



## Overview for Philemon

---

**Purpose:** Paul wanted Philemon to accept Onesimus, his runaway slave, as a brother in the Gospel.

**Author:** The Apostle Paul

**Date Written:** About A.D. 60

**History:** Most Bible scholars believe this book was written while Paul was imprisoned in Rome. Philemon lived in Colosse, and the letter was probably sent by Tychicus along with the Epistle to the Colossians (see Colossians 4:7-9).

**Key People:** Philemon, Onesimus, Paul

**Setting:** During the first century, millions of people in the Roman Empire were slaves. Both the government and their masters considered slaves to be property, and they were purchased and sold as such. They could be beaten for small wrongdoings, and if they ran away, they could be killed.

Paul did not specifically write condemning slavery. However, he addressed the Gospel principles of

forgiveness and brotherhood in Christ. He wanted the believers of his time to understand that salvation changed people from any culture or class into fellow members of the body of Christ.

**Summary:** This short book is a personal letter from Paul to his friend, Philemon, and the church which met in Philemon's house. It reflects Paul's deep love for both Philemon, who had been converted under Paul's preaching, and Onesimus, who had been saved while Paul was a prisoner. With incredible tact, Paul encouraged Philemon to forgive Onesimus, and to treat him as a Christian brother rather than a runaway slave.

Beyond the deep Christian love demonstrated by Paul in this letter, the book is also an object lesson in God's love and how He reaches out with forgiveness to those who stray from Him. Additionally, it shows fellowship between Christians being put into practice. It remains today as a challenge for God's people to love those who have done wrong and repented.

# Timeline

Many of these dates are approximate, as reference materials differ slightly.

Jesus crucified; Pentecost; Church begun A.D. 30	Stephen martyred; Paul's conversion 35			Peter's ministry in Asia Minor 47	Jerusalem council 50	PAUL IMPRISONED (CAESAREA) 57-59	PAUL'S HOUSE ARREST 60-62	James (Jesus' brother) martyred 62	Peter & Paul martyred 67/68?	Jude martyred 72
	PAUL IN CILICIA & SYRIA 35-46			PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS 46-48 50-52 53-57			Paul's trip to Rome 59			Rome destroys Jerusalem 70
			Holy Spirit falls on Gentiles 41	James (the apostle) martyred; Peter imprisoned 44						
				Galatians; James 49	1 & 2 Thessalonians 51/52	1 & 2 Corinthians 55	Romans 57	St. Mark 58/60	Ephesians; Colossians; Philemon 60	Philippians 61
							St. Matthew; St. Luke 61/64	1 Timothy; Titus; 1 Peter 64	Jude 65	Acts; 2 Peter; 2 Timothy 66/68
									Hebrews 68	

# Outline

Hannah's Bible Outlines used by permission per WORDsearch.  
A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at [www.apostolicfaith.org](http://www.apostolicfaith.org).

- I. Introduction (1:1-3)
  - A. The writers and recipients (1:1-2)
  - B. The salutation (1:3)
- II. The thanksgiving of Paul (1:4-7)
  - A. The fact of his thanksgiving (1:4)
  - B. The cause of his thanksgiving (1:5)
  - C. The petition with his thanksgiving (1:6)
  - D. The motive of his thanksgiving (1:7)
- III. The appeal of Paul (1:8-21)
  - A. The source for his appeal (1:8-9)
  - B. The object of his appeal (1:10-11)
  - C. The reason for his appeal (1:12-14)
  - D. The necessity of his appeal (1:15-16)
  - E. The basis for his appeal (1:17-21)
- IV. Conclusion (1:22-25)
  - A. Personal plans (1:22)
  - B. Personal greetings (1:23-24)
  - C. Benediction (1:25)