

2017: Week 38

Sunday, September 17th 2017

"Living Like a Saint"

Philemon 6

"and I pray that the fellowship of your faith *may become effective* through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake." (NASB)¹

This past Sunday John preached from the small letter within the New Testament known as **Philemon**. Although at first glance, **Philemon** might seem like a letter providing applications exclusive to the two primary characters addressed in the letter, Philemon and Onesimus. However, as John showed us on Sunday, this book provides wonderful insights and applications for the believer. One key idea stressed Sunday was a reality in which the believer finds him/herself: **sanctified!** The believer has been positionally sanctified (think "justification") through faith in Jesus' work on the cross, progressively sanctified (think "growing in godliness") through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and will one day be ultimately sanctified (think "glorification") at the resurrection of the righteous. The entire process of sanctification is a gift from our Triune God—initiated because of the Father's grace, carried out through the effective work of the Holy Spirit, and accomplished as a result of the Son's sacrificial death at the cross. If you have personally trusted in the Lord Jesus as your Savior, the Bible identifies you as a "saint." As such the Lord will be working within you, conforming you into the image of Christ. By God's grace you will be transformed. May you and I be reminded this week that we—as believers in Jesus—are called to live like saints!

1. "THE TEXT"

READ Philemon

- Who is Philemon? Who is Onesimus? What is Paul's relationship with each of these men?
- What would compel Onesimus to return to Philemon, even if it meant returning back to the life of slavery that he had originally escaped?
- Why would Paul *appeal* to Philemon in love (vs.9–10) rather than *ordering* him (vs. 8, 14) for the desired response?
- How does Paul expect Philemon to respond? (vs.15–16, 21) Why do you think Paul believes this will happen?

2. "YOU"

- Why might appealing to someone in love be more effective than commanding them to something?
- As Paul encouraged Philemon to receive back Onesimus, he was expecting responses of forgiveness and restoration. Paul even hoped for more than just a *restored* fellowship but an *enhanced* fellowship ("I know that you will do even *more* than what I say", v.21).
 - How can God make forgiveness and restoration possible regarding your relationships with others when...
 - a) you've wronged another person?
 - b) another person has wronged you?
- In v.18 Paul was personally assuming any debt that Onesimus owed to Philemon. How might this act of "charge that to my account" resemble what Christ did for us at the cross?

3. "REMEMBER"

- **Romans 6:19b** "... so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification."
- **Ephesians 2:10** "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

FAMILY PRAYER: Dear God, thank You for making me a saint in Christ. Help me to live like one through Your power. Amen

¹ All Scripture notations taken from the **New American Standard Bible (NASB)** unless otherwise noted.