



**Mustard Seed Children's Lesson Summary for May 23, 2010
Released on Wednesday, May 19, 2010**

"Friends Help Each Other"

Lesson Text: Philemon 1:8-18, 21

Background Scripture: Philemon 1:1-25

Memory Verse: "Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say" (Philemon 1:21).

Philemon 1:8-18, 21

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,
9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.
10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:
11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:
12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:
13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:
14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.
15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;
16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?
17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.
18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;
.....
21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach the children that as friends and believers, we can and should help one another.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

- 1.** Onesimus had run away from his master, but Paul sent him back. He was to help Philemon, his former master.
- 2.** Paul asked Philemon to accept Onesimus back as a brother in Christ. That would help Onesimus too.
- 3.** Friends and believers help one another.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS:

For Helping to Remember, bring magazines with many pictures, a piece of poster board, glue sticks, and safety scissors (blunt tip) for each student.

For the lesson activity, make a copy of the Word Search for each student.

TEACHER'S NOTES:

Paul's short epistle to Philemon is different from most of his epistles. It is one of a small number of all biblical letters written not to a group of believers but to an individual. Slaves were very common in the Roman Empire. Paul had met and led to Christ a runaway slave named Onesimus. Before this, Onesimus had worked for Philemon.

After Paul mentored Onesimus, he sent him back to Philemon, who was also a believer. However, Paul urged him to accept Onesimus back and view him not merely as a slave, but as a brother in Christ.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

Janie loved to help others. She was the first to say, "Let me help with dishes." She liked to help people carry heavy loads. She liked to help people when they fell down. She liked to help watch the younger children. She liked to help clean up. Everybody called her "Helpful Janie" because she was always looking for ways to help, and she always did it with such a big smile.

One day Janie had an accident. She was in a cast and could not get out of bed. Soon her friends started sending her cards. They brought her flowers and little toy animals to hug. They came to play board games with her and to sing songs with her. They brought her favorite foods. They did everything they could to cheer her up. She had helped them, and now they were all helping her.

Today's Bible story is about two men who helped one another. We read about it in the book of Philemon in our Bibles.

TELLING THE LESSON:

A man named Onesimus was a servant to a man named Philemon. Something must have gone wrong, and Onesimus ran away.

While he was away, he heard the Apostle Paul teaching about Jesus. Paul was under house arrest in Rome for teaching about Jesus. During this time he continued to teach about God's Son. Onesimus heard Paul's teaching and believed. He believed in Jesus as his Saviour. The Apostle Paul kept teaching him for a while and helped him grow spiritually strong. In return, Onesimus helped Paul in many ways as well, making his time as a prisoner easier to bear.

Onesimus must have told Paul about how he used to do his work—not very well. Now that he believed in Jesus, he worked hard helping the Apostle Paul.

At last Paul felt that Onesimus should go back to the place he had run away from. Paul wrote a letter to the man Onesimus had served. His name was Philemon.

Paul did not send Onesimus back just as a worker. Paul called him his own son in the Lord. Paul told Philemon he knew that before he became a believer, Onesimus had not been much help to him.

Now things had changed. Now that Onesimus was a believer, he would be as great a helper to Philemon as he had been to Paul.

Paul asked Philemon to forget about the past and to welcome Onesimus back, not just as a worker but as a brother in Christ. Paul said he knew Philemon would do even more than he asked. As believers, they could help one another now.

So Paul sent his friend Onesimus back to become a helper to Philemon just as he had been a helper to Paul.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Are you known as a helper? Friends and believers enjoy helping one another in every way they can. It is easy and fun to become a helper. You just look around for ways you can help, and then you volunteer or join in or just do it.

Let us think of some people you might try to help. (Let the children give ideas. The list might include parents, brothers and sisters or other family members, friends, teachers, neighbors, elderly people in the church, the pastor, their teachers, and others.)

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Let the children find and cut out pictures of people helping one another. Let them glue them on to a piece of poster board. When they are finished, each child can tell the group how his picture shows helping.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:

"Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say" (Philemon 1:21).

These are words written to Philemon about Paul's helper and worker Onesimus. Philemon was a believer in Jesus, so Paul said he was sure Philemon would obey what Paul was asking him to do. He was sure Philemon would take his worker Onesimus back as a brother in Christ. That is why Paul was not afraid to write to Philemon.

Paul was so sure Philemon was a good man that he knew Philemon would do even more than he asked. Paul was sure that since both men were believers in Jesus, they would now be able to help one another. Believers should always be good helpers.

CONCLUSION:

The little book of Philemon is a personal letter written by Paul while he was under house arrest in Rome. While there, he had become friends with Onesimus. Onesimus was a good friend and helper to Paul, but when the time came, he had to return home to another friend of Paul, Philemon.

Paul and Philemon had been friends for a long time, and Paul was sure that his old friend would do the right thing for his new friend. As friends and believers, we can and should help one another.

PRAYER:

Dear God, thank You for giving us examples to follow in Your Word. Show us how to love and help each other, in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "Hold On to Truth" and teaches that we should not believe anything that is different from what God's Word says. Study Jude 1:1-25.

LESSON SUMMARIZED BY:

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The Pulpit Commentary, Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Hrsg.), Bellingham, WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc.

The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson

WORD SEARCH

"Friends Help Each Other" (Philemon 1:8-18, 21)

Find each of the following keywords from the lesson:

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| OBEY | FRIENDS | GOSPEL | PAUL |
| ONESIMUS | LETTER | PHILEMON | SERVANT |
| TEACHING | WORKER | HELPER | RUNAWAY |
| LOVE | BELIEVERS | RETURN | BROTHERS |

E M E A N I S E R V A N T E R L E O C R S V R
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V E I B A R E T E R F R G P E R O V E E E V A

SOLUTION TO WORD SEARCH

"Friends Help Each Other" (Philemon 1:8-18, 21)

S E R V A N T R
S Y H U G L
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S S V P O W P P
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M E R D I Y O L
I H E V O L N L R
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