# **Philemon** (NIV)

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and
Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and fellow
worker— 2 also to Apphia our sister and
Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the
church that meets in your home:

3 Grace and peace to you from God our
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I always thank my God as I remember you
in my prayers, 5 because I hear about your
love for all his holy people and your faith in the
Lord Jesus. 6 I pray that your partnership with
us in the faith may be effective in deepening
your understanding of every good thing we
share for the sake of Christ. 7 Your love has
given me great joy and encouragement,
because you, brother, have refreshed the
hearts of the Lord's people.

8 Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold
and order you to do what you ought to do, 9
yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of
love. It is as none other than Paul—an old
man and now also a prisoner of Christ
Jesus— 10 that I appeal to you for my son
Onesimus, who became my son while I was in
chains. 11 Formerly he was useless to you,
but now he has become useful both to you
and to me.

12 I am sending him—who is my very
heart—back to you. 13 I would have liked to

keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. 14 But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary. 15 Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever— 16 no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.

17 So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. 18 If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. 19 I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. 20 I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.
21 Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

22 And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings.
24 And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.

25 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.