



# *Philemon*

---

STUDY GUIDE  
WRITTEN BY  
HOLLI WORTHINGTON

Copyright © 2017 Holli Worthington. This document may be reproduced for learning purposes but not for profit.

# Philemon

## Day 1- Philemon 1

1. Read through Paul's letter to Philemon. In as much detail as you can, describe the characters in this little drama.

Paul-

Philemon-

Onesimus-

2. Philemon was the legal owner of the slave Onesimus, who had seemingly stolen from Philemon, ran away and somehow ended up with Paul. From the information you have gathered about each person in this letter, speculate (use your imagination) on Onesimus's flight from Colossae to Rome and what happened when he met Paul.

## Day 2- Philemon 1

*R. Kent Hughes describes Paul's letter to Philemon as, "the most brilliantly nuanced, compelling letter of reconciliation in ancient history. It is a model of grace and charm. As such, it can be a great help to us all if we care to enhance our human relationships-*

*especially those in the Body of Christ, where we have special stake in each other's lives."*

3. How did Paul sincerely compliment Philemon in verses 4-7?

4. What kind of approach did Paul use with Philemon in verses 8-9?

Scholar's Note: Onesimus means "*useful*".

5. What words does Paul use to describe how he feels about Onesimus in verses 10,12, and 16?



There are many barriers between people in our world today, but those who belong to Jesus are one family regardless of the differences.

In Galatians 3:27-28 Paul says, "*And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.*"

❖ What kind of freedom does this truth bring to believers?

- ❖ What ways have you ever struggled with believers who were of a different race, economic status, political party, denomination or even personality or opinions than you?
  
- ❖ How can you show love to believers who have different ideas than you do about child rearing, working outside the home vs. stay home mom, or education choices?

As Gentiles (non-Jews) we at one time were not included as God's people. Our heritage and our sin formed an impenetrable barrier separating us from God.

*"Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." Eph. 2:12*

But gloriously Jesus changed our outsider status!

*"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ...So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God..." Eph. 2:13,19*

- ❖ Spend time in prayer thanking God that he removed all the barriers that kept you from him with the perfect life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Ask him to show you any barriers that you may have put up with other believers and how remembering all that Jesus has done for you should affect your relationship with other believers.

### Day 3- Philemon 1

6. How do you think Paul's expression of his relationship with Onesimus was helpful to his friend Philemon in the reconciliation process?

7. How did Paul show respect for Philemon in verses 13-14?

Picture and Ponder: "Human reconciliation runs on loving tact, something every Christian should master regardless of personality or position...Christian sensitivity is fundamental to reconciliation in human relationships."-R. Kent Hughes.

8. How do you see God's sovereignty at work in verses 15-16?

9. What positive picture of future relationship does Paul paint for Philemon in verse 16?

#### Day 4- Philemon 1

10. What does Paul do for Onesimus in verses 17-18?

11. How did Paul exhibit his faith in Philemon in verse 21?

-Do you think this faith was well founded? Why or why not?

-How do you think this confidence aided in the reconciliation process?

-What do you think an expression of doubts and warnings by Paul would have done?

Digging Deeper: What obligation do Christians have to forgive each other according to these verses?

Matthew 6:14-15-

Matthew 18:21-22-

Mark 11:25-

Colossians 3:13-

Day 5- Philemon 1

Listed below are themes from Philemon. How do these same themes relate to you and your Savior?

Slavery/Freedom- (Romans 6:16-18, Titus 3:3, Galatians 5:1)

Mediator/Intercessor- (1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 7:25-27)

Reconciliation- (Romans 5:11, 2 Corinthians 5:19)



Spend time meditating and praying on these Scriptures and thanking God for sending Jesus to be the perfect mediator between sinners and a holy God, for paying our debt, for setting us free from sin, and reconciling us to God.

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God impressed on you, convicted you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?