

How To Connect Disconnected People

A Study of the book of Philemon

INTRODUCTION

- A. This book is a brief account of a plea for reconciliation between brothers.
- B. These brothers once had a very different relationship with / to each other. In fact, they were not brothers at all.

Philemon

Master
Owner
Powerful Person
Christian
Saved

Onesimus

Slave
Property
Powerless Possession
Sinner
Lost

They had nothing in common. Philemon and Onesimus lived in two totally different worlds.

I. Onesimus Problems Were Obvious.

- A. He was useless to Philemon
- B. He was a (*possibly*) thief – He (*possibly*) stole from his master.
- C. He was irresponsible – He ran away from his obligations.
- D. He did not know God

II. Philemon's Problems Were Obscure

A. He blended into the acceptable practice of the then pagan Roman culture.

- 1. He owned slaves.
- 2. It was lawful but was it wise? *He looked like the culture of his world.*

Example: *Black Maids at rich North Dallas Church*

- 3. Obscurity leads to:
 - a. Ambiguous Ambition

Which are laced with → b. Murky Motives

Resulting in → → → → c. Vague Values

What We Are Drinking Is Developing Our Thinking

It is dangerous to mix the wisdom of Christ with the wisdom of this world. *James 3:13-18*

Example: *Water and Strychnine*

B. He buried his weakness under his strength.

- 1. What are his strengths?
 - a. Dear friend and fellow worker of Paul (*v. 1*)
 - b. The church met in his house (*v. 2*)
 - c. Paul thanked God because of his:
 - Faith in the Lord
 - Love for the saints (*v. 4-5*)
- 2. What is his weakness?
 - a. He had a problem sharing his faith (*v. 6*)
 - Is it possible to (*ie. abc*) and have problems sharing your faith?
 - Paul shifts his pray style from Thanksgiving (*v. 4-5*) to Intercession (*v. 6*)

b. Sharing our faith leads to a **full** understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

- Not just material things
- Provides eternal insight

C. Onesimus (*profitable*). Philemon did not see the eternal value of Onesimus because Philemon was not sharing his faith.

D. When we share our faith:

It is a → → → → → * Sign of Selflessness

It makes us → → → * Sensitive to sin

It help us become → * Sympathetic and empathetic to sinners yet unsaved.

It forces us to → → → * Stand in the Spirit's Power

Christian must share their faith openly with **EVERYONE** or deal with the problems associated with obscurity.

III. Paul's Appeal is Overwhelming

A. Paul Appeals on the basis of love rather than power (v. 8-10)

Paul had Apostolic Authority.

Love is more powerful than authority.

By using power, Paul would do to Philemon what Philemon had been doing to Onesimus

B. Paul Affirms Onesimus Worth. (v. 11-17)

1. "My son" (10) Paul twice calls a slave "my son".
2. Formerly useless (v.11) Presently useful
To you (Philemon) To me & to you
3. Equal to Philemon in value. (v. 12-14)
4. Elevated to the status of "brother" (v.15-17)

C. Paul Assume Onesimus Debt. (v. 18-21)

1. If he owes you, charge it to me. (v. 18)
2. If he owes you, I will pay you back. (v. 19)
3. If he owes you, remember you owe me more. (v. 19)

Serve Suffering Souls (Prov.31:6-7)

- Those who are perishing (the dying)
- Those who are in anguish (suffering and pain are with them day and night)
- Those who live in poverty (an unhealthy environments)
- Those who are miserable (feeling hopeless, wretchedly unhappy or constantly uncomfortable)

Speak Up (Prov.31:8-9)

- For those who cannot speak for themselves.
- Never speak for anyone until you understand what they need you to say.
- For the rights of all who are destitute.
- Judge Fairly.
- Defend the rights of the poor and needy.

CONCLUSION

What are you willing to do help you brother? (Mk. 2:1-12)