

**“The Heart Of The Gospel”**  
**Philemon 8-14**

**Introduction:**

1. What Would You Do?
  - What Would You Do If **You**:
    - Had Serious Health Problems - Including:
      - Diabetes & Heart Disease:
        - And In The Last Few Years You Suffered:
          - Three Heart Attacks - The Last Of Which Led To Congestive Heart Failure - With Only 1/3 Of Your Heart Functioning:
            - And You Are Near Death!
  - What Would You Do:
    - If - After Being Told That There Is Nothing:
      - That Can Be Done To Help You:
        - Someone Suggests A Surgery:
          - That Has Never Even Been Attempted Before? It’s Experimental! And You’re The Guinea Pig!
            - A Complete Heart Transplant!
- What Would You Do?
  - Well - A Man By The Name Of:
    - Louis Washkansky - Faced **All** Of This:
      - Back In 1967! And - What Did He Do?
        - He And His Wife Agreed To The Surgery!
- And On December 3, 1967 - In Cape Town, South Africa:
  - After A 6 Hour Surgery Involving:
    - A Team Of 30 Surgeons, Nurses & Technicians:
      - The First Ever Human Heart Transplant:
        - Was A Success!
- Or - At Least For:
  - Another 18 Days - When His Body Succumbed:
    - To Complications From Pneumonia & A Weakened Immune System!
2. But - Since That First Successful Attempt:
  - Heart Transplant Surgery:
    - Has Become More & More Common & Effective!
      - Today - Around 3,500 Transplants Are Performed:
        - Every Year Throughout The World!
  - But - For Each Transplant Patient:
    - There Is A Story & A History:
      - Of A Weak **Physical** Heart!
        - And The Only Hope They Have:
          - Is A Newer & A Stronger One!
3. Well - Even Though The Number Of Candidates:
  - For Heart Transplant Surgery - Is A Pretty Small Number:
    - And - Hopefully - A Decision You Will Never Have To Face!
      - Yet - There Is An Even Greater Disease:
        - That Infects The **Spiritual** Hearts:
          - Of Every Man & Woman & Child!
            - The Disease Of Sin!
  - And This Disease:
    - Does Not Just Make Your Heart Weak:
      - It Has Already Caused Your Heart:
        - To Die!
    - And This Means - **Every** Person Is A Candidate:
      - For A **Different** Kind Of Heart Transplant!
        - A **Spiritual** Transplant!
4. Well - Praise God - This Is Exactly:
  - Why God The Father Sent His Son Jesus Into This World!

- To Provide The Kind Of Heart Transplant:
    - That You And I Needed:
      - For Spiritual & For Eternal Life!
  - In Ezekiel 36:36 - The Lord Said:
    - “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh!”
      - ***That’s A Heart Transplant!***
        - And It’s the Only Solution For A Spiritually Dead Heart!
  - Have You Received:
    - Your New Heart Yet?
      - God Himself, The Greatest Of Physicians, Performs This Transplant Surgery:
        - When You Turn From Your Sin & Trust In The Lord Jesus Christ As Your Savior!
          - And Not Only Does Your Heart Change, So Does Your Whole Life!
            - And Not Just For 18 Days! But For Eternity!
5. As We Head Back To Paul’s Brief Letter To Philemon:
- This Morning - I Think That We Can See & Hear:
    - What The Throbbing Of This New & Healthy Heart:
      - From God Is Like!
        - As - The Apostle Paul Uses ***His*** New Heart To Appeal To ***Philemon’s*** New Heart:
          - To Receive Back His Runaway Slave, Onesimus, Who Has *Also* Received A New Heart!
    - And We See This In:
      - 1:8-14 - “Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, / 9 Yet for love’s sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. / 10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: / 11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me: / 12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels: / 13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel: / 14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly!”
6. Now - We Have Already Seen:
- That The Issue Paul Is Dealing With Is:
    - A Very Sensitive Issue! And So - He Handles It:
      - With Much Grace & Tact!
        - But - Through It All - I Believe We Can See The New & Strong Heart That Christians Receive From Christ!
    - Because - In Christ - There Is:
1. ***A New Kind Of Appeal!***
- An Appeal - To The Heart!
    - This Is What We Find In 1:9 - When Paul:
      - Makes His Appeal To Philemon:
        - “For Love’s Sake!”
      - You See - As An Apostle Of Jesus Christ:
        - Who Was Given Great Authority:
          - In The Development Of The Church:
            - He Could Have Appealed:
    - To The Authority Of Christ!
      - Which He Briefly Mentions In:
        - 1:8 - “Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin [Command] thee that which is convenient [Fit & Proper]!”
          - You See - Paul Was Given Spiritual Authority Over The Church & Even Over Philemon! And - He Could Very Well Have Ordered Philemon To Do What He Wanted Him To Do!
      - However - Paul Wanted - Even As Christ Wants:
        - Obedience To His Will - To Go Deeper!
          - To Come From The Heart!
            - So That What The Lord Said To Jeremiah Will Come True - Jeremiah 31:33 - “After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and



- To Him - Out Of Love!
- In Christ - There Is A New Kind Of Appeal!
  - An Appeal - To The Heart!
  - But Also - In Christ - There Is:

## 2. *A New Kind Of Affection!*

- An Affection - From The Heart!
  - This Is What We Find In 1:12 - When Paul Describes Onesimus As:
    - “Mine Own Bowels!”
      - Which Is The Term They Used For:
        - The Seat Of Their Emotions:
          - That Is - Their Heart!
  - In 1:10-12 - Paul Is Serving:
    - As An Advocate For Onesimus:
      - That Fugitive, Runaway Slave!
        - But - Listen To Paul’s Loving Description Of This Man!
          - He Describes:
- The Conversion Of Onesimus!
  - In 1:10 - “I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds!”
    - This Shows The Personal Affection & Lasting Concern That Paul Had For Onesimus!
      - Now - We Don’t Know All Of The Circumstances:
        - But Somehow God Led Onesimus To Paul:
          - So That Paul Could Lead Onesimus To Christ!
    - Like Timothy & Like Titus Before Him:
      - Onesimus - That Fugitive Slave:
        - Became One Of Paul’s Own “Sons In The Faith!”
          - So - He Was In Good Company!
    - But - What Memories & Feeling:
      - This Must Have Brought To Paul’s Mind & Heart!
        - Now - At This Point - Philemon Would Probably Have Been Pleased With This News!
          - That His Slave Had Been Converted To Christ! But - What Does This Have To Do With Him? Surely, With His Slave Back, Things Could Get Back To Normal!
            - But “Back To Normal” Was Not What Paul Was After!
              - He Then Describes:
    - The Change Of Onesimus!
      - In 1:11 - “Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me!”
        - To Appreciate This Verse - You Need To Remember That The Name “Onesimus” Means “Useful!”
          - It Was A Common Name For A Slave Back Then - And Philemon May Have Even Been The One To Give Him That Name! When He Was Born Or When He Was Bought!
            - And He Hoped That His Slave Would Live Up To His Name!
        - But - It Is Clear - That Onesimus Was *Not*:
          - Useful! As Paul Puts It Here:
            - “In Time Past Was To Thee Unprofitable!”
              - It Seems That Onesimus Was A Genuine Scoundrel!
          - He Possessed A Poor Character:
            - All Around! Not Just In How He Served:
              - But In His Attitudes & Actions!
                - He Was “Good For Nothing!”
          - But - Now - There’s Been A Change - Paul Writes!
            - “Now” – He’s – “Profitable To Thee And To Me!”
              - Reminds Us Of 2 Corinthians 5:17 - “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!”
          - And Paul’s Heart Was Greatly Moved For Onesimus:
            - Because Of The Great Change:
              - The Lord Had Done In That Slave’s Heart & Life!
                - And This Is Where Paul Further Describes:
          - The Connection Of Onesimus!

- 1:12 - "Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels!"
  - A Special Relationship & Connection:
    - Quickly Blossomed Between Paul & Onesimus:
    - As A Spiritual Father With A Spiritual Son!
  - And Paul Loved Onesimus!
    - His Heart Was Bound Up With His!
      - And So - He Asks Philemon To Treat His Slave As He Would Treat Paul's Own Heart!
      - "Receive Him!" And - Please - Don't Break My Heart!
- Oh - What Affection Paul Had For Onesimus!
  - An Affection That Can Only Come:
    - Through Christ!
      - But - Doesn't Paul's Heart Of Affection Reflect The Heart & Affection:
        - Of Christ Himself - Toward His Own Children?
  - When You Become A Christian:
    - There Is Now:
      - A Special Connection:
        - Between You And Your Savior!
          - And - Now - "He That Toucheth You Toucheth The Apple Of His Eye!" (Zechariah 2:8)
  - And Because Of Christ's Love For You:
    - You Can Love Him & Love Others:
      - They Way He Wants You To!
        - From The Heart!
    - But Also - In Christ - There Is:

### 3. *A New Kind Of Aspiration!*

- An Aspiration - By The Heart!
  - Which Is What We See In 1:14 - When Paul Desires Philemon To Do What He Asks:
    - "Willingly!"
      - Once Again - Paul Humbly Defers To Philemon - Because **He** Wants What **God** Wants!
      - His Heart! And:
  - A Willing Service!
    - In 1:13 - Paul Wrote - "Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel!"
      - Paul Makes The Assumption:
        - That Philemon Would Like To Serve Paul There In Rome!
        - He Also Assumes:
          - That - If He Had Kept Onesimus - Philemon Would Have Been OK With That!
    - This Shows The Kind Of Esteem:
      - That Paul Had For Philemon, As His Brother In Christ!
        - But - To Just Assume These Things Or To Require These Things:
          - Was Not Wise & Was Not Best!
          - Because It May Not Have Been Done From The Heart!
    - Instead - Paul Desired & The Lord Desires:
  - A Willing Surrender!
    - Which Paul Explains In:
      - 1:14 - "But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly!"
        - This Is The Kind Of Heart:
          - God Wants From His People!
    - Reminds Us Of:
      - What Paul Writes About Giving In The Church:
        - In 2 Corinthians 9:7 - Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver!"
    - Paul Understood That:
      - True Forgiveness:
        - Which Is What He Desired For Onesimus:

- Must Come From The Heart!
- And That - True Fellowship:
  - Which Is What He Desired For Himself:
  - Must Also Come From The Heart!
- And Only In Christ - Is There This Kind Of New Aspiration!
  - An Aspiration - By The Heart!
    - To Serve & To Surrender Yourself:
      - To The Lord:
        - Willingly!

**Conclusion:**

1. Does The Lord Have Your Heart This Morning?
  - If You Have Been Given That:
    - “Spiritual Heart Transplant” - Through Faith In The Gospel:
      - Then - No Longer Does The Lord:
        - Just Appeal To You:
          - As A Servant, But As A Son & A Daughter Of The King!
    - He Gave You A New Heart:
      - So That You Can Love Him & Obey Him & Serve Him:
        - From That Heart!
2. And With That Heart:
  - You Can Now Love Others:
    - As Christ Loves You!
      - This Is Why Paul Wrote This Letter:
        - On Behalf Of Onesimus:
          - In The First Place!
            - Because He Loved Him With All His Heart!
    - Is There An Onesimus In Your Life Today?
      - Is There Someone Who You Can Shower:
        - The Love Of Christ Upon?
          - Not Because Of What They Can Do For Or Give To You!
          - But - Because Of What You Can Do For & Give To Them!
    - Perhaps - You Need To Find:
      - Your Own Onesimus!
        - A Brother Or Sister That You Can Love & Encourage & Disciple:
          - For Their Good & For God’s Own Glory!
  - 3. This Is The New Kind Of Heart:
    - That You Have Been Given:
      - If You Are A Christian!
        - So - Let Your Heart Be Tender:
          - To The Lord!
            - Say - As We Will Soon Sing:
              - “I Am Thine, Lord, Here’s My Heart!”
      - Because - This Is:
        - The Heart Of The Gospel!

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