

The Epistle of Paul to Philemon

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1 Paul, a prisoner (*for declaring the truth*) of Jesus Christ (*which truth has captivated my heart*), and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow worker with us,

2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow helper, and to the church family that meets in your house:

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

4 I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers,

5 Hearing of your love and the faith that you have in the Lord Jesus, and your love for all the saints (*set part unto His life*);

6 I pray that in the fellowshiping of your faith that you may effectively communicate the knowledge of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

7 For we have great joy and are encouraged upon hearing of your love, and how because of it, the hearts of the saints are set at rest by you, brother.

8 Therefore, although I could be very bold in Christ and order you to do what seems fitting,

9 Yet for love's sake I would rather appeal to you, seeing I am now known as Paul the aged (*old man*), and also a prisoner for declaring the truth of Jesus Christ.

10 I implore you on behalf of my son (*in Christ*) Onesimus, whom I have fathered in the truth during my imprisonment:

11 Who in the past, I know was detrimental to your ministry, but he is now indeed useful to you and to me:

12 Who I have sent again to you: hoping that you would therefore receive him, that is at least, what is in my heart:

13 Who I was also hoping I could have kept with me, so that in your place he might have ministered to me in the captivity into which the preaching of the gospel has thrown me.

14 But apart from your consent I would do nothing; so that any good you might do would be born from your earnest desire and not out of any obligation.

15 For perhaps he departed your life for a season, that you should now receive him forever;

16 But now not as a servant, but something greater than a servant, a beloved brother in Christ, especially beloved to me, having fathered him in the truth, but how much more to you, who is both a brother in the flesh, and in the Lord?

17 If you consider me therefore a partner with you in the gospel (*and one who also fathered you in the truth*), receive him as you would me.

18 If he has wronged you, or owes you anything, set that to my account;

19 I Paul have written this with my own hand, that I will repay it: although (*let me be clear*) I do not say that you need repay me anything even for your own self.

20 Yes, brother, let me simply have joy of you in the Lord: That reward alone is enough and refreshes my heart in the Lord.

21 Having been persuaded of the love I see has captivated and constrains your heart also, I wrote to you, knowing that (*because of your heart in Christ*) you will (*like our Lord*) also do more than I ask (*not from obligation but a willing heart born from the love of God*)

22 But would also prepare for me a lodging: because I trust that through your prayers I will be (*released and*) given to you.

23 We salute you Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow workers.

25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit (*ever influencing your hearts and mind of His love*). Amen.