

“Personal But Not Private”

Philemon 1:1-3

September 27, 2020



Introduction

Author: Paul

Recipients: **Philemon**, Apphia, Archippus, and the church meeting in Philemon’s house.

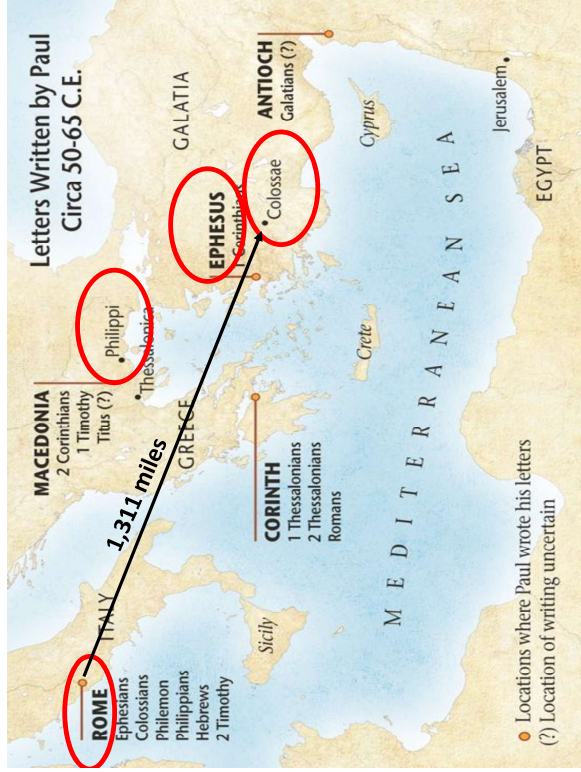
Date: 60-62 AD

Place of Writing: Paul – Roman prison. Part of the prison epistles – Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, Philemon.

Destination: Philemon – Colossae.

Purpose: To restore a runaway slave to his master.

Subjects : slavery, social justice, relationships, forgiveness, grace, mercy, tactfulness, restitution, plus Philemon also touches on the Church, reconciliation, intercession, and salvation.

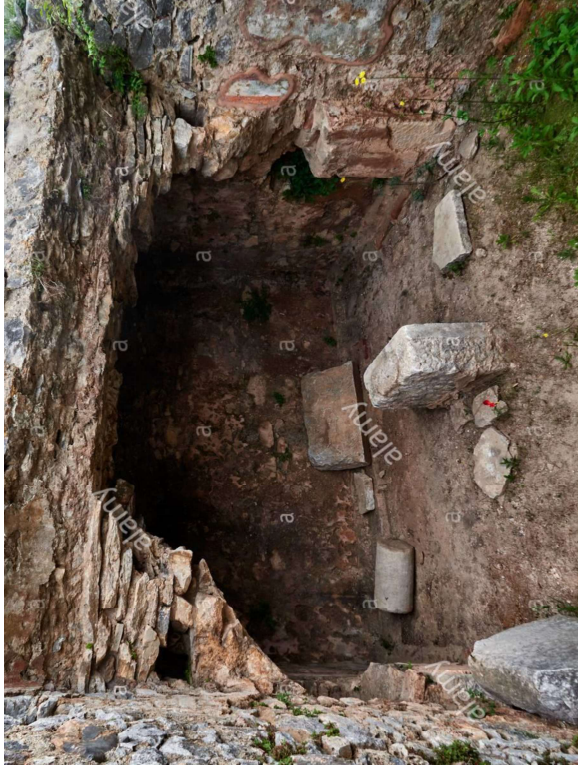


Philemon 1-3

- 1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker,
- 2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:
- 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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- This book is principally about 3 men.
 - On one level this book is about relationships and it is complex and “sticky.” It is a very delicate situation. Takes skill. There is a lot on the line for all 3 men.
 - This is a personal letter but not a private letter.
 - So lets start with the first person –
- Paul –**
- He is the spiritual patriarch/elder of the 3.
 - In the Greek world, letters always started with the name of the one writing. Makes sense.
 - Conversion is a “180.” Totally transformed – look at this letter.
 - Paul is the older, most mature of the 3.
 - Prisoner in a Roman prison.



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 - Prisoner in a Roman prison.
 - Look who he is prisoner of.
 - The Christian life is about perspective.
 - **“and Timothy”**: Paul’s sidekick. Timothy had been with Paul on his third missionary journey – Acts chapter 19. He was acquainted with the believers in Colossae, probably had met Philemon.

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Here is the second person –

Philemon –

- Name means “the loving one.”
- Saved under Paul’s ministry. (vs. 19)
- Was a beloved brother.
- Fellow worker – involved and active in ministry.
- Lived in Colossae.
- Wealthy: 1. Slave owner. 2. Church met in his house.

2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

Apphia – probably Philemon’s wife. A believer.

Archippus – maybe Philemon’s son and pastor of the church in Philemon’s house.

- Called fellow soldier.

Phil 2:25,30

25 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and **fellow soldier**, who is also your messenger and minister to my need;

30 because he came close to death **for the work of Christ**, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.

Col 4:17

17 Say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.”

“the church that meets in your house”

Why is that?

Christian congregations were dependent upon the hospitality of wealthy members who could provide and furnish their own houses for a church to meet in.

Acts 2:41-42, 46-47

41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about **three thousand** souls.

42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from **house to house**, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

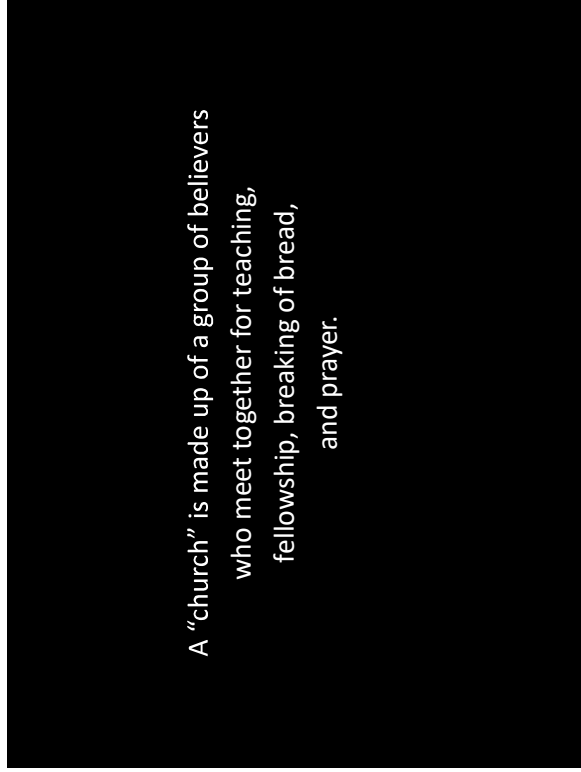
47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 4:4

4 But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the **men** came to be about **five thousand**.

Acts 5:42

42 And every day, in the temple and from **house to house**, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.



Acts 20:20

20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from **house to house**,

Rom 16:3-5

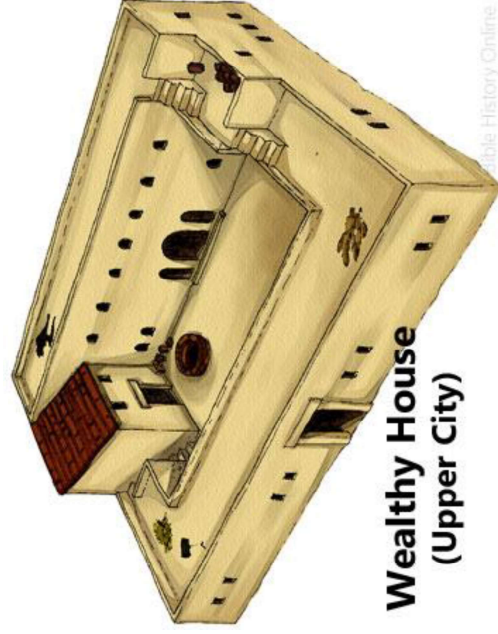
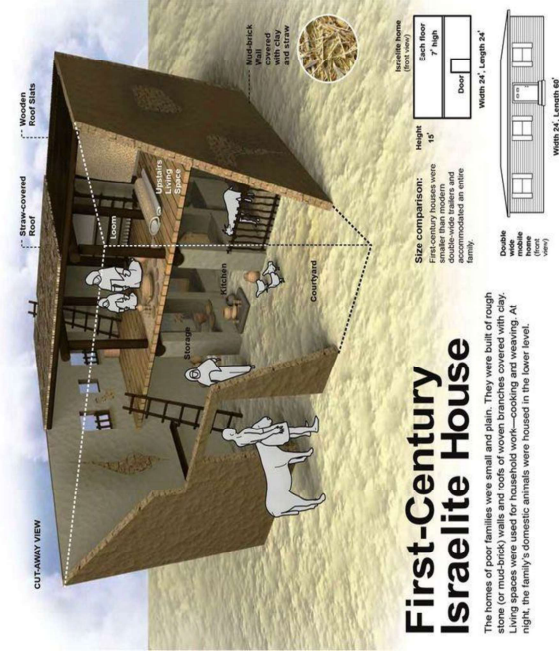
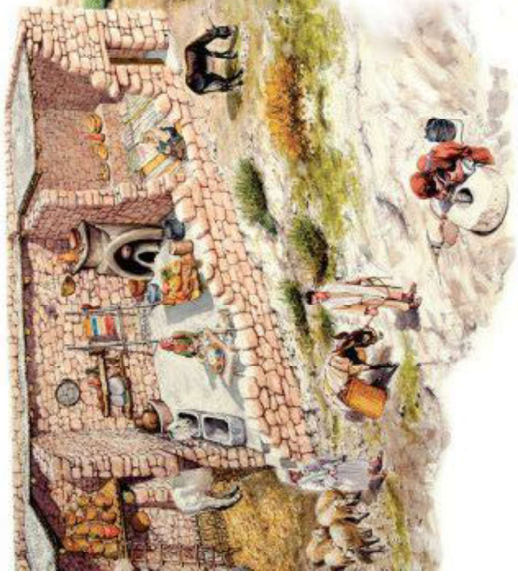
3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,
4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;
5 also greet the **church that is in their house**.

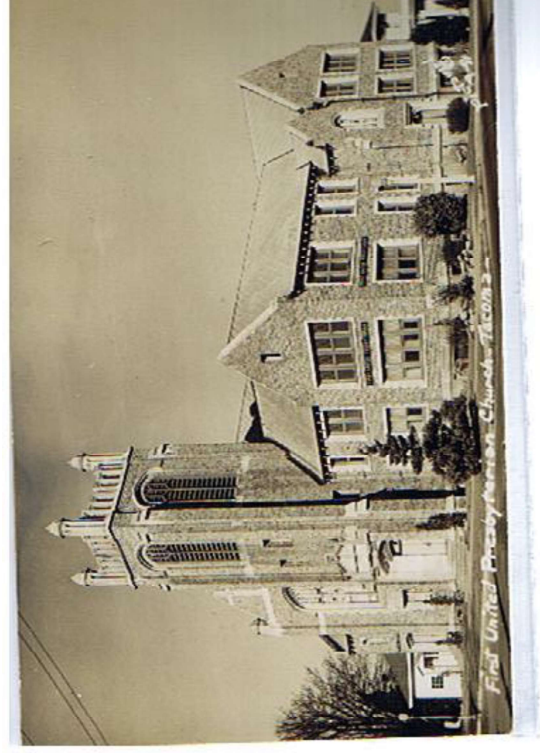
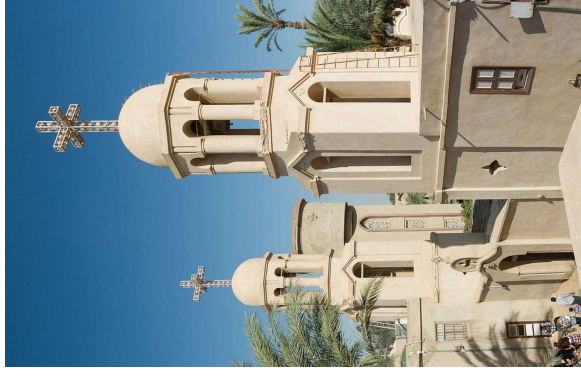
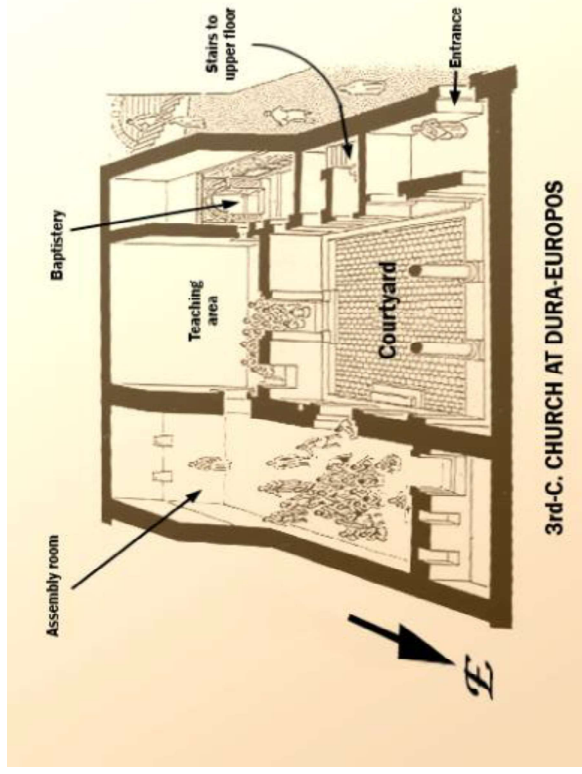
1 Cor 16:19

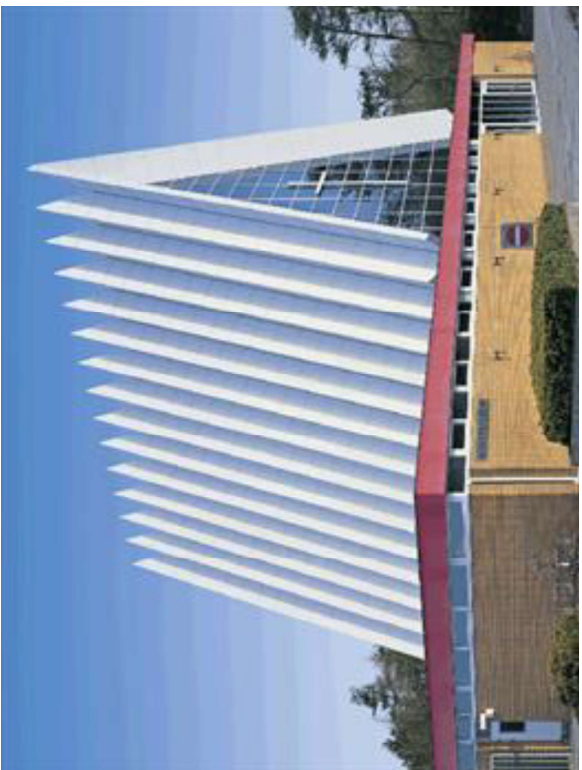
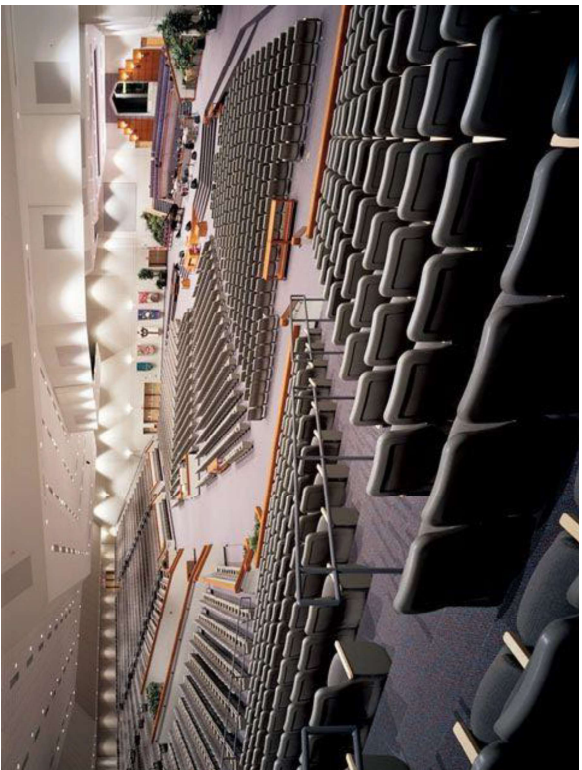
19 Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the **church that is in their house**.

Col 4:15

15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the **church that is in her house**.









A "church" is made up of a group of believers who meet together for teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer.

- So this letter is also written to the church meeting in Philemon's house.
- Paul has in mind by including the church - accountability, encouragement, and support for both Philemon and Onesimus.

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- Grace is extending to someone what they don't deserve.
- Peace is the result of extending grace.
- Grace saves, peace results.
- Grace is the Greek greeting. Peace is the Hebrew greeting.

Paul is saying –

“To those of you who are Greeks, I greet you with grace and favor, and to those of you who are Jews, I greet you with peace and comfort.”

- By using both the terms “grace” and “peace,” the doors were thrown open for the whole world to read this letter.
- The source of it all is “God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Paul's hope is that Philemon will extend grace to Onesimus and that peace will follow in his home, his family and his church.