

We all need a wingman! Life is difficult enough without having someone by our side to encourage us, challenge us, and have our back. This message series is about developing these types of relationships so we can walk through life making the best decisions possible. We need relationships like we see with Paul and Philemon. In this study, we will start laying the foundation on which these kinds of relationships are built.

1. Would you say you have “wingman” relationships? Why or why not? What do you think is your biggest obstacle to creating relationships like this?

“I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints,” Philemon 4-5 (ESV)

2. **Read Philemon 1-5.** Paul clearly cares for Philemon and wants to encourage him in his faith.

- Do you think that most relationships look like this? Why or why not?
- If we want friends like that, we need to be friends like that. What principles do you see in these verses that help us be this kind of friend? How could you apply these principles?

3. **Read Philemon 6.** This verse contains a very specific prayer that Paul has for Philemon.

- What is Paul saying? Try rephrasing it. Why do you think he is specifically pointing this out?
- How could having this same desire for a close friend change your relationship?

“For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother,
because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.”
Philemon 7 (ESV)

4. **Read Philemon 7.** Relationships can be a great source of joy, but also of stress. Here we see that Paul gets “much joy and comfort” because of Philemon.
 - Look carefully at the wording of the verse. What is it about Philemon that gives Paul this joy and comfort?
 - Do you derive joy and comfort from seeing your friends refresh others? In your experience, how does this change a relationship? Discuss this idea and what you can do to embrace it.
5. As you close, review the personal action steps you discussed during the study. Pray together for the focus to follow through on those things specifically.