

## Bible Study – Outline

### PHILEMON

#### Hope for the Future – Leadership in the Church

<u>Author</u>	Paul
<u>Date Written</u>	Approx. 60AD
<u>Audience:</u>	Philemon and the church at Colossae
<u>Key Places:</u>	Prison in Rome or possibly Ephesus, Colossae

#### Major Theme(s)

“A Ministry of Reconciliation” – II Cor. 5:18-20

Forgiveness

Grace

Love

#### Key People

Philemon

Onesimus

Paul

### PHILEMON

Paul's appeal to Philemon	
Paul gives thanks to God for his friend Philemon	verses 1 - 7
Paul asks (pleas for) Philemon to forgive Onesimus	verses 8 - 16
Paul's promise to Philemon	verses 17- 21
Personal remarks, greetings, and benediction	verses 22 - 25

#### Key Scriptures

4 I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, 5 because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. 6 I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. 7 Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people.

8 Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, 9 yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love.

14 But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary.

17 So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.

18 If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me.

21 Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

### **Approach and Structure**

To win Philemon's willing acceptance of Onesimus, Paul writes in a very tactful and warmhearted manner.

The appeal (vv. 4–21) is organized in a way prescribed by ancient Greek and Roman teachers:

- to build rapport (vv. 4–10),
- to persuade the mind (vv. 11–19) and
- to move the emotions (vv. 20–21).

The name Onesimus is not mentioned until the rapport has been built (v. 10), and the appeal itself is stated only near the end of the section to persuade the mind (v. 17).

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How does the Book of Philemon compare to Colossians 3:12-14? How does this show Paul practicing what he teaches?
2. What does Paul say to soften Philemon's heart?
3. Do you have an Onesimus in your life?
4. Who is the Philemon in your life? Possibly a person you may have hurt or mistreated and you would like to say how you are sorry and ask for forgiveness?

### **Resources Used**

Adventuring Through the Bible by Ray Stedman  
Life Application Bible (NIV) - Zondervan and Tyndale House.  
[www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com)  
[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)