



Leader Conversation Guide – XXVII - Philemon

Main Idea

This week, Pastor Brett continued our XXVII series and explored the Apostle Paul's letter to Philemon. Paul appeals to Philemon to welcome back Onesimus, a runaway slave who has become a believer, not as a slave but as a beloved brother in Christ. This letter emphasizes themes of love, transformation, and reconciliation. Paul demonstrates the power of Christian fellowship and urges Philemon to act out of love rather than obligation. We are reminded that in Christ, all distinctions are removed, and we are called to serve one another with humility and grace.

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!**

2 CORINTHIANS 5:27

Make It Practical:

Transformation in Christ:

- 2 Corinthians 5:17: Emphasizes the transformation that occurs when one is in Christ - the old is gone, and the new is here.

Reconciliation and Restoration (Philemon 11-16):

- Paul sends Onesimus back to Philemon, emphasizing that any favor should be voluntary, not forced.
- The separation of Onesimus from Philemon might have been for a greater purpose - to reunite them forever as brothers in Christ, transcending the master-slave relationship.

The Call to Serve and Love (Philemon 17-22):

- Mark 9:35: Whoever wants to be first must be the servant of all.
- Paul expresses confidence in Philemon's obedience and willingness to do even more than requested, and he hopes to visit Philemon soon.

Partnership and Spiritual Fellowship:

- Philemon 6 and 17: Emphasizes the importance of koinonia, which involves contributory help, participation, sharing, and spiritual fellowship.
- Colossians 3:11: In God's family, all distinctions (ethnic, social, cultural) are removed, and Christ is all and in all.

Talk About It

Paul's Appeal to Philemon:

- In Philemon 8-10, Paul mentions that he prefers to appeal to Philemon on the basis of love rather than command him. Why do you think Paul chose this approach, and how does it reflect the principles of Christian fellowship and leadership? How can we apply this principle of appealing with love in our own relationships and interactions within the church?

Transformation and Reconciliation:

- Reflecting on Philemon 15-16 and 2 Corinthians 5:17-19, how does the story of Onesimus illustrate the themes of transformation and reconciliation in Christ? What can we learn from Paul's message about the importance of seeing others as new creations and welcoming them as brothers and sisters in the Lord, regardless of their past?

The Role of Partnership and Fellowship:

- In Philemon 6 and 17, Paul speaks about the effectiveness of faith partnership (koinonia) and the importance of welcoming Onesimus as a partner. What does true partnership in faith look like in our church community? How can we enhance our spiritual fellowship to deepen our understanding of Christ and support each other more effectively?

KEY POINT

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for teaching us about love, transformation, and reconciliation through the story of Philemon and Onesimus. Help us to welcome others as brothers and sisters in Christ and deepen our fellowship with one another. Guide us to serve with humility and grace. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Leader Tip

Fall Groups Semester is right around the corner! Have you decided what Group you'll be leading this fall? We are asking all Group Leaders to submit their [Creating Your Group Form](#) by the end of July!