

### 3 Photos in Philemon

#### I. A Picture of Refreshing Character (Philemon)

##### A. The Reputation

1. Beloved Brother - Maintained precious relationships in Christ
2. Fellow Worker - Busy serving those around him
3. Church in Your House - Opened home; sacrificed to support others doing right
4. Love/faith towards Jesus/all the saints became his identity

##### B. The Result

1. His consistent behavior refreshed the hearts of the saints
2. Good news of saints being refreshed brought Paul joy/comfort, even in prison
3. Therefore, Paul could have confidence in his obedience

\* Have the character that refreshes; be refreshed by that kind of character. (Sarah Jones)

#### II. A Picture of a Loving Appeal (Paul)

##### A. The Mindset

1. Confidence in Christ to order to do what is proper - First align perspective with Christ's on the matter (not a matter of opinion or petty disagreement)
2. Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus - Consider the source; immaturity and unspirituality can defeat an appeal before it is even made
3. Rather Appeal (beg, urge, encourage, request, ask) - It is a humble, positive, and reasonable approach whose goal is persuasion, not coercion

##### B. The Approach

1. Sets an example of what he wants to see done; before he encourages Philemon to receive Onesimus as a beloved brother, he sends him back as his child, his very heart
2. Seeks another's good before his own
3. Respects free will; love never desires compulsive obedience
4. Appeals to good character; expresses confidence/trust

\* Have the right mindset and appeal to brethren like Paul did to Philemon.

#### III. A Picture of a Repenting Heart (Onesimus)

##### A. The Change

1. Formerly useless, now useful - Repentance always includes acknowledging previous state of sin; contrast should be evident to others
2. Ran away from work, now willing to work in difficult circumstances - Changed heart is tested
3. Sent Back - Reconciliation is from individual to individual and as direct as possible

##### B. The Response

1. Focus is not on separation, but gaining brother
2. No matter what he had done, still beloved brother, and even better to have him in person
3. Should be treated just as well as any other brother, though true repentance does not hinge on that

\* Repent honestly, with a reconciliation as the goal. Treat reconciled brothers no differently.