

sermon notes

August 16, 2026 | Mitchell Palermo, Messiah Bible Church | **Philemon**
“Serve Somebody” | **Philemon 1–7**

Sacrificial service in the church causes us to:

1) Be _____ for Christ-honoring workers. (v4)

2) Grow in _____ (v6)

3) Benefit other _____ (v7)

Questions for Further Application of God’s Word:

GO DEEPER

Who are the other people mentioned in the opening? Where do these names appear in other NT books? Why does it matter who these people are? How does our understanding of Paul's letters get shaped by these connections?

What are some of the features of Philemon 1–7 that show Paul attempting to be persuasive? Read the rest of the letter and look for more ways Paul tries to influence the reader.

Is Paul manipulating Philemon by having this letter read aloud in front of Philemon’s church? What is the difference between peer pressure and Paul’s tactic? How would you have felt if you were Philemon?

GET PERSONAL

Who are some “Philemons” that refresh your heart? Who serves you and your family at church? Take a moment to list those people and thank God for them. Pray that their service would become effective for greater Christlikeness.

Have you experienced growth through serving others? What about growth through other believers serving you? Share your experience with others and thank God for that spiritual fruit.

Does your concept of serving revolve around you? Or is your serving others focused? How does Paul's description of the effects of sacrificial service affect your attitude towards serving in the church?

If you are currently serving, take stock of your attitude about it. Do you grumble about serving? Do you tell others about the inconvenience so they will praise your efforts? Find a verse or two that directly addresses the attitude you have. Share that verse with others and consider committing that verse to memory so that you can use it to take your thoughts captive.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

How are you currently deploying your resources (time, finances, skills) to serve the church? If you can't think of any, what's keeping you from serving? What are some ways that you would like begin serving if you’re not already?

At times our life circumstances completely prevent us from serving the church. What are some ways that someone can love the church even when they're not able to serve?