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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas



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Be Loving and
Forgiving
A Study of Philemon

Date	Lesson	Text
03/14	Loving	1:4-9
03/21	Forgiving	1:10-21
03/28	Summary & Review	

Food for Thought

The Gift Of Grace

I do not ask for mighty words
To leave the crowd impressed,
But grant my life may ring so true
My neighbor may be blessed.
The best witness for Christ
shows God's grace and
shares His love.

*By grace you have been saved
through faith, and
that not of yourselves;
it is the gift of God.*

Ephesians 2:8 (NJKV)

(From "Our Daily Bread" Jan 14, 2007)

Review and Summary Philemon

This brief little epistle is full of instruction for us. I see four things here that arrested my attention as I read this letter from Paul to Philemon.

1. **Here is an example of true Christian love** (v. 5).

Paul showed great love in his regard for Onesimus. He took this degraded, loathsome creature in. Once he had been converted by the grace of God, Paul regarded him and treated him as his own son. Though Onesimus and Timothy were very different men before they were converted (Timothy was a moral, upright young man. Onesimus was the off scouring of society.), after they were converted, they were both equal in Paul's eyes. (In Christ there is no difference.)

Philemon showed great brotherly love in his reception of Onesimus. Though Philemon had been greatly wronged by this man, he received him again into his household, freely forgiving him the wrong he had done (Matt. 6:14-15). I pray that God will give me such a tender spirit (Eph. 4:32).

(Matthew 6:14-15) For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: *15* But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

(Ephesians 4:32) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

If God forgives us, surely we ought to forgive one another. If Christ receives us, surely we ought to receive one another. -- This is the kind of love that is the law that rules in the hearts of God's elect. (John 13:34-35).

2. **Here is an example of substitutionary redemption** (v. 18).

Onesimus had wronged Philemon. He had betrayed his master's trust, despised his master's goodness, and stolen his master's goods. Onesimus owed much to Philemon. But listen to this. Paul says, "*If he hath wronged thee ought, put that on mine account.*"

That is exactly what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us (Isa. 53:4-10).

3. **Here is an example of divine forgiveness** (v. 17).

Paul says, "*If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.*" Onesimus was forgiven through the intercession of another. He was accepted, not as a slave, but as a brother, an equal. And he was accepted because of another.

We have been forgiven through the intercession of Christ.

We have been accepted as the sons of God, in every way equal to Christ in God's sight (1 John 3:1).

We have been accepted because of another, even because of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. **But the thing which stands out most beautifully in the text is this. -- Here we have an example of God's wondrous, amazing, irresistible grace!**

(Excerpt from "Put That On Mine Account - The Story Of Onesimus" by Don Fortner)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

BE LOVING (1:1-9)

Pray for others (vs 4)

Pray on all occasions with all kinds of requests for others (Eph 6:18-19)

Pray for others that they may stand the test (2 Cor 13:7)

Pray for others that an open door is provided for the spread of the Gospel (Col 4:3)

Pray for others for their deliverance (2 Thess 3:2)

Pray for others that they may have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way (Heb 13:18)

Be loving (vs 5)

Be loving by expressing our faith through love (Gal 5:6)

Be loving by doing work prompted by love (1 Thess 1:3)

Be loving by executing what God has taught us about loving others (1 Thess 4:9-10)

Be loving by being devoted to others and honoring them (Rom 12:10)

Be loving by doing no harm to anyone (Rom 13:10)

Be loving by doing everything in love (1 Cor 16:14)

Be loving by being completely humble, gentle and patient (Eph 4:2)

Share our faith (vs 6)

By supplying the needs of God's people (2 Corinthians 9:12-14)

By helping others (Hebrews 6:10)

By doing deeds out of faith (James 2:14)

By letting our light shine before others (Matt 5:16)

By living such a good life that others will glorify God (1 Peter 2:12)

By always being prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give the reason for the hope that we have (1 Peter 3:15-16)

Refresh the hearts of others (vs 7)

By providing encouragement (2 Cor 7:13)

By supplying their needs (1 Cor 16:17-18)

By being together with saints in service (Rom 15:31-32)

BE FORGIVING (1:10-21)

Think of others as useful versus useless (vs 11)

Because a man's fruit will display their usefulness (Luke 6:43-45)

Because those who devote themselves to doing good are useful (Titus 3:8)

Because God is the only one who can decide who is useful, and all are useful to God whether for honor or dishonor (2 Tim 2:20-21)

Because we are to be considerate of all to stir up love and good works (Heb 10:24)

Because what God has created is good and useful (Acts 10:11-15)

Because all Christians are people of God (1 Peter 2:10)

Be spontaneous and earnest (vs 14)

By doing and giving with honor and integrity (1 Chron 29:17)

By doing things voluntarily (1 Cor 9:17)

By being willing (2 Cor 8:12)

By being eager to serve (1 Peter 5:2)

By doing and giving what has been decided on in our hearts not reluctantly or under compulsion (2 Cor 9:7)

By serving faithfully (1 Peter 4:10)

If you must separate, come back together (vs 15)

So that there will not be an overwhelming of sorrow (2 Cor 2:5-8)

So that God can do His work (Rom 12:19)

So that the sun does not go down on anger (Eph 4:26)

So that we will live a righteous life that God desires (James 1:19-20)

Treat as a brother in Christ (vs 16)

By recognizing fellow workers and partners in the work of God (2 Cor 8:23)

By loving as brothers (Heb 13:1)

By not slandering, judging or speaking against others (James 4:11)

By living in harmony with one another (1 Peter 3:8)

By being willing to lay down our lives for a brother (1 John 3:16-18)

Do not judge others (vs 18)

Because the same measure of judgment will be used against us (Matt 18:28-34)

Because our cry for help may not be answered (Prov 21:13)

Because our adversary may have us judged (Luke 12:58)

Because we need to ensure we are right before charging others (Matt 7:3-5)

Be obedient to God's word in forgiving (vs 21)

So that we will stand the test of obedience (2 Cor 2:9-10)

So that we won't need to feel ashamed (2 Thess 3:14)

Because God forgave us (Col 3:13)

By being kind and compassionate to others (Eph 4:32)