



## Philemon – A New Brother

### Scripture Reading: Philemon 1:1-25

**Memory Verse: Philemon 1:10-12** I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, <sup>11</sup> who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me. <sup>12</sup> I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart

### Song: “[Bind Us Together](#)”

Paul writes from prison to a fellow Christian named Philemon and two of his associates: a woman named Apphia, sometimes assumed to be his wife, and a minister named Archippus. It is believed Philemon lived in Colossae. And, as a slave-owner he would have been wealthy by the standards of the early church and this may explain why his house was large enough to accommodate church meetings.

Paul writes on behalf of Onesimus, Philemon's slave. Beyond that, it is not known what actually happened. Onesimus is described as having been "separated" from Philemon, once having been "useless" to him and having done him wrong.

It is generally believed that Onesimus is a runaway slave who became a Christian. Paul now sends him back to face his rightful master, and in his letter shows the need for reconciliation between these two Christian brothers. So how did Onesimus come to be with Paul? Various suggestions have been given: Onesimus being imprisoned with Paul; Onesimus being brought to Paul by others; Onesimus coming to Paul by chance; or Onesimus deliberately seeking Paul out, as a friend of his master's, in order to be reconciled. Of course we Christians believe Onesimus came to Paul by God's plan.

Paul had extreme confidence in Philemon that he would be fair and do the right thing regarding Onesimus. And, not treat him as returned property but as a full brother equal in the sight of Christ. Philemon 1:20-21

**Prayer:** Father in Heaven, thank you for this lesson on brotherly love. Help us all to love one another as your children. And, to make sure we treat each other as we would want to be treated. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

**Thought Questions:** Do we think less of some Christians because of their background or where they may come from? Jas 2:8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; (NKJV)