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To Philemon

Chapter One

Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to our beloved co-worker Philemon, ²our sister Apphia, our fellow soldier Archippus, and the community in your house: ³Grace to you and peace from Godde our Mother and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I always thank my Godde, praying for you ⁵because I hear about your love for all the holy ones and your trust in the Lord Jesus. ⁶I pray that our partnership with you in the faith may enable you to acknowledge all the good that we do for the sake of Christ. ⁷I'm very joyful and encouraged by your love, brother, because you've refreshed the hearts of the holy ones.

⁸So although I could confidently order you in Christ's name to do what's right, ⁹instead out of love I beg you as Paul, an old man, now also a prisoner for Christ Jesus. ¹⁰I beg you for my child, Onesimus, who became my son during my imprisonment. ¹¹Once he was useless to you, but now he's useful to you and me both. ¹²I'm sending him – my own heart – back to you. ¹³I wanted to keep him here so that during my imprisonment for the good news he could help me in your place. ¹⁴But I didn't want to do anything without your permission, so that your good deed wouldn't be forced but voluntary. ¹⁵Maybe that's why he was separated from you for a while, so that you'd have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a bondservant but more than a bondservant, a beloved brother – especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lady.

¹⁷So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸But if he's wronged you at all or owes you anything, charge it to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I'll repay it (not to mention that you owe me even your very self). ²⁰Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lady. Refresh my heart in Christ!

²¹Confident in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you'll do even more than I ask. ²²Prepare a guest room for me too, because I hope that through your prayers I'll be restored to you.

²³Epaphras, a prisoner with me in Christ Jesus, greets you, ²⁴as do my co-workers Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke. ²⁵The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.