

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

FRIENDS VALUE RELATIONSHIPS

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker— ² also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home:

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

Philemon v. 1-3

DAY 1— READ PHILEMON.

We can all relate to broken friendships. They happen in life. And they're painful. We're inclined to pull back, to distrust, to put up a wall of protection that prevents us from getting hurt again. **REFLECT** on the friendships in your life that fell apart. What happened? How did you react?

DAY 2 — READ PHILEMON.

READ Philemon verses 1-3 a few times. What words stand out to you? **NOTICE** the various relationships contained in these verses. Reading “between the lines,” what do you hear in the heart of Paul as he writes to his friends.

DAY 3 — READ PHILEMON.

READ Philemon verses 1-3. **IDENTIFY** the different ways these friends lived in community with one another. What sort of community relationships do you have? Are you content in those relationships, or do you perhaps feel like you're missing a connection?

DAY 4 — READ PHILEMON.

READ Philemon verses 1-3. Who initiated communication in this letter? Can you sense that there is a substantial amount of previous communication that we don't know about? **IMAGINE** what those relationships were like before this letter. **EXPLAIN** your feelings about the intentionality of Paul's writing to his friends. How do you feel when you receive a handwritten personal note from a friend you haven't seen for a long time?

DAY 5 — READ PHILEMON.

READ Philemon verses 1-3. The weekend message talked about gracing each other through interaction, intercession, and expression. These are building blocks that grow a friendship. Intercession builds on our interactions, expression builds on our intercession, interaction builds on our expression, and they continue to grow on top of each other. Well-built friendships become a beautiful Church and a well-built Church becomes a beautiful home for Christ to reside in.

How can you be intentional about building your friendships? How can you express to your friends what they mean to you? What fun things can you do together to grow your relationship? How can you pray for them? What other ways can you bless them?

Maybe you find yourself alone and isolated. Pray for God to gift you with healthy and Godly friendships. Take courage and reach out to some of the people God places in your path. Maybe that looks like finding a small group or serve team at JW to join. There is a level of vulnerability that may be really scary for you, but lean into it and see what happens. One of the hardest elements of new friendships is to keep expectations reasonable. Expect that not all friendships will be as deep as others. But step by step, some will become life-giving. God wants to bless you through friends, so keep trying.