

PHILEMON – Part IV
“The End of the Story”
Reference: **Philemon 1:20-25**
Pastor Larry Webb

DEFINITION: personal forgiveness means I completely release the offender from his debt. It means completely cleaning his record. It is a promise not to bring up the offense against him again, either to _____, to _____, or to the _____ himself.

Let's summarize what Paul asked Philemon: he asked Philemon to accept Onesimus back without punishment, to restore him to his former position of service, to accept Paul's payment as restitution for the financial problems Onesimus had caused, and, last, to treat him not as just a slave but as a Christian brother.

Five excuses Philemon could have made for not forgiving Onesimus

Excuse One: he doesn't _____ to be forgiven for what he did

Reference: **I Timothy 1:12-16** (see screen)

Excuse Two: he hurt me _____ for me to forgive him

Reference: **II Corinthians 5:21a**, *“For He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us...”*

Reference: **I Peter 2:24a**, *“who (Jesus) Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree...”*

Excuse Three: if I do forgive him, then he's _____ the _____ and that's not fair

Reference: **Romans 12:17 and 19** (see screen)

Excuse Four: if I do forgive him, I still won't be able to _____ what he did

Reference: **Hebrews 8:12b**, *“... and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”*

Excuse Five: how can I forgive him if I can't forgive _____

Reference: **none**

There are two things that give us a good idea as to what might have happened after Philemon received this letter: one is the _____ itself (see **verse 21**) and the second is church _____.