

My very heart. Philemon 12 (R.V.)

This fragment of ancient letter-writing gives us a model of the way in which our commonest or most prosaic dealings, and our letters, even on business matters may breathe the spirit of Christ. It also illustrates the relation in which we stand to Jesus Christ. What Onesimus was to Paul and Philemon combined, that we are to our Lord.

WHAT WAS ONESIMUS TO PAUL? His child, whom he had begotten in his bonds. He had probably been discovered by some of his companions in the purlieu of Rome, where criminals concealed themselves from justice, and abandoned characters gave vent to the wildest passions. Or, having heard that the apostle, whom he had so often met in his master's house, was residing in his own hired house in Rome, the runaway slave had found him out, when in the extremity of hunger. In either case he had now become dear as the apostle's heart; had learnt to minister to him in his bonds; had proved more than a servant--a brother beloved. O Thou who hast redeemed us from our sins, may we be all this to Thee!

WHAT WAS ONESIMUS TO PHILEMON? He had been unprofitable; and we have been. He was sent back; and we have returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. He had been a servant, henceforth he should be a beloved brother; and we are no longer servants, but friends. He had grievously wronged his master; but his sin had been forgiven, and so covered by over-abounding grace, that it would bring him into a position of greater privilege and blessing than ever before. In this man's sin and restoration we see ourselves. Where our sin abounded, grace has much more abounded, through the tender pity of Him who had put our defalcations to his own account.

我心上的人。 門12

這卷古老書信的片斷提供我們一個典範，在最平凡的書信來往中，可以有基督之靈的呼出。這也說明了我們和耶穌基督的關係。阿尼西母與保羅以及腓利門的關係，也就是我們與主的關係。

阿尼西母與保羅是什麼關係呢？阿尼西母是保羅在捆鎖中所生的兒子(10節)。他或許在羅馬的貧民窟被某個同伴發現，在那裡罪犯看不見公正，被唾棄的人發洩暴怒。或者他聽說那位在他主人家經常遇見的使徒，正住在羅馬一間租來的房子裡(徒廿八30)，這個逃跑的奴隸在極度饑餓中找到了他。無論是哪一種情形，他現在成了使徒心中親愛的人；學習服事在捆鎖中的使徒；已經證明高過奴僕——是一個親愛的兄弟(15節)。主啊！你曾將我們從罪中贖出來，願我們也成為你心上的人，學習服事你，證明自己是高過奴僕，是親愛的弟兄！

阿尼西母與腓利門是什麼關係呢？他以前對主人腓利門沒有益處(11節)；正如我們曾經對主沒有益處。他被打發回來，我們也同樣歸回我們靈魂的大牧人監督(彼前二25)。他以前是奴僕，如今是親愛的兄弟；我們也是不再作奴僕，而是朋友。他曾嚴重地得罪了他的主人；然而他的罪已蒙赦免，被綽綽有餘豐富的恩典遮蓋了，這恩典帶領他達到的地位，比先前有更大的權利和祝福。從這個人的罪和復興裡，我們也看見我們自己。罪在哪裡顯多，恩典就更顯多了(羅五20)，因著祂的憐憫，祂將我們盜用的款項都歸在祂的賬上(18節)。