

Preface To The Epistle Of Saint Paul To Philemon (1546 and 1522)

This Epistle gives us a masterly and tender illustration of Christian love; for here we see how St. Paul takes the part of poor Onesimus and advocates his cause with his master all that he can, and acts no differently than if he were himself Onesimus, who has done wrong.

And yet he does this, not with force or compulsion, as was his right, but he lays aside his rights and thus compels Philemon, also, to waive his rights. What Christ has done for us with God the Father, that St. Paul does for Onesimus with Philemon. For Christ laid aside His rights and overcame His Father with love and humility, so that He had to put away His wrath and His rights and receive us into favor, for Christ's sake, who so earnestly advocates our cause and takes our part so tenderly. For we are all his Onesimi, if we believe.