

BIG IDEAS FROM LITTLE BOOKS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

DISCUSSION GOAL



Discuss the power of the Gospel to reform our relationships.

ICE BREAKER



Aside from the Bible, what is your favorite book and why?

TEXT



Have a member of your group read the passage aloud.

Philemon

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

To Philemon our beloved fellow worker ² and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:

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

⁴ I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, ⁶ and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. ⁷ For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

(Turn to Philemon in the ESV bible to continue reading verses 8-21)

MESSAGE OUTLINE



This is what our pastoral team observed about the passage.

Big Idea: Gospel fellowship reforms social relationships.

Key Question: How does the gospel reform our relationships?

1. The gospel unites us as a spiritual family. (vv. 1 – 13)
2. The gospel transforms social status. (vv. 14 – 16)
3. The gospel compels reconciliation. (vv. 17 – 21)

DISCUSSION



- In the book of Philemon, Paul addresses how believers are to handle relational divisions and dysfunctions. What disconnections, dysfunction, and/or divisions have you seen or experienced in your social relationships? How have you approached these broken relationships in the past?
- In verses 1-13 of Philemon, Paul asks Philemon to receive back his slave, Onesimus, and to reconsider their relationship as the Gospel unites them as spiritual family. Who is your spiritual family? How do you prioritize time and relationships with them?
- In verses 14-16, Paul argues that the Gospel transforms our social status and makes us all one in Christ. What would it look like for you to form relationships with people outside of your cultural, ethnic, or socio-economic background and to welcome them into your spiritual family?
- As a final appeal, in verses 17-21 Paul encourages Philemon to reconcile with Onesimus. The Gospel compels us to true reconciliation as Christ reconciled us to God by his work on the cross. Is there someone in your life you need to seek out reconciliation with? What should this reconciliation look like based on Christ's example?
- Read John 15:12-17. If we follow Christ, he no longer calls us servants, but friends who should bear fruit and love one another. Given this Gospel call, what is one step you can commit to taking this week towards reforming social relationships in your life?

LIFE APPLICATION



The Gospel has the power to reform social relationships, to unite us spiritually, and compels us to reconciliation. As a group, commit yourselves this week to praying for any relationships, either inside or outside of your life group, that need reconciliation. In the coming weeks, hold each other accountable to working towards reconciliation in those relationships.

Jot your ideas below and send a picture to your group to remind everyone of your action steps this week.

PRAYER REQUESTS


