

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE'LL FINISH UP ~ VERSES 17-20.

AS WE'VE NOTED, ~ IN THESE VERSES, ~ PAUL GETS INTO SPECIFICS ~ REGARDING Onesimus.

▶▶ In [verse 17](#), ~ which we looked at ~ a couple weeks ago, ~ Paul specifically states ~ how he would like Philemon ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to handle the situation ~ of his returned slave

▷▷ As we noted, ~ basically, ~ Paul is saying this ~ in [verse 17](#).

↳↳ Philemon, ~ since you consider me ~ a partner ~ in spreading the gospel, ~ give Onesimus, ~ this new partner ~ in the gospel ministry, ~ the same ready welcome ~ on his arrival ~ that you would give me.

▷▷ Simply put, ~ Paul is asking Philemon ~ to ~ forgive and reconcile with ~ Onesimus.

▶▶ In [verses 18-19a](#), ~ last week, ~ Paul offers to pay ~ any debt ~ that Onesimus incurred ~ in running away.

▷▷ And as we observed ~ what Paul did for Onesimus ~ parallels ~ what Jesus did for us.

↳↳ Onesimus ~ had wronged Philemon ~ and thus ~ was separated from him.

→→ Sinners have wronged God ~ and are thus ~ separated. ¶¶ 1/9

↳↳ Paul had not been involved ~ with Onesimus' guilt.

→→ Jesus ~ was sinless, ~ separated from sinners

↳↳ Paul wrote this letter ~ to reconcile ~ Onesimus and Philemon.

→→ Jesus' work on the cross ~ reconciled sinners and God.

↳↳ The debt Onesimus had with Philemon ~ had to be paid. ⇨⇨ Paul offered to pay it.

→→ The penalty for sin ~ had to be paid. ⇨⇨ And Jesus paid it.

↳↳ Paul took on a debt ~ that was not his own ~ by promising to repay Philemon.

→→ Jesus took on the debt of sin ~ that was not his own (the sins of the whole world) ~ and paid it ~ by his death.

OK, ~ LET'S FINISH VERSES 17-20.

AFTER PAUL SAYS THAT ~ HE WILL PAY ~ ONESIMUS' DEBT TO PHILEMON, ~ ~ ¶¶

HE HAS A REMINDER FOR PHILEMON ~ IN VERSE 19b.

▶▶ to say nothing ~ of your owing me ~ even your own self.

HERE PAUL REMINDS PHILEMON THAT ~ while Paul is seeking a favor from him, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ he, ~ Philemon, ~ actually is in debt ~ to the greater favor ~ already showed to him ~ by Paul. ¶¶ 2/9

▶▶ No doubt Paul is referring ~ to leading Philemon to the Lord.

▶▶ Most likely, ~ Philemon was saved ~ during Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus.

PHILEMON THEN, ~ HUMANLY SPEAKING, ~ OWED HIS OWN SOUL TO PAUL.

▶▶ Philemon's debt to Paul ~ was thus ~ incalculable.

▶▶ So ~ how could he refuse Paul's request ~ and not show favor to Onesimus?

▶▶ By putting it this way, ~ Paul wishes to remind Philemon ~ of the pardon he himself received from God.

▶▶ Most likely, ~ Paul does so ~ in order ~ to help him understand ~ 77

▷▷ how grace freely received ~ calls us ~ to freely ~ pass grace on to others.

▶▶ Jesus tells us, ~ freely ~ you have received, ~ ~ freely give (Matt. 10:8b, NIV).

IN FACT, ~ IN EPH. 1, ~ PAUL TELLS US ~ that God caused his grace ~ to abound to us.

▶▶ The Greek word for "abound" means ~ more than enough, ~ to provide in abundance, ~ to cause to overflow.

▶▶ God is infinitely rich in grace.

▷▷ But He is not stingy with it.

↪↪ Not like some cosmic Scrooge. 11 3/9

▶▶ God ~ does not give His grace to us ! in limited measure, ~ carefully weighed out.

▷▷ He causes His grace to overflow, ~ to super-abound to us.

▶▶ And we, ~ my . . . , ~ are to ~ freely ~ pass on ~ abundant grace ~ to others.

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION ~ the case of ~ Paul, ~ Philemon, ~ and Onesimus, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ I would suggest ~ that it is also Scriptural ~ to teach ~ Freely ~ you have been ~ forgiven, ~ freely ~ forgive.'

MATTHEW ~ 18:23-35 ~ RECORDS JESUS' PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT.

▶▶ In the parable

▶▶ Verses 32-35

▶▶ A child of God ~ has had ~ all ~ of their sins forgiven by faith in Jesus.

▷▷ Because of that, ~ we should ~ not ~ withhold forgiveness from others.

▶▶ Realizing how completely Christ has forgiven us ~ should produce ~ ¶¶

▷▷ a free and generous attitude of forgiveness ~ toward others.

▶▶ When we don't forgive others, ~ we are saying ~ ¶¶

▷▷ that we appreciate God's love and forgiveness ~ but ~ that we're unwilling ~ to give it to anyone else. ¶¶ 4/9

WE MUST ADMIT ~~ ON THE HUMAN LEVEL, ~ FORGIVENESS CAN BE ~ very difficult, ~ can't it?

▶▶ We've all been hurt from time to time ~ by people, ~ unbeliever and believer alike.

▷▷ And will be so again.

▶▶ At those times, ~ we can do one of two things.

▷▷ One, ~ continue to be hurt, ~ unforgiving, ~ and become ~ resentful and bitter.

▷▷ Or, ~ two, ~ take the high road.

↪↪ I.e., ~ Meditate on ~ Calvary ~ and God's free and full forgiveness bestowed on us there.

WE WERE IN ~ INCALCULABLE DEBT ~ TO GOD, ~ DUE TO ~ WHO WE WERE ~ and what we had done.

▶▶ Yet, ~ he, ~ through his Beloved Son on Calvary, ~ freely and fully ~ ¶¶

▷▷ canceled the record of debt ~ that stood against us with its legal demands, ~ as Paul says in [Col. 2:14](#).

▶▶ Christ's death ~ was sufficient ~ to cancel the charges against the sinner ~ completely.

▶▶ Jesus paid our debt for us.

▶▶ The Greek word for ~ "canceled" ~ means ~ to cause something to cease ~ by obliterating ~ any evidence. ⇨⇨ Quite a statement. ¶¶ 5/9

▶▶ When a person repents ~ and turns to Jesus for salvation, ~ God the Father ~ obliterates ~ the charges against them.

▷▷ Through Isaiah, ~ God says in *Is. 43:25*, ~ I, ~ I am he ~ who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, ~~ and I will not remember your sins.

MY FELLOW BELIEVERS, ~ OUR RECORD OF DEBT HAS BEEN ~ FREELY AND FULLY ~ canceled ~ by Jesus.

▶▶ How can we then ~ bear grudges against our fellow human beings?

▶▶ A true understanding of God's grace ~ leads to gratitude, ~~ ¶¶

▷▷ and gratitude ~ leads to showing grace.

▶▶ The grace ~ that God lavished on Philemon, ~~ Philemon ~ was to lavish on Onesimus.

▶▶ The grace ~ that God lavished on us, ~ we ~ are to lavish on others.

IN VERSE 20, ~ PAUL SAYS, ~ ¶¶

YES, ~ BROTHER, ~~ I WANT SOME BENEFIT FROM YOU IN THE LORD. ~~ REFRESH MY heart in Christ.

▶▶ Recall, ~ at the beginning of the letter, ~ Paul noted that Philemon ~ had an ~ uplifting influence ~ on other believers.

AS WE NOTED AT VERSE 7, ~ WE TOO ~ SHOULD HAVE AN UPLIFTING INFLUENCE ON fellow believers.

▶▶ A little review ~ because so important. ¶¶ 6/9

▶▶ We should avoid ~ having an attitude and temperament ~ that adds ~ to the burden ~ others carry.

▶▶ Instead of draining others' energy and motivation ~ with complaints and problems, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we should replenish their spirits ~ by things like ~ ¶¶

↳↳ generosity, ~ expressing Christ-like love, ~ encouragement, ~ gracious hospitality, ~ and a helpful attitude.

▶▶ In brief, ~ our brothers and sisters in Christ ~ should feel refreshed ~ ¶¶

▷▷ after spending time with us.

BACK TO PHILEMON, ~~ AND PAUL NOW ~ WAS ASKING TO BE UPLIFTED BY PHILEMON.

▶▶ By forgiving and reconciling with Onesimus, ~ Philemon ~ would be refreshing Paul ~ by bringing him joy.

FOR ONE THING, ~ THROUGH FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ Philemon would maintain the unity in the Colossian church.

▶▶ And that ~ would bring great joy to Paul.

▶▶ Paul urged the church in Philippi, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ make my joy complete by ~ being like-minded, ~ having the same love, ~ being one in spirit and of one mind. ¶¶ 7/9

NOTICE THAT ~ THIS REFRESHMENT WOULD BE ~ IN CHRIST.

▶▶ I.e., ~ no doubt talking about ~ spiritual blessings.

▶▶ Paul always sought ~ spiritual blessings.

▶▶ And that's exactly what Jesus taught us to do.

▷▷ Matt. 6:19-21

▷▷ Jesus exhorts his followers ~ to continually store up heavenly treasures ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that are not subject ~ to the same kinds of things as earthly possessions.

▷▷ To be focused on treasures in heaven ~ is to pursue those goals and activities ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that have eternal significance ~ and ~ that have a relationship to God as the ultimate concern.

▷▷ Since one's treasure ~ is indicative of a person's loyalty and inner commitment, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ one's ultimate pursuit and interests ~ provide a window ~ to the true self.

GETTING BACK TO PHILEMON.

▶▶ Failing to forgive Onesimus ~ would sadden Paul.

▶▶ It would also damage ~ the testimony of the Colossian church ~ before the watching world. ¶¶ 8/9

IN ADDITION TO FORGIVING BECAUSE WE'RE FORGIVEN, ~ 77

▶▶believers ~ should be motivated to forgive and reconcile ~ by the knowledge ~ 77

▷▷that forgiveness ~ brings joy and blessing ~ to other believers.

▶▶And in addition to that, ~ our church presenting a proper witness to the world ~ 77

▷▷should be another motivation ~ for forgiveness and reconciliation.

BUT ~ THE MOST IMPORTANT MOTIVATION ~ for forgiveness and reconciliation, ~ 77

▶▶is that ~ it is glorifying and pleasing to the Lord.

▷▷And glorifying and pleasing the Lord in our life ~ should be ~ our highest priority.

LET'S PRAY..... 9/9