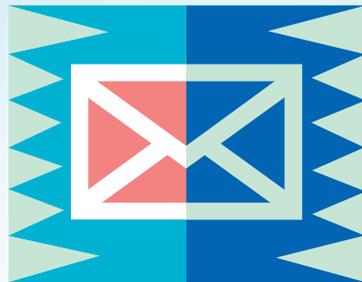
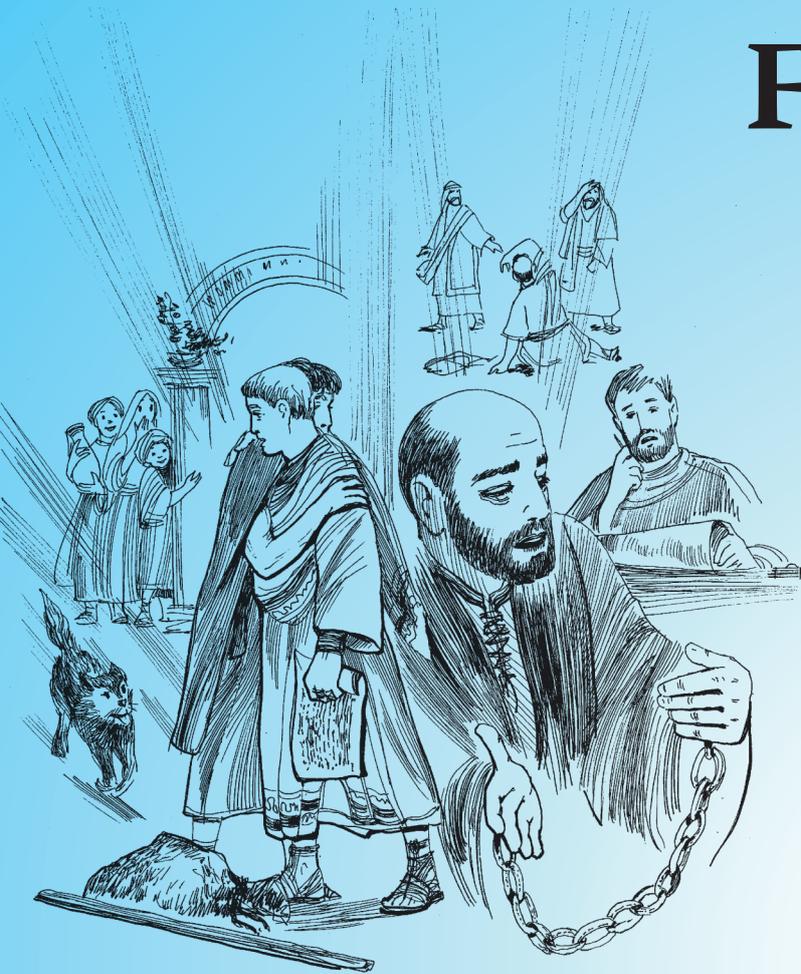


New Testament Survey

Joy and Forgiveness

Studying Philemon
and Philippians



For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

7



CBLT

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Joy and Forgiveness

Philemon and Philippians



LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
- II. An appeal for forgiveness
 - A. Exploring the Letter to Philemon
 - B. Establishing the Historical Perspective
 - 1. Authorship
 - 2. Audience
 - 3. Date
 - 4. General Background
 - C. Examining the Content
 - 1. Theme
 - 2. Key Verse
 - 3. Topics and Teachings
 - 4. Philemon: Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Master
- III. All Joy
 - A. Exploring Philippians
 - B. Establishing the Historical Perspective
 - 1. General Background
 - 2. Geography
 - 3. Authorship and Audience
 - 4. Date
 - C. Examining the Content
 - 1. Theme
 - 2. Key Verse
 - 3. Topics and Teachings
 - 4. Philippians: Jesus Christ, Our Joy
- IV. Conclusion

Self Test

Appendix 1. Let's Look At Philemon

Appendix 2. Let's Look At Philippians

LESSON OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson you should:

1. Have new insight into Philemon and Philippians.
2. Be familiar with basic background information about Philemon and Philippians.
3. Be able to explain the purpose of each of these books.
4. Be able to place Philippi on a Bible times map and a modern day map.
5. Be developing joy in your life.
6. Appreciate the humanity of Jesus Christ afresh.
7. Have a desire to work through your inter-personal conflicts in a God-honoring way.
8. Have a new testimony about God's work in your life and share it with others.

LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

1. Complete the lesson.
2. Read Philemon and Philippians.
3. Read in the appendices, excerpts from *A Look at the New Testament* by Dr. Henrietta Mears.
4. Complete Practical Assignments 1 and 2.

WORD STUDY

Incarnation--in flesh; in Christian literature it particularly refers to God appearing in flesh on earth in the form of Jesus Christ

Praetorian—a member of the special bodyguard of the Roman emperor, typically there were several thousand of these soldiers in Rome

I. Introduction

This lesson covers two of Paul's four epistles which he wrote in prison. As you read these letters, try to imagine Paul's conditions in prison, the hardships he was suffering—and in the midst of that he was reaching out to others and “redeeming” the time. And his messages! One based on forgiveness and the other—joy! Joy in prison. What a challenge to us.

This lesson consist of questions, exercises and assignments that will help you to dig into these epistles, opening up your understanding to the context in which they were written, and helping you to interact with God's Word. There are answers in the workbook to help you if you get stuck. In addition there is a self test included so that you can review what you have learned.

You need to have a Bible or New Testament which you will feel free to mark up as you will be required to make many markings. When you read, always keep a pen beside you so that you can mark whenever you find something particularly important to you. You will also need a personal notebook for written assignments. In addition there is a supplement, *New Testament Geography and Chronology*, which you must have to complete some of the exercises. If you did not receive one, please ask your leader.

You can do this study on your own, but it will be much more beneficial if you meet with a group and discuss what you are learning and discovering. We are meant to help and encourage and share with each other. It gives all of us more insights and greater joy. And then there is the issue of accountability. So often we have good intentions, but... Life is full and we easily lay aside a study, and then it gets buried. We need to spur each other on! Knowing that you are going to meet with a group often provides that extra incentive to dig in and learn. And every moment spent in the Word of God will build truth into your life and faith in your heart.

II. An appeal for forgiveness

A. Exploring the Letter to Philemon

Philemon is a little book only one chapter long and a personal letter unlike the letters we have studied thus far which were to groups of people. Therefore it has a totally different character. Let's take a little time to delve into this letter and see what we can understand about it simply from the text of the Bible.

You should only use your Bible and your imagination to complete the following exercise and questions. Read Philemon through right now.



Exercise 1

Key words and thoughts. As you read mark the following words in your Bible according to the colors suggested.

Purple -- "Love"
Brown -- "Brother"
Red -- "Appeal"

OUTLINE OF PHILEMON

I.	Paul's Love for Philemon	1-7
II.	Paul's Plea for Onesimus	8-21
III.	Final Words and Greetings	22-25



Question 1 Why did Paul write to Philemon?



Question 2 In your own words write a brief background explanation of the book; include an explanation of the relationship between Philemon and Onesimus and how this letter to Philemon might have changed their relationship.

B. Establishing the Historical Perspective

1. Authorship



Question 3 Where does it show Paul as the author?



Question 4 Where was he when he wrote this letter?



Question 5 In what verses is the above information found?

2. Audience



Question 6 To whom is this letter addressed?



Question 7 How is this audience different from the letters we have studied thus far?



Question 8 As you think about what we learn of Philemon in this letter, what kind of man do you think he was?



Question 9 Who do you think Apphia and Archippus are in relation to Philemon?

3. Date



Question 10 Read Colossians 4:8,9. Who had been sent to Colossae with Tychicus?

From this information it is assumed that these letters were sent at the same time.



Question 11 According to the information included in the previous lesson about Colossians in what year was Philemon written?

4. General Background

Onesimus, from what we know, was a runaway slave. His original master was Philemon. Along his path Onesimus had met Paul. Paul had in turn introduced him to Christ and Onesimus began a new life. Through this process he became Paul's friend. Now in this letter to Philemon, Paul

speaks of Onesimus as though he was Onesimus' father. Rather than commanding Philemon as an apostle could do, he pleads with him to forgive Onesimus in the same way that Christ forgave him. Most likely Paul, Philemon and Onesimus had no idea that their actions would one day change the whole world. Eugene Peterson comments:¹

Philemon and Onesimus, the slave owner and slave who are featured in this letter from Paul, had no idea that their belief in Jesus would involve them in radical social change. But as the two of them were brought together by this letter, it did. Belief in Jesus still does.

Although Paul, Philemon and Onesimus are the key players in this letter, the concluding greetings again introduce us to some of Paul's other friends and co-workers. Let's get to know them a little better now!



Question 12 The following is a chart with a number of different people who are listed more than once in the Prison Epistles. Fill out the chart as to how each one is identified and then his ministry.

NAME	SCRIPTURE REFERENCES	HOW IDENTIFIED	MINISTRY
Tychicus	Acts 20:3-6 Eph 6:21 Col 4:7		
Onesimus	Col 4:9 Philemon 10-16		
Aristarchus	Acts 19:29 Acts 20:4 Acts 27:2 Col 4:10 Philemon 24		
Mark	Acts 15:37-39 Col 4:10 Philemon 24		
Epaphras	Col 1:7 Col 4:12 Philemon 23		
Luke	Col 4:14 Philemon 24		
Demas	Col 4:14 Philemon 24		
Archippus	Col 4:17 Philemon 2		

¹ Eugene Peterson, *The Message*. — Colorado Springs: NavPress. — 1993. — P. 454.

Timothy	Philemon 1 Col 1:1 Phil 1:1 Phil 2:19		
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It is important to see these people as real individuals involved in the early church, and usually part of Paul's extended team of evangelists, church planters, encouragers. If they are mentioned in Scripture then there is value for us to try to see them as individuals serving in the Kingdom of God.

One of the things you may have learned from this chart is that Onesimus is referred to as being part of the Colossian church. Because he was a slave of Philemon it is therefore inferred that Philemon and his family were also from Colossae. These are the kind of things that you can explore yourself as you make connections between different scriptures, all of which add interest, and show how scholars themselves come to some of these conclusions.

When some of the other epistles are covered we will again identify some of the individuals mentioned and in some cases follow up on some of these.

C. Examining the Content

1. Theme

This tiny letter is fascinating as you begin to look deeper into what was happening. Here is Paul who has taken a social outcast (what in society could be lower than a slave?) and developed a deep bond of love with him, and is willing to appeal to his master for *forgiveness*. The whole tone of the letter is one of love, both for Philemon and for Onesimus. With that in mind an appropriate theme for Philemon is:

Christian (Christ's) love overrides all social divides.

2. Key Verse

Philemon is a book that is all about relationships. The first relationship is between Jesus Christ and each individual mentioned, but then there are also their relationships with each other. Paul and Philemon were friends, Paul and Onesimus were like father and child, Philemon and Onesimus were master and slave. Paul was asking Philemon to forgive Onesimus and not just forgive, but embrace him as a brother in Christ. The key verse of Philemon sums this request up.



Question 13 Write Philemon 17 on the blanks below.

3. Topics and Teachings

We have much to learn from this little letter which is so easily overlooked. The teaching of this letter has changed the world and should change our lives. As Eugene Peterson puts it:²

Every movement we make in response to God has a ripple effect, touching family, neighbors, friends, community. Belief in God alters our language. Love of God affects daily relationships. Hope in God enters into our work. Also their opposites—unbelief, indifference, and despair. None of these movements and responses, beliefs and prayers, gestures and

² Eugene Peterson, *The Message//Remix*. — Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2002. — P. 2179.

searches, can be confined to the soul. They spill out and make history. If they don't, they are under suspicion of being fantasies at best, hypocrisies at worst.

Christians have always insisted on the historicity of Jesus—an actual birth, a datable death, a witnessed resurrection, locatable towns. There is a parallel historicity in the followers of Jesus. As they take in everything Jesus said and did—all of it a personal revelation of God in time and place—it all gets worked into local history, eventually into world history.

Philemon and Onesimus, the slave owner and slave who figure prominently in this letter from Paul, had no idea that believing in Jesus would involve them in radical social change. But as the two of them were brought together by this letter, it did. And it still does.

This one little book has not only changed world history in relation to slavery, but it also gives us a wonderful example of forgiveness and reconciliation.

4. Philemon: Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Master

Now read Appendix 1 which is the section on “Philemon” in *A Look at the New Testament* and then complete the following questions.



Question 14 What is the outstanding lesson of this book?

Food for Thought

Your family is a vital church unit. Not only should you be involved in the larger church through small groups and Bible studies, you should be having “church” with your family.

Family church might take the form of devotional times with the whole family several times a week. These times should be more than just Scripture reading or singing, but should include applications that your children can understand. You may even want to use a devotional book that has stories geared for children.

Some questions that might help you include: Is this appropriate for everyone involved? What can I do to make things interesting for everyone? How can I implement a time of prayer and Bible reading with my family on a daily basis?

Actually there were no church buildings until the third century. We often put so much emphasis on there being a building to bring identity to Christianity, that our focus is no longer Jesus Christ, but a building and an organization.



Question 15 How were Paul’s actions in regard to Onesimus a shadow of what Jesus did for us?



Question 16 What is the best way to destroy unchristian practices?



Practical Assignment 1: Prepare and Present a Skit

As a group write a simple skit based on the story of Onesimus and Philemon. Your skit does not have to be long, but it should include each member of your group and it does need to have a specific application. Make sure that it is not just about entertainment, but that your audience will have something to think about when you are through.

You may need to meet two or three extra times in order to complete this assignment. Although you do not need to memorize your script, it is important that you can present your skit in a way that will be easily understandable and flow smoothly for your audience.

You will need to present it at least once in order to receive credit for the assignment. With your course coach arrange when and where it will be presented.

III. All Joy

A. Exploring Philippians

Take time to read through Philippians as you answer the following questions. Read carefully gleaning as much as you can from the book so that you will be prepared to outline it later.

As you read and answer the questions, also mark in your Bible according to the following exercise.



Exercise 2

Key words and thoughts. Mark the following words in your Bible according to the colors suggested.

- Purple -- "Joy/rejoice"
- Orange -- "All"
- Blue -- "In Christ"
- Green -- "Gospel"

Also as you read keep this outline in mind.

OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS	
I. Rejoicing in suffering	Chapter 1
II. Rejoicing in lowly service	Chapter 2
III. Rejoicing in striving to the goal	Chapter 3
IV. Rejoicing over anxiety	Chapter 4



Question 17 Why did Paul thank God for the Philippians?



Question 18 In chapter one what reason does Paul give for his rejoicing?



Question 19 In Philippians 1:20-26 Paul writes about the struggle that he has to choose between this life and the next. What choice does he make and what reason does he give for his choice?

Paul commands the Philippians to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so their testimony would be one of faithfulness and unity. How important this is for us too!



Exercise 3

Meditate on Philippians 1:27. What does it mean to “conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ?” What would that look like in this day and age? Write your answers in your notebook.



Question 20 What do we learn about the Philippians’ situation from the last three verses of the first chapter?



Question 21 What is the main theme of Philippians 2?



Question 22 How many times is the word joy mentioned in chapter two? In which verses?

It is interesting to note that Paul commands the Philippians to rejoice and to follow his example in rejoicing and yet we saw in the previous chapter that the Philippians were suffering and we know that Paul was himself in prison during this time. Paul certainly knew how to “rejoice always”.



Question 23 Who did Paul send to the Philippians to encourage them?



Question 24 What were some of Paul’s ambitions as listed in chapter 3?



Question 25 What is the secret of being content in all circumstances?



Question 26 Why was Paul encouraging the Philippians to give financial gifts to him?

B. Establishing the Historical Perspective

1. General Background

Read Acts 16:9-40 and answer the following questions.



Question 27 Who started the church in Philippi?

It is very likely that Luke was with Paul at this time. We can see this from the change in pronouns between verses 8 and 10. We have already learned that Luke was the author of Acts, so when he begins to refer to “we” and “us” in verse 10 we can understand that he was traveling with Paul during this part of the journey.



Question 28 Which missionary journey of Paul’s was this?



Question 29 Who were among the first to hear and accept the gospel in Philippi?



Question 30 Why were Paul and Silas beaten and thrown into jail?



Question 31 Who was saved as a result of Paul and Silas’ imprisonment?

2. Geography

Based on the information in Acts 16 and any other helps that you might have, complete the following exercise.



Exercise 4

Locate Philippi on your map. Turn now to the supplement, New Testament Geography and Chronology, and plot Philippi on Map 1.

Now look at Philippi on Map 2 in your supplement and answer these questions.



Question 32 What Roman district was Philippi in?



Question 33 What Roman province were the other Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon) sent to?

3. Authorship and Audience

We know that Paul authored Philippians and that it was sent to the church at Philippi, which very likely included the jailer and his family that were mentioned in Acts.



Question 34 Which verse tells us who the author and audience of Philippians were?



Question 35 Who were Euodia and Syntyche?

It is likely that Paul used Timothy as a scribe for this letter rather than a coauthor, since the only other mention of Timothy (in Philippians 2:19) is talking about being sent, and the first person (I, my, me) is consistently used with a number of obvious references to Paul himself.

4. Date

You will notice that Paul mentions the praetorian guard (1:13) and Caesar's household (4:22). These are confirmations scholars use to place this as his first imprisonment in Rome.

Food for Thought

In Philippians 4:8 Paul instructs us to focus our mind on positive things. It is much easier to rejoice if we keep ourselves focused on the positive.

Try writing that verse on a sheet of paper and then list under it some things that meet those qualifications. What are some things that you think about sometimes which do not meet these qualifications? Take a few minutes and pray and ask the Lord to help you as you purpose to focus your thoughts on positive things during the next week.

For the next week take a few minutes each day to think about how you did on focusing your thoughts positively that day.

Philippians was written within the same time period as Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, but probably after them. Why do scholars think it was written later? Let us look at a few of the internal proofs. First read 4:18 and 2:25. You already have learned that Epaphroditus was sent to encourage this church. As you look at these two verses and their context it becomes evident that Epaphroditus was also the messenger who delivered this letter, and that he had earlier taken a gift from the Philippians to Paul. Assuming Paul was in prison in Rome when he came then there had to be a considerable time lapse until he returned to Philippi. The other reference that is applicable to this is 2:24 where Paul hopes to come and visit them himself. So we are led to think that he was towards the end of his prison stay in Rome.



Question 36 Based on the information above and in the previous lesson in what year do you think Philippians was written?

C. Examining the Content

1. Theme

The overriding theme in this letter is rejoicing, even though Paul addresses a number of issues. There is almost a buoyant spirit to the letter. Despite the fact that Paul was in prison he just seems

to be consumed with joy. He does not forget his circumstances or ignore them, but rather he rises above them by focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ. You might state the theme as:

Let God's joy flow into every area of your life.

2. Key Verse

Like with any book, there are many possible options for a key verse for Philippians, but given the mega theme of joy we have chosen Philippians 4:4 as the theme verse for the book.



Question 37 Write this verse on the lines below.

3. Topics and Teachings

Joy in the Christian Life

It is worthwhile reiterating the joyful tone of this book and the place of active rejoicing in the Christian life. To actively rejoice all the time in all circumstances is a challenge in the Christian life, but creates a beauty that attracts the world.

Incarnation of Christ

Philippians 2:5-11 gives us a striking picture of who Christ was here on earth. We cannot begin to imagine the humility of a God who would become a man. And we are to have the “mind of Christ”.

Righteousness through faith, not law or flesh

Circumcision is used in Philippians 3:2-11 as in other passages as a struggle of legalism. This was a rite that was ordained by God starting with Abraham to be a sign of His covenant with His people. But it was Abraham's faith that made him acceptable to God.



Practical Assignment 2: Compare Philippians and Colossians

How does Paul's presentation of Christ in Philippians compare to Colossians? Give two similarities and two differences.

Use this material to make a short sermon. Don't forget to include the practical application.

4. Philippians: Jesus Christ, Our Joy

Read Appendix 2 as you answer the following questions.



Question 38 How is Jesus Christ our joy?

The apostle Paul rejoiced in all circumstances. Imagine that you are laying in a dark, damp, cool, musty room. You are chained to another person. Everything that you do, they do with you. You have no privacy, not even to care for personal needs. Would you be rejoicing? Paul did (see Acts 16:25)!

Food for Thought

Try making a rejoicing list. What circumstances do you need to rejoice in? Look for God's hand in all your circumstances and write down at least ten things that you have to rejoice for. Now: Rejoice!

Paul wrote from personal experience and understanding. During the writing of Philippians he was in Rome under house arrest. He was not in chains, but he was not allowed to leave his house either.

Making Pulpits Out of Troubles



Question 39 Where should we be in regards to our circumstances?



Question 40 What can we use our circumstances for?

Joy in Service



Question 41 What did Paul want the Philippians to do to complete his joy?



Question 42 How does Mears describe “the mind of Christ?”



Question 43 What does it mean to “work out” your salvation?



Question 44 Who can “work out” your salvation?

Joy in Fellowship



Question 45 What do Christians have to rejoice in?

Food for Thought

What do you have that makes you look good in the worlds’ eyes? Take some time right now to make a list of these things, then pray and “throw them overboard.” Accept God’s righteousness as the only valuable thing that you have!

IV. Conclusion

Two extraordinary letters both written in a totally personal style even though one was to an individual and the other to a church. Paul sitting in prison in Rome continued to minister to these people whom he obviously loved. Philemon stands as a challenge to put Christian principles into daily life; and as you think about it, Philippians has a similar challenge, on a very basic level. Having the joy of Jesus Christ in our lives—despite the circumstances, despite persecution, despite trouble, despite need, despite suffering—is the sign of a victorious Christian. The focus is Jesus Christ instead of me, me, me! Live out the principles you are learning, by faith, and see what Christ will do in and through you.

Food for Thought

Is Christ everything to you? Do you live for Him? Is your one aim and purpose to glorify Him?

If you have enjoyed this lesson please note that it is one in a series of 12 lessons which cover the epistles of the New Testament and the Revelation. These lessons do not necessarily need to be done in order but we would encourage you to pursue your study of the scriptures both for your personal spiritual growth and so that you will be prepared to help others.

Other lessons are:

Lesson 1—James and Galatians—*The Truth about Faith*

Lesson 2—1 and 2 Thessalonians —*Standing Firm in Persecution*

Lesson 3—1 Corinthians — *Problems of the Church*

Lesson 4—2 Corinthians — *Ministry Defended*

Lesson 5— Romans — *Righteousness by Faith*

Lesson 6— Colossians and Ephesians — *Christ and His Church*

Lesson 8—1 Timothy and Titus—*Church Leadership*

Lesson 9—1 Peter, 2 Timothy & 2 Peter—*Encouragement and Warnings*

Lesson 10— Hebrews—*The New Covenant*

Lesson 11—Jude, 1, 2 & 3 John—*Love in Action*

Lesson 12—The Revelation—*Climax of the Ages*

Self Test

Score: ___/100

Matching (6 points each, ___/60)

a. Philippians

b. Philemon

1. ___ Key word: "Joy"
2. ___ Key word: "Love"
3. ___

- | |
|--------------------------------|
| I. Paul's Love for Philemon |
| II. Paul's Plea for Onesimus |
| III. Final Words and Greetings |

4. ___

- | |
|--|
| I. Rejoicing in suffering |
| II. Rejoicing in lowly service |
| III. Rejoicing in striving to the goal |
| IV. Rejoicing over anxiety |

5. ___ Rejoicing
6. ___ Christian (Christ's) love overrides all social divides.
7. ___ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!
8. ___ If you then regard me a partner, accept him as you would me.
9. ___ Jesus Christ, Our Joy
10. ___ Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Master

Fill in the Blanks (4 points each answer, ___/40)

1. Philemon was sent to the same city as _____.
2. The little epistle of Philemon has changed the world's perspective on _____.
3. The _____ of Christ is an important theme in Philippians.
4. _____ teaches much about forgiveness.
5. _____ was the last of the Prison Epistles to be written.
6. Philippians was probably written in A.D. _____.
7. _____ was a runaway slave.
8. _____ was the slave's master.
9. The church at Philippi was started by _____ and _____.

Answers to Questions



Question 1

Paul wrote primarily to encourage Philemon and his household to be reconciled to their former slave Onesimus.

Question 2

Apparently Philemon had owned Onesimus and was his master. As a slave, Onesimus had few rights and very likely ran away to gain his freedom. Somehow he met up with Paul who eventually sent him back home with this letter to deliver to his master. If Philemon accepted the letter and Paul's advice/instruction then he and Onesimus were probably reconciled and began to enjoy a relationship as brothers in the Lord.

Question 3

Verses 1, 9, 19

Question 4

In prison, probably in Rome.

Question 5

Philemon 1, 9, 10, 13 and 23.

Question 6

This letter is addressed to Philemon, Apphia, Archippus and the church at their house.

Question 7

This letter is addressed primarily to an individual not a church or group of churches.

Question 8

He is called directly in verse 1 a fellow worker, which might mean that he was a church leader. We also know that he owned slaves and that he had a house large enough for a church group to meet in. So we can infer from that that he was relatively wealthy.

Question 9

Well, we know that Apphia is a woman, so it is possible that she was Philemon's wife and that Archippus was their son. However, we have no proof of this. It is also possible that Archippus was the pastor of the Colossian church.

Question 10

Onesimus.

Question 11

AD 61.

Question 12

NAME	SCRIPTURE REFERENCES	HOW IDENTIFIED	MINISTRY
Tychicus	Acts 20:3-6 Eph 6:21 Col 4:7	Companion to Paul Brother/Minister	Companion/Servant to Paul Messenger
Onesimus	Col 4:9 Philemon 10-16	Brother Child	Messenger Minister to Paul
Aris-tarchus	Acts 19:29 Acts 20:4 Acts 27:2 Col 4:10 Philemon 24	Companion to Paul Fellow Prisoner of Paul	Paul's traveling companion and fellow worker
Mark	Acts 15:37-39 Col 4:10 Philemon 24	Barnabbas' cousin	Messenger Paul's fellow worker
Epaphras	Col 1:7 Col 4:12 Philemon 23	Faithful servant of Christ Fellow prisoner of Paul	Prayer warrior
Luke	Col 4:14 Philemon 24	Beloved physician Fellow worker with Paul	Physician
Demas	Col 4:14 Philemon 24	Fellow worker with Paul	—
Archippus	Col 4:17 Philemon 2	Fellow soldier	Ministry given from the Lord Possibly a pastor
Timothy	Philemon 1 Col 1:1 Phil 1:1 Phil 2:19	Our brother Bond-servant of Christ Jesus	Messenger/encourager

Question 13

See Philemon 17 in your Bible.

Question 14

The importance and power of Christian love and forgiveness are the outstanding lessons of this book.

Question 15

Paul did not minimize Onesimus' sin, but pled for forgiveness for Onesimus because of his own (Paul's own) merit in Philemon's eyes. He also made himself personally responsible for Onesimus' debt.

In the same way, Jesus does not minimize our sin, but begs forgiveness from the Father for us because of His relationship with the Father. Not only does Jesus intercede for us, but He also makes Himself personally responsible for our debt of sin.

Question 16

The best way that unchristian practices are destroyed is when Jesus is preached and accepted.

Question 17

Because of their participation in the gospel “from the first day until now.” (Philippians 1:5)

Question 18

Paul mentions the Philippians’ faithfulness as a cause for joy (1:4-5) and also that Christ is being proclaimed because of his imprisonment (1:18).

Question 19

Paul chose this present life because he understood that this would be more helpful to the Philippians.

Question 20

The Philippians were being persecuted (1:28 “opponents;” 1:29 “suffer;” 1:30 “conflict”).

Question 21

Humility.

Question 22

Five times. Philippians 2:2, 17, 18, 28 and 29. Verse 28 actually uses the word rejoice rather than joy.

Question 23

Epaphroditus.

Question 24

Paul’s ambitions were to gain Christ (v. 8); be found in Him (v. 9); know Him ... (v. 10); attain resurrection from the dead (v. 11); and to press on to lay hold of that for which also he was laid hold of by Christ Jesus (v. 12).

Question 25

Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

If you read the context of this verse you will realize that contentment is a choice, but it is one that God gives us the power to choose.

Question 26

He knew that it would increase their blessings (Philippians 4:17).

Question 27

Paul and Silas (Acts 16:19) were the primary team.

Question 28

The second missionary journey.

Question 29

Lydia and her household.

Question 30

Paul cast a demon out of a slave girl. Her masters incited a mob against them and brought false accusations against them.

Question 31

The Philippian jailer and his household all believed and were baptized.

Question 32

Macedonia.

Question 33

They were sent to Asia Minor.

Question 34

Philippians 1:1 lists Paul and Timothy as the senders of the letter and the Philippian believers as the recipients.

Question 35

Two women who were co-workers with Paul and apparently had a disagreement.

Question 36

Philippians was probably written in A.D. 61 or 62.

Question 37

See Philippians 4:4 in your Bible

Question 38

Your answer. It is when we are focusing on Jesus Christ and are filled with Him that we are truly filled with joy, and rejoicing becomes a natural part of our lives.

Question 39

We should be on top of our circumstances, not under them.

Question 40

We can use our circumstances as a pulpit to spread the Good News!

Question 41

Live in unity with each other.

Question 42

She describes “the mind of Christ” as having self-forgetting love.

Question 43

To “work out” my salvation means to live the fruit of salvation. To show by my works that Jesus truly is the Lord of my life.

Question 44

Only I can, no one can work out anyone else’s salvation.

Question 45

Every Christian can rejoice in the Lord.

Answers to Exercises



Exercise 1

“Love” occurs four times in Philemon.

“Brother” occurs four times.

“Appeal” occurs twice.

Exercise 2

“Joy” and “rejoice” occur 16 times in Philippians.

“All” occurs 23 times.

“In Christ” occurs 10 times.

“Gospel” occurs eight times.

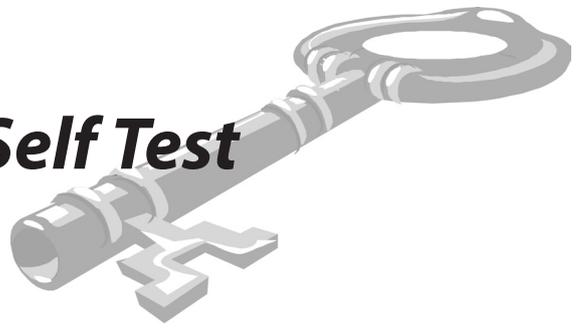
Exercise 3

Your answer.

Exercise 4

Share your answer with your leader.

Answers to Self Test



Matching

1. a.
2. b.
3. b.
4. a.
5. a.
6. b.
7. a.
8. b.
9. a.
10. b.

Fill in the Blanks

1. Colossians
2. slavery
3. Incarnation
4. Philemon
5. Philippians
6. 61 or 62
7. Onesimus
8. Philemon
9. Paul, Silas

Let's Look At Philemon

APPENDIX



Excerpt from Chapter 18 in *A Look at the New Testament* by Henrietta Mears³

Christian love and forgiveness are given prominence in this book.

This book shows the power of the Gospel in winning a runaway thief and slave, and in changing a master's mind. This is a book in "applied Christianity." It is a text book of social service.

One would hardly guess that it was written in prison but for two uncomplaining references to it. Usually letters coming out of prison or from people in affliction or disappointment breathe the atmosphere of sorrow or depression. Not so, Paul's letters!

This bit of verse could well be on every desk.

The Writing Table

"Be present at this table, Lord,
Be here and everywhere adored;
Each letter bless, and let it be
A little messenger from Thee."

~Anonymous

Notice the courtesy and tactfulness of Paul's letter. One's letter writing can be a real service for God, if we make it so. Some who find it hard to speak to anyone about Christ can write about Him. Then, too, a letter is good for the one who receives it, for he has a chance to read and re-read and think it over. Use the pen in witnessing to your friends. Remember most that has been preserved to us of Paul's ministry has come through his epistles. What a heritage his letters are for all Christians today! In order to appreciate what God thought of correspondence see how many letters He kept for us in Holy Scripture.

Is God helping you in your correspondence? Is the Spirit of Christ in your letters? We will write letters, once we catch Paul's spirit. Perhaps we shall not always do the thing with pen and ink and paper. But each of us is writing a letter with his life. The letter is to the world about us. Some life letters go into the wastebasket about as fast as they are written, for they are dictated by the spir-

³ Used by permission.

it of self. But the letters which live and bless the world are those whose keynote springs from the Spirit of Christ.

This letter is addressed to Colosse, to a man and his wife and presumably a son. A little meeting of Christians was held at their home. Paul gives us a beautiful picture of a Christian home in the time of the early Church. This family was the nucleus of that home-church and doubtless other believers in Colosse gathered there for worship. There were no church buildings till the time of Constantine. One of the causes for the spiritual decline today is the lack of *the church in thy house*. Is there one in your house? It begins around the family altar. House to house prayer meetings have done a vast amount of good. Open your home, if it is possible, for fellowship and prayer. It blesses the host and those entertained.

Paul was a wonderful student of human nature. The picture he conjures up, of himself as the bent and battered *prisoner of Jesus Christ* (v. 9), opens a well of sympathy in the heart of Philemon as he reads his friend's letter. Onesimus, whose name means "profitable," had robbed his master and run away to the big city Rome. In some way he fell in with the little band of Christians surrounding Paul and was converted. Paul sends the boy back to his master, with this friendly, personal note. He takes pleasure in playing with the fellow's name. The "unprofitable" servant now will be "profitable." Christ makes a man profitable to others. Christianity changes a man's value to his fellow men.

In approaching the main purpose of the letter, Paul does not blurt it out at once. He anticipates anger, and so he uses the finest tact. He admits that Onesimus had been good for nothing in the past, but playfully alludes to his name, hoping to put the reader into a favorable mood.

While Philemon's voice trembles, Mother Apphia is wiping her eyes on her apron, and son Archippus is clearing his throat. All three read on into the letter. Paul has his little joke and pun, and the faces of the trio break into smiles. Onesimus, meanwhile, nervously fumbles his cap back of the door, then breaks into a broad grin, and the tension is over.

My dearly beloved Philemon:

You remember how we worked together for the Church in your house. I thank God for your friendship and mention you in my prayers. I have heard how faithful you are to the followers of Christ. God bless you.

I am an old man now and a prisoner in Rome for the sake of Jesus Christ. I want to ask a favor of you not for myself but for another whom I have learned to love. I call him my son because he has been so kind to me here. He is Onesimus, your runaway slave, who found out that I was a prisoner. He has done everything to help me, just as you would have done had you been here. He took your place.

I would like to keep him with me always, but he belongs to you. He ran away, but is going back, so I am sending this letter by him. I feel sure you will receive him as a Christian brother, rather than a servant. I hope you will be as glad to see him as you would to see me. Be good to him for my sake. If he owes you any money, you can charge it to me.

Paul's action with regard to Onesimus is an illustration of the Lord's work on behalf of the sinner. Paul does not minimize the sin, but he pleads for forgiveness for the sinner on the ground of his own merit in the eyes of Philemon, his friend. More than that, he makes himself personally responsible for the debts of Onesimus. *Put that to mine account*. This is the message of the Gospel. For Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree. This is what Christ does—takes the sinner's place.

The secret of the solution of the capital-labor problem lies in the love of Christ, such as undoubtedly existed between Philemon and Onesimus after the slave returned home.

This epistle gives a clear idea of the attitude of Christianity to the social organization of the world. The subject of the epistle is slavery, which was widespread in that day. Christianity does not mere-

ly free the slaves, but teaches them that they and their masters are one in Christ. The position of the women in India is very much like that of slavery in the Roman Empire. If missionaries were to denounce existing customs, it would result in revolution, but the preaching and acceptance of Christ is the sure way of destroying all such unchristian practices.

Has Christianity yet driven slavery from the world? Here began the abolition of slavery. This terrible menace has been vanquished wherever brotherly love of Christ has been shed abroad. But there are still portions of the world in which slavery is practiced. Sometimes it is disguised by other names, but wherever human life is sold, wherever forced labor is carried on, slavery exists. Christ came to save men from the slavery of sin. And He came to change their lives. It is certainly the will of God that slavery of all kinds be abolished from individual lives and from the world.

If Timothy or Tychicus took Paul's dictation of this letter, Paul took the stylus or quill and wrote in his big, nearsighted scrawl: *This is my own handwriting. I, Paul, promise to refund it—not to mention that you owe me, over and above, your very soul!* (Moffatt's Trans. v. 19)

Let's Look At Philippians

Philippians Portrays Jesus Christ, Our Joy

Chapter 12 from *A Look at the New Testament* by Henrietta Mears⁴

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord (3:1). Then there is a pause. Paul is trying to think of some better last word to speak, but he can't find it. Presently he cries, *And again I say—well—just rejoice, that is enough* (From Phil. 4:4).

Paul and Silas, you remember, sang in the jail there at Philippi at midnight when their backs were bleeding and sore! He is rejoicing now as he writes this letter, chained to a Roman soldier, for he knows that his very chains are helping him to spread the Gospel. He could reach some in Caesar's household that he never could otherwise have brought to Christ. He urged his Philippian converts to rejoice because they were allowed to suffer for Christ (1:29).

Key Word

The joy of the Lord is your strength (Neh. 8:10). The word "joy," or "rejoice," occurs in this epistle sixteen times. Paul seems to laugh out loud for sheer joy in this epistle. He is the rejoicing apostle. "Joy" and "rejoice" and "all" are the words to underline. "Be glad" is Paul's exhortation.

Joy In Chains

It hardly seems possible that Paul is writing from prison with chains holding him. His words seem to come from a light heart. It is evident that the soul of this great apostle is free! There is an atmosphere of joy even from prison. Paul's spirit is like the old colored man's at Colonel Clark's mission in Chicago. "Brethren," he said, "when I get to the gates of heaven, if they shut me out, I'll say, 'Anyhow I had a good time getting here.'"

This letter has no definite plan, but it is the sweetest of all Paul's letters. There is no scolding. It is more of a love letter which reveals the apostle's heart to this church which surpassed all the others in devotion.

⁴ Used by permission.

Joy In Living

(Read Philippians 1)

Paul loved to call himself the servant (really “bond servant”) of Jesus Christ. He had been made free by Christ but felt like the poor black slave girl who had been bought at the auction. Her buyer was a white man from the North who purchased her so he could set her free from her slave condition. After the bargain had been made, the man found it difficult to get the girl to realize she was actually free. At last it did dawn upon her what it all meant. Instead of rejoicing in her new found liberty, she fell at the feet of her deliverer, exclaiming, “Oh, he redeemed me! I will follow him. I can never thank him enough. I will serve him all my life.” She would serve him out of a heart of love and gratitude. So it was with Paul. He had been set free from death and sin by the purchase price of Christ’s blood and now he wanted to serve Him as long as he lived. He starts his epistle, “Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ.” That is the reason he says, *For to me to live is Christ.*

You notice when Paul writes his letters he puts his name first. How sensible this is, for you know the first thing you do in opening a letter is to turn to the end and find out who wrote it.

Paul Prays

Although in prison, Paul could pray for his friends. *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy...* (1:3, 4)

Paul lived to intercede for others. So should every true Sunday school teacher, Christian friend, father, mother, brother, or sister remember others in their prayers without ceasing. Have you a “Prayer List”? Do you talk to the Lord about your friends? *Making request -with joy.* Why can we rejoice in prayer? What is your answer?

Making Pulpits Out Of Troubles

Although Paul was in prison, chained to a soldier, people came to hear him preach. The Roman guards were so interested in the Gospel that they spread it around. This encouraged others to be bold in preaching and many found Paul’s Christ.

There is great power in the witness of a consistent life. You may be bound to unsympathetic companions, but by your life you may win them for God. Your obstacle may become your pulpit. The Christian who works for Christ when everything is against him stirs others up.

Dr. Hinson, the preacher, met one of his congregations on the street one day and asked him how he was. “All right under the circumstances,” was the answer. “Where did you say you were?” asked the preacher. “I didn’t say I was anywhere. I just said I was all right under the circumstances.” “That’s what I thought you said,” was the quick reply. “No Christian should be under the circumstances, but on top of circumstances. Climb out from underneath and stand on top of them and make them your pulpit.” Job used his circumstances for a pulpit. Paul used his, and Daniel used his! Don’t let your troubles weigh you down, but as the birds use the weight of their wings as a lift so use your trials as instruments of flying.

Christ In My Life

For to me to live is Christ (1:21). Can you say this? Is Christ everything to you? Do you live for Him? Is your one aim and purpose to glorify Him?

Listen to the cries of the men of this world. What are they? To the successful business man it is, “To me to live is wealth.” To the scholar, it is, “To me to live is knowledge.” To the soldier, it is, “To me to live is victory.” To the young man, “To me to live is pleasure.” To the man desirous of recognition, “To me to live is fame.” To the high school student, “To me to live is recognition.” So we could go on and

listen to all the voices of the world, but one is heard over them all—"To me to live is not wealth, nor knowledge, not fame nor glory, but Christ. Christ first, last, midst all and always Christ."

Paul Says

When I travel, it is on Christ's errands.

When I suffer, it is in Christ's service.

When I speak, the theme is Christ.

When I write, Christ fills my letters.

Young man or woman, what do you think is the ruling passion of your life? Fill this blank in carefully and prayerfully. It will tell you much about why you are living and for whom. "For me to live is _____."

Joy In Service

(Read Philippians 2)

Paul gives us the wonderful Example of the Christian life that we may follow in His steps. We must imitate Him for although He is Lord of all He became servant to all! Paul urges the church to complete his happiness by living together in love and unity. Is there anything more Christlike for Christians to do? *Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded* (2:2). This is not an easy thing to do. If each one keeps his heart in tune with God, he will be in tune with others. The church would be a great choir.

What is the most important social grace? Elegance of manners? The gift of saying agreeable things? No, it is courtesy of heart and not mere fashion. Moody says, "Strife is knocking others down; vainglory is setting oneself up." "Each counting other better than himself is an astonishing phrase; in other words, "I am willing to be third."

This mind we have been describing is the "disposition" of Christ (2:5-11). Paul says, "Have the mind of Christ," which is self-forgetting love. Although He was God, He humbled Himself. Not only did Christ take on Himself the form of man, but the form of a servant. Then He humbled Himself more. He who was Author of life became obedient unto death. But even more than this, He faced an ignominious death, "even the death of the cross." This must be our spirit. *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it* (Matt. 16:25).

Paul is practical as well as profound. He never leaves us in the clouds. He never separates knowledge from action. Christianity is both life and creed. The creed without the life amounts to little. After Paul has scaled the heights in Christ's exaltation, he has no idea of leaving us there. *Wherefore, my beloved, . . . work out your own salvation.* "Work out" means live out, not working for salvation but showing the works of salvation. God has a plan for each of our lives as He has for Jesus. We must live it out. It is an absolutely personal matter. No one can do it for you. God plants in our hearts salvation in Christ, great, divine, and wonderful to be lived out. Can you go about it without *fear and trembling*? Happy is the person who finds God's plan for his life and falls in with it.

Christian experience is not something that is going on around you but in you. *Christ liveth in me!*

Joy In Fellowship

(Read Philippians 3)

Paul tells the Philippians that the duty of every Christian is that he be joyful. A long faced Christian is the worst advertisement against Christianity. The world doesn't want a greater burden; it wants a light heart. How can a Christian be joyful in a world so full of sorrow? Paul tells us in the first verse-*Rejoice in the Lord*.

Saul of Tarsus, a man rich in religious background, had been a member of the strict Judaic sect of the Pharisees. He was an earnest searcher after truth and kept the law with such care that he could state, "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." One day he met Christ and he records the complete change that he underwent in evaluating things. (3:4-9) He gladly sacrificed and counted the treasures of this world as nothing in comparison with Christ. He set a new standard of values. He had a new reason for life. Christ had stepped in between Paul and his old ideals and made him change the headings at the top of his ledger. He erased "gains" (credits) and wrote "loss" (debit). This was his choice in life.

When Paul met the Lord on the way to Damascus (Acts 9), his whole being was changed. His eyes were opened. He discovered in Christ a store of spiritual wealth which made him count all that he had as trash (3:7).

Like the sailor, who must throw overboard his precious cargo in order to save his ship and his life, so we must throw over much that we have counted as dear when we meet Christ. We may have a good family, as Paul had. We may boast of a good education. We may always have attended church and prayer meeting and lived a good moral life, but God tells us our righteousness is only as filthy rags in His sight. We need Christ's righteousness.

Here are some of the ambitions of Paul's heart. Mark these in your Bible.

That I may win Christ. (3:8)

That I may know Him. (3:10)

That I may know the power of His resurrection. (3:10)

That I may know the fellowship of His sufferings. (3:10)

That I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended. (3:12)

That I may gain the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (3:14)

Joy In Rewards

(Read Philippians 4)

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. (4:4,5) This blessed hope of Christ's coming again casts its gracious influence over all of life. Paul prays that the Christian may have joy at all times and not be worried by cares.

Moody says of verse six:

"Be careful for nothing;
Be prayerful for everything;
Be thankful for anything!"

