

# **“The Book of Philemon”**

## **Philemon 1-6**

### Introduction

- I. The book of Philemon is one of the shortest books in the entire Bible.
- II. It is also a book that may not get as much attention as it should.
- III. Let us notice some things that we can learn from this inspired letter.

### Discussion

- I. Introductory remarks (vs. 1-3)
  - A. Paul, the inspired writer, is imprisoned at this point of his life (cf. v. 10).
  - B. Timothy is mentioned as being involved in the sending of the letter.
  - C. Philemon is addressed (all that is known of Philemon is found in this short book).
  - D. Apphia and Archippus are also addressed (a woman and man who were faithful Christians; cf. Col. 4:17).
  - E. Paul extends a general, but wonderful blessing.
- II. Paul's thankfulness for Philemon's "love and faith" (vs. 4-7).
  - A. We should pray for one another (Gal. 6:2; James 5:16).
  - B. We should also help one another (v. 6 "fellowship"; 1 John 3:17).
  - C. Philemon's generosity "refreshed" his brethren (Gal. 6:2).
- III. Paul begs on behalf of Onesimus (vs. 8-21).
  - A. As an apostle, Paul could have commanded that Philemon receive, and treat, Onesimus appropriately.
  - B. Instead, Paul begs (cf. 2 Tim. 2:24-25).
  - C. While a prisoner, Paul continued to preach the Gospel (2 Tim. 4:1-4).
  - D. Onesimus was a servant of Philemon's, but he had run away.
  - E. Paul would have loved for Onesimus to stay with him, but he did not want that to happen without the approval of Philemon.
  - F. Onesimus was returning as far greater than a physical servant (now as Philemon's spiritual brother in Christ).
  - G. Paul wanted Onesimus treated like he would have been treated (cf. Acts 10:34-35).
  - H. Paul was willing to pay for any debt that Onesimus owed.
  - I. If received well, Paul would have felt gladness (cf. 1 Thess. 5:11).
  - J. Paul had confidence that Philemon would do the right thing.
- IV. Closing remarks (vs. 22-25).
  - A. Paul was planning to dwell with Philemon in the future (sometimes we do not know what the future will hold; James 4:13-17).
  - B. Epaphras was also a prisoner at this point (Col. 1:7; 4:12).
  - C. Some familiar names are mentioned (2 Tim. 4:10-11; Col. 4:14).
  - D. A closing blessing was given.

### Conclusion

- I. The book of Philemon, though short, shows the importance of brotherly love.
- II. May we each strive to have such in our lives (Heb. 13:1).