

**Discussion Questions for February 13, 2022 sermon,
“The Gospel Can’t Stay Inside,” from Philemon**

(You may not want to read these until after you’ve heard the sermon.)

1. Who do you thank God for in prayer?
2. Read Philemon and Luke 15:11-32. What parallels do you observe between Philemon and the parable Jesus taught?
3. When Paul is writing to Philemon, would you agree that he demonstrates authority but is not authoritative? Explain.
4. Throughout this letter, Paul is requesting that Philemon offer forgiveness to Onesimus. How have you observed, experienced, or needed forgiveness lately?
(See Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-22 and Colossians 3:12-14.)
5. Throughout time, people have sought to divide people along many different lines. What are some dividing lines that you observe today? Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-24; 12:13, Galatians 3:28, and Colossians 3:11. How might these ideas have impacted how Paul wrote to Philemon?
6. Paul would have preferred that Onesimus stayed in Rome with him, but He sends him back to Philemon because he knows that the reconciliation with God should lead to reconciliation with others. How does this challenge your understanding of seeking reconciliation in your own life?
7. In Philemon 15-16 Paul mentions the idea of God’s providence over Onesimus’ actions. What does it mean for God to take both our mistakes and our faithfulness to write a story in our lives for His glory?
8. In Paul’s request to Philemon, Paul asks him to welcome Onesimus as a brother and as if he was welcoming Paul himself. How then do you understand Paul’s words in verse 21?