

BELOVED BROTHER

In today's lesson's text, Paul began with his theological reason for Philemon to consider releasing Onesimus from slavery – "For perhaps he was for this reason parted from you **for a while**, that you should have him back **forever**, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, **a beloved brother**, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord."

We will examine our lesson text by the following three homiletical points.

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| • Slave status | Bondage | Fugitive |
| • Saved status | Brother | Family |
| • Superior status | Beloved | Faith |

This lesson will study five aspects of Paul's theological reason for Philemon releasing Onesimus from slavery as a BELOVED BROTHER.

1. BELOVED (agapetos) BROTHER (adelphos) is a theological title to describe the saved relationship between God as Father and the believer as His son.

It is an eternal title of every Church Age Believer (CAB): "**Forever (aionios)**, no longer (ouketi) as (hos) a slave, but (alla / adversative) more than (huper+ablative) [above / superior] a slave, **a beloved brother.**"

Beloved brother refers to every CAB being the object worthy of God's maximum love as a Father to a son based on grace salvation resulting from faith in the gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ (1 Cor.15:4-5; Rom.1:16).

"But as many as received Him, to them **He gave the right to become children of God**, even to those who **believe** on His name, who were **born** not of blood, nor to the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God.**" (John 1:12-13)

This doctrinal principle will be especially important to Onesimus - "For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, '**Abba! Father.**' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are **children of God.**" (Rom.8:15-16)

2. The title BELOVED BROTHER is transferred to every CAB at the moment of grace salvation based on being in union with Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God.

The title Beloved Son was ascribed to Jesus on three different occasions in the Book of Matthew.

Baptism of Jesus

"And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" (Matt.3:17)

Sabbath controversy

"My Beloved in whom My soul is well-pleased." (Matt.12:18; Isa.42:1)

Transfiguration of Jesus

"This is My Beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him." (Matt.17:5; 2 Pet.1:17-18)

In the parable of the Wicked Vine-growers, Jesus is depicted as the Beloved Son who the tenants murdered (**Luke 20:9-18**) "And the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send **my beloved son**; perhaps they will respect him.'"

3. BELOVED and BROTHER are 2 of the 50 things that every CAB receives in the package of grace salvation that he/she can never lose in time or eternity (1 John 4:9-10).

In our pamphlet entitled, 50 Things FREE, Beloved and Brother are listed among the 20 Status Privileges as children of the royal family of God (1 Pet.2:5, 9).

“But we should always give thanks to God for you, **brethren beloved by the Lord**, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.” (2 Thess.2:13)

Beloved: “To all who are **beloved of God** in Rome, called as saints.” (Rom.1:7) “And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy, **beloved**.” (Col.3:12a)

Brother: “To the saints and faithful **brethren in Christ** who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.” (Col.1:2) “Knowing, **brethren beloved by God**, His choice of you.” (1 Thess.1:4)

4. In grace salvation, every CAB becomes a BELOVED BROTHER on the basis of positional sanctification.

“In love, He predestined us to adoption **as sons** through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which he freely bestowed on us **in the Beloved**.” (Eph.1:5-6)

“For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of **His Beloved Son**.” (Col.1:13)

Positional Sanctification is the result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (positional truth)

“For you are **all sons of God** through faith in Christ Jesus. For **all** of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed your selves with Christ.” (Gal.3:26-27)

“For by one Spirit we were **all baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were **all** made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Cor.12:13)

“See **how great a love** the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called **children of God**; and **such we are**. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” (1 John 3:1)

5. Therefore, every CAB is always the object of God’s maximum love whether a carnal or spiritual BELOVED BROTHER (1 Cor.3:1-3).

An example of this doctrinal principle is given in the parable of the Prodigal Son – “And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father **saw** him, and **felt compassion** for him, and **ran** and **embraced** him, and **kissed** him.” (15:20)

“For those whom the **Lord loves** He disciplines, and he scourges **every son** whom He receives.” (Heb.12:6)

“I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, **even as Thou didst love Me**.” (John 17:23)