

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT PHILEMON

Chi Alpha Lifegroup Guide Ephesians

LESSON PREP

Being a follower of Christ means that we choose the right thing whether it is the easy thing or what we necessarily want. As a believer sometimes we have to put our desires aside in order to love and serve the way that Jesus does. Also as a believer we may have to make amends for things we did before giving our lives to Christ. Yes we are completely forgiven and re-deemed in Christ, but that doesn't mean we can sweep everything under the rug.

PRE LG TEXT

MESSAGE QUESTIONS

Sometimes the hard thing and the right thing are the same. Share your thoughts about that with the group tonight.

If we are a new creation in Christ, does that mean we are no longer accountable or responsible for our past? Come chat with us about that in lifegroup tonight.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

Philemon 1:6

1ON1 FOLLOW UP

Pray for each other that we would have the courage to always choose what Jesus would choose. Take a moment to talk through the past and see if there are any areas that need to be made right.

OVERVIEW

The following video by The Bible Project gives a great overview of the book of Philemon: <https://youtu.be/aW9Q3Jt6Yvk>

INTRODUCTION

There's a line in an old song by The Fray that says "sometimes the hard thing and the right thing are the same." Can you think of a time in your life that the hard thing and the right thing were the same? Did you choose the right thing? Share with the group about your experience, how you made the decision, and how you felt afterwards.

Read Philemon together

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *In the book of Philemon there are multiple people who had to choose the hard thing because it was right. When we choose to follow Christ we are not guaranteed that life will be easy or that choices we make will be what we want. Let's look at some of the people in this book and the hard decisions they had to make.*

1. The Apostle Paul

- What do you think was the hard decision for the Apostle Paul?
 - Vs 9 – It was hard for Paul to appeal to Philemon out of love and not obligation
 - Vs 10-14 – He sent Onesimus back even though he became a believe while with Paul
- How do you think you would have handled the situation if you were Paul?

2. Philemon (the slave owner)

- What do you think was the hard decision for Philemon?
 - Vs. 15-16 - The acceptable punishment for a slave during this time was death, Paul is asking Philemon to accept Onesimus back as a brother in Christ rather than punish him with death.
- How do you think you would have handled the situation if you were Philemon?

3. Onesimus (the slave)

- What do you think was the hard decision for Onesimus?
 - The journey from where Paul was back to Philemon was 1,500 miles. Paul made Onesimus take the letter all 1,500 miles back to Philemon. All the while not knowing if he would be graciously accepted or not. He could have decided anywhere along the journey to not go back, but by evidence of this letter being in the Bible we know that the situation ended well.
 - Onesimus was challenged to own up to decisions he made even before he met Jesus and make those things right.
- How do you think you would have handled the situation if you were Onesimus?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *When it comes to life with Christ we are called to follow Jesus and strive to be like him. This means that sometimes the right decision, the decision closest to what Jesus would do, may be the harder decision. We also must understand that though Jesus forgives, we must still make things right from our time before Jesus. This too can be incredibly hard but incredibly necessary.*

APPLICATION

Are there any things in your life before Jesus that you still need to make right? Are there any things currently in your life that you are struggling to do because the right thing is hard? Let's take a moment to examine our lives and identify if there is anything in either of those categories in our lives. Then we'll close out by praying for strength in those areas and praying that we may always have the strength to choose what is right according to Jesus.

