



## **The Common Thread: PHILEMON: Small Observations about Radical Community**

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### **Philemon 1:1-25 NIV**

- ***Small Observation #1: In a Dark Prison, Paul Still Writes in the Light***
- ***Small Observation #2: Our Partnership is a Treasure Right Now***
- **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."
- Paul was 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.
- ***Small Observation #3: The Father's Love is the Radical Solution***
- **Philemon 1:8-12 NIV**—"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."
- 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.

### **John 17:20-22 NLT**