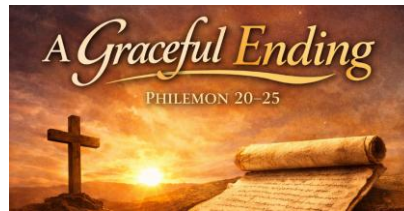


Expositional Preaching from the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible

Scriptures for Today: Philemon 20-25 – grace that is greater than all our sin!

Today's Message:

**"A Graceful Ending"**



## INTRODUCTION

Last week, we learned how Paul became a substitute for Onesimus. He was willing to pay the full and necessary cost of reconciliation. What a picture of the cross and Christ's willingness to pay the price for our peace and salvation. Today, we will finish Philemon with a graceful ending. Paul will end the letter with a plea, a confident expectation, and the accountability of Christian fellowship. Remember, this letter is a template for us as we seek reconciliation for others and ourselves. God has given us everything we need that pertains to life and godliness in the holy Bible. This is God's message to you...

## LEARNING TOGETHER

### ❖ The Text Philemon 20-25

#### A. Grace Refreshes – Paul asks for obedience that brings joy and renewal.

1. Reconciliation brings **HEALING** and encouragement to you and to those around you.

- **Philemon 20** – Yea, brother, **LET ME have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.**

"Let me" – this is a plea from Paul to his friend; please give me the blessing that follows!

"Joy of thee in the Lord..." – Benefit, spiritual fruit, happiness and rejoicing in the Lord!

"Refresh my bowels in the Lord" – To revive, to bring rest and encouragement in the Lord!

#### Comparing Scriptures

- **Acts 3:19** – ... when **the times of refreshing SHALL COME from the presence of the Lord;**
- **Matt 11:28** – COME UNTO ME, **all ye that labour... are heavy laden... I will give you rest.**
- **2 Corinth 1:4** – **Who comforteth us...our tribulation...we may be able to comfort them...**

#### Key Truths

- Reconciliation is not just duty; it becomes a refreshing testimony to God's church!
- Grace in action through reconciliation can heal the wounded and broken heart!

#### Practical Applications

- God's grace can bring reconciliation to refresh your family and marriage.
- God's grace can bring reconciliation to refresh your broken relationships.
- God's grace can bring reconciliation to refresh our church fellowship in the Lord.

**Important Note**  
What bitterness drains, grace can revive.

**Joseph's story**  
**Genesis 45**  
Joseph had every right to be angry and pay his brothers back for what they had done to him. But grace and forgiveness refreshed and healed an entire family.

**Reconciliation and obedience often refresh weary believers who are watching.**

Your obedience to God and reconciliation may become someone else's healing.

Who is watching your life? How might your obedience to God impact others?

**B. Grace Exceeds Expectations – Paul knows Philemon will do more than asked.**

2. Spiritual maturity allows grace to cover and **EXCEED** all of our sin and shortcomings.

- **Philemon 21** – Having **confidence in thy obedience** I wrote unto thee, KNOWING that thou wilt also do more than I say.

“Confidence in thy obedience” – Paul trusted his pattern of obedience to the word of God.

“Do more than I say” – Implies not just forgiveness, not just receiving, but full restoration!

**Comparing Scriptures**

- **Matthew 5:41** – And whosoever shall **compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.**
- **Luke 6:36** – Be YE therefore merciful, **as your Father** also is merciful.
- **Ephesians 4:32** – ...be YE kind... tenderhearted, forgiving... **even as God...** forgiven you.

**Key Truth**

- True grace always goes beyond the minimum expectations and mere duty.

**Hymn 188: The Love of God**

*“The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell; It goes beyond the highest star, and reaches to the lowest hell; the guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win; His erring child He reconciled, and pardoned from his sin.”*

**Practical Applications**

- Grace never asks, “What is the **least** I must do?” ...but “What did Christ do **for me?**”
- Do **not** just tolerate – restore; do **not** just forgive – love; do **more** than **REQUIRED!**

**C. Grace brings Accountability – Paul reminds Philemon of loving fellowship.**

3. Reconciliation is not **PRIVATE** – Christian relationships are lived in the open light!

- **Philemon 22** – But withal **prepare me also a lodging:** for I trust... your prayers...
- **Philemon 23** – There **SALUTE THEE** Epaphras, **my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus;**
- **Philemon 24** – Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, **my fellowlabourers.**
- **Philemon 25** – The **grace of our Lord Jesus Christ** be with your spirit. Amen.

“Prepare me a lodging” – “See you soon!” This is not pressure; it is Christian accountability.

“There salute thee” – “Your friends say, Hi!” Like life, this letter is personal... **not PRIVATE!**

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” – His grace is power for forgiveness and reconciliation.

**Comparing Scriptures**

- **John 13:35** – By this shall all men know... ye are **my disciples, if...** love one to another.
- **2 Cor 12:9** – ... **My grace** is sufficient for thee... **my strength** is made perfect in weakness

**Key Truths**

- Reconciliation is never isolated; by God’s grace, it can become a **SHARED** victory!
- Conflict affects others and God’s church – restoration strengthens the body.

**Romans 5:20**

*... But where sin abounded, **grace** did MUCH MORE abound:*

**The prodigal son****Luke 15**

*Like the father of the prodigal son... he did not just allow his son back... he **ran**... he **embraced**... he **clothed**... he **celebrated!***

**Paul’s acceptance****Acts 9:26-28**

*The believers were afraid of Saul of Tarsus, but Barnabas brought him into the fellowship. Amen. Grace made room for a former enemy.*

**2 Corinth 5:18**

*And all things are of God, **who hath reconciled us to himself** by Jesus Christ, and hath **given to us the ministry of reconciliation;***

**Picture Onesimus again... standing at the doorway.**

A runaway... a thief... a changed man.

Philemon holds Paul’s letter in his hands.... it is decision time.

The church is watching... God is waiting... will he live out what he preaches?