

# PHILEMON

## Lesson 4: Ministering To Prisoners

22 January, 2016

**“Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ”** (see Ephesians 3: 1, 4:1, 2 Tim. 1:8, Philemon 9)

Lost men and women who are in prison, nursing homes, or hospitals—are more likely to listen to a Christian witness in those situations.

Saved brothers and sisters who are in those same situations need encouragement, support, and love from the brethren.

All Christians have a responsibility to minister to people who are prisoners; who don't have freedom to go where they want to go.

**PSALM 69:32-34** Men will automatically think less of you if you go to prison. Not God. God does not despise His prisoners. When you trust the Lord as your Savior, you are cleansed and forgiven and God thinks as highly of you as anybody else in His family.

**PSALM 79:11** Sighing is a common occurrence in the prison house. Prison is not meant to be pleasant. There are a lot of heavy hearts and sad lonely souls groaning in despair, yearning for freedom or companionship, etc. Prisoners are surrounded by people who don't care about their troubles. Those who DO care (family members or ministers) can't be there all the time. But God hears every sigh—from the lips of His prisoners. Jesus will stay with you when all of your friends have abandoned you.

**PSALM 102:19-20** God hears the groaning of the prisoners. Many Christian prisoners have died in various forms of executions, but when they died, they were loosed by God from all their sorrows, pains, and troubles—and instantly entered into the presence of Jesus Christ.

**MATTHEW 25:34-40** When you go visit a saved person in prison, it is like you are going there to visit Jesus Christ Himself. Whenever you do anything for another brother or sister in Christ, it is as if you are ministering to Jesus.

**2 TIMOTHY:1:15** When Paul was in prison, many of his Christian friends turned away from him, but he named one man, Onesiphorus, who went to great lengths to find Paul in Rome at the risk of being imprisoned himself for being acquainted with Paul the Christian. Paul was refreshed by his friend's visit. God rewards those who are that kind of friend.

**ISAIAH 14:12-17** The Devil will never release his prisoners. He wants to keep you in bondage to sin or vanity forever.

**ISAIAH 42:5-8** Only Jesus can enter your life and instantly set you free from the bondage of sins, habits, vices, cults, and religion. (See 2 Cor. 5:17, Gal. 6:15, Col. 3:3).

**ISAIAH 61:1** Jesus Christ came **“to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”** This speaks of the spiritual prison in which sin has bound you.