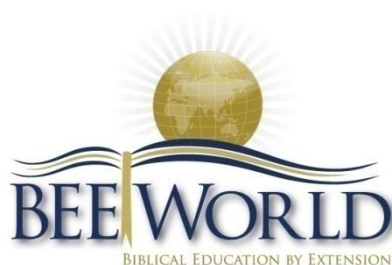


Advanced Studies in the New Testament



Advanced Studies in the New Testament

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Table of Contents

Course Introduction.....	1
Unit 1: The Kingdom Is Introduced.....	5
Lesson 1: Matthew: The Kingdom Is Presented and Rejected.....	8
Topic 1: The Intertestamental Period.....	9
Topic 2: Introduction to Matthew.....	12
Topic 3: The King Is Offered.....	13
Topic 4: The King Is Rejected.....	16
Topic 5: The King Is Offered Again.....	18
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	19
Lesson 1 Self Check	22
Lesson 1 Answers to Questions.....	23
Lesson 1 Self Check Answers.....	26
Lesson 1 Articles.....	27
Lesson 2: Mark: Kingdom Life Is Shown in Discipleship.....	34
Topic 1: Introduction to Mark.....	35
Topic 2: Jesus' Coming.....	37
Topic 3: Opposition to Jesus' Ministry.....	40
Topic 4: Jesus' Self-Sacrifice.....	42
Topic 5: Jesus' Resurrection.....	44
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	44
Lesson 2 Self Check	46
Lesson 2 Answers to Questions.....	48
Lesson 2 Self Check Answers.....	51
Lesson 2 Articles.....	53
Lesson 3: Luke: The Universal Savior Advances the Kingdom.....	61
Topic 1: Introduction to Luke.....	62
Topic 2: Jesus' Pre-Public Life.....	64
Topic 3: Jesus' Ministry in Galilee.....	65
Topic 4: Luke's Travelogue and Presentation.....	67
Topic 5: Jesus' Passion	68
Topic 6: Christ's Resurrection, Commission, and Ascension.....	69
Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	71
Lesson 3 Self Check	72
Lesson 3 Answers to Questions	74
Lesson 3 Self Check Answers.....	76
Lesson 3 Articles.....	77

Lesson 4: John: Deity Became Man to Bring Eternal Life.....	83
Topic 1: Introduction and Prologue to John.....	84
Topic 2: Jesus' Public Reception.....	86
Topic 3: Jesus' Rejection by the Nation.....	88
Topic 4: The Preparation of the Disciples for Christ's Departure.....	90
Topic 5: Jesus' Passion Week, His Resurrection, and the Epilogue.....	91
Topic 6: Know, Being, and Doing.....	92
Lesson 4 Self Check.....	94
Unit 1 Exam.....	96
Lesson 4 Answers to Questions.....	99
Lesson 4 Self Check Answers.....	102
Unit 1 Exam Answers.....	103
Lesson 4 Articles.....	109
Unit 2: The Kingdom Is Expanded.....	111
Lesson 5: Acts: The Universal Savior Is Proclaimed in Sovereign Kingdom Progress...	113
Topic 1: Introduction.....	115
Topic 2: Jerusalem.....	116
Topic 3: Judea and Samaria.....	119
Topic 4: The Uttermost Parts.....	121
Topic 5: Rome.....	124
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	126
Lesson 5 Self Check	127
Lesson 5 Answers to Questions.....	129
Lesson 5 Self Check Answers.....	132
Lesson 5 Articles.....	133
Lesson 6: James and Galatians: The Outcomes of Justification by Faith.....	141
Topic 1: Introduction to James.....	142
Topic 2: A Working Faith.....	143
Topic 3: Wise Speech.....	145
Topic 4: Introduction to Galatians.....	147
Topic 5: Paul's Defense of His Apostleship.....	148
Topic 6: Salvation by Faith.....	149
Topic 7: A Faith-Based Lifestyle.....	151
Topic 8: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	152
Lesson 6 Self Check	155
Lesson 6 Answers to Questions.....	157
Lesson 6 Self Check Answers.....	160
Lesson 6 Articles.....	161

Lesson 7: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: The Rapture and the Tribulation.....	171
Topic 1: Introduction to 1 Thessalonians.....	173
Topic 2: Paul's Innocence of Greed.....	175
Topic 3: Principles for Growth.....	177
Topic 4: Introduction to 2 Thessalonians.....	178
Topic 5: Tribulation Corrections.....	180
Topic 6: The Rapture and the Day of the Lord.....	182
Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	185
Lesson 7 Self Check	187
Lesson 7 Answers to Questions.....	189
Lesson 7 Self Check Answers.....	192
Lesson 7 Articles.....	193
Lesson 8: 1 & 2 Corinthians: Church Function and Apostolic Authority.....	201
Topic 1: Introduction to Corinthians.....	204
Topic 2: Chloe's Report.....	205
Topic 3: The Church's Questions.....	207
Topic 4: Paul's Ministry Sincerity.....	209
Topic 5: Paul's Ministry Authority.....	211
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	212
Lesson 8 Self Check	215
Unit 2 Exam.....	217
Lesson 8 Answers to Questions.....	220
Lesson 8 Self Check Answers.....	224
Unit 2 Exam Answers.....	225
Lesson 8 Articles.....	227
Unit 3: The Kingdom Is Tested.....	239
Lesson 9: Romans: God's Righteousness Comes by Faith.....	241
Topic 1: Introduction to Romans.....	242
Topic 2: Condemnation.....	245
Topic 3: Justification.....	246
Topic 4: Sanctification.....	247
Topic 5: Election.....	249
Topic 6: Transformation.....	250
Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	252
Lesson 9 Note.....	253
Lesson 9 Self Check.....	254
Lesson 9 Answers to Questions.....	256
Lesson 9 Self Check Answers.....	259

Lesson 9 Articles.....	261
Lesson 10: Ephesians and Colossians: Unity in Christ and in His Deity.....	271
Topic 1: Introduction to Ephesians.....	272
Topic 2: Unity as Equals.....	274
Topic 3: Love as a Testimony.....	275
Topic 4: Introduction to Colossians.....	277
Topic 5: Supremacy and Deity.....	279
Topic 6: Practical Instruction.....	281
Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	283
Lesson 10 Self Check.....	285
Lesson 10 Answers to Questions.....	287
Lesson 10 Self Check Answers.....	291
Lesson 10 Articles.....	293
Lesson 11: Philemon and Philippians: Christ's Forgiveness and Attitude.....	299
Topic 1: Introduction to Philemon.....	301
Topic 2: Philemon.....	302
Topic 3: Introduction to Philippians.....	305
Topic 4: Joy and Humility.....	307
Topic 5: Protection and Peace.....	308
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	312
Lesson 11 Self Check	314
Lesson 11 Answers to Questions.....	316
Lesson 11 Self Check Answers.....	320
Lesson 11 Articles.....	321
Lesson 12: 1 & 2 Peter: Righteous Suffering and Knowledge Against False Teaching... 327	327
Topic 1: Introduction to 1 Peter.....	328
Topic 2: Sanctification and Submission.....	331
Topic 3: Selflessness.....	333
Topic 4: Introduction to 2 Peter.....	334
Topic 5: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	343
Lesson 12 Self Check	339
Unit 3 Exam.....	341
Lesson 12 Answers to Questions.....	345
Lesson 12 Self Check Answers.....	349
Unit 3 Exam Answers.....	350
Lesson 12 Articles.....	351
Unit 4: The Kingdom Is Victorious.....	359
Lesson 13: Hebrews: Christ's Superiority as the High Priest.....	361

Topic 1: Introduction to Hebrews and Christ's Superiority to Prophets.....	363
Topic 2: Christ's Superiority to Angels and to Moses.....	365
Topic 3: Christ's Superiority to Aaron.....	367
Topic 4: Christ's Priesthood of Melchizedek's Order.....	368
Topic 5: Endurance Through Faith.....	370
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	372
Lesson 13 Self Check	374
Lesson 13 Answers to Questions	376
Lesson 13 Self Check Answers.....	379
Lesson 13 Articles.....	381
Lesson 14: 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: The Pastoral Epistles.....	389
Topic 1: Church Life.....	390
Topic 2: Personal Life.....	393
Topic 3: 2 Timothy.....	395
Topic 4: Titus.....	398
Topic 5: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	401
Lesson 14 Self Check	402
Lesson 14 Answers to Questions.....	404
Lesson 14 Self Check Answers.....	408
Lesson 14 Articles.....	409
Lesson 15: John's Epistles and Jude.....	415
Topic 1: Introduction to 1 John and Obedience.....	416
Topic 2: 1 John: Loving Others.....	418
Topic 3: 2 John.....	420
Topic 4: 3 John.....	422
Topic 5: Jude.....	424
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	426
Lesson 15 Self Check	427
Lesson 15 Answers to Questions.....	429
Lesson 15 Self Check Answers.....	432
Lesson 15 Articles.....	433
Lesson 16: Revelation: Sovereignty of Christ in Future Victory.....	441
Topic 1: Introduction: God's Sovereignty.....	442
Topic 2: The Seven Churches.....	445
Topic 3: The Seven Seals.....	447
Topic 4: The Seven Trumpets.....	448
Topic 5: The Seven Bowls.....	450
Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing.....	453

Lesson 16 Self Check	455
Unit 4 Exam.....	457
Lesson 16 Answers to Questions.....	461
Lesson 16 Self Check Answers.....	466
Unit 4 Exam Answers.....	467
Lesson 16 Articles.....	469

Advanced Studies in the New Testament

Course Introduction

In many ways, the New Testament can be considered the most important compilation of books ever written. Whether readers view the New Testament as a historical and cultural treasure or as the ultimate source of spiritual guidance, it tells the pivotal story of Jesus of Nazareth. He came as the promised Messiah in fulfillment of the Old Testament (OT) prophecies and to establish the kingdom. In the Gospels, Jesus introduces the kingdom to the Jews, but the nation rejects His offer. After studying the Gospels, we follow the expansion of the kingdom, see it tested, and see its ultimate victory.

The New Testament books were originally written in Greek by at least eight different authors. It was compiled over a period of about fifty years. The complexities of these historical books have sparked much debate among religious scholars. However, each text was recorded as the inspired Word of God. The message that they contain is hope for all who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

This course will examine all twenty-seven New Testament (NT) books, their authors, their historical context, and their unique messages and purposes for both the Christian believers and the wider world. The charts below list all the NT books in chronological order with their key words.

New Testament Key Words					
#	Date	Book	Key word	Paul's Journeys & imprisonment	Doctrinal classification
1	40s	Matthew	Kingdom		Ecclesiology
2	44–47	James	Works		Soteriology
3	49	Galatians	Justification	1 st journey	Soteriology
4	51	1 Thessalonians	Rapture	2 nd journey	Eschatology
5	51	2 Thessalonians	Tribulation	2 nd journey	Eschatology
6	56	1 Corinthians	Sanctification	3 rd journey	Ecclesiology
7	56	2 Corinthians	Apostleship	3 rd journey	Ecclesiology
8	56–57	Romans	Righteousness	3 rd journey	Soteriology
9	57–59	Luke	Sovereignty I		Missiology
10	60	Ephesians	Unity	1 st imprisonment	Christology (head)
11	61	Colossians	Deity	1 st imprisonment	Christology (God)
12	61	Philemon	Forgiveness	1 st imprisonment	Christology (reconciler)
13	62	Philippians	Attitude	1 st imprisonment	Christology (example)

New Testament Key Words (continued)					
#	Date	Book	Key word	Paul's Journeys & imprisonment	Doctrinal classification
14	62	Acts	Sovereignty II		Missiology
15	62	1 Timothy	Order	4 th journey	Ecclesiology
16	64	1 Peter	Suffering		Eschatology
17	64	2 Peter	Knowledge		Eschatology
18	64–68	Mark	Discipleship		Eschatology
19	66	Titus	Conduct	4 th journey	Ecclesiology
20	67	2 Timothy	Doctrine	2 nd imprisonment	Ecclesiology
21	67–68	Hebrews	Superiority		Christology
22	69	John	Belief		Soteriology
23	75	Jude	Pretenders		Eschatology
24	85–95	1 John	Love		Soteriology
25	85–95	2 John	Limits		Missiology
26	85–95	3 John	Missionaries		Missiology
27	95–96	Revelation	Triumph		Eschatology

Course Objectives

By the end of this course you will be able to do the following:

- State the author, date, origin, recipients, occasion, characteristics, key word, and argument of each NT book
- Know the chronological order of each NT book, and how it relates to the book of Acts, to Roman history, and to Jewish history
- Show how each NT book relates to your culture and to world missions
- Personally apply the truths that you have learned from God's Word
- Treasure God's call to a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ

Units of Study

The lessons in this course are grouped into the following four units:

Unit 1: The Kingdom Is Introduced

Lesson 1: Matthew

Lesson 2: Mark

Lesson 3: Luke

Lesson 4: John

Unit 2: The Kingdom Is Expanded

Lesson 5: Acts

Lesson 6: James and Galatians

Lesson 7: 1 & 2 Thessalonians

Lesson 8: 1 & 2 Corinthians

Unit 3: The Kingdom Is Tested

Lesson 9: Romans

Lesson 10: Ephesians and Colossians

Lesson 11: Philemon and Philippians

Lesson 12: 1 & 2 Peter

Unit 4: The Kingdom Is Victorious

Lesson 13: Hebrews

Lesson 14: Titus, 1 & 2 Timothy

Lesson 15: John's Epistles and Jude

Lesson 16: Revelation

As you plan your study schedule, you need to determine the dates when you want to finish each unit. You can then divide your time into study periods for each lesson.

We suggest that you try to do one lesson per week or three lessons per month. You can do this if you study about one hour each day.

Recommended for Further Reading

Benware, Paul N. *Survey of the New Testament*. Everyman's Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody, 1990.

Elwell, Walter A., and Robert W. Yarbrough. *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.

Gospel Light Pub. *Reproducible Maps, Charts, Timelines & Illustrations*. Originally *The Bible Visual Resource Book: For Do-It-Yourself Scholars*. Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 1989.

Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. Vol. 2: *New Testament Edition*. Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor, 1983.

Wilkinson, Bruce, and Kenneth Boa. *Talk Thru the Bible*. Nashville: Nelson, 1983.

Textbook for the Course

"New Testament Survey" by Rick Griffith, ThM, PhD

Unit One: The Kingdom Is Introduced

Unit Introduction

One little-known fact about the NT Gospels is that these were not the first written records of Christ's life. Around AD 58, Luke notes that "many" had written about Christ. However, none of those records were inspired, nor do we have even one copy that has survived. Between Christ's death and resurrection and the earliest surviving written accounts of His life, the acts and teachings of Jesus were also spread by word of mouth. In such an oral tradition, a story can evolve and change over time.

Perhaps this danger is why God guided the four authors of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to write the Gospels so early. In less than four decades after Christ's ascension all four Gospels had been completed. The danger of story distortion is probably also why an actual eyewitness (Matthew, John) or one mentored by an apostle (Mark under Peter, Luke under Paul) wrote each gospel. Jesus directed each apostle to witness about the good news, or "gospel" (Greek translation) of His resurrection and of the coming kingdom of God. Each book was written by a different author, in a different time, to a different audience. In this unit, we will examine each gospel's context and perspective. We will also discover how each interpretation of Jesus' life suited the readers and the times in which they lived.

The New Testament Books and Their Message Statements

You, as the student, need to know not only *what* each New Testament book says but also *why* each book was written. Many commentaries on the Bible provide only the themes of the biblical books. This course seeks to go further by stating the **purpose** for addressing the subject. For example, to say that Mark wrote his gospel in order to show that Jesus is the Suffering Servant, is incomplete. Why did Mark want his readers to see Christ as a suffering servant? The answer: because the believers in Rome were undergoing severe persecution, and they needed to see Christ's example in selfless suffering (the purpose). Therefore, we will study both the *what* and the *why* of every NT book. Then you will be able to write a short summary for each book. For example, each of the following subject/purpose statements shows the fuller message of each book in this twofold way:

Subject + Purpose = Message

What the book says + Why it says what it says = Main Idea

Theme + Reason = Summary Statement

This short summary of both the book's theme and its purpose will help every student to gain a deeper grasp of the book. The message statements for the Gospels are as follows:

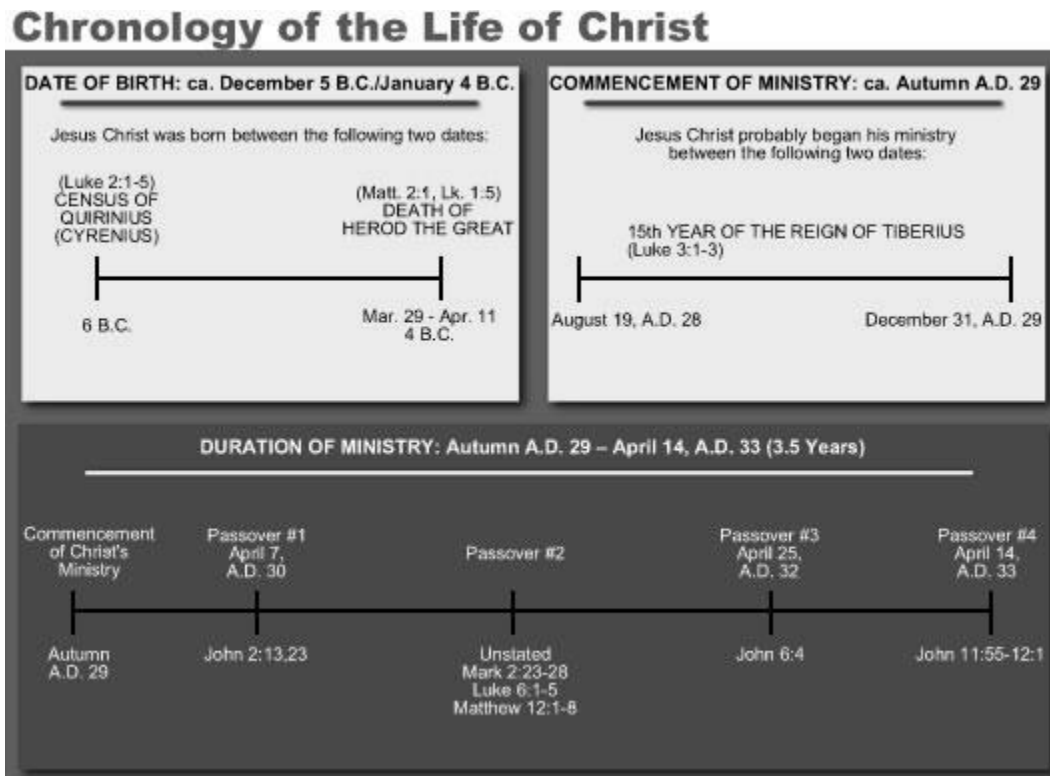
Matthew: Matthew proves Jesus is the Messiah so that the unbelieving Jews will trust Him. Matthew also explains that the earthly kingdom is delayed because Israel rejected Christ as their king. This explanation is to convince the believing Jews that Christ's present kingdom authority resides in the church.

Mark: In order to exhort the persecuted Roman believers to true discipleship, Mark presents, with pastoral concern, selected events about Christ, the Son of God who serves as the model of a suffering servant.

Luke: Luke presents how God expanded the message of the kingdom from the Jews, who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, to include the believing Gentiles in order to show that Jesus is the Savior for all people.

John: John proves that Jesus is both the Son of God and the son of man (human) through selected signs and discourses of Christ to convince unbelieving Gentiles to believe in Him and receive eternal life.

One final introductory matter concerns the dating of NT events, especially in the life of Christ. Many scholars disagree on the exact dates, especially on the year of Christ's death and resurrection (AD 30 and AD 33 are most common). This course follows the dating by Dr. Harold Hoehner in *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977). Key dates are summarized in the chart below:



Unit Objectives

By the end of this unit you will be able to do the following:

- Give examples of the major changes that happened during the Intertestamental period, which affect our understanding of the Gospels
- Explain the distinctive emphases of each gospel
- Outline biblical evidence that shows Jesus as the Messiah
- Suggest why God allowed Israel to reject His kingdom, His Messiah, and the establishment of His church
- Discern what your role is in accomplishing God's purpose in this age

Unit 1 Outline

Lesson 1: Matthew: The Kingdom Is Presented and Rejected

Lesson 2: Mark: Kingdom Life Is Shown in Discipleship

Lesson 3: Luke: The Universal Savior Advances the Kingdom

Lesson 4: John: Deity Became Man to Bring Eternal Life

Lesson 1: Matthew: The Kingdom Is Presented and Rejected

Lesson Introduction

There had been four hundred years of turmoil since the last OT prophet had spoken. Matthew's gospel message to Israel is that their promised Messiah is Jesus and that His earthly kingdom, as revealed in the Old Testament, will be established at the Second Advent. The first-century Jews were spiritually dead, and they had rejected the salvation offered by Jesus. When the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke in parables, He replied, "You have been given the opportunity to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but they have not" (Mt 13:11). The present form of His kingdom is made manifest in the lives of Christian believers. However the final form has been postponed.

Matthew Messiah With Authority Over the Church								
Preliminary Evidence That Christ is Messiah			Rejections and Interadvent Age			Final Evidence That Christ is Messiah		
Chapters 1–10			Chapters 11–27			Chapter 28		
The King Offered			The King Rejected			The King Re-offered		
Teaches crowds			Teaches disciples					
Topical			Chronological					
Bethlehem & Nazareth 1:1-4:11	Galilee 4:12-16:12			Judea 16:13-28:15			Galilee 28:16-20	
Advent & Approvals 1:1-4:11	Early Ministry & Proclamation 4:12-7:28	Miracles & Authority 8-10	Rejections & Postponement 11:1-16:12	Prepares Disciples 16:13-20:24	Official Presentation & Rejection 21-27	Empty Tomb 28:1-10	False Report 28:11-18	Great Commission 28:16-20
Prelude	Preaching	Power	Postponed	Prepares	Presented	Proof	Perjury	Plan
Palestine								
Written in AD 40s Covers 5 BC – AD 33								

Matthew's gospel is a logical choice to begin the New Testament because it mirrors most closely both the Jewish traditions and the prophecies of the Old Testament. This book provides an elegant transition between the Old and the New Testaments. Matthew opens with Jesus' genealogical link back to David (the great king of the Jews) and to Abraham (the father of Israel). This lineage establishes Jesus' credentials as the promised Jewish Messiah.

The author of Matthew was a Jewish man who worked as a tax collector for the Roman government. He is called Levi in the other Gospels. Matthew discarded his distasteful occupation and moderately wealthy lifestyle to become a true disciple of Jesus. His intended audience was also Jewish. Therefore, he portrayed Jesus as the "new Moses." In Matthew's view, Jesus was the

Jewish Messiah who, like Moses, was sent by the Jewish God, to the Jewish people, to fulfill Jewish law.

In topic one of this lesson, we will explore the significance of the Intertestamental period to the Gospels. This period begins at the close of the Old Testament and ends just prior to the birth of Christ.

In topic two, we will provide some background information on the book of Matthew, which includes when it was written, what was happening at the time it was written, and how the book is structured.

In topic three, we will look at Matthew's primary purposes: to prove that Jesus is the promised Messiah and to convert non-Christian Jews to follow His way.

In topic four, we will study Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. Matthew's secondary purpose is to address the question, "If Jesus is the Messiah, where is the promised earthly kingdom?" He will show the Christian Jews what happened to the promised earthly kingdom.

In topic five, we see how Christ's rejection by Israel reveals a greater purpose, which is the disciples' evangelism among the Gentiles. It is God's will that we expand His church so that salvation is available to the entire world.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson the student will be able to do the following:

- Give examples of major changes that happened during the Intertestamental period, which affect our understanding of the Gospels
- Explain the distinctive gospel emphases of Matthew
- Outline the biblical evidences that show Jesus as the Messiah
- Suggest why God allowed Israel to reject His kingdom and the Messiah
- Discern his or her role in accomplishing God's purpose in this age

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: The Intertestamental Period

Topic 2: Introduction to Matthew

Topic 3: The King Is Offered (Mt 1–10)

Topic 4: The King Is Rejected (Mt 11–20)

Topic 5: The King Is Offered Again (Mt 21–28)

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: The Intertestamental Period

Before the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, four hundred years of prophetic silence had passed. However that silence was broken by the announcement of John's birth to his father, Zechariah, and was soon followed by the announcement of Jesus' birth to His mother, Mary (Lk 1:5-38). After four hundred years, God again had something to say to His wayward people (see Heb 1:1-4)!

But much had changed in those four hundred years. New political rulers had power over the Jews. Different Jewish sects had come into being and the Sanhedrin had formed. Messianic expectations had increased. Unfortunately, modern interpretation of the Gospels can be challenging for most readers, because the gospel writers assumed the audience's knowledge of that particular time period.

Think of how different your country was four hundred years ago. Think also of how differently you would have lived then. How would you tell someone from that time about the changes that have happened over so many years? For example, how would you explain electricity? Cars? Airplanes?



The same gap in understanding is present between the last Old Testament communication of God to Israel and the current stories from the Gospels. Our interpretation of these texts is greatly enhanced when we learn about these changes.

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “The Intertestamental Period” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 1

Match the Old Testament reference in the left-hand column with the prophecy about the Messiah in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Prophecy</i>
Genesis 3:15	Hostility between the woman's seed and the serpent
Deuteronomy 18:15	A promised prophet like Moses
Isaiah 9:6-7	Zion's king who rode on a donkey
Micah 5:2	A God-child to rule on David's throne
Zechariah 9:9	Elijah sent before the Day of the Lord
Malachi 4:5	The Messiah's birth in Bethlehem

QUESTION 2

At the time of Jesus, the Jewish sect that had the greatest influence on the common people was which of the following:

- A) Essenes
- B) Herodians
- C) Pharisees
- D) Sadducees

QUESTION 3

Which of the following describe the rule of King Herod? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Justice for all
- B) Political intrigue
- C) Opposition to Rome
- D) Construction of buildings

QUESTION 4

Please open your Life Notebook and record your answer to the following: The article mentions several different forces that affected the population's readiness for the Messiah. Describe these same forces in your society today. Tell how these forces influence your society's readiness to hear the gospel message.

Topic 1 Key Points:

- Familiarity with the Intertestamental period helps us to understand the gospel stories.
- Distinctive Jewish sects were established during the Intertestamental period.
- Jesus uniquely fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah.
- Herod's legacy influenced the course of events throughout Jesus' life.

Topic 2: Introduction to Matthew

What influenced Matthew to write his account, and what issues did he address? The answers are varied, but his extensive Old Testament quotations are used to prove that Christ fulfilled the messianic prophecies. This apologetic purpose not only proves to unbelieving Jews that Jesus is the Messiah but also provides material for the Jewish Christians to prove the same.

The gospel also answers the question posed by any first-century Jewish believer: Since Jesus is the Messiah, and the Messiah is supposed to bring in a new earthly kingdom, where is that kingdom? Matthew wrote to encourage the born-again Jews that God had not forgotten His promise to Israel, despite the nation's unbelief. In fact, Matthew notes that the nation of Israel eventually will believe and will be judged by the disciples who will sit on separate thrones (Mt 19:28). In the meantime, Christ will exercise His authority over the church, which is composed of both the Jews and the Gentiles. All people are invited into God's program, and all believers are

responsible to bring His message to the entire world (Mt 28:18-20) before His earthly kingdom is established.

In any speech or presentation, a good speaker will know his or her audience. Where are they from? What are their politics? Religion? Education? In general, what makes this audience distinct from other audiences?

When a speaker knows the audience, the message can be written specifically to the listeners. Likewise, it helps us to understand a message when we know who, when, where, and why the message has been written. The following introduction to Matthew will help you to better understand both his target audience and why he wrote what he did.

Speaker Should Know the Audience



- **Matthew: The Messiah With Authority Over the Church**
- **Author:** Matthew, which means “gift of the Lord”
- **Date:** Probably written in the AD 40s
- **Key Word:** Kingdom
- **Key Verses:** Matthew 16:16-18; 21:5
- **Summary Statement:** Matthew proves that Jesus is the Messiah so that the unbelieving Jews will trust Him. Matthew also explains that the earthly kingdom is delayed because Israel rejected Christ as their king. This explanation is to convince the believing Jews that Christ's present kingdom authority resides in the church.
- **Application:** Have you trusted Christ as your Savior? If not, what qualification does He need to meet before you will accept Him?

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “Introduction to Matthew” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verses for the book: Matthew 16:16-18

QUESTION 5

Matthew's gospel is the only one that says Matthew was a tax collector. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

The extensive debates about the relationship among the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Synoptic problem, have contributed greatly to our understanding of the various Gospels. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

Using the book of Matthew, prove that the promised kingdom is a literal kingdom. Write at least three arguments to support your point.

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Matthew saw himself as a sinner who had been graciously pardoned for God's use.
- The Synoptic Gospels were all written under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the message remains accurate, and any discrepancies among the texts are the result of the writers' varied approaches.
- There is a lot of evidence to support the idea that the kingdom, which is being offered in Matthew, is literal.

Topic 3: The King Is Offered (Mt 1–10)

Persons traveling by plane to another country must identify themselves. Picture identification, like a driver's license and a passport, are usually required. These identifiers are carefully examined to ensure that all the passengers are safe from harm.

A man who identifies himself as the Messiah also needs the correct identification. For instance, He must be descended from the line of David, be born in the right city, be born at the right time, and be able to perform amazing works. But what credentials must the Messiah show?

Question:

This topic answers a question all **non-Christian Jews** ask, "How do we know that Jesus is the Messiah?" (Mt 1–10).

Answer:

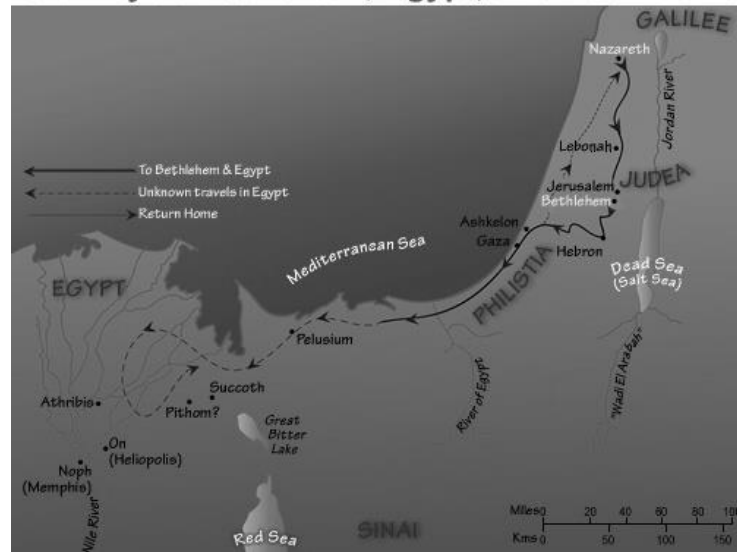
- Both His birth (Mt 1–2) and His approval by others (Mt 3:1–4:11) show that He



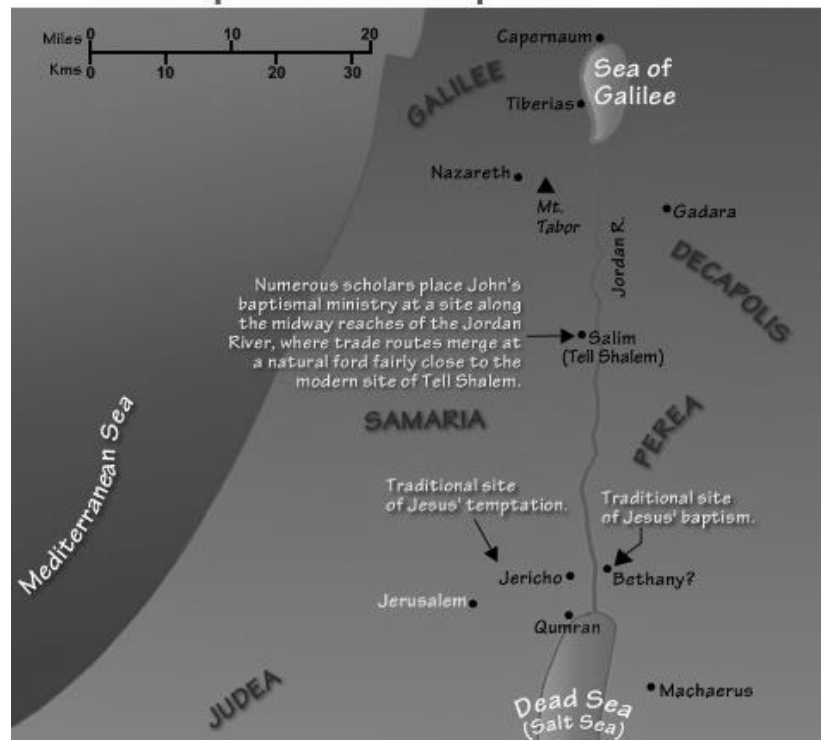
fulfilled the OT messianic prophecies.

- Both His early ministry (Mt 4:12-25) and the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7) reveal His prophetic office.
- He shows both His messianic power by healing the sick (Mt 8:1–9:34) and His messianic authority by delegating power to the disciples (Mt 9:35–11:1).

Journey to Bethlehem, Egypt, and Back Home



The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus



Reading Assignment

- Please read Matthew 8–9 on Jesus’ power as the Messiah.
- Please read the article “The King Is Offered” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 8

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the fulfillment of the messianic prophecies about the Messiah’s birth in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Prophecy</i>
Matthew 1:1-17	The Messiah came from David’s lineage.
Matthew 2:1-12	The Jewish Savior receives Gentile worship.
Matthew 2:13-18	Jesus’ lineage is contrasted with Herod’s Idumean ancestry.
Matthew 2:19-23	The Messiah’s humble origins are predicted.

QUESTION 9

Match the person in the left-hand column with the event that shows Jesus’ approval as the Messiah in the right-hand column.

<i>Person</i>	<i>Event</i>
John the Baptist	Through Jesus’ public introduction
God the Father	Through Jesus’ baptism
The Holy Spirit	Through Jesus’ temptation

QUESTION 10

What characteristics does the Sermon on the Mount emphasize? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Teachings primarily directed toward the disciples
- B) Character development
- C) Adherence to external rules
- D) Anticipation of the kingdom
- E) Repentant living
- F) Internal righteousness

QUESTION 11

Who so amazed Jesus by recognizing His authority that He said, “I tell you the truth, I have not found such faith in anyone in Israel!” (Mt 8:10)?

- A) The healed demoniac from Gadara
- B) The Roman centurion with his servant
- C) The men who carried the paralytic on a stretcher
- D) The woman with the hemorrhage

QUESTION 12

Please open your Life Notebook and record your answer to the following question: If you were to view the kingdom primarily as a future earthly one, how would your perspective on your Christian life change?

Topic 3 Key Points:

- Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah's birth.
- Jesus was approved as the Messiah by John the Baptist, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit through His public introduction, His baptism, and His temptations.
- The Sermon on the Mount was delivered to the disciples so that they would be encouraged toward repentant living in anticipation of the kingdom.
- Jesus exercised messianic authority, and some people trusted in Him as the Messiah.

Topic 4: The King Is Rejected (Mt 11–20)

When you travel to a foreign country, immigration officials can accept or reject a traveler's documents as legitimate. In Jesus' case, the official Jewish representatives rejected His credentials as false when they attributed His miracles to Satan (Mt 12:24). Christ responded to this rejection by insisting that "the kingdom of God has already come on you" (Mt 12:28). He elaborated on this statement in Matthew 13, when He began to teach in parables about what this kingdom looks like in the present age.

However, those Jews who did accept Him as the Messiah would still have another question. They would have wondered why Christ did not establish the earthly messianic kingdom in fulfillment of the many OT prophecies, which promised to Israel world prominence under their messianic king (e.g., Isa 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:3-5; 16:5; 24:21-23; 40:10). The rest of Matthew's gospel addresses this question. The answer can be outlined in a question and answer format that looks like the following:

Question:

Christian Jews asked, "He's the Messiah, but where's the promised kingdom?" (Mt 11–28).

Answer:

Because of the Jews' rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, He begins to reveal that the establishment of His earthly kingdom must be postponed. His kingdom purposes will continue to be advanced through the church (Mt 11:2–16:12). Jesus prepares the disciples to advance His kingdom through the church (Mt 17:14–20:34). Israel rejects Him as the Messiah, which results in His atoning death on the cross (Mt 21–27). Christ's resurrection shows both His messianic authority and His ability to establish the kingdom (Mt 28).

Reading Assignment

- Please read Matthew 12–13 about the rejection of Jesus and how He responded to it.
- Please read the article "The King Is Rejected" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 13

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the rejection of Jesus and His ministry in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Rejection</i>
Matthew 12	Christ is rejected by His hometown of Nazareth.
Matthew 13:1-52	Christ preaches the mysteries of the kingdom to introduce the Inter-Advent Age.
Matthew 13:53-58	Christ is rejected by the scribes and the Pharisees before He withdraws to feed 4,000 Gentiles.
Matthew 14	The Pharisees' rejection of Christ leads to a delay of the kingdom until Israel repents.
Matthew 15	Christ is rejected by Herod, which foreshadows His rejection and eventually His crucifixion by Rome.
Matthew 16:1-12	Christ is rejected by both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who demand a sign, while Jesus warns His disciples against these sects' teachings.

QUESTION 14

Match Jesus' predictions to His disciples about His death and resurrection with their reaction to His predictions.

<i>Prediction</i>	<i>Reaction</i>
Matthew 16:21-28	The disciples are filled with grief.
Matthew 17:22-23	Peter rebukes Jesus.
Matthew 20:17-24	Two request seats of honor.

QUESTION 15

Please open your Life Notebook and record your answers to the following questions: Are you personally convinced that Jesus is the Messiah whom God promised to send? If so, what qualifications did Jesus need to demonstrate before you accepted Him as the Messiah? If not, then what qualifications does He need to demonstrate before you will accept Him?

Topic 4 Key Points:

- The various rejections of Jesus as the Messiah foreshadow the national rejection by Israel.
- Jesus trains His disciples for the ministry they will have after His death and His resurrection.

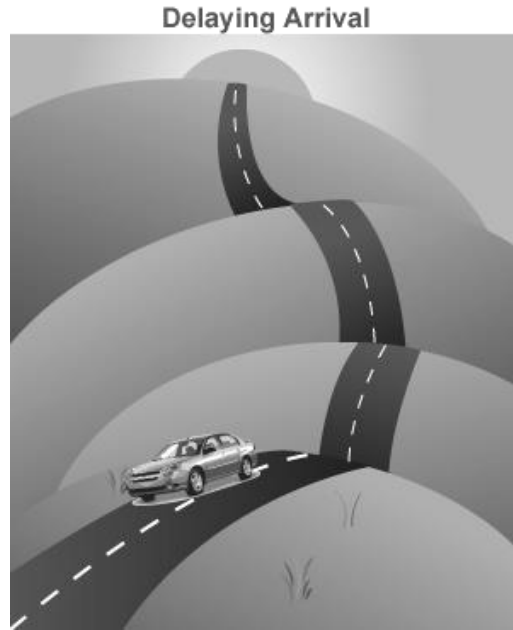
Topic 5: The King Is Offered Again (Mt 21–28)

A traveler usually wants to take the most direct route to a destination. However, there are times when the direct route is not the best way. If travelers have multiple destinations, or enjoy the ride, or prefer the scenic route, they may delay arriving at their ultimate destination.

In a like manner, Jesus took a more circuitous route to establish His kingdom. Jesus had a greater purpose to accomplish before His kingdom was set up. His rejection looked like a defeat, yet that rejection resulted in the salvation not just of Israel but also of the entire world!

In this topic, Jesus formally presents Himself to Israel as the Messiah. However, the leaders reject Him again, and He consequently rejects the nation and laments over its fate:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How many times I wanted to gather your children together, like a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is left to you desolate! For I tell you, you will not see me from now until you say, **“Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”** (Mt 23:37-39)



However God uses both Jesus’ death at the nation’s hands and His resurrection as a source of blessing to the world:

Then Jesus came up and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Mt 28:18-20)

Reading Assignment

- Please read Matthew 27–28 on Jesus’ death, His resurrection, and His commission.
- Please read the article “The King Is Offered Again” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 16

In what event does Christ officially present Himself to Israel as the Messiah and king for the first time?

- A) His Triumphal Entry
- B) The Olivet Discourse
- C) The Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats
- D) His Resurrection

QUESTION 17

The Olivet Discourse is given after Jesus declares God's judgment upon Jerusalem's _____.

QUESTION 18

The Roman guard's false report is the example Matthew gives of a flimsy excuse for rejecting the overwhelming testimony that Jesus is the Christ and the Savior. *True or False?*

QUESTION 19

According to Matthew, Christ's highest priority for His disciples is for them to make disciples of all nations. *True or False?*

Topic 5 Key Points:

- In the triumphal entry, Jesus formally presented Himself to Israel as the nation's Messiah and king.
- The Olivet Discourse is given after Jesus declares God's judgment upon Israel's temple.
- Matthew teaches that no one has a legitimate excuse to reject Christ.
- In the book of Matthew, Christ's highest priority for His disciples is for them to make disciples of all nations.

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 20

Match the title on the left with the reference in Matthew at the bottom of each column.

Matthew							
	Instructions						
Christ's Resurrection for the World							
Christ Rejected Introducing the Inter-Advent Age							
Disciples Prepared for Christ's Death							
Kingdom Postponed by Rejection and Vicarious Death							
Jesus Manifests Messiah's Authority							
Christ's Sermon on the Mount							
Christ's Advent and Approvals	1:1 – 4:11	4:12 – 7:29	8 – 10	11:1 – 16:12	16:13 – 20:34	21 – 27	28

QUESTION 21

Please open your Life Notebook and record your answers to the following questions: Why do you think Jesus spoke in parables when He could have spoken so clearly otherwise? How does your answer apply to us today? (Mt 13)

QUESTION 22

Why do you think God allowed Israel to reject His kingdom? Use Scripture to support your response in your Life Notebook.

QUESTION 23

Please open your Life Notebook and respond to the following question. As Christ's disciple, what is your role in the Great Commission until Christ's kingdom is established?

As human beings in times of trial, we often need to be reminded that our reward will come as God wills it and that we must wait in hope and faith. Israel waited four hundred years for certain Scriptures to be fulfilled. Matthew's message assures us that Jesus is the Messiah, who was promised by God through the prophets, and that He will come again to establish His earthly kingdom when Israel and the larger world are ready to accept Him.

Lesson 1 Self Check

QUESTION 1

During the Intertestamental period, Jewish worship, which took place primarily in the temple, changed to worship mostly in the _____.

QUESTION 2

King Herod is known for which of the following?

- A) Family love
- B) Pure Jewish descent
- C) Construction of buildings
- D) Opposition to Rome

QUESTION 3

Matthew called himself a tax collector in his gospel. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

In Matthew, the disciples' questions to Jesus show that they expected a literal earthly kingdom. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

The Holy Spirit showed His approval of Jesus as the Messiah through what event?

- A) Jesus' presentation in the temple
- B) Jesus' public introduction
- C) Jesus' baptism
- D) Jesus' temptation

QUESTION 6

Jesus' teaching from the Sermon on the Mount contrasted with and was directed mostly at the Jewish sect of the _____.

QUESTION 7

Who so amazed Jesus by recognizing His authority that He said, "I tell you the truth, I have not found such faith in anyone in Israel!"

- A) The Roman centurion with his servant
- B) The healed demoniac from Gadara
- C) The men who carried the paralytic on a stretcher
- D) The woman with the hemorrhage

QUESTION 8

Matthew uses John the Baptist's need for clarification as an illustration of the national rejection of Christ. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

What did the Jewish leaders do after Jesus' Triumphal Entry and His cleansing of the temple?

- A) They arrested Him.
- B) They asked Him about His authority.
- C) They accused Him of using Satan's power.
- D) They accused Him of breaking the Sabbath.

QUESTION 10

According to Matthew, Jesus' highest priority for His disciples is the Great Commission. *True or False?*

Lesson 1 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Prophecy</i>
Genesis 3:15	Hostility between the woman's seed and the serpent
Deuteronomy 18:15	A promised prophet like Moses
Isaiah 9:6-7	A God-child to rule on David's throne
Micah 5:2	The Messiah's birth in Bethlehem
Zechariah 9:9	Zion's king who rode on a donkey
Malachi 4:5	Elijah sent before the Day of the Lord

QUESTION 2

C. Pharisees

The Pharisees were the largest sect in number (about 6,000 of them) and had a strong influence on the people and the Sanhedrin.

QUESTION 3

B. Political intrigue

D. Construction of buildings

Herod was elected king of the Jews by the Roman senate, so he did not oppose Rome. He ruled by political scheming and excessive force. He assassinated anyone whom he considered a danger—even his own sons! He also was a master builder who produced many marvels, including the Jewish temple that was under renovation during Jesus' time.

QUESTION 4: *Your answer*

QUESTION 5: False

Matthew calls himself the tax collector (Mt 9:9). In the Synoptic Gospels he is called Levi, without mention of his despised profession (Mk 2:14; Lk 5:27). This hints at Matthew's humility and awareness of his sinfulness and of God's grace in his life.

QUESTION 6: False

We should not be surprised to see similarities between Matthew, Mark, and Luke since they all wrote about the same subject: Jesus' life. We know that the Holy Spirit guided these men to write what they did—and that what they wrote was accurate. Differences between these three gospels are few and are to be expected since each gospel has a slightly different emphasis.

QUESTION 7

Your response should be similar to the following: (1) Jesus is qualified for the same literal kingdom as other kings in the genealogy (Mt 1:1-17); (2) the most natural interpretation of the kingdom presented by John is that the same type of earthly kingdom seen in the Old Testament is in view (Mt 4:17); (3) Jesus never corrected the disciples for their understanding of a literal kingdom (Mt 18:1-3); (4) the kingdoms offered to Him by Satan were literal (Mt 4:8); (5) the references to kingdoms involve literal thrones and rules (Mt 19:28); and (6) the quote of David's is a literal view of the kingdom (Mt 22:44; Ps 110:1).

QUESTION 8

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Prophecy</i>
Matthew 1:1-17	The Messiah came from David's lineage.
Matthew 2:1-12	The Jewish Savior receives Gentile worship.
Matthew 2:13-18	Jesus' lineage is contrasted with Herod's Idumean ancestry.
Matthew 2:19-23	The Messiah's humble origins are predicted.

QUESTION 9

<i>Person</i>	<i>Event</i>
John the Baptist	Through Jesus' public introduction
God the Father	Through Jesus' baptism
The Holy Spirit	Through Jesus' temptation

QUESTION 10

- A. Teachings primarily directed toward the disciples
- B. Character development
- D. Anticipation of the kingdom
- E. Repentant living
- F. Internal righteousness

Christ mostly teaches the disciples the character that is expected of those who enter the kingdom. But, at the end of the sermon, He also invites the unbelieving listeners to accept Him for access into the kingdom. A repentant attitude of trust in Him contrasts with the attitude of the Pharisees who missed the kingdom in their arrogant, external observances.

QUESTION 11

- B. The Roman centurion with his servant

The centurion recognized that just as he gave commands and they were followed, so Jesus could give the order without being physically present and the servant would be healed.

QUESTION 12: *Your answer***QUESTION 13**

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Rejection</i>
Matthew 12	The Pharisees' rejection of Christ leads to a delay of the kingdom until Israel repents.
Matthew 13:1-52	Christ preaches the mysteries of the kingdom to introduce the Inter-Advent Age.
Matthew 13:53-58	Christ is rejected by His hometown of Nazareth.
Matthew 14	Christ is rejected by Herod, which foreshadows His rejection and eventually His crucifixion by Rome.
Matthew 15	Christ is rejected by the scribes and the Pharisees before He withdraws to feed 4,000 Gentiles.
Matthew 16:1-12	Christ is rejected by both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who demand a sign, while Jesus warns His disciples against these sects' teachings.

QUESTION 14

<i>Prediction</i>	<i>Reaction</i>
Matthew 16:21-28	Peter rebukes Jesus.
Matthew 17:22-23	The disciples are filled with grief.
Matthew 20:17-24	Two request seats of honor.

QUESTION 15: *Your answer***QUESTION 16**

A. His Triumphal Entry

Riding a donkey depicts Jesus' royal status. Unfortunately, the religious leaders' challenge shows their unrepentant disbelief in Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 17: Temple

Jesus reveals the events that will surround both His return and the establishment of His kingdom by delivering the Olivet Discourse (Mt 24–25). The disciples initiate the Discourse with two eschatological questions (“when?” and “what?”).

QUESTION 18: True

For Matthew there is no legitimate excuse for rejecting Christ.

QUESTION 19: True

Christ's Great Commission is His last instruction, which demonstrates that His highest priority for His disciples was for them to make disciples of every nation, until the present age ends when He returns to rule a believing Israel in the kingdom.

QUESTION 20

Matthew						
Instructions						
Christ's Advent and Approvals	Christ's Sermon on the Mount	Jesus Manifests Messiah's Authority	Christ Rejected Introducing the Inter-Advent Age	Disciples Prepared for Christ's Death	Kingdom Postponed by Rejection and Vicarious Death	Christ's Resurrection for the World
1:1 – 4:11	4:12 – 7:29	8 – 10	11:1 – 16:12	16:13 – 20:34	21 – 27	28

QUESTION 21: *Your answer***QUESTION 22:** *Your answer***QUESTION 23:** *Your answer*

Lesson 1 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: Synagogue

QUESTION 2

C. Construction of buildings

QUESTION 3: True

QUESTION 4: True

QUESTION 5

D. Jesus' temptation

QUESTION 6: Pharisees

QUESTION 7

A. The Roman centurion with his servant

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9

B. They asked Him about His authority.

QUESTION 10: True

Lesson 1 Articles

The Intertestamental Period

The time of Christ's birth and ministry had arrived (Gal 4:4-5). Life had changed since God had spoken to Israel through Malachi in 425 BC. At the close of the Old Testament, Persia was the most powerful nation. When the NT begins, Daniel's predictions had come true, Greece had ruled the Mediterranean world and now Rome was in control (Dan 7).

Roman Rule: Rome brought peace to the Mediterranean world by ruling aggressively. The Roman government built an extensive road system, which increased trade. Because of the new roads, Israel was no longer isolated from the world. As a result, Israel had a greater opportunity to spread Judaism throughout the Roman Empire. Similarly, the Christians used these roads to share the gospel. During Jesus' lifetime, the emperors did not interfere with the Jews. Later, some emperors expected their people to regard them as divine. This desire for emperor worship caused problems that led to persecution for God's people. Several of the apostles were ultimately martyred under Roman rule, for example, Peter and Paul.

Anticipated Prophecy: Malachi's last prophecy alerted the Jews to the coming Elijah (Mal 4:5). There were many other predictions in the Old Testament that promised an anointed ruler, the Messiah, would come (Gen 3:15; Deut 18:15; Isa 9:6-7; Mic 5:2; Zech 9:9). In Malachi's time, people hoped for the Messiah. The expectations for the coming Messiah were very high around the time that Jesus was born. Jesus fulfilled the standard set by Scripture, including His genealogy (Mt 1:1-17; 11:2-6).

Jewish Religious life: While the kings of Israel ruled, religious life centered around the temple and the sacrifices. But the synagogue became prominent during Israel's exile in Babylon. Jewish sects started to appear in the second century BC. Each sect had a different view on spiritual and national life. The Pharisees were the dominant sect, and they lived by a strict set of rules from interpretations of God's Law (see Mk 7:1-23). Spiritual authority shifted away from the Law of Moses and moved to the Pharisees' interpretations of the Law. The Pharisees emphasized strict obedience to the letter of the Law over observance of the spirit of the Law. Another sect was the Sadducees. This sect had great influence because of their social status, their money, their education, and their presence on the Sanhedrin (the high Jewish court) (Mk 12:18-27). Two other sects were the Herodians, who supported the Roman rule, and the Zealots, who violently opposed it (Mk 12:13-17).

God established the priests and the Levites as the spiritual leaders under the Law of Moses (Heb 7:11-28). Genealogy made them eligible for leadership roles. However, by the time of the New Testament, people obtained these positions through military action, bribery, execution, and political scheming. The Sanhedrin was also corrupt, being open to bribery and false testimony (Mk 14:53-65).

The king of the Jews: After Roman rule was established over Israel, their senate elected Herod the Great to be the king of the Jews, and he ruled most of Israel for thirty-three years. The people resented Herod's rule because he was only half Jewish and ruled by political scheming and by force. Anyone whom he considered to be a threat was assassinated, including his sons (Mt 2:16-18). Although Herod died shortly after Jesus' birth, the king's legacy and his descendants continued to influence Jewish life throughout Jesus' life (Mt 14:1-2; Lk 23:7).

During his life, Herod restored an extravagant temple for the Jews. It was overlaid with gold, and it shimmered so brightly in the sun that people could not look at it. Herod was known for building extravagant buildings. In order to build his fortress Herodium, Herod demanded that the top of a mountain should be moved. This event is probably what Jesus had in mind when He spoke of having enough faith to move mountains (Mk 11:20-25).

Many of the events in the New Testament are better understood in the context of the Intertestamental Period. The time was right in politics, religion, emotions, linguistics, prophesy, and transportation.

The Intertestamental Period (425–5BC)			
Subject	Malachi (close of OT)	Intertestamental	Advent of Christ
Rulers over Israel	Persia (208 yrs)	Greeks (188 yrs) Hasmoneans (80 yrs)	Rome (58 yrs)
Political Stability	Peace/autonomy	Many wars (Dan 11:1-35)	Peace (but through Rome's "iron fist")
Expectation of Messiah and Restored kingdom	Moderate	Increasing "Two Messiahs"	High
Language in Palestine	Hebrew/Aramaic	Greek	Aramaic/Greek/Latin
Ability to Evangelize	Limited	Increased	Extensive
Road system	Very limited	Expanded	Extensive
Places of worship	Temple & Few synagogues	Rise of Synagogues	Synagogues/Temple
Religious leaders -Achieved office by	Priests/Levites -Ancestral position	Rise of Jewish Sects -opposing the high priest	Pharisees/Sadducees -Bribes/executions
-Extent of power	-Local jurisdiction	-Rise of Sanhedrin	-Corrupt Sanhedrin
Authority for living	OT Law	Rise of oral Law	Pharisaical tradition

“But when the appropriate time had come, God sent out His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we may be adopted as sons with full rights” (Gal 4:4-5).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to Matthew

Authorship

The tax collector in Matthew's gospel is called "Matthew" (Mt 9:9). However, he is called Levi in Mark and in Luke (Mk 2:14; Lk 5:27). This difference suggests that Matthew was humble and was aware of his sin and of God's grace in his life. As a tax collector, he gives more financial information than the other Gospels. He uses more words for money, notes the cost of certain items, and is the only one to record the payment of the temple tax (Mt 17: 24-27; 18:24; 25:15; 26:6-9).

Every known manuscript of this gospel includes the line "according to Matthew" beneath the title.

Circumstances

Date: Scholars debate the exact date of Matthew because of the similarity to the other Gospels. Luke admits that he uses other sources to write his gospel, and John includes a lot of different parables and accounts of Jesus' life. This is the Synoptic problem, and it centers on whether Matthew or Mark wrote his gospel first.

An honest evaluation of Matthew acknowledges that he used both written and oral sources to compile his gospel. Matthew had extensive firsthand experience with the Lord and wrote with the Holy Spirit's direction. The work of the Holy Spirit to guide each of the gospel writers may account for the similarities between them. The Spirit also guarantees the accuracy of the content. The differences between the Gospels are minimal and reflect each author's purpose.

Matthew does show some evidence of early composition. The Olivet discourse (Mt 24–25) precedes the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. However, some phrases suggest that the Crucifixion and the Resurrection were not very recent events (Mt 27:8; 28:15). The early church tradition argued for Matthew's gospel being written first, and a date in the AD 40s satisfies the available data.

Origin/Recipients: The emphases on Jewish culture indicate that the first readers of the gospel were Jewish. No one knows where Matthew wrote his gospel or who read it first.

Characteristics

The following observations are unique to Matthew's gospel.

Matthew presents Jesus as the Messiah in all three required aspects, which are shown by the following references:

1. As a prophet through His discourses (Mt 5–7; 10; 13; 18; 23–25)
2. As a priest in His atoning death (Mt 26–27)
3. As a king by the following clear emphases of Matthew:
 - a. Several times the account refers to Him as the “son of David” and recognizes His ultimate authority (Mt 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 28:18).
 - b. The magi search for the one who is born “king of the Jews” to fulfill the prophecy of Micah 5:2 for Israel's great ruler's birth (Mt 2:2).
 - c. The Messiah, who is mounted on a donkey in a kingly but peaceful manner, fulfilled the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9.
 - d. The kingdom is noted frequently and described as a literal kingdom.

Matthew says that Jesus was qualified to rule in both a spiritual kingdom and a literal, earthly kingdom in the following ways:

- One of Matthew's key goals is to prove that Jesus fulfills God's promise to David. Jesus is one of David's descendents, and He will rule over an eternal kingdom (2 Sam 7:12-16).
- Jesus is eligible to rule the same literal kingdom as the other kings in His genealogy (Mt 1:1-17).
- The earthly kingdom is the same type of kingdom that is referred to by both John the Baptist (Mt 3:2) and Jesus (Mt 4:17), when they say the kingdom is imminent.
- The kingdoms that Satan offered to Jesus were literal (Mt 4:8).

- Jesus never corrected the disciples for an incorrect view of the kingdom. He only taught about the proper attitude in regard to it (Mt 18:1-3).
- The kingdom references involve both literal thrones and literal rulers upon Christ's return (Mt 19:28).
- A quote from David shows a literal view of the kingdom (Mt 22:44; Ps 110:1).

The Jewish character of the book is evident in multiple aspects. The writing style has similar parallelisms and connections. The vocabulary for the "kingdom of heaven" appears only in Matthew (Mt 3:2; 4:5, 17). In the New Testament, only Matthew and Revelation use the "holy city" to refer to Jerusalem, which is a Jewish reference (Mt 27:53; see Rev 11:2; 21:2, 10; 22:19). The subjects are all important to Judaism, such as the law, the Sabbath, Jerusalem, the temple, David, the Messiah, etc. The gospel also refers 129 times to the Old Testament. The genealogy lists Christ's lineage back to Abraham. This gospel also emphasizes Peter and Jewish evangelism (Mt 10:5-6, 23).

Matthew is the only writer to emphasize that the magi were all Gentiles (Mt 2:1-12). Matthew also emphasizes the church (Mt 16:18; 18:17) and the commission to evangelize all people (Mt 28:19). Such emphasis does not detract from the general Jewish character of the gospel. Instead this emphasis highlights that Israel's rejection has opened the door of salvation to all nations until Israel receives the Messiah at His return (Mt 19:28; 23:39).

Matthew also emphasizes the teaching ministry of Christ. He recorded many of the detailed instructions and speeches that Christ gave, which include the following:

- The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7)
- The instructions to the Twelve (Mt 10)
- The parables of the kingdom (Mt 13)
- The rebuke of the Jewish leaders (Mt 23)
- The Olivet discourse (Mt 24–25)

Throughout Matthew's gospel, events appear logically rather than chronologically. The genealogy is arranged into three groups of fourteen names (Mt 1:1-17). The seven miracles appear as a group (Mt 8–10). The opposition to Christ is in one section (Mt 11:2–16:12). The book begins with the summary statement (Mt 1:1) and concludes with the Great Commission (Mt 19–20), which is the reverse order of most arguments. The Great Commission is God's will for the church in the present age until Christ returns, but it also promises His presence until the end of this time period.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The King Is Offered

Jesus' advent and His approval from Gentiles reveal that He is both the Messiah and the rightful king of Israel (Mt 1:1–4:11).

Matthew gave Christ's genealogy in order to demonstrate His descent from the rightful line of David and to show His qualifications (Mt 1:1-17). Jesus had the right to inherit the throne of Israel (Mt 1–2).

After the genealogy, Jesus' birth shows that He fulfills the messianic prophecies. Matthew shows the predicted humble origins of the Messiah (Mt 1:1-11). His virgin birth fulfills Isaiah's prediction (Isa 7:14; Mt 1:18-2:23). Then this Jewish Savior receives worship by the Gentiles, while the Jews reject Him (Mt 2:1-12).

Jesus is then confirmed as the Messiah through three events (Mt 3:1-4:11). The first confirmation comes from John the Baptist when he preaches that there will be One to come after him (Mt 3:1-12). Since John is the forerunner to the Messiah, his teaching has divine authority (Mal 4:4-6). God the Father provides the second approval of Jesus as the Messiah at His baptism (Mt 3:13-17). The Father in heaven declares Jesus to be His "one dear Son" (Mt 3:17). The last confirmation of Jesus as the Messiah comes after He is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan (Mt 4:1-11). His ability to resist these temptations shows that He is the Messiah.

Jesus' early ministry and His Sermon on the Mount reveal the prophetic ministry that was expected of the Messiah (Mt 4:12-7:29).

Jesus' early ministry reveals Him to be the Messiah, and it provides the setting for Him to teach the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 4:12-25). Christ's overall message of repentance for entrance into the kingdom ties in with the message of this sermon. This comprehensive teaching shows the people that spiritual preparation, not just physical heritage, is required to enter the kingdom (Mt 4:12-17). By calling the disciples, Jesus demonstrates His authority over their lives as the Messiah (Mt 4:18-22). Jesus does the work of the Messiah through teaching, preaching, and healing (Mt 4:23-25).

The Sermon on the Mount illustrates how we should act in our relationship with God while we anticipate the kingdom (Mt 5-7). The introduction to the sermon shows that the message relates to the disciples and to other people who accepted Jesus as the Messiah (Mt 5:1-2). Jesus focuses on discipleship in His message. In the Beatitudes, Jesus congratulates the true followers for their righteousness, and He encourages them to continue developing their faith (Mt 5:3-16).

By nurturing heartfelt attitudes, which come from faith in God's Word, people can have a right relationship with God (Mt 5:17-7:12). His believers are no longer burdened by the external rules that the Pharisees had established. Christ does this in two ways. First, He rejects the Pharisees' interpretations of the Law (Mt 5:17-48). Second, He rejects the Pharisees' practices that focus on external observance more than heartfelt attitude. He teaches the disciples to live in anticipation of the kingdom through internal repentance (Mt 6:1-7:12).

Christ invites the unbelievers to accept Him for access to the kingdom. If they accept His invitation, then they will attain an internal righteousness, which is different from the Pharisees' external righteousness. The Pharisees will miss the kingdom (Mt 7:13-27). The crowd was amazed at the sermon, and they recognized Jesus' authority as the Messiah (Mt 7:28-29).

Jesus manifests the power and the authority of the Messiah to show that He would bring the kingdom, if Israel would accept it (Mt 8-10).

Three sections of miracles demonstrate Jesus' power as the Messiah. Two sections on discipleship show His authority. All these sections show Israel that the kingdom will come soon, if they accept Him (Mt 8:1-9:34):

- His miracles of healing show His power as the Messiah (Mt 8:1-17).
- He details the cost of discipleship, which shows His authority as the Messiah (Mt 8:18-22).
- His miracles of power show that He is the Messiah (Mt 8:23-9:8).

- His requirements for discipleship demonstrate His authority (Mt 9:9-17).
- His miracles of restoration show His power (Mt 9:18-34).

Lastly, Jesus shows His power as the Messiah by delegating authority to the disciples as He sends them out to heal and to exorcise demons (Mt 9:35–10:42).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The King Is Rejected

In the time leading up to the crucifixion, Jesus is rejected as the Messiah. He introduces the inter-advent age, and ministers to the Gentiles during the delay of the kingdom on earth (Mt 11:1–16:12).

John the Baptist asks for clarification about whether or not Jesus is the Messiah, and the Galileans are condemned because they do not repent. These situations contrast with Jesus' gracious invitation to accept Him as the Messiah (Mt 11:1-30). The Pharisees reject both Christ and the kingdom, foreshadowing Christ's rejection by the nation (Mt 12). Christ responds by telling the mysterious parables of the kingdom as a way of introducing the inter-advent age, the time between His two comings (Mt 13:1-52). Today, many people believe that the kingdom exists in a mysterious form during the time between Jesus' two comings. However, Jesus only noted the mysteries about this age that were previously unknown (Mt 13:11). These newly revealed mysteries included the following: (1) believers and unbelievers would live together in peace, and (2) believers understood the meaning of some of the parables, but unbelievers did not (Mt 13:11, 24-30). The kingdom is preceded by "Elijah," who comes before the Messiah's arrival (Mt 11:14; 17:10-13).

Jesus is rejected by more groups in anticipation of the nation's rejection of Him at the Cross. These rejections motivate Christ to withdraw from the leaders and to show that He will be king over a believing nation (Mt 13:53–16:12).

- Nazareth rejects Him, which signifies His rejection by His own people. Christ withdraws His miraculous power from that city (Mt 13:53-58).
- Herod rejects Him, which shows His rejection by the Roman government. Christ withdraws and feeds thousands of Jews to show that He will give spiritual food to His followers after He leaves (Mt 14).
- The scribes and Pharisees reject Him, just as Israel's religious leaders will do. Christ then withdraws and feeds thousands of Gentiles to anticipate His global ministry (Mt 15).
- The Pharisees and the Sadducees reject Him by demanding a sign. Christ withdraws with His disciples to warn them against the religious leaders' teaching (Mt 16:1-12).

Christ prepares His disciples about His person and His program so that His messianic authority might be delegated to them after His death (Mt 16:13–20:34).

Christ uses Peter's confession to reveal His messianic role to the disciples (Mt 16:13-17). This leads to Christ revealing the church, His death and His resurrection, and the coming kingdom, which is seen through His transfiguration (Mt 16:18–17:13). He continues to prepare the disciples for ministry, giving them guidance for the situations that they will encounter after His death and resurrection (Mt 17:14–20:34).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The King Is Offered Again

Christ's presentation and rejection as Israel's king in His substitutionary crucifixion show why the earthly kingdom is delayed until His return (Mt 21–27).

Jesus officially presents Himself as the Messiah to the nation in both the triumphal entry and the temple cleansing (Mt 21:1-17). However, the religious leaders challenge His authority, which shows their unrepentant disbelief (Mt 21:18–22:46). As a result, Christ rejects the nation by condemning the leaders and by lamenting over Jerusalem (Mt 23). Christ declares God's judgment upon Jerusalem's temple. Then the disciples initiate Christ's next message, the Olivet discourse, by asking two key questions. In this discourse He describes what people should expect to see when He returns (Mt 24:1-3). Christ reveals the Tribulation period, the Second Coming, and the judgments of Israel, which will all happen before His kingdom comes (Mt 24:4–25:46).

The Passover of Christ portrays His role as the ultimate Passover Lamb for the nation (Mt 26:1-46). The Crucifixion is Israel's ultimate rejection of Jesus as the Messiah (Mt 26:47–27:66).

Jesus' victory over death confirms Him as the Messiah who should be believed by the entire world (Mt 28).

Jesus' empty tomb proves that He is the Messiah (Mt 28:1-10). The guards' false report does not disprove Jesus as the Messiah (Mt 28:11-15). Christ's Great Commission is the last instruction that He gives to the disciples. It reveals that His top priority is to make disciples of all nations (Mt 28:16-20). He instructs the disciples to spread His message until He returns to rule the kingdom when Israel believes (Mt 28:16-20).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 2: Mark: Kingdom Life Is Shown in Discipleship

Lesson Introduction

The latter part of the Emperor Nero's reign was a terrifying time to be a Christian. Nero falsely blamed the Christians for a fire that devastated Rome in AD 64, and he executed many believers in gruesome ways. The apostles Peter and Paul became martyrs during that time.

During Nero's reign of terror, Mark wrote his gospel in Rome. The book of Mark has been outlined in numerous ways due to its unique style and its complexity. It contains many fast-moving sections. Several students have used Christ's geographical movements (ministry in Galilee, then Judea, etc.) to outline the book, but this method contributes little to help the reader understand Mark's argument.

It seems best to view Mark's purpose as a pastoral concern for his Christian readers who were suffering persecution, intimidation, and fear because they lived in Rome.

- Mark gives one solution to alleviate their fear: Their fear of God should be greater than their fear of other things (Mk 4:35-41)! In an interesting literary technique, Mark leaves the women at the tomb of the risen Jesus filled with fear (Mk 16:8). By explaining fear this way, Mark leaves unresolved the question of whether his readers would continue testifying or give in to their fear.
- Mark's second solution for fear is to show his readers how Christ served man even to the point of death as an example of selflessness. Each follower must heed Christ's command, "Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all" (Mk 10:43-44). With this perspective in mind, Mark 10:45 is a significant theme verse that sums up the two major movements of the book: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (see Christ's service in Mk 1:14-8:26; see also Christ's sacrifice in Mk 8:27-15:47).

The remaining sections introduce the reader to the Servant as both the Messiah and God (Mk 1:1-13) and prove to the reader His claim in the account of His resurrection (Mk 16).

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Appreciate the background information about Mark, which will help you personally interpret his message for today
- Evaluate Mark's introduction of Jesus to see if He arrived according to messianic expectations
- Feel the reaction that people had to Jesus, causing some to experience supernatural amazement and others to experience intense hatred
- Experience the servanthood of Jesus and its call upon your life
- Answer Mark's question of whether or not you will testify of Christ regardless of any fear you may have

Lesson Outline

- Topic 1: Introduction to Mark
- Topic 2: Jesus' Coming (Mk 1:1-13)
- Topic 3: Opposition to Jesus' Ministry (Mk 1:14–8:26)
- Topic 4: Jesus' Sacrifice (Mk 8:27–15:47)
- Topic 5: Jesus' Resurrection (Mk 16)
- Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to Mark

Mark Deity Who Models Suffering as a Servant									
Service					Suffering				
Sayings and signs					Sacrifice				
Galilee and Perea					Judea and Jerusalem				
Coming		Ministry opposition			Self-sacrifice		Resurrection		
1:1-13		1:14–10:52			11–15		16		
Deity & John 1:1-8	Baptism & Temptation 1:9-13	Mission 1:14–2:12	Opposition 2:13–8:26	Instruction 8:27–10:52	Rejection 11–13	Passion 14–15	Proof 16:1-8	Ending 16:9-20	
Authority of Christ Emphasized				Authority-Servant Tension	Servanthood of Christ Emphasized				
3 years				6 months	8 days				
Rome									
Written AD 64–68 Covers AD 29–33									

Clement of Alexandria, a theologian living around 150–215 AD, testified that Mark wrote his gospel at the request of the Roman Christians and that he delivered it to them upon its completion. Since Mark wrote during the reign of Nero (AD 54–68) the book was composed when the church faced intense persecution.

He wrote to prepare his readers for suffering by noting that Christian discipleship involves hardship—even death—as is modeled by Christ. But Jesus pointed out that this type of martyrdom is not really a life lost but a life gained:

Then Jesus called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, “If anyone wants to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and the gospel will save it. What advantage is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? What can a person give in exchange for his soul?” (Mk 8:34-38)

The verse that best sums up his message is Mark 10:45, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Many decisions in our lives are based on logic. Because spiritual decisions are made by faith, we often think that these decisions have nothing to do with logic. Mark shows that Jesus’ appeal for discipleship is logical! Jesus basically says, “Think about it. There is no benefit if you gain the whole world and then lose your soul, for then your loss is eternal.” Likewise, there is an eternal benefit when you live your life so that it will last into eternity. This is what Jesus did, and He left this example for us!

In this difficult context, Mark wanted to answer the concerns of the Christians in Rome. When it was unpopular or even dangerous to be a Christian and the faith of some was faltering, the believers asked, “Why should we suffer? We have found salvation in Christ but who wants to lose their life over our mission? Surely Jesus would not want us to suffer like this, would He? We seem to be losing this battle, so is our suffering worth it?”

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “Introduction to Mark” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize Mark 10:45. This key verse summarizes Christ’s attitude toward His mission.

QUESTION 1

Mark wrote his gospel for the Christians in Rome, who were facing great persecution during the reign of the emperor _____.

QUESTION 2

Mark portrays his people with notable candor. Match the reference in the left-hand column with Mark’s vivid description of various emotions in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Description</i>
Mark 1:12-13	Jesus’ family believed He was insane.
Mark 1:22, 27	Jesus felt distress and sorrow over His coming crucifixion.
Mark 1:43	The Holy Spirit drove Jesus to face Satan’s temptations.
Mark 3:21, 31-35	The crowd was amazed at Jesus’ works.
Mark 9:10, 32	The disciples didn’t understand yet feared to ask questions.
Mark 10:16	Jesus was stern with the leper whom He healed.
Mark 14:33-34	Jesus felt compassion for children.

QUESTION 3

Please write Mark 10:45 from memory so that you will grasp Mark’s key verse.

QUESTION 4

Open your Life Notebook and respond to the following question. Mark’s gospel shows Jesus’ struggle with temptation, and the disciples’ failure to follow His commands. The article “Introduction to Mark” argues that Mark includes these stories to show believers that even our greatest models of faith struggled to do what was right. What is one of your greatest struggles, and how do the disciples’ stories inspire you?

Topic 1 Key Points:

- Mark wrote out of pastoral concern for his original readers, who were facing persecution.
- Mark writes with unusual honesty about how Jesus and the disciples both felt about and endured trials.
- Mark 10:45 is the key verse that reveals how Jesus' mission is one of service to others.

Topic 2: Jesus' Coming (Mk 1:1-13)

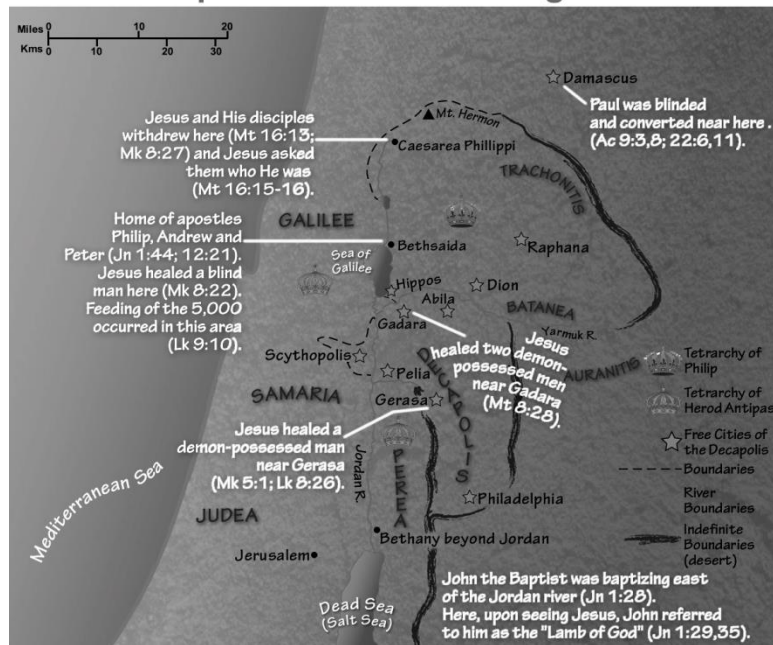
When you meet new people or when you interview for a job, it helps to have someone introduce you. It is also easier to meet new people if you arrive when they expect you and if you bring credentials from someone that they know and respect.

Who introduced Jesus when He appeared to minister? And what were their credentials? Did Jesus appear as the Jews expected? This topic explores the answers to these questions.

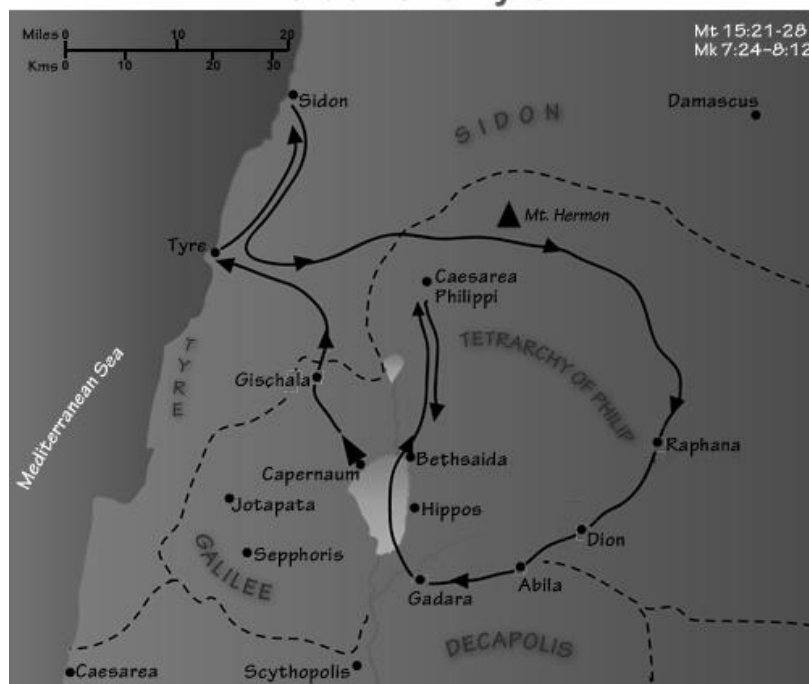
Meeting for an Interview



Decapolis and Surrounding Areas



Sidon and Tyre



Mark openly declares in the title of the book that Jesus is both the Messiah of Israel and the Son of God (Mk 1:1). He restates Christ's credentials through key witnesses at the beginning, middle, and end of his gospel:

- In Mark 1:9-11, God calls Jesus His Son when Jesus is baptized.
- In Mark 9:7, God calls Jesus His Son again at the Transfiguration.
- In Mark 15:39, a Roman centurion recognizes Jesus as God's Son after Jesus dies.

These statements show people progressing in their understanding of who Christ is. At the beginning of Mark, Jesus is known as the Son of God only in heaven. By the end of the gospel, even the Gentiles know Jesus as the Son of God.

When Jesus began His ministry on earth, John the Baptist introduced Him. Mark explains to his readers that John also carried credentials, which should be respected. The prophets Isaiah and Malachi both foretold John's ministry as the messenger who would make a way for the Lord (Mal 3:1; Isa 40:3; Mk 1:2-3). John was one who came in the spirit of Elijah as predicted, "I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way, the voice of one calling out in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'" (Mk 1:2-3; see also Mal 4:4-6).

In addition to this impressive introduction, which proves Christ's identity as the Savior, Mark is also concerned with showing the discipleship implications of His identity. The rest of the lesson will discuss what it means to follow Christ.

- **Mark: Deity Who Models Suffering as a Servant**
- **Author:** John Mark
- **Date:** Probably written between AD 64–68
- **Key Word:** Discipleship
- **Key Verse:** Mark 10:45
- **Summary Statement:** In order to exhort persecuted Roman believers to true discipleship, Mark presents, in pastoral concern, selected events about Christ, the Son of God who serves as the model of a suffering servant.
- **Application:** Are you a disciple who willingly suffers after Jesus' example?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Mark 1 on the coming of Christ.
- Please read the article "Jesus' Coming" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

Seemingly insurmountable barriers are removed—like the barriers between God's heaven and fallen humanity on earth (Isa 64:1)—as God arrives to minister "in the flesh" in the person of Jesus.

QUESTION 5

The prophets Malachi and Isaiah predicted that God would send a messenger to prepare the way for the Lord. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

God rips open the heavens to testify that Jesus is His Son at the beginning and in the middle of Mark's gospel. The one who testifies that Jesus is God's Son at the end of Mark is which of the following:

- A) Joseph of Arimathea
- B) The Roman centurion
- C) Mary Magdalene
- D) The angel at the tomb

QUESTION 7

Open your Life Notebook and write a response to the following question. Mark 1:12-13 says that the Holy Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness to face Satan's temptations. One way to understand that passage is that Jesus was reluctant to face this trial, but He emerged victorious. How does Christ's example strengthen you for the temptations or the trials that you are reluctant to face?

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Christ came precisely as predicted and was introduced by the prophesied forerunner "Elijah."
- God twice testifies in Mark's gospel that Jesus is His Son.
- Mark reveals Jesus' reluctance to face temptation in order to comfort the persecuted believers.

Topic 3: Opposition to Jesus' Ministry (Mk 1:14–8:26)

Mark shows that Jesus' ministry had an immediate impact. He calls the disciples, casts out the demon in the synagogue, heals the fever of Peter's mother-in-law, gets up early to pray, and heals a leper—all apparently within a twenty-four-hour period (Mk 1:16-45)! Some of these actions were considered beyond human ability. It is no wonder that the witnesses to Jesus' miracles were amazed.

Unfortunately, this impact was also **immediately** noticed by His opponents (Mk 2:6-8; 2:18; 2:24). They were so angry at Jesus that they immediately started planning His murder (Mk 3:1-6)!

Have you ever had someone oppose you to the point of being irrational (Mk 3:20-30)? This type of opposition is what Jesus faced throughout His ministry from the beginning to the crucifixion at the hands of His enemies. Every time He tried to do something good, He faced opposition (Mk 3:4).

But Jesus had a mission to accomplish and He did not stop just because of opposition. However, He did change His tactics. What were Jesus' responses to the increased opposition that He received?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Mark 3–4 on Jesus' response to opposition.
- Please read the article "Jesus' Ministry Opposition" in the Article section at the end of this lesson.



QUESTION 8

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the event in the right-hand column that shows why Jesus experienced opposition.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Mark 2:1-12	Jesus, through His messenger John, rebuked Herod's unlawful marriage.
Mark 2:13-17	Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners.
Mark 2:18-22	Jesus' disciples were accused of not fasting.
Mark 2:23-3:6	The disciples did not ritually wash their hands before eating.
Mark 3:20-30	The disciples picked grain and Jesus did good works on the Sabbath.
Mark 6:14-29	Supposedly, Jesus' miracles were done in Satan's power.
Mark 7:1-23	Jesus showed His authority to forgive sins by healing.

QUESTION 9

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with Jesus' response to opposition in the right-hand column.

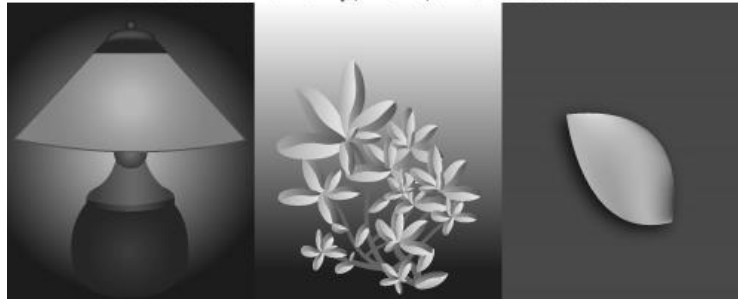
<i>Reference</i>	<i>Response to Opposition</i>
Mark 3:6-7	After the Pharisees argue with Jesus and ask Him for a sign, Jesus refuses a sign to that generation.
Mark 3:20-30	After the experts in the law accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan, Jesus begins teaching in parables.
Mark 5:1-20	After Jesus is opposed in His hometown, He sends out the twelve apostles.
Mark 6:1-12	After the Pharisees and the Herodians plan to kill Him, Jesus goes away to the sea.
Mark 7:1-30	After Jesus is opposed for not practicing ritual hand washing, He leaves Israel to heal a Gentile woman's daughter.
Mark 8:11-13	After teaching in parables, Jesus rescues the demoniac.
Mark 8:14-21	After the disciples ask about bread, Jesus warns them about the leaven of both Herod and the Pharisees.

QUESTION 10

Which of the following questions does the Parable of the Sower (Soils) answer?

- A) Why does the kingdom seem so small?
- B) How will the kingdom grow?
- C) Should Jesus' message of the kingdom be hidden?
- D) Why are there different responses to Jesus' message of the kingdom?

Parables of the Lamp, Plant, and Mustard Seed



QUESTION 11

In Mark 8:22-26, what does Jesus illustrate by healing a blind man in stages?

- A) Jesus' message was to the Gentiles.
- B) The disciples are slow to learn that Jesus is the Messiah.
- C) Jesus' power is limited by the person's lack of faith.
- D) The man's blindness is especially difficult to cure.

QUESTION 12

Open your Life Notebook. Jesus responded to opposition by walking away from trouble and doing good works. How do you respond to opposition? Are there ways you wish that you could change to better follow Christ's example?

Topic 3 Key Points:

- Jesus' ministry produces both amazement at the supernatural and immediate opposition by the Jewish leaders, to the point that they seek to murder Him.
- Jesus responds to opposition in the following ways: leaving the area, teaching in parables, rescuing the demoniac, sending out the twelve apostles, healing Gentiles, refusing to perform miraculous signs, and warning His disciples against the teaching of the Jewish leaders.
- The kingdom parables teach Jesus' inner circle about kingdom truths that are hidden from those who are outside that circle.
- After Jesus spends the first half of Mark teaching His disciples who He is, Peter finally confesses that Jesus is the Christ.

Topic 4: Jesus' Sacrifice (Mk 8:27–15:47)

Jesus spent the first half of Mark teaching His disciples one major lesson: "Who He is." Now He will spend the second half of Mark teaching them another: "What His mission is." Immediately after Peter confesses that He is the awaited Messiah, Jesus tells of the events soon to come:

Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the experts in the law, and be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke openly about this. So Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But after turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan. For you are not thinking about the things of God, but the things of men" (Mk 8:31-33).

Because the disciples had to understand who He was before they could understand what His mission was, Jesus' new lesson built on the previous one. But if anything, the new lesson was even more difficult for His disciples to learn: How could the God of the universe die? Why would He serve anyone or submit to anyone if He is the sovereign Master? What did His mission mean for them, and what attitude should they take in living their lives? What would happen to them after He dies? And what about the kingdom?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Mark 8:27-33; 9–10 about Jesus' teachings on self-sacrifice.
- Please read the article "Jesus' Sacrifice" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 13

In teaching humility, Jesus taught that His followers should have the social status of _____.

QUESTION 14

Match the reference in the left-hand column with Jesus' teaching at the Jerusalem temple during Passion Week in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching</i>
Mark 11:27-33	He treasures humility and not pride.
Mark 12:1-12	He trusts the God of resurrection.
Mark 12:13-17	He is the son of David.
Mark 12:18-27	He is treated as all God's servants were treated.
Mark 12:35-37	His authority is the same as John's.
Mark 12: 28-34; 12:38-44; 13:1-2	He gives both God and Caesar their due.

QUESTION 15

Which of the following are the main warnings from the Olivet discourse? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Don't tell anyone about Him.
- B) Watch out.
- C) Stay alert.
- D) You will all fall away.

QUESTION 16

Jesus' greatest temptation throughout Mark is to receive the kingdom apart from the Cross. *True or False?*

Topic 4 Key Points:

- Jesus' disciples must come to Him as people with no social status.
- Jesus comes with God's authority as the son of David, but Israel treats Him as they have treated all of God's servants.
- Jesus teaches His disciples to treasure humility and service.
- Jesus warns us to watch and stay alert until His return.
- Jesus' greatest temptation throughout Mark is to receive the kingdom apart from the Cross.

Topic 5: Jesus' Resurrection (Mk 16)

Mark's story of how God ripped open the heavens to come down to earth to reveal Himself still hasn't ended. Even the Gentile centurion recognized Jesus as God's Son (Mk 15:39), but the question remains whether or not we will do the same. In a sense, Mark starts a new story with the resurrection of Jesus, which he will not finish because the story is ongoing. Along with his original readers, we will help determine its ending!

Jesus is not dead but risen! Our mission is to tell this message to the world (Mk 16:7). The women at the tomb were silenced by terror and bewilderment (Mark 16:8). Will we tell others or say nothing because of fear? Will our hardness of heart prevent our mission (Mk 16:12-15)?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Mark 16 on Jesus' resurrection, His ascension, and His commission.
- Please read the article on "Jesus' Resurrection" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 17

The Resurrection account in Mark encourages Christ's servants that they also can have the hope of victory over _____.

QUESTION 18

The women that visit Jesus' tomb immediately follow the angel's command to tell others that He had risen. *True or False?*

Topic 5 Key Points:

- Jesus' resurrection gives His servants a sure hope of their own victory over death.
- The question at the end of Mark is still open-ended for us, "Will we testify of Jesus or give in to fear and be silent?"

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Being a Christian is not easy. Jesus does not promise us great wealth, political power, or a comfortable life. Through Mark's gospel, Jesus tells us that being a disciple means humbly serving others and risking death for the gospel.

But just as Mark wrote his gospel to comfort Christians who were being persecuted under the Roman emperor Nero, the Bible continues to encourage believers who suffer for their faith. Even if you are shut off from other Christians, the gospel of Mark and the other books in the New Testament provide a community of believers who can help you grow in faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

QUESTION 19

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Mark at the bottom of each column.

Title Key Events in Mark						
	Instructions					
Jesus' Crucifixion						
Gethsemane						
The Olivet Discourse						
The Transfiguration						
The Triumphal Entry						
The Kingdom Parables	Mark 4	Mark 9	Mark 11	Mark 13	Mark 14	Mark 15

QUESTION 20

Open your Life Notebook and record your answer to the following question. Mark was Peter's good friend, so why would his writings so often show Peter and the other disciples in an unflattering manner?

QUESTION 21

Open your Life Notebook. Reflect on times when you have been like the disciples in Mark, sometimes serving Jesus faithfully, and sometimes giving in to temptation or persecution. What have you learned from your experiences about how to be a better disciple of Christ?

QUESTION 22

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications that you should make to your life. Note especially how often you mention Christ's resurrection when you share the gospel.

Lesson 2 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Mark's original readers lived under the Roman emperor Nero and faced great _____ under his rule.

QUESTION 2

As an example for us, Mark shows that Jesus eagerly confronted every trial that He faced in His life. *True or False?*

QUESTION 3

John the Baptist fulfilled the role that the prophet Malachi predicted of a prophet named _____.

QUESTION 4

Three times in Mark someone testifies that Jesus is God's Son and the first of these times happens at Jesus' _____.

QUESTION 5

In Mark 3:20-30, how does Jesus respond when the Jewish leaders accuse Him of receiving His authority from Satan?

- A) By rejecting Jerusalem until He returns
- B) By denying them a sign
- C) By teaching in parables
- D) By asking about John's authority

QUESTION 6

In the first half of Mark, what is the main lesson that Jesus teaches the disciples?

- A) What His mission is.
- B) Who He is.
- C) He must die.
- D) He must suffer

QUESTION 7

Jesus wanted His disciples to come to their mission as those with no social status. Mark used the example of _____ to illustrate this.

QUESTION 8

In Mark 13, which of the following is the main warning of the Olivet discourse?

- A) Do not tell anyone about Jesus.
- B) You will all fall away.
- C) Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.
- D) Watch out! Stay alert!

QUESTION 9

Christ's resurrection shows that we, too, can victoriously overcome persecution and death. *True or False?*

QUESTION 10

In Mark 16, Jesus explains that His resurrection fulfilled His mission and now the disciples can go back to their hometowns and do the work that they were doing before meeting Jesus. *True or False?*

Lesson 2 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1: Nero

Mark's purpose is pastoral. He wrote to prepare his readers for suffering by noting that Christian discipleship involves hardship—even death—as modeled by Christ. But Jesus pointed out that this type of martyrdom is not really a life lost but a life gained.

QUESTION 2

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Description</i>
Mark 1:12-13	The Holy Spirit drove Jesus to face Satan's temptations.
Mark 1:22, 27	The crowd was amazed at Jesus' works.
Mark 1:43	Jesus was stern with the leper whom He healed.
Mark 3:21, 31-35	Jesus' family believed He was insane.
Mark 9:10, 32	The disciples didn't understand yet feared to ask questions.
Mark 10:16	Jesus felt compassion for children.
Mark 14:33-34	Jesus felt distress and sorrow over His coming crucifixion.

QUESTION 3

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

QUESTION 4: *Your answer*

QUESTION 5: True

Christ was introduced by the one who came in the spirit of Elijah, as predicted in Malachi 3:1, "Look, I am about to send my messenger, who will clear the way before me." He was also "the voice of one calling out in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'" (Mk 1:2-3; see Isa 40:3).

QUESTION 6

B. The Roman centurion

There is progress. At the beginning of Mark the message is known only in heaven, and by the end of the book, it is known even by a Gentile.

QUESTION 7: *Your answer*

QUESTION 8

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Mark 2:1-12	Jesus showed His authority to forgive sins by healing.
Mark 2:13-17	Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners.
Mark 2:18-22	Jesus' disciples were accused of not fasting.
Mark 2:23-3:6	The disciples picked grain and Jesus did good works on the Sabbath.
Mark 3:20-30	Supposedly, Jesus' miracles were done in Satan's power.
Mark 6:14-29	Jesus, through His messenger John, rebuked Herod's unlawful marriage.
Mark 7:1-23	The disciples did not ritually wash their hands before eating.

QUESTION 9

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Response to Opposition</i>
Mark 3:6-7	After the Pharisees and the Herodians plan to kill Him, Jesus goes away to the sea.
Mark 3:20-30	After the experts in the law accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan, Jesus begins teaching in parables.
Mark 5:1-20	After teaching in parables, Jesus rescues the demoniac.
Mark 6:1-12	After Jesus is opposed in His hometown, He sends out the twelve apostles.
Mark 7:1-30	After Jesus is opposed for not practicing ritual hand washing, He leaves Israel to heal a Gentile woman's daughter.
Mark 8:11-13	After the Pharisees argue with Jesus and ask Him for a sign, Jesus refuses a sign to that generation.
Mark 8:14-21	After the disciples ask about bread, Jesus warns them about the leaven of both Herod and the Pharisees.

QUESTION 10

D. Why are there different responses to Jesus' message of the kingdom?

The other three parables answered the following questions: (1) The Parable of the Lamp: Should Jesus' message of the kingdom be hidden? (2) The Parable of the Plant: How will the kingdom grow? and (3) The Parable of the Mustard Seed: Why does the kingdom seem so small?

QUESTION 11

B. The disciples are slow to learn that Jesus is the Messiah.

Immediately after this healing, Peter confesses he knows Jesus is the Christ. This shows that the disciples finally learned the main lesson Jesus taught them up to this point. Now they must learn His mission.

QUESTION 12: *Your answer*

QUESTION 13: Children

Children had no status whatsoever in that society.

QUESTION 14

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching</i>
Mark 11:27-33	His authority is the same as John's.
Mark 12:1-12	He is treated as all God's servants were treated.
Mark 12:13-17	He gives both God and Caesar their due.
Mark 12:18-27	He trusts the God of resurrection.
Mark 12:35-37	He is the son of David.
Mark 12: 28-34; 12:38-44; 13:1-2	He treasures humility and not pride.

QUESTION 15

B. Watch out.

C. Stay alert.

These are the same two warnings the disciples did not heed as seen in their behavior at the Garden of Gethsemane (Mk 14:32-42).

QUESTION 16: True

This showed Mark's readers that Jesus also suffered during this life before receiving glory.

QUESTION 17: Death

Death represented the main fear of Mark's original readers, but Christ triumphed over death.

QUESTION 18: False

They receive the instructions to tell Jesus' disciples of his resurrection, but instead they run away in terror (Mk 16:5-8). In his abrupt ending Mark leaves open the question of whether or not they obeyed. This literary technique causes the readers to put themselves in the women's place and ask, "What will I do with my testimony of Christ?"

QUESTION 19

Title Key Events in Mark						
						Instructions
The Kingdom Parables	The Transfiguration	The Triumphal Entry	The Olivet Discourse	Gethsemane	Jesus' Crucifixion	
Mark 4	Mark 9	Mark 11	Mark 13	Mark 14	Mark 15	

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21: *Your answer*

QUESTION 22: *Your answer*

Lesson 2 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: Persecution

QUESTION 2: False

QUESTION 3: Elijah

QUESTION 4: Baptism

QUESTION 5

C. By teaching in parables

QUESTION 6

B. Who He is.

QUESTION 7: Children

QUESTION 8

D. Watch out! Stay alert!

QUESTION 9: True

QUESTION 10: False

Lesson 2 Articles

Introduction to Mark

Authorship

All the early church fathers believed the author was John Mark, who worked with the apostle Peter. It was probably a scribe who added his name to the title before AD 125.

Several passages of the book indicate Mark's authorship. He is the only writer to record the young man that fled naked from Christ's arrest in Gethsemane (Mk 14:51-52). This man was probably Mark himself. The author's detailed description of the guest room (Mk 14:12-16) suggests that the Last Supper was in his home (see Mt 26:17-19; Jn 13:1-12). Many passages in the book show Mark's familiarity with the Jewish culture: the land of Israel (Mk 5:1; 6:53; 8:10; 11:1), the Aramaic language (Mk 5:41; 7:11, 34; 14:36), and the Jewish customs (Mk 1:21; 2:14, 16, 18; 7:2-4). Mark mentions details that only Christ's closest apostles would know (Mk 1:16-20; 5:21-24; 9:14-15; 11:4-6; 14:32-42). These details indicate that Peter may have been his main source of information, especially as Peter is mentioned by name in Mark 16:7.

Based on both the evidence in the book and other sources, the author is John Mark of Acts (Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:37, 39) and of the Epistles (Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Phm 24; 1 Pet 5:13).

Circumstances

Date: Historical records indicate that Peter did not go to Rome until AD 63 and since Mark worked with Peter in Rome, the gospel must have been written after AD 63. Peter was martyred in AD 64, but it is unknown if Mark wrote before or after his death. The likely date of the book is AD 64–68, because the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 is not mentioned.

Origin/Recipients: Mark's gospel was written for the Gentile Christians in Rome who suffered great persecution under the Emperor Nero. The text supports this through Mark's explanations of Jewish customs (Mk 7:3-4; 14:12; 15:42) and only contains one Old Testament quote (Mk 1:2). This gospel uses Latin words (Mk 5:9; 6:27) and interprets Aramaic expressions (Mk 5:41; 7:11, 34; 14:36). Mark's statement that the gospel will be preached to the nations (Mk 13:10) and the temple will be a house of prayer for all nations (Mk 11:17) also point to a Gentile audience.

Purpose: There are five interpretations of Mark's purpose.

- *Biographical:* to present Jesus as the servant of the Lord
- *Evangelistic:* to win converts
- *Instructional:* to supply material for new Christians, evangelists, and teachers
- *Apologetic:* to correct false notions of Christ and His mission
- *Pastoral:* Because Mark wanted to shepherd believers, this view has the most support. He presents the persecuted believers with some events about Christ as the Son of God and as the model of the suffering servant. The following are evidence for this view:
 1. The book emphasizes discipleship (Mk 8:27-10:52).
 2. The passion of Christ dominates, taking up 37 percent of the book (Mk 11–15; see Mk 10:45).

3. Mark stresses Christ's suffering during His life. He was tempted by wild beasts (Mk 1:12-13). His family misunderstood Him (Mk 3:22, 30). The book also emphasizes the costs of discipleship and persecution (Mk 8:34-38; 10:30, 33-34, 45; 13:8, 11-13).
4. Mark ends abruptly at Mark 16:8. This ending may mirror the current situation of both the audience and the women whom Mark describes (Mk 16:7-8).

Characteristics

Mark's gospel is brief, but full of action. The word "immediately" is used forty-one times. There are eighteen miracles, four parables, and one discourse, which is in Mark 13:3-37. While Mark selects fewer stories, he develops them more fully. Christ imposes secrecy after His miracles, His exorcisms, and His healing (Mk 1:25, 34, 40-45; 3:12). Jesus is also secretive after Peter confesses His identity as the Messiah (Mk 8:30) and after the Transfiguration (Mk 9:9).

The book emphasizes Jesus' divine nature, while also revealing His emotions (Mk 1:1; 8:29; 15:39). Jesus is angry (Mk 1:43; 3:5; 8:33; 10:14), distressed (Mk 7:34; 8:12; 14:33-34), and compassionate (Mk 1:14; 6:34; 8:2; 10:16). Mark is open and honest in his descriptions of the people in his gospel. The Holy Spirit pushes Christ to face Satan's temptations (Mk 1:12-13), the crowd is amazed (Mk 1:22, 27; 2:12, etc.), and Jesus' family thought He was insane (Mk 3:21, 31-35). Mark was also honest when he reported the disciples' failures, which helps his audience not to idealize them (Mk 4:13; 6:52; 8:17; 10:21, etc.).

The gospel's short, abrupt ending at Mark 16:8 is in the earliest manuscripts. The longer ending, Mark 16:9-20, was likely added later, however, no one knows who added these last verses.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Coming

Jesus' coming as a servant identifies Him as both the Messiah and God, but Mark only briefly summarizes these ideas in order to move quickly to the main content of this account: Christ's service and sacrifice as a servant (Mk 1:1-13).

Mark starts by identifying Jesus as the Messiah and God (Mk 1:1). He then provides John's ministry as a model for servanthood and humility (Mk 1:2-8). John's life was similar to the Old Testament prophets' lives (Mk 1:4-6). He simply served his Lord without seeking fame.

Mark uses Christ's baptism to demonstrate humble servanthood (Mk 1:9-11). His account shows God's removal of all barriers between heaven and earth by ripping open the heavens, in order to testify about His Son (Mk 1:10).

In Mark's account of the temptation, we see Jesus' suffering through Satan's attacks (Mk 1:12-13). This account also reveals His humanity as He is reluctant to suffer, being forced into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit (Mk 1:12). We see the same reluctance in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mk 14:32-42). This example of Christ's humanity in the face of suffering would be an encouragement to the persecuted Christians. People need to be fully dependent on God for their well-being, just as Jesus was fully dependent on God.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Ministry Opposition

Christ was opposed in His ministry as a servant, so He responds by teaching in parables. He focuses His teaching on His disciples and those listeners who were open to His message until the disciples recognize who He is at Peter's confession (Mk 1:14–8:26).

Christ provides a good example of one who serves others (Mk 1:14–2:12). He proclaims repentance, has the authority to call disciples, perform His first miracles, and change lives (Mk 1:14-20). He also reveals His deity through the following miracles:

- He commands demons (Mk 1:21-28).
- He cures a fever (Mk 1:29-34).
- He heals leprosy that was only cured by God (Mk 1:40-45; see Num 12; 2 Kgs 5).
- He uses forgiveness of sins as a way to heal (Mk 2:1-12).

Opposition to Christ's servanthood helped Mark's audience identify with persecution (Mk 2:13–8:26). The religious leaders used the following accusations to oppose Christ (Mk 2:13–3:35):

- They accuse Him of eating with sinners (Mk 2:13-17).
- They accuse Him of not observing their fasts (Mk 2:18-22).
- They accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath (Mk 2:23-36).

Jesus lives His life peacefully and responds to these accusations by withdrawing to the lake, followed by a great crowd of people. After this, He goes up the mountain and appoints men to help Him (Mk 3:7-19).

Jesus' family comes to the conclusion that He is insane and in an intense moment, the religious leaders accuse Jesus of performing miracles by Satan's power (Mk 3:20-35). Mark aims to comfort his persecuted readers by providing situations where they can identify with Jesus.

Christ responds to the opposition with parables in which He contrasts the dormant state of those who reject Him with the growth of His kingdom (Mk 4:1-34). These parables answered the disciples' questions about the following:

- Why were there different responses to Jesus' message? (The parable of the sower)
- Should Jesus' message of the kingdom be hidden? (The parable of the lamp)
- How will the kingdom grow? (The parable of the plant)
- Why does the kingdom seem so small? (The parable of the mustard seed)

Despite the opposition that He receives, Jesus' miracles demonstrate that He is the Messiah (Mk 4:35–5:43) in the following ways:

- Jesus has power over storms, causing the disciples to fear Him more (Mk 4:34-41).
- Jesus has power over both uncleanness and demons (Mk 5:1-20).
- Jesus has power over both incurable disease and death (Mk 5:21-43).

Mark includes teachings not found in the other gospels so that he can comfort the persecuted Roman Christians. He also shows how Christ grows through His rejection. Each of the four key rejections ends with Christ demonstrating His authority.

First, Jesus faces opposition in Nazareth but emphasizes His authority by appointing the Twelve (Mk 6:1-13):

- He is opposed in His hometown (Mk 6:1-6).

- His authority is transferable to His disciples (Mk 6:7-13).

Second, Herod opposes Jesus by claiming that He is John the Baptist resurrected (Mark 6:14-29). Jesus proves Himself through performing the following three miracles (Mk 6:30-56):

- He provides bread for 5,000 people, like Moses did (Mk 6:30-44).
- He walks on water to rescue the disciples (Mk 6:45-52).
- He heals the sick people in Gennesaret (Mk 6:53-56).

Third, the Pharisees oppose Him, but again, He proves His authority through performing three miracles (Mk 7:1–8:9). The Pharisees accuse Jesus of eating with unwashed hands, but Jesus teaches about true defilement (Mk 7:1-23). He also shows that His authority is superior to that of the Pharisees.

- He uses a Gentile woman's faith to heal her daughter of a demon (Mk 7:24-30).
- He heals a deaf mute by touching the man's ears and tongue (Mk 7:31-37).
- He feeds 4,000 Gentiles with seven loaves of bread (Mk 8:1-9).

In the fourth opposition, the Pharisees oppose Jesus again, and He shows His authority by healing a blind man (Mk 8:10-26). The Pharisees reveal their disbelief by asking for a sign from heaven (Mk 8:10-13). The disciples reveal their lack of understanding by misinterpreting the lessons of the loaves of bread (Mk 8:14-21). Jesus heals the blind man in stages to illustrate how long it takes His spiritually blind disciples to learn that He is the Messiah (Mk 8:22-26).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Sacrifice

Christ's sacrificial servanthood is seen in both His rejection and His death. His endureances of persecution and sacrifice is the ultimate example of service (Mk 8:27–15:47).

While they travel to Jerusalem, Christ continues to instruct the disciples in servanthood. He also teaches that all believers should live their lives as disciples despite opposition (Mk 8:27–10:52). After Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah, Christ predicts His approaching suffering and death, which will fulfill OT prophecy (Mk 8:27-38).

The disciples learn who Jesus is in the first half of Mark, but in the second half, He begins to explain His mission. The rest of the book teaches the disciples humility and faithfulness, which Christ models to them (Mk 8:27–16:20; see Mk 10:45).

- The Transfiguration reveals Christ as king and shows His future glory (Mk 9:1-13).
- Christ's power comes from faithful prayer, as seen in the healing of the demoniac child (Mk 9:14-29).
- The disciples don't understand Christ's resurrection when He teaches them about His death (Mk 9:30-32).

Mark's key concept seems contradictory to human tendency. Mark shows that Jesus could have authority as the Messiah and, at the same time, be a servant. This paradox is shown in the chart on the following page:

The Paradox of Authority and Servanthood in Mark		
	Authority	Servanthood
Themes	Christ's leadership	Discipleship
Strategy	Gentiles lord it over others (10:42)	Disciples serve (10:43)
Motivation	"Save his life" (8:35a)	"Lose his life" (8:35b)
Priority	"First" (9:35a; 10:31a)	"Last" (9:35b; 10:31b)
Reputation	"Great" (10:43a)	"Servant" (10:43b)
Position	"First" (10:44a)	"Slave of all" (10:44b)
Authority examples	Authority without serving: • Religious leaders • Rich man • Judas	Authority and served: • John the Baptist • Joseph of Arimathea
Servanthood examples	Authority but struggled to serve: • Disciples	No authority and served: • Bartimaeus • Woman who anointed Jesus
First section (1:1–8:26)	Authority of Christ	
Second section (8:27–10:52)	Authority-servanthood Tension	
Third section (11–16)		Servanthood of Christ

In His final teaching, Christ emphasizes the importance of a humble lifestyle for His disciples (Mk 9:33–10:45):

- The disciples need to view themselves as having no status in society, like children (Mk 9:33-37; 10:13-16).
- The disciples must be rich in God and humble before men (Mk 10:17-31).
- The disciples should mimic Christ's attitude toward dying for others (Mk 10:32-45).

These lessons helped Mark's original audience to understand the proper attitude for disciples of Christ.

In the story of Bartimaeus, a blind man, Mark shows that the blind man can "see" Christ, but the nation is blind to its Messiah (Mk 10:46-52). This event transitions the reader into the passion narrative. The secrecy Jesus originally used about being the Messiah disappears with the terminology used in this section. He is now referred to as both the Son of Man and the Son of David (Mk 10:45, 47). Jesus officially presents Himself as the Messiah in the Triumphal Entry (Mk 11:1-10).

In Mark 11–15, Jesus' rejection by Israel climaxes in Jerusalem while He is debating the Jewish leaders (Mk 11–13). He is rejected as a servant, enabling Him to empathize with all His followers who are rejected (Mk 11–13). The process of rejection starts with His official presentation to the nation in the triumphal entry. Next, Christ cleanses the temple and curses the fig tree to portray Israel's rejection of God's way (Mk 11:1-26).

Though Christ's answers baffle the Pharisees, they continue to oppose Him (Mk 11:27–12:44):

- His authority is the same as John's (Mk 11:27-33).
- He is treated in the same way as God's other servants (Mk 12:1-12).
- He respects both God and Caesar (Mk 12:13-17).
- He trusts the God of resurrection (Mk 12:18-27).

- He is the son of David (Mk 12:35-37).
- He treasures humility (Mk 12:28-34, 38-44; 13:1-2).

In the message that follows this rejection, Christ reveals that Israel's rejection of Him will bring dangerous times before He returns to establish the kingdom (Mk 13). At that time the "chosen ones" will trust Him (Mk 13:27).

Christ gives the disciples several instructions to help them face the coming persecution:

1. "Watch out" and "Stay alert" are the main emphases (Mk 13:5; 13:9; 13:33; 13:37).
2. Persecution provides an opportunity to witness in the Spirit's power (Mk 13:9-13).
3. Endure to the end (Mk 13:13).
4. Anticipate His return (Mk 13:14-37).

Christ's willing sacrifice of Himself is the ultimate example of servanthood (Mk 14–15). His expectation of the events that lead up to His sacrifice reveals His deity (Mk 14:1-52). The woman who anointed Jesus is the ideal disciple since she understands her mission. Jesus rewards her by stating that her actions will be remembered wherever the gospel is preached (Mk 14:1-9). On the other hand, Judas portrays the problematic disciple as he looks to betray Jesus for a price (Mk 14:10-21). Jesus inaugurates the New Covenant when He celebrates the Passover with His disciples (Mk 14:22-26). Later, on the Mount of Olives, He tells the disciples that they will desert Him (Mk 14:26-31). At Gethsemane the disciples fall asleep, despite Christ's warnings to "watch out" and "stay alert" (Mk 13:5, 9, 33, 37). While His followers sleep, Jesus faces His greatest temptation—to gain the kingdom apart from the Cross (Mk 14:32-42; 15:29-32; see also Mk 8:31-33). Then Judas arrives to betray Jesus with a fervent kiss (Mk 14:43-49). The nude eyewitness, Mark, illustrates the panic of the disciples as he flees to avoid arrest (Mk 14:50-52).

Jesus' trials, His death, and His burial reveal Him as the ideal servant (Mk 14:53–15:47). As He stood trial before the Sanhedrin, Christ gave the high priest a glimpse of his future, when he will stand before Christ's heavenly judgment seat (Mk 14:53-65). Later, Pilate was amazed by Jesus' silence to his questions (Mk 15:1-5). He was like a lamb led to be slaughtered. Though He was innocent, He took Barabbas' punishment. Jesus was flogged, mocked, and handed over for crucifixion (Mk 15:6-20). He was beaten so badly that His body failed Him and Simon of Cyrene had to help carry the cross (Mk 15:21-23). Mark simply said, "They crucified him" (Mk 15:24).

The observers at the Crucifixion mock His title "King of the Jews" (Mk 15:26, 32). Two criminals were crucified with Him, one on each side of Him, in what should be the seats of honor (Mk 10:35-40; 15:28). The watchers mock the resurrection promise by telling Him to save Himself and come down (Mk 15:29-30). They taunt Him by claiming that He cannot save Himself, though He could save others (Mk 15:31-32). The crowd thinks he cries out for Elijah (Mk 15:34-37). However, when He cries out and the veil rips from top to bottom, even the Roman centurion can tell that Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 15:39). After the Crucifixion, a disciple risks persecution by asking Pilate for his Savior's body (Mk 15:42-47). It is important to this disciple and to the faithful women that Jesus receives an honorable burial (Mk 15:42-47).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Resurrection

Jesus' resurrection authenticates Him as both the Messiah and God. It gives believers hope for victory over death (Mk 16).

Jesus' resurrection shows that He is the Messiah of Israel (Mk 16:1-8). Faithful women, who served Jesus during His ministry, continued to serve Him in His death (Mk 16:1-8; see Mk 14:1-9; 15:40-41, 47). In that culture, it was important to take care of the body of a loved one after death. These women prepared to anoint Him (Mk 16:1-4). On their arrival, they discovered that the tomb was empty. An angel instructed them to tell the disciples of the resurrection, and for all of them to go to Galilee, but the women ran away in terror (Mk 16:5-8). At the end of Mark's original gospel, it is unclear whether or not the women ever obeyed the angel.

The longer ending records Jesus' last lessons and His ascension (Mk 16:9-20). Mary Magdalene sees Jesus and then tells the eleven disciples. They don't believe either her or the two other disciples who say the same thing. Jesus had to appear to the disciples personally for them to believe. After the ascension, all the disciples obey His commission to preach. This account instills hope in Jesus' followers that they, too, can conquer death.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 3: Luke: The Universal Savior Advances the Kingdom

Lesson Introduction

The gospel of Luke is a story that can appeal to people in any time. It shares the message that Jesus was the Savior of all humanity. Luke's style of writing would have appealed to the Gentiles, showing that he carefully investigated the facts (Lk 1:1-4). This approach also helps people who are coming to the Christian faith today. Luke explains how God extended the message of the kingdom from the Jews of Jesus' time to the Gentiles and, ultimately, to all of us.

Luke's gospel tells us about Jesus' life first as a baby, then as a twelve-year-old, and finally as an adult who was prepared for public ministry. These accounts also show that from the beginning Christ came to save all people (Lk 1:5-4:13). The middle section of the gospel describes Jesus' earthly ministry, when He was rejected by the nation. This section also emphasizes His ministry to the Gentiles (Lk 4:14-21:38). You can see these emphases in His early Galilean ministry, (Lk 4:14-9:50), while He is on the way to Jerusalem (Lk 9:51-19:27), especially in Jerusalem itself (Lk 19:28-21:38), particularly at the temple (Lk 19:45-21:38).

Jerusalem



Temple



Christ's submission to the Father's will that He die to provide salvation for all is a powerful contrast to His rejection by the nation of Israel (Lk 22-23). His sacrifice is validated by His resurrection, commissioning the apostles, and His ascension (Lk 24). Luke's message is continued in the book of Acts, which also chronicles the expansion of the message of the kingdom from the Jews to the Gentiles. However, Acts shows the message moving from the Jews in Jerusalem to the Gentiles in Rome.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Appreciate the background information about Luke that will help you personally interpret his message for today
- Explain the five events that show God's sovereign hand in preparing His Son for ministry
- Assess Jesus' call that you live a life of discipleship
- Establish a plan to avoid personal sin under intense persecution
- Evaluate the importance of each factor that is needed to accomplish Jesus' mission

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to Luke (Lk 1:1-3)

Topic 2: Jesus' Pre-public Life (Lk 1:4–4:13)

Topic 3: Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (Lk 4:14–9:50)

Topic 4: Luke's Travelogue and Presentation (Lk 9:51–21:30)

Topic 5: Jesus' Passion (Lk 22–23)

Topic 6: Christ's Resurrection, His Commission, and His Ascension (Lk 24)

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to Luke (Lk 1:1-3)

Although Luke's name is mentioned only three times in the New Testament (Col 4:14; 2 Tim 4:11; Phm 24), the church fathers from the latter half of the second century agreed that he, the physician (Col 4:14), wrote this gospel. Luke is believed to have been a Gentile, since he uses Greek fluently and speaks of Jerusalem residents as naming a field in "their own language" (Acts 1:19). When Paul lists his companions in Colossians 4:10-14, Luke's name appears among the Gentiles. Tradition says that he came from Syrian Antioch, never married, and died at the age of eighty-four (Bruce Wilkinson, and Kenneth Boa. *Talk Thru The Bible*, [Nashville: Nelson, 1983], 327).

Several factors signify that Luke and Acts had the same author:

- (a) Both books are dedicated to the same man, Theophilus.
- (b) Acts 1:1 refers to "the former account," which is most naturally understood as Luke's gospel.
- (c) The language and style of the two books are remarkably similar.
- (d) Both books share many common themes.

(See Donald Guthrie. *New Testament Introduction*. [Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1965], 100).

Acts has four first-person narratives, "we sections" (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1–28:16), which show that the author was a close traveling companion of Paul. Of Paul's traveling companions, only Titus and Luke are not mentioned by name in these sections, and Titus has never been seriously considered as an author of Acts (Edmond Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 3 vols. [Chicago: Moody, 1977], 1:119).

- **Luke: The Universal Savior Ministers in Sovereignly Advancing the Kingdom**
- **Author:** Luke means “from Lucanus,” and he is referred to as “the physician” (Col 4:14)
- **Date:** AD 57–59
- **Key Word:** Sovereignty I
- **Key Verse:** Luke 19:10
- **Summary Statement:** Luke shows how God expanded the message of the kingdom from the Jews, who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, to the believing Gentiles, showing that Jesus is the Savior for all people.
- **Application:** Have you recognized God’s sovereign leading in your life to bring you to Christ?

Luke’s use of technical medical terms is compatible with authorship by a doctor (Lk 4:38; Mk 1:30; Lk 5:12; Mk 1:40; Lk 8:43; Mk 5:26, 29; Lk 4:35; 10:34; 13:11; see Werner Kümmel, *An Introduction to the New Testament* [New York: Abingdon Press, 1966], 104).

Luke, who is believed to have read Matthew’s gospel, seeks to present the material in a manner that the Gentiles would understand. Matthew wrote from a Jewish perspective, including themes and conflicts which the Gentiles would not grasp. So Luke wrote an orderly account of the gospel, which would confirm the faith of Gentile believers.

Luke God Became Man for Eternal Life									
To seek the lost						To save the lost			
Introduction		Ministry				Passion		Conclusion	
1:1-4:13		4:14-21:38				22-23		24	
Sources 1:1-4	Advent 1:5-2:52	Preparation 3:1-4:13	Galilee 4:14-9:50	Travelogue 9:51-19:27	Rejection 19:28-21:38	Night 22:1-23:25	Crucifixion 23:26-56	Resurrection 24:1-44	Commission 24:45-53
0 Kingdom references	1	0	8	25	2	4	2	0	0
30 years		3 years		3-4 months	8 days				
		Miracles prominent		Teaching prominent					
Caesarea									
Written AD 57-59 Covers 5 BC -AD 33									

Reading Assignment

- Please memorize Luke 19:10.
- Please read the article “Introduction to Luke” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 1

Luke’s purpose is to present Jesus as the perfect Jew. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

Luke tells Theophilus that, before writing his gospel, he has thoroughly investigated which types of sources? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Maps from where Jesus ministered
- B) Interviews with eyewitnesses
- C) Written accounts
- D) Roman scientific recordings

QUESTION 3

Please open your Life Notebook and write your reflections on the following questions. Luke wrote his gospel in a way that would appeal to Gentiles living in the first century. Who is your audience as you teach the gospel? What are the ways that you can teach your audience intellectually, socially, and spiritually so that they will understand Jesus' message?

QUESTION 4

Which of these verses from Luke summarizes Christ's mission?

- A) "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Lk 3:16).
- B) "The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Lk 9:58).
- C) "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10).
- D) "What is impossible with men is possible with God" (Lk 18:27).

Topic 1 Key points:

- Luke's purpose is to present Jesus as the perfect man, in accord with the Greek ideal.
- Luke thoroughly investigated written, oral, and eyewitness sources in compiling his account.
- As stated in Luke's key verse, Jesus, as the Son of Man, came to seek and save the lost.

Topic 2: Jesus' Pre-public Life (Lk 1:4–4:13)

A Jewish Savior would have a genealogy that shows descent from David's lineage, as is provided in Matthew's gospel (Mt 1:1-17). But Luke knew that the Gentiles would want to see that the Savior's line comes from Adam. So he supplies that genealogy in Luke 3:23-28, showing that this Jewish Savior is the Savior of all!

Luke gives us a glimpse of Jesus that we do not see from the other gospel writers. He shows us events in Jesus' life before He entered His public ministry.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Luke 1–4.
- Please read the article on "Jesus' Pre-public Life" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 5

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the event that shows God's hand in providing His incarnate Son for the salvation of the world.

Reference	Event
Luke 3:1-20	Christ's genealogy, through Mary to Adam, shows His humanity, His deity, and His universal salvation.
Luke 3:21-22	Christ's temptation by Satan records His faithfulness to God's mission.
Luke 3:23-28	Through Christ's baptism, God sovereignly guides His Son.
Luke 4:1-13	John's ministry of repentance prepares Israel for Christ's universal salvation.

QUESTION 6

The article on Jesus' early life shows how God prepared Him for ministry. Write in your Life Notebook about how God has helped you to get ready for your ministry.

Topic 2 Key points:

- Jesus was fully conscious from His youth of His identity as the Son of God.
- Four events show God's sovereign hand in preparing Jesus for ministry:
 - John's ministry, which prepares Israel for her Messiah
 - Christ's baptism, which shows God's approval of His Son
 - Christ's genealogy, which shows universal salvation
 - Christ's temptation, which shows His dedication to God's mission for Him

Topic 3: Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (Lk 4:14–9:50)

God has interesting ways of accomplishing His purposes in the world. When King Nebuchadnezzar became too proud, God turned him into an animal (Dan 4). When Jonah was disobedient by refusing to go to the Gentiles, God used a great sea creature to change his mind (Jon 1:17). Now God has sent Jesus to die on a cross to show that salvation is offered to everyone.

During Jesus' time on earth, there was hostility between the Jews and the Gentiles. But when He began His public ministry, He proclaimed that He would also take His message to the Gentiles. This inclusion greatly upset the people in Nazareth, so they forced Jesus out of town and prepared to throw Him

God Has Interesting Ways



off a cliff (Lk 4:16-30). This did not prevent Jesus from continuing to teach that the kingdom was offered to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews.

Reading Assignment

- Please read both Luke 7 on Jesus' messianic proofs and Luke 9 on Jesus' rejection as He approaches Jerusalem.
- Please read the article "Jesus' Ministry in Galilee" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 7

In Luke, Christ gives His "Sermon on the Level Place" and omits which parts of Matthew's "Sermon on the Mount"?

- A) The Jewish parts
- B) The Mosaic Law
- C) The rules for cleanliness
- D) The judgment on the Gentiles

QUESTION 8

According to Luke's definition, someone can be a "rich man" and not have a lot of money. *True or False?*

Luke's rich person has a self-dependence that prevents her or him from trusting God or helping others. It is more of an attitude than an accounting of earthly wealth. Though obviously, the more wealth that you have the more likely that you will fall into this trap.

Prepared To Throw Jesus Off A Cliff



Nazareth



QUESTION 9

Why was Jesus so impressed with the centurion who asked Jesus to heal his slave?

- A) Because he believed Jesus could heal from a distance
- B) Because he believed that Jesus had authority
- C) Because of his great faith
- D) Because he responded like the Jews did

Jesus was so impressed with this man that he told the crowd, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith” (Lk 7:9). Luke continuously shows God’s graciousness. Even though one would expect the Jews to believe in their Messiah, the nation rejected Christ. However, God was still accepting the faith of any individual who believed—even Gentiles.

Topic 3 Key points:

- Luke tailors Jesus’ teaching from His “Sermon on the Level Place” to suit his Gentile audience by removing parts that would appeal mainly to Jews.
- Some Gentiles, such as the centurion, responded to Jesus with greater faith than the Jews in Israel.

Topic 4: Luke’s Travelogue and Presentation (Lk 9:51–21:30)

Again Luke presents the Savior of the world in a way we might least expect. He shows Jesus’ rejection in its full brutality. The Samaritans reject Him simply because He is headed to Jerusalem (Lk 9:51-56). Then a group of Jews accuse Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons (Lk 11:15). Jesus knew that ultimately this rejection was irreversible and would end in His death. Then Jesus took the Twelve aside and said to them, “Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked, and insolently mistreated and spat on, they will flog him severely and kill him” (Lk 18:31-33).

Like many Bible writers, Luke presents his characters and stories candidly. Jesus is accused of using Satan’s power, and He is rejected by His people, now He approaches His ultimate rejection in Jerusalem. Knowing and revealing that He is on a march toward death, He teaches His disciples moral lessons through the parables, and He prepares them for ministry after His departure.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Luke 10–13.
- Please read the article “Christ’s Travels” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 10

The reason Luke records the Jew’s rejection of Jesus and His subsequent teaching is to show the following:

- A) Hatred should be met with vengeance.
- B) Doubt should be met with investigation.
- C) Opposition should be met with committed discipleship.
- D) Wrongdoing should be met with punishment.

QUESTION 11

According to Jesus, which of the following illustrations resemble the kingdom of God? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) A mustard seed that grows into a large tree
- B) An egg that hatches into a chicken
- C) An ox that plows a field
- D) Yeast that leavens much flour

QUESTION 12

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the discipleship challenge listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Discipleship Challenge</i>
Luke 9:59-60	Hate your own life and carry your cross.
Luke 9:61-62	Do not store up treasures for yourselves.
Luke 12:13-21	Let the dead bury their own dead.
Luke 14:25-27	Put your hand to the plow and do not look back.

QUESTION 13

Please open your Life Notebook and write about a time when you felt rejected. What was your instinctive response, and how do you think you should have responded based on the example of Jesus?

Topic 4 Key points:

- Jesus' followers will be opposed, just as He was, and their faithful response is a commitment to discipleship.
- Accusing Christ of using Satan's power is presented as the height of rejection and hopelessness.
- Jesus asks prospective disciples to consider His situation and the circumstances of the Cross, and count the costs before committing themselves.
- When Jesus is formally rejected by Israel, He pronounces a coming judgment both on her temple and also on Israel as a nation before His return.

Topic 5: Jesus' Passion (Lk 22–23)

Can you imagine the awe and confusion that the disciples experienced when listening to Jesus? His teaching was all new to them. When they answered Jesus' call to discipleship, they could not have known where the journey would take them. Jesus showed them the power of having compassion for the people rather than strict obedience to the rules. When they started following Him, they thought that they were on the road to glory, but instead, they ended up persecuted and afraid. They knew Jesus was the holy one of God, the Messiah of Israel. Yet they saw their Savior and God crucified by the Roman authorities.

The pathos of this time is captured by the words of an English song "Were You There?" (lyrics are provided in the Articles section at the end of this lesson). Continue with this topic in order to

explore both what Jesus' death and resurrection accomplished and what mission this Savior has for you.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Luke 22–23.
- Please read the article “Jesus’ Passion” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 14

The account of the Passover Supper reveals that Christ, in His sacrifice, is the antitype of the Passover _____.

QUESTION 15

What three commands did Jesus give to the disciples as they struggled to stay awake with Him in Gethsemane?

QUESTION 16

Read the lyrics to the song “Were You There?” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson. Write in your Life Notebook about how you feel when you imagine witnessing Jesus’ suffering and death.

Topic 5 Key points:

- Jesus’ blood established the New Covenant as He fulfilled the role of the Passover Lamb.
- Jesus commanded the disciples, when they were under intense temptation, to be on their guard, pay attention, and pray that they would not fall into temptation.

Topic 6: Christ’s Resurrection, His Commission, and His Ascension (Lk 24)

When people we love die, we long to see them once again, to touch them, and to talk to them. That is exactly what the disciples were able to do, even after they thought that their beloved teacher was dead and buried. They did not believe that Jesus would be resurrected, but then He appeared to them. He even invited them to touch Him to be sure it was He. He remained with them, teaching more about the Scriptures.

After His resurrection, Jesus commissioned His disciples to tell His story to all nations. He told them to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit because only in His power and anointing can we accomplish Jesus’ mission!

Take the Story of Christ to the Nations



Reading Assignment

- Please read Luke 24.
- Please read the article on “Christ’s Resurrection, His Commission, and His Ascension” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 17

When Jesus appeared to two of His followers on the road to Emmaus, they recognized Him immediately. *True or False?*

QUESTION 18

What are the most important factors in accomplishing Jesus’ commission? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Going out into the world
- B) Living a pure life in accordance with the law
- C) Receiving the Holy Spirit’s power
- D) Respecting all governmental authorities

Topic 6 Key points:

- The most important factor in accomplishing Jesus’ mission in our lives is the power, the ministry, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
- The teachings about the Messiah’s death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins were fulfilled in Jesus.

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 19

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Luke at the bottom of each column.

Title Key Events in Luke						
	Instructions					
The Triumphal Entry						
The Garden of Gethsemane						
The Sermon on the Level Place						
The Transfiguration						
Jesus' Power by Beelzebul						
Jesus' Temptation and Initial Rejection	Luke 4	Luke 6	Luke 9	Luke 11	Luke 19	Luke 22

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record your answers to the following: From God's perspective, Jesus' death was voluntary and in eternity past. But humanly speaking, God used Jesus' tragic death for the salvation of the world. Please reflect on a sorrowful event in your life that God eventually used for good. How does that experience help you to minister to fellow Christians in their difficulties?

QUESTION 21

Consider these outcomes of the Resurrection and write in your Life Notebook about those which are the most meaningful to you.

- Christ's resurrection proves that Jesus taught the truth (Acts 2:32, 36; Jn 14:6).
- Christ's resurrection gives you forgiveness (Rom 4:25; 1 Cor 15:17-19; 1 Pet 1:3).
- Christ's resurrection gives you victory over sin in your life (Rom 6:10-11, 14).
- Christ's resurrection gives you assurance of a new body in the future (1 Cor 15:20, 51; 1 Jn 3:2; Lk 24:31, 36).

Lesson 3 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Luke's purpose is to present Jesus as the perfect man for a _____ audience.

- A) Greek
- B) Roman
- C) Jewish
- D) Assyrian

QUESTION 2

Which of the following is Luke's key verse?

- A) "For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened" (Lk 11:10).
- B) "I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance" (Lk 15:7).
- C) "Watch yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him" (Lk 17:3).
- D) "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10).

QUESTION 3

Jesus first realized His identity as the Son of God at His baptism. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

Which of the following early events in Jesus' life was a sign of God's mission for Him?

- A) He was circumcised.
- B) He was born in a stable.
- C) He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.
- D) He began His ministry at age thirty.

QUESTION 5

Luke's "Sermon on the Level Place" leaves out the parts of the "Sermon on the Mount" that a Gentile audience might not understand. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

Which of these people in Luke presents a model of a faithful believer?

- A) The centurion seeking healing for his slave
- B) The lawyer seeking eternal life
- C) The rich, young ruler
- D) The elder brother of the prodigal son

QUESTION 7

To Luke being a "rich man" has more to do with attitude than with material wealth. *True or False?*

QUESTION 8

What story in Luke best illustrates hearts that are too hard to ever repent and come to Christ?

- A) The rich man and Lazarus
- B) The story of Zacchaeus
- C) The Jews who say that Jesus uses Satan's power
- D) The attempt to cast Jesus off a cliff

QUESTION 9

At Gethsemane, how did the disciples respond to their time of great temptation?

- A) By praying
- B) By staying alert
- C) By calling out to Jesus
- D) By sleeping

QUESTION 10

The importance of waiting for the Holy Spirit before fulfilling our mission is emphasized in both Luke and Acts. *True or False?*

Lesson 3 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1: False

QUESTION 2

B. Interviews with eyewitnesses

C. Written accounts

Luke tells Theophilus that he has investigated both eyewitness sources and written accounts before compiling his account of Christ's life.

QUESTION 3: *Your answer*

QUESTION 4

C. "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10).

QUESTION 5

Reference	Event
Luke 3:1-20	John's ministry of repentance prepares Israel for Christ's universal salvation.
Luke 3:21-22	Through Christ's baptism, God sovereignly guides His Son.
Luke 3:23-28	Christ's genealogy, through Mary to Adam, shows His humanity, His deity, and His universal salvation.
Luke 4:1-13	Christ's temptation by Satan records His faithfulness to God's mission.

QUESTION 6: *Your answer*

QUESTION 7

A. The Jewish parts

The Jewish parts of the Sermon on the Mount are removed to summarize for the Gentiles Jesus' teaching on discipleship.

QUESTION 8: True

Luke wanted to show that one may be self-dependent even though he or she may not have much earthly wealth.

QUESTION 9

C. Because of his great faith

While the other three answers are true to some extent, Jesus especially noted that his faith was great because he was a Gentile.

QUESTION 10

C. Opposition should be met with committed discipleship.

When Jesus is rejected on the way to Jerusalem, He teaches that the disciples must remain committed.

QUESTION 11

A. A mustard seed that grows into a large tree

D. Yeast that leavens much flour

Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a mustard seed and to yeast.

QUESTION 12

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Discipleship Challenge</i>
Luke 9:59-60	Let the dead bury their own dead.
Luke 9:61-62	Put your hand to the plow and do not look back.
Luke 12:13-21	Do not store up treasures for yourselves.
Luke 14:25-27	Hate your own life and carry your cross.

QUESTION 13: *Your answer***QUESTION 14:** Lamb

Consequently Jesus, through His blood, established the New Covenant and the Lord's Supper as a remembrance of His death until He returns.

QUESTION 15

Be on your guard, pay attention, and pray that you will not fall into temptation. These principles apply directly to us.

QUESTION 16: *Your answer***QUESTION 17:** False

The two followers did not recognize Jesus until immediately before He disappeared.

QUESTION 18

A. Going out into the world

C. Receiving the Holy Spirit's power

Jesus commands His disciples to go out into the world in the Holy Spirit's power.

QUESTION 19**Title Key Events in Luke**

						Instructions
Jesus' Temptation and Initial Rejection	The Sermon on the Level Place	The Transfiguration	Jesus' Power by Beelzebul	The Triumphal Entry	The Garden of Gethsemane	
Luke 4	Luke 6	Luke 9	Luke 11	Luke 19	Luke 22	

QUESTION 20: *Your answer***QUESTION 21:** *Your answer*

Lesson 3 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1

A. Greek

QUESTION 2

D. "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10).

QUESTION 3: False

QUESTION 4

C. He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.

QUESTION 5: True

QUESTION 6

A. The centurion seeking healing for his slave

QUESTION 7: True

QUESTION 8

C. The Jews who say that Jesus uses Satan's power

QUESTION 9

D. By sleeping

QUESTION 10: True

Lesson 3 Articles

Introduction to Luke

Circumstances

Date: Luke probably wrote his gospel in AD 57–59 while Paul was imprisoned. During this time, Luke could interview Paul and travel to gather information from eyewitnesses to Jesus’ ministry.

Origin/Recipients: Following the suggested date above, Luke wrote in Caesarea. Other suggestions are Rome, Arabia, Asia Minor, and Alexandria. He wrote to Theophilus (Lk 1:3), but several verses indicate a wider audience. Luke translates Aramaic terms, lists Jesus’ genealogy back to Adam, dates events by the Roman rulers, avoids mentioning prophecy fulfillment, explains Jewish customs, and describes Israel’s geography. The way that Luke addresses Theophilus indicates that he was either an official or a reputable man. Theophilus may be the one who published Luke and Acts, the other book Luke wrote.

Occasion: Luke was a well-educated physician and acquaintance of Paul. He was also an excellent historian and able to travel and interview eyewitnesses. Theophilus probably asked Luke to write this gospel in order to show that faith rested on factual evidence (Lk 1:3-4). Perhaps Luke sought to explain how Christ died for the entire world.

Key verse: Luke 19:10 summarizes Christ’s mission.

Characteristics

There are multiple interpretations regarding the purpose of Luke’s gospel, such as:

- A. The **kingdom** purpose explains how God transferred the message of the kingdom from the Jews to the Gentiles. It also answers the question that the Gentile unbelievers had about Jesus being the Savior of the world. The concept of the kingdom appears more than forty-two times in Luke (Lk 1:33; 4:43; 6:20; 7:28, etc.).
- B. God’s **sovereignty** is also emphasized. Luke shows God’s control over all events (Lk 1:13; 2:1; 13:31-35, etc.).
- C. Luke presents Christ as the **perfect man** and not a Jewish man. This portrait made sense to the Greeks. Jesus fulfilled the ideal image completely, especially in the references to Him as the Son of Man—a term used exclusively for the Messiah.
- D. The **instructional** purpose aims to affirm Theophilus and other believers in their faith.
- E. Another purpose could be that Jesus came to save all humanity. Luke sought to convince the Gentiles that He was the Son of God (Lk 19:10).
- F. Luke also used the gospel to prove Christianity was not politically subversive, but rather a universal movement (Lk 23:4, 14, 22).

Other significant characteristics of Luke include his superb writing style that makes it the most literary of the Gospels. The universal message of the gospel is stressed in references to the Gentiles (Lk 2:32; 18:32; 22:24-25). Forgiveness is also a prominent topic (Lk 3:3; 5:18-26; 12:10; 17:3-4, etc.). The Holy Spirit’s person and ministry is another emphasis in Luke (Lk 1:15, 35; 3:22; 4:1, 18; 10:21). Only Luke links biblical details to secular history (Lk 2:1-2; 3:1).

This gospel is the most comprehensive: It is the longest, and it covers the time from John’s birth to Jesus’ ascension (Lk 1:5-25; 24:50-53). By ending after Jesus’ ascension, Luke transitions

smoothly into the book of Acts (Acts 1:1-11). Luke also includes parables and miracles that are not in the other Gospels. Between this gospel and Acts, Luke wrote more verses than any other New Testament author.

Luke emphasized prayer in his gospel. He included nine prayers of Christ—seven of them are only found in this gospel (Lk 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 22:32; 22: 40-41).

Luke noted the individual's role in repentance. By using relevant examples, he stressed how followers should behave. He also emphasized the roles of women, children, and angels. Luke describes thirteen women not mentioned anywhere else in the New Testament.

Luke, the only known Gentile author in the Bible, specifies the sources of his account of Jesus' life. He used written records of oral tradition (Lk 1:1), he talked with the apostles (Lk 1:2), and he interviewed non-apostolic eyewitnesses (Lk 1:3).

Summary statement for the book

Luke presents how God expanded the message of the kingdom from the Jews, who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, to include the believing Gentiles, demonstrating that Jesus is the Savior of all people.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Pre-public Life

Christ's coming and preparation for ministry show how God's plan was carried out in a specific context with universal purposes (Lk 1:5–4:13).

The births of both John and Jesus show God's sovereignty in preparing world events to provide Jesus as the Messiah of Israel (Lk 1:5–2:52). The birth announcements use Old Testament allusions that Jesus is Messiah (Lk 1:5-56). These events show that God controls all things to provide the Messiah of Israel to the world (Lk 1:57–2:20).

In Christ's childhood, both Simeon and Jesus recognize that He is the Son of God and the Savior of the world (Lk 2:21-52). Simeon's prophecy that Jesus is a light to the Gentiles demonstrates that He is the Messiah to all (Lk 2:21-40). Christ's teaching in the temple shows that He was aware of His identity as the Son of God from the beginning (Lk 2:41-52).

Four events that prepare Christ for His ministry and that illustrate God's sovereign hand in placing Him among humanity for salvation (Lk 3:1–4:13) are:

1. John's ministry allows Israel to repent in preparation for salvation through Christ (Lk 3:1-20).
2. God's approval of Christ is seen at His baptism (Lk 3:21-22).
3. Christ's genealogy, through Mary back to Adam, shows both His humanity and His deity (Lk 3:23-38).
4. In His temptation, we see Christ's faithfulness to God's plan of salvation through the Cross (Lk 4:1-13).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Ministry in Galilee

The main section of Luke's gospel concerns Christ's ministry in Galilee. He shows both Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Messiah and Jesus' judgment of the Jews by turning to the Gentiles (Lk 4:14–21:38).

The time that Christ spent in Galilee contrasts the rejection of the Jews with the acceptance of the Gentiles and the disciples (Lk 4:14–9:50). First, the Gentiles accept Christ, but the Jews reject Him in Nazareth (Lk 4:14-30). Jesus calls His disciples and proves Himself to be the Messiah by performing miracles (Lk 4:31–6:16).

Jesus begins by casting out a demon, healing Simon's mother-in-law, and healing a leper (Lk 4:31–5:16). He continues by healing and forgiving a paralytic and eats with sinners. He teaches about new wineskins. Jesus declares Himself Lord of the Sabbath and heals a withered hand. Finally, He chooses His disciples (Lk 5:17-6:16).

Christ's Sermon on the Level Place, in Luke 6:17-49, is a shortened version of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount with the Jewish sections omitted. Luke's account summarizes discipleship teaching for the Gentiles who needed this information (Lk 6:17-49). Jesus blesses the needy and the persecuted, but chastises those who do not trust God for finances (Lk 6:17-26). This section pronounces woes on the wealthy for depending on money instead of God. It also commends those who return evil with good, because they follow God's example (Lk 6:27-36).

Christ ministers to human needs around Capernaum to show the expanding kingdom through His miracles and His lessons (Lk 7–8). Jesus' healing miracles include curing a slave from afar, raising a widow's son, healing a woman, and raising the ruler's son. Jesus teaches the people by letting a sinful woman anoint him, teaching kingdom parables, quieting a storm, and exorcising a demoniac (Lk 7:1–8:56).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Christ's Travels

During His ministry, Christ teaches the disciples to depend on Him and sends the Twelve on a mission (Lk 9:1-50). He also captures the interest of Herod as He ministers in Herod's territory (Lk 9:7). Christ feeds 5,000 people, which leads Peter to confess that Jesus is the Christ (Lk 9:10-17). After Peter's confession, Jesus explains the meaning of discipleship (Lk 9:18-27). On the mountain, Jesus is transfigured before the disciples (Lk 9:28-36). Jesus heals a demoniac child that the disciples cannot cure (Lk 9: 37-43). The main body of Luke's account contains a record of Jesus traveling up to Jerusalem and on the journey He continues to predict His death (Lk 9:51–19:27).

Jesus needed committed disciples at this time because He was rejected on the way to Jerusalem. On His travels, He taught those whom He encountered (Lk 9:51–19:27). Opposition to Christ increased with His rejection by the Samaritans and the Pharisees continued to be a problem (Lk 9:51–11:54). Jesus began to teach primarily through parables in which God offers the kingdom to everyone (Lk 12:1–19:27).

In the record of Christ's travels, the themes in the first half reappear in the second half. The first half shows that the opposition to Christ increases as Samaria rejects Him and as the Pharisees accuse Him of demonic power (Lk 9:51–11:54). The remaining portion of Luke depicts Christ's teaching on various subjects, with parables as His response to rejection (Lk 12:1–19:27).

Whenever themes are listed (A) then repeated (B) in reverse order, as seen below, it is called a “chiasm.” A chiasm is a literary device used in biblical literature where the sequence of what is written shows the author's key point. Its repeated elements appear in reverse order so that what appears in the center is the focus of the text.

- 1A. Jesus’ approaching departure (Lk 9:51)
- 2A. Purpose for coming (Lk 9:52-56)
- 3A. Discipleship and following Jesus (Lk 9:57-62)
- 4A. Rejection (Lk 10:1-24)
- 5A. Service and rewards (Lk 10:25-42)
- 6A. Pharisees judged (Lk 11:14-28)
- 7A. Resurrection (Lk 11:29-36)
- 8A. Woes on the Pharisees (Lk 11:37-54)
- 9A. Money and faithfulness (Lk 12:1-34)
- 10A. Parables of faithfulness (Lk 12:35-49)
- 11A. Discipleship causing division (Lk 12:49-53)
- 12A. Poor judgments, hypocrites (Lk 12:54-59)
- 13A. Parable of grace, repentance (Lk 13:1-9)
- 14A. Healing on the Sabbath (Lk 13:10-17)
- 15A. Growth of the kingdom (Lk 13:18-21)
- 15B. Judgment on Israel for rejection (Lk 13:22-35)
- 14B. Healing on the Sabbath (Lk 14:1-6)
- 13B. Parables of humility (Lk 14:7-24)
- 12B. Poor judgments, rejection (Lk 14:16-25)
- 11B. Discipleship, dedication (Lk 14:25-35)
- 10B. Parables of reconciliation (Lk 15)
- 9B. Money and Faithfulness (Lk 16:1-13)
- 8B. Condemnation of Pharisees (Lk 16:14-18)
- 7B. Resurrection (Lk 16:19-31)
- 6B. Israel to be judged (Lk 17:1-37)
- 5B. Service and rewards (Lk 18:18-30)
- 4B. Rejection (Lk 18:31-34)
- 3B. Following Jesus (Lk 18:35-43)
- 2B. Purpose for coming (Lk 19:1-10)
- 1B. Approaching the kingdom (Lk 19:11-27)

The repetition focuses this section on the central themes of Luke. The main focus of the repetition is the last new theme and the first repeated theme: Gentile inclusion in the kingdom and the judgment on Israel.

The next section of Luke starts with Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem where He is once more rejected (Lk 19:28–21:38). In the Olivet discourse, Jesus responds to this rejection by predicting the destruction of the temple and Israel’s judgment (Lk 21:24). When Jesus presents Himself as the Messiah in Jerusalem, He fulfills Daniel 9:26 (Lk 19:28-44). In Luke 21:24, “the

time of the Gentiles” refers to the years of Gentiles rule in Jerusalem. This began with its destruction by Babylonians in 586 BC and continues until the Messiah begins His reign.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus’ Passion

Luke’s fourth section, the passion narrative, shows Christ’s submission to the Father as the innocent Passover Lamb who, through death, provides forgiveness and eternal life to all who believe (Lk 22–23).

The Passover supper reveals Christ as the Passover Lamb. Jesus, through His blood, established the New Covenant and the Lord’s Supper to remind His followers of His death until He returns (Lk 22:1-38).

Jesus’ agony in Gethsemane affirms His submission to God’s will in spite of His desires, demonstrating true discipleship (Lk 22:39-46). This account shows readers their Savior’s deep suffering. He even asked God to spare Him the Cross. Jesus gave three commands to his disciples while He prayed:

1. “Watch out for yourselves” (Lk 21:34).
2. “Pay attention! Satan demanded you all, to sift you like wheat” (Lk 22:31).
3. “Pray that you may not fall into temptation” (Lk 22:40).

Instead the disciples fell asleep. They were tempted, and deserted Christ under intense spiritual pressure (Lk 22:46, 54-62). Faithful disciples will defeat temptation by remaining alert and praying as Jesus commanded in Gethsemane (Lk 22:39-46; see also Mk 14:32, 34).

Both Jesus’ arrest and trials declare His innocence, which confirms His sacrifice for the world (Lk 22:47–23:25). His death is the basis for forgiveness and eternal life for both the Jews and the Gentiles (Lk 23:26-56).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Were You There?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Repeat)

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they saw our risen Lord?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they saw our risen Lord?

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Christ's Resurrection, His Commission, and His Ascension

Both Jesus' resurrection and His appearances to the disciples confirm that He is the Messiah who fulfilled Scripture (Lk 24:1-44). Luke says the disciples' hearts burned within them while Christ explained the Scriptures (Lk 24:32).

Meanwhile Jesus encourages His disciples to proclaim salvation to the nations after the coming of the Holy Spirit (Lk 24:45-53). The end of the gospel leads into Luke's continuing account in Acts 1:1-11. Jesus' commission is to take His story to the nations in the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 24:49). Luke emphasizes that the disciples need the Holy Spirit's power to accomplish this mission.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 4: John: God Became Man to Bring Eternal Life

Lesson Introduction

The gospel of John is distinct from the other three Gospels in a very important way, it is written from a theological approach. Since Matthew, Mark, and Luke are already available, John repeats little of the material which they present.

John's gospel contains the clearest purpose statement of any book in the Bible: "But these are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (Jn 20:31). John's stated purpose is evangelism and he writes in order to prove that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. He does this so that nonbelievers might be convinced of His deity, through the signs recorded in the gospel, and will believe in Him for salvation.

John makes it clear that salvation is apart from works and by faith alone:

So then they said to him, "What must we do to accomplish the deeds God requires?" Jesus replied, "This is the deed God requires: to believe in the one whom he sent."... Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. The one who comes to me will never go hungry, and the one who believes in me will never be thirsty. But I told you that you have seen me and still do not believe." (Jn 6:28-36)

The Significance of John's Seven Signs		
Sign	Eternal Life Teaching	Application
1. Changing water into wine at Cana (2:1-11)	The joy of eternal life	<i>If He can transform water, He can change me</i>
2. Healing the official's son in Capernaum (4:46-54)	The condition of eternal life (faith)	<i>I am never too far away to be in His care</i>
3. Healing the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda (5:1-18)	The power to live the life	<i>No limitation surpasses His authority</i>
4. Feeding the 5,000 near the Sea of Galilee (6:16-21)	The food for eternal life	<i>Jesus can meet our deepest needs</i>
5. Walking on water in the Sea of Galilee (6:5-14)	Guidance for eternal life	<i>Jesus is Lord of life's storms</i>
6. Healing the man born blind in Jerusalem (9:1-7)	Light for eternal life	<i>Jesus offers spiritual and physical sight to the willing</i>
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead in Bethany (11:1-45)	Victory of life over death	<i>Jesus Christ is Lord of life and death</i>

John's writing style and his use of eyewitness accounts of miracles, or signs, underscore that he does not want to simply communicate information about Jesus' earthly life. Instead, he seeks to prove that Jesus is God, and He calls us to a new life. John repeatedly uses the verb **to believe** but never the noun **faith** to evoke a spiritual change in his readers. He selectively excludes some of the important events in Jesus' life described in the other Gospels because they are not pertinent to his message that Christ is the Son of God, the source of eternal life.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Appreciate the background information about John and why he selected the material that he did to help you personally interpret Christ's message for today
- Understand the information regarding Jesus' deity presented in each sign
- Evaluate Jesus' claims and His mission for your life
- Use the same resources that Jesus left for His disciples to use in His absence

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction and Prologue to John (Jn 1:1-18)

Topic 2: Jesus' Public Reception (Jn 1:19-4:54)

Topic 3: Jesus' Rejection by the Nation (Jn 5-12)

Topic 4: The Preparation of the Disciples for Christ's Departure (Jn 13-17)

Topic 5: Jesus' Passion Week, His Resurrection and the Epilogue (Jn 18-21)

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction and Prologue to John (Jn 1:1-18)

John Deity Made Man for Eternal Life					
Deity of the Son of God	Revelation of the Son of God		Preparation of the Son's Disciples	Passion/Resurrection of the Son of God	Adequacy of the Son of God
1:1-18	1:19–12:50		13–17	18–20	21
Prologue	Public		Private	Public	Private
Incarnation	2 signs received 1:19–4:54	5 signs rejected 5–12	Upper room Discourse (no signs)	Ultimate Sign	Last Sign
Eternity past	Fall AD 29–Monday, 30 March, 33		Thursday, 2 April 33	Friday, 3 April 33–Sunday, 12 April 33	May 33
Ephesus					
AD 65–69					

John shared a special fellowship with Jesus while He walked the earth. During the Passover Supper, he sat in the place of honor and rested his head on Jesus' chest. When Jesus noted that one of the disciples would betray him, it was John who confidentially asked, "Lord, who is it?" (Jn 13:25). The Greek word for Jesus' chest is the same one used for the relationship of Jesus and the Father in John 1:18: "No one has ever seen God. The only One, himself God, who is in the presence of the Father, has made God known." The same words John uses to describe the relationship between himself and Jesus that are used by him to describe the relationship between the Son and the Father! Through Christ, this type of relationship is available for us.

Often when a person researches someone's life story, the researcher interviews those who are the closest to the subject. This can be a colleague, a best friend, or a close family member. Usually the one being interviewed shares events and feelings in the subject's life that no one else knows—this information belongs to the subject's inner circle. In this way, we gain special insight about the subject's character.

Likewise, someone writing about Jesus and how to have fellowship with Him would find no one who was better qualified to share intimate insights than John was (see also 1 John 1:1-4). What do we learn from John that the other gospel writers do not tell us? What can we learn from someone who had intimate fellowship with the God of the universe?

- **John: Deity Became Man to Bring Eternal Life**
- **Author:** John, "Johanan," which means "Yahweh has been gracious"
- **Date:** probably written between AD 65–69
- **Key Word:** Belief
- **Key Verse:** John 20:31
- **Summary Statement:** John proves that Jesus is both the Son of God and the son of man. John uses selected signs and discourses of Christ to convince the unbelieving Gentiles to believe in Him and then to receive eternal life.
- **Application:** How do you respond to this life you have been given? Do you present the gospel clearly? How do you equip others to do the same?

Reading Assignment

- Please read John 1:1-18.
- Please read the article "Introduction and Prologue to John" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize John's key verse, which gives his purpose for writing his gospel: John 20:31.

QUESTION 1

Which of the following views does this course take about John's purpose in writing his gospel? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Evangelistic
- B) Edification
- C) Apologetic
- D) Supplemental to the Synoptics

QUESTION 2

Which aspect of Jesus' advent does John give in contrast to the Synoptics?

- A) Earthly
- B) Heavenly
- C) Historical
- D) Temporal

QUESTION 3

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the corresponding “I am” statement that Jesus makes, which is in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>“I am” Statement</i>
John 6:35	“I am the true vine”
John 8:12	“I am the door for the sheep”
John 8:58	“I am the bread of life”
John 10:7	“I am the light of the world”
John 10:11, 14	“I am the good shepherd”
John 11:25	“Before Abraham came into existence, I am”
John 15:1	“I am the resurrection and the life”

Note: There is one more “I am” statement that is not listed in the question above: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (Jn 14:6)

QUESTION 4

Please write John 20:31 from memory.

Topic 1 Key Points:

- John’s purpose is twofold: (1) to write a supplementary account to the Synoptics and (2) to get people to believe in Jesus and have life in His name.
- In contrast to the Synoptics, John emphasizes Jesus’ heavenly origin.
- Jesus claims deity in eight “I am” statements in John.

Topic 2: Jesus’ Public Reception (Jn 1:19–4:54)

In this topic John focuses on Jesus’ words and signs and on how He is received. Early in this gospel, most people respond positively to Jesus. One New Testament passage captures the tension of John’s presentation (1 Cor 1:21-25):

For since in the wisdom of God, the world by its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased to save those who believe by the foolishness of preaching. For Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks ask for wisdom, but we preach about a crucified Christ, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

The Jews’ desire to see the power of God was primarily to satisfy their fleshly cravings rather than out of a desire to trust God (Jn 6:26-27). But Jesus was focused on something else. What signs and teachings did He give? What did He want His audience to seek after?

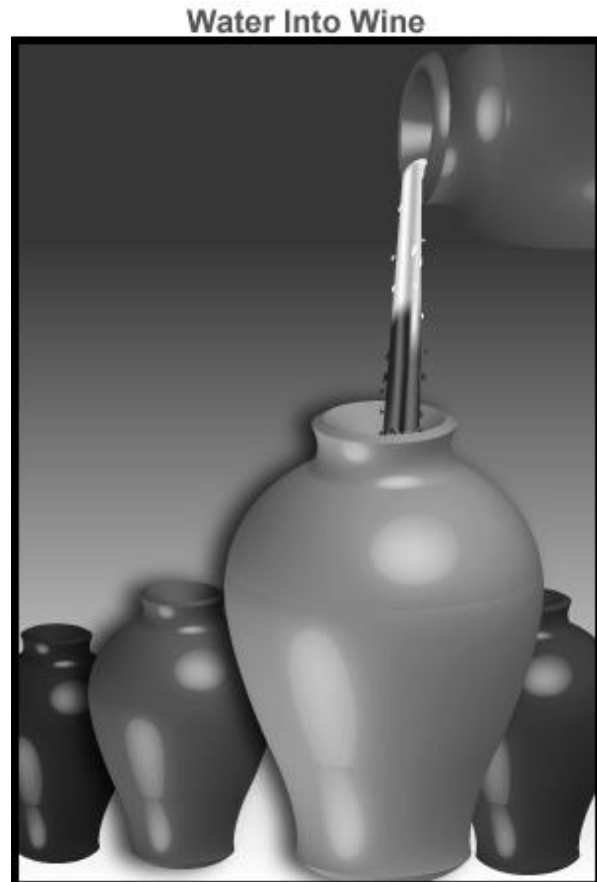
Reading Assignment

- Please read John 3:22-36; 4 on Jesus' reception in Judea, Samaria, and then Galilee.
- Please read the article "Jesus' Reception" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

The next question is based on John 2:1-12, in which Jesus turns the water into wine. Answering this question involves discovery. Instead of being told the answer, you must find it.

QUESTION 5

Jesus' miracle of turning the water into wine involves two key issues of timing. Please explain those issues.



QUESTION 6

In the Gospels, Jesus gave four different responses when the Jewish leaders asked Him for a sign. Please match the reference in the left-hand column with Jesus' response in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Sign Given</i>
Matthew 12:38-42; 16:1-4; Luke 11:29-32	The true bread from heaven
Luke 11:14-23	The sign of Jonah
John 2:12-22	Raising the temple in three days
John 6:30-33	Jesus plundering Satan

Properly evaluated, all of these signs should lead to faith.

The following question is based on John 2:12-22, where we see Jesus cleansing the temple. Again the answer involves discovery on your part.

QUESTION 7

From this passage, Jesus gives the sign of raising the temple in three days. Which of the seven signs is most similar to this one and why?

QUESTION 8

Jesus compared His being lifted up on the cross to the time Moses lifted up the _____ in the wilderness.

Topic 2 Key Points:

- John focuses on the issue of timing in the story of Jesus turning water into wine.
- When the Jewish leaders ask Jesus for a sign of His authority to cleanse the temple, He points them to His future resurrection.
- Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so Jesus was raised up, in order that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.

Topic 3: Jesus' Rejection by the Nation (Jn 5–12)

Jesus came with enough proof of His deity that any reasonable person could believe. Also, different levels of proof are sufficient for different people. For example, Jesus was surprised how little proof it took for Nathanael to believe in Him (Jn 1:47-51):

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and exclaimed, "Look, a true Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?" Jesus replied, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel!" Jesus said to him, "Because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these." He continued, "I tell all of you the solemn truth: you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Angels Ascending and Descending



Nathanael may have believed on Jesus with the least amount of proof needed of Jesus' deity, but what was the most proof Jesus gave? What was the ultimate, undeniable proof? And what happens when that proof is not sufficient? To make it personal, what is proof enough for you that Jesus is deity?

Reading Assignment

- Please read John 6:25-58 and John 11:38-44.
- Please read the article "Jesus' Rejection by the Nation" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 9

Why did some of Jesus' disciples quit following Him after His teaching in John 6:25-58? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Because they did not believe
- B) Because Jesus did not have the words of eternal life
- C) Because they could not understand Jesus' words
- D) Because the Father had not called them

QUESTION 10

What sign leads to the climactic rejection of Jesus' deity?

- A) Healing a lame man on the Sabbath
- B) Feeding the 5,000
- C) Giving sight to the man born blind
- D) Raising Lazarus from the dead

QUESTION 11

After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the Jewish leaders responded by asking Him for more signs. *True or False?*

Resurrection of Lazarus



Tomb of Lazarus



Topic 3 Key Points:

- In John 6, John records that some of Jesus' disciples left Him for one of the following three reasons:
 - Because they did not believe
 - Because He spoke difficult, spiritual words
 - Because the Father had not called them
- His true disciples kept following because He alone had the words of eternal life.
- Raising Lazarus from the dead was the climactic sign of Jesus' deity, but the Jewish leaders responded to it by plotting His death.

Topic 4: The Preparation of the Disciples for Christ's Departure (Jn 13–17)

Jesus knew that the time had come for His departure. He would fulfill His mission through His death, resurrection, and ascension. But the mission would continue after His ascension through His disciples and ultimately through the believers that follow them.

To prepare the disciples for their continued ministry, what did they most need to know? What would allow or enable them to finish their mission? And how could they possibly continue without Him?

Reading Assignment

- Please read John 13–17 on Jesus' preparation of the disciples.
- Please read the article "Preparation of the Disciples for Christ's Departure" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 12

Match the number in the left-hand column with the proper priority of relationships for the believer as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Relationship</i>
First priority	Dependence on Christ
Second priority	Witness to the world
Third priority	Love for believers

QUESTION 13

Match what Jesus says the Holy Spirit will convict the world about in the left-hand column with His explanation of why in the right-hand column.

<i>Conviction</i>	<i>Why</i>
About sin	Because they do not believe in Me
About righteousness	Because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me
About judgment	Because the ruler of this world has been condemned

QUESTION 14

In John 17, Jesus instructs the believers about their privileged position of _____, which allows them to fulfill the Father's purpose in their lives as He did.

Topic 4 Key Points:

- The proper priority of relationships in the believer's life is dependence on Christ, love for other believers, and then witness to the world.
- The role of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment in relationship to Jesus Christ.
- The believer's privileged position of unity with the Father and with other believers allows for the fulfillment of God's will in his or her life.

Topic 5: Jesus' Passion Week, His Resurrection and the Epilogue (Jn 18–21)

Sometimes in the Gospels the Jewish leaders seem like the Pharaoh who witnessed the plagues that God sent before the Exodus of Israel (Ex 7–11). No matter what proofs and miracles the Pharaoh saw, they were never enough to convince him to let God's people go (Ex 11:9-10). It was the same with the Jewish leaders; they were never convinced by any of the miracles or teachings of Jesus. So also the proofs offered today that Jesus is the Son of God are never enough for some people.

The same phenomenon happens during the tribulation judgments in Revelation: “Thus people were scorched by the terrible heat, yet they blasphemed the name of God, who has ruling authority over these plagues, and they would not repent and give him glory” (Rev 16:9).

When people reach the point where their hearts are so hard, there is nothing left but judgment. Yet God turned this time of the murder of His dear Son into the greatest display of love, grace, and redemption—the greatest revelation of the glory of who He truly is. Which passion events does John use to reveal this glory to us?

Reading Assignment

- Please read John 18–21 on Jesus' passion, His resurrection, and the epilogue.
- Please read the article “Jesus' Passion Week” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 15

The people who were arresting Jesus fell back at His revelation of His identity when He declared, “I am he.” *True or False?*

QUESTION 16

In John 21, what does Jesus' miraculous catch of fish show? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Jesus will abundantly meet the disciples' future ministry needs.
- B) Disciples can be reinstated even after a serious ministry failure, such as Peter experienced.
- C) The rumor is not true that John will never die.
- D) John selected stories for his gospel from many more possibilities.

Topic 5 Key Points:

- Jesus' deity was clearly revealed through His arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection.
- Jesus abundantly meets the disciples' future ministry needs.

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left with the verse from John at the bottom of each column.

Seven Pre-cross Signs in John							Instructions
Healing the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem							
Walking on water in the Sea of Galilee							
Raising Lazarus from the dead in Bethany							
Healing the man born blind in Jerusalem							
Changing water into wine at Cana							
Healing the official's son in Capernaum							
Feeding the 5,000 near the Sea of Galilee	John 2:1-11	John 4:46-54	John 5:1-18	John 6:16-21	John 6:5-14	John 9:1-7	John 11:1-45

QUESTION 18

John uses the word “believe” more than fifty times in his gospel to describe how people receive eternal life. Open your Life Notebook and record why you think he does not use the word “repent” even once in his gospel.

QUESTION 19

Open your Life Notebook and explain what you think the John 2:23-25 passage means and how it fits into the argument of John’s gospel. You may want to respond to this question as if someone had told you, “Jesus was a great man and a wonderful teacher—but he never claimed to be God. Others made Him out to be God later, but Jesus never said ‘I am God.’”

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

QUESTION 21

Match the key word on the left to the column with the corresponding book.

Unit 1 - Key Words of the Bible				
	Instructions			
Belief				
Sovereignty I				
Kingdom				
Discipleship	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John

Lesson 4 Self Check

QUESTION 1

According to John's gospel, where did Christ come from?

- A) He descended from Adam.
- B) He was from the kingly line.
- C) He had a heavenly origin.
- D) He descended from Abraham.

QUESTION 2

In one "I am" statement, Jesus claimed existence before Abraham. *True or False?*

QUESTION 3

When John tells the story of Jesus turning the water into wine, the story element he features that appears twice is _____.

QUESTION 4

Which of the nine signs is most similar to Jesus raising the temple in three days?

- A) The sign of the Son of Man
- B) Feeding the 5,000
- C) Satan falling from the sky
- D) The resurrection of Christ

QUESTION 5

In John 3 Jesus compared His being lifted up on a cross, which provides salvation by faith, to Moses lifting up the _____.

QUESTION 6

In John 6 some of Jesus' disciples left Him because He spoke spiritual words that they could not understand. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

Which of the following is the climactic sign of Jesus' deity?

- A) Raising Lazarus
- B) Walking on water
- C) Feeding the 5,000
- D) Turning water into wine

QUESTION 8

The proper priority of relationships in John 13–17 is first to love believers and then to witness to the world. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

The ones that came to arrest Jesus all fell back when He simply identified Himself. *True or False?*

QUESTION 10

What story from John 21 best shows that Jesus will meet the disciples' future ministry needs?

- A) The rumor that the apostle John would not die
- B) The miraculous catch of fish
- C) Jesus' telling Peter to mind his own business
- D) John's claim that the entire world would not hold the stories of Jesus

Unit 1 Exam

QUESTION 1

During the Intertestamental period, the focus of Jewish worship changed from temple-based to worship based in the _____.

QUESTION 2

What was King Herod known for?

- A) Construction of buildings
- B) Justice for all
- C) His pure Jewish background
- D) Opposition to Rome

QUESTION 3

In Matthew, the disciples' questions to Jesus show that they expected a literal earthly kingdom. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

In Matthew the Sermon on the Mount emphasizes adherence to external rules. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

What do the Jewish leaders do after Jesus' triumphal entry and cleansing of the temple?

- A) They ask him for a sign.
- B) They asked Him about His authority.
- C) They accuse Him of using Satan's power.
- D) They accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath.

QUESTION 6

According to Matthew, Christ's highest priority for His disciples is for them to make disciples of all nations. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

Mark shows that Jesus enthusiastically confronted every trial He faced in His life as an example for us. *True or False?*

QUESTION 8

Mark freely shows the disciples' failings, especially those of Peter. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

What is the main lesson that Jesus teaches the disciples in the first half of Mark?

- A) What His mission is.
- B) Who He is
- C) He must die.
- D) Jesus suffered also.

QUESTION 10

In Mark, who demonstrates a complete lack of social status?

- A) Children
- B) Slaves
- C) Women
- D) Samaritans

QUESTION 11

Which of the following is the main warning from the Olivet discourse?

- A) Not to tell anyone about Him.
- B) Watch out! Stay alert!
- C) You will all fall away.
- D) Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.

QUESTION 12

Throughout Mark, Jesus' greatest temptation is to receive the kingdom apart from the _____.

QUESTION 13

In Mark, the women that visit Jesus' tomb obey the angel's command immediately. *True or False?*

QUESTION 14

Which of the following is Luke's key verse?

- A) Even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.
- B) You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.
- C) For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
- D) See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey.

QUESTION 15

Jesus' genealogy in Luke shows that salvation is offered to all. *True or False?*

QUESTION 16

To Luke, being a rich man has more to do with attitude than with material wealth. *True or False?*

QUESTION 17

In Luke, the type of faith that Jesus looks for is best illustrated in which story?

- A) The lawyer seeking eternal life
- B) The rich, young ruler
- C) The Triumphal Entry
- D) The centurion and his slave

QUESTION 18

In Luke, Jesus asks prospective disciples to consider both their condition and their circumstances and to count the cost before committing. *True or False?*

QUESTION 19

What is the most important factor for Luke in accomplishing Jesus' commission?

- A) Going in the Holy Spirit's power
- B) Going out into the world
- C) Living a pure life for others to see
- D) Praying before you go

QUESTION 20

Where do experts believe that John wrote his gospel?

- A) Jerusalem
- B) Rome
- C) Corinth
- D) Ephesus

QUESTION 21

Which of the nine signs is most similar to Jesus raising the temple in three days?

- A) Walking on water
- B) The resurrection of Christ
- C) Feeding the 5,000
- D) Satan falling from the sky

QUESTION 22

In John 3, Jesus compared His being lifted up on a cross, which provides salvation by faith, to Moses lifting up the _____.

QUESTION 23

The Holy Spirit's work is to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and _____.

QUESTION 24

Which of the following is the climactic sign of Jesus' deity?

- A) Walking on water
- B) Feeding the 5,000
- C) Raising Lazarus
- D) Turning water into wine

QUESTION 25

The word John uses most to describe the human responsibility in obtaining eternal life through Jesus' name is _____.

Lesson 4 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

A. Evangelistic

D. Supplemental to the Synoptics

John even leaves out important events in the life of Christ, which do not fit his purpose. This shows the account is supplemental and written for those already familiar with one or more of the Synoptic Gospels. However, to say that this is John's only reason for writing ignores his stated evangelistic purpose.

QUESTION 2

B. Heavenly

John contains a highly theological preface relating Jesus to both God and eternity (Jn 1:1-18) in contrast to the Synoptics which only relate His earthly advent.

QUESTION 3

<i>Reference</i>	<i>"I am" Statement</i>
John 6:35	"I am the bread of life"
John 8:12	"I am the light of the world"
John 8:58	"Before Abraham came into existence, I am"
John 10:7	"I am the door for the sheep"
John 10:11, 14	"I am the good shepherd"
John 11:25	"I am the resurrection and the life"
John 15:1	"I am the true vine"

QUESTION 4

"But these are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

QUESTION 5

Your answer should be similar to the following: (1) Mary expected Jesus to provide wine right then, but Jesus commented that His time had not yet come; and (2) when the head steward tasted the wine, he commented that this good wine was served last, contrary to common practice.

QUESTION 6

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Sign Given</i>
Matthew 12:38-42; 16:1-4; Luke 11:29-32	The sign of Jonah
Luke 11:14-23	Jesus plundering Satan
John 2:12-22	Raising the temple in three days
John 6:30-33	The true bread from heaven

QUESTION 7

Your answer should be similar to the following: The sign of Jonah, because it also involves Jesus' death and resurrection and because this is the ultimate sign.

QUESTION 8: Serpent

Why was Jesus lifted up? "So that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life" (Jn 3:15).

QUESTION 9

- A. Because they did not believe
- C. Because they could not understand Jesus' words
- D. Because the Father had not called them

Jesus responded, "Does this cause you to be offended? Then what if you see the Son of Man ascending where he was before? ...The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life" (Jn 6:61-63). The disciples responded, "Lord, to whom will we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God!" (Jn 6:68-69).

QUESTION 10

- D. Raising Lazarus from the dead

The climactic rejection of His deity occurs as the leaders witness Christ's *seventh sign*, the resurrection of Lazarus, which proves His ability to give life.

QUESTION 11: False

The Jewish leaders then plot Christ's death while Mary anoints Him for burial (Jn 11:45–12:11)!

QUESTION 12

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Relationship</i>
First priority	Dependence on Christ
Second priority	Love for believers
Third priority	Witness to the world

QUESTION 13

<i>Conviction</i>	<i>Why</i>
About sin	Because they do not believe in Me
About righteousness	Because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me
About judgment	Because the ruler of this world has been condemned

QUESTION 14

Correct answers include:

- Union
- Unity

This unity is both with God and each other.

QUESTION 15: True

"So when Jesus said to them, 'I am He,' they retreated and fell to the ground" (Jn 18:6).

QUESTION 16

- A. Jesus will abundantly meet the disciples' future ministry needs.
- B. Disciples (such as Peter) can be reinstated even after a serious ministry failure.

Jesus appears for a third time to seven disciples at the Sea of Tiberius and miraculously provides fish for them and also reinstates Peter, who had denied him three times but now confesses his love three times.

QUESTION 17

Seven Pre-cross Signs in John

Instructions						
Changing water into wine at Cana	Healing the official's son in Capernaum	Healing the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem	Feeding the 5,000 near the Sea of Galilee	Walking on water in the Sea of Galilee	Healing the man born blind in Jerusalem	Raising Lazarus from the dead in Bethany
John 2:1-11	John 4:46-54	John 5:1-18	John 6:16-21	John 6:5-14	John 9:1-7	John 11:1-45

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21

Unit 1 - Key Words of the Bible

Instructions				
Kingdom	Discipleship	Sovereignty I	Belief	
Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	

Lesson 4 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1

C. He had a heavenly origin.

QUESTION 2: True

QUESTION 3: Timing

QUESTION 4

D. The resurrection of Christ

QUESTION 5: Serpent

QUESTION 6: True

QUESTION 7

A. Raising Lazarus

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9: True

QUESTION 10

B. The miraculous catch of fish

Unit 1 Exam Answers

QUESTION 1: Synagogue

QUESTION 2

A. Construction of buildings

QUESTION 3: True

QUESTION 4: False

QUESTION 5

B. They asked Him about His authority.

QUESTION 6: True

QUESTION 7: False

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9

B. Who He is

QUESTION 10

A. Children

QUESTION 11

B. Watch out! Stay alert!

QUESTION 12: Cross

QUESTION 13: False

QUESTION 14

C. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

QUESTION 15: True

QUESTION 16: True

QUESTION 17

D. The centurion and his slave

QUESTION 18: True

QUESTION 19

A. Going in the Holy Spirit's power

QUESTION 20

D. Ephesus

QUESTION 21

B. The resurrection of Christ

QUESTION 22: Serpent

QUESTION 23: Judgment

QUESTION 24

C. Raising Lazarus

QUESTION 25: Believe

Lesson 4 Articles

Introduction and Prologue to John

Authorship

The writer witnessed Christ's glory, which was revealed to Peter, James, and John at the Transfiguration (Jn 1:14; see Mk 9:1-13). The author must be John because of the two other eyewitnesses to the Transfiguration. James was martyred by Herod in AD 44 (Acts 12:2) and Peter is mentioned by name in the gospel (Jn 1:42). This conclusion also makes sense because only John was at the Crucifixion (Jn 19:33-35). John also referred to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (Jn 19:26-27; see also Jn 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20).

Circumstances

Date: It is more difficult to discern the date that John wrote his gospel. Bible scholars offer two possible dates:

Late First Century: One early church father states that John ministered in Ephesus in AD 66 to the time of Emperor Trajan, AD 98–117. This gospel would be the last one written, possibly shortly before John's death. John's gospel has always been considered to be the last one written. Most scholars agree that John wrote his gospel around AD 80–95.

Before AD 70: Most agree that John wrote after the Synoptic Gospels, but do not know how much later. Some of John's expressions indicate a date before the fall of Jerusalem, in AD 70, for example:

- A. John 5:2 says, "Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool..." this verse indicates that the pool is still there, but it was destroyed in AD 70. Some scholars insist that he is reflecting on the past.
- B. The term "the Jews" conveys the leaders' powerful influence in Jerusalem that decreased after the city was destroyed.
- C. John also seems concerned about the followers of John the Baptist (Jn 1), which was a first century concern.

As the last surviving disciple, he would have been encouraged to write down his unique perspective.

Origin/Recipients: According to the early church fathers, John wrote from Ephesus. The first readers were probably Gentiles in Ephesus.

Occasion: John's gospel has the clearest purpose: "These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (Jn 20:31). His purpose is for evangelism. He set out to prove that Jesus was the Messiah in order to convince nonbelievers of His deity. He records the signs that Jesus gave to urge people to believe in Him for salvation. This final gospel from an eyewitness would convince those people who didn't believe the Synoptic accounts. If John wrote in AD 65–69, the proof that he offered would be more vital for unbelievers, because those people who believed were being persecuted by Emperor Nero.

Characteristics

There are various proposals for John's purpose, such as the following:

Evangelistic (Jn 20:31): The section above argues for an evangelistic purpose but there is one problem with it in John 20:31. Many versions translate the verse "that you *may believe*" (emphasis added) with the idea that the readers were unbelievers. John was not encouraging believers to be evangelists as much as he was evangelizing the readers.

Edification (Jn 20:31): Others translate this verse as "that you *may go on believing*" (emphasis added). They feel that he wanted to convince believers that they have life in Jesus' name. This purpose would encourage believers in their faith.

Apologetic: Some believe that John wrote to defend Christianity against the following false teachings:

Docetism: the belief that Jesus was not fully human

Gnosticism: the belief that Jesus was not fully deity

People who still followed the teaching of John the Baptist

Judaism was adequate for salvation

Supplemental to the Synoptics: John leaves out significant events in Christ's life so that the gospel would fit into his purpose. This suggests that the readers were familiar with the other gospel accounts.

Combination: The gospel was written with an evangelistic purpose as a supplement to the other gospels. This view is used by this course.

John's gospel has a **unique style**. The vocabulary is simple and limited with repetition of key words. John uses parallelisms to connect statements that express similar truths (Jn 1:3). He also contrasts concepts such as light and dark, good and evil, and life and death. John elaborates on Jewish customs in explanatory statements to communicate with the Gentile readers (Jn 4:9; 5:2-3). The gospel contains many allegories built around extended metaphors, such as the good shepherd and the true vine. Only John's gospel begins with a preface about God and eternity (Jn 1:1-18).

John is the only gospel writer to record the first year of Christ's ministry, which includes the wedding in Cana, conversations with Nicodemus, and the woman at the well (Jn 1:29-4:42). More than 90 percent of this gospel is not repeated in Matthew, Mark, or Luke.

Christ's words are prominent in John because of the extensive record of His speeches. This includes the "I am" statements:

1. "I am the bread of life" (Jn 6:35)
2. "I am the light of the world" (Jn 8:12)
3. "Before Abraham came into existence, I am" (Jn 8:58)
4. "I am the door of the sheepfold" (Jn 10:7)
5. "I am the good shepherd" (Jn 10:11, 14)
6. "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn 11:25)
7. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6)
8. "I am the true vine" (Jn 15:1)

Personalities are highlighted in the gospel because John introduces over thirty people specifically.

The **number seven** is a godly number, and John records seven of the pre-Cross signs:

1. Changing water into wine at Cana (Jn 2:1-11)
2. Healing the official's son in Capernaum (Jn 4:46-54)
3. Healing the invalid at the pool of Bethesda (Jn 5:1-18)
4. Feeding 5,000 people near the Sea of Galilee (Jn 6:16-21)
5. Walking on water in the Sea of Galilee (Jn 6:5-14)
6. Healing the man born blind in Jerusalem (Jn 9:1-7)
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead in Bethany (Jn 11:1-45)

There are two post-Cross signs in the book of John:

1. The resurrection of Christ (Jn 20)
2. The miraculous catch of fish at the Sea of Galilee (Jn 21:1-13)

References to the **future** relate to judgment (Jn 3:36), to resurrection (Jn 11:25), and to eternal life (Jn 3:16).

John emphasizes Christ's ministry in Judea, the area around Jerusalem, unlike the focus of the other gospels on His ministry in Galilee.

John also puts emphasis on the **Holy Spirit** in five chapters (Jn 13–17). This section gives the most teaching in the New Testament on the Spirit.

Summary statement for the book

John uses selected signs and discourses of Jesus to prove that He is the Son of God in order to convince unbelieving Gentiles that they should believe in Him and receive eternal life.

John's Presentation

John's gospel presents Christ as God who became man. John walks the reader through Christ's public and private ministry. He records examples of belief and unbelief by using nine signs and nine discourses. John's words and events intentionally seek to lead readers to believe in Christ for eternal life.

In each section, John presents Christ as the Son of God in order to prompt readers to believe in Him as the Savior (Jn 1:1; 20:31). In his prologue, he first provides Jesus' identity as God made into a man and introduces some recurring themes (Jn 1:1-18). The main section presents seven signs and eight discourses that demonstrate Jesus is God (Jn 1:19–12:50). This section contains most of the "I am" statements, which clarify whether people were accepting or rejecting Christ as God. People did not reject Him because they were unsure of who He was.

In John 13, John switches from Jesus' public ministry to His private instruction to the disciples. In the Upper Room discourse, Christ prepares the disciples for their ministry after His death (Jn 13–17). Christ's death and resurrection demonstrate that the way to eternal life is through His substitutionary death for all. His resurrection and appearances validate Him as God (Jn 18–20). In Christ's final appearance, He miraculously provides fish for the disciples. His dialogue with Peter serves as a reminder for believers that their love for Christ must be the foundation of their ministry (Jn 21).

The graphic below explains that relationship.

John Deity Made Man for Eternal Life					
Deity of the Son of God	Revelation of the Son of God		Preparation of the Son's Disciples	Passion/Resurrection of the Son of God	Adequacy of the Son of God
1:1-18	1:19–12:50		13–17	18–20	21
Prologue	Public		Private	Public	Private
Incarnation	2 signs received 1:19–4:54	5 signs rejected 5–12	Upper room Discourse (no signs)	Ultimate Sign	Last Sign
Eternity past	Fall AD 29–Monday, 30 March, 33		Thursday, 2 April 33	Friday, 3 April 33– Sunday, 12 April 33	May 33
Ephesus					
AD 65–69					

John's theological purpose is to present Christ as God incarnate to enlighten and invigorate his readers. John also introduces recurring themes in Christ's work and encourages belief in Him (Jn 1:1-18).

The gospel begins with "in the beginning" Christ is God and Creator of all things for man (Jn 1:1-5). The allusion to Genesis 1:1 lays a foundation for who Christ is, so that the readers know who they are being asked to accept or reject. The Jews reject both the Creator's revelation of Himself and John the Baptist (Jn 1:6-13). Those who accept Him rightfully become God's children (Jn 1:13). Christ's identity as God incarnate proves the Father is full of grace and truth (Jn 1:14-18). While Moses gave the law, Christ offered grace and truth.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Reception

John affirms how Christ's public revelation of Himself as God, through seven signs and eight discourses, receives a mixed reaction. His reason for doing this was to cause His readers to consider their own response to Christ as the Savior (Jn 1:19-12:50).

The major section of this gospel shows both those people who received Christ (Jn 1:19-4:54) and those who rejected Him (Jn 5-12). Faith in Christ is for all people, because all people need Him. John the Baptist testifies to all that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn 1:19-34). Jesus' first disciples considered Him to be the Son of God (Jn 1:35-50). In Cana, the first disciples accept Christ after His *first sign*, where He changed water into wine (Jn 2:1-12).

In **Jerusalem**, both the Jews and Nicodemus receive Jesus as the Son of God (Jn 2:13-3:21). First, Jesus cleanses the temple to prove His claim to be the Son of God (Jn 2:13-22). Second, Jews visiting Jerusalem for Passover receive Him as the Son of God, after He performs miracles (Jn 2:23-25). Finally, Nicodemus receives Jesus as the Son of God after His first discourse, which was on spiritual birth (Jn 3:1-21).

In the next verses, people from three geographical areas come to faith in Christ (Jn 3:22-4:54). In **Judea**, the Jews try to provoke John the Baptist to be jealous of Jesus, who he says is the Son of God (Jn 3:22-36). In **Samaria**, a woman believes Jesus is the Messiah after His second discourse, in which He proclaims His true identity (Jn 4:1-42). In **Galilee**, people who had seen Him in

Jerusalem accept Him and a royal official's household believes after Jesus heals the son (Jn 4:43-54). Christ demonstrates that faith is based upon the Word of God and that it will grow.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Rejection by the Nation

At this point in the gospel, people's responses to Christ change. John records how His public revelation as God is rejected by the nation (Jn 5–12) and he warns his readers not to reject Christ. At a feast in **Jerusalem**, Jewish leaders reject Christ's deity after His third sign, because this healing was performed on the Sabbath. In His third discourse, Jesus affirms that He is God and brings the real Sabbath (Jn 5). As His fourth sign, Christ feeds 5,000 men in **Galilee**, after which the Jewish leaders and some of His disciples reject Him. His fifth sign was walking on water. In His fourth discourse, Jesus explained that He was God and acknowledged that there were many who did not believe His claim (Jn 6). In **Nazareth**, Christ's brothers reject Him while He waits to go to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem (Jn 7:1-9).

When Jesus is back in **Jerusalem**, He is rejected by the Jewish leaders after His eighth discourse. The Jewish leaders try to kill Jesus again, and He returns to the other side of the Jordan where people believe in Him (Jn 10:22-42). In **Bethany**, He raises Lazarus from the dead, His seventh sign. This sign leads to His climactic rejection (Jn 11:1–12:11). Lazarus' resurrection proves Christ's ability to give life, but the leaders still plot His death. In **Jerusalem**, some people believe in Christ at the Triumphal Entry, but most people reject Him despite His seven signs and eight discourses (Jn 12:12-50).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Preparation of the Disciples for Christ's Departure

Christ privately prepares His disciples for both His death and their future ministry. Through this, John encourages believing readers to serve others and to fulfill God's purpose for them by dependence upon the Holy Spirit (Jn 13–17).

During the Last Supper, Christ prepares the disciples for service. In His act of washing their feet, He demonstrated service to the Father (Jn 13:1-17). Christ's humility contrasts with Judas' betrayal, which was service to Satan. In the Upper Room discourse, Jesus' predicted His betrayal to show them that, as God, He knew the future (Jn 13:18-30).

Christ predicts His disciples will see Him again after His death. At that time, they will profit from the Holy Spirit's teaching, and they will have a successful ministry (Jn 13:31–16:33). He commands His disciples to love one another after His departure. The disciples ask questions that lead Christ to declare He is the only way to God and to promise the Spirit's guidance (Jn 13:31–14:31). Jesus teaches the disciples how to prioritize their relationships: to depend on Him, to love the believers, and to witness to the world. In doing so, the church will be effective in its ministry (Jn 15:1–16:4). The ministry of the Spirit will convict the world and teach believers the truth that glorifies Christ (Jn 16:5-15). The Spirit's presence will also prevent the disciples from feeling abandoned after Christ's departure. Finally, Jesus predicts that the disciples' grief at His death will turn to joy at His resurrection (Jn 16:16-33). This encourages believers that these events are part of God's will.

Christ prays for Himself, His disciples, and His future believers. The prayer describes the privileged position of believers in their union both with God and with each other. It allows believers to fulfill the Father's purpose (Jn 17).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jesus' Passion Week

John relates Christ's public arrest, trials, death, burial, and resurrection to document His death for the world, so that all might believe in Him for eternal life (Jn 18–20).

Christ redeemed the world through His death, because only He can give eternal life (Jn 18–19). John highlights God's sovereign control in Jesus' betrayal and arrest (Jn 18:4-11). Jesus' enemies fall back when He proclaims His deity by saying "I am" (Jn 18:5-6). Pilate asks Jesus, "What is truth?" (Jn 18:37-38), unfortunately, he isn't seeking the truth that Jesus has to offer (Jn 18:37-38; see also Jn 14:6). John records, in his unique eyewitness account, that Jesus committed Mary's care to the disciple "Jesus loved" (Jn 19:25-27, 35). John's account also depicts Christ's lack of personal sin while He endured the illegal trials.

However, God is the giver of life, and no grave can hold His Son. Christ's resurrection and appearances to His disciples verify that He is God and that His death atones for all who believe in Him (Jn 20). John describes Christ's appearances to Mary Magdalene (Jn 20:1-8), the ten disciples (Jn 20:19-23), and all eleven disciples (Jn 20:24-29). The purpose of John's gospel is to believe in the living Christ so that we can have life in His name (Jn 20:31).

Christ's last miraculous appearance and the reinstatement of Peter confirm for the disciples His adequacy. He teaches that success in ministry is an outgrowth of love (Jn 21).

Seven disciples, who were gathered at the Sea of Tiberius, witness Christ's third appearance. Christ provides fish for them to eat, which confirms His adequacy for their ministry (Jn 21:1-14). Jesus reinstates Peter to show him that ministry success comes from loving Christ genuinely (Jn 21:15-19). Peter asks Jesus if John would never die (Jn 21:20-23). John concludes his gospel with a reminder that he witnessed the events in the book (Jn 21:24-25).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Unit Two: The Kingdom Is Expanded

Unit Introduction

Unit 2 will trace how the message of the kingdom expands from the ascension of Jesus through the missionary journeys of the apostle Paul. The book of Acts overlaps Luke's gospel in that both record the ascension of Christ, but Acts continues the story with the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descends upon the apostles as Jesus had promised (Lesson 5). It is by the power of the Spirit that the apostles and other believers bring the message of the kingdom into the larger world.

Following the book of Acts we will study six epistles, or instructive letters, which were written to believers in the newly established churches. To help us understand the epistles better, we will study these letters in the order in which they were written so that we can see them in their historical context.

The first letters in this unit are James and Galatians (Lesson 6). James, the leader of the Jerusalem Council, wrote his letter primarily to Jewish Christians. Galatians is the first of the Pauline Epistles, written by the apostle Paul to a Gentile audience. Both of these letters present unique perspectives on justification by faith. Studying these complementary letters can provide us with a deeper understanding of the nature and the outcome of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Paul's two letters to the church in Thessalonica help to correct and instruct believers who are being persecuted (Lesson 7). The letters encourage the disheartened Christians and prepare them for Christ's return.

This unit ends with a study of two more Pauline Epistles, 1 and 2 Corinthians (Lesson 8). The church that Paul established in Corinth, during his second missionary journey, experienced severe division, moral disorders, and misinterpretations of Christian doctrine. In these letters, Paul explains the proper functioning and authority of the church, which is also instructive for church leaders today.

New Testament Books: Message Statements

Note: The following is a summary of the message of each New Testament book for this unit.

Acts: Luke presents God's sovereign oversight of the progression of the message of the kingdom from the Jews in Jerusalem to the Roman Gentiles. He proves that God is responsible for His Church and exhorts believers to witness everywhere.

James: James exhorts the early Jewish believers to demonstrate their Christian faith is through work. He teaches believers to replace their hypocrisy with good deeds, which are done in maturity and holiness.

Galatians: In order to counter false teaching by the Judaizers, Paul defends both his apostleship and salvation by faith to the Galatian churches. Paul does not want the Galatians to live by a legalistic system based upon the Law.

1 Thessalonians: Paul prepares the Thessalonians for the Rapture by strengthening the church's doctrinal and relational foundation. He also defends himself against accusations that he started the church out of greed.

2 Thessalonians: Paul corrects the persecuted Thessalonians' misconception that the Day of the Lord had already begun. He exhorts the disheartened Thessalonians to persevere and the idle to work. He wants to help them stand firm in correct doctrine despite false teachers.

1 Corinthians: Paul explains the proper functioning of the church in response to reports about the Corinthians' divisions, disorders, and doctrinal difficulties. He wants to be certain that the church makes its positional sanctification practical.

2 Corinthians: Paul defends his apostleship against the attacks of false teachers to confirm the Corinthians' doctrinal foundation and encourage them to keep their promise to give to the saints in Jerusalem. He serves as an example of respecting and giving to church leaders.

Unit Objectives

By the end of this unit the student will be able to do the following:

- Summarize the spread of the gospel throughout the Roman world, as described in Acts, by using key persons and events
- Explain how James' teaching on salvation by works complements Paul's teaching on salvation by faith
- Justify Paul's severe tone to the Galatians
- Grow in faith by understanding the imminence of the Rapture and the basic facts about the Day of the Lord
- Apply to yourself the teachings on faithful living that Paul addressed to the Corinthian church

Unit Outline

Lesson 5: Acts: The Universal Savior Is Proclaimed in Sovereign Kingdom Progress

Lesson 6: James and Galatians: Outcomes of Justification by Faith

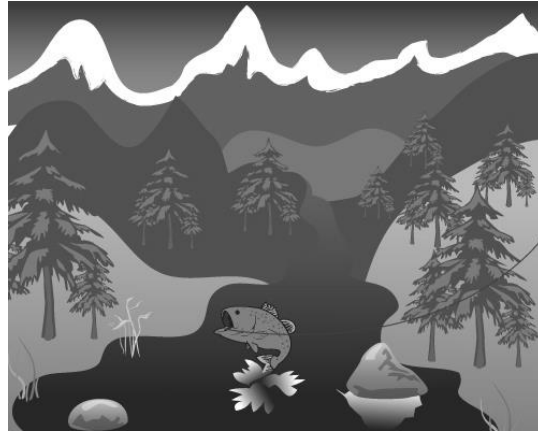
Lesson 7: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: The Rapture and the Tribulation

Lesson 8: 1 & 2 Corinthians: Church Function and Apostolic Authority

Lesson 5: Acts: The Universal Savior Is Proclaimed in Sovereign Kingdom Progress

Lesson Introduction

When I was a young child my father and I spent a lot of time fishing. Because we usually caught fish, I often thought that my skill brought success. Later I realized that most of my success was because of my father's ability to choose where and how to fish. When I set out to find fish on my own, I soon learned how little of that earlier success was due to my skill. In a similar way, though both God and people have important responsibilities, Luke sets out to show that the success of the early church comes not from the believers' efforts but is directed by God Himself.



Luke's gospel is written from a Gentile mind *to* a Gentile mind in order to confirm Theophilus's faith (Lk 1:3). It shows how the Jewish Savior could also be a Savior for the Gentiles. Luke continues this universal emphasis in Acts by chronicling the progress of the message of the kingdom from its reception by the Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 1:1–Acts 6:7) to the Judeans and the

Old Jerusalem



Samaritans (Acts 6:8–Acts 8:40) and then to the Gentiles in the uttermost part of the Roman Empire (Acts 9–Acts 28). He encourages the believers that church growth is God's work, not people's work. This divine responsibility is clearly stated in the key verse, Acts 1:8, which affirms that the power to witness is something that is *received* rather than earned.

However, Acts also notes how the early *church* was faithful to the task. This encourages all believers everywhere to faithfully witness to their own locale, their Jerusalem, immediately outside this area, their Judea and Samaria, and throughout the globe, their end of the earth. Thus, Luke's reason for writing shows both the divine and the human responsibilities for world evangelism, although God ultimately takes final responsibility for His church (Mt 16:18).

Judean Hills



Samaria



Acts 1:8 provides a threefold outline. Each of the three sections concludes with a summary statement in the form of a progress report, indicating the extent that the message of the kingdom has traveled up to that point (i.e., Acts 6:7; 8:40; 28:31). Five other progress reports (Acts 2:47; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20) conclude the various subsections in these three major sections (adapted from Stanley D. Toussaint, “Acts,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. ed. John Walvoord and Roy Zuck [Wheaton: SP Publications, 1983], 2:352).

Faithfully Witness



Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- See the fulfillment of the mission to take the gospel to the end of the Roman world (Acts 1:8)
- Explain the roles of key individuals in fulfilling this mission to various people groups
- Appreciate how the disciples' trials in Acts were an opportunity to spread the gospel
- Discern the hand of God in the growth and spread of the church
- Trace the steps that led to the church's eventual clear understanding of the universal nature of the gospel

Lesson Outline

- Topic 1: Introduction
- Topic 2: Jerusalem (Acts 1:1–6:7)
- Topic 3: Judea and Samaria (Acts 6:8–8:40)
- Topic 4: The Uttermost Parts (Acts 9:1–19:20)
- Topic 5: Rome (Acts 19:21–28:31)
- Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction

Acts					
Universal Savior Proclaimed in Sovereign Kingdom Progress					
Jerusalem		Judea and Samaria		Uttermost Part	
1:1–6:7		6:8–8:40		9–28	
Jews		Samaritans (racially mixed)		Gentiles	
AD 33–35 (2 years)		AD 35 (a few months)		AD 35–62 (27 years)	
Peter		Stephen & Philip		Paul	
Establishing home base		Nearby outreach		Missionary journeys	
Established 1–2	Expands 3:1–6:7	Stephen 6:8–8:3	Philip 8:4–40	Damascus 9:1–31	To Rome 10:1–28:31
Rome					
AD 62 Completed after Paul's house arrest					

Culture can be a powerful force in making people of different groups feel distinct. It can even lead to prejudice and violence. Yet the gospel message is powerful enough to transcend culture and to meet the needs of all people!

In the book of Acts, Luke sought to explain to his wider Gentile audience that the progress of the message of the kingdom was divinely directed, not of human ingenuity and skill. Therefore, the fact that the gospel message expanded from its original Jewish audience to the Gentiles was God's plan, not man's plan. This expansion means that we must embrace God's universal concern for all people.

Luke opens Acts by addressing Theophilus, who was probably a Roman official. Undoubtedly Theophilus considered Luke, a physician, to be an appropriate person to provide an orderly account of the life of Christ and the early history of the Church. Luke was well educated, an excellent historian, and well acquainted with Paul. As a single man, he was able to travel and interview eyewitnesses. He probably wrote at Theophilus's request, and his purpose appears to be to strengthen this wealthy Christian's faith by showing that this faith rested on firm historical fact (Lk 1:3-4).

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article "Introduction to Acts" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

- Please memorize Acts 1:8, Luke's key verse, which gives his purpose for writing.

QUESTION 1

In Acts, Luke shows that the gospel message progressed first to Jews, then to Samaritans and finally to Gentiles, because the gospel message was somewhat different to each group. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

How did Luke explain that the progress of the message of the kingdom was ultimately directed?

- A) Humanly directed with divine blessing
- B) Divinely directed with human responsibility
- C) Equally a human and a divine responsibility
- D) Directed randomly by human movement

QUESTION 3

Please write Acts 1:8 from memory.

Topic 1 Key Points:

- Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles are all saved in the same way through the universal message of the gospel.
- Luke shows that God ultimately directs the progress of the message of the kingdom, although His people also have responsibilities.
- Luke's key verse shows that the power to witness to the end of the earth comes from the Holy Spirit.

Topic 2: Jerusalem (Acts 1:1–6:7)

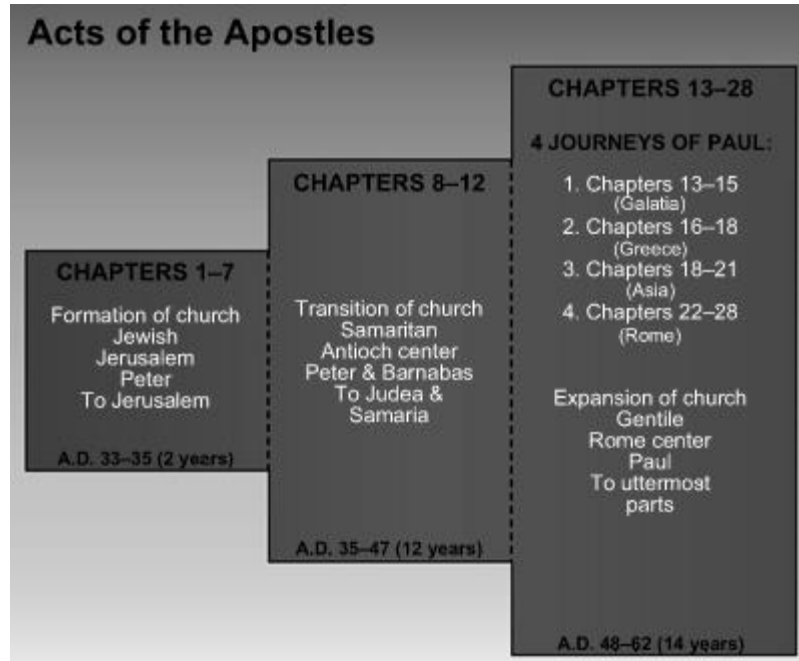
Acts records an incredible expansion of the gospel (see chart on next page, from Terry Hall, *Bible Panorama* [Wheaton, IL: SP Pub., Victor, 1983], 162). Prior to Pentecost, the disciples and other believers in Christ are obediently waiting in the Upper Room for the promised coming of the Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). Previously, they had deserted Jesus in His hour of trial and had even denied that they knew Him (Mk 14:50-52). How could they possibly carry out Jesus' Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19)?

The key to accomplishing this mission is to wait "until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Lk 24:49). Finally, fifty days after the Resurrection, the Holy Spirit came audibly and visually (Acts 2:1-13). Other proofs of His coming were the newfound boldness of Peter (contrast Mk 14:72 with Acts 2:14-41) and the power of Christ's miracles, which continued through the disciples (Acts 2:43; 3:1-10; 4:4-31; 5:12-16).

But how did they achieve this amazing growth? What were the acts of the apostles?

Recall from your study of Lesson 3 that Luke notes how Christ's message went forth by God's sovereign hand in the power of the Spirit. This was why we noted "Sovereignty I" as the key word for Luke. His account in Acts repeatedly emphasizes the same truth. The book emphasizes God's sovereign control of all events despite

obstacles. Acts also emphasizes predestination (Acts 2:23; 4:28; 13:48). The book is summarized by the following information:



- **Acts: The Universal Savior Is Proclaimed in Sovereign Kingdom Progress**
- **Author:** Luke
- **Date:** Most likely written about AD 62
- **Key Word:** Sovereignty II
- **Key Verse:** Acts 1:8
- **Summary Statement:** Luke presents God's sovereign oversight of the progression of the message of the kingdom from the Jews in Jerusalem to the Roman Gentiles. He proves that God is responsible for His church and exhorts believers to witness everywhere.
- **Application:** Is God extending His message of the kingdom through you? How are you fitting into His overall purpose of spreading the gospel throughout the earth?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Acts 2 on the birth of the church.
- Please read the article "Jerusalem" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 4

What events does Luke narrate at the end of his gospel and at the beginning of Acts that help tie these books together? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Passover
- B) Jesus' resurrection
- C) Jesus' ascension
- D) Waiting for the Holy Spirit

QUESTION 5

What signs are always present when Peter first brings a new people group, Jew, Samaritan, or Gentile, into the kingdom?

- A) Water baptism, laying on of hands, and receiving the Holy Spirit
- B) Speaking in tongues, water baptism, and Spirit baptism
- C) Speaking in tongues
- D) Speaking in tongues and prophesying

In this topic we observe that the infant church suffers persecution both externally and internally.

QUESTION 6

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the description of the event associated with persecution of the church in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Event</i>
Acts 3:1–4:31	Administrators are appointed for food distribution to Jews and Greeks to heal a division in the church.
Acts 4:32–5:11	Miracles by the apostles stretch the influence of the church outside of Jerusalem to nearby towns.
Acts 5:12-16	The Sanhedrin opposes the healing of the lame temple beggar.
Acts 5:17-42	Ananias and Sapphira lie to the Holy Spirit.
Acts 6:1-7	The Sanhedrin imprisons and flogs the apostles for their healing ministry.

QUESTION 7

Surprisingly, God helped His church to obey Jesus' commission to grow and evangelize by using _____.

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Both the end of Luke and the beginning of Acts are tied together by the ascension of Christ and the promised coming of the Holy Spirit.
- In this topic, Peter first uses the keys of the kingdom to bring the Jewish believers into the church on the Day of Pentecost.
- Surprisingly, the infant church grows numerically and spreads geographically because of persecution.

Topic 3: Judea and Samaria (Acts 6:8–8:40)

Missionary Journeys of Philip and Peter



At this point (Acts 6:7), the church has grown dramatically and has weathered the storms of persecution. These storms have only caused it to grow more quickly. But it still has not left its birthplace of Jerusalem nor has it advanced toward the uttermost part of the world.

Forcing Out of the Nest



Eagles teach their young to fly by pushing them out of the nest. The eaglets either learn to fly immediately or else crash to the ground. If the adults did not force them out, these young birds would remain helpless in the nest. In this topic, God takes things into His own hands and forces the believers to leave the city and spread out (Acts 8:4). But what exactly does He do as a loving parent to ensure that His church obeys the Great Commission?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Acts 6:8–8:40 about Stephen, Saul, and Philip.
- Please read the article on “Judea and Samaria” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 8

Stephen's indictment of the nation of Israel is most similar to Jesus' teaching in which Scripture?

- A) Matthew 9:1-8
- B) Mark 4:1-9
- C) Mark 12:1-12
- D) Luke 16:19-31

QUESTION 9

According to Acts 8:4-25, which of the following apply to Simon? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) He practiced magic arts.
- B) He believed Philip's message and was baptized.
- C) He attempted to purchase God's power.
- D) He repented of his sins, as Peter demanded.
- E) He asked Peter to pray for him.

QUESTION 10

Though the Samaritans had already believed, they did not receive the Holy Spirit until Peter arrived from Jerusalem (Acts 8). *True or False?*

Topic 3 Key Points:

- God used the external persecution of Stephen's martyrdom to compel the persecuted believers to spread the message of the kingdom throughout Judea and Samaria.
- God initiated internal discipline of the early believers in His church, when their hearts were not right before Him.
- Peter was present to open the kingdom to the Samaritan believers through the laying on of hands.

Topic 4: The Uttermost Parts (Acts 9:1–19:20)

	Saul	Paul
Meaning of name	"to demand"	"little"
Citizenship	Roman citizen & Jew	Same—could preach in either Greek or Hebrew
Title	Pharisee, rabbi	Apostle, servant of Jesus Christ
Trainer/Place	Gamaliel in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3)	God in Arabia & Damascus (Gal 1:17)
Style of Education	Formal	Informal
Passion	Zealous for the Law	Zealous for grace
Defended	Judaism	Christianity
Teaching Audience	Jews alone	Mostly Gentiles
Demeanor	Killed Christians (Acts 22:4)	Blessed all (Acts 23:1)
Opponents	Fought "heresy" called Christianity	Fought heresies of Judaizers, mystery religions, Stoics, Epicureans, etc.
Prayer	Others prayed for him (Acts 7:60–8:1)	He prayed for others
Oral Law	Authoritative 613 commands (248 positive + 365 negative)	Matter of conscience (Rom 14:1–15:13)

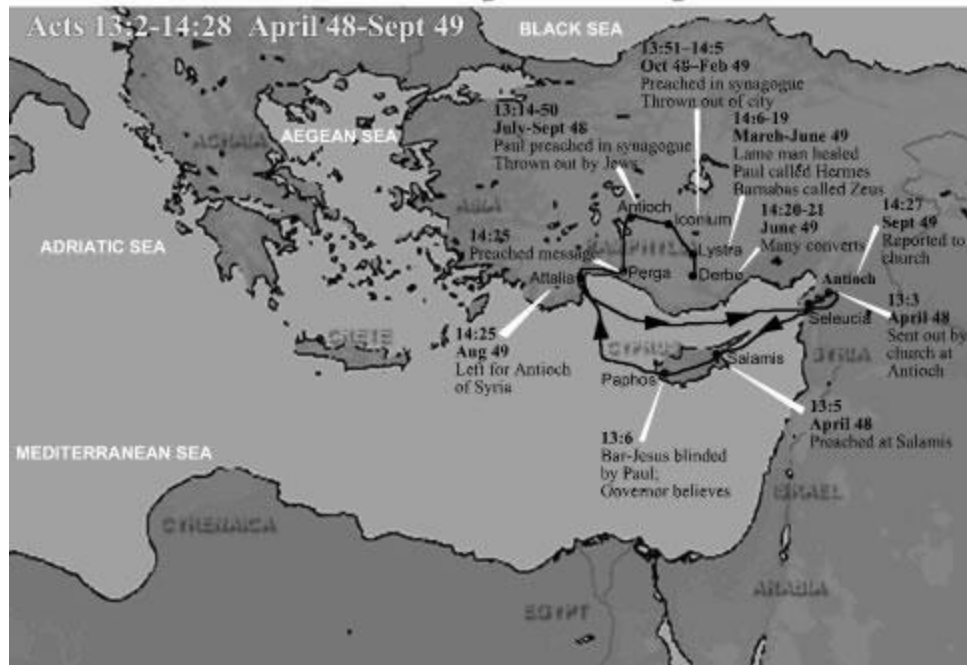
Who would be the perfect person to take the gospel to the Gentiles? God obviously was preparing Peter for this purpose. After all, Christ had taught him about uncleanness, in both Mark 5:1-20 and Mark 7:1-30. God would continue to use Peter, but Peter was a leader of the Jerusalem church, while Paul (Saul) would be God's special ambassador to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15).

Peter still had much prejudice to overcome and Saul was a persecutor of Christ! What methods would God use to make them fit for His use? What visions would God give them to help prepare them?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Acts 9–10 on the conversion of Saul and the preparation of Peter as well as Acts 15 on the Jerusalem Council's decision.
- Please read the article "Uttermost Part" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please study the following maps on Paul's three missionary journeys.

Paul's First Missionary Journey



Paul's Second Missionary Journey



Paul's Third Missionary Journey



QUESTION 11

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the incident surrounding Paul's conversion in the right-hand column.

Reference	Paul's Conversion
Acts 9:1-2	Paul fell before a heavenly light and heard someone asking why he persecuted Jesus.
Acts 9:3-7	The Lord commissioned Ananias to restore Paul's sight and to enable him to be filled with the Spirit.
Acts 9:8-9	Paul sought letters from the high priest to imprison members of "the Way."
Acts 9:10-18	Paul was baptized, ate some food and was strengthened.
Acts 9:18-19	Paul was with the disciples for several days and proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues.
Acts 9:19-20	Paul became increasingly capable at demonstrating to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.
Acts 9:21-22	Paul's companions brought the blinded Paul into Damascus.

QUESTION 12

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the incident surrounding Cornelius's conversion in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Cornelius's Conversion</i>
Acts 10:1-4	Peter proclaims the gospel of forgiveness in Christ.
Acts 10:5-8	A Gentile centurion named Cornelius fears God, performs charitable acts, and prays regularly.
Acts 10:9-19	Peter hosts Cornelius' men and follows them to Caesarea.
Acts 10:20-24	Peter sees a vision from God removing the prohibition against unclean animals.
Acts 10:25-29	Peter announces that God has shown him that he should call no one ritually unclean.
Acts 10:30-43	An angel instructs Cornelius to summon Peter from Joppa.
Acts 10:44-48	The Gentile believers receive the Holy Spirit and water baptism.

QUESTION 13

In Acts 15, Peter testified before the Jerusalem Council that the Gentiles are saved the same way as the Jews. *True or False?*

QUESTION 14

When Paul began his second missionary journey, what circumstances led to two teams going out instead of just one?

Topic 4 Key Points:

- God turned Paul's life around and prepared him for ministry to the Gentiles by revealing His Son in a vision.
- God prepared Peter for ministry to the Gentiles through a vision of cleansed animals.
- God preserved the unity of the church by leading the Jerusalem Council, in Acts 15, to reason that since Gentiles and Jews are both saved by faith in Christ, Gentiles need not keep the Mosaic Law.
- God even used a ministry dispute between Paul and Barnabas to send out two mission teams instead of one.

Topic 5: Rome (Acts 19:21–28:31)

At the end of Acts, Luke reveals how the church fulfills its mission, as given in Acts 1:8. According to the last of the eight progress reports, Paul lives in Rome for two years and welcomes all who come to him. He proclaims the kingdom of God and teaches about Christ boldly and without restriction (Acts 28:30-31). But how does God get His church to that point?

So far God has used the most unexpected methods to spread His church and His message. For example, through His Spirit, He empowered His messengers to speak in the native tongues of the

pilgrims who had gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost (Acts 2). Then He used the martyrdom of Stephen to ignite persecution against the entire church in Jerusalem and to spread the church more quickly (Acts 7–8). He also used internal difficulties to purify this same church as it spread (Acts 5–6). What other methods will He use so Luke can finish his account with the great accomplishment in progress report number eight?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Acts 27–28 on Paul’s journey to Rome.
- Please read the article “Rome” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 15

Acts describes a great persecution against Paul’s mission that was led by the Romans.
True or False?

QUESTION 16

In Acts 21–28, Paul gives his testimony in court three times during his _____.

Topic 5 Key Points:

- God uses Rome’s protection to safeguard Paul while he ministers in Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Rome.
- God uses Paul’s imprisonments to advance His kingdom in Jerusalem, Caesarea, Malta, and Rome.

Captivity Used to Further Kingdom



Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Acts at the bottom of each column.

Major Events in Acts					
	Instructions				
The Jerusalem Council					
Peter Visits Cornelius					
Pentecost					
Paul's Voyage to Rome					
Paul's Conversion					
Stephen's Martyrdom					
	Acts 2	Acts 7	Acts 9	Acts 10	Acts 15
					Acts 27

QUESTION 18

Please open your Life Notebook and evaluate the actions and reactions of the church in response to their prayers for Peter's deliverance in Acts 12:1-17. Describe an experience in your life when your reaction to your own situation was similar to the believers at the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark.

QUESTION 19

Study the conclusions of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15:19-21. Although not required to follow the Jewish law, Gentiles are asked to abide by four prohibitions. Describe in your Life Notebook why you think these rules were significant to the Gentiles then, and what they mean to the Christians today.

QUESTION 20

In your Life Notebook, write about the following question. In Acts 16:6-7, the Holy Spirit forbids Paul from traveling either to Asia or to Bithynia, and redirects him to Macedonia. When has the Holy Spirit changed your path?

QUESTION 21

Record in your Life Notebook anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

Lesson 5 Self Check

QUESTION 1

The book of Acts explains that ultimately the progress of the message of the kingdom was equally a human and a divine responsibility. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

The unexpected factor that God used to multiply and spread His church was _____.

QUESTION 3

What signs are always present when Peter first brings a new people group, Jew, Samaritan, or Gentile, into the kingdom?

- A) Speaking in tongues and Spirit baptism
- B) Speaking in tongues and prophecy
- C) Speaking in tongues, water baptism, and Spirit baptism
- D) Water baptism, laying on of hands, and receiving the Holy Spirit

QUESTION 4

Which of the following parables of Jesus is most similar to Stephen's message in Acts 7?

- A) The Parable of the Sower/Soils (Mk 4:1-9)
- B) The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mk 4:30-32)
- C) The Parable of the Tenants (Mk 12:1-12)
- D) The Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk 16)

QUESTION 5

Although Simon the magician believed and was baptized in Acts 8, his sin was most similar to the sin of which of the following?

- A) The Sanhedrin or Council, in Acts 4:13-22, forbade the disciples from speaking in Jesus' name.
- B) Ananias, in Acts 5:1-11, lied to the Holy Spirit about selling a field.
- C) Saul, in Acts 7:54-8:3, consented to Stephen's death and persecuted the church.
- D) The Pharisees, in Acts 15:5, said that the Gentiles must observe the Law of Moses.

QUESTION 6

According to Paul's vision in Acts 9, persecuting the church equals persecuting Christ. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

The main point of Peter's vision of the animals on the sheet in Acts 10 is that he should call no person _____.

- A) Sinful
- B) Unclean
- C) Weak
- D) Cowardly

QUESTION 8

The Jerusalem Council's decision, announced by James, told the Gentiles to observe certain regulations out of respect for Moses' teachings (Acts 15:12-21). *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

Luke describes Paul's conflict with Barnabas as ultimately harmful to the church. *True or False?*

QUESTION 10

Luke describes Paul's captivity in Acts 21–28 as a limiting factor to the gospel's spread. *True or False?*

Lesson 5 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1: False

The universal nature of the message is stressed with Luke recording eighty geographical locations in Acts. The gospel is the same for Jew and Gentile, because they are both saved in the same way (see Acts 15:11).

QUESTION 2

B. Divinely directed with human responsibility

Luke sought to explain to his wider Gentile audience that the progress of the message of the kingdom was divinely directed, not of human ingenuity and skill. Yet humans had definite responsibilities in the fulfillment of the mission.

QUESTION 3

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the earth.”

QUESTION 4

C. Jesus’ ascension

D. Waiting for the Holy Spirit

Both Luke’s gospel and his introduction to Acts summarize Christ’s ministry through His command to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and both books also narrate His ascension (Lk 24:49-52; Acts 1:1-11). His resurrection is not narrated again, though it is noted in passing in Acts 1:3.

QUESTION 5

A. Water baptism, laying on of hands, and receiving the Holy Spirit

Peter uses the keys of the kingdom three times in Acts. Though new people groups are saved by faith, Peter’s presence is required as a witness to the breaking down of barriers with the accompanying signs of water baptism, laying on of hands, and receiving the Holy Spirit. Tongues are present in Acts 2 and 10, but they are not noted in Acts 8.

QUESTION 6

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Event</i>
Acts 3:1–4:31	The Sanhedrin opposes the healing of the lame temple beggar.
Acts 4:32–5:11	Ananias and Sapphira lie to the Holy Spirit.
Acts 5:12-16	Miracles by the apostles stretch the influence of the church outside of Jerusalem to nearby towns.
Acts 5:17-42	The Sanhedrin imprisons and flogs the apostles for their healing ministry.
Acts 6:1-7	Administrators are appointed for food distribution to Jews and Greeks to heal a division in the church.

QUESTION 7: Persecution

Contrary to what we would expect, persecution helped spread the gospel message more quickly as it forced all but the apostles out of Jerusalem (Acts 8:1).

QUESTION 8

C. Mark 12:1-12

Israel throughout its history has consistently been stiff-necked and resisted God’s message.

QUESTION 9

- A. He practiced magic arts.
- B. He believed Philip's message and was baptized.
- C. He attempted to purchase God's power.
- E. He asked Peter to pray for him.

In Acts 5, Ananias was disciplined because his heart was not right in his desire for recognition and in lying to the Holy Spirit. In the same way, Simon Magus was rebuked with a strong curse by Peter because his heart was not right to desire to purchase the Holy Spirit's power in Acts 8.

QUESTION 10: True

Since these were the first non-Jews brought into the church and Peter had the "keys to the kingdom," he came down from Jerusalem. When he arrived, the believers received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of his hands (Acts 8:14-17). Luke consistently shows believers—and especially the apostles—as an extension of Christ.

QUESTION 11

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Paul's Conversion</i>
Acts 9:1-2	Paul sought letters from the high priest to imprison members of "the Way."
Acts 9:3-7	Paul fell before a heavenly light and heard someone asking why he persecuted Jesus.
Acts 9:8-9	Paul's companions brought the blinded Paul into Damascus.
Acts 9:10-18	The Lord commissioned Ananias to restore Paul's sight and to enable him to be filled with the Spirit.
Acts 9:18-19	Paul was baptized, ate some food and was strengthened.
Acts 9:19-20	Paul was with the disciples for several days and proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues.
Acts 9:21-22	Paul became increasingly capable at demonstrating to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

QUESTION 12

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Cornelius's Conversion</i>
Acts 10:1-4	A Gentile centurion named Cornelius fears God, performs charitable acts, and prays regularly.
Acts 10:5-8	An angel instructs Cornelius to summon Peter from Joppa.
Acts 10:9-19	Peter sees a vision from God removing the prohibition against unclean animals.
Acts 10:20-24	Peter hosts Cornelius' men and follows them to Caesarea.
Acts 10:25-29	Peter announces that God has shown him that he should call no one ritually unclean.
Acts 10:30-43	Peter proclaims the gospel of forgiveness in Christ.
Acts 10:44-48	The Gentile believers receive the Holy Spirit and water baptism.

QUESTION 13: True

Peter said, “God, who knows the heart, has testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, and he made no distinction between them and us, cleansing their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:8-9).

QUESTION 14

Paul and Barnabas sharply disagreed about bringing John Mark on the second missionary journey, because he had left in the middle of the first one (Acts 13:13). God turned this disagreement into a positive situation by sending two teams: Silas went with Paul, and John Mark went with Barnabas (Acts 15:36–16:5).

QUESTION 15: False

God uses the Roman army to protect Paul on his way Caesarea, where he will witness before the rulers (Acts 21:17–23:22). The Romans do not persecute Paul in Acts, instead, God uses them to protect him and allow him to teach (Acts 28:30-31).

QUESTION 16:

Correct answers include:

Captivity

Captivities

Paul's journey to Rome involves three captivities that God uses as part of His sovereign design to further the message of the kingdom among rulers even to Rome. God uses times of personal trial in our lives as well, so we can testify of Him to the world.

QUESTION 17

Major Events in Acts					
					Instructions
Pentecost	Stephen's Martyrdom	Paul's Conversion	Peter Visits Cornelius	The Jerusalem Council	Paul's Voyage to Rome
Acts 2	Acts 7	Acts 9	Acts 10	Acts 15	Acts 27

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21: *Your answer*

Lesson 5 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: False

QUESTION 2: Persecution

QUESTION 3

D. Water baptism, laying on of hands, and receiving the Holy Spirit

QUESTION 4

C. The Parable of the Tenants (Mk 12:1-12)

QUESTION 5

B. Ananias, in Acts 5:1-11, lied to the Holy Spirit about selling a field.

QUESTION 6: True

QUESTION 7

B. Unclean

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9: False

QUESTION 10: False

Lesson 5 Articles

Introduction to Acts

Circumstances

Date: Luke ends with Paul's imprisonment in AD 60–62 (Acts 28:30-31). It does not mention the persecution from Nero (AD 64) and the last years of Paul's ministry (AD 62–68) are not included in Acts. Therefore, Acts was written in AD 62.

Origin/Recipients: No one knows where Luke wrote this book. The story ends in the city of Rome, so Luke may have written it there. Other possible locations are Antioch, Ephesus, Asia Minor, and Achaia. Luke wrote to Theophilus (Acts 1:1), probably an official and a man of high social standing.

Characteristics

Purpose: There are many interpretations of Luke's purpose, for example:

Evangelistic: to present Christ to Gentile readers as the Son of Man who came to save humanity (Lk 19:10). However, this explains the gospel of Luke more than Acts.

Instructional: to confirm Theophilus and the other Gentiles in their faith (Lk 1:4). Acts emphasizes the Word of God, both through the church and by confronting men and women (Acts 4:29, 31; 6:2, 4, 7; 8:4, 14, 25; 10:36; 11:1, 19; 12:24; 13:7, 44, 46, 48-49; 14:25, etc.).

Apologetic: to show Christianity is a universal movement, not a political sect (Lk 23:4, 14, 22).

Ecclesiastical: to explore the differences between the church and Judaism.

Historical Narrative: to preserve the record of the early church.

Kingdom: this interpretation has several supporting factors:

1. To explain God's sovereign direction of the message of the kingdom from the Jews to the Gentiles. Also to answer the Gentiles' questions about the Savior of the world being Jewish and about how the Jewish religion relates to them. Luke shows that Jesus is a universal Savior, and he clarifies that Christianity is not a Jewish sect. Christianity is a divinely directed movement that began in Jerusalem (Acts 1:8).
2. Luke uses the phrase "kingdom of God" multiple times in both Luke and Acts, from the beginning to the end (Acts 1:3; 28:31).
3. The gospel of Luke emphasizes the kingdom. Since Acts continues the story, the emphasis continues.
4. The expansion of the message of the kingdom widens from the Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 1:1–6:7), to both Jews and Samaritans in Judea and Samaria (Acts 6:8–8:40), and then to the Gentiles in all areas (Acts 9–28).
5. This purpose is seen in reports of the kingdom expansion (Acts 2:47; 6:7; 8:40; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30-31).

Significance: There are three main reasons Acts is important.

- *Its link:* Acts is the only narrative of the early church. It serves to link the Gospels to the Epistles.
- *Its chronology:* the arrangement of Acts provides background for the Epistles.

- *Its exhortation:* the stories in Acts still exhort us today with zeal, faith, joy, commitment, and obedience.

Interpretative problems: Some issues arise when Acts is used to develop doctrinal beliefs. Acts should be viewed as a transitional book, especially when it discusses speaking in tongues.

Speaking in Tongues in Acts				
Passage	Speakers	Audience	Related to Salvation	Purpose
2:1-4	Apostles	Unsaved Jews at Pentecost	After salvation	Validate for Jews the fulfillment of Joel 2
8:14-17	Samaritans	Saved Jews doubting God's plan	After salvation	Validate for Jews God's acceptance of Samaritans
10:44-47	Gentiles	Saved Jews doubting God's plan	At salvation	Validate for Jews God's acceptance of Gentiles
19:1-7	OT believers in Messiah	Jews needing gospel message confirmed	At salvation	Validate for Jews God's message through Paul

Style and Structure: Luke and Acts were superbly written using the best Greek in the New Testament with certain words only found in Luke's books.

Universal Message: The book stresses the wide appeal of the gospel (Acts 1:8; 28:30-31). In Acts 15:7-11, Peter reiterates the truth that the Gentiles have the same access to the kingdom as the Jews do.

The Holy Spirit: Luke mentions the Holy Spirit and His ministry over fifty times in Acts.

Written by a Gentile: Luke and Acts are the only books written by a Gentile.

Comprehensive: Luke finishes his record with Acts. Through these two books, he wrote more of the New Testament than Paul did.

Sermons: Nearly all of the chapters include a full or partial sermon.

Contrast with Luke: Acts is different from Luke in many ways. Acts covers the thirty years after Christ's ascension and focuses on the life of the church.

Missionary Journeys: Acts provides the framework for Paul's journeys. It also gives the historical context of the Epistles.

Paul's Missionary Journeys in Acts						
	Area	Acts verses	Dates	Years	Letters	Men with Paul
1	Galatia	12:25-14:8	April 48-Sept 49	1.5	Galatians	Barnabas, Mark
2	Aegean	15:36-18:22	April 50-Sept 52	2.5	1 & 2 Thesalonians	Silas, Timothy, Luke
3	Ephesus & Aegean	18:23-21:16	Spring 53-May 57	4	1 & 2 Corinthians Romans	Timothy, Luke, Titus, Erastus, Gaius, Aristarchus, Sopater, Secundus, Tychicus, Trophimus, Sosthenes

Progress: Contrasting the beginning and the end of Acts reveals the progress of the gospel.

Progress of the Gospel in Acts

Acts 1	Acts 28
AD 33	AD 62
Nonexistent church	Thriving church
100 percent Jewish	Mostly Gentile
Central Location: Jerusalem	Central Location: Rome
Central Figure: Peter (narrow ministry)	Central Figure: Paul (broad ministry)

Summary statement for the book

Luke presents God’s sovereign oversight of the progression of the message of the kingdom from the Jews in Jerusalem to the Roman Gentiles. He proves that God is responsible for His Church and exhorts believers to witness everywhere.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Jerusalem

God’s sovereign expansion of the message of the kingdom in Jerusalem proves Him to be responsible for His church and exhorts His believers to witness first to those around them (Acts 1:1–6:7).

The baptism of the Holy Spirit teaches believers to rely on the Spirit as they witness. After believers were prepared for the coming of the Spirit, the church was established in Jerusalem (Acts 1–2).

Luke’s introduction summarizes Christ’s ministry and His command to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This summary ties Acts to the ending of Luke’s gospel (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:1-5). Jesus commanded the disciples to witness for Him instead of wondering when the kingdom will be restored. They should witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the end of the earth (Acts 1:6-11). Christ’s followers prepare for the Holy Spirit by praying for His power and by replacing Judas with Matthias as the twelfth disciple (Acts 1:12-26).

The Holy Spirit baptizes 120 believers into the church (Acts 2). The Spirit empowers Peter to preach with such passion that 3,000 Jews receive Christ.

Key of the Kingdom 1: Christ gave Peter “the keys of the kingdom” (Mt 16:13-20). In Acts, Peter uses his authority to share God’s salvation to the Jews, the Samaritans, and the Gentiles (Acts 2; 8; 10). Peter’s presence serves as a witness to breaking down all racial barriers with the accompanying signs of water baptism, laying on of hands, and receiving the Holy Spirit.

Acts records the progress of the Gospels in eight reports, the first is found at the end of Acts 2:

Report 1: “And the Lord was adding to their number every day those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:47)

The church in Jerusalem expands within the city and out to surrounding areas, despite opposition. God is committed to the growth of His church (Acts 3:1–6:7). After Peter heals a lame beggar at the temple in Jesus’ name, the church faces opposition from the Sanhedrin (Acts 3:1-10). God

provides an opportunity to witness to the Jews through this court appearance (Acts 3:11–4:31). The church is also opposed internally when Ananias and Sapphira lie about their giving (Acts 4:32–5:11). Their deaths cause the people to fear God and the church to grow.

The apostles extend the church's influence beyond Jerusalem by performing miracles of healing (Acts 5:12-16). Some people receive healing from Peter's shadow. The Sanhedrin continues to oppose the church, imprisoning and flogging the apostles. God shows His sovereignty by miraculously releasing them and giving them joy in the midst of their suffering (Acts 5:17-42). The rabbi Gamaliel, Saul's mentor, helps to free the apostles (Acts 5:33-42). A disagreement among the believers over the distribution of food threatens the unity of the new church. The apostles appoint seven deacons to deal with the problem. The problem and the solution demonstrate God's commitment to the growth of the church (Acts 6:1-7). God uses struggles to promote church growth and to encourage the church to obey Jesus' commission. The persecuted church can find comfort in God's involvement. This section concludes with another summary report:

Report 2: "The word of God continued to spread, the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly, and a large group of priests became obedient to the faith." (Acts 6:7)

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Judea and Samaria

God's sovereign expansion of the message of the kingdom in all Judea and Samaria proves Him to be responsible for His Church and exhorts the believers to witness outside their own locale (Acts 6:8–8:40).

Stephen is stoned to death for performing miracles and for accusing the Sanhedrin of murdering Christ (Acts 7:1-53). Saul approves the stoning and begins persecuting the church in Jerusalem (Acts 7:54–8:3). God uses Stephen's martyrdom and the persecution of the church to spread the message of the kingdom as believers scatter throughout Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:2-3).

Philip's ministry shows God's faithfulness in enabling the church to expand into Samaria and Judea (Acts 8:4-40). Philip performs miracles and preaches in Samaria, which brings the people joy (Acts 8:4-8). He helps Simon, a magician, to believe (Acts 8:9-25). Simon was fascinated by the healings and he coveted the power of God's workers, offering to buy it (Acts 8:18-19). Philip meets an Ethiopian eunuch and leads him to Christ. The eunuch takes the gospel back to his people in Africa (Acts 8:26-40).

Key of the Kingdom 2: The Samaritans were the first non-Jews brought to the church. Since Peter had the keys to the kingdom, he came down to Samaria from Jerusalem. The new Samaritan believers received the Holy Spirit when Peter laid his hands on them (Acts 8:14-17). While the Samaritans did not speak in tongues, their experience was similar to the Jews' baptisms at Pentecost. Tongues are not needed to validate salvation.

Report 3: "Philip, however, found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through the area he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea." (Acts 8:40)

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Uttermost Part

God's sovereign expansion of the message of the kingdom to Rome proves Him to be responsible for His church and exhorts the believers to witness to all the world (Acts 9–28).

The third section of Acts extends the gospel farther. Although the church began to expand toward Damascus in Acts 9, scholars date the beginning of this third movement in Acts 13. This is because Paul does not begin his missionary journeys until Acts 13.

Saul was converted in Damascus and preached there as God's instrument to reach both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 9:1-31). The Lord revealed Himself to Saul in a heavenly light that blinded him (Acts 9:1-9). Saul, now called Paul, had to prove himself to the Christians. He witnessed to unbelievers, which led to persecution and death threats against him (Acts 9:10-31). The next report mentions the church in Galilee as well:

Report 4: "Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria experienced peace and thus was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers." (Acts 9:31)

God continues to demonstrate His commitment to reach the uttermost part of the world by protecting the church. The message of the kingdom extends within Samaria to the Gentiles in Caesarea and in Antioch (Acts 9:32–12:24).

The first stage is Peter's primary ministry to the Gentiles who receive salvation in Joppa, Lydda, and Caesarea. This is a sign to the church that God's sovereign plan is to reach the Gentiles with the message of the kingdom (Acts 9:32–11:18). Peter's miracles demonstrate that God's power works through him, just as it did through Jesus. Compare the following miracles:

- Christ heals a paralytic in Mark 2:1-12. Peter heals a paralytic in Acts 9:32-35.
- Jesus raises Jairus' daughter to life in Mark 5:21-24. Peter raises Dorcas in Acts 9:36-43.
- Jesus teaches on cleanliness and goes to the Gentiles in Mark 7:1-30, as does Peter in Acts 10:1-43.

Peter introduces the gospel to the Gentile Cornelius. This introduction is the most significant development within church growth (Acts 10:1-43). If the gospel were only for the Jews, it would never reach the world.

Key of the Kingdom 3: Cornelius's salvation initiates the Gentiles' admission into the church. Peter is present to welcome the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48). His presence prevents a possible division of the church into Gentile and Jewish sections. God clearly preserved the unity of the church at this early stage.

Peter had to defend his decision to associate with Gentiles to the Jerusalem church (Acts 11:1-18). As further evidence of God's hand upon the Antioch expansion, the Gentile church supported the Jewish church in Jerusalem by providing them with food during the famine (Acts 11:19-29). Herod murdered James and imprisoned Peter, but God released Peter miraculously. These actions verify God's sovereign protection and expansion of His church (Acts 12:1-24). This section ends with the next report:

Report 5: "But the word of God kept on increasing and multiplying." (Acts 12:24)

The church extends to Asia Minor during Paul's first two missionary journeys. At this time, the Jerusalem Council's decision makes it easy to witness to Gentiles. God sovereignly directs the church (Acts 12:25–16:5). This occurs in three movements, as follows:

1. The first missionary journey that Paul and Barnabas take extends the message of the kingdom to Cyprus and the southern Galatian cities (Acts 12:25–14:28).
2. The Jerusalem council decides that the Gentile Christians are not required to follow the Jewish law. God uses this to expand the message of the kingdom throughout the Roman Empire (Acts 15:1-35).
3. Paul takes Silas with him on the second missionary journey. He goes to strengthen the churches in Asia Minor. After a disagreement with Paul, Barnabas and John Mark sail to Cyprus (Acts 15:36–16:5).

This section ends with the sixth summary report:

Report 6: “So the churches were being strengthened in the faith and were increasing in number every day.” (Acts 16:5)

God’s sovereign direction of the message of the kingdom continues in Acts 16–19. Paul plants churches in Macedonia and Achaia. God uses Priscilla and Aquila to minister to the Ephesians (Acts 16:6–19:20). God’s movement begins with calling Paul to Macedonia after he travels extensively in Phrygia and Galatia, and the Spirit prohibits him from ministering in Asia (Acts 16:6-10). Paul is obedient and thus brings the gospel to Europe, which will be the center of Christianity for nearly 1,800 years.

Paul's second missionary journey begins the expansion of the church into Macedonia and Achaia and work continues in his third journey (Acts 16:11-19:20). His traveling companions for this third journey are Silas, Luke, and Timothy. In Macedonia, churches are planted in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea (Acts 16:11-17:15). In Achaia, churches are planted farther south in the cities of Athens and Corinth. Paul visits Ephesus on his return to Antioch but leaves Priscilla and Aquila there to minister to the Ephesians (Acts 17:16-18:22). At the beginning of the third journey, Paul travels from place to place, strengthening the church in Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23-19:20). The church in Ephesus sees disciples of John the Baptist receive the Spirit and there are miracles of healing and exorcism (Acts 18:23-19:20).

Report 7: “In this way the word of the Lord continued to grow in power and to prevail.” (Acts 19:20)

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Rome

After Paul completed his third journey, he traveled to Rome as a prisoner and presented the gospel to rulers. This allowed the message of the kingdom to extend out from Rome (Acts 19:21–28:31). On his third journey, Paul strengthened the Greek believers but did not establish new churches (Acts 19:21–21:16).

God used Paul’s three captivities to further the message of the kingdom among rulers and to use Rome as a sending base to the “uttermost part” of the world (Acts 21:17–28:31):

- God utilized Paul’s captivity in Jerusalem to extend the message of the kingdom among the Jews. God used the Roman army to protect Paul on the way to Caesarea, where he would preach before rulers (Acts 21:17-23:22).
- God used Paul’s captivity in Caesarea to extend the message of the kingdom to Governor Felix, Porcius Festus, and King Agrippa II (Acts 23:23–26:32).

- God used Paul's captivity in Rome to extend the message of the kingdom to the Gentiles on his way to Rome and to both the Jews and the Gentiles in Rome (Acts 27–28).

The final section of Acts takes place in Rome, but does Luke regard this to be the “uttermost part” (Acts 1:8)? Paul desired to go to Spain, a better first-century understanding to be the “uttermost part” than Rome itself, since that city was the center of the Roman Empire (Rom 15:24). Paul's ministry while a prisoner in Rome extends the gospel farther out from there. God's message could not be chained!

Report 8: “Paul lived there two whole years in his own rented quarters and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with complete boldness and without restriction” (Acts 28:30-31).

Acts ends there, but God continues to direct the message of the kingdom. Paul lives six more years and writes three additional New Testament letters. Believers today must bring the gospel to the actual “uttermost part” of the world not yet reached with the good news.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 6: James and Galatians: The Outcomes of Justification by Faith

Lesson Introduction

Imagine that as you are sleeping one night you hear a loud voice calling your name. You awaken, and it is God calling you. You sit up straight and respond, “Yes, Lord?” God says, “Do you believe you are a good Christian? If I were to take you from this world tonight, would you be sure you are saved?”

Two answers come into your mind. First, you think that you will be saved because of your good works. After all, the book of James says, “faith without works is dead.” Just yesterday, you passed out meals to the poor and visited the sick in your community. Second, you also remember that, in Galatians, Paul says that believers are saved through faith alone. These answers seem contradictory. Which is the right one?

Explore the books of James and Galatians more deeply in this lesson and consider how you can best show your faithfulness to God.

This lesson covers both James and Galatians because this course looks at the New Testament books in historical order. The Gospels contain the earliest historical information in the New Testament, from Jesus’ earthly life to His death in AD 33, Acts records the birth and the spread of the church, from AD 33 until AD 62, and the Epistles cover various times from James, mid AD 40s, through Revelation, mid AD 90s. Using the historical order allows you to place the events in chronological order and to see how each New Testament letter relates to its times.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Apply James’ teaching on living out your faith
- Evaluate your life based on the quality of your speech
- Use James’ provisions for enduring trials
- Understand that salvation and sanctification are based on faith
- Feel the insult to Christ when works are added to His completed work
- Biblically discern the motive of those who avoid teaching the Cross

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to James

Topic 2: A Working Faith (Jas 1–2)

Topic 3: Wise Speech (Jas 3–5)

Topic 4: Introduction to Galatians

Topic 5: Paul’s Defense of His Apostleship (Gal 1–2)

Topic 6: Salvation by Faith (Gal 3–4)

Topic 7: A Faith-Based Lifestyle (Gal 5–6)

Topic 8: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to James

The author of James was a younger half brother of Jesus. He was born to Mary by Joseph after the birth of Jesus, who was born to Mary by the Holy Spirit. James is mentioned in Matthew 13:54-56 when the people of Nazareth discussed Jesus' acts with wonder, saying, "Isn't he the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother called Mary? And aren't his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?"

Though his letter is less structured than some of the Epistles, it is not without a theme. Each of the five chapters calls for maturity and holiness in the midst of trials. The main message of James is, "If you say you believe in Christ, then act like it!"

Two Sides of the Same Coin



People throughout the centuries have struggled with how James and Paul seem at odds with each other. Is a person justified by faith or by works? Are James and Paul talking about the same thing? Or, maybe they are referring to two sides of the same coin: perhaps there is faith alone on the one side, but on the other side, there is also works, because true, genuine faith always produces works. Since the Bible properly interpreted does not contradict itself, how do we reconcile these apparent differences and answer these questions?

One way of understanding these differences is to explore the two distinct meanings of justification. James' meaning of justification refers to one's relationship with other people, while Paul's later concept of justification refers to one's relationship with God.

The contrasts can be charted in this manner:

James vs. Romans on Justification		
	James	Romans
Author	James	Paul
Date	AD 44–48	AD 56
Justification is a	Non-technical term	Technical term
Justification is before	Man (horizontal)	God (vertical)
The faith is	After salvation	At beginning of salvation
The emphasis is upon	Works	Faith

Reading Assignment

- Please memorize James' key verse: James 1:22.
- Please read the article "Introduction to James" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 1

Which of the following are found abundantly in the book of James? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Doctrine
- B) Ethical teachings
- C) Faith as a concept
- D) Faith as an action
- E) Jewish character of faith

QUESTION 2

Please write James 1:22 from memory.

Topic 1 Key Points:

- James' book has a strong Jewish character and emphasizes ethics and faith as an action.
- James' key verse emphasizes living out the faith by displaying good works.

Topic 2: A Working Faith (Jas 1–2)

One of the big questions facing James' readers and most of the original recipients of the New Testament epistles is, "Why is God giving me so many trials?" (Jas 1:2). The Jewish religious culture assumed that trials and suffering resulted from a person's sin or the sin of his family (e.g., Jn 9:2). This was the philosophical background of the immediate recipients of James' letter. But this Jewish view of trials was not even true for the Old Covenant believer, so how could it apply to the New Covenant believer?



The United States Marine Corps training boot camp is known for its rigor, even compared to the training of other branches of the armed services. Most Marines consider that surviving boot camp was the most difficult thing that they had ever done. Though unpleasant in many ways, that training gets a person into the top physical and mental condition that is necessary to face battle conditions. The normal human reaction to trials is to relieve the pressure and to get out from under them. But these Marines are trained to endure them and to continue to perform their duties. However, I doubt that Marines consider their trials joyous (Jas 1:2).

So how does God expect us to consider trials “nothing but joy” (Jas 1:2-18)? In what ways should we live out our faith (Jas 1:19-27; 2:14-26)? Also, what does James have to say about the rich who seem to avoid such trials (Jas 2:1-13)? We will discover how faith shows its true qualities and answers these questions in the first two chapters of James.

First, let us review the basics of this book:

- **James: Faith Is Revealed Through Works**
- **Author:** Jesus’ half brother James
- **Date:** Most likely written about AD 44–48
- **Key Word:** Works
- **Key Verse:** James 1:22
- **Summary Statement:** James exhorts the early Jewish believers throughout the Roman Empire that the Christian faith is shown through works. He teaches the believers to replace their hypocrisy with good deeds, which are accomplished in maturity and holiness.
- **Application:** What specific works noted in the letter of James do you consistently do that reveal your calling as a Christian?

Reading Assignment

- Please read James 1–2.
- Please read the article “James 1 & 2” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

Persevering with joy during trials is not always the easiest thing to do but James gives his readers this advice:

- Remember God’s purpose is to develop Christ’s character in you (Jas 1:2-4).
- Remember to pray for wisdom in faith (Jas 1:5-8).
- Remember your position before God (Jas 1:9-11).
- Remember God’s promise of reward (Jas 1:12).
- Remember to praise God for His gifts, since temptations come from us (Jas 1:13-18).

QUESTION 3

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching that James gives about trials in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching on Trials</i>
James 1:2-4	Faith accepts trials with humility.
James 1:5-8	Temptations stem from one's own evil desires.
James 1:9-11	Faith accepts trials with hope of reward.
James 1:12	God cannot be blamed for trials.
James 1:13-15	Faith accepts trials with prayer for wisdom.
James 1:16-18	Faith accepts trials with joy.

QUESTION 4

Please open your Life Notebook. James chastises the early Christians for being prejudiced against the poor in their congregations. Have you ever felt prejudice against anyone in your congregation? What did you do in that situation, and how might you change your response in the future?

QUESTION 5

In James 2:14-26, he showed that faith, when it is demonstrated through good deeds, proves its validity before people. And he gives the biblical examples of Abraham and _____.

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Faith tested in trials produces perseverance when the trials are received joyfully and humbly.
- As evidenced by Abraham's offering of Isaac and by Rahab's saving of Israel's spies, Christians show their faith as valid before men by their works. Faith that has no works cannot be seen by others.

Topic 3: Wise Speech (Jas 3–5)

"Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word skillfully spoken" (Prov 25:11). What a beautiful thought! This is how James wants us to use our tongues (Jas 3:2). Instead, we come closer to Proverbs 25:23: "The north wind brings forth rain, and a sly tongue an angry look."

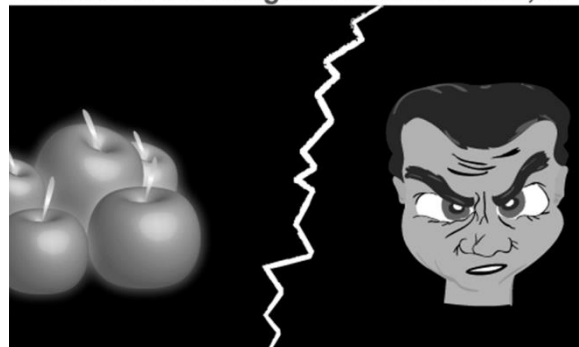
Even the secular world realizes the value and uniqueness of kind words, as seen in this quote:

"A word of kindness is seldom spoken in vain. It can be and is often treasured by the recipient for"

—George D. Prentice

All through this topic, James talks of the wise use of the tongue, which should not be used in bitter jealousy but rather in peace, righteousness, and prayer. James sees a black and white contrast in how we can use our tongues wisely. Our use can be harsh and

Effects of the Tongue: Proverbs 25:11,23



hypocritical, or it can be impartial, pure, peaceable, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy, and good fruit (Jas 3:15-17). But how can we achieve this practically?

James also says not to judge others, but what is the difference between discerning, which is good, and judging, which is bad? How can we make sure we discern but not judge others?

Discernment	Judgment
Commanded by God (1 Cor 11:31)	Prohibited by God (Mt 7:1; Rom 4:13; Jas 4:11-12)
Asks questions to consider all key factors (Prov 25:2)	Accepts hearsay at face value (Prov 14:15)
Looks for a comparable problem in one's own experience (Mt 7:5)	Makes no personal application or self-evaluation (Mt 7:3)

Reading Assignment

- Please read James 3–5.
- Please read the article “James 3, 4, & 5” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 6

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the illustration of the tongue in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Illustration</i>
James 3:3	A fig tree cannot produce olives.
James 3:4	The pilot steers his ship by a tiny rudder.
James 3:5-6	A small flame sets a huge forest ablaze.
James 3:7-8	The tongue is harder to tame than any animal.
James 3:9-11, 12	Springs don't give both fresh and bitter water.
James 3:12	We put bits in horse's mouths to control them.

QUESTION 7

Which of the following describes the rich discussed in James 5:1-6?

- A) Spiritually poor and materially poor
- B) Spiritually poor and materially rich
- C) Spiritually rich and materially rich
- D) Spiritually rich and materially poor

Topic 3 Key Points:

- The quality of the believer's speech is the perfect proof of his spirituality.
- Having riches in this world moves a person toward self-reliance, self-indulgence, and a hardened heart.
- Faith triumphs in persevering through patient suffering, especially when it is aided by the prayer of faith.

Topic 4: Introduction to Galatians

We now begin our study of the first of Paul's New Testament letters. This letter addressed new Christians in the region of Galatia, in modern-day Turkey. Like James, the epistle to the Galatians is an early letter that deals with the subject of salvation. However, while James addresses the results of salvation for Jewish believers, Galatians addresses the Gentile Christians primarily on how they received their salvation in the first place.

The Galatians had an enthusiastic beginning in the gospel (Gal 3:1-5; 4:13-14) that ended (Gal 4:15) due to opposition from Jewish false teachers (Gal 4:17). These Judaizers spread their teaching in the churches after Paul had established them (Gal 1:7; 4:13-14; 5:7). They proclaimed "another gospel" (Gal 1:6-9) that was associated with the Jewish Torah and circumcision (Gal 2:15-21; Gal 3:2-5; 4:21; 5:2-12; 6:12-17). Paul had already confronted these Judaizers in Jerusalem (Gal 2:4-5) but this letter was written before the Jerusalem leaders had officially disapproved of them at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:19-21, 24).

Since no official word had yet come from Jerusalem, Paul immediately wrote the churches. He fought this false teaching with a defense of his apostleship (Gal 1-2) and the true gospel of justification by faith alone (Gal 3-4), which produces a unique lifestyle that is based upon freedom in Christ (Gal 5-6).

- **Galatians: Justification by Faith**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul, whose name means "small, humble"
- **Date:** AD 49
- **Key Word:** Justification
- **Key Verse:** Galatians 2:16
- **Summary Statement:** The logical result of justification by faith is godliness.
- **Application:** Do you add any other requirements for salvation except faith in Christ—baptism, tongues, good works, or any other good deed? Now that you are saved, do you live before God by faith, or do you try to live by works of the Law?

What happens when you have lived your entire life under strict rules, and are suddenly set free? In the movie *The Shawshank Redemption*, the character Brooks is released from prison after a fifty-year confinement. However, he decides that the real world is no place for him so he hangs himself instead of facing freedom.

In a sense, the Jewish believers, who were included among the primarily Gentile churches, faced the same dilemma when Christ freed them from the Law:

Now before faith came we were held in custody under the law, kept as prisoners until the coming faith would be revealed. Thus the law had become our guardian until Christ, so that we could be declared righteous by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. (Gal 3:23-26)

So the question is: How should we live as believers who are free from the Law?

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article "Introduction to Galatians" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.



- Please memorize the key verse: Galatians 2:16.

QUESTION 8

Despite the problems that Paul addresses to the Galatians, he graciously adds his usual touch of thanksgiving and praise for their salvation in Christ in his salutation. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

Please write Galatians 2:16 from memory.

Topic 4 Key Points:

- Paul's tone with the Galatians is severe, which reflects the gravity of the issue that he addresses: the gospel itself!
- We are justified by faith in Christ and continue in faith for sanctification because the works of the Law will justify no one.

Topic 5: Paul's Defense of His Apostleship (Gal 1–2)

Whenever an idea is presented to us that we do not believe, we evaluate the source. Does the person who is trying to convince you have credibility? It is vital for that person to establish his or her authority. When you go to the doctor's office, you expect to see diplomas on the wall with the doctor's proper credentials. If you visit a university administrator, you expect to see the person's degrees.

Within the churches of the Galatians, the Judaizers had turned the people away from salvation by grace to the belief that salvation came by following the Law. In order to convince the Galatian believers of the true doctrine of justification by faith, Paul must first defend his credentials as an apostle of Christ.

In Galatians, Paul responds to attacks from his opponents in three areas. In their first attack they say, "Paul teaches this doctrine by his own authority!" In Galatians 1–2, Paul defends himself by saying that God called him and that the twelve apostles affirmed this calling.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Galatians 1–2.
- Please read the article "Paul Defends His Apostleship" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 10

Give the three examples that Paul uses in Galatians 1–2 to show his independence of the other apostles, his interdependence with the other apostles, and his indictment of one of them.

QUESTION 11

If righteousness could come through the Law, then Christ died for nothing. *True or False?*

Topic 5 Key Points:

- Paul was called directly by Christ and was fully accepted by the other apostles as an apostle to the Gentiles, just as they were apostles to the Jews.
- Seeking justification by the Law instead of by faith in Christ sets aside His work.

Topic 6: Salvation by Faith (Gal 3–4)

Christianity is a historic faith that is rooted in the Old Testament. The Gospels teach that Jesus qualifies as the predicted Messiah of the Old Testament prophecies (Isa 9:6; 53; Zech 9:9).

Therefore, no contradiction exists between Christianity and Judaism. Rather, Christ fulfills the Old Testament prophecies and still offers salvation by the same means: faith. However, Paul's opponents misunderstood the Gentile salvation by faith alone. The opponents saw it as a threat to long-held beliefs. So in this topic, Paul defends himself against a second attack from the Judaizers who said, "This is a new teaching contrary to the Old Testament."

Paul responds by arguing that salvation has always come through faith, and he uses the Old Testament stories of Abraham and Rahab to prove his point. He argues that believers are spiritual descendants of Abraham because they trust God as he did (Gal 3:1-15). Since the Abrahamic promise preceded the Law, salvation cannot be in the Law alone (Gal 3:15-29).

Paul continues his argument for salvation by faith by contrasting the Sinai covenant with the covenant of Abraham under which Christians are included. Paul uses the stories of Hagar and Sarah as an allegory of the two covenants. (An allegory uses symbolic figures and actions to express a truth about something.) This allegory does not talk about the historical figures themselves or about their physical descendants today, Muslims and Jews. Instead, it contrasts the two covenants that have drastically different ways of salvation to show that the Judaizers had the wrong view of the gospel.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Galatians 3–4.
- Please read the article "Paul Affirms Justification by Faith" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

In Galatians 4, Paul finishes the theological section of his letter with some strong contrasts. Look at the chart below to see the differences between the two covenants:

Covenant Contrasts in Galatians 4:21-31		
Covenant	Law (24-25)	Abrahamic (28)
Son	Ishmael (not specifically named)	Isaac (28)
Mother	Hagar (24-25)	Sarah (not specifically named)
Freedom	Slave (22, 24, 31)	Free (22b, 26, 31)
Birth	Ordinary (23)	Of promise (23)
Mount	Sinai in Arabia (24)	Calvary (implied)
Jerusalem	Present Earthly (25)	Future Heavenly, mother (26)
Followers	Children of Hell (implied)	Children of Promise (28)
Persecution	Persecutor (29)	Persecuted (29)
Teachers	Judaizers	Paul & True Evangelists
Salvation by	Works	Faith in Christ
Result	Unsaved	Saved

QUESTION 12

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching by Paul that contrasts the inferior Law with the superior Holy Spirit and Promise in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching</i>
Galatians 3:1-5	Faith brings blessing while the Law brings a curse.
Galatians 3:6-7	The Law was weakened because it came through angels.
Galatians 3:8-14	Abraham was justified by faith, not the Law.
Galatians 3:15-18	Faith came before the Law.
Galatians 3:19-20	Sanctification and reception of the Holy Spirit are by faith.
Galatians 3:22	The Law imprisoned everyone under sin.
Galatians 4:1-11	Legalism is a step back from enjoying our privileges as children of God.

QUESTION 13

From Galatians 3–4 we can conclude that the role of the Law is not to save but to sanctify. *True or False?*

Topic 6 Key Points:

- The Law is weak in many ways compared to the Promise. It ultimately brings a curse and only imprisons everyone under sin.
- Faith and Promise are superior to the Law by blessing us through Christ.
- Believers are sanctified in the same way they receive the Spirit—by faith.

Topic 7: A Faith-Based Lifestyle (Gal 5–6)

In this topic, Paul defends himself against the third and final attack of the Judaizers. They say, “Teaching faith alone will encourage a sinful lifestyle.”

This time their attack is not theological but very practical. They say, “If you follow what Paul preaches, sin will run rampant.” This same accusation is made today by people who want to apply the Law to Christians. At first glance this concern seems valid since living by the Law seems more spiritual. It is also difficult to impress people by living by faith because they cannot see it. People look for works. How will Paul respond to this third objection to the gospel? And what does Paul say these false teachers are avoiding?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Galatians 5–6.
- Please read the article “Paul Applies Salvation by Faith” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 14

In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul urges even those who are living according to the Spirit to keep the Law. *True or False?*

QUESTION 15

According to Galatians 5:11-12 and 6:12-14, the Judaizer’s motivation is to seek to avoid _____.

Contrasting Galatians and James

As we have seen in this lesson, the letters of Galatians and James are the first two epistles in the New Testament, chronologically speaking. This means that they help to set the foundation of doctrinal truth for the rest of the correspondence of Paul and the apostles. Both letters were written in the AD 40s when the church was still young—in its second decade after Christ’s ascension. Both were strong exhortations that were written to a more general readership than a single assembly. However, they differ in some notable ways, as seen in the following chart:

	Galatians	James
Probable Date	AD 48	AD 44
Length	6 chapters	5 chapters
Faith for...	Salvation	Demonstration
Written by...	Paul	James
Written to...	Gentiles	Jews
Readers' view of Author	Doubted his authority	Accepted his authority
Audience in a...	Province	Diaspora
Problem	Heresy	Persecution
False...	Teaching	Living
Subject	We can't see faith	We can see works
Form	Organized, sequential	Repetitive, circular
Outline	Easy to discern	Difficult to discern
Major concern	Theological	Practical
Key word	Justification	Works

QUESTION 16

What other contrasts can you add to those listed above? Write them in your Life Notebook.

The church needs both of these books, as together they provide the theological and the practical balance we each need as believers. May you become an expert in both books and subjects!

Topic 7 Key Points:

- Those who truly live according to the Spirit need no law to modify their behavior.
- The motivation of the Judaizers, and all who teach the Law, is to avoid the persecution that comes from bearing the cross of Christ.

Topic 8: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference in James at the bottom of each column.

James: Faith Revealed Through Works							
	Instructions						
Faith Triumphs							
Faith Speaks Wisely							
Faith Produces Humility							
Faith Avoids Favoritism							
Faith Rejoices in Difficulty							
Faith Produces Works							
Faith Obeys the Word							
	James 1:1-18	James 1:19-27	James 2:1-13	James 2:14-16	James 3	James 4:1– 5:6	James 5:7-20

QUESTION 18

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Galatians at the bottom of each column.

Galatians: Major Teachings						
	Instructions					
Abraham Believed God						
Allegory on Sinai and Jerusalem Above						
Walking According to the Spirit						
Carrying Others Burdens						
Paul Called as an Apostle						
Paul Rebukes Peter						
	Galatians 1	Galatians 2	Galatians 3	Galatians 4	Galatians 5	Galatians 6

QUESTION 19

Please open your Life Notebook and make two separate lists from the teachings in James 5:1-6. First, list “the troubles of the rich” and then, “the sins of the rich.” After you have made your lists, answer the following questions: Do you consider yourself wealthy in economic resources? How does this passage affect your attitude about material possessions?

QUESTION 20

In Galatians 6:12-14, Paul gives a final warning not to trust his opponents. The opposition wanted to force practices such as circumcision on the believers, so that they could gain approval from other religious leaders and avoid persecution. In your Life Notebook, answer the following questions. Has there ever been a time when you have hidden your Christian faith because you wanted approval or because you wanted to be the same as other people? How do you want to act differently in the future, based on what you have learned from Paul?

In Galatians, you learned that following certain rituals does not lead you to salvation. In James, you learned how Christians ought to treat people both inside and outside of the church.

You probably noticed that these two themes agree when it comes to how one is saved. Paul says following rituals, such as circumcision, is not necessary to be saved. It is faith in Christ alone that justifies a believer. However, people who are truly faithful do good works as a result of their faith. James cautions believers to examine themselves and to make sure that they do not just talk about their faith, but that they have good deeds to prove it.

QUESTION 21

Please open your Life Notebook and respond to the following question. While few people today would be susceptible to the Judaizer attack on the gospel by adding circumcision, other false teachers add other requirements beyond simple faith in Christ. How have you distorted the true gospel by requiring baptism, speaking in tongues, certain sacraments, or good works in order to be saved? Also record anything new you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

Lesson 6 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Which of the following is the key verse for James?

- A) “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Can this kind of faith save him?” (Jas 2:14).
- B) “If someone thinks he is religious and does not control his tongue but deceives his heart, his religion is futile” (Jas 1:26).
- C) “But if you really fulfill the royal law as expressed in this scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well” (Jas 2:8).
- D) “But be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves” (Jas 1:22).

QUESTION 2

According to James 1, God is the source of temptations, and He brings them upon us for our own good. *True or False?*

QUESTION 3

What does James say is the best measure of one’s spirituality?

- A) Whether you have matured enough to teach others (Jas 3:1)
- B) The quality of your speech (Jas 3:2)
- C) How often you pray for others (Jas 2:16)
- D) The amount of joy and laughter you have in your life (Jas 4:8-10)

QUESTION 4

James uses Job as a great example of someone who persevered in trials. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

What word best characterizes Paul’s tone in addressing the Galatians?

- A) Thanksgiving
- B) Gracious
- C) Condescending
- D) Severe

QUESTION 6

In Galatians, Paul says that salvation comes through faith but that sanctification must also involve works of the Law. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

In Galatians, Paul says that keeping the Law sets aside the work of Christ. *True or False?*

QUESTION 8

According to Galatians 3:19-20, the Law is weaker than the Promise because it came through the mediation of _____.

- A) Humans
- B) Apostles
- C) Angels
- D) Priests

QUESTION 9

In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul urges those who are living according to the Spirit to keep the Law as a supplemental guide to their spiritual living. *True or False?*

QUESTION 10

What does Paul say is the dominant goal of the false teachers in Galatians 5–6?

- A) To accumulate as many followers as possible
- B) To become apostles like those in Jerusalem
- C) To avoid being persecuted for the Cross
- D) To lead the Galatians astray

Lesson 6 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

- B. Ethical teachings
- D. Faith as an action
- E. Jewish character of faith

QUESTION 2

“But be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves.”

QUESTION 3

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching on Trials</i>
James 1:2-4	Faith accepts trials with joy.
James 1:5-8	Faith accepts trials with prayer for wisdom.
James 1:9-11	Faith accepts trials with humility.
James 1:12	Faith accepts trials with hope of reward.
James 1:13-18	Faith accepts trials without blaming God.
James 1:13-15	Temptations stem from one’s own evil desires.
James 1:16-18	God cannot be blamed for trials.

QUESTION 4: *Your answer*

QUESTION 5: Rahab

Abraham showed his faith by offering Isaac on the altar, and Rahab showed her faith by protecting Israel’s spies, since faith apart from works is not seen by others (Jas 2:20-26).

QUESTION 6

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Illustration</i>
James 3:3	We put bits in horse’s mouths to control them.
James 3:4	The pilot steers his ship by a tiny rudder.
James 3:5-6	A small flame sets a huge forest ablaze.
James 3:7-8	The tongue is harder to tame than any animal.
James 3:9-11, 12	Springs don’t give both fresh and bitter water.
James 3:12	A fig tree cannot produce olives.

QUESTION 7

- B. Spiritually poor and materially rich

Those with material goods in this world tend to oppress good but powerless people and lack dependence on God.

QUESTION 8: False

A tone of severity appears even in the first verse, which lacks the customary salutation. The letter lacks any words of thanksgiving for, or praise of, the readers e.g., they are never referred to as saints. This reflects the gravity of the issue that he addresses, the gospel itself. However, some touch of affection does eventually appear (Gal 4:12-15, 19-20).

QUESTION 9

“...yet we know that no one is justified by the works of the law but by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by the

faithfulness of Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.”

QUESTION 10

Your answer should be similar to the following: He showed his independence by describing his direct call by Christ, his interdependence through the apostles’ approval of him at Jerusalem, and his indictment of one of them in his public rebuke of Peter.

QUESTION 11: True

Paul’s essential point is that the life he now lives is because of the faithfulness of Christ who loved him and gave Himself for him. Paul does not “set aside God’s grace, because if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ died for nothing” (Gal 2:21).

QUESTION 12

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching</i>
Galatians 3:1-5	Sanctification and reception of the Holy Spirit are by faith.
Galatians 3:6-7	Abraham was justified by faith, not the Law.
Galatians 3:8-14	Faith brings blessing while the Law brings a curse.
Galatians 3:15-18	Faith came before the Law.
Galatians 3:19-20	The Law was weakened because it came through angels.
Galatians 3:22	The Law imprisoned everyone under sin.
Galatians 4:1-11	Legalism is a step back from enjoying our privileges as children of God.

QUESTION 13: False

Since the Galatians received the Holy Spirit by faith, not the law, their sanctification must be by the same means. This reveals that their own experience affirms salvation by faith (Gal 3:1-5). To think otherwise is foolishness and bewitchery!

QUESTION 14: False

Paul actually contrasts Spirit and law. He also says that there is no law against showing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

QUESTION 15: Persecution

This persecution comes from teaching and bearing the cross of Christ as a basis of blessing before God. This persecution does not come from teaching or doing the works of the law.

QUESTION 16: *Your answer*

QUESTION 17

James: Faith Revealed Through Works

Instructions						
Faith Rejoices in Difficulty	Faith Obeys the Word	Faith Avoids Favoritism	Faith Produces Works	Faith Speaks Wisely	Faith Produces Humility	Faith Triumphs
James 1:1-18	James 1:19-27	James 2:1-13	James 2:14-16	James 3	James 4:1– 5:6	James 5:7-20

QUESTION 18

Galatians: Major Teachings

Instructions						
Paul Called as an Apostle	Paul Rebukes Peter	Abraham Believed God	Allegory on Sinai and Heavenly Jerusalem	Walking According to the Spirit	Carrying Others Burdens	
Galatians 1	Galatians 2	Galatians 3	Galatians 4	Galatians 5	Galatians 6	

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21: *Your answer*

Lesson 6 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1

D. “But be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves” (Jas 1:22).

QUESTION 2: False

QUESTION 3

B. The quality of your speech (Jas 3:2)

QUESTION 4: True

QUESTION 5

D. Severe

QUESTION 6: False

QUESTION 7: True

QUESTION 8

C. Angels

QUESTION 9: False

QUESTION 10

C. To avoid being persecuted for the Cross

Lesson 6 Articles

Introduction to James

Circumstances

Date: James was written before AD 49, the year of his death. This date makes it the earliest epistle in the New Testament. This study uses AD 44–47.

Origin/Recipients: James specifies the readers as “the twelve tribes in the dispersion” (Jas 1:1). Though not stated, James was likely written in Jerusalem to the Jewish Christians throughout the Roman Empire.

Occasion: The evidence in the book reveals details about the recipients that help us to discern the occasion. The believers met regularly in the synagogue (Jas 2:2). The rich people exploited the poor within the congregation (Jas 1:9, 10; 2:1-13; 5:1-6). This exploitation resulted in complaints and quarrels with each other (Jas 4:11-12; 5:9-10; see also Jas 4:1-3). James was concerned that the believers were materialistic and worldly (Jas 4:4-17). Because the believers lacked compassion, he wrote about a faith that is shown through good deeds (Jas 2:14-26).

Purpose: The church’s deplorable conditions prompted James to write an epistle to plea for vital Christianity. The purpose is to present an ethical discourse that forces believers to examine whether or not their attitudes and actions demonstrate their faith in Christ. The two key concepts in James are to “be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves” and to declare that “faith without works is useless” (Jas 1:22; 2:20).

Characteristics

The letter of James is unique from a literary standpoint, based on the following:

The **structure** is difficult to outline because of the presence of several pithy sayings.

The **emphases** are varied:

- *Ethical emphasis:* The epistle contains little formal theology, but does have several doctrinal statements (Jas 1:12-13, 17-18; 2:1, 10-13, 19; 3:9; 4:5; 5:7-9). Both the ethical emphasis and the pastoral admonitions are reflected in James’ frequent uses of imperative verbs. There are over fifty direct commands in James’ 108 verses.
- *Jewish emphasis:* James quotes the Old Testament five times (Jas 1:11; 2:8, 11, 23; 4:6). There are also indirect allusions to Jewish concepts (Jas 1:11; 2:21, 23, 25; see also Jas 3:9; 4:6; 5:2, 11, 17, 18).
- *Sermon on the Mount emphasis:* The book has many similarities with Jesus’ teaching and His Sermon on the Mount.
- *Nature emphasis:* The epistle uses more than thirty references to nature to illustrate the truth.

James shows **unity** throughout the book. All five chapters call for maturity and holiness. Believers should be holy in trials, service, speech, submission, and sharing.

Initially, it is difficult to determine James’ **theme**. At first glance, the letter lacks structure and continuity. Topics change abruptly, but they are introduced with “my brothers” (Jas 1:2, 19; 2:1, 14; 3:1; 4:11). New topics are also introduced with “now listen” in James 4:13 and 5:1 (NIV), and with a question (Jas 4:1; 5:13, NIV).

However, with a thorough reading and a knowledge of how James changes topics, the theme becomes clear: living faith is revealed through active works, which include the following:

- Joyful attitude during trials and temptations (Jas 1:1-18)
- Obedience to God's Word (Jas 1:19-27)
- Impartiality without judging social status (Jas 2:1-13)
- Good deeds (Jas 2:14-26)
- Wise control of speech (Jas 3)
- Humility rather than worldliness (Jas 4:1-5:6)
- Patient and prayerful suffering (Jas 5:7-20)

James's main concern is for his readers to not be hypocrites but for them to grow in maturity and in holiness (Jas 1:8; 3:10). In effect, he says, "If you say you believe in Christ, then act like you do!"

James' **place in the canon** of the New Testament was debated until the fourth century. The debate arose from the uncertainty that James wrote the epistle. Internal and external evidence upholds James as an apostolic epistle worthy of its place in the New Testament canon.

The **key verse** for James is "Be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves" (Jas 1:22).

Summary statement of the book:

James exhorts the early Jewish believers throughout the Roman Empire that Christian faith is shown through works. He teaches the believers to replace their hypocrisy with good deeds, which are done in maturity and in holiness.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

James 1 & 2

This book shows the ways that faith is revealed through works.

James Faith is Revealed Through Works						
Rejoices in difficulty	Obeys the Word	Avoids favoritism	Produces works	Speaks wisely	Produces humility	Triumphs
1:1-18	1:19-27	2:1-13	2:14-26	3	4:1-5:6	5:7-20
Salutation Trials Temptations	Listening Anger Obedience Speech Compassion Purity	Discrimination Materialism Egalitarianism	Meeting Needs Validation	Influence Untamable Use Wisdom	Conflict Judging Presumption	Patience Prayer Confrontation
Jerusalem						
AD 44-47						

Faith rejoices in difficulty (Jas 1:1-18).

In his greeting to the Jewish believers, James identifies himself as God's servant and not as Jesus' brother (Jas 1:1). In this, he models the humility that he urges others to have.

James shows how faith enables believers to persevere with joy—and to accept trials joyfully and humbly (Jas 1:2-18). In this letter, we find the following five tips for enduring trials with joy:

1. Remember God's *purpose* for trials is to develop Christ's character (Jas 1:2-4).
2. Remember to *pray* for wisdom in faith (Jas 1:5).
3. Remember your *position* before God with *humility* because God's approval is superior to wealth during difficulty (Jas 1:9-11).
4. Remember God's *promise* of reward because God blesses perseverance and love (Jas 1:12).
5. Remember to *praise* God without blaming Him because He only gives good gifts (Jas 1:13-18).

Faith obeys the Word (Jas 1:19-27).

Believers should not only listen to the Bible's teaching, but also they should rid themselves of ill will by letting God's Word take root in them (Jas 1:19-21). Obey the Word quickly before forgetting what it reveals (Jas 1:22-25).

James shows how to please God through obedience (Jas 1:26-27) by:

1. Controlling your speech so that you will not be deceived and useless for God (Jas 1:26).
2. Caring for widows, orphans, and other vulnerable persons (Jas 1:27).
3. Keeping yourself from being stained by worldly values (Jas 1:27).

Faith avoids favoritism (Jas 2:1-13).

James commands believers to never favor the rich (Jas 2:1). He gives the following five reasons why churches should not discriminate by social status (Jas 2:2-13):

1. Favoring the rich indicates impure motives (Jas 2:2-4).
2. Favoring the rich insults the poor, whom God honors (Jas 2:5-6).
3. Favoring the rich gives more approval oppressors than to the oppressed (Jas 2:6-7).
4. Favoring the rich ignores God's command to love others as we love ourselves (Jas 2:8-11).
5. Favoring the rich brings down God's judgment (Jas 2:12-13).

Faith produces works (Jas 2:14-26).

A common misunderstanding of this section of James is that it teaches salvation by works. Properly understood, this section of James teaches what genuine faith looks like. He provides a practical argument that faith should produce works (Jas 2:14-17). Faith that does not have good deeds cannot preserve the life of anyone (Jas 2:14). To give a blessing with no compassion will not provide for a need, since faith without action is dead, and unable to help anyone (Jas 2:15-17).

James argues that having a faith with no deeds makes one no better than the demons, who also believe that God exists (Jas 2:18-19). He finishes his point with a biblical argument that uses two Old Testament examples, which prove faith produces works:

1. Abraham showed his faith by offering Isaac on the altar (Jas 2:20-24).
2. Rahab showed her faith by protecting Israel's spies (Jas 2:25-26).

The key verse of this section is James 2:24, “You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.”

James does not contradict Paul’s doctrine of salvation by faith alone. Paul wrote about faith that precedes salvation whereas James addresses the faith that follows it.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

James 3, 4, & 5

Faith speaks wisely (Jas 3).

James urges believers to control their speech (Jas 3:1-8). He admonishes teachers to be careful in what they say, but he acknowledges that everyone makes mistakes. He notes that the tongue is small, but powerful. He compares the tongue both to a bit in a horse’s mouth and to the rudder of a ship. In both examples, small parts direct the whole for good. In contrast, a tongue can cause a disaster, like a spark which starts a forest fire. He describes the task of disciplining the tongue as more difficult than that of taming an animal.

James notes the contradictory way people speak, they allow both compliments and insults to come from their mouths. That same tongue both praises God and curses people (Jas 3:9-10). The tongue reveals what is on someone’s heart. It is compared to a fig tree, which cannot produce olives, and a saltwater body, which cannot produce fresh water (Jas 3:11-12).

Faith produces the necessary wisdom for speech (Jas 3:13-18). Worldly wisdom sparks pride and envy that hurts others (Jas 3:13). God’s wisdom is a humble, pure, and peace-loving wisdom, which benefits relationships (Jas 3:14-18).

Faith produces humility (Jas 4:1–5:6).

Faith leads to humility, not the worldliness of church conflict and judgment (Jas 4:1-12). Believers should not pridefully follow their evil desires, rather they should humbly submit to God (Jas 4:1-10). Evil desires lead to bad results, such as:

- Quarrels between believers (Jas 4:1)
- Murderous thoughts or actions (Jas 4:2)
- Envy and coveting what others possess (Jas 4:2)
- Not receiving necessities due to a failure to pray for them (Jas 4:2)
- Materialistic prayers that do not receive answers from God (Jas 4:3)

However, James tells the believers how to repent and how to restore their relationship with God. Ask God for strength to turn pride into humility (Jas 4:4-6). Submission to God brings honor from Him (Jas 4:7-10). Submitting to God and resisting Satan causes the devil to flee from that Christian (Jas 4:7). Drawing near to God with a pure and repentant heart shows a submissive heart (Jas 4:8-9). The result of true humility is being honored by God (Jas 4:10).

Another way to demonstrate the humility of faith is to refrain from judging others (Jas 4:11-12). Slander breaks the law’s command to “love your neighbor as you love yourself” (Jas 4:11; see Lev 19:18). God alone can judge according to the law of love because He is the giver, the interpreter, and the enforcer of the law (Jas 4:12).

Faith depends on God not on your ability to plan for an unknown future. The rich must learn to trust in Him as well, instead of their wealth (Jas 4:13–5:6). Believers must humbly submit their

plans to God's will (Jas 4:13-17). He will judge the rich who choose to use their wealth to oppress others (Jas 5:1-6).

James is not saying that all wealthy people act this way. There are four types of people, as shown by the following:

1. Spiritually poor and materially poor
2. Spiritually rich and materially rich
3. Spiritually rich and materially poor
4. Spiritually poor and materially rich

James addresses the final group: the wealthy who need to repent in order to avoid the consequences of their sin (Jas 5:1). The troubles that the rich will face in the future should motivate them to repent (Jas 5:2-3):

- Their wealth and nice clothes will be replaced with rags (Jas 5:2).
- Their investments will be worthless (Jas 5:3).
- Their retirement savings will not alleviate the pain of hell (Jas 5:3).

God will judge their sins:

- They cheat their employees (Jas 5:3-4).
- They spend money only on luxury (Jas 5:5).
- They oppress good but powerless people (Jas 5:6).

Faith triumphs through patiently suffering, praying in faith, and confronting in love (Jas 5:7-20).

In the final section of the letter, James comforts and encourages his readers to see triumphant faith in three ways. First, faith will triumph through patient suffering until Christ's return (Jas 5:7-12). James illustrates this patience with a farmer who patiently waits for rain to help his crops (Jas 5:7-8). Impatience can manifest itself in complaints about other Christians, leaving one open to immediate judgment (Jas 5:9).

The OT prophets and Job are good examples of patience in suffering (Jas 5:10-11). Isaiah served sixty-five years during the fall of Israel, and Jeremiah served forty-seven years during the fall of Judah. These men had God's blessing and all believers who persevere are blessed (Jas 5:11). Job is known for his perseverance, which God rewarded out of compassion and mercy (Jas 5:11). Job's example reminds believers to keep their word instead of making rash promises during a trial (Jas 5:12).

Faith also triumphs through the prayer of faith for healing (Jas 5:13-18). Believers should commit their trials to prayer (Jas 5:13). A joyful believer should praise God in song (Jas 5:13). A sick believer will be healed if the elders pray for and anoint him with oil (Jas 5:14-15). Mutual confession of sin and prayer among believers can heal sickness as well (Jas 5:16). Elijah's prayers to control rain prove that God answers the prayer of faith (Jas 5:16-18).

Lastly, faith is triumphant when one lovingly confronts erring believers (Jas 5:19-20). Christians reveal real faith when they restore wandering believers to faith (Jas 5:19). Restoring errant believers saves them from premature death and more sins (Jas 5:20).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to Galatians

Paul considered follow-up with a new church a high priority. He often visited churches of new believers that he had started. At the church in Galatia, the new believers were confused by the unauthorized, false Jewish teachers who came after Paul left. These false teachers, or Judaizers, sought to impose the Jewish Law upon the new Gentile Christians. The Galatian believers wondered if they were saved by following the Mosaic Law or by faith in Christ.

Galatians emphasizes the believer's freedom in Christ. Paul's purpose was threefold:

1. To defend his apostleship against the Judaizers (Gal 1-2)
2. To defend the essence of the gospel that is based in justification by faith alone (Gal 3-4)
3. To give practical exhortations of the believer's freedom in Christ.

Galatians Justification by Faith						
Judaizer Attack #1 "Paul teaches this doctrine by his own authority!"		Judaizer Attack #2 "This is a new teaching contrary to the OT!"		Judaizer Attack #3 "Teaching faith alone will encourage a sinful lifestyle!"		
Paul's Defense: "God called me and the 12 apostles affirmed this."		Paul's Defense: "Salvation has always been by faith—even in the OT."		Paul's Defense: "No, justification by faith naturally leads to godly living"		
Biographical		Theological		Practical		
1-2		3-4		5-6		
Upholds Apostleship		Upholds justification by faith		Upholds responsibilities		
Rebuke	Relationships	Affirmed	Illustrated	Balance	Service	Warning
1:1-9	1:10-2:21	3	4	5	6:1-10	6:11-18
Antioch of Syria						
Fall AD 49 (after first missionary journey)						

Circumstances

Origin/Recipients: The origin is not stated and the destination is "to the churches of Galatia" (Gal 1:2). This is the only Pauline letter that is addressed to multiple churches. He may have done this due to time constraints. The debated question is "Where were these churches?" The recipients were Gentiles, but the question is "Which Gentiles?" (Gal 4:8; 5:2; 6:12).

The letter was written to believers in Galatia.

Date: The best evidence supports the early date of AD 49. This makes Galatians the earliest Pauline letter.

Characteristics

Purpose: To convince the Galatians that since they were saved by grace, they are free from the law. Judaizers should not lead them astray by imposing their legalistic system.

Structure: There are three major sections in the book. This is different from Paul's other writings, Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, etc. that have only two sections.

Mood: Paul is severe from the beginning; he does not start with his typical thanksgiving and praise. However, some affection appears later in the book (Gal 4:12-15, 19-20).

Jerusalem visit: Paul visited Jerusalem to aid the depressed church in the famine (see Acts 11:27-30). However, some argue that the visit could be Paul's attendance at the Jerusalem Council (see Acts 15:1-29).

Key Verse: "...yet we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified" (Gal 2:16).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Paul Defends His Apostleship

Biographical: Paul defends his apostolic authority against the Judaizers who had infiltrated the Galatian churches with their false teaching. The Judaizers taught that Paul had invented justification by faith by his own authority (Gal 1-2).

Paul greets the Galatians as an authoritative apostle who was appointed by God. He does not offer thanksgiving for them (Gal 1:1-2), instead he denounces them for abandoning the gospel for the Judaizers' false teaching (Gal 1:6-9). Paul specifies that their teaching is not simply a variation of Christianity, but a completely different gospel (Gal 1:6). The nature of his curse points out that these heretics are not even Christians.

Paul defends his apostleship against the Judaizers by showing both his independence from and his interdependence with the other apostles (Gal 1:10-2:21). He is independent because Christ revealed Himself directly to Paul, and Paul received the gospel. Christ set him apart to preach to the Gentiles (Gal 1:10-16). Paul met the apostles three years later but was unknown in the churches of Judea (Gal 1:16-24).

Paul also affirms his interdependence with the apostles, since the famine visit was approved by the apostles at Jerusalem. The other apostles also taught justification by faith despite their different audiences (Gal 2:1-5). James, Peter, and John recognized both God's grace in Paul and his calling to minister to the Gentiles (Gal 2:6-10). He did not serve under these apostles. In fact, Paul rebuked Peter when he sought Jewish approval by refusing to eat with Gentiles, which contradicted the teaching of justification by faith (Gal 2:11-21). The life Paul lives now is because of the faithfulness of Christ (Gal 2:20). Paul did not "set aside God's grace, because if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ died for nothing" (Gal 2:21).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Paul Affirms Justification by Faith

Theological: Paul argues against the Judaizers' accusation that justification by faith was a new teaching. He illustrates salvation by faith with several different examples (Gal 3-4).

In the second section of this epistle, Paul emphasizes that salvation by faith is not a new teaching. This emphasis was necessary because new teachings were viewed suspiciously in Paul's time.

First, he compares the law to the Holy Spirit and to God's promise to convince the Galatians that justification is by faith (Gal 3):

- The Galatians' experience confirms salvation and sanctification by faith, because they received the Holy Spirit by faith (Gal 3:1-5).

- Abraham was justified by faith, so this doctrine has a scriptural foundation (Gal 3:6-14). Abraham's sons are justified by the faith that brings a blessing, while those who rely on the Law are cursed (Gal 3:6-12). Christ redeemed His followers from the curse by becoming the curse for them. He brought Abraham's blessing to all who receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Gal 3:13-14).
- The Law was given 430 years after God repeated to Jacob His original promise to Abraham (Gen 35:9-12; 46:14). During that time salvation was by faith. The establishment of the Law did not change the principle of salvation by faith. Instead, the Law led people to faith because it revealed their sins and their need for a Savior (Gal 3:15-29). The Law was also weakened because it came through angels and was not able to give life (Gal 3:19-29). The Law imprisoned everyone under sin so that the promise could be given through Christ to those people who believe (Gal 3:21-22).

The next chapter illustrates justification by faith to convince the Galatians that they need to abandon legalism (Gal 4):

- A son has more privileges than a slave, just as the believer is blessed instead of those under the Law (Gal 4:1-7). Legalism is a step back into paganism and enslavement (Gal 4:8-11).
- In order to encourage the Gentiles to show the same zeal for the truth, Paul reminds them of their commitment to him (Gal 4:12-20). Paul implies that the Galatians were lazy because they did not stand for the truth of the gospel.
- Paul interprets God's blessing on Isaac, representing the Abrahamic Covenant/faith, rather than on Ishmael, representing the Mosaic Covenant/law to reveal that his readers were operating under the wrong covenant (Gal 4:21-31). The believers, as children of promise, are persecuted by the Judaizers, the slaves, and the believers must cast out the Judaizers (Gal 4:29-31).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Paul Applies Salvation by Faith

Practical: By advocating a balanced perspective and service to others, Paul applies salvation by faith to Christian living (Gal 5–6).

Paul uses the last section of this letter to answer the Judaizers' attack. They claimed that teaching faith alone would encourage sin. Paul responded by urging a balance between discipline and unrestrained freedom. He wanted the Galatians to live by the Holy Spirit's direction, not by their sinful nature (Gal 4:29-31):

- Believers should not live according to the Law because it cuts them off from the benefits of Christ. They should live expectantly, in faith that works through love (Gal 5:1-6). The Galatians lived by faith before the arrival of the Judaizers, who tried to avoid persecution that comes from both bearing the Cross of Christ (Gal 5:7-12). Freedom must not indulge the flesh, rather it must both love and serve others (Gal 5:13-15).
- Believers should live under the Holy Spirit's direction rather than the direction of the sinful nature. Those people who practice the deeds of the flesh will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal 5:16-21). There is no law against living according to the Spirit. Those people who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh and its desires (Gal 5:22-23). Freedom from the law is not freedom from responsibility. Paul commands the

Galatians to minister to Christians who are sinning, believers who are burdened, and teachers who share the Word (Gal 6:1-10).

Paul closes his letter with a warning about the impure motives of false teachers. He contrasts their motives with his own pure motives convincing the believers that they should focus on grace (Gal 6:11-18). To avoid persecution, the Judaizers forced legalistic practices on believers (Gal 6:11-13). Paul emphasizes the work of the Cross, which transforms people into new creations, and he was willing to suffer for this message (Gal 6:14-18). While the Cross brings persecution, it also brings freedom and eternal life!

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 7: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: The Rapture and the Tribulation

Lesson Introduction

How soon after leading people to Christ do you tell them to prepare for Christ's return? How old must our children be before we share with them that Jesus is coming back? Often the doctrine of eschatology, the study of last things, is the last subject that we study and teach others.

The apostle Paul did not share our hesitancy in talking about Christ's return. He discussed it early in his ministry to others. When Paul and his coworkers, Silas and Timothy, planted the church in Thessalonica, they felt like nurses or parents caring for children (1 Thess 2:7, 11). Their parental care led them to speak often to these new believers about Christ's return, even though the church planters were with this congregation only three months. Of course, the Thessalonian believers still had questions about Christ's return, even after Paul and his friends left. Paul's written answers to these questions have become our two letters to the Thessalonians in the NT.

What does Paul tell them? Each of the five chapters of 1 Thessalonians closes with an exhortation in regard to the Lord's return (1 Thess 1:10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23-24). Paul obviously wanted them to know about Christ's second coming! He had heard reports that the Thessalonians were remaining faithful to the gospel despite persecution, so he praised them and expressed great pride at their spiritual growth. Yet he also wrote to correct their ideas and behavior in areas where

Thessalonica



Athens



they needed guidance. In 1 Thessalonians, he answers their questions about what happens to the Christians who die before the Lord's return. He also urges them to be pure in their sexual choices, to be forgiving in their relationships within the church, and to be upright as they relate to unbelievers. In 2 Thessalonians, Paul gives further explanation about the timing of the Lord's return. He also tells the church to discipline any members who refuse to work because they just want to wait for Christ to take them away!

Corinth



In this lesson you will learn from the Thessalonian epistles how you and your church can grow in spiritual maturity as you learn more about Christ's return.

Historical Context of 1 Thessalonians:

After some Jews in Thessalonica incited the crowds against Paul, he left Silas and Timothy with the new church. Paul instructed them to meet him in Athens as soon as they could (Acts 17:11-16). They did so, but Paul then sent Timothy back to the Thessalonians (1 Thess 3:1-2), and he sent Silas back to Macedonia, probably Philippi. Both men rejoined Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5), and they are mentioned with Paul in his salutation (1

Thess 1:1). Timothy brought the good news that the Thessalonians, despite persecution, had remained true to the Lord (1 Thess 3:6). Paul mentions, time and again, how happy this news made him (1 Thess 1:2-10; 2:19-20; 3:6, 8-10), especially since he thought that Satan might have undone his work in them (1 Thess 3:5). Therefore, Paul wrote to encourage the church still more. He urges them to press on in growth because of the Lord's return. Timothy probably informed him of some questions from the church, so Paul also answers these questions in his letter.

Historical Context of 2 Thessalonians: Paul planted the Thessalonian church during his second missionary journey. The historical and chronological setting for Paul's ministry at Thessalonica looks something like this:

Chronology for Paul's Mission at Thessalonica

Date	Event
November 50–January 51	Paul plants the Thessalonian church.
February–March 51	Paul ministers in Berea, Athens, and Corinth.
April/May 51	Silas and Timothy report to Paul in Corinth.
Early Summer 51	Paul sends 1 Thessalonians from Corinth.
Mid Summer 51	The carrier of 1 Thessalonians reports back to Paul.
Late Summer 51	Paul sends 2 Thessalonians from Corinth.
September 52	Paul departs from Corinth.

Only a few months after writing 1 Thessalonians, Paul received news, probably from the courier, of problems that remained unresolved by his first letter. The persecution of the believers had increased (2 Thess 1:3-10), false teachers had taught that the Day of the Lord had already come (2 Thess 2:1-12), and some of the Thessalonian Christians had become idle as they simply waited

for Christ to return (2 Thess 3:6-15). Therefore, Paul decided to write the church again so that he could help the believers with these difficulties.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Live out a Christian lifestyle based on the imminent return of Christ
- Understand the imminence of the Rapture and the basic facts about the Day of the Lord
- Set for yourself the Christian goal to be blameless before Christ at His coming
- Proclaim how to live with faith, love, and endurance at a high spiritual level, as the Thessalonian church lived
- Follow Paul's personal example of spreading the gospel, despite persecution and suffering, instead of living for personal gain

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

Topic 2: Paul's Innocence of Greed (1 Thess 1–3)

Topic 3: Principles of Growth (1 Thess 4–5)

Topic 4: Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

Topic 5: Tribulation Corrections (2 Thess 1–3)

Topic 6: The Rapture and the Day of the Lord

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

While trying to repair a relationship, have you ever written a letter to a friend? With anguish, you choose each word carefully so that you can avoid hurting the person's feelings. Paul had recently written a letter like this to the Galatians.

In contrast, it must have been a delight for Paul to write this letter to the new converts in Thessalonica! They were running the race well, and Paul wanted to encourage them. In this type of letter, words are still chosen carefully but for a completely different reason: to be sure to encourage someone as much as possible. So, what were Paul's praises for the Thessalonians? And, what teachings did they still need?

Choosing Every Word Carefully



1 Thessalonians Preparation for the Rapture					
Innocence of Greed			Principles for Growth		
1–3			4–5		
Personal			Practical		
Silence slanders			Strengthen stand		
Historical			Teaching		
Reflections			Exhortations		
Looking back			Looking forward		
Commendation 1:1-10	Conduct 2:1-16	Concern 2:17–3:13	Love 4:1-12	Eschatology 4:13–5:11	Church life 5:12-28
"You're great!"	"I'm innocent"	"I care for you"	"Please God"	"Be comforted but watchful"	"Live holy"
Corinth					
Early Summer AD 51 (on second missionary journey)					

Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians has two major sections. Each section shows how believers should live until Christ's return. Paul first uses himself as an example of proper conduct until the Lord returns (1 Thess 1–3). In this section, he argues for his sincere motives in establishing the church. He defends himself against the false attacks of people in the city who had accused him of being concerned only with money and prestige (1 Thess 2:3-9).

Paul then gives principles for growth until the Lord's return (1 Thess 4–5). Timothy had likely reported that the Thessalonians had several questions about relationships and eschatology—especially death as it relates to the second coming of Christ. So Paul responds with instruction on living to please God (1 Thess 4:1-12), on eschatological issues (1 Thess 4:13–5:11), and on church life (1 Thess 5:12-22).

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article "Introduction to 1 Thessalonians" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verse: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13.

QUESTION 1

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the proposed purpose for 1 Thessalonians in the right-hand column.

Reference	Proposed Purpose
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; 3:6-13	To teach about the Lord's imminent return
1 Thessalonians 2:17–3:5; 2:2-6	To answer doctrinal questions
1 Thessalonians 3:1-13; 5:16-18	To instruct them in healthy church life
1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11	To grow in Christ
1 Thessalonians 5:12-15	To defend himself
1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23-24	To urge steadfastness during persecution

While each purpose above finds support at some point in the letter, the only common theme that appears throughout it is the Lord's return, or the Rapture.

QUESTION 2

Please write 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 from memory.

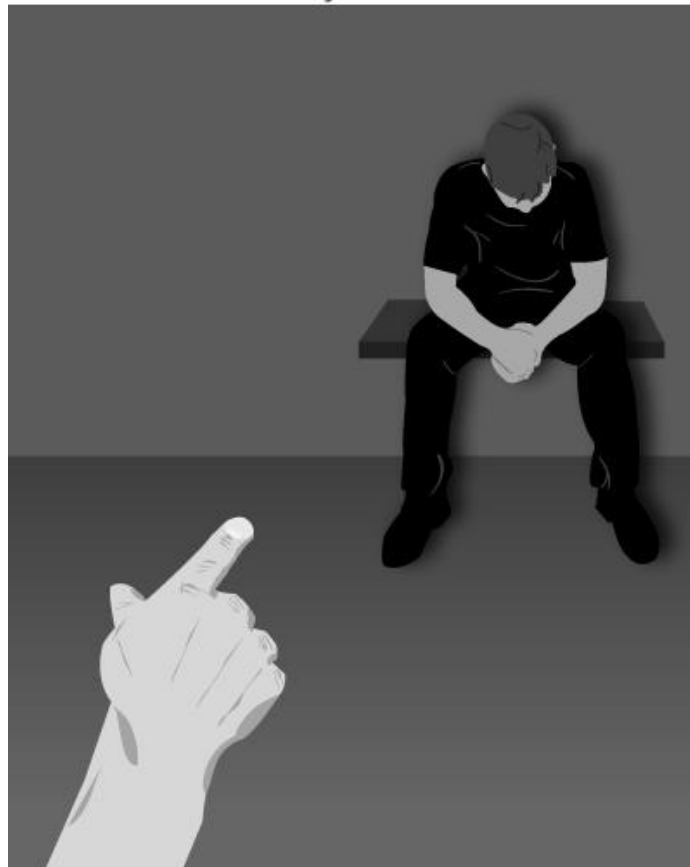
Topic 1 Key Points:

- Teaching about the Rapture is the common theme of every chapter in 1 Thessalonians.
- The key verse teaches us to abound in love for each other now so that we can be blameless before God when Jesus comes again.

Topic 2: Paul's Innocence of Greed (1 Thess 1–3)

Have you ever been falsely accused of wrongdoing? When I was a child of six or seven, I remember being falsely accused of theft by a clerk in a store. Though I visited that store frequently before this incident, I never again set foot in that store.

Falsely Accused



Paul knew what it was like to be falsely blamed. His opponents in Thessalonica wrongly accused him of starting the church to get money for himself (1 Thess 2:5; see also 2 Cor 11:7-9; 12:13-18). However, the true situation when Paul was with the Thessalonians was different. He worked

as a tentmaker to support himself financially, even though he was entitled to support as a worker in the gospel (1 Thess 2:7-9).

Paul loved and cared for the church deeply. Though he had the right to flex his apostolic authority, how would he approach this issue? He defended himself not for the sake of his reputation but so that his message would not be discredited. He also wanted the Thessalonians to follow his example and not be dependent on others, so he gave them instructions on how to be upright even as they anticipated the Lord's imminent return.

- **1 Thessalonians: Preparation for the Rapture**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** Early summer AD 51 (on second missionary journey)
- **Key Word:** Rapture
- **Key Verse:** 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13
- **Summary Statement:** Paul prepares the Thessalonians for the Rapture by strengthening the church's doctrinal and relational foundation. He also defends himself against accusations that he started the church out of greed.
- **Application:** If He comes today, are you ready for the Lord's return?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Thessalonians 1–3.
- Please read the article “Innocence of Greed” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 3

Paul appealed to the Thessalonians to trust him because of his love for them rather than because of his apostolic _____.

QUESTION 4

Though a new church, the Thessalonians were living at a high spiritual level. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

How did Paul bring the gospel to the Thessalonians? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) By pleasing everyone possible
- B) As someone collecting a paycheck
- C) Through much persecution and suffering
- D) By caring for them as a parent

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Paul appealed to the Thessalonians from his parental concern for them rather than claiming his authority as an apostle.
- Paul praised the Thessalonians for their faithfulness, their endurance, and their hope, even though they were a new church.
- Paul spread the gospel through intense personal persecution and suffering, and not for personal riches.

Topic 3: Principles of Growth (1 Thess 4–5)



Sports fans are always pleased to see their team get off to a great start. But great starts are often tough to maintain. Even if the athletes are hard working and disciplined, they sometimes stop trying when they have a lot of victories, make money, or become famous. At those times, the coach has to keep the team trained and focused on their goal.

As an apostle, Paul was in a role similar to a coach, and the Thessalonians were one of his teams. With his letter, he wanted to remind them of the spiritual teaching that he had given them. The Thessalonians had started out well as a church, and Paul wanted them to continue with that same energy and spiritual power (1 Thess 1:5-10). They presented a great testimony to a watching world, and they had gained many converts, who were also effective witnesses. However, to keep winning converts, they would need to stay focused and to build their spiritual strength. In the final two chapters, Paul addresses the concerns that Timothy noted could derail their progress.

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Thessalonians 4–5.
- Please read the article “Principles for Church Growth” in the Articles section of this lesson.

QUESTION 6

In 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12, which sins did Paul warn the church about? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Sexual sin
- B) Worldliness
- C) Laziness
- D) Division
- E) Incest
- F) Ambition

QUESTION 7

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the main concern that these Thessalonians had about the Rapture was that those who were _____ in Christ might be at a disadvantage.

Asleep in Christ at the Rapture



QUESTION 8

Paul's command for believers is to be alert and to be ready for Jesus' return, since those He finds asleep, not a reference to death but to spiritual lethargy, will not "come to life together with him" (1 Thess 5:10). *True or False?*

Topic 3 Key Points:

- Paul instructs believers to work diligently and to be pure sexually.
- Believers who have already died will be resurrected and will fully participate with living believers in the Rapture.
- Believers asleep in the sense of being spiritually lethargic will also be caught up to be with Christ at the Rapture.

Topic 4: Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

The Thessalonians were Paul's crown of joy (1 Thess 2:19-20). Yet Paul had feared that Satan, sin, and sloth might cause them to stumble (1 Thess 2:18; 4:1-12), so he wrote his first letter to guide them. But the Thessalonians continued to be persecuted, so Paul wrote them again to encourage them (2 Thess 1:5-7).

Three Difficulties of the Thessalonians



Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians so that he could help the believers to overcome three difficulties that they were facing: increased persecution (2 Thess 1:3-10), false teaching that the Day of the Lord had already come (2 Thess 2:1-12), and idleness among some of the Thessalonians who were waiting for the Rapture (2 Thess 3:6-15). Paul encourages perseverance based upon the Thessalonians' future reward at the Day of the Lord (2 Thess 1). Also, he corrects their false notion of it (2 Thess 2), which had resulted in idleness (2 Thess 3). The main theme is how we should live in anticipation of the Day of the Lord.

This second letter was written within a few months of 1 Thessalonians in response to a falsified letter that said the Rapture had already occurred. How would Paul get this church back on course?

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article "Introduction to 2 Thessalonians" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verse: 2 Thessalonians 2:2-3.

QUESTION 9

Which of the following problems in 1 Thessalonians is still present and is addressed in 2 Thessalonians?

- A) Idleness
- B) Sexual sin
- C) Accusing Paul of greed
- D) Taking advantage of a brother

QUESTION 10

Please list the three signs that precede the Day of the Lord (2 Thess 2:3-7).

Topic 4 Key Points:

- Paul wrote to the Thessalonians again to encourage them to remain steadfast in spite of persecution.
- Paul presents correct teaching on Christ's return in order to correct the false information that the Thessalonians had received, which stated that the Day of the Lord had begun.
- Believers must work for a living rather than live off other Christians.
- Three signs precede the Day of the Lord: the apostasy, the revelation of the Antichrist, and the removal of the one who holds him back.

Topic 5: Tribulation Corrections (2 Thess 1–3)

False reports can be damaging if they are taken seriously. If you heard a report that a hurricane, a tornado, a flood, or a tsunami was headed toward the area where you live, you would probably stop everything that you were doing and get your family away as quickly as you could. If you found out when you returned that the disaster had not happened, you would be upset that you had left for no reason.

When the Thessalonians received the false reports saying that Jesus had already returned and that they had missed it, they lost hope. Some of the reports even appeared to have come from Paul, Silas, and Timothy (2 Thess 2:1-2). Paul writes to them again to explain that they should not act upon those false reports, as some believers had been doing by refusing to work.

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul had taught that the Rapture of the church was imminent (1 Thess 4:13-18). Yet in 2 Thessalonians, Paul said at least three definite signs will precede the Day of the Lord, which is a time of judgment of the wicked and of deliverance for the righteous (2 Thess 2:3-4). Because those signs had not yet occurred, the believers could know that they were not in the Day of the Lord, the Tribulation, and that they had not missed the Rapture (2 Thess 2:3-7). Misunderstanding the prophetic future threw this church into turmoil (2 Thess 2:2). It is important for us to understand it to avoid the same turmoil.

How will Paul respond to those people disturbing the Thessalonians by saying that they were already in the Day of the Lord? How can we address people today who teach that the Day of the Lord will precede the Rapture? What prophetic events are in our future? Note Paul's threefold response to correct the Thessalonians' doubts about his teaching of a pretribulational Rapture in the chart below.

2 Thessalonians Tribulation Corrections							
Persevere in persecution		Day still future			Discipline the idle		
1		2			3		
Emotional		Theological			Practical		
Encouragement in persecution		Explanation of the day			Exhortation in body life		
Discouraged believers		Disturbed believers			Disobedient believers		
Correction of perspective		Correction of doctrine			Correction of behavior		
Salutation 1:1-2	Reward vs. Judgment 1:3-12	Pretribulation teaching 2:1-2	Antichrist Prerequisite 2:3-12	Stand firm 2:13-17	Prayer requests 3:1-5	Discipline idle 3:1-5	Blessing given 3:6-18
Corinth							
Late Summer AD 51							

- **2 Thessalonians: Tribulation Corrections**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** AD 51
- **Key Word:** Tribulation
- **Key Verses:** 2 Thessalonians 2:2-3
- **Summary Statement:** Paul corrects the persecuted Thessalonians' misconception that the Day of the Lord, the Tribulation, had already begun. He exhorts perseverance among

the disheartened and industry among the idle to help them stand firm in correct doctrine despite false teachers.

- **Application:** Do you study and teach eschatology because you believe that it affects your behavior as a Christian?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 2 Thessalonians 1–3.
- Please read the article “Tribulation Corrections” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 11

Paul contrasts their persecutor’s eternal destruction by fire with which of the following?

- A) The Thessalonians’ current great salvation
- B) The believers’ great efforts at evangelism
- C) The saints’ glorification when Jesus returns
- D) The saints’ current position in the heavenly realms

So far we have seen that the key teaching in 2 Thessalonians relates to the Day of the Lord, or the Tribulation. But what specific truths did Paul want the Thessalonians to know about the Day of the Lord so that they would be grounded in their faith?

QUESTION 12

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching on the Day of the Lord in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Day of the Lord Teaching</i>
2 Thessalonians 2:2	The lawless man will claim to be God in the temple.
2 Thessalonians 2:3	Remember Paul’s teachings.
2 Thessalonians 2:4	The one who holds the lawless man back must be removed.
2 Thessalonians 2:5, 15	God will delude unbelievers who trust in lies.
2 Thessalonians 2:6-8	First the lawless man must be revealed.
2 Thessalonians 2:9-10	The lawless man will come by Satan’s power and Satan’s miracles.
2 Thessalonians 2:11-12	It had not yet arrived.

QUESTION 13

In 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15, what commands about idleness did Paul give the Thessalonians? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Remember Paul’s teachings.
- B) Keep away from the idle.
- C) Feed all who are hungry.
- D) Imitate the discipline of Paul.
- E) Work quietly.
- F) Regard the idle as enemies.

Topic 5 Key Points:

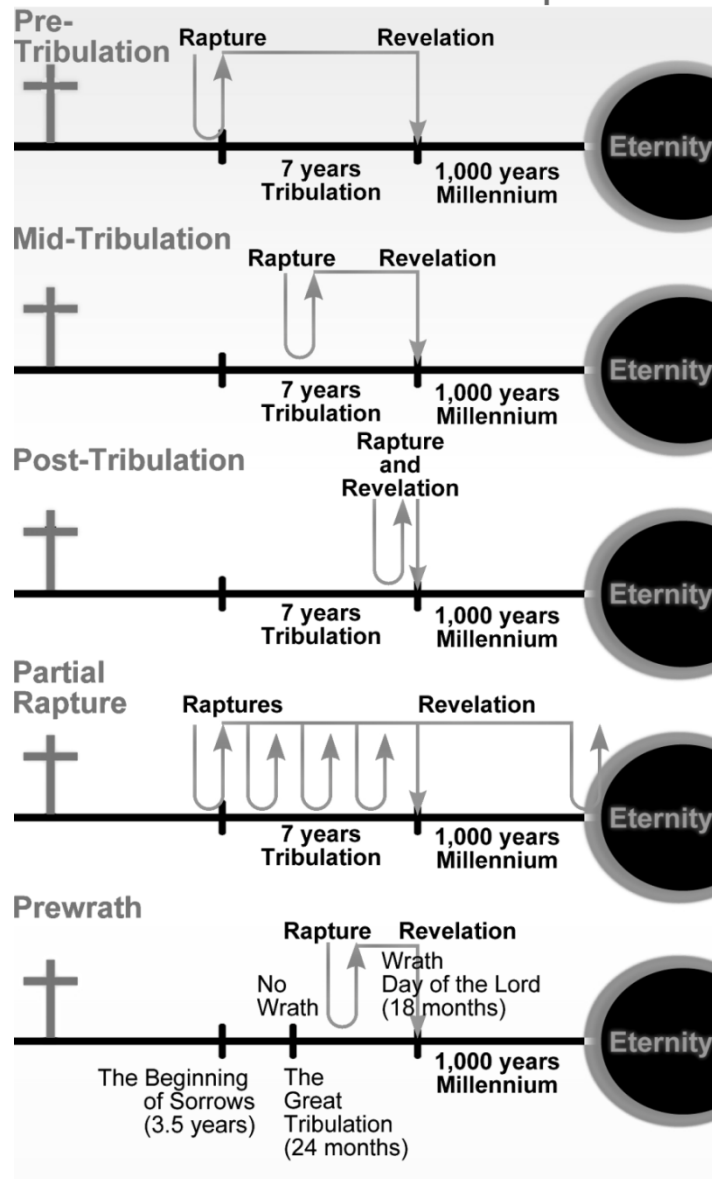
- Paul contrasts the Thessalonians' persecutors' destiny of eternal punishment apart from God with the Thessalonians' future eternal reward at Christ's return.
- Key activities in the Day of the Lord center around Satan's man of lawlessness, his boastings, and his power of deception.
- Believers should quietly work to be good examples to others around them, and members of the church should discipline those who refuse to work or who are busybodies.

Topic 6: The Rapture and the Day of the Lord

Christians differ in their understanding of the time of Christ's return at the Rapture in relationship to the Tribulation, or Daniel's seventieth "week" (Dan 9:27). Will He come before, during, or after this period of God's wrath? At least five views are held with the pretribulation and post-tribulation views being the most commonly accepted.

Some Christians teach that studying prophecy has no practical value, but Paul obviously felt differently. In every chapter of 1 Thessalonians he mentions the Rapture (1 Thess 1:10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23-24). Also, the central teaching of 2 Thessalonians is the Day of the Lord, which will follow the Rapture (2 Thess 2). In fact, seventeen of the twenty-seven NT books teach about the Lord's return.

Views on the Time of the Rapture



Why did Paul spend so much time on eschatology? He said that Christ's return motivates us to live a holy life now (1 Thess 3:11-13), encourages those of us who have lost loved ones (1 Thess 4:18), motivates us to work quietly (1 Thess 4:11-12; 2 Thess 3:6-15), and saves us from God's wrath (1 Thess 5:4-11).

Hope is a key Christian virtue, along with faith and love (1 Cor 13:13). When people lose hope, they tend to give up, to become ill, to stop working, and in extreme cases, to commit suicide. It is difficult to live for the Lord without hope. Paul said this about the resurrection that "if the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor 15: 32).

Christ's return for us is the ultimate hope for believers. The first time the Rapture was noted, Christ said:

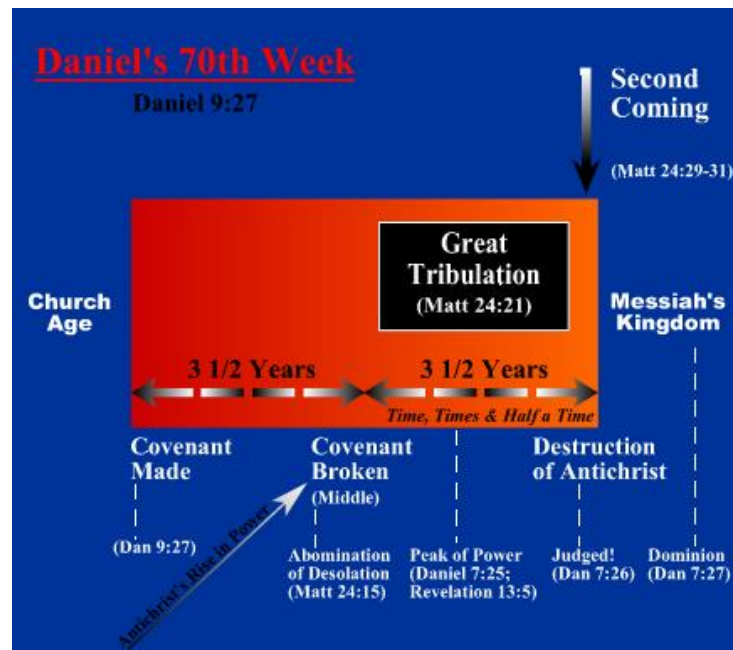
Do not let your hearts be distressed. You believe in God; believe also in me.
There are many dwelling places in my Father's house. Otherwise, I would have

told you. I am going away to make ready a place for you. And if I go and make ready a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that where I am you may be too. (Jn 14:1-3)

Even so, come Lord Jesus!

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “The Rapture and Day of the Lord” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.



QUESTION 14

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching in the right-hand column about why pretribulationists teach that the Rapture of the church will precede the Tribulation.

Reference	Pretribulationist Teaching
Revelation 3:10	The one who holds him back will be removed.
2 Thessalonians 6-8	The church will never come under God's wrath.
Revelation 4-19	Christ promised to keep the church from the hour of testing, but those who live on earth, Christ's enemies, will undergo testing.
1 Thessalonians 1:10	In these chapters the church is not mentioned.
1 Thessalonians 5:2-11	It is imminent; the Day of the Lord comes like a thief.

QUESTION 15

The term used to describe the coming of the Rapture, which means there are no signs that must come first, is _____.

QUESTION 16

What are the three main aspects given for the definition of the Day of the Lord?

Topic 6 Key Points:

- Many passages in the Bible support the pretribulational Rapture view.
- The Rapture is imminent, which means it could happen at any moment because there are no signs that must precede it.
- The Day of the Lord is a time when God judges the wicked, delivers the righteous, and establishes His kingdom.

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference from 1 & 2 Thessalonians at the bottom of each column.

Major Teachings in Thessalonians					
	Instructions				
Paul Reports the False Teacher's Destiny					
Paul Instructs about the Idle					
Paul Instructs about the Antichrist					
Paul Instructs about the Rapture					
Paul Sends Timothy for News	1 Thessalonians 3:1-13	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	2 Thessalonians 1:5-12	2 Thessalonians 2:1-12	2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

QUESTION 18

Open your Life Notebook and record your answers to the following questions. Paul tells the Thessalonians to work diligently and live quietly in order not to be dependent on anyone (1 Thess 5:12-15; see also 2 Thess 3:6-15). How does your lifestyle meet these standards? How can you and your church improve in following Paul's guidance?

QUESTION 19

Open your Life Notebook. In this lesson you learned different Christian views on the Rapture, the Tribulation, and Christ's return. Based on your readings, which of the ideas do you agree with, and why?

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

Lesson 7 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Which proposed theme of 1 Thessalonians appears in every chapter?

- A) Paul teaches about the Lord's return.
- B) Paul defends his apostleship.
- C) Paul answers doctrinal questions.
- D) Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to steadfastness.

QUESTION 2

Instead of appealing to the Thessalonians out of his apostolic authority, what feeling toward them does Paul mention to appeal to them?

- A) Respect
- B) Fear
- C) Love
- D) Disappointment

QUESTION 3

In 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13, Paul said that he did not spread the gospel for material gain, but instead, he spread it through his _____.

QUESTION 4

Technically, at the Rapture the dead in Christ are taken momentarily before the living Christians are taken. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

Paul says those people who are not watching for Christ will not be taken in the Rapture. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul lists three signs that precede the Day of the Lord: the apostasy, the revelation of the man of lawlessness, and:

- A) The signing of a peace treaty
- B) Rumors of wars
- C) Earthquakes and disasters
- D) The removal of the restrainer

QUESTION 7

In 2 Thessalonians 1, what aspect of the persecutors did Paul contrast with the Thessalonians?

- A) Their current positions
- B) Their eternal destinies
- C) Their perseverance
- D) Their superior knowledge

QUESTION 8

What did the Thessalonians do when they mistakenly thought they were in the Day of the Lord?

- A) They lost their hope and some stopped working.
- B) They remembered what Paul taught before.
- C) They kept on working.
- D) They sent a letter to Paul.

QUESTION 9

The term that means the Rapture can happen at any time without any preceding sign is _____.

QUESTION 10

In Scripture, the Day of the Lord refers to any time of God's judgment and NOT solely to the seven-year Tribulation followed by the Millennium. *True or False?*

Lesson 7 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Proposed Purpose</i>
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; 3:6-13	To grow in Christ
1 Thessalonians 2:17–3:5; 2:2-6	To defend himself
1 Thessalonians 3:1-13; 5:16-18	To urge steadfastness during persecution
1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11	To answer doctrinal questions
1 Thessalonians 5:12-15	To instruct them in healthy church life
1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23-24	To teach about the Lord’s imminent return

QUESTION 2

“And may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we do for you, so that your hearts are strengthened in holiness to be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.”

QUESTION 3: Authority

Paul appealed to them in love rather than emphasizing his authority as an apostle.

QUESTION 4: True

Paul immediately praised them for their “work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess 1:3).

QUESTION 5

C. Through much persecution and suffering

D. By caring for them as a parent

Part of Paul’s suffering for the gospel was his great concern for their welfare and his desire to encourage their faith so they may “be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints” (1 Thess 3:13).

QUESTION 6

A. Sexual sin

C. Laziness

Paul instructs the believers to love God through sexual purity, to love Christians by continually growing in mutual love, and to love unbelievers by earning their own living so as not to be a stumbling block to the watching world (1 Thess 4:1-12).

QUESTION 7

Correct answers include:

Dead

Asleep

Believers who are asleep in Christ, the dead, will be resurrected moments before the living believers receive their glorified bodies. What a comfort to those who had either lost loved ones in Christ or for those near death!

QUESTION 8: False

“For God did not destine us for wrath but for gaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that whether we are alert or asleep we will come to life together with him” (1 Thess 5:9-10). These verses teach that the Rapture is not solely for alert and watching believers.

QUESTION 9

A. Idleness

Some believers had stopped working (2 Thess 3:6-15), probably because they thought that either the time was short until the Rapture occurred or that they had missed the Rapture altogether.

QUESTION 10

Your answer should be similar to the following: These verses clearly state that three signs—the apostasy, the revelation of the Antichrist, and the removal of the one who holds him back—all precede the Day of the Lord.

QUESTION 11

C. The saints' glorification when Jesus returns

Suffering made them “worthy of the kingdom of God” which will occur “when Jesus Christ is revealed” and “glorified among his saints” so that “Jesus may be glorified” in them (2 Thess 1:5, 7, 10, 12).

QUESTION 12

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Day of the Lord Teaching</i>
2 Thessalonians 2:2	It had not yet arrived.
2 Thessalonians 2:3	First the lawless man must be revealed.
2 Thessalonians 2:4	The lawless man will claim to be God in the temple.
2 Thessalonians 2:5, 15	Remember Paul's teachings.
2 Thessalonians 2:6-8	The one who holds the lawless man back must be removed.
2 Thessalonians 2:9-10	The lawless man will come by Satan's power and Satan's miracles.
2 Thessalonians 2:11-12	God will delude unbelievers who trust in lies.

QUESTION 13

A. Remember Paul's teachings.

B. Keep away from the idle.

D. Imitate the discipline of Paul.

E. Work quietly.

They were not to feed an idle person (2 Thess 3:10). However, they were also not to regard him as an enemy but instead admonish him as a brother in Christ (2 Thess 3:15).

QUESTION 14

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Pretribulationist Teaching</i>
Revelation 3:10	Christ promised to keep the church from the hour of testing.
Revelation 3:10	The testing is for those who live on earth, Christ's enemies.
2 Thessalonians 2:6-8	The one who hold him back will be removed.
Revelation 4–19	In these chapters the church is not mentioned.
1 Thessalonians 1:10	The church will never come under God's wrath.
1 Thessalonians 5:2-11	It is imminent; the Day of the Lord comes like a thief.

QUESTION 15

Correct answers include:

Imminent

Imminence

Paul told the Thessalonians to fight spiritual lethargy, in order to prepare for Christ's unexpected arrival.

QUESTION 16

Your answer should be similar to the following: The Day of the Lord is “the time of Yahweh’s final intervention in history when He will judge the wicked, deliver the righteous, and establish His kingdom” (Hobart Freeman. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*. [Chicago: Moody, 1968], 146).

QUESTION 17

[illegible]

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

Lesson 7 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1

A. Paul teaches about the Lord's return.

QUESTION 2

C. Love

QUESTION 3

Correct answers include:

Suffering

Sufferings

Persecution

QUESTION 4: True

QUESTION 5: False

QUESTION 6

D. The removal of the restrainer

QUESTION 7

B. Their eternal destinies

QUESTION 8

A. They lost their hope and some stopped working.

QUESTION 9

Correct answers include:

Imminent

Imminence

QUESTION 10: True

Lesson 7 Articles

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

Circumstances

Date: The evidence from the letter suggests that Paul wrote it a few months after he left Thessalonica in the early summer of AD 51.

Origin/Recipients: Paul wrote from Corinth to the Thessalonians in Macedonia. He had established the church six months earlier.

Characteristics

Tone: In contrast to Galatians, 1 Thessalonians shows Paul's fond feelings for the believers in Thessalonica (1 Thess 1:2-3, 7-8; 2:17-20).

Rapture: Paul provides the fullest explanation of the Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11. The Rapture is the future event when Christ will return to take His followers to heaven. The English word for rapture is biblical and comes from the Latin for “caught up” (1 Thess 4:17). Paul believed that Christ's return was imminent, meaning that it could happen at any time. This is evident in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, when Paul includes himself in the Christians alive at the time of the Rapture. This view of the Rapture is pretribulational, a concept which is explained later in the lesson.

Length of Paul's stay: According to Luke, Paul reasoned in the synagogue in Thessalonica for three weeks (Acts 17:2). However, many arguments suggest a longer stay, such as the following:

- The Philippians sent Paul two gifts when he was in Thessalonica, which would have taken longer than three weeks to arrive (Phil 4:16).
- He stayed long enough to use his tent-making trade (1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:7-9).
- Paul's general practice was to preach until he got kicked out of the synagogue (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 19:8-9). According to Luke, this took three weeks, after which he taught the Gentiles.
- A ministry to the Gentiles would have taken a significant amount of time to establish because the Thessalonian Gentiles had an idol-worshipping background (1 Thess 1:9; 2:14-16).

Purpose: There are different interpretations of Paul's purpose for writing the letter:

1. Paul encouraged the people to continue to grow in Christ (1 Thess 1:1-10; 3:6-13).
2. Paul defended himself against some Thessalonians who accused him of insincerity, greed, and failing to return to the city (1 Thess 2:2-6; 2:17-3:5).
3. Paul urged the Thessalonians to remain steadfast in the face of persecution (1 Thess 3:1-3; 5:16-18).
4. Paul answered doctrinal questions that related to the believers who had died prior to the Lord's return (1 Thess 4:13-5:11).
5. Paul instructed the Thessalonians in aspects of healthy church life, such as sexual purity, respect for leadership, industriousness, and relationships (1 Thess 4:1-8; 5:12-15).

Each of these purposes finds support in the letter. However, the Lord's return is the only theme that appears throughout the letter. Each chapter ends with motivation based on the Rapture (1 Thess 1:10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23-24).

Summary statement of the book:

Paul prepares the Thessalonians for the Rapture by strengthening the church's doctrinal and relational foundations. He also defends himself against accusations that he started the church out of greed.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Innocence of Greed

Paul defends his motives for establishing the church by citing both his proper conduct and his genuine concern for them because of the imminence of the Rapture. He wants to silence slander from his opponents in Thessalonica who accuse him of greed (1 Thess 1–3).

Paul and his fellow workers Silas and Timothy greet the Thessalonians. He appeals to the believers out of love rather than out of authority (1 Thess 1:1). He praises them for their "work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope" (1 Thess 1:3). This reveals their high level of spirituality.

Paul commends the Thessalonians for imitating his lifestyle and for living in the power of the Holy Spirit. This verifies God's blessing on his ministry. The church and those reached through its ministry model how to live in view of Christ's imminent return (1 Thess 1:2-10).

Paul's conduct was not motivated by money, since he worked and cared for the believers as a parent (1 Thess 2:1-16). Thus, accusations of greed were false. Paul's message came through persecution and suffering (1 Thess 2:2).

Paul's concern proved his accusers wrong. He longed to see the believers and sent Timothy to encourage them to persevere (1 Thess 2:17–3:13). One way that Paul suffered for the gospel was by waiting to hear from them. He desired to encourage their faith so that they would be ready for the Lord's return (1 Thess 3:13).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Principles for Church Growth

Paul instructs the Thessalonian believers in order to strengthen the church's doctrinal and relational foundation, leading to growth until the Rapture (1 Thess 4–5).

The second part of the letter instructs believers to grow in the areas of love (1 Thess 4:1-12). They should demonstrate their love for God by being sexually pure, by continuing to grow in mutual love, and by working diligently and quietly, so that they would not be a stumbling block.

Paul comforts them with the assurance that dead believers will be present at the Lord's return (1 Thess 4:13-18; 5:10). He warns them as "sons of light" to be alert for the Rapture. The subsequent judgment on the "Day of the Lord" will come unexpectedly for those in darkness (1 Thess 5:1-11). The "Day of the Lord" period is noted by OT prophets (Zeph 3; Zech 14). Paul refers to the beginning of the seven years of tribulation followed by a millennial period of blessing. However, he only notes the judgment aspects here. This concept is studied in detail at the end of the lesson.

Paul concludes the letter by urging a healthy church life. In a healthy church, each person fulfills his or her responsibilities to leaders, to wounded people, to themselves, and in Spirit-led worship. This strengthens the church's relational foundation for continued growth (1 Thess 5:12-24). Paul has three requests and a benediction that show his genuine concern for the church (1 Thess 5:25-28).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

Circumstances

Date: Paul may have written this second letter in the summer of AD 51, just months after the first letter. The following ideas support this date:

- There is no record of Paul, Silas, and Timothy being together after their stay in Corinth (2 Thess 1:1).
- The same general conditions still exist in the church (see 1 Thess 4:11-12; 2 Thess 3:6-15).
- The second letter precedes Paul's visit in AD 56. It is likely that 2 Thessalonians followed the first letter by less than a year.

Origin/Recipients: Paul wrote from Corinth to the Thessalonian believers in the province of Macedonia. The congregation was still young, probably less than a year old.

The Day of the Lord

While 2 Thessalonians is the shortest of Paul's New Testament letters, it contains the most information about both the second coming of Christ and the Day of the Lord:

The Lord's return is the major theme in 2 Thessalonians 1–2. It is the most mentioned doctrine in the New Testament. On average, it is mentioned once in every chapter of the NT.

The Day of the Lord is taught in other texts as well (see Isa 13:6, 9; Joel 1–2, Zeph 1:14-16; Rev 6–20). It refers to both unsurpassed judgment on God's enemies and blessing on His children.

Summary statement of the book:

Paul corrects the persecuted Thessalonians' misconception that the Day of the Lord had already begun. He urged both perseverance among the disheartened and industry among the idle.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Tribulation Corrections

Paul encourages the Thessalonian believers to persevere because their persecutors will be judged at the Day of the Lord. He demonstrates his deep concern for the disheartened among them (2 Thess 1).

Paul, with Silas and Timothy, directly addresses the Thessalonians and appeals to the believers from his deep concern rather than from his apostolic authority (2 Thess 1:1-2). Paul commends their faithful perseverance, which makes them "worthy of the kingdom of God" (2 Thess 1:4-5). He encourages them to persevere by reminding them of their coming reward for their progress.

They will not be punished like their persecutors (2 Thess 1:3-12). Paul encourages them that their suffering will be rewarded in their glorification at Christ's return (2 Thess 1:12).

Paul corrects the Thessalonians' misconception, which came from the false teachers, that the Day of the Lord had already occurred. He teaches that the Antichrist must be revealed first, so the church can see that they have not missed this event (2 Thess 2).

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to correct, not to comfort, the believers. The main correction centered on their persecution being so intense that they thought it was the Day of the Lord. In chapter 2, Paul calls this belief a false teaching. He warns the believers against false teachers that claimed Paul had changed his view on the timing of the Day of the Lord (2 Thess 2:1-2). Paul teaches that three events must come before the Day of the Lord (2 Thess 2:3-12):

- The professing church will depart from the earth before the Day of the Lord takes place, and only an apostate church will be left behind (2 Thess 2:3).
- The Antichrist will reveal himself to discerning believers before the Day of the Lord begins (2 Thess 2:3-4). In Daniel 9:27, he reveals himself by signing a covenant with Israel.
- The restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit in the church will be removed from the earth, which will allow the Antichrist to rule unchallenged in the Day of the Lord (2 Thess 2:5-7).

Paul notes that the Antichrist's rule will be supported both by fake miracles and by a powerful delusion sent by God. This will be destroyed at Christ's return at the end of the Tribulation (2 Thess 2:8-12).

However, there is a problem in reference to the Day of the Lord. If the Rapture can happen at any time, and it will be followed by the Day of the Lord, then how can this "day" be preceded by three signs? The three signs are the apostasy, the revelation of the Antichrist, and the removal of the one who holds him back (2 Thess 2:3-12).

At first, this may look like support for the Rapture after the Tribulation. However, the Tribulation does not begin with the Rapture. It begins when the Antichrist signs a covenant with Israel (Dan 9:27). According to the passage from 2 Thessalonians, the three signs will come before the beginning of the Tribulation. This means it could be days, weeks, or months after the Rapture. No signs precede the Rapture, but three signs precede the Day of the Lord after the Rapture occurs.

Paul thanks God that the Thessalonians will not suffer through the Day of the Lord but will share in Christ's glory. He prays that their practice of faith will stand firm (2 Thess 2:13-17). Paul comforts their hearts and strengthens them to do good things (2 Thess 2:16-17).

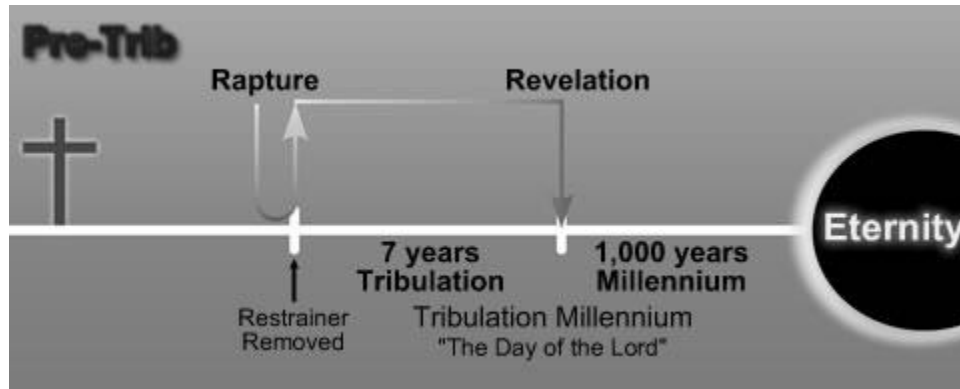
Paul warns the church to discipline the idle believers who are living off other people's work as they wait for Jesus' return. Paul wants to shame them into the kind of responsible behavior shown by him and his companions (2 Thess 3).

Paul requests prayer for his progress to spread the gospel. He prays that the Thessalonians will be faithful, which will establish a model of responsible behavior for the coming Day of the Lord (2 Thess 3:1-5). Paul warns them to discipline the idle believers who rely on the work of others as they wait for Jesus' return. Paul tries to shame the lazy believers into working and witnessing until the coming Day of the Lord (2 Thess 3:6-15). Paul signs the blessing and benediction in his own hand to prove that the letter is genuine (see 2 Thess 2:2). This also encourages the church to act upon the letter's authority (2 Thess 3:16-18).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The Rapture and the Day of the Lord

Arguments for a Pretribulational Rapture



Christians believe different things about the events surrounding Christ's return. Christians who believe that the Rapture will come before the Tribulation are pretribulationists. They believe this because of the following:

1. Christ told the believers in Philadelphia, "I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is about to come on the whole world to test those who live on earth" (Rev 3:10). The tribulation period is in view because He said "the hour" (see Rev 4–19).
2. The Tribulation is to test "those who live on the earth" (Rev 3:10). This phrase is used in Revelation when it refers to the enemies of the church. Since the church is not tested, there is no reason for the church to be present at this time.
3. The Holy Spirit will not restrain the evil that will be present in the Tribulation (2 Thess 2:6-7). His restraining ministry is mentioned in both Genesis 6:3 and John 16:8-11. It is hard to imagine that the Holy Spirit's restraining influence would not be active if the church were still present.
4. Revelation 4–19, relating to the Tribulation, does not mention the church. The church, or "tabernacle of God," is in heaven (Rev 13:6; see Eph 2:21-22). The tabernacle of God is the Bride poised to return to the earth among the armies arriving at the Second Coming (Rev 19:14).
5. The church will never come under God's wrath (Jn 5:24; Rom 5:9; 8:1; 1 Thess 1:10; 5:9). The church has been promised persecution and trials (Jn 16:33; Acts 5:41; Phil 1:29), but that is different from the wrath of the Tribulation (Rev 6:15-17; 11:18; 14:10, 19). Wrath and persecution are not the same.
6. Since the Rapture is imminent, it must be pretribulational. Christians should look for signs of His coming, not merely His return. The New Testament teaches God's next major event is the imminent Rapture.
 - (a) "For you know quite well that the day of the Lord will come in the same way as a thief in the night.... So then we must not sleep as the rest, but must stay alert and sober.... And build up each other, just as you are in fact doing" (1 Thess 5:2-11). Although the Day of the Lord will have three preceding signs, it will take unbelievers by surprise. Paul told the Thessalonians to fight spiritual lethargy so that they would be prepared for Christ's unexpected arrival (see also Mk 13:5, 9, 33, 35, 37).
 - (b) When Jesus told the disciples, "I will come again and take you to be with me" (Jn 14:3), he used present tense, with the idea of the immediate future.

(c) Other passages imply that Christ will come to receive His saints before the Tribulation, because He is coming soon or quickly (Jas 5:8-9; Tit 2:13; 1 Jn 2:28; Rev 22:10, 12).

7. The second coming of Christ will be in two stages:

	The Rapture	The Revelation
1	Pretribulational (Rev 3:10)	Posttribulational (Rev 19:11-21)
2	Christ will come in the air (1 Thess 4:16)	Christ will come to the earth. His feet touching the Mt. of Olives (Zech 14:4)
3	He comes for the saints (1 Thess 4:15-17)	He comes with the saints (Mt 25:31)
4	Saints, dead and alive, will be caught up, raptured, from the earth to meet the Lord in the air and taken to heaven (1 Thess 4:16-17)	Saints who are already on earth will remain on the earth, no rapture, to be ushered into the Millennial Kingdom (Acts 15:16; Rev 5:10)
5	Produces comfort and hope (1 Thess 4:18)	Produces fear and judgment
6	Mystery truth revealed only in the New Testament age (1 Cor 15:51)	Central in Old Testament prophecy but clarified in the New Testament (Jer 30:7)
7	Bodies of church saints glorified (1 Cor 15:51-58; Phil 3:20-21) and brought to heaven for seven years (1 Thess 4:17)	Bodies of tribulation saints left in mortal state to continue to live on the earth in the millennium (Mt 25:31-34)
8	Imminent, no signs needed (1 Thess 4:16)	Not imminent but preceded by spectacular signs in the heavens and on the earth (Mt 24:29; Lk 21:25-28)
9	Primary purpose is deliverance of the saints from this world (1 Thess 1:10)	Primary purpose is judgment of unbelieving (Mt 25:31-46)
10	Invisible and private as only believers see Christ and since God sends a powerful delusion through the Antichrist (2 Thess 2:11)	Visible and public since "every eye shall see Him" (Rev 1:7)
11	Fulfills a promise to the Church where Jew-Gentile distinctions do not exist (1 Thess 4:15)	Fulfills promises to Israel of covenants made in the Old Testament (Gen 12:1-3)
12	Evil begins to increase (2 Thess 2:1-12)	Evil is suppressed (2 Thess 1:7)
13	Church removed (1 Thess 4:13-18)	Satan removed (Rev 20:1-3)
14	Christ shown as Head of the Church and all things (Eph 1:10, 22; 4:15)	Christ vindicated as Messiah to Israel (Zech 14:3-4)
15	Judgment seat of Christ for believers (2 Cor 5:10)	Judgment of Israel and Gentiles (Ezek 20:34-38)
16	The Lord is at hand (Phil 4:5)	The kingdom is at hand (Mt 24:14)
17	Nature subsequently ruined (Rev 6-16)	Nature subsequently restored (Rom 8:19-22)

The above graphic shows distinctions between the two stages. However, do the two events need to be separated? The post-tribulationist combines these two aspects into a single event separated by moments. The following considerations argue that there would be a significant amount of time in between the Rapture and the Second Coming:

- The saints need to be rewarded before returning with Christ to earth.
- The marriage supper of the Lamb has to occur before the Second Coming (Rev 19:7-9).
- Unbelievers on earth need time to trust Christ, so they remain on earth in their mortal bodies. Some believers need to be in mortal bodies on earth to enter the Millennium. If they were not on earth, there would be no one to reproduce, die, and rebel after the thousand years (Isa 65:20; Rev 20:7-10).

The Day of the Lord

Usage: The concept of the Day of the Lord appears in every prophetic book. The judgment aspect is detailed in Zephaniah, Joel, and Revelation. Some people believe that the “Lord’s day” of Revelation 1:10 refers to this period (see 2 Thess 2:2-3).

Definition: The Day of the Lord is when God will both judge the unbelievers and deliver the faithful believers in order to establish His kingdom.

Judgment:

- The destruction of Israel’s enemies (Zeph 2–3; Amos 1:3–2:3; Joel 3; Zech 12–14, etc.).
- Punishment for both the rebellious people and the disobedient people in the nation of Israel (Amos 5:18-20).
- The Great Tribulation of Revelation 6–19 finds parallels with prophetic descriptions in the OT.
- Ultimately the Day of the Lord will end in the destruction of the world (2 Pet 3:10).

Deliverance:

- Israel will be saved from the Gentile oppressors, because God preserves and delivers a remnant of Israel (Joel 2:32; Zech 14; Zeph 3:8-20; Isa 2; 11; 65; 66; Amos 9:11-15; Ezk 20:33-44).
- The salvation enables Israel to enter the kingdom, where God will fulfill all His promises to Abraham.
- There are many blessings (Deut 30:3-9; Zeph 3:9).
- Final salvation after judgment will be in the new heaven and the new earth (2 Pet 3:11-13).

Summary

Judgment + Salvation = Day of the Lord

Great Tribulation + Christ’s Return = Day of the Lord

The Day of the Lord prophecy also depicted an imminent, impending disaster through the Assyrians or Babylonians. Sometimes both near and far aspects of prophecy appear together in a dual sense (Joel 2:1). God did not clearly reveal whether a near or far perspective was expected to encourage repentance.

The Antichrist

The Post-Rapture Crisis for Leadership

The need for a world leader after the Rapture cannot be overstated:

- Someone will need to offer an explanation for the disappearance of millions of Christians.
- Communication, transportation, and economic systems will be disrupted.
- The Middle East conflict will need to be resolved.

Difficult times have always prepared the way for a strong man to take control. The world scene after the Rapture will be a perfect environment for the Antichrist to gain power.

Summary of the activity of the future Antichrist:

Antichrist's Activity

Activity	Reference
Makes seven-year treaty with Jews	Daniel 9:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:3 (treaty reveals him?)
Peaceful beginning	Revelation 6:1-2
Heads a ten-nation confederacy	Daniel 7:20
Is dominated by world church	Revelation 17:3-11
Dominates world church	Revelation 17:12-16
Breaks covenant with Israel	Daniel 9:27 (midpoint of the Tribulation)
Counterfeits own death/resurrection	Revelation 13:3
Worshipped worldwide	Revelation 13:3-8, 11-15
Sets up image for worship	2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
Makes false prophet promote a mark	Revelation 13:16-18
Orders the two witnesses to be slain	Revelation 11:7
Persecutes Jews and is victorious in Israel	Daniel 11:40-43
Defeated by Christ	Revelation 19:11-19
Is doomed to Lake of Fire	Revelation 19:20

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 8: 1 & 2 Corinthians: Church Function and Apostolic Authority

Lesson Introduction

Paul's letters are written in a pattern. On his first missionary journey, he wrote one letter to the Galatians. Later, on his second missionary journey, he wrote two more letters, which both went to the Thessalonians. On his third missionary journey, Paul wrote three letters: two went to the Corinthians and one went to the Romans. I suspect you caught the pattern: 1-1, 2-2, 3-3. It looks like God wants to make this study easy for you! These six letters have become known as the "missionary letters" since they were written on Paul's three missionary journeys. In these letters we continue to see that "The Kingdom Is Expanded," which is the title of this unit. If you use the map to see where and when the letters were written, you will remember the information more easily.



1 Corinthians											
Proper Functioning of the Church											
Divisions		Disorders			Doctrine						
Answers a report from Chloe's men (1:11)		Answers a report from Chloe's men (5:1)			Answers a letter from the Church (7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 15:1; 16:1)						
Leadership		Relationships			Theology						
Pride		Immorality			Selfishness						
1–4		5–6			7–16						
Problem	Misunderstandings	Immorality	Lawsuits	Prostitution	Marriage	Liberty	Head coverings	Lord's supper	Gifts	Resurrection	Giving
Ephesus											
Fall 56 (on third missionary journey)											

Paul's establishment of the church at Corinth, on his second missionary journey, took about eighteen months from March AD 51–September AD 52 (1 Cor 3:6, 10; 4:15; Acts 18:1-17). Nearly four years later, while he was in Ephesus on his third missionary journey, he received bad news about the church from two sources. Both sources had concerns in the following three areas:

1. Divisions were reported by Chloe's household (1 Cor 1:11).
2. Disorders were reported by Chloe's household (1 Cor 5:1).
3. Difficulties were reported by the church itself, through a letter that was carried by three men. The church requested Paul's opinion on certain issues (1 Cor 7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 15:1; 16:1).

Therefore, Paul's first Corinthian letter is actually a response to these three issues. He answers the problems of (1) divisions, (2) disorders, and (3) difficulties of concern to the church. Note that this letter was already his second one to them, as he refers to an earlier letter that he had written (1 Cor 5:9).

2 Corinthians											
Defense of Apostolic Authority											
Ministry sincerity				Giving				Ministry authority			
1–7				8–9				10–13			
Defense of Paul's motives				Defense of Paul's worth				Defense of Paul's traits			
Character of Paul				Collection for Saints				Credentials of Paul			
Greeting 1:1-11	Defends Conduct 1:12–2:16	Defends ministry 3:1–6:10	Restore Confidence 8:11–7:18	Examples 8:1-9	Purpose 8:10-15	Arrangements 8:16–9:5	Benefits 9:6-15	Defense 10	Offense 11:1–12:18	Warning 12:19–13:10	Closing 13:11-14
Macedonia											
Fall AD 56											

However, within a year of Paul's writing 1 Corinthians, false teachers had infiltrated the church (2 Cor 11:20) and had stirred up the people against him. The false teachers had accused him of

pride (2 Cor 10:1), fickleness (2 Cor 1:16), an unimpressive appearance, poor speaking ability, (2 Cor 10:10), dishonesty (2 Cor 8:16), and being unqualified to be an apostle (2 Cor 11:23; 12:6-7). Paul saw this threat as a valid reason to visit the church personally, and he refers to this second visit as painful (2 Cor 2:1; 12:14; 13:1). He anticipates this visit in 1 Corinthians 16:5-9.

After leaving the church this second time, Paul wrote a third letter to urge the church to discipline the leader of the opposition (2 Cor 2:1-11; 7:8). Titus delivered that sorrowful letter and then met Paul in Macedonia. He shared the good news that most of the Corinthians had repented of their rebellion against Paul's apostolic authority (2 Cor 7:6-7). Nevertheless, Paul still felt it necessary to write his fourth letter, 2 Corinthians, to defend himself against the minority opposition (2 Cor 10-13). So Titus turned right around and headed back to Corinth, accompanied by two brothers, to deliver 2 Corinthians (2 Cor 8:16-24). Later, Paul made a third visit to the church, as he had anticipated in 2 Corinthians 13:1. Luke notes these in Acts 19:21 and Acts 20:2-3.

Corinth View



Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Contrast God's wisdom with human wisdom
- Clearly state the major issues that surround the gospel in Corinth
- Apply Paul's teachings about church problems to your church situation
- Live as an ambassador for God in practical ways
- Appreciate trials as an opportunity to spread God's Word

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to Corinthians

Topic 2: Chloe's Report (1 Cor 1-6)

Topic 3: The Church's Questions (1 Cor 7-16)

Topic 4: Paul's Sincerity (2 Cor 1-7)

Topic 5: Paul's Authority (2 Cor 8-13)

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to Corinthians

Often believers today see the first-century church as perfect, or at least nearly perfect. We hear stories about how the early Christians' faith was strong enough to endure intense suffering. One early church leader said that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church. We see the early church as purified and without internal problems.

However, the reality is far from this ideal. No local church illustrates the weaknesses of early churches better than the church at Corinth, Greece.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul responds to three concerns from two different sources. Each of these three issues relates to the proper functioning of the church. His first answer, which is a severe rebuke, responds to a report from Chloe's household about divisions in the church (1 Cor 1–4). Next, he rebukes the Corinthian church for various church disorders, which he also may have learned about from Chloe's household (1 Cor 5–6). The final and largest portion of the epistle answers the questions from a letter from the church itself about various doctrinal and practical issues (1 Cor 7–16). Paul introduces each of his responses with the words “now with regard to” or a similar phrase (1 Cor 7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 15:1; 16:1). His purpose is to assure that the believers operate effectively for the Lord by making their positional sanctification practical (David K. Lowery, in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, ed. John Walvoord and Roy Zuck. [Wheaton: SP Publications, 1983], 2:506). *Note:* positional sanctification is a judicial standing received based on someone's salvation through faith in Christ and is not based on any works that we do. In contrast, practical sanctification is received through practiced application of God's Word.

Sometimes Christians complain that church sermons, doctrines, and Bible stories don't relate to their real-life problems. This attitude explains why teachings about marriage often draw a positive response, it is very practical. In other epistles, such as Ephesians, Paul starts out with doctrinal issues (Eph 1–3) and then ends up with practical applications (Eph 4–6). But the issues he addresses in 1 Corinthians are immediately practical because the church members themselves asked Paul about them! So, what issues were important to the members of this church? Are they also practical issues that translate to real-life problems in our lives today?

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “Introduction to 1 Corinthians” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verse: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

QUESTION 1

Who asked Paul the questions that he answered in 1 Corinthians? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Chloe's household
- B) Apollos
- C) The church itself
- D) Those people opposed to Paul

QUESTION 2

Even though most of the church had repented of their rebellion against Paul's apostolic authority, he still felt that he needed to write 2 Corinthians to address the minority opposition. *True or False?*



Topic 1 Key Points:

- In 1 Corinthians, Paul responds to questions that originated within the church about divisions, disorders, and difficulties.
- Though most believers had repented of their rebellion against his apostolic authority, Paul still felt the need to write 2 Corinthians to address the minority opposition.

Topic 2: Chloe's Report (1 Cor 1–6)

The six chapters covered in this topic answer the questions and concerns from Chloe's household. Paul says, "For members of Chloe's household have made it clear to me, my brothers and sisters, that there are quarrels among you" (1 Cor 1:11). God had miraculously unified this church by removing the barriers between Jew and Gentile, but the Corinthian believers had created new divisions based on which human leader they followed (1 Cor 1:12). Another revealing issue in these chapters is the nature of true wisdom and how the folly of the Cross relates to it (1 Cor 1:18-19).

If we aren't supposed to follow human leaders, who are they really and what is their role in the church? How can the folly of a crucified Christ be part of wisdom? And how else should wisdom affect the church's life?

- **1 Corinthians: Proper Functioning of the Church**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** AD 56
- **Key Word:** Sanctification
- **Key Verse:** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

- **Summary Statement:** Paul explains the proper functioning of the church in response to reports about the Corinthians' divisions, disorders, and doctrinal difficulties. He ensures that the church makes its positional sanctification practical.
- **Application:** Does your life appear set apart for God? Or are you plagued with divisions, disorders, and doctrinal difficulties that make you look no different than a non-Christian?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Corinthians 1 on Paul's introduction to Chloe's questions.
- Please read the article that discusses 1 Corinthians 1–6 "Chloe's Questions" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 3

In 1 Corinthians 1:10-17, Paul says that he came to preach the gospel to them through baptism. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching</i>
1 Corinthians 1:10-17	Paul paternally addresses his Corinthian children.
1 Corinthians 1:18-31	God's wisdom is only understood through His Spirit.
1 Corinthians 2:1-5	They were divided about following human leaders.
1 Corinthians 2:6-16	God chose the weak to shame the strong.
1 Corinthians 3	The Corinthians are self-deceived spiritual infants.
1 Corinthians 4:1-13	Paul did not come with personal strength and eloquence.
1 Corinthians 4:14-21	The Corinthians reign while the apostles are abused.

QUESTION 5

Why should only believers resolve disputes in the church? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Because even an inexperienced believer is more competent than an unbeliever
- B) Because a believer should never accept personal loss
- C) Because shame may come to Christ if unbelievers get involved
- D) Because believers will judge even more difficult cases in the future

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Church divisions stem from pride over following the right leaders but these men are actually only servants of Christ.
- Church divisions must be replaced with a humble focus on the gospel message of Christ crucified.
- Christians must live in sexual purity.
- Only believers should be involved in resolving church disputes.

Topic 3: The Church's Questions (1 Cor 7–16)

Besides Chloe's report, the church had also asked questions of Paul. Some of these questions were new, for example marriage (1 Cor 7:10). However, they should have remembered the answers to other questions from Paul's teaching, such as the nature of the gospel itself (1 Cor 15:1-4).

Paul addressed more than the doctrinal concerns behind these questions. In every case, he showed the practical results of doctrine. However, applying these

doctrines today is not as easy as it may seem. For example, which marital issues concerned only the Corinthian church? Was Paul's response applicable today? Should women wear head coverings in church in my culture today? If not, how does Paul's teaching apply? Which spiritual gifts were the most important then, and how will they benefit the church today? Also, which doctrine does Paul call the most important one, and what are the consequences if it is not true? What question would you ask Paul if you had same opportunity that this church had?

What Would Paul's Response Be?



Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Corinthians 15.
- Please read the article on “The Church's Questions” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 6

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the category of person that Paul instructs in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Category of Person</i>
1 Corinthians 7:1-7	Slaves
1 Corinthians 7:8-9	Widowers and widows
1 Corinthians 7:10-11	Divorcees
1 Corinthians 7:12-16	Mixed marriages (believer/unbeliever)
1 Corinthians 7:17-19	Jews and Gentiles
1 Corinthians 7:20-23	Married persons

QUESTION 7

What is the guiding principle for eating meat sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8)?

- A) There really is no such thing as an idol.
- B) There is only one God.
- C) God deems love more important than knowledge.
- D) Retrain your sensitive conscience.

QUESTION 8

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching about head coverings in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching on Head Coverings</i>
1 Corinthians 11:3	A woman without a head covering should cut her hair.
1 Corinthians 11:4	A man praying or prophesying with his head covered disgraces his head (Christ).
1 Corinthians 11:5-6	Nature teaches that a woman's long hair is her glory.
1 Corinthians 11:10	God commands submission from wives to husbands to Christ to God.
1 Corinthians 11:14-15	A woman should submit because of the angels.
1 Corinthians 11:16	All churches follow these guidelines.

QUESTION 9

According to 1 Corinthians 12:31, which gifts should be emphasized the most in church meetings?

- A) None because the church needs all gifts
- B) The gifts that show the most love
- C) The gifts whose practice can be maximized
- D) Those gifts that edify the most members

QUESTION 10

Which statements are true, if Christ is still dead? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Christians can still be resurrected.
- B) Christians are doomed.
- C) Baptism and persecution are meaningless.
- D) Christians still have hope.

Topic 3 Key Points:

- Due to their “present distress,” Paul told the Corinthians to remain in their present marital, physical, and socio-economic state (1 Cor 7:17-24).
- Paul willingly gave up his rights in order to win others to Christ (1 Cor 9).
- God's authority structure is submission from wives to husbands to Christ to God (1 Cor 11:3).
- The church must use spiritual gifts in an orderly, loving, and beneficial way to edify others rather than self (1 Cor 12:7; 13:1; 14:40).
- Our resurrection and Christ's resurrection stand or fall together (1 Cor 15:13).

Topic 4: Paul's Sincerity (2 Cor 1–7)

Paul's most unsystematic epistle is 2 Corinthians. The style of this letter is unique in its many digressions, unusual constructions, mixed metaphors, broken sentences, and sudden shifts in feeling and tone. It has all the signs of having been written by someone under extreme anguish of heart. Paul's distress is that his entire eighteen-month's work at Corinth might be undermined by false teachers.

All parents who have lovingly disciplined their children, even if the discipline caused pain will understand how Paul felt about this church. He wanted to show them love and receive love back from them, not cause and receive grief (2 Cor 1:23–2:13; 6:11–13).

Discipline



Another View of Corinth



But most of all, he loved them enough to cause them the grief that leads to repentance (2 Cor 6:14–7:3). So now that most of the church has repented, what does Paul recommend?

• **2 Corinthians: Defense of Apostolic Authority**

- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** Paul makes two comments about the Corinthians' giving, which indicate that 2 Corinthians was written less than a year after 1 Corinthians (2 Cor 8:10; 9:2). The fact that he mentions leaving Ephesus soon (1 Cor 16:5–8) indicates that 1 Corinthians was written in AD May 56. The letter of 2 Corinthians followed later that year in the fall of AD 56.

- **Key Word:** Apostleship
- **Key Verse:** 2 Corinthians 4:5–6
- **Summary Statement:** Paul defends his

apostleship against the attacks of false teachers to confirm the Corinthians' doctrinal foundation and encourage them keep their promise to give to the saints in Jerusalem. He serves as an example of respecting and giving to church leaders.

- **Application:** Do you frequently criticize your spiritual leaders? In other words, do you have a problem submitting to authority? For spiritual leaders: Are you fearful of defending your God-given spiritual authority?

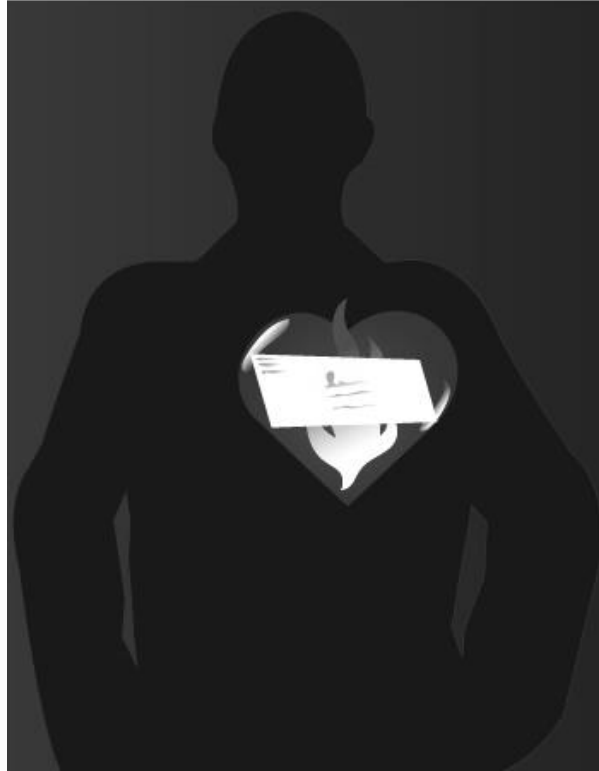
Reading Assignment

- Please read 2 Corinthians 1–4.
- Please read the article "Paul's Sincerity" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verse: 2 Corinthians 4:5–6.

QUESTION 11

Paul says that if restoration, forgiveness, and love are not shown to the disciplined brother that _____ will have an advantage.

Letter Written On Our Hearts



QUESTION 12

In 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, Paul compares a believer's witness to an aroma and in 2 Corinthians 3:1-6, he compares a believer's witness to a _____.

QUESTION 13

What does Paul say is true of suffering? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Christ is more easily seen in us when we suffer.
- B) Paul is less likely to offend others in his ministry.
- C) It is like dying on the inside but being renewed on the outside.
- D) It makes him long for the resurrection.

Topic 4 Key Points:

- Restoration, forgiveness, and love must be shown to repentant believers who are disciplined so that Satan does not take advantage of them.
- Paul compares the witness of believers both to an aroma that leads to life or death and to a letter that is written for all to see.
- Suffering servants see hardships, both from God's eternal perspective and in God's power, as an aid to ministry.

Topic 5: Paul's Authority (2 Cor 8–13)

This letter reveals Paul's character, motives, priorities, desires, and emotions more than any other New Testament writing. It records events about Paul that would otherwise not be known: his persecutions and hardships that are not recorded in Acts (2 Cor 11:23-27), extra details of his escape from Damascus (2 Cor 11:32-33), God's revelation of Paradise to him in a vision (2 Cor 12:1-7), and his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor 12:7-10).

This letter expands upon Paul's former instructions about taking a collection (1 Cor 16:1-4) in a passage that offers the most extended teaching on giving in the NT (2 Cor 8–9). The book of 2 Corinthians tells the church to respect pastors and teachers because of their full-time ministry for Christ.



Have you ever defended something because of your personal convictions? Sometimes in sports, such as hockey or soccer, it is the responsibility of the goalie to defend their goal. In a like manner, Paul thought his apostolic ministry was worth defending (2 Cor 2:11-21). He would gladly sacrifice himself for others, but his ministry was worth defending (2 Cor 12:15). So how does Paul defend this challenge to his apostleship?

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article "Paul's Authority" in the Article section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 14

One key purpose for giving is to ensure that all churches are equally enabled to carry on the work of ministry. *True or False?*

QUESTION 15

Paul only flexes his apostolic authority and power reluctantly. *True or False?*

QUESTION 16

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the proofs Paul gives of his apostleship.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Proofs of Apostleship</i>
2 Corinthians 11:7-15	His sufferings
2 Corinthians 11:16-33	His miraculous signs and wonders
2 Corinthians 12:1-10	His visions and revelations
2 Corinthians 12:11-12	His willingness to serve without pay
2 Corinthians 12:13-18	His paternal love for the church

Topic 5 Key Points:

- The main purpose of giving is to ensure that all churches can carry on the work of ministry.
- Though he preferred to bless, Paul will use his apostolic power if necessary.
- Paul gives all the necessary proofs of an apostle.

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference from 1 Corinthians at the bottom of each column.

Major Teachings in 1 Corinthians						
	Instructions					
The Resurrection Chapter						
Use Spiritual Gifts in Love						
Head Coverings and the Lord's Supper						
Teachings on Marriage						
The Judgment Seat						
God's Wisdom Revealed by the Spirit	1 Corinthians 2	1 Corinthians 3	1 Corinthians 7	1 Corinthians 11	1 Corinthians 13	1 Corinthians 15

QUESTION 18

Match the title on the left side with the reference from 2 Corinthians at the bottom of each column.

Major Teachings in 2 Corinthians				
	Instructions			
We are Ambassadors for Christ				
Paul Taken to Paradise				
The Superior Glory of the Spirit				
Teachings on Giving	2 Corinthians 3	2 Corinthians 5	2 Corinthians 8 & 9	2 Corinthians 12

QUESTION 19

Open your Life Notebook. Paul wrote to the Corinthians after he had received bad reports from both Chloe's household and the Corinthian church. These reports were about difficulties, divisions, and disorders in the church. Imagine that you are writing to Paul about difficulties in your church. Explain the problems to him, and then, based on his response to the Corinthians, imagine what kind of guidance you would receive from him.

QUESTION 20

Answer the following questions in your Life Notebook. How are disputes resolved in your church? How can you apply Paul's advice to improve how disputes are resolved?

QUESTION 21

Please read 1 Corinthians 14 on orderly worship. Then open your Life Notebook and record Paul's guidelines for orderly worship. Organize them into the categories that are most helpful to you.

QUESTION 22

Do you frequently criticize your spiritual leaders? In other words, do you have a problem submitting to authority? If you are a spiritual leader yourself, are you fearful of defending your God-given spiritual authority? In your Life Notebook, record any insights that God has given you in this lesson, and include how you will apply these to your life.

QUESTION 23

Match the key word on the left side with the books at the bottom of each column.

Unit 2 - Key Words of the Bible							
	Instructions						
Rapture							
Apostleship							
Sanctification							
Works							
Sovereignty II							
Justification							
Tribulation							
	Acts	Jas	Gal	1 Thess	2 Thess	1 Cor	2 Cor

Lesson 8 Self Check

QUESTION 1

The first issues that Paul addressed in 1 Corinthians came in response to reports from the household of _____.

QUESTION 2

Instead of baptizing many in Corinth, Paul said that he brought the message of the _____.

QUESTION 3

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul teaches that instead of bringing a fellow believer to court, believers should accept personal loss, so that the whole church does not lose its _____.

QUESTION 4

In 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, what was Paul's instruction to divorcees about remarriage? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Remarry
- B) Remarry "in the Lord"
- C) Be reconciled to your spouse
- D) Remain unmarried

QUESTION 5

In 1 Corinthians 11, which of the following ideas does Paul teach about head coverings in church?

- A) It does not matter whether a man wears a head covering in church.
- B) If she does not wear a head covering, a woman should wear her hair long.
- C) God's churches have different customs about head coverings.
- D) Angels notice whether or not women wear head coverings in church.

QUESTION 6

In 1 Corinthians 12–14, which of the following does Paul say remains?

- A) The gift of tongues
- B) The gift of prophecy
- C) The gift of knowledge
- D) Faith, hope, and love

QUESTION 7

Paul says a believer is the aroma of death to those who disbelieve. *True or False?*

QUESTION 8

In 2 Corinthians, which of the following statements does Paul say is true of suffering?

- A) It hinders us in testifying of Christ.
- B) It offends those we minister to.
- C) It helps us long for resurrection.
- D) It is like dying on the inside but like being renewed on the outside.

QUESTION 9

In 2 Corinthians 8–9, which of the following ideas about giving does Paul teach?

- A) It enables other churches to carry on the ministry.
- B) God blesses us whether or not we give.
- C) It should be more than a tithe.
- D) It should be set aside at the end of the week.

QUESTION 10

In 2 Corinthians 11–12, Paul lists his willingness to work without pay as a proof of his apostleship. *True or False?*

Unit 2 Exam

QUESTION 1

Luke sought to explain that the progress of the message of the kingdom was ultimately directed in which way?

- A) Humanly directed
- B) Divinely directed with human responsibility
- C) Equally a human and a divine responsibility
- D) Not directed at all

QUESTION 2

Whenever Peter witnessed to a new people group, which of these signs always appeared as validation that they had believed in Christ?

- A) Water baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit
- B) Speaking in tongues
- C) Prophesying and speaking in tongues
- D) Speaking in tongues, water baptism, and Spirit baptism

QUESTION 3

Surprisingly, the infant church grows numerically and spreads geographically in Acts because of _____.

QUESTION 4

In Acts 10, the main point of Peter's vision of the animals and the sheet is that he should call no person _____.

QUESTION 5

The Jerusalem Council's decision, which was announced by James, told the Gentiles to observe certain regulations out of respect for Moses' teachings (Acts 15:12-21). *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

In Acts 21–28, Paul testified three times while he was in _____.

QUESTION 7

Which of the following does the book of James emphasize?

- A) Doctrine
- B) Faith as an action
- C) Teaching to Gentiles
- D) Works prior to salvation

QUESTION 8

According to James 1, faith accepts trials with a hope for reward. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

According to James, what is the ultimate proof of spirituality?

- A) How often you pray for others (Jas 2:16)
- B) Whether you have matured enough to teach others (Jas 3:1)
- C) The quality of your speech (Jas 3:2)
- D) The amount of joy and laughter you have in your life (Jas 4:8-10)

QUESTION 10

In Galatians, Paul talks about justification by faith for salvation, but he admits that sanctification must also involve works of the Law. *True or False?*

QUESTION 11

Despite the problems that Paul will address in writing to the Galatians, he graciously adds his usual salutation of thanksgiving and praise for their salvation in Christ. *True or False?*

QUESTION 12

In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul urges even those believers who live by the Spirit to keep the Law. *True or False?*

QUESTION 13

In Galatians 5–6, two times Paul states the goal of the Judaizers, what is it?

- A) To avoid being persecuted for the Cross
- B) To accumulate as many followers as possible
- C) To become apostles like those in Jerusalem
- D) To lead the Galatians astray

QUESTION 14

Which proposed theme of 1 Thessalonians appears in every chapter?

- A) Paul defends his apostleship.
- B) Paul answers doctrinal questions.
- C) Paul exhorts them to steadfastness.
- D) Paul teaches on the Lord's return.

QUESTION 15

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the main concern the Thessalonians had about the Rapture was that those who were _____ in Christ might be at a disadvantage.

QUESTION 16

Which of the following problems in 1 Thessalonians is still present and is addressed in 2 Thessalonians?

- A) Idleness
- B) Sexual sin
- C) Accusing Paul of greed
- D) Taking advantage of a brother

QUESTION 17

In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul lists three signs that will precede the Day of the Lord: the revelation of the man of lawlessness, the removal of the one who holds him back, and

- A) The signing of a peace treaty
- B) The apostasy
- C) Rumors of wars
- D) Earthquakes and disasters

QUESTION 18

In 1 Thessalonians 1:10, God promises that the church will never come under His wrath. *True or False?*

QUESTION 19

The way to describe the fact that the Rapture can happen at any time, without any preceding sign is _____.

QUESTION 20

In 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, Paul says that God's wisdom is only understood through His _____.

QUESTION 21

In 1 Corinthians 1, Paul said that instead of baptizing many in Corinth, he brought them the message of the _____.

QUESTION 22

In 1 Corinthians 11, which of the following ideas does Paul teach about head coverings in church?

- A) No matter how long her hair is, every woman must wear a head covering.
- B) A man should not wear a head covering in church.
- C) God's churches have different customs about head coverings.
- D) Angels DO NOT notice whether prophesying or praying women wear head coverings in church.

QUESTION 23

In 1 Corinthians 14, when Paul discusses believers who use tongues and prophecy in church, he argues for the priority of the gift of _____.

QUESTION 24

Paul says that if restoration, forgiveness, and love are not shown to a disciplined brother then _____ will have an advantage.

QUESTION 25

In 2 Corinthians 11–12, Paul lists his visions as proof of his apostleship. *True or False?*

Lesson 8 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

- A. Chloe's household
- C. The church itself

Paul received bad news about the church from two sources: (1) disturbing reports from the household of Chloe regarding divisions and disorders in the church (1 Cor 1:11), and (2) news of difficulties from the church itself via a letter carried by three men that asked Paul's opinion on certain issues. Paul's letter is actually a response to three issues and answers the problems of: (1) divisions, (2) disorders and (3) difficulties that are raised in the church's questions.

QUESTION 2: True

After reporting to Paul from the church, Titus turned right around and headed back to Corinth to deliver 2 Corinthians, accompanied by two other brothers (2 Cor 8:16-24).

QUESTION 3: False

Paul actually said he preferred "that no one can say that you were baptized in my name!...For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—and not with clever speech, so that the cross of Christ would not become useless" (1 Cor 1:15, 17).

QUESTION 4

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching</i>
1 Corinthians 1:10-17	They were divided about following human leaders.
1 Corinthians 1:18-31	God chose the weak to shame the strong.
1 Corinthians 2:1-5	Paul did not come with personal strength and eloquence.
1 Corinthians 2:6-16	God's wisdom is only understood through His Spirit.
1 Corinthians 3	The Corinthians are self-deceived, spiritual infants.
1 Corinthians 4:1-13	The Corinthians reign while the apostles are abused.
1 Corinthians 4:14-21	Paul paternally addresses his Corinthian children.

QUESTION 5

- A. Because even an inexperienced believer is more competent than an unbeliever
 - C. Because shame may come to Christ if unbelievers get involved
 - D. Because believers will judge even more difficult cases in the future
- Paul says it is better to suffer personal loss and be wronged than to have the whole church lose its witness. Also, it is better to lose money than lose ministry opportunities by cheating other Christians (1 Cor 6:7-8).

QUESTION 6

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Category of Person</i>
1 Corinthians 7:1-7	Married persons
1 Corinthians 7:8-9	Widowers and widows
1 Corinthians 7:10-11	Divorcees
1 Corinthians 7:12-16	Mixed marriages (believer/unbeliever)
1 Corinthians 7:17-19	Jews and Gentiles
1 Corinthians 7:20-23	Slaves

QUESTION 7

C. God deems love more important than knowledge.

So the application is: Give up the right to eat meat offered to idols if it hurts a weaker brother's conscience, causing him to sin against Christ.

QUESTION 8

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching on Head Coverings</i>
1 Corinthians 11:3	God commands submission from wives to husbands to Christ to God.
1 Corinthians 11:4	A man praying or prophesying with his head covered disgraces his head (Christ).
1 Corinthians 11:5-6	A woman without a head covering should cut her hair.
1 Corinthians 11:10	A woman should submit because of the angels.
1 Corinthians 11:14-15	Nature teaches that a woman's long hair is her glory.
1 Corinthians 11:16	All churches follow these guidelines.

QUESTION 9

D. Those gifts that edify the most members

The hierarchy of gifts shows that all believers do not have the same gifts, yet the gifts that edify the most members should be emphasized (1 Cor 12:28-31).

QUESTION 10

B. Christians are doomed.

C. Baptism and persecution are meaningless.

The Corinthians were told to show their faith in the Resurrection in three ways: by standing firm in this belief, by never letting anyone or anything shake their faith, and by serving Christ wholeheartedly (1 Cor 15:58).

QUESTION 11: Satan

Restoration, forgiveness, and love are important "so that now instead you should rather forgive and comfort him. This will keep him from being overwhelmed by excessive grief to the point of despair" and "so that we may not be exploited by Satan (for we are not ignorant of his schemes)" (2 Cor 2:7, 11).

QUESTION 12: Letter

"You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone; revealing that you are a letter of Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not *on stone tablets* but on tablets of human hearts." (2 Cor 3:2-4)

QUESTION 13

A. Christ is more easily seen in us when we suffer.

B. Paul is less likely to offend others in his ministry.

D. It makes him long for the resurrection.

Paul does not lose heart during suffering because he sees his hardships from God's eternal perspective and through God's power for his ministry.

QUESTION 14: True

Paul taught this in 2 Corinthians 8:13. He also cites other benefits of generous giving as continued blessing and opportunities for the recipients to thank God and pray for the givers (2 Cor 9:11-12).

QUESTION 15: True

Paul defends his apostolic authority against his accusers' charges of cowardice, weakness, and pride (2 Cor 10). He says he would follow through on his authority in God's power, but only if necessary (2 Cor 10:1-11).

QUESTION 16

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Proofs of Apostleship</i>
2 Corinthians 11:7-15	His willingness to serve without pay
2 Corinthians 11:16-33	His sufferings
2 Corinthians 12:1-10	His visions and revelations
2 Corinthians 12:11-12	His miraculous signs and wonders
2 Corinthians 12:13-18	His paternal love for the church

QUESTION 17**Major Teachings in 1 Corinthians**

					Instructions
God's Wisdom Revealed by the Spirit	The Judgment Seat	Teachings on Marriage	Head Coverings and the Lord's Supper	Use Spiritual Gifts in Love	The Resurrection Chapter
1 Corinthians 2	1 Corinthians 3	1 Corinthians 7	1 Corinthians 11	1 Corinthians 13	1 Corinthians 15

QUESTION 18

Major Teachings in 2 Corinthians

Instructions			
The Superior Glory of the Spirit	We are Ambassadors for Christ	Teachings on Giving	Paul Taken to Paradise
2 Corinthians 3	2 Corinthians 5	2 Corinthians 8 & 9	2 Corinthians 12

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21: *Your answer*

QUESTION 22: *Your answer*

QUESTION 23

Unit 2 - Key Words of the Bible

Instructions						
Sovereignty II	Works	Justification	Rapture	Tribulation	Sanctification	Apostleship
Acts	Jas	Gal	1 Thess	2 Thess	1 Cor	2 Cor

Lesson 8 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: Chloe

QUESTION 2

Correct answers include:

Cross

Gospel

QUESTION 3

Correct answers include:

Witness

Testimony

QUESTION 4

C. Be reconciled to your spouse

D. Remain unmarried

QUESTION 5

D. Angels notice whether or not women wear head coverings in church.

QUESTION 6

D. Faith, hope, and love

QUESTION 7: True

QUESTION 8

C. It helps us long for resurrection.

QUESTION 9

A. It enables other churches to carry on the ministry.

QUESTION 10: True

Unit 2 Exam Answers

QUESTION 1

B. Divinely directed with human responsibility

QUESTION 2

A. Water baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit

QUESTION 3: Persecution

QUESTION 4: Unclean

QUESTION 5: True

QUESTION 6

Correct answers include:

Captivity

Prison

Custody

QUESTION 7

B. Faith as an action

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9

C. The quality of your speech (Jas 3:2)

QUESTION 10: False

QUESTION 11: False

QUESTION 12: False

QUESTION 13

A. To avoid being persecuted for the Cross

QUESTION 14

D. Paul teaches on the Lord's return.

QUESTION 15

Correct answers include:

Dead

Asleep

QUESTION 16

A. Idleness

QUESTION 17

B. The apostasy

QUESTION 18: True

QUESTION 19: Imminent

QUESTION 20: Spirit

QUESTION 21

Correct answers include:

Cross

Gospel

QUESTION 22

B. A man should not wear a head covering in church.

QUESTION 23: Prophecy

QUESTION 24: Satan

QUESTION 25: True

Lesson 8 Articles

Introduction to 1 Corinthians

Circumstances

Date: Paul makes two comments about the Corinthians' giving that indicate 2 Corinthians was written less than a year after 1 Corinthians (2 Cor 8:10; 9:2). In 1 Corinthians 16:5-8, he mentions that he is about to leave Ephesus. This indicates that 1 Corinthians was written in May of AD 56. The second letter followed in the fall of AD 56.

Origin/Recipients: Paul wrote to Corinth from Ephesus, which was across the Aegean Sea.

Characteristics

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians describes the most problematic church in the New Testament. The letter contains the theology of how God responds graciously but firmly to a carnal church.

This letter provides major teachings on the following topics. Without Paul's explanations, the church would not have a full understanding of these topics:

- Christian carnality
- Church discipline
- Lawsuits among believers
- Marriage
- Christian liberty
- The role of women
- The Lord's Supper
- Spiritual gifts
- The nature of love
- The gospel
- The resurrection of the body

This book was not Paul's first letter to Corinth. He had already written a letter to them (1 Cor 5:9), which is lost and not a part of Scripture.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Chloe's Questions

Paul responds to Chloe's report of divisions. He discusses the absurdity of exalting favorite teachers, since their message is Christ crucified. Teachers minister as Christ's humble servants to convince the church to humble itself (1 Cor 1-4).

Paul begins this stern letter with a positive with a salutation and thanksgiving (1 Cor 1:1-9):

1. *Salutation:* He refers to the church as people set apart for God's special purposes (1 Cor 1:1-3).

2. *Thanksgiving*: He thanks God for the church being set apart because God assures their ultimate sanctification (1 Cor 1:4-9).

Problem: After the positive beginning, Paul commands unity among the competing factions (1 Cor 1:10-17).

Misunderstandings: Paul says the solution is to admit their misconceptions about the message that they accepted (1 Cor 1:18–2:16), of the messengers who delivered it (1 Cor 3), and of the pride in the church (1 Cor 4):

1. *The Message*: The church shouldn't boast about types of wisdom because the gospel is not human wisdom but Christ crucified (1 Cor 1:18–2:16).

The power of the gospel in Christ crucified is seen in the changed lives of the church and Paul (1 Cor 1:18–2:5). This power is the atoning death of Christ, not superior ideas of men (1 Cor 1:18-25). Two examples show how the gospel changes lives: The Corinthians found forgiveness to prevent them from boasting before God (1 Cor 1:26-31), and Paul's simple message of forgiveness in the Cross was the foundation for his teaching (1 Cor 2:1-5).

So what should the believers do now? They should be united by a common focus on God's wisdom, which is shown in the gospel and is given to believers (1 Cor 2:6-16). God's wisdom was a secret hidden from everyone until God revealed it to the apostles (1 Cor 2:7). Those who crucified Christ misunderstood God's wisdom (1 Cor 2:8). They represent all of us who cannot see, hear, or comprehend God's plan (1 Cor 2:9). In fact, non-Christians may think spiritual truth is foolish because they don't have the Spirit teaching them (1 Cor 2:14-16). However, Christians can make intelligent spiritual decisions because Christ instructs them (1 Cor 2:15-16). The desire of Paul's heart is for the Corinthians to unite around the truth of the gospel.

2. *The Messengers*: The church misunderstood the role that Paul and the other apostles played. The Corinthians needed to see that the blessings come from God, not the leaders (1 Cor 3):

Their problem: The divisions in the church revealed that the Corinthians were carnal and selfish (1 Cor 3:1-4). Paul wanted them to be spiritual, but they were carnal, like babies (1 Cor 3:1). They acted like unbelievers: not comprehending doctrine, selfish, and divisive over leaders like Paul (1 Cor 3:1-4).

Paul's solution: The way for the Corinthians to unite was to recognize that God gave the church blessings and growth (1 Cor 3:5-23). Leaders are only instruments of God and are accountable to Him (1 Cor 3:5-15). God will reward believers at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor 3:10-15). God judges the church in true wisdom and will give it everything in the world. God is the one who deserves the glory in Corinth, not man (1 Cor 3:16-23).

3. *Pride in the Church*: The Corinthians were proud, as shown in their misunderstandings. Paul asked them to treat all the apostles biblically, not pridefully by following certain leaders (1 Cor 4).
4. The church should treat Paul and the apostles in the following manner:

As faithful servants who are accountable to Christ's judgment, rather than to human opinion (1 Cor 4:1-5).

As men who are biblically qualified, rather than selected by a popular vote (1 Cor 4:6-7).

As humble men who suffered to lead the church, rather than men who exalted wealth (1 Cor 4:8-13).

As their spiritual fathers—especially Paul, who cared enough to discipline them (1 Cor 4:14-21).

Paul answers the reports of immorality and lawsuits. He teaches the Corinthian believers that God has given them the ability to make wise decisions and to exercise church discipline (1 Cor 5–6).

Paul addresses three difficult problems in these two chapters: incest, lawsuits, and prostitution. The first is a sexual sin, and the church must discipline a man who is involved in immorality with his own stepmother (1 Cor 5). That man's actions had polluted the body of the church to the extent that the members were proud of their "liberality." The correct response to this man was to expel him from the church with grief and humility (1 Cor 5:1-2). This discipline benefited both the church and the man (1 Cor 5:3-8). Discipline hands a believer over to Satan so that the hypocrisy will end and the purity of the body will remain (1 Cor 5:3-8). The discipline depends on whether the immoral person is a believer or not (1 Cor 5:9-13). The Corinthian believers could associate with immoral unbelievers but not with professing Christians who practice sin (1 Cor 5:9-12). These sinning Christians must be removed from the church (1 Cor 5:13).

The second peculiar problem was that the Corinthian believers were suing other believers. The justified were going to the unjustified, the public courts, for justice. Paul said disputes needed to be resolved among the Christians rather than with the help of unbelievers. Believers are more competent and will cause less shame to the body (1 Cor 6:1-11). Believers will judge more difficult cases in the Millennium by judging angels and the world. Paul concludes that the believers should be able to judge a single church now (1 Cor 6:2-3). Inexperienced Christians make better judges than non-Christians (1 Cor 6:4-6). This is because salvation and sanctification are more important in making judgments than legal expertise (1 Cor 6:9-11). It is better for an individual to experience loss than for the church to lose its witness. It is better to lose money to cheating Christians than to lose ministry opportunities (1 Cor 6:7-8).

The third troublesome issue that Paul addressed was sexual immorality with prostitutes. Paul reported that this harmed relationships with God, others, and themselves (1 Cor 6:12-20). Immorality hinders their relationships with God because He is the one who gives value to the physical body (1 Cor 6:12-14, 17, 20). He dedicates Christians' bodies to His use forever, by the indwelling of the Spirit. Sexual sin harms relationships with others, both non-Christians and Christians (1 Cor 6:15-18).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The Church's Questions

Paul answers the church's questions about the doctrinal difficulties that the believers were facing. His answers enable them to make sanctification practical (1 Cor 7–16).

In this large and final section, Paul answers seven questions on the issues listed below. Paul often introduces each section with "in regard to" or a similar phrase (see 1 Cor 7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 15:1; 16:1):

- Marriage (1 Cor 7)
- Meat offered to idols (1 Cor 8:1–11:1)
- Head coverings (1 Cor 11:2-16)
- The Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:17-34)
- Spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12–14)
- The Resurrection (1 Cor 15)

- Giving (1 Cor 16)

Paul states that singleness provides the most ministry opportunities. He also says that getting married is allowed and that married couples should stay together (1 Cor 7). They should be content because God has placed believers in every marital, ethnic, and economic state. Each state has its own advantages (1 Cor 7:1-24):

- Married people should stay married to meet their sexual needs (1 Cor 7:1-7).
- Life is simpler for single people, but singleness and marriage are both God's gifts (1 Cor 7:7).
- Widowers and widows can remarry if they have sexual needs, but otherwise, they should stay single, like Paul (1 Cor 7:8-9).
- Divorcees should remain unmarried or should reconcile to their spouse (1 Cor 7:10-11).
- Believing partners who are married to unbelievers should stay married in order to be a godly influence on the family (1 Cor 7:12-16). However, if the unbelieving partner requests a divorce, the believer should let the spouse leave, since peace is better than fighting (1 Cor 7:15-16).
- All believers should remain in the current marital state in which God has placed them (1 Cor 7:17-24). The Jews and the Gentiles should not try to blend in with one another physically (1 Cor 7:17-19). Slaves must be willing to stay in their low socio-economic position (1 Cor 7:20-23).

Paul advocates the many advantages of being single, given the situation in which the Corinthians found themselves (1 Cor 7:25-40). Paul did not have a direct command from Christ for single females during this crisis. However, he advised them to stay in their current state, although marriage was not prohibited (1 Cor 7:25-28). The key advantages of being single are: fewer trials, more time to invest in eternal matters, and more options for serving Christ (1 Cor 7:28-35). The exceptions to remaining single apply both to those who have never married and to widows (1 Cor 7:36-38). Remarriage to a believer is allowed after the spouse dies, but widows are happier if they do not remarry (1 Cor 7:39-40).

Paul devotes three chapters to answering questions about meat that is sacrificed to idols. He addresses the principle of Christian liberty, meaning that a Christian denies his rights out of love for a believer with a sensitive conscience. The Christian glorifies God both in private and in public (1 Cor 8:1-11:1). The guiding principle is that God considers love to be more important than knowledge (1 Cor 8:1-3). Some believers would defile their consciences if they ate food offered to idols because they do not realize that there are no idols (1 Cor 8:4-8). Application: a Christian should permanently give up eating meat offered to idols if it causes a brother with a weaker conscience to sin against Christ (1 Cor 8:9-13).

Paul illustrates Christian liberty through his voluntary denial of his own apostolic rights. In contrast, Israel misused its privileges in the wilderness. Both examples show the church how Christian liberty works and the judgment on selfishness (1 Cor 9:1-10:13). Paul willingly gave up his rights in order to win others to Christ (1 Cor 9). As an apostle, he had many rights and freedoms in Christ, which included financial support from others for his ministry (1 Cor 9:1-6). Financial support is customary for all secular workers and it is scriptural for both oxen and people (1 Cor 9:7-11). Paul and Barnabas do not accept the support they are due so as not to hinder the gospel (1 Cor 9:12). The Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should earn their living from the gospel (1 Cor 9:13-14).

Paul relinquished his rights to financial support and chose to preach the gospel without charge (1 Cor 9:15-18). His guiding principle was to give up every right in order to win people to Christ (1 Cor 9:19-27), as demonstrated by the following:

- He accepted voluntary slavery to everyone's conscience so as not to offend anyone (1 Cor 9:19).
- Paul accepted that he needed to follow certain Jewish customs to be able to evangelize the Jews. He circumcised Timothy (1 Cor 9:20; Acts 16:3), paid for vows (Acts 18:18), and gave temple offerings (Acts 21:20-26).
- Paul accepted the Gentile ways so that he could evangelize them (1 Cor 9:21; Gal 2:11-21).
- Paul did not want to put a stumbling block in anyone's path, because he wanted everyone to trust Christ (1 Cor 9:22-23).

Therefore, Christians should also give up any right that hinders them from winning people to Christ (1 Cor 9:24-27).

What would happen if the Corinthians insisted on their own rights? What if they ate whatever they wanted, without concern for others? Those people would be judged. The way to avoid a judgment similar to Israel's evil practices is to humbly accept God's warnings and help (1 Cor 10:1-13). God judged almost all the Israelites who received His blessings through Moses (1 Cor 10:1-5). All Israel was delivered from heat and drowning in the Red Sea (1 Cor 10:3-4). Despite God's blessing, the Israelites were involved in pagan practices, in this way they earned God's displeasure. Their death in the wilderness serves as a warning to future believers of a similar judgment (1 Cor 10:5). To escape judgment, we must humbly accept God's warning and His help when we are tempted (1 Cor 10:6-13). Thankfully, God does not allow believers to be tempted without giving them an escape route (1 Cor 10:13).

The last part of Paul's teaching on Christian liberty notes that eating meat offered to idols is consistent with freedom if it edifies others (1 Cor 10:14-30). The exception to that statement is when the meat is a part of a pagan idol feast. Idol feasts are demonic in nature, just as the Lord's Supper is godly in nature (1 Cor 10:14-22). All should flee from this type of idolatry (1 Cor 10:14). The Lord's Supper is a corporate communion with Christ (1 Cor 10:15-17). The cup symbolizes the believer's forgiveness through Christ's blood (1 Cor 10:15-16). The bread symbolizes the believers' unity with other partakers (1 Cor 10:16-17). Pagan idols are harmless by themselves, but in a pagan idol feast, it is a corporate communion with demons (1 Cor 10:18-22). Believers can eat all foods because God created them, unless it hinders the conscience or the good of others (1 Cor 10:23-30). Paul's guiding principle on Christian liberty is to glorify God. He never pleases himself at the expense of others (1 Cor 10:31-11:1).

Next Paul answers questions on public worship. He states three reasons that the Corinthian wives should wear a head covering during public prayer or when declaring a revelation (1 Cor 11:2-26).

1. It was shameful to minister without a head covering in their culture (1 Cor 11:2-6). God's structure of authority is submission from wives to husbands to Christ to God (1 Cor 11:3). Therefore, men with a head covering shame Christ as their head (1 Cor 11:4). Women without a head covering shame their husbands as their heads (1 Cor 11:5). It was as shameful in that society as having short hair or being bald (1 Cor 11:5-6).
2. Women who wear a head covering show that their husbands have had authority over them since creation (1 Cor 11:7-12). Men should pray with uncovered heads, because man was the first to be made in God's image (1 Cor 11:7). Women should pray with a head covering, because wives are led by their husbands (1 Cor 11:8). Woman was created

from man, not the other way around (1 Cor 11:8). She was created to be man's helper (1 Cor 11:9). A woman's submission also reminds the angels to submit to God (1 Cor 11:10). Men and women have been dependent upon each other since creation, but God is their ultimate source of life (1 Cor 11:11-12).

3. Corinthian wives should wear a head covering because it followed proper gender distinctions in Corinth (1 Cor 11:13-16). Society viewed a woman who prayed with her head uncovered as improper (1 Cor 11:13). According to nature, men should wear short hair and women should wear long hair, which serves as a covering for her (1 Cor 11:14-15). Churches followed the cultural head-covering norms so that they would not be a stumbling block (1 Cor 11:16). This practice should be followed in cultures today where women wear head coverings as a sign of submission to their husband.

Then, Paul transitions into teaching on the Lord's Supper, because the Corinthians had been selfish in their practice of it. The Lord's Supper should be celebrated in a worthy manner by looking in four directions (1 Cor 11:17-22):

1. Look *outward* to others in the body, horizontally (1 Cor 11:23-25).
2. Look *back* at Christ's death for them, vertically (1 Cor 11:26).
3. Look *forward* by proclaiming Christ's second coming (1 Cor 11:27-34).
4. Look *inward* in self-examination or else suffer God's judgment in sickness and death (1 Cor 11:17-34).

The church reported which spiritual gifts God had given to the body. Paul takes three chapters to explain that spiritual gifts should be exercised in selfless love, not selfish pride. The Corinthians needed to be sure that the entire body would benefit from the spiritual gifts and would worship together (1 Cor 12-14). This section flows in three movements:

1. The church is spiritually gifted with both unity and diversity, so that every member of the church plays an important role (1 Cor 12:1-31).

- The importance of the Corinthians' diverse spiritual gifts was evident in their praise of the united but triune God (1 Cor 12:1-6).
- A spiritual gift is evidence of the Spirit's work in the life of each Christian (1 Cor 12:7-11). These gifts that come from the same Spirit include the following: message of wisdom, message of knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues.
- Both church leaders and church members need each other in order for the church to function (1 Cor 12:12-31). The church is like a human body whose different parts illustrate the diversity of gifts within the church (1 Cor 12:12-13). Just like the body, the church needs all of its parts in order to function properly, none should be disregarded (1 Cor 12:14-20). Similarly, highly visible believers should not be proud, because they need other believers in order to have a caring church (1 Cor 12:21-26). All the members of a church are not supposed to have the same gifts, but the gifts that edify the most members should be emphasized (1 Cor 12:27-31). However, these emphasized gifts should not be exalted above the others.

2. In the next chapter, often called the love chapter, Paul notes the value of love over gifts. Believers should emphasize character over abilities (1 Cor 12:31-13:13). Paul gives the following three reasons:

- Love is superior to gifts in what it produces (1 Cor 13:1-3). Any gift that is used without love is useless.
- Love benefits others in contrast to the Corinthians' self-edification (1 Cor 13:4-7). Paul describes what love is and what love is not. For example, love is patient, not retaliating (1 Cor 13:4). In each description, Paul alludes to the opposite practice at Corinth. For example, "love is kind" alludes to both their lawsuits and their abuses of the Lord's table (1 Cor 6:8; 11:21-22).
- Love is eternal, and it outlasts gifts, which are temporary and partial (1 Cor 13:8-13). The superiority, selflessness, and permanence of love also is greater than faith and hope (1 Cor 13:13).

Note: Paul's chapters on the spiritual gifts show both their diversity and their uselessness without love (1 Cor 12–13:13). The third chapter, 14, also applies these truths to ensure that the church exalts prophecy over tongues. A great deal of confusion surrounds those two gifts.

- Some argue that prophecy is the same as preaching or declaring to others what God has brought to their mind. Paul reveals that the prophets received messages by divine revelation (1 Cor 14:26, 29-30; see Eph 3:5). Their declarations were 100 percent accurate (Deut 18:14-22). The implication is that after the prophecy is evaluated for truth, it should be rejected if it has any error (1 Cor 14:29).
- The gift of tongues is also misunderstood. All the messages given in tongues were real languages in the New Testament, but some people believe it can also be ecstatic speech, which is either gibberish or an unknown language (see Acts 2:4-11). However, the word tongue means language, and to interpret tongues means to translate languages. If one speaks in any earthly or heavenly language, it is useless without love. Therefore, to "speak mysteries" (1 Cor 14:2) means that no one present can comprehend the language used, not that the tongue is an unknown language (1 Cor 14:10). This gift is the God-given ability to speak divine revelation in a foreign language. This language is unknown to the speaker and is a sign to unbelievers given in their native language, and an interpreter is needed to translate utterance for the edification of the rest of the church (1 Cor 14:21-22). Jews were present at each occasion where Acts records the use of tongues (Acts 2:1-4; 8:14-17; 10:44-47; 19:1-7).

3. Orderly worship emphasizes prophecy over uninterpreted tongues, but imposes speaking limitations on both (1 Cor 14). The reason for this emphasis is that prophecy edifies both believers and unbelievers (1 Cor 14:1-25). Prophecy is better in the following three ways:

- Prophecy benefits other believers, not only the speaker (1 Cor 14:1-5). Note: Self-edification is not the purpose of tongues.
- Prophecy is easily understood, but tongues are incomprehensible if they are not interpreted (1 Cor 14:6-19). Prophecy is always given in the language of the audience.
- Prophecy has a superior purpose and a greater benefit for the audience (1 Cor 14:20-25). It edifies believers, while tongues authenticate God's work for unbelievers (1 Cor 14:21-22). Prophecy results in conviction, repentance, and worship for unbelievers, but uninterpreted tongues makes unbelievers think that the church is crazy (1 Cor 14:23-25).

Orderly and edifying worship imposes speaking limitations on both gifts (1 Cor 14:26-40). All messages edify the church, when they are delivered in an orderly way (1 Cor 14:26-35). Christ imposes both the speaking limitations and the penalty for disobedience through church discipline (1 Cor 14:36-38). Orderly worship emphasizes prophecy without forbidding altogether genuine tongues (1 Cor 14:39-40).

Tongues versus Prophecy		
	Tongues	Prophecy
Value	Inferior (14:5)	Superior (14:1)
Relation to other gifts	The least important gift (12:28)	The second most important gift (12:28)
Language used	Foreign (14:10)	Vernacular (14:19)
Corollary gift	Interpretation of tongues (12:30)	Discerning of spirits (12:10; 14:29)
Speaker's knowledge of language	Unknown: "utters mysteries with his spirit...my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful" (14:2, 14)	Known: "pray with my spirit [and] with my mind" (14:15, 19)
Value (without interpretation)	Harmful: people cannot understand and thus are not edified (14:16-17, 23, 28)	Great: people can understand and thus are edified (14:5, 24-25)
Edification (without interpretation)	Self only (14:4; 10:24; 12:7, 11)	Entire church (14:4)
Direction of Speech is to...	God (14:2)	Men (14:3)
Result in others	Revelation, knowledge, prophecy, word of instruction (14:6)	Strengthening, encouragement, and comfort (14:3)
Type of Communication	Speaking (14:6), prayer (14:14), praise (14:16), singing (14:15)	Foretelling the future, or declaring doctrinal truth (14:18)
Purpose	Sign to unbelievers (14:21-22)	Message to believers (14:22b)
Limitations	Two or three messages in tongues in each service, speak in turn, someone must interpret (14:27)	Two or three prophetic messages in each service, speak in turn, weigh what is said (14:29-32)
Exhortation	Negative: do not forbid tongues (14:39)	Positive: be eager to prophesy (14:39)
Who stops it	Itself (13:8)	Someone else (13:8)

After these three chapters, Paul now turns to the Corinthians' questions about the Resurrection. Paul declares that Christ's resurrection is the foundation of the Corinthians' faith. It strengthens their belief in their own future resurrection and motivates them to confidently serve Christ in the present with confidence (1 Cor 15:1-58). Paul uses various arguments to support their belief in the Resurrection, such as:

1. *Historical argument:* The resurrection of Christ is a key part of the gospel of salvation. It was the most important doctrine that the apostles preached (1 Cor 15:1-11). The faith of the Corinthians was founded on this vital gospel (1 Cor 15:1-3). The three major elements of the gospel are Christ's substitutionary death, His burial, and His resurrection, all three of which are prophesied in the Old Testament (1 Cor 15:3-8). Paul and the Corinthians were saved by believing in this gospel (1 Cor 15:9-11). Paul continues his argument by illustrating that Christ's resurrection enables believers to be resurrected in new bodies (1 Cor 15:12-57).
2. *Logical argument:* The implications of Christ's resurrection should shame the Corinthian believers who doubted their own resurrection (1 Cor 15:12-34). They believed that Jesus rose, but failed to see their hopelessness without Christ's resurrection (1 Cor 15:12-19). They tried to believe that Jesus rose but that they would not rise (1 Cor 15:12). Paul declared that both their resurrection and Christ's resurrection succeed or fail together (1 Cor 15:13). If Christ is still dead, then Christians are liars, unforgiven, fools, doomed, and pitiful (1 Cor 15:14-19). Other logical results follow. Christ's resurrection brings hope that others will rise at His return to reign until the end of the Millennium (1 Cor 15:20-28). If Christ didn't rise, baptism and persecution are meaningless (1 Cor 15:29-32). Therefore, Corinthians who doubted the Resurrection through false teachers should be ashamed and need to return to their senses (1 Cor 15:33-34).

3. *Theological Argument*: Believers' resurrected bodies will be superior to their earthly bodies (1 Cor 15:35-57). Three illustrations from nature reveal the superiority of the resurrected bodies (1 Cor 15:36-38): (a) Plant life shows the first body in the seed is inferior to the body in the plant (1 Cor 15:36-38), (b) animal life shows that each animal's flesh is different from others' so the believer's resurrected body will be better than his mortal body before death (1 Cor 15:39), and (c) inanimate objects like mountains, canyons, and seas are inferior in glory to heavenly bodies like the sun, moon, and stars (1 Cor 15:40-41). This argument continues with three reasons to exchange our temporal bodies for eternal ones (1 Cor 15:42-57). (1) Mortal, weak, and sinful earthly bodies need to be replaced with immortal, sinless, and strong heavenly bodies (1 Cor 15:42-44). (2) Christ is superior to Adam, and He will pass on His sinless nature to all believers (1 Cor 15:44-49). (3) At the Rapture, believers must defeat death to live with God eternally (1 Cor 15:50-57).

4. *Experiential Argument*: God's promise to resurrect believers' bodies should result in confident service for Christ with an assured reward (1 Cor 15:58). Paul urges the Corinthians to receive the reward for their faith in the Resurrection in three ways: (1) by standing firm in believing in their resurrection, (2) by never letting anyone or anything shake their faith, and (3) by serving Christ wholeheartedly.

Paul dedicates his last chapter to answering the Corinthians' question about giving. Paul wrote that they could advance the church both by giving to the Jerusalem church and through teamwork (1 Cor 16). The poor believers in Jerusalem could use their help. The money should be collected every Sunday before Paul's visit (1 Cor 16:1-4). The Corinthians could help their own leaders through financial support, encouragement, and understanding (1 Cor 16:5-18). They could financially assist Paul when he passes through after his ministry in Macedonia and in Ephesus (1 Cor 16:5-9). They could encourage Timothy with compassion, if he arrives at the church (1 Cor 16:10-11). They should understand that Apollos felt he should stay in Ephesus, despite Paul's urging to accompany his letter (1 Cor 16:12). They could submit to all of their spiritual leaders by obeying Paul's letter (1 Cor 16:13-18). They could help their relationships by imitating Paul's priority on people in their greetings to others (1 Cor 16:19-24).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Paul's Sincerity

Paul defends his sincerity in order to stabilize the foundation laid at Corinth (2 Cor 1–7).

Paul starts this letter with a greeting to the Corinthians and thanks to God for the comfort that he received from them when he fled Asia. This opening shows the church that he is a genuine apostle and that they should pray for him (2 Cor 1:1-11). Paul's suffering marked him as an authentic apostle and gave him the opportunity to relate to others who suffer.

Paul defends both the postponement of his visit and the harsh treatment of a Corinthian leader who opposed him. This serves to remind the Corinthians that both situations ended positively (2 Cor 1:12–2:17).

1. The Corinthians had started to doubt Paul's care because of the postponed visit. Their doubt prevented Paul from excessively rebuking them about their lack of discipline toward the leader who had opposed him (2 Cor 1:12-24).
2. By the church disciplining this leader, they would receive rejoicing, restoration, forgiveness, and love on Paul's next visit. In this way, Satan cannot come between Paul and the Corinthians (2 Cor 2:1-11).

3. Paul sends Titus to remind the church to spread the aroma of Christ to the believers, while warning unbelievers of impending peril (2 Cor 2:12-17).

Paul defends his ministry by contrasting it with the Mosaic ministry and by showing how he willingly suffered for Christ's sake. Paul wants to stabilize the foundation that he had laid at Corinth by defending himself from the false teachers (2 Cor 3:1–6:10). What Paul writes is a key component to understanding the New Covenant. He writes that his Christian ministry is superior to that of Moses because the glory of the New Covenant is superior to the Mosaic Covenant (2 Cor 3). The Corinthians should have known that they could trust Paul and they did not require a letter. They also needed to see the New Covenant ministry as superior to that of Moses':

Contrasting the Old and New Covenants in Corinthians	
Old Covenant	New Covenant
Initiated by Moses (1 Cor 3:8)	Initiated by Christ (1 Cor 3:4)
Of the letter (1 Cor 3:6)	Of the Spirit (1 Cor 3:6, 18)
Kills (1 Cor 3:6, 7)	Gives life (1 Cor 3:6)
Engraved on stone (1 Cor 3:3, 7)	Engraved on hearts (1 Cor 3:3; Jer 31:33)
Glorious (1 Cor 3:7)	More glorious (1 Cor 3:8, 10)
Glory faded (1 Cor 3:7, 11, 13)	Glory ever-increases (1 Cor 3:11, 18)
Condemns men (1 Cor 3:9)	Brings righteousness (1 Cor 3:9)
Deception (1 Cor 3:13)	Boldness, sincerity (1 Cor 3:12; 4:2)
Veiled face of Moses (1 Cor 3:13)	Unveiled faces of believers (1 Cor 3:13a 18)
Veiled minds (1 Cor 3:14)	Unveiled minds (1 Cor 3:14; 4:3-6)
Veiled hearts (1 Cor 3:15)	Unveiled hearts (1 Cor 3:16)
Dullness (1 Cor 3:14)	Freedom (1 Cor 3:17)
Moses reflected God's glory	All believers reflect Christ's glory (1 Cor 3:17)
Non-transformational (1 Cor 3:7)	Transformational (1 Cor 3:18)
Lack of zeal (1 Cor 3:13)	Confidence, steadfastness (1 Cor 3:4-5; 4:1)

Paul does not lose heart during suffering because he has God's perspective and he ministers in God's power (2 Cor 4:1–6:10). He is motivated by the love of God that compels him in his ministry of reconciliation. He understands that Christ died for all so that they can be reconciled to God (2 Cor 4:16–6:2). Paul exemplifies the distinguishing marks of genuine ministry during suffering. He does not want to offend others by having a comfortable lifestyle (2 Cor 6:3-10).

Paul exhorts the believers so that he can restore their confidence in him, just as he opened his heart to them. He wants them to respond emotionally, not just intellectually, to his character and ministry (2 Cor 6:11–7:16). Paul urges them to separate themselves from unbelievers to prevent compromise between faith and worldly values (2 Cor 6:11-7:3). The unrepentant attitude of the Corinthians had saddened Paul. When they did come to repentance, it caused hi great joy Their repentance leads to life and salvation as well as an increase in Paul's confidence in them (2 Cor 7:4-16).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Paul's Authority

Paul explains generous giving in order to encourage the Corinthians to fulfill their promise to help the suffering saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8–9).

Paul gives both the Macedonians and Christ as examples of selfless giving. His goal is to encourage the Corinthian church to help the suffering church in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:1-9). The purpose of giving is for the churches to help each other in times of need, so that the work of ministry will continue (2 Cor 8:10-15). Paul sent Titus and two others with this letter to help the church prepare a gift, so that his boasting about their generosity would not be in vain (2 Cor 8:16–9:5). Paul cites the benefits of generous giving as continued blessing and cause for the recipients to thank God (2 Cor 9:6-15).

Paul proves his apostolic authority against the false teachers so that the Corinthians will respect his authority and his sacrifices for Christ (2 Cor 10–13).

Paul defends his apostleship against the charges of cowardice, weakness, and pride (2 Cor 10). He will stand on his authority in God's power, if necessary (2 Cor 10:1-11). Paul notes that only God can set the limits of someone's work (2 Cor 10:12-18).

Paul meets the requirements of an apostle, and he proves it to the Corinthians so that they are not deceived (2 Cor 11:1–12:18). He lists the following proofs of his claim as a genuine apostle of Christ (2 Cor 11:7–12:18):

- His willingness to serve without pay (2 Cor 11:7-15)
- His sufferings (2 Cor 11:16-33)
- His visions and revelations, especially his revelation of paradise that required a thorn in his flesh (2 Cor 12:1-10)
- His miraculous signs and wonders (2 Cor 12:11-12)
- His paternal love for the church (2 Cor 12:13-18)

Paul warns the carnal Corinthian believers to repent before he arrives. In this way, he would not need to use his authority for discipline while he was there (2 Cor 12:19–13:10). At the end of the letter, he summarizes the conduct that he desires from them and gives a benediction as a final appeal to practice their positional sanctification (2 Cor 13:11-14).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Unit Three: The Kingdom Is Tested

Unit Introduction

Congratulations! You have now reached the halfway point of this course.

You probably should review what you have learned so far. Can you list in your Life Notebook, in chronological order, all eleven books studied so far? Can you show which books Paul wrote on his three missionary journeys? Now add the key word for each of these eleven books.

It gets a little tricky when you add the Gospels and Acts into the list of the six Epistles that we have studied so far. At this point, only Matthew fits in chronologically, because it is first in the list. After we study Romans in this lesson, we will see that the other Gospels and Acts appear in this order: Luke, Acts, Mark, and John.

If you would like to review the chronological order, consult the note for the NT key words in the Notes section at the end of this lesson.

In Unit One, we saw “The Kingdom Is Introduced” in the four Gospels. Then Unit Two addressed how “The Kingdom Is Expanded” through Acts and Paul’s missionary journeys. Now, Unit Three will continue the kingdom theme as we see “The Kingdom Is Tested” in seven letters, which were written when it became unpopular and even dangerous to be a Christian (AD 56–64).

New Testament Books: Message Statements

Note: The following statements summarize the message of each New Testament book for this unit.

Romans: Paul expounds the righteousness of God, which requires justification solely by faith in Christ apart from the Law. He writes before his arrival to help solve conflicts between Jewish and Gentile believers at Rome.

Ephesians: Paul explains God’s mystery—the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the church—to exhort these two groups to live worthy of this calling through a unified love for one another as a testimony to the world.

Colossians: Paul instructs the Colossian church in the supremacy and the deity of Christ. He encourages a practical outworking of this doctrine in order to fight a heresy threatening the life and ministry of the church.

Philemon: Paul asks Philemon to forgive his runaway but repentant slave, Onesimus, whom Paul had led to Christ and then sent back to Philemon for reinstatement as a Christian brother. Paul teaches how to forgive and how to be forgiven.

Philippians: Paul exhorts the believers at Philippi to imitate Christ’s attitude and stand firm in a joyful, humble, and peaceful dependence upon His adequacy. He writes to combat both disunity and false teaching in the church.

1 Peter: Peter encourages the believers in north Asia Minor to suffer properly for Christ: as holy, submissive, and selfless witnesses. They are motivated by Christ’s example and their hope of future glory. In this way, others will be attracted to their message.

2 Peter: Peter reminds the Asian believers of the grace of Jesus Christ and of the characteristics and future destruction of false teachers. He writes to combat false teaching and to stimulate godly growth.

Unit Objectives

By the end of this unit you will be able to do the following:

- Explain what Paul means by the gospel in Romans
- Make applications in your own life from Paul's teachings on our position in Christ
- Counsel a person who is struggling with issues similar to the Colossian heresy
- Illustrate the work of Christ from Philemon
- Seek to have the mind of Christ
- Value the role of suffering as it relates both to sanctification now and to Christ's return
- Strive to put on the divine nature and to have a more intimate relationship with Christ

Unit Outline

Lesson 9: Romans: God's Righteousness Comes by Faith

Lesson 10: Ephesians and Colossians: Unity in Christ and in His Deity

Lesson 11: Philemon and Philippians: Christ's Forgiveness and Attitude

Lesson 12: 1 & 2 Peter: Righteous Suffering and Knowledge Against False Teaching

Lesson 9: Romans: God's Righteousness Comes by Faith

Lesson Introduction

When Paul wrote to the church at Rome, he had never visited this capital city (Rom 1:10, 12). However, at the time in his third missionary journey that he wrote this letter, he had completed his work of sharing Christ in the eastern Roman Empire. His desire was to meet the Roman Christians soon (Rom 15:23). He hoped that the church would help him in his future plans to share the gospel in Spain (Rom 15:24). He wrote this letter in advanced to advise them of his plan: He would deliver the offering from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia to the Jerusalem church, then stop by Rome en route to Spain (Rom 15:25-29). Paul made it to Rome, but only as a prisoner, after three years and two imprisonments (Acts 21:17–Acts 28:29). Church tradition says that he later served in Spain (AD spring 64–spring 66) between his two Roman imprisonments (AD Feb 60–Mar 62 and AD autumn 67–spring 68).

Actually, Paul's purposes in writing were fourfold (John A. Witmer, in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, ed. John Walvoord and Roy Zuck. [Wheaton, IL: SP Publications, 1983] 2:437):

- The immediate purpose was to announce that he was coming soon to visit and to solicit prayer and financial support for his preaching in Spain.
- He wanted to build up the Roman believers with his theological foundation in the gospel, just as he had done with the other Gentile churches (Rom 1:15).
- He sought to reconcile conflicts between the Jewish and the Gentile segments in the church. "The Jew-versus-Gentile issue looms largely in this letter. Paul did not take sides, but he carefully set forth both sides of the question. On the one hand he emphasized the historical and chronological priority of the Jews—'first for the Jew, then for the Gentile' (Rom 1:16; see Rom 2:9-10). He also stressed the 'advantage... in being a Jew' (Rom 3:1-2; Rom 9:4-5). On the other hand he pointed out that 'since there is only one God' (Rom 3:30), He is the God of the Gentiles as well as the Jews (Rom 3:29). As a result 'Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin' (Rom 3:9) and alike are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ..." (see Walter B. Russell III, "An Alternative Suggestion for the Purpose of Romans," in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 [April–June 1988], 174–84).
- Most important, Paul expounded upon the righteousness of God, which is revealed in the gospel and is received by faith (Rom 1:17). He affirmed God's goodness (Rom 3:4) and wisdom (Rom 11:33) and justice (Rom 3:26). He defended God's plan of salvation, which must have as its basis justification by faith, since no one can reach the righteousness of God through his own works.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Explain what Paul means by the gospel in Romans
- Show biblically why all people are condemned under sin and deserve death
- Describe how righteousness is received
- Know how to live a sanctified life that is pleasing to a holy God

- Clarify the difference between the promises to Israel and the promises to the church

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to Romans (Rom 1:1-18)

Topic 2: Condemnation (Rom 1:19-3:20)

Topic 3: Justification (Rom 3:21-5:21)

Topic 4: Sanctification (Rom 6-8)

Topic 5: Election (Rom 9-11)

Topic 6: Transformation (Rom 12-16)

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to Romans (Rom 1:1-18)

Romans						
God's Righteousness/Justification by Faith in Christ—Not the Law						
Righteousness explained					Righteousness applied	
Theological					Practical	
1–11					12–16	
Relationship to God					Relationship to others	
Righteousness theme	Righteousness needed	Righteousness provided	Righteousness imparted	Righteousness vindicated	Righteousness applied	Righteousness disseminated
Introduction 1:1-17	Condemnation 1:18–3:20	Justification 3:21–5:21	Sanctification 6–8	Election 9–11	Transformation 12:1–15:13	Propagation 15:14–16:27
Sin		Salvation	Set apart	Sovereignty	Service	
Corinth						
Written AD 56 or 57						

Romans was called “the most profound book in existence” by the English poet Samuel Coleridge. It has played a key role in every spiritual awakening in church history—from Augustine (AD 354-430) to the Reformation (16th century) to the present day. The book of Romans stands as the greatest exposition of the Christian gospel ever written.

Romans quotes the OT, especially Isaiah and Psalms, sixty-three times—almost as much as all the other Pauline epistles combined, 75 quotes in 1 Corinthians to Titus!

Romans is the most systematic of Paul's epistles. Therefore, it is appropriate that it is placed first among his thirteen epistles in the New Testament. The outline of Romans almost exactly conforms to the well-known secular as well as to the biblical letter-writing format of the first century:

- (1) Salutation: Romans 1:1-7
 - a. Sender: Romans 1:1-6
 - b. Recipient: Romans 1:7
 - c. Greeting: Romans 1:7
- (2) Thanksgiving: Romans 1:8-17
- (3) Body: Romans 1:18–15:13
- (4) Conclusion: Romans 15:14–16:27
 - a. Plans: Romans 15:14-32
 - b. Peace wish: Romans 15:33
 - c. Greetings: Romans 16:1-23
 - d. Close: Romans 16:25-27

Ruins of Ancient Rome



The emphasis in Romans on Christian doctrine shows in its many theological terms:

Another View of Ancient Rome



condemnation, salvation, grace, faith, righteousness, justification, sanctification, glorification, redemption, death, and resurrection.

Paul is concerned for Israel's present status, her relationship to the Gentiles, and her final salvation. He even notes that he might (if it were helpful) wish himself "cut off from Christ" instead of his fellow Jews, who were cut off because they rejected the Messiah (Rom 9:1-3).

One popular magazine in America is called *Reader's Digest*. Many people like it because it condenses articles and books so that the contents can be read more quickly. *Reader's Digest* even published a version of the Bible that eliminated the genealogies and other material, which some people thought was less interesting. Even though Paul condensed the gospel in Romans 1:17 as he did in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, he wrote the entire book of Romans as the gospel in its fullest sense. The book includes people who are universally condemned in sin but are also blessed by God with salvation, sanctification, and glorification. God's fulfillment of His promises to Israel is also included, as well as our expected life response.



The essentials of Romans include the following:

- **Romans: God's Righteousness/Justification Is by Faith in Christ—Not by the Law**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** AD 56 or 57
- **Key Word:** Righteousness
- **Key Verse:** Romans 1:17
- **Summary Statement:** Paul expounds the righteousness of God, which requires justification solely by faith in Christ apart from the Law. He writes before his arrival to help solve the conflicts between Jewish and Gentile believers at Rome.
- **Application:** Do you experience peace with other believers as fellow recipients of God's righteousness by faith? Or do you have conflicts with them stemming from pride?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Romans 1:1-18.
- Please read the article "Introduction to Romans" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verse: Romans 1:17.

QUESTION 1

Please write Roman's key verse (Rom 1:17) from memory.

QUESTION 2

The Old Testament prophet who is quoted in Romans 1:17 is named _____.

Topic 1 Key Points:

- Paul clearly states that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel by faith alone, totally apart from any works or the Law.
- The above concept was also revealed in the Old Testament as Paul quotes Habakkuk.

Topic 2: Condemnation (Rom 1:19–3:20)

One friend I know leads several people to Christ each week. Once I asked him how he did it. He told me, “You have to get them lost before you can get them saved.” Seeing my puzzled look, he commented insightfully, “Most presentations of the gospel tell people that Christ is the answer before they even know what the question is. Too often we try to give the solution before people even know they have a sin problem, so I spend most of my presentation showing them how helpless they are without Christ.” So, how does Paul show that everyone is guilty before God?

In this topic, Paul shows everyone his or her need for Christ. When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well (Jn 4), He first established her thirst for the Messiah before presenting Himself as the solution to her thirst. Paul follows a similar pattern, except that he establishes every person in the world as a sinner who deserves God’s wrath.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Romans 1:18-32 and 3:1-20.
- Please read the article “Condemnation,” which addresses Romans 1:18–3:20, in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.



QUESTION 3

The Gentiles are condemned as sinners because they reject the knowledge of God that is obvious in nature and in their _____.

QUESTION 4

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the condemnation of the self-righteous, as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Condemnation</i>
Romans 2:1-4	They will be judged by their consciences since they don’t have God’s law.
Romans 2:5-11	They judge others for sin but commit the same sins themselves.
Romans 2:12-16	They neglect to do good and are judged by an impartial God.

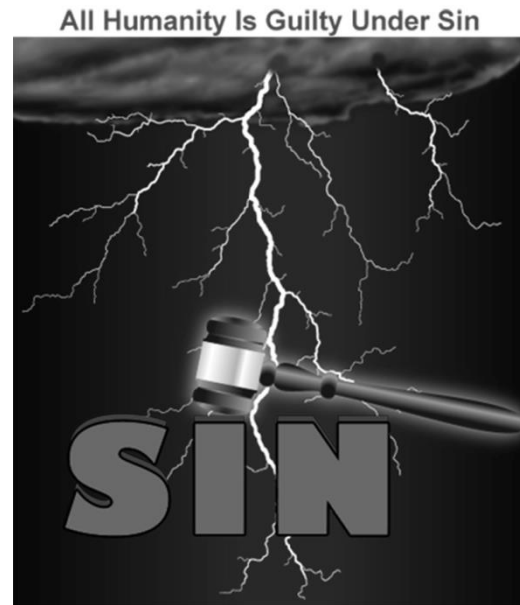
QUESTION 5

Paul concludes that possessing the Word of God is an advantage for the Jew. *True or False?*

Paul concludes that all humanity, including himself, is guilty under sin and deserves God's wrath. All are condemned because God is revealed in creation, in their conscience and/or in the Law, but all people still turn away to idols and immorality and hypocrisy.

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Gentiles are guilty of sin by rejecting the revelation of God in nature and in their conscience.
- The self-righteous are guilty of sin for their hypocrisy and evil works.
- Jews are guilty of sin because they disobey the Mosaic Law.



Topic 3: Justification (Rom 3:21–5:21)

Paul has shown that all people are condemned under sin and deserve God's wrath. Now, the implied question is, "If we all have sinned and cannot become righteous even by obeying the very Mosaic Law that God gave the Jews, how then can we become righteous before this holy God?" Paul says, "I'm glad you asked!" He intends to answer this question in the next section of his letter.

Paul will answer other important questions in this section, too, such as "Since righteousness cannot be earned, how can we get it?" and "Is this righteousness a new way of salvation, or was this idea also true in the Old Testament?"

Reading Assignment

- Please read Romans 3:21–5:21.
- Please read the article "Justification," which addresses Romans 3:21–5:21, in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 6

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the OT teaching about Abraham or David in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>OT teaching</i>
Romans 4:1-3	Abraham became the father of both the circumcised and the uncircumcised.
Romans 4:4-8	Abraham had simple trust that Sarah would bear a child.
Romans 4:9-12	By faith, Abraham received the promise of blessing to the nations.
Romans 4:13-15	Abraham was justified by his faith in God's promise, not by his works or by the Law.
Romans 4:16-25	David spoke of faith bringing righteousness that was apart from works.

This teaching showed that Jews and Gentiles alike can be saved through their trust that God raised Jesus from the dead for their justification (Rom 4:16-25).

QUESTION 7

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the benefits of righteousness in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Benefits of Righteousness</i>
Romans 5:1-2	Salvation from God's wrath
Romans 5:3-5	Peace with God
Romans 5:6-8	Joy in all circumstances
Romans 5:9-11	Reconciliation despite formerly being God's enemies

Topic 3 Key Points:

- Old Testament believers—specifically Abraham and David—were justified and blessed by their faith apart from their works (including circumcision).
- Justification by faith brings peace and reconciliation with God, brings salvation from God's wrath, and brings joy in all circumstances.

Topic 4: Sanctification (Rom 6–8)

We have seen that justification is obtained through faith in Christ. Now, as Paul begins to discuss sanctification, it is helpful to see the differences between these two key terms:

Contrasts Between Justification and Sanctification

Justification	Sanctification
Not guilty	Set apart
Legal standing	Internal condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout life
Entirely God's work	We cooperate
Perfect in this life	Not perfect in this life
The same in all Christians	Greater in some than others

Up to this point, Paul has shown that all people can be justified by faith, just as Abraham and David were. He has also shown that this justification is by grace through Christ, apart from works or the Law. But this information leads to another question: "Now that Christ has saved us forever from the penalty of death for sin, how can we live righteously before this holy God right now?" Paul again says, "I'm glad you asked!" He intends to answer this question in this next section of his letter.

What breaks the power of sin in a believer's life? Yes, as far as our position or status before God is concerned, we are saved and will be with God in heaven. But sin still attracts us and still seems to rule our life. What should we do?

In Romans 6, Paul declares that sin's power is broken through Christ's death, when we trust Him. Sin is no longer master over believers; it just tries to act like it. Yet how do we have victory in our life in a practical sense? What is the believer's power source? What is the believer's new goal? What also is the Christian's relationship to the Law of Moses?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Romans 6.
- Please read the article "Sanctification," which covers Romans 6–8, in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

Romans 8 supports our assurance of salvation in the following ways:

- We are not condemned (Rom 8:1).
- We are in the position of being set free from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2).
- We possess the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9).
- The Spirit will give us glorified bodies (Rom 8:11).
- The Spirit testifies to our human spirit that we are God's children (Rom 8:16).
- We are adopted into God's family (Rom 8:14, 16-17, 21, 23).
- Our bodies will definitely receive final redemption (Rom 8:23).
- We have a hope that will be fulfilled (Rom 8:24-25).
- We will be conformed to Christ's likeness (Rom 8:29).
- All who are predestined will eventually be glorified (Rom 8:30).
- Nothing can separate us from God's love (Rom 8:35-39).
- We are already more than conquerors over sin (Rom 8:37).

QUESTION 8

In Romans 6, the believer's positional identification with Christ encourages the Gentiles to avoid indulgence and the Jews to avoid _____.

QUESTION 9

Explain how Paul's illustration of a marriage covenant in Romans 7 parallels the believer who is free from the Law.

QUESTION 10

In Romans 8, what is the stated goal for the believer?

- A) To be counted worthy of heaven
- B) To conform to Christ despite present sufferings
- C) To persevere in the faith
- D) To be freed from sin's penalty



Topic 4 Key Points:

- A believer's sanctification comes through identification with Christ's death. His death broke sin's power and now allows believers to yield by faith to righteousness.
- Believers are released by Christ's death from the Law's bondage in the same way that a marriage partner is released from the marriage bonds by the partner's death.
- The Holy Spirit gives believers the power to reach their goal of conforming to Christ, despite current sufferings.

Topic 5: Election (Rom 9–11)

For many people, Romans 9–11 is the most difficult section about Israel in the book. At first these chapters may not seem to fit with the rest of the book, but Paul contrasts the Jews and the Gentiles throughout the letter. However, in these chapters he explains in detail the contrast between the calling of Jews and Gentiles. Paul teaches that God's righteousness is shown in His faithful treatment of Israel. He chose the nation, and, despite their present rejection of Him, the Lord even guarantees future salvation for the Jews, who will comprise an entire believing nation.

Before studying the details, let us look at an overview of these chapters. Please study the threefold arrangement of this section:

Summary of Romans 9–11		
9:1-29	9:30–10:21	11:1-36
Israel's past	Israel's present	Israel's future
God elected Israel	Israel rejects God	God will reject Israel only partially and temporarily
Israel's failure is not due to God's unfaithfulness	Israel's failure is due to her rejection of the Messiah	Israel's failure will be neither total in scope nor final
A Jewish remnant has been preserved by God	But this Jewish remnant resists Him now	Yet this remnant will grow into an entire believing nation
Gentiles have also become elect of God in Christ	Gentiles are now becoming saved by faith in Christ	Gentiles should not pride themselves in receiving the blessings that Jews reject
Divine side	Human side	Divine results
God's election	Man's responsibility	God's mercy
Human unbelief cannot eradicate God's promises because they are based on the principle of sovereign election	However, God's election in sovereign grace to fulfill His Word does not eradicate human responsibility for unbelief	Ultimately, God's election will be justified in the salvation of the Jewish nation still living when Christ returns

Paul has shown that all people can be justified by faith and they can live before a holy God in righteousness by faith. The implied question in this topic is, "If God's salvation is open to all, what happened to His promises to Israel?" How can we count on God to fulfill His promises to us, if He has permanently cast aside His people?

Other implied questions in this topic are: "What is the cause of Israel's failure?" "How is it fair for God to choose only some for salvation?" and "Has God permanently cast aside His people?"

Reading Assignment

- Please read Romans 11.

- Please read the article “Election,” which covers Romans 9–11, in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 11

From Romans 9, match the person(s) in the left-hand column with what they prove about God’s election as given in the right-hand column.

<i>Person(s)</i>	<i>God’s Election</i>
Isaac and Ishmael	God can elect to show mercy on or to harden whomever He wishes.
Jacob and Esau	God’s justice, even in judgment, is seen through saving Gentiles and preserving a believing Jewish remnant.
Pharaoh	God can choose to bless the younger son so as to serve His sovereign purpose regardless of merit or human tradition.
The elect	Being physical descendants of Abraham is insufficient, since in order to be a part of Israel’s blessings, one must participate in God’s promise by faith.

QUESTION 12

According to Romans 10, why did Israel reject its many opportunities to accept righteousness by faith? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Because they lacked opportunities to hear
- B) Because they were blinded and not able to understand
- C) Because they were disobedient, as prophesied
- D) Because they sought salvation by works

QUESTION 13

The main attitude that the Gentiles should have after being grafted into the cultivated olive tree is _____.

Topic 5 Key Points:

- God’s election is not based on physical descent, birth order, or human merit but on sovereign choice, and it is not unjust to elect some to salvation by mercy.
- Israel rejected salvation by faith and pursued salvation by works instead.
- The salvation of Gentiles should produce humility in them and should lead Israel, through jealousy, to seek God.

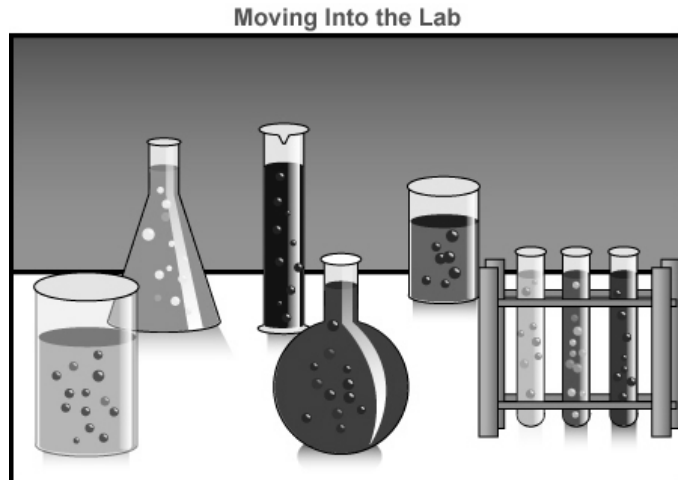
Topic 6: Transformation (Rom 12–16)

Paul spent the first eleven chapters of Romans telling us what God’s great mercy has done for everyone, but especially for believers. Now in this topic, Paul makes his teaching very practical by applying these great truths to a variety of relationships. This time, the implied question is, “Based on His great mercy, what is our appropriate response?”

In many school classes, such as chemistry, students are first taught theory. Only then do they move to the labs, where they put their theory to the test. In this topic, Paul moves his readers into the lab to make their merciful salvation practical for their everyday lives.

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “Transformation,” which addresses Romans 12–16, in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.



QUESTION 14

The key to the transformed lifestyle as it is explained in Romans 12:3–Romans 15:13 is _____.

QUESTION 15

What does Paul say that we accomplish for Christ when we submit to governmental authorities (Rom 13:1-7)? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) We follow God’s pattern of submission to authority.
- B) We escape being punished by them.
- C) We keep a clear conscience before God.
- D) We improve the morality of our nation.

QUESTION 16

In the issues surrounding weaker and stronger brother (Rom 14:1–15:13), Paul still urges the Jewish believers to follow their conscience on food issues. *True or False?*

Topic 6 Key Points:

- In Roman’s 12:2–15:15, the key to the transformed lifestyle is dedication.
- In a transformed life, God’s righteousness produces both humility in using one’s spiritual gifts and love in difficult social relationships.
- God expects us to obey our governmental leaders and their laws so that we escape punishment and live with a clear conscience.
- In issues with weaker brothers, keep a good conscience and do not judge others or harm their consciences.

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Romans at the bottom of each column.

Major Issues in Romans						
	Instructions					
Israel Rejected because of Disobedience						
Submission to Governmental Authority						
Weaker Brothers						
All Have Sinned						
Abraham and David were Justified by Faith						
No Condemnation for those in Christ	Romans 3	Romans 4	Romans 8	Romans 10	Romans 13	Romans 14

QUESTION 18

Read Romans 2:6-8. In isolation, this passage may seem to teach that it is possible to be saved by works, which would contradict Paul's teaching in the rest of Romans. Please explain these verses in your Life Notebook.

QUESTION 19

Some Christians think that the church has replaced the nation of Israel as God's chosen people. These Christians also believe that Israel's unfulfilled promises will be fulfilled by the church. Please open your Life Notebook and make two columns. From the teachings in Romans 9:1–11:36, in the first column write Paul's statements that seem to support the church as the new Israel. In the second column, write the statements that seem to support a future for Israel that is separate from the church as God's people. Which view seems more scriptural?

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications that you should make to your life.

Lesson 9 Note

Key Words of the New Testament

New Testament Key Words					
#	Date	Book	Key word	Paul's Journeys & imprisonment	Doctrinal classification
1	40s	Matthew	Kingdom		Ecclesiology
2	44–47	James	Works		Soteriology
3	49	Galatians	Justification	1 st journey	Soteriology
4	51	1 Thessalonians	Rapture	2 nd journey	Eschatology
5	51	2 Thessalonians	Tribulation	2 nd journey	Eschatology
6	56	1 Corinthians	Sanctification	3 rd journey	Ecclesiology
7	56	2 Corinthians	Apostleship	3 rd journey	Ecclesiology
8	56–57	Romans	Righteousness	3 rd journey	Soteriology
9	57–59	Luke	Sovereignty I		Missiology
10	60	Ephesians	Unity	1 st imprisonment	Christology (head)
11	61	Colossians	Deity	1 st imprisonment	Christology (God)
12	61	Philemon	Forgiveness	1 st imprisonment	Christology (reconciler)
13	62	Philippians	Attitude	1 st imprisonment	Christology (example)

New Testament Key Words (continued)					
#	Date	Book	Key word	Paul's Journeys & imprisonment	Doctrinal classification
14	62	Acts	Sovereignty II		Missiology
15	62	1 Timothy	Order	4 th journey	Ecclesiology
16	64	1 Peter	Suffering		Eschatology
17	64	2 Peter	Knowledge		Eschatology
18	64–68	Mark	Discipleship		Eschatology
19	66	Titus	Conduct	4 th journey	Ecclesiology
20	67	2 Timothy	Doctrine	2 nd imprisonment	Ecclesiology
21	67–68	Hebrews	Superiority		Christology
22	69	John	Belief		Soteriology
23	75	Jude	Pretenders		Eschatology
24	85–95	1 John	Love		Soteriology
25	85–95	2 John	Limits		Missiology
26	85–95	3 John	Missionaries		Missiology
27	95–96	Revelation	Triumph		Eschatology

Lesson 9 Self Check

QUESTION 1

What is the chronological order of the writing of Paul's missionary epistles?

- A) Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans
- B) Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Romans
- C) 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans
- D) Galatians, James, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans

QUESTION 2

In Romans 1:18-32, the Gentiles are condemned for rejecting the knowledge of God in their conscience and in _____.

QUESTION 3

According to Romans 2, the Jew's disobedience to the Law nullifies God's faithfulness. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

In Romans 4, Paul says that Abraham was the father of both the circumcised and the uncircumcised. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

Justification is a continuous work throughout our lives, whereas sanctification is once for all time. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

According to Romans 7, what event freed/frees us from bondage to the Law?

- A) Christ's life
- B) Christ's death
- C) Christ's resurrection
- D) Christ's current intercession

QUESTION 7

According to Paul in Romans 8, the believer's goal, despite current sufferings, is to _____ to Christ.

QUESTION 8

Who did Paul use in Romans 9 to illustrate that God can harden or show mercy to whomever He wishes?

- A) Ishmael
- B) Esau
- C) Pharaoh
- D) The elect

QUESTION 9

According to Romans 11, one result of Gentile salvation is to cause Israel to seek God because of the emotion of _____.

QUESTION 10

Which of the following is of LEAST concern to God?

- A) What type of food and drink you consume
- B) What effect your behavior has on others
- C) Whether your conscience is clear when you eat or drink
- D) If you are acting on faith

Lesson 9 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

“For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, just as it is written, ‘the righteous by faith will live.’”

QUESTION 2: Habakkuk

The gospel reveals God’s righteousness. It shows us that we can only receive His righteousness by trusting God for it, not by obeying the Law, just stated in Habakkuk 2:4.

QUESTION 3: Conscience

God judges the Gentiles not because of their ignorance but because they suppress the truth of God’s omnipotence and divine nature, which they know from creation and conscience (Rom 1:18b-20). This rejection means that the Gentiles stand guilty before God with no valid reason for rejecting Him (Rom 1:20).

QUESTION 4

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Condemnation</i>
Romans 2:1-4	They judge others for sin but commit the same sins themselves.
Romans 2:5-11	They neglect to do good and are judged by an impartial God.
Romans 2:12-16	They will be judged by their consciences since they don’t have God’s law.

QUESTION 5: True

Although Jews have the advantage of the Old Testament, their disobedience to it never nullifies God’s faithfulness. It only brings out His righteousness since their disobedience is their own fault—not God’s (Rom 3:1-8).

QUESTION 6

<i>Reference</i>	<i>OT teaching</i>
Romans 4:1-3	Abraham was justified by his faith in God’s promise, not by his works or by the Law.
Romans 4:4-8	David spoke of faith bringing righteousness that was apart from works.
Romans 4:9-12	Abraham became the father of both the circumcised and the uncircumcised.
Romans 4:13-15	By faith, Abraham received the promise of blessing to the nations.
Romans 4:16-25	Abraham had simple trust that Sarah would bear a child.

QUESTION 7

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Benefits of Righteousness</i>
Romans 5:1-2	Peace with God
Romans 5:3-5	Joy in all circumstances
Romans 5:6-8	Reconciliation despite formerly being God’s enemies
Romans 5:9-11	Salvation from God’s wrath

QUESTION 8: Legalism

This means that Christians are delivered from sin to reveal God's righteousness. This manifestation happens as they are identified with Christ in baptism and as they continually yield by faith to their new master, Christ, and as they realize their old master, sin, has no claim on them.

QUESTION 9

Your answer should be similar to the following: Believers are released from obeying the Mosaic Covenant, because they have died to it by the death of Christ, just as a widow is free from the marriage covenant when her husband dies. The living widow represents the living believer, while the dead husband symbolizes the dead Law of Moses. Therefore neither the Mosaic Covenant nor the marriage covenant is binding anymore.

QUESTION 10

B. To conform to Christ despite present sufferings

Power in sanctification through the Holy Spirit provides victory over the believer's sinful heart, something that the law could never do. This power and victory give believers confidence that they can reach their goal of conformity to Christ.

QUESTION 11

<i>Person(s)</i>	<i>God's Election</i>
Isaac and Ishmael	Being physical descendants of Abraham is insufficient, since in order to be a part of Israel's blessings, one must participate in God's promise by faith.
Jacob and Esau	God can choose to bless the younger son so as to serve His sovereign purpose regardless of merit or human tradition.
Pharaoh	God can elect to show mercy on or to harden whomever He wishes.
The elect	God's justice, even in judgment, is seen through saving Gentiles and preserving a believing Jewish remnant.

QUESTION 12

C. Because they were disobedient, as prophesied

D. Because they sought salvation by works

Israel did not reject its many opportunities to accept righteousness by faith due to a lack of hearing or understanding the gospel of Christ. Rather it was because of the nation's obstinate disobedience, in fulfillment of OT prophecies (Rom 10:16-21).

QUESTION 13: Humility

Paul's purpose here is twofold: (1) To warn the Gentiles against pride about God's discipline of Israel for its unbelief (Rom 11:17, 21-22) and (2) to give an argument for the restoration of Israel (Rom 11:22-27).

QUESTION 14: Dedication

Since God has demonstrated such abundant mercy, the believer's natural response is total dedication to do His will rather than to conform to the world's pattern.

QUESTION 15

- A. We follow God's pattern of submission to authority.
- B. We escape being punished by them.
- C. We keep a clear conscience before God.

Paul says, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except by God's appointment, and the authorities that exist have been instituted by God" (Rom 13:1). Also, "rulers cause no fear for good conduct but for bad" (Rom 13:3) and we must submit "because of... conscience" (Rom 13:5).

QUESTION 16: True

Paul says, "The faith you have, keep to yourself before God. Blessed is the one who does not judge himself by what he approves. But the man who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not do so from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom 14:22-23).

QUESTION 17

Major Issues in Romans					
					Instructions
All Have Sinned	Abraham and David were Justified by Faith	No Condemnation for those in Christ	Israel Rejected because of Disobedience	Submission to Governmental Authority	Weaker Brothers
Romans 3	Romans 4	Romans 8	Romans 10	Romans 13	Romans 14

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

Lesson 9 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1

A. Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans

QUESTION 2

Correct answers include:

Nature

Creation

QUESTION 3: False

QUESTION 4: True

QUESTION 5: False

QUESTION 6

B. Christ's death

QUESTION 7: Conform

QUESTION 8

C. Pharaoh

QUESTION 9: Jealousy

QUESTION 10

A. What type of food and drink you consume

Lesson 9 Articles

Introduction to Romans

Circumstances

Date: Paul wrote from Corinth at the end of his third missionary journey. He stayed in Corinth from AD November 56 to AD February 57 (Acts 20:2-3). Therefore, the book can be dated to that time. Romans is the last of six missionary epistles from Paul.

Origin/Recipients: The text identifies the readers as Roman believers, which included Gentiles and some Jews (Rom 1:7; 2:17; 11:13, 17-31; 15:14-16; 16:3-16; see also Acts 28:17-28). This audience makes sense, because Rome was a Gentile city, and Paul was their apostle (Rom 11:13; 15:16). Evidence in the book shows that Paul wrote on his follow-up visit to the Corinthians as shown by the following:

- Paul took the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem (Rom 15:22). He was about to return to Jerusalem with the money (Rom 15:25; Acts 24:17).
- Paul stayed with Gaius, a Corinthian (Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:14).
- Phoebe likely delivered the letter, since Paul commends her to the church (Rom 16:1-2). She ministered near the eastern port of Corinth.
- Romans 1:18-32 describes Corinth better than any other city in the Roman Empire.

Argument: Paul wrote to Rome to explain God's righteousness, which is revealed in the gospel and received by faith (Rom 1:17). While he had other reasons to write, Paul uses Romans 1–11 to argue to his Jewish and Gentile audience that justification is by faith and not by works of the Law:

- Paul begins by establishing his authority as God's minister to the Gentiles before introducing justification. He previews the content of the letter with the theme of God's righteousness, which requires justification by faith alone (Rom 1:1-17).
- Paul shows that people need God's righteousness, because God condemns all mankind as sinners (Rom 1:18–3:20).
- This condemnation proves that justification must be through faith (Rom 3:21–5:21). The basis of this faith is the death of Christ that God provided for mankind.
- Paul moves on to sanctification, which is the natural result of justification. God's righteousness, which is imparted in sanctification, identifies believers with Christ, frees them from the law, and conforms them to Christ. The law was powerless against sin so people needed the empowering of the Spirit, which leads to glorification (Rom 6–8).
- The last section reviews God's election of Israel. God's righteousness is vindicated, because He will fulfill His promises to Israel, even though the nation does not believe now (Rom 9–11). Israel's rejection allows the Gentiles to enter God's family until the nation believes in the future.

Paul begins the practical portion of the letter in Romans 12. Justification by faith from God's righteousness is applied in a transformed life (Rom 12:1–15:13). Christians' relationships with other believers, unbelievers, and authorities should be given in selfless love. Believers received this love by God's grace, so they should give it to others.

Paul concludes with his need for financial assistance so that he can spread the news of God's righteousness to the Gentiles in Spain. He follows with personal greetings and with praise for God's salvation for both the Jews and the Gentiles (Rom 15:14–16:27).

Throughout Romans, Paul uses his knowledge of potential conflicts between the Jews and the Gentiles to address both groups. He advises them about how to behave with each other with the following instructions:

- Treat one another with humility (Rom 11:17-24).
- Respect differing issues of conscience (Rom 14:1–15:13).
- You are equally condemned in sin and equal in Christ (Rom 10:12).

Summary statement for the book

Paul expounds the righteousness of God, which requires justification solely by faith in Christ apart from the Law. He writes before his arrival to help solve conflicts between Jewish and Gentile believers at Rome.

Paul establishes rapport and identifies himself as God's approved servant who previews God's righteousness, which requires justification by faith (Rom 1:1-17).

Paul introduces himself as a servant of God who has been called to preach to the Gentiles. This indicates God's approval of the message in the letter. He continues with both greeting and blessing the believers at Rome (Rom 1:1-7). The letter identifies Paul as an author whom God has set apart to share the gospel with the Gentiles. This gospel involves the whole Trinity, because the Father sent the Son to die and to be resurrected through the power of the Spirit (Rom 1:1-6). Paul reminds Christian readers that God's love leads them to live a sanctified life (Rom 1:7). He wishes both grace and peace for his readers (Rom 1:7).

By expressing thankfulness to God for his readers, Paul establishes rapport with them. He desires to see them. He has tried so many times to come, with no success (Rom 1:8-15). Paul thanks God for the Romans' widespread faith (Rom 1:8). He prays that he can visit them to strengthen believers and to lead more Romans to Christ (Rom 1:9-14).

In Romans 1:16-17, Paul declares the theme of the letter: God's righteousness requires justification solely by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law. This statement gives Jews and Gentiles an idea of what the letter contains before they get all the details. Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the only solution to man's condemnation (Rom 1:16). The gospel shows people that they can receive God's righteousness only by trusting Him, not by obeying the Law (Rom 1:17). Habakkuk 2:4 acknowledges this truth.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Condemnation

God's righteousness is necessary due to the condemnation of all mankind for sin. His righteousness requires that justification, for both Jew and Gentile, comes only by faith (Rom 1:18–3:20).

The Gentiles condemn themselves by suppressing the knowledge of God they receive from nature and their conscience. They need justification by faith because they lead a sinful lifestyle (Rom 1:18-32). Paul traces the Gentiles' need for salvation in two movements:

- *Suppression*: Gentiles experience God's anger against their sin because they suppress the knowledge of Him found in creation (Rom 1:18-20). God's wrath judges their godlessness and wickedness (Rom 1:18). He judges them because they suppress the truth

they have about God's eternal power and divine nature (Rom 1:18-20). This suppression means the Gentiles are guilty before God (Rom 1:20).

- *Rejection:* The Gentiles reject their innate knowledge of God, which leads them into a downward spiral of sin and judgment (Rom 1:21-32). Acting against their consciences causes them to ignore God by worshipping idols (Rom 1:21-23). God responds to their idolatry by handing them over to sexual sin and to further idolatry (Rom 1:24-25). Their sin leads God to give them over to homosexuality and its penalties (Rom 1:26-27). Finally, God gives them to more degraded practices, but despite the death penalty, these people approve of others who are bound by sin (Rom 1:28-32).

Note: homosexuality is a dangerous lifestyle. The average life expectancy for a homosexual male is twenty years less than that for a heterosexual male. Homosexuals are also more inclined to suicide and drug use.

Paul points out that self-righteous people also need justification by faith because they condemn themselves as well. These people's lives lack both truth and works, in contrast to God's righteousness, which is revealed in their consciences (Rom 2:1-16). One who arrogantly judges others condemns himself, because he commits the same sins (Rom 2:1-4). He could escape God's judgment through repentance. The degree of their punishment depends on their works before God (Rom 2:5-11). Self-righteous people will be judged by their consciences, since they sin and do good works apart from any knowledge of the law (Rom 2:12-16).

Are Jews who have been given God's law better? No, Jews also need justification by faith. They condemn themselves by their prejudice and their disobedience to the Law, especially since they had God's Word before the Gentiles had it (Rom 2:17-3:8). A Jew, under the high standards of the Law, must be careful that he does not hypocritically judge others while he himself sins (Rom 2:17-24). Circumcision is only valuable if the man also obeys the Law (Rom 2:25-29). An uncircumcised Gentile who keeps the Law is better than a Jew who neglects it (Rom 2:25-27). God approves of a heart that is circumcised by the Holy Spirit more than the flesh circumcised by a knife (Rom 2:28-29). The Jews' disobedience to the Law never nullifies God's faithfulness—it brings out His righteousness (Rom 3:1-8). The Jews have the advantage of the Word of God, and their disobedience is their fault.

Everyone needs justification by faith since all are condemned by their sin (Rom 3:9-20). In this section, Paul established the bad news before explaining the good news of justification. People reveal that they are under sin by their actions (Rom 3:9-18). Paul includes himself among those who are under God's judgment since all, Jews and Gentiles, sin (Rom 3:9). The Old Testament teaches the sinfulness of all men (Rom 3:10-18). Unfortunately, no one person is righteous, understands God, or does good (Rom 3:10-12; quoting Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Eccl 7:20). Paul observes that every part of our bodies sins (Rom 3:17; see Ps 5:9; 140:3; Isa 59:7-8). No one truly fears God (Rom 3:18; see Ps 36:1). The Mosaic Law reveals that all people sin and must be held accountable before God, so the righteousness that we need will not come from obeying the law (Rom 3:19-20).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Justification

God's righteousness, which is provided in the justification of all who trust Christ, proves that neither Jews nor Gentiles have any advantage, since God Himself makes provision for the forgiveness of sin (Rom 3:21–5:21).

Jews and Gentiles have an equal opportunity for salvation because they are both justified through faith, not through works (Rom 3:21-31). Righteousness must be received by faith in Christ. Then, God shows His justice in justification, redemption, and propitiation (Rom 3:21-26). No believer can boast of anything because faith saves all (Rom 3:27-31).

There are several unfamiliar theological words in Romans 3:21-31. The following chart with definitions may help to clarify these concepts:

Theological Words in Romans	
<i>Predestination (8:29, 30a)</i> <i>Election (9:10-13)</i>	The gracious act of God before creation when he chose some people for salvation and conformity to the likeness of Christ because of his sovereign good pleasure
<i>Foreknowledge (8:29, 30)</i>	God's personal, relational look into the future to save certain individuals not based upon their faith but upon His desire to bring them into relationship with Him
<i>Calling (8:28, 30b)</i>	God's effective summons of people from the kingdom of darkness that guarantees their response to the preaching of the gospel and allows them entrance into heaven
<i>Righteousness (3:21)</i>	Holliness or perfection which is inherent for God yet imputed to persons who trust in the perfection of Christ on their behalf
<i>Faith (3:22, 25)</i>	A person's trust in Christ, whose atoning work on the Cross as the sinless substitute paid the penalty for sin
<i>Justification (3:24; 4:25; 5:18; 8:30c)</i>	The instantaneous legal act of God when he declares a sinner "not guilty" due to Christ's righteousness being applied to this person. This legal act makes him/her justified in God's sight
<i>Grace (3:24)</i>	God's act of bestowing on people undeserved blessings through His own good pleasure and through no merit of their own.
<i>Mercy (11:30, 31, 32; 12:1)</i>	God's act of withholding punishment from people because of His compassion and not through any merit of their own
<i>Redemption (3:24; 8:23)</i>	The return of the sinner to a relationship with God through Jesus Christ's payment of the death penalty on the behalf of the believer
<i>Propitiation (3:25)</i>	The removal of God's punishment for sin through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ so that God's righteous anger is satisfied
<i>Justice (3:25-26)</i>	The fairness of God whereby He must punish sin in an individual or in a sinless substitute for that person, Jesus Christ
<i>Imputation (5:13)</i>	Reckoning either the sin of Adam to an unbeliever or reckoning the perfection of Christ to a believer
<i>Sanctification (5:2; 15:16)</i>	The progressive work of God through the Holy Spirit to make a Christian increasingly free from sin's power and increasingly like Jesus Christ
<i>Glorification (8:18, 19, 30d)</i>	The final state of the believer when he is in complete conformity to the character of Jesus Christ and is in a resurrected body that will last forever

In the next chapter, Paul gives examples of justified people. God's righteousness, which is provided by faith, is illustrated in Abraham who was justified by his faith in God's promise. This shows that justification by faith is not a new way of salvation (Rom 4). This teaching is important because some Christians taught that salvation was through both obedience to the law of the Old Testament and faith in the New Testament. This is not true as seen in the lives of the Old Testament people:

- Abraham was not declared righteous by works, but by belief (Rom 4:1-3).
- David spoke of the faith that brings righteousness apart from works when he praised God's forgiveness by faith, see Psalm 32 (Rom 4:4-8).

- Abraham was declared righteous before he was circumcised, thus becoming the father of both the circumcised and the uncircumcised, since he was circumcised later (Rom 4:9-12).
- Abraham received God's promise to bless the nations through faith (Gen 12:1-3), and not through the Law, which brings wrath (Rom 4:13-15).
- Abraham serves as an example of salvation by faith when he trusted that Sarah would have a child. This showed that both Jews and Gentiles can be saved by trusting that God raised Jesus from the dead for their justification (Rom 4:16-25).

God's righteousness ensures that the believer shares a relationship with God. Reconciliation with God depends on the work of Christ, which provides peace, joy, reconciliation, and salvation (Rom 5:1-11).

- Justification by faith brings peace with God (Rom 5:1-2).
- Justification by faith brings joy in all circumstances (Rom 5:3-5).
- Justification by faith brings reconciliation between God and His former enemies (Rom 5:6-8).
- Justification by Christ's blood brings salvation from God's wrath (Rom 5:9-11).

God's righteousness is imputed to believers through Christ's atoning work, just as Adam's sinfulness is imputed to all his descendants. This imputation shows that Christ's death is the basis for justification by faith (Rom 5:12-21). (Review imputation in the chart of definitions, if necessary.)

- Adam's sin brought death to the world, since all who came after him also sinned (Rom 5:12-14).
- As Adam's sin imputed sin and death to all, Christ's righteousness imputed grace to all who believe (Rom 5:15-17).
- As Adam's sin brought condemnation to all, so Christ's righteousness brings justification for all believers (Rom 5:18-19).
- Although the Law revealed sin and reigned over it, God's grace forgives sin and reigns through righteousness to bring eternal life through Christ (Rom 5:20-21).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Sanctification

God's righteousness, which is imparted in sanctification, identifies believers with Christ. In this way they are freed from the Law and conformed to Christ. His righteousness shows the Law's impotence versus the Spirit's power against legalism and indulgence (Rom 6-8).

The believer's positional identification with Christ is the new basis for experiential growth in sanctification (Rom 6). Paul declares that Christians are delivered from sin in order to reveal God's righteousness. He does this to encourage the Jews to avoid legalism and the Gentiles to avoid indulgence. Two types of sanctification are noted:

- A believer's positional freedom from the power of sin comes from God, who identifies the believer with Christ in a spiritual baptism in His death and resurrection. This results in the Christian being freed from the power of sin (Rom 6:1-10).

- A believer's practical freedom from the power of sin occurs as he continually yields through faith in Christ as his master (Rom 5:11-14).
- Each believer must choose righteousness with the understanding that his old master, sin, has no more claims on him (Rom 6:15-23).

Christians sometimes trust in rituals and beliefs for their sanctification, instead of their experience with Christ. Some of these are:

- Teaching that salvation can be lost
- Worshipping in specific styles or with a specific type of music
- Requiring church attendance in order to keep salvation
- Sinning is acceptable as long as it is confessed, because God is a forgiving God
- Participating in the Lord's Supper and being baptized are necessary to maintain salvation
- Avoiding certain activities like playing cards, dancing, drinking alcohol, smoking, etc.

The Christian life is not summarized by activities that should be avoided. Believers are freed from the Law by Christ's death. However, the Christian still sins because of his sinful heart, which reveals his need for sanctification because the Law cannot deliver from sin (Rom 7). Believers have died to the Law through Christ's death. They are released from obeying it, just as a widow is freed from her marriage to her husband upon his death (Rom 7:1-6). The Law reveals the presence of sin in people, even Christians (Rom 7:7-12). Sin, not the Law, causes death (Rom 7:13). The only way a believer can be free from sin is by trusting Christ's victory over death (Rom 7:13-25).

Some believers try to live by the Mosaic Law today in the following ways:

- Observing the Sabbath
- Obeying food laws
- Tithing
- Not charging interest to Christians
- Practicing circumcision
- Teaching the law as a way of sanctification

It is unclear if Paul is describing his past or his present in Romans 7:7-25. The following chart looks at both possibilities:

Pre-conversion Support	Post-conversion Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •How can a believer say, "I am a slave to sin" (7:14)? This is contrary his being "set free from sin and become slaves to God (6:2) and "should no longer be slaves to sin" (6:6). •Being in the flesh/being in sinful nature does not mean physical passion, but a way of life (7:5). •The structure of 7:7-25 interprets 7:5, pre-conversion, while 8:1-17 interprets 7:6, post-conversion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Believers also sin since Paul says: "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desire" (6:12). •Paul describes his pre-conversion life as free from struggle (Gal 1:14; Phil 3:5-6). •Paul uses the present tense (7:14-25). •Romans 6-8 describes sanctification, which is a post-conversion activity. •Christians still struggle with sin. •Only a believer can be described as having a sinful nature, while being a slave to God's Law (7:25).

Sanctification through the Holy Spirit provides the believer with power to have victory over his sinful nature. The Law could never provide this. This power and victory give believers confidence to reach their goal of conforming to Christ in glorification despite suffering (Rom 8). This chapter is key to understanding the ministry of the Spirit. It is also one of the clearest passages to show how God's Spirit guarantees salvation. The Holy Spirit is the source of three significant benefits:

1. Victory over sin (Rom 8:1-13)
2. Adoption into God's family as sons (Rom 8:14-27)
3. Assurance of salvation (Rom 8:28-39)

This chapter teaches both the believer's security and his assurance. While some think these terms are the same, they are distinct:

Security and Assurance	
Eternal Security	Assurance of Salvation
Being saved from the penalty of sin forever (once saved, always saved)	Knowing that we are saved from the penalty of sin forever
God's work to guarantee salvation	Realization of the truth of eternal security
Spirit's ministry of sealing (Eph 1:13-14)	Spirit's ministry of assuring (Rom 8:15-17)
Believer's position as a child of God (Rom 8:16)	Believer's confidence as a child of God (Rom 8:16)
All Christians possess	Some Christians doubt
Can't be lost (Jn 6:39-40; 10:27-29; Rom 8:30, 38-39)	Can be lost (see 1 Jn 5:11-13)
I know whom I have believed	Blessed assurance

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Election

God's righteousness is vindicated in His election of Israel, who rejected Christ in favor of works and is now partially and temporarily rejected. He also provides the Gentiles with salvation by faith and warns them against pride. God also shows His faithfulness to His covenant nation Israel (Rom 9–11).

God's righteousness is revealed in His sovereign *past* choice of Israel. In this way, Israel's failure is not because God was unfaithful (Rom 9:1-29). Paul grieves over Israel's rejection of Christ because God had chosen to give the nation certain privileges. These privileges included adoption, glory, covenants, law, temple worship, promises, and the ancestry of Christ (Rom 9:1-5). Paul illustrated God's choice of Israel with three examples of election from the Old Testament. He did this to affirm that God's sovereign choice by grace is not new (Rom 9:6-18):

- Isaac's election over Ishmael showed that to inherit Israel's blessings, participation in God's promise must be by faith, not simply through physical descent from Abraham (Rom 9:6-9).

- Jacob's election over Esau showed that, regardless of human tradition, God can bless the younger son to serve His sovereign purpose (Rom 9:10-13).
- Pharaoh's hardened heart showed that God can choose to show mercy on whomever He wishes and harden whomever He wishes (Rom 9:14-18).

Paul declares that God proves He is just in electing some for salvation. God, in His righteousness, shows mercy in judgment by saving Gentiles and preserving the Jewish remnant (Rom 9:19-29).

Note: In Hosea 1:10; 2:23, the nation of Israel is called God's people. Paul applies this term to the church in Romans 9:25-26. This reference does not annul God's promise to the nation.

God's righteousness is also revealed in man's responsibility, which reflects Israel's *present* trust in works. Israel rejects God's offer of righteousness through faith in Christ, despite the message that is being preached throughout the Gentile world (Rom 9:30–10:21). Israel misses God's righteousness because the Jews seek salvation through works. However, the Gentiles find salvation by faith in Christ (Rom 9:30–10:4). God's offer of salvation by faith in Christ is still offered to Israel and to all men (Rom 10:5-15). Israel rejects many opportunities to accept righteousness by faith because of the nation's fixed disobedience, in fulfillment of OT prophecies (Rom 10:16-21).

Finally, God's righteousness will be revealed in Israel's future, since He did not fully reject her. Israel will believe at Christ's return (Rom 11). God is faithful to His covenant and will not fully reject Israel, but He will provide salvation for the Gentiles, which they should accept humbly. God will not reject the people whom He foreknew, because He is saving a remnant (Rom 11:1-10). God's present rejection of Israel is not permanent. However, the greater purpose of the rejection is to enable the Gentiles to join in the Abrahamic covenant promises for salvation. This inclusion provokes Israel to jealousy and leads the Jews to accept Christ's salvation. Then they can be restored as His future avenue of blessing to the world (Rom 11:11-24).

Paul clarifies the present relationship of Jews and Gentiles to the Abrahamic covenant with an illustration of two olive trees. The covenant is for opportunity and privilege. The covenant is first given to Israel, the cultivated olive tree. The cut-off branches represent Israel's rejection of the Messiah. God then offers the covenant to the Gentiles, the wild olive tree, which is grafted onto the cultivated olive tree by means of the church. Paul has two purposes here: (1) to warn the Gentiles against pride because of God's discipline on Israel for unbelief (Rom 11:17, 21-22) and (2) to give an argument for the restoration of Israel (Rom 11:22-27).

Future salvation will come to Israel as a whole, when the nation repents (Rom 11:26). Israel will repent after all the elect Gentiles have repented at Christ's return to Jerusalem (Rom 11:25-32). God is worthy of all glory and praise for His incomparable wisdom and knowledge. His plan will fulfill the Abrahamic covenant to Israel (Rom 11:33-36)!

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Transformation

Paul declares that God's righteousness is applied in transformed living with other believers, nonbelievers, government, and weaker-conscience Christians. Transformed living reveals the truths of justification in Romans 1–11 (Rom 12:1–15:13).

The believer's natural response to God's abundant mercy is total dedication to do His will (Rom 12:1-2). This dedication is the key to a transformed lifestyle in Romans 12:3–15:13.

In a transformed life, God's righteousness produces humility in the use of one's spiritual gifts. It also demonstrates love in difficult social relationships in order to help believers bring others to Christ through love (Rom 12:3-21).

Categories of Spiritual Gifts (1 Pet 4:11; see Rom 12:6-8)

Serving	Speaking
Administering	Teaching
Faith	Evangelism
Giving	Pastor-Teacher
Service	Encouraging

Three more results of God's righteousness at work are:

- Submission to authorities in order to escape punishment and live with a clear conscience (Rom 13:1-7)
- Love for other believers because all will soon give an account before God (Rom 13:8-14)
- Sensitivity over people's consciences in the church, which leads Gentile believers to change offending habits and Jewish believers to follow their conscience (Rom 14:1–15:13).

Two Conflicting Groups at Rome

Weak	Strong
Jewish minority	Gentile majority
Conscience easily offended	Not easily offended
Narrow, more closed perspective	Broad, more open perspective
Vegetarian (Rom 14:2)	Eats all meats freely (Rom 14:2)
Sabbath worship (Rom 14:5)	Worships any day (Rom 14:5)
Less mature (most of the time)	More mature
Strong convictions in above mentioned areas	Ambivalent convictions in above mentioned areas
Commanded not to violate own conscience (Rom 14:5)	Commanded not to hurt weaker brother's conscience (Rom 14:1, 15, 20, 21; 15:1)

Principles for both are:

1. Follow your own convictions (Rom 14:5).
2. Accept others' beliefs instead of criticizing or judging them (Rom 14:13; 15:7).
3. Work toward peace, edification, and unity (Rom 14:19; 15:5).
4. Remember that all people are accountable to God (Rom 14:12).
5. Keep private your personal convictions in gray areas (Rom 14:22).

6. Christianity has no food laws, so believers should work toward righteousness, peace, and joy (Rom 14:6; 14:17).
7. Do everything for God's glory (Rom 15:6).
8. Teach one another (Rom 15:14).

Paul declares that God's righteousness is dispersed by spreading the gospel. He wants to raise support to reach more Gentiles in Spain. His letter ends with personal greetings and praise for God's plan of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 15:14–16:27).

Paul exemplifies how to spread God's righteousness by requesting the church's support for his ministry to the Gentiles in Spain. He plans to evangelize there, after a visit to Rome, and will need the believers' assistance (Rom 15:14-33).

Paul also shows how to relate to others in the body of Christ (Rom 16:1-24):

- Commending co-laborers who disperse God's righteousness should be a priority for leaders (Rom 16:1-16). He commends Phoebe to the church so that the believers in Rome will assist her in serving others (Rom 16:1-2). Paul then commends twenty-six church members in Rome, whom he met while traveling, as evidence of his deep concern for the saints (Rom 16:3-16).
- Work for unity by watching out for divisive people and by avoiding them (Rom 16:17-20).
- Fellowship between churches is an important priority in spreading God's righteousness (Rom 16:21-24).

Paul concludes by praising God for revealing His eternal plan to save both Jews and Gentiles. This letter is his final encouragement for both groups of believers at Rome so that their presence in the church brings glory to God (Rom 16:25-27).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 10: Ephesians and Colossians: Unity in Christ and in His Deity

Lesson Introduction

When Paul wrote Romans, he intended to visit them after a quick trip to Jerusalem to deliver the offering from the Gentile churches (Rom 15:24-29). However, Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and spent two years in prison in Caesarea (Acts 24:27). His appeal to Caesar led to a perilous journey to Rome (Acts 27:1–28:16), where he lived for two years under house arrest (Acts 28:30-31). Lessons 10 and 11 cover the four letters Paul penned during this period from AD 60–62. The best we can tell, they were written in this order: Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philipppians.

The twin epistles of Ephesians and Colossians can be compared and contrasted in several ways as shown below (adapted and expanded from Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa. *Talk Thru The Bible*. [Nashville: Nelson, 1983], 413):

Similarities Between Ephesians and Colossians

- Written in prison, carried by Tychicus
- Stress wisdom, knowledge, fullness, and mystery
- First half = position, second half = practice

Similar Passages

- Redemption and forgiveness of sins (Eph 1:7; Col 1:14)
- Wives (Eph 5:22-24; Col 3:18)
- Husbands (Eph 5:25-33; Col 3:19)
- Children (Eph 6:1-3; Col 3:20)
- Fathers (Eph 6:4; Col 3:21)
- Slaves (Eph 6:5-8; Col 3:22-25)
- Masters (Eph 6:9; Col 4:1)

Differences Between Ephesians and Colossians

- Ephesians emphasizes the church
- Colossians emphasizes the Christ
- Ephesians is general, universal
- Colossians is specific, local
- Ephesians is a calm presentation
- Colossians is a concerned defense
- Ephesians is reflective, quiet
- Colossians is spiritual, conflict

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you should be able to do the following:

- Explain the major emphases Paul makes in both Ephesians and Colossians
- Trace the major themes throughout each book
- Make applications in your own life from Paul's teachings on positional truth
- Explain how Paul expected believers to best testify about God to a watching world
- Counsel a person struggling with issues similar to the Colossian heresy
- Give and receive encouragement through corporate struggle in the faith

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to Ephesians

Topic 2: Unity as Equals (Eph 1–3)

Topic 3: Love as a Testimony (Eph 4–6)

Topic 4: Introduction to Colossians

Topic 5: Supremacy and Deity (Col 1–2)

Topic 6: Practical Instruction (Col 3–4)

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to Ephesians

Ephesians								
Jew-Gentile Unity Shown in Love								
Unity as equals				Love as testimony				
1–3				4–6				
Doctrine				Application				
Position				Practice				
Belief				Behavior				
Privileges				Responsibilities				
Salutation 1:1-2	Position 1:3-23	Reconciliation 2	Uniqueness 3	Unity 4:1-16	Holiness 4:17-5:20	Submission 5:21-6:9	Reliance 6:10-20	Love 6:21-24
Rome								
Fall AD 60 (first Roman imprisonment)								

Purpose of Ephesians: A key to the argument of Paul's letter to the Ephesians can be found in the distinction between the many references to two groups designated as “we” (Eph 1:11) and “you” (Eph 1:13; 2:1). The “you” clearly refers to Gentiles (Eph 2:11; 3:1) who were far away from God (Eph 2:13). Therefore by the “we” Paul has in mind Jews, like himself, who are part of the people of Israel and possess the covenants of promise.

This Jew-Gentile distinction is important, since the original readers of the letter were mostly Ephesian Gentiles, as they are the only group addressed (Eph 1:13; 3:1). Paul, in effect, wrote this letter to encourage these Gentile believers that their new standing in Christ makes them equal heirs with Jewish Christians. His passion was that both groups would work together for the Lord, as a testimony to the world. He accomplishes this purpose by first laying the doctrinal foundation of the Jew-Gentile unity (Eph 1–3). He then discusses the practical implications for this new entity called the church, made of both Jews and Gentiles (Eph 4–6).



Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “Introduction to Ephesians” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verses: Ephesians 4:1-3.

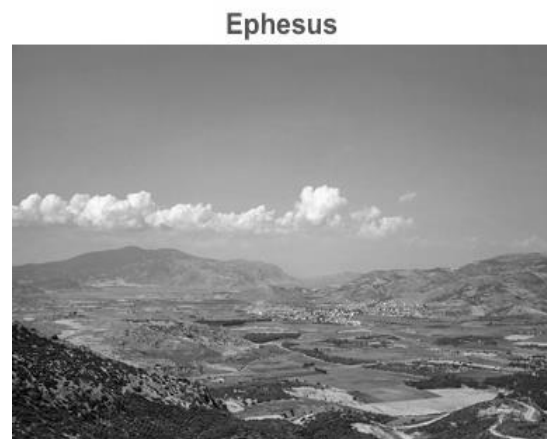
QUESTION 1

What is emphasized so much in Ephesians that it is noted in every chapter?

- A) The characteristics and work of demons
- B) The Holy Spirit
- C) Prayer
- D) Long sentences (in the original language)

QUESTION 2

Please write Ephesians 4:1-3 from memory.



Topic 1 Key Points:

- In Ephesians, Paul emphasizes the spiritual world, which includes mentioning the person and work of the Holy Spirit in every chapter as well as teaching on demonology.
- The key verses of Ephesians ask believers to walk worthy of their heavenly calling in unity and love.
- Paul’s aim is to encourage Jews and Gentiles to show their love for one another, since they are one in Christ.

Topic 2: Unity as Equals (Eph 1–3)

Ephesians gives the fullest explanation of the unity between Jews and Gentiles of any New Testament writing. This joint-body in Christ is the mystery hidden since OT times (Eph 3:1-13). The general attitude of Jews toward Gentiles before the church age is summed up by Paul in Galatians 2:15: “We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners.” Positionally, Jews and Gentiles were opposites and antagonists. How could these two groups be brought together in unity and love?

Even Jesus stated that Jews “worship what we know because salvation is from the Jews.” In referring to the Samaritans, but also Gentiles, He also said, “You people worship what you do not know” (Jn 4:22). He also predicted, “But a time is coming— and now is here— when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such people to be his worshipers” (Jn 4:23). Worship would no longer be just at Jerusalem, and salvation would no longer be solely through identification with the Jews (Jn 4:19-26). This exciting time has arrived, for the Messiah has come, and Paul has the privilege of revealing the Jew and Gentile unity that results.

- **Ephesians: Jew-Gentile Unity Is Shown in Love**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** AD 60
- **Key Word:** Unity
- **Key Verses:** Ephesians 4:1-3
- **Summary Statement:** Paul explains God’s mystery—the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the church—to exhort these two groups to live worthy of this calling through a unified love for one another as a testimony to the world.
- **Application:** Do you really believe you are equal with other members of the body of Christ and that they are equal with you? How do you express your unity with believers who are different from you?

Our Position in Christ

Satan’s Lie	God’s Truth
You are a sinner because you sometimes sin.	You are a saint, one declared righteous by God, who sometimes sins.
You get your identity from your behavior.	You get your identity from what God has done for you.
You get your identity from what people say about you.	You get your identity from what God says about you.
Your behavior determines what you believe about yourself.	Your belief about yourself determines your behavior.

(Adapted from “Resolving Spiritual Conflicts and Cross-Cultural Ministry” by Dr. Timothy Warner, [Knoxville, TN: Freedom in Christ Ministries, 1998]).

Reading Assignment

- Please read Ephesians 1–3.

- Please read the article “Unity as Equals” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 3

In Ephesians 1, why did Paul pray that the Ephesians would have the wisdom and the revelation to comprehend their exalted position in Christ?

- A) To encourage them to get to know God better
- B) So they might better understand their blessings
- C) To encourage them to thank God
- D) To encourage them to give regularly

QUESTION 4

What is the mystery Paul revealed in Ephesians 3?

- A) Salvation by grace through faith in Christ
- B) Our current heavenly position in Christ
- C) Unbelievers are empowered by the ruler of the kingdom of the air
- D) The church is one unified body of Jews and Gentiles

QUESTION 5

In Ephesians 3, believers testify of God through their unity. *True or False?*

Topic 2 Key Points:

- In Ephesians 1, Paul prays that believers would comprehend their position in order to encourage them to get to know God better.
- Paul’s ministry revealed is the mystery of the unity of Jew and Gentile in the church.
- The unity and love of believers for each other testifies to the world about God’s truth.

Topic 3: Love as a Testimony (Eph 4–6)

The Weapons of Our Warfare Ephesians 6			
Weapons	Roman Function	Spiritual Meaning	Defends Against Accusations of...
Belt (14a)	Held up flowing robe and sword	Integrity	Hypocrisy
Breastplate (14b)	Protected vital organs	Imputed righteousness	Never being able to conquer sin
Shoes (15)	Gave mobility to fight anywhere	Availability in evangelism	Uselessness in sharing the gospel
Shield (16)	Extinguished arrows	Faith in God	Inability to fight temptations
Helmet (17a)	Protected from head injury	Security of salvation	Doubt of salvation
Sword (17b)	Attacked the foe or defended against attack	God’s Word, the Bible	Inadequacy of God’s Word (lies about us or God)

God desired Old Testament Israel to bear witness to Him by being separate and unique from the other nations around her (Lev 20:23). It displeased God when Israel wanted to be like the nations around her, because it took away her uniqueness (1 Sam 8:4-9). But now in Christ, the witness is that the Jews and the Gentiles are one:

Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh—who are called “uncircumcision” by the so-called “circumcision” that is performed in the body by hands—that you were at that time without the Messiah, alienated from the citizenship of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, the one who turned both groups into one and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the hostility, in his flesh, when he nullified the law of commandments in decrees. The purpose of this was to create in himself the two into one new man, thus making peace, and to reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by which the hostility has been killed. (Eph 2:11-16)

Paul has revealed the exalted spiritual position of the Gentiles in Christ and their equality with their Jewish believers in the Messiah. He has also shown through unity, they can witness to an unbelieving world (see also Jn 17:20-23). So, how can a believer live out this unity? What should change in a person’s life? How do heavenly citizens live here on earth?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Ephesians 4–6.
- Please read the article “Love as a Testimony” in the Articles section at the end of the lesson.

QUESTION 6

In Ephesians 4, God equips gifted men. Which men can do the work of ministry?

- A) Pastor-teachers
- B) Evangelists
- C) Saints
- D) Apostles

QUESTION 7

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching about submission in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching About submission</i>
Ephesians 5:22-24	Masters, treat slaves with the equality that God shows
Ephesians 5:25-33	Fathers, do not provoke your children
Ephesians 6:1-3	Wives, respect your husbands
Ephesians 6:4	Husbands, love your wives as Christ loves the church
Ephesians 6:5-8	Slaves, willingly obey your masters as if you are obeying Christ
Ephesians 6:9	Children, obey your parents

QUESTION 8

List the six pieces of the armor of God from Ephesians 6:14-17.

Topic 3 Key Points:

- Unity among believers will be seen in their love for one another.
- Proper submission to all authority is a testimony to unbelievers.
- God's armor of truth, righteousness, gospel, faith, salvation, God's Word, and prayer in the Spirit are the Christian's weapons of spiritual warfare.

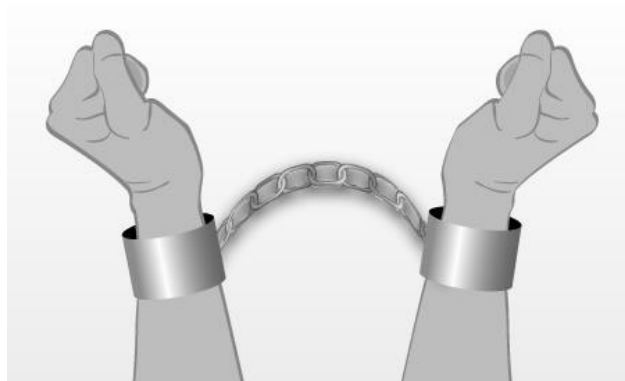
Topic 4: Introduction to Colossians

Colossians					
Deity of Christ vs. Syncretistic Heresy					
Supremacy/Deity			Practical Instruction		
1–2			3–4		
Heretical Living			Holy Living		
Belief			Behavior		
Greeting & Prayer 1:1-14	Supremacy & Deity 1:15–2:3	Syncretistic Heresy 2:4-23	Position: Union with Christ 3:1-4	Practice: Holiness in Relationships 3:5–4:6	Conclusion 4:7-18
Rome					
Autumn AD 61 (first Roman imprisonment)					

Purpose of Colossians: Paul writes to the Colossians in order to deliver the church from a serious heresy that was threatening its very life, since it attacks the deity of Christ. He responds to this cult with a two-pronged approach: He first establishes the supremacy of Christ as God to deal with the theological basis of the false teaching (Col 1–2). He then provides practical instruction based on the deity of Christ. When this advice is followed the enemies of Christ will be put to shame as they see holy living in the church (Col 3–4). Thus the Pauline formula to successfully fight this cult is a holy lifestyle that is founded in a solid Christological foundation. This holy lifestyle could successfully fight a heresy that is both legalistic and ascetic as well as philosophical and knowledge-oriented.

Free people always seem to be in danger of being brought into bondage. But God does not want His people to live in bondage. The Israelites suffered in bitter bondage in Egypt (Ex 1:14; 2:23), yet God brought them out of it. In our case, God paid a high price—the blood of His dear Son—to free us from bondage. Therefore, Paul urges us in Galatians not to allow false teachers to bring us back into slavery “to the weak and worthless basic forces...observing religious days and months and seasons and years” (Gal 4:9-10). So the problems the Colossians faced were not unique to them, but how do they apply to us today?

Danger of Bondage



Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “Introduction to Colossians” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the Colossians key verse: Colossians 2:9.

QUESTION 9

What is Paul’s strategy to successfully fight the cult facing the Colossians?

QUESTION 10

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the characteristics of the Colossian heresy in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Heresy Characteristics</i>
Colossians 2:16-17	Denial of Christ’s deity
Colossians 2:2-4, 8-10	Its Jewish nature in certain OT laws and ceremonies
Colossians 2:18	A low view of the body
Colossians 1:15	Denial of Christ’s supremacy
Colossians 1:16	Worship of angels as mediators
Colossians 1:17	Denial of Christ as creator and sustainer
Colossians 2:20-23	Greek philosophical roots in a so-called deeper knowledge

QUESTION 11

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the unique word used in that verse in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Unique Word</i>
Colossians 1:16	Knowledge
Colossians 1:18	Deity
Colossians 1:24	Philosophy
Colossians 2:8	Visible
Colossians 2:9	Supremacy
Colossians 2:3	Fill up

Topic 4 Key Points:

- Paul’s formula to successfully fight this cult is a holy lifestyle with a solid foundation of who Christ really is.
- The Colossian heresy included false teachings of various origins, substitutes for Christ, false knowledge, and harsh treatment of the body.
- The unique Colossian situation calls for a special vocabulary that Paul did not need to use in his other writings.

Topic 5: Supremacy and Deity (Col 1–2)

Probably the closest parallel to the ancient Colossian heresy is today's new age movement. The new age movement is comprised of a loose network of individuals that are bound together by their common values. Their values are based in mysticism and monism, which is the worldview that all things are one. People who are part of the new age movement have a common vision of peace and enlightenment (Elliot Miller, *A Crash Course on the New Age Movement*, [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989], 15-16). It is similar to the Colossian heresy in that it draws from many erroneous philosophies that are directly contrary to biblical Christianity.



Issue	Christianity	New Age
Theism	Monotheism	Pantheism
God	Personal	Impersonal
Divinity	External: "He's God"	Internal: "I'm God"
Our Origin	Creation	Evolution
Our Problem	Alienation from God	Undiscovered divinity
Our Solution	Faith in God	Sense emotional atmosphere
Techniques	Unimportant	Vital: imaging, hypnosis
Faith	Historical	Mystical
Truth	Objective	Subjective
Standards	Absolute	Relative
Matter	Real & temporal	Illusion & eternal
Forgiveness	Only in Christ	Not needed
Appeal	Rational: fill the mind	Experiential: empty the mind
Religion	Oneway	Many ways
Orientation	Exclusive	Inclusive (syncretism)
Occultism	Prohibited	Practiced
Salvation	Atonement	Enlightenment
Basis	Divine salvation	Human effort
Jesus Christ	God made man	Man knowing divinity
Hope	Resurrection	Reincarnation
Afterlife	Fellowship with God	Merge with God

Paul answers this horrendous teaching with a correct focus on Christ. Colossians gives the fullest explanation of Christ's deity of any NT writing. Especially worth noting are (1) "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, for all things in heaven and on earth were

created by him” (Col 1:15-16), (2) “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him” (Col 1:19), and (3) “For in him all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form” (Col 2:9).

False Teachers Lead Astray



False teachers plague the churches, so they are the occasion for writing many of the Epistles. In Galatians, the false teachers are the Judaizers who are trying to bring believers back under Jewish laws and customs (Gal 4:8-12). In Jude, the false teachers are motivated by greed, and they turn God’s grace into license (Jude 4, 11). But what are the errors of the false teachers in Colossae?

- **Colossians: The Deity of Christ Versus Heresy**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** AD 61
- **Key Word:** Deity
- **Key Verse:** Colossians 2:9
- **Summary Statement:** Paul instructs the Colossian church in the supremacy and the deity of Christ. He also urges a practical outworking of this doctrine in order to fight a heresy threatening the life and ministry of the church.
- **Application:** How might you see one of these heresies appear in your church?

Reading Assignment

- Please review again the key verse that you have already memorized: Colossians 2:9.
- Please read Colossians 1–2.
- Please read the article “Supremacy and Deity” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 12

In both Ephesians and Colossians Paul emphasizes the believer's high standing in Christ. *True or False?*

QUESTION 13

Match the philosophy in the left-hand column with the reason it is wrong in the right-hand column.

<i>Philosophy</i>	<i>Correction</i>
Gnosticism	Because reality is in Christ
Legalism	Because restraint is in Christ
Mysticism	Because deity is in Christ
Asceticism	Because headship is in Christ

Topic 5 Key Points:

- Paul teaches the high position the believer has in Christ in order to let the Colossian believers know of their adequacy in Him to fight this heresy.
- This heresy is false because deity, reality, headship, and restraint are all in Christ.

Topic 6: Practical Instruction (Col 3–4)

John, in his gospel, wrote a description of Christ's deity that is similar to what Paul gave in the previous topic in Colossians (see Topic 4: Introduction to Colossians):

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created (Jn 1:1-3).

So the biblical writers agree that Christ is God, but what practical effect should that concept have on our lives? And how will our holy living affect an observing world?

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article "Practical Instructions" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please read Colossians 3–4.

QUESTION 14

The author points out that Paul's description of Christ's deity in Colossians is similar to the introduction of which other NT book?

- A) Matthew
- B) Mark
- C) Luke
- D) John

QUESTION 15

Explain the two steps Paul expects us to take in order to implement holy living.

QUESTION 16

Why does Paul end his letter to the Colossians with greetings from his fellow workers? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Because it is his custom in his letters
- B) To provide witnesses to his instructions
- C) Because everyone greeting them came from that church
- D) To let the Colossians know they are not alone in their fight

Put on the Virtues of Your New Life



Topic 6 Key Points:

- Both John and Colossians have passages with similar and exalted views of Christ as both creator and deity.
- Paul gives many commands for holy living but, in summary, we must put off the sins of the old life and put on the virtues of the new life.
- Paul and his coworkers greeted the Colossians to let them know that they were not alone in their fight.

Topic 7: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Ephesians at the bottom of each column.

Major Teachings in Ephesians						
	Instructions					
Paul Reveals the Divine Mystery						
The Armor of God						
Household Submission						
Sealed by the Holy Spirit						
Live in Unity and Holiness						
Salvation is by Grace through Faith						
	Ephesians 1	Ephesians 2	Ephesians 3	Ephesians 4	Ephesians 5	Ephesians 6

QUESTION 18

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Colossians at the bottom of each column.

Major Teachings in Colossians				
	Instructions			
Household Submission				
Witness and Prayer				
Christ's Supremacy				
Warnings Against Bondage				
	Colossians 1	Colossians 2	Colossians 3	Colossians 4

QUESTION 19

There are two theories for how to get people to live the Christian life. One says that they must show fruit and that their assurance of salvation can be taken away if they do not act “Christian.” The other theory emphasizes the believers’ position with secure salvation and asks them to live up to that level. Open your Life Notebook and record the approach Paul takes in both Ephesians and Colossians. Support your conclusion with specific passages taken in context.

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and note how you may be encountering a heresy like the Colossians faced. Record any help you have received from this lesson, and include specific applications you will make to your life.

Lesson 10 Self Check

QUESTION 1

One emphasis in Ephesians is demonology. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

What is the mystery Paul revealed in Ephesians 3?

- A) Salvation by grace through faith in Christ
- B) The church as one unified body of Jew and Gentile
- C) Our current heavenly position in Christ
- D) Believers taken in the Rapture

QUESTION 3

In Ephesians, the primary way believers testify of God and Christ is through their _____.

QUESTION 4

In Ephesians 4, Paul expects the _____ to do the work of ministry.

QUESTION 5

Which of the following is the key verse for Colossians?

- A) For in him all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form
- B) I urge you to live worthily of the calling with which you have been called
- C) Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace
- D) With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bear with one another in love

QUESTION 6

Which of the following is a key element in fighting the Colossian heresy?

- A) Daily confession
- B) A holy lifestyle
- C) Daily prayer
- D) Gifted men using their God-given gifts

QUESTION 7

Why did Paul use a special vocabulary with unique words in Colossians?

- A) Because someone helped him write this book
- B) Because it was written at a later date than his other epistles
- C) Because he gave so many Old Testament references
- D) Because the situation there was unique

QUESTION 8

Which book or books emphasize the believer's high position in Christ?

- A) Ephesians
- B) Colossians
- C) Ephesians and Colossians
- D) Neither

QUESTION 9

If you were counseling someone involved in mysticism, which book or books would be best to use?

- A) Ephesians
- B) Colossians
- C) Ephesians and Colossians
- D) Neither

QUESTION 10

Paul probably sent both Ephesians and Colossians together at the end of his third missionary journey. *True or False?*

Lesson 10 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

B. The Holy Spirit

Paul emphasizes the person and work of the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13-14; 2:18; 3:5, 16; 4:3-4, 30; 5:18; 6:17-18).

QUESTION 2

“I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to live worthily of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

QUESTION 3

A. To encourage them to get to know God better

Paul prays that the Gentile Ephesian believers would have wisdom and revelation to comprehend their exalted position in Christ in order to encourage them to know God better (Eph 1:15-23, especially 1:17).

QUESTION 4

D. The church is one unified body of Jews and Gentiles

Ephesians gives the fullest explanation of the unity between Jews and Gentiles of any New Testament writing. This joint-body in Christ is the “mystery” hidden since OT times (Eph 3:1-13).

QUESTION 5: True

Paul prays that his readers would have strengthened power and realize the tremendous scope of God's love. His desire is to strengthen the love between his Gentile and Jewish readers in an experiential unity to the glory of God.

QUESTION 6

C. Saints

“It was he who gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some to be evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God—a mature person, attaining to the measure of Christ’s full stature” (Eph 4:11-13).

QUESTION 7

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching About submission</i>
Ephesians 5:22-24	Wives, respect your husbands
Ephesians 5:25-33	Husbands, love your wives as Christ loves the church
Ephesians 6:1-3	Children, obey your parents
Ephesians 6:4	Fathers, do not provoke your children
Ephesians 6:5-8	Slaves, willingly obey your masters as if you are obeying Christ
Ephesians 6:9	Masters, treat slaves with the equality that God shows

QUESTION 8

Your answer should be similar to the following: (1) The belt of truth; (2) The breastplate of Righteousness; (3) Fit your feet with the good news of peace; (4) The Shield of faith; (5) The helmet of salvation; (6) The sword of the Spirit.

QUESTION 9

Your answer should be similar to the following: It is a holy lifestyle with a solid Christological foundation. This alone could successfully fight a heresy that is both legalistic and philosophical.

QUESTION 10

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Heresy Characteristics</i>
Colossians 2:16-17	Its Jewish nature in certain OT laws and ceremonies
Colossians 2:2-4, 8-10	Greek philosophical roots in a so-called deeper knowledge
Colossians 2:18	Worship of angels as mediators
Colossians 1:15	Denial of Christ's deity
Colossians 1:16	Denial of Christ as creator and sustainer
Colossians 1:17	Denial of Christ's supremacy
Colossians 2:20-23	A low view of the body

QUESTION 11

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Unique Word</i>
Colossians 1:16	Visible
Colossians 1:18	Supremacy
Colossians 1:24	Fill up
Colossians 2:8	Philosophy
Colossians 2:9	Deity
Colossians 2:3	Knowledge

QUESTION 12: True

In Colossians, Paul offers a prayer of thanksgiving for the fruitfulness of the Colossians' faith. He then implores them to grasp their high standing in Christ so that they can realize God's adequacy in them to fight the false teaching in their midst (Col 1:3-14).

QUESTION 13

<i>Philosophy</i>	<i>Correction</i>
Gnosticism	Because deity is in Christ
Legalism	Because reality is in Christ
Mysticism	Because headship is in Christ
Asceticism	Because restraint is in Christ

QUESTION 14

D. John

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created" (Jn 1:1-3).

QUESTION 15

Your answer should be similar to the following: The first step in holy living is to put off the sins of the old life: sins of the body, of materialism, and of improper speech (Col 3:5-9). The next step in holy living is to put on the virtues of the new life: proper relationships, forgiveness, love,

peace, thankfulness, Scripture meditation, singing, and doing everything for God's glory (Col 3:10-17).

QUESTION 16

- A. Because it is his custom in his letters
- D. To let the Colossians know they are not alone in their fight

QUESTION 17

Major Teachings in Ephesians					
					Instructions
Sealed by the Holy Spirit	Salvation is by Grace through Faith	Paul Reveals the Divine Mystery	Live in Unity and Holiness	Household Submission	The Armor of God
Ephesians 1	Ephesians 2	Ephesians 3	Ephesians 4	Ephesians 5	Ephesians 6

QUESTION 18

Major Teachings in Colossians				
				Instructions
	Christ's Supremacy	Warnings Against Bondage	Household Submission	Witness and Prayer
	Colossians 1	Colossians 2	Colossians 3	Colossians 4

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

Lesson 10 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: True

QUESTION 2

B. The church as one unified body of Jew and Gentile

QUESTION 3

Correct answers include:

Unity

Love

Walk

Life

QUESTION 4: Saints

QUESTION 5

A. For in him all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form

QUESTION 6

B. A holy lifestyle

QUESTION 7

D. Because the situation there was unique

QUESTION 8

C. Ephesians and Colossians

QUESTION 9

B. Colossians

QUESTION 10: False

Lesson 10 Articles

Introduction to Ephesians

Authorship

This letter to the Ephesians follows Paul's pattern of writing. The few stylistic differences of this letter compared to Paul's other books may indicate that another person penned the letter on Paul's behalf. This idea is supported by several factors:

- Linguistic and stylistic differences compared to other Pauline writings
- The belief that people often wrote in another's name
- The impersonal form—lack of personal greetings to individuals
- The allusions to the author not knowing the readers (Eph 1:15; 3:2; 4:21)
- The lack of words “in Ephesus” (Eph 1:1)
- The first person references that appear forced

Circumstances

Date: If we accept that Paul wrote Ephesians, then it was written during the same house arrest in AD 60–62 in which he wrote Colossians and Philippians (see Acts 28:30-31). Philemon was also written during this confinement. Therefore these four letters are known as the “Prison Epistles.”

Origin/Recipients: Paul wrote to the Ephesians while in prison in Rome (Eph 3:1; 4:1; 6:20). Church tradition, Ephesians 1:1, and the title support the Ephesian destination. However, it is possible that the letter was intended to circulate throughout Asia starting in Ephesus.

Occasion: During his third missionary journey, Paul invested more than two years teaching in Ephesus (see Acts 19). He was imprisoned in Rome within four years of leaving Ephesus. While in his Roman confinement, Paul also wrote Colossians and Philemon, which is addressed to a leader in the Colossian church. His friend Tychicus delivered the letter to Philemon (Col 4:7-9) and he could have delivered the letter to the Ephesians while en route to Colossae (Eph 6:21-22). There are different opinions about Paul's reasons for writing the Ephesian church, see below.

Characteristics

Purpose:

- Ephesians explores the love and the work of God in the world which believers are to share with others.
- Believers who are not living to their full potential in Christ need to rely on Him to provide for their needs. Paul's aim is to show believers their position in Christ and to encourage them to rely on Him in their lives.
- Paul encourages Jews and Gentiles to demonstrate their love for each other. Their lack of love leads to the eventual loss of their first love for Christ (Rev 2:4).

Ephesians contains the best description in the New Testament of the demonic world (Eph 2:2; 6:11-16). Paul also emphasizes the person and the work of the Holy Spirit, who is mentioned in each chapter (Eph 1:13-14; 2:17-21; 3:5, 16-19; 4:3-4, 30; 5:15-21; 6:17-18). The letter contains more prayerful doctrinal and exhortative material than the other NT books.

Ephesians contains the longest Greek sentences in the NT. There are eight lengthy sentences: the first is the most complex in the original Greek.

- Ephesians 1:3-14
- Ephesians 1:15-23
- Ephesians 2:1-7
- Ephesians 3:1-13
- Ephesians 3:14-19
- Ephesians 4:1-7
- Ephesians 4:11-16
- Ephesians 6:14-20

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Unity as Equals

Paul affirms God's calling of the Gentiles into the church as positional equals to Jewish believers, and he prays for Gentiles and Jews to experience this union so that God might be given glory (Eph 1-3).

Paul's identification of himself as an apostle called by Christ, and his greeting of the Ephesian church with blessing, affirm the letter's authority (Eph 1:1-2).

Paul praises God for the Gentile believers' position as equal to that of the predestined Jews. He prays that the Gentiles would fully understand their equality and draw near to God (Eph 1:3-23). Paul praises God for Jewish and Gentile believers who are experiencing every spiritual blessing in Christ. He praises them in order to encourage the Gentile readers that the benefits of their redemption are equal to those of the Jews (Eph 1:3-14). Paul prays that the Gentile Ephesians would have the wisdom and the revelation to comprehend their position in Christ (Eph 1:15-23).

God's love removed the Gentiles from their depraved state. This love ended their separation from Israel, which reconciled Jews and Gentiles to one body—the church (Eph 2). God's work of grace for depraved individuals gave them a new position. This position makes them responsive to God by His love, mercy, and grace through faith (Eph 2:1-10). Jews and Gentiles are now part of one body, despite their former separation, since all are saved by grace (Eph 2:11-21).

Paul describes the nature of the relationship that Jews and Gentiles have, and he prays for a love that will both unite them and bring glory to God (Eph 3). He also describes the mystery that his ministry revealed about the Jew and Gentile church. This gives his readers an appreciation of the privilege that they have through God's grace (Eph 3:1-13). Paul finishes the doctrinal section of the letter with a prayer for the readers to have power and to realize the scope of God's love. God's love will strengthen the love between the Gentiles and the Jews in a unity that brings God glory (Eph 3:14-21).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Love as a Testimony

Paul gives practical instruction on Christian living so that his readers will show their Jew-Gentile unity daily through love. This loving unity serves as a testimony to the world (Eph 4–6).

Paul commands a unity between both Jew and Gentile believers that is shown through love in various ways:

- Serve one another under gifted people whom God provides so that the church might reach its full potential of likeness to Christ (Eph 4:1-16).
- Exchange their old lifestyles for a righteous walk in the power of the Holy Spirit so that they can be testimonies to a depraved world (Eph 4:17–5:20).
- Submit in all areas of life, which includes church, home, and work. This submission shows that every relationship must be transformed by their new life in Christ (Eph 5:21–6:9).
- Rely on God and His provisions to defeat Satan. Such reliance admits the believers' inadequacy to proclaim Christ in their own power (Eph 6:10-20).
- Receive further care from Tychicus to better love one another (Eph 6:21-24).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to Colossians

Authorship

This letter is similar to Ephesians and each was written around the same time.

Colossians is also similar to Philemon:

- Both books greet Timothy (Col 1:1; Phm 1).
- Both mention Aristarchus, Mark, Epaphras, Luke, and Demas (Col 4:10-14; Phm 23-24).
- Both refer to Archippus' ministry (Col 4:17; Phm 2).
- Both confirm the sending of the slave Onesimus back to Colossae (Col 4:9; Phm 10).

Circumstances

Date: Colossians was written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome (see Acts 28:30). The best evidence suggests a specific date of autumn AD 61.

Origin/Recipients: The epistle mentions many of Paul's associates (Col 4:7-17). One them, Tychicus, carried both the Colossian and the Ephesian letters to Philemon (Col 4:7, 9; Eph 6:21; Phm 10, 12, 17). These names suggest that Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon had the same origin. Two of the books mention Paul's imprisonment (Eph 3:1; 4:1; Phm 1, 9). Therefore, Colossians must have been written in Rome and sent to Colossae (Col 1:2). This letter was also read in Laodicea (Col 4:16).

Occasion: Paul had not visited Colossae when he wrote his letter. However, when he was in nearby Ephesus, he probably met Epaphras, who returned to Colossae and founded the church (Col 1:7; see Acts 19). Five years later, Epaphras visited Paul during his imprisonment and brought news of the church's love in the Spirit (Col 1:8). Epaphras also brought news of the

heresy that was plaguing the church. This prompted Paul to write his letter to the Colossians for Tychicus to deliver when he returned to the city.

The nature of the heresy has been debated. Internal evidence suggests that it was a breeding ground for Gnosticism. This heresy taught that the material world is evil and that freedom from it comes through secret knowledge. Its characteristics can be determined by Paul's arguments against it:

1. Its Jewish nature is evident in its legalistic emphasis on following Old Testament laws and ceremonies (Col 2:16-17).
2. It had Greek philosophical roots in a deeper knowledge (*gnosis*) that was revealed only to the elite (Col 2:2-4, 8-10).
3. It had roots in Ascetism, which views the body as something corrupt that must be mastered (Col 2:20-23).
4. The system taught the worship of angels as mediators between man and God (Col 2:18).
5. The heresy denied the deity of Christ and, therefore, His supremacy and His ability to create and sustain the world (Col 1:15; 2:9).

It is difficult to precisely identify the heresy, since Paul does not formally explain its elements or name it. However, the above list shows that it was a cult drawing from Jewish, Greek, Ascetic, and Pagan beliefs. Paul's method of combating heresy is to emphasize the deity and the supremacy of Christ along with a holy lifestyle.

Characteristics

Colossians is the only NT book that uses these terms:

1. The thirty-five unique words include:
 - Visible (Col 1:16)
 - Supremacy (Col 1:18)
 - Fill up (Col 1:24)
 - Philosophy (Col 2:8)
 - Deity (Col 2:9)
2. Paul redefines terms from Gnosticism with an orthodox meaning
 - Pleroma* for fullness (Col 2:9)
 - Gnosis* for knowledge (Col 2:3)

Some scholars believe that these unique words argue for a non-Pauline authorship. However, the Colossian situation calls for a unique vocabulary that Paul did not need to use in other writings.

Paul does not reference the Old Testament in Colossians. This is unusual because the heresy he was combating had a Jewish influence. The lack of such references is also expected because the readers were Gentiles without the background of the Old Testament.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Supremacy and Deity

Paul establishes the supremacy of Christ as God over all things to combat the heretical teachers who had infiltrated the Colossian church with false precepts and practices (Col 1–2).

Paul greets the believers with a prayer for them. This introduction is a positive way to establish his authority and to enable them to fight heresy (Col 1:1-14). He greets the believers with spiritual authority as an apostle so that members of the church will not question his teaching (Col 1:1-2). He praises their fruitful faith and informs them of their high standing in Christ that enables them to fight false teaching (Col 1:3-14). Paul assures them of God's adequacy to face opposition.

Christ's supremacy over all things as God and His work as redeemer means that Paul's work has not been in vain (Col 1:15–2:3).

Paul emphasizes Christ's deity to show that life in Him is better than deceptive precepts and practices that attack the church (Col 2:4-23).

- Gnosticism is wrong since deity is in Christ (Col 2:4-10).
- Legalism is wrong since reality is in Christ (Col 2:11-17).
- Mysticism is wrong since headship is in Christ (Col 2:18-19).
- Asceticism is wrong since restraint against sin is in Christ (Col 2:20-23).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Practical Instructions

Paul provides practical instruction based on the deity of Christ in order to shame His enemies as they observe the holy lifestyle of the church (Col 3–4).

The basis for holy living is the believer's union with Christ, which contrasts with the sinful living of the false teachers (Col 3:1-4). The believer's union with Christ affects every area of his life. His enemies are shamed as they observe the church's holy lifestyle (Col 3:5–4:6). A holy life is one that replaces the sins of the old life with the virtues of the new life in Christ (Col 3:5-17). How do believers take on these new virtues?

- The first step to holy living is to put off sins of the body, materialism, and improper speech (Col 3:5-9).
- The second step is to put on the virtues of proper relationships, forgiveness, love, peace, thankfulness, Scripture meditation, singing, and doing everything for God's glory (Col 3:10-17).

A believer's union with Christ brings holy living that improves relationships in every area of life (Col 3:18-4:6):

- Families improve when wives, husbands, and children obey commands about their respective roles (Col 3:18-21).
- Work is harmonious when slaves work for Christ, and masters treat slaves fairly (Col 3:22-4:1).
- Unbelievers receive a positive witness when believers pray, speak, and act with wisdom (Col 4:2-6).

To encourage the Colossians that they do not stand alone in the fight against false teaching, Paul sends greetings from faithful workers who have also faced heresy. Then he commands the readers to distribute his letter to others so they can combat other false teachings (Col 4:7-18).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 11: Philemon and Philippians: Christ's Forgiveness and Attitude

Lesson Introduction

What does it take for you to be happy? Most people would say it takes family, friends, money, a pleasant job, or good health. However, when circumstances are out of control in your life, how do you respond? Often we hope and pray that things will get easier—that the family, friends, money, pleasant job, or good health will be restored.

As we continue our studies in this lesson, we find Paul still under house arrest in Rome, awaiting his trial. As a single man, he had no family. He had few friends with him, though he did welcome any who could visit (Acts 28:30-31). He did not have much money, his job of planting churches was taken away from him, and as an old man his health was deteriorating. While lacking family, lots of friends, money, a pleasant job, and good health, how would Paul respond in such dire circumstances?

Did any churches write Paul to encourage him? We do not know. However, we do have four of Paul's letters written to the churches. In these four "Prison Epistles," Paul's solution to his unforeseen imprisonment was to focus on Christ. We have already seen this in Ephesians and Colossians, so let us now add Philemon and Philippians and see a more complete picture of Christology in the Prison Epistles.

Christology in the Prison Epistles			
Epistle	Christ as...	Focus	Explanation
Ephesians	Head	Unity of Christ	Christ breaks down barriers between believers
Colossians	God	Deity of Christ	Christ is superior to human philosophies
Philemon	Reconciler	Forgiveness of Christ	Christ reconciles believers to God and one another
Philippians	Example	Attitude of Christ	Christ modeled how to handle difficulties

Philemon:

Paul's short letter to Philemon shows that, to walk with God, we must both forgive offenders and also be forgiven. He gives the perspective of both Onesimus and Philemon. Paul greets Philemon (Phm 1-3) and praises him (Phm 4-7) as an introduction to his main request, the pardon of Onesimus (Phm 8-21). This is followed by some closing personal remarks (Phm 22-25). We know that this was not simply a personal correspondence to Philemon alone because it addresses others in the church and uses the plural you in Philemon 25.

Philippians:

Philippians as a whole can be summed up in Paul's exhortation to have the mind or the attitude of Christ. Christ is clearly the main subject as His name appears seventy times, and some key verbs that convey the idea of imitating His thinking, attitude, or mind appear twenty or more times. The BAGD, a biblical dictionary, describes some of these key verbs in the following manner:

Scripture	Greek Word	Definition
Philippians 1:7; 2:2, 5; 3:15, 16, 19; 4:2, 10	<i>Froneo</i>	think, form opinion, set one's mind on, be minded, or disposed
Philippians 2:3, 6, 25; 3:7, 8	<i>Hegeomai</i>	think, consider, regard, lead, guide
Philippians 2:4; 3:17	<i>Skopeo</i>	notice, consider
Philippians 3:13; 4:8	<i>Logizomai</i>	reckon, consider

This is supported with many knowledge terms (Phil 1:9-11; 3:8-10) “which include, but are not restricted to, purely intellectual concerns” (Moisés Silva, *Philippians*, WEC, 20).

The concept of imitating Christ's attitude in difficult times is mentioned over twenty times, more than the commonly suggested theme of rejoicing. This concept should be given as much weight as that of rejoicing as the theme of the book (Phil 3:10). Each chapter bears out this emphasis, since having Christ's attitude produces the following:

- Joy in adversity (Phil 1)
- Humility leading to unity (Phil 2)
- Protection from legalistic or libertine teaching (Phil 3)
- Peace with God and man in all circumstances (Phil 4).

Paul wrote the Philippians to let them know that “as a man has calculated, so is he” (Prov 23:7) and the best thinkers do so with Christ's attitude. Paul states the key verse in this respect in Philippians 2:5, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” (NIV), which begins the heart of the book (Phil 2:5-11). A related concept is that of mimicking Paul (Phil 3:17; 4:9).

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Illustrate the work of Christ from both Philippians and Philemon
- Critique Paul's handling of the reconciliation between Philemon and Onesimus
- Discern and defend the major themes of both books
- Teach selfless concern through biblical examples as it is vital for living the Christian life
- Esteem the work of Christ on our behalf and scorn the works of the flesh
- Apply Paul's commands to defeat the false teachings of the Judaizers and libertines

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to Philemon

Topic 2: Philemon (Phm 1)

Topic 3: Introduction to Philippians

Topic 4: Joy and Humility (Phil 1–2)

Topic 5: Protection and Peace (Phil 3–4)

Topic 1: Introduction to Philemon

Philemon Forgive Others and Seek Forgiveness							
Greeting 1-3		Prayer & Commendation 4-7		Appeal for Onesimus 8-21		Conclusion 22-25	
Preface		Praise		Petition		Postscript	
People concerned		Philemon's character		Onesimus' conversion		Paul's co- workers	
Authors 1	Recipients 1-3	Thanks 4-5	Relationships 6-7	General appeal 8-11	Reasons for return 12-16	Specific appeal 17-21	Preparations Greetings Blessing 22-25
Rome to Colosse							
Fall AD 61							

During Paul's first imprisonment in Rome (AD Feb 60–March 62) he led Onesimus, the fugitive slave of Philemon, to Christ (Phm 10). The content of Philemon reveals that Onesimus had done some injustices to and stolen from Philemon (Phm 18) before he ran away. Paul sent this letter to Philemon, who also had become a Christian through Paul (Phm 19), through Onesimus himself to convince Philemon to forgive him as a brother (Col 4:9).

God truly looked after Onesimus. In Roman society, a runaway slave who had stolen from his master was under a sentence of death. So becoming a Christian—and having a Christian owner—saved him in many ways. And becoming a Christian under Paul's teaching was even more fortunate, since Paul's intercession was unusually effective—with man and God. Yet, he had responsibilities to fulfill and Paul would ensure he met those. Under what circumstances would Paul expect Philemon to accept Onesimus back?

Reading Assignment

- Please read the article "Introduction to Philemon" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize Philemon's key verses: Philemon 17-18.

QUESTION 1

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching about forgiveness in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching About Forgiveness</i>
Philemon 8-11, 17, 20	Forgiving others reminds us of how God forgave us
Philemon 11	Forgiveness requires sacrifice and pain but is good for us
Philemon 12	Forgiveness shows humility since it must be voluntary not forced
Philemon 13, 18-19	Forgiveness solidifies friendships
Philemon 14, 21	Restored relationships make people more helpful to us
Philemon 15, 16	Forgiveness involves one's heart
Philemon 19	Forgiveness reminds one that God controls painful events

In Philemon's key verses Paul illustrates the substitutionary nature of Christ's work, where our sin was imputed to His account just as Paul asks Philemon to impute Onesimus's sin to his account.

QUESTION 2

Please write Philemon 17-18 from memory.

Topic 1 Key Points:

- Forgiveness purifies relationships, betters our own attitude, and reminds us of God's work for us.
- Paul illustrates Christ's work of imputation and substitution in pleading with Philemon on behalf of Onesimus.

Topic 2: Philemon (Phm 1)

Philemon ends without giving us the result of the letter. The question looms, "Did Philemon forgive Onesimus?" Three factors would indicate that he did:

1. Philemon preserved this epistle and allowed it to be copied and circulated among the churches. This eventually led to its inclusion within the canon. It is unlikely that he would have allowed this to be published if he had not forgiven Onesimus.
2. Paul expressed great confidence that Philemon would do even more than forgive Onesimus (Phm 21). Perhaps Paul meant that he had no doubt that Philemon would grant Onesimus his freedom from slavery.
3. The early church father Ignatius wrote a letter to the nearby church in Ephesus about AD 115 that was addressed to a Bishop Onesimus! Could the former slave and the Ephesian bishop be one and the same? This incident took place about 55–57 years after Paul wrote the letter, when Onesimus could have been in his 70s.

Onesimus's name means useful. Paul makes a play on words in Philemon by saying, "I am appealing to you concerning my child, whose spiritual father I have become during my

imprisonment, that is, Onesimus, who was formerly useless to you, but is now useful to you and me” (Phm 10-11). So Paul says that the slave once was not “Onesimus” but now he is truly “Onesimus” to Paul and Philemon.

This truth perfectly pictures our possibilities once we are saved through the work of Christ and choose to serve God. Though formerly useless to God, we now can be useful. There are many other clear illustrations of Christ’s work in this short epistle. To find them, please continue in this topic.

- **Philemon: Forgive Others and Seek Forgiveness**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** AD 61
- **Key Word:** Forgiveness
- **Key Verse:** Philemon 17-18
- **Summary Statement:** Paul asks Philemon to forgive his runaway but repentant slave, Onesimus, whom Paul had led to Christ and then sent back to Philemon for reinstatement as a Christian brother. Paul teaches how to forgive and how to be forgiven.
- **Application:** Which of the following do you currently relate to?
 1. Philemon: Whom do you need to forgive that has wronged you?
 2. Onesimus: Whose forgiveness do you need to request?
 3. Paul: How can you help two others to reconcile?
 4. The church: How can you affirm the reconciliation of others?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Philemon 1.
- Please read the article “Philemon” in the Articles section at the end of the lesson.

QUESTION 3

Match the person in the left-hand column with why they were mentioned in Philemon 1-3 as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Person</i>	<i>Why Mentioned?</i>
Timothy	A wealthy slave owner
Philemon	Slave owner’s wife
Apphia	Pastor of the church
Archippus	The source to draw on to experience grace and peace
House church	Agrees with Paul about the letter
God	To show the public implications of this decision

QUESTION 4

In Philemon 4-7, about what did Paul commend Philemon? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) His love toward believers
- B) His faith active in his relationships
- C) His discipline in purifying the church
- D) His love shown in good deeds that refreshed other believers

QUESTION 5

In Philemon 8-11, match Paul's appeal to Philemon in the left-hand column with its pull on him in the right-hand column.

<i>Appeal</i>	<i>Pull</i>
It is not from apostolic authority but brotherly love	To add weight to his entreaty that could not be easily cast aside
Paul has grown old through a strenuous life	To ensure that Philemon's decision would be voluntary and not forced
Paul is imprisoned for Christ's sake	To help Philemon's decision be appropriate in God's family
Onesimus's new position in Christ	To make Philemon see Onesimus's incalculable worth
Onesimus is deemed useful to both Philemon and Paul	To arouse Philemon's sympathies to make him more favorable to Paul's request

QUESTION 6

According to Philemon 18-19, Paul says the one who is responsible for paying any debt to Philemon is _____.

Paul Offers to Pay Onesimus' Debts



Topic 2 Key Points:

- Philemon's decision was a public matter, not a private one, with implications for the entire body of Christ.
- Paul expected Philemon to treat Onesimus in all ways as a member in good standing in God's family and as one forgiven by grace just as Philemon was.
- Paul appealed for Onesimus based on Paul's love, Philemon's debt to Paul, and Onesimus's usefulness to the mission.
- Paul illustrated the work of Christ by asking Philemon to impute Onesimus's debt to Paul's account.

Topic 3: Introduction to Philippians

Philippians Results of Imitating Christ's Attitude									
Joy		Humility		Protection		Peace			
1		2		3		4			
Joy (5x)		Joy (7x)		Joy (1x)		Joy (4x)			
Attitude (1x)		Attitude (7x)		Attitude (8x)		Attitude (4x)			
Suffering		Submission		Salvation		Sanctification			
Salutation 1:1-2	Thanks & prayer 1:3-11	In prison ministry 1:12-30	Exhorted 2:1-4	Exemplified 2:5-30	From legalism 3:1-16	From indulgence 3:17-21	With people 4:1-3	With God 4:4-9	Always 4:10-20 — Greetings 4:21-23
Rome									
Early Spring AD 62 (first Roman imprisonment)									

Paul's Macedonian Call, his second missionary journey, led to his planting the church at Philippi (Aug–Oct AD 50). Lydia, the Philippian jailer, and some other converts responded to the gospel, but then the government officials asked Paul and Silas to leave (Acts 16). Paul returned to the city six years later, though probably for only a few days (between June–Nov AD 56; Acts 20:1, 6). He wrote this epistle to the church six years after this visit (AD 62). It was written after the church had sent Epaphroditus with a gift (Phil 4:18). Epaphroditus almost died of an illness, but when he recovered, Paul sent him back with the Philippian letter (Phil 2:25-30). The immediate reason for writing was to express Paul's affection and thanks for the church's generosity, other purposes are also discussed in this topic. Yet another key purpose was to encourage perseverance (Phil 1:27-

Philippi



28; 2:12; 3:13-15; 4:1) against the Judaizers who required obedience to the Mosaic Law (Phil 1:27-28; 3:2-4, 17-19; see Acts 15:1-6; Gal 1:6-9; 2:1-16; 3:1-5; 5:7-10; 6:12-13).

Many times when we need to communicate with someone, we will wait until there are multiple issues to discuss before sending a note. This is what Paul did with the Philippians. He had many reasons to write to this church. A couple of them are mentioned in the paragraph above. To find Paul's other reasons, please continue with this topic.

Reading Assignment

- Please memorize Philippians key verse: Philippians 2:5.
- Please read the article “Introduction to Philippians” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 7

As with Galatians, the false teachers who are troubling the Philippian church are the _____.

Lydia



QUESTION 8

According to the author of this course, what is the CENTRAL theme of Philippians?

- A) The person of Christ
- B) Joy
- C) Pastoral
- D) Living the Christian life
- E) Having Christ’s attitude
- F) Multipurpose

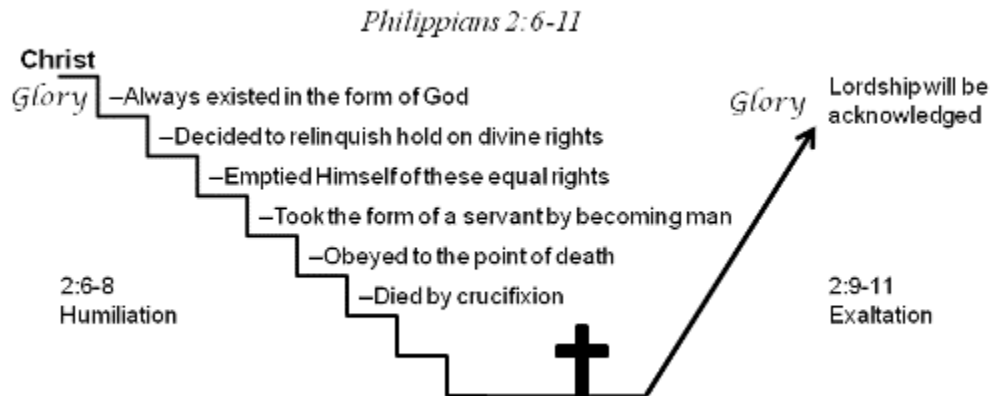
QUESTION 9

Please write Philippians 2:5 from memory.

Topic 3 Key Points:

- As in Galatians, the Judaizers are the false teachers who trouble this church by requiring obedience to the Mosaic Law.
- The central theme of Philippians is to have the mind, or attitude, of Christ, and this teaching is also reflected in the key verse.

Topic 4: Joy and Humility (Phil 1–2)



Philippians is not a systematic treatise of formal doctrine, but it contains the most significant Christological passage in the Pauline epistles (Phil 2:5-11), which is cited as an example of humility. This passage is often called the *kenosis* passage. *Kenosis* is the Greek word for “to empty” and the passage refers to the fact that Christ emptied Himself of His rights. He did not empty Himself of His deity. These seven verses provide profound insights into His preexistence, incarnation, humiliation, and exaltation (Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa. *Talk Thru The Bible*, [Nashville: Nelson, 1983], 408).

What a mystery this is to us! Christ is God from all eternity past—self-existing, holy, seated comfortably in the heavens in intimate fellowship with the Father and Holy Spirit. Yet, to save humanity He voluntarily leaves that position to take on the appearance of a person in flesh and blood. He voluntarily suffers and sheds His blood in our place. “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mk 10:45). But what does this truth mean for us practically?

- **Philippians: Results of Imitating Christ’s Attitude**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** AD 62
- **Key Word:** Attitude
- **Key Verse:** Philippians 2:5
- **Summary Statement:** Paul exhorts the believers at Philippi to imitate Christ’s attitude and stand firm in a joyful, humble, and peaceful dependence upon His adequacy. He writes to combat both disunity and false teaching in the church.
- **Application:** How do you need to show a more Christ-like attitude during difficulty?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Philippians 1–2.
- Please read the article “Joy and Humility” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 10

In which of these letters did Paul overtly use his apostolic authority?

- A) In neither
- B) In Philemon
- C) In Philippians
- D) In both

QUESTION 11

Paul rejoiced when OTHERS preached the gospel, even when they preached with impure motives. *True or False?*

QUESTION 12

Match the person listed in the left-hand column with the reason that they are models of selfless concern as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Person</i>	<i>Selfless Concern</i>
Christ	A living example of someone with a selfless attitude
Paul	In selfless service is poured out as a drink offering
Timothy	He relinquished equal rights with the Father
Epaphroditus	An example of someone who serves God to the point of physical illness

QUESTION 13

In Philippians 2:5-11, the Greek word used to describe Christ's emptying Himself of His rights as deity is _____.

Topic 4 Key Points:

- In both Philemon and Philippians, Paul subtly used his apostolic authority to appeal to the readers out of love rather than force.
- Paul rejoiced when others preached the gospel, even if they did so from impure motives—he would not allow himself or the obedient church to preach this way.
- Paul used himself, Christ, Timothy, and Epaphroditus as godly examples of humility in selfless concern.
- In Christ's *kenosis*, He humbly emptied Himself of His rights as God, but He did not empty Himself of His deity.

Topic 5: Protection and Peace (Phil 3–4)

Please note the extremes that Paul warned about in Philippians 3, and pray that God will enable you to find the balance of the center column in your own life:

Balance in the Christian Life		
Legalism	A Godly Balance	Libertinism
Phil 3:1-3	Phil 3:4-16	Phil 3:17-20
Legal= Law only	Standards and liberty	Liberty= No law
Excessive rules	Only biblical rules	License for everything
Actions are everything	Actions are something	Actions are unimportant
Highly structured	Some structure	No structure
Pharisee-like	Christlike	Glutton-like
"god" is their traditions	God is Christ	"god" is their stomach
Starves the flesh	Controls the flesh	Indulges the flesh
Claim of perfectionism	In process (3:12-13)	Practice of fatalism
Think they've arrived	Know they haven't	Don't care if they do
Confidence in flesh (3:3)	Confidence in Christ (3:7)	Confidence in shame (3:19)
Righteousness from the Law (3:9a)	Righteousness by faith (3:9a)	Righteousness not pursued (3:19d)
No movies No TV No music No wine for merit Unclean foods "Christian Sabbath" Celibacy required Salvation can be lost	Wholesome movies Wholesome TV Wholesome music No wine/moderation Moderation in eating Rest Celibacy for ministry Eternal security	All movies All TV All music Drunkenness Gluttony Frivolity Sexual immorality Salvation can't be gained

Paul instructs this church to rejoice, but what are the dangers facing them? Paul warns this church, as he has other churches, of seeking any righteousness that is not Christ's:

I now regard all things as liabilities compared to the far greater value...that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not because of having my own righteousness derived from the law, but because of having the righteousness that comes by way of Christ's faithfulness—a righteousness from God that is based on Christ's faithfulness. My aim is to know him, to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings, and to be like him in his death. (Phil 3:8-11)

Christ's Suffering, Death, and Resurrection



Since Paul is already a heavenly citizen, what is his goal in life? Many Christians are taught and think that their ultimate goal is to get to heaven. Paul knows the Christian achieves that goal by faith in Christ's death and resurrection on the Christian's behalf. But he also knows that there is more at stake:

My aim is to know him, to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings, and to be like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Phil 3:10-14)

Paul is not saying that he needed good works so that eventually he would be resurrected. Rather, Paul wanted to be so holy now that it would be as if he already experienced the Christ-like attitude that he will eventually know in his resurrected body.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Philippians 3–4.

- Please read the article “Protection and Peace” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

Paul's Pedigree (Phil 3:4-6)	
Circumcised the eighth day	This sign of participation in the Abrahamic Covenant separated Paul from pagans and was performed on him the exact day the OT prescribed (Gen 17:11-12)
Of the people of Israel	Paul was a pure-blooded member of this race chosen by God himself. He was not even a proselyte, who were often viewed as second class.
Of the tribe of Benjamin	This tribe was one of the smallest, yet it boasted Israel's first king, Saul—so Paul was not from a disreputable tribe like Dan, Reuben, etc.
A Hebrew of Hebrews	Paul did not adopt Greek ways even though he grew up in Tarsus, a Greek city
In regard to the Law, a Pharisee	This sect adhered more strictly to the Mosaic law than any sect in mainstream society
As for zeal, persecuting the church	Even most Pharisees did not actively seek to do away with Messianic believers
As for legalistic righteousness, faultless	Paul followed all 613 Pharisaical laws without exception

QUESTION 14

What are the five fleshly credentials that Paul meets in Philippians 3:5-6?

QUESTION 15

In Philippians 3:17–4:1, which of the following teachings does Paul give to help them resist the libertines? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Christ will give us new bodies.
- B) Christ will come suddenly, like a thief.
- C) Live for tomorrow, not today.
- D) Follow Paul's example of resisting false, unbalanced teaching.

Paul promises peace with God by following some simple principles. Rejoicing puts you in a safer spiritual position, because you are spiritually vulnerable if you are not rejoicing.

QUESTION 16

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the route to peace with God as listed in the right-hand column.

Reference	Route to Peace With God
Philippians 4:4	Think about praiseworthy things
Philippians 4:5	Rejoice
Philippians 4:6-7	Pray in all circumstances
Philippians 4:8-9	Demonstrate steady determination

Topic 5 Key Points:

- Paul's fleshly credentials were flawless, yet he considered them worthless compared to knowing Christ.
- Paul exhorts the church toward Christlikeness to protect them from libertines.
- Peace with God comes through rejoicing, gentleness, prayer, and praise.

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Philemon at the bottom of each column.

Main Divisions in Philemon				
	Instructions			
Paul Reminds of God's Power				
Paul Requests Mercy for Onesimus				
Paul Sends Grace and Peace				
Paul Commends Philemon				
	Philemon 1-3	Philemon 4-7	Philemon 8-21	Philemon 22-25

QUESTION 18

Match the title on the left side with the reference in Philippians at the bottom of each column.

Main Divisions in Philippians				
	Instructions			
Humility Exhorted and Exemplified				
Sanctification Always				
Paul Rejoices in His Imprisonment				
Protection from Legalism and Indulgence				
	Philippians 1	Philippians 2	Philippians 3	Philippians 4

QUESTION 19

Open your Life Notebook and read through Philemon. As you read, write down all the ways this letter illustrates the work of Christ. It is amazing how many illustrations there are in this one short book.

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

Lesson 11 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Which of the following are taught in Philemon's key verses?

- A) Imputation
- B) Propitiation
- C) Resurrection
- D) Humility

QUESTION 2

Paul ensured that whatever decision Philemon made was a private decision involving only Paul, Onesimus, and Philemon. *True or False?*

QUESTION 3

The name Onesimus means _____.

QUESTION 4

As an encouragement to forgive, Paul emphasized that Philemon's stature in the family of God is superior to that of Onesimus's. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

According to this course what is the theme of Philippians?

- A) Multipurpose
- B) Having Christ's attitude
- C) Living the Christian life
- D) Joy

QUESTION 6

The false teachers troubling the Philippians are the _____.

QUESTION 7

In Christ's *kenosis*, He humbly emptied Himself of His deity. *True or False?*

QUESTION 8

In Philippians 2, Paul used Timothy as a godly example of selfless concern because of the following reason:

- A) He relinquished equal rights with his father.
- B) He served selflessly, being poured out as a drink offering.
- C) He was an example of someone serving God to the point of physical illness.
- D) He was a living example of someone with a selfless attitude.

QUESTION 9

According to Paul's teaching on his fleshly credentials in Philippians 3, if someone could prove Jewish ancestry, it would improve his or her standing before God. *True or False?*

QUESTION 10

In Philippians 3:17–4:1, which of the following is NOT a teaching Paul gives to help them resist the libertines?

- A) Remember Christ will give us new bodies.
- B) Remember to live for tomorrow and not just today.
- C) Remember to control your tongue.
- D) Remember to resist false, unbalanced teaching.

Lesson 11 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching About Forgiveness</i>
Philemon 8-11, 17, 20	Forgiveness solidifies friendships
Philemon 11	Restored relationships make people more helpful to us
Philemon 12	Forgiveness involves one's heart
Philemon 13, 18-19	Forgiveness requires sacrifice and pain but is good for us
Philemon 14, 21	Forgiveness shows humility since it must be voluntary not forced
Philemon 15, 16	Forgiveness reminds one that God controls painful events
Philemon 19	Forgiving others reminds us of how God forgave us

QUESTION 2

"Therefore if you regard me as a partner, accept him as you would me. Now if he has defrauded you of anything, charge what he owes to me."

QUESTION 3

<i>Person</i>	<i>Why Mentioned?</i>
Timothy	Agrees with Paul about the letter
Philemon	A wealthy slave owner
Apphia	Slave owner's wife
Archippus	Pastor of the church
House church	To show the public implications of this decision
God	The source to draw on to experience grace and peace

QUESTION 4

A. His love toward believers

B. His faith active in his relationships

D. His love shown in good deeds that refreshed other believers

Paul used Philemon's love for other believers, his good deeds, and his active faith shown in relationships as reasons for Philemon to show these traits also toward Onesimus.

QUESTION 5

<i>Appeal</i>	<i>Pull</i>
It is not from apostolic authority but brotherly love	To ensure that Philemon's decision would be voluntary and not forced
Paul has grown old through a strenuous life	To add weight to his entreaty that could not be easily cast aside
Paul is imprisoned for Christ's sake	To arouse Philemon's sympathies to make him more favorable to Paul's request
Onesimus's new position in Christ	To help Philemon's decision be appropriate in God's family
Onesimus is deemed useful to both Philemon and Paul	To make Philemon see Onesimus's incalculable worth

QUESTION 6

Correct answers include:

Paul

Himself

Paul offers to pay any of Onesimus's outstanding debts to Philemon and he encourages Philemon to forgive Onesimus unconditionally (Phm 18-19). This is a great illustration of Christ's work on our behalf.

QUESTION 7: Judaizers

A key purpose was to encourage perseverance (Phil 1:27-28; 2:12; 3:13-15; 4:1) against the Judaizers who sought to require obedience to the Mosaic Law (Phil 1:27-28; 3:2-4, 17-19; see Acts 15:1-6; Gal 1:6-9; 2:1-16; 3:1-5; 5:7-10; 6:12-13).

QUESTION 8

E. Having Christ's attitude

The purpose that sums up Philippians as a whole is the exhortation to have the mind or attitude of Christ.

QUESTION 9

"You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had."

QUESTION 10

A. In neither

In Philemon, Paul appeals not from apostolic authority but brotherly love so that Philemon's decision is not forced (Phm 8-9). In Philippians, Paul identifies himself as a servant to set a tone of affection, as he does not refer to his authority as apostle (Phil 1:1).

QUESTION 11: True

Paul was so selfless that he even rejoiced that some preached the gospel from selfish motives (Phil 1:15-18). But it seems obvious that he would not allow this for himself or anyone approved in the church.

QUESTION 12

<i>Person</i>	<i>Selfless Concern</i>
Christ	He relinquished equal rights with the Father
Paul	In selfless service is poured out as a drink offering
Timothy	A living example of someone with a selfless attitude
Epaphroditus	An example of someone who serves God to the point of physical illness

QUESTION 13: Kenosis

This passage is often called the *kenosis* passage. It is important to note that when He emptied Himself of His right, He did not empty Himself of His deity.

QUESTION 14

Your answer should be similar to the following: (1) circumcised on the eighth day, (2) of Benjamin and Israel, (3) a Pharisee, (4) in zeal he persecuted the church, (5) blameless according to the righteousness in the law

QUESTION 15

A. Christ will give us new bodies.

C. Live for tomorrow, not today.

D. Follow Paul's example of resisting false, unbalanced teaching.

Paul exhorts the church toward Christlikeness to protect them from libertines, who were antinomians indulging their flesh (Phil 3:17-21).

QUESTION 16

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Route to Peace With God</i>
Philippians 4:4	Rejoice
Philippians 4:5	Demonstrate steady determination
Philippians 4:6-7	Pray in all circumstances
Philippians 4:8-9	Think about praiseworthy things

QUESTION 17

Main Divisions in Philemon

Instructions			
Paul Sends Grace and Peace	Paul Commends Philemon	Paul Requests Mercy for Onesimus	Paul Reminds of God's Power
Philemon 1-3	Philemon 4-7	Philemon 8-21	Philemon 22-25

QUESTION 18

Main Divisions in Philippians

			Instructions
Paul Rejoices in His Imprisonment	Humility Exhorted and Exemplified	Protection from Legalism and Indulgence	Sanctification Always
Philippians 1	Philippians 2	Philippians 3	Philippians 4

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

Lesson 11 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1

A. Imputation

QUESTION 2: False

QUESTION 3: Useful

QUESTION 4: False

QUESTION 5

B. Having Christ's attitude

QUESTION 6: Judaizers

QUESTION 7: False

QUESTION 8

D. He was a living example of someone with a selfless attitude.

QUESTION 9: False

QUESTION 10

C. Remember to control your tongue.

Lesson 11 Articles

Introduction to Philemon

Circumstances

Date: Philemon was written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. This is evident in the parallels between Philemon and Colossians (Phm 23; Col 4:7-10). This epistle was probably written in fall AD 61.

Origin/Recipients: Philemon was a wealthy Christian slave owner in Colossae (Phm 1). Paul also addressed other people in the epistle (Phm 2).

Characteristics

This is the shortest of Paul's epistles, with only 25 verses. The letter provides the clearest New Testament example of the need to show forgiveness. By his commitment to return to his master, Onesimus was risking his life in order to seek forgiveness. The Roman government gave absolute rights to slave owners and gave no rights to slaves, who were considered property.

This letter illustrates the nature of imputation. Paul requests that Onesimus's sin should be placed on Paul and not on Onesimus (Phm 18). Just like Christ who took the sin of humanity on Himself (Rom 5:12-21).

Paul provides several reasons why forgiveness is important, such as the following:

1. Forgiveness solidifies friendships (Phm 8-11, 17, 20).
2. Restored relationships make people more helpful to us (Phm 11).
3. Forgiveness involves one's heart (Phm 12).
4. The sacrifice that forgiveness requires is painful but good (Phm 13, 18-19).
5. Forgiveness shows humility, since it must be voluntary, not forced (Phm 14, 21).
6. Forgiveness reminds one that God is in control during painful times (Phm 15, 16).
7. Forgiving others reminds us of how God forgave us (Phm 19).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Philemon

Summary statement for the book

Paul asks Philemon to forgive his runaway but repentant slave, Onesimus, whom Paul had led to Christ and had then sent back to Philemon for reinstatement as a Christian brother. Paul teaches how to forgive and how to be forgiven.

Paul introduces himself as the author with Timothy. He addresses Philemon, his wife, his son, and his house church. He wishes them God's grace and peace, setting the tone for his following appeal for Onesimus (Phm 1-3).

Paul humbly identifies himself as a prisoner loyal to Christ as a sign of friendly warmth. He does not assert his apostolic authority. Paul incites Philemon's sympathy and touches his conscience as

one servant gives a plea to another (Phm 1). Paul adds merit to his appeal by affirming that Timothy was in complete agreement with him (Phm 1).

Philemon, his family, and the church are the recipients of the letter, which makes the letter a public one. Philemon is the primary recipient of the letter. The secondary recipients—Apphia, Archippus, and the church—give the letter a public feel to encourage Philemon to accept Onesimus (Phm 1-2). Apphia is apparently Philemon's wife, because her name was placed before two men. She may have been addressed because of the influence she had with her husband (Phm 2). Archippus was probably Philemon's son and the pastor of the church who would need to know the details of Philemon's decision (Phm 2). Paul also addresses the house church to remind Philemon of the public implications of his decision (Phm 2).

Paul's greeting expresses his wish for God's unmerited favor for his readers. God's favor would result in peace to remind Philemon of his position through Christ. Philemon can draw on Christ's grace to find peace with Onesimus (Phm 3).

Paul prays for and commends the love and faith of Philemon in genuine thanksgiving. In doing this, he encourages Philemon to demonstrate these same qualities toward Onesimus, his runaway but repentant slave (Phm 4-7).

We see the personal and ongoing nature of Paul's thanksgiving for Philemon, which informs him of Paul's esteem for him (Phm 4). Paul gives thanks because Philemon's faith was demonstrated in his love toward believers. This implies that Onesimus is now included among them (Phm 5). Paul prays for Philemon's faith to be active in his relationships. The result of this faith will be the knowledge of his divine blessings and that this same faith should be shown to Onesimus (Phm 6). Paul's thanksgiving is based on Philemon's love that refreshed believers through good deeds (Phm 7).

Paul makes a general appeal to Philemon for mercy toward Onesimus, cites reasons for sending him back to Philemon, and makes a specific request that Onesimus be fully pardoned for his wrongdoing (Phm 8-21).

Paul's general appeal asks that Philemon show mercy to Onesimus based on both Paul's credentials and Onesimus's new status as a believer (Phm 8-11). This appeal will prepare Philemon to grant Paul's request to forgive Onesimus in Philemon 17.

His sympathetic appeal is based on his credentials as a friend who was also persecuted for Christ (Phm 8-9). Paul appeals from brotherly love so that Philemon's decision would be voluntary and not forced (Phm 8-9). He also appeals as a man having grown old through a strenuous life in order to add weight to his plea (Phm 9). Paul's petition as an imprisoned man for Christ's sake would make Philemon sympathetic to Paul's request (Phm 9).

Paul makes his appeal from Onesimus's position in Christ as a new believer. This should make Philemon realize that he should do whatever is appropriate in the family of God (Phm 10). Paul also appeals from Onesimus's new usefulness and value to Philemon and Paul in order to make Philemon aware of Onesimus's incalculable worthiness (Phm 11).

Paul then states several reasons for sending Onesimus back. He wants Philemon to know the motives of his heart and grant forgiveness (Phm 12-16). Paul admits that his desire to continue his relationship with Onesimus could not take precedence over doing what was right (Phm 12-13). He recognizes that Philemon has the ultimate authority over Onesimus, so Philemon should decide if Onesimus could stay with Paul (Phm 14). Paul suggests that God permitted these events so that greater good would come from Philemon and Onesimus becoming brothers in Christ (Phm 15-16).

What is Philemon supposed to do? Paul asks him to accept Onesimus as a brother so that the church will understand Onesimus's equal standing with them in Christ (Phm 17). Paul reminds Philemon that Onesimus converted because of Paul's teaching. He wants to motivate Philemon to forgive rather than to require payment from Onesimus (Phm 19). Paul then asks for encouragement from Philemon through the complete acceptance of Onesimus. Forgiving Onesimus would encourage both Philemon and Paul (Phm 20). Paul expresses confidence that Philemon will both forgive and free Onesimus (Phm 21).

Paul asks Philemon to prepare for his visit and sends greetings from coworkers. He blesses the church in order to reinforce the public nature of Philemon's decision and to remind him of God's power to fulfill his appeal (Phm 22-25).

Paul requests a room for his visit, which comforts the church with prospects for a visit as an answer to their prayer for his release (Phm 22). This also adds immediacy in their decision regarding Onesimus. Five men, who are with Paul in prison, also greet Philemon, thus reinforcing the public nature of his decision (Phm 23-24). These men include Epaphras, founder of the Colossian church (Phm 23; see Col 1:7).

Paul closes the letter with a blessing for Christ's grace upon the Colossian church, indicating the source of the power needed to fulfill his appeal (Phm 25).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to Philippians

Circumstances

Date: Paul mentions his imprisonment in Rome, which places the epistle during his first Roman imprisonment in AD 60–62 (Phil 1:13, 14). Philippians is the last of the four Prison Epistles. Ephesians does not mention an expected release, and Colossians and Philemon were written about the same time as Ephesians (AD 60–61). The best date for Philippians is spring AD 62, just before Paul's release that answered the church's prayers (Phil 1:19).

Origin/Recipients: Mention of the palace guard and Caesar's household indicate that Paul wrote during his imprisonment (Phil 1:13; 4:22). The letter was written in Rome and sent to the colony of Philippi (Phil 1:1). It was delivered by Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25-30).

Characteristics

While the authorship is not often contested, the unity of the book is challenged. Some insertions suggest Paul wrote the book at a different time. There are two main issues in the book that affect the unity. First, Paul's tone changes from affection as a fellow worker to a warning from an authority (Phil 3:1). Second, there is a poetic hymn in the midst of prose (Phil 2:6-11). The first issue is not significant, as Paul's disposition could change as he writes. The addition of a Pauline hymn does not affect the inspiration of the letter.

Central theme: Philippians is one of the most studied books, which means there are many suggested themes. Some people think that the book is about living the Christian life, but this theme is very general and applies to all NT books. Others suggest a pastoral theme because Paul's warmth is unmatched in any other epistle. This theme doesn't account for the exhortations and the doctrinal content. Joy is the most popular theme, because believers are encouraged to rejoice despite their circumstances. Joy in trials is an emphasis in the book (Phil 1:4, 18, 25, 26; 2:2, 17-18, 28-29; 3:1; 4:1, 4, 10). However this theme downplays the doctrinal elements. Christ could

also be the theme, because He is noted over seventy times. The following chart lists every reference to Christ:

Characteristics	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4
Deity (God)		2:6		
Pre-eminent (Lord)	1:2, 20	2:9-11	3:20-21	
Returning in power	1:6, 10	2:10, 16	3:20-21	4:5
Sacrificial (cross)	1:29	2:8	3:18	
Savior			3:20	
Glorified body (resurrected)			3:10, 21	
Incarnation (man)		2:6-8		
Humble		2:6-8		
Obedient		2:8		
Selfless interests (servant)		2:6, 21		
Has a ministry plan		2:21, 30		
Provider of needs				4:19
Helper via the Spirit	1:19			
Answers prayer	1:19			
Gives faith to believe	1:29			
Gives privilege of service	1:1, 14-18, 22		3:3	
Gives ability to glorify Him		2:29		
Gives affection for others				
Gives righteousness (saints)	1:8		3:9	4:21
Gives encouragement	1:1, 10-11	2:19		
Gives knowledge of Himself			3:8, 10	
Gives glory to God				
Gives grace	1:11			4:23
Gives comfort to us	1:2	2:1		
Gives comfort for others		2:1		
Gives purpose for ministry		2:16		
Gives life	1:21			
Gives ability to do everything				4:13
Gives joy (contentment)	1:18, 26	2:29	3:1	4:4, 10-13
Gives confidence (ability to stand)	1:13-14	2:19, 24		4:1, 19
Gives peace	1:2			4:2, 7
Gives suffering	1:13, 29		3:10	
Gives rewards	1:21, 23		3:7-8, 14	
Gives humility		2:5		
Gives unity	1:15-17	2:1-2		4:21-22
Gives new bodies (resurrection)			3:11, 21	
Gives Christ-likeness (exalts himself in us)	1:20, 27	2:5	3:10-14	

One likely theme is a multifaceted one. Paul had many reasons for writing to the Philippians. He expresses his affection for them (Phil 1:7). He thanks them for their gift (Phil 1:5, 7; 4:10-19). Paul updates them on his missionary work in prison (Phil 1:12). He gives them encouragement in their growth (Phil 1:27). He corrects a problem of disunity in the church (Phil 2:1-4, 14). He encourages them about Epaphroditus' recovery (Phil 2:25). He warns against false teachers and legalism (Phil 3:2-4) and about being against the law (Phil 3:17-19). He exhorts them to express joy in trials and sufferings (Phil 3:1; 4:4).

The theme that sums up the book as a whole is the imitation of the attitude of Christ. The application of Christ's life is the focus and Philippians 2:5-11 is the heart of the book. This theme is deeper than joy since it explains how one can experience these qualities during difficulty.

Summary statement of the book

Paul exhorts the believers at Philippi to imitate Christ's attitude and stand firm in a joyful, humble, and peaceful dependence upon His adequacy. He writes to combat both disunity and false teaching in the church.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Joy and Humility

Paul thanks and prays for the Philippians. He rejoices over how his imprisonment had advanced the gospel, which encourages them to see how contending against their persecutors with Christ's attitude will give them joy as well (Phil 1).

Paul introduces both himself and Timothy as God's servants. He greets the church with a blessing of God's grace and peace. This greeting prepares the readers for the warmth and affection which follow in the letter (Phil 1:1-2). He does not refer to his apostolic authority. The church has received its holiness from Christ. Favor and harmony come from the Father and the Son (Phil 1:2).

The letter starts with thanks and a prayer for their love to multiply so that Christ's attitude would produce righteousness within them (Phil 1:3-11). He thanks the church for their partnership in giving and promises God's blessing for it (Phil 1:3-8). Paul prays for the church's love to grow in knowledge and in righteousness until the Rapture (Phil 1:9-11).

Paul rejoices that his imprisonment has advanced the gospel. He exhorts the church to rejoice in their trials (Phil 1:12-30). He rejoices that the gospel has reached many, including the Roman guard, even through the false motives of some. The church should rejoice in its persecution (Phil 1:12-18). The Philippians thought the gospel was hindered while Paul was imprisoned, but it spread farther (Phil 1:12-14). Paul was selfless because he even rejoiced that some preached the gospel with selfish motives (Phil 1:15-18). Paul rejoiced that he could either die or be released, because both have advantages (Phil 1:18-26). He exhorts the church to challenge its persecutors by living worthy of Christ in unity (Phil 1:27-30).

Paul presents four individuals—Christ, Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus—as models of a humble attitude, which encourages the church to unity through the humility of each individual member (Phil 2).

To prevent divisions in the church, Paul exhorts church members to unity through a humble concern for each other (Phil 2:1-4). He illustrates how humility in four individuals contributes to the unity of the body, so that the church might imitate them (Phil 2:5-30):

- As the ultimate example, he exhorts the church to imitate the humility of Christ who relinquished His equal rights with the Father (Phil 2:5-11).
- Paul encourages the church to follow his own example of humility in selfless service as a model of Christ's attitude. This would motivate them to avoid complaining (Phil 2:12-18).
- Paul commends Timothy as an example of Christ's selfless attitude. Paul indicates his intention to send Timothy to the church, which would provide them with a living model of Christ's humble attitude and would help them to learn unity (Phil 2:19-24).
- In his concern for the church's distress over his illness, Paul commends Epaphroditus and sends him to the Philippians as a model of Christ's humble attitude. He was also a model of a servant of Christ to the point of illness, which would encourage the Philippians to show Christ's humble attitude also (Phil 2:25-30).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Protection and Peace

Paul exhorts the church to mimic his pursuit of being like Christ rather than to trust in self-righteousness. He does this so that they will be protected from legalistic or libertine teachers by striking a balance between law and liberty (Phil 3).

Paul encourages the Philippians to be like Christ by avoiding self-righteousness, which would protect them from legalists. These people are Judaizers who deny their flesh and place their confidence in their own righteousness (Phil 3:1-16). Paul used to be like the Judaizers, because he placed his confidence in his deeds and his pedigree (Phil 3:4-6). He renounces self-righteousness by making himself an example of one who seeks to be like Christ above all else (Phil 3:7-11). The church should also seek to be like Christ (Phil 3:12-16).

Application: How have you renounced personal accomplishments to pursue being like Christ?

To protect them from libertines, Paul exhorts the church to be like Christ by reminding them that Christ will give them new bodies (Phil 3:17-21). These false teachers were antinomians, against the law. Libertines indulge their flesh, so they are to be avoided (Phil 3:17-19). Believers live for tomorrow by anticipating their glorified bodies (Phil 3:20-21). They should follow Paul's example of faith and should resist false teaching (Phil 4:1).

Paul notes that having Christ's attitude produces peace with God and man in all circumstances. The believers should rely on Christ's strength as the empowerment for unity and contentment in the church (Phil 4).

Paul pleads for peace between two women. This peace comes by having Christ's attitude to stand firm for unity to prevail in the church (Phil 4:1-3).

Paul promises they will have peace with God by following some simple principles (Phil 4:4-9).

- Rejoice at all times (Phil 4:4).
- Demonstrate steady determination (Phil 4:5).
- Pray in all circumstances (Phil 4:6-7).
- Think about praiseworthy things (Phil 4:8-9).

Paul rejoices with peace in all circumstances. He lets the believers know that while he appreciates their gift, his strength and contentment lie in Christ (Phil 4:10-20). Christ is the source of power for all believers. Paul then closes the letter with affectionate greetings that show his care for them (Phil 4:21-23).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 12: 1 & 2 Peter: Righteous Suffering and Knowledge Against False Teaching

Lesson Introduction

1 Peter: While the letter has many themes, Peter explains the key purpose of his epistle near its end, “I have written to you briefly, in order to encourage you and testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it” (1 Pet 5:12). Thus, the letter has these dual themes:

Themes in 1 Peter

<u>“This is the true grace of God”</u>	<u>“Stand firm in it”</u>
1 Peter 1:1-12	1 Peter 1:13–5:14
Election	Endurance
Sovereignty of God	Responsibility of man
Positional sanctification	Practical sanctification
Initiated by Godhead (1:2)	Effected in godly living (1:13)

Therefore, Peter’s purpose encourages his readers that God’s grace enables them to live appropriately despite the suffering that they had already experienced and undoubtedly would still suffer. The type of behavior that he exhorts is holiness, which results from salvation (1 Pet 1:1–2:12), submissiveness in all aspects of life (1 Pet 2:13–3:12), and selflessness in the midst of suffering with Christ’s example as motivation (1 Pet 3:13–5:14). The promise that is reiterated again and again is that suffering precedes glory.

2 Peter: The epistle of 2 Peter emphasizes knowledge, as seen in the sixteen occurrences of the Greek words for “knowledge” (*epignosis* 2 Pet 1:2, 3, 8; 2:20; *epiginosko* 2 Pet 2:21 two times; *proginosko* 2 Pet 3:17; *gnoridzo* 2 Pet 1:16; *gnosis* 2 Pet 1:5, 6; 3:18; *gigosko* 2 Pet 1:20; 3:3; *oida* 2 Pet 1:12, 14; 2:9). The knowledge that Peter seeks for his readers is in three areas: a knowledge of God and His choice of them (2 Pet 1), a knowledge of the characteristics and destruction of future false teachers (2 Pet 2), and a knowledge of Christ’s return and the coming Day of the Lord (2 Pet 3). However, the apostle is not content with head knowledge alone. This knowledge must work itself out in godly behavior (2 Pet 1:3-9; 3:11, 14, 18) and a cautiousness that protects the believers from being ensnared by the error of the heresies around them (2 Pet 3:17). The last two verses of the epistle especially emphasize this dual purpose for knowledge: protection and maturity (2 Pet 3:17-18).

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Value the role of suffering in the maturing Christian’s life
- Value sufferings in light of Christ’s return
- Strive to put on the divine nature, which gives a more intimate relationship with Christ

- Trust that God judges the ungodly—especially those who are guilty of sexual sin and who despise proper authority—while He protects the righteous

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to 1 Peter

Topic 2: Sanctification and Submission (1 Pet 1:1–3:12)

Topic 3: Selflessness (1 Pet 3:13–5:14)

Topic 4: 2 Peter (2 Pet 1–3)

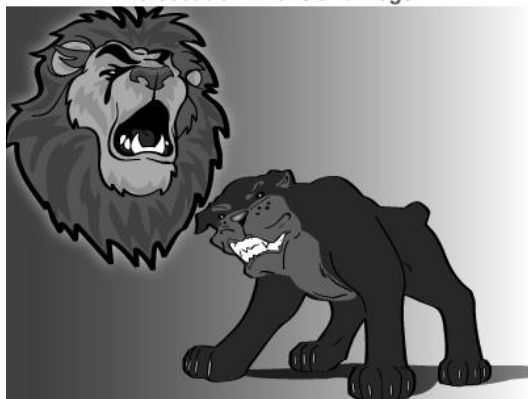
Topic 5: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to 1 Peter

1 Peter												
Endurance in Righteous Suffering by God's Grace												
Sanctification			Submission				Selflessness					
1:1–2:12			2:13–3:12				3:13–5:14					
Holiness			Humility				Honoring others					
Salu- tation 1:1-2	Praise for hope 1:3-12	Holy life exhorted 1:13– 2:12	Govern- ment 2:13-17	Work place 2:18– 25	Mar- riage 3:1-7	Church & all of life 3:8-12	Christ's triumph 3:13-	Edify others 4:7-19	Elders 5:1-4	Young men 5:5a	Humility/ Watchful- ness 5:5b-11	Purpose 5:12-14
Rome to Northern Asia												
Early AD 64												

July 19, AD 64, was one of the most significant dates for the first century church. Beginning this day and continuing for seven more days, much of Rome burned to the ground. The fire was probably instigated by Emperor Nero himself. But the event added to the suspicions most people already had regarding the many Christians in Rome. The infamous Neronian persecutions began at this time, in which Christians were thrown to lions and dogs, mutilated by gladiators, and burned on posts in Nero's garden to provide light for his evening meals.

Persecution: Lions and Dogs



According to Hoehner's chronology, Peter was crucified upside down a few months before the Neronian persecutions broke out (Harold Hoehner. "A Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age." [ThD Diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1964]). However, while civil persecution was not yet in full swing, believers experienced personal persecution (1 Pet 2:12; 3:16-17; 4:3-4, 12, 14) and the threat of imperial persecution loomed on the horizon. In this context, Peter wisely penned this manual on suffering to encourage his brethren (1 Pet 5:12) in the provinces of northern Asia Minor to stand firm with submissive attitudes.

Humanly speaking, we may think that living a protected life would be the best way to fulfill our mission. But, as seen in Acts, God's people often need to be motivated to follow His commands. Jesus had told the early Christians to be His witnesses first in Jerusalem, then in Judea, Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth (Acts 1:8). But those early Christians did not scatter and fulfill His command until after Stephen was martyred (Acts 8:1, 4). As unpleasant as it seems, Peter commands us to rejoice in these sufferings (1 Pet 4:12-13). What other justification does he give for such an unexpected command?

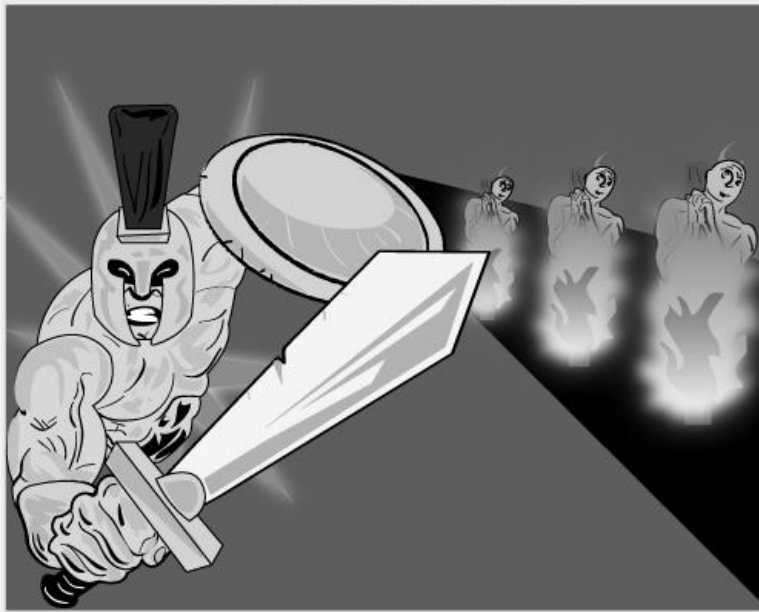
Peter crucified upside down



Reading Assignment

- Please read the article “Introduction to 1 Peter” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize 1 Peter's key verses: 1 Peter 4:12-13.

Persecution: Gladiators and Fire



Peter's advice on dealing with persecution counters the natural responses of man.

Dealing with Persecution

Common Responses to Persecution	Peter's Exhortation
I'll get even	Do not return evil for evil or insult for insult, but instead bless others because you were called to inherit a blessing (1 Pet 3:9; see 1 Pet 2:1)
I'm discouraged	Rejoice in the degree that you have shared in the sufferings of Christ...do not be ashamed (1 Pet 4:13, 16)
I'm afraid	But do not be terrified of them [persecutors] or be shaken (1 Pet 3:14)
Forget Christianity. It's not worth it.	By his wounds you were healed (1 Pet 2:24)
Why do they only persecute me?	Your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering (1 Pet 5:9)
Hey! I have my rights!	God will exalt you in due time, if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand (1 Pet 5:6)

QUESTION 1

Please write 1 Peter's key verses from memory (1 Pet 4:12-13).

QUESTION 2

Babylon appears to be Peter's code word for the city of _____.

QUESTION 3

Why is July 19, AD 64, called one of the most significant dates for the church in the first century?

- A) It was the date the Jerusalem temple was destroyed.
- B) It was the date of Peter's death.
- C) It was the date that Rome burned.
- D) It was the date of Caesar's decree in favor of Christianity.

Topic 1 Key Points:

- Trials in the Christian life should be expected and rejoiced in just as we share in Christ's suffering.
- Nero was the facilitator of the persecution of Christians, which was centered in Rome at the time that Peter wrote.

Topic 2: Sanctification and Submission (1 Pet 1:1–3:12)

Little did Peter know how applicable his letter would soon become in the regions beyond his intended readership, and especially in Rome. In his letter, the Greek word for suffer and its variations occur sixteen times.

- Suffering and glory appear together (1 Pet 1:11, 21; 4:13; 5:1, 10).
- Suffering is an encouragement for the believers to look ahead in faith (1 Pet 1:5, 7, 9; 5:10).
- It completes their salvation (1 Pet 1:5, 9, 10; 2:2).
- Suffering ends at the return of Christ (1 Pet 1:5, 7, 13; 4:13; 5:1, 4).

It seems that all of the biblical books that provide eschatological teaching do so based on suffering (e.g., Dan, Ezk, 1 & 2 Thess, Rev, etc.). Peter's epistles do the same through their emphasis upon the second coming of Christ in conjunction with the Christians' present suffering. But what is the connection? In what way does that teaching connect with our suffering?

- **1 Peter: Endurance in Righteous Suffering by God's Grace**
- **Author:** The apostle Peter, also known as Cephas
- **Date:** AD 64
- **Key Word:** Suffering
- **Key Verses:** 1 Peter 4:12-13; 1 Peter 5:12
- **Summary Statement:** Peter encourages the believers in north Asia Minor to suffer properly for Christ: as holy, submissive, and selfless witnesses. They are motivated by Christ's example and their hope of future glory. In this way, others will be attracted to their message.
- **Application:** How you respond to suffering for Christ will either draw unbelievers to Jesus or repel them. Do you suffer with integrity?

Characteristics of Strangers:

1. Reside in a foreign land
2. Citizenship is in another place (see Phil 3:20)
3. Residency is temporary, not a permanent resident
4. Values differ from that of the majority—sense of humor, dress, view of money, job, giving, etc.
5. Persecution often results from being different—laughed at, ridiculed, etc.

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Peter 1–2, and 1 Peter 3:1-12.
- Please read the article “Sanctification and Submission” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 4

From 1 Peter 1:3-12, match the reference in the left-hand column with the reason in the right-hand column that believers who undergo unjust suffering have a reason to rejoice.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reason to Rejoice</i>
1 Peter 1:3	It accomplishes several good purposes, different facets of our sanctification.
1 Peter 1:4-5	We have been born into God's family and have the hope of eternal life in eternal bodies.
1 Peter 1:6-9	We have salvation that can never be lost.
1 Peter 1:10-12	OT prophets had a limited understanding of Christ's suffering, so we should appreciate this salvation that we now possess.

QUESTION 5

According to 1 Peter 1:22-2:3, we should replace the evil desires that we had as unbelievers, with moral purity for four reasons. Please match God's role as listed in the left-hand column with what it accomplishes as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Role</i>	<i>Accomplishes</i>
God our Example	Will hold us accountable for our deeds without any favoritism (1 Pet 1:17)
God our Judge	Is holy (1 Pet 1:13-16)
God our Redeemer	Purifies us to obey him through his Word (1 Pet 1:22-1 Pet 2:3)
God our Communicator	Rescued us through Christ's blood from our empty life (1 Pet 1:18-21)

QUESTION 6

In 1 Peter, the positive term that is often linked with suffering, which encourages the believers to look ahead in faith to the completion of their salvation at the return of Christ, is _____.

QUESTION 7

In 1 Peter 3:1-7, the main danger Peter warns husbands about, if they do not submit to their wives, is that it will affect their _____ life.

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Believers enduring unjust suffering can rejoice because they have eternal life, are born into God's family, and are perfected, sanctified, through their suffering.
- The fact that God is our Example, Judge, Redeemer, and Communicator encourages us to replace our old evil desires with moral purity.
- When teaching believers about enduring suffering Peter links their future glory with Christ's return.
- When husbands do not properly submit to their wives, their prayer life suffers. When either does not submit, Christian mission and testimony is harmed.

Topic 3: Selflessness (1 Pet 3:13–5:14)

This topic directs believers to follow Christ's example in selfless service for other believers. Anticipating their rewards when Christ returns leads believers to follow Christ's example of selfless service. So, our life is lived both by following Him and anticipating His return.

Drafting



Following a leader is usually easier than charting a course of your own. A good example is the concept of drafting. Drafting works with cars, with bicycles, and even with geese, which use this technique by flying in “V” formation. The leader puts out most of the energy and those who follow are able to move behind him without using as much of their own energy. All these drafting techniques achieve distance or speed with less energy. Usually, the higher the speed the better drafting works.

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Peter 3:13–5:14.
- Please read the article “Selflessness” in the Articles section at the end of the lesson.

QUESTION 8

According to 1 Peter 3:18-20, to whom did Jesus proclaim His triumph after His death?

- A) The imprisoned demons
- B) The unsaved dead in Hades
- C) The believing dead in Paradise
- D) The residents of heaven

QUESTION 9

According to 1 Peter 3:20-21, how does Noah's ark illustrate the work of Christ's resurrection?

QUESTION 10

Match the reference in the left-hand column with what rejoicing will accomplish in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Rejoicing Accomplishes</i>
1 Peter 4:13	Rejoicing about proper, or undeserved, suffering reminds us that we bear Christ's name.
1 Peter 4:14	Rejoicing in difficulty reminds us that all people will be accountable to God—and unbelievers even more so.
1 Peter 4:15-16	Rejoicing now will bring greater rejoicing later—after Christ returns.
1 Peter 4:17-18	Rejoicing brings the greater blessing of God's Holy Spirit working through us.

QUESTION 11

Explain the main requirements for elders to receive a reward at Christ's return.

Topic 3 Key Points:

- As an example of how God will reward Christians for enduring suffering, God rewarded Jesus after His death by allowing Him to preach to the imprisoned demons.
- The eight people on Noah's ark who were saved through water illustrate the work of Christ's resurrection as pictured by baptism.
- Rejoicing in undeserved suffering reminds us that we are Christ's and points us to His return while we live through His Holy Spirit now.
- Elders will receive a reward at Christ's return for rightly shepherding God's flock.

Topic 4: Introduction to 2 Peter (2 Pet 1–3)

Contrasts Between 1 & 2 Peter		
	1 Peter	2 Peter
Problem	Persecution	False Teaching
Source of Problem	External	Internal
Theme	Hope	Knowledge
Key word	Suffering	Knowledge
Date	Early AD 64	Early spring AD 64

Peter referred to his readers as “temporarily residing in the dispersion” (1 Pet 1:1). He reminded them that this earth is not their home. Such a truth was especially needed since Nero was ruling Rome! We do not know if Peter was imprisoned when he wrote this letter. However, it is clear that he expected the persecution to take his life (2 Pet 1:14-15). According to church tradition, Peter did lose his life to persecution. Within a few months after Peter wrote this letter, Rome

burned (July 16, AD 64), and Nero used the Christians as his scapegoat. Believers suffered the most horrible kinds of deaths in the ensuing four years. Before his death, Peter wrote this epistle as a reminder of the truths his readers already knew (2 Pet 1:12, 15; 3:17). He wanted to stimulate them to wholesome thinking (2 Pet 3:1)—both knowledge of error (2 Pet 3:17) as well as truth (2 Pet 3:18). His concern was for orthodoxy in the midst of this suffering.

Peter’s main comfort to his readers is that God will judge those who persecute the righteous and that He can, at the same time, keep that judgment from affecting believers. What examples does Peter give from the Bible that illustrate his point?

2 Peter Knowledge to Combat False Teaching									
God's Election			Future Apostasy			Lord's Return			
1			2			3			
Salutation 1:1-2	Provides every need 1:3-11	Foundation of knowledge 1:12-21	False teachers coming 2:1-3a	End in Hell 2:3b- 10a	Character described 2:10b-22	Scoffers before Rapture 3:1-4	Destroys heaven & earth 3:5-13	Motivates holiness 3:14-16	Protection/ growth exhorted 3:17-18
Adequacy of believers			Inadequacy of unbelievers			Expectancy of believers			
Holiness			Heresy			Hope			
Disciples of the Lord			Diabolical leaders			Day of the Lord			
Rome to North Asia Minor									
AD 64									

- **2 Peter: Knowledge to Combat False Teaching**
- **Author:** The apostle Peter
- **Date:** AD 64
- **Key Word:** Knowledge
- **Key Verse:** 2 Peter 3:17-18
- **Summary Statement:** Peter reminds the Asian believers of the grace of Jesus Christ and of the characteristics and future destruction of the false teachers. He writes in order to combat false teaching and stimulate godly growth.
- **Application:** Never stop being a student of the Scripture. If you do, you will stop growing in grace, and you will eventually tolerate and/or promote heresy. So what new things in His Word has God taught you lately?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 2 Peter 1–3.
- Please read the article “Introduction to 2 Peter” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize 2 Peter’s key verses: 2 Peter 3:17-18.

QUESTION 12

There still remains significant doubt that 2 Peter is an authentic epistle actually written by the apostle Peter. *True or False?*

Notice that 2 Peter 1:3-8 says that God's divine power has given us all that we need to achieve a more intimate relationship with Christ.

QUESTION 13

From 2 Peter 1:5-7, match the characteristic of the divine nature as listed in the left-hand column with its definition as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Definition of Divine Nature</i>
Love	Opposite to the world's lust and gluttony
Brotherly Kindness	Does good deeds like God
Godliness	Our foundation and means to salvation
Perseverance	Seeks the best for family members
Self-Control	Literally "bearing under," patient endurance
Knowledge	Christian concern and interest
Faith	Insight and understanding from Scripture

QUESTION 14

According to 2 Peter 1:19-21, one reason Peter knew about Christ's power was that the Old Testament prophets accurately predicted Christ. *True or False?*

QUESTION 15

In 2 Peter 2:4-10, the examples Peter gives of God judging the ungodly while protecting the righteous help show God's special judgment against which of the following? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Sexual sin
- B) Despising authority
- C) Idolatry
- D) Greed

QUESTION 16

From 2 Peter 3, scoffers of the last days will teach that the earth has continued in the same state since Creation—denying both Creation and the Great Flood. This teaching is called _____.

- A) Gnosticism
- B) Uniformitarianism
- C) Antinomianism
- D) Babylonianism

Topic 4 Key Points:

- The evidence clearly shows that 2 Peter was written by Peter.
- Peter exhorts believers to make every effort to draw upon God's power to have a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Peter understood Christ's power from (1) witnessing the transfiguration and (2) knowing about the revelation and the reaction of Old Testament prophets.
- God has shown in history that He judges the ungodly—especially those who are guilty of sexual sin and who despise proper authority—while He protects the righteous.

- Scoffers teach uniformitarianism to deny that God has ever judged or ever will judge the earth.

Topic 5: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference in 1 & 2 Peter at the bottom of each column.

Major Subjects in 1 & 2 Peter					
	Instructions				
Creation of New Heavens and Earth					
Reflect the Divine Nature					
Believers are a Spiritual Temple					
Rewards for Shepherds (Elders)					
Marital Submission					
	1 Peter 2	1 Peter 3	1 Peter 5	2 Peter 1	2 Peter 3

QUESTION 18

Please open your Life Notebook and record your answer to the question that applies to you: For wives, in what area do you have the most difficulty submitting to your husband? For husbands, in what area do you have the most difficulty submitting to your wife? For those not married, in what area and circumstance do you have the most difficult time submitting to proper authority?

QUESTION 19

Please open your Life Notebook and record your answer to the following question: What decision have you made differently due to knowing Christ could return at any moment?

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

QUESTION 21

Match the keyword on the left to the corresponding book at the bottom of each column.

Unit 3 - Key Words of the Bible						
	Instructions					
Forgiveness						
Attitude						
Suffering						
Knowledge						
Righteousness						
Unity						
Deity						
	Romans	Ephesians	Colossians	Philemon	Philippians	1 Peter
						2 Peter

Lesson 12 Self Check

QUESTION 1

The name of the emperor who increased persecutions against Christians by instigating the burning of Rome and blaming Christians is _____.

QUESTION 2

The key term in 1 Peter that also helps confirm our sanctification is _____.

QUESTION 3

In 1 Peter 1:17, Peter teaches believers to put on moral purity by understanding that as Judge, God can show favoritism to believers, because we are under Christ's blood. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

In 1 Peter 3:1-7, specifically whose prayer life does Peter warn will be affected by a lack of submission?

- A) Wives
- B) Husbands
- C) Workers
- D) Elders

QUESTION 5

What example is given in 1 Peter 3 of God rewarding Christ for His faithful suffering and death?

- A) Preaching to imprisoned demons
- B) Sending believers His Holy Spirit
- C) Giving Him believers as a holy temple
- D) Giving Him rule over the nations

QUESTION 6

In 1 Peter 3, what event in Old Testament history does Peter use to illustrate baptism?

- A) Noah's ark
- B) Sodom and Gomorrah
- C) Crossing the Red Sea
- D) Moses striking the rock in the wilderness

QUESTION 7

Peter is included in a group of people who receive a reward for faithfully shepherding God's flock. This group is called _____.

QUESTION 8

In 2 Peter 1:3-8, why does Peter want us to make every effort to reflect the divine nature?

- A) To ensure our calling as God's child
- B) To better endure our current suffering
- C) To better accomplish our mission
- D) To be more intimate with Christ

QUESTION 9

From 2 Peter 1, the event Peter says he personally witnessed that showed him the power of Christ was the _____.

QUESTION 10

In 2 Peter 2:4-10, and throughout both of his epistles, Peter agrees that when God judges the ungodly, out of necessity the righteous might temporarily suffer along with them. *True or False?*

Unit 3 Exam

QUESTION 1

In Romans 1:18-32, Gentiles are condemned under sin for rejecting the knowledge of God in nature and in their _____.

QUESTION 2

The key verse in Romans is, "For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, just as it is written, '**The righteous will live by faith.**'" What Old Testament prophet does Paul quote?

- A) Habakkuk
- B) Isaiah
- C) Jeremiah
- D) Amos

QUESTION 3

According to Paul in Romans 8, the believer's goal is to _____ to Christ, despite current sufferings.

QUESTION 4

In Romans 9, Paul uses the illustration of Isaac and Ishmael to show which of the following?

- A) God can choose to elect regardless of merit or human tradition.
- B) God's justice, even in judgment, is seen through saving Gentiles and preserving a believing Jewish remnant.
- C) God can elect to show mercy on or harden whomever He wishes.
- D) Being physical descendants of Abraham is insufficient, since in order to be a part of Israel's blessings, one must participate in God's promise by faith.

QUESTION 5

In issues regarding both weaker and stronger brothers (Rom 14:1), Paul still urges the Jewish believers to follow their conscience regarding food. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

Which of the following concerns God the LEAST?

- A) What effect your behavior has on others
- B) Whether your conscience is clear when you eat or drink
- C) What type of food and drink you consume
- D) If you are acting on faith

QUESTION 7

What is emphasized in Ephesians and referred to in each chapter?

- A) The characteristics and work of demons
- B) The Holy Spirit
- C) Prayer
- D) Long sentences in the original language

QUESTION 8

What is the mystery that Paul revealed in Ephesians 3?

- A) Salvation by grace through faith in Christ
- B) Our current heavenly position in Christ
- C) The church as one unified body of Jew and Gentile
- D) Believers will be taken in the Rapture

QUESTION 9

According to Ephesians 4, God expects the pastor to do the main work of ministry. *True or False?*

QUESTION 10

Which of the following is a key element in fighting the Colossian heresy?

- A) A holy lifestyle
- B) Daily confession
- C) Daily prayer
- D) Gifted men using their God-given gifts

QUESTION 11

In Colossians, Paul used a special vocabulary with unique words because the situation was unique. *True or False?*

QUESTION 12

The beginning of which gospel is most similar to the description of Christ's deity in Colossians?

- A) Matthew
- B) Mark
- C) Luke
- D) John

QUESTION 13

If you were counseling someone in mysticism, which book would be best to use?

- A) Galatians
- B) Ephesians
- C) Colossians
- D) Philippians

QUESTION 14

Paul assured Philemon that whatever decision he made was a private one, which involved only Paul, Onesimus, and Philemon. *True or False?*

QUESTION 15

"Therefore if you regard me as a partner, accept him as you would me. Now if he has defrauded you of anything, charge what he owes to me" is the key verse for the book of _____.

QUESTION 16

In Christ's *kenosis*, He humbly emptied Himself of His deity. *True or False?*

QUESTION 17

According to this course, what is the theme of Philippians?

- A) Multipurpose
- B) Having Christ's attitude
- C) Living the Christian life
- D) Joy

QUESTION 18

According to Paul's teaching on his fleshly credentials in Philippians 3:1-6, if people could prove Jewish descent, it would improve their standing before God. *True or False?*

QUESTION 19

Paul exhorts the Philippians toward Christlikeness to protect them from libertines. *True or False?*

QUESTION 20

Babylon appears to be Peter's code word for the city of _____.

QUESTION 21

In 1 Peter 1:17, Peter teaches believers to put on moral purity because God as Judge favors those under Christ's blood. *True or False?*

QUESTION 22

In 1 Peter, the positive term often linked with suffering, which encourages believers to look ahead in faith to the completion of their salvation at the return of Christ, is _____.

QUESTION 23

According to 1 Peter 3:18-20, to whom did Jesus proclaim His triumph after His death?

- A) The imprisoned demons
- B) The unsaved dead in Hades
- C) The believing dead in Paradise
- D) The residents of heaven

QUESTION 24

In 2 Peter 1:3-8, why does Peter want us to make every effort to be "partakers of the divine nature"?

- A) To ensure our calling as God's children
- B) To be more intimate with Christ
- C) To better endure our current suffering
- D) To better accomplish our mission

QUESTION 25

In 2 Peter 2:4-10, and throughout both of his epistles, Peter agrees that when God judges the ungodly, out of necessity the righteous will suffer along with them. *True or False?*

Lesson 12 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

“Dear friends, do not be astonished that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in the degree that you have shared in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed you may also rejoice and be glad.”

QUESTION 2: Rome

The epistle claims to have been written from “Babylon” (1 Pet 5:13). Several factors indicate that this is a code word for Rome, rather than the literal Babylon. Peter does not directly identify it because of the persecutions against its believers.

QUESTION 3

C. It was the date that Rome burned.

On this day much of Rome burned to the ground, probably at Nero's own hand. But the event added to the suspicions most people already had regarding the many Christians in Rome. The infamous Neronian persecutions began at this time, even though some persecutions had begun even before this date.

QUESTION 4

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reason to Rejoice</i>
1 Peter 1:3	We have been born into God's family and have the hope of eternal life in eternal bodies.
1 Peter 1:4-5	We have salvation that can never be lost.
1 Peter 1:6-9	It accomplishes several good purposes, different facets of our sanctification.
1 Peter 1:10-12	OT prophets had a limited understanding of Christ's suffering, so we should appreciate this salvation that we now possess.

QUESTION 5

<i>Role</i>	<i>Accomplishes</i>
God our Example	Is holy (1 Pet 1:13-16)
God our Judge	Will hold us accountable for our deeds without any favoritism (1 Pet 1:17)
God our Redeemer	Rescued us through Christ's blood from our empty life (1 Pet 1:18-21)
God our Communicator	Purifies us to obey him through his Word (1 Pet 1:22–1 Pet 2:3)

QUESTION 6: Glory

The Bible books that provide eschatological teaching do so based on suffering (e.g., Dan, Ezk, 1 & 2 Thess, Rev, etc.). Peter's epistles do the same through their emphasis upon the second coming of Christ in conjunction with the Christians' present suffering.

QUESTION 7: Prayer

The reason a husband should submit to his wife is because she is weaker physically but equal spiritually and able to affect his prayer life (1 Pet 3:7). Both submit to each other, or the Christian mission and testimony is harmed.

QUESTION 8

A. The imprisoned demons

This was part of God's way of rewarding Him for His obedient suffering. It also served as an example for the Christian enduring suffering that there would be a reward after death.

QUESTION 9

Your answer should be similar to the following: Eight souls were delivered through the water that prefigures baptism. Baptism saves us by the pledge of a good conscience to God—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

QUESTION 10

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Rejoicing Accomplishes</i>
1 Peter 4:13	Rejoicing now will bring greater rejoicing later—after Christ returns.
1 Peter 4:14	Rejoicing brings the greater blessing of God's Holy Spirit working through us.
1 Peter 4:15-16	Rejoicing about proper, or undeserved, suffering reminds us that we bear Christ's name.
1 Peter 4:17-18	Rejoicing in difficulty reminds us that all people will be accountable to God—and unbelievers even more so.

QUESTION 11

Elders should selflessly share the suffering of its members with pure motives by teaching and gently protecting their churches, as a shepherd cares for his sheep (1 Pet 5:1-4).

QUESTION 12: False

The evidence, especially internal, shows that Peter did in fact write this letter bearing his name. The book is far superior to the spurious books attributed to him and the authenticity of the epistle is also confirmed in its language that is similar to Peter's speeches in Acts (Donald Guthrie, "New Testament Introduction" [Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1965], 844).

QUESTION 13

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Definition of Divine Nature</i>
Love	Christian concern and interest
Brotherly Kindness	Seeks the best for family members
Godliness	Does good deeds like God
Perseverance	Literally "bearing under," patient endurance
Self-Control	Opposite to the world's lust and gluttony
Knowledge	Insight and understanding from Scripture
Faith	Our foundation and means to salvation

QUESTION 14: True

Peter says he knew about it through UNinterpreted messages from the prophets. They often did not understand what they prophesied, but sought to understand, because they were only accurately speaking what God revealed to them. Another reason he knew about Christ's power was his personal witness of the Transfiguration.

QUESTION 15

- A. Sexual sin
B. Despising authority

These three past examples of judgment and salvation show that God will do the same in the future (2 Pet 2:9-10). In particular, God judges heretics guilty of sexual sin and despising authority (2 Pet 2:10).

QUESTION 16

- ## B. Uniformitarianism

Apostates will live godlessly and scoff at the passing of time until Christ returns. Rather than the wholesome belief in Creation and the Flood, end times scoffers will teach that no catastrophic event ever occurred—to create doubt that God will climatically judge in the future as well.

QUESTION 17

Major Subjects in 1 & 2 Peter				
				Instructions
Believers are a Spiritual Temple	Marital Submission	Rewards for Shepherds (Elders)	Reflect the Divine Nature	Creation of New Heavens and Earth
1 Peter 2	1 Peter 3	1 Peter 5	2 Peter 1	2 Peter 3

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21

Unit 3 - Key Words of the Bible

Instructions						
Righteousness	Unity	Deity	Forgiveness	Attitude	Suffering	Knowledge
Romans	Ephesians	Colossians	Philemon	Philippians	1 Peter	2 Peter

Lesson 12 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: Nero

QUESTION 2

Correct answers include:

Suffering

Suffer

QUESTION 3: False

QUESTION 4

B. Husbands

QUESTION 5

A. Preaching to imprisoned demons

QUESTION 6

A. Noah's ark

QUESTION 7: Elders

QUESTION 8

D. To be more intimate with Christ

QUESTION 9: Transfiguration

QUESTION 10: False

Unit 3 Exam Answers

QUESTION 1: Conscience

QUESTION 2

A. Habakkuk

QUESTION 3: Conform

QUESTION 4

D. Being physical descendants of Abraham is insufficient, since in order to be a part of Israel's blessings, one must participate in God's promise by faith.

QUESTION 5: True

QUESTION 6

C. What type of food and drink you consume

QUESTION 7

B. The Holy Spirit

QUESTION 8

C. The church as one unified body of Jew and Gentile

QUESTION 9: False

QUESTION 10

A. A holy lifestyle

QUESTION 11: True

QUESTION 12

D. John

QUESTION 13

C. Colossians

QUESTION 14: False

QUESTION 15: Philemon

QUESTION 16: False

QUESTION 17

B. Having Christ's attitude

QUESTION 18: False

QUESTION 19: True

QUESTION 20: Rome

QUESTION 21: False

QUESTION 22: Glory

QUESTION 23

A. The imprisoned demons

QUESTION 24

B. To be more intimate with Christ

QUESTION 25: False

Lesson 12 Articles

Introduction to 1 Peter

Authorship

Early tradition affirms that the apostle Peter wrote this epistle, which bears his name. The facts in the book are consistent with Peter writing the letter. The opening salutation identifies Peter as the author (1 Pet 1:1).

Circumstances

Date: Peter was martyred in the spring of AD 64. Since 2 Peter was written shortly before Peter's death (2 Pet 1:13-15), 1 Peter cannot be dated any later than early AD 64. This date assumes that some time passed between Peter's two epistles.

Origin/Recipients: The epistle claims to be written from Babylon (1 Pet 5:13). Several factors indicate that Babylon was a code name for Rome:

- *External evidence:* There is no record of Peter visiting Babylon either on the Euphrates or the Nile rivers. However, there is a tradition from early church fathers that Babylon refers to Rome and Peter was martyred in that city. The book of Revelation hints that Rome is "Babylon the Great" (see Rev 14:8; 17:5; 18:10).
- *Internal evidence:* Mark, who lived in Rome (1 Pet 5:13; see Col 4:10; Phm 24), was with Peter when he wrote the letter. Therefore, Peter must have written from Rome.

The recipients of the letter are "those temporarily residing in the dispersion...who are chosen" (1 Pet 1:1). Peter mentions five Roman provinces in a circle: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. This suggests that the letter should be copied and sent to the next province on the list. Originally, a predominantly Gentile audience received the letter (1 Pet 1:14, 18; 4:3). However, Jewish elements are also present, so Jews were also some of the readers (1 Pet 1:1; 2:9). Peter likely addressed people in northern Asia Minor because Paul focused on southern Asia Minor.

Characteristics

This epistle uses sixty-two words that are only used once in the New Testament. The most problematic passage in the book is 1 Peter 3:18-22, which talks about rewards for suffering. The larger context of 1 Peter focuses on undeserved struggles and continual submission to God's sovereignty, as in Job of the Old Testament.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Sanctification and Submission

Sanctified living that is based on the believers' hope of future glory leads the watching unbelievers to praise God (1 Pet 1:1-2:12).

Peter greets the believers in northern Asia Minor as strangers in the world. He identifies them as elected for positional sanctification and obedience, which sets the emphases of the letter (1 Pet 1:1-2). Believers are sanctified positionally when they put their faith in Christ's work on the Cross and the Holy Spirit sets them apart for God. He praises God for the hope that the believers have through faith in Christ. This encourages his readers that the result of their suffering will be

triumph in future glory (1 Pet 1:3-12). Believers who are suffering unjustly should rejoice (1 Pet 1:3-5) because:

- They have been born into God's family (1 Pet 1:3).
- Their lives in God are based on the hope of eternal life in eternal bodies (1 Pet 1:3).
- They have salvation that cannot be lost (1 Pet 1:4-5).
- Unjust suffering accomplishes several good purposes in believers (1 Pet 1:6-9).
- Since OT prophets prophesied with little understanding of Christ's suffering, Peter's audience should appreciate this salvation that they possess (1 Pet 1:10-12).

Believers' practical sanctification is the natural result of their salvation in their daily lives. Their holy lifestyle may cause unbelievers to praise God (1 Pet 1:13-2:12). Peter gives four reasons why the believers should replace the evil desires, which they had as unbelievers, with moral purity (1 Pet 1:13-2:3):

1. God, their example, is holy (1 Pet 1:13-16).
2. God, their judge, will hold them accountable, without favoritism, for their deeds (1 Pet 1:17).
3. God, their redeemer, rescued them through Christ's blood from their empty lives (1 Pet 1:18-21).
4. God, their communicator, purifies them so they can obey Him through His Word (1 Pet 1:22-2:3).

The believer's holiness has a corporate aspect that declares to unbelievers that those in the church are God's special people (1 Pet 2:3-12). Believers receive privileges in Christ: eternal life and corporate blessing to serve and worship (1 Pet 2:4-5). They come to Christ, who was rejected by unbelievers but chosen by God (1 Pet 2:4). God grants believers eternal life and makes them both spiritual temples and holy mediators whose spiritual sacrifices please Him (1 Pet 2:5).

The way unbelievers reject Christ contrasts with God's blessing on believers as His own people (1 Pet 2:6-10). God chose Christ to be Jerusalem's new cornerstone, who is precious to Him, and He also chose the believers, whose salvation is assured (1 Pet 2:6-7). Unbelievers who reject Christ are destined for eternal condemnation (1 Pet 2:7-8). Believers are similar to Israel in the OT as elect, kingly, priestly, holy people who belong to God. They praise Him for transferring them from the ignorance of sin into the knowledge of holiness and mercy (1 Pet 2:9-10). Believers should respond to God's blessings by living holy lives to silence opposition at the judgment (1 Pet 2:11-12).

The Context in Peter's Day

1. Christians were slandered for believing in another king—Jesus.
2. The government assumed that the believers' respect for Jesus meant that they did not honor the government.
3. Peter wrote the believers to remind them that belief in Christ actually made them better citizens.

Submissive living in all areas of life pleases both God and man (1 Pet 2:13-3:12).

Believers must submit to the government. Their good conduct will silence opponents of the truth (1 Pet 2:13-17). The command to submit to all human authorities, which is mentioned in this section, prepares readers to show humility to them (1 Pet 2:13). Submission to the government shows that believers are good for society (1 Pet 2:13-15). This submission silences accusations

that believers are poor citizens. Submission to God and to civil laws occurs by respecting and honoring God and others (1 Pet 2:16-17).

God is pleased when believers submit in the workplace (1 Pet 2:18-25). The general principle is straightforward—slaves must submit to their masters, regardless of how they are treated (1 Pet 2:18). Peter gives the following three reasons for submission to a master in order to motivate Christian slaves to respond to their owners in a godly way (1 Pet 2:19-25):

- God is pleased with submission to a harsh master (1 Pet 2:19-20).
- Submission in unjust situations imitates Christ when He submitted to God at His death (1 Pet 2:21-24). Though He was without sin, Christ suffered and committed Himself to God as the Just Judge. He bore all sins so that believers can live righteously instead of sinfully (1 Pet 2:21).
- Submission in the workplace shows a repentant lifestyle to unbelievers (1 Pet 2:25).

Wives and husbands must submit in marriage to please God and to receive answer to prayer (1 Pet 3:1-7). A wife should submit to her husband to please both him and God (1 Pet 3:1-6). Christian wives should submit to unbelieving husbands so that the husbands might trust Christ (1 Pet 3:1-2). This is because the true nature of a woman's beauty is an internal submission that pleases God (1 Pet 3:3-6). A husband should also submit to his wife, because she is weaker physically but equal spiritually and able to affect his prayer life (1 Pet 3:7).

Lastly, Peter notes that believers must submit in the church and in all of life to please God (1 Pet 3:8-12). Submission in the church is seen in harmony, sympathy, love, compassion, and humility (1 Pet 3:8). Blessing others instead of retaliating toward unfriendly outsiders shows submission. By blessing others, believers are rewarded by God (1 Pet 3:9). Psalm 34:12-16 affirms that enjoyment comes from rejecting evil and pursuing good, especially in speech (1 Pet 3:10-12).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Selflessness

When a Christian lives a selfless life, though God's grace, he follows Christ's example of triumphing after suffering and he also receives God's reward (1 Pet 3:13–5:14).

Since Christ suffered before His triumph and believers suffer for righteousness before their future glory, Christians should live selflessly for others (1 Pet 3:13–4:6). God rewards Christians who suffer for righteousness, who are doing right, who submit to the lordship of Christ, and who are gentle and respectful (1 Pet 3:13-17).

God rewards selfless Christians just as He rewarded Christ after His suffering (1 Pet 3:18-22):

- Christ proclaimed His triumph to the imprisoned demons after His death (1 Pet 3:18-20).
- As Noah's ark saved eight people from physical death caused by water, Christ's resurrection saves believers from spiritual death. This concept is illustrated in baptism, which looks back on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Pet 3:20-21).
- God sat Jesus at His right hand and gave Him authority over the angelic realm after Christ's unjust suffering (1 Pet 3:22).

In contrast to godless people who heap abuse on believers and are concerned only for themselves, Christians should live selflessly (1 Pet 4:1-6).

God rewards believers who behave with selfless concern for others and who praise God for their unjust suffering (1 Pet 4:7-19). Believers must show **selfless concern for others** in practical ways during suffering (1 Pet 4:7-11). Being clear of mind and self-controlled allows believers to be prayerful and ready for reward (1 Pet 4:7; see Mt 3:2; Rom 13:12; Jas 5:8). Love is the vital virtue as it overlooks wrongs rather than fights for one's rights (1 Pet 4:8; see 1 Cor 13:7). Believers should offer hospitality without grumbling (1 Pet 4:9). Gifts of speaking and serving must demonstrate God's grace to others and praise Him (1 Pet 4:10-11). Those gifted in speaking should speak to others as God would (1 Pet 4:11). Those gifted in serving should rely on God's strength to help others (1 Pet 4:11).

Those who suffer for righteousness will be blessed for their selfless care (1 Pet 4:12-18). Suffering for Christ is natural (1 Pet 4:12) and believers should rejoice in it, as they will be blessed (1 Pet 4:13-18). Current rejoicing will bring greater rejoicing later, after Christ returns (1 Pet 4:13). Rejoicing brings the blessings of the work of the Holy Spirit in all believers (1 Pet 4:14). Rejoicing about undeserved suffering reminds believers that they bear Christ's name (1 Pet 4:15-16). Rejoicing in difficulty reminds believers that all people will be held accountable to God (1 Pet 4:17-18).

Conclusion: Believers suffering for God must commit themselves to Him and continue to bless others (1 Pet 4:19).

Leaders must demonstrate selflessness. Elders should teach and protect their churches and selflessly share in the members' suffering until they are rewarded in glory (1 Pet 5:1-4). Peter appeals to the elders as a witness of Christ's suffering and as one who will be rewarded at Christ's return just as they will be (1 Pet 5:1). Elders should care for the church as a shepherd looks after his sheep (1 Pet 5:2-3). They will be rewarded at Christ's return if they do these things (1 Pet 5:4).

Young men must humbly submit to their church elders and selflessly help them. It is better if the young men don't show concern only for themselves (1 Pet 5:5). All believers should suffer with humility and watchfulness, which God will reward with triumph (1 Pet 5:5-11). Humility in believers means that God will fight for them instead of against their pride (1 Pet 5:5-7). Watchfulness against Satan's temptation allows believers to suffer triumphantly with others (1 Pet 5:8-9). God's response to humble watchfulness is to restore these saints to a stronger foundation in their faith (1 Pet 5:10-11).

Peter states that his purpose for writing is to encourage believers to find stability in God's grace (1 Pet 5:12). Believers can find this stability through their endurance in suffering (1 Pet 5:12). Peter ends with greetings and a benediction (1 Pet 5:13-14). He wanted Silas to record the epistle so that the readers would be encouraged to endure suffering through God's grace (1 Pet 5:12). He sends greetings from the church in Babylon and Mark, who wrote the gospel of Mark (1 Pet 5:13). The recipients should greet one another affectionately (1 Pet 5:14). Despite difficulties of suffering, believers can experience peace through Christ (1 Pet 5:14).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to 2 Peter

Authorship

Although most people regard this epistle as authentic, early Christian tradition is divided on Peter's authorship. However, the letter claims to be written by Peter throughout the text. The beginning of the letter is signed as "Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 1:1).

The author witnessed Jesus' transfiguration (2 Pet 1:16). He references Jesus' speaking about the martyrdom of Peter (2 Pet 1:14). Referring to the "beloved brother Paul" places the author on the same apostolic level as Paul (2 Pet 3:15). Peter clearly refers to 1 Peter in 2 Peter 3:1, "This is already the second letter that I have written you." Peter believes that his death is imminent and is writing as a testament.

While some dispute the authenticity of 2 Peter, the evidence reveals that Peter wrote this letter attributed to him. This book is much better than other false books that carry his name. The language of the epistle is also similar to Peter's speeches in Acts.

Circumstances

Date: Peter was martyred in the spring AD 64. Therefore, 2 Peter was likely written that same year, because it was shortly before his death (2 Pet 1:13-15).

Origin/Recipients: In 1 Peter, he addresses "God's elect" (1 Pet 1:1). The readers were predominantly Gentiles though some Jews likely read the letter. He addresses the same group in 2 Peter 3:1.

Characteristics

Peter astonishes the readers with his description of the destruction of the present earth and heavens and their replacement by the new heavens and earth (2 Pet 3:5-13). This letter also includes the most explicit teaching on false teachers in Scripture.

Peter assures his readers that their knowledge of God and His choice of them has a firm foundation, and that He provides them with all they need for godliness. They can successfully fight the false teaching in their midst (2 Pet 1).

Peter greets his readers with a blessing of God's knowledge. This knowledge is received through faith in Christ (2 Pet 1:1-2). The letter emphasizes knowing God in the face of false teaching. To show his authority, Peter introduces himself as a slave and an apostle of Jesus Christ (2 Pet 1:1). Faith comes only through the righteousness of Christ (2 Pet 1:1). In his blessings, Peter establishes his theme of knowledge, noting that grace and peace come from knowing God and Jesus (2 Pet 1:2).

Believers need to know that God has chosen them for salvation. He gives believers all they need in order to be like Christ (2 Pet 1:3-11). Every spiritual provision comes from knowing that God called the believers to salvation (2 Pet 1:3). God shows His glory in the promises that lead us to be like Christ (2 Pet 1:4). Spiritual qualities should grow with a believer's efforts to become pure and Christlike (2 Pet 1:5-7).

- **Faith:** a believer's foundation and means to salvation (2 Pet 1:5)
- **Goodness:** morality, the opposite of evil (2 Pet 1:5; see also 2 Pet 1:3; Phil 4:8)
- **Knowledge:** insight and understanding from Scripture (2 Pet 1:5; see also 1 Pet 3:7; 2 Pet 3:18)
- **Self-Control:** opposite to the world's lust and gluttony (2 Pet 1:6; see also Acts 24:25; Gal 5:23)
- **Perseverance:** "bearing under," patient endurance (2 Pet 1:6; see also Jas 1:3)
- **Godliness:** performing good deeds by imitating God (2 Pet 1:6; see also Jas 1:3)
- **Brotherly kindness:** love that seeks the best for family members (2 Pet 1:7; see also 1 Pet 1:22)

- **Love:** *agape* Christian concern and interest (2 Pet 1:7; see also 1 Pet 4:8)

Growth in these qualities affects the Christian's future (2 Pet 1:8-9). One who continually grows in these qualities will be effective (2 Pet 1:8). A believer who doesn't develop these qualities will be useless, because of ignorance of his forgiven state (2 Pet 1:9).

Believers should live out their chosen position through a growing spiritual life (2 Pet 1:10-11). This life includes expressing the virtues in 2 Peter 1:5-7 in order to show their calling (2 Pet 1:10). Assurance of salvation also has at least two wonderful benefits (2 Pet 1:10-11):

- It leads to a stable spiritual life that prevents apostasy (2 Pet 1:10).
- It leads to a more richly rewarded heavenly welcome later, at death or the Lord's return (2 Pet 1:11).

As early as AD 64, while the apostles were still living, false teachers questioned what believers were taught. Peter wanted his readers to have an accurate knowledge of the truth, so he responded to these attacks from false teachers.

Peter assures his readers that their knowledge of God has a firm foundation (2 Pet 2:12-21). Peter knows that Nero is about to execute him, so he reminds the believers about the truth of God's election and provision (2 Pet 1:12-15). Two reliable sources help Peter remind readers that truth is vital to spiritual life (2 Pet 1:16-23). Peter knows Christ's power, not due to clever tales from false teachers, but because he witnessed His power at the Transfiguration (2 Pet 1:16-18). He also knows Christ's power is true because the OT prophets accurately predicted Christ (2 Pet 1:19-22). The apostles knew that the prophets spoke truth, so readers should heed their messages until Christ's return (2 Pet 1:19). No true prophet misinterpreted a prophecy (2 Pet 1:20). A true prophecy comes from God, and He uses the prophet's voice as a willing instrument of the Spirit's message (2 Pet 1:21).

Peter warns of a future time of apostasy by describing these false teachers. He assures his readers that their knowledge of God will be needed to recognize and to defeat these apostates (2 Pet 2).

So that his readers will be able to defend themselves, Peter warns of a coming apostasy when heretics will exploit the church with false teachings (2 Pet 2:1-3). When Jude wrote ten years later, in AD 75, this time of apostasy had come. Israel had true prophets in the OT times, but there were also false prophets among them. Therefore, false prophecy was not something new among God's people (2 Pet 2:1). Peter then briefly describes these false teachers, so that they will be identifiable (2 Pet 2:1-3).

Believers will be protected, but the apostates will be condemned to hell (2 Pet 2:3-10). God had condemned these false teachers before they had deceived people (2 Pet 2:3). God has a long history of judging the ungodly, while He protects the righteous (2 Pet 2:4-8):

- Demons who enticed the rulers in Genesis 6 into immorality have long been in demonic prison awaiting final judgment (2 Pet 2:4).
- Ungodly people died in the flood, but godly Noah and his family were spared (2 Pet 2:5).
- Sodom and Gomorrah were burned, while righteous Lot was delivered (2 Pet 2:6-8).

The three examples of judgment and salvation show that God will do the same in the future (2 Pet 2:9-10). He knows how to rescue the godly and judge the ungodly in the present and in the future (2 Pet 2:9). God especially judges heretics who are guilty of sexual sin and who despise authority (2 Pet 2:10).

Peter then extends the description of the heretics to show how to recognize them when they come (2 Pet 2:10-22):

- The false teachers are rebellious (2 Pet 2:10-12).
- They slander demons, which angels do not try to do (2 Pet 2:10-11).
- They blaspheme, without thinking, like beasts, so they will be ruined (2 Pet 2:12).
- False teachers are immoral (2 Pet 2:13-16).
- The harm they have caused will happen to them (2 Pet 2:13).
- Their sexual sin is public (2 Pet 2:13).
- They eat with saints but boast of their immorality, like Balaam did to Israel (2 Pet 2:15-16; see also Num 22:28; 25:1-9).

The false teachers are depraved unbelievers who ensnare others regardless of experiencing the blessings of a righteous life (2 Pet 2:17-22). Hell is reserved for these people (2 Pet 2:17). They entice others to free sex, but are slaves to it themselves (2 Pet 2:18-19). They reject the knowledge of righteousness that they once had, and their final state will be even worse (2 Pet 2:20-22).

Peter exhorts godly living based on the knowledge of Christ's return and the destruction of everything in the Day of the Lord (2 Pet 3).

Christ's return should stimulate believers to live according to that promise. However, apostates will live godlessly and will scoff at the passing of time (2 Pet 3:1-7). Peter reminds his readers that both the OT prophets and the NT apostles stimulated wholesome thinking (2 Pet 3:1-2). Rather than holding wholesome belief in Creation and the Flood, those who scoff at the end times will teach that no catastrophic event took place. This will create doubt that God will judge them in the future (2 Pet 3:3-7).

Mockers will appear and will show that the Church Age comprises the "last days" before Christ returns (2 Pet 3:3; see also 2 Pet 2:1; Mt 24:3-5, 11, 23-26).

Scoffers doubt God because they assume nothing catastrophic ever happens (2 Pet 3:4-6). One main teaching is to ridicule Christians because Christ has not returned (2 Pet 3:4). The apostates also teach uniformitarianism, which teaches that the earth has continued in the same state since its creation. They deny Creation and the Flood (2 Pet 3:4-6).

The same word of God that brought judgment by the Flood will also judge the world and the unbelievers by fire (2 Pet 3:7).

The Day of the Lord will end with the heavens and the earth being replaced with new heavens and a new earth. This should motivate believers to be godly (2 Pet 3:8-16). God can wait patiently for a thousand years so that more people will trust Christ, but He will destroy the heavens, the elements, and the earth (2 Pet 3:8-10). Do not confuse the patience of God with a lack of omnipotence on His part.

Creation is temporary, so believers should be active in the following four ways (2 Pet 3:11-16):

1. Holy living should be their passion (2 Pet 3:11-12).
2. Receiving their eternal home should be their expectation (2 Pet 3:13).
3. Peace with God should rule their hearts in purity (2 Pet 3:14).

4. Patience with God's patience should help believers to see that He waits to bring more people into His family (2 Pet 3:15-16). Paul's letters show the same wisdom about God's patience that Peter had (2 Pet 3:15). Some unbelievers distorted Paul's teachings, as they did other Scriptures (2 Pet 3:16). Peter considered Paul's letters to be Scripture just as much as the OT was.

The knowledge of the false teachers' ultimate destruction and Jesus' grace will protect believers and stimulate growth in godliness (2 Pet 3:17-18).

Note: What does 2 Peter 3:17 mean by saying that a Christian could fall from a secure position by believing heresy?

- Some say this statement means that a Christian can lose his or her salvation. However, many passages in the NT affirm that the believer's position in Christ is permanent (see Jn 3:16; 10:28-29).
- It is better to see this as referring to believers who are led astray (2 Pet 1:10; Gal 5:4).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Unit Four: The Kingdom Is Victorious

Unit Introduction

We have followed the kingdom theme throughout this course. Christ's kingdom was introduced in the Gospels (Unit 1), was expanded in Acts and throughout Paul's missionary letters (Unit 2), and then was tested after the writing of Romans and in the Prison Letters and the letters of Peter (Unit 3). But would this kingdom succeed?

As Unit 4 addresses the last writings of the New Testament, it affirms that this kingdom will be victorious.

New Testament Books: Message Statements

Note: The following summarizes the message of each New Testament book for this unit.

Hebrews: The author shows the Hebrew believers the superiority of Christ as the High Priest and of Christianity over Judaism. He exhorts them to endure persecution rather than to return to their former life under Judaism.

1 Timothy: Paul exhorts Timothy to courageously guard his personal life, Christian doctrine, and the local church, so that he can safeguard the Ephesian church against ascetic and speculative false teachers.

2 Timothy: Paul exhorts Timothy to faithfully practice and preach the Word despite hardship. He encourages him to persevere against false teaching and apostasy.

Titus: In order to defeat their opponents through their word and deed, Paul exhorts Titus to organize the Cretan churches. He is to appoint qualified elders and to teach respectable behavior, which is the natural result of salvation by grace.

1 John: John writes a general letter that encourages his readers to obey God's commands to love others. He writes to protect them from Gnosticism, which does not accept that Christ was both fully God and fully human, denying one or the other.

2 John: John teaches a Christian woman and her children, who show hospitality to missionaries, that there are limits to love. These people are warned not to extend the same hospitality to false teachers, which would aid the spread of destructive heresies.

3 John: In order to help the church understand its responsibility to finance God's work, John encourages Gaius to continue his support of missionaries. Gaius is being opposed by Diotrephes, a godless leader who opposes supporting missionaries.

Jude: Jude warns all Christians about pretenders—unbelievers who have infiltrated their churches by masking themselves as Christians, but in reality, they are perverting the truth by the lifestyles of license. Jude writes to defend the holiness of the church.

Revelation: Through John, God discloses the sovereignty of Jesus Christ in His ultimate future triumph. John writes to encourage the believers to persevere in their faith, despite internal compromise and external opposition.

Unit Objectives

By the end of this unit you will be able to do the following:

- Summarize the danger the recipients of Hebrews are warned against

- Summarize how people should conduct themselves in God's church
- Restate the motivations for persevering in the Christian life
- Initiate personal support for missions at a level in agreement with your conscience
- Evaluate your church for apostasy
- Patiently trust in God's sovereign plan to judge His/our enemies

Unit Outline

Lesson 13: Hebrews: Christ's Superiority as the High Priest

Lesson 14: 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: The Pastoral Epistles

Lesson 15: John's Epistles and Jude

Lesson 16: Revelation: The Sovereignty of Christ in Future Victory

Lesson 13: Hebrews: Christ's Superiority as the High Priest

Lesson Introduction

Hebrews

Why Jesus Is Superior	To Whom?
Hebrews 1–2: He is the Son	Superior to angels in name
Hebrews 3–4: He is the Apostle	Superior to Moses in honor
Hebrews 5–6: He is the High Priest	Superior to Aaron in calling
Hebrews 7–10: He is like Melchizedek	Superior to Levi in blessing
Hebrews 11–13: Having faith is	Superior to losing heart

Hebrews is a logical and yet passionate and stern declaration to rescue a group of persecuted Jewish Christians from abandoning Christianity for Judaism. The writer affirms the superiority of Christ in a rational style. He begins first with His person and then deals with His work. He explains Jesus' preeminence over the prophets, the angels, Moses, Aaron, the Old Covenant, the tabernacle, and the sacrifices. His purpose is to convince the readers that abandoning Christ for foreshadowings of Him makes no sense and receives sure judgment. Five warning texts emphasize how forsaking the substance for the shadow is a tragic mistake. The letter then progresses with an exhortation to endure in faith, by citing the examples of many who have successfully gone before the recipients of the epistle who are experiencing suffering. The final chapter exhorts the church to love in both the social and the religious realms. It concludes with a request for prayer, a benediction, and personal greetings.

The author wrote to prevent his readers from deserting the faith by lapsing back into Judaism. He shows the superiority of Christianity, and of Christ in particular, to the old system of Judaism in the following ways:

1. Christ, who is God Himself, is the final revelation of God (Heb 1:1-8).
2. Christ is superior to angels (Heb 1–2), Moses (Heb 3–4), and Aaron—who represents the Old Covenant, the sanctuary, and the sacrifices (Heb 4–10).
3. Whenever the Greek word translated as *better* occurs, it emphasizes Christ and salvation (Heb 1:4; 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24).
4. Five admonitions to the Hebrews warn them against despising the new order to return to the old (Heb 2:1-4; 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:8; 10:19-39; 12:18-29).

The Thirteen Betters

Reference	What's better?
Hebrews 1:4	Become so much better than the angels
Hebrews 6:9	We are confident of better things in your case
Hebrews 7:19	And a better hope is introduced
Hebrews 7:22	Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant
Hebrews 8:6	Mediator of a better covenant
Hebrews 8:6	It is founded on better promises
Hebrews 9:23	With better sacrifices than these
Hebrews 10:34	You yourselves had better and lasting possessions
Hebrews 11:4	Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain did
Hebrews 11:35	So that they might gain a better resurrection
Hebrews 11:40	God had planned something better for us
Hebrews 12:24	Speaks a better word than the blood of Abel

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Explain how the author's arguments in Hebrews are affected by whether he wrote before or after AD 70
- Make a case for the superiority of Christ over prophets, angels, Moses, and Aaron
- Compare the concept of rest in Canaan with the rest described in Hebrews
- Contrast the features of the Old and New Covenants as well as the Old and New Priesthoods
- Identify features of Melchizedek's priesthood that typify Christ's priesthood
- Value the inheritance stored up for those who patiently endure
- Use the teachings in Hebrews to discern the trials of faith in your own life

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to Hebrews and Christ's Superiority to the Prophets (Heb 1:1-3)

Topic 2: Christ's Superiority to Angels and to Moses (Heb 1:4-4:13)

Topic 3: Christ's Superiority to Aaron (Heb 4:14-6:20)

Topic 4: Christ's Priesthood of Melchizedek's Order (Heb 7-10)

Topic 5: Endurance Through Faith (Heb 11-13)

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to Hebrews and Christ's Superiority to the Prophets (Heb 1:1-3)

Hebrews													
Christ's Superiority Over Judaism as High Priest													
Superiority in His person to...			Superiority in His priestly work to...					Endurance through faith					
1:1–4:13			4:14–10:18					10:19–13:25					
Prophets 1:1-3	Angels 1:4– 2:18	Moses 3:1– 4:13	Aaron 4:14– 6:20	Mel- chiz- edek 7	Old Cov- enant 8	Taber- nacle 9:1-10	Sacri- fices 9:11– 10:18	Will- ful sin 10:1 9-39	Models 11:1– 12:3	Endure as sons 12:4- 13	Ethics 12:14 -17	Ignor- ing God 12:18 -29	Exhor- tation 13
Christ's majesty			Christ's ministry					Christian's manifestation					
Theology								Practice					
Unknown author, recipients, origin, and destination!													
AD 67–68													

Romans shows the *need* for Christianity, while Hebrews shows the *superiority* of Christianity. The repetition of six key terms throughout the book affirms the superiority of Christ. The key terms show that He is the perfect and eternal high priest in heaven, proving that He is superior to Judaism (Harold L. Willmington, *Willmington's Guide to the Bible* [Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1991], 516).

Six Key Words Affirming Christ's Superiority

Terms	Times Used
Priest, high priest	Thirty-two times
Heaven	Seventeen times
Eternal, forever	Fifteen times
Perfect	Fourteen times
Better	Thirteen times
Partakers	Nine times

In this first topic the author shows that Christ is superior to the prophets. But in what ways is He better? He performed some of the same functions, didn't He?

- **Hebrews: Christ's Superiority Over Judaism as the High Priest**
- **Author:** Unknown
- **Date:** AD 67–68
- **Key Word:** Superiority
- **Key Verses:** Hebrews 12:1-2
- **Summary Statement:** The author shows the Hebrew believers the superiority of Christ as the High Priest and of Christianity over Judaism. He exhorts them to endure persecution rather than to return to their former life under Judaism.

- **Application:** Despite the perceived advantages, never, ever let difficulties convince you to return to the religion that you embraced before you were saved.

Reading Assignment

- Please read Hebrews 1:1-3.
- Please read the article “Introduction to Hebrews” on Jesus’ superiority to the prophets in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verses: Hebrews 12:1-2.

QUESTION 1

Why is it necessary to date Hebrews before AD 70?

QUESTION 2

The course author feels that when the writer of Hebrews refers to the “raging fire that will consume the enemies of God,” he is clearly referring to the fires of hell. *True or False?*

QUESTION 3

List the six reasons from Hebrews 1:2-3 that explain why Jesus is superior to the prophets.

Fires of Jerusalem



Topic 1 Key Points:

- The author wrote Hebrews before AD 70, because his arguments are based on the fact that the temple still stands but will soon be destroyed.
- The raging fires referred to in Hebrews are best understood as the burning of Jewish cities by the Roman army in AD 70, not the fires of hell.
- Jesus is superior to the prophets in His name, His inheritance, His essence, and His works.

Topic 2: Christ's Superiority to Angels and to Moses (Heb 1:4–4:13)

Exhortations in Hebrews

Reference	Exhortation
Hebrews 4:1	We must be wary that...none of you seem to have come short.
Hebrews 4:11	We must make every effort to enter that rest.
Hebrews 4:14	Let us hold fast to our confession.
Hebrews 4:16	Let us confidently approach the throne of grace.
Hebrews 6:1	We must progress beyond the elementary instructions about Christ and move on to maturity.
Hebrews 10:22	Let us draw near with a sincere heart
Hebrews 10:23	Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess.
Hebrews 10:24	Let us take thought of how to spur one another on.
Hebrews 10:25	Not abandoning our own meetings.
Hebrews 10:25	Encouraging one another.
Hebrews 12:1	Let us throw off everything that hinders.
Hebrews 12:1	Run with endurance the race set out for us.
Hebrews 12:2	Keeping our eyes upon Jesus.
Hebrews 12:3	Think of him who endured such opposition against himself by sinners
Hebrews 12:7	Endure your suffering as discipline.
Hebrews 12:14	Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness.
Hebrews 12:15	See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God, that no one be like a bitter root springing up.
Hebrews 12:28	Let us give thanks.
Hebrews 13:1	Brotherly love must continue.
Hebrews 13:15	Let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God.

Adapted from Walter Dunnett, *An Outline of New Testament Survey*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1960) and Henrietta C. Mears, *A Look at the New Testament* (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light Publications, 1966).

The five warning passages in Hebrews have caused much debate. The main issue is whether or not they address (1) non-Christians in danger of eternal damnation, (2) Christians in danger of losing their salvation, or (3) Christians in danger of temporal judgment in the fires of Jerusalem

and losing their reward. The first two warning passages appear in this topic. The first warning is the mildest one, in which readers are cautioned against drifting away (Heb 2:1). The second warning is more intense, and it compares the readers' test to Israel's test at Kadesh (Heb 3:7-11; Deut 1:19-36; Ps 95) where they did not enter into their rest.

In this second topic, the author shows that Christ is superior to the angels and to Moses. Both angels and Moses were greatly revered in Judaism and had a major role in bringing Israel its Law (Ex 19:1-25; Gal 3:19). So how does the author compare Jesus to the angels and Moses?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Hebrews 2, Hebrews 4, and Numbers 13–14.
- Please read the article “Christ’s Superiority to the Angels and to Moses” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

Christ is Superior to Angels and Moses



QUESTION 4

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the reason that Jesus is superior to the angels as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Superiority to Angels</i>
Hebrews 1:4-5	Angels eternally worship Christ as God, because the Father calls him God.
Hebrews 1:6-12	Christ has a better name than the angels, since He is called God’s son.
Hebrews 1:13-14	Christ has completed His work, whereas the angels continue working.
Hebrews 2:5-18	In His humanity, Christ is superior to angels, since Scripture says man, not the angels, has authority to rule over the world.

QUESTION 5

In the first warning passage, the writer included himself among those who could drift away (Heb 2:1). *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

The readers’ temptation to return to Judaism is compared to the testing of Israel at which place?

- A) Jericho
- B) Marah
- C) Kadesh
- D) Rephidim

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Jesus is superior to the angels in His name, His receiving worship, His finished work, and His humanity.
- Jesus is superior to Moses in His glory and His position over God's house.
- In the first warning passage in Hebrews, the author applied any potential penalty to himself.
- The choice the readers of Hebrews faced is compared to Israel's testing at Kadesh.

Topic 3: Christ's Superiority to Aaron (Heb 4:14–6:20)

Because of both Jesus' humanity and His deity, He makes a superior high priest. Because of His deity, He remains forever, and because of His humanity, He can sympathize with people. He successfully endured temptation and can help those in need (Heb 4:14-15).

The third warning is against the spiritual immaturity involved in a return to Judaism. This would lead to irreversible apostasy and judgment in the fires of the Roman armies.

In this third topic, the author shows that Christ's priesthood is superior to Aaron's. Every Jew knew the qualifications of a high priest in Israel. For one, he must be of the tribe of Levi (Heb 7:11-14). But Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah. So how could He qualify as a high priest and therefore what priesthood is He from?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Hebrews 5–6.
- Please read the article "Christ's Superiority to Aaron" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 7

According to Hebrews 4:14-16, instead of passing from one room in the Temple to another as the Jewish high priest did, Jesus passed through the _____.

QUESTION 8

From Hebrews 5, explain the two main qualifications of the Jewish high priest and how Christ fulfilled them.

QUESTION 9

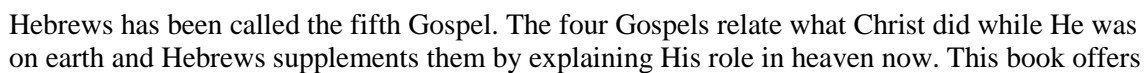
According to Hebrews 5:11-14, why were these readers still infants? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) They had unconfessed sin in their lives.
- B) They had not developed their consciences.
- C) They were new converts in the faith.
- D) They had not applied God's Word to their lives.

According to the third warning in Hebrews 6, if these readers fail this test and return to Judaism, there is no room for repentance. *True or False?*

- Christ is superior to Aaron, who ministered only in the earthly tabernacle and not in heaven itself.
- Christ is superior to Aaron through singular obedience and submission in prayer.
- Christian growth comes through the practice of applying God's Word to our lives, and that practice develops our conscience.
- The readers are warned that reverting to Judaism would leave no room for repentance, since they would not remain alive to repent.

The Tabernacle and the Tribes of Israel



a unique glimpse into both the heavenly tabernacle and how Christ is the fulfillment of the Law and the tabernacle.

In this fourth topic, Christ is shown as belonging to the superior priesthood of Melchizedek.

The fourth warning is so severe that many interpreters feel it could not possibly apply to Christians (see Heb 10:26-31). Each successive warning has increasing severity, but the other warnings are also so severe that one can legitimately ask, “How can they possibly apply to those redeemed under the New Covenant?”

Reading Assignment

- Please read Hebrews 7–8.
- Please read the article “Of Melchizedek’s Order” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 11

Match the reference as listed in the left-hand column with the reason Melchizedek’s priesthood is superior to the Aaronic priesthood.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Hebrews 7:1-10	Christ obtained His office by God’s oath.
Hebrews 7:11-19	Levi paid Melchizedek tithes through Abraham.
Hebrews 7:20-22	Christ’s character is perfect.
Hebrews 7:23-25	Christ fulfills the promise of a future priest, not according to heredity.
Hebrews 7:26-28	Christ does not die but continues living eternally.

QUESTION 12

According to Hebrews 8, the coming of a New Covenant shows that the Old Covenant is obsolete. *True or False?*

QUESTION 13

According to Hebrews 9:1–10:18, by entering _____ Christ showed that His sacrifice was the one perfect, permanent, and final sacrifice.

QUESTION 14

According to the fourth warning in Hebrews 10:26-31, if these believers failed this test, their sin would be a willful sin for which there is no sacrifice. *True or False?*

Topic 4 Key Points:

- Christ’s Melchizedekian priesthood is superior to the Aaronic priesthood based on God’s oath and its eternal character.
- According to Hebrews 8, the coming of a New Covenant shows that the Old Covenant is obsolete.
- Christ passed from earth to heaven after His atonement for man—not simply from the Holy Place to the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, as the Aaronic priests did.
- According to Hebrews 10:26-31, if these believers failed this test, their sin would be a willful sin for which there is no sacrifice.

Topic 5: Endurance Through Faith (Heb 11–13)

The readers of Hebrews were well aware of God's promises. But they had not yet received the fulfillment of those promises, even though in the past, they had faithfully suffered persecution for the Lord's sake (Heb 10:32-39). When would they receive those promises? When will we?

Why are there Halls of Fame for sports heroes? Because good models have a way of spurring us on to greater heights in ways that theory never can. The author of Hebrews knew this well. This is why he listed specific people who had faithfully endured amidst difficulty. He wanted to encourage his readers that they were not alone in their struggle. These people are enrolled in God's Hall of Faith! Please continue reading in this topic to find out what the qualifications are for God's Hall of Faith, and who is enrolled. The following table shows what is written on their plaque in the Hall.



Hall of Faith	
Inductee	Heading on the plaque
Believers in creation	Trusted that God created the universe by His spoken word
Abel	Offered a better sacrifice than Cain
Enoch	Pleased God with his lifestyle of holiness
Noah	Built the ark despite ridicule, believing it would rain
Abraham	Moved to an unknown land
Isaac	Went against tradition and blessed both boys
Jacob	Blessed each son and worshipped God outside Canaan
Joseph	Commanded Israel to bury his bones in Canaan
Moses' parents	Trusted God to protect a baby in the Nile
Moses	Chose to be mistreated, led the Exodus and kept the Passover
Israel at the Red Sea	Crossed between walls of water
Israel at Jericho	Circled and shouted obeying God's unconventional strategy
Rahab	Hid the spies and helped them escape
Gideon	Attacked the enemy while vastly outnumbered
Barak	Overcame doubts to attack a stronger army
Samson	Beat the Philistines despite lust and vengeful attitude
Jephthah	Returned to his people as a judge
David	Defeated Goliath without a sword
Prophets	Hosea was loyal to a harlot, Amos confronted sin, and Ezekiel's wife died
Women with resurrected relatives	Elijah raised the boy to life
Persecuted believers	Rejoice among suffering
Martyrs	Stephen and Antipas among multitudes
Mistreated	Kept preaching despite opposition

Reading Assignment

- Please read Hebrews 12–13.
- Please read the article “Endurance Through Faith” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

The Better Covenant Warns us not to Turn Back (Heb 12:18-29)	
Mount Sinai	Mount Zion
“You have not come to” (12:18)	“You have come to” as if heaven is a present reality (12:22)
Mountain of fire and darkness (12:18)	City of perfection (12:22; 11:10, 16; 13:14)
Gloom (12:18)	Joy (12:22)
Feared even touching Sinai (12:20)	Names recorded in heaven in privileged firstborn status (12:23)
Earth (12:25-26; Ex 19:10-25)	Heaven (12:22, 25)
Old/Mosaic (12:21)	New (12:24)
No animal yet killed (12:20)	Perfect atonement (12:24)
Jews who could not escape living under the Law (12:25)	God (12:21, 23), Angels (12:22), Church (12:23), OT saints (12:23c), Jesus (12:24)
Asked not to hear God (12:19)	Should listen to God speaking (12:25)
Easily shaken (12:26-27)	Cannot be shaken (12:27-28)
Never turn back to your past religion (12:25)	Press on to your reward with thanks and worship (12:28-29)

QUESTION 15

In the fifth warning passage (Heb 12:18-29), the author’s main thought is which of the following?

- A) Retribution was greater under the Old Covenant because the New Covenant contains more grace.
- B) Retribution is greater under the New Covenant.
- C) Retribution is the same under both covenants.
- D) Retribution is no longer a concern under the New Covenant.

QUESTION 16

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the way that believers should show love, so that the supremacy of Christ is shown to people in relationships, as listed in the right-hand column.

Reference	Way of Love
Hebrews 13:1-3	Contentment with one’s possessions is the logical result of recognizing God’s commitment to His children.
Hebrews 13:4	Hospitality must be shown to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners.
Hebrews 13:5-6	Purity in marriage must be a priority to avoid God’s judgment.

Topic 5 Key Points:

- Retribution under the New Covenant is greater than under the Old Covenant because of the greater blessings and greater cost, Christ's shed blood, and apostates are compared with Esau.
- We show the supremacy of Christ by showing hospitality, keeping marriage pure, and being content with our possessions.

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference from Hebrews at the bottom of each column.

Major Teachings in Hebrews						
	Instructions					
Endure as Sons						
Melchizedek						
Hall of Faith						
Our Sympathetic High Priest						
The Old Covenant						
God Spoke through His Son						
	Hebrews 1	Hebrews 4	Hebrews 7	Hebrews 8	Hebrews 11	Hebrews 12

QUESTION 18

From the table in Topic 4 titled *The Hall of Faith*, try to discern in your own life what challenge of faith you personally face. It can be a past, a present or a future challenge. What do you need to do to demonstrate your faith? Open your Life Notebook and record your answer.

QUESTION 19

We often share how Christ has changed our lives—that is wonderful. But each of us also is still tempted by certain aspects of our pre-Christian life. These temptations often come from the religious philosophy that we held before becoming a Christian—Buddhist, atheist, agnostic, nominal Christian, etc. Please open your Life Notebook and record the things from those days which still tempt you today, such as had more time, legalism, freedom, etc.

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

Lesson 13 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Some of the author's arguments in Hebrews are more effective if the book is dated before AD 70. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

The raging fires referred to in Hebrews are best understood as the fires of:

- A) Hell
- B) The Roman soldiers
- C) The believer's trials
- D) Rewards being consumed

QUESTION 3

In Hebrews 3, one argument the author made is that Christ deserves greater glory than Moses because He is the _____ of God's house.

QUESTION 4

In the first warning passage, the author EXCLUDED himself as one who could possibly "drift away" from Christ. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

The readers' temptation to return to the Old Covenant is compared with Israel's temptation at _____.

QUESTION 6

According to Hebrews 5:11-14, why were these readers still infants?

- A) They had not applied God's Word to their lives.
- B) They had unconfessed sin in their lives.
- C) They worshipped angels along with God.
- D) They were new converts in the faith.

QUESTION 7

According to the third warning in Hebrews 6:4-8, as long as these believers were still alive there would always be room for repentance from this apostasy. *True or False?*

QUESTION 8

According to Hebrews 7, even the Old Testament high priest was confirmed in office by God's oath. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

According to the fourth warning in Hebrews 10:26-31, if these believers fell into apostasy, it would be a willful sin for which there is no _____.

QUESTION 10

In Hebrews 12:16-17, who is the example of an immoral and godless person who found no opportunity for repentance, though he sought it with tears?

- A) Cain
- B) Esau
- C) Korah
- D) Saul

Lesson 13 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

Your answer should be similar to the following: The lack of a reference to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple points to a date before AD 70. This is especially true since the sacrificial system was still in operation (see Heb 8:4-5, 13; 9:6-9; 10:1-3, 11) and was “obsolete and aging” and would “soon disappear” (Heb 8:13). Otherwise the author’s argument would have been that the sacrificial system was already destroyed.

QUESTION 2: False

He is referring to the fires started by the Roman army in AD 70. They burned Jerusalem, Qumran, and other cities involved in the revolt against Roman rule.

QUESTION 3

Your answer should be similar to the following: (1) Jesus is God’s Son speaking. (2) He is the Heir and the Creator of the universe. (3) He is God, since He exactly represents the Father. (4) He is the Sustainer of the universe by the power of His Word. (5) He is the Atonement for mankind’s sins. (6) He completed His ministry in a way that was pleasing to the Father.

QUESTION 4

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Superiority to Angels</i>
Hebrews 1:4-5	Christ has a better name than the angels, since He is called God’s son.
Hebrews 1:6-12	Angels eternally worship Christ as God, because the Father calls him God.
Hebrews 1:13-14	Christ has completed His work, whereas the angels continue working.
Hebrews 2:5-18	In His humanity, Christ is superior to angels, since Scripture says man, not the angels, has authority to rule over the world.

QUESTION 5: True

First Warning: Christ is unsurpassed in the angelic realm, so these Christian readers would be punished if they discarded their faith and drifted back into Judaism. No penalties are listed here, but they can’t include hell as the writer was among those who could “drift away” (Heb 2:1-4).

QUESTION 6

C. Kadesh

The choice this group faced is compared to the temptation Israel faced at Kadesh when they lost faith and refused to believe that they could defeat the people of the land by God’s help.

QUESTION 7: Heavens

Therefore, He is unequaled as a high priest (Heb 4:14). However, even in His greatness, Christ is able to “sympathize with our weaknesses” and provide free access to His throne of grace (Heb 4:15-16).

QUESTION 8

Your answer should be similar to the following: The high priest needed to be a man who participated in human weakness and was chosen by God. God chose Christ, but He chose Him through His qualifications for the better Melchizedek priesthood since Jesus was God’s Son (Heb 5:5-6). He also became a man but showed singular human submission in His prayers and learned obedience (Heb 5:7-10).

QUESTION 9

B. They had not developed their consciences.

D. They had not applied God's Word to their lives.

It takes practice to grow the Christian life through applying God's Word to real life situations.

When believers do not apply it or ignore doing what is right, they regress back to infancy and their conscience and faith do not develop.

QUESTION 10: True

Choosing apostasy by dropping Christianity for the Law would be an irreversible decision in which a recommitment to Christ was impossible and physical death inevitable (Heb 6:4-8). The author's encouragement toward spiritual maturity shows confidence that the readers will not choose apostasy and be judged but that they will show faithfulness to the end of their lives (Heb 6:9-20).

QUESTION 11

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Hebrews 7:1-10	Levi paid Melchizedek tithes through Abraham.
Hebrews 7:11-19	Christ fulfills the promise of a future priest, not according to heredity.
Hebrews 7:20-22	Christ obtained His office by God's oath.
Hebrews 7:23-25	Christ does not die but continues lives eternally.
Hebrews 7:26-28	Christ's character is perfect.

QUESTION 12: True

Also, the fact that Jeremiah 31:31-34 taught the coming of a new and better covenant demonstrates that the New Covenant makes the old obsolete (Heb 8:7-13).

QUESTION 13: Heaven

Christ passed from earth to heaven after His atonement for man—not simply from the Holy Place to the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, as they high priests did (Heb 9:11).

QUESTION 14: True

The preceding warning is buffered by an encouraging reminder that the readers had faithfully suffered persecution in the past. They are to exhibit this same endurance in their present difficulties (Heb 10:32-39).

QUESTION 15

B. Retribution is greater under the New Covenant.

Retribution is greater now because of its greater blessings and higher cost—the shed blood of Christ (Heb 12:24). Apostasy here is compared to Esau selling his birthright for a single meal (Heb 12:16-17).

QUESTION 16

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Way of Love</i>
Hebrews 13:1-3	Hospitality must be shown to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners.
Hebrews 13:4	Purity in marriage must be a priority to avoid God's judgment.
Hebrews 13:5-6	Contentment with one's possessions is the logical result of recognizing God's commitment to His children.

QUESTION 17

Major Teachings in Hebrews					
					Instructions
God Spoke through His Son	Our Sympathetic High Priest	Melchizedek	The Old Covenant	Hall of Faith	Endure as Sons
Hebrews 1	Hebrews 4	Hebrews 7	Hebrews 8	Hebrews 11	Hebrews 12

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

Lesson 13 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: True

QUESTION 2

B. The Roman soldiers

QUESTION 3

Correct answers include:

Son

Creator

QUESTION 4: False

QUESTION 5: Kadesh

QUESTION 6

A. They had not applied God's Word to their lives.

QUESTION 7: False

QUESTION 8: False

QUESTION 9

Correct answers include:

Sacrifice

Atonement

QUESTION 10

B. Esau

Lesson 13 Articles

Introduction to Hebrews

Authorship

External Evidence: The author is not stated in the book, although Hebrews 13:18-24 indicates that the original readers knew the author. Throughout church history, different authors have been suggested. Early church tradition was also divided over authorship.

- The church in Alexandria and the Eastern Church thought Paul wrote Hebrews.
- The North African church fathers thought the author was Barnabas.
- The churches of Italy and Western Europe initially debated authorship. Originally, Paul's authorship was rejected. Hebrews was not in the early canon, but two important early fathers, Jerome and Augustine, convinced the Western Church to accept the Eastern Church's view of Paul's authorship.
- The Reformation Protestants rejected Pauline authorship and attributed Hebrews to the apostle Apollos.
- Modern scholars are divided on authorship, as well. Suggestions include Luke, Clement, Silas, Priscilla, and Philip the Evangelist. External evidence is inconclusive.

Internal evidence: Despite some non-Pauline aspects of the letter, the best evidence may indicate a Pauline authorship:

- Timothy is mentioned in Hebrews 13:23 as a potential traveling companion.
- The author seems to be in prison (Heb 13:19). The letter has a closing benediction similar to Paul's (Heb 13:20-21, 24). This closing may indicate that Paul could have written it during one of his imprisonments at Rome.
- There are Pauline themes like gifts and power (Heb 2:4), Israel's example (Heb 4), the New Covenant (Heb 8), the person of Christ (Heb 1-10), and faith (Heb 11).
- Paul may have omitted his name because the Jews hated him. They thought that he maligned the temple and that he renounced his faith from Judaism to Christianity.

However, there are some lines of internal evidence that may oppose Pauline authorship:

- Greek style is more polished and classical than Paul's typical style. Old Testament references are from the Greek Septuagint and not the Hebrew text, as would be expected from a formally trained Jew.
- No salutation appears at the beginning, as is Paul's custom.
- Because of Hebrews 2:3-4, the author may have received the gospel from the disciples of Jesus. Paul did not describe himself in this way (Gal 1-2).
- While Paul's writings emphasize the death and resurrection of Christ, Hebrews emphasizes the priesthood of Christ and His present work.

The anonymity of the author does not affect Hebrews' canonicity, since the early church held to its authority.

Circumstances

Date: The date is not stated, so it must be determined by internal and external evidence. The following facts can be surmised:

- The destruction of the temple in Jerusalem is not mentioned, which dates the book before AD 70. The author believed that the sacrificial system, which was still in place, was coming to an end (Heb 8:4-5, 13; 9:6-9; 10:1-3, 11).
- Although no reputable scholars will do so, the book may be dated prior to Nero's persecutions in AD 64–68. This is because believers had not yet shed their blood for their faith (Heb 12:4). This concept assumes that the recipients would be persecuted by the Romans, which may not have been the case.

Assuming Paul wrote Hebrews, the best date is during his second Roman imprisonment (AD 67–68), during the Jewish revolt in Palestine that led to the burning of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple.

Origin/Recipients: Hebrews was sent from Italy (Heb 13:24). However, Italy may have also been the destination, because the Italians with the author may have been greeting their countrymen. Because of the many unexplained allusions to and quotes from the Old Testament it is probably that the readers were Jews. This is supported by the oldest and most reliable title, "To the Hebrews."

These Jews were second-generation believers (Heb 2:1-4; 3:1; 4:14-16; 10:19-22, 32-34; 12:7; 13:1, 20-22) who should have advanced beyond their immaturity in Christ (Heb 5:11-14). Therefore, they were true believers and more than those who claimed to be Christians. They were in danger of lapsing back into Judaism because of their persecution for Christ. The author notes the problem of reverting to OT rites in Hebrews 7:11, 26-28; 8:4-5; 9:1–10:18.

It appears that the Jewish Christians composed a specific community and were not the original recipients of the letter:

1. They have a history the author is acquainted with—their conversion (Heb 2:3), their ministry to other Christians (Heb 6:10), their sufferings for the gospel (Heb 10:32-34), and their present level of spiritual maturity (Heb 5:11).
2. The author had visited once and desired to revisit them (Heb 13:19, 23). The readers were also concerned for Timothy (Heb 13:23).
3. The readers may have been leaders of a larger community, since it is unlikely that a whole church would be teachers (Heb 5:12).

Destination: The original Jewish readers lived in a location that may have been away from Jerusalem, since they were not among those who personally saw the Lord (Heb 2:3). However, the fact that they have not seen Christ was probably because they were second-generation believers. Several destinations have been suggested: the Lycus Valley in Asia Minor, Rome, Cyprus, Cyrene, and the Qumran Community near the Dead Sea. If Barnabas is the author, he may have written to Cyrene, his home area. He ministered in Rome at the time that Hebrews was written. A relationship between Italian Christians and believers at Cyrene may have existed through Barnabas' contact with Simeon (see Acts 13:1).

No one knows the origin or destination with certainty, except for the original readers. However, the recipients of this letter were all Jews.

The author began by showing how Jesus surpassed the angels (Heb 1:4–2:18). The writer had clear prophetic knowledge that the temple and the sacrificial system would soon be destroyed

(Heb 8:13). He warned believers that fire from the Romans was coming on those involved in the Jewish revolt. So, returning to Judaism would bring that destruction on them (Heb 10:27; see also Heb 6:8). The author's warning refers to the fires that burned Jerusalem and all the other resistant cities, not the fires of hell.

The Jewish Christians were in a very serious situation. The author gave five severe warnings to admonish them not to reject Christianity (Heb 2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:8; 10:19-39; 12:18-29). The recipients suffered persecution but not necessarily martyrdom (Heb 10:30-32; 12:4). Because they were in danger of drifting away from their foundation in Christ, they need to be encouraged to endure (Heb 10:36; see Heb 2:1; 3:12; 5:11).

Characteristics

The authorship of Hebrews perplexes scholars more than any other book in Scripture. The recipients, origin, and destination are equally baffling. However, Hebrews contains the greatest information on several doctrines: the believer's rest, the Melchizedek Priesthood, the High Priesthood of Christ, and the New Covenant. The book lacks an opening salutation and seems more like a sermon. Hebrews 11 is one of the most beloved chapters in Scripture on faith.

The Greek in Hebrews is considered to be among the most elegant in the New Testament. There are at least 157 words that are unique to Hebrews.

The book also extensively quotes the Old Testament. There are more than eighty-five quotes and allusions from twenty-one OT books. The author also quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34, the longest OT quote in the NT (Heb 8:8-12).

Jesus' Superiority to the Prophets

The readers should not return to Judaism because Christ is superior to the OT prophets, to the angels, and to Moses (Heb 1:1-4:13).

Since Christ is superior to the OT prophets, the readers should follow Him (Heb 1:1-3). As partial revelations of God, the prophets ministered to the Jews. However, Christ is the final and complete revelation of God (Heb 1:1-3):

- Jesus is God's Son speaking, which was never said of a prophet (Heb 1:2).
- He is the Heir and the Creator of the universe (Heb 1:2).
- He is God, since He exactly represents the Father, which was never said of a prophet (Heb 1:3).
- He is the Sustainer of the universe by the power of His Word (Heb 1:3).
- He is the Atonement for humankind's sins (Heb 1:3).
- He completed His ministry and pleased the Father (Heb 1:3).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Christ's Superiority to the Angels and to Moses

Since Christ is superior to the angels in His deity and His humanity, the readers should not respect created angels more than Christ (Heb 1:4-2:18). Angels are mediators between God and man, but Christ is the Creator Himself. Christ's deity is superior because the OT says many things about Him that are not said for angels. Readers should not return to Judaism, which emphasizes angel ministry (Heb 1:4-14):

- As God's son, Christ has a better name than the angels (Heb 1:4-5).
- Angels eternally worship Christ as God, and the Father calls Him God (Heb 1:6-12).
- Christ has completed His work, whereas the angels continue to work (Heb 1:13-14).

First Warning: Christian readers would be punished for discarding their faith for Judaism, because Christ is unsurpassed. No penalties are listed here, but they cannot include hell as the writer was among those who could “drift away” (Heb 2:1-4).

In His humanity, Christ is superior to the angels, since man has authority to rule the world, but the angels do not. As a man, Jesus has the authority to rule and to be a high priest, so readers should trust Christ rather than angels (Heb 2:5-18).

God never promised the angels authority to rule (Heb 2:5), this privilege belongs to man. Psalm 8:4-6 states that man will fully rule the world in the future (Heb 2:6-8). Many Scriptures prophesied that Jesus would become a man with the authority to rule because of His atoning death (Heb 2:9-13). Christ's humanity makes Him more desirable to worship than any angel (Heb 2:14-18), as shown by the following:

- Christ defeated Satan's grip on other men (Heb 2:14-16).
- Christ atoned for man's sin as a compassionate High Priest (Heb 2:17).
- Christ was victorious in suffering and can now help people who suffer (Heb 2:18).

Since Christ is superior to Moses in His glory and in His position, readers who return to Judaism will forfeit their inheritance in the messianic kingdom. The author wants readers to picture themselves at Kadesh where Israel had to choose whether to enter the land or not (Heb 3:1-4:13 see Deut 1:19-36; Ps 95).

Christ is depicted as superior to Moses in His glory and in His position to show that the readers should follow Christianity (Heb 3:1-6):

- In His glory, Christ is greater than Moses. In Him the two offices of apostle and high priest are combined into one person, manifested in Christ, who redeemed people. Meanwhile, Moses only played the role of servant (Heb 3:1-4).
- Christ is greater than Moses in His position because He was over God's house as a son, not in His house as a servant (Heb 3:5-6).

Second Warning: As Israel could not enter the Promised Land of Canaan because of unbelief, so church believers should continue to be obedient in order to enter their rest in the Promised Land of the millennial kingdom (Heb 3:7-4:13).

In the second warning, the author quotes Psalm 95:7-11, which says that disobedience to Moses brought judgment to Israel. The readers need to understand that disobedience to Christ would also bring judgment (Heb 3:7-19):

- The quote from Psalm 95 shows that Israel's unbelief in the wilderness kept them from entering Canaan. This same unbelief was possible in the time of the psalmist (Heb 3:7-11).
- Hebrews uses this passage from the Psalms to show readers that they could disbelieve in the same way. To prevent their hearts from being hardened, believers should encourage each other daily (Heb 3:12-15).
- Israel's failure to believe God's promise to bring them to the Promise Land is rebellion, sin, and disobedience. Their rebellion disqualified them from entering Canaan. This consequence to sin shows the readers how serious their situation is (Heb 3:16-19).

Therefore, Israel's sinful unbelief should warn these Hebrew Christian readers against rejecting Christ, because a failure to obey will result in the loss of their reward of rest in the kingdom (Heb 4:1-13; see 1 Cor 3:11-15).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Christ's Superiority to Aaron

The readers should not return to Judaism, because in His high priestly work, Christ is superior to Judaism's priestly system (Heb 4:14–10:18).

Christ is superior to the Jewish high priest in His position and in His qualifications, so readers should follow Him (Heb 4:14–6:20). Christ's superiority to the high priest in both His heavenly position and His victory over temptation should cause readers to draw near to Him and not drift away (Heb 4:14-16).

Christ's superiority in His qualifications makes Him more worthy to be followed than Judaism (Heb 5:1-10). A Jewish high priest had to meet the following qualifications (Heb 5:1-4):

- He needed to be a man who had compassion for human weakness (Heb 5:1-3).
- He needed to be chosen by God (Heb 5:4).

Jesus fulfilled both of these qualifications even more than the earthly high priest (Heb 5:5-10):

- Christ became a man who showed human submission more than any other man in His prayers and His obedience, which qualified Him for the priesthood (Heb 5:7-10).
- Christ was chosen by God in the higher Melchizedek priesthood, since He was God's Son (Heb 5:5-6).

The author then warns the believers against lapsing back into Judaism, and he gives encouragement toward spiritual maturity to prevent the readers from apostasy and judgment (Heb 5:11–6:20).

Third Warning: The danger of continued spiritual immaturity, which would be shown by a return to Judaism, would lead to irreversible apostasy and judgment in burning Jerusalem (Heb 5:11–6:8).

These Christians were spiritually lethargic, choosing to dull their hearing instead of pursuing Christ. They should have been teachers, but instead they still needed to learn the basic facts about Christ rather than advanced doctrine (Heb 5:11-14). They had not matured, because they had not applied the Word to their lives (Heb 5:13-14).

This dangerous situation made them more likely to emphasize OT rituals rather than mature doctrines (Heb 6:1-3). Apostasy by reverting back to the Law would be an irreversible decision (Heb 6:4-8). A recommitment to Christ was impossible, and physical death was inevitable.

By encouraging his readers toward spiritual maturity, the author reflects his confidence that they will be faithful to the end of their lives and become apostates who would be judged (Heb 6:9-20).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Of Melchizedek's Order

The readers should follow Christ, because He is superior to both Abraham and the Jewish Levitical priesthood. He is of the Melchizedek Priesthood (Heb 7).

Melchizedek and the Levitical priesthood both received tithes from Abraham, the founder of Israel. The fact that they received tithes shows their high standing in Judaism (Heb 7:1-10). Melchizedek, personified as the king of Salem, possessed such superior qualities that even Abraham, the great patriarch of Israel, paid him tithes (Heb 7:1-3). Levi also paid Melchizedek tithes through Abraham (Heb 7:4-10).

However, Christ is over the Levitical priesthood because He is from both the tribe of Judah, which does not determine priesthood through heredity, and the order of Melchizedek. A return to the old Levitical order is foolish and unnecessary (Heb 7:11-28). Jesus fulfilled the promise of a new, future priest from a different order (see Ps 110:4). This new order shows how Christ could be of Judah's line and how the Law ended (Heb 7:11-19). God recognized Jesus as the High Priest by oath, whereas the other priests did not obtain their office with an oath (Heb 7:20-22). Jesus is a permanent priest because He is eternal, but the other priests all died in office (Heb 7:23-25). Jesus' character is perfect, whereas the other priests offered sacrifices for their own sin (Heb 7:26-28).

Christ is superior to the Old Covenant because He established a New Covenant (Heb 8:1-13). Jesus in His priesthood supersedes the old priesthood, so the New Covenant supersedes the Old Covenant (Heb 8:1-6). The coming of a new and better covenant, as taught in Jeremiah 31:31-34, shows that the New Covenant makes the old one obsolete (Heb 8:7-13).

Christ is superior to the tabernacle by His sacrifice, so all people should follow him (Heb 9:1-10:18). The tabernacle and the sacrificial system were only temporary (Heb 9:1-10). God approved the earthly tabernacle and dwelt in it (Heb 9:1-5); however, the sacrifices were external regulations that could not cleanse the worshippers' consciences (Heb 9:6-10).

In contrast, Christ is a better sacrifice than any that could be offered in a tabernacle. The Hebrews should not trade the new and permanent source of redemption for the old and transitory (Heb 9:11-10:18). Christ passed from earth to heaven after His atoning death for man (Heb 9:11). He shed His human blood, not the blood of animals (Heb 9:12-14), and His sacrifice made Him the mediator of the New Covenant (Heb 9:15). He died because forgiveness only comes by the shedding of blood (Heb 9:16-22). Christ entered heaven after His sacrifice to show that it was the one perfect, permanent, and final sacrifice (Heb 9:23-10:18).

Since Christ is superior to Judaism, the Hebrew readers are exhorted to endure persecution by faith rather than to shrink back (Heb 10:19-13:25).

The danger of willful sin highlights the need to persevere in faith, despite obstacles, so that the believers don't lose their lives (Heb 10:19-39). The unsurpassed priesthood of Christ should encourage perseverance through fellowship with God and man (Heb 10:19-25). Christ's superiority exhorts His believers to draw near to Him (Heb 10:19-22). His faithfulness exhorts the believers to hold fast to true doctrine (Heb 10:23). Christ's superiority moves believers to show one another love and good deeds (Heb 10:24-25).

Fourth Warning: Divine judgment, through death by Roman fires, would result if these believers, who had successfully suffered persecution in the past, failed to endure in their present difficulties (Heb 10:26-31).

This warning is buffered by an encouraging reminder of how the readers had successfully withstood persecution before. This reminder will help them to persevere in their current trials (Heb 10:32-39).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Endurance Through Faith

The persecuted Hebrews should be encouraged to follow the examples of others who had endured in faith, because perseverance was a requirement for their reward (Heb 11:1–12:3). Old Testament saints persevered in anticipation of the fulfillment of God’s promises, which they did not receive, even at death (Heb 11). Similarly, the Hebrew believers had yet to receive all that God had promised them. The ultimate example of receiving its reward is Jesus Christ on the Cross and in His exaltation. Looking at Him helps the reader to look away from sin (Heb 12:1-3).

Enduring hardship from God as discipline leads to righteousness and confidence (Heb 12:4-13). All sons of God must endure discipline, just as human sons are trained by their earthly fathers (Heb 12:4-11). The Hebrews could be strong and confident by responding appropriately to God’s discipline (Heb 12:12-13).

Believers must endure in the context of right relationships with others, since one can persevere while having bad attitudes and improper motives (Heb 12:14-17). God requires peace with others for holiness (Heb 12:14). To prevent the spread of bitterness, God requires sanctification in relationships (Heb 12:15). God requires purity in lifestyle in order to prevent sexual sin and greed such as Esau displayed (Heb 12:16-17).

Fifth Warning: The author compares the establishment of the Mosaic covenant with the establishment of the New Covenant. If the readers ignore the voice of God, which caused terror in the Israelites at Mt Sinai, they will receive even greater divine retribution because they are turning their backs on this same God, who is now granting even greater blessings (Heb 12:18-28).

The awesome God, who was feared and avoided at Mt. Sinai at the giving of the Law, has brought believers into the New Covenant as citizens of heaven (Heb 12:18-24). Believers do not come to the unapproachable God of Mt Sinai (Heb 12:18-21; see Ex 19:10-25; Deut 4:11-12; 5:22-26), but to the living God who has accepted them into the New Covenant. They are now citizens of heaven with the angels, the OT saints, and Jesus (Heb 12:22-24; see Rev 14:1; Ps 2:6; 48:1-2, 8).

Therefore, believers should never reject God when He speaks from heaven, because it will invite more severe judgment than Israel experienced in Moses’ time (Heb 12:25-29). God’s judgment at Sinai repeatedly shook the ground near the mountain, but God will judge the entire earth and skies by removing them (Heb 12:26-27). God deserves thanks and worship because of His graciousness in providing an unshakable kingdom and His holiness in judgment (Heb 12:28-29).

Hebrews offers various admonitions on how to worship God (Heb 12:28; 13). Exhortations to love in multiple areas of life summarize practical applications of Christ’s supremacy (Heb 13:1-17).

The supremacy of Christ is shown in relationships with people through love in the social realm (Heb 13:1-6):

- Hospitality must be shown to saints, strangers, and prisoners (Heb 13:1-3).
- Purity in marriage must be a priority (Heb 13:4).

- Contentment with one's possessions is the logical result of recognizing God's commitment to care for His children (Heb 13:5-6).

The readers are then exhorted to love in the religious realm so that the supremacy of Christ is revealed in relationship to God in the following ways (Heb 13:7-17):

- They should honor church leaders, because the leaders teach and live out God's Word (Heb 13:7-8).
- Doctrinal purity will lead to separation from Judaism and to obedience to leaders (Heb 13:9-17).

The epistle has a personal conclusion, which tempers the book's strong exhortations (Heb 13:18-25). The author requests prayer, especially that he might join the Hebrews soon to exhort them in person (Heb 13:18-19). A prayer that God would enable the readers to obey Him reminds them that they can only please God through His power (Heb 13:20-21). The letter ends on an affectionate note with greetings from those who are with the author in Italy (Heb 13:22-25).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 14: 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: The Pastoral Epistles

Lesson Introduction

Since the eighteenth century, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus have often been referred to in English as the Pastoral Epistles. At least three things make these letters unique:

- The Pastorals are the only Pauline epistles that are addressed to individuals, except for Philemon, which some also consider a Pastoral Epistle. Timothy and Titus were younger men who served as apostolic delegates to different geographical areas. Although the men are not specifically designated as pastors in these writings, they fulfilled a pastoral-like role, hence the title Pastoral Epistles.
- The Pastorals are Paul's last three writings that are preserved in the New Testament. Thus, they provide many insights into the kind of concerns that burdened Paul near the end of his ministry.
- The Pastorals provide the most information in Scripture on local church life, church order, and church leadership. All pastors and church leaders should be experts in these books—and those of us who follow church leaders should also heed Paul's pastoral advice here!

Date: The chronology of the latter years of Paul's life is obscure (Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* [Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1965], 623), yet one harmonization of the internal and external data yields this scenario (Harold Hoehner, "A Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age" [ThD Diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1964], 381-84):

Chronology of the Last Years of Paul's Life	
First Roman Imprisonment (Acts 28:30-31) Paul writes <i>Ephesians</i> , <i>Colossians</i> , <i>Philemon</i> , and <i>Philippians</i> James, the Lord's brother, martyred	February 60–March 62 Autumn 60–early Spring 62 Spring 62
Freedom from Imprisonment Paul in Ephesus and Colosse (Timothy left at Ephesus) Peter travels to Rome Paul in Macedonia 1 <i>Timothy</i> written from Macedonia to Timothy in Ephesus Paul in Asia Minor Paul in Spain (anticipated in Rom 15:24) Christians persecuted by Nero, Peter martyred Paul in Crete (Titus left there, Tit 1:5) Paul in Asia Minor Titus written from Asia Minor to Titus in Crete Paul in Nicopolis (Tit 3:12) Paul in Troas (2 Tim 4:13), Macedonia and Greece	Spring 62–Autumn 67 Spring–Summer 62 62 Late summer 62–winter 62/63 Autumn 62 Spring 63–Spring 64 Spring 64–Spring 66 Summer 64 Early summer 66 Summer–Autumn 66 Summer 66 Winter 66/67 Spring–Autumn 67
Second Roman Imprisonment Paul arrested and brought to Rome 2 <i>Timothy</i> written from Rome to Timothy in Ephesus Paul beheaded	Autumn 67–Spring 68 Autumn 67 Autumn 67 Spring 68
Destruction of Jerusalem	September 2, 70

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Memorize the key verses for each letter studied in this lesson
- Choose people as elders based on the standards in God's Word
- Discern the motives of the apostates and explain the principles for fighting apostasy in the church
- Value the motivations for living the Christian life and earnestly live this way
- Explain how God's grace teaches us to live godly lives
- Apply the teachings on how to act toward various groups of people within a church

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Church Life (1 Tim 1–3)

Topic 2: Personal Life (1 Tim 4–6)

Topic 3: 2 Timothy (2 Tim 1–4)

Topic 4: Titus (Tit 1–3)

Topic 5: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Church Life (1 Tim 1–3)

1 Timothy Church Order Is Maintained by Giving Priority to...				
Combat false teachers	Church life	Personal life/doctrine	Various church groups	Warning against materialism
1	2–3	4	5: 1–6: 10	6: 11–21
Doctrine	Worship	Example	Respect	Priorities
Warning	People	Warning	People	Warning
Salutation Fight heresies God's grace Charge	Prayer Gender roles Qualities of leaders Purpose of epistle	Future heresy Guard life Guard doctrine	Respect everyone Widows Elders Slaves False teachers	Spiritual goals Wealthy must give Closing charge
Practical Exhortations throughout (in contrast to the normal theological/applicational Pauline epistle structure)				
From Macedonia to Ephesus				
Autumn AD 62				

One great benefit of the Pastoral Epistles is their lists of qualifications for church leadership, both elders and deacons. Let us compare and contrast the twenty traits that are required of elders with the twelve necessary for deacons. Similar characteristics appear in parallel columns in the following chart. For the right column, the elder trait appears first, followed by the deacon trait. Also, similar qualifications match horizontally across the chart (note respected = blameless, children believe = children obey, and teach = holds doctrines).

Elder and Deacon Traits		
Unique to Elders	Unique to Deacons	Required of both offices
Respected by non-christians	Qualities of a Deacon's Wife:	Blameless, tested as above reproach
Not a new believer	Respectable	Respectable
Not quick-tempered	Not a slanderer	Not quarrelsome, not deceptive
Self-controlled	Temperate	Temperate, not addicted to wine
Not a lover of money	Trustworthy	Not pursuing dishonest gain
Children believe		Children obey, managed well
Able to teach		Holds basic doctrines
Not self-willed		Husband of one wife
Gentle, not violent		
Hospitable		
Love what is good		
Sensible, prudent		
Just, fair		
Devout/holy		

How many observations can you make of the above requirements for elders and deacons? For example, did you notice that the four traits for the wives of deacons in the center column parallel the four traits for deacons in the third column? How many traits relate to character rather than to ability?

Why did Paul write 1 Timothy? He specifically declares his purpose for writing to the young Timothy, "I am writing these instructions to you...to let you know how people ought to conduct themselves in the household of God, because it is the church of the living God, the support and bulwark of the truth" (1 Tim 3:14-15). Thus, Paul's aim is to help Timothy to instruct others in keeping order in the church (see 2 Tim 2:2). When Paul penned the letter, false teaching was attacking the Ephesian church. He begins the epistle with a charge to Timothy to defend the faith by using the changes in his own life as an encouragement to persevere (1 Tim 1:12-17). Then he discusses the proper conduct for public worship, so that the leadership and the people might be above reproach before any accusers (1 Tim 2-3).

When we visit a foreign culture, we do not always know how to act and may give offense out of ignorance. I remember my first visit to a Catholic church as a teen. People were kneeling before they entered the rows and were observing practices that I had never seen before. I did not know what the acceptable behavior was and when to do it. I did not copy their behavior for fear of doing it at the wrong time.

In Paul's time, many church members came out of idolatrous backgrounds, and they were ignorant about how to act in God's church. Proper church conduct is Paul's main concern in this letter. So, what advice does Paul give for those leading God's church?

- **1 Timothy: Church Order**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** Autumn AD 62
- **Key Word:** Order

- **Key Verses:** 1 Timothy 3:14-15
- **Summary Statement:** Paul exhorts Timothy to courageously guard his personal life, Christian doctrine, and the local church, so that he can safeguard the Ephesian church against ascetic and speculative false teachers.
- **Application:** Do you take an active role in guarding your local church against heresy—or do you expect others to do it?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Timothy 1–3.
- Please read the article “Introduction to 1 Timothy” with special focus on the section about Church Life, in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verses: 1 Timothy 3:14-15.

QUESTION 1

Please write 1 Timothy’s key verses from memory (1 Tim 3:14-15).

QUESTION 2

Which of the following does 1 Timothy suggest is Timothy’s role in the Ephesian church?

- A) Elder
- B) Pastor
- C) Deacon
- D) Apostolic representative

QUESTION 3

Which of the following does Paul specifically tell Timothy that he must do to fight the good fight against apostasy in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:18-20)? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) Put on the armor of God.
- B) Hold firmly to the faith.
- C) Keep a good conscience.
- D) Limit who could be teachers.

QUESTION 4

Why does Paul request prayer for all people, kings, and those in authority in 1 Timothy 2:1-4? (*Select all that apply.*)

- A) So that each individual country can become a Christian nation
- B) That we may lead a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity
- C) Because prayer for all is good and is welcome before God our Savior
- D) Because he wants all people to be saved and to come to know the truth

QUESTION 5

Match the instruction Paul gives about appointing leaders in the church as listed in the left-hand column with the reason for that instruction in the right-hand column (1 Tim 3:1-13).

<i>Instruction</i>	<i>Reason</i>
If someone aspires to the office of overseer	So that he may not fall into disgrace
He must manage his household well	Gain a good standing for themselves
He must not be a recent convert	He desires a good work
He must be well thought of by those outside the faith	Otherwise how will he care for the church of God?
For those who have served well as deacons	He may become arrogant

QUESTION 6

The members of a church voted to display their country's flag at all services but the elected church leadership overruled that vote. According to your reading so far in 1 Timothy, which decision should the church follow and why?

Topic 1 Key Points:

- The key verse teaches that Paul writes so that the people will know how to conduct themselves in God's church.
- Timothy's role in Ephesus was as Paul's apostolic representative.
- Timothy must hold firmly to the faith and must keep a good conscience to defeat the false teachers.
- Paul urges prayer for all men, especially those in authority, so that they may be saved and the church will be free to accomplish God's mission in peace.
- Candidates for church elder and deacon must live out their faith, both inside and outside the church.
- In areas of disagreement, which are not addressed by God's Word, church members must submit to their church leaders, since these leaders are more responsible before God.

Topic 2: Personal Life (1 Tim 4–6)

Chapter 4 begins with an exhortation, which is directed toward Timothy's life and his personal doctrine (1 Tim 4). Paul then concludes with instruction on how to handle various groups in the church (1 Tim 5:1–6:10) and with a warning of the perils of materialism. The warning is to prevent the replacement of spiritual priorities with material ones (1 Tim 6:11-21). Throughout the letter, Paul seeks church order, not simply for order's sake alone but to deter false teaching and its practice, which destroy the local church ministry.

Diversity



Today there is much diversity within God's church. There is diversity not only in age and in gender but also in race, in denomination, in country, in customs, and in language. Yet we need to fellowship together as God's people. As well as specific examples, is there a guiding principle that Paul can give us about how to relate to any diverse group?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 Timothy 4–6.
- Please read the article "Personal Life" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 7

In 1 Timothy 4:1-5, Paul warns that the source of the ascetic teachings against marriage and against certain foods is _____.

QUESTION 8

From 1 Timothy 5, Paul's general principle for Timothy in his personal relationships is to treat all people with _____.

QUESTION 9

Match the group of people who are listed in the left-hand column with the instruction about them in the right-hand column (1 Tim 5:1–6:10).

<i>Group</i>	<i>Instruction</i>
Older, godly widows without family	Should remarry so as not to be a financial or social burden
Younger widows	Should work even harder than they would for an unbelieving owner because they benefit believers
Elders	Should be cared for by the church
Slaves of Christian masters	Should be spurned to prevent church members from focusing upon materialism and speculation
False teachers who emphasize financial gain and useless theologies	Should be well supported financially, not easily accused, and not hastily appointed

QUESTION 10

What is Paul's main teaching in 1 Timothy 6:17-19?

- A) Future rewards
- B) Positional truth
- C) Instruction in giving
- D) Evangelism

Topic 2 Key Points:

- The ascetic teaching that Paul warns against has a satanic source.
- Paul's general principle is to treat all people with respect.
- Elders should receive generous support.
- False teachers, who lead people astray into materialism and speculation, should be spurned.
- Rich Christians should share their wealth to receive heavenly rewards and to have a purposeful life now.

Topic 3: 2 Timothy (2 Tim 1–4)

2 Timothy Sound Doctrine Against Opposition				
Persevere in present hardship		Persevere in future hardship		
1–2		3–4		
Examples of faithfulness 1	Characteristics of faithfulness 2	Problem: apostasy 3:1-9	Solution: Preach the Word 3:10–4:5	Paul's hope 4:6-22
Eunice Lois Paul Onesiphorus	Discipling Single-minded Obedient Hardworking Biblical Holy gentle	Godlessness Hypocrisy	Preaching Persevering Rebuking Encouraging Evangelism	Martyrdom Betrayals Greetings Benediction
Rome to Ephesus				
Autumn AD 67 (second Roman imprisonment)				

Paul's second letter to Timothy is directed to Timothy himself rather than to his congregation. With so many falling away just before Paul's death, he carefully chooses his words in, perhaps, his last statements to Timothy. He wants to ensure that Timothy will remain true to the faith until death. The apostle accomplishes this end through exhorting Timothy to persevere in his present hardships with godly character (2 Tim 1–2), because the future will be even more difficult (2 Tim 3–4). Timothy will have to fight apostasy with faithful preaching of the Word of God (2 Tim 3:10–4:5).

A godly man, who is nearing the end of his life, usually concentrates on the most important things in life. He wraps up the loose ends of the things he wants to accomplish. If he has important work to continue through someone else, he makes sure that person has what he needs in direction,

warnings, and resources to continue the work. Paul's mission as an apostle was very important. So what specific areas of Timothy's life and ministry did Paul focus on?

- **2 Timothy: Sound Doctrine Against Opposition**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** Autumn AD 67
- **Key Word:** Doctrine
- **Key Verses:** 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 4:2
- **Summary Statement:** Paul exhorts Timothy to faithfully practice and preach the Word despite hardship. He encourages him to persevere against false teaching and apostasy.
- **Application:** Is anything—such as methods, logic, ignoring false teaching, etc.—more powerful against heresy than God's Word? While teaching proper doctrine is not the only thing needed, it is the most important thing.

Reading Assignment

- Please read 2 Timothy 1–4.
- Please read the article “Introduction to 2 Timothy” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verses: 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and 4:2.

QUESTION 11

In 2 Timothy 1, who does Paul say remained faithful in service to him and unashamed of his imprisonment?

- A) Phygelus
- B) Hermogenes
- C) Onesiphorus
- D) Epaphrus

QUESTION 12

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the illustration and Paul's explanation as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
2 Timothy 2:1-2	A diligent workman who is unashamed uses the Scriptures against false teachers.
2 Timothy 2:3-4	A teacher, who disciples, commits to pass on the teaching that he has received by investing his time in potential disciple-makers.
2 Timothy 2:5	A noble container is preferred over an ignoble container, which illustrates the discipline needed to stay away from false teachers.
2 Timothy 2:6-13	A good soldier's single-minded desire to please his commander is seen in his unswerving commitment to please the Lord.
2 Timothy 2:14-19	A hardworking farmer, who reaps his material rewards, shows the joy of seeing spiritual fruit, just as the risen Christ rejoiced to see His fruit.
2 Timothy 2:20-22	A gentle servant refuses to quarrel with false teachers but rather commits to instruct them properly.
2 Timothy 2:23-26	A successful athlete's faithfulness to follow the rules comes through his steadfast obedience to God's Word.

QUESTION 13

As with all believers, Paul, near death, expresses hope but is unsure that his service will be approved when he appears before God. *True or False?*

Topic 3 Key Points:

- Many Christian workers had deserted Paul, because they were ashamed of his chains, so Paul encourages Timothy to remain faithful.
- Timothy's instructions are as follows: teach others, remain disciplined and committed to pleasing the Lord, anticipate his rewards, preach the Scriptures, and avoid quarrels.
- The sure promise of rewards awaits God's faithful servants.
- Paul's way to combat false teaching was for Timothy to teach sound doctrine.

Topic 4: Titus (Tit 1–3)

Titus Sound Conduct Against Opposition											
Appoint elders		Set things in order									
Prevent false doctrine		Practice true doctrine									
Elders vs. false teachers		Conduct of various groups					Grace leads to godliness				
1		2:1-10					2:11–3:15				
Organize		Teach					Grace				
Truth leads to godliness 1:1-4	Elders 1:5-16	Older men 2:1-2	Older women 2:4-5	Young women 2:4-5	Young men 2:6-8	Slaves 2:9-10	Educates 2:11-15	Empow-ers 3:1-2	Moti-vates 3:3-8	Protects 3:9-11	Conclu-sion 3:12-15
Asia Minor (origin) to Crete (destination)											
Summer AD 66											

While similarities exist between Titus and 2 Timothy, there are several differences between these last two letters penned by Paul:

Differences Between Titus and 2 Timothy

Titus	2 Timothy
Written in freedom in Asia Minor (AD 66)	Written in captivity in Rome (AD 67)
Brief	Long
More official, less personal (6 names used)	Warm, informal (20 names used)
Teaches how the church is to be organized	Teaches how the church is to be led
Emphasis on sound conduct	Emphasis on sound doctrine

Paul's aim in Titus is to give practical advice, which will help this apostolic delegate to organize the new believers in Crete. His letter offers counsel in three general areas: How to appoint the right elders, who can counter false teaching through both the Word and their deeds (Tit 1). How to teach the people respectable conduct, which would protect the churches from being maligned by the opposition (Tit 2:1-10). And, finally, how to exhort the saints to live in contrast to the false teachers, since the grace of God, which they have received, leads to godly behavior (Tit 2:11–3:15). The apostle's emphasis is on Christian behavior more than on Christian doctrine. Nevertheless, the fact that Titus had to teach the people about their proper action shows that doctrine and behavior are inseparable.

Titus has a great verse that teaches us about God's mercy:

...When the kindness of God our Savior appeared and his love for mankind, he saved us not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the washing of the new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit,

whom he poured out on us in full measure through Jesus Christ our Savior. (Tit 3:4-6)

Sometimes people malign the grace of God because they think it only encourages us to sin more. However, Paul viewed God's grace as teaching us to be holy in many ways.

- **Titus: Sound Conduct Against Opposition**
- **Author:** The apostle Paul
- **Date:** Summer AD 66
- **Key Word:** Conduct
- **Key Verse:** Titus 3:8
- **Summary Statement:** In order to defeat their opponents through their word and deed, Paul exhorts Titus to organize the Cretan churches. His is to appoint qualified elders and teach respectable behavior, which is the natural result of salvation by grace.
- **Application:** The grace of God must lead us to proper conduct. Do you do good deeds because you fear punishment by God—external motivation, the law—or because you love Him in response to His grace?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Titus 1–3.
- Please read the article “Introduction to Titus” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verse: Titus 3:8.

QUESTION 14

Titus is warmer and more informal than 2 Timothy. *True or False?*

QUESTION 15

From Titus 2:1-10, match the category of person in the left-hand column with the respectable behavior that they should show as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Person</i>	<i>Behavior</i>
Older men	Act respectably in accordance with their age
Older women	The priority of an upright home life
Younger women	Respectable behavior so that they can teach by example
Younger men	Submission in respect, honesty, and lack of slander
Slaves	Self-control in speech and in actions

QUESTION 16

Match the reference to God's grace in the left-hand column with the teaching on what grace does as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>What Grace Does</i>
God's grace teaches believers (Tit 2:11-15)	To good works
God's grace empowers (Tit 3:1-2)	Away from divisive behavior on minor issues
God's grace motivates Christians (Tit 3:3-8)	To choose godliness over ungodliness
God's grace protects believers (Tit 3:9-11)	To gracious behavior before all people

Topic 4 Key Points:

- Though his letters to Timothy and Titus address similar issues, Paul's closer personal relationship with Timothy causes him to write more formally to Titus.
- You, as a Christian leader, should treat different groups appropriately, but always with respect.
- God's grace teaches, empowers, motivates, and protects believers bringing them to unity and godly behavior.

Topic 5: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side to the reference from 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus at the bottom of each column.

Pastoral Epistles: Major Issues					
	Instructions				
Paul's Certain Rewards					
Grace Teaches Godly Living					
Respect Everyone					
Qualifications for Elders					
Inspired Scripture					
Gender Roles					
	1 Timothy 2	1 Timothy 5	2 Timothy 3	2 Timothy 4	Titus 1
					Titus 3

QUESTION 18

Please open your Life Notebook and write out your responses to the following statements on church discipline:

1. Telling others the truth and administering justice are more important than unity (1 Cor 6:6-7).
2. A church can deteriorate to the point where discipline should not be enacted.
3. A church leader who fears disciplining overt sin should be replaced.

QUESTION 19

Please read 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9. As you read, open your Life Notebook and write out the qualifications for elders and deacons. Then, evaluate yourself according to these qualities. Which ones do you meet and where do you need improvement? Choose one area that you need to improve on and make it a matter of prayer and obedience.

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications you should make to your life.

Lesson 14 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Timothy was an elder in the church of Ephesus. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

In 1 Timothy 1, to defeat the false teachers, Timothy must hold firmly to the faith and keep a good _____.

QUESTION 3

In 1 Timothy 2, when Paul requested prayer for all men, which of the following was NOT his concern?

- A) That we may lead a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity
- B) Because prayer for all is good and is welcome before God our Savior
- C) So each individual country can become a Christian nation
- D) Because he wants all people to be saved and to come to know the truth

QUESTION 4

The danger of promoting a new convert to the status of elder is that he may become _____.

QUESTION 5

In 1 Timothy, Paul says ascetic teaching about abstaining from certain foods and denying marriage is satanic in origin. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

In 2 Timothy, Paul advises that younger widows should be cared for by the church. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

Which illustration from 2 Timothy 2 illustrates the discipline needed to stay away from false teachers?

- A) A good soldier
- B) A successful athlete
- C) A hardworking farmer
- D) A noble container

QUESTION 8

According to 2 Timothy 4, Paul was absolutely sure that he would receive a crown of righteousness from God. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

The key verse for Titus includes which of the following?

- A) Encouragement to good works
- B) The inspiration of Scripture
- C) Conduct in God's household
- D) The promise of reward

QUESTION 10

According to Titus 2:11–3:11, what does God’s grace protect the believer from?

- A) Ungodliness
- B) Divisive behavior on minor issues
- C) Evil works
- D) False teaching

Lesson 14 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1

“...I am writing these instructions to you in case I am delayed, to let you know how people ought to conduct themselves in the household of God, because it is the church of the living God, the support and bulwark of the truth.”

QUESTION 2

D. Apostolic representative

Some have referred to Timothy as the pastor, but the letter suggests that his function at the church was to represent Paul (1 Tim 1:3; 3:14; 4:6, 13).

QUESTION 3

B. Hold firmly to the faith.

C. Keep a good conscience.

Paul’s first charge to Timothy exhorts him to commit to spiritual truth in the battle against apostasy. His goal is to motivate Timothy to courageously defend the faith in the face of certain resistance (1 Tim 1:18-20).

QUESTION 4

B. That we may lead a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity

C. Because prayer for all is good and is welcome before God our Savior

D. Because he wants all people to be saved and to come to know the truth

God wants each of us to fulfill His mission for us. This is best accomplished in peaceful conditions under wise political leadership.

QUESTION 5

<i>Instruction</i>	<i>Reason</i>
If someone aspires to the office of overseer	He desires a good work
He must manage his household well	Otherwise how will he care for the church of God?
He must not be a recent convert	He may become arrogant
He must be well thought of by those outside the faith	So that he may not fall into disgrace
For those who have served well as deacons	Gain a good standing for themselves

QUESTION 6

Your answer should be similar to the following: Since this practice is not directly addressed by God’s Word, churches in different cultures may legitimately come up with different answers on this sometimes controversial question. The following is one possible answer for one church in a specific culture. The congregation should submit to the decision of its leaders. These leaders are responsible for determining God’s will, not the people’s will. The people are responsible to submit to their elders, even in areas of disagreement, as long as the decision does not contradict God’s Word.

QUESTION 7

Correct answers include:

Satan, Satanic, Demonic

Paul warns that some believers will reject Christianity for a demonic, ascetic teaching, which denies the legitimacy of marriage and the eating of certain foods. He does this to shock Timothy into realizing the satanic source of such teaching.

QUESTION 8: Respect

Respect is the one requirement that Paul notes is vital in all personal relationships (1 Tim 5:1-2).

QUESTION 9

<i>Group</i>	<i>Instruction</i>
Older, godly widows without family	Should be cared for by the church
Younger widows	Should remarry so as not to be a financial or social burden
Elders	Should be well supported financially, not easily accused, and not hastily appointed
Slaves of Christian masters	Should work even harder than they would for an unbelieving owner because they benefit believers
False teachers who emphasize financial gain and useless theologies	Should be spurned to prevent church members from focusing upon materialism and speculation

QUESTION 10

A. Future rewards

The materially rich should be rich in deeds by sharing their wealth in the congregation so they can obtain rewards in heaven and fulfillment on earth.

QUESTION 11

C. Onesiphorus

By listing Onesiphorus as an example, Paul encourages Timothy to also remain faithful and probably impressed on him how easy it is to fall away.

QUESTION 12

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
2 Timothy 2:1-2	A teacher, who disciples, commits to pass on the teaching that he has received by investing his time in potential disciple-makers.
2 Timothy 2:3-4	A good soldier's single-minded desire to please his commander is seen in his unswerving commitment to please the Lord.
2 Timothy 2:5	A successful athlete's faithfulness to follow the rules comes through his steadfast obedience to God's Word.
2 Timothy 2:6-13	A hardworking farmer, who reaps his material rewards, shows the joy of seeing spiritual fruit, just as the risen Christ rejoiced to see His fruit.
2 Timothy 2:14-19	A diligent workman who is unashamed uses the Scriptures against false teachers.
2 Timothy 2:20-22	A noble container is preferred over an ignoble container, which illustrates the discipline needed to stay away from false teachers.
2 Timothy 2:23-26	A gentle servant refuses to quarrel with false teachers but rather commits to instruct them properly.

QUESTION 13: False

Paul knows for sure that he fought the good fight and remained faithful to his apostolic mission to the end of his life. Therefore, he knows the Lord will reward him.

QUESTION 14: False

Titus mentions fewer names of people and fewer details about Paul's personal life than does 2 Timothy.

QUESTION 15

<i>Person</i>	<i>Behavior</i>
Older men	Act respectably in line with their age
Older women	Respectable behavior also so that they can teach by example
Younger women	The priority of an upright home life
Younger men	Self-control in speech and in actions
Slaves	Submission in respect, honesty, and lack of slander

QUESTION 16

<i>Reference</i>	<i>What Grace Does</i>
God's grace teaches believers (Tit 2:11-15)	To choose godliness over ungodliness
God's grace empowers (Tit 3:1-2)	To gracious behavior before all people
God's grace motivates Christians (Tit 3:3-8)	To good works
God's grace protects believers (Tit 3:9-11)	Away from divisive behavior on minor issues

QUESTION 17**Pastoral Epistles: Major Issues**

Instructions					
Gender Roles	Respect Everyone	Inspired Scripture	Paul's Certain Rewards	Qualifications for Elders	Grace Teaches Godly Living
1 Timothy 2	1 Timothy 5	2 Timothy 3	2 Timothy 4	Titus 1	Titus 3

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

Lesson 14 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: False

QUESTION 2: Conscience

QUESTION 3

C. So each individual country can become a Christian nation

QUESTION 4

Correct answers include:

Arrogant

Conceited

Prideful

Proud

QUESTION 5: True

QUESTION 6: False

QUESTION 7

D. A noble container

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9

A. Encouragement to good works

QUESTION 10

B. Divisive behavior on minor issues

Lesson 14 Articles

Introduction to 1 Timothy

Circumstances

Origin/Recipients: After Paul's release from prison, he went to Macedonia and wrote 1 Timothy (1 Tim 1:3). He wrote to Timothy, his traveling companion, who had stayed in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3). The letter to Titus followed and was sent to him in Crete (Tit 1:4-5). Paul wrote 2 Timothy from Rome during his second Roman imprisonment and shortly after his first defense before the court (2 Tim 1:8-17; 2:9; 4:16-17). Paul did not expect to live much longer, so he requested Timothy to hurry to him before winter (2 Tim 4:9, 21).

Occasion: Perhaps because Paul had left in a hurry, he wrote 1 Timothy only a month or two after leaving Timothy in Ephesus. The letter contains instructions for church organization and oversight. It is also possible that an emissary from Timothy asked for Paul's help. However, neither suggestion can be supported by Scripture. The reason for the letter must be determined by its contents, which concern church order.

Characteristics

This letter is full of qualifications for church leadership (1 Tim 3:1-12). Paul specifies the character traits for both elders and deacons, whereas the letter to Titus only concerns traits for elders (see Tit 1:5-9).

Timothy's position in the Ephesian church is not mentioned. He was not an elder, because Paul spoke of them as individuals different from Timothy. Similarly, Titus was to appoint elders but not to be one (Tit 1:5). The letter suggests that Timothy was at the church to represent Paul (1 Tim 1:3; 3:14; 4:6, 13).

Church Life

Paul charges Timothy to defend the faith against the false teachers of the Law. Paul also writes of God's grace in his own life in order to encourage Timothy to courageously fulfill his ministry (1 Tim 1).

Paul greets Timothy with a reminder of Paul's apostolic calling. This reminder adds authority to the letter and encourages Timothy to act courageously (1 Tim 1:1-2). He commands Timothy to prohibit false teachers from leading the people away from love and into speculation. Timothy is to correct the Ephesian teachers who focus on minor matters in their Bible teaching (1 Tim 1:3-11). Paul testifies to God's grace poured upon him despite his former persecution of the church. If God can use Paul, the "chief of sinners," then Timothy is encouraged that God could use him, too (1 Tim 1:12-17). Paul's first charge exhorts Timothy to battle apostasy by a commitment to spiritual truth. Paul wants to motivate him to courageously defend the faith in the face of resistance (1 Tim 1:18-20).

Paul instructs Timothy about the proper conduct of believers in public worship. He wants to insure the priority of both prayer and godly leadership, which lead to victory against those who find fault in the church (1 Tim 2-3).

The apostle's first instruction on public worship emphasizes prayer. The church should depend on God for victory in people's souls through prayer (1 Tim 2:1-7). Paul contrasts the men's role of teaching and authority in the church with the women's role of service and maintenance of their

homes. This contrast balances the ministry from extremes of both passive men and dominant women (1 Tim 2:8-15). Paul gives qualifications for elders and deacons to ensure that the church is led by godly leaders. These leaders ensure victory against false teachers (1 Tim 3:1-13). Paul's purpose in giving the leadership qualifications and in writing the epistle is to ensure that Timothy would see the importance of proper conduct in the church (1 Tim 3:14-16).

Summary of Elder Qualifications: The elder qualifications in both 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 describe a man's character, not his abilities. God is more concerned with *who* a man is than *what* he can do, especially in terms of his family relationships and his reputation as a man of God.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Personal Life

Paul exhorts Timothy to guard his personal life and his doctrine closely to help him overcome the influences of ascetic apostates who are threatening the Ephesian church (1 Tim 4).

Paul warns that some believers will reject Christianity for a demonic teaching. That teaching denies the legitimacy of marriage and certain foods. Paul aims to shock Timothy into realizing the satanic source of such a teaching (1 Tim 4:1-5). Timothy is also exhorted to guard his personal life and his doctrine closely. He should diligently use his gift of teaching to protect both himself and his congregation from false teachers (1 Tim 4:6-16).

Paul instructs the believers on how to treat various groups in the church respectfully, in order to ensure that financial and other needs are met (1 Tim 5:1-6:10).

Paul's general principle for Timothy is to treat people with respect (1 Tim 5:1-2). He follows this principle with practical teaching for various groups within the church:

- Older, godly widows, who have no family, should be cared for by the church, but younger widows should remarry in order to avoid being a burden (1 Tim 5:3-16).
- Elders should be well-supported financially, not easily accused, and not hastily appointed. Having only godly men serve in the highest office protects the church (1 Tim 5:17-25).
- Slaves of Christian masters should work even harder than they would work for an unbelieving master, because believers benefit from Christian masters (1 Tim 6:1-2).
- False teachers who emphasize financial gain and useless theologies should be spurned in order to prevent church members from focusing upon materialism and speculation (1 Tim 6:3-10).

Paul warns Timothy to guard his own life against materialism which destroys godly virtues. He cautions him about the danger of replacing spiritual goals with material ones, which results in apostasy (1 Tim 6:11-21).

Paul charges Timothy to flee materialism and speculation along with pursuing godly virtues. Paul encourages him that having spiritual goals rather than physical ones results in bringing glory to God (1 Tim 6:11-16). The materially rich should be rich in deeds by sharing their wealth with the congregation, which leads to rewards in heaven as well as fulfillment on earth (1 Tim 6:17-19). The closing charge warns that some people, who claim to be Christians, have left the basics for speculation, thus Paul cautions Timothy to watch his own life and to guard against apostasy (1 Tim 6:20-21).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to 2 Timothy

Circumstances

Date: Autumn AD 67

Origin/Recipients: Five years after Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy, he wrote this second letter (2 Tim 1:2). Timothy may have still been in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3), so 2 Timothy had the same destination (2 Tim 1:16-18; 4:19). Paul wrote from Rome during his second Roman imprisonment and after his first defense (2 Tim 1:17; 2:9; see 2 Tim 4:21).

Occasion: When he wrote 2 Timothy, Paul was an experienced inmate. He had spent five of the past ten years behind bars and knew about prisons and political procedures. He knew that this second Roman imprisonment could only end in his execution (2 Tim 4:6-8). He requested Timothy to hurry to him before winter, because he knew he would not live much longer (2 Tim 4:9, 21).

Rome burned three years before Paul wrote 2 Timothy. Nero blamed the Christians for this disaster. The Christians were in danger, especially the leaders and their associates. Many of Paul's coworkers sought a lower profile, and some fell away (2 Tim 1:15; 4:10, 14). When Paul was on trial, no one defended him before the emperor (2 Tim 4:16). No doubt, Timothy was tempted to minister less aggressively (2 Tim 1:7-8). Therefore, Paul wrote to remind him to faithfully persevere and to preach the Word despite hardship and false teachers (2 Tim 3:6-9; 4:2-4).

Characteristics

This letter is unique because it is Paul's last extant letter. The letter provides the clearest teaching on the need for exposition (2 Tim 4:2). Paul's letter does numerous things, such as:

- Shows the need to guard the gospel (2 Tim 1:14)
- Emphasizes the centrality of the Scriptures (2 Tim 2:15)
- Notes how we must persevere in the gospel and suffer for it (2 Tim 1:8; 2:3; 3:14)
- Provides the most important explanation of the inspiration of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Paul encourages Timothy to persevere in the present hardships and illustrates the characteristics that he should exemplify to combat false teaching and apostasy (2 Tim 1–2).

To encourage Timothy to persevere, Paul greets him by identifying himself as an apostle (2 Tim 1:1-2). He encourages Timothy to continue being faithful like his mother, grandmother, and Onesiphorus, in the midst of others who have fallen away (2 Tim 1:3-18).

Paul thanks God for Timothy's faithfulness in the past, which was confirmed at his ordination, to encourage him to continue ministering faithfully (2 Tim 1:3-7). Like Paul, Timothy needs to trust in the power of the gospel for the courage to suffer through Nero's persecutions (2 Tim 1:8-14). Paul contrasts the desertion of nearly all the Asian believers with the faithfulness of Onesiphorus. This example should encourage Timothy to courageously minister the gospel (2 Tim 1:15-18).

The characteristics of a faithful minister should admonish Timothy to persevere in trials (2 Tim 2). A teacher who discipless others passes on the teaching that he has received by investing his time in those who will multiply the work (2 Tim 2:1-2). A good soldier's desire to please his commander is a picture of the faithful minister's unswerving commitment to please the Lord (2

Tim 2:3-4). The successful athlete's faithfulness to follow the rules shows the faithful minister's steadfast obedience to God's Word (2 Tim 2:5). A hardworking farmer, who reaps his material rewards, illustrates the faithful minister's joy in seeing spiritual fruit. In just this way when Christ was raised, He rejoiced to see the fruit of His labor (2 Tim 2:6-13). A diligent workman, who is unashamed, is a picture of the faithful minister using the Scriptures against false teachers (2 Tim 2:14-19). A noble container, which is preferred over an ignoble container, illustrates the discipline needed to stay away from false teachers (2 Tim 2:20-22). A gentle servant instructs false teachers instead of quarrelling with them (2 Tim 2:23-26).

Paul exhorts Timothy to persevere in the future tribulation and furnishes his own positive attitude toward death to encourage Timothy to faithfully preach the Word despite apostasy (2 Tim 3-4).

To enable Timothy to face them wisely, Paul warns of a future when people will appear to be godly (2 Tim 3:1-9). These people will embody the traits of the enemy. Paul exhorts Timothy to oppose these future heresies by faithfully preaching the Word (2 Tim 3:10-4:5). Timothy also needs to fulfill the other duties of ministry, such as enduring hardship, rebuking, encouraging, and evangelizing. Paul's hope in God, despite death and betrayals, is a model to Timothy of trusting God despite testing (2 Tim 4:6-18). Paul's closing remarks reveal a man who is not conquered by death, but is victorious in it (2 Tim 4:19-22).

Church Discipline

Paul's letters cautioned Timothy to guard his own life. Every church encounters problems with believers living in sin—even leaders. In these cases, a loving body will restore them to God's holiness. Believers should follow the four-step process that Jesus gave in Matthew 18:15-17. This process begins with a private confrontation and then progresses to involve only those that need to know about the issue. There are at least twelve purposes for church discipline:

Purposes

Benefits to the offender:

- It restores and reconciles the offender to God and to fellowship (Gal 6:1).
- It stimulates the offender to take a spiritual inventory, which leads to a restoration in fellowship (2 Thess 3:13-15).
- It destroys fleshly lusts and returns the offender to Christ's rule over his life (1 Cor 5:1-5).

Benefits to the whole church:

- It purifies both the worship and the message of the church (1 Cor 5:6).
- It denies the enemy any advantage or access into the church (2 Cor 2:10-11).
- It prevents God's discipline within the local church (Rev 2:4-5).

Benefits to each individual believer in the church:

- It strengthens faith to maintain a clear conscience (1 Tim 1:18-20).
- It promotes self-examination in the offended believer's life (2 Cor 7:11).
- It confirms individual responsibility for other believers (Heb 3:13).

Benefits to church authorities:

- It protects Scripture from perversion and error (Tit 1:10-13).

- It affirms obedience to God's authority and leadership (2 Cor 2:9).
- It allows the congregation to show that they support their church leaders (2 Cor 7:12).

Summary

Sinning members need to be properly restored to the church, because believers act on God's behalf.

Submit to the authority of the church under God. If church leaders are right with God, they should seek to lovingly restore those who fall away.

Clean up sin in your life, and avoid pain for everyone.

Conclusion

Very few church leaders today show the commitment and courage to enact church discipline. This reflects either ignorance of God's instructions or an unwillingness to follow them. In both cases, the leaders sin against the Lord and the body of Christ.

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to Titus

Circumstances

Date: Summer AD 66

Origin/Recipients: Paul's letter to Titus was sent from an unknown location in Asia Minor to Crete (Tit 1:4, 5). Ephesus, Macedonia, and Corinth have been suggested as possible origination spots.

Occasion: Paul and Titus traveled together to Crete between Paul's two imprisonments in Rome. Paul left Titus to organize the new believers into local churches and moved on to other ministries. He wrote to Titus shortly after they separated to provide him with practical wisdom about both church administration and the conduct of believers.

Characteristics

Paul's letter to Titus shares many of the same concerns as his first letter to Timothy. This epistle emphasizes behavior more than doctrine, but it contains three summaries of Christian theology, the last two on the graces of God (Tit 1:1-4; 2:11-14; 3:4-7).

Paul exhorts Titus to appoint elders of character who are obedient to the Scriptures. They will then be able to protect the newly formed Cretan churches by refuting legalistic false teachers (Tit 1).

Paul greets Titus with a declaration of the truth that leads to godliness. This declaration previews the emphasis of godly behavior in a pagan world (Tit 1:1-4).

Titus needed to select godly men as elders, so Paul provides a list of qualifications. The leaders need to refute legalistic false teachers in both word and deed (Tit 1:5-16). Titus's task on Crete is to organize the churches by appointing leaders (Tit 1:5-9).

Paul encourages Titus to teach various groups that they must conform to sound doctrine, so that the Cretan enemies cannot malign the church or God's Word (Tit 2:1-10).

The following groups should be taught respectable behavior:

- Older men must act respectably for their age (Tit 2:1-2).
- Older women must act respectably so that they can teach the younger women by example (Tit 2:3).
- Younger women must be taught by the older women how to maintain an upright home life (Tit 2:4-5).
- Younger men must show self-control in their speech and actions (Tit 2:6-8).
- Slaves must show submission to their masters through respect, lack of slander, and honesty (Tit 2:9-10).

Paul affirms that God's grace leads to godly behavior. He reminds Titus that his instructions in the letter are required of all Christians, since all are saved by grace (Tit 2:11–3:15).

God's grace teaches believers to choose godliness (Tit 2:11-15) and empowers their gracious behavior before all people (Tit 3:1-2). It motivates Christians to do good works as a natural response to God's merciful acceptance of them (Tit 3:3-8). It also protects believers from divisive behavior over minor issues. Therefore church discipline must be exercised upon argumentative saints (Tit 3:9-11).

Paul's conclusion sends greetings, encourages his fellow workers to display hospitality, and instructs the people to lead productive lives and to be devoted to doing good (Tit 3:12-15).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 15: John's Epistles and Jude

Lesson Introduction

1 John

John's first letter has at least five stated purposes: to promote fellowship (1 Jn 1:3), to produce joy (1 Jn 1:4), to protect holiness (1 Jn 2:1), to prevent heresy (1 Jn 2:26), and to provide assurance of salvation (1 Jn 5:13; Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru The Bible* [Nashville: Nelson, 1983], 483, adapted). This fivefold purpose makes the book both difficult to summarize in a central theme or purpose and difficult to outline, especially since the subjects overlap. However, it seems that the general theme of obedience, especially as it is demonstrated in loving others, encompasses the above purposes. The Greek word love is used thirty-six times, so it is a huge emphasis.

Viewed in this way, a simple outline of the epistle shows John exhorting obedience (1 Jn 1-2), particularly by loving others (1 Jn 3:1-5:3), which provides many benefits (1 Jn 5:4-21). These benefits are innumerable, but the most immediate benefit of obedience through love is the protection that it provides from early Gnosticism.

2 John

John's second epistle warns a woman, who is zealous in hospitality, against providing lodging to false teachers so that she will not help spread their destructive doctrines. His greeting balances both truth and love in order to illustrate this point (2 Jn 1-3). The greeting is followed by a commendation of the woman for her love (2 Jn 4), which is balanced with the importance of truth (2 Jn 5-6). Next is the main teaching of the letter, which warns her to demonstrate her love with discerning limits by refusing hospitality to false teachers (2 Jn 7-11). A conclusion follows (2 Jn 12-13).

3 John

The letter of 3 John teaches believers to show hospitality and support for the true teachers who are sent from the church, missionaries. Such hospitality enables them to spread the gospel freely. John wrote Gaius this short note to commend him for this kind of hospitality. John first commends Gaius for his faithful support of these men (3 Jn 1-8) and then condemns Gaius's opposer, Diotrephes, who rejects the missionaries and those who support them (3 Jn 9-11). John concludes with an introduction of Demetrius, who is worthy of support (3 Jn 12), along with some personal matters (3 Jn 13-14).

Jude

Jude exhorts his readers to "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3) which is endangered by pretenders who seek to lead the Lord's people away from their moorings in Christ. After the greeting and blessing (Jude 1-2), Jude exposes the pretenders of the faith within the church (Jude 3-16), so that their practices can be avoided (Jude 17-23). His closing doxology praises God as the only hope for protection from apostasy (Jude 24-25).

Lesson Objectives

By the end of the lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Explain in your own words how to abide in Christ
- Identify from 1 John the hindrances to obedience

- Describe the behaviors that show genuine love
- Formulate a personal biblical plan for countering apostates who visit your residence
- Initiate personal support for missions at a level in agreement with your conscience
- Evaluate your own church for apostasy based on Jude's warnings

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction to 1 John and Obedience (1 Jn 1–2)

Topic 2: 1 John: Loving Others (1 Jn 3–5)

Topic 3: 2 John (2 Jn 1)

Topic 4: 3 John (3 Jn 1)

Topic 5: Jude (Jude 1)

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction to 1 John and Obedience (1 Jn 1–2)

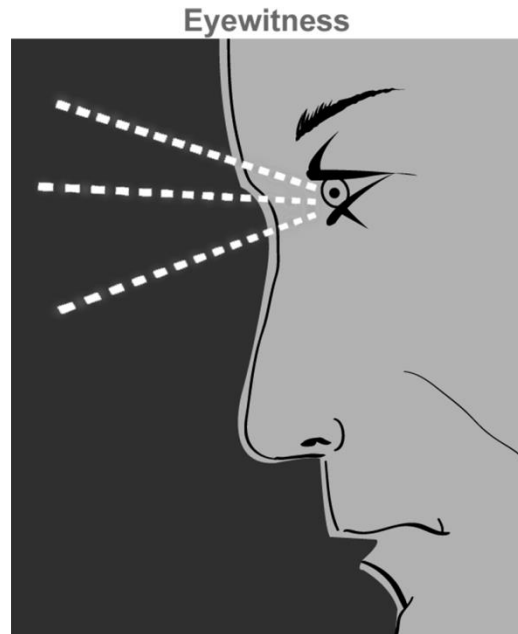
John proclaimed himself an expert on eternal life. He had personally heard, seen, looked upon and handled that which was from the beginning (1 Jn 1:1). He wanted to share his personal experience with his readers so that they could have joyous fellowship with him and the Father and Christ (1 Jn 1:4).

John breaks down living the Christian life—and the measure of one's love for God—to the most basic principles: obedience to God's commands and loving one's brothers. This obedience through loving others is the best rebuttal to the practices of Gnosticism. He also sought to defeat immorality by exhorting obedience and righteousness (1 Jn 2:28–29).

In a court of law an eyewitness to a crime is a valuable commodity. Of all the disciples, John was the most intimate with Jesus, even leaning back on His chest while eating the Last Supper (Jn 13:25). John supplies an eyewitness account to the testimony of eternal life that is personified by Jesus Christ Himself.

John testified that he personally saw Jesus and even “handled” Him (1 Jn 1:1). What better person to explain to us eternal life and close fellowship, remaining in Him?

- **1 John: Obedience in Love Combats Early Gnosticism**
- **Author:** The apostle John
- **Date:** AD 85–95
- **Key Word:** Love



- **Key Verses:** 1 John 2:26-28
- **Summary Statement:** John writes a general letter that encourages his readers to obey God's commands to love others. He writes to protect them from Gnosticism, which does not accept that Christ was both fully God and fully human, denying one or the other.
- **Application:** How can you show love to another believer so that heresy might be thwarted? Who do you know that needs to see Christian love demonstrated in order to turn from false teaching?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 John 1–2.
- Please read the article “Introduction to 1 John” and focus on the section on obedience, in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize 1 John's key verses: 1 John 2:26, 28.

QUESTION 1

The author of this course prefers the translation of 1 John 3:6 that says that no one who resides in him sins, in the absolute sense, over the translation that says no one who resides in him sins habitually. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

How does John define abiding, or remaining, in Christ?

QUESTION 3

According to 1 John 2:26, 28, the book's key verses, if someone remains in Christ what else does he or she have at His return?

- A) Confidence
- B) Rapture
- C) Victory
- D) Reward

QUESTION 4

Please match the reference in the left-hand column with the hindrance to obedience as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Hindrance</i>
1 John 2:15-17	Not practicing righteousness
1 John 2:18-23	Love for the world and the things in it
1 John 2:24-27	Antichrists who deny that Jesus is the Christ
1 John 2:28-29	Those people who deny God's promise of eternal life

Topic 1 Key Points:

- In an absolute sense, no one who abides in Christ sins.
- John's definition of abiding in Christ is to obey God's commands and to love one's brothers.

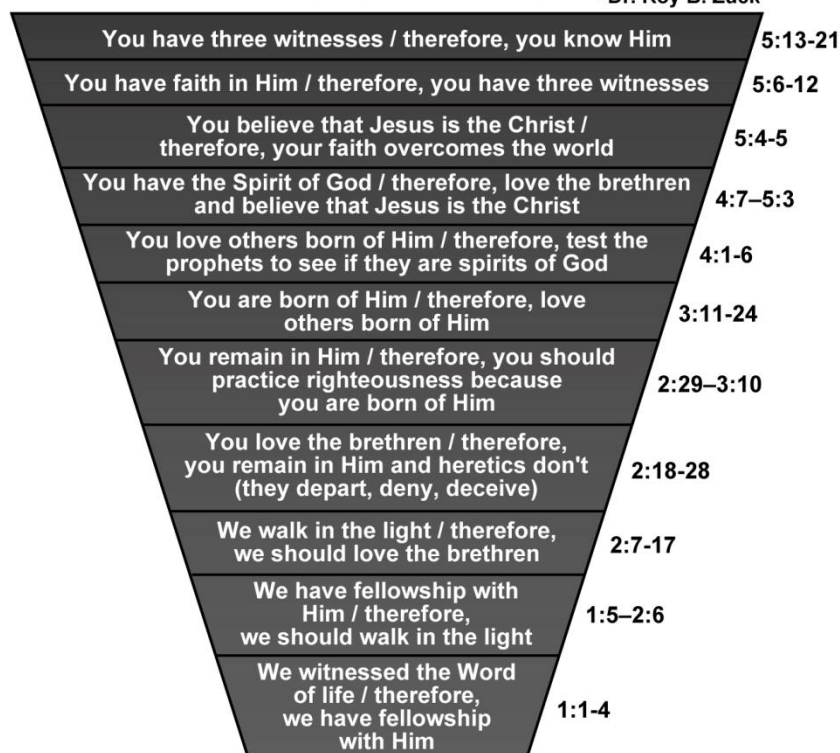
- Believers that abide in Christ have confidence in His promises and will not shrink away at His return.
- Hindrances to obedience are love for the world, antichrists, denial of God's promises, and unrighteousness.

Topic 2: 1 John: Loving Others (1 Jn 3–5)

ASCENDING SPIRAL STRUCTURE IN 1 JOHN

(Adapted from Lenski)

—Dr. Roy B. Zuck



John suggests that many antichrists had gone out into the world (1 Jn 2:18) and perhaps had even infiltrated the churches. Although Gnosticism did not develop into its worst form until the second century, an early form of Gnosticism is evident in this letter. Gnosticism had two basic heretical elements: the exaltation of intellect, the Greek word *gnosis*, and the belief that matter is inherently evil.

Gnosticism exalts the intellect, but Paul wrote that human wisdom cannot find God (1 Cor 1:18-2:16). In contrast to Gnostic pride, the common thread in every lesson that Jesus taught was humility (Mk 8:34) and its complement—total dependence on God. The rich young ruler lacked humility, and that lack caused him to leave instead of to follow Jesus (Mk 10:17-31). The climactic lesson in Mark on humility is Mark 10:45: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” John reveals his strategy for defeating this prideful philosophy of Gnosticism in 1 John.

1 John Obedience in Love Combats Early Gnosticism		
Necessity of obedience	Characteristics of love	Benefits of obedience
1–2	3:1–5:3	5:4–21
Humanity of Christ Prerequisites to obedience Hindrances to obedience	Don't sin Don't hate believers Show compassion Confidence before God Obey apostolic teaching Care for believers Obey God's commands	Victory over the world Assurance of salvation Guidance in prayer Freedom from sin Fidelity to God
Ephesus to Asia Minor Churches		
AD 85–95		

Reading Assignment

- Please read 1 John 3–5.
- Please read the article “Loving Others” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 5

Please list the basic heretical tenets of Gnosticism.

QUESTION 6

One unique literary characteristic John uses is making several absolute statements. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the teaching in the right-hand column about what characterizes one who genuinely loves.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching on Love</i>
1 John 3:1-10	Obedience to God's commands
1 John 3:11-15	Confidence before God
1 John 3:16-20	Compassionate acts
1 John 3:21-24	An inability to sin
1 John 4:1-6	Obedience to the apostolic teaching
1 John 4:7-21	An inability to hate other believers
1 John 5:1-3	Caring for others as Christ did

QUESTION 8

Match the reference in the right-hand column with the result of obedience in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Result of Obedience</i>
1 John 5:4-5	Guidance in prayer
1 John 5:6-13	Victory over the world system
1 John 5:14-17	Freedom from habitual sin
1 John 5:18-20	Assurance of salvation
1 John 5:21	Fidelity to God, which is shown in avoiding idolatry

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Gnosticism had two basic heretical elements: the exaltation of intellect and the belief that matter is inherently evil.
- One unique literary characteristic John uses is making several absolute statements.
- Genuine love cares about others, is confident before God, is obedient to God, and is unable to sin.

Topic 3: 2 John (2 Jn 1)

2 John Limits to Love				
Aid true teachers			Avoid false teachers	
1-6			7-13	
Walk in commandments			Watch for counterfeits	
Positive			Negative	
Demonstrate truth			Defend truth	
Greeting in truth & love (1-3)	Children's obedience commended (4)	Exhortation to love (5-6)	Prohibition to help false teachers (7-11)	Expected visit & greetings (12-13)
Ephesus				
AD 85-95				

Before the New Testament writings were completed and circulated among the early believers, the churches had to rely upon traveling preachers and teachers for truth. These teachers stayed with Christians, since the inns were unsafe and sparse. A question with which many believers struggled was: "How could someone know which teachers to allow into his or her home?" John answers this question in this epistle, where he pointedly commands a hospitable woman to limit her love by refusing to house false teachers or to encourage them in any way.

Traveling Preachers and Teachers



I have personally had members of two cults, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses, come to my door. Because I'm used to showing hospitality to all I find it uncomfortable to talk with them. And I'm not convinced the Bible commands us to be unfriendly from the start of our meeting.

The last visit that I had was from two Mormon gentlemen. I stepped outside to talk with them, gave them the gospel, and explained that we had different messages. When

they were ready to leave, the leader offered his hand in fellowship. I explained that I could not accept his handshake, because our messages were different. He continued holding out his hand for an extended period of time, but though it was uncomfortable, I continued to refuse his offer. I am convinced that at this point, the Bible does command that with apostates, we are not to follow cultural rules for courteous leave-taking. Despite the personal discomfort, I'm convinced that I did the right thing biblically because they needed to know that we were not in spiritual agreement when we separated.

- **2 John: Limits to Love**
- **Author:** The apostle John
- **Date:** AD 85–95
- **Key Word:** Limits
- **Key Verses:** 2 John 9-10
- **Summary Statement:** John teaches a Christian woman and her children, who show hospitality to missionaries, that there are limitations to love. These people are warned not to extend the same hospitality to false teachers, which would aid the spread of destructive heresies.
- **Application:** Do not contribute to or encourage in any way Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, or any other false religion.

Reading Assignment

- Please read 2 John.
- Please read the article "Introduction to 2 John" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 9

The message of 2 John makes sense if it is addressed to a woman instead of to an entire church. *True or False?*

QUESTION 10

John's concern for this believer is that by aiding heretical teachers, she may lose her _____.

QUESTION 11

A normal reading of 2 John 10 is that false teachers should be allowed to enter believer's homes but not stay in them. *True or False?*

Topic 3 Key Points:

- 2 John makes sense as a letter addressed to an individual woman instead of to a church.
- Believers are warned against losing their reward by assisting heretical teachers.
- False teachers should not be encouraged or aided in any way by believers.

Topic 4: 3 John (3 Jn 1)

3 John Supporting Missionaries								
1-8			9-11			12-14		
Gaius			Diotrephes			Demetrius		
Commended			Condemned			Recommended		
Supported missionaries			Opposed missionaries			Is a missionary		
Greetings & prayer 1-2	Joy over godliness 3-4	Support confirmed 5-8	For rejecting John 9	For opposing missionaries 10	For doing evil 11	Good reputation 12	Visit anticipated 13-14a	Affectionate greetings 14
Asia Minor								
AD 90								

The book of 3 John can be seen as a short note:

People in the note: This warm, personable letter revolves around three people:

1. Gaius is a godly man who wholeheartedly supports traveling missionaries (3 Jn 1-8).
2. Diotrephes is a carnal believer who opposes hospitality toward the missionaries as it is practiced by Gaius and other believers (3 Jn 9-11). Although the common first-century practice for the Gentiles who had been saved from idolatry was to change their names after embracing Christianity, Diotrephes kept his pagan name after his conversion.
3. Demetrius is a missionary whom the church should support (3 Jn 12).

Matthew 10:41 tells us that the one who "receives a prophet in the name of a prophet" will receive a prophet's reward. When we help someone to fulfill his or her mission, we receive part of the credit for that mission's success (see also Mt 25:31-46). John makes the same point with the readers of 3 John in order to encourage them to support faithful missionaries. So what does John say?



- **3 John: Support Missionaries**
- **Author:** The apostle John
- **Date:** AD 90
- **Key Word:** Missionaries
- **Key Verse:** 3 John 8
- **Summary Statement:** In order to help the church understand its responsibility to finance God's work, John encourages Gaius to continue his support of missionaries. Gaius is being opposed by Diotrephes, a godless leader who opposes such support.
- **Application:** Are you advancing the gospel by supporting missionaries through hospitality and finances?

Reading Assignment

- Please read 3 John.
- Please read the article "Introduction to 3 John" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

The latter two epistles of John can be contrasted in several ways:

Contrast: 2 & 3 John

2 John	3 John
Recipient: a woman	Recipient: a man
Names: none	Names: Gaius, Diotrephes, Demetrius
Condemns bad doctrine	Condemns bad conduct
False missionaries	True missionaries
Hospitality is misplaced	Hospitality is either denied or offered
Verses: thirteen	Verses: fourteen
Words (Greek text): 245	Words (Greek text): 219

QUESTION 12

According to 3 John 4, John's greatest joy is to personally have assurance of eternal life. *True or False?*

QUESTION 13

Explain biblically how a Christian can receive a prophet's reward, or a missionary's reward, etc.

QUESTION 14

The message of 2 John is to not support false missions while 3 John commands us to support _____ missions.

Topic 4 Key Points:

- John's greatest joy is to hear that his spiritual children are walking according to the truth.
- Those believers who faithfully support faithful missionaries are promised a share in their reward.
- God's people must support true missions, which shows the partnership between missionaries and their supporters.

Topic 5: Jude (Jude 1)

Jude Contending Against Pretenders										
Why to contend						How to contend				
Intro		Pretenders' practices				How to avoid pretenders' snares			Praise for preservation	
1-2		3-16				17-23			24-25	
Greeting 1	Bless- ing 2	Purpose of epistle: defend the faith 3-4	OT pre- tenders 5-7 (past)	Charac- teristics 8-13	Judg- ment 14-16 (future)	Remember apostle's predictions 17-19	Nurture oneself in God's love 20-21	Show mercy to pretenders' followers 22-23	Source of victory 24	Only savior 25
Unknown origin to probably Palestine										
AD 75										

The men whom Jude condemned were “denying the lordship of Christ (Jude 4), exercising sinful license (Jude 4, 8, 16), rebelling against authority (Jude 8, 11, 18), giving into their own desires (Jude 16, 19), being concerned only with gain for themselves (Jude 11-12, 16), being divisive (Jude 19), fault-finding (Jude 16), and boasting (Jude 16)” (E. Pentecost, “Jude,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament Edition*, eds. Walvoord and Zuck [Wheaton, IL: SP Pub., Victor, 1983], 917). He wrote to inform the church of these men so that believers would not fall into their error, which evidently was more behavioral than doctrinal.

Jude makes the point that these unfaithful men have always been around and have always been motivated by selfish interests. His examples include: pretenders among the Israelites; the angels who left their proper domain; those people who were destroyed in Sodom and Gomorrah; Cain, Balaam, and Korah. How does Jude say to respond to these charlatans in the church?

- **Jude: Contending Against Pretenders**
- **Author:** Jude, the earthly half brother of Jesus. Jude means “praise.”
- **Date:** AD 75
- **Key Word:** Pretenders
- **Key Verses:** Jude 3-4

- **Summary Statement:** Jude warns all Christians about pretenders—unbelievers who have infiltrated their churches by masking themselves as Christians, but in reality, they are perverting the truth by their lifestyles of license. Jude writes to defend the holiness of the church.
- **Application:** Do you fight those who introduce godlessness in the church, or do you let them get away with lowering the standard?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Jude 1-25.
- Please read the article “Introduction to Jude” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 15

What did Jude originally intend to write about to his readers?

- A) False teachers
- B) The Lord’s soon return
- C) Angels who sin
- D) Their mutual salvation

QUESTION 16

Match the reference in the left-hand column with the example of these false teachers in the right-hand column.

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Example of False Teachers</i>
Jude 5	Some fallen angels, who left their proper position in heaven to possess rulers and seduce women (Gen 6:1-4), are presently chained in punishment.
Jude 6	These men reject all authorities, even slandering angels, unlike the archangel Michael who refused to slander Satan and left the matter in God’s hands.
Jude 7	Their greed resembles Balaam’s claim to speak for God, while in reality, he spoke for money.
Jude 8-10	Sodom, Gomorrah, and the surrounding towns were judged for their homosexual perversion.
Jude 11	Of the two million Israelites who were delivered from Egypt, some did not believe God and thus were pretenders like those about whom Jude warns.

QUESTION 17

Explain how Jude directs believers to treat the misguided followers of these false teachers (Jude 22-23).

Topic 5 Key Points:

- Out of necessity, Jude changed his purpose for writing in order to warn his readers of false teachers.

- The false teachers' greed, rebellion, and sexual perversion are illustrated by examples from the Old Testament Scriptures.
- Believers must treat the misguided followers of these rebels with mercy—not slander—by sharing Christ while guarding themselves.

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 18

Match the title on the left side with the reference in John's epistles at the bottom of each column.

Major Teachings John's Epistles							
	Instructions						
Certain Knowledge of Eternal Life							
Support Faithful Missionaries							
Do Not Support False Missionaries							
Our Advocate with the Father							
Inability to Sin or Hate							
Eyewitness of Eternal Life							
The One Who Loves Knows God	1 John 1	1 John 2	1 John 3	1 John 4	1 John 5	2 John	3 John

QUESTION 19

The letter of 1 John talks about knowing that you have eternal life (1 Jn 5:13). Please open your Life Notebook and explain why you think most people have difficulty in accepting the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer.

QUESTION 20

Please research a way to support Christian missions that is in agreement with your conscience before God. Please open your Life Notebook, record your plan, and make sure to follow through with it!

QUESTION 21

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications that you should make to your life.

Lesson 15 Self Check

QUESTION 1

The letter of 1 John defines abiding in Christ as loving one's Christian brothers and _____.

- A) Obeying God's commands
- B) Praying in the Spirit
- C) Denying self
- D) Carrying your cross daily

QUESTION 2

According to 1 John 2:26-28, what is a danger of not abiding in Christ?

- A) Loss of salvation
- B) Unanswered prayer
- C) Shame at His return
- D) Being cast into darkness

QUESTION 3

One tenet of Gnosticism is that all matter is inherently evil. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

One unique literary characteristic John uses is making several absolute statements. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

In 2 John, believers are warned against supporting false missionaries in any way, because the believers may lose their _____.

QUESTION 6

The way to read 2 John 10 is that false teachers should not be allowed into your house or even given a greeting. *True or False?*

QUESTION 7

In 3 John 4, what is John's greatest joy?

- A) Immediate access to God's presence
- B) Seeing his children walk in the truth
- C) Experiencing God's love
- D) His mutual salvation with his readers

QUESTION 8

According to Matthew 10:41 and 3 John 8, believers can be rewarded by God for participating in foreign missions even if they never leave their home country. *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

According to Jude 8-10, an example of submission to God is when the archangel Michael respectfully disputed with Satan about the body of _____.

QUESTION 10

According to Jude 22-23, which of the following should believers NOT do to the misguided followers of the false teachers?

- A) Show mercy on them
- B) Share Christ with them
- C) Stay away from their errors
- D) Slander them

Lesson 15 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1: True

It seems the more natural translation and it is characteristic of John to deal in absolutes.

QUESTION 2

Your answer should be similar to the following: John's definition is clearly explained as obedience to God's commands and love for one's brothers (1 Jn 2:28–4:16).

QUESTION 3

A. Confidence

“And now, little children, remain in him, so that whenever he appears we may have confidence and not shrink away from him in shame when he comes back” (1 Jn 2:28).

QUESTION 4

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Hindrance</i>
1 John 2:15-17	Love for the world and the things in it
1 John 2:18-23	Antichrists who deny that Jesus is the Christ
1 John 2:24-27	Those people who deny God's promise of eternal life
1 John 2:28-29	Not practicing righteousness

QUESTION 5

Your answer should be similar to the following: Gnosticism had two basic heretical elements: the exaltation of intellect and the belief that matter is inherently evil. Also, Docetic Gnosticism denied the humanity of Christ while Cerinthian Gnosticism denied the deity of Christ.

QUESTION 6: True

Understanding this fact can help in determining the correct interpretation of certain disputed passages.

QUESTION 7

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Teaching on Love</i>
1 John 3:1-10	An inability to sin
1 John 3:11-15	An inability to hate other believers
1 John 3:16-20	Compassionate acts
1 John 3:21-24	Confidence before God
1 John 4:1-6	Obedience to the apostolic teaching
1 John 4:7-21	Caring for others as Christ did
1 John 5:1-3	Obedience to God's commands

QUESTION 8

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Result of Obedience</i>
1 John 5:4-5	Victory over the world system
1 John 5:6-13	Assurance of salvation
1 John 5:14-17	Guidance in prayer
1 John 5:18-20	Freedom from habitual sin
1 John 5:21	Fidelity to God, which is shown in avoiding idolatry

QUESTION 9: True

It's best to follow the literal sense, unless it doesn't make sense, it does make sense here.

QUESTION 10: Reward

The fact that the believers can lose their rewards by going beyond official teaching and by adhering to heresy should cause her to consider whether or not aid to false teachers really brings God's blessing (2 Jn 8).

QUESTION 11: False

Believers who prevent false teachers from entering their homes assure that they are not promoting false teaching even in the slightest sense.

QUESTION 12: False

"I have no greater joy than this: to hear my children are living according to the truth" (3 Jn 4).

QUESTION 13

Your answer should be similar to the following: Since the missionaries work for Christ, the world will not support them. This need leaves believers with a personal responsibility to fund God's work (3 Jn 7-8). Missionaries must be completely supported by God's people in order to show that the missionaries and their supporters are partners in spreading God's truth. In a like manner, Matthew 10:41 promises a prophet's reward to those that support prophets.

QUESTION 14: True**QUESTION 15**

D. Their mutual salvation

Jude changed his original intention of writing concerning their mutual salvation to warn his readers to defend the faith because of pretenders who secretly infiltrated the church with libertine practices, which denied the lordship of Jesus Christ (Jude 3-4).

QUESTION 16

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Example of False Teachers</i>
Jude 5	Of the two million Israelites who were delivered from Egypt, some did not believe God and thus were pretenders like those of whom Jude warns.
Jude 6	Some fallen angels, who left their proper position in heaven to possess rulers and seduce women (Gen 6:1-4), are presently chained in punishment.
Jude 7	Sodom, Gomorrah, and the surrounding towns were judged for their homosexual perversion.
Jude 8-10	These men reject all authorities, even slandering angels, unlike the archangel Michael who refused to slander Satan and left the matter in God's hands.
Jude 11	Their greed resembles Balaam's claim to speak for God, while in reality, he spoke for money.

QUESTION 17

Your answer should be similar to the following: Believers must show mercy to false teachers by encouraging, rather than slandering, them and by immediately sharing Christ with them. At the same time, the believers must watch to see that they do not fall into the contamination of the false teaching.

QUESTION 18

Major Teachings John's Epistles

Instructions						
Eyewitness of Eternal Life	Our Advocate with the Father	Inability to Sin or Hate	The One Who Loves Knows God	Certain Knowledge of Eternal Life	Do Not Support False Missionaries	Support Faithful Missionaries
1 John 1	1 John 2	1 John 3	1 John 4	1 John 5	2 John	3 John

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21: *Your answer*

Lesson 15 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1

A. Obeying God's commands

QUESTION 2

C. Shame at His return

QUESTION 3: True

QUESTION 4: True

QUESTION 5

Correct answers include:

Reward

Inheritance

QUESTION 6: True

QUESTION 7

B. Seeing his children walk in the truth

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9: Moses

QUESTION 10

D. Slander them

Lesson 15 Articles

Introduction to 1 John

Circumstances

Date: Conservative scholars date 1 John from AD 80–97 and liberals date it from AD 90–110. The epistle does not mention the persecution that lasted from AD 81–96. This may suggest a date before AD 81 or after AD 96. John was an old man when he wrote. This course uses the date AD 85–95, since it is likely that the book preceded Revelation (AD 95–96).

Origin/recipients: John wrote the epistle from Ephesus as a circular letter to the churches in Asia Minor. The admonition to avoid idols supports this view, because idols were common in the pagan culture in the area.

Occasion: 1 John combats two forms of early Gnostic teaching that exalted the intellect:

1. Docetic Gnosticism denied the *humanity* of Christ (1 Jn 4:2-3). They claimed that Jesus only appeared to be human. This is why, John wrote that he had actually touched Jesus (1 Jn 1:1).
2. Cerinthian Gnosticism denied the *deity* of Christ. Cerinthus, who lived near John, taught that Jesus was only a man upon whom the Christ descended. Christ was present from Jesus' baptism until just before His crucifixion. John replied that Jesus Christ came both by water and by blood (1 Jn 5:6).

The practical outworking of the Gnostic belief that matter is evil also had the two following aspects:

1. Some Gnostics reasoned that all matter should be avoided because it is evil. The result was *asceticism*. In this letter, John attempts to defeat asceticism by encouraging fellowship among believers (1 Jn 1:7). Ascetism is the attempt to remove oneself from all possible temptations.
2. Other Gnostics were more fatalistic by thinking that since matter will always be evil, any type of immoral behavior is acceptable. John responded to this philosophy in 1 John 1:6, 8, 10; 3:4-10.

Characteristics

John's epistle has several unique literary characteristics. He makes several *absolute* statements, such as in 1 John 3:6. This verse is sometimes translated with the absolute sense as in, "No one who abides in Him *sins*" (NASB, emphasis added). However, other interpretations use a *habitual* sense, "No one who lives in him *keeps on sinning*" (NIV, emphasis added). The absolute sense is more consistent with John's tendency in the book. Note that people do not sin when they are truly following Christ, but carnal Christians do habitually sin (see 1 Cor 3:1-4). John's definition of abiding in Christ is obeying God's commands and loving one's brothers (1 Jn 2:28–4:16).

John uses contrast as a teaching tool in the epistle, because he sees everything as black and white:

- Light vs. darkness (1 Jn 1:5; 2:9-11)
- Life vs. death (1 Jn 3:14)
- Love vs. hatred (1 Jn 4:20)
- New vs. old (1 Jn 2:7)

- Christ vs. anti-Christ (1 Jn 2:22)
- Truth vs. falsehood (1 Jn 4:6)
- Confidence vs. fear (1 Jn 4:17-18)
- Love of the world vs. love of God (1 Jn 2:15)
- Confession of sin vs. denial of sin (1 Jn 1:8-10)
- Sin leading to death vs. sin not leading to death (1 Jn 5:16)

The style is very simple, but the letter has profound meaning. Concepts are repeated without monotony. It does not quote the Old Testament and only mentions one incident from Genesis (1 Jn 3:12; see Gen 4:8).

Obedience

John exhorts his readers about the prerequisites for a life of obedience so that they will not be easily led astray into early Gnostic teaching and practice (1 Jn 1–2).

John begins with a clear affirmation of Christ's humanity and with confidence that his rebuttal for Docetic Gnosticism will result in joy when he sees fellowship among believers (1 Jn 1:1-5). He teaches that the requirement of obedience is dependence on Christ, which will protect his readers' holiness (1 Jn 1:6–2:14). John explains the hindrances to obedience in order to prevent heresy from capturing any unprotected believers who do not walk obediently with Christ (1 Jn 1:7). This worldliness and deception among believers is cautioned against so that they would not be easily led into false teaching and practice (1 Jn 2:15-29).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Loving Others

John affirms the characteristics of a life of love so that his readers might genuinely love. Their love would be a defense from early Gnostic teaching and practice (1 Jn 3:1–5:3).

A person who genuinely loves has the following characteristics:

- An inability to sin when living a life based on future likeness to Christ (1 Jn 3:1-10)
- An inability to hate other believers (1 Jn 3:11-15)
- Compassionate acts (1 Jn 3:16-20)
- Confidence before God because of righteous behavior (1 Jn 3:21-24)
- Obedience to the apostolic teaching rather than to the error of Docetic Gnosticism (1 Jn 4:1-6)
- Caring for others as Christ did (1 Jn 4:7-21)
- Obedience to God's commands (1 Jn 5:1-3)

John promises the results of obedience in order to motivate his readers to live obediently in the face of early Gnosticism (1 Jn 5:4-21).

A life of obedience results in the following:

- Victory over the world system (1 Jn 5:4-5)
- Assurance of salvation (1 Jn 5:6-13)
- Guidance in prayer (1 Jn 5:14-17)

- Freedom from habitual sin (1 Jn 5:18-20)
- Fidelity to God, which is shown in avoiding idolatry (1 Jn 5:21)

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to 2 John

Circumstances

Date: It was likely written about AD 85–95.

Origin/recipients: John’s final years of ministry were in Ephesus, which makes this city the origin of the letter. This letter is addressed to the “elect lady and her children” (2 Jn 1). This greeting has caused debate about who is really being addressed.

Some believe the title is a personified term for the local church for the following reasons:

- There are no personal names in the epistle.
- The literary form addresses nations, cities, and churches as female, which is common in the Bible (see Eph 5:29; 1 Pet 5:13).
- John often referred to the people in the church as “children” (1 Jn 2:12).
- The lady was known by “all who know the truth,” which suggests a community is being addressed, not a woman (2 Jn 1).
- The content, which is about false teachers, matches a church more than an individual.
- The predominant use of the second person plural suggests a community more than a family (2 Jn 8, 10, 12).
- John’s commandment makes more sense if it is applied to a community (2 Jn 5).

An anonymous woman and her children are addressed. They probably opened their home for church services and housed traveling preachers. This view is more literal and preferable for several of the following reasons:

- Her children are mentioned (2 Jn 1, 4).
- This view distinguishes between the woman and her children. If the lady is the church, who are the children?
- If the lady refers to a church leader, it would be odd to refer to a man with a feminine title.
- The New Testament pattern for addressing a church is to refer to it by name.
- The woman’s name may have been secret to avoid persecution.
- Mention of the woman’s nephews and nieces make sense when taken literally (2 Jn 13).
- Adopting the literal meaning explains the reluctance of some early Christians to use this epistle.

Characteristics

This letter is the second shortest book in the Bible. Only three other books have one chapter: Philemon, 3 John, and Jude. This is also the only one addressed to a woman. The most controversial part of this letter is 2 John 10. This issue is whether false teachers should be allowed

to stay in believers' homes, enter their homes for a brief discussion, or neither. The last option is the normal interpretation, so that the believers do not promote the false teaching.

John uses both truth and love to prepare the woman for his later rebuke (2 Jn 1-6).

As the leader of the Ephesian church, John affectionately greets a woman and her children. He emphasizes both truth and love in preparing her for his warning about how undiscerning love can help false teachers (2 Jn 1-3). The recipients are kept anonymous to protect them from severe persecution, if the letter was read by the wrong person (2 Jn 1-2). John bases his love on God's truth so that the woman will respond in a way that protects the truth (2 Jn 1-2). John reminds her that all who know God also love her. True love is based on the eternal, indwelling truth of God that is shared by Christians (2 Jn 2). God's blessing balances truth and love so that the readers are prepared for John's teaching on a love that is limited by truth (2 Jn 3).

John commends her for the obedience of her children who are living the truth. He writes to enforce his correction with a word of sincere appreciation (2 Jn 4). He exhorts her to practice the truth that is expected of those who fear God. This fear is shown through a life of obedience. John makes sure that she will not think that he is discouraging love altogether (2 Jn 5-6).

To help her see love's limits, John warns the woman not to help false teachers (2 Jn 7-13).

John warns the woman to protect the truth. She should not assist false teachers who deny that Christ is God. John stresses how a Christian must discern the limits of love (2 Jn 7-11). There are many false teachers who deny Christ is God incarnate. This teaching is deceptive and totally against Christ and the woman should not support these teachers (2 Jn 7). John cautions her not to lose the rewards from God by aiding or by believing false teachers and their heresies. He encourages her to please God by remaining steadfast (2 Jn 8-9). A Christian must discern the limits placed on love by the truth of the gospel (2 Jn 10). Believers should never encourage heresy by inviting false teachers into their homes or greeting them. Even a greeting encourages a false teacher in his heresies. Such support will promote their evil work, so the woman must not aid these people (2 Jn 11).

A face-to-face visit to further explain both discerning love and the subject of false teachers is better than a letter of stern instructions. Therefore, John hopes to see her and sends greetings from her sister's children, ending the letter on a note of joy (2 Jn 12-13).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to 3 John

Circumstances

Date: Conservative scholars believe John wrote this letter about AD 90.

Origin/Recipients: John addresses Gaius, a man who opened his home to traveling missionaries.

This is the shortest letter in the Bible, based on the number of Greek words.

John affirms Gaius for both his godliness and his missionary support, so that he would continue to support the missionaries despite the opposition (3 Jn 1-8).

John authoritatively identifies himself as the author. He addresses Gaius, a dear Christian brother who had material means, in order to publicly commend him before all who may read the letter, especially Diotrephes, who opposed Gaius (3 Jn 1). John prays that Gaius's health would be as

good as his spiritual vitality, which shows his concern for Gaius's physical and spiritual needs (3 Jn 2).

John tells of hearing from missionaries who had stayed with Gaius, whom John had personally led to Christ. Gaius faithfully lived the Christian life and supported God's workers (3 Jn 3-4). This is the best news that John could receive about him. John also rejoices that Gaius continues to grow in Christ and to be obedient to the truth (3 Jn 4).

Gaius's hospitality and love toward the missionaries whom he supported is confirmed. John affirmed Gaius in order to encourage him to continue his support of missionaries despite the opposition from Diotrephes (3 Jn 5-6). He wanted Gaius to know that his ministry must continue (3 Jn 6). John reminds Gaius that the world will not support the missionaries' work for Christ. This makes Gaius and the other believers responsible to fund God's work (3 Jn 7-8). Missionaries must be supported by God's people, showing that missionaries and their supporters are partners in spreading God's truth (3 Jn 8).

John condemns Diotrephes both for rejecting his teaching and for opposing the missionaries' support. John does not want the believers to imitate Diotrephes' evil actions (3 Jn 9-11).

John had written an earlier letter to Gaius's church, commending the missionaries' support, but Diotrephes rejected the appeal because of his personal ambition (3 Jn 9). John now writes to condemn Diotrephes, a church leader, for his opposition to missionary support. Diotrephes showed opposition by spreading malicious gossip, not being hospitable, and excommunicating the hospitable believers. If John visits, he promises to condemn this behavior again (3 Jn 10). John condemns Diotrephes to contrast his evil actions with the good deeds of Gaius (3 Jn 11).

John recommends Demetrius, probably a traveling missionary who carried the letter, with a threefold positive testimony. This will help Gaius to not hesitate in giving him the same support that he has shown to other missionaries (3 Jn 12).

Everyone, in multiple churches, who knew Demetrius spoke well of him. Gaius should extend his hospitality to this missionary (3 Jn 12). Demetrius's behavior lined up with proper teaching, so that even if no one spoke well of him, his behavior should be enough. John writes these words to encourage Gaius to take in Demetrius (3 Jn 12). John and his fellow workers recommend Demetrius so that Gaius will not be discouraged by Diotrephes' rejections (3 Jn 12).

John desires to personally see Gaius, wishes him peace, sends greetings, and requests that Gaius greet his friends on John's behalf. This closing reinforces both John's displeasure with Diotrephes and his affection for Gaius (3 Jn 13-14).

John had much to write about supporting missionaries. And John hoped to visit Gaius personally to commend him with affection as well as to show his displeasure with Diotrephes (3 Jn 13-14). John wishes Gaius peace during this opposition. He sends greetings from his friends and requests that friends there be personally greeted. He ends the letter with affection to reinforce his love for Gaius, his friends, and the believers in Gaius's church (3 Jn 14).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Introduction to Jude

Authorship

Jude is the half-brother of Jesus Christ and the son of Joseph and Mary. He was also the brother of James (Jude 1), who led the church at Jerusalem and who wrote the epistle of James (Acts 15:13). Jude is a variation of the names Judah or Judas.

Circumstances

Date: Most scholars believe that Jude wrote between AD 67–80 because the readers had heard the apostles (Jude 17). This course uses AD 75 as the date of the epistle.

Origin/Recipients: Jude does not specify a church (Jude 1). There are many references to the Old Testament as well as to other literature, which suggests that the recipients were Christian Jews from Palestine.

Characteristics

Like 2 John, Jude warns against unbelieving false teachers, especially early Gnosticism. Gnostics taught that the spirit was good and that the body was evil. They believed an arrogant, indulgent lifestyle was acceptable.

Jude is the only NT book that refers to falsely ascribed books. These are writings whose authors attribute authorship to someone else, usually an historical person. There were many of these books which were never included in the canon. He alludes to the *Assumption of Moses* (Jude 9) and he quotes Enoch 1:10 (Jude 14-15). But in doing so he does not affirm their authority.

Jude uses triads three times. Jude 1 links the following: Jude with called, servant with sanctified, and brother with preserved. Jude 2 compares mercy, peace, and love. Jude 5-7 discusses the people, the angels, and the unbelievers.

Jude identifies himself as the author and affirms some unknown believers as the recipients. He wishes upon them the threefold graces of mercy, peace, and love, with which they need to defend the faith from pretenders (Jude 1-2).

Jude identifies himself as the author and affirms that his recipients are predestined, are beloved, and are eternally secure (Jude 1). These believers are predestined because they have been called and chosen by God and loved by the Father with an incomprehensible, unconditional love (Jude 1). Jude blesses his recipients with mercy, peace, and love, which is to be multiplied in their lives in order to face the opposition from the pretenders (Jude 2).

Jude warns against and describes the pretenders, who have secretly infiltrated the church, so that they can be recognized and avoided (Jude 3-16).

Jude changes his original intention to write to them about their mutual salvation in order to warn his readers to defend the faith. This change was necessary because of both the circumstances his readers faced and the Holy Spirit's prompting. Believers should defend the faith from the pretenders, who had infiltrated the church (Jude 3-4). These unbelieving pretenders, with their libertine practices, deny the lordship of Jesus Christ, as had been prophesied (see Isa 8:19-22; Jer 5:12-14).

Jude illustrates the characteristics of the pretenders with OT examples, such as the following:

- Of the two million Israelites who were delivered from Egypt, some such as the ones Jude warns about did not believe God and were pretenders (Jude 5; see Num 16).

- Some fallen angels are chained in punishment to await the great judgment, and they illustrate the pretenders' end in hell (Jude 6; see Gen 6:1-4).
- Sodom, Gomorrah, and the surrounding towns were judged for homosexuality, and they are an example of the pretenders who will suffer eternal fire (Jude 7).

Jude relates the characteristics of the pretenders' practices and their destiny. He wants his readers to guard themselves from such people and practices (Jude 8-13):

- These men reject all authorities, even slandering angels, unlike the archangel Michael who refused to slander Satan but left the matter in God's hands (Jude 8-10). This reference comes from the false book *The Assumption of Moses*. The pretenders are engrossed in practices that pollute their bodies, and they fall headlong into destruction by observing practices with known disastrous effects (Jude 8, 10).
- Their religion will kill others, like Cain killed Abel (Jude 11; see Gen 4:8).
- Their greed resembles Balaam's claim to speak for God, while he really spoke in order to receive money (Jude 11; see Num 22).
- Their rebellion is against leaders whom God has designated. They will suffer the same fatal fate as that of Korah, who rebelled against Moses (Jude 11; see Num 16).
- Various pictures from nature graphically illustrate the pretenders' destructive lifestyles. The following pictures are a warning for believers to stay clear of their practices (Jude 12-13):

1. Like hidden reefs on a shore, which wreck ships before they are detected, pretenders participate in the most intimate practices of the church, while they destroy the church from within (Jude 12).
2. Like shepherds who feed themselves rather than the sheep, these men are leaders who are seeking to satisfy their personal desires (Jude 12).
3. Like clouds that seem to be full but are waterless and blown around, these men appear saintly but have no teaching for thirsty souls. They do not understand doctrines and are easily seduced by theological trends (Jude 12).
4. Like trees that lack the expected fruit, these men lack the character expected of a Christian, rather they are dead in their sins and will experience a second death (Jude 12).
5. Like waves of the sea, which direct ships nowhere, these men provide no helpful or edifying guidance; instead they practice shameful actions (Jude 13).
6. Like shooting stars, which move across the sky and then vanish without producing light or providing direction, these men lead followers astray from God's truth, joining them in eternal judgment (Jude 13).

Jude reviews the future judgment on the pretenders' selfishness so that his readers might be able to guard themselves from the pretenders (Jude 14-16):

- The future judgment will be at the second coming of Christ, as prophesied by Enoch in the false book *The Book of Enoch*, so readers should avoid the pretenders (Jude 14-15).
- Jude denounces these pretenders for their selfish lifestyles, which are demonstrated in the following ways, so that his readers could recognize and avoid them (Jude 16):
 - They complain about difficulties rather than rejoicing in them (Jude 16).
 - They find fault in others rather than encouraging them (Jude 16).

They lust for their own advantage rather than serving (Jude 16).

They boast about their accomplishments rather than praising others (Jude 16).

They flatter others in order to receive special treatment rather than minister unselfishly (Jude 16).

So that his readers will be safe from apostasy, Jude shows three ways to avoid the pretenders' snares (Jude 17-23).

Believers must remember the apostolic predictions about these men and about their characteristics (Jude 17-19). The apostles warned about the pretenders in order to prepare the Christians to recognize and to avoid them (Jude 17; see 2 Pet 3:1). The specific characteristics are scoffing, selfishness, divisiveness, sensuality, and lacking the Spirit in their lives (Jude 18-19).

Believers need to nurture themselves in God's love by studying the Scriptures, by praying in fellowship with God through the Spirit, and by looking for the Rapture, which would bring them into His presence (Jude 20-21). This immersion into God will protect them from the wiles of the pretenders.

Believers must show mercy to the pretenders' confused followers by encouraging them and sharing Christ with them. This way the deceived followers will not face the fires of hell, and the believers will not succumb to the pretenders' errors (Jude 22-23).

Jude praises God alone as the source of victory over apostasy. It is He who will make believers sinless and who deserves all the honor. Jude teaches that believers cannot preserve themselves but can feel secure in God's unlimited resources (Jude 24-25).

Jude affirms that God alone should be praised, because, as the source of victory, He alone can preserve Christians from apostasy. He will make every believer stand before Him joyfully and without sin. Only He has unlimited majesty, strength, and dominion through Christ in eternity past, present, and future (Jude 24-25).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

Lesson 16: Revelation: The Sovereignty of Christ in Future Victory

Lesson Introduction

The gospel writers provide only a limited picture of Jesus Christ as they depict His deity, life, authority, death, and resurrection almost entirely in a veiled form (see Phil 2:5-8). The book of Revelation removes this veil and clearly demonstrates the sovereignty of Jesus Christ in His future final triumph as the Lord of lords and the King of kings, making Revelation 1:19 the key verse. John records this triumph to encourage the believers who are undergoing external opposition—Roman persecution—and internal compromise—deterioration within the churches—to give them hope.

Revelation 1:19 provides an inspired outline of the entire prophecy. This prophecy begins with John's past vision of Christ's sovereignty (Rev 1:9-20), continues with a present description of Christ's sovereign authority over the seven churches (Rev 2-3), and concentrates the bulk of the prophecy upon the future triumph of Christ over Satan and evil (Rev 4-Rev 22).

Revelation is the climax of biblical revelation. It brings to completion the many prophecies in both testaments and provides numerous prophecies of its own. Unlike any other NT book, it closes all prophecy by a warning against adding or subtracting from it (Rev 22:18-19; see Deut 4:2; Prov 30:6; Gal 3:15).

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson you will be able to do the following:

- Explain the special blessings Revelation promises
- Treasure the rewards that are promised to the conqueror
- Live in dependence on the sovereignty of God
- Live in light of Christ's return
- Patiently trust in God's plan to judge both His and our enemies
- Give a synthesis of the three series of judgments in the Tribulation
- List the future events of Revelation 19-22 in chronological order

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction: God's Sovereignty (Rev 1)

Topic 2: The Seven Churches (Rev 2-3)

Topic 3: The Seven Seals (Rev 4-7)

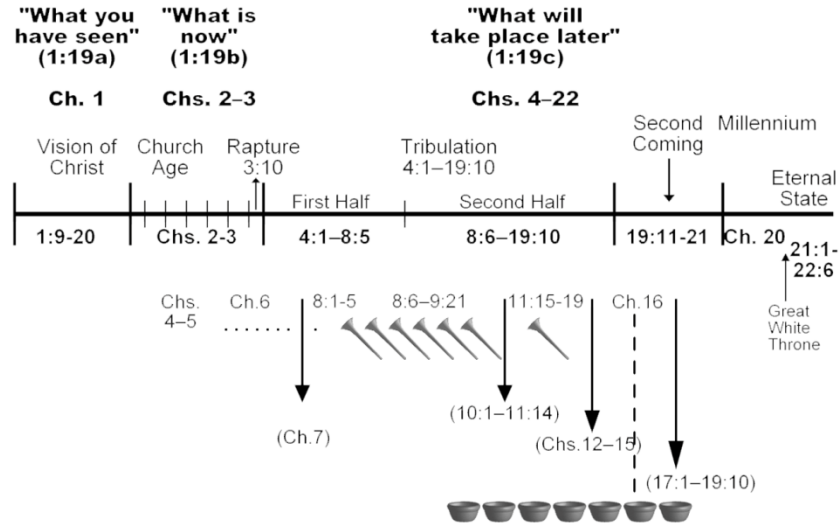
Topic 4: The Seven Trumpets (Rev 8-14)

Topic 5: The Seven Bowls (Rev 15-22)

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

Topic 1: Introduction: God's Sovereignty (Rev 1)

Chronology of Revelation



The immediate destination of the prophecy is the seven churches of the Roman province of Asia (Rev 1:4, 11; 2-3), but the recurring phrase “hear what the Spirit says to the churches” indicates that these churches were only representative of a much wider Christian audience. This is supported because the seven churches were not the only ones in the province nor were they the largest. For nearly two thousand years, believers have wondered why Christ chose to write to these particular churches. Then, in the late nineteenth century, William M. Ramsay, the first Professor of Classical Archaeology at Oxford University, surveyed Turkey. He discovered that a circular road connected the seven historical churches in the exact order that they appear in Revelation 2-3 (*The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904], 468). This remains the best reason why they were chosen as the means to distribute the prophecy to all the churches.

Revelation Sovereignty of Christ in Future Victory									
Sovereignty in person			Sovereignty over churches		Sovereignty in End-Time events				
1			2–3		4–22				
“What you have seen” (1:19a)			“What is now” (1:19b)		“What will take place later” (1:19c)				
Past			Present		Future				
Christ unveiled			Churches unveiled		Consummation unveiled				
God on earth			God’s ambassadors on earth		From hell on earth to heaven on earth				
The judge			The assignments		The judgments & rewards				
Subject 1:1-3	Worship of Trinity 1:4-8	Glorified Christ 1:9-20	Seven Churches of Asia: Ephesus; Smyrna; Pergamum; Thyatira; Sardis; Philadelphia; Laodicea		Tribulation 4:1–19:10	Second Coming 19:11-21	Millennium 20	Eternal State 21:1– 22:5	Closing Imminency 22:6-21
Island of Patmos									
AD 95									

- **Revelation: The Sovereignty of Christ in Future Victory**

- **Author:** The apostle John

- **Date:** AD 95

- **Key Word:** Triumph

- **Key Verse:** Revelation 1:19

- **Summary Statement:**
Through John, God discloses the sovereignty of Jesus Christ in His ultimate future triumph. John writes to encourage the believers to persevere in the faith, despite both internal compromise and external opposition.

- **Application:** Does your life show that you are on the winning team? Do your goals, values, and disposition show that you represent the Victor of the world?

Are You on the Winning Team?



Reading Assignment

- Please read Revelation 1.
- Please read the article “Introduction to Revelation” and focus on the section about God’s Sovereignty in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.
- Please memorize the key verse: Revelation 1:19.

QUESTION 1

Revelation is the only book of the Bible that promises a _____ for reading and obeying its message.

QUESTION 2

Match the interpretive view of Revelation in the left-hand column with its explanation as listed in the right-hand column.

<i>Interpretive View</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
The allegorical	Insists that the events in Revelation 4–22 are not yet fulfilled but will take place only after the church age.
The preterist	Interprets the book as a non-literal, timeless depiction of the triumph of good, God, over evil, Satan.
The historicist	Argues that the events of Revelation 2–19 are past. That they were fulfilled in the early history of the church.
The futurist	Says that Revelation 4–19 occurred between Christ’s first and second advents as a symbolic depiction of the church age, which is also depicted in Revelation 2–3.

QUESTION 3

What is the main feature of the book of Revelation?

- A) The Rapture
- B) The Tribulation
- C) The Second Advent
- D) The Reign of Christ

QUESTION 4

According to Revelation 1:19, what is the God-given threefold outline of Revelation?

Topic 1 Key Points:

- For reading and obeying its message, Revelation uniquely promises a blessing.
- Of the four main interpretive views of Revelation, the futurist view best correlates with the events of this prophecy and follows the inspired outline of Revelation 1:19.
- The main feature of Revelation is the Second Advent, and the readers are exhorted to look for Christ’s return.
- The God-given threefold outline of Revelation (Rev 1:19) is “what you saw, what is, and what will be after these things.”

Topic 2: The Seven Churches (Rev 2–3)

Locations of the Seven Churches



Revelation 2–3 records the only letters written by Christ that have been saved for us. This book is also the only NT writing containing individual letters for different churches. These are actual historical churches that existed near the end of the first century. The instructions within the letters are invaluable insights into how Christ evaluates His churches.

These evaluations are personalized, even naming names, which reminds us that Christ sees everything we do (Rev 2:13). He sees and judges us with those same piercing eyes that saw past the physical exterior and evaluated the hearts of those He met when He walked the earth (Mk 3:5; Lk 22:61; Rev 2:18). How much purer would our personal walk and our churches be if we kept that image of discernment constantly in mind?

Christ Sees Everything We Do



Reading Assignment

- Please read Revelation 2–3.
- Please read the article “The Seven Churches” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 5

Match the church and the reference in the left-hand column with the description of Christ in the right-hand column.

<i>Church/Reference</i>	<i>Description of Christ</i>
Ephesus (Rev 2:1)	The one who has eyes that are like a fiery flame and has feet that are like polished bronze
Smyrna (Rev 2:8)	The one who has the sharp, double-edged sword
Pergamum (Rev 2:12)	The holy one, the true one, who holds the key of David, who opens doors that no one can shut, and shuts doors that no one can open
Thyatira (Rev 2:18)	The one who has a firm grasp on the seven stars in His right hand—the one who walks among the seven golden lampstands
Sardis (Rev 3:1)	The one who is the first and the last, the one who was dead, but who came to life
Philadelphia (Rev 3:7)	The one who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars
Laodicea (Rev 3:14)	The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God's creation

QUESTION 6

Match the church and the reference in the left-hand column with the promised reward in the right-hand column.

<i>Church/Reference</i>	<i>Promised Reward</i>
Ephesus (Rev 2:7)	The one who conquers is allowed to sit with Me on My throne, just as I too conquered and sat down with My Father on His throne.
Smyrna (Rev 2:10-11)	Those with clean clothes will walk with Me in white and the conqueror will also dress in white, and I will never erase his name from the Book of Life, but will declare his name before My Father and His angels.
Pergamum (Rev 2:17)	Remain faithful unto death for the crown that is life itself. The one who conquers will not be harmed by the second death.
Thyatira (Rev 2:26-29)	The conqueror who continues in My deeds will receive authority over the nations and the morning star.
Sardis (Rev 3:4-6)	The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of My God and write on him God's name and city and My new name as well.
Philadelphia (Rev 3:12-13)	The conqueror will receive some hidden manna, and a white stone with a new name that no one else knows.
Laodicea (Rev 3:21-22)	To the one who conquers, I will permit him to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.

Topic 2 Key Points:

- Christ is described in each letter according to the needs of each individual church.
- The overcomers in each church are promised rewards, which are especially meaningful to their challenges.

Topic 3: The Seven Seals (Rev 4–7)

The first half of the Tribulation depicts Christ's sovereignty over the Antichrist during this relatively peaceful period (Rev 4:1–8:5). An introduction to the Tribulation judgments first shows Christ's heavenly position (Rev 4–5). The awesome heavenly throne points to the greatness of God, and therefore, of Christ, who dwells there (Rev 4). The Lamb, Jesus Christ, alone is shown to be worthy to break the seals and open the scroll. This indicates His sovereign authority to judge the world (Rev 5). These seal judgments will take place during the first half of the seven-year tribulation.

Seal Judgments



Though the first half of the Tribulation is horrible by any standard, these seal judgments seem almost tame compared to the judgments that come in the second half (Dan 9:27; Mt 24:15-21). The beginning of the second half is triggered by the abomination of desolation and beginning of the trumpet judgments is simultaneous with that event (Dan 9:27; Mt 24:15-21; Rev 8:1). But the unique judgments set the scene for the later judgments. So, what judgments happen as each seal is opened?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Revelation 4–5.
- Please read the article “The Seven Seals” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 7

Match the seal in the left-hand column with the response at its opening as noted in the right-hand column.

Seal	Response
Seal 1	A rider on a black horse brings famine to control commodity prices.
Seal 2	God reassures the martyrs in heaven that He is sovereign and worthy of trust.
Seal 3	A rider on a pale horse brings death to one-fourth of the people on earth.
Seal 4	A rider on a red horse brings war to show political control.
Seal 5	A rider on a white horse goes out to conquer.
Seal 6	Men fear the sovereign God more than earthquakes and signs in the sky.

QUESTION 8

It seems best to identify the rider of the white horse in Revelation 6:1-2 as _____.

QUESTION 9

The sealing of 12,000 Jews from every tribe and the presence of the Gentiles from every ethnic group shows how God fulfills the Great Commission during the Tribulation. *True or False?*

Topic 3 Key Points:

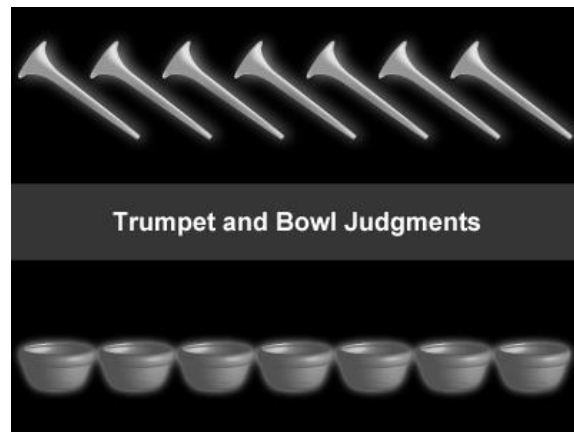
- The seven seals reveal conditions that are initiated by heaven and that affect earth during the first half of the Tribulation. This includes the revelation of the Antichrist as both a political and a commercial ruler with judgments that result in massive death and destruction.
- The first horseman is best identified as the Antichrist.
- God's mercy and salvation are still present during the seal judgments.

Topic 4: The Seven Trumpets (Rev 8–14)

Judgments of Seals, Trumpets, and Bowls			
Number	Seals Opened by the Lamb	Trumpets Blown by seven angels	Bowls Poured by seven angels
1	White horse: conqueror	Hail and fire: 1/3 of vegetation burnt	Sores
2	Red horse: war	Mountain of fire: 1/3 of creatures in the sea destroyed	Sea becomes blood; all marine life dies
3	Black horse: famine	Star named Wormwood falls: 1/3 of fresh water poisoned	Fresh water turned to blood
4	Pale horse: death	Partial darkness: 1/3 of sun, moon, and stars	Scorching sun burns men
	Trumpets 5-7 announced as woes		
5	Martyrs reassured	Woe #1: Angel releases locusts from abyss	Darkness on beast's kingdom
6	Great day of wrath: earthquakes, signs in heaven	Woe #2: Four angels loosed at Euphrates; they slay 1/3 of earth's population	Euphrates dries up; kings assemble for war at Armageddon
	The 144,000 sealed	Mystery of God to be concluded with 7 th trumpet	
7	1/2 hour of silence; introduction of trumpets	Announcement of the Lord's victory	Severe earthquake and great hail

The second half of the Tribulation, the Great Tribulation, is recorded in both trumpet and bowl judgments. It includes supplementary information, which demonstrates Christ's sovereignty over the entire earth, its religions, and its political powers (Rev 8:6–19:10). The complete depravity of earth's inhabitants of this time is clearly shown:

The rest of humanity, who had not been killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands so as to stop worshiping demons and idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk about. Furthermore, they did not repent of their murders, of their magic spells, of their sexual immorality, or of their stealing. (Rev 9:20-21)



But what is the response of the inhabitants of the earth during the time of the Tribulation to these righteous judgments of God? How do they respond to God's provision of 144,000 missionaries and two special witnesses (Rev 7:1-17; 11:1-14)?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Revelation 12–14.
- Please read the article “The Seven Trumpets” in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

QUESTION 10

Please match the first six trumpet judgments in the left-hand column with the response at its sounding in the right-hand column.

<i>Trumpet</i>	<i>Response</i>
Trumpet 1	Releases terrible, supernatural, locust-like creatures that torment only non-Christians for five months
Trumpet 2	Kills many people by polluting one third of the fresh water, which is caused by the falling of Wormwood, a blazing star
Trumpet 3	Releases terrible, supernatural horse-and-rider creatures from the Euphrates, which slay one third of earth's inhabitants
Trumpet 4	Destroys one third of the sea creatures and ships by a huge fiery object, which turns one third of the saltwater seas into blood
Trumpet 5	Burns up one third of the earth's vegetation by hail and fire
Trumpet 6	Causes partial darkness from the striking of a third of the sun, moon, and stars

Warning of Last Three Trumpet Blasts



QUESTION 11

Why are the last three trumpets called woes?

- A) Because they destroy human resources
- B) Because they affect people directly
- C) Because they cause so much pain
- D) There is no discernable reason

QUESTION 12

As symbolized by the woman with the stars in Revelation 12, whom does Satan specifically target for persecution in the second-half of the Tribulation?

- A) Jesus
- B) Believers in Christ
- C) Israel
- D) Those without his mark

QUESTION 13

Briefly describe the False Prophet of Revelation 13:11-18 and his role.

Topic 4 Key Points:

- The seven trumpets are judgments that are initiated by heaven in the second half of the Tribulation. The judgments are now intensified and culminate in three woes that directly affect humanity.
- Israel is a singular target for Satan's persecutions during the second half of the Tribulation.
- The False Prophet is the Beast's assistant, who promotes his worship and persecutes the believers.

Topic 5: The Seven Bowls (Rev 15–22)

Preparation for the bowl judgments of Revelation 16 further heightens the expectation for the climactic bowl judgments that immediately precede Christ's return (Rev 15). Revelation 15:2 shows a vision of those who are victorious over the Beast, his mark, his image, and his name. But the scene in heaven is ominous as smoke fills the heavenly temple. No one enters it until these bowl judgments, which finish the wrath of God, are poured out (Rev 15:7-8).

So far the tension is building, and the outcome and the eventual victor may still seem to be in doubt. But the Antichrist and the False Prophet, though formidable to humanity on earth, are merely pawns in Satan's game (Rev 12; 19:19-20:3). Similarly, Christ has not yet personally appeared on earth but is represented by His saints. What happens when the main combatants finally meet? And what conditions does the victor bring to earth?

Reading Assignment

- Please read Revelation 20–22.
- Please read the article "The Seven Bowls" in the Articles section at the end of this lesson.

The Consummation of All Things	
Genesis 1–3	Revelation 20–22
In the beginning God created the <i>heavens and the earth</i> (1:1)	Then I saw <i>new heavens and a new earth</i> (21:1)
The darkness He called <i>night</i> (1:5)	There will be <i>no night</i> there (21:25; 22:5)
God made <i>two great lights</i> , sun and moon (1:16)	The city <i>does not need the sun or moon</i> (22:1-2)
Trees and rivers (2:8-14)	The tree and the river (22:1-2)
In the day you eat of it you will surely <i>die</i> (2:17)	There will be <i>no more death</i> (21:4)
Husband and wife	Lamb and bride
Satan <i>appears</i> as deceiver of mankind (3:1)	Satan <i>disappears</i> forever (20:10)
Defilement <i>enters</i> the garden (3:6-7)	Defilement <i>never enters</i> the city (21:27)
Fellowship with God <i>broken</i> (3:8-10)	Fellowship with God <i>restored</i> (21:3)
<i>Initial</i> triumph of the serpent (3:13)	<i>Ultimate</i> triumph of the Lamb (20:10; 22:3)
I will greatly <i>multiply your sorrow</i> (3:16)	There will be <i>no more... sorrow or crying or pain</i> (21:4)
<i>Cursed</i> is the ground because of you (3:17)	<i>No longer</i> will there be any <i>curse</i> (22:3)
Man's dominion <i>broken</i> in the fall of the first man, Adam (3:19)	Man's dominion <i>restored</i> in the rule of the new man, Christ (22:5)
First paradise <i>closed</i> (3:23)	New Paradise <i>opened</i> (21:25)
<i>Prohibition</i> from the tree of life (3:24)	<i>Access</i> to the tree of life (22:14)
Man <i>driven from God's presence</i> (3:24)	They <i>will see His face</i> (22:4)

QUESTION 14

Please match the bowl in the left-hand column with the response at its outpouring in the right-hand column.

<i>Bowl</i>	<i>Response</i>
Bowl 1	Plunges the Antichrist's kingdom into darkness
Bowl 2	Inflicts ugly, painful sores on the Antichrist's followers
Bowl 3	Dries up the Euphrates so that the Oriental armies can cross over it to war against other nations at Armageddon
Bowl 4	Burns unrepentant people with the sun's fire
Bowl 5	Produces both an earthquake, which levels mountains and islands, and forty-five-kilogram hailstones
Bowl 6	Kills freshwater marine life by turning all rivers and springs into blood
Bowl 7	Kills saltwater marine life by turning the seas into blood

QUESTION 15

Please place the following events in chronological order by matching the order in the left-hand column with the event in the right-hand column.

<i>Order</i>	<i>Event</i>
First	Christ's millennial reign
Second	Destruction of religious and commercial Babylon
Third	The marriage supper of the Lamb
Fourth	The Beast and the False Prophet cast into the lake of fire
Fifth	The judgment at the Great White Throne
Sixth	The second advent of Christ
Seventh	Satan's defeat

QUESTION 16

Revelation concludes by reminding the readers that Christ's coming is imminent. *True or False?*

Topic 5 Key Points:

- The seven bowls are judgments that are initiated by heaven and immediately precede Christ's return: The judgments are now hyper-intensified and build upon and rapidly follow each other.
- Revelation describes in chronological order the future events of the Second Advent, the judgments, the millennial reign, Satan's rebellion, and the eternal state.
- The conclusion to the prophecy reminds the readers that Jesus Christ's second coming is imminent so that they might be ready to meet Him unashamedly (Rev 22:6-21).

Topic 6: Knowing, Being, and Doing

QUESTION 17

Match the title on the left side with the reference from Revelation at the bottom of each column.

Major Events in Revelation					
	Instructions				
The Bowl Judgments					
Christ's Second Advent					
Letters to the Church					
The Trumpet Judgments					
The Seal Judgments					
	Rev 2–3	Rev 6	Rev 8–9	Rev 16	Rev 19

QUESTION 18

As you have seen, Revelation is full of symbolism. Please open your Life Notebook and explain why you think it is written in symbolic language instead of plain language. What does the symbolism accomplish that plain words would not?

QUESTION 19

In 1 John 5:4-5, John gives a definition of the one who conquers the world. He also refers to a conqueror in Revelation 2:1–3:22. Please open your Life Notebook and answer the following questions: Are the conquerors in these two passages the same or different? Why or why not?

QUESTION 20

Please open your Life Notebook and record anything new that you have learned from this lesson, and include any applications that you should make to your life.

QUESTION 21

Match the key word to the column with the book at the bottom of each column.

Unit 4 - Key Words of the Bible				
				Instructions
Order				
Doctrine				
Superiority				
Conduct				
	Hebrews	Titus	1 Timothy	2 Timothy

QUESTION 22

Match the key word to the column with the book at the bottom of each column.

Unit 4 - Key Words of the Bible				
				Instructions
Pretenders				
Triumph				
Love				
Missionaries				
Limits				
	1 John	2 John	3 John	Jude
				Revelation

Lesson 16 Self Check

QUESTION 1

Revelation promises a blessing to all believers who read and apply its message. *True or False?*

QUESTION 2

Which of the following interpretive views of Revelation argue that the events in Revelation 2–19 were fulfilled in the early history of the church?

- A) The preterist
- B) The allegorical
- C) The futurist
- D) The historicist

QUESTION 3

The description of Jesus to the different churches in Revelation 2–3 is personalized to them. *True or False?*

QUESTION 4

The rewards Jesus offers to the various churches in Revelation 2–3 are for those who _____.

QUESTION 5

This course recognizes the rider on the white horse from the first seal in Revelation as:

- A) The False Prophet
- B) Satan
- C) Christ
- D) The Antichrist

QUESTION 6

In what way does the parenthetical remark in Revelation 7, between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals, show that God's mercy is still present during the Tribulation?

- A) By shortening the time of the Tribulation
- B) By sealing 12,000 witnesses from each tribe of Israel
- C) By allowing anyone to remain alive
- D) By allowing the inhabitants of earth to hide under rocks and in caves

QUESTION 7

The particular target for Satan's persecutions during the second half of the Tribulation is _____.

QUESTION 8

The last three trumpet judgments, which affect humanity directly, are called _____.

QUESTION 9

Which of the following series of judgments is most intense?

- A) The bowls
- B) The seals
- C) The trumpets
- D) They are all equal

QUESTION 10

Which of the following events happens between the Second Advent and the beginning of the millennial reign?

- A) Satan's final rebellion
- B) The marriage supper of the Lamb
- C) The Beast and the False Prophet being cast into the lake of fire
- D) The judgment at the Great White Throne

Unit 4 Exam

QUESTION 1

In 1 Timothy 2, when Paul requested prayer for all men, which of the following was NOT his concern?

- A) That we may lead a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity
- B) Because prayer for all is good and is welcome before God our Savior
- C) So each individual country can become a Christian nation
- D) Because He wants all people to be saved and to come to know the truth

QUESTION 2

The members of a church voted to display their country's flag at all services but the elected church leadership overruled that vote, and now the flag will not be displayed. According to your reading on church authority, the flag should be displayed. *True or False?*

QUESTION 3

The book of 1 Timothy states that the danger of promoting a new convert to the status of an elder is that he may become _____.

QUESTION 4

In 1 Timothy 5, Paul counsels Timothy that older, godly widows who are without family should remarry. *True or False?*

QUESTION 5

According to 2 Timothy 4, Paul was absolutely sure that he would receive a crown of righteousness from God. *True or False?*

QUESTION 6

In Titus 2:10, Paul instructs Titus to treat groups of younger men, older men, women, and slaves in certain ways. The general principle for all groups is to treat them with _____.

QUESTION 7

The raging fires that threaten the readers in Hebrews are best understood as temporal, earthly fires. *True or False?*

QUESTION 8

In the first warning passage in Hebrews, the writer included himself among those that could "drift away." *True or False?*

QUESTION 9

In Hebrews, the readers' temptation to return to the Old Covenant is compared with Israel's temptation at _____.

QUESTION 10

According to Hebrews 5:11-14, why were these readers still infants?

- A) They had unconfessed sin in their lives.
- B) They had not developed their consciences.
- C) They worshipped angels along with God.
- D) They were new converts in the faith.

QUESTION 11

According to the third warning in Hebrews 6:4-8, as long as these believers were still alive, there would always be room for repentance from this apostasy. *True or False?*

QUESTION 12

In the fifth warning passage (Heb 12:18-29), which of the following is the author's main idea?

- A) Retribution is greater under the New Covenant.
- B) Retribution is less under the New Covenant but do not take advantage of God's grace.
- C) Retribution is greater under the Old Covenant because the New Covenant contains more grace.
- D) Retribution is the same under both covenants.

QUESTION 13

The book of 1 John defines abiding in Christ as obeying God's commands and _____.

- A) Loving one's brothers
- B) Praying in the Spirit
- C) Denying self
- D) Carrying your cross

QUESTION 14

According to 1 John 2:26-28, which of the following is a danger of not abiding in Christ?

- A) Loss of salvation
- B) Being cast into darkness
- C) Unanswered prayer
- D) Shame at His return

QUESTION 15

One basic tenet of Gnosticism is the exaltation of the intellect. *True or False?*

QUESTION 16

The natural interpretation of 2 John 10 is that false teachers should not be allowed in a believer's house or even given a greeting. *True or False?*

QUESTION 17

In 3 John 4, which is John's greatest joy?

- A) Immediate access to God's presence
- B) Seeing his children walking in the truth
- C) Experiencing God's love
- D) His salvation

QUESTION 18

Jude originally intended to write to his readers about their mutual _____.

QUESTION 19

In Jude, the person given as a biblical example of the false teacher's willingness to kill is _____.

QUESTION 20

The interpretive view of Revelation, which insists that events in Revelation 4–22 are not yet fulfilled but will take place only after the church age, is called the _____.

QUESTION 21

The rewards Jesus offers to the various churches in Revelation 2–3 are offered to those who _____.

QUESTION 22

Which series of judgments occurs during the first half of the Tribulation?

- A) The trumpets
- B) The bowls
- C) The seals
- D) Both the trumpets and the bowls

QUESTION 23

Which is the most intense series of judgments?

- A) The trumpets
- B) The seals
- C) The bowls
- D) They are equally intense

QUESTION 24

In Revelation, when God's wrath is the most severe, more people tend to repent and seek salvation. *True or False?*

QUESTION 25

Which of the following events happens between the setting up of the millennial reign and the eternal state?

- A) Satan's final rebellion
- B) The marriage supper of the Lamb
- C) The Beast and the False Prophet being cast into the lake of fire
- D) The Second Advent

Lesson 16 Answers to Questions

QUESTION 1: Blessing

In addition to this blessing (Rev 1:3), it also has a curse for those who add or take away from the words of the prophecy (Rev 22:18-19).

QUESTION 2

<i>Interpretive View</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
The allegorical	Interprets the book as a non-literal, timeless depiction of the triumph of good, God, over evil, Satan.
The preterist	Argues that the events of Revelation 2–19 are past. That they were fulfilled in the early history of the church.
The historicist	Says that Revelation 4–19 occurred between Christ’s first and second advents as a symbolic depiction of the church age, which is also depicted in Revelation 2–3.
The futurist	Insists that the events in Revelation 4–22 are not yet fulfilled but will take place only after the church age.

QUESTION 3

C. The Second Advent

John relates Christ’s second coming, which fulfills Zechariah 12:10, as the main feature of his Revelation and exhorts his readers to look for Christ’s return (Rev 1:7).

QUESTION 4

“Therefore write what you saw, what is, and what will be after these things.”

QUESTION 5

<i>Church/Reference</i>	<i>Description of Christ</i>
Ephesus (Rev 2:1)	The one who has a firm grasp on the seven stars in His right hand—the one who walks among the seven golden lampstands
Smyrna (Rev 2:8)	The one who is the first and the last, the one who was dead, but who came to life
Pergamum (Rev 2:12)	The one who has the sharp, double-edged sword
Thyatira (Rev 2:18)	The one who has eyes that are like a fiery flame and who has feet that are like polished bronze
Sardis (Rev 3:1)	The one who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars
Philadelphia (Rev 3:7)	The holy one, the true one, who holds the key of David, who opens doors that no one can shut, and who shuts doors that no one can open
Laodicea (Rev 3:14)	The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God’s creation

QUESTION 6

<i>Church/Reference</i>	<i>Promised Reward</i>
Ephesus (Rev 2:7)	To the one who conquers, I will permit him to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.
Smyrna (Rev 2:10-11)	Remain faithful unto death for the crown that is life itself. The one who conquers will not be harmed by the second death.
Pergamum (Rev 2:17)	The conqueror will get some hidden manna, and a white stone with a new name that no one else knows.
Thyatira (Rev 2:26-29)	The conqueror who continues in My deeds will get authority over the nations and the morning star.
Sardis (Rev 3:4-6)	Those with clean clothes will walk with Me in white and the conqueror will also dress in white, and I will never erase his name from the Book of Life, but will declare his name before My Father and His angels.
Philadelphia (Rev 3:12-13)	The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of My God and write on him God's name and city and My new name as well.
Laodicea (Rev 3:21-22)	The one who conquers is allowed to sit with Me on My throne, just as I too conquered and sat down with My Father on His throne.

QUESTION 7

<i>Seal</i>	<i>Response</i>
Seal 1	A rider on a white horse goes out to conquer.
Seal 2	A rider on a red horse brings war to show political control.
Seal 3	A rider on a black horse brings famine to control commodity prices.
Seal 4	A rider on a pale horse brings death to one-fourth of the people on earth.
Seal 5	God reassures the martyrs in heaven that He is sovereign and worthy of trust.
Seal 6	Men fear the sovereign God more than earthquakes and signs in the sky.

QUESTION 8: Antichrist

Many have identified this horseman as Jesus Christ due to superficial similarities with the horseman at the Second Advent. But this rider is a counterfeit of Christ, having a different purpose, name, companions, apparel, time, and context.

QUESTION 9: True

A parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seals provides hope in God's mercy even during judgment, by saving believing Jews and Gentiles from every nation (Rev 7:1-17).

QUESTION 10

<i>Trumpet</i>	<i>Response</i>
Trumpet 1	Burns up one third of the earth's vegetation by hail and fire
Trumpet 2	Destroys one third of the sea creatures and ships by a huge fiery object, which turns one third of the saltwater seas into blood
Trumpet 3	Kills many people by polluting one third of the fresh water, which is caused by the falling of Wormwood, a blazing star
Trumpet 4	Causes partial darkness from the striking of a third of the sun, moon, and stars
Trumpet 5	Releases terrible, supernatural, locust-like creatures that torment only non-Christians for five months
Trumpet 6	Releases terrible, supernatural horse-and-rider creatures from the Euphrates, which slay one third of earth's inhabitants

QUESTION 11

B. Because they affect people directly

An eagle warns of the last three trumpet blasts by calling them woes since they affect people directly. In contrast, the first four trumpets destroy humanity's resources.

QUESTION 12

C. Israel

The figurative language of the flood being swallowed up by the earth reveals that Satan will persecute them after he is cast out of heaven. It is specifically "a time of trouble for the descendants of Jacob" (Jer 30:7).

QUESTION 13

Your answer should be similar to the following: The False Prophet, represented by the beast from the earth, glorifies the Antichrist and persecutes those who lack the mark of the Antichrist.

QUESTION 14

<i>Bowl</i>	<i>Response</i>
Bowl 1	Inflicts ugly, painful sores on the Antichrist's followers
Bowl 2	Kills saltwater marine life by turning the seas into blood
Bowl 3	Kills freshwater marine life by turning all rivers and springs into blood
Bowl 4	Burns unrepentant people with the sun's fire
Bowl 5	Plunges the Antichrist's kingdom into darkness
Bowl 6	Dries up the Euphrates so that the Oriental armies can cross over it to war against other nations at Armageddon
Bowl 7	Produces both an earthquake, which levels mountains and islands, and forty-five-kilogram hailstones

QUESTION 15

<i>Order</i>	<i>Event</i>
First	Destruction of religious and commercial Babylon
Second	The marriage supper of the Lamb
Third	The second advent of Christ
Fourth	The Beast and the False Prophet cast into the lake of fire
Fifth	Christ's millennial reign
Sixth	Satan's defeat
Seventh	The judgment at the Great White Throne

QUESTION 16: True

The conclusion to the prophecy reminds the readers that Jesus Christ's coming is imminent and they need to be ready to meet Him unashamedly (Rev 22:6-21).

QUESTION 17

Major Events in Revelation				
				Instructions
Letters to the Church	The Seal Judgments	The Trumpet Judgments	The Bowl Judgments	Christ's Second Advent
Rev 2–3	Rev 6	Rev 8–9	Rev 16	Rev 19

QUESTION 18: *Your answer*

QUESTION 19: *Your answer*

QUESTION 20: *Your answer*

QUESTION 21

Unit 4 - Key Words of the Bible

	Instructions			
	Superiority	Conduct	Order	Doctrine
	Hebrews	Titus	1 Timothy	2 Timothy

QUESTION 22

Unit 4 - Key Words of the Bible

[illegible]

Lesson 16 Self Check Answers

QUESTION 1: True

QUESTION 2

A. The preterist

QUESTION 3: True

QUESTION 4

Correct answers include:

Overcome

Conquer

QUESTION 5

D. The Antichrist

QUESTION 6

B. By sealing 12,000 witnesses from each tribe of Israel

QUESTION 7: Israel

QUESTION 8: Woes

QUESTION 9

A. The bowls

QUESTION 10

C. The Beast and the False Prophet being cast into the lake of fire

Unit 4 Exam Answers

QUESTION 1

C. So each individual country can become a Christian nation

QUESTION 2: False

QUESTION 3

Correct answers include:

Arrogant

Conceited

Prideful

QUESTION 4: False

QUESTION 5: True

QUESTION 6: Respect

QUESTION 7: True

QUESTION 8: True

QUESTION 9

Correct answers include:

Kadesh-Barnea

Kadesh

QUESTION 10

B. They had not developed their consciences.

QUESTION 11: False

QUESTION 12

A. Retribution is greater under the New Covenant.

QUESTION 13

A. Loving one's brothers

QUESTION 14

D. Shame at His return

QUESTION 15: True

QUESTION 16: True

QUESTION 17

B. Seeing his children walking in the truth

QUESTION 18: Salvation

QUESTION 19: Cain

QUESTION 20

Correct answers include:

Futurist

Future

QUESTION 21

Correct answers include:

Overcome

Conquer

QUESTION 22

C. The seals

QUESTION 23

C. The bowls

QUESTION 24: False

QUESTION 25

A. Satan's final rebellion

Lesson 16 Articles

Introduction to Revelation

Title: The word *revelation* in the Greek title means “disclosure.” The verb form means “to uncover” or “to reveal.” This book does more than unveil the future. It unveils the person, power, and program of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:1).

Authorship

The author says that he is John, a servant of Christ (Rev 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). Nearly all believers since the first century have thought that the apostle John wrote Revelation. The differences between John’s gospel and the Revelation are negligible.

In contrast to what some modern churches teach, the early church fathers believed in a literal millennium.

Circumstances

Date: The traditional view dates the book at AD 95 during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian (AD 81–96). John was banished to Patmos, an island about 112 kilometers southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea (Rev 1:9). It was during this time that there was imperial persecution on those who refused to worship the emperor (the Beast in Rev 13:4, 15; 14:9–11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). The churches were also in spiritual decline.

However, dates late in Nero’s reign (AD 66–68) or during Vespasian’s reign (AD 69–79), have been suggested with little evidence. Also, the early church father Papias stated that John was martyred with his brother James in AD 44 (Acts 12:1). However, stronger tradition argues that he lived to a ripe old age at Ephesus, which also better fits the book of Revelation.

Occasion: Later first-century churches had internal and external problems, such as:

Internal struggles: By the end of the first century, many churches had compromised their faith. Ephesus did not love Christ (Rev 2:4). Pergamum tolerated heresy (Rev 2:14–15). Thyatira was immoral (Rev 2:21–24). Sardis was dead (Rev 3:1). Laodicea was lukewarm (Rev 3:15–17).

External persecution: These churches also endured severe testing from the Roman government (Rev 1:9; 2:9–10; 3:10). Tradition notes that John himself was boiled in oil but lived through it.

In response to this, John wrote a message of hope. He described the ultimate victory of Christ both to counteract compromise from within and to encourage perseverance in the midst of hostility. Readers see the final future triumph of Christ over evil and can gain confidence in the present.

Characteristics

Revelation is the only New Testament book that primarily deals with the future. Without this book, eschatology would lack the clearest descriptions of these events: the Tribulation (Rev 6–18), the second coming of Christ (Rev 19:11–21), Satan’s binding and the length of the kingdom (Rev 20:1–6), and the Great White Throne of judgment (Rev 20:11–15). It is also the only apocalyptic writing in the New Testament. Apocalyptic writing is characterized by secrecy, pessimism, end times emphases, warnings, triumph of God, etc.

Revelation contains more symbolic, representative language than any other inspired writing. Nearly all of Revelation was revealed to John in a vision by an angel (Rev 1:1). It is written in

response to a direct command from God (Rev 1:10-11, 19). All other NT writings came through the Holy Spirit's prompting of the individuals to write. It also alludes to the OT more than any other NT writing.

This prophecy completes the Christians' spiritual understanding about Jesus Christ by including more about His glory than the Gospels do. Revelation provides its own inspired outline within the text (Rev 1:19): (1) Past—what you have seen (Rev 1:9-20), (2) Present—what is now (Rev 2-3), and (3) Future—what will take place later (Rev 4-22).

Revelation has more songs than any other NT book, and serves as a model for worship. This is the only book that promises a blessing for reading it (Rev 1:3). It is also the only book that John wrote that includes his name in the text (Rev 1:1, 4, 9).

Revelation has more interpretative views than any other NT writing. The four major perspectives are the following (from radical to conservative):

1. The **allegorical** or idealist approach interprets the book as a non-literal, non-historical depiction of the triumph of God over Satan. It was most popular during the third and fourth centuries but finds support from some modern, liberal scholars.

Response: This view ignores the historical context, fails to see that symbols represent real things, has no objective guideline, and contradicts the book's inspired outline in Revelation 1:19.

2. The **preterist**, or past fulfillment, view argues that the events in Revelation 2-19 are past. They were fulfilled in early church history.

Response: When were the judgments of Revelation 6-19 fulfilled? When in history have there been forty-five-kilogram hailstones (Rev 16:21)? What about an army of 200 million (Rev 9:16)?

3. The **historicist** view says that Revelation 4-19 occurred between Christ's first and second advents as a symbolic depiction of the church age. Many say that Revelation 2-3 depicts first-century churches. Thus the main part of the book supposedly depicts Western Europe through the popes, the Reformation, the French revolution, and leaders such as Charlemagne and Mussolini.

Response: This view spiritualizes the thousand-year millennium and literal events. The subjective interpretation of symbols has led to much disagreement in this camp.

4. The **futurist** interpretation insists that events in Revelation 4-22 are not yet fulfilled but will take place after the church age. This includes the Tribulation during the last seven years prior to Christ's second coming (Rev 4-19), the Millennium, and the judgment that follows it (Rev 20). Finally, the new heaven and earth are created (Rev 21-22). It emphasizes God's final victory.

Response: The futurist view best correlates with the nature of the events, predicted in the prophecy. It also follows the inspired outline of Revelation 1:19. It is the approach that this course follows.

Summary of Interpretations on the Book of Revelation				
Views	Millennial view	Rev 1–3	Rev 4–19	Rev 20–22
Allegorical	Postmillennial or amillennial	Historic churches	Symbol of the timeless conflict between good and evil	Victory of good over evil—church over the world
Preterist	Apocalyptic	Historic churches	Symbolic of events in first century—Nero, Mt. Vesuvius eruption	Symbolic of heaven and victory
Historicist	Amillennial or postmillennial	Historic churches	Symbolic of events in the Church Age—fall of Rome, rise of Islam & Catholics, Reformation	Present age or future millennium, General judgment, heaven
Futurist	Premillennial	Historic churches	Future tribulation judgments on apostate church and Antichrist, return of Christ	Future millennium judgment, heaven

Some of the different views listed in the second column can be defined in these ways. The postmillennial view believes that Christ will return after the millennium. The amillennial view states that there is no millennium, but rather that the prophecies about the thousand year reign started being fulfilled immediately after Christ's death and resurrection. The apocalyptic view holds that Christ returned after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. The premillennial view believes that Christ will return to inaugurate the millennium.

God's Sovereignty

Through John, God discloses the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, the subject of his prophecy. John encourages the church by showing them Christ's ability to handle both internal compromise and external opposition (Rev 1).

John's prologue shows that the prophecy is divinely given. The prophecy unveils the sovereignty of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:1-3). His sovereignty is seen by unveiling future events which will rapidly take place. The prophecy is transmitted from the Father to Jesus to an angel, who relates the prophecy to John, who passes it on to other believers, thus establishing its inspiration (Rev 1:1-2). Those people who read, hear, and obey the prophecy will receive a special blessing from God (Rev 1:3).

The seven churches in Asia are addressed. John worships the triune God, especially Christ as the coming and sovereign ruler. He exhorts his readers to watch for Christ's return (Rev 1:4-8). John worships Christ as both the ruler of the world and the redemptive, resurrected revealer of the prophecy, which reminds the readers of His authority over their lives (Rev 1:4-6). Christ's second coming will fulfill Zechariah 12:10 and is the main feature of the book. John exhorts his readers to look for Christ's return (Rev 1:7). John quotes God, who is demonstrating His ability to bring all the promises of the prophecy to pass (Rev 1:8).

Christ's ability to handle the church's internal and external problems is substantiated in John's vision, which he received while on the island of Patmos. By reporting his vision, John reveals his outline for Revelation: "what you saw," "what is," and "what will be after these things" (Rev 1:9-20). Christ commands John to prophesy to the seven churches of Asia in order to reveal His sovereignty (Rev 1:9-11). John is terrified of the glorified Christ, who comforts him with His divine attributes (Rev 1:12-18). Christ commands John to record the threefold-inspired outline (Rev 1:19): (1) The vision John had just seen (Rev 1:9-20). (2) The present authority that Christ

has over the churches (Rev 2–3). (3) The future events that will pass before, during, and after His return (Rev 4–22). The stars in his hand represent the seven churches. The lampstands represent their witness for Christ in a spiritually dark world. These two images show Christ’s authority over the churches (Rev 1:20).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The Seven Churches

The seven letters sent to selected churches in Asia display Christ’s sovereignty and encourage the recipients, who are struggling with internal compromise (Rev 2–3).

Each of these seven churches is a literal church in the Roman province of Asia. Each church is given a description of Christ which speaks to its particular circumstances. He also commends, rebukes, exhorts, and warns the churches appropriately. Each letter ends with a promise for those who conquer.

Ephesus

Christ tells John to write the believers in Ephesus to commend them for their service and their perseverance in God’s truth. This commendation exhorts them to rekindle their former love for Christ (Rev 2:1-7).

1. **Destination:** Ephesus (Rev 2:1)
2. **Description of Christ:** “The One who has a firm grasp on the seven stars in His right hand—the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands” (Rev 2:1).
3. **Commendation:** “I know your works as well as your labor and steadfast endurance, and that you cannot tolerate evil. You have even put to the test those who refer to themselves as apostles (but are not), and you have discovered that they are false. I am also aware that you have persisted steadfastly, endured much for the sake of my name and have not grown weary” (Rev 2:2-3).
4. **Rebuke:** “You have departed from your first love!” (Rev 2:4).
5. **Exhortation:** “Remember from what high state you have fallen and repent! Do the deed you did at first” (Rev 2:5).
6. **Warning:** “If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place” (Rev 2:5, NIV).
7. **Promise:** “To the one who conquers, I will permit him to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God” (Rev 2:7).

Smyrna

Christ then tells John to write the believers in Smyrna to commend their suffering and their poverty as they deal with satanic attacks. This letter exhorts them to fearless and faithful suffering (Rev 2:8-11).

1. **Destination:** Smyrna (Rev 2:8)
2. **Description of Christ:** “The One who is the first and the last, the one who was dead, but came to life” (Rev 2:8).

3. **Commendation:** “I know the distress you are suffering and your poverty (but you are rich). I also know the slander against you by those who call themselves Jews and really are not, but are a synagogue of Satan” (Rev 2:9).
4. **Rebuke:** None
5. **Exhortation:** “Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer” (Rev 2:10, NIV).
6. **Warning:** “...I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days” (Rev 2:10, NIV).
7. **Promise:** “Remain faithful even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown that is life itself...the one who conquers will in no way be harmed by the second death” (Rev 2:10-11).

Pergamum

Christ tells John to write the believers in Pergamum to commend their faithfulness despite satanic attack. This letter exhorts them to reject false teaching in the church (Rev 2:12-17).

1. **Destination:** Pergamum (Rev 2:12)
2. **Description of Christ:** “Him who has the sharp, double-edged sword” (Rev 2:12, NIV).
3. **Commendation:** “I know where you reside, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you continue to cling to my name and you have not denied your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was killed in your city” (Rev 2:13).
4. **Rebuke:** “You have some people there who follow the teaching of Balaam, who instructed Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and commit sexual immorality. In the same way, there are also some among you who follow the teaching of the Nicolaitans” (Rev 2:14-15).
5. **Exhortation:** “Therefore, repent!” (Rev 2:16).
6. **Warning:** “If not, I will come against you quickly and make war against those people with the sword of my mouth” (Rev 2:16).
7. **Promise:** “To the one who conquers, I will give him some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on that stone will be written a new name that no one can understand except the one who receives it” (Rev 2:17).

Thyatira

Christ tells John to write the believers in Thyatira to commend the properly motivated, persevering service of some believers. This letter exhorts the others to repent of immorality (Rev 2:18-29).

1. **Destination:** Thyatira (Rev 2:18)
2. **Description of Christ:** “The One who has eyes like a fiery flame and whose feet are like polished bronze” (Rev 2:18).
3. **Commendation:** “I know your deeds: your love, faith, service, and steadfast endurance... your more recent deeds are greater than your earlier ones” (Rev 2:19).
4. **Rebuke:** “You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and by her teaching deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I have given her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her sexual immorality” (Rev 2:20-21).

5. **Warning:** “I am throwing her onto a bed of violent illness, and those that commit adultery with her into terrible suffering, unless they repent of her deeds. Furthermore, I will strike her followers with a fatal illness, and then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts. I will repay each one of you what your deeds deserve” (Rev 2:22-23).
6. **Exhortation:** “To you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secret (I will not impose any other burden on you): Only hold on to what you have until I come” (Rev 2:24-25, NIV).
7. **Promise:** “To the one who conquers and who continues in my deeds until the end, I will give him authority over the nations” (Rev 2:26).

Sardis

Christ tells John to write the believers in Sardis to commend their reputation for good deeds. This commendation exhorts them to rekindle their obedience to what they had been taught (Rev 3:1-6).

1. **Destination:** Sardis (Rev 3:1)
2. **Description of Christ:** “The One who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars” (Rev 3:1).
3. **Commendation:** “I know your deeds” (Rev 3:1).
4. **Rebuke:** “You have a reputation that you are alive, but in reality you are dead” (Rev 3:1).
5. **Exhortation:** “Wake up then, and strengthen what remains that was about to die, because I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. Therefore, remember what you received and heard, and obey it, and repent” (Rev 3:2-3).
6. **Warning:** “If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will never know at what hour I will come against you” (Rev 3:3).
7. **Promise:** “But you have a few individuals in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes, and they will walk with me dressed in white, because they are worthy. The one who conquers will be dressed like them in white clothing, and I will never erase his name from the book of life, but will declare his name before my Father and before his angels” (Rev 3:4-5).

Philadelphia

Christ tells John to write the believers in Philadelphia to commend their endurance in evangelism despite opposition. This letter encourages them to persevere for their reward (Rev 3:7-13).

1. **Destination:** Philadelphia (Rev 3:7)
2. **Description of Christ:** “The Holy One, the True One, who holds the key of David, who opens doors no one can shut, and shuts doors no one can open” (Rev 3:7).
3. **Commendation:** “I know your deeds. (Look! I have put in front of you an open door that no one can shut.) I know that you have little strength, but you have obeyed my word and have not denied my name” (Rev 3:8).
4. **Rebuke:** None
5. **Promise 1:** “I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept my command to endure

patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth. I am coming soon” (Rev 3:9-11, NIV).

6. **Exhortation:** “Hold on to what you have so that no one can take away your crown” (Rev 3:11).
7. **Warning:** None
8. **Promise 2:** “The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never depart from it. I will write on him the name of my God (the new Jerusalem that comes down out of heaven from my God), and my new name as well” (Rev 3:12).

Laodicea

Christ tells John to condemn the believers in Laodicea for their materialistic, selfish lifestyle. This letter exhorts them to repent and embrace Christ’s lordship in self-sacrifice (Rev 3:14-22).

1. **Destination:** Laodicea (Rev 3:14)
2. **Description of Christ:** “The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God’s creation” (Rev 3:14).
3. **Commendation:** None
4. **Rebuke:** “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot...because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth! Because you say, ‘I am rich and have acquired great wealth, and need nothing,’ but do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked” (Rev 3:15-17).
5. **Exhortation:** “Buy gold from me refined by fire so you can become rich! Buy from me white clothing so you can be clothed and your shameful nakedness will not be exposed, and buy eye salve to put on your eyes so you can see! All those I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent! Listen! I am standing at the door and knocking!” (Rev 3:18-20).
6. **Warning:** None
7. **Promise:** “I will grant the one who conquers permission to sit with me on my throne, just as I too conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne” (Rev 3:21-22).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The Seven Seals

John records future end-time events, which demonstrate the sovereignty and the final triumph of Jesus Christ. He writes to encourage the believers who are struggling with external opposition (Rev 4–22).

These prophecies cover all seven years of the Tribulation with emphasis on the second half. However, the entire prophecy shows how Christ is sovereign and worthy to judge the world (Rev 4:1–19:10).

John records the first half of the Tribulation briefly and depicts Christ’s sovereignty over the Antichrist during this relatively peaceful period (Rev 4:1–8:5). The introduction to the Tribulation judgments shows Christ’s heavenly position (Rev 4–5). The description of the heavenly throne reveals the greatness of God, who dwells there (Rev 4). Christ the Lamb is

shown as worthy to break the seals and open the scroll, thus He demonstrates His authority to judge the world (Rev 5).

Christ opens the seven seals, which reveals His sovereign authority to judge the world (Rev 6:1–8:5):

- The first seal, a white horse, allows the Antichrist to conquer the world through his government and his covenant with Israel (see Dan 9:27). This shows that Christ is sovereign over the Antichrist (Rev 6:1-2). *Note:* Some believe that Jesus is the horseman because of the white horse mentioned in the description of His Second Advent (Rev 19:11-16; see Rev 1:14; 2:17; 3:4, 5, 18). However, white does not always illustrate holiness (Mt 23:27; Acts 23:3). This color may indicate that the rider seeks to appear holy (Mt 24:5; Rev 11:7; 12:3; 13:7). Also, the only commonality between the riders in Revelation 6:2 and Revelation 19:11-16 is the color of the horse.
- The second seal, a red horse, brings war. This depicts how the Antichrist controls the world as a political leader (Rev 6:3-4).
- The third seal, a black horse, allows the Antichrist to use a famine to control commodity prices. This shows his global economic control (Rev 6:5-6).
- The fourth seal, a pale horse, affirms that death will come to over one billion people through war, famine, plague, or roaming wild beasts (Rev 6:7-8).
- The fifth seal depicts God's reassurance to the martyrs in heaven that He alone is sovereign and that they should trust His plan (Rev 6:9-11).
- The sixth seal reveals that men will fear a glimpse of the Sovereign God more than a mountain-leveling earthquake and signs in the sky (Rev 6:12-17)!

At this point, Revelation provides additional information, which is not tied specifically to a judgment. Many consider chapter 7 to be a parenthetical insertion to the chronology. There are other parenthetical passages inserted later in the book. This first parenthetical comment, between the sixth and seventh seals, provides hope for God's mercy in judgment by saving the Jew and the Gentile believers from every nation (Rev 7:1-17). Sealing 12,000 Jews from each of the twelve tribes shows God's mercy even during the Tribulation (Rev 7:1-8). The Gentiles that are saved from every nation indicate God's merciful fulfillment of the Great Commission (Rev 7:9-17).

- The seventh seal contains no judgment as it introduces the trumpet judgments, which are in response to the prayer for vindication by the Tribulation martyrs (Rev 8:1-5; see Rev 6:10).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The Seven Trumpets

The second half of the Tribulation is recorded in both the trumpet and the bowl judgments along with supplementary information. These judgments demonstrate Christ's sovereignty over the entire earth, its religions, and the political powers. Angels sound seven trumpets of judgment, which reveal Christ's sovereign authority to judge the world (Rev 8:6–11:19):

- The first trumpet burns up one third of the earth's vegetation by hail and fire (Rev 8:6-7).
- The second trumpet destroys one third of the sea creatures and ships by a huge fiery object that turns one third of the saltwater seas into blood (Rev 8:8-9).

- The third trumpet kills many people by polluting one third of the fresh water. This is caused by the falling of a blazing star named Wormwood (Rev 8:10-11).
- The fourth trumpet strikes a third of the sun, the moon, and the stars, causing partial darkness (Rev 8:12).

Note: An eagle warns of the last three trumpet blasts, naming them woes. These last three affect humans directly, in contrast to the first four trumpets that destroy humanity's resources (Rev 8:13).

- The fifth trumpet, woe #1, releases terrible, supernatural locust-like creatures which torment only the non-Christians for five months (Rev 9:1-12).
- The sixth trumpet, woe #2, releases terrible, supernatural horse-and-rider creatures from the Euphrates that slay one third of earth. Yet the people who remain alive choose to cling to their idols rather than repent (Rev 9:13-21).

Another parenthetical interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets shows that the Tribulation believers experience God's protection, while the unbelievers receive His wrath (Rev 10:1–11:14). An angel reveals undisclosed judgments and tells John to eat a little scroll. This experience signifies the sweetness of God's Word to the believers who are protected from this judgment and its bitterness to the unbelievers who are experiencing His wrath (Rev 10). Two witnesses will prophesy and defeat their enemies for three and a half years. After that time, they will be martyred and resurrected before their enemies. Then 7,000 enemies will die in an earthquake (Rev 11:1-14).

- The seventh trumpet, woe #3, has no specific judgment connected with it, as it introduces the seven bowl judgments (Rev 11:15-19).

A parenthetical interval between the trumpet and the bowl judgments provides additional information about Satan's activity. It also previews the final judgments in order to assure the believers of their triumph and judgment of the unbelievers (Rev 12–14).

More information about Satan's activity to thwart God in the Tribulation gives insight into Israel's persecution. The information also provides instruction on what the believers should do at this time (Rev 12-13). Satan attempts to destroy both Israel and Christ (Rev 12). Israel, symbolized as a pregnant woman, labors to bring Jesus Christ into the world as a man (Rev 12:1-2). Satan and his demons, symbolized as a dragon with stars, seek to destroy the infant Jesus (Rev 12:3-4). Jesus escapes Satan in His ascension to await His millennial rule, and Israel is protected during the last three and a half years of the Tribulation (Rev 12:5-6). Satan is cast from heaven where he accuses the saints and unsuccessfully seeks to destroy Israel in the Great Tribulation (Rev 12:7-21).

Satan's agents—the Antichrist and the False Prophet—are described so that readers of the Tribulation can identify these men and resist them (Rev 13). The Antichrist is represented by the beast from the sea. He gains a worldwide following of unbelievers through satanic power, and he persecutes the Christians (Rev 13:1-10). The False Prophet, represented as a beast from the earth, glorifies the Antichrist and also persecutes those who lack the mark of the Beast (Rev 13:11-18).

The triumph of 144,000 Jews and the judgment of the Antichrist preview the specific judgments at the end of the Tribulation in Revelation 15–17 (Rev 14). The 144,000 Jews escape martyrdom in the Tribulation, which anticipates Christ's triumph at His second coming (Rev 14:1-5). Three angels shout warnings to fear God by rejecting the mark of the Beast. The angels want to encourage believers to wait patiently and faithfully for Christ's return (Rev 14:6-13). The final

Tribulation judgment of the unbelievers by Christ and the three angels is previewed with the figure of grapes trodden in a winepress (Rev 14:14-20).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.

The Seven Bowls

Angels prepare and pour out seven bowls of judgment that reveal Christ's sovereign authority to judge the world before His return (Rev 15-16).

All of Revelation 15 is devoted to the preparation of the bowl judgments. This preparation heightens the reader's expectations for the climactic bowl judgments, which precede Christ's return (Rev 15). The angels pour out seven bowls of judgment, revealing Christ's authority to judge the world (Rev 16). These seven bowl judgments are even more intense than the previous judgments and they occur immediately, while the effects of the previous judgments are still being experienced.

- The first bowl inflicts ugly, painful sores on the Antichrist's followers (Rev 16:1-2).
- The second bowl kills the saltwater marine life by turning the seas into blood (Rev 16:3).
- The third bowl kills the freshwater marine life by turning all rivers and springs into blood (Rev 16:4-7).
- The fourth bowl burns the unrepentant people with the sun's fire (Rev 16:8-9).
- The fifth bowl plunges the Antichrist's kingdom into darkness while the sores and burns continue, but his people still refuse to repent (Rev 16:10-11).
- The sixth bowl dries up the Euphrates river, enabling the Oriental armies to cross it and war against the other nations at Armageddon. But Satan's purpose will be to gather them to fight Christ (Rev 16:12-16).
- The seventh bowl produces both an earthquake, which levels mountains and islands, and forty-five-kilogram hailstones (Rev 16:17-21).

John reveals the fall of the world system and its corresponding regret on earth and contrasts it with the rejoicing in heaven (Rev 17:1–19:10). The fall of the religious and the commercial world system encourages readers that it will be destroyed before Christ installs His own kingdom (Rev 17:1–18:8). The fall of the religious world system—symbolized by the harlot, Babylon the Great—comes after the Antichrist is worshipped in the middle of the Tribulation (Rev 17). The fall of the religious world order is symbolized by a prostitute on a beast with seven heads and ten horns, who commits adultery with false doctrine (Rev 17:1-6). The symbols represent the apostate world church and a ten-nation alliance that is headed by the Antichrist. He replaces this church with self-worship in the middle of the Tribulation (Rev 17:7-18; see Dan 9:27). The fall of the world's commercial system demonstrates Christ's superiority over it and the need for its removal before His kingdom is established (Rev 18:1-8).

Earth's regret over the fall of Babylon is contrasted with heaven's rejoicing. Through this contrast the readers understand God's perspective of Babylon's fall and rejoice at the coming of Christ (Rev 18:9–19:10). The earth mourns because the businessmen can no longer profit from the system's commercial enterprises (Rev 18:9-24). Heaven rejoices and the completed church celebrates her union with Christ. They anticipate His imminent second coming to set up a righteous kingdom (Rev 19:1-10). Heaven rejoices because the destruction of the evil empire allows Christ to replace it (Rev 19:1-6). The marriage feast of the Lamb with His bride, the church, is celebrated in anticipation of the imminent second coming of Christ (Rev 19:7-10).

The second coming of Christ is recorded in order to encourage the persecuted believers that Christ will be the ultimate Victor (Rev 19:11-21). Christ returns to the earth in great power, accompanied by the angels and the saints in order to right the wrongs committed by the Antichrist and the False Prophet. He also shows Himself as the sovereign King of kings and the Lord of lords (Rev 19:11-16). He proves Himself to be the ultimate Victor by defeating the Antichrist, the False Prophet, and their armies at the Battle of Armageddon. This victory encourages the believers who are being persecuted by enemies (Rev 19:17-21).

Prophecies concerning the Millennium demonstrate Christ's sovereignty as the ultimate Victor over the earth, Satan, and death itself (Rev 20). The Millennium fulfills many prophecies of Scripture about Satan being bound and the believers reigning with Christ on earth for 1,000 years (Rev 20:1-6). Satan is bound during the entire Millennium to prevent him from deceiving the nations for the 1,000 years that Christ rules (Rev 20:1-3). Christians, including believing Israel, will reign with Christ to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant as well as other promises that relate to the kingdom of God (Rev 20:4-6). However, Satan will be released one final time, but his final torment in the lake of burning sulfur, after his defeat by Christ at the battle with Gog and Magog, will show Christ's victory over His enemy (Rev 20:7-10). The judgment of the unbelievers at the Great White Throne shows God's just vengeance upon all those who have opposed Him. It also proclaims His victory over the last enemy, death (Rev 20:11-15).

Prophecies about the eternal state show the wonderful future in store for those who are victors with Christ, who defeat the forces of evil (Rev 21:1–22:5). Because the first heaven and earth have passed away, the new heaven and earth are created, one where men are not separated by the sea (Rev 21:1). The negative effects of the fall are no longer experienced in the new Jerusalem because man is restored to complete fellowship with God (Rev 21:2-8). The new Jerusalem is a cubed city, 2500 kilometers on each side, with walls made of jewels and twelve gates. Each gate is made from a single pearl, and the city is lit by the presence of God. The tree of life is on the banks of the river of life, which flows down the middle of the great street of the city (Rev 21:9–22:5).

The conclusion to the prophecy reminds the readers that Jesus Christ's coming is imminent and that they must be ready to meet him unashamedly (Rev 22:6-21).

This concludes the article. Please return to the lesson to finish the topic.