

God Is In The Birthing and Molding Business

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: (Phil 1:6)

General Purpose: To encourage the saved and unsaved that God still wants to mold you

Connections:

- Angle: Using the characters in Philemon to support my thoughts
- Purpose: To show how God can mold the saved and the unsaved for his purpose
- Context: The book of Philemon

TEXT: 1 Phil 1-11 (Reading from the NIV version)

Phil 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker,

Phil 1:2 to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home:

Phil 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Phil 1:4 I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers,

Phil 1:5 because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.

Phil 1:6 I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

Phil 1:7 Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

Phil 1:8 Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do,

Phil 1:9 yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul-an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus-

Phil 1:10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

Phil 1:11 Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

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FOCUS THOUGHT: God is continuously working on molding us on what he wants us to be. No matter how many times we succeed or fail, God is not finished working on us.

A. CONNECTION:

Everyday responsibilities tend to mold us and shape us. Believe it or not, our daily lives tend to shape our character. All of the stress, traffic, our jobs, handling the kids, and just daily routines mold and shape who we are. If we're not careful we can wake up one day and find that we're not satisfied with where we are in our spiritual walk. **But God has always been in the birthing and molding business.** There are many examples throughout the Word of God on how God changes people and molds them for his use. Everyone hear in the church today are at different levels with there walk with God. Some of us have the victory, feel very blessed, some of us may be going through trials, sickness, suffering discouragement, maybe you feel backslidden, or this may be your first time in church. But the one thing remains the same; **God is still in the birthing and molding business.**

Key Thought: Doesn't matter how much money you have, your job status, where you're from, where you live, how much stock you have, what color you are, what sin you may have committed, God wants to put his arms around us, shape, and mold our hearts

B. FACTS ON THE BOOK OF PHILEMON:

1. **Date and place of writing:** Paul wrote Philemon from prison and is classified with Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians and is considered one of Paul's Prison Epistles. Most bible scholars agree that this Epistle was written during his first Roman imprisonment A.D. 61-63
2. **Them:** Reconciliation **Note:** 25 verses, 445 words **Key Word:** Receive

3. **Outline:** Greetings and salutations, Philemon's good report, Paul's request to receive Onesimus, Paul's companions, and closing Benedicton
4. **Purpose:** Paul wrote to Philemon to deal with the specific problem of his runaway slave Onesimus. According to Roman law, a runaway slave could be punished by death. Paul intercedes on Onesimus' behalf with Philmon and petitions him to graciously receive Onesimus back, not as a slave, but as a fellow believer and as Paul's companion, with the same love and respect with which he would receive Paul himself.

The book of Philemon involves 3 people who take on 3 separate roles in the eyes of God. First Philemon who was the well respected man of God who had to learn forgiveness. Second, Onesimus who had to learn repentance and restitution. Then 3rd, the Apostle Paul interceding on behalf of Onesimus.

C. APOSTLE PAUL "The Intercessor":

Phil 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker,

- i. **Paul is the ultimate example** of being molded into what God can do.
- ii. **Paul refers himself** as a "Prisoner of Christ Jesus". Thrown into prison for preaching the Gospel. He was also referring to how consumed he was, that God's hand was continuously molding his life.
- iii. **Key Thought:** I wonder how blessed we would become, what revelation would we get if put on the mind set of being a "Prisoner of Jesus Christ". We would become so dangerous to the devil and become a jewel in God's kingdom!!!

D. PHILEMON'S REPORT: "Student of Forgiveness"

**Phil 1:4 I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers,
Phil 1:5 because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.**

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Phil 1:6 I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

Phil 1:7 Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

- i. **I remember you in my prayers:** example of how we can help God mold each other.
- ii. **Your faith and your love for all the saints:**
 - a. Philemon “affectionate”, was a convert under the Apostle Paul who owed his very own soul to.
 - b. He was a man of faith, prayer, and loved all saints.
 - c. A man of wealth and held services in his home.
 - d. Although he was born again, filled with the Spirit, the Apostle Paul directs the main focus of the letter towards Philemon.
 - e. God still had to do some molding in his heart and he used the Apostle Paul to talk directly to him.
- iii. **May be active in sharing your faith:** “Active” or “Communication” in KJV means, participation, distribution, and fellowship

“How to see a treasure right in his own house in Onesimus, he missed that one!

Key Thought:

- a. This is one of the quickest cures (sharing your faith) for discouragement,
- b. It’s too easy to sin and stay from church, I’ve been there! **Be accountable to God and let him mold you in church!**
- iv. **Have refreshed the hearts of the saints:** This is part of Philemon’s good report. Through God’s molding of him, he was a blessing to the saints of the church.

Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

- i. **Philemon had to learn “Forgiveness”.** He had his slave steal from his house and take off running.
- ii. **Key Thoughts:** You may feel you have a strong walk and relationship with the Lord, but the minute someone does you wrong you feel like you have to get revenge.

Key Thought: Example if 1 person doesn't make it, no one does.

- iii. **Exhortation:** Even though we might be born again and love the Lord, God isn't finished molding us yet. There's still a chapter of victory to be written, souls to be won, and praise reports to be given. The best is yet to come.

Key Words that describe God's molding process:

1. Justification- a change of standing before God
2. Regeneration- a change of nature from God
3. Repentance- a change of mind about God
4. Conversion- a change of life for God
5. Sanctification- a change of service unto God
6. Glorification- a change of place with God
7. Adoption- a change of family in God

E. ONESIMUS: “Repentance and Restitution”

Phil 1:10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

Phil 1:11 Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

Phil 1:13 I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

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Phil 1:16 no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother.
He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.

- i. **Who became my son while I was in chains:** Paul preaching in jail!!
- ii. **Formerly he was useless:** Onesimus was a slave who stole from Philemon for whatever reason and ran away. He later was caught and thrown into prison with the apostle Paul.

Key Thought: It took Paul to preach and intercede on his behalf. Just like Jesus has to intercede on our behalf and take up our sins!

- iii. **He has become useful:** Being a slave with Philemon he must have had heard some preaching and worship while being there. A seed had to be planted in him. While being in prison with Paul, he was born again.

Key Thoughts: Onesimus was no longer a slave and unprofitable. He was now forgiven, blessed and anointed of God to spread the gospel. Such as we are now!!!

- iv. **Formely was useless:** Story about Tommy Calvert who said I was a loser

The New Things that come from God:

1. A new Heart
2. A new spirit
3. A new song
4. A new hope
5. A new life
6. A new motive
7. A new attitude
8. A new service
9. And a new message

Phil 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

F. GOD'S PLAN FOR MOLDING MARRIAGE:

Eph 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

- i. **God's molding plan works for marriages.** My wife and I have noticed that when we let God be God in our marriage, our marriage is much more joyful.
- ii. **God molds our kids:** Story about how Andrew was commended. If your kids are older it's not too late to God's plan in your household, but use wisdom.

G. PREPARE A GUEST ROOM:

Phil 1:22 And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

Phil 1:23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings.

Phil 1:24 And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.

Phil 1:25 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Prepare a guest room for me: Paul is speaking faith here

The grace of the Lord be with your spirit: Grace=charis, divine influence upon the heart

READ EPH 2:1-8

H. MEN MOLDED BY GOD:

God molded these people:

- Abraham, the great man of faith
- Joseph, to be the 2nd man of Egypt

- Moses from shepherd to a mighty leader for the Israelites
- Jeremiah to the weeping prophet
- Ezekiel to the man who had a vision on the Lord's day
- Peter to man of power and anointing
- James and John to the sons of Thunder
- Timothy to a Pastor
- John the Baptist to a fiery fearless preacher
- Paul into the greatest apostle and missionary for the gospel
- And God wants to mold us into a blessed and anointed vessel for his use

2 Tim 2:21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, **he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use**, and prepared unto every good work.

I. CLOSING

- i. Philemon had to experience the **molding process** of God and **had to learn forgiveness**.
- ii. Onesimus had to experience the **birthing and molding** process of God and **had to learn repentance and restitution**.
- iii. Paul was **used of God in the birthing and molding process**. But he understood that everything was of God **based on the opening and closing scriptures in used in this epistle**:

Verse 1 "I Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and verse 25, **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, Amen.**

Final Connection Thought: Let us all thank God for his birthing and molding that he does continuously on our families and us.