



The Love of Christ Compels Us

By Ken Terry on July 27, 2021

TODAY'S READING: Philemon

In our world people are judged all the time. Often it matters not what they have said or done. The accuser uses preconceived understanding and experiences as they see the other individual. They are a prisoner of their own volition and the means to a very sad and unproductive life. As Christ followers we cannot allow ourselves to be grouped with such individuals. We must demonstrate a love for one another. It matters not what they look like or their past. This is what comes to my mind as I read Philemon. Paul's plea to Philemon to accept Onesimus, his runaway slave, and receive him back as his beloved brother.

This was a huge ask, due to the fact that all runaway slaves could be put to death by Roman law. But there was an underlying beauty in why Paul pleaded with him.

"I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me" (Philemon 1:10-11 NKJV).

Onesimus had come to Christ as he ministered to Paul while imprisoned. Now Paul needed Philemon to see this new Christ follower as a beloved brother.

"For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, 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" (Philemon 1:15-16 NKJV).

You see, as a Christ follower, Philemon would need to exhibit the characteristics of his Lord and Savior by being obedient, exhibiting forgiveness, and then restoration. These concepts were not readily contemplated for slaves in the ancient world. Paul was appealing to Philemon's new perspective in life, one in Christ. This act of Christian love would reflect a higher calling, one that contradicted the expectations of the culture at large.

"that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother" (Philemon 1:6-7 NKJV).

Therefore, my friends, what are we to do? Be reflective of the world and judge people in an attempt to elevate ourselves and our prideful dispositions? Or demonstrate the love of Christ -- Be the peacemakers, by being obedient to the Word, forgiving others as we have been forgiven and finally, treating others as we would like others to treat us. Let us all learn to walk in Christ together!

PRAYER: Our Father in the Heavens, Jehovah God, we thank You for Your Holy Spirit that leads us down Christ's righteous path. Father, we pray that You provide us with the supernatural ability to share Christ's love with others. Father, help us see others as You see them, as individuals made in Your image, deserving of Christ's love. Help us, Father, to love like Jesus. In Christ's name we pray, amen.

TOMORROW'S READING: Hebrews 1

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