

The Common Thread

PHILEMON: *Small Observations about Radical Community*

Community Group Questions

1. Read the entire book of Philemon aloud in your group. What were your general impressions and takeaways from the reading and the PHILEMON video shown in this message?
2. What are the implications of Paul addressing a personal letter to more than one person? How did this bring the whole issue into the light of community? Are you ever prone to isolation in certain areas of life? Explain.
3. **Philemon 1: 6 NIV**—"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."
 - a. In what ways was Paul counting on community itself to be effective in helping Philemon to realize not just what he was obligated to, but what he already had in Christ? Do you generally see others around you as the "good things" you already have because of Jesus?
4. Discuss this quote: "Paul loved Philemon and Onesimus. Why? Because he really understood the love of God as a Father. He was experiencing not just the love of God, but the love that the Father has for the Son—and it changed everything. He gave the Father's love away as a father himself because he was experiencing it."
5. Read and discuss **John 17:20-22 NLT**: "I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me."