

Growth Group Questions

Getting to Know Each Other

Paul's letter to Philemon is not one that we read or think about very often. As a group, read the letter again in one sitting, including the verses we skipped for the sermon. Share with the group what your immediate reaction is after learning about Onesimus and Philemon.

Into the Word

- Who was Onesimus and what had he done wrong?
- Who does Onesimus meet in Rome and how does that change the trajectory of his life?
- How had Onesimus become useful to Paul, and what did Paul urge him to do?
- For what reasons did Paul expect that Philemon would be compassionate and forgiving of this runaway slave?

Into my Life

- Slavery is a difficult topic, especially in the racially charged times we live in today. How might a person use this account of Onesimus to discourage the practice of slavery? How might (and sadly, did) some use this account to promote slavery? Who is right?
- One can say that everybody is a slave to something. What kinds of things can enslave people in this world? How does Christian faith set us free from those things?
- The CSB Bible translation changes many of the instances of being a "servant of Christ" to being a "slave of Christ." Why might "slave" be a better translation? What does it mean to be a slave for Christ and why is that title we would loathe something we gladly pick up now?

Prayer

Savior Jesus, you are the Way and the Truth and the Life. You set me free from the burden of shame, the weight of sin, and the unending desire for me. Help me to turn aside from worthless slavery to the world and make me your willing servant, Amen.

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