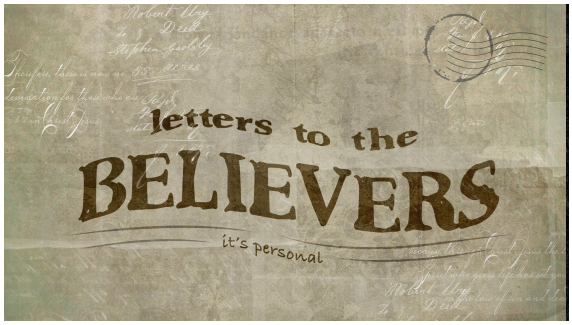
Pastor Grant // Philemon 8-25// November 12, 2017

Living Water Church

Diving Deeper: A Gather Group discussion guide or personal devotional guide




# Useful

**Introduction:** Paul's letter to Philemon was written to bring reconciliation between Philemon and Onesismus. The letter portrays the heart of Paul and his love for people when he intercedes on behalf of Onesismus. People often criticize the Bible and Paul for being oppressive. However, the NT displays the belief that all people, weather Jew or Gentile, male or female, slave or free, stand equal before God.

**Text: Philemon 8-25**

**Discussion:**

1. Icebreaker: Have you ever had a conflict with someone that caused a break in the friendship or relationship? How did you reconcile?
2. Slavery was never intended to be part of God's created order. The institution and practice of slavery is a result of fallen humanity and sin. Due to the sinfulness of humanity, our word is filled with all types of evil. Why is it important to realize that slavery was not God's idea?
3. The Bible was not written to the Pharaoh of Egypt, or the king of Babylon, or the Caesar of Rome. The Bible was written to God's people. The Bible is not a book for the sole purpose of social justice, but how we can know God and live to honor him. The Bible, therefore, regulates the evil of slavery. Instead of explaining how to overthrow an unjust system, the Bible shows us how we are to share the gospel with everyone, and the gospel breaks the chains that society puts on. As long as mankind rules the nations, there will always be injustice, wickedness, prejudice etc. Though we should seek justice, we must always remember that true justice comes from the Lord. Jesus stated that His kingdom is not of this world. King Jesus is the only just ruler. It will only be when he returns that we will have perfect peace and justice. The church, therefore, must preach the gospel of Christ, for it is the true way to freedom. Why is this important to realize? How does this help you live your life?
4. How does Paul refer to Onesismus in vs 10-12? What does this say for Paul's love for people?
5. Why is Onesismus useful now to Paul and Philemon? (Look up what Onesismus means)
6. What does the name Philemon mean? How does Paul use his name for a play on words in vs 14?
7. How is the sovereignty of God revealed in vs. 15-16?
8. What does Paul offer to do for Onesismus in vs. 18-19? How does this show the love of Christ?
9. We are Onesismus. We have all turned our back on God. We have rejected him and turned to our own way. But Jesus interceded on our behalf and paid our debt. How does this letter portray Chris't love for us?
10. How does God look at us those who are saved?
11. We were once useless to God and his kingdom, but through salvation we are made useful! How can you live a life useful to the kingdom of God?

**Think About it:**

This powerful letter displays the amazing love of Christ towards sinners. The grace of God changed the heart of Onesismus and freed him more than the law ever could. Had Onesismus only gained freedom from slavery, but not freedom over sin, it would have been a short lived freedom. He now had eternal freedom. Salvation brings greater liberty to a human soul than any social freedom a man can gain.

**Moving Forward:**

Thank God for his mighty grace and mercy he showed you. Thank him for making you useful to his kingdom. Seek to please the Lord this week in all ways. Make a plan to be a blessing to others and to share the good news of Jesus when you have the opportunity to do so.