

The Implications of Partnership

Series: Philemon: Living in Partnership

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Last Sunday we discovered for the Book of Philemon as picture of Partnership or Koinonia.

We said it means:

- **Christian Partnership means creating & tending to New Creation realities.**
 - New Creation = new identity, new tasks, new realities in others (all equal although all are not same)
 - “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **the new creation has come**: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who **reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation**: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ **We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.** We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.” 2 Corinthians 5:17-20
 - “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:26-29
- **Christian Partnership insists on respect & awareness of Kingdom priorities.**
 - We need to respect fellow Christ-followers and together start to change the world!
 - We change the world by showing the world a different way...the way of Love!

Let us consider an example of this from Philemon: Paul reveals a roadmap for how to deal with huge societal problems: _____ vs. 21

- Does God have an opinion about slavery?
- Really common question: Why didn’t Paul recognize the offensiveness of slavery and ban it?

Philemon chose to live as a “New Creation” over living like society! Christ-followers live differently than the world, not just by not sinning, but by choosing better!

- Do YOU see brokenness in our society? Societal problems that God has a different or better way?
- The real question: How does the Body of Christ change it?

Changing the World start with the Body of Christ, living counter-culturally to advance New Creation truth!

“... Christianity served as a revitalization movement that arose in response to the misery, chaos, fear, and brutality of life in the urban Greco-Roman world. . . . Christianity revitalized life in Greco-Roman cities by providing new norms and new kinds of social relationships able to cope with many urgent problems. To cities filled with the homeless and impoverished, Christianity offered charity as well as hope. To cities filled with newcomers and strangers, Christianity offered an immediate basis for attachment. To cities filled with orphans and widows, Christianity provided a new and expanded sense of family. To cities torn by violent ethnic strife, Christianity offered a new basis for social solidarity. And to cities faced with epidemics, fire, and earthquakes, Christianity offered effective nursing services. . . . For what they brought was not simply an urban movement, but a new culture capable of making life in Greco-Roman cities more tolerable.” Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, Princeton University Press, 1996, page 161.

All Scriptures are from the New International Version Bible. You may make comments or ask Bro. Tony questions about this message by:

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