

NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

THE LETTERS OF PAUL PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS AND PHILEMON

LESSON 21

LESSON OUTLINE

- I. INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS
- II. OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS
- III. LESSONS IN PHILIPPIANS
 - A. Jesus Christ, the reason for life.
 - B. Jesus Christ, the example of life.
 - C. Jesus Christ, the goal of life.
 - D. Jesus Christ meets the needs of life.
- IV. INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS
- V. OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS
- VI. LESSONS IN COLOSSIANS
 - A. The prayer of Paul.
 - B. The greatness of Jesus Christ.
 - C. The Christian is complete in Christ.
 - D. Christ and the believers together in heaven.
 - E. How to live as a Christian.
- VII. INTRODUCTION TO PHILEMON
- VIII. OUTLINE OF PHILEMON
- IX. LESSONS IN PHILEMON
 - A. God changes lives.
 - B. When sin is committed, it must be made right.
- X. WORDS TO LEARN
- XI. ASSIGNMENT

PHILIPPIANS

I. INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS

Who wrote Philippians

Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians. Timothy was with him. Maybe Timothy wrote down the words Paul told him to write.

When Philippians was written.

Philippians was written while Paul was in prison at Rome. It was written about A.D. 60 to 64. Because the letter was written from prison, it is called a **prison letter**.

To whom Philippians was written.

Philippi was a city in the northern part of Greece (Macedonia). The people of Philippi were called Philippians. Find Philippi on the map. Philippi was an important city. It was a Roman settlement. The Roman government gave it to the soldiers who were sent away from Rome. The highway from east to west went through Philippi.

There were no Jews in Philippi.

The church at Philippi was started on Paul's second missionary trip. God used a vision to tell Paul to go to Macedonia, Acts 16:9-10.

Lydia was the first one to believe in Jesus Christ at Philippi. A slave girl was set free from evil spirits. The jailor and his family also believed in Jesus Christ.

The church at Philippi loved Paul very much. They sent money to help Paul. No other church did this. Paul and the people at Philippi had good fellowship.

It is believed Luke was the minister of the church at Philippi for the first six years.¹

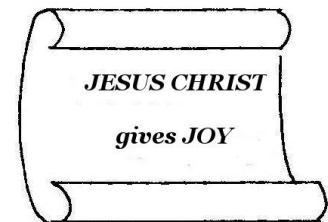
Why Philippians was written.

1. Paul thanked the Philippians for the gift they sent him.
2. Paul told the Philippians how he was making out in prison.
3. Paul told the Philippians he hoped to come to see them.

Main thought in Philippians.

The main thought is "Jesus Christ gives joy."

The key words are: **gospel and joy**.



¹H.Halley, Halley Bible Handbook, p. 552. Copyright C 1965, by Halley's Handbook, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

The key verses are: Philippians 1:21; 2:5; 3:13,14; 4:19.

II. OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS

- A. Jesus Christ, the reason for life, Philippians chapter 1.
- B. Jesus Christ, the example of life, Philippians chapter 2.
- C. Jesus Christ, the goal of life, Philippians chapter 3.
- D. Jesus Christ meets the needs of life, Philippians chapter 4.

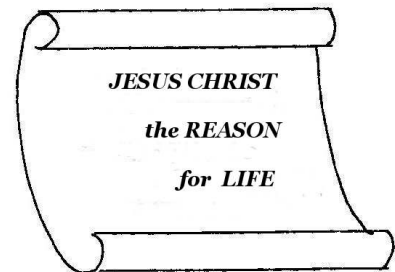
III. LESSONS IN PHILIPPIANS

A. Jesus Christ, the reason for life.

READ PHILIPPIANS CHAPTER 1

Paul had joy in praying for the Christians. He prayed for the people at Philippi. He prayed:

1. with thanksgiving.
2. with joy for their part in giving the gospel to others.
3. with joy because God was still working in their lives.
4. that their love would grow more and more.
5. that they would have a better understanding and be wise in all things.
6. that they would know what is the very best.
7. that they would be true and without blame until Christ comes.
8. that they would be filled with the fruits of right living. These fruits come from Jesus Christ.



Paul was in prison because he preached the gospel. Yet, he had joy. Paul told of the good things that happened because he was in prison. One of the good things was that the gospel was spread. Another good thing was that Christians became brave to preach the gospel.

Paul did not know if he would be put to death soon. Paul did not know which would be better, to live or to die. He wanted to live so he could help the Philippians. He also wanted to die so he could be with Jesus Christ. Paul wanted most of all to bring honor to Christ. He wanted to bring honor to Christ whether he lived or died. He did this by accepting the will of God.

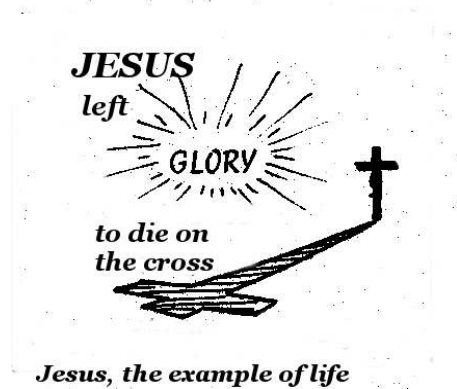
Paul had joy in living for Christ. The Christians were to live for Christ. They were

to work together. They were to preach the gospel. They were to have a part in the Christian fight. They were to be willing to suffer for Christ.

B. Jesus Christ, the example of life.

READ PHILIPPIANS CHAPTER 2.

Jesus Christ showed the Christians how to be humble and how to obey. The humble person does not think about himself. Jesus Christ did not think about Himself when He became man. Christians do not think about themselves when they think about the work of other Christians. The Christians have great joy in seeing God work through other people.



Jesus Christ showed the Christians how to obey. He did this when He died on the cross. He obeyed God the Father even to the death on the cross.

The Christian has joy when he obeys God all the way. When the Christian is humble and obeys God, he shows that he is saved. The Christian is a light in the world, Matthews 5:16.

God helps the Christian to obey. God helps the Christian to be humble. God helps the Christian to say and to do right things.

Timothy was a good worker. He was interested in people. He thought more about Jesus Christ than about himself. He gave the Christians an example of how to live.

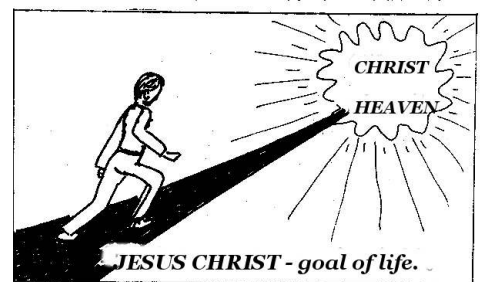
Epaphroditus was also a good worker. He became sick while working for the Lord. Even though he nearly died, he kept on working for the Lord. Epaphroditus was an example of someone who obeys the Lord.

C. Jesus Christ, the goal of life.

READ PHILIPPIANS CHAPTER 3.

The Christian is to rejoice because he belongs to Christ.

Paul said to watch for those who would



destroy the fellowship with Christ. The Judaizers had not come to Philippi when Paul wrote. Paul thought they would come. He warned the Christians about the Judaizers. The Christians were not to believe the words of the Judaizers. Paul told them he used to worship like the Judaizers. He found their way of worship did not make him happy. Paul found true joy in Jesus Christ.

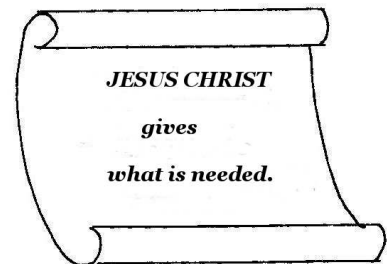
Paul told the Christians about those who did not really belong to Christ. They pretended to be Christians so they could enjoy the good things of the church. These people thought only about the things of the world.

The Christians belong to the country of heaven. They should have their interests in the things of heaven. When Jesus comes again, the Christians will be with Christ in heaven.

D. Jesus Christ meets the needs of life.

READ PHILIPPIANS CHAPTER 4.

A Christian should have peace and joy. A Christian belongs to the Lord. This makes him happy. A happy Christian lets all people see how gentle and kind he is. The Christian does not worry about things. He learns to pray about everything. He gives thanks to God for hearing prayer. God hears his prayers because of Jesus Christ.



Jesus Christ gives the Christian peace. This peace keeps the Christian's heart and mind.

A Christian should keep on thinking about the things of Christ. Philippians 4:8,9 says (N.L.T.),

"Christian brothers, keep your minds thinking about whatever is true, whatever is respected, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever can be loved, and whatever is well thought of. If there is anything good and worth giving thanks for, think about these things. Keep on doing all the things you learned and received and heard from me. Do the things you saw me do. Then the God Who gives peace will be with you."

Jesus Christ gives the Christian strength to do these things. This strength makes the Christian rejoice when he does not have much on earth. Paul reminds the Christian about what he has in heaven.

The Christians at Philippi sent money to help Paul. Paul was happy because he knew God was pleased with their love. They gave their gift more to please God than to just help Paul. Paul told them God would pay them for their giving. God would give them everything they needed.

The letter to the Philippians told the Christians how Christ gives joy to those who obey Him.

COLOSSIANS

IV. INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS

Who wrote Colossians.

Paul wrote Colossians. Timothy was with Paul.

When Colossians was written.

Paul was in prison when he wrote Colossians. It was written about A.D. 60 to 64. Colossians is also a **prison letter**. It was written the same time Ephesians was written. Ephesians and Colossians are called twin letters. Both letters teach the doctrine of the Church. Ephesians teaches about the Church of Christ. Colossians teaches Christ is LORD of His Church.

To whom Colossians was written.

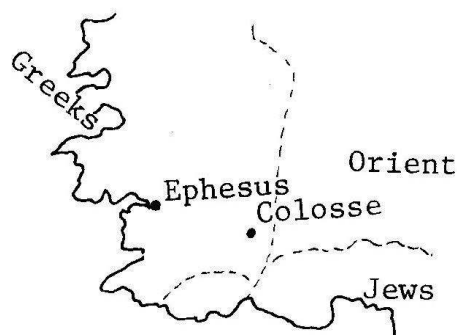
Colosse was a city of Phrygia. Find it on the map. The city was not far from Hierapolis and Laodicea. Colosse was about 100 miles east of Ephesus. Colosse had been an important city. But at the time the church started in Colosse, it was not as important.

We are not sure how the church started at Colosse. It may have been started by those who were at Pentecost in Jerusalem, Acts 2:10. It could have been started by Christians from Ephesus, Colossians 1:7; 4:12,13. It could have been started by Epaphras, Colossians 1:7. It seems that Paul had not been in Colosse before, Colossians 2:1.

Paul wrote this letter to the church at Colosse. He also wanted the letter to be read by the church at Laodicea, Colossians 4:16.

Why Colossians was written.

False teachings (heresies) were starting in the church at Colosse. Many people from Israel, Greece and the eastern countries (Orient) came through Colosse. Each group had its own religion. Each group had its own way of looking for God. The people at Colosse had strong feelings. They were very interested in things with secret meanings. They were interested in things that the human mind could not really understand. Because of this the Christians became interested in secret meanings and in feelings.



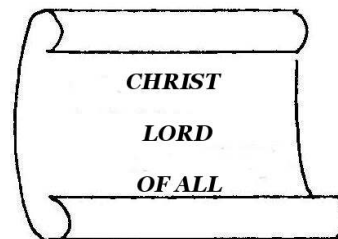
The Christians wanted to know more of God. These new teachings promised them an easy way to know God. They promised them a secret knowledge of God. But the Christians had to do certain things to get this knowledge. The Christians were told to make themselves humble by not eating certain foods. They were told to make their bodies suffer. The Christians were to keep certain days. They were taught that angels were the “go-between” for God and them.

The Judaizers tried to make the Christians keep the Jewish rules, Colossians 2:11.

Paul wrote to the Colossians. He wanted them to know that Jesus Christ is greater than the false teachers. The Christians are complete in Christ.

Main thought of Colossians.

The main thought is: **Christ is Lord of all.** Jesus is more important than everything else. We say, Christ is pre-eminent.



The key verses are: Colossians 2:9,10.

V. OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS

- A. Greetings, Colossians 1:1-8.
- B. The prayer of Paul, Colossians 1:9-14.

- C. The greatness of Jesus Christ, Colossians 1:15-29.
 - 1. Things which show the greatness of Christ, Colossians 1:15-20.
 - 2. What Jesus did for the sinners, Colossians 1:21-23.
 - 3. What Jesus did for the believers, Colossians 1:24-29.
- D. The Christian is complete in Christ, Colossians 2:1-23.
 - 1. The “mystery of God” in Christ, Colossians 2:1-7.
 - 2. Two dangers to the faith, Colossians 2:8-23.
- E. Christ and the believers together in heaven, Colossians 3:1-4.
- F. How to live as a Christian, Colossians 3:5 - 4:6.
- G. Last greetings, Colossians 4:7-18.

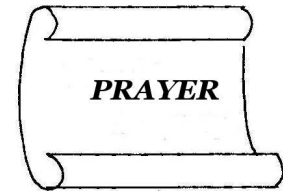
VI. LESSONS IN COLOSSIANS

A. The prayer of Paul.

READ COLOSSIANS 1:1-14.

Paul prayed that the Christians:

1. may know what God wants them to do.
2. may have the wisdom and understanding which the Holy Spirit gives.
3. may live to please God.
4. will do every kind of good work.
5. would be made strong by God’s great power.
6. would have joy as they kept going on for the Lord.



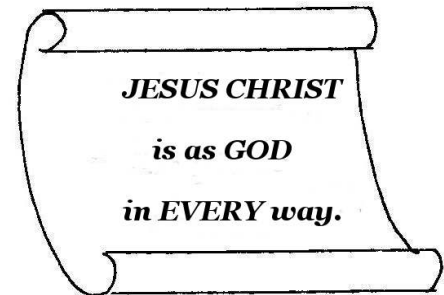
The Christians were to give thanks to God, the Father. They were to give thanks because they could share the good news with other Christians.

Paul reminded the Christians they were taken out of darkness. They had been in darkness because they did not know who God was. Their sin kept them in darkness. God brought them to the light of the good news. They would see God by faith and could know God. God did this by the blood of Jesus Christ.

B. The greatness of Jesus Christ.

1. **Jesus Christ is great.**

READ COLOSSIANS 1:15-20.

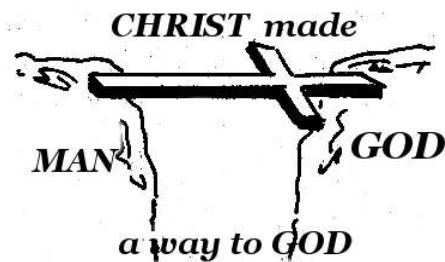


- a. Jesus Christ shows the Christian what God, the Father, is like. Jesus Christ is God.
- b. Jesus Christ lived before anything was made.
- c. Jesus Christ made everything. He made everything seen and not seen. Jesus Christ made all the power in heaven (spirit powers). Jesus Christ made all things for Himself.
- d. Jesus Christ was before all things.
- e. Jesus Christ holds all things together. He keeps the world together.
- f. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church.
- g. Jesus Christ is as God is in every way.

2. What Jesus Christ did for sinners.

READ COLOSSIANS 1:21-23.

People were strangers to God. They wanted to fight against Him. What people thought and did was wrong. Christ brought them back to God. Christ made peace between the people and God. He did this by His death on the cross.

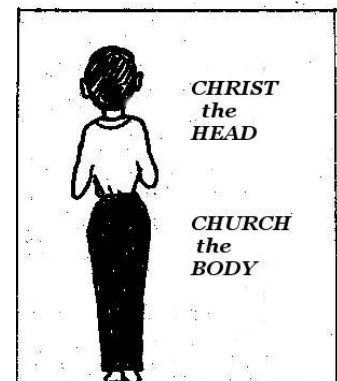


3. What Jesus Christ did for the believers.

a. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church.

Christ is the Head of the Church. Like a body has a head, so the Church has a head. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. The people in the Church are like the parts of the body, 1 Corinthians 12:12,13.

Christ was the first to rise from the dead. He was the beginning of the Church. Therefore Christ should have first place in the Church.



b. Jesus Christ can make a person holy and pure in the sight of God.

Sin separates everyone from God. When Jesus Christ died on the cross He paid the punishment for sin. Jesus Christ took away the sin. Those who put their trust in

Jesus Christ are pure in God's sight. They can come to God.

c. Jesus Christ suffered on the cross for all sin, Isaiah 53:6.

No more suffering for sin is needed, Hebrews 9:24-28.

Paul suffered because he lived right. Christians will suffer, Matthews 5:11; Philippians 1:29. They will be made to suffer by those who live in sin. Suffering may help people to want to become Christians, Acts 7:58-60; 9:1-7. When a person who is not a Christian sees a Christian suffer for Christ, he may want to believe in Christ.

d. Jesus Christ is also for Gentiles.

God chose to show Paul the gospel is for all the world. It is for both the Jews and the Gentiles. The people who lived before Christ was born did not know this.

e. Jesus Christ in a Christian gives the hope of heaven.

The secret of the gospel is that Christ lives in the Christian. This gives him the hope of going to heaven.

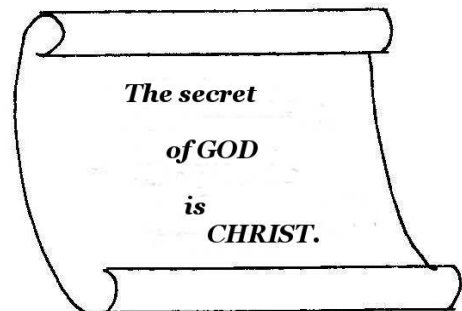
f. Jesus Christ is all a Christian needs.

Paul's work was to preach Christ. A person has his needs met in Christ.

C. The Christian is complete in Jesus Christ.

1. The mystery of God is Christ.

READ COLOSSIANS 2:1-7.



The secret of God is Christ Himself. In Christ the Christian has all the riches of wisdom and understanding. The Christian does not have to listen to big sounding talk. Christ can lead the Christian everywhere. The Christian is to grow in Christ. He is to become more and more like Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ makes the Christian strong in faith. The Christian should be thankful to God.

2. Two dangers to the faith.

READ COLOSSIANS 2:8-23.

Some people brought new religions to Colosse. One group talked about **big sounding ideas**. These ideas could not really be explained. They were more than the mind could understand. These religions left out Christ.



Paul reminded the Christians that Christ is:

1. God in human flesh.
2. Head of all leaders and powers.
3. the One Who set people free from sin.
4. the One Who forgives sin.
5. the One Who destroyed the powers of the devil and the powers of darkness.

Christ makes the Christian complete. A religion which leaves out Christ is wrong.

Some groups who came to Colosse talked about keeping laws. One religion told the Christians to eat certain foods and keep certain days. A Christian does not have to keep all these rules of food and days. The Christian died with Christ to the old ways. He no longer follows the old way of worship. The Christian is to listen to what Christ says and to follow His ways.

One group said they had to hurt their bodies to take away the desire to sin. Hurting the body cannot take away the desire to sin. The Christian died with Christ. The Christian was raised with Christ to a new life. Christ is the One Who takes away the desire to sin.

Another group said that angels were the “go-between” for God and people. Jesus Christ died for the Christians. He is the “go-between” for people and God. A Christian is to worship Christ, not angels.

D. Christ and the believers together in heaven.

READ COLOSSIANS 3:1-4.

The Christian should remember that he has died to the sinful ways of this world. He no longer has a desire to do the sinful things of the world. The Christian has a new

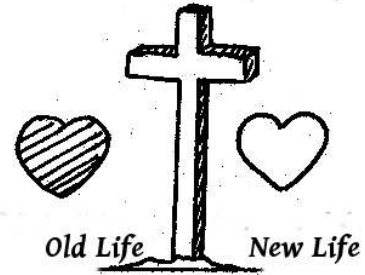
life. This new life is prepared for heaven. The Christian should look to the time when he will be with Christ in heaven.

E. How to live as a Christian.

1. The old life and the new life.

READ COLOSSIANS 3:5-17.

The difference between the old person and the new person:



The old person wants to:

- a. do sex sins.
- b. do things that are not clean.
- c. have things other people have.
- d. get angry.
- e. talk to hurt others.
- f. tell lies.
- g. go his own way.

The new person wants to:

- a. learn more about Christ.
- b. be made more like Christ.
- c. love other people.
- d. be kind to others.
- e. try to understand other people.
- f. forgive others.
- g. be gentle and wait for others.
- h. be full of loving pity.

The Christians are to do everything in the name of Christ.

2. How to live in the family.

READ COLOSSIANS 3:18-21.

Wives are to obey their husbands. Husbands are to love their wives. Fathers are not to be too hard on the children. If they are too hard, the children may want to give up doing right. Children are to obey their parents in everything.

3. How to live at work.

READ COLOSSIANS 3:22 - 4:1.

Paul told how the workmen and their boss should live. The workmen are to obey their boss. The workmen are to work hard for their boss. They are to do this also while the boss is not watching them. The workmen should work for their boss as they would work for the Lord. The boss is to give the workmen what is right. He is to treat all the workers the same. He has a boss in heaven.

4. How to live every day.

READ COLOSSIANS 4:2-18.

- a. The Christian is to pray.
- b. The Christian is to be careful how he lives around those who are not Christians.
- c. The Christian is to use his time wisely.
- d. The Christian is to talk well and not foolishly.

VII. INTRODUCTION TO PHILEMON

Who wrote Philemon.

Paul wrote the letter of Philemon.

When Philemon was written.

Philemon was written the same time Ephesians and Colossians were written. This was written while Paul was in prison in Rome.

To whom Philemon was written.

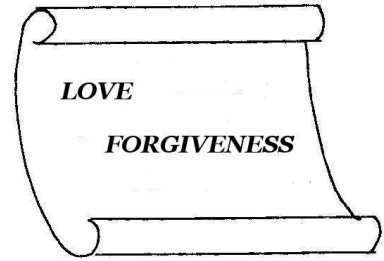
Paul wrote this letter to a man in Colosse by the name of Philemon. Paul led this man to the Lord. The man was rich. Philemon had church meetings in his home. Paul and Philemon were good friends.

Why Philemon was written.

Philemon had a slave. His name was Onesimus. Onesimus stole some money from Philemon and ran away. After awhile Onesimus found Paul in Rome. Paul taught him to love the Lord. Then Paul encouraged Onesimus to go back to Philemon. He wrote this letter to Philemon to tell him what had happened to Onesimus. Paul wanted Philemon to accept him as a Christian brother.

Main thought of Philemon.

The main thought of Philemon is Christian love and forgiveness.



VIII. OUTLINE OF PHILEMON

- A. Paul greets the family, Philemon 1-3.
- B. Philemon's love and faith, Philemon 4-7.
- C. Paul talks for Onesimus, Philemon 8-20.
- D. Paul says good-bye, Philemon 21-25.

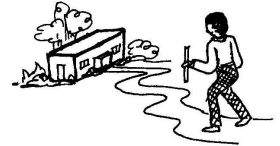
IX. LESSONS FROM PHILEMON

READ THE LETTER OF PHILEMON.

Paul told of his love for Philemon. He also told of the love and faith of Philemon. The love of Philemon gave Paul much joy and comfort.

A. God changes lives.

Onesimus was a slave. He belonged to Philemon. A slave was not paid for his work. His boss gave him food, clothing and a place to live. If a slave ran away, he was punished.



Onesimus was not happy working for Philemon. He had a problem. Maybe he did not do his work well. He stole some money from Philemon. Then he ran away. Onesimus went to Rome. He was a long way from home.

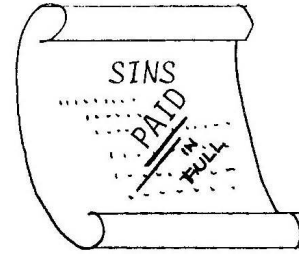
Onesimus came to Paul. Paul led him to the Lord. Onesimus put his trust in Jesus Christ. God changed his life. Onesimus helped Paul. Paul loved him.

When a person puts his trust in Jesus Christ, he becomes useful to others.

B. When sin is committed, it must be made right.

Paul would have liked to keep Onesimus, but Onesimus belonged to Philemon. Onesimus had to go to Philemon and make things right. Paul sent a letter with Onesimus. He asked Philemon to forgive Onesimus. He asked Philemon to take Onesimus as a much-loved Christian brother.

Paul did one more thing for Onesimus. He offered to pay Philemon anything Onesimus owed to Philemon. Even the money Onesimus stole was to be charged to Paul.



This is a picture of what Christ did for us. Jesus let our sin be charged to Himself, 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:24. Paul pleaded with Philemon for Onesimus like Christ pleads with the Father for us.

X. WORDS TO LEARN

1. complete - perfect; nothing more is needed.
2. goal - the end to which a person works.
3. honor - to say, "You are great."
4. pre-eminent - that which is first - the greatest, the most important.
5. persecution - hard times or troubles because a person believes something, usually because he believes in Christ.
6. rejoice - to be really happy.

XI. ASSIGNMENT

Philippians.

1. Why are Philippians and Colossians called prison letters?
2. Give three reasons why Paul wrote to the Christians at Philippi.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
3. What is the main thought of Philippians?
4. What good things happened because Paul was in prison? Philippians 1:12-14
5. How did Paul feel toward those who made it hard for him? Philippians 1:15-18
6. What did Jesus Christ do to show He was obedient to His Father?

Philippians 2:5-8

7. Tell in your own words how you can follow the example of Christ.
8. How are you to work out your own salvation? Philippians 2:12,13 (See III B)
9. Paul used to follow the laws of Judaism. What did he do about it?
Philippians 3:8
10. What was Paul's greatest wish (desire)? Philippians 3:10
11. As a Christian what is your greatest wish?
12. What are you to think about? Philippians 4:8
13. In what way can this kind of thinking (#12) bring peace to your mind?
14. In what way do you have joy when you see other Christians work for the Lord?
15. Paul was happy because the Philippians sent him a gift. Why?

Colossians.

16. Had Paul been at Colosse before he wrote Colossians?
17. In which other church was the letter to the Colossians to be read?

18. Why was Colossians written?

19. What is the main thought of Colossians?

20. Seven things which show that Christ is great are: (Colossians 1:15-20)
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)
 - 6)
 - 7)

21. What secret did Paul tell? Colossians 1:27

22. What do we have in Christ? Colossians 2:3

23. What are we to be careful of? Colossians 2:8

24. What happens when we are baptized? Colossians 2:12

25. What are we to put out of our life? Colossians 3:8

26. People from all nations are made one in

27. Tell in your own words:
 - 1) God chose us. He has made us holy. He loves us. What should our lives be like? Colossians 3:12,13

- 2) Why should a wife obey her husband?
 - 3) Why should the husband love his wife?
 - 4) How should a workman do his work?
 - 5) How should a boss treat his workers?
28. What was the prayer of Epaphras for the Christians at Colosse?
Colossians 4:12

Philemon.

- 29. Who was Philemon?
- 30. Who was Onesimus?
- 31. Why did Paul send Onesimus back to Philemon?
- 32. Paul did several things for Onesimus. In what way are these things a picture of what Jesus Christ does for us?
 - 1)
 - 2)
- 33. How was Philemon to take Onesimus back? Philemon 16,17
- 34. Would Onesimus still be a slave for Philemon?

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