

A Story of Providential Reconciliation

Philemon

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved *brother* and fellow worker,

² and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers,

⁵ because I hear of your love, and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints;

⁶ *and I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

⁷ For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

⁸ Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to order you *to do* that which is proper,

⁹ yet for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*-- since I am such a person as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus--

¹⁰ I appeal to you for my child, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, Onesimus,

¹¹ who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me.

¹² And I have sent him back to you in person, that is, *sending* my very heart,

¹³ whom I wished to keep with me, that in your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel;

¹⁴ but without your consent I did not want to do anything, that your goodness should not be as it were by compulsion, but of your own free will.

¹⁵ For perhaps he was for this reason parted *from you* for a while, that you should have him back forever,

¹⁶ no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ If then you regard me a partner, accept him as *you would* me.

¹⁸ But if he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account;

¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand, I will repay it (lest I should mention to you that you owe to me even your own self as well).

²⁰ Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

²¹ Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.

²² And at the same time also prepare me a lodging; for I hope that through your prayers I shall be given to you.

²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,

²⁴ *as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers.

²⁵ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.