

In order for us to get into application and because there's so much background and nuance in Philemon I'd suggest listening to the sermon on Riverside's website if you were not able to hear it "live." Plus, I heard the speaker that day was mesmerizing.

- 1) What can you take away from Paul's example of leading Philemon to make the right decision? How can you apply it to family, coworkers, and church?

- 2) Did it strike you as uncomfortable that Paul sent this very personal letter to the entire church that met in Philemon's home? Why did he do that? What kind of decisions do we make as individuals that affect our entire home group community and how much are we willing to submit to each other?

- 3) What are some present-day social evils in our culture? What can we apply from Paul's approach to the problem of slavery with Philemon?

- 4) Can you relate to Onesimus, having run away from a someone or something, possibly due a wrong you committed or fear of a situation? Were you able to seek forgiveness or reconciliation? If not, what's keeping you from seeking it? How can we (your home group) help you in this?

- 5) Can you relate to Philemon, possible harboring culturally acceptable resentment toward someone that may have wronged you or casting judgment on some people group? Have you been able to forgive that person(s), setting them free of your judgment? If not, how can we (your home group) help you in this?

- 6) Assuming the story ended well, what parallels are there between the story of Onesimus/Philemon and the Gospel message for us/God?