

P.T. BIBLE SURVEY

Paul's Epistle to Philemon

THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

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- Paul writes this short letter to Philemon to request gentle treatment and forgiveness of a runaway slave, Onesimus.
- Who wrote it?
 - Paul is the writer of this epistle (1:1).
 - Philemon is one of Paul's four "Prison Epistles". The other three are Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

- ◉ Date of writing:

- Around A.D. 61.

- ◉ Surrounding Circumstances:

- This letter to Philemon was written by Paul sometime during his imprisonment in Rome.
- Philemon was a wealthy Christian and church leader in Colossae. Onesimus, his former slave, had run away and possibly stolen money from him.

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◎ Key Term: Brother

- When master and slave are both Christian, they are brothers, and therefore essentially equal. If Christian brotherhood extends this far, then it covers all relationships among the people of God.

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◉ Location of Events:

- Paul wrote to Philemon from a Roman prison.
- Philemon's home served as one of the meeting places for the church in Colossae.

PHILEMON

Overview of the Acts of the Apostles



OUTLINE OF PHILEMON

I. Prayer of Thanksgiving for Philemon (1-7)

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- II. Petition of Paul for Onesimus (8-16)
- III. Promise of Paul to Philemon (17-25)

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- ◎ Summary in one sentence:
 - Everyone who has repented of sin and come to Christ should be welcomed as a brother or sister, treated gently, and forgiven by other believers.

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- ◎ Summary in 10 words or less:
 - Paul begs mercy for a runaway slave converted to Christianity.

THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

◎ Cast of Characters:

- **Paul:** a prisoner making an appeal for a brother
- **Philemon:** well respected in Colossae; hosts a church in his home
- **Onesimus:** an escaped slave; became Paul's brother in faith
- **Epaphras:** a fellow prisoner in Jesus
- **Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke:** Paul's fellow workers

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Verse to Remember

“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.”

(Philemon 1:6)

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◉ Interesting Facts:

- Philemon is Paul's shortest letter. It is also one of four letters addressed to an individual. The other three are 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus.
- According to Roman law, a runaway slave could be severely punished, and even put to death.
- Paul sent Tychicus, along with Onesimus, to deliver his letter to Philemon. (Col. 4:7-9)

THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

- What is my take away?
 - Christians are called to forgive others as Christ forgives us. Jesus said to *“do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you”* (Matt. 5:44).

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◉ Home Study

- Read a couple chapters daily in Hebrews this week.
- Review your One-Sentence Summaries.
- Recite your memory verses.