

# TENDER MERCIES APPLIED

## Survey of Philemon

### I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. The necessity for application following instruction in Colossians: **(Col. 3:12)**
  
- B. The leading characters in this short story:
  - 1. The author, Paul:
  - 2. The wealthy merchant, Philemon, his wife Apphia, and his son Archippus:
  - 3. The runaway slave, Onesimus, the point of the letter:
  
- C. The "house church" at Colosse in Philemon's house:
  - 1. Epahras, the founding pastor: v. 23
  - 2. Archippus, the present pastor: v. 2 (See Col. 4:17)
  
- D. One of four letters delivered by Tychicus and Onesimus:
  - 1. The recipients:
  - 2. Why it took 2 to deliver the letters (2 potentially divisive blowups):

### II. FORGIVING AS CHRIST FORGIVES: **(Eph. 4:32) (See also Col. 3:13)**

- A. Paul, the beloved friend: vv. 1-7 **(See Col. 3:14)**
  - 1. His love: vv. 1-3
  - 2. His thanksgiving: vv. 4-5, 7
  - 3. His prayer: v. 6
  
- B. Paul, the beseeching intercessor: vv. 8-16
  - 1. He appeals to Philemon's reputation: v. 8
  - 2. He appeals to Christian love: v. 9 (Col. 3:14)
  - 3. He appeals with Onesimus' conversion: v. 10
  - 4. He appeals with Onesimus' value: vv. 11-14
  - 5. He appeals with the significance of divine providence: vv. 15-16
  
- C. Paul, the burden bearer: vv. 17-25
  - 1. His partnership: vv. 17-19
  - 2. His confidence: vv. 20-22
  - 3. His greeting: vv. 23-25

### V. PRINCIPLES TO PERSONALLY APPLY:

**(Together becoming "people of the Word" in principle AND in practice)**

- A. This brief letter addresses "he that hath an ear, let him hear". (Rev. 2:7, 3:7, 13, 22; Ja. 1:19)
  
- B. Forgiveness is the theme of the Bible following the fall of humanity. **(See back)**
  
- C. A sinner entering God's family overshadows the sins of his entire past.

# FORGIVENESS

Colossians 3:13; Eph. 4:32

The Bible defines forgiveness as the **choice** to release someone from an offense and love them through the lens of our own transformed spirit.

When we are struggling to forgive and wonder what the Bible says about forgiveness, it helps to remember that we are to forgive everyone and forgive often just as Jesus forgives us.

Forgiveness means releasing someone from a debt.

Forgiveness means ceasing to feel resentment for wrongs and offenses.

Biblical forgiveness is the process of forgiving someone or being forgiven as illustrated in the Bible. Forgiveness itself is defined as the letting go of sin. In the Bible, this includes forgiving everyone, every time, of everything, as an act of obedience and gratefulness to God. It acknowledges the sacrifice God made through His Son Jesus who died to restore the relationship between God and man. Forgiveness does not mean excusing, forgetting, permitting repetition of the sinful act against you, or guaranteeing reconciliation with the perpetrator.

**It is impossible to forgive someone until you stop choosing to rehearse the offense over and over again in your mind. Since Colossians 3:13 and Ephesians 4:32 are both commands for all believers, to fail to forgive is sin (going your own way) with far reaching consequences and discredits Christ to a lost world.**

Christ's example is spelled out in Ephesians 4:32. It includes 1) Never bringing the offense up again, 2) Never telling anyone else about the offense, including family, and lastly 3) Treating the offending party as if he/she never committed the wrong.