

Partnership
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"I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ." Philemon 1:6

One of my blog followers, Aaron Landgrave, picked the word "partnership" for his word for 2019. Partnership is a word used in the letters of Paul to the early churches in the New Testament. It is a word deep and rich with meaning. The Greek word, koinonia is translated as "participation" and occurs frequently in Philippians.

The commentator Melick makes the point, "Christians not only belong to one another but actually become mutually identified, truly rejoicing with the happy and genuinely weeping with the sad." Philemon's "participation in the faith" would mean that he also participated in the good things that promoted the cause of Christ.

We are Stronger Together

I think we take for granted the power and blessings of Christian partnership. Paul was reminding Philemon of the need to reconcile with Onesimus "...for the greater good of the Kingdom." He centers his argument on the fact we are all slaves to sin. Our entrapment needs release, we need reconciliation. Jesus is the one who heals our broken relationship.

The Power of Community

Christian partnership is about community. In this community, we forgive an erring and repentant brother or sister. We offer through Christ the salvation He won on Calvary's cross. Reconciliation has far-reaching implications in the whole church and a hurting world observing the church.

Prayer for the Week

Dear Father,

I know some of my choices in life have created a distance from you and others. I struggle to seek reconciliation and not vengeance in my life. My actions have not led me to the right places. I listened to the voices of my enemies instead of Your words in Scripture, and the results have been disastrous.

Paul reminded Philemon that we are called for a greater purpose, to walk in the light.

"Create a clean heart for me, God;
put a new, faithful spirit deep inside me!
Let me hear joy and celebration again;
let the bones you crushed rejoice once more." Psalm 51

Lord, help me be an agent of reconciliation and restoration. I pray this in the precious name of Jesus.
Amen.