

teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” (2 Timothy 2:24-25) Do not allow yourself to be worthless to God and useless spiritually!

Onesimus met a real Bible man – Philemon 1:12-16: We are not told concerning the occasion that brought Onesimus and Paul together. Scripture does teach that Paul was a prisoner when Onesimus was converted. “I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.” (Philemon 1:10) Onesimus was blessed to meet a real Bible man. Paul explained to him the gospel and Onesimus found hope in Christ Jesus. As a Bible man, Paul knew that the right thing to do would be to send Onesimus back to Philemon. Paul let Philemon know that he really wanted Onesimus to stay with him and minister to him. “Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel.” (Philemon 1:13) However, Paul would not allow Onesimus to stay without the consent of Philemon. (Philemon 1:14) The good news is that if a spiritually worthless person can meet a Bible man or woman they may become profitable to God for ever. (Philemon 1:15) Onesimus was now a brother in Christ. He was useful to Paul and to God.

Onesimus proves that people can change – Philemon 1:17-24: Paul said that he would rejoice and feel refreshed if Philemon would receive Onesimus back. He would especially be happy if Onesimus would be allowed to return to him. People do change. Sinners learn God’s will and that powerful word changes their heart and life. “Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.” (Philemon 1:20-21) Onesimus had changed; he was not that same useless or unprofitable man who ran away from his master. Paul would be happy to have this new brother by his side as a faithful coworker. Regardless of your past, you can become a useful servant in God’s kingdom. People do change; they become new creatures in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17) Paul closed this epistle by naming several coworkers in Christ. He said, “There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.” (Philemon 1:23-24) Paul was an outstanding leader for God. Those who have the ability to lead should step up and be the kind of leaders God needs and desires. However, if you cannot lead like Paul and others in the New Testament, at least you can be a fellowlabourer in the cause of Jesus Christ. Love and appreciate your fellow Christians in the good work they do in the kingdom. Never allow yourself to be jealous of some good that is done by someone else in God’s kingdom.

Paul concluded the book of Philemon by saying, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.” (Philemon 1:25) Paul’s desire was that everyone be in Christ. In Christ we are able to find genuine love. In Christ our eternal hope is sure. In Christ you can have the best life now and God’s eternal reward here after. Are you in Christ? To get into Christ you must hear the gospel (Romans 10:17), believe in Jesus (John 8:24), repent of sins (Acts 17:30), confess Christ as Lord (Acts 8:37), and be baptized to be saved. (1 Peter 3:21) When we think of our salvation, let us also think of the salvation of our beloved brethren.

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