

good
NEWS BIBLE

LETTERS

of the New Testament Vol 1

1 Corinthians to Philemon

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Welcome to the Good News Bible

Welcome to this dyslexia-friendly edition of 1 Corinthians to Philemon, using text from the Good News Bible.

If you are dyslexic, you may find most Bibles very difficult to read, with their small type, long paragraphs and thin paper. This book has been specially designed with the British Dyslexia Association's style guide in mind, so it has the following features:

- Thicker paper, so that type does not show through
- Cream-coloured paper
- Matt paper
- Plain font
- Larger type
- Wider line spacing
- Short paragraphs
- Bold headings

The Good News Bible is a clear, easy-to read translation of the Bible. It uses ordinary, everyday language so that as many people as possible can read and understand it. This has made it a very popular translation, selling over 150 million copies in the UK alone.

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians

The letter of life together in harmony

What's it about? This letter was written to a church in crisis. The church was set up by Paul, but, after his departure, it went seriously downhill. The letter addresses various problems that the people in the church made for themselves.

Who wrote it? Paul, who was once an enemy of the followers of Jesus. Paul wrote many of his letters to churches he himself had helped to start.

Why read it? Because he has to remind the Corinthians about the fundamentals of what it means to follow Jesus, Paul gives them some great explanations of things like the Holy Spirit, the Lord's supper, spiritual gifts and Jesus' death and resurrection.

What's it to me? Paul had to remind the people in Corinth of the central idea of following Jesus, which is love – both loving God and loving others. He explained what love should mean when we live as a community of Christians.

Chapter 1

¹From Paul, who was called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Sosthenes —

²To the church of God which is in Corinth, to all who are called to be God's holy people, who belong to him in union with Christ Jesus, together with all people everywhere who worship our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

³May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Blessings in Christ

⁴I always give thanks to my God for you because of the grace he has given you through Christ Jesus.

⁵For in union with Christ you have become rich in all things, including all speech and all knowledge.

⁶The message about Christ has become so firmly established in you ⁷that you have not failed to receive a single blessing, as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

⁸He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be faultless on the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹God is to be trusted, the God who called you to have fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Divisions in the Church

¹⁰By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ I appeal to all of you, my brothers and sisters, to agree in what you say, so

that there will be no divisions among you. Be completely united, with only one thought and one purpose.

¹¹ For some people from Chloe's family have told me quite plainly, my friends, that there are quarrels among you.

¹² Let me put it this way: each one of you says something different. One says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Peter"; and another, "I follow Christ".

¹³ Christ has been divided^a into groups! Was it Paul who died on the cross for you? Were you baptized as Paul's disciples?

¹⁴ I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius.

¹⁵ No one can say, then, that you were baptized as my disciples.

¹⁶ (Oh yes, I also baptized Stephanas and his family; but I can't remember whether I baptized anyone else.) ¹⁷ Christ did not send me to baptize. He sent me to tell the Good News, and to tell it without using the language of human wisdom, in order to make sure that Christ's death on the cross is not robbed of its power.

Christ the Power and the Wisdom of God

¹⁸ For the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God's power.

^a *Christ has been divided; some manuscripts have Christ cannot be divided.*

Paul's second letter to the Corinthians

The letter of standing up for faith

What's it about? The church in Corinth seems to have heavily criticised Paul. In this letter, he stands up for himself and the teachings he has passed on.

Who wrote it? The apostle Paul, who travelled around the Roman empire telling people about Jesus. This may well have been his fourth letter to the Corinthians. Others are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5 and 2 Corinthians 2.

Why read it? As Paul defends his actions, life and teachings, he gives us a great picture of some of the major themes of our faith, such as the message of the cross, the Holy Spirit and the new agreement between God and his people, made through Jesus.

What's it to me? Criticised for his faith, Paul stood up for himself. How can we do the same?

Chapter 1

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, and from our brother Timothy —

To the church of God in Corinth, and to all God's people throughout Achaia:

² May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Paul Gives Thanks to God

³ Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merciful Father, the God from whom all help comes!

⁴ He helps us in all our troubles, so that we are able to help others who have all kinds of troubles, using the same help that we ourselves have received from God.

⁵ Just as we have a share in Christ's many sufferings, so also through Christ we share in God's great help.

⁶ If we suffer, it is for your help and salvation; if we are helped, then you too are helped and given the strength



“Help others who have all kinds of troubles” (1.4)

to endure with patience the same sufferings that we also endure.

⁷So our hope in you is never shaken; we know that just as you share in our sufferings, you also share in the help we receive.

⁸We want to remind you, brothers and sisters, of the trouble we had in the province of Asia. The burdens laid upon us were so great and so heavy that we gave up all hope of staying alive.

⁹We felt that the death sentence had been passed on us. But this happened so that we should rely, not on ourselves, but only on God, who raises the dead.

¹⁰From such terrible dangers of death^a he saved us, and will save us; and we have placed our hope in him that he will save us again, ¹¹as you help us by means of your prayers for us. So it will be that the many prayers for us will be answered, and God will bless us; and many will raise their voices to him in thanksgiving for us.

The Change in Paul's Plans

¹²We are proud that our conscience assures us that our lives in this world, and especially our relations with you, have been ruled by God-given frankness^b and sincerity, by the power of God's grace, and not by human wisdom.

^a *terrible dangers of death*; some manuscripts have *terrible death*.

^b *frankness*; some manuscripts have *holiness*.

Paul's letter to the Galatians

The letter of the Spirit

What's it about? The church in Galatia (central Turkey today) had been influenced by teachers who preached untrue things. The Galatians seemed to be under their spell, so Paul wrote to set things straight.

Who wrote it? Paul, the great travelling apostle of the early church, wrote this letter in the middle of the first century AD.

Why read it? Galatians contains some famous teaching about living in the Spirit. In a passage traditionally called 'the fruit of the Spirit', Paul tells his readers that if you have the Spirit with you, your life will produce some amazing 'fruit', such as love, joy and peace.

What's it to me? The false teachers told the Galatians that new Christians had to become Jews first, because Jesus was a Jew. Paul would have none of this: we are not saved by following the law, but by the grace of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1

¹ From Paul, whose call to be an apostle did not come from human beings or by human means, but from Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from death.

² All the brothers and sisters who are here join me in sending greetings to the churches of Galatia:

³ May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

⁴ In order to set us free from this present evil age, Christ gave himself for our sins, in obedience to the will of our God and Father.

⁵ To God be the glory for ever and ever! Amen.

The One Gospel

⁶ I am surprised at you! In no time at all you are deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ,^a and are accepting another gospel.

⁷ Actually, there is no "other gospel", but I say this because there are some people who are upsetting you and trying to change the gospel of Christ.

⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel that is different from the one we preached to you, may he be condemned to hell!

^a *by the grace of Christ; some manuscripts have by his grace.*

⁹We have said it before, and now I say it again: if anyone preaches to you a gospel that is different from the one you accepted, may he be condemned to hell!

¹⁰Does this sound as if I am trying to win human approval? No indeed! What I want is God's approval! Am I trying to be popular with people? If I were still trying to do so, I would not be a servant of Christ.

How Paul Became an Apostle

¹¹Let me tell you, my brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preach is not of human origin.

¹²I did not receive it from any human being, nor did anyone teach it to me. It was Jesus Christ himself who revealed it to me.

¹³You have been told how I used to live when I was devoted to the Jewish religion, how I persecuted without mercy the church of God and did my best to destroy it.

¹⁴I was ahead of most fellow-Jews of my age in my practice of the Jewish religion, and was much more devoted to the traditions of our ancestors.

¹⁵But God in his grace chose me even before I was born, and called me to serve him. And when he decided ¹⁶to reveal his Son to me, so that I might preach the Good News about him to the Gentiles, I did not go to anyone for advice, ¹⁷nor did I go to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me. Instead, I went at once to Arabia, and then I returned to Damascus.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians

The letter of the gospel

What's it about? The letter to the church in Ephesus covers some of the great themes of the Christian faith – God's work in Jesus, being unified as a church and how to live and work together in love.

Who wrote it? Paul, who spent much time in person with the church in Ephesus (on the west coast of modern-day Turkey).

Why read it? Ephesians is full of famous verses and passages, such as the armour of God (6.10–18). Reading the book as a whole will help you put those verses in context and understand them better.

What's it to me? Because Paul doesn't seem to have written the letter for a specific purpose (unlike the Corinthian letters or Galatians), he gives a great overview of what God did through Jesus and how we should live because of this.

Chapter 1

¹ From Paul, who by God's will is an apostle of Christ Jesus —

To God's people in Ephesus,^a who are faithful in their life in union with Christ Jesus:

² May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³ Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! For in our union with Christ he has blessed us by giving us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world.

⁴ Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be his through our union with Christ, so that we would be holy and without fault before him.

Because of his love ⁵ God^b had already decided that through Jesus Christ he would make us his sons and daughters — this was his pleasure and purpose.

⁶ Let us praise God for his glorious grace, for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son!

⁷ For by the blood^c of Christ we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven. How great is the grace of God, ⁸ which he gave to us in such large measure!

^a Some manuscripts do not have *in Ephesus*.

^b *before him. Because of his love* ⁵ *God; or before him, and to live in love. God.*

^c *by the blood; or by the sacrificial death.*



“Let us... praise God’s glory!” (1.12)

In all his wisdom and insight ⁹God did what he had purposed, and made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Christ.

¹⁰This plan, which God will complete when the time is right, is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head.

¹¹All things are done according to God’s plan and decision; and God chose us to be his own people in union with Christ because of his own purpose, based on what he had decided from the very beginning.

¹²Let us, then, who were the first to hope in Christ, praise God’s glory!

¹³And you also became God’s people when you heard the true message, the Good News that brought you salvation. You believed in Christ, and God put his stamp of ownership on you by giving you the Holy Spirit he had promised.

Paul's letter to the Philippians

The letter of joy

What's it about? The church in Philippi was the first that Paul set up in Europe. He encouraged the believers to keep growing in their faith, even though some of them were arguing. He described what growth in faith would look like.

Who wrote it? Paul, the Pharisee who met Jesus (Acts 9.1–19) and went on to change the world. He wrote this letter from prison in Rome.

Why read it? Philippians is a joyful book, with its readers being encouraged to live out their faith in the world. The song about Jesus in 2.5–11 is a beautiful reminder of who he is.

What's it to me? Paul tells the Philippians what it means to grow in faith. These things, including faith in Jesus, serving others and spreading the good news of Christ, apply to us as well as the people of Philippi.

Chapter 1

¹From Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus —

To all God's people in Philippi who are in union with Christ Jesus, including the church leaders and helpers:

²May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Paul's Prayer for his Readers

³I thank my God for you every time I think of you; ⁴and every time I pray for you all, I pray with joy ⁵because of the way in which you have helped me in the work of the gospel from the very first day until now.

⁶And so I am sure that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished on the Day of Christ Jesus.

⁷You are always in my heart! And so it is only right for me to feel as I do about you. For you have all shared with me in this privilege that God has given me, both now that I am in prison and also while I was free to defend the gospel and establish it firmly.

⁸God is my witness that I am telling the truth when I say that my deep feeling for you all comes from the heart of Christ Jesus himself.

⁹I pray that your love will keep on growing more and more, together with true knowledge and perfect judgement, ¹⁰so that you will be able to choose what is

best. Then you will be free from all impurity and blame on the Day of Christ.

¹¹Your lives will be filled with the truly good qualities which only Jesus Christ can produce, for the glory and praise of God.

To Live is Christ

¹²I want you to know, my brothers and sisters, that the things that have happened to me have really helped the progress of the gospel.

¹³As a result, the whole palace guard and all the others here know that I am in prison because I am a servant of Christ.

¹⁴And my being in prison has given most of the brothers and sisters more confidence in the Lord, so that they grow bolder all the time to preach the message^a fearlessly.

¹⁵Of course some of them preach Christ because they are jealous and quarrelsome, but others from genuine goodwill.

¹⁶These do so from love, because they know that God has given me the work of defending the gospel.

¹⁷The others do not proclaim Christ sincerely, but from a spirit of selfish ambition; they think that they will make more trouble for me while I am in prison.

^a *the message*; some manuscripts have *God's message*.

¹⁸It does not matter! I am happy about it — so long as Christ is preached in every way possible, whether from wrong or right motives. And I will continue to be happy, ¹⁹because I know that by means of your prayers and the help which comes from the Spirit of Jesus Christ I shall be set free.

²⁰My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail in my duty, but that at all times, and especially just now, I shall be full of courage, so that with my whole being I shall bring honour to Christ, whether I live or die.

²¹For what is life? To me, it is Christ. Death, then, will bring more.

²²But if by continuing to live I can do more worthwhile work, then I am not sure which I should choose.

²³I am pulled in two directions. I want very much to leave this life and be with Christ, which is a far better thing; ²⁴but for your sake it is much more important that I remain alive.

²⁵I am sure of this, and so I know that I will stay. I will stay on with you all, to add to your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶so that when I am with you again, you will have even more reason to be proud of me in your life in union with Christ Jesus.

²⁷Now, the important thing is that your way of life should be as the gospel of Christ requires, so that, whether or not I am able to go and see you, I will hear that you are standing firm with one common purpose and that with only one desire you are fighting together for the faith of the gospel.