

1 Paul – Prisoner for Jesus

1b to Philemon- fellow worker  
beloved & church/ house

3 Grace and peace  
from God

4 Your LOVE – all saints  
& FAITH  
Jesus  
*HEARTS* refreshed by you

8 Appeal for Onesimus  
I command ~~But~~ for LOVE appeal  
MY CHILD  
Formerly useless- now useful  
Sending him back  
MY HEART  
I glad keep him ~~But~~ do nothing without  
your consent

15 brother in the Lord  
Parted for a while- back for ever  
No longer a slave – ~~But~~ beloved brother  
To you / me

17 Welcome him as me  
if you my partner  
if he owes you – I WILL REPAY  
your owing me yourself  
Refresh MY HEART

22 Prepare room for me  
I hoping I given to you

23 Greetings  
Ephaphras- fellow prisoner & fellow  
workers.....

25 Grace with your spirit

Who? Paul is a physical prisoner – not metaphorical as in Romans. He is not a prisoner of the state but for Jesus i.e. his imprisonment is part of God's plan. He does not use his usual title apostle as he does not want to appeal to Phil on basis of authority. Why? Because he wants Phil to be free to make his own decision

Who? Philemon- name derived from phileo = love .

Love – agape: not based on feelings but on will. Saints= hagioi= forgiven sinners. Sig in light of what is to come in this letter.

FOS Heart = splachna = lit bowels/ intestines .Symbolic source of feelings affections. Not kardia- the source of thinking/ willing

Onesimus means useful. He was probably born into Philemons house and even named by him. How disappointed he must have been when he did not live up to his name .The pun on useful shows Paul has a salty sense of humour. He uses the pun twice ; in this paragraph and also in 17 paragraph.

Note the number of family / close associates refs. In this letter. Child . father, brother, beloved, fellow worker, partner. Why? To stress the Unity and equality of believers .This strengthens Pauls appeal to accept a slave back. TT Christ removes divisions of any type.

Paul could have sent a letter informing Philemon of One. Conversion and his usefulness to himself. He is not so presumptuous wanting Phil to have free will and not act out of compulsion..

Paul and Onesimus are as one. UNITY of believers.

Probable the I will repay it' is written by Paul himself. It is effectively a hand written I.O.U. It is possible One. ran away with stolen goods. How would he reach Rome otherwise. But he effectively robbed Phil of his time and service.

Who is the 'my heart'? Paul or Onesimus? Probably both. Paul is saying to Phil forgive Onesimus – ( my heart) and let Paul have One. as Phils representative as a free decision. This would certainly be 'do even more than I say' of which he is confident.

Summary: The appeal to Philemon is made in many different ways but never by coercion .The contrasts serve to highlight the transformation Onesimus has experienced giving Philemon

A1 as a prisoner appealing for a slave.

Who ? church meets in Phils. House. Why letter addressed to church too. Personal ethical decisions affect whole fellowship.

Paul transforms the pagan greeting ' chara (joy) to Grace and peace which is Biblical shorthand for ' the grace of God results in peace of God in our lives.

A2 to Philemons reputation for loving all the saints. Why? This is going to include the formerly unlovable & untrustworthy Onesimus. !

A3 based on Love. Paul does not exert his authority. He respects Phil and does not violate his rights. He puts aside his own

A4 Evangelism. Onesimus has become a Christian whilst in prison. Paul is his spritual father

A5 Service. One is now practically helpful

A6 personal appeal. Pauls affection for O. is very deep . Reveals his pastors heart.

A7 Brother . Paul does not tackle the institution of slavery head on but challenges internal attitude.

A8 Theological appeal. Paul uses the euphemism parted for a while for 'run away. This indicates a hidden action of God. He invites Phil to reflect on the fact that God works all things together for good for those who love him. Emphasises Gods tender care.

A9 Personal indebtedness .Onesimus may own Phil something. But Paul says but you – Philemon do too! This is an appeal for Phil to put aside any bad feeling on basis of his own indebtedness . How Phil owes Paul himself? Paul never visited Colosse so probable Epaphras was Phil. Spiritual father . Paul was his spiritual grandfather. See Col 1:7 and 4:12.

A10 possibility of his personal presence. Paul hopes through Phil. prayers to be released from prison

Ctd. The situation is a practical outworking of the prodigal son parable with reconciliation and forgiveness at the heart .Also Jesus pays our debts and receives us back as Paul hopes Phil will.