

Useless to Useful - Onesimus
Great lessons from less known – part 3
Book of Philemon

“Onesimus hasn’t been of much use to you in the past, but now he is very useful to both of us.” Philemon v 11

The Holy Spirit took... 1. Godly influences

“I am writing to Philemon, our beloved co-worker, ² and to our sister Apphia, and to our fellow soldier Archippus, and to the church that meets in your house.” v 1b-2

2. An unwise decision

“It seems you lost Onesimus for a little while so that you could have him back forever. ¹⁶ He is no longer like a slave to you. He is more than a slave, for he is a beloved brother, especially to me. Now he will mean much more to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.” v 15-16

3. A “random” meeting

“I became his father in the faith while here in prison.” v 10b

4. Godly mentoring

“I am sending him back to you, and with him comes my own heart. ¹³ I wanted to keep him here with me while I am in these chains for preaching the Good News, and he would have helped me on your behalf. ¹⁴ But I didn’t want to do anything without your consent.” v12-14

5. A graciously refreshing brother

“Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God’s people.” v 7

“Give me this encouragement in Christ.” v 20 (“Refresh my heart in Christ.” ESV)

“So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge it to me.” v 18-19

- **Welcomed**

“So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.” Ephesians 1:6

- **Made right with God**

“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

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