

# PHILEMON

— PARTNERS IN SERVICE —

FEBRUARY 20-24

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We often applaud the Lone Ranger, or the pioneer with the courage to step out on their own in order to blaze new territory. In the realm of spiritual service, however, teamwork is part of being members together in the body of Christ. Though many would consider Paul a solo act, in Philemon 1:1–9, he speaks much of the people with whom he partners and reminds us that a heart of service is collaborative.



## THIS WEEK'S DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read Philemon 1:1–9. Unlike Paul's letters to churches, this letter was personal. How do you see that difference of tone and spirit as Paul writes to someone he considers a close friend?
- In these verses, we see how Paul views himself and how he views others. How do those descriptions inform us of the apostle's working relationships with those he mentions?
- We often think of Paul as a tireless missionary or a brilliant theologian. How does he describe his relationship with Philemon, and how might that give us a different perspective on Paul as a "people person"?
- In Paul's status as an apostle, he had a measure of spiritual authority in his day. How does he set that aside in order to serve as a partner with Philemon, rather than an authority over him?



## CHALLENGE

As you seek opportunities to serve Christ, how can you become intentional about partnership and collaboration in that work? Who could you enlist to serve with you, and how could that collaboration be a growth point for each of you?



## COMMIT TO MEMORY

"Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building"  
(1 Corinthians 3:8–9 NASB).



## PRAYER

Loving Father, thank You for the privilege of spiritual service, and thank You that we don't have to tackle that privilege in isolation. Teach us to be good fellow-servants with our brothers and sisters in Christ, that Your name would be honored and Your body would be enriched. Amen.