

PHILEMON

GOD SPEAKS
THROUGH
HIS WORD

LET'S LISTEN
TOGETHER

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¹Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother: To Philemon our dear friend and coworker, ²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your home. ³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I always thank my God when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear of your love for all the saints and the faith that you have in the Lord Jesus. ⁶ I pray that your participation in the faith may become effective through knowing every good thing that is in us [b] for the glory of Christ. ⁷ For I have great joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother. ⁸ For this reason, although I have great boldness in Christ to command you to do what is right, ⁹ I appeal to you, instead, on the basis

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of love. I, Paul, as an elderly man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus, ¹⁰ appeal to you for my son, Onesimus. I became his father while I was in chains. ¹¹ Once he was useless to you, but now he is useful both to you and to me. ¹² I am sending him back to you—I am sending my very own heart. ¹³ I wanted to keep him with me, so that in my imprisonment for the gospel he might serve me in your place. ¹⁴ But I didn't want to do anything without your consent, so that your good deed might not be out of obligation, but of your own free will. ¹⁵ For perhaps this is why he was separated from you for a brief time, so that you might get him back permanently, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave, but 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. ¹⁷ So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would me. ¹⁸ And if he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account.

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¹⁹I, Paul, write this with my own hand :I will repay it —not to mention to you that you owe me even your very self .²⁰ Yes, brother, may I benefit from you in the Lord ; refresh my heart in Christ .²¹ Since I am confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say .²² Meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, since I hope that through your prayers I will be restored to you .²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings, and so do ²⁴ Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my coworkers .²⁵ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit .

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La Porte du Non-Retour (The Door of No Return), Benin, Africa

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La Porte du
Non-Retour
(The Door of No
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Africa

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Justification:

w e h a v e b e e n s a v e d f r o m t h e p e n a l t y o f s i n .

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As a slave to Sin (one who has not yet experienced justification), we are:

In need of rescue from darkness	Colossians 1:13
Alienated from God;	Colossians 1:21
Dead in our sin	Colossians 2:13
Gratified our sinful nature	Ephesians 2:1
Far away from God	Galatians 2:13

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Implications of Justification in the life of Onesimus:

It c h a n g e d H i s i d e n t i t y ;

It c h a n g e d H i s p o s i t i o n ;

It c h a n g e d H i s f a m i l y .

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As a slave to God (one who has experienced justification), we are:

Made alive in God	Colossians 2:13; Ephesians 2:5
Rescued from darkness	Colossians 1:13
Brought near through the blood of Jesus	Galatians 3:13
God's workmanship	Ephesians 2:10
Part of God's household	Galatians 2:19-20

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Summary

When Onesimus became a believer in Christ, Paul urged Philemon to recognize him under his new identity as a brother in Christ and no longer as a slave. When we experience justification, becoming followers of Christ, our dead self that was a slave to sin is gone and we are given a new identity, a new position before God, and a new family. Do we live within this new identity? Or do we continue to live as a slave to sin?

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Interested in learning more about modern-day slavery? Take a look at the following organizations doing tremendous work in this area all throughout the world.

Internationally:

International Justice Mission www.ijm.org

State-Wide:

The Refuge for DMST www.therefugeaustin.org/

Locally:

Key2Free www.thekey2free.org/