

The Necessity of Forgiveness

Philemon 1-21

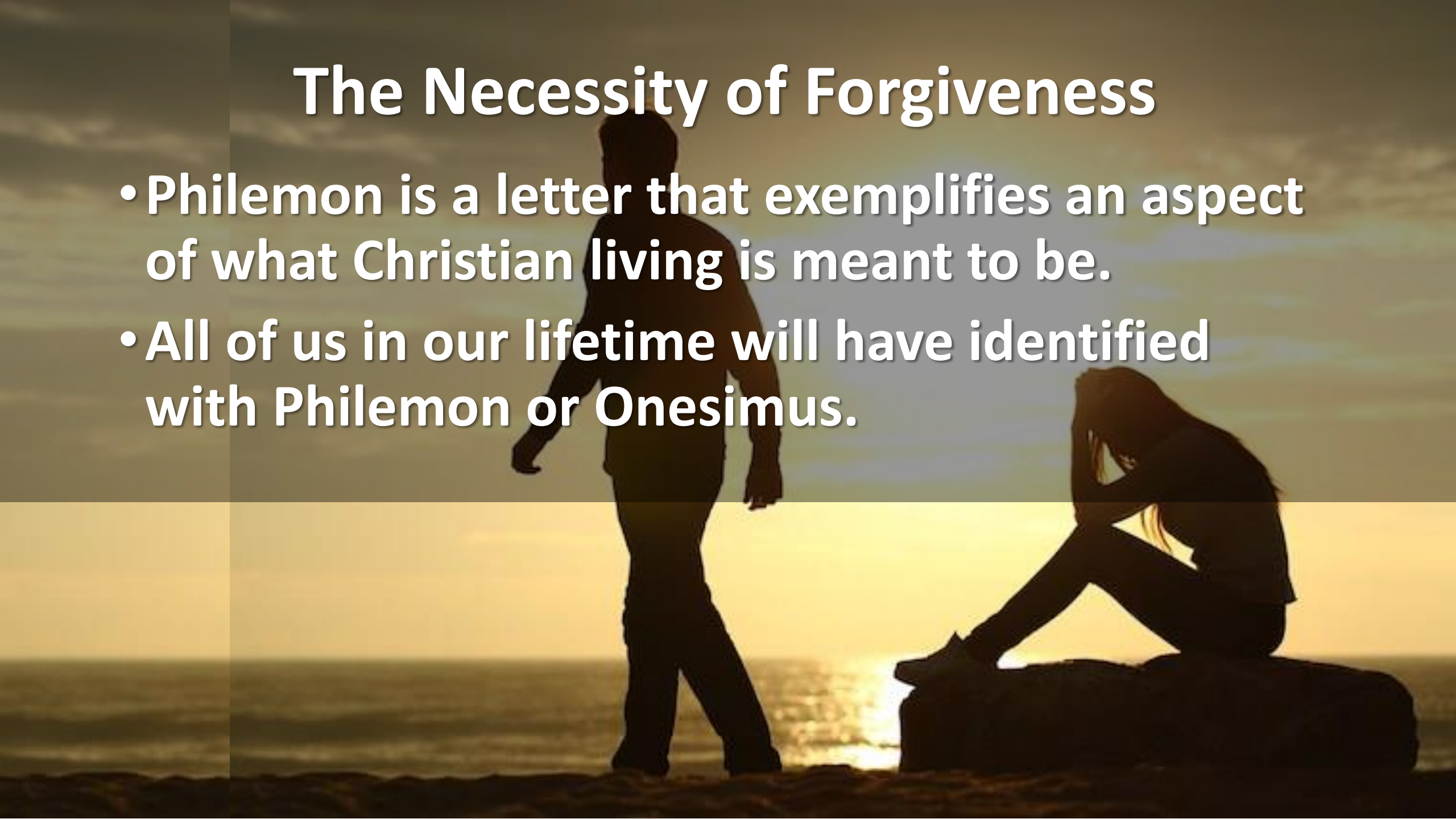


The 3 Main Characters of Philemon

Philemon	Paul	Onesimus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slave owner• Converted by Paul• ‘Brother’ and co-worker of Paul• Legally justified in meting out punishment under Roman Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apostle• Author of the letter• Pleaded on behalf of Onesimus• Had the authority• Willing to compensate Philemon in anyway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Runaway slave• Deserving of punishment• Converted by Paul• Adopted by Paul

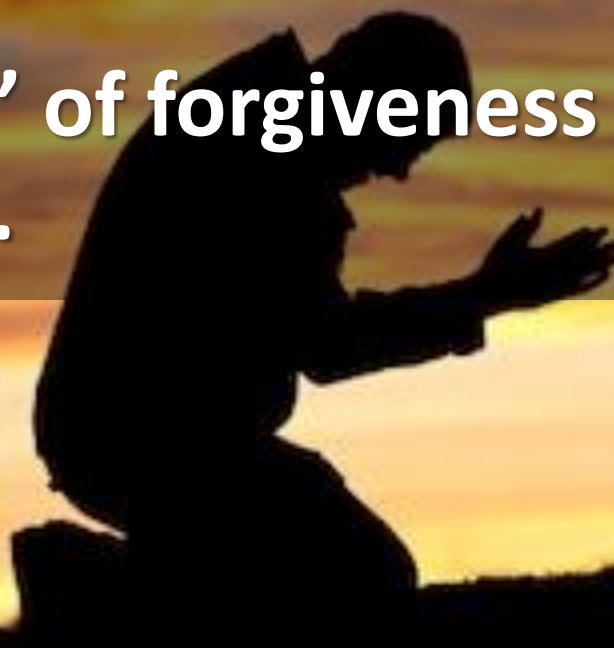
The Necessity of Forgiveness

- Philemon is a letter that exemplifies an aspect of what Christian living is meant to be.
- All of us in our lifetime will have identified with Philemon or Onesimus.



3 Reasons Why:

- Forgiveness is a core tenet and command - Christ taught, lived and died for it.
- An act of worship – An act of love & a call to imitate Christ.
- The 'fruits' of forgiveness are far sweeter than bitterness.



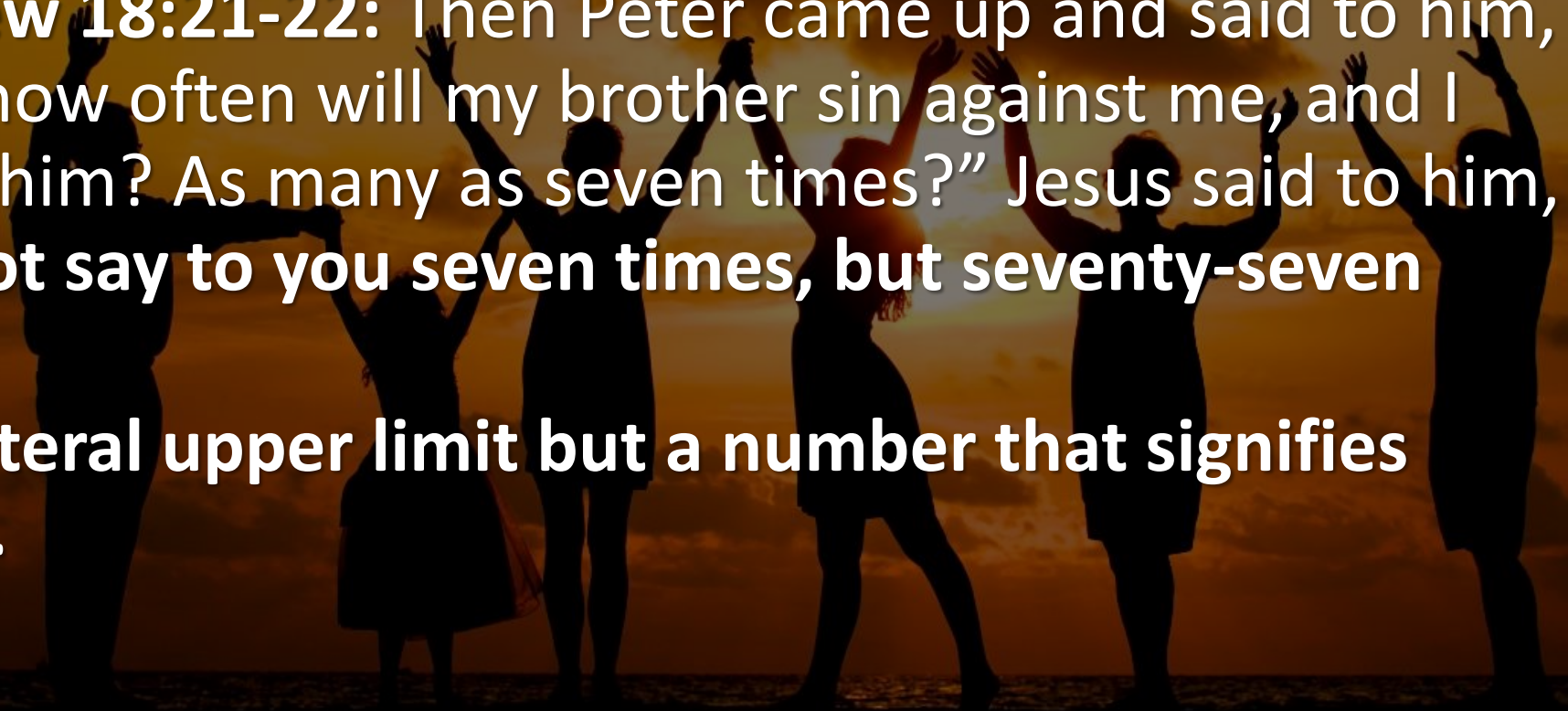
1. Christ Taught Us So

“Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do” - Philemon 8

- When we pray...
 - Matthew 6:12: “... and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”
 - Matthew 6:14-15: For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, **but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

1. Christ Taught Us So

- **How many times?**
 - **Matthew 18:21-22:** Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “**I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.**”
 - **Not a literal upper limit but a number that signifies infinity.**



1. Christ Lived and Died for It:

A continual acknowledgement in the New Testament:

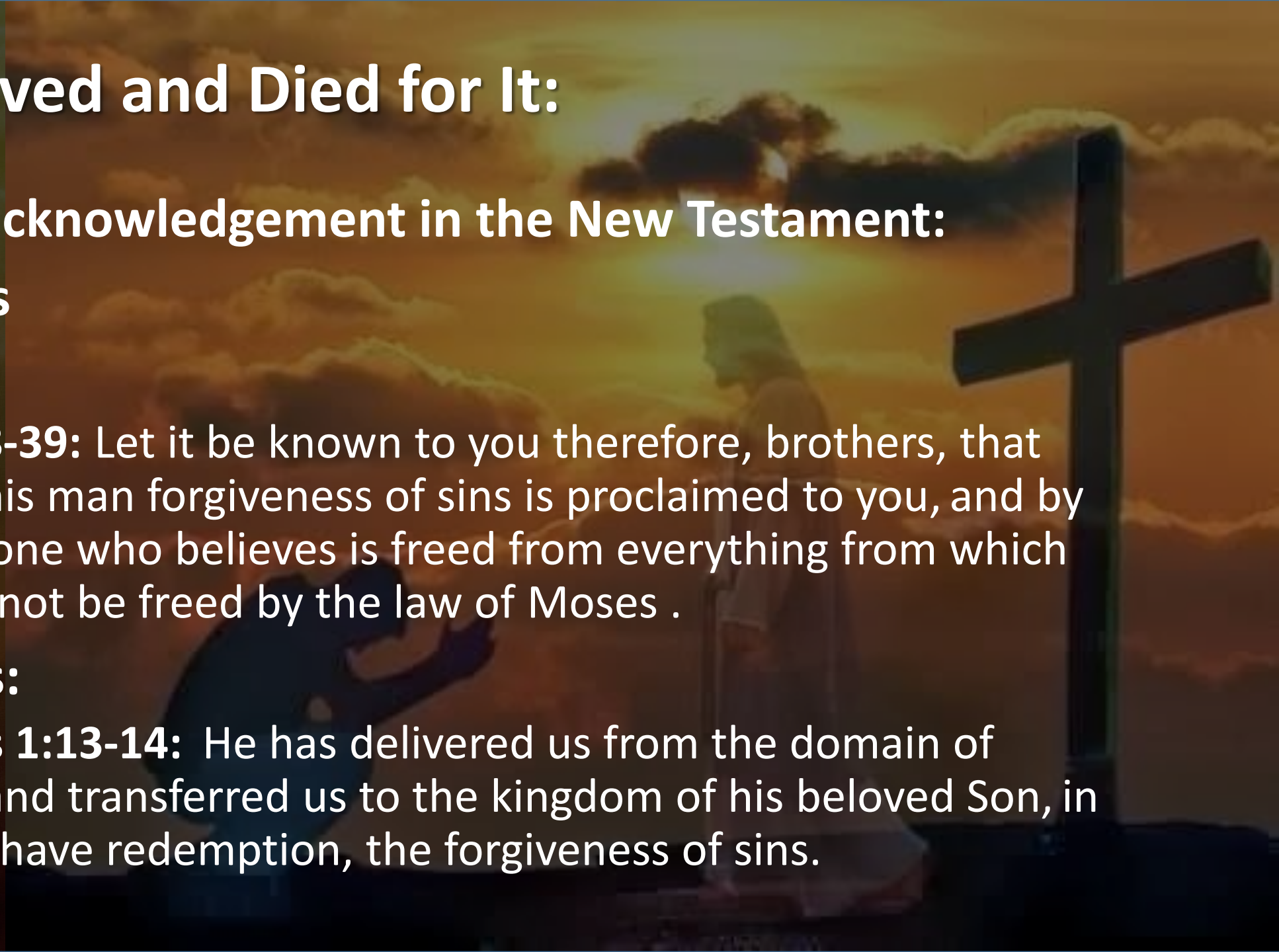
- **The Gospels**

- **In Acts:**

- **Acts 13:38-39:** Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses .

- **The Epistles:**

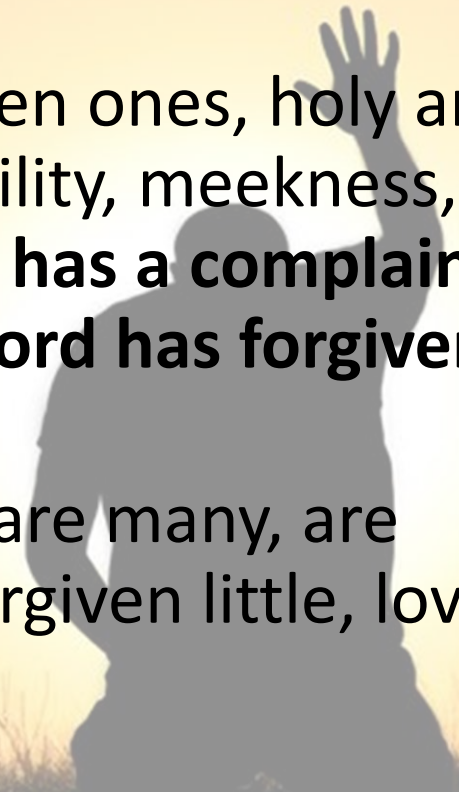
- **Colossians 1:13-14:** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.



2. An Act of Worship

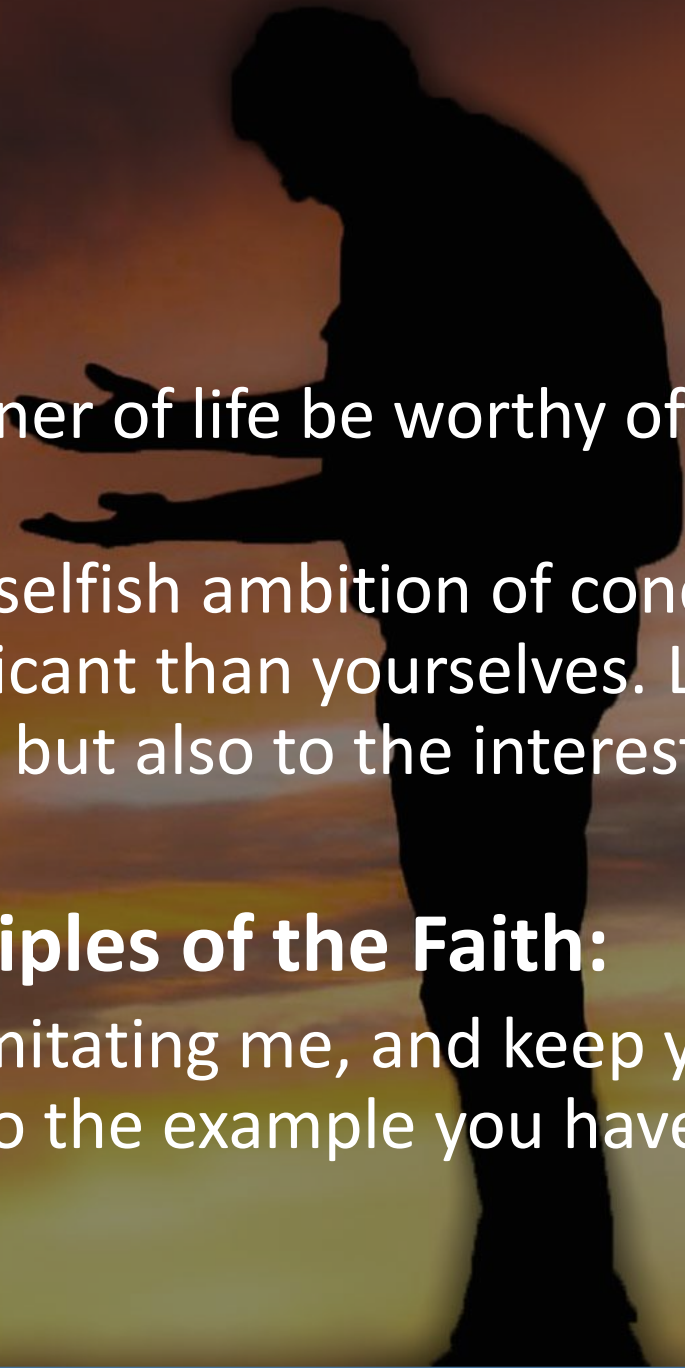
“...because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints,” - Philemon 5

- **To forgive is to know the grace of God:**
 - **Colossians 3:12-13:** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, **if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.**
 - **Luke 7:47:** Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

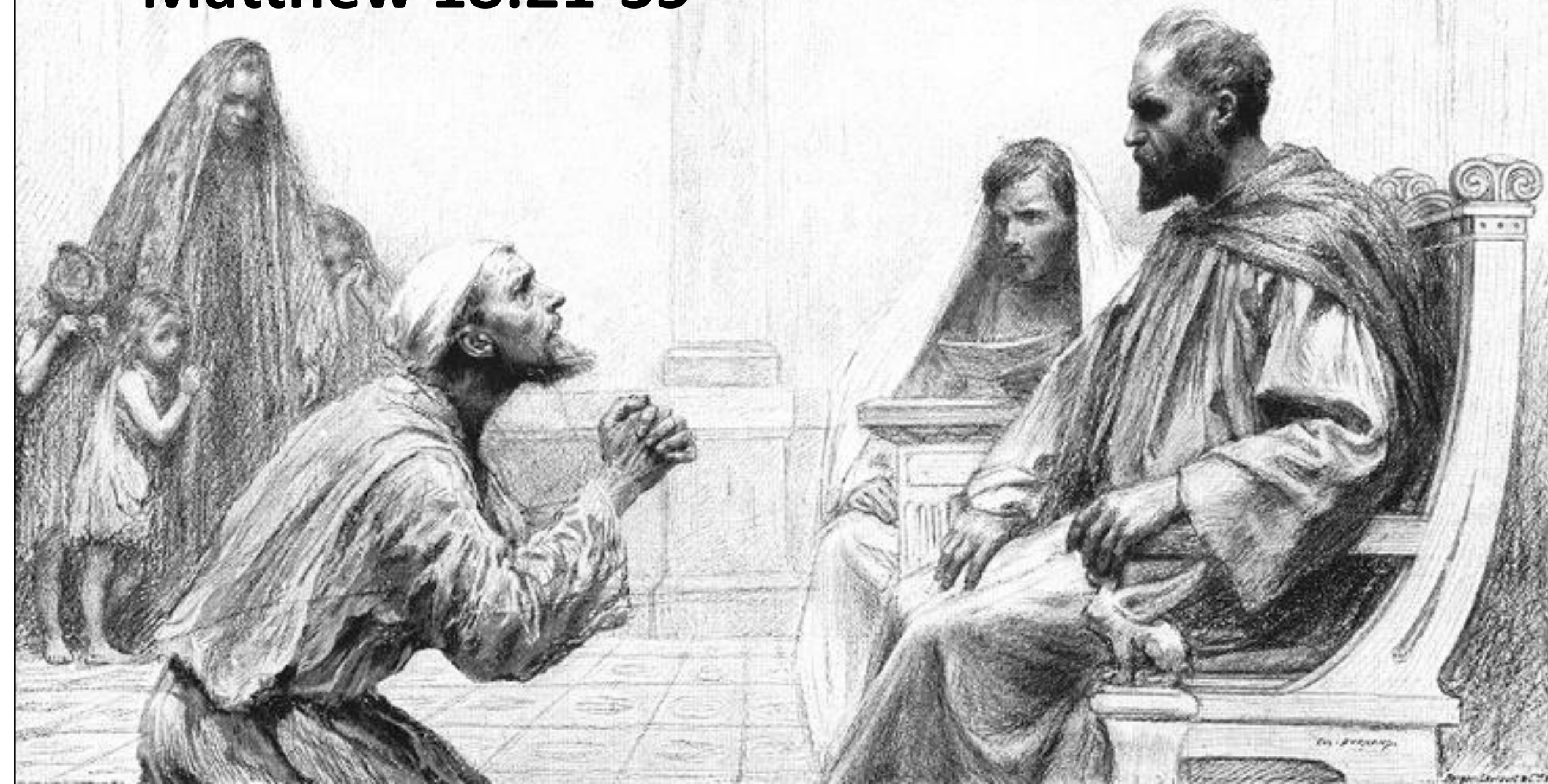


2. An Act of Worship

- **In Living a life worthy of Christ:**
 - **Philippians 1:27** “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ...”
 - **Philippians 2:3-4** “Do nothing from selfish ambition of conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his interests, but also to the interests of others.
- **In Imitating Christ and fellow disciples of the Faith:**
 - **Philippians 3:17** “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us”



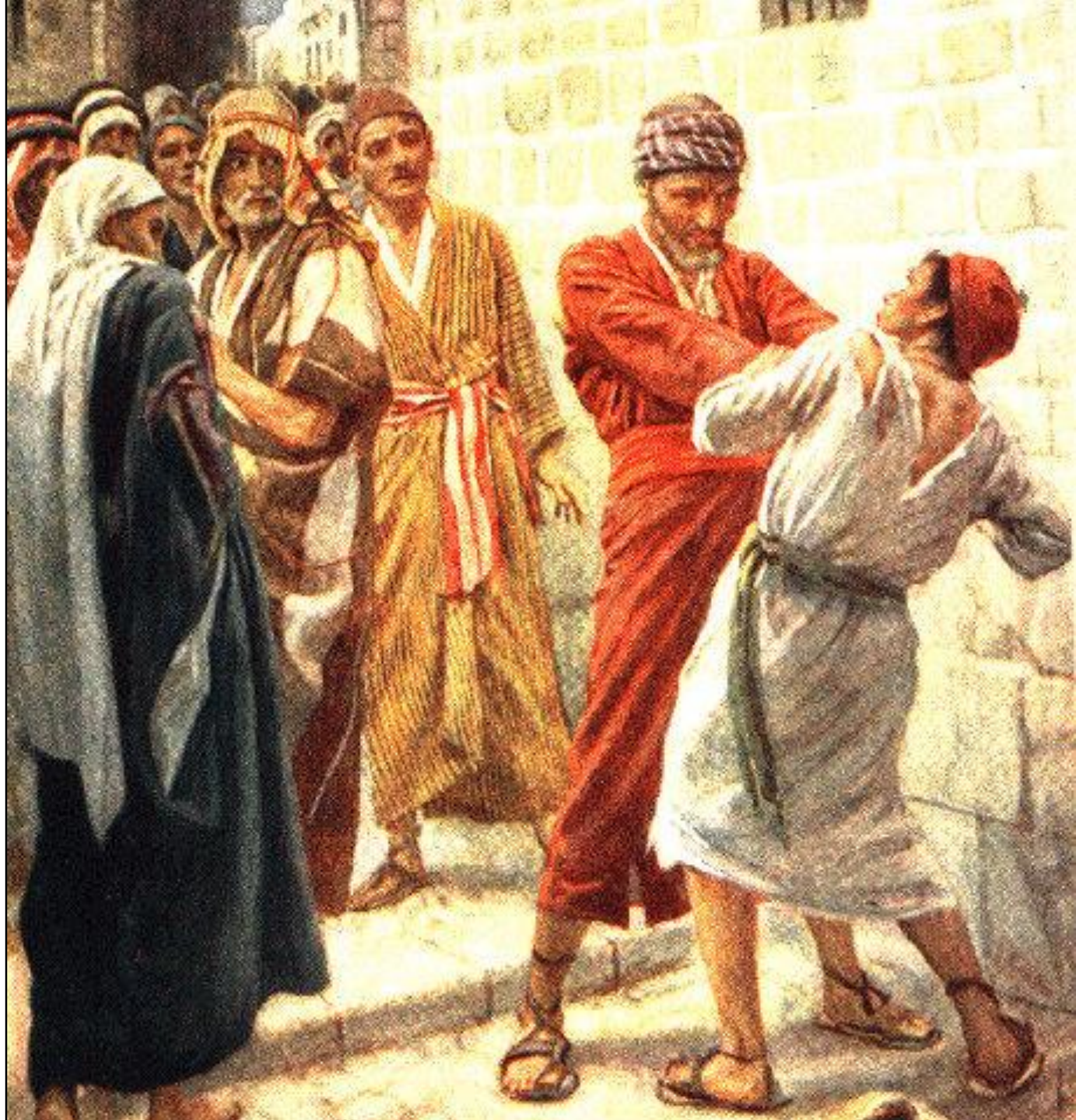
Matthew 18:21-35



Matthew 18:21-35

³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.

³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."



3. The 'Fruits' of Forgiveness

For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, no longer as a bondservant but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother—especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. – Philemon 15-16

The redemptive power of Christ:

- **1 Peter 3:9:** Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.
- **Hebrews 8:12** For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more. (NIV)
- Both the forgiver and the forgiven gain.
- Others are blessed as well.

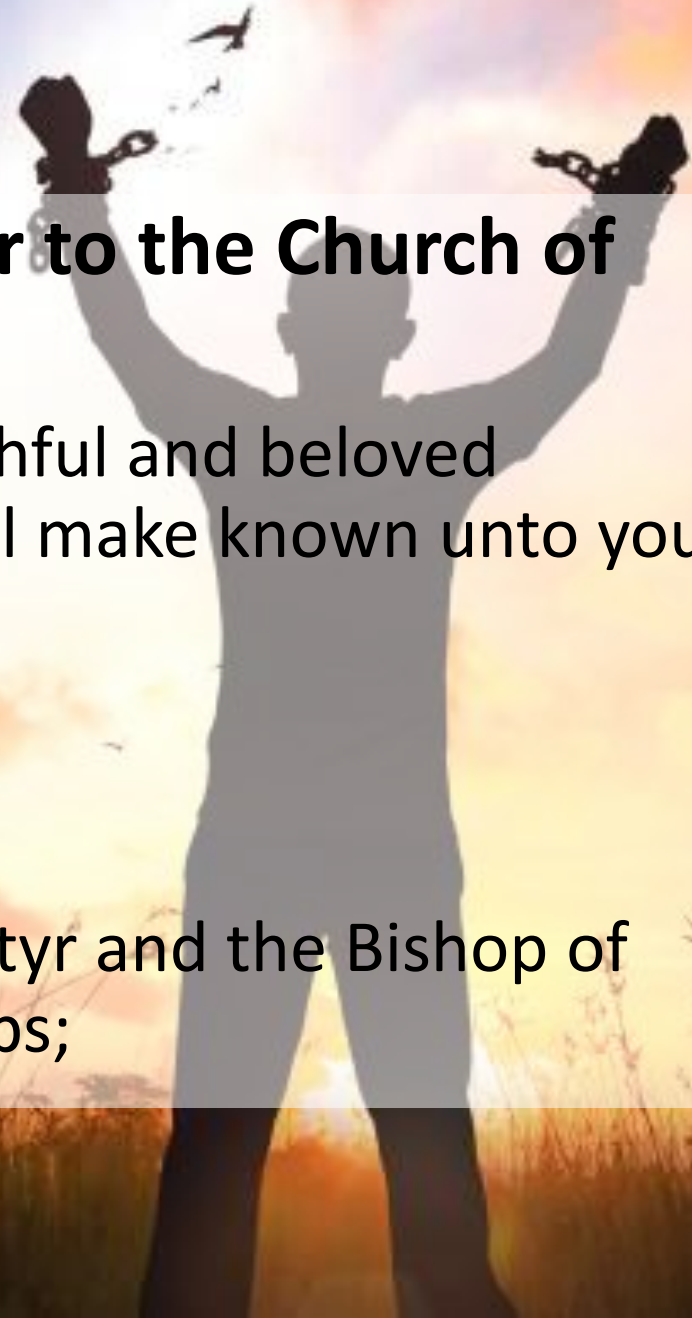
'Useful' Onesimus

A possible worker and messenger to the Church of Colossae:

- **Colossians 4:9** With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.

A bishop [?]:

- Traditionally Acknowledged as a martyr and the Bishop of Ephesus among some Christian groups;



Warning against Bitterness and Revenge

- **Hebrews 12: 14-15:**

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; **that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;**

- **Romans 12:19-21:**

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”

A close-up photograph of two hands, one from a darker-skinned person and one from a lighter-skinned person, gently cupping a small, light-colored, heart-shaped object. The background is a soft-focus, warm-toned surface, possibly sand or a textured cloth. The word 'Reflection' is written in a white, elegant cursive script across the top of the image.

Reflection

- Is there bitterness that needs to be surrendered?
- Is there someone you need to forgive?
- Do you need to ask for forgiveness?