



PHILEMON

Serving the Church since 1986

Copyright © 2014 WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL®

25 Lantana Lane, Maxwell, Texas 78656

Email: biblestudy@wvbs.org Phone: (512) 398-5211

Website: www.wvbs.org

Copyright Guidelines

Copyright © WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL®

WARNING: SINGLE USER product

Use of this material is limited to the registered user,
according to the following conditions.

Print distribution: Any number of printed copies can be made by printing or photocopying, and used for Bible classes, seminars or teaching settings. Copies of a course or multiple courses can be printed. Printed copies cannot be used for resale purposes or mass distribution.

Electronic distribution: No electronic distribution is allowed, either transmitted or hyperlinked, in part or whole. The electronic version of the course notes is limited to the registered user, and may be copied to any computer within the registered user's ownership. However, the copyright does not include making them available on the Internet or through one's own server. If the Course Notes are registered to a congregation, then the electronic files may be installed on any computer located on the congregation's property, and be used by any of its members as a resource to study (either in electronic or printed form) while on their premises.

For any copyright questions, feel free to contact us so we can help.

25 Lantana Lane, Maxwell, Texas 78656

Email: biblestudy@wvbs.org Phone: (512) 398-5211

Website: www.wvbs.org

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY	4
BACKGROUND	5
OUTLINE	10
EXPOSITION	10
1-3 -- SALUTATION.....	10
4-7 -- THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER	12
8-22 -- THE REQUEST	13
23-25 -- FAREWELLS	23
AN AFTERTHOUGHT	25
BIBLIOGRAPHY	26

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

Instructor: C. M. (Chuck) Horner

Biography:

Chuck was born in 1933. He and his wife Loretta have been married 60 years. They have 3 children, 5 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. He is an alumnus of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, where he majored in actuary science and minored in accounting. He graduated from the Bear Valley School of Preaching, Denver, Colorado in 1974. He has served on the administrations of York College and the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver. He served both as an instructor and as director in the Southwest School of Biblical Studies in Austin, Texas. In the fall of 1986 he helped start World Video Bible School where he serves as an instructor and trustee.

BACKGROUND:

- I. It is written by the apostle Paul.
- II. It was written about 62 A.D. (the ninth year of the emperor Nero).
 - A. From Rome.

During Paul's first imprisonment – the reason this was called a “prison epistle.”
 - B. Other locations have been suggested – Caesarea and Ephesus.

The exposition of the letter is not dependent on the location of its writing.
 - C. An objection to Rome was that it was over 1,000 mile away, and not easily accessible to one such as Onesimus.

There was a proverb at that time – “All roads lead to Rome.”

Traveling to Rome on the main routes would actually be relatively easy, and no individual would stand out traveling with the crowds.
- III. It is the only strictly private letter in the New Testament.
 - A. It is more than likely Paul wrote several private letters, but this is the only one that has lasted through the centuries and come down to us.
 - B. The letters to Timothy and Titus were written to individuals, but dealt with matters that involved the whole church.
 - C. This letter has sometimes been regarded as an appendix to the Colossians letter because they were written at the same time and sent to Colossae by the same messengers.

Read Colossians chapter four here.
 - D. However this letter is written to an individual regarding a personal matter, while the other letter is to an entire congregation.
 - E. Paul wrote to his friend Philemon about his friend Onesimus.

- IV. There is neither Christian doctrine nor exhortation to Christian living in the letter.

It is a perfect example of interaction between Christians.

- V. It is a request for Philemon to receive back a runaway named Onesimus.

Onesimus delivered the letter himself.

“It is hardly possible to imagine any other Roman gentleman of that time so much as lifting a finger to help a slave, much less a runaway slave” (Cox).

- VI. The basis of the epistle – all solutions are in Christ.

“There are no fewer than *eleven* references to the Lord Jesus by name, while the specially significant phrase ‘*in Christ Jesus*’ occurs oftener than in the same number of verses anywhere else in Scripture” (Drysdale).

- VII. This letter was received as scripture very early in the history of the canon.

The epistle to Philemon . . . “was held so sacred that even the ancient heretics did not attempt to impugn its authenticity or corrupt its matter, while making dangerously free with the four gospels, and all the other epistles” (Clarke).

- VIII. A few lessons from this letter:

- A. This letter shows the principles of the gospel will bring good to us regardless of our situation in life.
- B. This letter shows we must honor our duties regardless of the consequences.
- C. A great argument of this letter is . . . “Christian ‘fellowship,’ or communion, of which Paul and Philemon and Onesimus are all members; that if this fellowship is an effectual energy, and not a mere name, they are all brethren; that this new Christian relation overrides all other relations; that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither Asiatic nor Roman, neither master or slave, bond or free, but all are brethren because *He is Brother to all*” (Cox).

IX. Slavery in Bible times.

Old Testament times:

Exodus 21:1-11

1-2 Israelite sells himself into slavery – time of service.

Deuteronomy 15:12-14,18

After time served the former owner to send him out with many provisions.

3-6 Family matters of the slave.

7-11 A daughter sold into slavery.

Exodus 21:20-21

Beating of a slave.

Exodus 21:26-27

Maiming of a slave.

Exodus 21:32

Slave injured by a non-owner.

Genesis 16:9

Hagar instructed to return to her slavery.

Deuteronomy 28:68

All Israel to go into slavery if they disobey Jehovah.

How people became slaves –

Thief, defrauding on debt (unwilling or unable to pay), born into a slave family, foreigners captured in battle. However, death to kidnappers (Deut 24:7).

Slaves could own slaves –

2 Samuel 9:9-10 – Saul's son Mephibosheth owned Ziba who owned slaves.

Some who owned slaves –

Abraham, Lot, David, Abimelech, Job, Joash. etc.

New Testament times:

Three basic terms used for servants –

δοῦλος – slave, bondservant, servant.

This person has no choice over what duties he is to perform, whether he likes it or not because he is subject to another's will, the will of his owner.

He must always do what his master will have done and refrain from doing what his owner will not have done.

Literal meaning – slave.

διάκονος – deacon, servant.

This one provides for or cares for others with love.

All of the services of this one provided for others are ultimately unto the Lord.

They are responsible for all of the work committed to them and to know they were given to them as a gift of grace.

Literal meaning – one who stirs up dust.

ὑπηρέτης – minister, servant.

Assistant to another with full authority to carry out the master's instructions and to enforce them.

This person willingly learns his tack and goals from another who is over him, but without any regard to his own personal worth or dignity.

Literal meaning – under-rower.

Passages to consider:

1 Corinthians 7:21-24 – Christians, do not be concerned about whether you are a slave or free – serve the Lord.

Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-25 – there are rewards for those who do good for each other (slaves or owners). And punishments for those who do evil.

1 Timothy 6:1-2 – slaves honor your owners, do not despise them.

Titus 2:9-10 - slaves, do not defraud your owners.

1 Peter 2:18 – slaves, respect your owners even though they may be harsh.

Philemon – slave return to your owner and fulfill your obligations to him.

Additional thoughts:

Many slaves had good and gracious owners.

Many slaves had very high and responsible positions – mayors, soldiers, child-leaders (owner's children), chief stewards of very large estates, etc.

Slavery did not always mean poor living conditions, mistreatment, disrespect, branding, undeserving death, etc.

Owning slaves was never condemned in the Bible. Your conduct toward them was, but not their ownership.

OUTLINE:

I.	Salutation	1-3
II.	Thanksgiving and Prayer	4-7
III.	The Request	8-22
IV.	Farewells	23-25

EXPOSITION:

I. Salutation (1-3)

1. We know nothing of this man except for what we read in this letter.

Paul is the author, but he usually identifies himself as “an apostle of Jesus Christ.” Here he writes as a prisoner of Christ Jesus.

His appeal is not as an apostle, but on a more personal level.

Philemon must have known Paul as a man of authority with ceaseless activities, not resting in his evangelistic labors and even in his constant travels.

But, now he is a prisoner held in chains.

This would make for a much stronger appeal. It would create sympathy for this man who is suffering for the Lord’s sake.

The word “prisoner” can mean Paul is chained to a guard (Phil 1:7; Eph 6:20).

The normal procedure was for the chain to be attached from the prisoner’s wrist to the soldier’s arm.

Paul had not broken any civil laws which would place him in custody.

It was his devotion to Christ that kept him in trouble with those who hated Christ.

Their false charges against him placed him in prison.

Obey the laws of your country!

The only time you may disobey the laws of your country is when they are in opposition to God's laws (Acts 5:29).

Paul mentions Timothy in the salutation as being with him.

Philemon must have known Timothy also, but to speculate further why he is mentioned is unwarranted.

To Philemon. Φιλήμονι “affectionate” or “beloved” from φίλήμα, “a kiss.”

Beloved friend

Fellow laborer

2. This “is a genuine letter of Paul, concerning a slave called Onesimus, who somehow needs the apostle’s help in restoring good personal relations between himself and his master (one of Paul’s friends), and that Paul quite naturally takes the opportunity at the beginning and end of the letter to send greetings and good wishes to other members of the household” (Bruce).

Also consider that Philemon, as a good Christian, would have contributed to Onesimus’ conversion:

- a. As an example in his Christian living.
- b. And as such possibly caused Onesimus to have a guilty conscience for having run away and causing Philemon any grief.

Apphia – why she is addressed here is totally unknown.

Guesses vary as to who she is – wife, sister or Christian lady in charge of Philemon’s household, but nobody knows for sure.

Archippus – Ἀρχίππῳ Lit: the ruler or master of the horse – from ἄρχων, a chief, and ἵππος, a horse.

Why he is addressed here is also totally unknown (cf. Col 4:17).

Guesses also vary as to who he is – perhaps Philemon’s son or the preacher of the church that meets in Philemon’s house.

Fellow soldier – he would have had the same conflicts, face the same dangers and fought for the same goals.

“The conflict between God’s saints and the world is inevitable unless Christians compromise with the world” (Holland).

All in Philemon’s household will need these recommendations of Paul in order for them to receive a fugitive slave as a brother.

The church in your house.

In large cities there would be more than one meeting place.

Before the third century there is no evidence that there were buildings to hold larger groups of Christians for their services.

There was nothing but “house churches” prior to that time.

“The word rendered ‘Church’ refers always in the New Testament (where it occurs 115 times) to a fellowship of persons, never to a place of worship” (Drysdale).

3. It is just as necessary to give honor to Christ as it is to the Father (Jn 5:23) and the Holy Spirit.

This phrase may be considered as a wish, a prayer or a promise.

Grace. A Greek greeting. Here intensified by Christianity.

Peace. A Jewish greeting. A fruit of grace, or favor, of God.

II. Thanksgiving and Prayer(4-7)

4. I thank my God. Paul was always sincere, he was not “softening up” Philemon.

Making mention of you always in my prayers. Paul most likely had an extensive prayer list of fellow workers, churches and supporters.

And, as a result, would have spent much time in prayer each day.

5. Hearing of your love and faith.

Philemon's love and faith must have been shown in actions or Paul would not have heard of them.

It should be noted that neither Onesimus nor Epaphras has carried any unfavorable tales about Philemon that would reflect badly on his reputation.

Love – toward all the saints, and

Faith - toward the Lord Jesus.

6. The sharing of your faith. A united faith, not like the Jews were practicing.

“Though they were of one faith, - for they were all either Jews or proselytes – their faith was but a slack bond of union. The temple was a scene of strife between warring sects and factions. Galilean and Judean, Hellenist and Hebrew, Pharisee and Sadducee, Herodian, Sanhedrist, and Roman partisan wrangled among themselves and with each other. Every clique, every school, every faction, every race had its separate synagogue where they worshipped apart” (Cox).

May become effective . . . in Christ Jesus. “In” should be “unto,” the idea is unto Christ's glory.

By the acknowledgement. ἐν ἐπιγνώσει Lit: in full knowledge.

7. By this letter Philemon has gone down in history as a man whose house has refreshed and rested God's people.

If Philemon had been this kind and generous, surely he would have been glad to go on and perform this request Paul is making.

III. **The Request (8-22)**

- 8-9. Be very bold. Lit: to have much confidence.

As an apostle Paul might have ordered Philemon to “do what is befitting,” but out of his love for Philemon he will only make this request.

One friend does not give commands to another friend, that is not how one friend approaches another.

Orders are apt to be resented, but a friend's appeal is hard to resist.

Fitting. As Christians we must try to always do what is the "fitting" action to take, and then have the fortitude to do it

We do not always have book, chapter and verse, but we must know the tenor of scripture.

We must develop a "discerning ear."

Fitting - *čvňkov* Lit: "to come up to requirements" therefore "befitting."

For love's sake. "He is speaking of the principle of Christian love at large, not of any particular application of it, like Philemon's love for Paul, or Paul's love for Philemon, but generally" (Drysdale).

A gift must be given freely. If it is coerced it is not a free gift.

Any appearance of compulsion in this letter might damage Philemon's reputation if others knew about it.

The aged. It is possible Paul's sufferings, constant labors and anxieties had "made him old before his time."

"Hippocrates, the Greek medical doctor and writer says that a man is *presbutes* from the age of forty-nine to the age of fifty-six. Between these years he is a what we might call *senior*; only after that does he become a *geron*, the Greek for an old man" (Barclay).

In the first century their medical knowledge was quite limited compared to ours today and, with what Paul had suffered, it would have made him "an old man."

Since age usually brings with it experience and wisdom, this would be an additional appeal for Philemon to listen to Paul's request.

Also a prisoner. Even here with all of his pain and distress Paul is still advancing the cause of Christ.

10. I appeal to you. Not a command, but a strong and earnest request.

This is a call for Philemon to come to his aid.

Onesimus. After laying the groundwork for a strong appeal Paul finally brings up his subject.

This is where Paul introduces his object in writing this letter.

However, Philemon must have already known what the letter was about because Onesimus was standing in front of him at the time.

My son . . . I have begotten. Paul is Onesimus' father in the faith.

According to the teachings of the Sanhedrin, if someone teaches the son of his neighbor the law of Moses, that son is counted as if the teacher had begotten him.

We have no way of knowing how Onesimus came into contact with Paul.

There are many theories, but we simply do not know how.

“It could be argued that his master had sent him to fulfill some commission, and that he overstayed his leave” (Bruce).

A very important lesson is taught here – we can still evangelize under any circumstance.

Begotten while in my chains. This implies that Onesimus came to Paul, and that Paul did not search him out.

11. Describing Onesimus by using a play on words.

Onesimus' name means “profitable, useful or of value.”

“With the new nature that Onesimus has received as a believer in Christ, he has for the first time become true to his name” (Bruce).

Now is profitable. Christianity knows of no hopeless cases.

Christianity does not produce inefficient, aimless people; it produces people who can do a better job than they ever could before they were

Christians.

A Christian is profitable to all around him.

The gospel has given Onesimus a new and improved view of his own life.

By the same token his service to Philemon will also be improved.

Onesimus, in this verse, is said to have been worthless to one person (Philemon), but now he is useful to two (Philemon and Paul).

12. I am sending him back. With three witnesses:

Tychicus,

The letter to the Colossians and

This letter.

Sending back can also be used in a legal sense.

It can mean “to refer a legal case to.”

This phrase can be saying – “I am referring this case on Onesimus to you so that you can pass a verdict on him that will match the love you are known to have.”

A Christian cannot run away from responsibility or escape his past, Christianity is to enable us to face our past and rise above it.

Onesimus is to go back to face the responsibilities he left behind and face up to the consequences of what he did; to face his past and rise above it.

Christianity is never an escape, it is always a conquest!

And, on the other hand, a Christian must welcome back the man who has sinned against him.

Too often we still look upon the person who repented with suspicion and we are never prepared to trust him again.

We do believe God can forgive him, but we find it very difficult to do so ourselves.

There was a risk in sending Onesimus back to Philemon, especially if he were a slave.

Legally, at that time, a slave was not a person, he was a living tool.

An owner had absolute power over his slaves, including life and death.

There is no absolute proof in this letter whether Onesimus was a slave or not.

Paul nowhere tells Philemon to emancipate Onesimus.

He might have been indentured to him in some business transaction.

He might have borrowed money from Philemon, and then absconded with the funds.

We simply are not told the actual relationship between the two.

The point of this letter is to get Philemon to accept Onesimus back, not as a pagan master would, but as a Christian brother would.

Another lesson here is that wrongs committed among believers should always be sorted out among believers!

“Paul had no power to send Onesimus back to his master unless he chose to go. He had no civil authority; he had no guard to accompany him; he could entrust him to no sheriff to convey him from place to place, and he had no means of controlling him, if he chose to go any other place than Colosse” (Barnes).

13. Whom I wished to keep with me. Even though Onesimus was a bondsman (or a slave) we should not necessarily think of him as uneducated or unproductive.
14. Without your consent. Paul cannot continue to be served by a fugitive without his master's knowledge and consent.

If Onesimus were sent back he would be available fulltime to help

carry out Paul's work.

This would be a great contribution to the service of the gospel.

However, there is no direct statement in these verses that Paul is expecting Philemon to send Onesimus back to him. That must be read into the text.

I wanted to do nothing. Lit: I decided to do nothing. A decision he made, not just a desire.

15. For perhaps. Paul is suggesting God's providence is at work here.

Paul is not identifying this as an act of providence, but is acknowledging God is able to bring good out of evil actions. God has permitted Onesimus' unfaithfulness, and overruled it to the advantage of both Philemon and Onesimus.

God does use the faults and failures of men to bring about His desires.

Joseph's brothers selling him into slavery.

Judas betraying Jesus to the high priest.

"This principle is exemplified most vividly at the cross. The very climax of human wickedness – the crucifixion of the Lord of glory – becomes the method for cancelling and obliterating the sins of men. 'And so, albeit the actors in Christ's death wickedly intended nothing but to show their hatred and testify their envy, yet God brought another matter out of their malice, and made His endless mercy to man appear in His work of redemption. God would have Christ die; Caiaphus would have Him die; Pilate would have Him die; Judas and Jews would have Him die: but God for our redemption, they for other ends, as Judas for covetousness, the priests for envy, and Pilate to please the people'" (Drysdale quoting Attersoll).

God's providence is "behind the scenes," and we are not told which of God's acts are intended for what purpose, but Onesimus' running away precipitated this letter which produced benefits for the entire world ever since (regarding slavery).

Whatever evil actions of Onesimus brought him to Rome, and Paul, have been used to bring him to Christ, and as such is being returned as an asset to Philemon.

He departed. διὰ τοῦτο ἐχώρισθη Lit: “on account of this he was taken away.”

Paul does not use the words “run away.”

This phrase is in the passive voice which indicates the departure was brought upon him and not of his own design.

Paul continues to lean toward providence.

For a while. πρὸς ὥραν Lit: for an hour. In other words “a short time.”

16. Paul is not pleading for his freedom, he is pleading for Philemon to receive him as a brother.

Paul may be expecting Philemon to accept Onesimus back as a slave and then help him, protect him and nurture him in Christ!

Paul is expecting Onesimus to be obedient and submissive to Philemon’s wishes.

Now that Onesimus is Philemon’s brother in the Lord his service to him must not be of dread and drudgery, but of goodwill and cheerfulness.

Compare Paul’s teaching (guided by the Holy Spirit) in 1 Corinthians 7:20-22; 1 Timothy 6:1-2; Titus 2:9-10 and Colossians 3:22-25.

But how much more to you. “But for the separation, Onesimus would have remained with Philemon as his slave until their relationship was terminated in some way or another – by emancipation, redemption, resale, or death. Then the relationship would exist no more. But, thanks to the separation, Onesimus was now a member of Christ, as Philemon already was, and a new and deeper relationship was thus established which would never come to an end” (Bruce).

Both in the flesh and in the Lord. They are now related in two ways –

In the flesh according to civil law that regulates their fleshly

relationship,

And according to the gospel that regulates their spiritual relationship.

Relationships “in the flesh” are limited to this earthly life; relationships “in the Lord” last forever.

17. This is a first class conditional sentence (condition assumed to be true). “Since” not “if.”

Partner. This claims Philemon to be more than a friend to Paul.

This indicates a relationship so close in its experiences that it involves mutual responsibilities.

Receive him. Onesimus is also showing his repentance by willingly surrendering himself to Philemon and facing any possible penalty that Philemon has the “legal right” to administer.

Paul seems to be saying that if Philemon continues to regard Onesimus as a runaway slave, while Paul himself regards Onesimus as a brother, there will be a break in fellowship between Paul and Philemon.

Partner . . . as you would me. “That implication gives the appeal an added edge, since it was a traditional assumption in Greco-Roman society that such a relationship was only possible between equals, and certainly not between master and slave” (Dunn).

- 18-19. First class conditional sentence again (condition assumed to be true). “But since” not “but if.”

If he has wronged you. “Either by escaping from you, or by failing to perform what he agreed to, or by unfaithfulness when he was with you as a servant, or by taking your property when he went away. Any of these methods would meet all that is said here . . . conjecture is useless as to the way in which the debt had been contracted” (Barnes).

Put that to my account . . . I will repay. But, what about any debts Onesimus may have owed Philemon?

It has been asserted by many commentators that Onesimus stole money from Philemon, but this cannot be proven.

Repentance should include restitution wherever possible.

We do not know what funds Paul had available to him.

He may have had private funds, or could rely on fellow Christians to help in any of his special needs.

However, Paul's promise is definite!

Felix had hoped to receive funds from Paul (Acts 24:26).

Paul was renting a house during his imprisonment (Acts 28:30).

This is an astonishing pledge because of the limited means available to Paul, plus Paul was in prison at this time.

This helps Onesimus in that he could return without having to suffer for failures while he was in Rome.

If Onesimus was a slave (or an adoptee) and another accepted responsibility for him, he also assumed all debts the man owed.

That you owe me. προσοφείλεις Lit: owe in addition.

“I have laid you under obligation, not only for an amount equal to that due from Onesimus, but for *yourself* as made a Christian through my ministry” (Vincent).

Paul could claim Philemon as his spiritual son just as he did Onesimus in verse 10.

When we convert someone to Christianity we must also see to their spiritual needs and growth.

This is a responsibility we take upon ourselves when we help convert souls.

20. Let me have joy . . . refresh my heart. Paul finally describes the request for which this entire letter is written.

It is a plea for kindness to be shown to Paul himself.

Joy. ὀναίμην Lit: profit. Same root word Onesimus' name came from.

21. Having confidence in your obedience. This obedience is not a command!

In light of verse 9 (“appeal to you”) perhaps “compliance” would have been a better translation.

Paul has been very careful not to claim apostolic authority.

This obedience is a call to Christian duty and love.

Paul always expected the best from others.

When we expect the best from others often times they will do their best.

If we expect too little that is probably what we will get in return.

A person who truly knows the love of Christ in him will never seek to find the very least he can do in his daily service to the Lord.

“Paul had walked a difficult tightrope between covering the legal aspects of the affair and treating it as in-house issue to be determined by other than the rules of the marketplace and law court. The effect has been to give Philemon the maximum amount of room to make his own decision, to act graciously precisely by discarding the legal option which has been put to him” (Dunn).

Christians must be eager and glad to “receive and forgive.”

They are right with the Lord again! This is cause for joy.

22. Guest room . . . through your prayers. Paul hopes to visit Colossae.

This, however, is not a definite promise.

Paul knows his being set free from imprisonment depends on a judicial decision, but he allows for God’s overriding providence as well.

He realizes all prayer is offered in a spirit of submission to the will of God.

If our prayers are to be effectual they must be made –

In faith (Jas 1:6),

Abiding in Jesus (Jn 15:7),

According to God's will (1 Jn 5:14) and

In love (Rom 8:28).

Additional needs for effective prayers:

Obedience (1 Jn 3:22),

Remaining in Christ (Jn 15:7) and

Pray in Christ's name – authority (Jn 14:14)

True prayer = “Give me my request for Your sake.”

There is power in prayer. If Paul needed the prayers of others, how much more do we need the prayers of others?

“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (Jas 5:16).

Do you do this?

Are you afraid there is no righteous one to pray for you?

“It should also be recalled that in the ancient world hospitality played a much larger role in traveling than today; inns were generally places to be avoided if at all possible, so that the householders would generally expect to provide hospitality for their compatriots” (Dunn).

IV. Farewells (23-25)

23. Epaphras. His association with Paul in Rome may have caused suspicion and led to his confinement, or he may have shared Paul's imprisonment voluntarily.

Fellow prisoner. Συναιχμάλωτός Lit: fellow prisoner of war, fellow captive.

Greets you. This is singular in the Greek.

This confirms this is a personal letter, not a general epistle.

24. Mark. John Mark who was once separated from Paul is now working with him (Acts 13:13; 15:36-41 cf. 2 Tim 4:11).

Aristarchus. Had been with Paul more than once (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2).

Demas. This man is faithful at this time, but will later fall from the faith (2 Tim 4:10).

His falling should make us more alert in our own dealings with our faithful brethren around us – Remain Watchful to help them remain Faithful!

Luke. The physician and writer of the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts.

25. Grace . . . with your spirit. Paul desires that the unmerited favor of Christ rests on his soul (both here and in eternity).

FINIS

AN AFTERTHOUGHT:

“There are some contemporary issues which are discussed in this brief epistle to Philemon. The truth of Philemon exposes much of the socio-theological thinking of our day.

“Those who have been indoctrinated with the liberal, theological social gospel will have trouble appreciating Paul’s approach to a real social problem.

“Much of the social, theological, and political thinking of our day is based on a naturalistic view of man. When man is viewed as a ‘non-rational animal’ then he is subject to conditioning and his ‘choices’ are in reality nothing but responses which are ‘programmed’ by heredity and environment. Consequently, change man’s environment and you change the individual. Provide the material needs of men: food, shelter, medical attention, creative needs (art classes, crafts, et.al.), and recreation, and you will thereby create Utopia. ‘Community regeneration’ precedes individual regeneration.

“The truth in the letter to Philemon is a repudiation of the dogma of the social gospel” (Holland).

If the country you live in is not following God’s ways, the only solution is for every Christian to convert everyone around them to Christianity they possibly can.

Bring enough people to Christ and you will change your nation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY*

- Barclay, William, Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, The, Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1976.
- Barnes, Albert, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus and Philemon, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1907.
- Bruce, F.F., Epistles to the Corinthians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians, The, New International Commentary on the New Testament, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984.
- Cox, Samuel, Epistle To Philemon, The, Minneapolis, MN: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, Inc., 1982 reprint of 1867.
- Drysdale, A.H., Epistle To Philemon, The, The, Minneapolis, MN: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, Inc., 1982 reprint of 1897.
- Dunn, James D.G., Epistle To The Colossians And To Philemon, The, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, Grand Rapids, MI: 1996.
- Eales, S.J., Philemon, Pulpit Commentary, The Vol. 21, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962.
- Erdman, Charles R., Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon, The, Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1966.
- Fields, Wilbur, Philippians-Colossians-Philemon, Bible Study Textbook Series, Joplin, MO: College Press, 1976.
- Greek New Testament, The, Fourth Revised Edition, Nordlingen, Germany: United Bible Societies, 2005.
- Guthrie, Donald, New Testament Introduction, Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1973.
- Hendriksen, William, Exposition of Colossians and Philemon, New Testament Commentary, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980.
- Holland, Tom, Living Message of Philemon, The, The Living Messages of the Books of the New Testament, Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, 1976.
- Holy Bible, The, NKJV, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984.
- Muller, Jac. J., Epistles of Paul to the Philippians and to Philemon, The, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983.
- Nicoll, W.R., Ed., Expositor's Greek Testament, The, Vol. IV, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970,
- NKJV Greek-English Interlinear New Testament, The, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1994.
- Robertson, A.T., Epistles Of Paul, Vol. 6, Word Pictures In The New Testament, 6 Vols., Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1033.
- Shepherd, J.W., 1&2 Thess; 1&2 Tim; Titus; Philemon, Gospel Advocate Commentaries, Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Company, 1969.
- Thiessen, H.C., Introduction to the New Testament, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971.

Vincent, M.R., Word Studies In The New Testament, Vol. 3, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973.

Weed, Michael R., Letters of Paul to the Ephesians, the Colossians, and Philemon, The, The Living Word Commentary, Austin, TX: R.B. Sweet Co., Inc., 1971.

*This bibliography is not intended to be a complete listing of all references used in compiling this course. These notes were originally created as teaching notes with no thought given for them to be in written or published form. Therefore, if you come across any references, quotes, etc. not given credit please contact WVBS for inclusion in all newer editions.