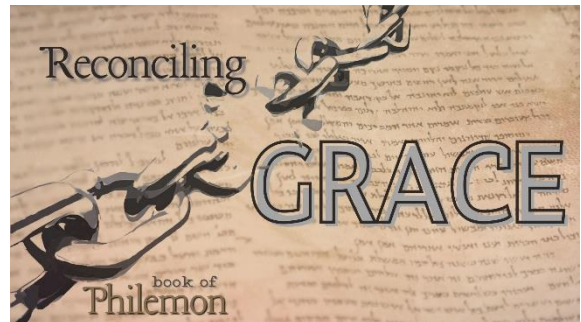

Philemon: Reconciling Grace
REV. JOSH DESCH
NEPC SERMON SERIES
SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024

Sermon Title: “The Bible and Slavery, Part 1”
(#4 in the Sermon Series)

Scripture text: Philemon 12-16

Main Points:



1. What do we do with difficult passages of the Bible, like the ones about slavery?
2. What was slavery like in Paul’s day, and how does it compare to slavery in American history?
3. What can we learn from Paul’s strategy with Philemon about his view of the power of the gospel and social change?

Questions:

1. **Ice Breaker Question** – What are some things in the Bible that you have struggled with? Not things you have struggled to understand, but things you have struggled to accept?
2. **Transition Question** – Before this sermon, what did you think about the Bible and what it has to say about slavery?
3. **Observation Question** – Paul says that Onesimus has become “his very heart.” Is Paul exaggerating here, or does this give us a picture of how special Onesimus has become to Paul?
4. **Interpretation Question** – Why doesn’t Paul straight out ask for emancipation for Onesimus? Do you think he should have?
5. **Reflection Question** — How does the gospel change the way we see people, especially “those people”?
6. **Application Question** – Where is God calling you to stand up for the least and the lost, like Paul did for Onesimus?