

Philemon

1. Where appropriate, share some examples of when there have been difficulties between believers in the fellowship. What caused them and how were they resolved/what prevented them from being resolved?

Read Philemon 1-7

2. What do we learn about Philemon in these verses?
3. Reread Col 3:12-17. How do these verses unpack what “effective” partnership/fellowship looks like?
 - a. Which qualities have been displayed by Philemon so far?
 - b. Which qualities will be required with the return of Onesimus?
4. Paul calls Philemon a “refresher of hearts” in v7. Share about believers you know who “refresh” your heart and how they do it

Read Philemon 8-16

5. How does Paul appeal to Philemon and why do you think he takes such an approach?
 - a. What are some occasions when Paul’s approach here might be appropriate in our own context?
6. What is the wrong Onesimus has committed against Philemon?
7. Reflect on what we have heard about the relationships between Paul and Philemon, and between Paul and Onesimus. How did the *faith* they shared shape these relationships?
 - a. What relationships have you known that have developed out of a shared faith in Christ?
8. As Philemon (and the congregation) listened to this, by the time they had heard verse 16 what might they have thought Paul was hoping Philemon would do?
 - a. What are the possibilities?

Read Philemon 17-25

9. Why and how does Paul expect Philemon’s fellowship with him (Paul) to radically affect his (Philemon’s) treatment of Onesimus?
10. Has your fellowship in the faith been effective (or failed to be effective) in a relationship with another believer who has wronged you in some way (or someone you have wronged)? How has Paul’s letter to Philemon been relevant?