

**Philemon – Pt. 2  
Paul’s Bold Favor/Ask**

**Big Idea – The better we know Christ and experience His blessings, the more we want to share these blessings with others.**

**The more your faith benefits you, the more you want to give it to benefit others.**

Here's the backstory: Paul was a prisoner in Rome, his friend Philemon was in Colossae, and the human link between them was a runaway slave named Onesimus. The details aren't clear, but it appears that Onesimus robbed his master and then fled to Rome, hoping to be swallowed up in the crowded city. But, in the providence of God, he met Paul and was converted! The primary theme of this letter is “be someone who forgives”

Philemon 1:8 Therefore, I am boldly asking a favor of you. I could demand it in the name of Christ because it is the right thing for you to do.

9 But because of our love, I prefer simply to ask you. Consider this as a request from me—Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus.

10 I appeal to you to show kindness to my child, Onesimus. I became his father in the faith while here in prison.

11 Onesimus hasn't been of much use to you in the past, but now he is very useful to both of us.

12 I am sending him back to you, and with him comes my own heart.

13 I wanted to keep him here with me while I am in these chains for preaching the Good News, and he would have helped me on your behalf.

14 But I didn't want to do anything without your consent. I wanted you to help because you were willing, not because you were forced.

15 It seems Onesimus ran away for a little while so that you could have him back forever.

16 He is no longer like a slave to you. He is more than a slave, for he is a beloved brother, especially to me. Now he will mean much more to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.

Notice some things about the basis for Paul's big ask of his friend Philemon:

**1. Philemon's character of kindness and refreshing others**

Vs. 7 “Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God’s people.”

Paul says now you can refresh or bless me and Onesimus

## **2. Love’s sake – Paul and Philemon’s mutual love for one another**

Vs. 9 ..because of our love, I prefer simply to ask you. Consider this as a request from me—Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus.”

## **3. Kinship – Onesimus was Paul’s son in the faith, so they shared a common bond in Christ**

## **4. Value – Onesimus was now profitable to Paul and would be profitable to Philemon**

Vs. 11 “...who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.”

Philemon’s name meant “kind or affectionate”

## **5. Providence of God – God arranged it**

Philemon 1:15 It seems Onesimus ran away for a little while so that you could have him back forever.

16 He is no longer like a slave to you. He is more than a slave, for he is a beloved brother, especially to me. Now he will mean much more to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.

Paul was not dogmatic ("perhaps") as he made this telling point: God permitted Onesimus to go to Rome so he could meet Paul and become a believer.

Onesimus departed so he could come back. He was gone a short time so that he and his master might be together forever. He left for Rome a slave, but he would return to Colossae a brother.

As Christians, we must believe that God is in control of even the most difficult experiences of life.

Romans 8:28 “We know that in everything God is working for the good of those who love him. They are the people he called according to His purpose for them.”

(Philemon and his family had surely witnessed to Onesimus and prayed for him – their prayers planted the seeds of his conversion)

**Talk about Keep 5 Cards here!!**