

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.

Colossians 3:1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

⁴ When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

⁶ For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come,

⁷ and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

⁸ But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.

⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices,

¹⁰ and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him

¹¹ -- *a renewal* in which there is no *distinction between* Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

¹² And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

- ¹⁴ And beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity.
- ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.
- ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
- ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.
- ¹⁸ Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
- ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them.
- ²⁰ Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.
- ²¹ Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart.
- ²² Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who *merely* please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.
- ²³ Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men;
- ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.
- ²⁵ For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.
- 4:1** Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.
- ² Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of* thanksgiving;
- ³ praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;
- ⁴ in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.
- ⁵ Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.
- ⁶ Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, *as it were*, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.
- ⁷ As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information.
- ⁸ For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know *about* our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts;
- ⁹ and with him Onesimus, *our* faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your *number*. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

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All scripture is from the NASV.