

INTRODUCTION TO PHILEMON

This short letter was written by Paul from Rome and is classified with Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians as one of his prison letters. It is addressed to Philemon, to Apphia (Probably his wife), to Archippus (Col. 4:17), and to the Church that meets in Philemon's household.

Evidently Onesimus had escaped from Philemon in Colosse to Rome where he became a believer and associated with Paul. As a slave he was the legal property of Philemon. In addition, Onesimus had stolen some of Philemon's goods.

With this letter Paul sends Onesimus back to Philemon, emphasizing that Christian conduct should permeate their relationship. Paul especially pleads for forgiveness for Onesimus, asking that he be accepted as a Christian brother. The appeal is written very tactfully and is organized in such a way as to build rapport, persuade the mind, and move the emotions. ¹

1. The Amplified Bible, p. 1422.

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