

## God Is In The Birthing and Molding Business

**Philippians 1:6** - Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

CEV - God is the one who began this good work in you, and I am certain that he won't stop before it is complete on the day that Christ Jesus returns.

**Purpose:** I want to encourage you this morning, saved or unsaved, **God still wants to mold you!**

**Connections:**

- *I'm Using the characters in Philemon to support my thoughts.*
- *To show how God can mold the saved and the unsaved for his purpose.*

**Philemon 1:1-11** - **1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus**, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker,

**Phil 1:2** to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home:

**Phil 1:3** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Phil 1:4** I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers,

**Phil 1:5** because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.

**Phil 1:6** I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

**Phil 1:7** Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

**Phil 1:8** Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do,

**Phil 1:9** yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul-an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus-

**Phil 1:10** I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

**Phil 1:11** Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

**FOCUS THOUGHT:** God is continuously working on molding us on what he wants us to be. No matter how many times we succeed or fail, God is not finished working on us.

**A. *Everyday responsibilities tend to mold us and shape us.***

- Believe it or not, our daily lives **tend to shape our character.**
- All the stress, traffic, our jobs, handling the kids, and just daily routines **mold and shape who we are.**

**If we're not careful we can wake up one day and find that we're not satisfied with where we are in our spiritual walk.**

**God has always been in the birthing and molding business.**

There are many examples throughout the Word of God on **how God changes people and molds them for his use.**

- Every one of us are at different levels in our walk with God.
- ***Some of us have the victory,*** feel very blessed,
- Some of us *may be going through trials, sickness, suffering discouragement,*
- **Maybe you feel** backslidden, or this may be your first time in church.
- But the **one thing remains the same;**
- **God is still in the birthing and molding business.**

**Doesn't matter how much money you have, your job status, where you're from, where you live, how much stock you have, what color you are, what sin you may have committed,**

**God wants to put his arms around us, shape, and mold our hearts!**

**FACTS: Paul wrote Philemon from prison and is classified with Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians and is considered one of Paul's Prison Epistles.**

- This Epistle was written during **his first Roman imprisonment** A.D. 61-63.
- **The theme is Reconciliation,** 25 verses, The **Key Word** would be **Receive.**

***Paul wrote Philemon to deal with the specific problem of his runaway slave Onesimus.***

- According to **Roman law,** a runaway slave could be punished by death.
- **Paul intercedes on Onesimus' behalf** with Philmon
- And petitions him to ***graciously receive Onesimus back,***
- **Not as a slave, but as a fellow believer** and as Paul's companion, with the same love and respect with which he would receive Paul himself.

The book of Philemon involves 3 people who take on 3 separate roles in the eyes of God.

- First **Philemon** who was the respected man of God who had to learn forgiveness.
- Second, **Onesimus** who had to learn repentance and restitution.
- Then 3<sup>rd</sup>, the **Apostle Paul** interceded on behalf of Onesimus.

B. PAUL “The Intercessor”: Phil 1:1 **Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus**, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker,

Paul is the ultimate example of being molded into what God can do.

Paul refers himself as a “Prisoner of Christ Jesus”.

- Thrown into prison for preaching the Gospel.
- **He was also referring to how consumed he was**, that God’s hand was continuously molding his life.

I wonder how blessed we would become, what revelation would we get if we put on the mind set of being a “Prisoner of Jesus Christ”.

We would become so dangerous to the devil and become a jewel in God’s kingdom!!!

C. PHILEMON’S REPORT: “Student of Forgiveness” - Philemon 1:4-7 - **4** I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, **5** because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. **6** I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. **7** Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

I remember you in my prayers: How can we help God mold each other.

Your faith and your love for all the saints:

- a. **Philemon “affectionate”**, was a convert under the Paul.
- b. **He was a man of faith**, prayer, and loved all saints.
- c. Although he was born again, **filled with the Spirit**, the Paul directs the focus of the letter towards Philemon.
- d. **God still had to do some molding** in his heart, and he used the Paul to talk directly to him.

**May be active in sharing your faith: “Active” or “Communication” means, participation, distribution, and fellowship.**

” How to see a treasure right in his own house in Onesimus, **he missed that one!**

This is one of the quickest cures for discouragement, **(share your faith)**

***It's too easy to sin and stay away from church!***

**Be accountable to God and let him mold you in church!**

**Have refreshed the hearts of the saints: This is part of Philemon's good report.**

**Through God's molding of him, he was a blessing to the saints of the church.**

**Acts 3:19 - Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,**

***Philemon had to learn “Forgiveness.”***

**He had his slave steal from his house and take off running.**

**\*\*You may feel you have a strong walk and relationship with the Lord, but the minute someone does you wrong you feel like you must get revenge.**

***Even though we might be born again and love the Lord, God isn't finished molding us yet.***

- ***There's still a chapter of victory to be written,***
- ***Souls to be won, and praise reports to be given.***
- ***The best is yet to come.***

**Key Words that describe God's molding process:**

1. **Justification**-a change of standing before God
2. **Regeneration**- a change of nature from God
3. **Repentance**- a change of mind about God
4. **Conversion**- a change of life for God
5. **Sanctification**- a change of service unto God
6. **Glorification**- a change of place with God
7. **Adoption**- a change of family in God

D. ONESIMUS: **“Repentance and Restitution”** Philemon 1:10-11, 13, 16 - 10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

**11 Formerly he was useless to you**, but now **he has become useful** both to you and to me.

**13** I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in **helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.**

**16 no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother.** He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.

**Who became my son while I was in chains: *Paul preaching in jail!!***

**Formerly he was useless:** Onesimus was a slave who stole from Philemon for whatever reason and ran away. ***He was later caught and thrown into prison with the apostle Paul.***

***\*\*\*It took Paul to preach and intercede on his behalf.*** Just like Jesus must ***intercede on our behalf and take up our sins!***

**He has become useful:** Being a slave with Philemon he must have had **heard some preaching and worship** while being there.

- **A seed** had to be planted in him.
- While being in prison with Paul, **he was born again.**

**Onesimus was no longer a slave and unprofitable.**

**He was now forgiven, blessed, and anointed of God to spread the gospel.**  
**Such as we are now!!!**      **Formerly was useless: My Story before Christ!!!**

**The New Things that come from God:**

**A new Heart – spirit – song – hope – life – motive – attitude – service – message.**

**Philippians 1:6 - Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.**

**2 Corinthians 5:17 -** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

**Ephesians 2:10 -** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

## E. PREPARE A GUEST ROOM: Philemon 1:22-25

**22** And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

**23** Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings.

**24** And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.

**25** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

**Prepare a guest room for me: Paul is speaking faith here.**

**The grace of the Lord be with your spirit: Grace, divine influence upon the heart**

### **Ephesians 2:1-8 - By Grace Through Faith**

**2** **And you He made alive**, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

**4** **But God**, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

## F. MEN MOLDED BY GOD:

- **Abraham**, the great man of faith
- **Moses**, from shepherd to a mighty leader for the Israelites
- **Jeremiah**, to the weeping prophet
- **Ezekiel**, to the man who had a vision on the Lord's day
- **Peter**, to man of power and anointing
- **Timothy**, to a Pastor
- **John the Baptist**, to a fiery fearless preacher
- **Paul**, into the greatest apostle and missionary for the gospel

God wants to mold us into a blessed and anointed vessel for his use!

2 Timothy 2:21

<sup>21</sup> Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.

CLOSE:

Philemon had to experience the molding process of God and had to learn forgiveness.

Onesimus had to experience the birthing and molding process of God and had to learn repentance and restitution.

Paul was used of God in the birthing and molding process.

But he understood that everything was of God based on the opening and closing scriptures used in this epistle:

Verse 1 "I Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and verse 25, The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, Amen.

Final Connection Thought:

Let us all thank God for his birthing and molding that he does continuously on our families and us.

Philippians 1:6 - CEV - God is the one who began this good work in you, and I am certain that he won't stop before it is complete.