

## *A Prisoner of Christ Jesus*

### *Philemon 1-7*

*"The apostles understood the importance of peacemaking, and they realized that Satan will do all he can to promote conflict. The depth of their concern is revealed by the fact that every Epistle in the New Testament contains a command to live at peace with one another. Half of Paul's letter to the Ephesians is devoted to peacemaking... Note carefully what Paul places at the top of his list of practical applications; 'As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle, be patient bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace' (Eph. 4:1-3). The Greek word that is translated "make every effort" in this passage means to strive eagerly, earnestly, and diligently. It is a word that a gladiator trainer in Rome might have used when he sent one of his men to fight to the death in the coliseum: 'Make every effort to stay alive!' So, too, must a Christian agonize for peace and unity. Obviously, token efforts and halfhearted attempts at reconciliation fall far short of what Paul had in mind."*

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- I. Jesus has taken all believers captive to righteousness. Our rights as his disciples are determined by the Lord alone. We have none of our own, yes, a free will to live life as we please, but only under the Lordship of our Master.

Philemon vs. 1a

**Rom. 6:18,20-22** *You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness... When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.*

- II. Upon Salvation, Jesus adopted us and placed us into his family. Consequently, our actions have a vast impact on the spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing of the fellowship of believers (*koinonia*) God has sovereignly placed us in.

Philemon vv. 1b-7

Rom. 8:15-16

- A.** The level of our faith in the Lord Jesus to give us everything we need for life and godliness (**2 Peter 1:3-4**), will have a direct impact on the depth of our brotherly kindness and love for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Philemon vv. 4-5  
Col. 1:3-4

- B.** The more active we are in sharing our life (i.e., the fruit of the Spirit, the spiritual gifts we've been given, Christ's love, grace and mercy) as brothers and sisters in Christ, the more we will experience and understand the joy of the Spirit as we yield to Jesus' will concerning his church.

Philemon vs. 6  
Col. 3:17

***Koinonia*** = fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, the share which one has in anything, participation, fellowship, intimacy (Strong's G2842)

- C.** If we truly have a love for God's family, we will do everything we can to keep conflict from destroying the peace and safety of the church Christ died for. The result will be an assembly of believers whose hearts find the kind of peace, rest and security that God intended for his family.

Philemon vs. 7  
James 4:1-2  
Rom. 12:9-21