

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF MOTIVATING BELIEVERS

Philemon 8-22

Many think Radical _____ is the theme of the book of Philemon, but more broadly Paul is motivating Philemon to forgive Onesimus when he knows it is the right thing to do, but he doesn't _____ like doing it

I. THE _____ MOTIVATION TO OBEY GOD

A. Motives to Do Right

- 1) In v.8 Paul says he could have _____ Philemon as an apostle; he could have forced obedience
- 2) In v.9 Paul says he would rather Philemon obey "for _____ sake"; it should be voluntary (v.14)
- 3) Christians should obey God NOT because if we fail to do right, God will _____ us or because we think our obedience will get more love or more _____ from God; that is not the NT model
- 4) Christians should voluntarily obey God because we _____ Him, because our hearts are filled with gratitude for our _____, because He daily continues to extend His grace to us

B. Motivating Others to Do Right

- 1) In nearly every other verse in this letter, Paul gives Philemon reasons to _____ God and His people
- 2) Augustine, the great theologian of the early church, put it this way: "Love, and do what you _____"
- 3) When we counsel those having trouble doing right, we should remind them of reasons to _____ God

II. THE OVERRULING _____ OF GOD

A. V.15: Literally, "Onesimus was _____ from you;" Paul implied that everything was in God's hands

- 1) Paul begins "perhaps" indicating that he did not claim that he could discern the _____ of God
- 2) God wove even the sinful actions of Onesimus into His _____, resulting in Onesimus' conversion

B. V.11: Your slave Useful ("Utility") was once useless, but now he is indeed _____ to you and to me

- 1) God is such a great God, such a wise God, that He can bring even _____ actions out for our good
- 2) To do right when others have harmed us, we must renew our faith in the _____ of God
- 3) We must remember the words of Joseph: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for _____"

III. POSITIVE _____ LINKED WITH _____

A. A Self-Fulfilling _____ *Philemon 21*

- 1) When we communicate our _____, they often end up becoming self-fulfilling prophecies
- 2) This dynamic works if our expectations are positive or _____, if expressed or unexpressed
- 3) We particularly need to remember this principle with our _____: it applies to their achievement as well as to their behavior and spiritual growth: many parents expect their teenagers to _____

B. Matter-of-Fact _____ *Philemon 22*

- 1) Paul expressed confidence that Philemon would do right, then told him, "I'm coming for a _____"
- 2) In 1987, Reagan told Gorbachev the foundation for arms control would be "trust, but _____"
- 3) We must express our confidence our children will do right, but then we must hold them _____