

Philemon 1:3-7

A Life that Prompts Prayers of Thanksgiving and Brings Comfort and Joy!

INTRO:

Philemon 1:1-7 illustrates the following ministry maxims:

1) *If you need to communicate something that may be difficult to receive, first try and identify “evidences of _____.*

We should 2) ***Regularly thank God for how He’s _____***
in the lives of our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ!

This Encouraging Prayer Breaks Down into Three Parts

1) **The *Frequency* and _____ of Paul’s Prayer of Thanksgiving.**

(Philemon 1:4; 1 Thess. 5:16-18; Philippians 1:3-11)

2) The *Foundation* & _____ of Paul's Prayer of Thanksgiving

(Philemon 1:5; 3 John 4; 1 John 3:10; Gal. 5:6-14)

3) The *Desired* _____ & *Petition within* Paul's Prayer of Thanksgiving

(Philemon 1:6; Acts 20:35)

Am I a "joy giver" or a "joy robber?" (Philemon 1:7; 3 Jn 4; Heb. 13:17)

What does a life that prompts prayers of thanksgiving and a walk that brings comfort and joy look like in your stage of life? (meditate on Philemon 1:1-7)

To help apply God's Word to your daily walk, spend some time going over the devotional on page 3.

For Further Reflection: *Lord help us to be doers of the Word and not just sermon connoisseurs*

How did the Scriptures encourage, challenge, and/or convict you today? What helpful reminders did you hear? Is there anything you want to study further as a result of today's worship service?

How we live our Christian lives impacts those around us more than we often realize; For good and bad; for better and worse. Does my daily walk prompt prayers of thanksgiving? Does my life bring comfort and joy to the saints and to my shepherd-leaders? (note Philemon 1:1-7; 3 John 4; Hebrews 13:17) Am I a joy giver or a joy robber?

Pleasing Christ should drive everything we think, say, and do (Philemon 1:6; 2 Cor 5:9; Eph. 5:20-6:9).

What twin ministry maxims were mentioned at the beginning of today's sermon? As you review the main sermon outline: What are the 3 parts that make up Paul's biblical prayer of Thanksgiving? How should this passage/sermon impact the way we Live? Think? Pray?

Is thanksgiving a central part of our prayer lives? How can we foster this so that our prayer lives are not compromised solely of petitions and requests? (note Philemon 1:1-6) Identifying evidences of grace and

Talk about *why* verses 1-7 come *before* verses 8-20. How does Paul skillfully use his opening salutations and the prayer of thanksgiving to set the table for what Pastor Caleb calls, "the big ask?" Before planting the seed of exhortation, a wise farmer first cultivates the soil. Explain what this means and what difference it makes esp. when dealing with sensitive and potentially explosive situations.

Verse 3 contains Paul's favorite greeting. Listen to Fernando Ortega's related song "*Grace and Peace.*" Grace from God and Christ and peace with God through Christ should foster peace with one another. How can we not be gracious when such grace has been poured out on us in Christ?

Why is Paul confident that Philemon will respond to his loving appeal in a God-honoring way? What does humility, godliness, and spiritual maturity have to do with being responsive to the biblical soul care of your human shepherd-leaders? (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Peter 5:1-5)

Still, the Apostle Paul does not presume on Philemon's good graces instead he lovingly appeals to his inner man. Partially, on the basis of 1) his trying personal circumstances (as an older man and prisoner of Christ; note v. 1; vv. 9-10; etc) and on the basis of 2) their tight-knit familial relationship; and on the basis of 3) their ministry partnership. We are a family. A team. There are many members but we are one body (Christ is the undisputed Head of the Church).

As you read Philemon 1:1-2 here are some application questions to prayerfully meditate on. Could the following designations be honestly said of me? "*Prisoner of Christ, Beloved Brother or Sister, Faithful Co-Laborer, Fellow Christian Soldier.* Like Paul, am I *totally captive* to the cause of Christ? Do I strive to know other saints and to be known by them (2 Cor. 6:11-13) with familial affection? Am I a spiritual workhorse and a reliable worker bee among this Christian beehive? Finally, as a good "soldier" of Christ, by God's grace, am I *fighting the fight of faith*?

Read 3 John 1:3-4. When considering the opening few verses of Philemon against the backdrop of the Philemon/Onesimus story and the rest of the N.T. Scriptures, the following 3 points of application come to the surface. 1) Don't rub salt in the wounds of saint that is suffering for righteousness/Christ's sake? How could Philemon add unnecessary stress/weight/pain to Paul? (who was a prisoner in Rome; suffering for Christ and God's people- note 2 Tim. 1:10; 3:12) How can you show compassion and grace towards on a believer who is suffering unjustly? 2) Don't forget to keep persecuted Christians in your thoughts and prayers? Read Hebrews 13:3; Colossians 4:18; Philippians 4:18; 2 Timothy 4:13. 3) Don't use your free to indulge the sinful desires of the flesh, instead through love serve ye one another. Read Galatians 5:13; 2 Timothy 1:8; Acts 14:22.