

‘Flower’ (when He calls my name)

The story of Onesimus also appears in the book of Colossians. Paul’s disciple Tychicus takes two letters to colosse with Onesimus. One is Paul’s personal letter to Philemon, and the other is a letter to the church in the Colossians.

[Colossians 4:9]

He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

Onesimus was a servant of Philemon and went to the same church as him. he was well known person in that church. But for Onesimus, Christianity was nothing more than a tool. Going to church and believing in Jesus was just a tool to win the favor of his master. The goal he wanted to achieve was clear. He wanted to be in a higher position in church and peek at the chance to steal the master’s money. The church, Jesus, and Christianity were nothing but the way of achieving his goal. As a result, he is now in prison and he is in the deep despair that he cannot be overcome by his own strength.

What changed the situation for Onesimus when he met the Christian leaders Paul and Epaphras? Paul and Epaphras noticed that Onesimus was in prison as a sinner and a slave. They did not focus on Onesimus’ sin but saw the possibilities he had. They had mercy on him and cared for him. however, they were heartbroken that Onesimus treated Jesus as a tool to accomplish his purpose. Paul introduced Jesus Christ, the reason for salvation to him. Jesus Christ who came to the earth to truly save sinners.

Paul wanted to send born again Onesimus out of prison. To do so, Roman citizen Paul had to endorse and send Onesimus to his master Philemon under the watch of Epaphras. That is why Paul asked Philemon to forgive Onesimus. Philemon forgave him as Paul asked, and he raised him. He treated him as a brother and no longer saw him as a slave. Perhaps it was Philemon who was most surprised by all this. He had experienced sudden escape of a slave, and loss of his wealth. The biggest pain was that Onesimus had no faith. However, Onesimus returned to his arms. He left for a while, and when he came back, he came back as a wonderful man of God. I remembered a poem as I prepared my sermon.

‘Flower’ (When He calls my name) by Choon Su Kim

Before I called his name

He was just a gesture.

When I called his name

He came to me and become a flower.

Just like I called his name

Suitable for my color and fragrance

Somebody calls my name

I would like to go to him and become his flower

We all want to be something

Just like you are to me

I want to be a memorable fragrance to you.

I suppose now you understand why today’s sermon title is ‘Flower’ (When he calls my name.) Onesimus, the voice of God calling him back arose him from despair. Even though it was a way that could lead him to death at the end, he was willing to walk. But through the forgiveness of Philemon, God also gave him a fellow worker in faith. Onesimus and Philemon became “flower” to each other that are beautiful meaning. This enriched the church, and both remained beautiful names that could be recorded in the history of church.

The same goes for us. Even now Jesus calls our names. Let us walk the path together. Let us experience the moment when Jesus Christ calls your name. also, let us live as a precious ‘flowers’ that condone each other through the experience. We want each other to stand before Christ and to serve fellow workers every day in our church. The beginning of it is to return to Christ who always calls your name. There is no happier way than to return to Jesus Christ.

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