now.
    - a. Did you hear about....supply the name.
    - b. Did you hear what they did?
    - c. Can be either good or bad!
- B. WE NEED TO SO LIVE....
  - 1. That, that which is heard about us is good.
  - 2. And there are those who hear of our faith and life.
    - a. Our Friends.
    - b. Our Family.
    - c. Our God.

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## WHAT HAS BEEN HEARD

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### A. THAT WHICH IS GOOD:

1. *'For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which ye show toward all the saints...' (Eph. 1:15).*
2. *"...we give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have toward all the saints," (Col. 1:4).*
3. Common to both.... faith in the Lord, and love toward the saints.

### B. THAT WHICH IS BAD!

1. *"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I heard that divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it." (I Cor. 11:18).*
2. *"For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies." (II Thess. 3:11).*
3. Divisions, Disorderly, Busybodies.

### C. WHAT IS HEARD ABOUT YOU?

1. We need to Plan our Life And LIVE our Life.
  2. So that, that which is Heard is ALWAYS GOOD, What It Should Be.
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## CONCLUSION

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### A. Christianity is for plain, honest, earnest people who have a heart.

1. Men upon becoming Christians, must as possible, right their past wrongs.
2. Regardless of cost...Onesimus return to Philemon.
3. In no place does Paul hint that Philemon is to let Onesimus go free.
4. But he would be free of any fear of the master if request followed.
5. Philemon is not requested to set Onesimus free but...what is more difficult...to love him and see in the converted slave a brother.
6. Philemon becomes to Christians a precious paper because it provides an object lesson in applied Christianity.
7. Truly, in Christ Jesus all become one! In Christ the love is genuine, the hope is sure; the reward is for the now and for eternity.

### B. "REJOICE MY HEART"

1. To see his brethren reconciled in the Lord. **"A brother beloved"**
  2. Like John, could have no greater joy than "to hear of my children walking in the truth."
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