

THE BROTHERHOOD OF BELIEVERS

Introduction: Paul's letter to Philemon is like a window through which we can see the brotherhood of believers in action. "Brother" is used four times in this letter: once of Timothy, once of Onesimus, and twice of Philemon. Apphia, who probably was Philemon's wife, is called "sister" in some of the manuscripts. Even the greatest sinners that receive Jesus as Savior should be treated as brothers.

Lesson Aim: To show Christian brothers and sisters how they ought to treat each other.

Verse: "Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord." (Philemon 1:20).

Lesson Outline and Questions to Answer**I. Paul's Prayers — 1:1-7**

1. Paul did not consider himself a prisoner of Rome, so what did he call himself? 1:1, 9
2. Locate the places where Paul used "brother" in his letter. _____
3. What did Paul call Archippus who may have been a son of Philemon? 1:2
4. What did Philemon do that caused Paul to thank God? 1:4-5
5. How did Paul pray for Philemon in sharing his faith? 1:6
6. What caused Paul and others great joy when they heard about Philemon's work? 1:7

II. Paul's Plea — 1:8-20

7. How did Paul approach Philemon in his plea for Onesimus? 1:8-9
8. Why did Paul call Onesimus his son? 1:10
9. What was Onesimus' worth to Philemon in the past and present? 1:11
10. How did Paul want Philemon to receive Onesimus? 1:12
11. Why did Paul send Onesimus back to Philemon instead of keeping him in Rome? 1:13-14
12. How did Paul want Philemon to receive Onesimus? 1:15-17
 - a. He should receive him _____ 1:15
 - b. He should receive him not as a _____, but as a _____ 1:16
 - c. He should receive him as he would receive _____ 1:17
13. What was Philemon to do with any debts that Onesimus owed him? 1:18-19
14. What did Philemon owe Paul? 1:19

15. How would Philemon's kind treatment of Onesimus affect Paul? 1:20

III. Paul's Persuasion — 1:21-25

16. How did Paul persuade Philemon to treat Onesimus well? 1:21
17. How did Paul persuade Philemon to treat him well? 1:22
18. How did Paul end his letter that would enable Philemon to forgive Onesimus? 1:25