



Week 3 – The Cost of Reconciliation (Philemon – verses 15-25)

The book of Philemon was written by Paul to help reconcile a broken relationship between Philemon (a church leader) and Onesimus (his run-away slave). This week we discovered that reconciliation always comes at a cost.

Main Points:

- Every debt must be paid in order to reconcile (called restitution) – it is called restitution.
- True **repentance** will always be accompanied by a **willingness** to repay what is owing.
- True **forgiveness** will always be accompanied by a **willingness** to release the debt.
- When there is **true repentance** and **true forgiveness**, reconciliation is possible.
- **Gospel centred reconciliation** is always worth it.

Discussion Questions:

- In the message Nathan shared a story about a vehicle he would love to have if it weren't for the price tag. What is the ONE THING you would buy immediately if it were not for the cost?
- Do you agree with the following statement - "someone always pays"? Share a story about a time when you had to foot the bill (financially, emotionally, at work) because someone else decided not to meet their obligations.
- Read verse 19 of Philemon. Paul expresses a willingness to pay Onesimus's debt, but at the same time he also reminds Philemon that he (Philemon) also owes a debt. Why is this remark significant when thinking about reconciliation?
- In Matthew 18:21-35 – Jesus teaches us why forgiveness is *not an option*. What is the reason he gives?
- The scales must be balanced in order for reconciliation to occur. If repentance & forgiveness are the keys to reconciliation. We hold the keys to one another's freedom. Onesimus becomes an influential leader in the early church. What could happen if we were willing to set one another free?

Next Steps:

- Do you owe a debt that can be repaid? Your next step may be to repay it.
- Do you owe a debt to someone that you cannot pay? Your next step may be true repentance.
- Does someone owe you a debt that they cannot pay? Can you pay it and release them from the debt?

Fun reading – Exodus 21-22 (Laws for restitution)