

PHILEMON – INTRODUCTION

1. A slave by the name of ONESIMUS apparently fled Colossae and his master, PHILEMON, and journeyed to Rome where he meets Paul.
2. Paul teaches ONESIMUS the Gospel and converts him to Christ.
3. This letter is PAUL'S plea to PHILEMON on behalf of ONESIMUS to receive ONESIMUS back.

I. AUTHOR OF THE BOOK

- A. PAUL – “Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus.”
- B. Timothy is also present, and is ministering to Paul.

II. PLACE AND DATE OF WRITING

- A. PLACE: Roman prison where Paul is confined for two years (Acts 28, Philemon 1:1, 10, 22).
- B. DATE: A.D. 61-62

III. THEME AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

- A. THEME: A Picture Of Christian Living. Theory put into practice.
- B. PURPOSE:
 1. Encourage Philemon to accept ONESIMUS back in love.
 2. Let PHILEMON know that ONESIMUS was now a fellow brother in Christ, not merely a slave in the flesh.

IV. ARRANGEMENT OF THE BOOK

- A. An outline:
 - I. SALUTATIONS v.1-3.
 - II. PAUL'S THANKSGIVINGS FOR PHILEMON'S FAITHFULNESS v. 4-7.
 - III. PAUL'S PLEA TO PHILEMON v. 8-22.
 - A. Plea to take ONESIMUS back in love v. 8-12.
 - B. Plea to accept ONESIMUS back willingly v.13-14.
 - C. Plea based on the fact that ONESIMUS will benefit PHILEMON v. 15-16.
 - D. Plea based on partnership and spiritual indebtedness v. 17-20.
 - E. PAUL'S confidence in PHILEMON'S decision v. 21.
 - F. PAUL'S request for lodging v. 22.
 - IV. GRACIOUS SALUTATIONS FROM FELLOW PRISONERS AND WORKERS v. 23-25.

V. OUTSTANDING LESSONS FROM THE BOOK

- A. God's way of correcting social evils is changing the heart of man first, not his circumstances.
- B. Our relationship with Christ is tested by our relationship with others.
- C. Christianity changes some relationships and intensifies others.