



**January 15-21, 2017**

**Text: *Philemon***

**SUMMARY OF “SERMON”:** Paul’s friend and co-worker, Philemon, had a slave that ran away, Onesimus. But Onesimus became a fellow follower of Christ and greatly helped Paul who was in prison. Paul sends Onesimus back to Philemon with the encouragement for the latter to receive the former as a brother in Christ and set him free. In doing so Paul addresses the issue of slavery and more with the call to treat others with Christian love.

**RELATED BIBLE PASSAGES FOR THE COMING WEEK** [The Bible readings this week speak of the importance of applying Christian grace in all situations, including in respect to slavery.]

*Monday, Jan. 16* – **Ephesians 6:5-9** [Paul was not in a position to overturn the institution of slavery. But Christians could transform it. The instructions here are given to Christian slaves and masters. What is remarkable is that masters even received instructions. The culture allowed them to do as they pleased with slaves.]

*Tuesday, Jan. 17* – **Matthew 20:20-28** [Jesus set the example for a new way of living. He humbly came to serve others in love and called for His followers to do likewise. In being slaves to the Lord we are slaves to others.]

*Wednesday, Jan. 18* – **Deuteronomy 15:12-18** [Slavery was part of the fabric of the ancient world. Again, though, the law of love, as evidenced here in OT form, is to be evident in master/slave relationships.]

*Thursday, Jan. 19* – **Galatians 3:26-4:7** [Faith in Christ does not remove earthly differences (e.g. in v. 28 there are still males and females). Rather, faith in Christ removes status before God. We are all equal as sons of God.]

*Friday, Jan. 20* – **Romans 6:15-23** [Paul uses the concept of slavery to say that we are technically slaves to whatever controls us. By God’s grace we have been delivered from being slaves to sin so that we can be slaves to the Lord.]

*Saturday, Jan. 21* – **Jeremiah 34:8-22** [The Jews who had slaves were not allowing them to be set free. God spoke through Jeremiah to do so. At first they said ‘yes’. But then they changed their minds and kept controlling their slaves. This rebellion and exploitation solidified God’s judgment against them.]



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