

Chattabox  
session  
Sunday 25th  
July 2021.

Philemon

# Welcome

Hi guys,

Whilst we can now meet with some of us at church for Chattabox, we know that not everyone can come along but we can still all have Chattabox!

There are some things here for to do which those in church will be doing too.

If you want to join us next week face to face, [sign up here.](#)



# Last Time

Do you remember the story from last week? We learned about Titus who was another person Paul wrote letters to, this time helping him be a good leader and stop the bad leaders in Crete who said one thing and did another.



# Getting started

Today we have the last of our sessions about people Paul wrote letters to. This time it's a man called Philemon. By the time Paul writes to Philemon he has finished his journeys and is now in Rome but he is in prison! Paul wrote lots of letters while in prison and he sent his friends to take the letters to many of the places he had visited before - there was no such thing as a postman back then!

Let's start by writing letters too. Choose someone who you live with to write a letter to. Write your letter and fold it up (they didn't have envelopes then either), now go deliver your letter before you come back and carry on with today's story.

# Story Preparation

There's lots of travelling in the story today, as you listen or read, move around your house or garden and think about how long it took for people to go places back in the time the story takes places.

If there are 3 of you, you could even act out the story with one person being Philemon, one Onesimus and one Paul.

# Story Time

Philemon is the name of one of the New Testament Books in the bible. It is named after one of the people that Paul wrote to when he was in prison.

Who was Paul and what was he doing in prison? Was he bad? Had he done something terrible. No. Paul was a good man. He was one of the very early Christians and because of all his travelling and teaching, many new churches were being set up. But the authorities in Rome did not believe in the good news that Paul was sharing and tried to stop him by throwing him into prison.

# Story Time

But even while he was in prison, Paul did what he could to encourage his friends in all the new churches by writing letters to them. One of these friends was Philemon.

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Philemon was a very wealthy man. He had a big house and slaves to do the work. Philemon had met Paul and become a Christian. He set up a church in his home, so many Christians could come together to pray and worship. Now one of Philemon's slaves, whose name was Onesimus, wanted to be free. He had a plan.

# Story Time

One day he saw his opportunity. He knew where his master, Philemon kept his treasure and one night, when everyone was asleep, he stole enough to keep himself alive, and ran away. He thought that if he could get as far as Rome, he would be able to live as a free man.

While he was in Rome, Onesimus saw a big crowd of people listening to a man telling them all about Jesus and God's love for us all. He made his way to the front of the crowd and the more he heard, the more was convinced that Paul's every word was true. Before the day was out, he had become a Christian.



# Story Time

Paul and Onesimus became good friends. As they talked about their lives Paul came to learn that Onesimus was a runaway slave. Not only that, but he had run away from Philemon. The very same man who was a close friend of his.

Paul and Onesimus talked things over and Paul told Onesimus that he should go back to his master, say he was sorry and ask to be taken back. Paul knew that Onesimus could be a good worker for the church and valuable helper for Philemon if he was just given the chance.

# Story Time

This was when Paul was thrown into prison. As we heard earlier, Paul was able to write to his friends from prison, so he sent a letter to Philemon.

Paul asked Philemon to take Onesimus back and treat him well, just as he would treat Paul himself. He asked Philemon to forgive Onesimus for running away and to not treat him like a servant any more, but to treat him like a brother. Paul said that if Onesimus owed him anything, he, Paul, would repay it.

# Story Time

Paul said in his letter that he knew that Philemon would not only do what Paul asked of him, but that he would do more than Paul asked.

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The letter of Philemon is a letter of love and forgiveness. This is how Christians treat each other--with gentleness, forgiveness, and love, not holding onto a grudge or bad feelings. We should treat others the same way that Paul asked Philemon to treat Onesimus.

# What next?

The letter of Philemon is one of the shortest ones in the Bible, in fact why don't you go and read it yourself then come back here.

Why do you think such a short letter is still in the Bible? It's because even though Paul was writing to Philemon about Onesimus we can still learn from what he says about how to live today. Just like Philemon, we should forgive people and give them a second chance; and just like Onesimus we should listen to other Christians who tell us when we've done something wrong and we should ask for forgiveness and say sorry to the people we've done wrong to.

What else do you think we can learn from Paul's letter to Philemon and today's story?

# Let's pray

*Dear God*

*Help us to forgive people and love them like you do.*

*Thank you for the people we know that show us the way to be like you like Paul did for Philemon.*

*Amen*

First, let's say this prayer together then you pray for something you want to say to God.

Is there someone you need to say sorry to? If so why not ask God to help you say sorry and to help you not do that thing again.

Remember God will always listen to you when you pray.

# Philemon Bible Scavenger Hunt

Use a Bible to find the answers to these questions. If there is more than one of you - make each question into a race!

What book comes before Philemon?

What book comes after Philemon?

How many chapters are in Philemon?

Which chapter has the most verses?

How many verses are in Chapter 1?

What are the first two names mentioned in Chapter 1 verse 1?

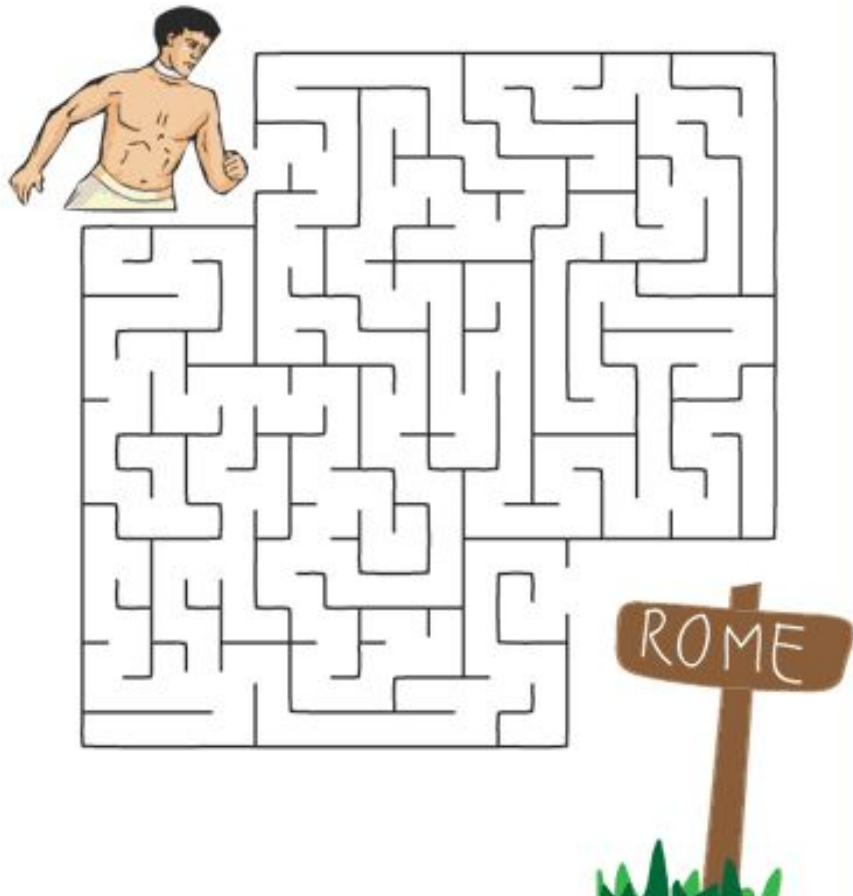
What are the two names mentioned in Chapter 1 verse 2?

Who does Paul say he met in jail in Chapter 1 verse 10?

What does Paul ask them to prepare for him in Chapter 1 verse 22?

What name is mentioned in chapter 1 verse 23?

What four names are mentioned in chapter 1 verse 24?



# Maze

Help Onesimus find the way to Rome now he has run away from being Philemon's slave.

# Colouring Page

Print off the page or, if you're feeling artistic draw your own picture of Paul sending Onesimus back with his letter.



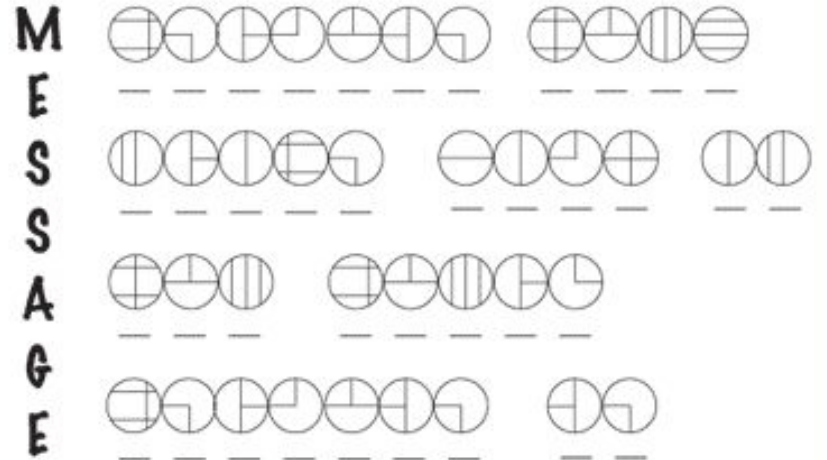
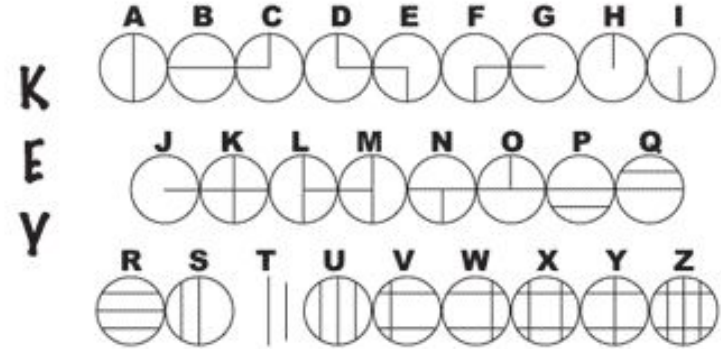


# Can you crack the code?

Using the key, can you decode the message from Paul to Philemon?

Now can you find that message in the Bible - try looking in the book called Philemon!

Use the key below to decode a message from Paul to Philemon regarding Onesimus.



# August

I hope you enjoyed Chattabox today!

During August we're going to put 6 of our favourite Chattabox online sessions up on the website for you to work through whilst the Chattabox team have a summer holiday.

If there is one you particularly enjoyed and want to see again send us an email and we'll see if we can include it :)

From the Chattabox team :)

