



# EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

## Personal Study Guide

Fall 2021 | CSB



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ness of mind let ca  
than themselves.  
y man on his own thing  
so on the things of other  
and be in you, which was al  
us:  
eing in the form of God, "thoug  
bery to be equal with God:  
made himself of no reputation, an  
upon him the form <sup>2</sup>of a servant, an  
as made in the likeness of men:  
<sup>6</sup>And being found in fashion as a man,  
numbled himself, and <sup>8</sup>became obedie  
unto death, even the death of the cross.  
<sup>9</sup>Wherefore God also <sup>10</sup>hath highly exa  
ed him, and <sup>11</sup>given him a name which  
above every name:  
<sup>12</sup>That at the name of Jesus every kn  
should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *thin*  
in earth, and *things* under the earth;  
2047:1 <sup>218</sup> Matt. 26:39, 42; John 10:18; Heb. 5:8; 12:2 <sup>219</sup> John 1:1-2:8; Acts 2:33; Heb.  
<sup>220</sup> Eph. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:4 <sup>221</sup> 2:10 Isa. 9:23; Matt. 28:18; Rom. 14:11; Rev.

each) over  
this priority  
and glorified.  
a church of its  
kingdom of God),  
n, that they stand  
ected military pride,  
ad ready for combat re  
nemy's level of strength  
ss or the distracting entice  
ure. The church must manifest  
adiness. "One spirit" expresses  
ver's unified attitude. **One mind**  
e soul") means that believers share  
Together they prevent divisiveness  
Paul witnessed at Rome (vv. 14-17).

love, same accord (lit. "the same soul"), and  
the same goal (one mind).  
2:3-4 Strife or vainglory recalls the prob  
lem Paul condemned (1:15, 17). Lowliness,  
the antidote for wrong attitudes, results  
in considering others as more important.  
Additionally, humility considers the inter  
ests (things) of others. Proper relationships  
include the contrast "not only, but also."  
Personal responsibilities demand con  
sideration, but the concerns of others are  
equally important.  
2:5-11 This is one of the most difficult  
passages in the Bible, prompting various  
(Gk) *kenosis* (lit. "emptying") theories at  
tempting to describe what Jesus gave up

on to at all costs), J  
cling to equality with  
privileges to become  
2:7-8 The phrase ma  
tation is much deba  
der what Jesus gave  
did not divest himse  
butes. Two statemen  
verb. First, God the S  
Form (cp. v. 6) indic  
Second, the likenes  
emptying and servan  
*homoiomo*) differs f  
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humbled (cp. v. 3).  
fashion as a man p

U N D E R S T A N D

E X P L O R E

A P P L Y

## Philippians; Colossians; Philemon



# WHO IS JESUS?

In Paul's Letter to the Philippians, Christ was and is the eternal Son of God who gave up the glory of heaven to become man. He died on a cross for our sins, was raised from the grave, and exalted to the right hand of God, where He reigns today. When He returns, every creature will recognize Him for who He is and confess Him as Lord. He alone is our hope, peace, joy, and strength.

In Colossians, Christ is the One through whom God created all things and is Lord over all creation. He is Creator and Savior. He paid the price for our sin through His death on the cross. He provided forgiveness, canceling our sin debt and rescuing us from its eternal consequences. His death and resurrection make it possible for all who believe in Him to be reconciled to God and to live free from the power of sin. Jesus is supreme; He is Savior; He is sufficient.

In Philemon, Jesus is the One who transforms and restores relationships. He changes how we view people and treat others. He makes all those who share a common faith in Him members of one family—God's family. He is the One who breaks down the barriers that exist between people and unites us as one.

All of this points to our need of Jesus and the life He offers. Right now, He is waiting for you.

- **Admit** to God that you are a sinner. Repent, turning away from your sin.
- **By faith receive** Jesus Christ as God's Son and accept His gift of forgiveness from sin. He took the penalty for your sin by dying on the cross.
- **Confess** your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. You may pray a prayer similar to this as you call on God to save you: "Dear God, I know that You love me. I confess my sin and need of salvation. I turn away from my sin and place my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray, amen."

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After you have received Jesus Christ into your life, tell a pastor or another Christian about your decision. Show others your faith in Christ by asking for baptism by immersion in your local church as a public expression of your faith.



# The Second Missionary Journey of Paul



## **PHILIPPIANS; COLOSSIANS; PHILEMON**

Paul's Letters to Philippi, Colossae, and Philemon call believers today to keep Christ central. The original audiences were troubled by conflict—disunity and a false teaching that undermined the centrality and sufficiency of Christ. The apostle's concern for unity and doctrinal integrity in the churches at Philippi and Colossae provides a model for our own churches. His concern over the relationship between Onesimus and Philemon provides insights into the nature of Christian relationships and how we are to relate to one another as members of Christ's body. Each of these letters encourages us toward a deeper relationship with Christ that nurtures deeper relationships with others. More importantly, they provide God's perspective on what it means to live out the gospel in a meaningful way every day.

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# CONTENTS

## FEATURES

Word Wise .....	6
Bible Reading Plan .....	7
Introduction to Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon .....	8
Friendship: Lessons from Philippians ....	127
Coming Next Quarter .....	130



## SESSIONS

### SUGGESTED FOR THE WEEK OF

<i>Sept. 5</i>	Session 1: <b>Joy in Prayer</b> (Phil. 1:1-11) .....	10
<i>Sept. 12</i>	Session 2: <b>Joy of Adversity</b> (Phil. 1:12-26) .....	19
<i>Sept. 19</i>	Session 3: <b>Joy Through Humility</b> (Phil. 2:1-15) .....	28
<i>Sept. 26</i>	Session 4: <b>Joy in Knowing Jesus</b> (Phil. 3:8-21) .....	37
<i>Oct. 3</i>	Session 5: <b>Joy Through Peace</b> (Phil. 4:1-9) .....	46
<i>Oct. 10</i>	Session 6: <b>Joy and Contentment</b> (Phil. 4:10-20) .....	55
<i>Oct. 17</i>	Session 7: <b>The Gospel's Power*</b> (Col. 1:9-23) .....	64
<i>Oct. 24</i>	Session 8: <b>The Gospel's Goal</b> (Col. 1:24-2:3) .....	73
<i>Oct. 31</i>	Session 9: <b>The Gospel's Forgiveness</b> (Col. 2:4-15) .....	82
<i>Nov. 7</i>	Session 10: <b>The Gospel's Freedom</b> (Col. 2:16-23) .....	91
<i>Nov. 14</i>	Session 11: <b>The Gospel Lived</b> (Col. 3:1-17) .....	100
<i>Nov. 21</i>	Session 12: <b>The Gospel and Relationships</b> (Col. 3:18-4:6) ..	109
<i>Nov. 28</i>	Session 13: <b>Restoration</b> (Philem. 8-21) .....	118

\*Evangelistic Emphasis

# MEET THE WRITER

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*Explore the Bible: Adult Personal Study Guide CSB* (ISSN ; Item 005573495) is published quarterly by Lifeway Christian Resources, One Lifeway Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234, Ben Mandrell, President. © 2021 Lifeway Christian Resources.

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Explore the Bible  
Adult Personal Study Guide  
Fall 2021  
Volume 8, Number 1

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Printed in the United States  
of America

# FROM THE TEAM LEADER

Early in his letter, we find Paul calling the Philippians his partners in the gospel (1:5). Paul also challenged Philemon to consider him a partner when making his appeal on behalf of Onesimus (Philem. 17). By extension, this partnership included the church that met in Philemon’s home in Colossae. (Archippus is listed by Paul in Col. 4:17 and Philem. 2).

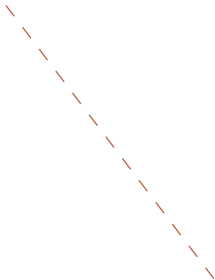
Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon were all written as Paul sat in Rome waiting to appear before Caesar. We can assume this idea of partners was an important thing to Paul as he sat in house arrest. Paul knew he was not alone in taking his stand with Christ. There were partners standing with him, seeking to live Christ-honoring lives in their locations. Paul represented those believers while inside the walls of that Roman house while they represented him outside those walls. They expected each other to represent Christ well in word and in deed, with Paul expressing the joy he found in their partnership. They were counting on each other to do the right thing.

Our shared partnership in the gospel should impact how we live our lives. How we treat each other as believers and a high moral standard should be evident. Our prayer is that as we study Paul’s letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon we will gain a deeper appreciation of the partnership we share in Christ.

In His service,

**G. Dwayne McCrary**

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# WORD WISE

**Terms listed here are identified in the Bible commentary with a dot (•).**

**Clement** [KLEM uhnt]—a coworker with Paul and member of the church in Philippi (Phil. 4:3)

**Colossae** [koh LAHS sih]—city in the region of Phrygia, located near Laodicea. The name means “purple wool,” derived from the wool produced and dyed there.

**Epaphroditus** [ih PAF roh DIGH tuhs]—a coworker with Paul and member of the Philippian church; he delivered to the apostle a gift from the Philippian church (Phil. 2:25,29)

**Euodia** [yoo OH dih uh]—a female member of the church at Philippi who had a disagreement with Syntyche; she worked with Paul in the spread of the gospel (Phil. 4:2-3)

**Imperial guard**—the Roman emperor’s elite troops stationed in Rome. The guard was first established by Caesar Augustus, the emperor at the time of Jesus’ birth.

**Laodicea** [lay AHD ih SEE uh]—a city in southwest Asia Minor, ten miles from Colossae; Paul wrote a letter to the church there that has not survived; perhaps best known for its mention in Revelation 3:14-22.

**Macedonia** [MASS uh DOH nih uh]—a Roman province in what is today northern Greece. Paul responded to a vision to preach the gospel there (Acts 16:9-10).

**Philippi** [FIH lih pigh]—a city in the Roman province of Macedonia, what is today northern Greece. Paul first visited Philippi on his second missionary journey in response to his Macedonian vision (Acts 16:9). The church planted there by Paul was the first church in Europe.

**Syntyche** [SIN tih kee]—a female member of the church at Philippi who had a disagreement with Euodia; she worked with Paul in the spread of the gospel (Phil. 4:2-3)

**Thessalonica** [THESS uh loh NIGH kuh]—a city in Macedonia, what is today northern Greece. Paul started a church there on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-4) and later wrote two letters to the church.

**Timothy**—missionary partner of the apostle Paul. Paul first met Timothy on his first missionary journey in the area of Lystra (Acts 16:1); he was mentioned by Paul in the salutations of six letters (2 Cor.; Col.; Phil.; 1, 2 Thess.; Philem.) and was the recipient of two letters from Paul (1, 2 Tim.).



# BIBLE READING PLAN

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Philippians 1:1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Philippians 4:2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Colossians 3:5-7
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Philippians 1:3-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Philippians 4:4-7	<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Colossians 3:8
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Philippians 1:6	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Philippians 4:8-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Colossians 3:9-10
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Philippians 1:7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Philippians 4:10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Colossians 3:11
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Philippians 1:9-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Philippians 4:13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Colossians 3:12-13
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Philippians 1:12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Philippians 4:15-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Colossians 3:14-15
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Philippians 1:18-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Philippians 4:19-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Colossians 3:16-17
<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Philippians 1:21	<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Philippians 4:21-23	<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Colossians 3:18-19
<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Philippians 1:22-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Colossians 1:1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Colossians 3:20-21
<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Philippians 1:25-26	<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Colossians 1:3-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Colossians 3:22
<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Philippians 1:27-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Colossians 1:7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Colossians 3:23-24
<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Philippians 2:1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Colossians 1:9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Colossians 3:25-4:1
<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Philippians 2:3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Colossians 1:13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Colossians 4:2
<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Philippians 2:5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Colossians 1:15-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Colossians 4:3-4
<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Philippians 2:9-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Colossians 1:18-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Colossians 4:5-6
<input type="checkbox"/> 16. Philippians 2:12-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 16. Colossians 1:21-23	<input type="checkbox"/> 16. Colossians 4:7-9
<input type="checkbox"/> 17. Philippians 2:14-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 17. Colossians 1:24-26	<input type="checkbox"/> 17. Colossians 4:10-11
<input type="checkbox"/> 18. Philippians 2:17-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 18. Colossians 1:27-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 18. Colossians 4:12-13
<input type="checkbox"/> 19. Philippians 2:19-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 19. Colossians 2:1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 19. Colossians 4:14-15
<input type="checkbox"/> 20. Philippians 2:22-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 20. Colossians 2:4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 20. Colossians 4:16-18
<input type="checkbox"/> 21. Philippians 2:25-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 21. Colossians 2:6-7	<input type="checkbox"/> 21. Philemon 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/> 22. Philippians 3:1	<input type="checkbox"/> 22. Colossians 2:8	<input type="checkbox"/> 22. Philemon 4-5
<input type="checkbox"/> 23. Philippians 3:2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 23. Colossians 2:9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 23. Philemon 6
<input type="checkbox"/> 24. Philippians 3:4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 24. Colossians 2:11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 24. Philemon 7
<input type="checkbox"/> 25. Philippians 3:7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 25. Colossians 2:13	<input type="checkbox"/> 25. Philemon 8-10
<input type="checkbox"/> 26. Philippians 3:10-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 26. Colossians 2:14-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 26. Philemon 11-13
<input type="checkbox"/> 27. Philippians 3:12-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 27. Colossians 2:16-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 27. Philemon 14-16
<input type="checkbox"/> 28. Philippians 3:15-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 28. Colossians 2:18-19	<input type="checkbox"/> 28. Philemon 17-18
<input type="checkbox"/> 29. Philippians 3:18-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 29. Colossians 2:20-23	<input type="checkbox"/> 29. Philemon 19-22
<input type="checkbox"/> 30. Philippians 4:1	<input type="checkbox"/> 30. Colossians 3:1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> 30. Philemon 23-25
	<input type="checkbox"/> 31. Colossians 3:3-4	

# INTRODUCTION

Paul wrote four letters during his imprisonment in Rome, a period when the apostle was kept under house arrest while awaiting an appearance before Caesar. (See Acts 28:16,30.) This quarter's study looks at three of these letters: Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Ephesians was the other one.

The contexts and experiences of the letters' original readers were different, so the themes of the letters varied as well. For example, Paul had founded the Philippian congregation (see Acts 16) and still felt a strong personal tie to that church. They shared that emotional bond with him and were concerned about the effects of his imprisonment. To encourage them, he emphasized themes like partnership and joy.

In contrast, Paul had never visited the city of Colossae and likely knew few of the Colossian Christians. However, he understood the pressures they were facing and wanted to minister to them from afar. The attacks of false teachers in Colossae had raised serious questions about the keys to faith and spiritual maturity. So, he reminded them that Jesus was superior to every other spiritual "option," and that His work on the cross was sufficient for salvation. The pervasive theme of Colossians is the sufficiency and supremacy of Christ as head of the church.

Finally, Paul's letter to Philemon represents a short, yet personal note to a friend faced with a difficult choice. Philemon's slave, named Onesimus, had stolen from him and escaped to Rome. There, he had met Paul and come to faith in Jesus. Paul's letter reflects an urgent plea for Philemon to embrace the return of his slave warmly instead of taking advantage of his rights to punish Onesimus. Paul's request was based not on first-century rules governing slavery but on Christian grace toward brothers and sisters in Christ. This brief letter could be read as an example of the truth declared in Galatians 3:28, "There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Paul's letters to Philippi, Colossae, and Philemon call individuals to a higher standard. They encourage readers toward a deeper relationship with Christ that nurtures deeper relationships with others. More importantly, they provide God's perspective on what it means to live out the gospel in a meaningful way each and every day.

# OUTLINES

## OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS

- I.** Salutation (1:1-2)
- II.** Paul's Concerns (1:3-2:30)
- III.** Living the Christian Life (3:1-4:9)
- IV.** Thankfulness (4:10-20)
- V.** Benediction (4:21-23)

## OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS

- I.** Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1-12)
- II.** God's Work in Christ (1:13-23)
- III.** Paul's Ministry (1:24-2:3)
- IV.** False Teaching Denounced (2:4-23)
- V.** The Christian Life (3:1-4:6)
- VI.** Conclusion (4:7-18)

## OUTLINE OF PHILEMON

- I.** Paul's Greeting (vv. 1-3)
- II.** Paul's Thanksgiving (vv. 4-7)
- III.** Paul's Appeal (vv. 8-20)
- IV.** Paul's Plans (vv. 21-22)
- V.** Paul's Conclusion (vv. 23-25)



## ON THE COVER

Ruins of store buildings in Laodicea. Laodicea was located in the Lycus Valley near Colossae and Hierapolis. The city was known for an eye ointment that local merchants produced. (See session 8.)

ILLUSTRATOR PHOTO/ BOB SCHATZ (11-31-2)