

## Goals:

- Introduce a core member to the inductive method of studying scripture as a way of learning to hear God's voice.
- Begin to learn how to study God's Word accurately
- Begin to build the habit of asking questions of context as we study scripture (Who is writing? Who is it written to/for? What situation(s) caused this text to be written? Etc.) so we can grasp what God was saying to the original audience.

## Brainstorm:

- Why is it important for us to be able to grasp what God was saying to the original audience in scripture?

## Scripture:

**The Book of Philemon** (bring a printed off copy for both of you to reference and "mark-up")

**Take some time to individually read Philemon 4-5 times through to get a feel for the letter – who wrote it, who it's written to, why it's written.**

## Ponder Together:

- Who wrote the letter and what do you learn about him from the text?
- Who's the letter written to and what do you learn about the recipient from the text?
- Other than the recipient, who is the other main character in the letter and what do you learn about him?
- What do you learn about the relationships between Paul/Philemon, Paul/Onesimus, Philemon/Onesimus?
- What was the situation that prompted the author to write this letter?  
What does the author hope to accomplish by writing this letter?

## Application:

- What can we learn from this letter about the character of God?
- Are there any commands to be followed or truths to be believed? If so, what are they and what needs to change in our thoughts or actions because of them?
- Pick another New Testament letter to study through for the rest of the quarter in your devotional times with the Lord. Read it through in one setting and ask the same questions all the way through.

## Resources:

[How To Read the Bible For All It's Worth](#), by Fee and Stuart

[How To Read the Bible Book by Book](#), by Fee and Stuart

[www.BibleGateway.com](http://www.BibleGateway.com) - A website designed to allow easy searching of the Christian Bible in many different versions and translations.

## Philemon (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker— <sup>2</sup> also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home:

<sup>3</sup> Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, <sup>5</sup> because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. <sup>7</sup> Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, <sup>9</sup> yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus— <sup>10</sup> that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. <sup>11</sup> Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

<sup>12</sup> I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. <sup>13</sup> I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. <sup>14</sup> But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary. <sup>15</sup> Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever— <sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.

<sup>17</sup> So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. <sup>18</sup> If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. <sup>19</sup> I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. <sup>20</sup> I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. <sup>21</sup> Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

<sup>22</sup> And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

<sup>23</sup> Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. <sup>24</sup> And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.

<sup>25</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.