



Growth Group discussion questions for Philemon
Week of January 14-17, 2018

1. NCC Q19: Is there any way to escape punishment and to be brought back into God's favor?
A: Yes, to satisfy his justice, God himself, out of mere mercy, reconciles us to himself and delivers us from sin and from the punishment for sin, by a Redeemer.
Memorize, meditate on and be ready to recite Isaiah 53:5

2. Read Philemon carefully, at least twice.

3. What principles or thoughts had the most impact on you from the message on this passage on Sunday, January 14th? How were you specifically challenged? What points of application did you take away from the message?

4. One of the wonderful qualities for which the apostle Paul commends Philemon includes Philemon's regular practice of refreshing the hearts of the saints (v. 7).
 - a) What does it mean to refresh your brother or sister's heart? How can you do this? How have your brothers and sisters in Christ refreshed your heart? (e.g. Gal. 5:13 & 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:11; 2 Cor. 13:11; etc.)

 - b) Why is this such a needed and important practice in the church? Is this a habit of yours? How can you cultivate this quality? (e.g. Ps. 42:5, 63:1-8; Heb. 10:24-25)

 - c) Paul was refreshed indirectly by Philemon as he learned of Philemon's ministry. How did Paul say that Philemon could refresh Paul's heart more directly (v. 20, consider the context)?

5. Paul makes an interesting comment about Onesimus in verse 11. How had Onesimus become useless to Philemon? How was he now useful to Philemon and also to Paul? (v. 13, 16; Col. 3:22-23, Psalm 133, etc.)

6. Onesimus appears to have stolen money or property from Philemon when he fled.
 - a) If that's true, what do you think causes Paul to write verses 17 and 18? How does this echo the work of Christ on his (and our) behalf? (Isaiah 53:4-7; Deuteronomy 15:2; Luke 10:29-37, esp. vs. 35)

 - b) In what way do we have the same kind of need as Onesimus?

7. How did Paul's request of Philemon pale in comparison to what Philemon, in a sense, "owed" Paul (v. 19)? What do you think Paul meant that Philemon owed him his "own self"?

8. On what basis could Paul have confidence that Philemon would not only do what Paul requested, but even go above and beyond (v. 21)? (See Luke 15:11-24, John 13:34-35) How is it possible to love people in the way Christ loved you? How can your extraordinary love for others impact unbelievers?

PRAY IN THE GROUP

- What has God impressed on you through this study? Pray that God would enable you to grow in any areas of spiritual conviction. Pray for specific needs of your group members.
- Cornerstone's new Addictions Victorious ministry is now up and going. Pray that God would bring many who need this help to this ministry. Pray that He would save many souls and deliver them from life-dominating sin.