

## Philemon

### Lesson 1: Philemon 1-25

#### Preview Questions

Take a few minutes to answer these questions to get your thought process started:

What's your initial, gut reaction to people from the political party you like least (Democrat, Republican, Libertarian, or whatever) who say they're voting as Jesus would want them to?

In Paul's prison letters that we've studied so far, what's the defining mark of the relationships between people as Paul imagines it? How does this differ from the norms of the Empire?

After Paul's standard letter-opening he once again begins with prayer. What sorts of things does he pray for this time?

What relationship between authority and persuasion does Paul set up in Philemon 8-11? What sort of position does Paul set up for himself in this paragraph?

What "favor" or "benefit" do you think Paul is referring to in Philemon 14? Why do you think Paul wants this to happen without the official weight of his authority?

Paul suggests that, when Onesimus returns to Philemon, he will return much better than he was before. If Philemon believes Paul, what does this change do to the situation?

The identification Paul asserts in Philemon 17-18 is the real culmination of his argument—what weight does Paul put on Onesimus's return?

Philemon 19-20 puts some muscle behind the center of the argument in a way that's both subtle and ham-fisted. What moves does Paul make here to solidify his position? How does verse 21 put icing on the cake?