

Philemon

Philemon 1:4-7

Faith, Forgiveness, Friendship and Freedom

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Oakleaf Baptist Church, Orange Park, Florida

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Phm 1:4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

Phm 1:5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

Phm 1:6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

Phm 1:7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

In verses 1-3

He has just spoken of God as the giver of Christian grace, and the memory of such grace working in Philemon's life, calls forth his instant thanksgiving.¹

Phm 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,

Phm 1:2 And to *our* beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:

Phm 1:3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Phm 1:4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

- Note the almost exact verbal coincidence with the salutations in [Ephesians 1:15-16](#); [Philippians 1:3-4](#); [Colossians 1:3-4](#),² (The other 3 prison epistles)
 - **Eph 1:15** Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,
 - Eph 1:16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;
 - **php 1:3** I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,
 - Php 1:4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,
 - **Col 1:3** We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,
 - Col 1:4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,

(NOTE:) Even though Paul is in less than perfect circumstances he encourages others and offers up thanks to God.

¹ Schaff, Philip. "Commentary on Philemon 1:4". "Schaff's Popular Commentary on the New Testament". 1879-90.

² Ellicott, Charles John. "Commentary on Philemon 1:4". "Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers". 1905.

Phm 1:5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

- Hearing of thy love and faith - Either by Onesimus, who, after his conversion, would be disposed to state all that he knew that was favorable of Philemon, or hearing it by some other persons who had come from Colosse to Rome. ³
 - The faith which is mentioned here refers to the Lord Jesus;
 - the love, to the saints.³
- Hearing of thy love and faith. This praise, which he bestows on Philemon, includes briefly the whole perfection of a Christian man. It consists of two parts, faith in Christ, and love towards our neighbors;⁴
- Saint - hag'-ee-os;- sacred (physically, pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially, consecrated)⁵

Phm 1:6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

- That the communication of thy faith – silent faith communicates nothing!
- (Becomes effectual) Effectual - active, operative:—effectual, powerful.⁴
- by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.
 - The acknowledging - the meaning is, that every good thing that is in the saints, or among them, should be acknowledged to come to them in and through Christ Jesus, in whom all fulness of grace dwells, and from whom all is imparted; and that every good thing that is communicated, or done in faith, which is effectual to any good purpose, should be owned as done by the grace and strength of Christ, and be done to his saints, as if done to himself, and be directed to his glory: the phrase, "in you", respects not Philemon only, but Apphia, Archippus, and the church in Philemon's house; the Arabic version reads, in us.⁶

Phm 1:7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

- The apostle speaks here of the works of charity in which Philemon abounded towards poor Christians.⁷
- Love produces Joy and consolation (solace, comfort, exhortation)
- The word “bowels” here probably means minds, hearts, for it is used in the Scriptures to denote the affections. The sense is, that the kindness which he had shown to Christians had done much to make them happy. ³
- 2 Timothy 1:16 - The family of Onesiphorus - for so the word house is often used. He was himself still living 2 Timothy 1:18, but not improbably then absent from his home; compare the notes at 2 Timothy 4:19. He was evidently of Asia, and is the only one who is mentioned from that region who had showed the apostle kindness in his trials. He is mentioned only in this Epistle, and nothing more is known of him. The record is entirely honorable to him, and for his family the

³ Barnes, Albert. "Commentary on Philemon 1:5". "Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible". 1870.

⁴ Calvin, John. "Commentary on Philemon 1:5". "Calvin's Commentary on the Bible". 1840-57.

⁵ THAYER'S GREEK LEXICON, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2002, 2003, 2006, 2011 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.

⁶ Gill, John. "Commentary on Philemon 1:6". "The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible". 1999.

⁷ Clarke, Adam. "Commentary on Philemon 1:7". "The Adam Clarke Commentary". 1832.

apostle felt a warm interest on account of the kindness which he had showed to him in prison. The ecclesiastical traditions also state that he was one of the seventy disciples, and was ultimately Bishop of Corone. But there is no evidence of this. There is much force in the remark of the Editor of the Pictorial Bible, that “the pretended lists of the 70 disciples seem to have been made out on the principle of including all the names incidentally mentioned in the sacred books, and not otherwise appropriated.”³

- For he oft refreshed me - That is, showed me kindness, and ministered to my needs.³

People with a thankful heart:

- Remember to pray for you because faith and love is evidenced in your life (vs. 4-5)
- See the power of Christ in your life (vs. 6)
- Appreciate the joy, comfort and refreshment you bring them with God’s love in your life (vs. 7)
 - Thank God
 - Look for God at work in people’s lives
 - Give joy, comfort and are refreshing to others.