

PHILEMON: A Study by Bill Jones
“A Plea for Forgiveness”

I. Forgiveness: Appeal for a Runaway Slave

A. Setting up the Appeal and Positioning the Situation

(Philemon 1-3)

1. The Mediator

(1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 9:15, Romans 8:34)

2. The Penalty

(Romans 6:23, Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 4:10-11)

3. The Substitution

(Romans 5:8, Isaiah 53:5, 12)

4. The Biblical example

(Luke 15:11-32)

B. Object of the Appeal and Praise for Philemon

(Philemon 4-7)

1. Philemon's love for all the saints

2. Philemon's faith in the Lord Jesus

3. Philemon's ministry

C. The Appeal and Plea for Onesimus

(Philemon 8-16)

1. Onesimus's conversion (Philemon 8-11)

a. Was unsaved, now saved

b. Was useless, now useful

c. Was unprofitable, now profitable

2. New changed relationship (Philemon 12-16, Romans 1:1)

a. Retrospect: a slave

b. Prospect: a beloved brother in Christ

c. Emancipation Principle: Goodness....of your own free will

D. Source of the Appeal and Promise of Paul

(Philemon 17-21)

- 1. Paul's love**
- 2. Surety of a partner**
- 3. Charge to my account**
- 4. I will repay the debt**
- 5. Confident will do even more**

(Romans 8:12-17)

E. Closing the Appeal and Postscript of Grace

(Philemon 22-25)

- 1. We all were once fugitive slaves to sin, our guilt was great, our debt of sin was beyond repayment, our penalty was severe, the wages of sin is death, but Christ, our mediator, asked God to charge it to His account, so instead of death we receive the gift of eternal life from God in Christ Jesus and are no longer slaves to our old sinful nature but have received the Holy Spirit and the righteousness of Christ so that we become sons of God, children of God and heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ Jesus.**

(2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 8:12-17)

- 2. What He has done for us we must do for others just as Philemon did for Onesimus, because of what Christ had done for him.**

(John 13:13-17, 15:12-13)

- 3. This little letter, almost just a postcard, contains rich lessons in slavery, love, faith, forgiveness, grace, restoration, redemption, accountability, intercession, partnership with Christ, mediation, substitutionary payments, acceptance and adoption.**

What a power-packed letter of a mere 25 verses for us to apply in our daily walk with Jesus!!!