

## The Family of God > Philemon v1-7

**V1-3** Paul, with Timothy, writes to Philemon, alongside others in the church near Colossae. Though Paul will get to his specific request later in the letter, at this early point we need to see how much he values relationships and encouragement.

**V4-6** Specifically, we read that Paul regularly prays for Philemon – not just generally, but with thankfulness specifically on account of how Philemon has been living out his beliefs in ways that glorify Christ and build up others.

**V7** This pattern of faithful living, in turn, has been an encouragement to Paul as well.

**Context:** The letter to Philemon was written by Paul likely around the same time as he wrote the letter to the Colossians. It concerns a personal appeal to Philemon regarding a slave named Onesimus, and how the family of God can glorify their Lord in this very sticky situation.

**Argument:** Paul begins his letter by showing how the lived-out Christian life affects others: when this is done faithfully, fellow Christians are built up and God is glorified.

**Gospel:** We read in Matthew 25 that to care for Christ's people is to show love and care to Him. Since Christ has first loved us, this pattern of loving others is not only possible, but at the very heart of our response to His grace.

**Applications:** The Christian faith is not just about individuals, but about the family of God, gathered into what the Bible calls churches. Our actions build each other up and witness to the work of Christ to transform us.

**Here is how I will apply these truths:** \_\_\_\_\_

---