



Times of Worship

- Sunday Bible Classes:** 9am
Sunday AM Worship: 10am
Sunday PM Worship: 5pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm

Join us Online

Church Website:

<https://www.westfayettechurchofchrist.com/>

YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGckN8D9NwwX3KUuQ4GRKyA>

Interested in a Bible Study?

Please send an email to patcawthon@gmail.com

Evangelist

Patrick Cawthon

Lessons from Philemon

Paul's letter to Philemon is the shortest letter he wrote that is in our New Testament. Though it is only 25 verses long, there is a lot we can take away from this powerful letter.

Paul wrote this letter to encourage Philemon, his beloved brother and fellow worker, to accept back Onesimus his slave that ran away from him. Onesimus ran to Rome where he met the apostle Paul. Paul proclaimed the gospel to him and Onesimus became a christian. After being converted to Christ, Onesimus knew he needed to make things right with his master. Paul writes this letter to help smooth things over with Philemon who is not only receiving his slave back but also a brother in Christ.

Paul does several things in this letter to help Philemon accept his runaway slave Onesimus. It is understandable that Philemon would be very angry with Onesimus whose name means useful - a good name for a slave. Instead of being useful, he turned out to be a liability and stole money from Philemon. Notice the ways in which Paul encourages Philemon to welcome Onesimus back with open arms.

Paul begins by complimenting Philemon (4-7): Paul is encouraged by Philemon's love and faith in God. He is thankful how Philemon loves ALL of the saints. Paul and Philemon certainly share that in common and Paul is very grateful that Philemon refreshes the christians who are in Colossae. It's hard to be a christian and we all need people like Philemon who refreshes us.

Week of August 6

Attendance

- ◆ **AM Service** - 57
- ◆ **PM Service** - 53
- ◆ **Wednesday** - 50

Contribution

- ◆ Weekly Budget \$2,400
- ◆ Contribution - \$3,157

Upcoming Birthdays

- ◆ Ron and Marianne (8/15)
- ◆ Shawn Morgan (8/16)
- ◆ Joey Walker (8/17)
- ◆ Rashad Carswell (8/20)
- ◆ Rachel Seaton (8/22)
- ◆ Dianne McCoy (8/30)

Calendar Items

Song Learning Class on Sunday
August 13 at 4pm at the building

Women's Bible Study on
Tuesday at the building at 11a

Men's Meeting on August 27th
at 4pm at the building

Today's Lessons

- ◆ **AM Sermon** - Faith and Works
- ◆ **PM Service** - Exhortation (Discipleship Series)

Paul appeals to Philemon's love (8-9): The apostle Paul, chosen by God to be the apostle to the Gentiles, could have easily commanded Philemon to take back his former slave. Instead, Paul appeals to Philemon's heart. He strongly encourages Philemon to extend his love to someone who has hurt and betrayed him. This shows Paul's confidence that Philemon will do the right and Christ-like action in forgiving Onesimus.

Paul describes his love for Onesimus (10-14): In taking back Onesimus, Paul helps Philemon see him in a different light. Onesimus now lives up to his name - he is very useful for Paul. In fact Paul wanted to keep him with him but knew he could not do that with a clear conscience. Paul tells Philemon it's as though Onesimus is his very heart. How could Philemon reject Onesimus after this beautiful description of him?!

God had a plan all along (15-16): Paul believed God had a strong part in leading Onesimus to him. He was converted and now could serve his master as his brother in Christ. How could Philemon reject his brother in Christ?

Paul appeals to Philemon's love for him (17-20): Paul, knowing this would be very hard for Philemon to accept Onesimus, wants him to do it for him. Paul is willing to pay back anything Onesimus took from him. What matters most to Paul is that these two brothers in Christ reconcile.

Paul believes Philemon will do more than he is asking of him (21): Paul is so confident in Philemon that he believes he will go above and beyond. Paul is not just saying this to get Philemon to accept Onesimus, he truly believes in Philemon.

There are many great lessons from this letter but one take away for us can be to become peacemakers. Paul wanted more than anything for these two brothers to accept and forgive one another. Sometimes we need strong encouragement to do the right thing which is usually the hard thing. Let's be like Paul and encourage one another to forgive those who have sinned against us.

Patrick