

Short Books: Philemon

[Philemon 1:1–25](#)

In Paul's letter to Philemon, he demonstrates the vital importance of identity, vulnerability, and love in the Christian life. Being secure in our identity in Christ enables us to live vulnerably and extend love to others even in difficult circumstances.

Application

1. Paul endures much hardship for the sake of Christ, and as a result, many to come faith, including Onesimus. Have you ever grown through seeing someone else endure difficulty? Can you name people who have been drawn to the gospel through seeing you experience trials?
2. We are called to live vulnerably with one another as believers. What does this look like, practically? Is there an area of your life where you need to "tell on yourself" and share your sin struggle with another believer?
3. Understanding and embracing our identity in Christ is crucial for enduring difficulty and being able to live vulnerably with love for one another. How does knowing Christ died for you enable you to endure trials? How does it allow you to extend grace to others?

Key Points

- Although Paul is being held prisoner by the Roman government, he views himself as a prisoner of Christ. Because he understands his identity in Jesus, he can endure hardship with dignity and power.
- If we can also be clear on our identity in Christ, we can endure injustice and suffering with hope, and we can live vulnerably in community with others.
- Onesimus is living proof of Paul's commitment to the gospel. However, Paul knows it's important for him to be reconciled to Philemon.
- God modeled vulnerability when he created us by giving us the choice to reject him. He further demonstrated his willingness to be vulnerable by sending Jesus to take on our sin.

Other Scripture References

[Colossians 4:9](#)

[Matthew 23:37](#)

[Genesis 3](#)