

Nate – Brian – Zach – Stev & Monica + VBS – Dani | Jay – Aug 14 | Brian – Aug 28 | Elders – Thanks

Four Messages – Four Passages = Series 'Together' | Reconcile – Love – Confidence – Hope

Series Big Idea – We are Stronger Together

I almost never endorse movies – Joke | Maverick – Scientologist – Movie is wonderful...I won't spoil it

• All is lost moments...enemy closing in...no way out...from nowhere...ally comes and saves the day

How we should be for each other – Enemy is closing in...no way out...we're coming! | Fine Point...

• Maverick = Unorthodox & Independent | No such thing Christian Maverick | Orthodox & Dependent

There is no place in Body of Christ for individualism that does not care about God and others

We're stronger together...we must learn and apply true biblical reconciliation

BI – Reconciliation is Necessary for Christian Community.....Because we're all terrible people

I don't think there is a better writing on reconciliation than Philemon | Turn in your Bibles...

Context: Paul – Onesimus – Philemon | Shortest...Personal...Paul to Philemon w/ plea for Onesimus

• Philemon was a wealthy – Respected Leader in the Colossian Church – Possible convert of Paul's

○ Like many wealthy families in the 1st century...Philemon owned slaves...

• Slaves were incredibly populous in Rome | Whole structure of the society and economy

○ Conquered captives | Born | Not considered people – Chattel...property to their masters

○ Sold – exchanged – given away – seized pay debt | No legal rights – Punished without impunity

• Onesimus was one of Philemon's slaves – Runaway...lost in Rome – Converted Paul's Ministry

For Christian reconciliation...Paul is going to send Onesimus, the slave, back to Philemon the Master

Paul's bold...receive him back...not slave...but a brother | 6 Principles of Biblical Reconciliation | Pray

1. **Reflect Genuine Gospel Humility (1-7)** | Look at how gospel laden this opening is...

¹Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved fellow worker ²and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, ⁶and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ ⁷For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you. - Before Paul gets into the 'Ask' – He reminds Philemon who he is in Christ

• Beloved – Fellow Worker – Remembered in Prayer – Man of Faith – Loves Jesus...and the Saints

Send Onesimus Danger - Slave Catchers - No limit master – Branded - Crucified less | Good Pleasure

Fear of a slave uprising was so palpable, Spartacus, rebellion was met with swift / public punishment

Victor - Onesimus coming w/ letter | New Creation impacts our position and our posture...Explain

We are a forgiven people; therefore, we must be a forgiving people

How Onesimus approached is how we come before Christ | End v6 - 'For the sake of Christ'

Paul knew the relationship between Onesimus & Philemon needed to be restored – Sake of Christ

When we seek or offer reconciliation...we reflect the Gospel of our salvation – 'For the sake of Christ'

2. **Encourage Believers to Work It Out (8-9)**

⁸Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, ⁹yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus— Outstanding – 'I am bold enough to demand you do what is required' | Trusts Adult – HS – Work it out

• 'For Love's Sake' – Appealing to you, Philemon – I know you won't want to do this...do it anyway

• Borrow Hurts – My friend is mad, so I'm mad, so now we're both mad | NO EARS | RECONCILE

• Believe the Best in Believers – I think most Christians are not malicious | Two in a room = Good

3. **Prayerfully Lean into Conflict (8-9)**

Anyone think this was an easy conversation? | First 2 steps hurt – 'Try and let it go' | Matt 18:15-30

• Get Bitter – Tell Everyone – Pick Sides - Leave | Alone – One or Two – Tell the Church

For Christian, unwillingness to seek forgiveness or forgive freely is biblically unthinkable | 30 reasons

Forgiveness runs all through the Scriptures – Reconciliation so important HS devoted an entire book

Allen – Choose Your Hard | Worked with about 12 – 9 went south – 3 went well | Both were hard

Paul is an old man in prison – Appeals two Christians to lean into the conflict and work it out

Paul knew Reconciliation was Necessary for Christian Community

Reflect Genuine Gospel Humility – Encourage Believers to Work it Out – Prayerfully Lean into Conflict

4. **Don't Freeze People in Time (12-16)**

¹⁰I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became in my imprisonment. ¹¹(Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.) ¹²I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. ¹³I

would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own accord. ¹⁵For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a bondservant but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother—especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

Paul – When he found Onesimus he was useless...USELESS | Now...'He is my very heart'

• When Onesimus left – He did so as a slave & criminal | Then God got ahold of him & got to work

2 Cor. 5:17 - 'If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.'

• Philemon – Maybe the reason he wronged you, was for his redemption

¹⁵For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever

Crux of the Gospel – God works in broken sinners...God is at work! | Easy to believe...difficult to live...

• Give up your right to be right – Fair – Cross – Give it up for what you'll gain...a brother...a sister

• Your hardship has led to the redemption of a human soul – Gained a brother...or a sister

5. **Manage Your Expectations (17-20)**

¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me. If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it—to say nothing of your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

There is no way to guarantee what was going to happen – Paul was going to do everything he could...

• Paul – Go ahead and charge me anything Onesimus owes you – Don't forget...what you own me In most things, especially reconciliation, 'Unmet Expectations will Kill You'

• We expect when we ask for forgiveness...it will be given...it might not

• We have an expectation of what that relationship will look like...it might not

• We have an expectation that someone will take responsibility for their part...they may not

• We have an expectation on what the timeline for reconciliation will be...it may not

• We have an expectation that there will not be hurt in reconciliation...there may be

Two biblical principles that help us manage expectations

Romans 12:18 – 'If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all'

a) Keep your side of the dorm clean...and be patient with the mess

• Do whatever you can – Love the other person...on their terms...take responsibility...patient

b) Peace is the desired outcome...anything more is a blessing | LETA (TIME)

• Family...sometimes relationships change | Strive for peace = Wanting what is best for another

6. **Trust the Lord for the Outcome (21-25)**

²¹Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. ²²At the same time, prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping that through your prayers I will be graciously given to you.²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you,²⁴and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. ²⁵The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Paul was ultimately putting his confidence in the Lord – 'Do even more than I say'

What we're looking at here is a radical reconciliation – An escaped slave and a master

Only a powerful work of the Lord could turn this into a story of redemption

• God is in the business of reconciliation

○ To Himself through His Son

○ Empowers His people to reconcile through His Spirit

Reflect Gospel humility – Encourage Believers – Prayerfully Lean – Don't Freeze – Manage – Trust

• There are times when we're going to be Philemon – Give forgiveness for being wronged

• There are times when we're going to be Onesimus – Need to seek for forgiveness for wrongs

When you want to be treated like Onesimus when you are the offender

You have to be willing to live like Philemon when you're offended

Reconciliation is Necessary for Christian Community...Because we're all terrible people

There are no lasting relationships worth having where forgiveness isn't offered and sought

We must strive to be reconciled together...Because we're stronger together