

# Forgiven / Forgive

Case Study: Onesimus & Philemon

How to **SEEK** to be **FORGIVEN** from someone you've wronged

**APPEAL** for forgiveness, don't demand it! vs. 10

Appeal in **PERSON**: face-to-face vs. 12; Matthew 5:23-24

The person wronged **APPROVES** the plan vs. 14

State the **BENEFITS** of restoration vs. 16

Over repay for **DAMAGES** done vs. 18; Matthew 5:40

Express **CONFIDENCE** of good results vs. 21

Additional Notes:

Auburn Grace Community Church – May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Life Group Discussion Questions – May 18, 2025

**Philemon 14-15** *“...but I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion, but of your own free will. For perhaps it was for this reason that he was separated from you for a while, that you would have him back forever...”*

### DISCOVER

1. Why is it so hard to say, “I was wrong. Will you forgive me?” Discuss the role of grace in you as the offender and also the role of grace in the offended. Describe what happens if grace is lacking in either party.
2. Examine the ramifications of saying, “Please forgive me.” vs. “Will you forgive me?”
3. What is biblical humility? How does the world see humility? When you surrender over a disagreement, must there always be humility? Explain. Why does surrendering like this take such great inner strength? What does it take to let the Holy Spirit in you have precedence?
4. Share of a time when you repented because of your position in a disagreement. Describe how your repentance was received. How did your repentance impact the outcome?

### EXPLORE (read Philemon)

1. In the account of the Book of Philemon, identify the clues that point to a relationship wrecked by sin. How does Paul's approach to Philemon demonstrate both humility and respect?
2. What should you do if a person you need forgiveness from is no longer in your life? How can you become “useful” even if they are forever gone? (see Philemon v. 11)
3. Re-read Philemon v. 15. What does it mean that your opponent might “gain you back forever”? Does this result rest solely on your efforts to be reconciled? Elaborate.
4. Besides forgiveness, are there other essential ingredients in cleaning-up broken relationships? Must there be grace, humility and repentance? Explain.
5. Read Philippians 2:3-4. How does the concept of humility challenge the cultural norms of pride and self-promotion?
6. How does the story of Onesimus inspire us to seek and offer second chances? Is making an appeal for forgiveness valid in the secular world as well in Christian community? Why do you think that is?

### EXPERIENCE

1. Is there anyone you need forgiveness from? What's keeping you from taking the initiative to reach out and seek reconciliation? Identify the sacrifices you might have to make. What clues can you discern that your counterpart is possibly consenting to your plan of action? Why is face-to-face the most appropriate approach?
2. How does being in Christ change the way we interact with people from every level of society? Criminals? Outcasts? The elite?
3. While it is difficult to eradicate all selfishness from our lives immediately, how can we start to achieve this goal? Share an example of how you can put others first this week.
4. Think about a recent situation where you had the opportunity to practice humility. How did you respond, and what could you do differently next time to better reflect Christ-like humility?

### PRAY

Heavenly Father, it's true that I have offended others by my words and/or actions. As a result, I not only have embittered them, but I have profaned Your Holy Name as a witness. Forgive my recklessness, acting in self-interest and priorities. Help me to be mindful when things get a little raw and unpredictable...that I would show Christ-likeness instead. For Your glory alone. Amen.