



Heart Moment from Philemon - We're All In This Together!

We met together to plan a women's ministry event. Each of us had our gifts and a task or responsibility to complete for the event to be successful. We talked and planned, but did I view the other ladies as beloved friends, co-workers, and soldiers?

How do you view the people who work alongside you in ministry?

In the New Testament book of Philemon, Paul wrote a letter to Philemon on behalf of Philemon's runaway slave, Onesimus. He appealed to Philemon to forgive and receive Onesimus back as a brother-in-Christ rather than a slave.

As I read the opening to Paul's letter, the words he used to describe Philemon and his family leaped off the wrinkled, highlighted, and underlined page of my Bible at me.

"Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker—² also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home:" Philemon 1-2

Paul considered Philemon a "dear friend and fellow worker." He called Apphia "our sister" and Archippus "our fellow soldier." As you read Paul's opening words, it is easy to envision a small army of the faith working together for the cause of Jesus Christ and with genuine affection for each soldier.

Do you and I see each other as dear friends, fellow workers, and soldiers?

Sadly, there are times our ministries can work as competitors and not supporters of each other. The Christian life is not easy, and ministry is not easy. Oh, how we need our fellow workers and soldiers! How we need to see and treat each other like our much-loved family!

Believers in Christ should be co-workers with other believers and soldiers in the army for Christ.

As *soldiers* in the army for Christ, we are fighters and defenders of the faith to glorify God and make Christ known! As *co-workers*, we partner together to accomplish the ministries God has planned for us to do. Finally, as *dear or beloved friends*, our love for each other is a witness to the world.

***⁹ Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:
¹⁰ If either of them falls down,***



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***one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.
¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
¹² Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.***

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

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