

Refreshed in Christ | Philemon 1-7

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[0 : 0 0] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. Well, as we're heading to our seats, you know, this last week, we did a thematic exposition of the book of Philemon.

We read from the Word of God together. And as a church, when we have that opportunity, we should take advantage of such an opportunity to read God's word.

We read the book and we looked into the overarching theme and the connection from being once useless to useful and how God restores us.

He mends us together, just like the Kinsuki art, taking that which is broken and making it whole once again. God is the great healer.

[1 : 0 4] He restores the broken and God's love is everlasting. God takes us as broken vessels and brings us back together.

To be a Christian, to choose Christ is to allow for God to work in and through you. I know that for me when I made a decision for Christ, I was on a path of learning from the Word of God and learning from his direction.

What does God have in store for my life? Where does he want me to go? What does he want me to do? And sometimes we struggle with that, don't we? We learn that the main theme of Philemon, it's about a man, it's about Onesemus, who went from being useless to useful and he is being sent back from the apostle Paul to Philemon.

Paul is making an appeal to Philemon to take Onesemus back, not as a bondservant or a slave, but to take him back as a brother, a brother in Christ, but also as a free man.

And that's something that is very revolutionary, especially for that time period. Take him back as a brother in Christ. And since Onesemus has made a decision for Christ, he is no longer a slave to sin, but Paul is also saying, take him back as a brother.

[2 : 3 2] And today we're gonna go deeper into God's Word, we're gonna go line by line through the Word of God. We're gonna go more into the details that are found in Scripture.

Many of you have heard that saying that the devil is in the details, not when it comes to the Word of God. God is in the details, and there's so much that we can learn, wisdom and insight, biblical knowledge that we can apply to our lives.

So certainly God is in the details in the pages of Scripture. We're gonna learn about who is with Paul. What are all these people, who are they?

And why are they significant? We're gonna learn about Philemon's love and faith to God and to others. We're gonna learn about the faith that he shares and refreshing others in Christ, which is what we have titled this sermon for today, Being Refreshed in Christ.

And I wanna ask you the question. What comes to mind when you think of refreshing love in today's world?

[3 : 40] I want you to think about that, to be refreshed. Well, sometimes when you think of refreshing, you might think of having a nice, maybe a soda pop, something that drink that's refreshing, or feeling water on your face.

You're refreshing yourself. Think of cleansing almost. And how you answer that question, that's up to you. Our verses from today are from Philemon. It's gonna be verses one through seven.

And we're gonna learn, we're gonna grow together as a church. Because the Word of God is truth. There is insight, there's life, there's wisdom in it.

So let's pray. And then we're gonna open the Word of God. Father, we thank you for bringing us here today. We are excited, we're motivated, and we're encouraged.

We're encouraged to be here. And I'm so glad that each and every person that is here today is here. We're grateful for the freedom that we have to worship you, to sing praises to you, and to open the pages of your holy Word.

[4 : 44] We ask today that you are with us. And that even though we're going through this small and this personal letter, and okay, who are all these people, we ask that you give us insight.

A life without you is rendered useless. But a life with you, by having Christ in our lives, by saying yes to Jesus Christ, we are rendered useful.

Our life in you, we end, we say an end to the former life. And we say yes to the beginning of a new life, new identity that exists in you.

May our hearts be open to live and to love like you. And may our minds be open to hear your word, to learn. And even though it may be challenging, may we learn from you.

May we apply it to our everyday life. May we be refreshed and refresh others. It is in Jesus' holy name that we pray that we all stay together, amen.

[5 : 44] All right, let's please turn to page. I'm gonna put that on the slide here. It's gonna be page 1186. Let's go, we're turning to the book of Philemon.

It's right before Hebrews. All right. All right, so here we go. Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus and Timothy, our brother.

To Philemon, our beloved fellow worker. And Athea, our sister. And Archipus, our fellow soldier. And the church in your house.

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father. And the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers.

Because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints. And 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.

[6 : 55] For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been what? Refreshed through you.

May God be with us as we go through these verses. So the book of Philemon, it's a book that gives us insight about the relationship with the apostle Paul, the friendship with Paul and Philemon, the beloved fellow worker.

Now, we don't have a lot of information specifically about Philemon, but we do have information that's found in this specific book. We know that Philemon he owned Omosimus as a bond servant, or as some translations say, a slave.

And that Philemon he owned a home that was big enough to host an actual church there. When we think of the early Christianity, having a home that was big enough to have services, even back then, that's a lot of money.

That's a lot of resources that you can use for the glory of God. And that's what's happening with Philemon here. Can you imagine nowadays, if you knew someone who had a house big enough to have church services?

[8 : 12] That's still even today. We can think about that. That's a pretty big house. There is a very close, there is a Christian, it's a brotherly love that is between Paul and Philemon.

And it can be stated, it can be concluded, that Paul helped with Philemon's conversion to Christ. So we start off with verse one. Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus and Timothy, our brother.

We start off the letter written by the apostle Paul. This is one of the few books in the Bible where Paul doesn't show his formality. Most often from the apostle Paul, you find that Paul would say, I, Paul, an apostle for Jesus Christ, there would be that formality that's there.

But Paul is saying instead, he's introducing himself as a prisoner for Christ. And although Paul has mentioned in other parts of scripture that he is a prisoner or he's in chains, he's introducing himself as a prisoner, instead of later on in other letters.

Paul is introducing himself, not as an apostle, but as a prisoner for Christ. This refers to Paul being in literal prison, which he was in often much space in.

[9 : 32] And it can also make mention of how Paul, Paul dedicated his life for the cause of Christ. I think of Romans chapter one, verse one, which goes on to say that Paul is being a servant, or some translations say a slave for Christ.

But Paul is writing to Philemon as a close friend. He is appealing to Philemon. Rather than using his authority to command Philemon, he's making that appeal to him.

A prisoner of Jesus Christ, and then the verse goes on to say, to Timothy our brother. Well, we know that Timothy from first and second Timothy as someone who was also close with the apostle Paul.

Timothy was someone who was close. When Paul was in prison, Timothy was a trusted brother in Christ who helped him during his imprisonment. So there's that close relationship.

In first Timothy chapter one, verse two, Paul calls Timothy my true child in the faith. And Paul is mentioning Timothy likely because of the weight.

[10 : 43] Paul's writing this personal letter to Philemon, and he's letting him know that Timothy is there with me, or with him. So it has the emphasis of the letter.

So the verse goes on, and it says to Philemon, our beloved worker. So we know that Philemon is a Christian who, it said for him to have lived in Colossae.

The letter is said to have been written in the time during Colossians, and Paul felt moved to write to Philemon in regards to Onesimus. So it might have been a little bit after.

It might have even been during when Paul was writing Colossians. But we know that the importance of writing this letter was so important that he had to write it to Philemon.

As I mentioned, Philemon is the owner of Onesimus. So Onesimus, he ran away, and he met Paul. Paul is sending Onesimus back to Philemon as a believer in Christ, who is free from sin.

[11 : 43] There's a lot of that language that we find here. We are slaves to sin, if you will. We are in bondage because of sin. And when we choose Christ, we are free from sin.

Now, don't get confused here. Doesn't give you that ticket to sin. Free from sin is an encouragement to live for Christ.

So Philemon was a wealthy individual. He owned a large home, like I was mentioning. It's a huge house. And Philemon is known for showing love and faith to God and to other people.

My friends, I hope we're all known for that. Being known to love God and to exhibit that love to others. Philemon is known to refresh others.

He is trusted by Paul to welcome Onesimus back as a free man, free from sin and free from slavery. So Philemon is mentioned as beloved.

[12 : 45] It's used to describe him. It's a man who is loved by God and loved by people in the early church. That word beloved has to do with being worthy of love, being beloved.

It has to do with that closeness. Now, you'll see in your notes, there's a lot of verses on there.

And I mentioned the KJV specifically because it uses the word beloved, which is the same word in the Greek as well.

Although Paul says throughout scripture that those who are Christians are beloved by God in context, we can conclude that Philemon is loved by Paul. So there's that closeness there.

So we go to verse 2 of Thea, our sister, and Archipus, our fellow soldier, and the church in your house. So who is Aphia? That's a name that doesn't come up.

[13 : 43] Aphia is mentioned as our sister in the same way that Timothy, our brother, is mentioned, right? So Timothy, our brother in Christ, and Aphia, our sister.

So we know that she is a sister in Christ contextually. We don't know much about her. It has been suggested there are a lot of biblical scholars and even denominations that have concluded that Aphia was the wife of Philemon.

Now, we don't have that specific connection, like Aphia, the wife of Philemon, but it has been concluded. And since this is a personal letter to Philemon, the argument that's made is that, well, because it's such a personal letter, well, it makes sense to your household.

Well, then Aphia might very well have been the wife. But we just don't 100% know for sure. It's also been said that Aphia could have been Philemon's sister.

But in any case, she is our sister in Christ, a fellow believer. She may have had some position of influence in the early church, but we just don't entirely know.

[14 : 49] All that we know is Aphia is a sister in Christ. And here's the thing, that the Lord felt it was important for Aphia to be in the pages of scripture.

Now, according to some Christian circles, Aphia is said to have been a martyr during the reign of Emperor Nero. There are some sources that make mention as Aphia as a martyr.

So then we go to Archipelus. He is referred to as our fellow soldier. Now, that's a very interesting wording we found. This word's unique. It's only used twice in scripture.

It's used once in Philemon, verse 2, and Philippians, chapter 2, verse 25. And this language has to do with someone who has experienced the spiritual battles of ministry.

When you serve the Lord, there are battles that go with them. There are people that oppose you. There are people who, well, in the early church especially, there is persecution.

[15 : 54] Paul is most likely referring to someone who has gone to battle, if you will, with this person. There's that connection there, meaning that there were experiences.

There might have even been shared struggles, partnerships during the early church. Paul is highlighting that Archipelus has shared in spiritual warfare.

Now, it could have been that he was an actual soldier, but he's talking about the Apostle Paul is talking contextually about spiritual warfare.

Sometimes when we go through things together, there's spiritual battles that we go through. It might be your brothers and sisters in Christ. It might be your family that's going through a battle.

So that's where the language is, our fellow soldier. Now, Archipelus is also mentioned in Colossians chapter 4, verse 17, which says, and say to Archipelus, say that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.

[16 : 58] And since there has been an argument that this is the son of Philemon. So the same people that are making the argument that Afiya is the wife of Philemon, there's also an argument that Archipelus is the son of Philemon.

We just don't know though. It's a nice conclusion, and I can understand why people will make that argument. These have been conclusions that have been made by others. So we go to verse 3, grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 1, 7, 1 Corinthians 1, 3, 2 Corinthians 1, 2, Galatians 1, 3, there's a whole trove of verses. This is what Paul says in his letters, grace and peace.

And when Paul is writing this, Paul is referring to, sorry, I didn't put that one up. When Paul is writing this, Paul is referring to grace that is undeserved.

The grace that comes from God, and the peace. So we find out here, grace undeserved and peace, the calm. It is the peace that comes from God.

[18 : 03] So when you think about it, it's almost like the apostle Paul is saying, may you continue to experience the grace of God and the peace that comes from our Lord.

That's very powerful language. So next time you read or hear grace and peace, it's you saying, may you experience God's favor, unmerited favor, the grace that comes from God, and the peace that comes with it.

That's very beautiful, very powerful language. It goes on to say, I think my God always, when I remember you in my prayers, Paul is giving thanks to God.

When Paul is praying, he makes it a point to thank God for the work that Philemon is doing and how God is working in Philemon's life. It is a sense of gratitude when Paul is praying.

The word I thank to give thanks is very similar to the word Eucharist, or what we would call communion. Because in communion, we are giving thanks for Jesus Christ.

[19 : 10] A nice little play on words there. Verse 5, because I hear of your love and the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus Christ and for all the saints.

Paul hears of the agape love and the faith, the trust that Philemon has for fellow believers and the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to be known for that.

And I hope that each and every one of us want to be known for having loving God and for loving others. Paul is appreciating and acknowledging this kind of love and faith.

And as Christians, we're to be reminded in this text that we are to love God, love people, and exhibit that faith in an action. First, it is seeking the kingdom and its righteousness.

For as God loves us, we are to love one another. And I'm reminded, of course, John 3.16, 1 Corinthians, chapter 13, verses 4 through 8. There's a lot of love passages that we are to share that same kind of unconditional love that God has for us.

[20 : 19] And in verse 6, 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. I pray, Paul is thanking God.

He is not going. He's not going to stop praying. I pray, I continue to pray. He is going to pray for Philemon's ministry. That the sharing of your faith, Philemon, sharing his faith with others, we need to live out our faith.

Philemon was living out his faith. It is through our living. It is through our intentional sharing of our faith, our testimony, sharing of the gospel.

Philemon is living it out through love and faith and through sharing, that it may become effective. Paul is wishing that his sharing may become effective.

This means that Paul wishes for Philemon to have an effective, powerful, and fruitful impact on others. This should be the prayer that we have to, we should share our faith, that it will have the transformative power of Jesus Christ.

[21 : 26] It is through Christ that lives are changed. Lives are transformed for the full knowledge of every good thing. Paul is wishing that in the sharing and in the effectiveness that people will come to know Christ because all good comes from the Lord.

It comes from Christ. And this can mean for Philemon specifically, but it can also mean for the ones he's sharing his faith with, that they come to the full knowledge of every good thing.

When we share our faith with others, we want our testimony, our action. We want our words to be effective in bringing people to Christ.

For people to come to Christ, they need to have a knowledge of who Jesus Christ is, that he is the Savior, and that he is Lord.

You need to have a proper understanding. Who is Jesus to you? Who is Jesus? It's a very good question to ask people. Next time you meet someone who doesn't believe in the Lord, ask them, who is Jesus to you?

[22 : 32] Well, Jesus is a good teacher. Absolutely. But he's much more than that. Is he your Lord and Savior? That's the question. And it goes on saying, that is in us for the sake of Christ.

This part reminds us that every good thing comes from Christ. Everything is made possible because of him. Paul is praying in that verse 6, that Philemon will continue to share in his faith, and that it will make a profound, a fruitful, a life-changing, and transforming impact upon people for Christ.

He prays that people will come to know Jesus Christ, have that knowledge, and experience his love and his grace. Verse 7, I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because of the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

Paul is encouraged. He has experienced great joy and comfort because of that Agape love that Philemon has to other saints.

Philemon has made a name for himself because of the love that he's showing for others. Paul is showing gratitude by calling Philemon a brother.

[23 : 47] And that's where we have the idea of being refreshed. Paul states that the hearts of the saints have been refreshed because of what Philemon did.

Exhibiting love and hospitality, the sharing of the faith, it could be any of that works of service. We're called to do great things in the name of Christ.

First, we need to have a relationship with him. Then we go out and do good in the name of above all names. Philemon has encouraged others and motivated believers.

The emotions or the spirits of the saints, they have been refreshed. What a remarkable word to use here. The Greek defines that word refreshed as rest, taking ease, being refreshed.

This is a man of God who is able to encourage people, to refresh people to the point where Paul acknowledges this. Getting a reputation being known for giving people rest.

[24 : 52] Philemon showed love. He showed hospitality and support for others that was encouraging and uplifting to others. And this makes me think of the world that we live in today.

Sometimes we experience overwhelm, stress, and anxiety. And we have many burdens that are on our shoulders, if you will.

To show that agape love to others is showing the love of Christ to others. It's unlike any type of love that we see here in the world. Philemon was appreciated by the apostle Paul for refreshing the saints.

So we should be encouraged to refresh the saints, refreshed by Christ and refreshing others. For Christ is the ultimate source of refreshment.

Consider how Christ is living water, how Christ is the bread of life, and he gives rest to the weary. There are some verses I want to share with you.

[25 : 56] There's two types of refreshing here. There's vertical and horizontal. There's not a lot of verses on this. The first and most important refreshing it comes from Jesus Christ.

Christ refreshes our hearts. In Matthew chapter 11, verse 28 through 30, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is life.

Because Christ is the giver of life, he is the comforter of the week, he gives us rest, renewal, restoration, and most importantly, he gives us salvation, he gives us grace.

It is Christ who rejuvenates us and refreshes our soul. That Matthew passage, it's a call for all of those who are weary and burdened.

[27 : 01] Have you felt burdened before? Have you felt weary before? The way of Christ to come to him, to walk in the footsteps of Christ and have that relationship, it's different than what the world has to offer.

The burden is light, but it's still an encouragement. Think about that. And I pray that each and every one of you come to know who Jesus Christ is, the way, the truth, and the life, to have that relationship, to receive the gift of salvation, to say yes to Jesus Christ, just like how the thief on the cross said, Jesus, remember me.

It's a very powerful story. That's one of my favorite stories in scripture, the thief on the cross. He knew he did wrong. Except that last moment, Jesus, remember me.

Christ has provided the way to salvation through him. It is not about what you do. It is about what has been done by Christ's life, his miracles that he's performed, his fulfillment of the prophecy, his death, his burial, and his resurrection.

Just as Christ refreshes our hearts, we should refresh others. We learned about how Philemon does this. And of course, we should be encouraged to do the same.

[28 : 26] We should refresh the hearts of others. In 1 Corinthians that verse, I rejoice at the coming of Stephanus and Fortunus and Arachis, because they have made up for your absence.

They have refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such people. Paul expresses in the 1 Corinthians passage the gratitude for these people who have refreshed him.

Because Paul was refreshed, he was able to continue to go on his mission, to go throughout Corinth. And as Christians, we should see that we should care and love one another.

We should uplift each other in the same manner and in the same way that Christ has done for us. In 2 Corinthians chapter 7 verse 13, therefore we are comforted.

And besides our own comfort, we are rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

[29 : 25] That final verse Paul is writing about Titus and how he has been refreshed. This is but another example of how individuals were encouraged to refresh each other.

We help one another. We are a community of believers, the body of Christ. Coming through the doors of the church, I pray that all of you are encouraged, encouraged to make a decision for Christ, encouraged to grow in the faith.

And I pray that all of you come to know who Jesus Christ is, that he is Lord and Savior. Let us lift up one another today.

Think of someone who needs love and encouragement. Think of someone who needs that refreshing love. Christ is the giver of life, and he takes care of his own.

When we make a decision for Christ, we're choosing to have Christ at the center of our life. May we receive that refreshment from him.

[30 : 27] Christ loves, he loves us, and he cares for his people, and he wants you to come to him. He will give you rest for your soul. I don't know about you, but I'm tired of getting beaten down by culture.

I'd rather run to the Father who refreshes my soul, opening the pages of the Word of God for strength, for insight, for wisdom. I'm tired of looking at the world and seeing how it just sucks the energy out of you.

It's a burden, isn't it? I know we can go on about that, but we all know. I hope we all know how overwhelming and how burdensome culture is.

But that's an encouragement to come to Christ, who gives us life, who gives us that refreshment, who gives us so much.

He'll give you rest for your soul. He'll give you direction for your life. He'll give you purpose, and he'll give you salvation through faith in him, for all who believe, everyone, not the rich, not the elite, not a certain race, not a certain culture, every single person who believes in Christ shall not perish, but have eternal life.

[31 : 50] How simple is that? It's not about how often I pray a certain direction. It's not about how much money I give, or it's not about how much I do, or the material possessions I own.

Can you imagine if heaven was full of the wealthy? How arrogant heaven would be? Can you imagine if heaven was full of, I did more than you?

Oh, man. Is this a prideful in how much I've done? No. It's about what Christ has done for us.

And so the closing question I have for you is, how can we seek refreshment in Christ? And how can we seek to refresh others in his name? When we are down as Christians, we seek God who comforts us, and we should also seek others in Christ.

I have to tell you, there have been times when I've been down. And I've had, look, I am no different than you. I've had my struggles.

[32 : 55] I've had times where I've been overwhelmed. Coming to a brother or sister in Christ, having someone pray over you, is that not refreshing?

Knowing that there is a community, there is a family that is here for you, that is exhibiting that agape love, isn't that what this world needs? Instead of the constant scrutiny and attack from culture, you post one thing that's against what culture says, and you're out.

You're washed up. You're gone. Where's the call for forgiveness and restoration? I thought culture taught that love is love.

I thought culture teach that let's accept everyone. Well, where's the call for forgiveness and restoration when you've done wrong? Where is that? I wonder about that a lot.

The thing is, that's what's different about Christianity, is there is a call for repentance. There is a call for restoration. And it is Christ that refreshes us.

[33 : 56] If you're down or you're discouraged, come to the Lord. Seek other Christians, brothers and sisters in Christ, just like Athea, our sister, or Archipus, our fellow soldier who's gone through spiritual battles.

How many of us have gone through spiritual battles? Or Timothy, our brother in Christ? May we help one another. May we show and share in that agape love, in that encouragement, in that prayer, in that present, being present with one another, being real with each other, and being involved.

We are better when we are together, united in Jesus Christ, who is the way, who is the truth, and the life. May we be refreshed by Jesus Christ, and may we refresh others.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this time for us to turn to you in your word. Certainly, these words are very challenging, but they're inspiring.

They are from the good book, the holy word, the word of God. May it move us to action. You give us life, God, you give us salvation.

[35 : 13] You refresh our very souls. When we are weak and when life is heavy on us, you give us strength. We know that this life isn't perfect.

We live in a fallen world. We know that you restore that which is broken. You give us all the opportunity to choose you. May we learn to come to you as the rock in which we build our lives.

May we share in our faith, never being ashamed of who we are or what we believe in our faith, and trust in you or the gospel. May we choose to have that relationship with you, to grow in you, and to go in your holy name.

We ask that the Holy Spirit empowers us to refresh fellow believers. May we learn to be like Philemon, who used what he was given in service to you and to others.

And may we always remember that when we choose you, we go from being useless to useful, from broken to restored.

[36 : 17] May we remember that. Be with us today. Be with us throughout this week. And we are just excited that things are starting. May we begin in life with you.

And may we grow and just continue in your holy name. It is in Jesus' name that we pray, and we all say together, amen. Thank you for tuning in to the Ontario Community Church sermon podcast.

For more about our church and how you can get involved or support our mission, please visit ontariocommunitychurch.org. May God's blessings be with you.