

# THE ONE YEAR BIBLE CLUB

WITH TEACHING COMMENTARY BY NICK BOORK

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## October 29 – Philemon

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy *our* brother, To Philemon our beloved *friend* and fellow laborer, <sup>2</sup>to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: <sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, <sup>5</sup>hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, <sup>6</sup>that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup>For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

<sup>8</sup>Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting, <sup>9</sup>*yet* for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*—being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ—<sup>10</sup>I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, <sup>11</sup>who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me. <sup>12</sup>I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, <sup>13</sup>whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. <sup>14</sup>But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

<sup>15</sup>For perhaps he departed for a while for this *purpose*, that you might receive him forever, <sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>If then you count me as a partner, receive him as *you would* me. <sup>18</sup>But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. <sup>19</sup>I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. <sup>20</sup>Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord.

<sup>21</sup>Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. <sup>22</sup>But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you. <sup>23</sup>Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, <sup>24</sup>*as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. <sup>25</sup>The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

## OKAY, HERE'S MY TEACHING COMMENTARY

Paul writes this letter to Philemon. He was a personal friend of the apostle Paul and a fellow worker helping to establish the church in his city. He had a reputation of being a very influential leader that was able to bring a fresh word to build up believers and share his faith in Christ effectively. Paul encourages him to continue to share the gospel by reminding him that the strength of his power comes from acknowledging every good thing which is in him in Christ

Jesus. In other words the grace of God and the anointing of the Holy Spirit that was in him were the spiritual abilities that he needed to rely on to continue this good work of preaching and ministering to the saints.

While Paul was under house arrest in Rome Onesimus who was a slave, ran away from Philemon. Paul informs Philemon that Onesimus has been converted to Christ and now he's become his spiritual son and attendant in the ministry! He makes an appeal to Philemon to forgive Onesimus and to receive him back but now as a brother in Christ. Onesimus had grown in his relationship with God and he turned out to be a very helpful assistant to the apostle Paul. He also reminds Philemon that now Onesimus would once again be profitable to have around and Paul promised to pay any outstanding debt Onesimus owed to Philemon. Paul discerned that Onesimus needed to return and make things right with Philemon. Paul asks his friend Philemon to prepare a room for Paul to stay in at his home because he believes that he will be released and return to him through the prayers of Philemon. We know that Paul was never released from his house arrest while in Rome.

What this letter teaches us is that no matter what you did in your past once you come to Christ you are forgiven and made a new creature through the new birth. Paul was making a personal appeal to Philemon to forgive and restore Onesimus as God had forgiven and saved him. Paul was acting as a peacemaker. If we want to act like God then we need to forgive others even if they have done some stupid stuff. Onesimus had ran away from his duties as a household servant of Philemon but now he had come to Christ and been saved. Paul knew that the best thing Onesimus could do was return to Philemon and be restored but not as a slave but as a brother in Christ and fellow worker in the Kingdom of God. How about you? Is there anyone you need to forgive for things they have done to hurt you?

### **WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?**

- 1) Philemon was a personal friend of Paul and his fellow worker.
- 2) Onesimus had been a household slave that ran away from Philemon.
- 3) Paul led Onesimus to faith in Christ and mentored him as a servant of God.
- 4) Paul intervened to see Onesimus reconciled to Philemon.
- 5) God has had mercy on us so we also need to have mercy on others that don't deserve it.

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