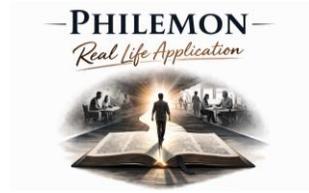


Expositional Preaching from the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible

Scriptures for Today: Philemon – Case studies for real-life practical applications to our lives

Today's Message:

"Real Life Application"



INTRODUCTION

Last week, we finished Philemon with a graceful ending. Paul ended the letter with a plea, a confident expectation, and the accountability of Christian fellowship. Today, after 5 weeks of studying Philemon, we will walk through practical examples of what this looks like in real life. This letter is more than just history; it is instruction for us from the Holy Spirit for handling broken relationships with wisdom and grace. This message will challenge you to move from biblical knowledge to obedience to God. Don't get stuck between the word of God and real life. You must work it out. This is God's message to you...

LEARNING TOGETHER

❖ The Text Philemon 1-25

A. *Philemon Framework* – the roadmap from the Holy Spirit for us to live out.

Week 1: Phm 1-7 – Seeking Reconciliation

Reconciliation begins by remembering who we are in Christ and choosing to move toward peace. Paul began with affirmation, gratitude, and shared identity in Christ before addressing conflict.

Week 2: Phm 8-11 – For Love's Sake

Biblical reconciliation is pursued through love and humility, not force or manipulation. Paul could have commanded Philemon but chose to appeal to him instead – grace restrains authority.

Week 3: Phm 12-16 – Letting Go

Restoration requires being willing to let go of something you love which can include control, pride, and the demand for personal repayment. Paul sent Onesimus back, trusting God for the next step.

Week 4: Phm 17-19 – The Price of Peace

True peace often requires someone to sacrifice or absorb the cost rather than demand justice. Paul offered to pay the debt he did not owe – a picture of Jesus Christ's great sacrifice for us! Amen.

Week 5: Phm 20-25 – A Graceful Ending

When reconciliation is handled biblically, grace becomes the final word. Paul closed with confidence that Philemon would do the right thing and the blessed accountability and fellowship of believers.

The Five Scenarios to be examined:

1. **The Returning Offender** – restoration after failure
2. **Family Estrangement** – restoration of parents, children, siblings and relatives
3. **Marital Trust after betrayal** – restoration of marriages to model Christ and church
4. **Workplace Conflict** – responding to a co-worker and/or supervisor tensions
5. **Church Offense between believers** – graceful restoration after division and tension

This book is not just about Onesimus and Philemon.

It is about how born-again believers handle broken relationships.
Every scenario we examine today will walk this same five-step path.

B. Real Life Scenarios – five case studies for our edification

1. The Returning Offender – a former member or prodigal returns after causing division, moral failure, or hurt.

Scenario: They desire forgiveness, but trust with church members is fragile.

Primary Issues: Restoration vs. enabling; accountability, boundaries; fear within church; mercy vs. naive

Week 1: Seeking Reconciliation	Welcome with love before suspicion; create space for repentance.
Week 2: For Love’s Sake	Restoration must be invited humbly, not assumed automatically.
Week 3: Letting Go	Receive the repentant as family, not as a permanent outsider.
Week 4: The Price of Peace	Forgiveness often means surrendering your “right” to repayment.
Week 5: A Graceful Ending	A restored life refreshes the church and displays God’s redemptive power.

Guidance	Do not be in a hurry. Require time, discipleship, and fruit through accountability. Protect the church while extending grace; forgiveness is immediate, trust is rebuilt.
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Questions	How does the church balance grace with wisdom and minimizing harm? What fruit of repentance should be evident over time?
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Bible Example: Joseph & brothers (*Gen 45*) – forgiveness _____ offended more than offender.

2. Family Estrangement – a parent / adult child are separated due to betrayl, harsh conflict, or unresolved hurt.

Scenario: Family gatherings are painful or avoided entirely.

Primary Issues: Long-standing bitterness; miscommunication; fear; unrepented words and actions; pride.

Week 1: Seeking Reconciliation	Rebuild relational bridges with love and humility; affirm value of relationship.
Week 2: For Love’s Sake	Encourage humble first steps – reconciliation must be invited, not demanded.
Week 3: Letting Go	Release the demand for immediate emotional repayment.
Week 4: The Price of Peace	Someone must absorb past pain without full repayment.
Week 5: A Graceful Ending	Even partial restoration can end in grace rather than hostility; rewrite story.

Guidance	Distinguish forgiveness from immediate trust. Encourage prayerful contact, even if small. Reconciliation may be gradual, not instant. Guard against bitterness becoming identity.
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Questions	What “debt” are you still holding against them? How does Christ receive you despite sins? What would a first step of grace look like this week?
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Bible Example: Jacob & Esau (*Gen 33*) – time did not heal the wound – _____ did.

3. Marital Trust after betrayal – a marriage is strained after dishonesty, betrayal, addiction, broken promises.

Scenario: One spouse feels unsafe, the other feels hopeless.

Primary Issues: Loss of trust; shame and resentment; fear of repeat failure; need boundaries, repentance.

Week 1: Seeking Reconciliation	Reaffirm covenant commitment before addressing failure.
Week 2: For Love’s Sake	Healing cannot be rushed – repentance must be appealed for patiently.
Week 3: Letting Go	Release the desire to weaponize past wrongs; be willing to let go of bitterness
Week 4: The Price of Peace	Trust rebuilding requires sacrifice, patience, and accountability.
Week 5: A Graceful Ending	God’s aim is renewed joy, not mere survival – hearts refreshed in Christ.

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Making disciples and caring for souls!

- Guidance** Require consistent fruit of repentance, not emotional promises. Use both grace *and* wisdom. Encourage accountability, transparency, counseling. Forgiveness is a process, not a moment.
- Questions** What does true repentance look like in this marriage? Can you “refresh one another” again? How can forgiveness and boundaries coexist biblically?

Bible Example: Hosea & Gomer (*Hosea 3*) – grace in marriage mirrors our life _____ Christ.

4. Workplace Conflict – a Christian employee faces ongoing tension with a co-worker or supervisor.

Scenario: The Christian is receiving unfair accusations, hostility, competition, or unresolved resentment.

Primary Issues: Unfairness; reputation damage; retaliation temptation; difficulty honoring authority.

Week 1: Seeking Reconciliation	Respond with Christlike character, remembering your witness matters.
Week 2: For Love’s Sake	Approach conflict humbly, not aggressively – communicate concerns humbly.
Week 3: Letting Go	Release the desire for revenge or gossip; treat co-workers as lost souls.
Week 4: The Price of Peace	Absorb pride; grace refuses revenge and entrusts justice to the Lord.
Week 5: A Graceful Ending	Your workplace is your mission field – reconciliation is a gospel witness.

- Guidance** Pursue peace without compromise. Use respectful communication, not passive aggression. God may use the workplace to refine you. Distinguish injustice from inconvenience.
- Questions** Where are you tempted to retaliate rather than reflect Christ and yield to the Holy Spirit? What does sacrifice look like in your workplace? How can your response become a witness?

Bible Example: David & Saul (*1 Sam 24*) – trust God for vindication and _____ revenge.

5. Church Offense between believers – two faithful church members are divided; the tension affects others.

Scenario: A division is caused by harsh words, misunderstanding, or ministry disagreement.

Primary Issues: Pride and defensiveness; gossip or side-taking; broken fellowship in the body; no progress.

Week 1: Seeking Reconciliation	Affirm shared faith and history in love before addressing the wound/offense.
Week 2: For Love’s Sake	Appeal gently for reconciliation rather than forcing compliance or apology.
Week 3: Letting Go	Release personal vindication and control of the offensive narrative/offense.
Week 4: The Price of Peace	One of both may need to absorb misunderstanding without repayment.
Week 5: A Graceful Ending	The goal is hearts refreshed and unity restored in the church. Grace wins!

- Guidance** If helping, meet with each before bringing together. Emphasize restoration, not victory. Unresolved offense always spreads. Encourage confession of attitudes, not just words.
- Questions** What would it look like to respond “for love’s sake” instead of pride’s sake? How does Christ change the way we handle offense? What sacrifice is needed for unity?

Bible Example: Euodias & Syntyche (*Php 4:2-3*) – unity matters – God’s _____ is at stake!

Next Steps:

- ❖ What does God want you to do after His message to you today? _____
- ❖ Who do you need to reconcile with and take a step in faith? _____

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