



### *RCC Phoenix – 6.21.20 – Philemon*

The book of Philemon is very short. It has only 1 chapter and just \_\_\_\_\_ verses.

It is a book we tend to overlook but it contains great principles for us.

Philemon was a great friend of the \_\_\_\_\_ and Scripture indicates they had a very close relationship.

Philemon was well off from the material perspective and even supported Paul \_\_\_\_\_ on some of his missionary journeys.

Philemon had a slave / servant working for him by the name of Onesimus.

Most slaves / servants in those days were people who had borrowed money and worked for an agreed upon time to repay the debt.

Historians believe this was probably the case with Onesimus.

One day, Onesimus gets tired of doing the work to repay his debt, decides he's had enough and decides to no longer honor his agreement with Philemon.

And to make things worse, Onesimus sneaks into the Philemon's home and \_\_\_\_\_ more money from him.

Onesimus is living it up on stolen money in Rome. But one day, he runs across one of Philemon's best friends, \_\_\_\_\_.

Paul winds up connecting with Onesimus and \_\_\_\_\_ him to the Lord.

Paul writes this letter to Philemon and sends \_\_\_\_\_ to deliver it to him.

#### **Philemon 1:5-21 NLT**

"I always thank my God when I pray for you, Philemon, because I keep hearing about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all of God's people. And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ. Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God's people. That is why I am boldly asking a favor of you. I could demand it in the name of Christ because it is the right thing for you to do. But because of our love, I prefer simply to ask you. Consider this as a request from me—Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner for the sake of Christ

Jesus. I appeal to you to show kindness to my child, Onesimus. I became his father in the faith while here in prison. Onesimus hasn't been of much use to you in the past, but now he is very useful to both of us. I am sending him back to you, and with him comes my own heart. I wanted to keep him here with me while I am in these chains for preaching the Good News, and he would have helped me on your behalf. But I didn't want to do anything without your consent. I wanted you to help because you were willing, not because you were forced. It seems you lost Onesimus for a little while so that you could have him back forever. He is no longer like a slave to you. He is more than a slave, for he is a beloved brother, especially to me. Now he will mean much more to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord. So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, PAUL, WRITE THIS WITH MY OWN HAND: I WILL REPAY IT. AND I WON'T MENTION THAT YOU OWE ME YOUR VERY SOUL! Yes, my brother, please do me this favor for the Lord's sake. Give me this encouragement in Christ. I am confident as I write this letter that you will do what I ask and even more!"

Philemon had every \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ right to prosecute Onesimus.

Philemon is being asked to take another loss, forget what's rightfully owed to him, keep Onesimus around and treat him as a \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ.

1. Paul Was Not \_\_\_\_\_

Paul could've earned some serious BFF points for this. He could've sent Onesimus home in chains to Philemon with a note that said, "I know this fool did you wrong. I caught him here in Rome partying with your money. I had him arrested and delivered to you so this little twit can work off his debt."

Paul could've taken the opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_ to Philemon.

Paul could have captured Onesimus and sent him back to Philemon and bragged about how loyal of a friend he was to everyone.

Paul rejects the opportunity to be selfish and puts the \_\_\_\_\_ where it should be, on Jesus and his heart for Salvation.

2. Paul doesn't take the \_\_\_\_\_ road. He takes the road of the \_\_\_\_\_

He sees this as an opportunity to do something greater than the rules, greater than repay physical monies owed in this temporal world. He takes the opportunity to step higher and love like Christ loves.

Fathers, when disciplining your children and teaching them about right and wrong, I challenge you to not just have the heart of a father but the heart of \_\_\_\_\_ Father.

This decision is straight from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Heavenly Father that's beating in Paul's chest.

3. Acting like our Heavenly Father has \_\_\_\_\_ Impacts.

In our current cultural climate, we are hearing a lot of opinions from people on what the church should be doing to combat racism, inequality, injustice, etc.

Cultural law changes are needed and justified but there is there is a \_\_\_\_\_ road.

The church can be the leading example in this and many areas in a relatively short time frame. How?

We can...

- follow Jesus instructions and treat every single person as if they were \_\_\_\_\_ bearers of God.
- love \_\_\_\_\_ with everything and love \_\_\_\_\_ as we love ourselves.
- treat the people in our local \_\_\_\_\_ fellowships with the love, patience, dignity, kindness, grace and compassion that comes from the Holy Spirit living inside of us.
- not just take the high road but the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Most High.
- look past our differences in ideas, ethnicities, gender, sizes and shapes to see the people God \_\_\_\_\_ and sent his Son to die for.

If we simply live like God's Word instructs us, we can crush the evil and hateful attitudes that arise from our fallen flesh.

And when the world continues to look for ways to cure a fallen human condition, the church of Jesus Christ can be a \_\_\_\_\_ example to the planet that following what Jesus says actually works.

Human \_\_\_\_\_ do not solve the problem of sin.

Mankind will always find a way to hate. It will find a way to be offended. People away from Christ will create all sorts of ways to try to give themselves satisfaction but it will not work.

#### **Romans 1:28-32 NLT**

"Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done. Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. They know God's justice requires that those who do these things deserve to die, yet they do them anyway. Worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too."

Every effort that moves us to any end that does not end in deepening our relationship with Christ is a \_\_\_\_\_.

Onesimus becomes the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church in Ephesus.

#### 4. Paul Helps Onesimus Live Up to His \_\_\_\_\_

The name Onesimus means \_\_\_\_\_.

When we submit our lives fully to Christ, we have His love, His gift of Salvation and a \_\_\_\_\_ with the God who created us and knows our ultimate \_\_\_\_\_.