

# PHILEMON

## Lesson 2: Fellow

8 January, 2016

**Theme:** the Body of Christ must function as one unit, every member striving together to reach a common goal. An Independent body part is useless if it's not working in the body. Christians must receive help from one another if they are expected to grow in Jesus Christ.

**Example:** the apostle Paul accomplished great things during his ministry, but he always acknowledged and thanked the people who had part in his work. He knew he could not have done what he did without help from others along the way.

Notice the terms Paul used in Philemon:

**"Fellowlabourer"** (verse 1): Christians must work together among other Christians who may be less qualified, equally qualified, or more qualified than us. But we must not attempt to do the work alone.

**"Fellowsoldier"** (verse 2): a single soldier cannot fight a battle alone. He is part of an army of soldiers working together against a common enemy.

**"Partner"** (verse 17): Christianity is a partnership. That doesn't mean that every partner can do exactly what you can do, but our individual skills and abilities are combined to accomplish the common goals.

**"Fellowprisoner"** (verse 23): Christians must not think that they are the only ones suffering for the cause of Christ. It is a comfort to know there are others who have experienced similar trials and troubles. (See 1 Cor. 12:26, Rom. 12:15, Gal. 6:2)

**"Fellowlabourers"** (verse 24): Paul listed several men with differing strengths and skills and counted them as being on equal ground with him.

The independent Christian is very limited in what he or she can accomplish. But there is no limit to what can be accomplished for the Lord Jesus Christ when Christians work together as a unified body.

Jesus sent His disciples out two by two (Mark 6:7). Paul didn't travel on his missionary journeys alone (Acts 12:25, 13:2, 15:40, 2 Tim. 4:11). Paul's instruction to young preachers was to find some good men and teach them so they can help with the work. (2 Tim. 2:2, 1 Tim. 3:2-9, Titus 1:5-9). A pastor can't accomplish the work alone. The church must work together.

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**ROMANS 14:7-10**

Our life is going to affect other lives even if we think we can live and die alone. We ought not to discount, disregard, ignore, or neglect (**set at nought**) any brother or sister in Christ. We should never put our own convictions, opinions, or standards ahead of our fellowship and relationship with a brother or sister in Christ. Nobody is always right.

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**ECCL. 4:9-10**

Why are two better than one?

1) It is very rewarding to be able to share the blessings with someone else (Acts 4:23-24, 16:40, 1 Thess. 2:19) and rejoice together.

2) It is certain that there will be times when we shall fall (Prov. 24:16, 1 Cor. 10:12). If you're alone, you'll keep falling. If your brother or sister is there, they'll help you get back on your feet again, providing encouragement, support, and correction.

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**EPHESIANS 4:11-13**

God gave us what we need to accomplish the work of the ministry and to perfect the saints. Other members (plural) of the body of Christ are needed in order to achieve edification. Individual members of the body cannot edify themselves. Unity of the faith is accomplished when we all come together in unity. We need to make sure that no brother or sister is left behind or left out in the work of the church. We must "**ALL come**" (vs. 13) to [be like] a perfect man (Christ).

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**4:14-16**

The "**whole body**," "**EVERY part**" (vs. 16) must grow up into Christ (the head of the body), joined together, compacted (very close to one another). The closer we get to one another, the easier it will be to become what Christ wants us to grow to be.

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