

## A Man Greatly Changed, Onesimus Philemon 08–21

### **1 *Paul wanted to make a special request of Philemon***

- a. Paul's right to demand
- b. Paul's appeal to love
- c. Paul's age and imprisonment
- d. Paul's request:  
Concerns Onesimus

### **2 *Onesimus was a spiritual son of Paul — born again***

- a. Had been useless
- b. Was now useful

### **3 *Onesimus was facing his past — to right his wrong***

- a. He returns
- b. He ministers — serves others
- c. He trusts the goodness of other believers

### **4 *Onesimus was a changed man***

- a. A man changed by the hand and providence of God — changed forever
- b. A man changed from a slave to a brother — a dear brother

8 Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do,

9 yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul — an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus —

10 that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

11 Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

12 I am sending him — who is my very heart — back to you.

13 I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

14 But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favour you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary.

15 Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever —

16 no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.

**5 *Onesimus was to be welcomed and trusted as much as Paul***

a. In a spirit of sharing debts

b. In a spirit of remembering one's own spiritual debts

c. In a spirit of mutual refreshment

d. In a spirit of obedience

17 So if you consider me a partner,  
welcome him as you would welcome me.

18 If he has done you any wrong  
or owes you anything,  
charge it to me.

19 I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand.  
I will pay it back — not to mention  
that you owe me your very self.

20 I do wish, brother,  
that I may have some benefit from you  
in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

21 Confident of your obedience,  
I write to you,  
knowing that you will do  
even more than I ask.