

## Paul's Epistles – Philemon: God's Patience

The New Testament \* Week 30 \* Opening collect: Advent 4, BCP 212

If you have questions from past weeks or your reading, email them to

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I. Philemon: a letter from Paul to a friend *and the church that meets in his home* about a runaway slave named Onesimus.

Home Groups started right after Pentecost, and going strong by Acts 2:46-47.

Result?

A. The story of Philemon (by inference):

1. Onesimus
2. Paul and Onesimus
3. Paul sends
4. Paul explains and commends

B. Takeaways for non-slaveowners:

1. Vs 4-5 –faith and love
2. Vs 6 – Serving and sharing:

II. Slavery: The Bible does not encourage slavery; it regulates it.

A. Old Testament:

1. Non-Jews: Leviticus 25:44-46
2. Jews could sell themselves into slavery, BUT Exodus 21:1
3. Even then, slaves had rights. Exodus 21:26-27 --
4. Deuteronomy 23:15 – If a runaway slave comes to you...
5. Old Testament set boundaries...

B. New Testament does same: doesn't encourage slavery, but regulates it.

1. Slaves: Ephesians 6:5-8;

Colossians 3:22-25

2. Masters: Ephesians 6:9;

Colossians 4:1.

3. Roman culture and economy:

4. Christians:

5. New Testament perspective: 1 Corinthians 7:21-22

6. Philemon gives Paul's opinion obliquely:

a) Roman law harsh with runaway slaves:

b) Paul's gave Philemon clear guidance, but...

c) That's how God often is with us:

7. If someone debunks Bible, because "it approves of slavery," ask them to show you!  
And then tell them to read Philemon.

## **Preparation for next week: Read 1 Corinthians**

Closing collect: Independence Day, BCP 242