

The Letter of Paul to Philemon
A translation from the Original Greek
By Matthew Jones
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¹Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and our brother Timothy.

To Philemon, our beloved friend and coworker, ²and to our sister Apphia, and to our fellow-soldier Archippus, and to the church at your house.

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I always give thanks to my God as I remember you during my prayers, ⁵because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. ⁶I pray that your participation in the faith might powerfully deepen your understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. ⁷I was overcome with joy and encouraged because of your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

⁸Therefore, although I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is proper, ⁹instead I appeal to you on the basis of love – such as I am, Paul, an elder man but now also a prisoner for Christ Jesus. ¹⁰I appeal to you concerning my child, who became my child while I was imprisoned, Onesimus – ¹¹previously useless to you, but now useful both to you and to me.

¹²I have sent him back to you, he who is my very heart. ¹³I wanted to keep him with me so that he could minister to me in your place during my imprisonment because of the gospel. ¹⁴However, I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that your special favor might be done of your own free will, and not by coercion. ¹⁵Perhaps he was separated from you for a short time so that you might have him back forever - ¹⁶no longer as a slave, but as more than a slave, as a dearly loved brother. He is especially so to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷Therefore, if you regard me as a partner, then welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, write this with my own hand - I will pay it back. (Not to mention to you that you owe me even your very self.) ²⁰Yes, brother, may I benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹I am writing to you confident of your obedience because I know you will do even more than I say.

²²Now as a further matter, be ready to prepare a guest room for me, for I hope to be graciously given to you through your prayers.

²³Epaphras, a fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus with me, greets you, ²⁴and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, fellow-laborers with me.

²⁵May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.