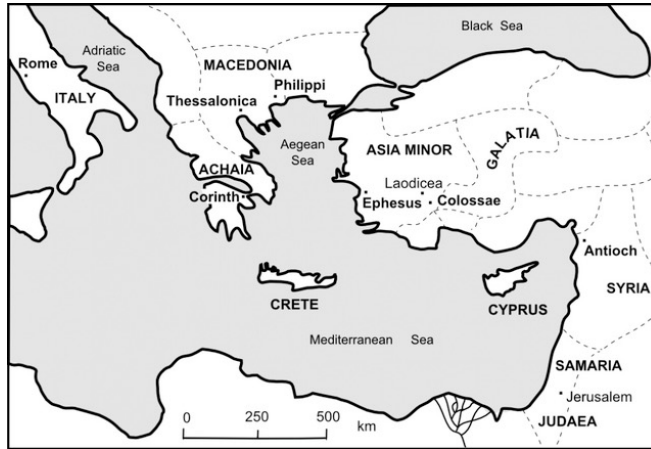


JUNE 23, 2021  
MUNGER PLACE CHURCH  
led by Rev. Andrew Forrest



**ARISTOTLE ON SLAVERY**

- Households require tools; “some are lifeless and some are living”
- Some people are “by nature slaves”
- “the usefulness of slaves diverges little from that of animals”

“The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore— cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and human beings sold as slaves.”

**REVELATION 18:11-13**

**EMPIRE vs. EKKLESIA**

*Ekklesia* is the Greek word for a political assembly (“the called-out ones”) that the early Christians used to describe what we today call the “church”.

What does the Letter to Philemon tell us about the Apostle Paul’s view of the church? How is the Empire different from the *Ekklesia*?

**FELLOWSHIP IS THE KEY IDEA**

*“You keep using that word; I do now think it means what you think it means.”*

*Koinonia* = “active association, mutual participation, identification with one another, relational interchange and exchange, and partnership with others” (Scot McKnight).

## LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS 4:7-18

<sup>7</sup> Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. <sup>8</sup> I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. <sup>9</sup> He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

<sup>10</sup> My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) <sup>11</sup> Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. <sup>12</sup> Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. <sup>13</sup> I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. <sup>14</sup> Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. <sup>15</sup> Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

<sup>16</sup> After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

<sup>17</sup> Tell Archippus: “See to it that you complete the ministry you have received in the Lord.”

<sup>18</sup> I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

## PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON (C. AD 57-62)

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a prisoner of King Jesus, and Timothy our brother: to our beloved Philemon, our colleague and partner, <sup>2</sup> to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our comrade-in-arms, and to God's people who meet in their house: <sup>3</sup> may grace and peace be upon you, from God our father and King Jesus the Lord.

<sup>4</sup> I always thank my God when your name comes up in my prayers, <sup>5</sup> because I've heard of your love and faithful loyalty towards the Lord Jesus and to all God's people. <sup>6</sup> My prayer is this: that the partnership which goes with your faith may have its powerful effect, in realizing every good thing that is at work in us to lead us into the king. <sup>7</sup> You see, my dear brother, your love gives me so much joy and comfort! You have refreshed the hearts of God's people.

<sup>8</sup> Because of all this I could be very bold in the king, and order you to do the right thing. <sup>9</sup> But, because of love, I'd much rather appeal to you—yes, it's me, Paul, speaking, an old man as I am and now a prisoner of King Jesus! <sup>10</sup> I am appealing to you about my child, the one I have fathered here in prison: Onesimus, 'Mr Useful'. <sup>11</sup> There was a time when he was useless to you; but now he's very useful, to you and to me.

<sup>12</sup> I'm sending him to you, yes, the man himself; and this means sending my own heart. <sup>13</sup> I would have liked to keep him here with me, so that he could have been your representative in serving me in the chains of the gospel. <sup>14</sup> But I didn't want to do anything without you knowing about it. That way, when you did the splendid thing that the situation requires, it wouldn't be under compulsion, but of your own free will.

<sup>15</sup> Look at it like this. Maybe this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you could have him back for ever—<sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave, but much more than a slave, as a beloved brother, beloved especially to me, but how much more to you, both as part of your household and in the Lord. <sup>17</sup> So, anyway, if you reckon me a partner in your work, receive him as though he was me. <sup>18</sup> And if he's wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, put that down on my account. <sup>19</sup> This is me, Paul, writing with my own hand: I'll pay you back (and far be it from me to remind you that you owe me your own very self!). <sup>20</sup> Yes, my brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in the king.

<sup>21</sup> As I write this I'm confident that you'll do what I say. In fact, I know you'll do more than I say. <sup>22</sup> But, at the same time, get a guest room ready for me. I'm hoping, you see, that through your prayers I will be granted to you.

<sup>23</sup> Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in King Jesus, sends you greetings. <sup>24</sup> So do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my colleagues here.

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

[Kingdom New Testament translation, by N.T. Wright]