

The Epistle Of Paul To Philemon

The Argument

Albeit the excellency of Paul's spirit wonderfully appeareth in his other Epistles, yet this Epistle is a great witness, and a declaration of the same. For far passing the baseness of his matter, he fleeth as it were up to heaven, and speaketh with a divine grace and majesty. Onesimus servant to Philemon both robbed his master, and fled away, whom Paul having won to Christ, sent again to his master, earnestly begging his pardon, with most weighty arguments proving the duty of one Christian to another, and so with salutations endeth.

Philemon 2

Philemon

*1 Paul handling a base and small matter, yet according to his manner mounteth aloft unto God.
8 Sending again to Philemon his vagabond and thievish servant, he entreateth pardon for him,
and very gravely preacheth of Christian equity.*

1 Paul a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and *our* brother Timothy, unto Philemon our dear friend, and fellow helper,

2 And to *our* dear sister Apphia, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the Church that is in thy house:

3 Grace *be* with you, and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I (*) give thanks to my God, making mention always of thee in my prayers,

(*) 1 Thessalonians 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:3 .

5 (When I hear of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all Saints.)

6 That the (a) (*) fellowship of thy faith may be made effectual, and that whatsoever good thing is in you (♣) through Christ Jesus, may be (b) known.

(a) By fellowship of faith, he meaneth those duties of charity which are bestowed upon the Saints, and flow forth of an effectual faith.

(*) Thy benevolence toward the Saints, which proceedeth of a lively and effectual faith.

(♣) That experience may declare that you are the members of Jesus Christ.

(b) That by this means all men may perceive how rich you are in Christ, to wit, in faith, charity, and all bountifulness.

7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because by thee, brother, the Saints' (c) (*) bowels are comforted.

(c) Because thou didst so dutifully and cheerfully refresh the Saints, that they conceived inwardly a marvelous joy; for by this word (Bowels) is meant not only the inward feeling of wants and miseries that men have one of another's state, but also that joy and comfort which entereth into the very bowels, as though the heart were refreshed and comforted.

(*) Meaning their inward parts and affections were through his charity comforted.

8 Wherefore, though I be very bold in Christ to command thee that which is convenient,

9 (1) Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, though I be as I am, even Paul aged, and even now a prisoner for Jesus Christ.

(1) An example of a Christian exercise and commendation for another man.

10 I beseech thee for my son (*) Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds,

(*) Colossians 4:9 .

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable both to thee and to me,

12 Whom I have sent again, thou therefore receive him, that is my own (d) bowels,

(d) As my own son, and as if I had begotten him from my own body.

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel.

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be as it were of (e) necessity, but willingly.

(e) That you mightest not seem to have lent me thy servant upon constraint, but willingly.

15 It may be that he therefore (f) departed for (g) a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever,

(f) Thus he assuageth the harder kind of speech, which is to say, he ran away.

(g) For a little time.

16 (*) Not now as a servant, but above a servant, *even as* a brother beloved, specially to me, how much more than unto thee, both in the (h) flesh and in the Lord?

(*) For he is thy servant by condition, and also now the Lord's, to the both for thine own sake and for the Lord's thou oughtest to love him.

(h) Because he is thy servant, as other servants are, and because he is the Lord's servant, so that thou must needs love him both for the Lord's sake, and for your own sake.

17 If therefore thou count our things (*) common, receive him as myself.

(*) That all thine is mine, and all mine is thine.

18 If he hath hurt thee, or oweth thee ought, that put on my account.

19 I Paul have written *this* with my own hand, I will recompense it, albeit I do not say to thee, that thou owest unto me even thy own self.

20 (i) Yea, brother, let me obtain this pleasure of thee in the Lord; comfort my (*) bowels in the Lord.

(i) Good brother let me obtain this benefit at thine hand.

(*) Grant me this benefit, which shall be most acceptable unto me of all others.

21 Trusting in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even more than I say.

22 Moreover also prepare me lodging, for I trust through your prayers I shall be freely given unto you.

23 There salute thee Epaphras my fellow prisoner (*) in Christ Jesus,

(*) That is, for Christ's cause.

24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas *and* Luke, my fellow helpers.

25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit, Amen.

Written from Rome to Philemon, and sent by Onesimus a servant.