

OBSERVATION

Seeing the Big Picture

When tackling a puzzle it is helpful to have the picture in front of you to refer back to as you look at the details of each puzzle piece. Identifying the big picture of a book of the Bible is like taking a good look at the picture on the puzzle box before tackling the job of putting the puzzle together.

BIG PICTURE

Let's take a look at the big picture of the letter to Philemon.

1. Pull out your Bible or the copy of the letter to Philemon included with this handout. Leave all helps and aids aside so you can see for yourself what the Word says.
2. Pray! Remember that the Holy Spirit is your teacher. Invite him to speak through his word.
3. Read the book aloud. (You retain 10% when you read it to yourself and 30% when you read it and hear it.)
4. Summarize the letter to Philemon in one or two sentences. What is the letter to Philemon about?

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

Read the text through again. This time, in order to see a few more of the details of what is said summarize each paragraph using words from the text.

- 1:1a Paul and Timothy
- 1:1b To Philemon and church
- 1:3 _____
- 1:4 _____
- 1:8 _____
- 1:17 _____
- 1:21 _____
- 1:23 _____
- 1:25 _____

TIPS FOR 2021

As you read through the Bible in a year in 2021 take a few moments to summarize the big picture of what you read each day. The next day review what you wrote before you begin the reading for the day.

If you want to do a more in-depth study of a particular passage write a 4-5 summary of each paragraph using words from the text before digging deeper.

THE LETTER TO PHILEMON

¹Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our beloved fellow worker ²and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, ⁶and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ⁴. ⁷For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

⁸Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, ⁹yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you – I, Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus – ¹⁰I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus,² whose father I became in my imprisonment. ¹¹(Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.) ¹²I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. ¹³I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve

me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own accord. ¹⁵For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave³ but more than a slave, as a beloved brother – especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me. ¹⁸If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it – to say nothing of your owing me even your own self. ²⁰Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

²¹Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. ²²At the same time, prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping that through your prayers I will be graciously given to you.

²³Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, ²⁴and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

²⁵The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.