

## MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, January 12, 2016 – Theme: Finances

# Onesimus – Second Chance Offer

## Philemon 1:1-25

### Segment:

- Paul's prayer for Philemon for his continued growth.
- Paul's plea to Philemon to respond well to Onesimus.
- Paul's personal request to visit Philemon.

### Segment Questions:

- What are the things that Paul says he prays for Philemon? How is your prayer life similar and how is it different?
- Before receiving this letter from Paul, what do you think Philemon thought of Onesimus? Describe what you think the conversation would have been like if the two had met.
- Paul uses an emotional appeal saying that he is going to beg which is different than his normal direct approach (*some translations read boldly ask instead of demanding in name of Christ*). What is the reason why Paul goes this route this time?
- Words have meaning. Paul uses powerful descriptive words like "invaluable helper, worthless slave and valuable brother." What are some other powerful words Paul uses? Why does Paul use terminology like this?
- How much do you think Paul wrestled with telling Philemon? Why not just let the "past be the past" and just move on (*and continue with the benefit of Onesimus helping Paul*).
- Why did Paul pick up the quill and write in his own hand that he would **repay the debt**?
- Paul uses the phrase "But what am I talking about? I know you'll do this and even more" as a transition. What does he mean by this phrase and why would he say it.

### Action Questions:

- Paul asks Philemon to give Onesimus a second chance. Describe a time when you were given a second chance or a time when you gave someone else a second chance.
- What do learn from this study about how to tread other people?
- What do we learn from the fact that Paul was willing to repay the debt out of his own pocket?

## **Philemon 1:1-25**

From: [www.btstories.com](http://www.btstories.com)

Philemon, my dear friend, greetings to you, your family, and the church that meets in your home. I pray for you on a regular basis. I thank God for the love you have for the Lord Jesus Christ and for fellow believers. I pray that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith and understanding of Christ. Your love brings me joy and comfort. Those who meet you are encouraged in their faith.

Dear brother, you know me. I don't normally hesitate in telling you what is right and wrong. I'm usually quick in reminding you of your duties in Christ. But I'm not going to do that this time. Instead, I am going to beg.

Picture this in your mind. I'm an old man who is in prison for the cause of Jesus Christ. In my weakness, God sent me a helper, Onesimus – a man who caused you pain and grief. But God sent him to me and I was able to introduce him to Jesus. He yielded his life to Christ, and then became invaluable as a helper to me.

In a way, it was like you sent him here to help me because you couldn't come yourself. I don't know how I can carry on without him. But he and I both know he should go back to you. He was helping me in your stead, but we didn't have your permission.

Listen, he was a worthless slave when he ran away from you. Now he's coming back as a valuable brother in Christ, a co-worker in the ministry and a dear friend of mine. Receive him back in love.

Oh, concerning those things he stole from you – put those on my account. Here, I will pick up the quill and write this in my own handwriting. "I, Paul, will repay it." I won't remind you of the fact you actually owe me your very life.

Please receive him as if you were receiving me. You'll bring joy to my life when I hear how you've accepted Onesimus back into your life and home.

But what am I talking about? I know you'll do this and even more.

By-the-way, prepare your guest room for me. I know you've been praying that I'd be set free and come back to visit you. I think the Lord is going to answer your prayers.

Greet all my good friends who are there. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Paul.