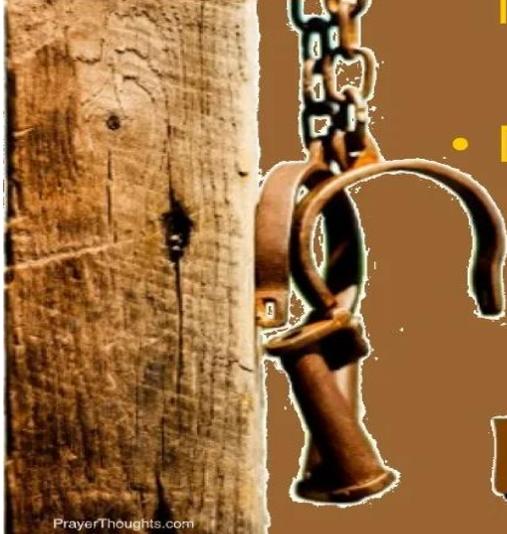


THE APOSTLE & THE RUNAWAY

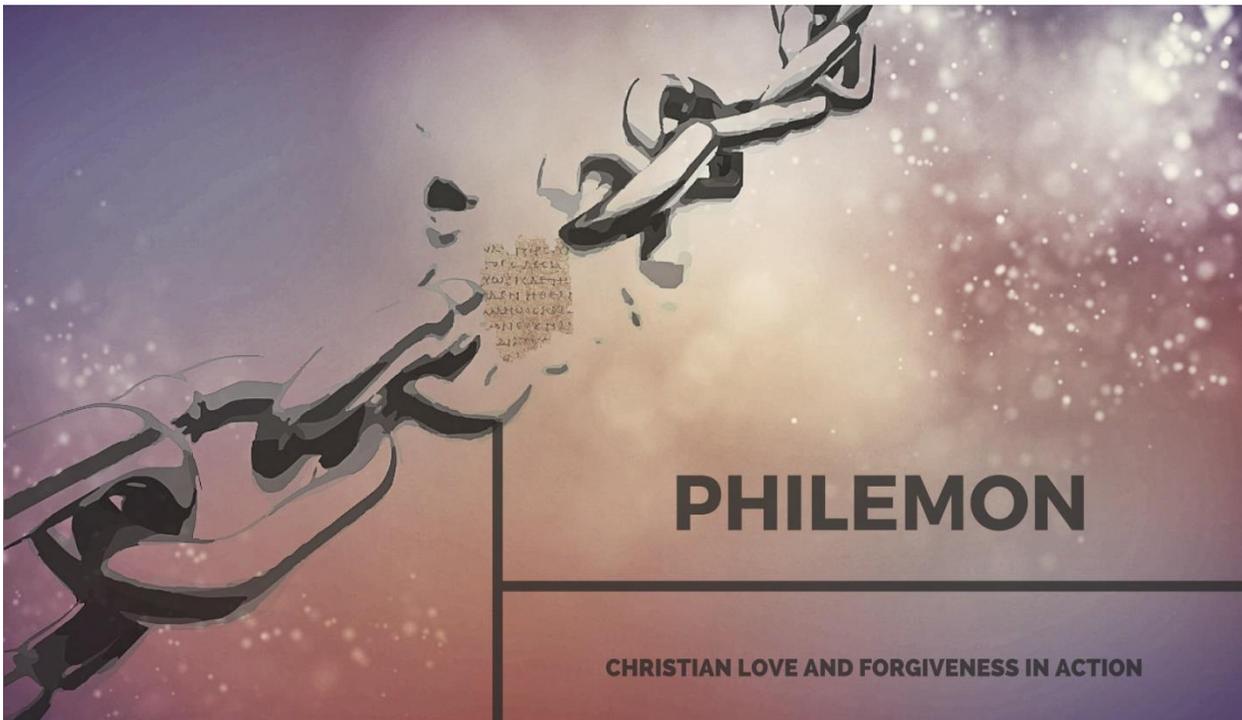
by **David Lee Burris**



- Only preserved private letter of Paul
- Dated between 62-64 AD

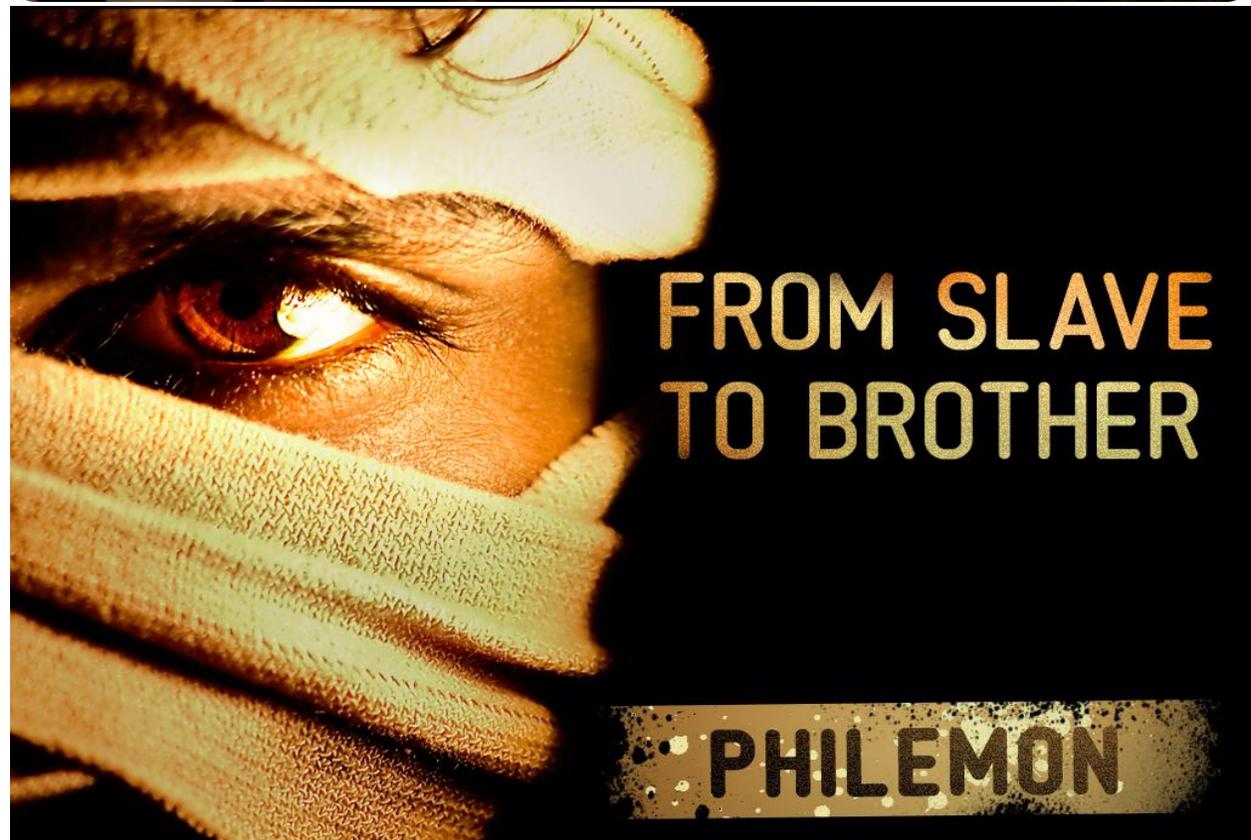
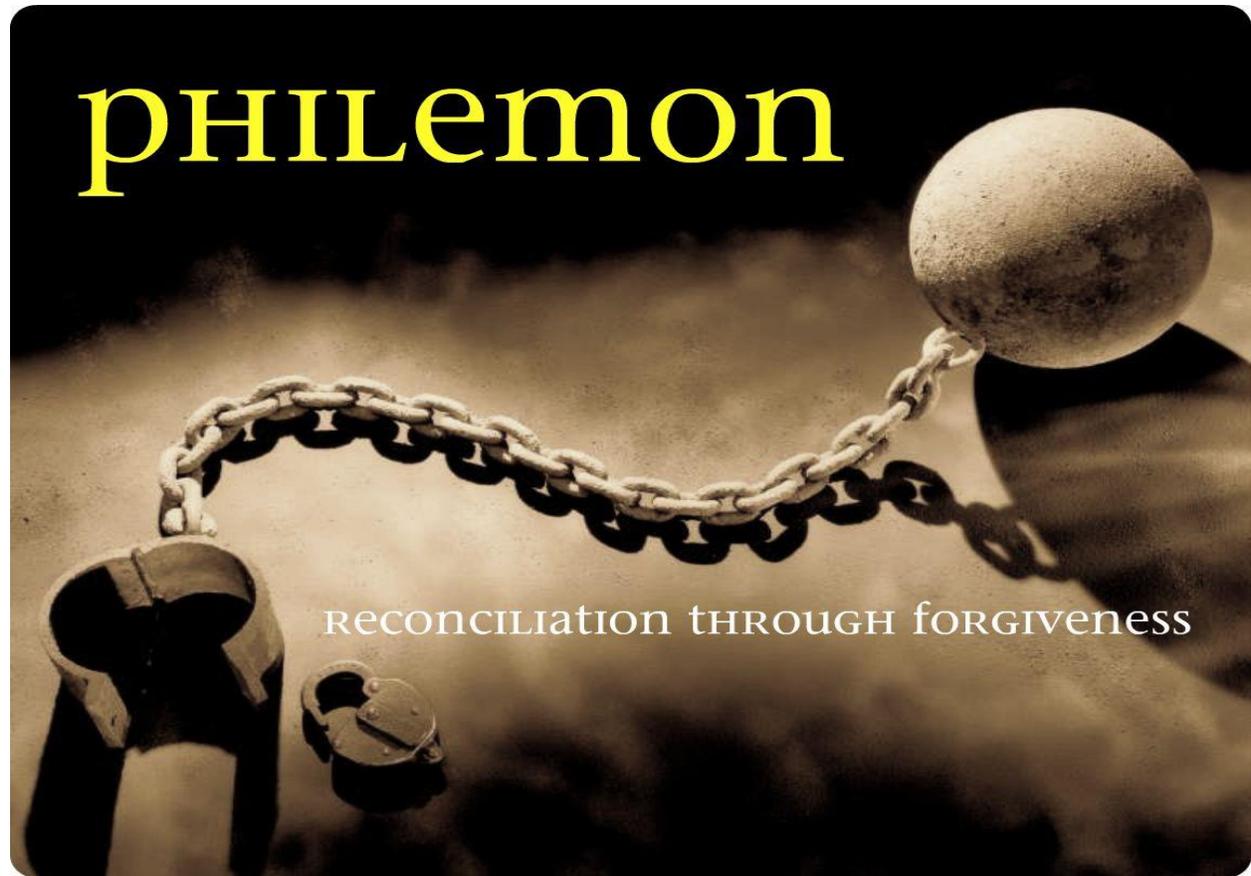
Philemon

PrayerThoughts.com Hope4Healing.com



PHILEMON

CHRISTIAN LOVE AND FORGIVENESS IN ACTION



THE LETTER OF PAUL TO PHILEMON

For the Introduction to Philemon see page 1058

Greeting

¹ Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved fellow worker ² and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon's Love and Faith

⁴ I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, ⁶ and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. ⁷ For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

Paul's Plea for Onesimus

⁸ Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—⁹ Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus—¹⁰ I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus,¹¹ whose father I became in my imprisonment. (Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.) ¹² I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. ¹³ I would have been glad to

keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴ but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own accord. ¹⁵ For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶ no longer as a bondservant³ but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother—especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it—to say nothing of your owing me even your own self. ²⁰ Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

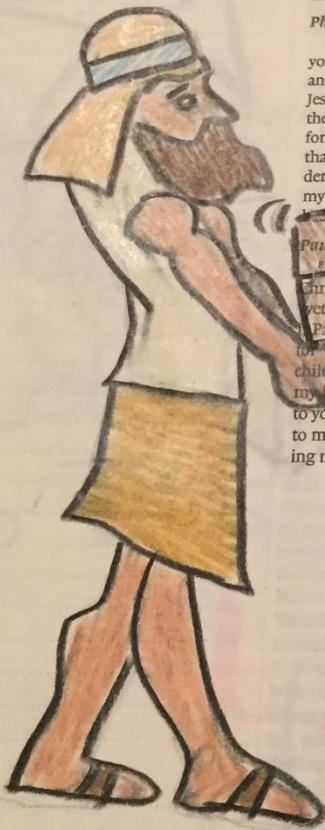
²¹ Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. ²² At the same time, prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping that through your prayers I will be graciously given to you.

Final Greetings

²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, ²⁴ and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

²⁵ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

ONESIMUS



FROM SLAVE
TO BROTHER

¹ Or for Christ's service. ² Onesimus means useful (see verse 11) or beneficial (see verse 20). ³ Or slave; twice in this verse (for the contextual rendering of the Greek word doulos, see Preface).

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Interesting Facts About Philemon

AUTHOR: Paul
TIME WRITTEN: About A.D. 60 or 61 from Rome
POSITION IN THE BIBLE:

- 57th Book in the Bible
- 18th Book in the New Testament
- 13th of 21 Epistle Books (Romans - Jude)
- 7th of Paul's 13 books
- 9 Books to follow it.



CHAPTERS: 1
VERSES: 25
WORDS: 445

PHILEMON

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT PHILEMON:

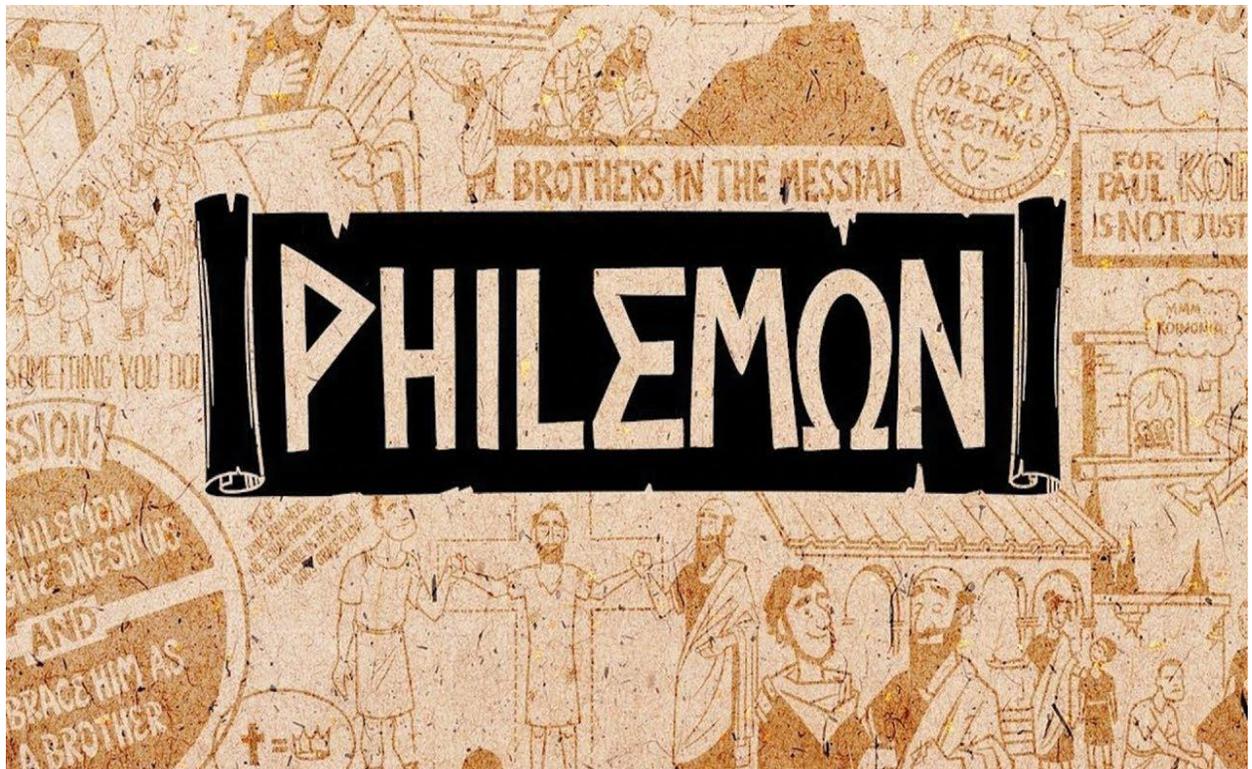
- The Book of Philemon:
 - Is one of the four prison epistles of Paul.
 - Ephesians
 - Philippians
 - Colossians
 - Philemon
 - Is Paul's only one chapter book.
 - Is Paul's shortest book. (334 words in Greek, and 445 in the KJV)
 - Is one of Paul's four books addressed to individuals.
 - 1 Timothy - Titus
 - 2 Timothy - Philemon
- Philemon was:
 - A resident of Colosse. 1-2
 - One of Paul's converts to Christ. 19
 - Had a house large enough for the church to meet in. 2
 - A benevolent man. 5-7
 - Father of Archipus. 2
 - Was the owner of the slave, Onesimus.

- According to Roman law, a runaway slave could be severely punished, and even put to death.
- Concerning Onesimus:
 - He was a slave who had runaway from his master.
 - It is possible that he had stolen money from Philemon.
 - He fled to Rome.
 - He was converted to Christ by Paul.
- Paul writes the letter to Philemon and asks him to take Philemon back as a beloved brother.
- The letter was delivered to Philemon by:
 - Tychicus
 - Philemon



Barnes' Bible Charts





THE MISSION:
GET PHILEMON TO FORGIVE ONESIMUS AND EMBRACE HIM AS A BROTHER.

PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON

THE ONLY LETTER WHERE PAUL DOESN'T TALK ABOUT JESUS' DEATH & RESURRECTION... BECAUSE HE'S ACTING IT OUT.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE GOOD NEWS ARE PERSONAL, BUT NEVER PRIVATE: JESUS' FAMILY IS A NEED, IMPORTANCE OF EQUAL PARTNERS WHO SHARE TOGETHER IN GOD'S HEALING MERCY.

vv1-7 OPENING PRAYER

PHILEMON, I THANK GOD FOR YOUR LOVE & FAITHFULNESS. (v4-5)

"I PRAY THAT THE PARTNERSHIP THAT SPRINGS FROM YOUR FAITH THAT EFFECTIVELY LEAD YOU TO RECOGNIZE ALL THE GOOD THINGS AT WORK IN US, LEADING US INTO THE MESSIAH." (v6)

GREEK: KOINONIA = SHARING, MUTUAL PARTICIPATION

ALL OF JESUS' FOLLOWERS ARE EQUAL PARTNERS WHO SHARE IN THE GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE & LOVE.

FOR PAUL, KOINONIA IS NOT JUST AN IDEA.

IT'S SOMETHING YOU DO!

vv8-20 PAUL'S REQUEST

THE BOLD REQUEST:
"RECEIVE ONESIMUS BACK, NO LONGER AS A SLAVE, BUT AS A BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD."

1 RECONCILIATION:
"GOD WAS RECONCILING THE WORLD TO HIMSELF."
NOT COUNTING PEOPLE'S SINS AGAINST THEM." (2 CORINTHS 5:19)

2 KOINONIA:
THEY ARE EQUAL BEFORE GOD, SHARING IN THE SAME NEED FOR FORGIVENESS.
"IN GOD'S NEED FAMILY, PEOPLE ARE NOT GREEK OR JEWISH, CIRCUMCISED OR UNCIRCUMCISED, SLAVE OR FREE, BUT THE MESSIAH IS ALL & IS IN ALL." (COLLOSSIANS 3:11)

BROTHERS IN THE MESSIAH

Pulpit Commentary @Colossians 3: 22 - 24

Verse 22. - Ye servants (literally, **bondmen**), **be obedient in all things to your lords according to the flesh** ([Ephesians 6:5-9](#); [1 Timothy 6:1, 2](#); [Titus 2:9, 10](#); [1 Corinthians 7:21-24](#); [Romans 13:1, 5](#); [1 Peter 2:18-25](#)). The duties of **servants & masters** are prominent here (ver. 22- [Colossians 4:1](#)), in view of the emphasis thrown upon the lordship of Christ; and partly, no doubt, with reference to the case of the runaway slave Onesimus ([Colossians 4:9](#); Epistle to Philemon) "Servant" is δούλος, **bondman**, as in [Colossians 1:1](#) and commonly in St. Paul. In [1 Peter 2:18](#) we have the milder οἰκετής, **domestic**. The vast majority of servants of all kinds at this time in the Greek and Roman world were **slaves**. In most districts the slaves were much more numerous than the free population. And they were undoubtedly numerous in the early Church. The gospel has always been welcome to the poor and oppressed. The attitude of St. Paul and of Christianity towards slavery claims consideration under the Epistle to Philemon; on this point see Lightfoot's 'Introduction.' Here and in [Ephesians 6:5](#) (comp. vers. 7, 8) the apostle calls the master κύριος ("lord") in reference to "the Lord Christ" (vers. 22 b, 24); elsewhere in the New Testament, as in common Greek, the opposite of δούλος is δεσποτής ([1 Timothy 6:1, 2](#); [2 Timothy 2:21](#), etc.). "According to flesh," that is, "in outward, earthly relationship" (comp. [Romans 4:1](#)): Christ is **the Lord** in the absolute and abiding sense of the word (similarly, "in the flesh" and "in the Lord," [Philemon 1:16](#)). Not with acts of eye service (literally, **not in eye services**), **as man pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord** ([Ephesians 6:6](#); [Ephesians 5:21](#); [1 Thessalonians 2:4](#); [Galatians 1:10](#); [Matthew 6:22](#); [Luke 11:34](#); [James 1:5-8](#); [Psalm 123:2](#); [Isaiah 8:13](#); [Revelation 2:23](#)). "Eye service" is plural here, according to Revised Text; singular in [Ephesians 6:6](#). Here the word ὀφθαλμοδουλεία first occurs in Greek, like ἐθελοθησκεία ([Colossians 2:23](#)). It strikes at the besetting sin of servants of all kinds. Ἀνθρωπάρεσκος ("man pleaser") occurs in the LXX, [Psalm 52:6](#) (comp. [1 Thessalonians 2:6](#); [Galatians 1:10](#)). **The servant whose aim it is to please his earthly master in what will catch his eye, plays a double part, acting in one way when observed, in another when left to himself; with this duplicity is contrasted "singleness of heart"** ([Romans 12:8](#); [2 Corinthians 11:7](#); ἀπλότης in [2 Corinthians 8:2](#) and [1 Cor 9:11, 13](#) has a different application). "Fearing the Lord" **more than the eye of his earthly lord, the Christian servant will always act in "singleness of heart;" for "the eyes of the Lord are in every place."** In the same manner the apostle ("bondman of Christ Jesus," [Colossians 1:1](#)) speaks of his own relations to men and to the Lord Christ respectively ([1 Corinthians 4:3-5](#); [2 Corinthians 5:11](#); [Galatians 1:10](#); [1 Thessalonians 2:4-6](#), etc.: comp. [John 5:37-44](#)). The reading "God" of Received Text is a copyist's emendation, a sample of a large class of corruptions of the text, where a word more familiar in any given connection is, more or less unconsciously, substituted for the original word. [Colossians 3:22](#)

Ellicott's Commentary @Ephesians 6: 5 - 9

4 c.) In [Ephesians 6:5-9](#) the hardest form of subjection, that of slaves to masters, is dealt with, still under the same idea that both are "in Christ." The slave is the servant of Christ in obeying his master, the master is a fellow-servant with his slave to the same Divine Lord. We notice on this particular subject a remarkable emphasis, and a singular closeness of parallelism between this Epistle and the Epistle to the Colossians; probably to be accounted for by the presence of Onesimus with St. Paul at the time, which would naturally press on him some special consideration of the relation of Christianity to slavery. Accordingly, Apostle Paul's general attitude towards slavery will be best considered in the Philemon Epistle. **Here it will be sufficient to note that while the institution, unnatural as it is, left untouched, the declaration of common fellowship in Christ enunciates a principle absolutely incompatible with slavery, and one that's destined to destroy it.**

(5) **Your masters according to the flesh.**—This phrase (used also in [Colossians 3:12](#)) at once implies the necessary limitation of all human slavery. It can subjugate and even kill the body, but it cannot touch the spirit; and it belongs only to the visible life of this world, not to the world to come. The slave is a man in spiritual and immortal being, not a "living tool" or "chattel," as even philosophy called him. **With fear and trembling.**—The phrase is a favourite one with St. Paul. (See [1 Corinthians 2:3](#); [2 Corinthians 7:15](#); [Philippians 2:12](#), in all which cases it is applied to the condition of man as man under the weight of solemn responsibility before God.) It recognises the "spirit of bondage unto fear" ([Romans 8:15](#)) necessarily belonging to all who are "under law," *i.e.*, under obedience to the will of another, as enforced upon them by compulsion; and this fear, moreover, is viewed as showing itself in "trembling" anxiety to obey. So St. Peter commands ([1 Peter 2:18](#)), "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward;" and it is to be noted that he describes the suffering herein implied as a fellowship with the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 6:21-24](#)). **Singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.**—The phrase "singleness of heart," is here used in its proper sense, from which all others (see [Romans 12:8](#); [2 Corinthians 8:2](#); [2 Corinthians 9:11](#); [2 Corinthians 9:13](#)) may be derived. It means having but one aim, and that the one which we profess to have, with no duplicity of reservation or hypocrisy. Such singleness of heart cannot be given perfectly to any merely human service, because no such service has a right to our whole heart; hence St. Paul adds, "as unto Christ," bidding them look on their service as a part of the service to Him who can claim absolute devotion.

MacLaren's Expositions @Philemon

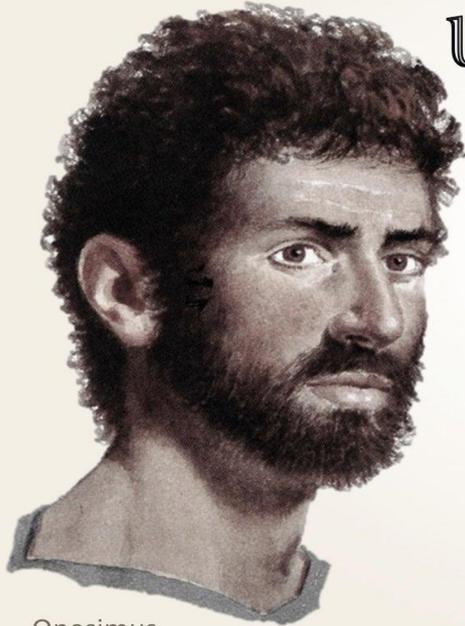
I. The first point to notice is that decisive step of sending back the fugitive slave.

Then does Christianity sanction slavery ? Certainly not; its principles cut it up by the roots. A gospel, of which the starting-point is that all men stand on the same level, as loved by the one Lord, and redeemed by the one cross, can have no place for such an institution. A religion which attaches the highest importance to man's awful prerogative of freedom, because it insists on every man's individual responsibility to God, can keep no terms with a system which turns men into chattels. Therefore Christianity cannot but regard slavery as sin against God, and as treason towards man. The principles of the gospel worked into the conscience of a nation destroy slavery. Historically it is true that as Christianity has grown slavery has withered. **But the New Testament never directly condemns it, and by regulating the conduct of Christian masters, and recognizing the obligations of Christian slaves, seems to contemplate its continuance, and to be deaf to the sighing of the captives.**

This attitude was probably not a piece of policy or a matter of calculated wisdom on the part of the Apostle. He no doubt saw that the Gospel brought a great unity in which all distinctions were merged, and rejoiced in thinking that "in Christ Jesus there is neither bond or free"; but whether he expected the distinction ever to disappear from actual life is less certain. It is by no means necessary to suppose that the Apostles saw the full bearing of the truths they had to preach, in their relation to social conditions. They were inspired to give the Church the principles. It remained for future ages, under Divine guidance, to apprehend the destructive and formative range of these principles.

However this may be, the attitude of the New Testament to slavery is the same as to other unchristian institutions. It brings the leaven, and lets it work. That attitude is determined by three great principles. **First**, the message of Christianity is primarily to individuals, and only secondarily to society. It leaves the units whom it has influenced to influence the mass. **Second**, it acts on spiritual and moral sentiment, and only afterwards and consequently on deeds or institutions. **Third**, it hates violence, and trusts wholly to enlightened conscience. So it meddles directly with no political or social arrangements, but lays down principles which will profoundly affect these, and leaves them to soak into the general mind. If an evil needs force for its removal, it is not ready for removal. If it has to be pulled up by violence, a bit of the root will certainly be left and will grow again. When a dandelion head is ripe, a child's breath can detach the winged seeds; but until it is, no tempest can move them.

He was formerly was
useless but now is



Onesimus

useful

Philemon 1: 11

Knowing-Jesus.com

Philemon

- **Appeal to Philemon's Character**
- Love displayed through hospitality 5-7, 22
- Means of furthering the Gospel
2 Jn. 10-11, 3 Jn. 10, 5-6
- Same love should be extended toward
Onesimus upon his repentance
- Confidence in his Character 21

From the *Dictionary of Paul & His Letters*:

. PHILEMON, LETTER TO

Philemon is the shortest (335 words in Greek) and most personal of the letters belonging to the Pauline corpus. Despite the literary, historical and interpretive problems the letter raises for modern scholarship, it offers a fascinating window not only on a corner of the social world of the first century, but on Christian principles at work in a particular setting within the early church.

1. History of Interpretation

1.1. *Historical-Critical Method.* Although there are some older critical theories which tended to question the letter's authenticity and purpose (F. C. Baur, for example, regarded it as a second-century "fictional romance" seeking to address the issue of slavery in the early church), the interpretation given by most commentators who follow the historical-critical method and the "natural" meaning of the text, is that this letter was written somewhere between A.D. 58 and 60 while Paul was in a Roman prison. It appears that the letter is addressed to Philemon (Philem 1), who was a wealthy Gentile Christian in Colossae who became a believer under Paul's ministry (Philem 10). Its divisions include Paul's greetings (Philem 1-3); thanksgiving and prayer (Philem 4-7); intercession for Onesimus (Philem 8-22); final greetings and benediction (Philem 23-25).

The heart of the letter centers upon Onesimus, [Philemon's slave](#) who had somehow wronged his master ([Philem 18](#)), made his way to Paul in prison ([Philem 9](#)), was converted ([Philem 10](#)) and became a useful partner (*see* [Coworkers](#)) with Paul in the [gospel](#) ([Philem 11; 13](#)). But under the existing laws governing slavery, Paul knows that Onesimus must be returned to his rightful owner. In the letter, Paul implores Philemon not only to receive ([Philem 17](#)), forgive ([Philem 18; see Forgiveness](#)) and acknowledge Onesimus' new status as a fellow believer ([Philem 16](#)), but to relinquish all claims upon Onesimus so that he can continue serving with Paul ([Philem 13; 21](#)).

In the opening greetings ([Philem 1-3](#)) Paul identifies Philemon as a "dear friend and fellow worker" ([NIV](#)). We have no way of knowing how the two became acquainted and whether [Philemon 19](#) should be taken to imply that Philemon was converted by Paul. If so, it probably was during Paul's stay in [Ephesus](#) and in similar circumstances when Epaphras, another resident of Colossae, came under Paul's ministry ([Col 1:7; 4:12](#)). Nor is there any way of knowing whether Apphia was Philemon's wife and Archippus his son.

The thanksgiving and [prayer](#) ([Philem 4-7](#)) focus on Philemon, who is commended for his [faith](#) in [Christ](#) and his [love](#) for the [saints](#). Both of these virtues have "refreshed" (*anapauō*) the [saints](#) and given joy and encouragement to the [apostle](#). The [accent](#) is on Philemon's spirit of love and not on any specific actions.

4. Socio-rhetorical Interpretations of Philemon. The late twentieth century witnessed a growing interest in and development of socio-rhetorical interpretive methods. In the case of Philemon, socio-rhetorical methods focused less on Onesimus and the questions surrounding his legal status and instead on how Paul brought pressure to bear on Philemon.

Using the traditional interpretation, Forrester Church demonstrates how Paul frames his appeal to Philemon using deliberative rhetoric. Paul addresses Onesimus's situation by establishing Philemon's *honor while at the same time convincing him to fulfill the request (i.e., forgive Onesimus). **Although it concerns a private matter between a slave and a master, Philemon is also a public letter. Onesimus is the subject of Paul's appeal, but its objects are *love and brotherhood, and Paul uses the opportunity to instruct the community about the practice of Christian love.**

Norman Petersen suggests the most important idea in Philemon is indebtedness. Paul considers Philemon indebted to him, which allows him to request repayment. Philemon could either fulfill Paul's request or jeopardize his status both with Paul and the church. Onesimus's new status as a brother places the slave in the position of playing two roles. In the social structures of the world, he is Philemon's slave, but in the church, he is a brother. If the church emphasizes equality, how could Philemon maintain his role as master?

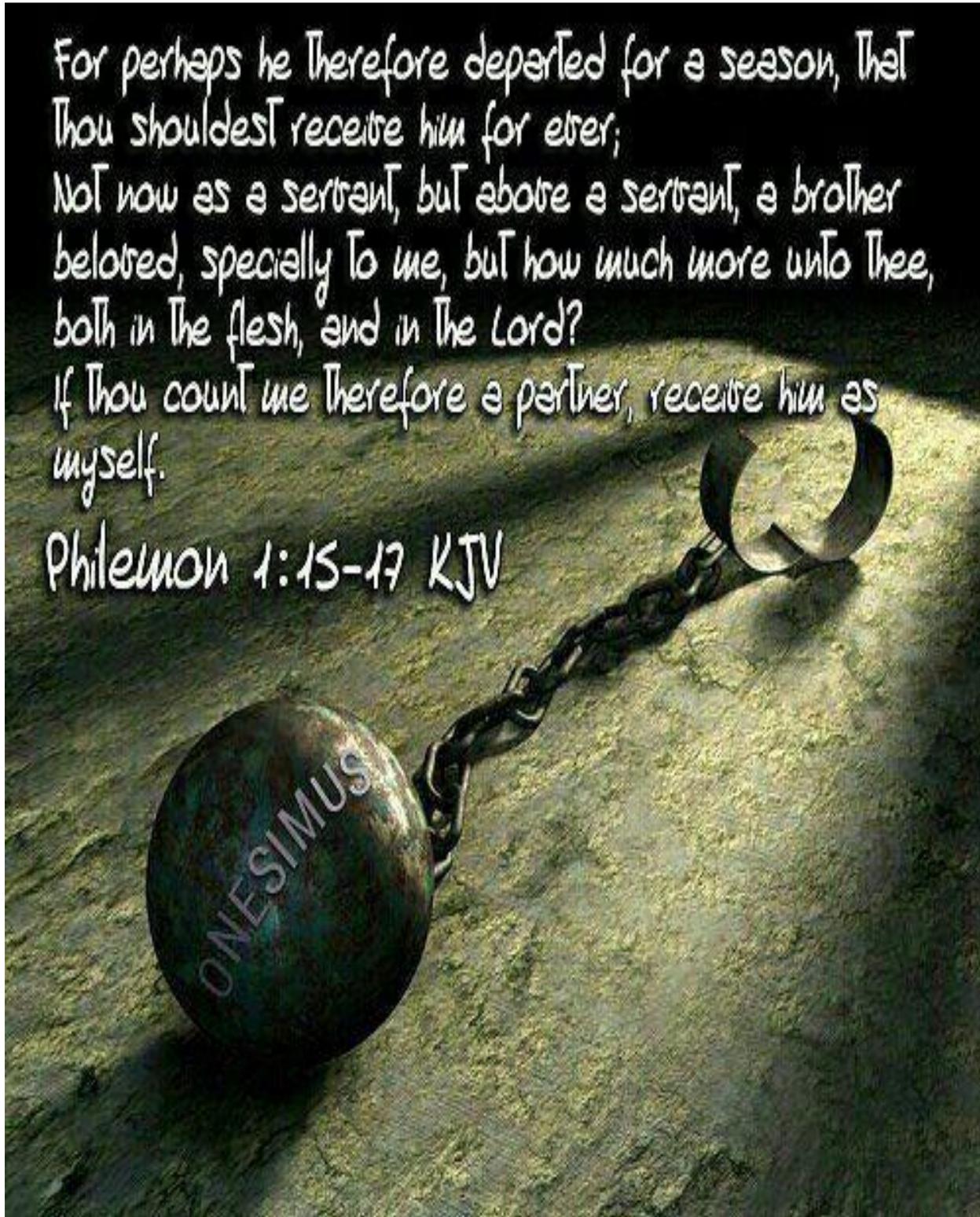
Prevailing social pressure would expect Philemon to punish Onesimus. But Paul presses Philemon to treat Onesimus as a Christian brother and thus calls into question the social structure of the master/slave relationship.

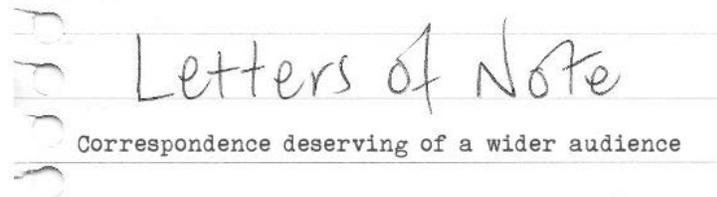
Clarice Martin notes how the commercial language in [Philemon 18](#) is often interpreted as a promise by Paul to repay Philemon and seen as evidence of Onesimus's thievery. She argues, however, that Paul's use of the rhetorical device of anticipation suggests that his promise to repay is only for argument's sake and not necessarily because an actual theft occurred or debt was owed. **The combination of this rhetorical promissory note combined with the reminder to Philemon about his debt to the apostle mitigates suggestions that Onesimus had committed a crime and shifts the focus onto the request Paul is making of Philemon.**

While some emphasize the social pressure brought to bear on Philemon, others, such as Andrew Wilson, highlight how Paul avoids alienating Philemon. **By identifying himself as "prisoner" rather than "apostle," Paul reduces the appearance of his authority over Philemon while creating social solidarity between him and the slave Onesimus. At the same time, Paul uses familial language that connect him to Philemon and Onesimus in a way that creates a bond between all three.** The lack of an explicit request for Onesimus's forgiveness and [*freedom](#) is part of Paul's strategy, since indirectness avoids alienating Philemon & nothing's on record.

For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that
Thou shouldest receive him for ever;
Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother
beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto Thee,
both in the flesh, and in the Lord?
If Thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as
myself.

Philemon 1:15-17 KJV





Letter from freed slave to his former slave-master draws public attention



By [Eric Pfeiffer](#) | [The Sideshow](#)



ca. 1860's, USA.

Freed slaves in Southern town shortly after the Civil War. © Bettmann/CORBIS

A newly discovered letter from a freed former slave to his onetime master is creating a buzz. [Letters of Note explains](#) that in August of 1865, a Colonel P.H. Anderson of Big Spring, Tennessee wrote to his former slave Jourdan Anderson, requesting that Jourdan return to work on his farm.

In the time since escaping from slavery, Anderson had become emancipated, moved to Ohio where he found paid work and was now supporting his family. The letter turned up in the August 22 edition of the [New York Daily Tribune](#). Some excerpts:

Sir: I got your letter, and was glad to find that you had not forgotten Jourdon, and that you wanted me to come back and live with you again, promising to do better for me than anybody else can. I have often felt uneasy about you. I thought the Yankees would have hung you long before this, for harboring Rebs they found at your house. I suppose they never heard about your going to Colonel Martin's to kill the Union soldier that was left by his company in their stable. **Although you shot at me twice before I left you**, I did not want to hear of your being hurt, and am glad you are still living. It would do me good to go back to the dear old home again, and see Miss Mary and Miss Martha and Allen, Esther, Green, and Lee. Give my love to them all, and tell them I hope we will meet in the better world, if not in this. I would have gone back to see you all when I was working in the Nashville Hospital, **but one of the neighbors told me that Henry intended to shoot me if he ever got a chance.**

On the "good chance" offered by the former slave owner:

I want to know particularly what the good chance is you propose to give me. I am doing tolerably well here. I get twenty-five dollars a month, with victuals and clothing; have a comfortable home for Mandy,—the folks call her Mrs. Anderson,—and the children—Milly, Jane, and Grundy—go to school and are learning well. The teacher says Grundy has a head for a preacher. They go to Sunday school, and Mandy and me attend church regularly. We are kindly treated. Sometimes we overhear others saying, "Them colored people were slaves" down in Tennessee. The children feel hurt when they hear such remarks; but I tell them it was no disgrace in Tennessee to belong to Colonel Anderson. Many darkeys would have been proud, as I used to be, to call you master. Now if you will write and say what wages you will give me, I will be better able to decide whether it would be to my advantage to move back again.

And then Jourdan explains that anything his former master could offer, he's already earned on his own. Other than some back wages:

As to my freedom, which you say I can have, there is nothing to be gained on that score, as I got my free papers in 1864 from the Provost-Marshall-General of the Department of Nashville. Mandy says she would be afraid to go back without some proof that you were disposed to treat us justly and kindly; and we have concluded to test your sincerity by asking you to send us our wages for the time we served you. This will make us forget and forgive old scores, and rely on your justice your friendship in the future. **I served you faithfully for thirty-two years, and Mandy twenty years. At twenty-five dollars a month for me, and two dollars a week for Mandy, our earnings would amount to eleven thousand six hundred and eighty dollars. Add to this the interest for the time our wages have been kept back, and deduct what you paid for our clothing, and three doctor's visits to me, and pulling a tooth for Mandy, and the balance will show what we are in justice entitled to.** Please send the money by Adams's Express, in care of V. Winters, Esq., Dayton, Ohio. **If you fail to pay us for faithful labors in the past, we can have little faith in your promises in the future. We trust the good Maker has opened your eyes to the wrongs which you and your fathers have done to me and my fathers, in making us toil for you for generations without recompense.** Here I draw my wages every Saturday night; but in Tennessee there was never any pay-day for the negroes any more than for the horses and cows. **Surely there will be a day of reckoning for those who defraud the laborer of his hire.**

And after a few more jabs about how his children are now happy and receiving an education, Jourdan concludes his letter with:

Say howdy to George Carter, and thank him for taking the pistol from you when you were shooting at me.

The ancient world recognized degrees of slavery.

Though much of their literature present freedom and slavery as exact opposites Greek and Roman culture support many degrees in between. The lowest slaves worked in unskilled manual labor. If someone was punished with slavery this is the kind of work they would likely be condemned to. Mines, mills, porters, bearers, etc. These slaves had no rights and few privileges. They were human beasts of burden. These slaves had the smallest chance of gaining their freedom. It's difficult to impress the master when all you do is haul things around and perform one mundane activity over and over again. But has already been pointed out by others there were also privileged slaves. These were the ones who often lived away from the master and rendered a payment (paramone) to the master. They were skilled workers like slave bankers, craftsmen, overseers, and the like. Though everything they earned legally belonged to the master it was customary that the master receive this paramone and not everything that the slave earned. The slave could then save up their earnings to eventually earn their freedom. Because they often lived away from the master or worked along-side him, they had better chances of being granted freedom for their good work and were more in control of their own lives. Those that lived away from the master were in control of their own movements and lives with the exception of the payment to the master. These individuals functioned much like subcontractors.

Even slaves who gained their freedom often lacked all of the freedoms that society could offer. Freedom did not mean citizenship so freedmen could not participate in politics and were excluded from other activities. When a slave bought their freedom it was fairly common that the agreement be sealed with a sort of contract. The slave would agree to render a fixed amount and often agree to perform services for their master at the former master's request. This obligation to provide for the former master could last until the master's death and, rarely, even afterward. If the obligations proved to be too burdensome a freedman could offer suit in Athens and if he won would be given unconditional freedom (not citizenship), but if he lost he would re-enslaved. The stigma of having been a slave lasted for life and severely limited future opportunities.

Some points about Classical slavery: It was customary in Rome to free a slave after he had reached the age of 30 if he had rendered good service. This practice was far more common with domestic and skilled slaves in the city than with agrarian or unskilled slaves.

It was recommended that a master in Ancient Athens immediately discuss with a slave what would be that required of them to buy their freedom and how they would earn it. The master would try to arrange a marriage with the slave and have him start a family. If a slave knew what was required of him to gain his freedom & his freedom lay before him a real possibility why risk rebellion or escape, especially if the slave had family also owned by the master. It was to encourage productivity and reduce rebellion or flight. **It was recognized that slaves were human beings. It was just also recognized that these people were property.** As such, slaves were to be treated with a certain level of decency (not hubris). Now many masters clearly had no compunctions about ruthlessly beating their slaves, but literary evidence from Rome and court records from Athens suggest that there was an expectation (and law) to treat slaves as people even if only to avoid rebellion.

- Internet Engine Searched Information

From the *Dictionary of Paul & His Letters*:

1.3. As a Slave. Even though Paul preferred sending his letters as the “apostle of Christ Jesus,” a few times he addresses his readers as Christ’s slave ([Rom 1:1](#); [Phil 1:1](#); [Titus 1:1](#)). In a revealing (and somewhat surprising) comment, Paul claims he did not preach the gospel voluntarily. Rather, the “obligation” to preach the gospel was laid on him against his will ([1 Cor 9:16–17](#)). Enslaved to Christ, Paul sees himself as his master’s house manager ([1 Cor 9:17](#))—the servant of Christ charged with running the **household* of Christ ([Eph 3:2](#); [Col 1:25](#))—and he very much wants his converts to “think of us in this way” ([1 Cor 4:1 NRSV](#)). Since “it is required of stewards that they may be found trustworthy” ([1 Cor 4:2 NRSV](#)), Paul shows no hesitation in bringing order to Christ’s household. He sets down rules for orderly worship ([1 Cor 14:26–40](#)). He challenges Roman table customs that are “unworthy of the Lord,” ordering proper conduct when his converts ate together ([1 Cor 11:17–34](#)). He instructs husbands and wives on how they are to behave toward each other when they gather in house churches as brothers and sisters in Christ ([Eph 5:21–33](#)). He tells men and **women* what clothing to wear and how to wear their hair ([1 Cor 11:4–16](#); [1 Tim 2:9](#)).

When it comes to religious **identity*, he encourages his converts to “follow this rule”: “neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything” ([Gal 6:15–16 NRSV](#)).

When the “weak” and the “*strong” are contemptuous of one another over holy days and eating meat, Paul says they have no business judging “servants of another,” for “it is before their own lord that they stand or fall” ([Rom 14:4 NRSV](#)). Indeed, Paul claims to be a “slave of Christ” who pleases only God and not people ([Gal 1:10](#)). Therefore, he refuses to listen to those who would judge him—not even trusting his own judgment as to whether he will be found “trustworthy” as Christ’s house manager. On the last day, “it is the Lord who judges me” ([1 Cor 4:4 NRSV](#)).

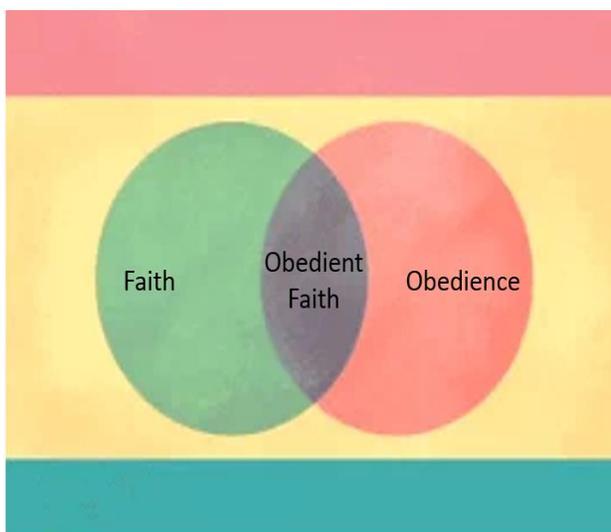
Even though Paul does not expect his converts to imitate him by becoming an apostle or act like a father to new converts, **he does claim they have become slaves of Christ just like him. Whether slave or free, they all became slaves of Christ because they were “bought with a price,” their bodies owned by Christ ([1 Cor 6:19–20; 7:22–23](#)). Previously enslaved to *sin, they were set free by God to become slaves of righteousness ([Rom 6:16–18](#)).** Since the salient feature of slavery is obedience, **Paul devotes a lot of attention in his letters instructing his fellow slaves to obey their common master.** “To win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed” is crucial to the success of his ministry as Christ’s steward ([Rom 15:18 NRSV](#)).

“Because Christ Jesus has made me his own,” Paul tries to inspire his converts to imitate him and suffer “the loss of all things” in order to “gain Christ” ([Phil 3:8, 12 NRSV](#)). For, just as Christ “emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,” becoming “obedient to the point of death—even death of the cross.

AT THE NEXUS OF GRACE & GLORY

Five Steps For Saving:

- HEARING:
- Romans 10: 17; Matthew 7: 24 - 27
- BELIEVING:
- Hebrews 11: 6; Mark 16: 15, 16
- REPENTING:
- Acts 2: 38; 17: 30; Luke 13: 3
- CONFESSING:
- Matthew 10: 32, 33; Acts 8: 36, 37
- BAPTISM:
- Romans 6: 3 – 5; Acts 8: 36 – 38



O That Will Be Glory

2. *Wh* O that will be glory for me, e grace,

I an Glory for me, glory for me; ce,

When by His grace I shall look on His face, e

That will be glory, be glory for me. me.

