

# TRIUMPH

“Do you know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it” (1 Cor. 9:24)

## A Study in Philemon (9)

*Gabriel Rodriguez*

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*Shepherd's Corner:*  
You Know You Have Eternal Life If You Are In Christ

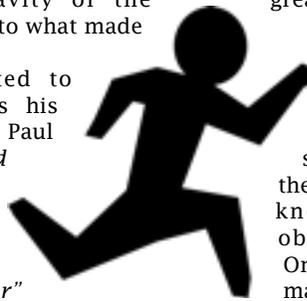
Now that Paul through tact and encouraging words uplifted Philemon for his spiritual work's sake, a more pressing issue was addressed. Paul began by saying, “Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required” (v.8). Paul acknowledged that as an authoritative apostle of Jesus Christ he simply could have commanded Philemon on what to do, but instead he chose to make an “appeal to him for love's sake” (v.9a). Paul deferred to reason with Philemon so that he could understand the gravity of the situation and make an appeal to what made sense.

The first thing Paul wanted to impress upon Philemon was his **age and position in Christ**. Paul recognized himself as an “old man” (*aged*), which signified his possession of experience and wisdom. Next, he reiterated his position in Christ, a “prisoner” of Jesus Christ. Paul helped to teach Philemon that he, along with all those who gave themselves to the service of Christ, were **captive slaves** under the authority of Christ. These ideas certainly would get Philemon to think considerably and rationally concerning what was on Paul's mind.

Paul “beseeched” Philemon, meaning he pleaded with him through great urging, concerning “my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds” (v.10b). Who was Onesimus? He was one of Philemon's servants (v. 16a) who apparently had run away from

him for some reason (v.18). As we studied extensively concerning the relationship between master and servant in the OT, we noticed that both had a responsibility towards each other, to care and be respectful. But it seems to imply that somewhere in their relationship there was a breakdown. In verse 18, it seems to indicate that it was Onesimus, for some reason or another who violated their working relationship by either stealing something or doing something unethical against Philemon. Whatever it was, it was great enough to make Onesimus flee from his master. But remarkably, either through supernatural means or time and chance (v. 15a), Onesimus encountered Paul and their meeting resulted in the salvation of Onesimus as he obeyed the gospel (v.10b; 13b). As Paul gained knowledge of Onesimus situation, obeying the gospel didn't absolve Onesimus from his duty toward his master; therefore, Paul was minded to send Onesimus back to Philemon.

As Paul sent Onesimus back there was no doubt that sore feelings from Philemon might have presented a problem. So Paul made a rational case on the behalf of Onesimus and used his name, which means “profitable and useful” as a way to help Philemon look at the bright side of this entire situation. Paul noted that Onesimus was “in time past to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and me” (v.11). May God be praised!



# THE NATURE AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER (4)

## Church News and Announcements

### CONGREGATION

The fellowship luncheon, hosted by Carolyn Harris, will be next Sunday, July 9. The menu is healthy potluck.

We'll be having a special contribution this morning (after our regular offering) for the David Trevino family. David, the brother of Ray, is battling stage 4 cancer.

The ladies get-together will be on July 27th, while the men's breakfast will be on July 29th. Sign-up sheets are in the foyer.

Volunteers are needed for August: a host for the young adult devotional, a host for the fellowship luncheon, someone to prepare the communion, and a brother to be in charge of the services. See one of the elders if you can serve in any way.

### YOUTH

There will be no July devotional because most of our kids will be out of town.

### YOUNG ADULT

There will be no July young adult devotional.

### AREA NEWS

See the bulletin board in the foyer for events in our area.

As we've learned from the Scriptures, God has already provided all that we would need to survive on this planet. Therefore, God has **already provided care** and *protection* for us, now it is up to us to use the blessings of life for our success. What God actually wants us to concentrate our efforts on, more than anything else, is making sure we are desiring His word and fulfilling it everyday in our lives (Matt. 6:33; Jas. 1:22-23).

The confusion, especially with regard to the nature and efficacy of prayer, lies in the misunderstanding in how God works and why. As I've noted, many "religious people" (including members of the church) have produced a false concept on what prayer is and how it should be used. Many will go to prayer examples in the Bible, such as Hezekiah, Elijah, Jesus, etc. and use their examples to fit with every era and generation of men. But this simply isn't the case because first, it's irrational, and second, it's contradictory.

When we consider how God interacted with people in ancient times, it is much different today. This principle is indicated in Hebrews 1:1-2 in which the Hebrew writer said that "*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son....*" These passages teach us that God **CHANGED** his manner of operation with regard to communication. This means that God would no longer use the medium of angels to communicate His message, rather Jesus Christ would be the final spokesman for God. Jesus' words would then be written down and canonized for all generations to read, study, and apply (e.g., Lk. 16:29). This concludes that people who think they hear the voice of God audibly or think they see a vision of the Lord are simply wrong and mistaken. God apprised men that only through the written word would men come to know and

understanding God's message (2 Tim. 2:15; Eph. 5:17). Hence, if it is true that God **CHANGED** how He would deliver the message, isn't possible that He **CHANGED** the way in which He worked with regard to physical necessities. As we've already been taught, first, all of our physical necessities have been provided for, because God knew what we would need in advance. Second, knowing that He provided all our needs, the purpose for intervening (at times) during ancient times is and was totally different from His objectives now.

His main objective in ancient times was to provide and care for the nation of Israel. But why? Seeing that Israel wasn't a nation worth saving (Deut. 9:4-5), why did God intervene supernaturally at times? The answer is simple and quite clear. Israel was the vessel by which the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, would come (Gen. 3:15; 12:1-5; 49:10-13). Therefore, despite Israel's gross misconduct, God used a small remnant of faithful men and women to accomplish the goal of making sure Jesus would come. This is why God employed supernatural acts (at various times) to make sure that the plan of redemption (the salvation of men's souls by Jesus) would come to fruition. Therefore, there was always an objective for God's miraculous intervention with Israel.

Now that Christ and his plan has been fulfilled (Jn. 3:16), now we ask a more serious question, would God continue to supernaturally intervene in the lives of men today as He once did? I believe that answer is clear. No! And this is the reason why the Bible teaches us that God has provided all our physical needs (Matt. 6:25ff), time and chance events happen to us all (Eccl. 9:11), and that at anytime we could fall into dire situations. Therefore, what God was more concerned about than anything in life is our spiritual well-being. May God be praised!

**Bro. G. Rodriguez**

## What Must I Do?

Nearly two thousand years ago an important question was raised before the Apostles after they had delivered the good news of Jesus's life, death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:21-36). The hearer's conscience were pricked of sinful conduct (2 Cor. 7: 10-11) and asked: "*Men and brethren, what shall we do* (in order to be saved)? (Acts 2:37). Without hesitation, Peter elevated his voice and proclaimed: "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38).

Upon hearing the words of Peter, the people obeyed. This demonstrated their belief in Christ (Jn. 8:24). Hence, they repented of sin and confessed allegiance to the name of Christ (Matt. 10:32-33). Afterwards, the people were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:41, cf. Mrk. 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21) and given the hope of eternal life (Acts 2:38).

The people's submission to the words of salvation granted them a relationship with God the Father by accessing citizenship into the church of Christ (Acts 2:47, cf. Matt. 16:18; Mrk. 9:1; Acts. 2:1-4). As a member of Christ's body (Acts 8:4) the people were then encouraged to live faithful unto death by conquering sin in their lives (Rev. 2:10; Rom. 6: 4-12; 2 Tim. 4: 6-8). We then await for the coming day in which all men shall be judged the word of God (Jn 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10). Will we be ready?

## SHEPHERD'S CORNER

### You Know You Have Eternal Life If You Are In Christ

We have noted some conditions we must meet if we would have eternal life. But "where" is it? John answers clearly: "And the witness is this, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John 5:11). Eternal life is "in Christ," and nowhere else! The apostle Paul writes at length about the blessings that are "in Christ." In Eph. 1:3-7, he uses that expression, or its equivalent, six times. He states that "every spiritual blessing" is "in Christ" (v. 3), and so are redemption and forgiveness (v. 7). In 2 Tim. 2:10, he writes that "salvation is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." All of that means that there is no spiritual blessing outside of Christ, no salvation outside of Christ, no forgiveness outside of Christ.

But how do we enter into Christ? The apostle Paul answers clearly, "Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3). This echoes what we read earlier, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). That is the reason people were told to "repent and be baptized" (Acts. 2:38), or "Arise, and be baptized" (Acts. 22:16). Until their faith led them to obey the Lord by being baptized into Him, they were still outside of Christ. Search the Scriptures carefully, and you will find no other action that puts one "into Christ." Only baptism does that. And the question, "Are you in Christ?" is easily answered, for you know whether or not you have been baptized into Him. So, it comes down to this. Do you have eternal life? "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (1 John 5:13). You should know. If you are walking in the light, constantly striving to live for God, you have eternal life. If you keep His commandments, if you are a child of God, if you love God and His children and if you are in Christ, then you have eternal life. Do you have eternal life? If you haven't done so, and the need is there, we encourage you to get your life right with the Lord. Tomorrow may be too late!

Bro. W. Holmes

# CHURCH LEADERSHIP

## BISHOPS/SHEPHERDS/ ELDERS

(1 Tim. 3: 1-6)

*Brother Elwyn Hipp* (830) 510-6311  
*Brother Wayne Holmes* (210) 696-8597

## DEACONS

(Acts 6: 1-5; 1 Tim. 3: 7-12)

*Brother Raul Baltierra*

(210) 843-9730

*Brother Bill Dorries*

(210) 253-0173

## GOSPEL PREACHER

(1 Cor. 9:1-16; 2 Tim. 4: 2-5)

*Brother Gabriel Rodriguez*

(210) 315-4453



## July 2

### AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Opening Prayer: *J. Guillen*  
 Song Leader: *E. Castillo*  
 Communion Leader: *A. Maldonado*  
 Lord's Supper Servers: *T. Mayces; N. Esenowo; R. Baltierra; Z. Watkins*

Scripture: *Isaiah 53:6-9*  
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Benediction: *D. Mathis*

### PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Opening Prayer: *W. Holmes*  
 Song Leader: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Lord's Supper: *J. Guillen; R. Baltierra Jr.*

Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*  
 Benediction: *T. Mayces*

After Greeter: *J. Guillen*  
 Greeter/Usher: *S. Amos*  
 AV Duty: *M. de la Garza*  
 In Charge of Invitation: *G. Rodriguez*

### REMEMBERING OUR BELOVED

*(by writing, calling, and praying)*

Wayne Holmes  
 Joe Guillen  
 Ina Dial  
 David and Elijah Sudhoff  
 Caral O'Banon  
 Sam Amos *(awaiting surgery)*  
 Parents of David Lyssy  
 Sandra Welch  
 Lavender Nelson  
 Tita Cortez *(sister of Sam Ramirez)*  
 Dolly Gribble *(back)*

### BATTLING CANCER:

Johna Dorries      Abigail Reyes  
 Graciola Anderson      Sonny Cary  
 Arturo Hernandez  
 Renalto *(brother-in-law of Joe Guillen)*  
 David Trevino *(brother of Ray)*

### SHUT-INS:

Dazel Ball  
 Mildred Geest  
 Sarah Cannon

### TRAVELING:

Baltieras; Lyssys; Mayces; Dorries;  
 Rodriguez *(leaving Monday)*

### SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES JULY

Organizing Monthly Luncheon:  
*Harris; Rodriguez*  
 Preparing Lord's Supper:  
*Harris*  
 Auditorium Service Duties:  
*Harris*  
 Wash baptismal garments; clean cry  
 room  
*Harris*  
 Brother in charge of services:  
*Open*

### AM Theme:

The Hall of Fame:  
*Crown of Glory: The King of My Life*

### PM Theme:

The Canon of Scripture:  
*Which Books Are Inspired of God?*

### AM Sermon:

*King Saul (5)*

### PM Sermon:

*Introduction*

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

July 5: *M. de la Garza*

July 12: *E. Hipp*

July 19: *J. Guillen*

## FOR THE RECORD

### June 25/28

#### Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study      38  
 Sunday AM Worship      50  
 Sunday PM Worship      32  
 Wednesday Bible Study      34  
 Budget/Offering:      **\$2,140.02/ \$1,739.00**

Weekly Bible Readers: NA *(Adult Bible class)*

## SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**(210) 696-5532**

**Fax: (210) 696-5181**

**Church email Address:**

**[shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org](mailto:shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org)**

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

**Sunday:** Bible Study at 9:30 am; Worship at 10:30 am;  
 Worship at 5:00 pm.

**Wednesday:** Bible Study at 7:00 pm