

# Philemon

## Chapter 1.

### Paul's greeting to Philemon

- <sup>1</sup> From Paul, who is in jail for serving Christ Jesus, and from Timothy, who is like a brother because of our faith. Philemon, you work with us and are very dear to us. This letter is to you
- <sup>2</sup> and to the church that meets in your home. It is also to our dear friend Apphia and to Archippus, who serves the Lord as we do.
- <sup>3</sup> I pray that God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ will be kind to you and will bless you with peace!

### Philemon's Love and Faith

- <sup>4</sup> Philemon, each time I mention you in my prayers, I thank God.
- <sup>5</sup> I hear about your faith in our Lord Jesus and about your love for all of God's people.
- <sup>6</sup> As you share your faith with others, I pray that they may come to know all the blessings Christ has given us.
- <sup>7</sup> My friend, your love has made me happy and has greatly encouraged me. It has also cheered the hearts of God's people.

### Paul Speaks to Philemon about Onesimus

- <sup>8</sup> Christ gives me the courage to tell you what to do.
- <sup>9</sup> But I would rather ask you to do it simply because of love. Yes, as someone[a] in jail for Christ,
- <sup>10</sup> I beg you to help Onesimus![b] He is like a son to me because I led him to Christ here in jail.
- <sup>11</sup> Before this, he was useless to you, but now he is useful both to you and to me.
- <sup>12</sup> Sending Onesimus back to you makes me very sad.
- <sup>13</sup> I would like to keep him here with me, where he could take your place in helping me while I am here in prison for preaching the good news. <sup>14</sup> But I won't do anything unless you agree to it first. I want your act of kindness to come from your heart, and not be something you feel forced to do.
- <sup>15</sup> Perhaps Onesimus was taken from you for a little while so that you could have him back for good,
- <sup>16</sup> but not as a slave. Onesimus is much more than a slave. To me he is a dear friend, but to you he is even more, both as a person and as a follower of the Lord.
- <sup>17</sup> If you consider me a friend because of Christ, then welcome Onesimus as you would welcome me.
- <sup>18</sup> If he has cheated you or owes you anything, charge it to my account.
- <sup>19</sup> With my own hand I write: I, PAUL, WILL PAY YOU BACK. But don't forget that you owe me your life.
- <sup>20</sup> My dear friend and follower of Christ our Lord, please cheer me up by doing this for me.
- <sup>21</sup> I am sure you will do all I have asked, and even more.
- <sup>22</sup> Please get a room ready for me. I hope your prayers will be answered, and I can visit you.

### Final greetings

- <sup>23</sup> Epaphras is also here in jail for being a follower of Christ Jesus. He sends his greetings,
- <sup>24</sup> and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, who work together with me.
- <sup>25</sup> I pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will be kind to you!