



Week 8: August 30 – September 5

10min Welcome / Introduce Guests / Share Life
Recall the Guidelines / Open in Prayer

2min *Share the Vision: Paul encourages us to do all that we do in love. Our small group gathers because we love each other. Let's continue to develop a culture of love that points each other to Christ.*

5min **Hook Question:** When was there a time that it was hard for you to forgive someone for the wrong they had done to you?

Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:

2min In today's story, Paul is older. His third missionary journey has ended with his arrest and now he is under house arrest in Rome. Despite being a prisoner of Rome, he refers to himself as a prisoner or slave for Christ Jesus. While imprisoned, he has made a new friend named Onesimus.

Onesimus was a slave who had committed a crime against his master, Philemon. Philemon was also a follower of Jesus. While we do not know the exact crime Onesimus committed, many scholars believe that he was a runaway slave. Whatever the crime was, it was serious enough for him to be imprisoned. While in prison, Onesimus became a follower of Christ and was mentored by Paul. Because Onesimus had wronged Philemon, it would have been very understandable for Philemon to have felt wounded. Paul's desire was for Philemon to forgive and receive Onesimus back home as a brother in Christ, not as his slave. But it was very rare in Roman-Greco culture for a master to forgive a slave for any crime. However, Christians live by a different standard. This is where our story begins...

Tell the story from Philemon 1:4-22: *Remember to change up the storyteller often.*

12min **Rebuild the story:** *Group members retell the story based on what they remember.*

Read the story from Philemon 1:4-22: *Ask the group to read these verses.*

Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...

Head
Questions:
Quicker
tempo.

- What stands out to you the most in this story? Why?
- What does this story teach us about us as people?
- What does this story teach us about God?

Heart & Hand
Questions:
Slow down &
wait!

- What is God speaking to you about and how do you need to apply what He is saying to your life?
- Who could retell the story for us? **CHALLENGE:** Tell the story to someone this week!

Ask for a volunteer storyteller for next week. Close in prayer.