



PHILEMON | IN CHRIST | JANUARY 28, 2018

PHILEMON 6

And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ.

What does Philemon have in Christ? By extension, what do we have in Christ?

WE HAVE A FOUNDATION

- Jesus changed the world, it is impossible to build what Jesus would want us to build with a different foundation.
- Cant' build a good house with a poor foundation
- Col. 2.6-7

⁶ And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. ⁷ Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

WE HAVE A PATTERN

- Christ is the pattern. His way of doing things is the blueprint.

We have Christ's example in the gospels. We can ask the question "what did Jesus do?"

WE HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 20.19-23

¹⁹ That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! "Peace be with you," he said. ²⁰ As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! ²¹ Again he said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." ²² Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

The foundation that is given informs what comes out of it. What does that mean for Philemon, Onesimus and Paul?

- Philemon – building off the foundation of Christ in his life and following the pattern of Christ with coaching from Paul.
- Onesimus – letting the new foundation begin to shape his life. Living with the consequences, but experiencing the pattern of Christ (grace and peace) in the midst of it.
- Paul – allowing the Holy Spirit to give him wisdom in the encouraging of believers.

But make no mistake, Jesus is the center of the story. Without Jesus:

- Paul is an angry Pharisee imposing rules on whoever he can;
- Philemon is a wealthy slave owner, abusing and taking advantage of others;
- Onesimus would still be on the run looking over his shoulder continually, or worse, found and punished by death.

But that's not how the story ended for these guys. Nor is it how it ends for us.

Ephesians 3.17-19

¹⁷ Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. ¹⁸ And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. ¹⁹ May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you have a solid foundation in your life? What would you say the foundation of your life is?
2. What stage of "the good things in Christ" would you say that you are at? building foundation, following Christ's pattern, allowing the Holy Spirit to work?
3. Which character in Philemon do you feel you identify with: Paul, Onesimus, Philemon?
4. What are the "next steps" for you to experience "the good things in Christ"?