**[Friends Of Paul: Philemon and Onesimus](https://lakeshorebiblestudy.com/2020/07/07/friends-of-paul-philemon-and-onesimus/)**

**Paul and Philemon**

Paul describes Philemon as “our beloved friend and laborer” (Philemon 1:2) and said that he thanked God for him in his prayers (4). Paul had “great joy and consolation” because of the love of Philemon (7). Philemon was indebted to Paul, perhaps because Paul had taught him about Jesus (19).

**Paul and Onesimus**

Paul describes Onesimus as “a faithful and beloved brother” (Colossians 4:9). In the book of Philemon he describes him as “my (spiritual) son, Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains” (10) and describes him as “my own heart” (12).

So they were both very close to Paul and in the book of Philemon we see that Paul found himself caught in the middle of a conflict between them.

**Philemon and Onesimus**

Evidently Onesimus was Philemon’s slave and he had stolen from his master and fled. It appears Onesimus crossed paths with Paul while Paul was in prison and Paul had converted him to Christianity. Paul wrote this letter to Philemon explaining how Onesimus had become a Christian and urging him to forgive and receive his formally unprofitable servant who was now a brother in Christ.

In what way was Paul a friend to Onesimus similar to how Barnabas had been a friend to Paul?

True friends encourage friends to “do the right thing”. In what way did Paul do this for Philemon?

“So they were both very close to Paul and in the book of Philemon we see that Paul found himself caught in the middle of a conflict between them”. What does this lesson teach about situations in which we might be “caught in the middle of a conflict” between two dear friends?

What other thoughts do you have about Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus?

Feel free to answer these questions, make any other comments, or ask additional questions in the comments. We will review this material Wednesday Night at 7 pm on Facebook Live and Zoom. If you would like to be a part of the Zoom discussion let us know and we will send you a link!