

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, [Literally, in fact, and yet this letter will reveal his primary concern to be the well-being of a lowly servant once in rebellion to his master, Philemon. I book that, among other lessons, will teach us the art of persuasion] and Timothy our brother,[and Paul's "son in the Lord" 1 Tim. 1:2.]

To Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker, and to Apphia our sister, [If you've a hole in your heart, fill it with spiritual family."...whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother." Mark 3:35] and to Archippus our fellow soldier, [We are all soldiers at war with the enemy of our souls, but victory is certain for those who keep the faith: "...be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." ] and to the church in your house: [a congregation of believers are a church, regardless of where they worship.] Grace to you and peace [There is but one true source of both] from God our Father and ["and" indicates the Father and Jesus are two separate persons, regardless of what a loved Mormons, J. Witnesses or Pentecostals teach] the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all[not some that are favored or most compatible with our own

personalities, but all] the saints; and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective [It is God who makes flourish what we plant, until it bears the fruit of “effectiveness” in the hearts around us] through the knowledge of every good thing [--- especially the good thing that has happened that you are about to know. Let us not collect knowledge of trivial things and certainly not the ends and outs of how vile things work, but let us gather in our hearts and minds only the knowledge of every good thing] which is in you for Christ’s sake. [The good that is in us is given that Christ be glorified in us] For I have come to have much joy and comfort in [not in addictions or pleasures or distractions or sin, but in...] your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through [Not sports or yoga or a long vacations, but...] you, brother. [What can we do today to refresh someone’s heart today?]

Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ [as an inspired Apostle] to order you to do what is proper, [not everything we are brave enough to do, should be done] yet for love’s sake I rather appeal to you [Nothing is more persuasive than love, especially if one is looking for a change of heart, not just a change of outward compliance] —since I am such a person as Paul, the aged, [ Get ready to grant a request, Philemon because God says you are to “...stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man...” Lev. 19:32] and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—[Get ready to grant a request, Philemon because God says you are to “Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.” Heb. 13:3]

I appeal to you for my [dear, spiritual] child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment [born again out of the waters of baptism after having believed, repented, confessed Christ as Lord. John 3:5; Acts 2; Romans 6; Romans 10:9; Mark 16:15-16; Matt.28:16-20], who formerly was useless to you, [as all runaway slaves are by default] but now is useful both to you and to me. [He’s all done with that runaway business, and have proven such to be

so by how well he has, of his own volition, been meeting my physical needs while I've been imprisoned.] **I have sent him back to you**[not that I had to, but it is the right thing to do] **in person**, [hand delivering this letter to you] **that is, sending my very heart**, [I will miss not only his help, but the happiness his companionship means to me] **whom I wished to keep with me**, [Not even Apostles get to do what they wish] **so that on your behalf** [Since he is yours to loan, you'd be credited for "sharing"] **he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel**; [which is far more important than any physical tasks he would accomplish in your household] **but without your consent I did not want to do anything**, [but if you'd like to consent, that would be fabulous...hint...hint] **so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion** [forced compliance makes all goodness void] **but of your own free will**. [Do the right thing freely, and you will be rewarded. May I keep Philemon?] **For perhaps** [I'm not certain what God's providence is doing in this situation, but I might be ...] **he was for this reason separated from you for a while**, [His running away, after all, ironically resulted in the salvation of His eternal soul, and my personal benefit during a time of great need] **that you would have him back forever**, [Repentance = Restitution, even with runaway slaves] **no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother**, [who has traded his rebellion for obedience, and every other vice for every other virtue, and in God's sight you are equal in value. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." 1 Cor. 12:13] **especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord**. [both brother and helper]

**If then you regard me a partner**, [If you don't do this thing I'm about to ask you, I'll feel personally rejected] **accept him as** [no less than] **you would me**. **But if he has wronged you in any way** [and we both know he has] **or owes you anything**, [and we both know he has] **charge that to my account**; [Christ paid my debt and yours when He bought us back from eternal damnation. "I If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each

one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." 1 Pet. 1:17-19], Paul, am writing this with my own hand,[This matter is so important, I'm not even hiring out the penning of it.] I will repay it [every dime Onesimus owes you] (not to mention to you that you owe to me even your own self as well).[That is unless you recall and your conscience is touched by how indebted to me you already are to me. Come on, Dude. You owe me one.] Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.[By not only forgiving Onesimus everything he owes you monetarily, but gifting him to this imprisoned apostle.]

Having confidence in your obedience,[I'm expecting only the best response] I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.[Surprise me with what "even more" might look like :D]

At the same time also prepare me a lodging,[I'll catch up to you then and that meeting can either be REALLY awkward according to how stingy or generous you are in this matter.] for I hope that through your prayers I will be given to you.[You want that face to face as much as I do, right?]

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers. [Others are watching to see what your response will be, Brother]

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ[He has been gracious to us, now be gracious to me] be with your spirit[That part of you that will live on forever and be rewarded or punished according to all you have chosen to do or not do. But no pressure].