

FORMER LIFE

Beginning with verse 8, Paul began his appeal for a big favor from Philemon on behalf of Onesimus.

We have divided verses 8-14 (one Greek sentence) into three homiletical parts of Paul's appeal.

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| • Appeal (vs.8-9) | Love's sake | Believers | Fellowship |
| • Appeal (vs.10-11) | Lord's sake | Born again | Family |
| • Appeal (vs.12-14) | Liberty's sake | Benefactors | Freedom |

Today's lesson comes from the second homiletical appeal (vs.10-11). Pay attention to the English words "formerly" and "now." These two temporal adverbs are used to establish our lesson title.

We will examine these two adverbs by the following two points.

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| • Formerly (ton pote) | Before Christ | Useless (achrestos) to the plan of God. |
| • Now (nun) | After Christ | Useful (euchrestos) to the plan of God. |

Here is the thrust of today's lesson; "Everyone has a former life which is **useless** to the plan of God." However once a person believes the gospel of grace salvation (1 Cor.15:1-4; Rom.1:16), he / she becomes **useful** to the Plan of God.

(Eph.2:8-10) "**But now** in Christ Jesus you were formerly far off (useless) have been brought near by the blood of Christ (useful)."

This lesson will study five ways a person's former life can be changed by the power of the Gospel of Grace Salvation.
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1. The point that Paul is making to Philemon is that there are no Christians without a formerly life as a sinner (Onesimus, vs.11) and (Philemon, vs.19).

Onesimus' former life was no worse than Paul's or Timothy's or Philemon's. We are all sinners with a former life (Rom.3:23-24).

Paul - "Even though I was **formerly** (proteros) a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. And yet I was shown mercy because I acted in unbelief; and **the grace of our Lord was more than abundant**, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. It is trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**, among whom I am foremost of all." (1 Tim.1:13-15)

2. Every Christian has a former life because of the 13 judicial charges of AOS (Adam's Original Sin)

Alienation (Eph.2:19)	Blind (2 Cor.4:4)	Condemnation (Rom.8:1)	Cursed (Gal.3:13-14)
Darkness (Col.1:13)	Death (Rom.5:12)	Enmity (Eph.2:11-16)	Natural (1 Cor.2:14)
Perish (John 3:16)	Sinner (1 Tim.1:15)	Ungodly (Rom.5:6)	Unrighteous (Rom.3:10)
			Wrath (John 3:36)

(Rom.8:2) "Set free from the law of sin and death."

If you lived a moral or religious life, you would still have a former life of AOS (Phil.3:4-11) [Paul].

OR

If you lived an immoral or irreligious life, you would still have a former life of AOS (Heb.11:31; Matt.1:5, 18) [Rahab] (Josh.6).

3. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only power able to remove the 13 judicial charges of AOS and to cleanse us from the deeds of the former life.

(Rom.1:16) “For I am not ashamed of **the gospel, for it the power of God** for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greeks.”

The removable of the 13 judicial charges of AOS is part of the package of 50 things that every believer receives at salvation that he can never lose in time or eternity. (See **50 Things Free** on our website)

“For we also **once (pote / formerly)** foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.” (Titus 3:3-5)

Peter -“And again a voice came to him a second time, ‘**What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.**’ And this happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into the sky.” (Acts 10:15-16)

Peter - “And He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.” (Acts 15:9)

4. While the gospel of Jesus Christ has the power to cleanse the believer from the deeds of a former life, it also has the power to create a new life in Christ.

“Therefore if any man is inn Christ, he is a **new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” (2 Cor.5:17)

“We know that we have **passed out of death into life**, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.” (1 John 3:14)

“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you **formerly (pote)** walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all **formerly (pote)** lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.” (Eph.2:1-3)

5. However, our former life ‘beliefs’ can be brought into the CWL and corrupt the ‘new man’ in Christ.

“That in reference to your **former (proteros)** manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lust s of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which is the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.” (Eph.4:22-24) (4:25-32) (Col.3:5-11)

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the **former (proteros)** lusts which were yours in your ignorance, **but like** the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.” (1 Pet.1:14-15)

- **Jews** Legalism (Gal.2:11-21; Book of Hebrews)
- **Gentiles** Paganism (1 Cor.3:1-3; 5:1; 6:18; 8:7-9)