

# Eisenhower Church of Christ

## Useless or Useful?

Paul's letter to Philemon is a personal appeal to his friend Philemon regarding the slave, Onesimus. Apparently Onesimus had run away from his master, which was a crime punishable by death under Roman law. At the same time, Onesimus may have stolen some of Philemon's goods. While on the run, Onesimus met Paul and was converted to Christ. Paul convinced Onesimus to return to his master and this letter was Paul's way of encouraging Philemon to accept Onesimus back, not only as his slave, but as his brother in Christ (Philemon 15-16).

As Paul sought to persuade Philemon to receive Onesimus, he made a play on Onesimus' name, which means "useful." In verse 10-11 Paul said, ***"I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me."*** When Onesimus was serving Philemon he was literally useful to him. When he ran away, he became useless to Philemon. Then, when he became a Christian, this "useless" slave became useful to Paul in his imprisonment. Now, as Paul was sending him back to his master, Onesimus would once again be useful to Philemon.

The transformation of this slave from useless to useful is an illustration of the power of God's word to change our character. As an unbelieving slave Onesimus thought only of himself. This is why he ran away from Philemon. When he became a Christian, however, he learned from Paul the importance of humble service, and of the need to render faithful service as a slave of Christ. This slave who returned to Philemon was no doubt a much better slave than he had ever been.

This same transformation must take place in each one who becomes a disciple of Christ. When we are outside of Christ Paul says that we have no hope and are without God in the world (Ephesians 2:12). In this state, covered in sin, we are useless to God and to His kingdom. We are like Onesimus when he ran away from Philemon. If we continue in this state we will never be useful for godly things and our end will be in the lake of fire, which is the second death (Revelations 20:14-15).

However, when we become Christians, we begin the transformation that makes us useful to God, to His kingdom, and to our fellow Christians. Peter spoke of this in 2 Peter 1:5-8. He said, ***"Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence and in your moral excellence, knowledge and in your knowledge, self-control and in your self-control, perseverance and in your perseverance, godliness and in your godliness, brotherly kindness and in your brotherly kindness, love. For, if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."***

Peter likened new Christians to newborn babies (I Peter 2:1-3). However, newborn babies are not useful in the kingdom unless and until they add the virtues that make them useful in the Lord's service. If one does not grow and mature in the faith, as the scriptures require, then he is useless and unfruitful in the kingdom. This is not acceptable to the Lord.

Therefore, like Onesimus, we must be transformed from useless to useful. Paul helped Onesimus make this transformation by personally teaching him how to be useful in the kingdom. Today we learn the same lesson by devoting ourselves to God's word. In Romans 12:1-2 Paul said we are transformed by the renewing of our minds so we may prove what the will of God is. So then, let us not be useless, but useful in the Lord's service.

—Fred Dominguez

### ***Prayer Request***

**Rudy Ochoa** was taken to a hospital in Big Spring last weekend due to some pain he was having. He is now at Medical Center Hospital—Room #647 and will undergo more tests. Keep Rudy in your prayers.

For the next couple of weeks, **Linda Coggins** will have a series of tests. She has already had two rounds each of antibiotics and steroids. Linda is having breathing treatments every four hours and is on oxygen just about most of the time. She has had a cat scan and tests on her heart; COPD or a heart related problem is suspected. Please keep Linda in your daily prayers that she will get an answer soon.

**Cheyenne Lozano** (Sonia Wood's niece) gave birth to a 1 lb. 12 oz. baby girl Tuesday, January 31st. Her baby was delivered at 25 weeks and is breathing on her own. The family is requesting prayers for her.

### ***Concerns Update***

**Elder McCarty** has home health nurses and also physical therapy come to his home in hopes of building up his needed strength.

**Ann Wilson** (Denny's mother) is responding really well from her surgery. Please continue to keep Ann in your prayers.

**Jenny Fuls** (Nancy Easlon's sister) is home from the hospital and her mother, **Marjorie Foster**, is still recuperating from a broken leg after the car accident a few weeks ago.

**Charles Jones** is in Arizona with his son Mike. This is a permanent arrangement. If you would like to send Charles a card of encouragement, his mailing address is c/o Michael Jones, 2561 W. Granite Pass Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85085. It is also posted on our bulletin board.

### ***Prayer List***

David Alaniz; Lee Roy Bell, Betty Branson; Mary Brown; Bill Bundick; Mitchell Bundick; Sissy Bundick; Betty Burns; Crystal Card; Glynn Chandler; Sonny Coggins; John Cole; Barbara Crowder; Ruby Davis; Dayton Dennard; James & Joyce Drake; John Ford; Shane

Ford; Marjorie Foster; Melida Frazier; Jenny Fuls; Jane Gibbons; Hattie Gilmore; Maria Guzman; Anna Groves; Lon Howard; Charles Jones; Janis Laminack; Jody Langford; Elder & Glenna McCarty; Jason Moore; Russ Montgomery; Juan & Estella Morolez; Carolyn Morrison; Rudy Ochoa; Trina Plyler; Ivan Rigsby; Lester Savoy; Cynthia Schulze; Andrew Schwarz; Janelle Shirley; Brenda Simmons; Charles Simmons; James Stephens; John Tessororf; Bill Tolbert; Marilyn Upshaw; James Weaver; Judy Wells; Lisa Wells; Ann Wilson; John Wood; Jack Wright; Paula Wyatt; Toya Zambelli.

### ***Eisenhower's Shut-ins***

Ruby Davis; Roberta Hamil; Janice Laminack; Dusty and Kathy Marshall; Maxine Newton; Janelle Shirley; and Lester Whisenant.

### ***Youth***

#### **Bible Quiz Question...**

Elijah didn't die, as you know. Who else was "taken away?"

#### **Last Week's Bible Quiz answer...**

The second miracle Jesus performed in the city of Capernaum was healing the nobleman's son of the fever. (John 4:46-54)

### ***Thank You***

Dearest Brothers and Sisters,

You have showered me with love and I am so very grateful. Everyday there are 3 or 4 cards of sweet caring sympathy. They fill my heart with warmth.

Thank you so very much,

James & Terresia Weaver

### ***Events***

Watch "***In Search of the Lord's Way***" every Sunday morning at 7:00 am on KWES TV 9, (New West 9)

Also, tune in to hear a message from the Brown Trail Church of Christ on the "***Speaking the Truth in Love***" program every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. on ABC.

We will have a "***Sunday Night Family Devotional***" February 19th following the evening service. Please bring a snack food.

### ***Office News***

The "***New Mexico Children's Home***" will be back in Odessa March 7th, 2017. They are requesting **Apple Cider Vinegar and plain Vinegar**. Monetary donations also accepted.

### ***Food for Thought***

Two kinds of men never succeed—those who cannot do what they are told and those who cannot do anything else.

Some wish to be counted "in" but not counted "on."

Yesterday is buried and tomorrow is unborn. So, live nobly today.

**February 12, 2017 A.M.**

**P.M.**

Announcements	Allen Weakland	Allen Weakland
Song Leader	John Wood	Jacob Carson
Sermon	Allen Weakland	Allen Weakland
Opening Prayer	Allen Weakland	Allen Weakland
Scripture	Richard Siler	Dex Dennard
Second Prayer	George Warren	Rudy Ochoa
Closing Prayer	Trinidad Wood	Jr. Munoz

Lord's Supper

West...

Jeff Wesson  
Bill Tolbert  
Richard Siler

John Wood  
Communion  
(In Library)

East...

Josh Wells  
Josh Weakland  
Jacob Carson

**Other Responsibilities:** **Elder:** Allen Weakland 362-1403 **Deacon:** Jr. Munoz 363-1309 **Pulpit:** Tom Sorenson 631-2518 **Table:** John Wood 413-7444 **Song Leaders:** Denny Wilson 325-340-2291 **Recording Duties:** Chris Butler 362-7486 **Collections:** John Wood & Tom Sorenson

### **Sunday AM**

*"Is Being Religious Enough?"  
(Romans 2:17-24)*

### **Sunday PM**

*"Can We Withstand the Storm?"  
(Matthew 7:24-27)*

### **Our Records**

*Bible Class... 72  
Morning Worship...115  
Evening Worship...57  
Wednesday...76  
Contribution...\$5,423.54*