

PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS TO SLAVE OWNERS PHILEMON (2) 1-3,10

What were Paul's instructions?

I. Paul's instructions were local

II. Paul's instructions were also universal

III. Paul's instructions are persuasive and not coercive

IV. Paul's instructions are transformative

Philemon 10 I beseech thee for my son **Onesimus**, whom I have begotten in my bonds: **Philemon 15** For **perhaps** he therefore departed for a season, **that** thou shouldest **receive him** for ever; **Philemon 16** Not now **as a servant** (**ὡς δοῦλον**), **but above** (**ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ δοῦλον**) a servant, a brother (**ἀδελφὸν ἀγαπητόν**) beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? **Philemon 17** **If** thou count me therefore a partner, **receive him as myself**.

How does Christianity transform everything?

1. The Imago Dei: in the image of God

Genesis 1:26 And God said, **Let us make man in our image, after our likeness**: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male **and** female created he them.

James 3:9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, **which are made after the similitude of God**.

James 3:10 Out of the **same** mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. **My brethren, these things ought not so to be**.

2. The two great commandments

Mark 12:28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, **Which is the first commandment of all?** **Mark 12:29** And Jesus answered him, **The first of all the commandments is**, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: **Mark 12:30** And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: **this is the first commandment**. **Mark 12:31** And the **second is like**, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. **There is none other commandment greater than these**.

3. The Golden Rule:

Matthew 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye **even so** to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Luke 6:31 And **as** ye would that men should do to you, do ye **also** to them likewise.

4. On being a brother in Christ | part of the family of God:

Philemon 15 For **perhaps** he therefore departed for a season, **that** thou shouldest **receive him** for ever; **Philemon 16** Not now **as a servant** (**ὡς δοῦλον**), **but above** (**ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ δοῦλον**) a servant, a brother (**ἀδελφὸν ἀγαπητόν**) beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? **Philemon 17** **If** thou count me therefore a partner, **receive him as myself**.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by **one Spirit** are we **all** baptized into **one body**, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been **all** made to drink into **one Spirit**.

Colossians 3:11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: **but Christ is all, and in all**.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: **for ye are all one in Christ Jesus**.

Sooner or later some intelligent individual might note that Paul doesn't free Onesimus but merely sends him back!

Philemon 12 Whom I have sent again: **thou therefore receive him**, that is, mine own bowels:

Philemon 15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou **shouldest receive him** for ever;

Philemon 17 If thou count me therefore a partner, **receive him as myself**.

Philemon 21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, **knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say**.

Thoughts:

- Paul did send him back
- Paul encouraged Philemon to receive Onesimus
- But no longer as a slave but now as a brother
- Paul **expected** Philemon to do more than Paul asked!
- Paul has no authority to free a slave / change Rome's laws
- Paul did change everything | transform everything for Christians
- Paul actually transformed all **vertical** relationships!

Slave owner ≠ slave ↓↑ Slave	Father ≠ children ↓↑ Children	Husband ≠ wife ↓↑ Wife
Owner ≠ employer ↓↑ Employer	Boss ≠ worker ↓↑ Worker	

- **Abuse is always** a possibility in a vertical relationship. Paul didn't remove those relationships (make them all horizontal) but instead he transformed them (added mutuality)!

V. Paul's instructions are **practical**

Philemon 17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. **Philemon 18** If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; **Philemon 19** I Paul have written *it* with mine own hand, **I will repay it:** albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides. **Philemon 20** Yea, brother, **let me have joy of thee in the Lord:** refresh my bowels in the Lord. **Philemon 21** Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do **more than I say.**

In the USA, during the constitutional convention and after, there was much discussion of slavery. The discussion was often / mainly about how& when to eliminate slavery.

- Emancipation (gradual vs, immediate)
- Compensation (reparation more now)
- Colonization → to places like Liberia
- Relocation → to the American west
- Education &/ preparation → along with gradual emancipation to prepare for the future

There is a huge difference between equality *de jure* and equality *de facto*!

- Integration (miscegenation)

At that time, there was no model of a genuinely biracial society existing anywhere on earth or in recorded history!

The USA was paralyzed by the immensity of the problems including: fear, impossibility, lack of money, real prejudice, desire to form a union (1787) and maintain a union (1790s-1840s)....