



What is It?

Philippians, Colossians and 1st and 2nd Thessalonians are four epistles (letters) of the New Testament written by Paul.

Who, What, When, Where and WHY

Who – All four letters are indisputably Paul’s work (formerly Saul), though he may have used a scribe to write some of them down.

What – Again, there were problems in the various churches that Paul established or helped set up. Paul needed to address false teachings in his letters to the Colossians and the Thessalonians. Although Paul’s purpose and tone in Philippians was one of thanksgiving and rejoicing, he still had to address a false teaching here too.

When – The two letters to the Thessalonians were written from Corinth around 51 AD. Philippians and Colossians are considered two of Paul’s “prison letters” (house arrest in Rome) written around 60 AD.

Where – Philippi and Thessalonica are located in northern Greece. Colosse was a major town in what the Romans called Asia (today’s Turkey).

Why – Paul so wanted to visit these churches again, to help them understand the salvation found in Jesus Christ. But he didn’t get the chance, and when reports of various heresies (though Paul would not have called the false teachings that) got back to him, he had to settle for letters. He addressed the influence of Judaizers, early Gnosticism, misunderstandings about eschatology (end-times, Jesus’ second return), the resurrection, and holy living. For us, these Pauline letters clarify Christian doctrine and encourage Church unity.

Reading Advice

To read Philippians, Colossians and 1st and 2nd Thessalonians in one week you will need to read 2 to 3 chapters a day (16 chapters/6 days = 2.7 per day). We recommend at least 15 minutes a day, Monday through Saturday. If you include a Sunday reading, then you can reduce the chapters and/or minutes per day a little. Whether you have read these books before or not, they should be familiar to you – these verses are used often in church.