

“Drowning”

The Book of Philemon

Ever been caught with your hand in the cookie jar?
Coming to grips with being guilty & believing God’s gospel

Drowning in Guilt... Rescued by Grace!

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, & Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker,

v1 Paul prisoner is parallel to Jesus on cross

v1 Philemon is:

- "beloved" = AGAPETOS
- "fellow worker" note both words

2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

v2 key words:

- sister
- fellow soldier
- church EKKLESIA
- in your home = KOINONIA

w.1-2 = prisoner, brother, agapetos worker, sister, fellow soldier, and "the church in your house"

(aka ekklesia in koinonia).

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

v3 "grace & peace to you"

*** Paul BEGINS with GRACE!

- note traditional greeting...
- define terms of miraculous endearment

*** "from" GOD our FATHER

*** "and" ***

the LORD JESUS Christ"

4 I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers,

"I thank My God"

- note how personal...
- spirit of praise & gratitude
- note reverence & Lordship

"always"

- fruit of consistency
- consistent praise/appreciation
- always = faithful obedience

"remember you"

- keeping others on/in heart
- lifting others up...
- loving selflessness...

"in my prayers"

- denotes communication with God
- defines intercessory prayer
- greatest demo of love...

* Paul perpetually & prayerfully thanks God for Philemon...

5 because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints;

5 = Paul thanks God because he (Paul) "has heard of" Philemon's faith in The Lord & love for God's family (aka "ALL the Saints").

v5 explains Paul's rationale...

- "I hear of your love... & faith"
- * Philemon has a reputation...
 - What in your life speaks?!
 - what if your faith in Christ & love for Christians (both present/potential) was so transforming & inspirational that people were being inspired thru word of mouth witnessing in places like D.C., NYC, Detroit, Dallas...
.....such was the case with Philemon - Amen!

6 & I pray that the FELLOWSHIP/SHARING of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

v.6 = ESV Translation:

- A. "and I pray that"
- B. "the SHARING (koinonia) of your faith"
- C. "may become effective"
- D. "for the FULL KNOWLEDGE"
- E. "of every good thing"
- F. "that is in us"
- G. "for the sake of Christ."

v6. Key = KOINONIA (sharing)

- Paul is both calling for & commending Koinonia
- "sharing your faith" does NOT refer to evangelism here but rather, divine unity, a.k.a. "love for one another"

*** John 17:21

*** see also Pilippians 1&2

- "knowledge of every good thing"

*** Key point: KOINONIA in EKKLESIA brings both the Christian & the Church into a deeper blessing because both are literally more faithfully obedient, living & loving examples of genuine, comprehensive, "Church," & Christ-likeness...

*** See our LIFE Curve

- Contrast "height" vs. horizontal
- Contrast "up in churchy crowd vs. down in the trenches, cross-carrying"

* ILLUSTRATION:

- individual "weights" only sink so far (unable to serve effectively as an anchor)... BUT... when added together, the collective weights can bring the anchor all the way down to the ocean floor...

- Like coals in a fire...

KEY Q: What's the big deal?

1. EKKLESIA in KOINONIA = faithful obedience
2. Thus... anything else = divine disobedience
3. KOINONIA = narrow path, Christ-like walking

*** ILLUSTRATION: Explain **UBUNTU** "slides"

- A. South African culture...
- B. Anthropologist... (fruit/race)

- C. All hold hands, run, share fruit
- D. "I am... because we are."
- E. See SITTING in FOOT CIRCLE
- F. Shows.... Kids in Koinonia...

7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

v.7 = Paul tells Philemon:

"I've been blessed in knowing that you've been such a blessing to others."

* Philemon "has been" what appears to be the real deal...

8 Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to order you to do what is proper,

v.8 = PIVIT POINT...

- A. "Therefore"
- B. (aka here comes the matter at hand... Or, here comes my transition statement...)
- C. what I'm about to say could be a "command"
- D. Paul is demonstrating 3 things:
 - Authority
 - Urgency
 - Orthodoxy

9 yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you —since I am such a person as Paul, the

***aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ
Jesus—***

w.9-10a =

- A. "Yet, for love's sake"
- B. "I rather"
- C. "I appeal to / beseech you" (2x)

*** Paul notes his perspective is offered from
one currently imprisoned for Christ...

***10 I appeal to you for my child/son
Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my
imprisonment,***

v.10 = Paul's appeal is for Onesimus

- A. Paul, like Christ, appeals for one guilty & deserving of wrath
- B. Paul, like Christ, uses personal terms of endearment
- C. Paul, like Christ, is more than adoring... He's adopting (cf. "my son...")
- D. Paul, like Christ, emphasizes the transformation that has transpired thru his own sacrificial tribulation

***11 who formerly was useless to you, but
now is useful both to you and to me.***

v.11 = Paul paints Onesimus' "before & after" picture...

- A. Onesimus, like us, was dead and "useless" before our adoption
- B. Onesimus, like us, was useless to anyone before... but now, adopted in Christ, is

useful to EVERYONE as a light...

w.10-11 combined =

*** NOTE: a demonstration of Eph. 2:8-9 and then 2:10 is portrayed in Paul's description of Onesimus to Philemon...

12 I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very heart, 13 whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel; 14 but without your consent I did not want to do anything, so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion but of your own free will.

w.12-14: (Paul explains sending O back)

- A. Sending O is akin to sending my own heart...
- B. My personal preference was that O stay and minister to/with me here (where, again, I remind you, I am in chains for the gospel)...
 - Note: like Jesus in Gethsemane, Paul lays down his personal preferences to fulfill the Father's will!
 - Selfless surrender & Christ likeness...
- C. Paul did not want to "take" that which could & should be given...

Compulsion lacks the heart of Christ-like Compassion - JDP

15 For perhaps he was for this reason

separated from you for a while, that you would have him back forever, 16 no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

w.15-16 (Parallel Prodigal Son)

- A. Principle of Romans 8:28...
- B. Trust in God's sovereignty w/out excusing sin
- C. Look at what God can do with our mess...
 - *** (NOTE: ref. today's suicide data... 5% of people contemplating suicide at any given moment... That's 1 out of 20 people... That's 3 minutes out of every hour... That's a huge number of souls that have been deceived by the devil into the depths of depression and even deeper despair...
 - *** If only they knew personally the holy hope of heaven... HIS NAME IS JESUS!
 - *** the world tries to turn lemons into lemonade... Jesus replaces lemons with His Living Water.
Amen!
- D. Total transformation... a renegade slave ran away... an “agapetos brother” is coming back to you!

NOTE: “in the flesh and in the Lord”

“REDEEMED MEN are REAL MEN!” – JDP

17 If then you regard me a partner, accept him as you would me.

v.17 = If you are in “koinonia with me”

...then think of yourself as being in koinonia with O

“welcome him as you would welcome me.”

*** “in-Christ” really means “IN-CHRIST!”

18 But if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account;

v.18-19 = “Type” of Gospel!!!

Paul talks to Philemon the way Jesus talks to us!

NOTE: there are no caveats given...
(cf. good Samaritan)

The Gospel of Jesus Christ comes in
“NO MATTER WHAT” sized containers

Read 2 Corinthians 5:21

“If he has done ANY wrong...”

OR

If he “owes you ANY thing...”

“Charge it to m/Me.”

19 I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand, I will repay it (not to mention to you that you owe to me even your own self as well).

v.19 = Paul, again, speaks to Philemon, how Jesus speaks to us...

“writing this with my own hand” == Jesus on the cross

“I will pay it back.”

Not to mention that you owe me your very self.”

*** TOTAL SURRENDER... but of the heart.

*** The Gospel is an all or nothing offer...

*** Those who realize what they owe...
gladly give back.

20 Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

v.20 = Paul makes it clear that if/when Philemon acts Christ-like to/toward Onesimus, it will bless his heart (literally).

21 Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.

v.21 = Paul expresses confidence in this Christian (Philemon) because this Christian has demonstrated consistent, transformed Christ-likeness

Christ-likeness goes above and beyond...

“There’s seldom any traffic on the extra mile.”

22 At the same time also prepare me a lodging, for I hope that through your

prayers I will be given to you.

v.22 = Paul begins to close with a warm, personal touch...

“Please pray & prepare for me... I hope to see you soon.”

***23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ
Jesus, greets you, 24 as do Mark,
Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow
workers.***

v.23-24 = ...my fellow prisoner & workers in Christ
also greet you...

NOTE: Demas is listed as a fellow worker
BUT
in 2 Tim. 4:10...Demas deserted Paul
because he “loved the world”

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

NOTE: Paul starts & ends with grace... “pure gospel”

CLOSE: Drowning in Guilt... Rescued by Grace!

PRAYER

STL:

Someone Worth Dying For
Sidewalk Prophets - Love Me Anyway

Prayer:
Redeemed
Forgiveness
You Make Beautiful Things