

PHILEMON

From Slave To Bishop?

The Key Players & Back Story

Philemon 1:1-25/ Colossians 4:7-15

Paul's Tweet Philemon's Letter

The Elephant In The Room *Does The Bible Endorse Slavery?*

Deuteronomy 15:12-15, 23:15-16 & Exodus 21:16/ Galatians 3:26-29 & Colossians 3:11/ Colossians 3:22-25/ Colossians 4:1/ I Corinthians 7:17-24/ 1 Timothy 1:9-10

Lessons To Take Home *What Does This Passage Teach Us About Righteous Living?*

2 Timothy 3:16-17

- 1) God is in **control** of who is in **control**.
Philemon 1:1, 9 & 23/ Daniel 1:1-2/ Romans 13:1-10/ Romans 8:28-39 & Philemon 1:15-16
- 2) Our **unity** in Christ is greater than our **differences** in this world.
Philemon 1:16/ Galatians 3:26-29, Colossians 3:11 & 1 Corinthians 12:13
- 3) When we do **wrong** – we need to make it **right**.
When we've been **wronged** – we need to **let it go**.
Philemon 1:12-14 & 18-19/ Matthew 5:23-26/ Philemon 1:17 & Ephesians 4:32
- 4) It's always better to **motivate** than **legislate**.
Philemon 1:8-10

Food for Thought

For the week of June 24, 2012

(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

1. As we heard in this week's sermon, "our unity in Christ is greater than our differences in this world." God created all of us uniquely which often leads to different thoughts and opinions, especially when it comes to religion and God. Read Ephesians 4:1-3 and write down Paul's instruction as to how we can bridge some of our differences and unify in Christ.

Ephesians 4:1-3

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. [2] Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. [3] Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. [NIV]

Take a moment to rate how well you are doing in each unifying action. Are there any you want to work on?

2. The book of Philemon gives us a powerful example of Paul sending a slave, Onesimus (a man he referred to as "my son") back to Philemon (his master) to seek forgiveness for running away. Even though Paul had the authority and perhaps the justification to order Philemon to release Onesimus, Paul demonstrates the importance of seeking forgiveness and "making it right" according to God's standards and not our own. How do the following verses reinforce the importance of "making it right"?

Proverbs 28:13

He who conceals his sins does not prosper,
but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. [NIV]

Isaiah 59:1-2

Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save,
nor his ear too dull to hear.

[2] But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear. [NIV]

3. Equally important to seeking forgiveness from others, is seeking God's forgiveness. What encouragement do the following verses give us to confess our sins to God and examine our own lives?

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. [NIV]

Psalm 32:5

Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess
my transgressions to the Lord"--
and you forgave
the guilt of my sin.

Selah [NIV]

Psalm 139:23-24

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
[24] See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting. [NIV]