Lesson 4
"The Christ-Centered Life"
Philemon 10–16

DAY 1

PRAY: Psalm 119:47. Pause and pray that you will delight yourself in God's commandments—even the more difficult ones that require you to forgive others their trespasses against you.

READ: Philemon 10–16

WRITE:

1. No one is beyond the hope of the Gospel. God can change any life and turn a negative past into a positive future. From verse 11, describe Onesimus' reputation "before" Christ and "after" coming to Christ. _____
   _____
   _____
2. Read Paul's testimony of a changed life from Acts 22:1–21. How does this account give you hope that anyone can change? _____
   _____
   _____

APPLY:

The disciple knows and understands Christ's redemptive work in her life. Take time to briefly write out your own before-and-after testimony—and be sure to point out the positive things Christ has done in your life.

DAY 2

PRAY: Psalm 119:50. Thank the Lord for the promises He gives you in His Word and both the direction and comfort they bring you. Pray that you will know how to apply what you learn.

READ: Philemon 11–13

WRITE:

1. Onesimus was never a project to Paul, but a beloved person that needed forgiveness from a brother. From verse 12, what does Paul ask Philemon to do? What does that require from Philemon? _____
   _____
   _____
2. Paul sent Onesimus to Philemon as if he was sending his own heart. Read Luke 17:3-4, how would knowing this help Philemon to forgive and receive Onesimus despite any fears he might have? _____
   _____
   _____

APPLY:

Now put yourself in Philemon's place. Is there someone the Spirit is bringing to your remembrance that He is asking you to forgive? Remember, God keeps each of us with great affection in His heart and has forgiven us. How can this truth help you trust God to forgive others? (Consider Ephesians 4:32)

DAY 3

PRAY: Psalm 119:61. Before you start your study guide, pray that you will be firmly anchored to the instructions you receive from God's Word today.

READ: Philemon 11–13

WRITE:

Read verse 13. Clearly, Paul wanted Onesimus to stay and continue to help him; this would have made Paul's life so much easier! But instead, he chose to send Onesimus back so he could be restored to a right relationship with Philemon. From Philippians 2:3-4, explain why Paul did this.

_____
_____
_____
_____

APPLY:

Read 2 Corinthians 4:8–11. Many of our missionary brothers and sisters all over the world face similar challenges as the apostle Paul. They may not be in prison, but they are no less hard-pressed on every side and need us to consider and encourage them. Take a moment to pray specifically for your group missionary today. Now that you prayed, send an encouraging email to them.

DAY 4

PRAY: Psalm 119:59. Pause and consider your ways. Is there anything hindering your walk today? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you turn and follow the Lord and His commands.

READ: Philemon 11–13

WRITE:

We have spoken much about forgiving those who have wronged us in some way. Today, let's take a close look at how God has pardoned us. In light of the following scriptures, what do you learn that will help you receive God's love and forgiveness?

Micah 7:19: _____
_____
_____

Romans 8:1: _____
_____
_____

1 John 1:9: _____
_____
_____

APPLY:

Consider the extent that Jesus has forgiven you by reading Psalm 103:12. Now stop and pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to receive and accept by faith (the extent of) God's amazing love and forgiveness.

ON ANOTHER DAY THIS WEEK REFLECT ON OUR LIFE PRINCIPLE

This week we will talk about principle "L" . . . **L** = Learning the Word

As humans, we have a natural tendency to look out for "number one" and no one needs to remind us to consider our own needs above others! Thankfully, the Word teaches us a completely different lifestyle! Let's look at Paul's disciple Timothy for a shining example of a life that forsakes the "me-first" attitude for the sake of the kingdom. Read Philippians 2:19–22. Pray and ask God what He wants you to learn from His example.

Notes