

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the ROMANS



## THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Romans, Paul's greatest work, is placed first among his thirteen epistles in the New Testament. While the four Gospels present the words and works of Jesus Christ, Romans explores the significance of His sacrificial death. Using a question-and-answer format, Paul records perhaps the most systematic presentation of doctrine in the Bible. Romans is more than a book of theology; it is also a book of practical exhortation. The good news of Jesus Christ is more than facts to be believed; it is also a life to be lived—a life of righteousness befitting the person “justified freely by [God’s] grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24).

Although some manuscripts omit “in Rome” in 1:7, 15, the title *Pros Romaïous*, “To the Romans,” has been associated with the epistle almost from the beginning.



## THE AUTHOR OF ROMANS

All critical schools agree on the Pauline authorship (Rom. 1:1) of this foundational book. The vocabulary, style, logic, and theological development are consistent with Paul's other epistles. Paul dictated this letter to a secretary named Tertius (16:22), who was allowed to add his own greeting.

The problem arises not with the authorship but with the disunity of the epistle. Some Latin (but no Greek) manuscripts omit 15:1–16:24, and the closing doxology (16:25–27) is placed at the end of chapter 14 in some manuscripts. These variations have led some scholars to conclude that the last two chapters were not originally part of the epistle or that Paul issued it in two editions. However, most scholars believe that chapter 15 fits in logically with the rest of the epistle. There is more debate over chapter 16, because Paul greets by name twenty-six persons in a church he has never visited. Some scholars contend that it was a separate letter, perhaps written to Ephesus, that was appended to this epistle. Such a letter would be surprising, to say the least (nothing but greetings), especially in the ancient world. It is simpler to understand the list of greetings as Paul's effort as a stranger to the Roman church to list his mutual friends. Paul met these people in the cities of his missionary journeys.

Significantly, the only other Pauline epistle that lists individual greetings was addressed to the believers at Colosse, another church Paul had never visited. It may be that this portion was omitted from some copies of Romans because it did not seem relevant.



## THE TIME OF ROMANS

Paul did not found the church at Rome, and the tradition that Peter was its founder is contrary to the evidence. It is possible that it began when some of the Jews and proselytes to Judaism who became followers of Christ on the Day of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:10) returned to Rome, but it is more likely that Christians from churches established by Paul in Asia, Macedonia, and Greece settled in Rome and led others to Christ. According to this epistle, Gentiles were predominant in the church at Rome (Rom. 1:13; 11:13, 28–31; 15:15–16), but there were also Jewish believers (2:17–3:8; 3:21–4:1; 7:1–14; 14:1–15:12).

Rome was founded in 753 BC, and by the time of Paul, it was one of the greatest cities in the world with over one million inhabitants (one inscription says over four million). It was full of magnificent buildings, but most people were slaves: opulence and squalor coexisted in the Imperial City. The church in Rome was well known (1:8), and it had been established for several years by the time of this letter (see 14:14; 15:23). The believers there were probably numerous, and evidently, they met in several places (16:1–16). The historian Tacitus referred to the Christians who were persecuted under Nero in AD 64 as “an immense multitude.” The gospel filled the gap left by the practically defunct polytheism of Roman religion.

Paul wrote Romans in AD 57, near the end of his third missionary journey (Acts 18:23–21:14; cf. Rom. 15:19). It was evidently written during his three-month stay in Greece (Acts 20:3–6), more specifically, in Corinth. Paul was staying with Gaius of Corinth (Rom. 16:23; cf. 1 Cor. 1:14); and he also mentioned “Erastus, the treasurer of the city” (Rom. 16:23). A first-century inscription in Corinth mentions him: “Erastus, the commissioner of public works, laid this pavement at his own expense.” Paul's collection from the churches of Macedonia and Achaia for the needy Christians in Jerusalem was complete (15:26), and he was ready to deliver it (15:25). Instead of sailing

directly to Jerusalem, Paul avoided a plot by the Jews by first going north to Philippi. He evidently gave this letter to Phoebe from the church at Cencrea, near Corinth, and she carried it to Rome (16:1–2).

## † CHRIST IN ROMANS

Paul presents Jesus Christ as the Second Adam whose righteousness and substitutionary death have provided justification for all who place their faith in Him. Christ offers His righteousness as a gracious gift to sinful people, having borne God’s condemnation and wrath for their sinfulness. His death and resurrection are the basis for the believer’s redemption, justification, reconciliation, salvation, and glorification.

## ✂ KEYS TO ROMANS

**Key Theme:** *The Righteousness of God*—The theme of Romans is found in 1:16–17: God offers the gift of His righteousness to everyone who comes to Christ by faith. Paul writes Romans to reveal God’s sovereign plan of salvation (Rom. 1–8), to show how Jews and Gentiles fit into that plan (chs. 9–11), and to exhort them to live righteous and harmonious lives (chs. 12–16). In his sweeping presentation of God’s plan of salvation, Paul moves from condemnation to glorification and from positional truth to practical truth. Key words, such as *righteousness, faith, law, all, and sin* each appear at least sixty times in this epistle.

**Key Verses:** *Romans 1:16–17; 3:21–25*—“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith’” (1:16–17).

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed” (3:21–25).

**Key Chapters:** *Romans 6–8*—Foundational to all teaching on the spiritual life is the central passage of Romans 6–8. The answers to the questions of how to be delivered from sin, how to live a balanced life under grace, and how to live the victorious Christian life through the power of the Holy Spirit are all contained here. Many consider this to be the principal passage on conforming to the image of Jesus Christ.

## 📐 SURVEY OF ROMANS

Because of its majestic declaration of the divine plan of salvation, Martin Luther wrote: “This epistle is the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel . . . It can never be read or pondered

OVERVIEW OF ROMANS									
Outline	THE REVELATION OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD			THE VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD			THE APPLICATION OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD		
	THE NEED FOR THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD	THE IMPUTATION OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD	THE DEMONSTRATION OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD	ELECTION: ISRAEL'S PAST	REJECTION: ISRAEL'S PRESENT	RESTORATION: ISRAEL'S FUTURE	THE DUTIES OF THE CHRISTIAN	THE LIBERTIES OF THE CHRISTIAN	CONCLUSION
	1:1–3:20	3:21–5:21	6:1–8:39	9:1–29	9:30–10:21	11:1–36	12:1–13:14	14:1–15:13	15:14–16:27
Theme	SIN	SALVATION	SANCTIFICATION	SOVEREIGNTY			SERVICE		
Approach	DOCTRINE						CONDUCT		
Location	PROBABLY CORINTH								
Time Frame	C. AD 57								

too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes.” The four Gospels present the words and works of the Lord Jesus, but Romans, “The Gospel According to Paul,” delves more into the significance of His death and resurrection. The theology of Romans is balanced by practical exhortation because Paul sees the believers’ position as the basis for their practice. The theme of righteousness that runs through the book is reflected in the following outline: the revelation of the righteousness of God (Rom. 1–8); the vindication of the righteousness of God (chs. 9–11); the application of the righteousness of God (chs. 12–16).

**The Revelation of the Righteousness of God (1:1–8:39)**—The prologue (1:1–17) consists of a salutation (1:1–7), a statement of Paul’s desire to minister in Rome (1:8–15), and the theme of the book (1:16–17). This two-verse theme is the basic text of Romans because it combines the three crucial concepts of salvation, righteousness, and faith.

In 1:18–3:20, Paul builds a solid case for the condemnation of all people under holy God. The Gentiles are without excuse because they have suppressed the knowledge of God they received from nature and their conscience (1:18–32; their seven-step regression is traced in 1:21–31). The Jews are also under the condemnation of God, and Paul overcomes every objection they could raise to this conclusion (2:1–3:8). God judges according to truth (2:2–5), works (2:6–10), and impartiality (2:11–16), and both the moral and religious Jews fail to meet His standard. Paul concludes his discussion of the reasons for the guilt of the Jews by reminding them they do not obey the Law (2:17–29) nor believe the “oracles of God” (3:1–8). The divine verdict (3:9–20) is universal: “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (3:23).

The section on justification (3:21–5:21) centers on, and develops the theme of, God’s provision for man’s need. The first eleven verses are the core of the book (3:21–31), revealing that in Christ, God is both Judge and Savior. Justification is by grace (the source of salvation; 3:21–24), by blood (the basis of salvation; 3:25–26), and by faith (the condition of salvation; 3:27–31).

Chapter 4 illustrates the principle of justification

by faith apart from works in the life of Abraham. Justification issues in reconciliation between God and humanity (5:1–11). It is brought about by the love of God which is causeless (5:6), measureless (5:7–8), and ceaseless (5:9–11). In 5:12–21, Paul contrasts the two Adams and the opposite results of their two acts. The righteousness of the Second Adam is imputed to all who trust in Him, leading to reconciliation.

Chapter 6 describes the believers’ relationship to sin: in their position, they are dead to the principle of sin (6:1–14) and the practice of sin (6:15–23). The reality of identification with Christ is the basis for the sanctified Christian life. After describing the Christian’s emancipation from the Law (7), Paul looks at the work of the Holy Spirit who indwells and empowers every believer (8:1–17). The next major topic after condemnation, justification, and sanctification is glorification (8:18–39). All Christians can anticipate a time when they will be perfectly conformed to Jesus Christ not only in their position (present) but also in their practice (the future resurrection).

**The Vindication of the Righteousness of God (9:1–11:36)**—It appears that God has rejected His people, Israel, but it is really Israel who has rejected its Messiah. God’s rejection of Israel is only partial (there is a spiritual remnant that has trusted in Christ) and temporary (they will be grafted back; 11:23–27). Paul appropriately quotes frequently from the Old Testament in this section, and he emphasizes that God will be faithful to His covenant promises and restore Israel.

**The Application of the Righteousness of God (12:1–16:27)**—Paul recognizes that behavior must be built upon belief, and this is why the practical exhortations of this epistle appear after his teaching on the believer’s position in Christ. The salvation described in the first eleven chapters should transform a Christian’s life in relation to God (12:1–2), society (12:3–21), higher powers (13:1–7); and one’s neighbors (13:8–14). In chapters 14 and 15, the apostle discusses the concept of Christian liberty noting its principles (ch. 14) and its practice (15:1–13). A changed life is not a condition for salvation, but it should be the natural outcome of saving faith. The epistle closes with Paul’s statement of his plans (15:14–33), a long series of personal greetings (16:1–16), and an admonition followed by a doxology (16:17–27).

## OUTLINE OF ROMANS

### Part One: The Revelation of the Righteousness of God (1:1–8:39)

I. The Need for the Righteousness of God . . . . .	1:1–3:20
A. Introduction . . . . .	1:1–17
B. Condemnation: The Need for God’s Righteousness . . . . .	1:18–3:20
1. Guilt of the Gentile . . . . .	1:18–3:2
a. Reason for Gentile Guilt . . . . .	1:18–23
b. Results of Gentile Guilt . . . . .	1:24–32
2. Guilt of the Jew . . . . .	2:1–3:8
a. Jews Are Judged According to Truth . . . . .	2:1–5
b. Jews Are Judged by Their Works . . . . .	2:6–10

## OUTLINE OF ROMANS *continued*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Jews Are Judged with Impartiality . . . . . 2:11–16</li> <li>d. Jews Do Not Obey the Law . . . . . 2:17–29</li> <li>e. Jews Do Not Believe the Oracles . . . . . 3:1–8</li> <li>3. Conclusion: All Are Guilty Before God . . . . . 3:9–20</li> <li><b>II. The Imputation of the Righteousness of God . . . . . 3:21–5:21</b></li> <li>A. Description of Righteousness . . . . . 3:21–31</li> <li>B. Illustration of Righteousness . . . . . 4:1–25           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Abraham's Righteousness Apart from Works . . . . . 4:1–8</li> <li>2. Abraham's Righteousness Apart from Circumcision . . . . . 4:9–12</li> <li>3. Abraham's Righteousness Apart from the Law . . . . . 4:13–15</li> <li>4. Abraham's Righteousness Was by Faith . . . . . 4:16–25</li> </ul> </li> <li>C. Benefits of Righteousness . . . . . 5:1–11</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peace with God . . . . . 5:1–2</li> <li>2. Joy in Tribulation . . . . . 5:3–8</li> <li>3. Salvation from God's Wrath . . . . . 5:9–11</li> <li>D. Contrast of Righteousness and Condemnation . . . . . 5:12–21</li> <li><b>III. The Demonstration of the Righteousness of God . . . . . 6:1–8:39</b></li> <li>A. Sanctification and Sin . . . . . 6:1–23           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Believer's Death to Sin in Principle . . . . . 6:1–14</li> <li>2. Believer's Death to Sin in Practice . . . . . 6:15–23</li> </ul> </li> <li>B. Sanctification and the Law . . . . . 7:1–25           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dead to the Law but Alive to God . . . . . 7:1–6</li> <li>2. Law Cannot Deliver from Sin . . . . . 7:7–25</li> </ul> </li> <li>C. Sanctification and the Spirit . . . . . 8:1–39           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Spirit Delivers from the Power of the Flesh . . . . . 8:1–11</li> <li>2. The Spirit Gives Sonship . . . . . 8:12–17</li> <li>3. The Spirit Assures of Future Glory . . . . . 8:18–30</li> <li>4. The Spirit Assures of Final Victory . . . . . 8:31–39</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Part Two: The Vindication of the Righteousness of God (9:1–11:36)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>I. Election: Israel's Past . . . . . 9:1–29</b></li> <li>A. Paul's Sorrow . . . . . 9:1–5</li> <li>B. God's Sovereignty . . . . . 9:6–29</li> <li><b>II. Rejection: Israel's Present . . . . . 9:30–10:21</b></li> <li>A. Israel Seeks Righteousness by Works . . . . . 9:30–33</li> <li>B. Israel Rejects Christ . . . . . 10:1–15</li> <li>C. Israel Rejects the Prophets . . . . . 10:16–21</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>III. Restoration: Israel's Future . . . . . 11:1–36</b></li> <li>A. Israel's Rejection Is Not Total . . . . . 11:1–10</li> <li>B. Israel's Rejection Is Not Final . . . . . 11:11–32           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purpose of Israel's Rejection . . . . . 11:11–24</li> <li>2. Promise of Israel's Restoration . . . . . 11:25–32</li> </ul> </li> <li>C. Israel's Restoration: The Occasion for Glorifying God . . . . . 11:33–36</li> </ul>
<b>Part Three: The Application of the Righteousness of God (12:1–16:27)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>I. The Duties of the Christian . . . . . 12:1–13:14</b></li> <li>A. Responsibilities Toward God . . . . . 12:1–2</li> <li>B. Responsibilities Toward Society . . . . . 12:3–21</li> <li>C. Responsibilities Toward Higher Powers . . . . . 13:1–7</li> <li>D. Responsibilities Toward Neighbors . . . . . 13:8–14</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>II. The Liberties of the Christian . . . . . 14:1–15:13</b></li> <li>A. Principles of Christian Liberty . . . . . 14:1–23</li> <li>B. Practices of Christian Liberty . . . . . 15:1–13</li> <li><b>III. Conclusion . . . . . 15:14–16:27</b></li> <li>A. Paul's Purpose for Writing . . . . . 15:14–21</li> <li>B. Paul's Plans for Traveling . . . . . 15:22–33</li> <li>C. Paul's Praise and Greetings . . . . . 16:1–27</li> </ul>

### CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

**P**AUL, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated to the gospel of God Acts 9:15; 13:2; 1 Tim. 1:11

2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, Acts 26:6; Gal. 3:8

3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, Gal. 4:4

4 and declared *to be* the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Ps. 16:10; Acts 13:33; Heb. 9:14

5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, Acts 6:7; 9:15; Eph. 3:8

6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 1:2, 3, 24

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. Rom. 16:19; 1 Cor. 1:4

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, Acts 27:23; Rom. 9:1; 1 Thess. 3:10

10 making request if, by some means, now at

last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established— Rom. 15:29

12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Titus 1:4

13 Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles.

14 I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.

15 So, as much as is in me, *I am* ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,<sup>a</sup> for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. Ps. 40:9, 10; Acts 3:26; 1 Cor. 1:18, 24

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”<sup>a</sup> Hab. 2:4; Rom. 3:21; 9:30

**REASON FOR GENTILE GUILT**

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, Acts 17:30; 2 Thess. 2:10

19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. Acts 14:17; 17:24

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, Ps. 19:1–6

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Jer. 2:5

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, Jer. 10:14

23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Deut. 4:16–18; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15, 16

**RESULTS OF GENTILE GUILT**

24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, Lev. 18:22; Eph. 4:18, 19

25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. Is. 44:20

26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Lev. 18:22

27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; Eph. 5:4

29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality,<sup>a</sup> wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers,

30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving,<sup>a</sup> unmerciful;

32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. Hos. 7:3; Rom. 2:2; 6:21

**CHAPTER 2**

**JEW'S ARE JUDGED ACCORDING TO TRUTH**

**T**HEREFORE you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. Matt. 7:1–5; Rom. 1:20

2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.

3 And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?

4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Is. 30:18

5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Deut. 32:34

**JEW'S ARE JUDGED BY THEIR WORKS**

6 who “will render to each one according to his deeds”;<sup>a</sup> Ps. 62:12; Prov. 24:12

7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, 2 Thess. 1:8

9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 1 Pet. 1:7

**JEW'S ARE JUDGED WITH IMPARTIALITY**

11 For there is no partiality with God. Deut. 10:17

12 For as many as have sinned without law will

1:16<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits of Christ. 1:17<sup>a</sup> Habakkuk 2:4 1:29<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits sexual immorality. 1:31<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits unforgiving. 2:6<sup>a</sup> Psalm 62:12; Proverbs 24:12

also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law

13 (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;

James 1:22, 25

14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves,

15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*)

Acts 24:25; 1 Cor. 5:1

16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. 1 Tim. 1:11

### JEWES DO NOT OBEY THE LAW

17 Indeed<sup>a</sup> you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God,

Is. 48:1, 2; Mic. 3:11

18 and know *His* will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law,

Deut. 4:8; Phil. 1:10

19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,

20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law.

2 Tim. 3:5

21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?

Matt. 23:3

22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

Mal. 3:8

23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?

Rom. 2:17; 9:4

24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,"<sup>a</sup> as it is written.

Is. 52:5

25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you *who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?*

Matt. 12:41

28 For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh;

29 but *he is a Jew who is one* inwardly; and *circumcision is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.

Deut. 30:6; 1 Cor. 4:5; Phil. 3:3; 1 Pet. 3:4

## CHAPTER 3

### JEWES DO NOT BELIEVE THE ORACLES

**W**HAT advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?

2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.

Deut. 4:5–8

### RIGHTEOUSNESS

1:17 (Gr. *dikaioynē*) (Matt. 5:6; Rom. 3:22; Phil. 3:9) G1343: Derived from judicial contexts—referring to the judge or to the requirements of the law—this word means "righteousness, uprightness, justice." It refers to doing the right thing, observing divine laws, or holiness. In Scripture it denotes right standing with God—a status which can only be attained through faith in Christ. Paul writes to the Romans, "But now the righteousness [*dikaioynē*] of God apart from the law is revealed . . . even the righteousness [*dikaioynē*] of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe." (Rom. 3:21–22). The phrase "the righteousness of God" refers either to being right before God (being found guiltless) or to right standing provided by God through faith in Christ. These two meanings are closely related.

3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

2 Tim. 2:13; Heb. 4:2

4 Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written:

"That You may be justified in Your words,  
And may overcome when You are  
judged."<sup>a</sup>

Job 40:8; Ps. 51:4; 62:9; John 3:33

5 But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is* God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)

Gal. 3:15

6 Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?

Gen. 18:25

7 For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?

8 And *why* not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"?—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.

Rom. 5:20

### CONCLUSION: ALL ARE GUILTY BEFORE GOD

9 What then? Are we better *than they*? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

Gal. 3:22

10 As it is written:

"There is none righteous, no,  
not one;

Ps. 14:1–3; 53:1–3; Eccl. 7:20

11 There is none who understands;  
There is none who seeks after God.

12 They have all turned aside;  
They have together become unprofitable;  
There is none who does good, no,  
not one."<sup>a</sup>

2:17<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *But if*. 2:24<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:22

3:4<sup>a</sup> Psalm 51:4 3:12<sup>a</sup> Psalms 14:1–3; 53:1–3; Ecclesiastes 7:20

REDEMPTION

**3:24** (Gr. *apolytrōsis*) (Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14) **Go629**: The Greek word *apolytrōsis* refers to the buying back or freeing (of a slave) by payment of the redemption price. Its New Testament occurrences emphasize both the price (Jesus' blood in Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14) and the resulting freedom. The use of *apolytrōsis* and its cognates in salvation contexts implies the complete liberation of those redeemed by Christ from their former slavery. The related Greek word *lytrōsis* essentially means the same thing (Luke 1:68; 2:38). Elsewhere in the New Testament different authors use the verb *lytroō*, free by paying ransom, redeem (1 Pet. 1:18), and noun *lytron*, ransom price (only in Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45).

- 13 “Their throat *is* an open tomb;  
With their tongues they have practiced  
deceit”,<sup>a</sup>  
“The poison of asps *is* under their  
lips”,<sup>b</sup> Ps. 5:9; 140:3
- 14 “Whose mouth *is* full of cursing  
and bitterness.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 10:7
- 15 “Their feet *are* swift to shed  
blood; Prov. 1:16; Is. 59:7, 8
- 16 Destruction and misery *are* in  
their ways;
- 17 And the way of peace they have not  
known.”<sup>a</sup>
- 18 “There is no fear of God before  
their eyes.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 36:1

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Job 5:16; John 10:34

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. Gal. 2:16

DESCRIPTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

**21** But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, John 5:46; Acts 15:11; 1 Pet. 1:10

22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all<sup>a</sup> who believe. For there is no difference; Col. 3:11

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Gal. 3:22

24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:8

25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, Lev. 16:15; Acts 14:16; 17:30; Col. 1:20

26 to demonstrate at the present time His

righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

**27** Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 1 Cor. 1:29

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Gal. 2:16

29 Or *is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also,

30 since *there is* one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Gal. 3:8, 20

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

CHAPTER 4

ABRAHAM'S RIGHTEOUSNESS  
APART FROM WORKS

**W**HAT then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?<sup>a</sup> Is. 51:2

2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God.

3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 15:6

4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. Rom. 11:6

5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, Josh. 24:2; Eph. 2:8, 9

6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: Ps. 32:1, 2

7 “Blessed *are those* whose lawless deeds are forgiven,  
And whose sins are covered; Ps. 32:1, 2

8 Blessed *is the man* to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.”<sup>a</sup>

ABRAHAM'S RIGHTEOUSNESS  
APART FROM CIRCUMCISION

**9** Does this blessedness then *come* upon the circumcised *only*, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, Gen. 17:10; Luke 19:9

**3:13**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 5:9    <sup>b</sup> Psalm 140:3    **3:14**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 10:7    **3:17**<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 59:7, 8  
**3:18**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 36:1    **3:22**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *and on all*.    **4:1**<sup>a</sup> Or *Abraham our (fore)father according to the flesh has found?*    **4:3**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 15:6  
**4:8**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 32:1, 2

12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only *are* of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham *had while still* uncircumcised. Rom. 4:18–22

#### ABRAHAM'S RIGHTEOUSNESS APART FROM THE LAW

13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Gen. 17:4–6; 22:17

14 For if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, 15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression. Rom. 3:20

#### ABRAHAM'S RIGHTEOUSNESS WAS BY FAITH

16 Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all Is. 51:2; Rom. 3:24; Gal. 3:22

17 (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations<sup>a</sup>”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; Gen. 17:5; Rom. 8:11; 9:26

18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 15:5

19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. Gen. 17:17; Heb. 11:11

20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. Heb. 11:19

22 And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 15:6

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, Rom. 15:4

24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, Acts 2:24

25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification. Is. 53:4, 5

### CHAPTER 5 PEACE WITH GOD

**T**HEREFORE, having been justified by faith, we have<sup>a</sup> peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Is. 32:17; Eph. 2:14

2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Eph. 2:18; 3:12; Heb. 3:6

#### JUSTIFICATION

**4:25** (Gr. *dikaïōsis*) (Rom. 5:18) G1347: The Greek noun for *justification* is derived from the Greek verb *dikaioō*, meaning “to acquit” or “to declare righteous” (used by Paul in Rom. 4:2, 5; 5:1). It is a legal term used of a favorable verdict in a trial. The word, used only twice in the New Testament, depicts a courtroom setting, with God presiding as the Judge, determining the faithfulness of each person to the Law. In the first section of Romans, Paul makes it clear that no one can withstand God’s judgment (Rom. 3:9–20). The Law was not given to justify sinners but to expose their sin. To remedy this deplorable situation, God sent His Son to die for our sins, in our place. When we believe in Jesus, God imputes Jesus’ righteousness to us and we are declared righteous before God. In this way, God demonstrates that He is both a righteous Judge and the One who declares us righteous, our Justifier (Rom. 3:26).

#### JOY IN TRIBULATION

3 And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; Matt. 5:11, 12; James 1:3

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. James 1:12

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Phil. 1:20

6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Rom. 4:25; 5:8; 8:32

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. John 3:16; 15:13 +

#### SALVATION FROM GOD'S WRATH

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. Eph. 2:13; 1 Thess. 1:10

10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. John 14:19; Rom. 8:32; 2 Cor. 5:18

11 And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. Gal. 4:9

#### CONTRAST OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND CONDEMNATION

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— Gen. 2:17

**4:17**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 17:5 **4:18**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 15:5 **4:22**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 15:6  
**5:1**<sup>a</sup> Another ancient reading is, *let us have peace.*



RECONCILIATION

**5:11** (Gr. *katallagē*) (Rom. 11:15; 2 Cor. 5:18) G2643: The Greek word basically means “change” or “exchange.” In the context of relationships between people, the term implies a change in attitude on the part of both individuals, a change from enmity to friendship. When used to describe the relationship existing between God and a person, the term implies the change of attitude on the part of both a person and God. The need to change the sinful ways of a human being is obvious; but some argue that no change is needed on the part of God. But inherent in the doctrine of justification is the changed attitude of God toward the sinner. God declares a person who was formerly His enemy to be righteous before Him.

13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 1 John 3:4

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 1 Cor. 15:21, 22

15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. Is. 53:11

16 And the gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many offenses *resulted* in justification.

17 For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore, as through one man’s offense *judgment came* to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. John 12:32; 1 Cor. 15:21, 45

19 For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. Is. 53:11, 12 +; Phil. 2:8

20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, John 15:22; 1 Tim. 1:14

21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER 6

BELIEVER’S DEATH TO SIN IN PRINCIPLE

**W**HAT shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Rom. 3:8; 6:15

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Gal. 2:19

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 1 Cor. 15:29; Gal. 3:27

4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Gal. 6:15; Col. 2:12

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection, Phil. 3:10

6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; Col. 2:11

7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 2 Tim. 2:11

9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. Rev. 1:18

10 For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. 6:2; 7:4, 6; Gal. 2:19

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. Ps. 19:13

13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. Col. 3:5; 1 Pet. 2:24; 4:2

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. Gal. 5:18

BELIEVER’S DEATH TO SIN IN PRACTICE

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! 1 Cor. 9:21

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? 2 Pet. 2:19

17 But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 2 Tim. 1:13

18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. John 8:32

19 I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading to more* lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. John 8:34

21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. Rom. 1:32; 7:5

22 But now having been set free from sin, and

having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. Rom. 8:2  
 23 For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Gen. 2:17

## CHAPTER 7

### DEAD TO THE LAW BUT ALIVE TO GOD

**O**R do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to *her* husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of *her* husband. 1 Cor. 7:39

3 So then if, while *her* husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Matt. 5:32

4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. Gal. 2:19; 5:18, 22

5 For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. James 1:15

6 But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Rom. 2:29

### LAW CANNOT DELIVER FROM SIN

7 What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.”<sup>a</sup> Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21; Acts 20:33; Rom. 3:20

8 But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For apart from the law sin *was* dead. 1 Cor. 15:56

9 I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.

10 And the commandment, which *was* to *bring* life, I found to *bring* death. Lev. 18:5

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*.

12 Therefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. Ps. 19:8

13 Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. 2 Kin. 17:17

15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. Gal. 5:17

16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.

17 But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. Gen. 6:5; 8:21

19 For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice.

20 Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. Ps. 1:2; 2 Cor. 4:16

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Rom. 6:13, 19; Gal. 5:17

24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 1 Cor. 15:51, 52

25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. 1 Cor. 15:57

<sup>a</sup>Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21

## BEGINNING THE NEW LIFE

### THE WAY TO NEW LIFE

#### PART 1: A FREE GIFT

6:23—You can work for sin, but it is a cruel master. When it comes to payday, the wage it pays is death—separation from God forever. In stark contrast, God does not pay wages. Instead, He offers a gift—eternal life. There is nothing that we can do to earn this gift. After all, if we *could* earn it, it would not be a gift; it would be wages. Eternal life is just that—eternal—it never ceases. The basic concept underlying life is union. There are three kinds of life mentioned in the Bible: (1) **physical life**—union of the soul with the body; (2) **spiritual life**—union of the soul with God; and (3) **eternal life**—eternal union of the soul and body with God. Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice . . . And I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish” (John 10:27–28). The gift of God is eternal life. We receive this gift when we believe in Jesus as our Savior. Having eternal life, we will never perish.

For Part 2: **BASED ON CHRIST’S DEATH**, turn to *Colossians 1:22* on page 1317. For an explanation of “*The Christian’s Guide to the New Life*,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.

## CHAPTER 8

## THE SPIRIT DELIVERS FROM THE POWER OF THE FLESH

**T**HERE is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,<sup>a</sup> who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Gal. 5:16

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, Acts 13:39; 2 Cor. 5:21

4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Gal. 5:16, 25

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. John 3:6; Gal. 5:22–25

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Gal. 6:8

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 1 Cor. 2:14; James 4:4

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from

the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. 1 Cor. 6:14

## THE SPIRIT GIVES SONSHIP

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. Rom. 6:7, 14

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. Gal. 6:8; Eph. 4:22

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Gal. 5:18

15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” Is. 56:5

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, Eph. 1:13

17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together. Phil. 1:29

## THE SPIRIT ASSURES OF FUTURE GLORY

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 2 Cor. 4:17

19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 2 Pet. 3:13

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; Gen. 3:17–19

21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 2 Cor. 3:17

8:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.

## UNDERSTANDING GOD’S BEING

## GOD THE FATHER

## PART 3: GOD THE FATHER OF BELIEVERS

8:15—God is the Father of all who believe in Christ in a special sense not shared by unbelievers. God is called our Father, first of all, because we have a new standing before Him. While unbelievers are the offspring of God because He created them (Acts 17:28–29), they do not have standing as sons. Their standing is rather as condemned sinners before God the Judge (John 3:18; Rev. 20:11). When we believe in Christ as Savior, our estate is wonderfully changed from grim condemnation to privileged sonship. This new standing grants to all believers the legal right and spiritual privileges of divine sonship: “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17).

God is the Father of believers also in the sense that He gives us new life (John 3:3). This relationship, then, is a family one involving many of the same realities that exist between an earthly parent and child: birth of the child (John 3:3); partaking of the parent’s nature (2 Pet. 1:4); the parent’s care for the child (Matt. 6:32–33; 7:9–11); and the parent’s discipline of the child (Heb. 12:6–8). Furthermore, this new Father-child relationship with God includes new brothers and sisters (Heb. 13:1).

To obtain God as Father is not a result of one’s own merit but a result of Christ’s. The one who believes in Christ as Savior enters into the Father-child relationship with God solely on the grounds of Christ’s sonship (Rom. 8:17; Heb. 2:17). It is the grand privilege and calling of those who know God as Father to graciously invite unbelievers to meet God as Father and not as Judge.

For the next article, *THE SON OF GOD*, turn to Isaiah 9:6 on page 726. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.

22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Jer. 12:4, 11

23 Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 2 Cor. 5:2, 4, 5; Eph. 1:14; 4:30

24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? Heb. 11:1

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us<sup>a</sup> with groanings which cannot be uttered. Matt. 20:22; Eph. 6:18

27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. 1 Chr. 28:9; 1 John 5:14

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His purpose*. 2 Tim. 1:9

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to *be conformed to the image of His Son*, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 1:5, 11; 2 Tim. 2:19; Heb. 1:6

30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. John 17:22; Gal. 2:16; 1 Pet. 2:9; 3:9

#### THE SPIRIT ASSURES OF FINAL VICTORY

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? Num. 14:9

32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Rom. 4:25; 5:6, 10

33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. Is. 50:8, 9

34 Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Mark 16:19; John 3:18; Heb. 7:25; 9:24

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written:

“For Your sake we are killed all day long;  
We are accounted as sheep for the  
slaughter.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 44:22

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 1 Cor. 15:57

38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, Eph. 1:21

39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created

#### PREDESTINE

**8:29** (Gr. *proorizō*) (Acts 4:28; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:5, 11) G4309: To *predestine* means “to mark out beforehand,” “to establish one’s boundary, or one’s limits, beforehand.” Our English word *horizon* is a derivative of this Greek word. The Christian’s ultimate destiny or horizon has been fixed by God from all eternity: to be made like His Son. Note how the words *predestined, called, justified, and especially glorified* in Romans 8:29–30 are in the past tense. That is because God, from His eternal perspective, sees this process as having been completed already. From God’s perspective, we have been glorified already because He sees us as righteous because of Jesus’ finished work on the cross. But still, in the progression of time, we must undergo the process of being conformed to the image of God’s Son.

thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### CHAPTER 9 PAUL’S SORROW

**I** TELL the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 Cor. 1:23

2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. Rom. 10:1

3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen<sup>a</sup> according to the flesh, Ex. 32:32

4 who are Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; Ex. 4:22; 1 Sam. 4:21

5 of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the eternally blessed God*. Amen. Deut. 10:15; Jer. 23:6

#### GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel, Num. 23:19; Gal. 6:16

7 nor *are they* all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, “In Isaac your seed shall be called.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 21:12; Gal. 4:23

8 That is, those who *are* the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. Gal. 4:28

9 For this *is* the word of promise: “At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 18:10, 14

10 And not only *this*, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, *even* by our father Isaac Gen. 25:21

11 (for *the children* not yet being born, nor having

**8:26**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *for us*. **8:36**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 44:22 **9:3**<sup>a</sup> Or *relatives*  
**9:7**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 21:12 **9:9**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 18:10, 14

MERCY

**9:23** (Gr. *eleos*) (Matt. 9:13; Luke 1:78; Eph. 2:4; 2 John v. 3) G1656: The word means (and is always rendered) “mercy,” a manifestation of compassion—not merely a feeling but an action—for one in distress. Mercy is different from grace, which emphasizes that favor is not deserved. Mercy, in contrast, emphasizes the misery that elicits response. The word may refer to mercy shown by people to one another (Luke 10:37), mercy shown by God to people in general (Luke 1:58), or the mercy that comes in Christ for redemption (Rom. 15:9).

done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), Rom. 4:17; 8:28  
 12 it was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 25:23  
 13 As it is written, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.”<sup>a</sup> Mal. 1:2, 3  
 14 What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! Deut. 32:4  
 15 For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.”<sup>a</sup>  
 16 So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.  
 17 For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.”<sup>a</sup> Ex. 9:16; Gal. 3:8  
 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. Ex. 4:21  
 19 You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?” 2 Chr. 20:6  
 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, “Why have you made me like this?” Is. 29:16  
 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? Prov. 16:4; 2 Tim. 2:20  
 22 *What* if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 1 Thess. 5:9; 1 Pet. 2:8  
 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, Rom. 8:28–30; Col. 1:27  
 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? Rom. 3:29; 8:28  
 25 As He says also in Hosea:

“I will call them My people, who were not My people,  
 And her beloved, who was not beloved.”<sup>a</sup> Hos. 2:23  
 26 “And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,

‘*You are* not My people,’  
 There they shall be called sons  
 of the living God.”<sup>a</sup> Hos. 1:10

27 Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel:<sup>a</sup>  
 “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea,  
 The remnant will be saved. Is. 10:22, 23  
 28 For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness,  
 Because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 10:23; 28:22

29 And as Isaiah said before:  
 “Unless the LORD of Sabaoth<sup>a</sup> had left us a seed,  
 We would have become like Sodom,  
 And we would have been made like Gomorrah.”<sup>b</sup> Is. 1:9; 13:19

ISRAEL SEEKS RIGHTEOUSNESS BY WORKS

**30** What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; Rom. 1:17  
 31 but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.<sup>a</sup>  
 32 Why? Because *they did* not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law.<sup>a</sup> For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. 1 Cor. 1:23  
 33 As it is written:

“Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense,  
 And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 8:14; 28:16 +; Rom. 5:5; 10:11

CHAPTER 10  
 ISRAEL REJECTS CHRIST

**B**RETHREN, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel<sup>a</sup> is that they may be saved.  
 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Acts 21:20  
 3 For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. Rom. 1:17; Phil. 3:9  
 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Gal. 3:24; 4:5  
 5 For Moses writes about the righteousness

**9:12**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 25:23 **9:13**<sup>a</sup> Malachi 1:2, 3 **9:15**<sup>a</sup> Exodus 33:19  
**9:17**<sup>a</sup> Exodus 9:16 **9:25**<sup>a</sup> Hosea 2:23 **9:26**<sup>a</sup> Hosea 1:10 **9:27**<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 10:22, 23 **9:28**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *For the LORD will finish the work and cut it short upon the earth.* **9:29**<sup>a</sup> Literally, in Hebrew, *Hosts*  
<sup>b</sup> Isaiah 1:9 **9:31**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *of righteousness.* **9:32**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *by works.* **9:33**<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 8:14; 28:16 **10:1**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *them.*

which is of the law, “The man who does those things shall live by them.”<sup>a</sup> Lev. 18:5

6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’”<sup>a</sup> (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*) Deut. 30:12–14

7 or, “Who will descend into the abyss?”<sup>a</sup> (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). Deut. 30:13

8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”<sup>a</sup> (that is, the word of faith which we preach): Deut. 30:14

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Luke 12:8

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 28:16

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. Acts 10:36; Rom. 3:22, 29; Eph. 1:7

13 For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”<sup>a</sup> Joel 2:32; Acts 9:14

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? Titus 1:3

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

“How beautiful are the feet of those who  
preach the gospel of peace,<sup>a</sup>  
Who bring glad tidings of good  
things!”<sup>b</sup> Is. 52:7; Nah. 1:15

#### ISRAEL REJECTS THE PROPHETS

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?”<sup>a</sup> Is. 53:1; John 12:38 +

17 So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

“Their sound has gone out to all the earth,  
And their words to the ends of the  
world.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 19:4

19 But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says:

“I will provoke you to jealousy by *those who*  
*are* not a nation,  
I will move you to anger by a foolish  
nation.”<sup>a</sup> Deut. 32:21; Titus 3:3

20 But Isaiah is very bold and says:

“I was found by those who did not seek Me;  
I was made manifest to those who did  
not ask for Me.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 65:1

#### CONFESS

10:9 (Gr. *homologeō*) (Luke 12:8; Acts 24:14; Heb. 11:13) G3670: *Homologeō* literally means “to speak the same thing.” It is translated as “confess” or “agree.” When we “confess” our sins before God, we agree with Him that our actions or thoughts are wrong and against His perfect law (1 John 1:9). However, when we do “confess,” God is faithful to forgive us for our sins. Confession is part of the process of repentance; confession or acknowledgment of a wrong is the first step of turning back to obedience. To “confess” that Jesus is Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead is the way to receive eternal life (Rom. 10:9).

21 But to Israel he says:

“All day long I have stretched out My hands  
To a disobedient and contrary people.”<sup>a</sup>

#### CHAPTER 11

##### ISRAEL'S REJECTION IS NOT TOTAL

**I**SAY then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 1 Sam. 12:22; Jer. 46:28

2 God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, Rom. 8:29

3 “LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life”<sup>a</sup> 1 Kin. 19:10, 14

4 But what does the divine response say to him? “I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”<sup>a</sup> 1 Kin. 19:18

5 Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. Rom. 9:27

6 And if by grace, then *it is* no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace.<sup>a</sup> But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. Rom. 4:4

7 What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Rom. 9:31; 2 Cor. 3:14

8 Just as it is written:

“God has given them a spirit of stupor,  
Eyes that they should not see  
And ears that they should not hear,  
To this very day.”<sup>a</sup> Deut. 29:3, 4; Is. 29:10, 13

10:5<sup>a</sup> Leviticus 18:5 10:6<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 30:12 10:7<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 30:13 10:8<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 30:14 10:11<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 28:16 10:13<sup>a</sup> Joel 2:32 10:15<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *preach the gospel of peace, Who.*

<sup>b</sup> Isaiah 52:7; Nahum 1:15 10:16<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 53:1 10:18<sup>a</sup> Psalm 19:4

10:19<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 32:21 10:20<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 65:1 10:21<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 65:2

11:3<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings 19:10, 14 11:4<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings 19:18 11:6<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. 11:8<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 29:4; Isaiah 29:10

## FOREKNOWLEDGE

**11:2** (Gr. *prognōsis*) (Acts 2:23; 26:5; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 3:17) G4268: The Greek term indicates “knowledge beforehand,” either of things that are seen or things that are intended or arranged. In the present context, the word denotes God’s selection and formation of Israel as His chosen people. Not only did God have knowledge of this people beforehand, but He also had knowledge of their subsequent rebellion.

9 And David says:

“Let their table become a snare and  
a trap,  
A stumbling block and a recompense  
to them. Ps. 69:22, 23 †

10 Let their eyes be darkened, so that  
they do not see,  
And bow down their back always.”<sup>a</sup>

## PURPOSE OF ISRAEL’S REJECTION

**11** I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles. Is. 42:6, 7; Rom. 10:19

**12** Now if their fall *is* riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

**13** For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

**14** if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *those who are* my flesh and save some of them. 1 Cor. 9:22

**15** For if their being cast away *is* the reconciling

of the world, what *will* their acceptance *be* but life from the dead? Is. 26:16–19

**16** For if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches. Lev. 23:10

**17** And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, Jer. 11:16

**18** do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, *remember that* you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you. 1 Cor. 10:12

**19** You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.”

**20** Well *said*. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. Heb. 3:19

**21** For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

**22** Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness,<sup>a</sup> if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. John 15:2; 1 Cor. 15:2

**23** And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 2 Cor. 3:16

**24** For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who *are* natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?

## PROMISE OF ISRAEL’S RESTORATION

**25** For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be

**11:10** <sup>a</sup> Psalm 69:22, 23 **11:22** <sup>a</sup> NU-Text adds of God.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

## WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

## PART 2: YIELDING

**12:1–2**—Confessing sin is not enough to enable the believer to walk in the Spirit. We must then become yielded instruments for God’s service. What is to be yielded is simply one’s own self (Rom. 6:13; James 4:7). This involves both the mind (Rom. 12:2) and the body (Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:20) because that which is conceived in the mind is carried out in the body. Thus, our whole being must be presented to God for His service by a decisive act of our will. Yielding must not be thought of simply as a willingness to do some specific thing. Rather, it is to be fully dedicated to do whatever God commands.

Yielding leads not only to dedication but also can result in separation: “Do not be conformed to this world” (Rom. 12:2). Since the world is resolutely opposed to God, one cannot revel in its lusts and at the same time do the will of God (1 John 2:15–17). The concept of separation involves being “unfashionable” in spirit, thought, values, and actions according to the world’s standards.

Finally, yielding includes transformation of the mind. This work is said to be accomplished through a lifetime of “renewing” the mind. The human mind has been darkened by sin (Rom. 8:7; Col. 1:21) and must be brought to the place where it thinks as God thinks (Eph. 4:23). This renewing is said to come especially through prayer to God in everything (Phil. 4:6–7) and through constant meditation on the Word of God (Ps. 119:1). This transformation is a lifelong process that will not be completed until we are with Christ (Phil. 1:6; 1 John 3:2). Along life’s way, however, it brings a peace and delight that can only come from having embraced the mind of Christ.

*For Part 3: FILLING, turn to Ephesians 5:18 on page 1304. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. Luke 21:24; Rom. 12:16; 2 Cor. 3:14  
 26 And so all Israel will be saved,<sup>a</sup> as it is written:

“The Deliverer will come out  
 of Zion,  
 And He will turn away ungodliness  
 from Jacob; Is. 59:20, 21  
 27 For this *is* My covenant with  
 them,  
 When I take away their sins.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 27:9

28 Concerning the gospel *they are* enemies for your sake, but concerning the election *they are* beloved for the sake of the fathers. Deut. 7:8; 10:15

29 For the gifts and the calling of God *are* irrevocable. Num. 23:19

30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, Eph. 2:2

31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.

32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. Gal. 3:22

#### ISRAEL'S RESTORATION: THE OCCASION FOR GLORIFYING GOD

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!

34 “For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?”<sup>a</sup> Job 36:22; Is. 40:13; Jer. 23:18

35 “Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?”<sup>a</sup> Job 41:11

36 For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen. Heb. 13:21

### CHAPTER 12 RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD GOD

**I** BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. 2 Cor. 10:1–4; Heb. 10:18, 20

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Eph. 4:23; 1 Thess. 4:3; 1 John 2:15

#### RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD SOCIETY

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. Prov. 25:27; Gal. 2:9; Eph. 4:7

#### CONFORM

12:2 (Gr. *suschēmatisō*) (1 Pet. 1:14) G4964: Formed from the root *syn*, “with,” and *schēma*, “the figure or external condition,” this word refers to conforming oneself in outward appearance to a model or pattern. From this word we get “scheme” and “schematic.” In both places it is used in Scripture, here and 1 Peter 1:14, it refers to being conformed to the ways of the world, especially its passions and lusts. We are to conform ourselves to the image of Christ, not to the pattern of the world.

#### TRANSFORM

12:2 (Gr. *metamorphōō*) (Matt. 17:2; 2 Cor. 3:18) G3339: The Greek word means “to change form,” as does the English derivative *metamorphosis*. In the New Testament, this word is used to describe an inward renewal of our mind through which our inner spirit is changed into the likeness of Christ. Paul told the Roman believers: “Be transformed by the renewing of your minds” (Rom. 12:2). As our Christian life progresses, we should gradually notice that our thought life is being changed from Christlessness to Christlikeness. Transformation does not happen overnight. Our regeneration is instantaneous, but our transformation is continuous. We are conformed to Christ’s image gradually as we spend time in intimate fellowship with Him (2 Cor. 3:18).

4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 1 Cor. 12:12–14

5 so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. 1 Cor. 10:17

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; John 3:27

7 or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; Eph. 4:11

8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Matt. 6:1–3; 2 Cor. 9:7

9 *Let love be* without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Ps. 34:14; 1 Tim. 1:5

10 *Be* kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; Phil. 2:3; Heb. 13:1

11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; Luke 10:20; 18:1; 21:19

13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. 1 Cor. 16:1; 1 Tim. 3:2

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Matt. 5:44

11:26<sup>a</sup> Or *delivered* 11:27<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 59:20, 21 11:34<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 40:13; Jeremiah 23:18 11:35<sup>a</sup> Job 41:11



15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 1 Cor. 12:26

16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Jer. 45:5; Phil. 2:2; 4:2

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. Matt. 5:39; 2 Cor. 8:21

18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Heb. 12:14

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,"<sup>a</sup> says the Lord. Lev. 19:18; Deut. 32:35

20 Therefore

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
If he is thirsty, give him a drink;  
For in so doing you will heap coals  
of fire on his head."<sup>a</sup> Prov. 25:21, 22

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Rom. 12:1, 2

### CHAPTER 13 RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD HIGHER POWERS

**L**ET every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 1 Pet. 2:13

2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. Titus 3:1

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 1 Pet. 2:14

4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But

if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to *execute* wrath on him who practices evil.

5 Therefore *you* must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. Eccl. 8:2

6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes *are due*, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. Matt. 22:21

### RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD NEIGHBORS

8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. Gal. 5:13, 14

9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness,"<sup>a</sup> "You shall not covet,"<sup>b</sup> and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."<sup>c</sup> Ex. 20:13–17; Lev. 19:18; Deut. 5:17–21

10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law. Matt. 7:12; 22:39, 40

11 And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we *first* believed. 1 Cor. 15:34

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Eph. 5:11; 6:11, 13

13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. Prov. 23:20; Phil. 4:8; James 3:14

<sup>12:19</sup> <sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 32:35 <sup>12:20</sup> <sup>b</sup> Proverbs 25:21, 22 <sup>13:9</sup> <sup>c</sup> NU-Text omits "You shall not bear false witness." <sup>b</sup> Exodus 20:13–15, 17; Deuteronomy 5:17–19, 21 <sup>c</sup> Leviticus 19:18

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S INSTITUTIONS

### HUMAN GOVERNMENT

#### PART 2: THE FUNCTION OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

13:1–4—The general function of human government, as instituted by God, is threefold: to protect, punish, and promote.

- a. **The Function of Protection:** The moment Adam sinned, it was obvious civilizations would need some form of restraint and rule to protect citizens from themselves. An example of this function is seen in Acts 21:27–37 where Roman soldiers stepped in and saved Paul from being murdered by his enraged countrymen in Jerusalem.
- b. **The Function of Punishment:** Both Paul and Peter discussed this component. Paul wrote that duly appointed human officials are to be regarded as God's servants to "bear the sword," that is, to impose punishment upon criminals (Rom. 13:3–4). Peter said governors are "sent by [God] for the punishment of evildoers" (1 Pet. 2:13–14).
- c. **The Function of Promotion:** Human government is to promote the general welfare of the community where its laws are in effect. Paul commanded us to pray for human leaders "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Tim. 2:1–2).

*For Part 3: OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HUMAN GOVERNMENT, turn to 1 Peter 2:13 on page 1382. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts. Gal. 3:27; 5:16

## CHAPTER 14

### PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

**R**ECEIVE one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things. 1 Cor. 8:9; 9:22

2 For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats *only* vegetables. Titus 1:15

3 Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Col. 2:16

4 Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. James 4:11, 12

5 One person esteems *one* day above another; another esteems every day *alike*. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. Gal. 4:10

6 He who observes the day, observes *it* to the Lord;<sup>a</sup> and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe *it*. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks. Gal. 4:10; 1 Tim. 4:3

7 For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. Gal. 2:20

8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. 2 Cor. 5:14, 15

9 For to this end Christ died and rose<sup>a</sup> and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Acts 10:36; 2 Cor. 5:15

10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.<sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. 5:10

11 For it is written:

“As I live, says the LORD,  
Every knee shall bow to Me,  
And every tongue shall confess  
to God.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 45:23

12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. 1 Pet. 4:5

13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in *our* brother's way.

14 I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that *there is* nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him *it* is unclean. 1 Cor. 10:25

15 Yet if your brother is grieved because of *your* food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. 1 Cor. 8:11

16 Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; Rom. 12:17

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom. 8:6; 1 Cor. 8:8

18 For he who serves Christ in these things<sup>a</sup> is acceptable to God and approved by men. 2 Cor. 8:21

19 Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Rom. 12:18; 1 Cor. 14:12

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed *are* pure, but *it is* evil for the man who eats with offense. Acts 10:15; 1 Cor. 8:9–12

21 *It is* good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor *do anything* by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 8:13

22 Do you have faith? Have<sup>a</sup> *it* to yourself before God. Happy *is* he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. 1 John 3:21

23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *he does not eat* from faith; for whatever *is* not from faith is sin.<sup>a</sup> Titus 1:15

## CHAPTER 15

### PRACTICES OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

**W**E then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Gal. 6:1, 2

2 Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good, leading to edification. 1 Cor. 9:22; 10:24, 33

3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 69:9 +; Matt. 26:39

4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. 1 Cor. 10:11

5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 1:10

6 that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:24

7 Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us,<sup>a</sup> to the glory of God. Rom. 5:2; 14:1, 3

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* to the fathers, 2 Cor. 1:20

9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy, as it is written:

“For this reason I will confess to You  
among the Gentiles,  
And sing to Your name.”<sup>a</sup> 2 Sam. 22:50; Ps. 18:49

14:6<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this sentence. 14:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *and* rose. 14:10<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads of God. 14:11<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 45:23  
14:18<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *this*. 14:21<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *or is* offended *or is* made weak. 14:22<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *The faith which you have—* have. 14:23<sup>a</sup> M-Text puts Romans 16:25–27 here. 15:9<sup>a</sup> Psalm 69:9 15:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *you*. 15:9<sup>a</sup> 2 Samuel 22:50; Psalm 18:49

## HOPE

**15:13** (Gr. *elpis*) (Acts 23:6; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 13:13; Col. 1:5; Titus 1:2) G1680: The Greek term denotes “confident expectation” or “anticipation,” not “wishful thinking” as in common parlance. The use of the word *hope* in this context is unusual and ironic, for it suggests that the Gentiles, who knew nothing or little about the *Messiah*, were anticipating His coming. However, we need only think of Cornelius (Acts 10) to realize that some Gentiles had anticipated the coming of the Jewish *Messiah*. For Jesus was sent, not only for the salvation of the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. Since God is the Author of our salvation, we can call Him the God of hope, for He has given us hope (Rom. 15:13).

10 And again he says:

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!”<sup>a</sup> Deut. 32:43

11 And again:

“Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 117:1

12 And again, Isaiah says:

“There shall be a root of Jesse; And He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, In Him the Gentiles shall hope.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 11:1, 10 →

13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 12:12; 14:17

## PAUL'S PURPOSE FOR WRITING

**14** Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 1:5; 8:1, 7, 10; 2 Pet. 1:12

**15** Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on *some* points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, Rom. 12:3

**16** that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Is. 66:20; Rom. 11:13

**17** Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things *which pertain* to God. Heb. 2:17; 5:1

**18** For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient— Acts 15:12; 21:19; Rom. 1:5

**19** in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and

round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Acts 19:11

**20** And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation, 2 Cor. 10:13, 15, 16  
**21** but as it is written:

“To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 52:15

## PAUL'S PLAN FOR TRAVELING

**22** For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you. Rom. 1:13

**23** But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you, Acts 19:21; 23:11

**24** whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you.<sup>a</sup> For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your *company* for a while. Acts 15:3; Rom. 1:12

**25** But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. Acts 19:21

**26** For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. 1 Cor. 16:1

**27** It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Rom. 11:17; 1 Cor. 9:11

**28** Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain. Phil. 4:17

**29** But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel<sup>a</sup> of Christ. Rom. 1:11

**30** Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 2:1

**31** that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 2 Tim. 3:11; 4:17

**32** that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.

**33** Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

## CHAPTER 16

## PAUL'S PRAISE AND GREETINGS

**I** COMMEND to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, Acts 18:18

**2** that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed

**15:10**<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 32:43 **15:11**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 117:1 **15:12**<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 11:10  
**15:14**<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *others*. **15:21**<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 52:15 **15:24**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *I shall come to you* (and joins *Spain* with the next sentence).  
**15:29**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *of the gospel*.

she has been a helper of many and of myself also. Phil. 1:27; 2:29

**3** Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, Acts 18:2, 18, 26

**4** who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

**5** Likewise *greet* the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia<sup>a</sup> to Christ. 1 Cor. 16:15, 19

**6** Greet Mary, who labored much for us.

**7** Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Acts 1:13, 26; Gal. 1:22

**8** Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

**9** Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

**10** Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the *household* of Aristobulus.

**11** Greet Herodion, my countryman.<sup>a</sup> Greet those who are of the *household* of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

**12** Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord.

**13** Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 2 John 1

**14** Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them.

**15** Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

**16** Greet one another with a holy kiss. The<sup>a</sup> churches of Christ greet you. 1 Cor. 16:20

**17** Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause

divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. Acts 15:1; 1 Cor. 5:9

**18** For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus<sup>a</sup> Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple. Phil. 3:19; Col. 2:4

**19** For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. Matt. 10:16; Rom. 1:8

**20** And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen. Gen. 3:15; 1 Cor. 16:23

**21** Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen, greet you. Acts 20:4

**22** I, Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, greet you in the Lord.

**23** Gaius, my host and *the host* of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother. Acts 19:22; 1 Cor. 1:14

**24** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.<sup>a</sup> 1 Thess. 5:28

**25** Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began Eph. 1:9; 3:20; Col. 4:3

**26** but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith— Rom. 1:5; Eph. 1:9

**27** to God, alone wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.<sup>a</sup> Jude 25

**16:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Asia*. **16:11**<sup>a</sup> Or *relative* **16:16**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *All the churches*. **16:18**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *Jesus*. **16:24**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits this verse. **16:27**<sup>a</sup> M-Text puts Romans 16:25–27 after Romans 14:23.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

### PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

#### PART 1: DEFINITION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

**16:5**—The local church is a geographically located, temporally limited, and visibly evident manifestation of the universal church, the body of Christ. In the early New Testament days, local churches often met in Jewish synagogues and had a very simple organization (James 2:2). A little later, churches met in the homes of believers (Rom. 16:5) and it was not uncommon to have several churches in an area (Gal. 1:2). The idea of meeting in a building constructed for that exclusive purpose is a post-New Testament idea.

*For Part 2: REASON FOR PARTICIPATION, turn to Hebrews 10:25 on page 1365. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

# The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the CORINTHIANS



## THE BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

Corinth, the most important city in Greece during Paul's day, was a bustling hub of worldwide commerce, degraded culture, and idolatrous religion. Paul founded a church there (Acts 18:1–17), and two of his letters are addressed “to the church of God which is at Corinth.”

First Corinthians reveals the problems, pressures, and struggles of a church called out of a pagan society. Paul addresses a variety of problems in the lifestyle of the Corinthian church: factions, lawsuits, immorality, questionable practices, abuse of the Lord's Supper, and spiritual gifts. In addition to words of discipline, Paul shares words of counsel in answer to questions raised by the Corinthian believers.

The oldest recorded title of this epistle is *Pros Korinthious A*, in effect, the “First to the Corinthians.” The A was no doubt a later addition to distinguish this book from 2 Corinthians.



## THE AUTHOR OF 1 CORINTHIANS

Pauline authorship of 1 Corinthians is almost universally accepted. Instances of this widely held belief can be found as early as AD 95, when Clement of Rome wrote to the Corinthian church and cited this epistle regarding their continuing problem of factions among themselves.



## THE TIME OF 1 CORINTHIANS

Corinth was a key city in ancient Greece until it was destroyed by the Romans in 146 BC. Julius Caesar rebuilt it as a Roman colony in 46 BC and it grew and prospered, becoming the capital of the province of Achaia. Its official language was Latin, but the common language remained Greek. In Paul's day, Corinth was the metropolis of the Peloponnesus, since it was strategically located on a narrow isthmus between the Aegean Sea and the Adriatic Sea that connects the Peloponnesus with northern Greece. Because of its two seaports, it became a commercial center, and many small ships were

rolled or dragged across the Corinthian isthmus to avoid the dangerous 200-mile voyage around southern Greece. Nero and others attempted to build a canal at the narrowest point, but this was not achieved until 1893. The city was filled with shrines and temples, but the most prominent was the Temple of Aphrodite on top of an 1,800-foot promontory called the Acrocorinthus. Worshipers of the “goddess of love” made free use of the 1,000 Hieroduli (consecrated prostitutes). This cosmopolitan center thrived on commerce, entertainment, vice, and corruption; pleasure-seekers went there to spend money on a holiday from morality. Corinth became so notorious for its evils that the term *Korinthiazomai* (“to act like a Corinthian”) became a synonym for debauchery and prostitution.

In Paul's day, the population of Corinth was approximately 700,000, about two-thirds of whom were slaves. The diverse population produced no philosophers, but Greek philosophy influenced any speculative thought that was there. Despite these obstacles to the gospel, Paul was able to establish a church in Corinth on his second missionary journey (1 Cor. 3:6, 10; 4:15; Acts 18:1–7). Persecution in Macedonia drove him south to Athens, and from there he proceeded to Corinth. He made tents with Aquila and Priscilla and reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue. Silas and Timothy joined him (they evidently brought a gift from Philippi; 2 Cor. 11:8–9; Phil. 4:15), and Paul began to devote all his time to spreading the gospel. Paul wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians, moved his ministry from the synagogue to the house of Titius Justus because of opposition, and converted Crispus, the leader of the synagogue. Paul taught the Word of God in Corinth for eighteen months in AD 51 and 52. After Paul's departure, Apollos came from Ephesus to minister in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 3:6; Acts 18:24–28).

When Paul was teaching and preaching in Ephesus during his third missionary journey, he was disturbed by reports from the household of Chloe concerning quarrels in the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:11). The church sent a delegation of three men (16:17), who apparently brought a letter that requested Paul's judgment of certain issues (7:1). Paul wrote this epistle as his response to the problems and questions of the Corinthians (he had already written a previous letter; 5:9). It may be that the men

who came from Corinth took this letter back with them. Paul was planning to leave Ephesus (16:5–8), indicating that 1 Corinthians was written in AD 56.

## † CHRIST IN 1 CORINTHIANS

This book proclaims the relevance of Christ Jesus to every area of the believer’s life. He “became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30), and these are the themes Paul addresses in this epistle.

## ✂ KEYS TO 1 CORINTHIANS

**Key Theme:** *Correction of Carnal Living*—The basic theme of this epistle is the application of Christian principles to carnality in the individual as well as in the church. The cross of Christ is a message that is designed to transform the lives of believers and make them different as people and as a corporate body from the surrounding world. However, the Corinthians are destroying their Christian testimony because of immorality and disunity. Paul writes this letter as his corrective response to the news of problems and disorders among the Corinthians. It is designed to refute improper attitudes and conduct and to promote a spirit of unity among the brethren in their relationships and worship. Paul’s concern as their spiritual father (1 Cor. 4:14–15) is tempered with love, and he wants to avoid visiting them “with a rod” (4:21).

**Key Verses:** *1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 10:12–13*—“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at

a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (6:19–20).

“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (10:12–13).

**Key Chapter:** *1 Corinthians 13*—Read at weddings and often the text for sermons, 1 Corinthians 13 has won the hearts of people across the world as the best definition of “love” ever penned. Standing in stark contrast to the idea that love is an emotion, that one can fall into or fall out of love, this chapter clearly reveals that true love is primarily an action. This is why when “God so loved the world that He gave” (John 3:16).

## 🔍 SURVEY OF 1 CORINTHIANS

Through the missionary efforts of Paul and others, the church has been established in Corinth, but Paul finds it very difficult to keep Corinth out of the church. The pagan lifestyle of Corinth exerts a profound influence upon the Christians in that corrupt city—problems of every kind plague them. In this disciplinary letter, Paul is forced to exercise his apostolic authority as he deals firmly with problems of divisiveness, immorality, lawsuits, selfishness, abuses of the Lord’s Supper and spiritual gifts, and denials of the resurrection. This epistle is quite orderly in its approach as it sequentially addresses a group of problems that have come to Paul’s attention. Paul also gives a series

OVERVIEW OF 1 CORINTHIANS										
Outline	THE RESPONSE TO CHLOE’S CONCERNS				THE RESPONSE TO THE CHURCH’S QUESTIONS					
	CONCERNING DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH	CONCERNING IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH	CONCERNING LITIGATION IN THE CHURCH	CONCERNING IMPURITY IN THE CHURCH	COUNSEL CONCERNING MARRIAGE	COUNSEL CONCERNING OFFERINGS TO IDOLS	COUNSEL CONCERNING PUBLIC WORSHIP	COUNSEL CONCERNING RESURRECTION	COUNSEL CONCERNING THE COLLECTION FOR JERUSALEM	CONCLUSION
	1:1–4:21	5:1–13	6:1–11	6:12–20	7:1–40	8:1–11:1	11:2–14:40	15:1–58	16:1–4	16:5–24
Theme	DISORDER				DIFFICULTIES					
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT									
Location	FROM EPHESUS									
Time Frame	C. AD 56									

of perspectives on various questions and issues raised by the Corinthians in a letter. He uses the introductory words “Now concerning,” “Moreover,” or “Now” to delineate those topics (1 Cor. 7:1, 25; 8:1; 11:2; 12:1; 15:1; 16:1). The two divisions of 1 Corinthians are: responding to Chloe’s concerns (chs. 1–6) and responding to the church’s questions (chs. 7–16).

**The Response to Chloe’s Concerns (1:1–6:20)**—Personality cults centering on Paul, Apollos, and Peter have led to divisions and false pride among the Corinthians (ch. 1). It is not their wisdom or cleverness that has brought them to Christ, because divine wisdom is contrary to human wisdom. The truth of the gospel is spiritually apprehended (ch. 2). Factions that exist among the saints at Corinth are indications of their spiritual immaturity (ch. 3). They should pride themselves in Christ, not in human leaders who are merely His servants (ch. 4).

The next problem Paul addresses is that of incest between a member of the church and his stepmother (ch. 5). The Corinthians have exercised no church discipline in this matter, and Paul orders them to remove the offender from their fellowship until he repents. Another source of poor testimony is the legal action of believer against believer in civil courts (6:1–8). They must learn to arbitrate their differences within the Christian community.

Paul concludes this section with a warning against immorality in general (6:9–20).

**The Response to the Church’s Questions (7:1–16:24)**—In these chapters, the apostle Paul gives authoritative answers to thorny questions raised by the Corinthians. His first counsel concerns the issues of marriage, celibacy, divorce, and remarriage (ch. 7). The next three chapters are related to the problem of meat offered to idols (8:1–11:1). Paul illustrates the twin principles of Christian liberty and the law of love from his life, and he concludes that believers must sometimes limit their liberty for the sake of weaker brothers and sisters (cf. Rom. 14). The apostle then turns to matters concerning public worship, including improper observance of the Lord’s Supper and the selfish use of spiritual gifts (11:2–14:40). Gifts are to be exercised in love for the edification of the whole body. The Corinthians also have problems with resurrection, which Paul seeks to correct (ch. 15). His historical and theological defense of the resurrection includes teaching on the nature of the resurrected body. The Corinthians probably have been struggling over this issue because the idea of a resurrected body is disdainful in Greek thought. The epistle closes with Paul’s instruction for the collection he will make for the saints in Jerusalem (16:1–4), followed by miscellaneous exhortations and greetings (16:5–24).

## OUTLINE OF 1 CORINTHIANS

### Part One: The Response to Chloe’s Concerns (1:1–6:20)

<b>I. Concerning Divisions in the Church. . . . .</b>	<b>1:1–4:21</b>	<b>a. Ministers Are Fellow Workers</b>	
A. Introduction . . . . .	1:1–9	with God . . . . .	3:5–17
1. Greetings of Grace . . . . .	1:1–3	<b>b. Ministers Are Accountable</b>	
2. Prayer of Thanksgiving . . . . .	1:4–9	to God. . . . .	3:18–4:5
B. Report of Divisions . . . . .	1:10–17	<b>3. Misunderstanding of Paul’s</b>	
C. Reasons for Divisions. . . . .	1:18–4:21	Ministry . . . . .	4:6–21
1. Misunderstanding of the		<b>II. Concerning Immorality in the Church . . . . .</b>	<b>5:1–13</b>
Gospel Message . . . . .	1:18–3:4	A. Deliver the Fornicators for	
a. The Gospel Is Not Earthly		Discipline. . . . .	5:1–8
Wisdom . . . . .	1:18–2:5	B. Separate Yourself from	
b. The Gospel Is Heavenly		Immoral Believers . . . . .	5:9–13
Wisdom . . . . .	2:6–3:4	<b>III. Concerning Litigation in the Church . . . . .</b>	<b>6:1–11</b>
2. Misunderstanding of the Gospel		<b>IV. Concerning Impurity in the Church . . . . .</b>	<b>6:12–20</b>
Messenger . . . . .	3:5–4:5		

### Part Two: The Response to the Church’s Questions (7:1–16:24)

<b>I. Counsel Concerning Marriage. . . . .</b>	<b>7:1–40</b>	<b>II. Counsel Concerning Offerings to Idols . . . . .</b>	<b>8:1–11:1</b>
A. Principles for Married Life . . . . .	7:1–9	A. Principles of Liberty and the Weaker	
B. Principles for the Married		Brother . . . . .	8:1–13
Believer. . . . .	7:10–16	B. Illustration of Paul and His Liberty . . . . .	9:1–27
C. Principle of Abiding in God’s Call . . . . .	7:17–24	1. Paul Lists His Rights as a Minister. . . . .	9:1–14
D. Principles for the Unmarried. . . . .	7:25–38	2. Paul Limits His Rights for Ministry. . . . .	9:15–27
E. Principles for Remarriage . . . . .	7:39–40	C. Warning Against Forfeiting Liberty . . . . .	10:1–13

## OUTLINE OF 1 CORINTHIANS *continued*

<p>D. Exhortation to Use Liberty to Glorify God . . . . . 10:14—11:1</p> <p><b>III. Counsel Concerning Public Worship . . . . . 11:2—14:40</b></p> <p>A. Principles of Public Prayer . . . . . 11:2—16</p> <p>B. Rebuke of Disorders at the Lord's Supper. . . . . 11:17—34</p> <p>C. Principles of Exercising Spiritual Gifts . . . . . 12:1—14:40</p> <p>1. Test of the Spirit's Control . . . . . 12:1—3</p> <p>2. Diversity of the Gifts . . . . . 12:4—11</p> <p>3. Importance of All Gifts . . . . . 12:12—31</p> <p>4. Exercise Gifts with Love . . . . . 13:1—13</p> <p>5. Superiority of Prophecy . . . . . 14:1—6</p>	<p>6. Gift of Tongues. . . . . 14:7—25</p> <p>7. Exercising Gifts in Public Worship . . . . . 14:26—40</p> <p><b>IV. Counsel Concerning Resurrection . . . . . 15:1—58</b></p> <p>A. Fact of Christ's Resurrection . . . . . 15:1—11</p> <p>B. Importance of Christ's Resurrection. . . . . 15:12—19</p> <p>C. Order of the Resurrections. . . . . 15:20—28</p> <p>D. Moral Implications of Christ's Resurrection. . . . . 15:29—34</p> <p>E. Bodies of the Resurrected Dead . . . . . 15:35—50</p> <p>F. Bodies of the Translated Living. . . . . 15:51—58</p> <p><b>V. Counsel Concerning the Collection for Jerusalem . . . . . 16:1—4</b></p> <p><b>VI. Conclusion . . . . . 16:5—24</b></p>
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### CHAPTER 1 GREETINGS OF GRACE

**P**AUL, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

Acts 18:17; Rom. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1

2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Acts 15:9; Rom. 1:7; 3:22; 1 Cor. 8:6

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

Rom. 1:7

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,

Rom. 1:8

5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,

1 Cor. 12:8

6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,

2 Tim. 1:8

7 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Phil. 3:20

8 who will also confirm you to the end, *that you may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Col. 1:22; 2:7; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23

9 God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Is. 49:7

#### REPORT OF DIVISIONS

10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

2 Cor. 13:11

11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."

John 1:42; Acts 18:24; 1 Cor. 3:4

13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

2 Cor. 11:4

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

John 4:2; Acts 18:8; Rom. 16:23

15 lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.

16 Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

1 Cor. 16:15, 17

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

#### THE GOSPEL IS NOT EARTHLY WISDOM

18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 2:15

19 For it is written:

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
And bring to nothing the understanding  
of the prudent."<sup>a</sup>

Is. 29:14

20 Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

Job 12:17; Is. 19:12; 33:18

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

Dan. 2:20

22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom;

Matt. 12:38

23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks<sup>a</sup> foolishness,

Luke 2:34; 1 Cor. 2:14

<sup>1:19</sup> <sup>a</sup> Isaiah 29:14    <sup>1:23</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Gentiles*.



**POWER**

**1:18** (Gr. *dynamis*) (Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:20; 2 Cor. 12:9; 2 Tim. 1:7) **G1411**: Formed from the root for “ability” or “strength” (*dynamai*) this word refers to the force or power behind supernatural events. Another translation is “work of power.” It specifically refers to an ability that a person has inherently in his or her nature—i.e., the power of Jesus to work miracles because He is God. The cross is the ultimate example of this power: “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power [*dynamis*] of God.”

**SPIRIT**

**2:10** (Gr. *pneuma*) (Luke 8:55; John 3:5; Rom. 8:5; 1 Cor. 12:11) **G4151**: This word has two meanings: “wind” and “spirit.” The root word, *breathe* (*pneo*), is also related to the Spirit in that He is a life-giving force. In the same way God breathed into man and he lived (Gen. 2:7), so also the Spirit gives life to our souls (Acts 2:4; Rom. 8:2). This word can also refer to spirit as a life force, that which animates and makes up the true person (Luke 8:55).

24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Rom. 1:4; Col. 2:3

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. John 7:48

27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; Matt. 11:25

28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.

30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— 2 Cor. 5:21

31 that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”<sup>a</sup> Jer. 9:23, 24

**CHAPTER 2**

**A**ND I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony<sup>a</sup> of God.

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Gal. 6:14

3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. Acts 18:1; 2 Cor. 4:7

4 And my speech and my preaching *were* not with

persuasive words of human<sup>a</sup> wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 2 Pet. 1:16  
5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. 1 Thess. 1:5

**THE GOSPEL IS HEAVENLY WISDOM**

6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Matt. 27:33–50; Luke 23:34

9 But as it is written:

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,  
Nor have entered into the heart  
of man  
The things which God has prepared  
for those who love Him.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 64:4; 65:17

10 But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. Matt. 11:25; 13:11; 16:17

11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Rom. 11:33; James 2:26

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. Rom. 8:15

13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy<sup>a</sup> Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. Matt. 16:23

15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one.

16 For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?”<sup>a</sup> But we have the mind of Christ. Is. 40:13; John 15:15

**CHAPTER 3**

**A**ND I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual *people* but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. Heb. 5:13

2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; and until now you were not able to *receive it*, and even now you are still not able; John 16:12; 1 Pet. 2:2

3 for you are still carnal. For where *there are*

**1:31**<sup>a</sup>Jeremiah 9:24 **2:1**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *mystery*. **2:4**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *human*. **2:9**<sup>a</sup>Isaiah 64:4 **2:13**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *Holy*. **2:16**<sup>a</sup>Isaiah 40:13

## IMPORTANT CAPITAL CITIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT



- 1 **Rome:** Capital city of the Roman Empire; the apostle Paul was imprisoned and perhaps later executed in Rome (Acts 28:16).
- 2 **Thessalonica:** Capital of the Roman province of Macedonia; Paul founded a church here (Acts 17:1–4).
- 3 **Pergamos:** Capital of the Roman province of Asia; location of the “compromising” church addressed by John (Rev. 2:12–17).
- 4 **Corinth:** Capital of the Roman province of Achaia in ancient Greece; thriving trade and shipping center when Paul arrived here to establish a church (Acts 18:1).
- 5 **Athens:** Capital of ancient Greece; center of culture and politics during Greece’s golden age; visited by Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:16–30).
- 6 **Antioch:** Capital of province of Syria during Roman period; missionary base for Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:1–3).
- 7 **Caesarea:** Important biblical seaport built by Herod the Great and named for Caesar Augustus; became Roman provincial capital of Jewish nation for 600 years.
- 8 **Jerusalem:** Religious capital of the Jewish people during the Roman occupation.
- 9 **Alexandria:** Capital of Egypt during the Greek and Roman periods; established by Alexander the Great; home of Apollos (Acts 18:24).

envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like *mere* men?

4 For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?

### MINISTERS ARE FELLOW WORKERS WITH GOD

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? 2 Cor. 3:3, 6; 4:1; 5:18; 6:4

6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. Acts 18:4, 24–27; 2 Cor. 3:5

7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. Ps. 62:12

9 For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, *you are* God’s building. 2 Cor. 6:1; Eph. 2:20–22

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. Rom. 1:5; 1 Cor. 4:15

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Is. 28:16

12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one’s work will become clear; for the Day

will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

Luke 2:35; 1 Pet. 1:7

14 If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward.

15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? 2 Cor. 6:16

17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

### MINISTERS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD

18 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.

Prov. 3:7

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their *own* craftiness";<sup>a</sup>

Job 5:13

20 and again, "The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."<sup>a</sup>

Ps. 94:11

21 Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours:

2 Cor. 4:5

22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come—all are yours.

23 And you *are* Christ's, and Christ *is* God's. 2 Cor. 10:7

## CHAPTER 4

**L**ET a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Titus 1:7

2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court.<sup>a</sup> In fact, I do not even judge myself.

4 For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

Matt. 7:1; 10:26; Rom. 2:29; 1 Cor. 3:13

### MISUNDERSTANDING OF PAUL'S MINISTRY

6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

7 For who makes you differ *from another*? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive *it*, why do you boast as if you had not received *it*?

John 3:27

8 You are already full! You are already rich! You

have reigned as kings without us—and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!

Rev. 3:17

9 For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

Heb. 10:33

10 We *are* fools for Christ's sake, but you *are* wise in Christ! We *are* weak, but you *are* strong! You *are* distinguished, but we *are* dishonored!

Acts 17:18

11 To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless.

12 And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure;

Matt. 5:44; Acts 18:3; 20:34

13 being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

Lam. 3:45

14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*.

1 Thess. 2:11

15 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

Gal. 4:19

16 Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

1 Cor. 11:1

17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

Acts 19:22; 1 Tim. 1:2, 18

18 Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you.

1 Cor. 5:2

19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power.

Acts 18:21; 19:21; 20:2

20 For the kingdom of God *is not in word but in power*.

1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Thess. 1:5

21 What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness? 2 Cor. 10:2

## CHAPTER 5

### DELIVER THE FORNICATORS FOR DISCIPLINE

**I**T is actually reported *that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named<sup>a</sup> among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife!

Lev. 18:6-8

2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.

2 Cor. 7:7-10

3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed.

Col. 2:5

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

John 20:23

3:19<sup>a</sup> Job 5:13 3:20<sup>a</sup> Psalm 94:11 4:3<sup>a</sup> Literally *day* 5:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *named*.

5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.<sup>a</sup> Acts 26:18; 1 Tim. 1:20

6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Gal. 5:9

7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.<sup>a</sup> Is. 53:7; John 19:14

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. Ex. 12:15; Deut. 16:3; Matt. 16:6

### SEPARATE YOURSELVES FROM IMMORAL BELIEVERS

9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 2 Cor. 6:14

10 Yet *I* certainly *did* not *mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. John 17:15

11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. Matt. 18:17; Gal. 2:12

12 For what *have I to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”<sup>a</sup> Deut. 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21, 24; 24:7

## CHAPTER 6 CONCERNING LITIGATION BETWEEN BELIEVERS

**D**ARE any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Dan. 7:22

2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Ps. 49:14

3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

4 If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?

5 I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?

6 But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!

7 Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather *let yourselves* be cheated? Prov. 20:22

8 No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and *you do* these things to *your* brethren!

### IMITATOR

4:16 (Gr. *mimētēs*) (Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 2:14; Heb. 6:12) G3402: The literal meaning of the word is “imitator” or “emulator,” but this Greek word does not have the negative connotation or artificial sense conveyed by the English words *imitate* or *mimic*. It suggests, basically, the repetition of a pattern already established by another (as 1 Thess. 1:6). To be an imitator of a person who is setting a positive example, then, is a good thing. Paul invited his readers to be “imitators” both of himself (as here in 1 Cor. 4:16 and 11:1) and of God (Eph. 5:1).

9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals,<sup>a</sup> nor sodomites, Gal. 5:21

10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor. 12:2; Heb. 10:22

### WARNING AGAINST SEXUAL IMMORALITY

12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of a 1 Cor. 10:23

13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. Eph. 5:23; 1 Thess. 4:3

14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 1:19

15 Do you not know that that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? Certainly not! Rom. 12:5

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 2:24

17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*. John 17:21–23

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Heb. 13:4

19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 2 Cor. 6:16

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body<sup>a</sup> and in your spirit, which are God’s. 2 Pet. 2:1

5:5<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Jesus*. 5:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *for us*.

5:13<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 17:7; 19:19; 22:21, 24; 24:7 6:9<sup>a</sup> That is, catamites

6:16<sup>a</sup> Genesis 2:24 6:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text ends the verse at *body*.

## CHAPTER 7

## PRINCIPLES FOR MARRIED LIFE

**N**ow concerning the things of which you wrote to me: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman.* 1 Cor. 7:8, 26

2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. Ex. 21:10

4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.

5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. Joel 2:16; 1 Thess. 3:5

6 But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. 2 Cor. 8:8

7 For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. Acts 26:29

8 But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; 1 Cor. 7:1, 26

9 but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*. 1 Tim. 5:14

## PRINCIPLES FOR THE MARRIED BELIEVER

**10** Now to the married I command, *yet not I but the Lord*: A wife is not to depart from *her* husband. Matt. 5:32; Mark 10:6–10

11 But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce *his* wife.

12 But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her.

13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. Mal. 2:15

15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace. Rom. 12:18

16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife? 1 Pet. 3:1

## PRINCIPLE OF ABIDING IN GOD'S CALL

**17** But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches. 1 Cor. 4:17

18 Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. Acts 15:1

19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is *what matters*. John 15:14; Gal. 3:28; 5:6; 6:15

20 Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.

21 Were you called *while* a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use *it*.

## BEGINNING THE NEW LIFE

## THE ASSURANCE OF NEW LIFE

## PART 3: CHANGED LIFE

**6:11**—Without a doubt, the greatest proof a person has experienced new birth is changed living. This changed living on the outside comes from a critical change within—a changed heart. As followers of Christ, we now suddenly love the following:

- a. **Jesus.** Before conversion, we might have held Christ in high esteem, but after conversion, we love Him as our greatest treasure (1 John 5:1–2).
- b. **The Bible.** We should love God's Word as the psalmist did in Psalm 119, who expressed his love for the Scriptures at least seventeen times (vv. 24, 40, 47–48, 72, 97, 103, 111, 113, 127, 129, 140, 143, 159, 162, 165, and 168).
- c. **Fellow Christians.** "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14).
- d. **The lost.** Like Paul, we also cry out for the salvation of loved ones. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1; cf. 2 Cor. 5:14).
- e. **Our enemies.** See Matthew 5:43–45.
- f. **Holy living.** John said if one loves the world, "the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15–17; cf. 1 John 5:4).
- g. **Worshipping God.** "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19).

*For the next article, BIBLE STUDY, turn to Nehemiah 8:3 on page 506. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

22 For he who is called in the Lord *while* a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called *while* free is Christ's slave. John 8:36; 1 Pet. 2:16

23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 1 Pet. 1:18, 19

24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that *state* in which he was called. Col. 3:22–24

#### PRINCIPLES FOR THE UNMARRIED

25 Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy.

26 I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is: 1 Cor. 7:1, 8

27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

28 But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.

29 But this I say, brethren, the time *is* short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, 1 Pet. 4:7

30 those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess,

31 and those who use this world as not misusing *it*. For the form of this world is passing away. 1 John 2:17

32 But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. 1 Tim. 5:5

33 But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please *his* wife.

34 There is<sup>a</sup> a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things

of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please *her* husband.

35 And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.

36 But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry.

37 Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin,<sup>a</sup> does well.

38 So then he who gives *her*<sup>a</sup> in marriage does well, but he who does not give *her* in marriage does better. Heb. 13:4

#### PRINCIPLES FOR REMARRIAGE

39 A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. Rom. 7:2; 2 Cor. 6:14

40 But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment—and I think I also have the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. 7:6, 25; 1 Thess. 4:8

### CHAPTER 8

#### PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY AND THE WEAKER BROTHER

**N**ow concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. Acts 15:20; Rom. 14:3, 14

7:34<sup>a</sup> M-Text adds also. 7:37<sup>a</sup> Or virgin daughter 7:38<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads his own virgin.

## UNDERSTANDING GOD'S BEING

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### PART 3: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CHRISTIAN LIVING

6:19—As a loving and wise mother tenderly watches over her child, so the Holy Spirit cares for the children of God. Here are six ways the Holy Spirit does so:

- The Holy Spirit indwells believers.** All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19) for the purpose of guiding the newly created nature given at conversion (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 3:16).
- The Holy Spirit fills believers.** We are admonished to “be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18). The word “fill” means “to be controlled.” The filling does not mean that the Christian gets more of the Holy Spirit, but rather, He gets more of the believer.
- The Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer** (Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13).
- The Holy Spirit produces fruit in the life of the believer.** This fruit is described by Paul: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal. 5:22–23).
- The Holy Spirit imparts gifts to Christians** (Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Cor. 12:1–11; Eph. 4:7–12). A spiritual gift is an ability imparted to every Christian (1 Cor. 7:7; 1 Pet. 4:10). The purpose of these gifts is twofold, namely, to glorify God (Rev. 4:11) and to edify the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12–13).
- The Holy Spirit teaches believers.** He will instruct us in all spiritual things as we read the Word of God (John 14:26) and abide in the Son of God (1 John 2:24–27).

*For the next article, THE TRINITY, turn to Genesis 1:26 on page 4. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

2 And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that *there is* no other God but one. Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4; Is. 41:24

5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), John 10:34

6 yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we *live*. Mal. 2:10; John 1:3; 13:13; Acts 17:28; Rom. 5:11

7 However, *there is* not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat *it* as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. Rom. 14:14, 22

8 But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. Rom. 14:17

9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? 1 Cor. 10:28

11 And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? Rom. 14:15, 20

12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Matt. 25:40

13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble. Rom. 14:21

## CHAPTER 9

### PAUL LISTS HIS RIGHTS AS A MINISTER

**A**M I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? Acts 9:15; 1 Cor. 3:6; 4:15; 15:8

2 If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. 2 Cor. 12:12

3 My defense to those who examine me is this:

4 Do we have no right to eat and drink?

5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as *do* also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Matt. 8:14; 13:55

6 Or *is it* only Barnabas and *I who* have no right to refrain from working? Acts 4:36

7 Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? Deut. 20:6; John 21:15; 2 Cor. 10:4

8 Do I say these things as a *mere* man? Or does not the law say the same also?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall

not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain."<sup>a</sup> Is it oxen God is concerned about? Deut. 25:4

10 Or does He say *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this is* written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. 2 Tim. 2:6

11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, *is it* a great thing if we reap your material things?

12 If others are partakers of *this* right over you, *are* we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. Acts 18:3; 20:33; 2 Cor. 11:12

13 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake *of the offerings* of the altar? Lev. 6:16, 26; 7:6, 31; Num. 18:8-31

14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel. Matt. 10:10; Rom. 10:15

### PAUL LIMITS HIS RIGHTS FOR MINISTRY

15 But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it *would be* better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. 2 Cor. 11:10

16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! Rom. 1:14

17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 1 Cor. 3:8, 14; 9:18; Gal. 2:7

18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ<sup>a</sup> without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel. 1 Cor. 7:31; 9:12; 10:33

19 For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; Matt. 18:15; 1 Cor. 9:1; Gal. 5:13

20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under the law, as under the law,<sup>a</sup> that I might win those *who are* under the law; Acts 16:3; 21:23-26

21 to those *who are* without law, as without law (not being without law toward God,<sup>a</sup> but under law toward Christ<sup>b</sup>), that I might win those *who are* without law; Rom. 2:12, 14; 1 Cor. 7:22; Gal. 2:3; 3:2

22 to the weak I became as<sup>a</sup> weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. Rom. 11:14; 14:1; 15:1

23 Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with *you*.

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*. Gal. 2:2

25 And everyone who competes *for the prize* is

<sup>9:9</sup> <sup>a</sup>Deuteronomy 25:4 <sup>9:18</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits of Christ.

<sup>9:20</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text adds *though not being myself under the law*.

<sup>9:21</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *God's law*. <sup>b</sup>NU-Text reads *Christ's law*.

<sup>9:22</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *as*.

temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable crown.

James 1:12

26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. 2Tim. 2:5

27 But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. Jer. 6:30

## CHAPTER 10 WARNING AGAINST FORFEITING LIBERTY

**M**OREOVER, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, Ex. 14:21, 22, 29

2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 all ate the same spiritual food, Ex. 16:4, 15, 35

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. Ex. 17:5-7

5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* were scattered in the wilderness. Num. 14:29, 37; 26:65

6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. Num. 11:4, 34

7 And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."<sup>a</sup> Ex. 32:6; 1 Cor. 10:14

8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; Num. 25:1-9; Ps. 106:29; Rev. 2:14

9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; Ex. 17:2, 7

10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Ex. 12:23; 16:2

11 Now all<sup>c</sup> these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Phil. 4:5

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. Rom. 11:20

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*. Ps. 125:3

### EXHORTATION TO USE LIBERTY TO GLORIFY GOD

14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

15 I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say. 1 Cor. 8:1

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? Matt. 26:26-28; Acts 2:42

17 For we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

### PREACH

9:14 (Gr. *katangelō*) (Acts 13:5; Col. 1:28) G2605: The literal meaning of *katangelo* is "to report down." It is often translated as "preach" and describes the way a message from God is "reported down" to His people. It is also translated as "declare" or "teach" in a few instances. Barnabas and Saul "preached" in the synagogues (Acts 13:5). Paul exhorted those who "preach" the gospel to also live the gospel (1 Cor. 9:14). He also commanded believers to always "preach" Christ (Col. 1:28).

18 Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? Lev. 3:3; 7:6, 14; Rom. 4:1, 12

19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? 1 Cor. 8:4

20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. Lev. 17:7; Deut. 32:17

21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. Deut. 32:38

22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? Deut. 32:21; Ezek. 22:14

23 All things are lawful for me,<sup>a</sup> but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me,<sup>b</sup> but not all things edify. 1 Cor. 6:12

24 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's *well-being*. Phil. 2:4

25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; 1 Tim. 4:4

26 for "the earth *is* the LORD's, and all its fullness."<sup>a</sup> Ps. 24:1

27 If any of those who do not believe invites you *to dinner*, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. Luke 10:7, 8

28 But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake;<sup>a</sup> for "the earth *is* the LORD's, and all its fullness."<sup>b</sup> Ps. 24:1; 1 Cor. 8:7, 10, 12

29 "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another *man's* conscience? Rom. 14:16

30 But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for *the food* over which I give thanks? Rom. 14:6

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Col. 3:17

32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, Rom. 14:13

33 just as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not

10:7<sup>a</sup> Exodus 32:6 10:11<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *all*. 10:23<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *for me*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *for me*. 10:26<sup>a</sup> Psalm 24:1 10:28<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. <sup>b</sup> Psalm 24:1



## SLEEP

**11:30** (Gr. *koimaō*) (John 11:12; Acts 12:6; 1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:14) G2837: *Koimaō* means “sleep” and refers to both natural sleep (Matt. 28:13) and death of the body of those who believe in Jesus. *Koimaō* is not used to describe Jesus’ death in any way; however, it is used in 1 Corinthians 15:20, saying Jesus is the first of those who have fallen “asleep.” The symbolic use of *koimaō* to describe death refers to the similarity of a sleeping body and a dead body, both providing restfulness and peace. It describes the saints who died before Jesus (Acts 13:36) and Lazarus’ death (John 11:11).

seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved. Rom. 15:2

## CHAPTER 11

**I**MITATE me, just as I also *imitate* Christ. Eph. 5:1

## PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC PRAYER

**2** Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered *them* to you.

**3** But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman *is* man, and the head of Christ *is* God. Gen. 3:16; Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23

**4** Every man praying or prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonors his head. 1 Cor. 12:10

**5** But every woman who prays or prophesies with *her* head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. Deut. 21:12

**6** For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. Num. 5:18

**7** For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:1; 9:6

**8** For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Gen. 2:21–23

**9** Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. Gen. 2:18

**10** For this reason the woman ought to have *a symbol of authority* on *her* head, because of the angels.

**11** Nevertheless, neither *is* man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. Gal. 3:28

**12** For as woman *came* from man, even so man also *comes* through woman; but all things are from God.

**13** Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?

**14** Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him?

**15** But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for *her* hair is given to her<sup>a</sup> for a covering.

**16** But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor *do* the churches of God. 1 Tim. 6:4

## REBUKE OF DISORDERS AT THE LORD’S SUPPER

**17** Now in giving these instructions I do not praise *you*, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

**18** For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. 1 Cor. 1:10–12; 3:3

**19** For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. Deut. 13:3; 1 Tim. 4:1

**20** Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper.

**21** For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk. Jude 12

**22** What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*.

**23** For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread;

**24** and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, “Take, eat;<sup>a</sup> *this is My body which is broken<sup>b</sup> for you; do this in remembrance of Me.*”

**25** In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, “*This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.*”

**26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. John 14:3

**27** Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood<sup>a</sup> of the Lord. John 6:51

**28** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 2 Cor. 13:5

**29** For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner<sup>a</sup> eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s<sup>b</sup> body.

**30** For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

**31** For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 1 John 1:9

**32** But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. Ps. 94:12

**33** Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 1 Cor. 14:26

**34** But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home,

**11:15**<sup>a</sup> M-Text omits *to her*. **11:24**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Take, eat*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *broken*. **11:27**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the blood*.

**11:29**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *in an unworthy manner*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *Lord’s*.

lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

## CHAPTER 12

### TEST OF THE SPIRIT'S CONTROL

**N**ow concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: 1 Cor. 12:4; 14:1, 37  
 2 You know that<sup>a</sup> you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. Ps. 115:5  
 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. Matt. 16:17

### DIVERSITY OF THE GIFTS

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. Rom. 12:3–8; Eph. 4:4  
 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. Rom. 12:6  
 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. 1 Cor. 15:28  
 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*:  
 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, Rom. 15:14; 1 Cor. 2:6, 7  
 9 to another faith by the same<sup>a</sup> Spirit, 2 Cor. 4:13  
 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. Rom. 12:6; 1 John 4:1  
 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. John 3:8; Rom. 12:6

### IMPORTANCE OF ALL GIFTS

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. Rom. 12:4, 5; Gal. 3:16  
 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into<sup>a</sup> one Spirit. John 7:37–39; Rom. 6:5; Col. 3:11

14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling?

18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 1 Cor. 12:28

19 And if they were all one member, where *would* the body *be*?

20 But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body.

21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

23 And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable *parts* have greater modesty,

24 but our presentable *parts* have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it,

25 that there should be no schism in the body, but *that* the members should have the same care for one another.

26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it*.

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. Rom. 12:5; Eph. 5:30

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Num. 11:17

29 *Are* all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are* all teachers? *Are* all workers of miracles?

12:2<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *when*. 12:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *one*.

12:13<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *into*.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

### STEWARDSHIP

#### PART 1: USING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

12:1–10—Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to believers for the accomplishment of God’s purpose in the world and for the edification of the church, the body of Christ. Spiritual gifts are listed and described in four New Testament passages: Romans 12:3–8; 1 Corinthians 12:1–10, 28–31; Ephesians 4:11–12; and 1 Peter 4:10–11. While disagreement exists regarding whether these lists are partial or complete, what a combined list of gifts should look like, and whether all the gifts remain available today, two truths are agreed upon: (1) every believer has been given spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:5–6; 1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Pet. 4:10); and (2) the gifts belong to God and are given for the believer to use for the glory of God (1 Pet. 4:11).

*For Part 2: SERVING, turn to Galatians 5:13 on page 1295. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

## FAITH

**13:13** (Gr. *pistis*) (Acts 17:31; Gal. 5:6; Col. 1:4; 2 Tim. 4:7) *G4102*: In the New Testament, this term is always used with reference to religious matters. Basically, faith is trusting in the God whom one is convinced is trustworthy. The Bible declares, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). True faith is the means of obtaining a right relationship with God (Rom. 1:17; Eph. 2:8; James 2:14). On several occasions, this term can mean "faithfulness, trustworthiness," especially when used in connection with other virtues (Matt. 23:23; Rom. 3:3; Gal. 5:22). The expression "the faith" may be used to denote Christianity (Gal. 1:23; 1 Tim. 4:1; Jude v. 3).

30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

31 But earnestly desire the best<sup>a</sup> gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. 1 Cor. 14:1, 39

## CHAPTER 13

## EXERCISE GIFTS WITH LOVE

**T**HOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

2 And though I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. Matt. 17:20; 21:21

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned,<sup>a</sup> but have not love, it profits me nothing. Matt. 6:1, 2

4 Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; Prov. 10:12; 17:9; Gal. 5:26; Eph. 4:32

5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 1 Cor. 10:24

6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; Rom. 1:32; 2 John 4

7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Gal. 6:2

8 Love never fails. But whether *there are prophecies*, they will fail; whether *there are tongues*, they will cease; whether *there is knowledge*, it will vanish away.

9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. Phil. 3:12; 1 John 3:2

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

## CHAPTER 14

## SUPERIORITY OF PROPHECY

**P**URSU<sup>e</sup> love, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy. Num. 11:25, 29

2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. Acts 10:46

3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. 1 Tim. 4:13

4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for<sup>a</sup> he who prophesies *is* greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching? 1 Cor. 14:26

## GIFT OF TONGUES

7 Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played?

8 For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?

9 So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them *is* without significance.

11 Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks *will be* a foreigner to me.

12 Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual *gifts*, *let it be* for the edification of the church *that* you seek to excel.

13 Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. 1 Cor. 12:10

14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is *the conclusion* then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. Ps. 47:7; Col. 3:16

16 Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? 1 Cor. 11:24

17 For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;

**12:31**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *greater*. **13:3**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *so I may boast*.

**14:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *and*.

19 yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature. Ps. 131:2; 1 Pet. 2:2

21 In the law it is written:

“With *men of other tongues and other lips*  
I will speak to this people;  
And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me,”<sup>a</sup>

says the Lord. Is. 28:11, 12; John 10:34

22 Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.

23 Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those who are* uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind? Acts 2:13

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.

25 And thus<sup>a</sup> the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on *his* face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you. Is. 45:14

#### EXERCISING GIFTS IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

26 How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 2 Cor. 12:19

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, *let there be* two or at the most three, *each* in turn, and let one interpret.

28 But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. 1 Cor. 12:10

30 But if *anything* is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. 1 Thess. 5:19, 20

31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. 1 John 4:1

33 For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. 1 Cor. 11:16

34 Let your<sup>a</sup> women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but *they are* to be submissive, as the law also says. Gen. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:11

35 And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.

36 Or did the word of God come *originally* from you? Or *was it* you only that it reached?

37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or

#### TONGUE

14:6 (Gr. *glōssa*) (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Cor. 12:10) G100: The Greek term *glōssa* means “tongue” or “language.” When Jesus’ followers were empowered by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they were given the ability to speak in many different languages so those visiting from all around the Roman world could hear the glories of God being uttered in their native tongues (Acts 2:4–11). The household of Cornelius also spoke in different languages when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:46). The same happened with the new disciples from Ephesus (Acts 19:6). From then on, some believers regularly spoke in different languages as a way of praying to God, and others spoke in different languages in church meetings. When these languages were spoken in private, interpretation was not needed; when they were spoken in the meetings, Paul required interpretation so that the others could understand and be edified (1 Cor. 14:2–27).

spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. 2 Cor. 10:7

38 But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant.<sup>a</sup>

39 Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

#### CHAPTER 15

##### FACT OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

**M**OREOVER, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, Rom. 5:2; 11:20; Gal. 1:11

2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. Rom. 1:16; Gal. 3:4

3 For I delivered to you first of all that that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, Ps. 22:15; 1 Cor. 11:2, 23; Gal. 1:12

4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, Acts 2:25 +

5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. Matt. 28:17; Luke 24:34

6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Acts 1:3, 4

8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. Acts 9:3–8; 22:6–11; 26:12–18

9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not

14:21<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 28:11, 12 14:25<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *And thus*. 14:34<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *your*. 14:38<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized*.

worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. Acts 8:3; Eph. 3:8

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was* with me. Eph. 3:7, 8; Phil. 2:13

11 Therefore, whether *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

**IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION**

12 Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. 1 Thess. 4:14

14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. Acts 2:24

16 For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.

17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Rom. 4:25

18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. Job 14:12

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. 2 Tim. 3:12

**ORDER OF THE RESURRECTIONS**

20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. Acts 26:23; 1 Pet. 1:3

21 For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. Rom. 5:12; 6:23

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. John 5:28, 29

23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. 1 Thess. 4:15–17

24 Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27 +

25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. Ps. 110:1

26 The last enemy *that* will be destroyed is death. 2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 20:14 +

27 For "He has put all things under His feet."<sup>a</sup> But when He says "all things are put under *Him*," *it is* evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Ps. 8:6 +

28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. 1 Cor. 3:23; 11:3; 12:6; Phil. 3:21 +

**MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION**

29 Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?

30 And why do we stand in jeopardy every hour? 2 Cor. 11:26

31 I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. 1 Thess. 2:19

32 If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is *it* to me? If *the* dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"<sup>a</sup> Is. 22:13; 56:12; 2 Cor. 1:8

15:27<sup>a</sup> Psalm 8:6 15:32<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 22:13

**GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE**

**SHARING OUR FAITH**

**PART 3: WHAT TO SHARE**

15:3–4—Before discussing what is to be shared concerning our faith, addressing two things *not* to do when sharing our faith is helpful. First, we are not to force Christian faith and practice upon the unbelieving world (1 Cor. 5:12). Second, we are not to mislead or confuse people by allowing them to believe that church membership, tithing, or good works are somehow connected with becoming a Christian (Eph. 2:8–10).

Instead, we have but one thing to share with the unsaved, and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ. According to Paul, the core of the gospel is the death and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:1–4). A plan for sharing the faith might be as follows:

- a. God's Word says that all people are sinners, separated from a relationship with God and deserving of death (Is. 53:6; Rom. 3:10–11, 23; 5:8, 12; Rev. 20:15).
- b. There is nothing we can do on our own to save ourselves (Is. 64:6; Eph. 2:9).
- c. What we could not do, however, God did. Jesus, the Son of God, was born, crucified, and resurrected to save us from our sin (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 1:15).
- d. To be saved, we must believe God's Word and trust in who Jesus is and what He has done (John 5:24; Acts 16:31).

*For Part 4: HOW TO SHARE, turn to 1 Thessalonians 1:5 on page 1324. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

33 Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.” 1 Cor. 5:6

34 Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak *this* to your shame. Rom. 13:11; 1 Cor. 6:5; 1 Thess. 4:5

#### BODIES OF THE RESURRECTED DEAD

35 But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?” Ezek. 37:3

36 Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. John 12:24

37 And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other *grain*.

38 But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.

39 All flesh *is* not the same flesh, but *there is* one *kind of* flesh<sup>a</sup> of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, *and* another of birds.

40 *There are* also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory of* the terrestrial *is* another.

41 *There is* one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory.

42 So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body is* sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. Dan. 12:3

43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. Phil. 3:21

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.”<sup>a</sup> The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. Gen. 2:7; John 5:21; 6:57; Rom. 5:14

46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.

47 The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord<sup>a</sup> from heaven. Gen. 2:7; 3:19

48 As *was* the man of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly Man, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly. Phil. 3:20

49 And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear<sup>a</sup> the image of the heavenly Man. Gen. 5:3; Rom. 8:29

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. John 3:3, 5

#### BODIES OF THE TRANSLATED LIVING

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 1 Thess. 4:15

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Matt. 24:31

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. 2 Cor. 5:4

54 So when this corruptible has put on

incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 25:8

55 “O Death, where *is* your sting?<sup>a</sup>

O Hades, where *is* your victory?”<sup>b</sup> Hos. 13:14

56 The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. Rom. 3:20; 4:15; 7:8

57 But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 7:25; 1 John 5:4

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Cor. 3:8; 2 Pet. 3:14

## CHAPTER 16

### COUNSEL CONCERNING THE COLLECTION FOR JERUSALEM

**N**ow concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: Gal. 2:10

2 On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. Acts 20:7

3 And when I come, whomever you approve by *your* letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. 2 Cor. 3:1; 8:18

4 But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me. 2 Cor. 8:4, 19

### CONCLUSION

5 Now I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia (for I am passing through Macedonia).

6 And it may be that I will remain, or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my journey, wherever I go. Acts 15:3

7 For I do not wish to see you now on the way; but I hope to stay a while with you, if the Lord permits. James 4:15

8 But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost.

9 For a great and effective door has opened to me, and *there are* many adversaries. Acts 14:27; 19:9

10 And if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. Acts 19:22; Phil. 2:20

11 Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.

12 Now concerning *our* brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time; however, he will come when he has a convenient time. 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:5

15:39<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *of flesh*. 15:45<sup>a</sup> Genesis 2:7

15:47<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *the Lord*. 15:49<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *let us also bear*.

15:54<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 25:8 15:55<sup>a</sup> Hosea 13:14 <sup>b</sup> NU-Text reads *O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?*

## CHURCH

**16:19** (Gr. *ekklēsia*) (Acts 8:3; 19:32) G1577: The Greek word is derived from the verb *ekkaleō*, meaning “to call out.” The normal Greek usage refers to a regular assembly (Acts 19:32, 39, 41). In the Septuagint, it is used to translate the Hebrew word *qahal*, meaning congregation, and in this sense, it is used of Israel (Acts 7:38). Jesus used the word to speak of building His church (Matt. 16:18), meaning the whole body of believers (cf. Eph. 1:22). The most common New Testament usage is of local Christian communities or congregations (as here and in Acts 8:3), including those that met in houses (Col. 4:15; Philem. v. 2).

**13** Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Matt. 24:42; Eph. 3:16; 6:10; Phil. 1:27; 4:1

**14** Let all *that* you *do* be done with love. 1 Pet. 4:8

**15** I urge you, brethren—you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and

*that* they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints— Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 1:16; 2 Cor. 8:4

**16** that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us. Heb. 6:10; 13:17

**17** I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. 2 Cor. 11:9

**18** For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men. Phil. 2:29; Col. 4:8

**19** The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. Rom. 16:5

**20** All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. Rom. 16:16

**21** The salutation with my own hand—Paul’s.

**22** If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.<sup>a</sup> O Lord, come!<sup>b</sup> Jude 14, 15

**23** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Rom. 16:20

**24** My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**16:22**<sup>a</sup> Greek *anathema* <sup>b</sup> Aramaic *Maranatha*

# The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the CORINTHIANS



## THE BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS

Since Paul's first letter, the Corinthian church had been swayed by false teachers who stirred the people against Paul. They claimed he was fickle, proud, unimpressive in appearance and speech, dishonest, and unqualified as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul sent Titus to Corinth to deal with these difficulties, and upon Titus's return, Paul rejoiced to hear of the Corinthians' change of heart. Paul wrote this letter to express his thanksgiving for the repentant majority and to appeal to the rebellious minority to accept his authority. Throughout the book, he defends his conduct, character, and calling as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

To distinguish this epistle from 1 Corinthians, it was given the title *Pros Korinthios B*, the "Second to the Corinthians." The A and B were probably later additions to *Pros Korinthios*.



## THE AUTHOR OF 2 CORINTHIANS

External and internal evidence amply support the Pauline authorship of this letter. As with Romans, the problem of 2 Corinthians is with its lack of unity, not with its authorship. Many critics theorize that chapters 10–13 were not a part of this letter in its original form because their tone contrasts with that of chapters 1–9. It is held that the sudden change from a spirit of joy and comfort to a spirit of concern and self-defense points to a "seam" between two different letters. Many hypotheses have been advanced to explain the problem, but the most popular is that chapters 10–13 belong to a lost letter referred to in 2:4. Several problems arise with these attempts to dissect 2 Corinthians. Chapters 10–13 do not fit Paul's description of the "lost" letter of 2:4 because they are firm but not sorrowful and because they do not refer to the offender about whom that letter was written (2 Cor. 2:5–11). Also, this earlier material would have been appended at the beginning of 2 Corinthians, not at the end. There is simply no external (manuscripts, church fathers, tradition) or internal basis for challenging the unity of this epistle. The difference in tone between chapters

1–9 and 10–13 is easily explained by the change of focus from the repentant majority to the rebellious minority.



## THE TIME OF 2 CORINTHIANS

Part of the background of 2 Corinthians can be found in "The Time of 1 Corinthians." Paul was in Ephesus when he wrote 1 Corinthians and expected Timothy to visit Corinth and return to him (1 Cor. 16:10–11). Timothy apparently brought Paul a report of the opposition that had developed against him in Corinth, and Paul made a brief and painful visit to the Corinthians (this visit is not mentioned in Acts, but it can be inferred from 2 Cor. 2:1; 12:14; 13:1–2). Upon returning to Ephesus, Paul regretfully wrote his sorrowful letter to urge the church to discipline the leader of the opposition (2:1–11; 7:8). Titus carried this letter. Paul, anxious to learn the results, went to Troas and then to Macedonia to meet Titus on his return trip (2:12–13; 7:5–16). Paul was greatly relieved by Titus's report that most of the Corinthians had repented of their rebelliousness against Paul's apostolic authority. However, a minority opposition persisted, evidently led by a group of Judaizers (10–13). There in Macedonia Paul wrote 2 Corinthians and sent it with Titus and another brother (8:16–24). This took place late in AD 56, and the Macedonian city from which it was written may have been Philippi. Paul then made his third trip to Corinth (12:14; 13:1–2; Acts 20:1–3) where he wrote his letter to the Romans.

There is an alternate view that the anguished letter of 2:4 and 7:8 is, in fact, 1 Corinthians and not a lost letter. This would require that the offender of 2 Corinthians 2:5–11 and 7:12 be identified with the offender of 1 Corinthians 5.



## CHRIST IN 2 CORINTHIANS

Christ is presented as the believer's comfort (2 Cor. 1:5), triumph (2:14), Lord (4:5), light (4:6), judge (5:10), reconciliation (5:19), substitute (5:21), gift (9:15), owner (10:7), and power (12:9).





## KEYS TO 2 CORINTHIANS

**Key Theme: Paul's Defense of His Ministry**—The major theme of 2 Corinthians is Paul's defense of his apostolic credentials and authority. This is especially evident in the portion directed to the still rebellious minority (2 Cor. 10–13), but the theme of vindication is also clear in chapters 1–9. Certain false apostles had mounted an effective campaign against Paul in the church at Corinth, and Paul was forced to take several steps to overcome the opposition. This epistle expresses the apostle's joy over the triumph of the true gospel in Corinth (chs. 1–7), and it acknowledges the godly sorrow and repentance of the bulk of the believers. It also urges the Corinthians to fulfill their promise of making a liberal contribution for the poor among the Christians in Judea (chs. 8–9). This collection would not only assist the poor, but it would also demonstrate the concern of Gentile Christians in Macedonia and Achaia for Jewish Christians in Judea, thus displaying the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ.

The opposition addressed in chapters 10–13 apparently consists of Jews (Palestinian or Hellenistic; 11:22) who claim to be apostles (11:5, 13; 12:11) but who preach a false gospel (11:4) and are enslaving in their leadership (11:20). Chapters 10–13 are intended to expose these "false apostles" (11:13) and defend Paul's God-given authority and ministry as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

**Key Verses:** 2 Corinthians 4:5–6; 5:17–19—"For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (4:5–6).

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new cre-

ation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation" (5:17–19).

**Key Chapters:** 2 Corinthians 8 and 9—Chapters 8 and 9 are really one unit and comprise the most complete revelation of God's plan for giving found anywhere in the Scriptures. Contained therein are the principles for giving (8:1–6), the purposes for giving (8:7–15), the policies to be followed in giving (8:16–9:5), and the promises to be realized in giving (9:6–15).



## SURVEY OF 2 CORINTHIANS

Second Corinthians describes the anatomy of an apostle. The Corinthian church has been swayed by false teachers who have stirred the people against Paul, especially in response to 1 Corinthians, Paul's disciplinary letter. Throughout 2 Corinthians, Paul defends his apostolic conduct, character, and call. The three major sections are: the ministry of Paul (2 Cor. 1–7); the request of Paul (chs. 8–9); and the apostleship of Paul (chs. 10–13).

**The Ministry of Paul (1:1–7:16)**—After his salutation and thanksgiving for God's comfort in his afflictions and perils (1:1–11), Paul explains why he has delayed his planned visit to Corinth. It is not a matter of vacillation: the apostle wants them to have enough time to repent (1:12–2:4). Paul graciously asks them to restore the repentant offender to fellowship (2:5–13). At this point, Paul embarks on an extended defense of his ministry in terms of his message, circumstances, motives, and conduct

### OVERVIEW OF 2 CORINTHIANS

Outline	THE MINISTRY OF PAUL			THE REQUEST OF PAUL		THE APOSTLESHIP OF PAUL		
	PAUL'S CHANGE OF PLANS 1:1–2:13	PAUL'S PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY 2:14–6:10	PAUL'S APPEAL TO THE CORINTHIANS 6:11–7:16	EXAMPLE OF THE MACEDONIANS 8:1–6	EXHORTATION TO THE CORINTHIANS 8:7–9:15	PAUL ANSWERS HIS ACCUSERS 10:1–18	PAUL DEFENDS HIS APOSTLESHIP 11:1–12:13	PAUL ANNOUNCES HIS VISIT 12:14–13:10
Theme	CHARACTER			COLLECTION		CREDENTIALS		
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT							
Location	FROM MACEDONIA							
Time Frame	C. AD 56							

(2:14—6:10). He then admonishes the believers to separate themselves from defilement (6:11—7:1) and expresses his comfort at Titus's news of their change of heart (7:2—16).

**The Request of Paul (8:1—9:15)**—This is the longest discussion of the principles and practice of giving in the New Testament. The example of the Macedonians' liberal giving for the needy brethren in Jerusalem (8:1—6) is followed by an appeal to the Corinthians to keep their promise by doing the same (8:7—9:15). In this connection, Paul commends the messengers he has sent to Corinth to make arrangements for the large gift they have promised. Their generosity will be more than amply rewarded by God.

**The Apostleship of Paul (10:1—13:14)**—Paul concludes this epistle with a defense of his apostolic authority and credentials that is directed to the still rebellious minority in the Corinthian church. His meekness in their presence in no way diminishes his authority as an apostle (ch. 10). To demonstrate his apostolic credentials, Paul is forced to boast about his knowledge, integrity, accomplishments, sufferings, visions, and miracles (11:1—12:13). He reveals his plans to visit them for the third time and urges them to repent so that he will not have to use severity when he comes (12:14—13:10). The letter ends with exhortations, greetings, and a benediction (13:11—14).

## OUTLINE OF 2 CORINTHIANS

### Part One: The Ministry of Paul (1:1—7:16)

- I. Paul's Change of Plans . . . . . 1:1—2:13
  - A. Introduction . . . . . 1:1—11
    - 1. Paul's Thanksgiving to God . . . . . 1:1—7
    - 2. Paul's Trouble in Asia . . . . . 1:8—11
  - B. The Explanation of His Change of Plans . . . . . 1:12—2:13
    - 1. Paul's Original Plan . . . . . 1:12—22
    - 2. Paul's Change of Plans . . . . . 1:23—2:4
    - 3. Paul's Appeal to Forgive . . . . . 2:5—13
- II. Paul's Philosophy of Ministry . . . . . 2:14—6:10
  - A. Christ Causes Us to Triumph . . . . . 2:14—17
  - B. Changed Lives Prove Ministry . . . . . 3:1—5
  - C. New Covenant Is the Basis of Ministry . . . . . 3:6—18
  - D. Christ Is the Theme of Ministry . . . . . 4:1—7
  - E. Trials Abound in the Ministry . . . . . 4:8—15
  - F. Motivation in the Ministry . . . . . 4:16—5:21

- 1. Motivation of External Perspective . . . . . 4:16—18
- 2. Motivation of the Future Presence of Christ . . . . . 5:1—8
- 3. Motivation of Future Reward . . . . . 5:9—10
- 4. Motivation of the Love of Christ . . . . . 5:11—16
- 5. Motivation of the Message of Reconciliation . . . . . 5:17—21
- G. Giving No Offense in the Ministry . . . . . 6:1—10

- III. Paul's Appeal to the Corinthians . . . . . 6:11—7:16
  - A. Paul's Appeal for Reconciliation . . . . . 6:11—13
  - B. Paul's Appeal for Separation from Unbelievers . . . . . 6:14—7:1
  - C. Paul's Meeting with Titus . . . . . 7:2—7
  - D. Corinthians' Response to Paul's Letter . . . . . 7:8—16

### Part Two: The Request of Paul (8:1—9:15)

- I. Example of the Macedonians . . . . . 8:1—6
- II. Exhortation to the Corinthians . . . . . 8:7—9:15
  - A. Example of Christ . . . . . 8:7—9
  - B. Purpose of Giving . . . . . 8:10—15
  - C. Explanation of the Delegation . . . . . 8:16—9:5

- 1. Policies in Giving . . . . . 8:16—24
- 2. Readiness in Giving . . . . . 9:1—5
- D. Exhortation to Giving . . . . . 9:6—15
  - 1. Principles in Giving . . . . . 9:6—7
  - 2. Promises from Giving . . . . . 9:8—15

### Part Three: The Apostleship of Paul (10:1—13:14)

- I. Paul Answers His Accusers . . . . . 10:1—18
  - A. The Charge of Cowardice Is Answered . . . . . 10:1—2
  - B. The Charge of Walking in the Flesh Is Answered . . . . . 10:3—9
  - C. The Charge of Personal Weakness Is Answered . . . . . 10:10—18
- II. Paul Defends His Apostleship . . . . . 11:1—12:13
  - A. Paul's Declaration of His Apostleship . . . . . 11:1—15
  - B. Paul's Sufferings Support His Apostleship . . . . . 11:16—33
  - C. Paul's Revelations Support His Apostleship . . . . . 12:1—10

- 1. Vision of Paradise . . . . . 12:1—6
- 2. Thorn in the Flesh . . . . . 12:7—10
- D. Paul's Signs Support His Apostleship . . . . . 12:11—13
- III. Paul Announces His Visit . . . . . 12:14—13:10
  - A. Paul's Concern Not to Be a Financial Burden . . . . . 12:14—18
  - B. Paul's Concern Not to Find Them Carnal . . . . . 12:19—21
  - C. Paul's Warning to Examine Yourselves . . . . . 13:1—10
- IV. Conclusion . . . . . 13:11—14

## SUFFERING

**1:5** (Gr. *pathēma*) (Col. 1:24; Heb. 2:9; 1 Pet. 4:13) G3804: *Pathēma* means “suffering, affliction.” Paul frequently uses *pathēma* in his writings to describe his circumstances as well as the “suffering” shared by all believers (2 Cor. 1:5; Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 4:13). Paul rejoiced in his *pathēma*, recognizing how it brought him closer to Christ (Col. 1:24). Christ “suffered” for the sake of the world. He “suffered” death so that those who believe in Him would have eternal life free from “suffering” (Heb. 2:9). As a believer in Christ, one can partake in the “suffering” of Christ in the walk of faith and spread of the gospel (1 Pet. 4:13).

## CHAPTER 1

### PAUL'S THANKSGIVING TO GOD

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother,

To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia: Col. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 1:7

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 1 Pet. 1:3

4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. Is. 51:12; 66:13

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.

6 Now if we are afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which *is* effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. 2 Cor. 4:15; 12:15

7 And our hope for you *is* steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also *you will partake* of the consolation. Rom. 8:17

### PAUL'S TROUBLE IN ASIA

8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Acts 19:23

9 Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, Jer. 17:5, 7

10 who delivered us from so great a death, and does<sup>a</sup> deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us, 2 Pet. 2:9

11 you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our<sup>a</sup> behalf for the gift *granted* to us through many. Rom. 15:30

### PAUL'S ORIGINAL PLAN

12 For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you. 1 Cor. 2:4; 2 Cor. 2:17

13 For we are not writing any other things to you than what you read or understand. Now I trust you will understand, even to the end

14 (as also you have understood us in part), that we are your boast as you also *are* ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 5:12; Phil. 2:16

15 And in this confidence I intended to come to you before, that you might have a second benefit— Rom. 1:11; 15:29; 1 Cor. 4:19

16 to pass by way of you to Macedonia, to come again from Macedonia to you, and be helped by you on my way to Judea. 1 Cor. 16:3–6

17 Therefore, when I was planning this, did I do it lightly? Or the things I plan, do I plan according to the flesh, that with me there should be Yes, Yes, and No, No? 2 Cor. 10:2; 11:18

18 But *as God is faithful*, our word to you was not Yes and No. 1 John 5:20

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me, Silvanus, and Timothy—was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes. Mark 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Heb. 13:8; 1 Pet. 5:12

20 For all the promises of God in Him *are* Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. Rom. 15:8, 9

21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God, 1 John 2:20, 27

22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Eph. 1:14; 4:30

### PAUL'S CHANGE OF PLANS

23 Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Gal. 1:20

24 Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. Rom. 11:20; 1 Pet. 5:3

## CHAPTER 2

**B**UT I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. 2 Cor. 1:23

2 For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? 2 Cor. 7:8

3 And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is *the joy* of you all. 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:10

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you. 2 Cor. 2:9; 7:8, 12

110<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *shall*. 111<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *your behalf*.

### PAUL'S APPEAL TO FORGIVE

5 But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent—not to be too severe. 1 Cor. 5:1; Gal. 4:12

6 This punishment which *was inflicted* by the majority *is* sufficient for such a man, 1 Cor. 5:4, 5

7 so that, on the contrary, you *ought* rather to forgive and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Gal. 6:1

8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm *your* love to him.

9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

10 Now whom you forgive anything, I also *forgive*. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one<sup>a</sup> for your sakes in the presence of Christ,

11 lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, Acts 16:8; 1 Cor. 16:9

13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia. 2 Cor. 7:6, 13; 8:6

### CHRIST CAUSES US TO TRIUMPH

14 Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 4:3

16 To the one *we are* the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

17 For we are not, as so many,<sup>a</sup> peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ. 2 Cor. 1:12; 2 Pet. 2:3

## CHAPTER 3

### CHANGED LIVES PROVE MINISTRY

**D**o we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you or *letters* of commendation from you? Acts 18:27; 2 Cor. 5:12; 10:12, 18; 12:11

2 You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; 1 Cor. 9:2

3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart. Ex. 24:12; 31:18; 32:15; Ps. 40:8

4 And we have such trust through Christ toward God.

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, John 15:5; 1 Cor. 15:10

### NEW COVENANT IS THE BASIS OF MINISTRY

6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit;<sup>a</sup> for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Jer. 31:31

7 But if the ministry of death, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, Ex. 34:1, 29; Rom. 7:10  
8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? Gal. 3:5

2:10<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *For indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it.* **2:17<sup>a</sup>** M-Text reads *the rest.* **3:6<sup>a</sup>** Or *spirit*

## UNDERSTANDING OTHER SPIRIT BEINGS

### SATAN

#### PART 3: STRATEGIES OF SATAN

**2:11**—Some of the strategies of Satan are suggested by his many names:

- The devil** (James 4:7). He slanders God to people, people to God, people to one another, and people to themselves.
- The wicked one** (Eph. 6:16). He is out to harm people and create havoc in the natural, political, and social world.
- The tempter** (1 Thess. 3:5). He presents a false but appealing set of plausible reasons and advantages for sinning.
- The god of this age** (2 Cor. 4:4). He is the supernatural motivation for the secular and religious systems of thought that oppose biblical truth.
- The ruler of this world** (John 12:31). Satan has great influence over unrighteous political systems. Totalitarian power, injustice, oppression, and greed are among his trademarks.
- The prince of the power of the air** (Eph. 2:2). He directs the activity of his army of fallen angels who conspire to tempt, deceive, and corrupt in a seemingly endless variety of ways.

At a personal level, Satan appeals to unbelievers and believers alike by: (1) urging that there is a better way than God's way in the immediate situation, (2) reminding how often we have failed in the past at this point, (3) insinuating how pleasant sin will be, (4) promoting the merits of hatred, bitterness, and revenge, (5) advocating power over love, and (6) urging us to destroy our enemies.

*For Part 4: DESTINY OF SATAN, turn to Matthew 25:41 on page 1081. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

9 For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. Rom. 1:17; 3:21

10 For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels.

11 For if what is passing away *was* glorious, what remains *is* much more glorious.

12 Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— Eph. 6:19

13 unlike Moses, *who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. Ex. 34:33–35

14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taking away in Christ. Is. 29:10 ✦; Acts 28:26

15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Is. 25:7; Rom. 11:23

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 1 Cor. 15:45; Gal. 5:1, 13

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. Rom. 8:29, 30; 1 Cor. 13:12

## CHAPTER 4 CHRIST IS THE THEME OF MINISTRY

**T**HEREFORE, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. 1 Cor. 7:25

2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 2 Cor. 5:11

3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 1 Cor. 1:18

4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. John 1:18; 12:31, 40; 2 Cor. 3:8, 9

5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 1 Cor. 1:13; 9:19

6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Gen. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:19

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 1 Cor. 2:5

### TRIALS ABOUND IN THE MINISTRY

8 *We are* hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair;

9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— Ps. 37:24; Heb. 13:5

10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. Rom. 8:17; Phil. 3:10

11 For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. Rom. 8:36

12 So then death is working in us, but life in you.

13 And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke,"<sup>a</sup> we also believe and therefore speak, Ps. 116:10; 2 Pet. 1:1

14 knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. Rom. 8:11

15 For all things *are* for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Col. 1:24

### MOTIVATION OF EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVE

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. Is. 40:29, 31; 2 Cor. 4:1

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, Rom. 8:18

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. Heb. 11:1, 13

## CHAPTER 5 MOTIVATION OF THE FUTURE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

**F**OR we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Job 4:19; Mark 14:58

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. Rev. 3:18

4 For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 1 Cor. 15:53

5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. Rom. 8:23

6 So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.

7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. Heb. 11:1

8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Phil. 1:23

<sup>a</sup>4:13 <sup>o</sup>Psalm 116:10

**MOTIVATION OF FUTURE REWARD**

9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Rom. 2:16; 14:10, 12; Eph. 6:8 ↗

**MOTIVATION OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST**

11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. Heb. 10:31; 12:29

12 For we do not commend ourselves again to

you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have *an answer* for those who boast in appearance and not in heart. 2 Cor. 1:14; 3:1

13 For if we are beside ourselves, *it is* for God; or if we are of sound mind, *it is* for you. 2 Cor. 11:1, 16; 12:11

14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; Rom. 5:15; 6:6

15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. Rom. 6:11

16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him thus* no longer. Matt. 12:50; 2 Cor. 10:3

**NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD THE SPIRIT**

Name or Title	Reference
Eternal Spirit, the	Heb. 9:14
God	Acts 5:4
Helper, the	John 14:26
Highest, the	Luke 1:35
Holy Spirit, the	Matt. 1:18
Lord, the	2 Cor. 3:17
Seven Spirits, the	Rev. 1:4
Spirit of adoption, the	Rom. 8:15
Spirit of Christ, the	Rom. 8:9
Spirit of counsel and might, the	Is. 11:2
Spirit of glory, the	1 Pet. 4:14
Spirit of God, the	Gen. 1:2
Spirit of grace, the	Heb. 10:29
Spirit of His Son, the	Gal. 4:6
Spirit of holiness, the	Rom. 1:4
Spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, the	Is. 11:2
Spirit of life, the	Rom. 8:2
Spirit of the living God, the	2 Cor. 3:3
Spirit of the Lord, the	2 Cor. 3:17
Spirit of the Lord, the	Judg. 3:10
Spirit of the Lord God, the	Is. 61:1
Spirit of truth, the	John 14:17
Spirit of wisdom and understanding	Is. 11:2
Spirit of your Father, the	Matt. 10:20
Spirit, the	Matt. 4:1
Your generous Spirit	Ps. 51:12
Your good Spirit	Neh. 9:20

### MOTIVATION OF THE MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION

17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Is. 43:18; 65:17; Rom. 6:3–10; 8:9

18 Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, Rom. 5:10

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Rom. 3:24

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. Eph. 6:20

21 For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Is. 53:6, 9 +; Rom. 1:17; 3:21

### CHAPTER 6 GIVING NO OFFENSE IN THE MINISTRY

**W**E then, as workers together *with Him* also plead with *you* not to receive the grace of God in vain. 1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:20

2 For He says:

“In an acceptable time I have heard you,  
And in the day of salvation I have helped you.”<sup>a</sup>

Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation. Is. 49:8 +

3 We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. Rom. 14:13

4 But in all *things* we commend ourselves as

ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, 1 Cor. 4:1

5 in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; 2 Cor. 11:23

6 by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,

7 by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, 1 Cor. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:14; 10:4

8 by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and *yet* true;

9 as unknown, and *yet* well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and *yet* not killed; Ps. 118:18; 1 Cor. 4:9, 11; 2 Cor. 4:2; 5:11

10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and *yet* possessing all things. 2 Cor. 8:9

### PAUL'S APPEAL FOR RECONCILIATION

11 O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. 2 Cor. 7:3

12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your *own* affections. 2 Cor. 12:15

13 Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open. 1 Cor. 4:14

### PAUL'S APPEAL FOR SEPARATION FROM UNBELIEVERS

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 1 Cor. 5:9; Eph. 5:6, 7, 11

15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you<sup>a</sup> are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

6:2<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 49:8 6:16<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *we*.

## BEGINNING THE NEW LIFE

### THE RESULTS OF NEW LIFE PART 2: NEW NATURE

5:17—The term “new nature” refers to the spiritual transformation that occurs within us when we believe in Jesus as Savior. At that moment, we each become a “new person” (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 2:15; 4:22–24; Col. 3:9–10). The concept of newness can have one of two basic meanings. In one sense, making something new means to renovate it or to repair it. This is a newness of quality. In the other sense, making something new means bringing something into existence. This is a newness of nature. The Scriptures describe Christians being made new in the latter sense. We are not renovated or refreshed versions of the old; rather, we are brand new. We have a new family, a new set of values, new motivations, and new possessions.

For believers, the battle is in living our true, new identity in Christ while casting off our false, old identity. There are times when we “resurrect” the old person and live in our former ways, such as by lying (Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9). Instead, we must put on our new identity in the same way we would put on new clothing (Col. 3:10). In other words, the new nature must be cultivated or nurtured by spiritual decisiveness to grow in Christ. We must not revert to putting on the old attire of the former life; rather, we must continue to grow in this new life (Eph. 5:8). The message of the new nature is a message of supreme hope: the Spirit of God can accomplish a life-changing transformation for all who will only believe in Christ.

*For Part 3: CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, turn to Isaiah 61:10 on page 777. For an explanation of “The Christian's Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

“I will dwell in them  
And walk among *them*.  
I will be their God,  
And they shall be My people.”<sup>b</sup> Ezek. 37:26, 27

17 Therefore

“Come out from among them  
And be separate, says the Lord.  
Do not touch what is unclean,  
And I will receive you.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 52:11

18 “I will be a Father to you,  
And you shall be My sons and  
daughters,  
Says the LORD Almighty.”<sup>a</sup> 2 Sam. 7:14; Rom. 8:14

## CHAPTER 7

**T**HEREFORE, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 1 John 3:3

### PAUL'S MEETING WITH TITUS

**2** Open *your hearts* to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one. Acts 20:33

**3** I do not say *this* to condemn; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. 2 Cor. 6:11, 12

**4** Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation. 1 Cor. 1:4; 2 Cor. 3:12; Phil. 2:17

**5** For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside *were* conflicts, inside *were* fears. Deut. 32:25; 2 Cor. 2:13; 4:8

**6** Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:13

**7** and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

### CORINTHIANS' RESPONSE TO PAUL'S LETTER

**8** For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. 2 Cor. 2:2, 4

**9** Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing.

**10** For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. Prov. 17:22; Matt. 26:75

**11** For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, *what* clearing of *yourselves*, *what* indignation,

### KINDNESS

**6:6** (Gr. *chrēstotēs*) (Rom. 2:4; 11:22; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 2:7) G5544: Equally translated as “goodness” and “kindness,” this word denotes the outward expression of goodness. The root word means “useful, pleasant” (*chrēstos*). It is a sweet gentleness toward others that leads a person to perform kind acts. It is acting for the welfare of others, even those who are difficult to get along with. This is the character trait God displays toward us that leads us to repentance (Rom. 2:4). Such sweetness of spirit is possible for us to show others only through the working of the Holy Spirit.

### SORROW

**7:10** (Gr. *lypē*) (Luke 22:45; John 16:20; 2 Cor. 2:3) G3077: This word describes great “grief” or “sorrow.” Jesus found His disciples in the garden sleeping because of great “sorrow” (Luke 22:45). This level of “sorrow” denotes a heaviness and continual sadness. Jesus told His disciples they would experience great *lypē*, but that soon their “sorrow” would be turned to joy because of His resurrection (John 16:20). *Lypē* is crucial to the Christian walk, as godly “sorrow” is what brings one to repentance over sin which leads to salvation, in contrast to the “sorrow” of the world that leads to death.

*what* fear, *what* vehement desire, *what* zeal, *what* vindication! In all *things* you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter. 2 Cor. 2:5–11; Eph. 5:11

**12** Therefore, although I wrote to you, *I did not do it* for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you. 2 Cor. 2:4

**13** Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. Rom. 15:32

**14** For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true.

**15** And his affections are greater for you as he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him. 2 Cor. 2:9

**16** Therefore I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything. 2 Thess. 3:4

## CHAPTER 8

### EXAMPLE OF THE MACEDONIANS

**M**OREOVER, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

**6:16**<sup>b</sup> Leviticus 26:12; Jeremiah 32:38; Ezekiel 37:27 **6:17**<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 20:34, 41 **6:18**<sup>a</sup> 2 Samuel 7:14



## FELLOWSHIP

**8:4** (Gr. *koinōnia*) (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:6) G2842: The Greek word means “fellowship,” “communion,” or “sharing in common.” It is one of the four staples of the New Testament church, along with the apostles’ doctrine, prayer, and the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42). According to 1 John 1:3, believers can have communion or fellowship with God the Father, with His Son, Jesus Christ, and with the apostles. Additionally, believers enjoy fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7), with the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:1), and with Jesus’ sufferings (Phil. 3:10). The same word is used (rendered “contribution”) for the financial gift to the church in Jerusalem in Romans 15:26.

2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. Mark 12:44

3 For I bear witness that according to *their* ability, yes, and beyond *their* ability, *they were* freely willing,

4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive<sup>a</sup> the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. Rom. 15:25, 26

5 And not *only* as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and *then* to us by the will of God. Rom. 12:1, 2; Eph. 6:6

6 So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well.

## EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

7 But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—*see* that you abound in this grace also. 1 Cor. 1:5; 12:13; 2 Cor. 9:8

8 I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. 1 Cor. 7:6

9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. Rom. 9:23; Phil. 2:6, 7

## PURPOSE OF GIVING

10 And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; 1 Cor. 7:25, 40; Heb. 13:16

11 but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as *there was* a readiness to desire it, so *there also may be* a completion out of what you have.

12 For if there is first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to what one has, *and* not according to what he does not have. Mark 12:43, 44

13 For *I do not mean* that others should be eased and you burdened;

14 but by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may supply* their lack, that their

abundance also may *supply* your lack—that there may be equality.

15 As it is written, “He who *gathered* much had nothing left over, and he who *gathered* little had no lack.”<sup>a</sup> Ex. 16:18

## POLICIES IN GIVING

16 But thanks *be* to God who puts<sup>a</sup> the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus.

17 For he not only accepted the exhortation, but being more diligent, he went to you of his own accord.

18 And we have sent with him the brother whose praise *is* in the gospel throughout all the churches, 19 and not only *that*, but who was also chosen by the churches to travel with us with this gift, which is administered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and *to show* your ready mind, 1 Cor. 16:3, 4

20 avoiding this: that anyone should blame us in this lavish gift which is administered by us—

21 providing honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. Rom. 12:17

22 And we have sent with them our brother whom we have often proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, because of the great confidence which *we have* in you.

23 If *anyone inquires* about Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren *are inquired about*, *they are* messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. Phil. 2:25

24 Therefore show to them, and<sup>a</sup> before the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf. 2 Cor. 7:4, 14; 9:2

## CHAPTER 9

## READINESS IN GIVING

**N**ow concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; Gal. 2:10

2 for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. 2 Cor. 8:10

3 Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; 2 Cor. 8:6, 17

4 lest if *some* Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting.<sup>a</sup>

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which *you had* previously promised, that it may be ready as a *matter of* generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

<sup>a</sup>8:4 NU-Text and M-Text omit that we would receive, thus changing text to urgency for the favor and fellowship . . . <sup>a</sup>8:15 Exodus 16:18

<sup>a</sup>8:16 NU-Text reads has put. <sup>a</sup>8:24 NU-Text and M-Text omit and.

<sup>a</sup>9:4 NU-Text reads this confidence.

## PRINCIPLES IN GIVING

6 But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Prov. 11:24; 22:9

7 *So let each one give* as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. Deut. 15:7; Rom. 12:8

## PROMISES FROM GIVING

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work. Prov. 11:24

9 As it is written:

“He has dispersed abroad,  
He has given to the poor;  
His righteousness endures  
forever.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 112:9

10 Now may<sup>a</sup> He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have *sown* and increase the fruits of your righteousness, Is. 55:10; Hos. 10:12

11 while *you are* enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. 2 Cor. 1:11

12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, 2 Cor. 8:14

13 while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal sharing with them and all *men*, Matt. 5:16; Heb. 13:16

14 and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you. 2 Cor. 8:1

15 Thanks *be* to God for His indescribable gift!

## CHAPTER 10

## THE CHARGE OF COWARDICE IS ANSWERED

Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence *am* lowly among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you. Rom. 12:1; 1 Thess. 2:7

2 But I beg *you* that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 1 Cor. 4:21

## THE CHARGE OF WALKING IN THE FLESH IS ANSWERED

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

4 For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, Jer. 1:10

5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 1 Cor. 1:19

6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. 2 Cor. 7:15; 13:2, 10

7 Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he *is* Christ's, even so we *are* Christ's.<sup>a</sup> John 7:24; 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:23; 14:37

8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us<sup>a</sup> for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed— 2 Cor. 7:14; 13:10

9 lest I seem to terrify you by letters.

<sup>a</sup>9:9 Psalm 112:9 <sup>a</sup>9:10 NU-Text reads *Now He who supplies . . . will supply . . .* <sup>a</sup>10:7 NU-Text reads *even as we are.* <sup>a</sup>10:8 NU-Text omits *us.*

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

## STEWARDSHIP

## PART 3: GIVING

9:6–8—There might be no better indicator of growth in the new life than giving of our resources. When it comes to the amount we give, an important rule of thumb is focusing not on how much we give, but how much is *left* after we give. This strikes at the heart of sacrificial giving. God is not primarily occupied with the amount of the gift itself, but with the motive that lies behind it. A large gift can cost us little and come from a lacking heart. Conversely, a small gift can cost us greatly and come from a committed heart. This passage also addresses how our giving should be done cheerfully. All the money in the world belongs to God. Our gifts to Him, then, do not make Him any richer; they make us richer spiritually because of the realization that everything we have is His and that we are giving because we love Him and want to give.

Three principles for giving are found in 1 Corinthians 16:2. Our giving is to be (1) **regular**—“On the first day of the week”; (2) **systematic**—“Let each one of you lay something aside”; and (3) **proportionate**—“As he may prosper.”

People who fail to honor God with their money rob God (Mal. 3:8), not because it impoverishes Him but because it denies the God-ordained means for the support of His work and His ministers. For the children of God who honor God with their money, God promises abundant blessing (Mal. 3:10; Luke 6:38) and the provision of his every need (Phil. 4:19). Giving, then, is a key to growth in the new life.

*For the next article, WORSHIP, turn to 1 Chronicles 16:29 on page 428. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

### THE CHARGE OF PERSONAL WEAKNESS IS ANSWERED

10 “For *his* letters,” they say, “*are* weighty and powerful, but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible.” 2 Cor. 11:6; Gal. 4:13

11 Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *we will* also *be* in deed when we are present.

12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. 2 Cor. 5:12

13 We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you. 2 Cor. 10:15

14 For we are not overextending ourselves (as though *our authority* did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ; 1 Cor. 3:5, 6

15 not boasting of things beyond measure, *that is*, in other men’s labors, but having hope, *that is*, as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere, Rom. 15:20

16 to preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man’s sphere of accomplishment.

17 But “he who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”<sup>a</sup>

18 For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends. Prov. 27:2; Rom. 2:29

## CHAPTER 11

### PAUL’S DECLARATION OF HIS APOSTLESHIP

**O**H, that you would bear with me in a little folly—and indeed you do bear with me. 2 Cor. 11:4, 16, 19

2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you* as a chaste virgin to Christ. Lev. 21:13

3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity<sup>a</sup> that is in Christ. Gen. 3:4, 13; Eph. 6:24

4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or *if* you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it! Gal. 1:6–8

5 For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. 2 Cor. 12:11

6 Even though *I am* untrained in speech, yet *I am* not in knowledge. But we have been thoroughly manifested<sup>a</sup> among you in all things. 1 Cor. 1:17; Eph. 3:4

7 Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? 1 Cor. 9:18

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages *from* them to minister to you.

9 And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep *myself*. Phil. 4:10

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows!

12 But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. 1 Cor. 9:12

13 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Gal. 1:8

15 Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. Phil. 3:19

### PAUL’S SUFFERINGS SUPPORT HIS APOSTLESHIP

16 I say again, let no one think me a fool. If otherwise, at least receive me as a fool, that I also may boast a little.

17 What I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. 1 Cor. 7:6

18 Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast.

19 For you put up with fools gladly, since you *yourselves* are wise! 1 Cor. 4:10

20 For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours *you*, if one takes *from you*, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. Gal. 2:4; 4:3, 9; 5:1

21 To *our* shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold—I speak foolishly—I am bold also. 2 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 3:4

22 Are they Hebrews? So *am* I. Are they Israelites? So *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So *am* I. Phil. 3:4–6

23 Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I *am* more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. Acts 9:16; 1 Cor. 15:10, 30

24 From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. Deut. 25:3; 2 Cor. 6:5

25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; Acts 21:32; 27:1–44

26 *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; Acts 14:5, 19; 17:5, 13; 19:23; 27:42

10:17<sup>a</sup> Jeremiah 9:24 11:3<sup>a</sup> NU-Text adds *and purity*. 11:6<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *been*.

27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— Acts 9:9; 13:2, 3; 14:23; 20:31; 1 Cor. 4:11

28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn *with indignation*?

30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. 2 Cor. 12:5, 9, 10

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; Acts 9:19–25

33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

## CHAPTER 12

### VISION OF PARADISE

**I**T is doubtless<sup>a</sup> not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: Acts 16:9; 18:9; 22:17, 18; 23:11; 26:13–15; 27:23; Gal. 1:12; 2:2

2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. Rom. 16:7

3 And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—

4 how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Luke 23:43

5 Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. 2 Cor. 11:30

6 For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me *to be* or hears from me.

### THORN IN THE FLESH

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Job 2:7

8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. Matt. 26:44

9 And He said to me, “**My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.**” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Cor. 11:30; 1 Pet. 4:14

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. Rom. 5:3; 8:35; 2 Cor. 13:4

### PAUL’S SIGNS SUPPORT HIS APOSTLESHIP

11 I have become a fool in boasting;<sup>a</sup> you have compelled me. For I ought to have been

commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. Acts 28:1–10; Rom. 15:18

13 For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong!

### PAUL’S CONCERN NOT TO BE A FINANCIAL BURDEN

14 Now *for* the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 1 Cor. 4:14; 10:24–33; 2 Cor. 1:15; 13:1, 2

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. 2 Cor. 6:12, 13; 2 Tim. 2:10

16 But be that *as it may*, I did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning! 2 Cor. 11:9

17 Did I take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you?

18 I urged Titus, and sent our brother with *him*. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did *we* not *walk* in the same steps? 2 Cor. 8:18

### PAUL’S CONCERN NOT TO FIND THEM CARNAL

19 Again, do you think<sup>a</sup> that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But *we do* all things, beloved, for your edification. Rom. 9:1, 2

20 For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and *that* I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest *there be* contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults; 1 Cor. 4:21

21 lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced. 1 Cor. 5:1; 2 Cor. 2:1, 4; 13:2

## CHAPTER 13

### PAUL’S WARNING TO EXAMINE YOURSELVES

**T**HIS *will be* the third *time* I am coming to you. “By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.”<sup>a</sup> Deut. 17:6; 19:15; 2 Cor. 12:14

2 I have told you before, and foretold as if I were present the second time, and now being absent I write<sup>a</sup> to those who have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare—

3 since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in

12:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *necessary, though not profitable, to boast.*

12:11<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *in boasting.* 12:19<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *You have been thinking for a long time. . . .* 13:1<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 19:15

13:2<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *I write.*

me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you.

Matt. 10:20; 1 Cor. 9:2

4 For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.

Rom. 1:4; 6:4; 2 Cor. 10:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:18

5 Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

1 Cor. 9:27; Gal. 4:19

6 But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.

7 Now I<sup>a</sup> pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem disqualified.

2 Cor. 6:9

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad when we are weak and you

are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete.

1 Cor. 4:10; 1 Thess. 3:10

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.

1 Cor. 4:21

### CONCLUSION

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

Rom. 16:16

13 All the saints greet you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen.

Rom. 16:24; Phil. 2:1

13:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *we*.

## UNDERSTANDING GOD'S BEING

### THE TRINITY

#### PART 2: PERSONS OF THE TRINITY

13:14—The one, indivisible divine essence has eternally existed in three Persons: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16–17; 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:4–6; 1 Pet. 1:2; 3:18). These three Persons, however, are not a cosmic committee that meets to rule over heaven and earth. Rather, the three Persons exist within one God. They comprise one divine Being.

Each Person of the Trinity has the full divine nature. The Father is not merely “part of God,” nor is the Son or Spirit. When you look at either the Father, the Son, or the Spirit, you are looking at God—not just a piece of Him (John 14:9; 1 Cor. 2:10–16; Heb. 1:3). Nor does the one God take on three different roles or parts. Our one God does not act as the Father at times, the Son at other times, and the Spirit at still other times. Each Person is fully divine at the same time.

Even the Old Testament, with its strict monotheism (Deut. 6:4; Zech. 14:9), hints at a plurality of Persons within the Godhead. There are glimpses of God deliberating with Himself as a plural Being (Gen. 1:26; 11:7; Is. 6:8). A reoccurring Old Testament figure called the Angel of the Lord is also identified as God (Gen. 31:11, 13; Ex. 3:2–5). Even the “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts” from the mouth of the seraphim (Is. 6:3) is consistent with three Persons in God’s Being.

*For Part 3: INTERACTION WITHIN THE TRINITY, turn to Ephesians 1:4, 7, 13 on page 1300. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the GALATIANS



## THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

The Galatians, having launched their Christian experience by faith, seem content to leave their voyage of faith and chart a new course based on works—a course Paul finds disturbing. His letter to the Galatians is a vigorous attack against the gospel of works and a defense of the gospel of faith.

Paul begins by setting forth his credentials as an apostle with a message from God: blessing comes from God based on faith, not law. The law declares people guilty and imprisons them; faith sets people free to enjoy liberty in Christ. But liberty is not license. Freedom in Christ means freedom to produce the fruits of righteousness through a Spirit-led lifestyle.

The book is called *Pros Galatas*, “To the Galatians,” and it is the only letter of Paul that is specifically addressed to multiple churches (“To the churches of Galatia,” Gal. 1:2). The name *Galatians* was given to this Celtic people because they originally lived in Gaul before their migration to Asia Minor.



## THE AUTHOR OF GALATIANS

The Pauline authorship and the unity of this epistle are virtually unchallenged. The first verse clearly identifies the author as “Paul, an apostle.” Also in 5:2, we read, “Indeed I, Paul, say to you.” In fact, Paul physically wrote Galatians (Gal. 6:11) instead of dictating it to a secretary, as was his usual practice.



## THE TIME OF GALATIANS

The term *Galatia* was used in an ethnographic sense (that is, cultural and geographic origin) and in a political sense. The original ethnographic sense refers to the central part of Asia Minor where these Celtic tribes eventually settled after their conflicts with the Romans and Macedonians. Later, in 189 BC, Galatia came under Roman domination, and in 25 BC, Augustus declared it a Roman province. The political or provincial Galatia included territory to the south that was not originally considered part of Galatia (for example, the cities of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe). There are two theories regarding the date and setting of Galatians.

The **North Galatian Theory** holds that Paul was speaking of Galatia in its earlier, more restricted sense. According to this theory, the churches of Galatia were north of the cities Paul visited on his first missionary journey. Paul visited the ethnographic Galatia (the smaller region to the North) for the first time on his second missionary journey, probably while he was on his way to Troas (Acts 16:6). On his third missionary journey, Paul revisited the Galatian churches he had established (Acts 18:23) and wrote this epistle either in Ephesus (AD 53–56) or in Macedonia (AD 56).

According to the **South Galatian Theory**, Paul was referring to Galatia in its wider political sense as a province of Rome. This means that the churches he had in mind in this epistle were in the cities he evangelized during his first missionary journey with Barnabas (Acts 13:13–14:23). This was just prior to the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), so the Jerusalem visit in Galatians 2:1–10 must have been the Acts 11:27–30 famine-relief visit. Galatians was probably written in Syrian Antioch in AD 49 just before Paul went to the Council in Jerusalem.

Paul wrote this epistle in response to a report that the Galatian churches were suddenly taken over by the false teaching of certain Judaizers who professed Jesus yet sought to place Gentile converts under the requirements of the Mosaic Law (Gal. 1:7; 4:17, 21; 5:2–12; 6:12–13).



## CHRIST IN GALATIANS

Christ has freed believers from bondage to the law (legalism) and to sin (license) and has placed them in a position of liberty. The transforming cross provides for the believers’ deliverance from the curse of sin, law, and self (Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 3:13; 4:5; 5:24; 6:14).



## KEYS TO GALATIANS

**Key Theme: Freedom from the Law**—This epistle shows that the believer is no longer under the law but is saved by faith alone. It has been said that Judaism was the cradle of Christianity, but also that it was very nearly its grave as well. God raised up Paul as the Moses of the Christian church to deliver them from this bondage. Galatians is

the Christian’s Declaration of Independence. The power of the Holy Spirit enables the Christian to enjoy freedom within the law of love.

**Key Verses:** *Galatians 2:20–21; 5:1*—“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain” (2:20–21).

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage” (5:1).

**Key Chapter:** *Galatians 5*—The effect of the truth concerning freedom is staggering: freedom must not be used “as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (5:13). This chapter records the power, “Walk in the Spirit” (5:16), and the results, “the fruit of the Spirit” (5:22), of that freedom.

gospel of works and demonstrate the superiority of justification by faith. This carefully written polemic approaches the problem from three directions: the gospel of grace defended (Gal. 1–2), the gospel of grace explained (chs. 3–4), and the gospel of grace applied (chs. 5–6).

**The Gospel of Grace Defended (1:1–2:21)**—Paul affirms his divinely given apostleship and presents the gospel (1:1–5) because it has been distorted by false teachers among the Galatians (1:6–10). Paul launches into his biographical argument for the true gospel of justification by faith in showing that he received his message not from people but directly from God (1:11–24). When he submits his teaching of Christian liberty to the apostles in Jerusalem, they all acknowledge the validity and authority of his message (2:1–10). Paul also must correct Peter on the matter of freedom from the law (2:11–21).

**The Gospel of Grace Explained (3:1–4:31)**—In this section, Paul uses eight lines of reasoning to develop his theological defense of justification by faith: (1) The Galatians began by faith, and their growth in Christ must continue to be by faith (3:1–5). (2) Abraham was justified by faith, and the same principle applies today (3:6–9). (3) Christ has redeemed all who trust in Him from the curse of the law (3:10–14). (4) The promise made to Abraham was not nullified by the law (3:15–18). (5) The law was given to drive people to faith, not to save them (3:19–22). (6) Believers in Christ are adopted children of God and are no longer bound by the law (3:23–4:7). (7) The Galatians must recognize their inconsistency and regain their original freedom in Christ (4:8–20). (8) Abraham’s two sons allegorically

## SURVEY OF GALATIANS

The Epistle to the Galatians has been called “the Magna Carta of Christian liberty.” It is Paul’s manifesto of justification by faith, and the resulting liberty. Paul directs this great charter of Christian freedom to a people who are willing to give up the priceless liberty they possess in Christ. The oppressive theology of certain Jewish legalizers has been causing the believers in Galatia to trade their freedom in Christ for bondage to the law. Paul writes this forceful epistle to do away with the false

OVERVIEW OF GALATIANS								
Outline	THE GOSPEL OF GRACE DEFENDED		THE GOSPEL OF GRACE EXPLAINED		THE GOSPEL OF GRACE APPLIED			
	THE APOSTOLIC CALL 1:1–24	THE APOSTOLIC CONFIRMATION 2:1–21	THE BONDS OF LAW 3:1–9	THE FREEDOM OF GRACE 3:10—4:31	POSITION OF LIBERTY: “STAND FAST” 5:1–12	PRACTICE OF LIBERTY: LOVE ONE ANOTHER 5:13–15	POWER OF LIBERTY: WALK IN THE SPIRIT 5:16–26	PERFORMANCE OF LIBERTY: DO GOOD TO OTHERS 6:1–13
Theme	AUTHENTICATION OF LIBERTY		ARGUMENTATION FOR LIBERTY		APPLICATION OF LIBERTY			
Approach	BIOGRAPHY		DOCTRINE		CONDUCT			
Location	SYRIAN ANTIOCH / EPHESUS OR MACEDONIA							
Time Frame	AD 49 / AD 53–56							

reveal the superiority of the Abrahamic promise to the Mosaic Law (4:21–31).

**The Gospel of Grace Applied (5:1–6:18)**—The Judaizers seek to place the Galatians under bondage to their perverted gospel of justification by law, but Paul warns them that law and grace are two contrary principles (5:1–12). So far, Paul has been contrasting the liberty of faith with the legalism of law, but at this point he warns the Galatians of the opposite extreme of license or antinomianism (5:13–6:10).

Christians are not only set free from bondage of law, but they are also free of the bondage of sin because of the power of the indwelling Spirit. Liberty is not an excuse to indulge in the deeds of the flesh; rather, it provides the privilege of bearing the fruit of the Spirit by walking in dependence upon Him. This letter closes with a contrast between the Judaizers—who are motivated by pride and a desire to avoid persecution—and Paul, who has suffered for the true gospel, but boasts only in Christ (6:11–18).

## OUTLINE OF GALATIANS

### Part One: The Gospel of Grace Defended (1:1–2:21)

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|---|--|
| <p><b>I. The Apostolic Call</b> . . . . . 1:1–24</p> <p>A. Introduction . . . . . 1:1–9</p> <p>1. Salutation: The Ground of Grace . . . . . 1:1–5</p> <p>2. Situation: The Departure from Grace . . . . . 1:6–9</p> <p>B. Gospel of Grace Is Given by Divine Revelation . . . . . 1:10–24</p> | <p><b>II. The Apostolic Confirmation</b> . . . . . 2:1–21</p> <p>A. Gospel of Grace Is Approved by Jerusalem Leadership . . . . . 2:1–10</p> <p>B. Gospel of Grace Is Vindicated by Rebuking Peter . . . . . 2:11–21</p> |
|---|--|

### Part Two: The Gospel of Grace Explained (3:1–4:31)

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|---|--|
| <p><b>I. The Bondage of the Law</b> . . . . . 3:1–9</p> <p>A. Holy Spirit Is Given by Faith, Not by Works . . . . . 3:1–5</p> <p>B. Abraham Was Justified by Faith, Not by Works . . . . . 3:6–9</p> <p><b>II. The Freedom of Grace</b> . . . . . 3:10–4:31</p> <p>A. Justification Is by Faith, Not by the Law . . . . . 3:10–4:11</p> | <p>1. Christ Redeems Us from the Curse of the Law . . . . . 3:10–14</p> <p>2. Abrahamic Covenant Is Not Voided by the Law . . . . . 3:15–18</p> <p>3. Law Given to Drive Us to Faith . . . . . 3:19–22</p> <p>4. Believers Are Free from the Law . . . . . 3:23–4:11</p> <p>B. Galatians Receive Blessings by Faith, Not by the Law . . . . . 4:12–20</p> <p>C. Law and Grace Cannot Coexist . . . . . 4:21–31</p> |
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### Part Three: The Gospel of Grace Applied (5:1–6:18)

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| <p><b>I. Position of Liberty: “Stand Fast”</b> . . . . . 5:1–12</p> <p><b>II. Practice of Liberty: Love One Another</b> . . . . . 5:13–15</p> <p><b>III. Power for Liberty: Walk in the Spirit</b> . . . . . 5:16–26</p> <p>A. Conflict Between the Spirit and the Flesh . . . . . 5:16–18</p> <p>B. “Works of the Flesh” . . . . . 5:19–21</p> <p>C. “Fruit of the Spirit” . . . . . 5:22–26</p> | <p><b>IV. Performance in Liberty: Do Good to Others</b> . . . . . 6:1–10</p> <p>A. “Bear One Another’s Burdens” . . . . . 6:1–5</p> <p>B. Do Not Be Weary While Doing Good . . . . . 6:6–10</p> <p><b>V. Conclusion</b> . . . . . 6:11–18</p> <p>A. Motives of the Circumcised . . . . . 6:11–13</p> <p>B. Motives of the Apostle Paul . . . . . 6:14–18</p> |
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## CHAPTER 1

### SALUTATION: THE GROUND OF GRACE

**P**AUL, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead), Acts 2:24; 9:6

2 and all the brethren who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

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

4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might

deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, Matt. 20:28; Heb. 2:5

5 to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

### SITUATION: THE DEPARTURE FROM GRACE

6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, Gal. 1:15; 5:8

7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 2 Cor. 2:17; 11:4; Gal. 5:10, 12



## ACCURSED

**1:8** (Gr. *anathema*) (Acts 23:14; Rom. 9:3; 1 Cor. 12:3; 16:22) G0331: Originally the Greek noun meant “that which has been devoted to God.” In the Septuagint, it carries a negative sense: “that which has been devoted to God *for destruction*” (Josh. 6:17–18); that is, a thing accursed. In the New Testament, similarly, it is used with a negative meaning each of the six times it occurs—a thing (or person) to be cursed, destroyed. In the same vein, in Acts 23:14, the rendering is “great oath.”

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 1 Cor. 16:22

9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. Deut. 4:2

GOSPEL OF GRACE IS GIVEN  
BY DIVINE REVELATION

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. 1 Sam. 24:7

11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 1 Cor. 15:1

12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15:1; Eph. 3:3–5

13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and *tried to* destroy it. Acts 9:1; 22:4, 5

14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called *me* through His grace, Is. 49:1, 5

16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, Acts 9:15; 2 Cor. 4:5–7

17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,<sup>a</sup> and remained with him fifteen days.

19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother. Matt. 13:55; 1 Cor. 9:5

20 (Now *concerning* the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Acts 9:30

22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which *were* in Christ. Rom. 16:7

23 But they were hearing only, “He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once *tried to* destroy.” Acts 8:3; 9:20, 21

24 And they glorified God in me. Acts 11:18

## CHAPTER 2

GOSPEL OF GRACE IS APPROVED  
BY JERUSALEM LEADERSHIP

**T**HEN after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me*. Acts 15:2

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Acts 15:1–4; Phil. 2:16

3 Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

4 And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), Gal. 4:3, 9; 5:1, 13

5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. Gal. 1:6; 2:14; 3:1

6 But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed *to be something* added nothing to me. Acts 10:34; 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11; Gal. 2:9; 6:3

7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as *the gospel* for the circumcised *was* to Peter Acts 9:15; 13:46; 22:21; 1 Thess. 2:4

8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), Gal. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:1

9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we *should go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. Matt. 16:18; Acts 13:3; Rom. 1:5

10 *They desired* only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

GOSPEL OF GRACE IS VINDICATED  
BY REBUKING PETER

11 Now when Peter<sup>a</sup> had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;

12 for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. Acts 10:28; 11:2, 3

13 And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before *them* all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you<sup>a</sup> compel Gentiles to live as Jews?”<sup>b</sup> 1 Tim. 5:20

1:18 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Cephas*. 2:11 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Cephas*.

2:14 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *how can you*. <sup>b</sup> Some interpreters stop the quotation here.

15 “We *who are Jews* by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

Matt. 9:11; Acts 15:10

16 “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Ps. 143:2; Acts 13:38, 39; Rom. 1:17

17 “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!

1 John 3:8

18 “For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 “For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God.

Rom. 6:2, 11, 14; 7:4; 8:2

20 “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Is. 53:12 +; Rom. 6:6; 2 Cor. 5:15; Eph. 5:2

21 “I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

Heb. 7:11

## CHAPTER 3

### HOLY SPIRIT IS GIVEN BY FAITH, NOT BY WORKS

**O** FOOLISH Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth,<sup>a</sup> before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you<sup>b</sup> as crucified?

2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Rom. 10:16, 17

3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

Heb. 7:16

4 Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain?

Heb. 10:35

5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?—

### ABRAHAM WAS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, NOT BY WORKS

6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”<sup>a</sup>

Gen. 15:6

7 Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

John 8:39

8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying*, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.”<sup>a</sup>

Gen. 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14

9 So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

### CHRIST REDEEMS US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone

## HYPOCRITE

**2:13** (Gr. *hupokritēs*) (Mark 7:6) G5273: A hypocrite is a person whose actions stand opposed to the way he or she tries to present himself or herself. *Hupokritēs* was also historically used of actors, who, like hypocrites, are masters of playing roles. Jesus often condemns hypocrites, especially ones among the religious leaders, for being overly concerned with appearing righteous (“You travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves”—Matt. 23:15) and following the minutiae of the law while neglecting “the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith” (Matt. 23:23). Also condemned are those who accuse others of sin while living in sin themselves (Luke 6:42).

## BELIEVE

**3:6** (Gr. *pisteuō*) (Mark 9:24; John 3:16; Acts 10:43; Rom. 4:3; Eph. 1:13) G4100: The basis of our relationship with God and eternal salvation is faith or belief in Him, so this word figures prominently in the New Testament. It means “believe, have faith, trust, put confidence in.” Most of the 264 uses of this word in Scripture are references to faith in Jesus or in the things He taught. *Pisteuō* is the basis of healing (Matt. 8:13; Luke 8:50), answered prayer (Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:23), and salvation (Mark 16:16; John 1:12). Hebrews 11:6 sums up the life of the believer with these words: “But without faith [*pistis*] it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe [*pisteuō*] that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.”<sup>a</sup>

Deut. 27:26

11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”<sup>a</sup>

Hab. 2:4

12 Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”<sup>a</sup>

Lev. 18:5; Rom. 4:4, 5

13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree”<sup>a</sup>),

14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Rom. 4:1–5, 9, 16+

### ABRAHAMIC COVENANT IS NOT VOIDED BY THE LAW

15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a man’s covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it.

Heb. 9:17

16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of

**3:1**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *that you should not obey the truth*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *among you*. **3:6**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 15:6 **3:8**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14 **3:10**<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 27:26 **3:11**<sup>a</sup> Habakkuk 2:4 **3:12**<sup>a</sup> Leviticus 18:5 **3:13**<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 21:23

many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,”<sup>a</sup> who is Christ. Gen. 12:3, 7 +; 13:15; 22:18; 24:7; 1 Cor. 12:12

17 And this I say, *that* the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ,<sup>a</sup> that it should make the promise of no effect. Ex. 12:40; Rom. 4:13

18 For if the inheritance *is* of the law, *it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Rom. 4:14; 8:17

**LAW GIVEN TO DRIVE US TO FAITH**

19 What purpose then *does* the law *serve*? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Ex. 20:19; John 15:22; Acts 7:53; Gal. 4:4

20 Now a mediator does not *mediate* for one *only*, but God is one. Rom. 3:29

21 *Is* the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.

22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Rom. 4:11; 11:32

**BELIEVERS ARE FREE FROM THE LAW**

23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

24 Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us to* Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Rom. 10:4

25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. John 1:12

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Rom. 6:3; 10:12; 13:14

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:15, 16; Col. 3:11

29 And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. Heb. 11:18+

**CHAPTER 4**

**N**ow I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all,

2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. Col. 2:8, 20

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born<sup>a</sup> of a woman, born under the law, Gen. 3:15; 49:10; Is. 7:14 +; John 1:14

5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. John 1:12

6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth

the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Rom. 5:5; 8:9, 15, 16

7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir<sup>a</sup> of God through Christ.

8 But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods.

9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how *is it that* you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? Col. 2:20; Heb. 7:18

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. Rom. 14:5

11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain. 1 Thess. 3:5

**GALATIANS RECEIVE BLESSING BY FAITH, NOT BY THE LAW**

12 Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I *became* like you. You have not injured me at all.

13 You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 1 Cor. 2:3

14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus. Mal. 2:7; Luke 10:16

15 What<sup>a</sup> then was the blessing you *enjoyed*? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.

16 Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously court you, *but* for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. Rom. 10:2

18 But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.

19 My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, 1 Cor. 4:15

20 I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.

**LAW AND GRACE CANNOT COEXIST**

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a free-woman. Gen. 16:15; 21:2

23 But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, Rom. 9:7, 8; Heb. 11:11

24 which things are symbolic. For these are the<sup>a</sup> two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— Deut. 33:2

25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—

26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. Is. 2:2

3:16<sup>a</sup> Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 24:7 3:17<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *in Christ*. 4:4<sup>a</sup> Or *made* 4:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *through God* and omits *through Christ*. 4:15<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Where*. 4:24<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *the*.

27 For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren,  
You who do not bear!  
Break forth and shout,  
You who are not in labor!  
For the desolate has many more  
children  
Than she who has a husband.”<sup>a</sup>      Is. 54:1

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac *was*, are children of promise.      Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:29

29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, even so *it is now*.      Gen. 21:9; Gal. 5:11

30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”<sup>a</sup>      Gen. 21:10, 12; John 8:35; Gal. 3:8, 22

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

## CHAPTER 5 POSITION OF LIBERTY: “STAND FAST”

**S**TAND fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free,<sup>a</sup> and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.      Acts 15:10; Phil. 4:1

2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.      Acts 15:1

3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.      Rom. 2:25

4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt to be justified by law*; you have fallen from grace.      Rom. 9:31; Heb. 12:15

5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.      Rom. 8:24

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor

uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.      Gal. 6:15; 1 Thess. 1:3

7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?      1 Cor. 9:24

8 This persuasion does not *come* from Him who calls you.

9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.      1 Cor. 5:6

10 I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.      1 Cor. 1:23; 15:30

12 I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!      Josh. 7:25; Acts 15:1, 2

### PRACTICE OF LIBERTY: LOVE ONE ANOTHER

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.      1 Pet. 2:16

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”<sup>a</sup>      Lev. 19:18; Matt. 7:12; 22:40

15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

### CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.      Rom. 6:12

17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.      Rom. 7:15, 18, 22, 23; 8:5

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.      Rom. 6:14; 7:4; 8:14

**4:27**<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 54:1    **4:30**<sup>a</sup> Genesis 21:10    **5:1**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads  
*For freedom Christ has made us free; stand fast therefore.*  
**5:14**<sup>a</sup> Leviticus 19:18

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

### STEWARDSHIP PART 2: SERVING

**5:13**—God intended that the Christian life should not be static, but rather dynamic. We should sit under the teaching of the Word of God, understand and apply its meaning and implications, and serve God and our fellow believers. The Spirit of God has given us spiritual gifts, but those gifts are worthless unless they are used in the service of God and His church. Paul often used the figure of the human body to show the dependence of the members of the body upon one another and the importance of each member serving the other (Rom. 12:4–5; 1 Cor. 12:12–31). While some members of the body have more prominent places of service than others, all are equally important. The worst thing that can happen to the human body is for one of its members to become nonfunctioning. Paralysis, sickness, deterioration, and sometimes death occur when one part of the human body ceases functioning as God intended. To maintain strength, health, and vitality, every part of the human body must function and serve all the other parts of the body. This is also true of the spiritual, or new, life. As we grow in the new life, we become strong and maintain good spiritual health, which also allows us to use the gifts God has given us to serve the church and, in turn, preserve the strength, health, and vitality of the body of Christ.

*For Part 3: GIVING, turn to 2 Corinthians 9:6–8 on page 1285. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

### “WORKS OF THE FLESH”

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery,<sup>a</sup> fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,

20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

21 envy, murders,<sup>a</sup> drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6:9, 10

### “FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT”

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 1 Tim. 1:9

24 And those *who are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Rom. 6:6

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Rom. 8:4, 5

26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Phil. 2:3

## CHAPTER 6

### “BEAR ONE ANOTHER’S BURDENS”

**B**RETHREN, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Eph. 4:2

2 Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Rom. 15:1; James 2:8

3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 2 Cor. 3:5

4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. Luke 18:11; 1 Cor. 11:28

5 For each one shall bear his own load. Rom. 2:6

### DO NOT BE WEARY WHILE DOING GOOD

6 Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. 1 Cor. 9:11, 14

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Rom. 6:8

9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 1 Cor. 15:58; James 5:7, 8

10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. Prov. 3:27; Rom. 12:13; Titus 3:8

### MOTIVES OF THE CIRCUMCISED

11 See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!

12 As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these *would* compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. Gal. 5:11

13 For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

### MOTIVES OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom<sup>a</sup> the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 1 Cor. 1:18; Col. 2:20

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. 1 Cor. 7:19

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

5:19<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *adultery*. 5:21<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *murders*.

6:14<sup>a</sup> Or *by which* (the cross)

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the EPHESIANS



## THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Ephesians is addressed to a group of believers who are rich beyond measure in Jesus Christ, yet living as beggars, and only because they are ignorant of their wealth. Because they have yet to accept their wealth, they relegate themselves to living as spiritual paupers. In chapters 1–3, Paul begins by describing the contents of the Christian’s heavenly “bank account”: adoption, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom, inheritance, the seal of the Holy Spirit, life, grace, citizenship—in short, every spiritual blessing. Drawing upon that huge spiritual endowment, the Christian has all the resources needed for living “to the praise of the glory of His grace” (Eph. 1:6). Chapters 4–6 resemble an orthopedic clinic, where Christians learn a spiritual walk rooted in their spiritual wealth. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus [chs. 1–3] for good works, . . . that we should walk in them [chs. 4–6]” (2:10).

The traditional title of this epistle is *Pros Ephesios*, “To the Ephesians.” Many ancient manuscripts, however, omit *en Epheso*, “in Ephesus,” in 1:1. This has led some scholars to challenge the traditional view that this message was directed specifically to the Ephesians. The encyclical theory proposes that it was a circular letter sent by Paul to the churches of Asia. It is argued that Ephesians is really a Christian treatise designed for general use: it involves no controversy and deals with no specific problems in any particular church. This is also supported by the formal tone (no terms of endearment) and distant phraseology (“after I heard of your faith,” 1:15; if they “have heard” of his message, 3:2). These things seem inconsistent with the relationship Paul must have had with the Ephesians after a ministry of almost three years among them. On the other hand, the absence of personal greetings is not a support for the encyclical theory because Paul would have done this to avoid favoritism. The only letters that greet specific people are Romans and Colossians, and they were addressed to churches Paul had not visited. Some scholars accept an ancient tradition that Ephesians is Paul’s letter to the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16), but there is no way to be sure. If Ephesians began as a circular letter, it eventually became associated with Ephesus, the foremost of the Asian churches. Another plausible

option is that this epistle was directly addressed to the Ephesians but written in such a way as to make it helpful for all the churches in Asia.



## THE AUTHOR OF EPHESIANS

All internal (Eph. 1:1) and external evidence strongly supports the Pauline authorship of Ephesians. In recent years, however, critics have turned to internal grounds to challenge this unanimous ancient tradition. It has been argued that the vocabulary and style are different from other Pauline epistles, but this overlooks Paul’s flexibility under different circumstances (cf. Romans and 2 Corinthians). The theology of Ephesians in some ways reflects a later development, but this must be attributed to Paul’s own growth and meditation on the church as the body of Christ. Since the epistle clearly names the author in the opening verse, it is not necessary to theorize that Ephesians was written by one of Paul’s pupils or admirers, such as Timothy, Luke, Tychicus, or Onesimus.



## THE TIME OF EPHESIANS

At the end of his second missionary journey, Paul visited Ephesus where he left Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:18–21). This strategic city was the commercial center of Asia Minor, but heavy silting required a special canal to be maintained so that ships could reach the harbor. Ephesus was a religious center as well, famous especially for its magnificent temple of Diana (Roman name) or Artemis (Greek name), a structure considered to be one of the seven wonders of the ancient world (cf. Acts 19:35). The practice of magic and the local economy were clearly related to this temple. Paul remained in Ephesus for nearly three years on his third missionary journey (Acts 18:23—19:41); the Word of God was spread throughout the province of Asia. Paul’s effective ministry began to hurt seriously the traffic in magic and images, leading to an uproar in the huge Ephesian theater. Paul then left for Macedonia, but afterward he met with the Ephesian elders while on his way to Jerusalem (Acts 20:17–38).

Paul wrote the “Prison Epistles” (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) during

his first Roman imprisonment in AD 60–62. These epistles all refer to his imprisonment (Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; Phil. 1:7, 13–14; Col. 4:3, 10, 18; Philem. vv. 9–10, 13, 23), and fit well against the background in Acts 28:16–31. This is especially true of Paul’s references to the palace guard (governor’s official residential guard, Phil. 1:13) and “Caesar’s household” (Phil. 4:22). Some commentators believe that the imprisonment in one or more of these epistles refers to Paul’s Caesarean imprisonment or to a hypothetical Ephesian imprisonment, but the weight of evidence favors the traditional view that they were written in Rome. Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were evidently written about the same time (cf. Eph. 6:21–22 with Col. 4:7–9) in AD 60–61. Philippians was written in AD 62, not long before Paul’s release.

## ✝ CHRIST IN EPHESIANS

Paul’s important phrase “in Christ” (or its equivalent) appears about thirty-five times, more than in any other New Testament book. The believer is in Christ (Eph. 1:1), in the heavenly places in Christ (1:3), chosen in Him (1:4), adopted through Christ (1:5), in the Beloved (1:6), redeemed in Him (1:7), given an inheritance in Him (1:11), given hope in Him (1:12), sealed in Him (1:13), made alive together with Christ (2:5), raised and seated with Him (2:6), created in Christ (2:10), brought near by His blood (2:13), growing in Christ (2:21), a partaker of the promise in Christ (3:6), and given access through faith in Him (3:12).

## ✂ KEYS TO EPHESIANS

**Key Theme:** *Building the Body of Christ*—Ephesians focuses on the believer’s responsibility to walk in accordance with his heavenly calling in Christ Jesus

(Eph. 4:1). Ephesians was not written to correct specific errors in a local church, but to prevent problems in the church as a whole by encouraging the body of Christ to maturity in Him. It was also written to make believers more aware of their position in Christ because this is the basis for their practice on every level of life.

**Key Verses:** *Ephesians 2:8–10; 4:1–3*—“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (2:8–10).

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (4:1–3).

**Key Chapter:** *Ephesians 6*—Even though the Christian is blessed “with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (1:3), spiritual warfare is still the daily experience of the Christian while in the world. Chapter 6 is the clearest advice for how to “be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (6:10).

## 🔗 SURVEY OF EPHESIANS

Paul wrote this epistle to make Christians more aware of their position in Christ and to motivate them to draw upon their spiritual source in daily living: “walk worthy of the calling with which you were called” (Eph. 4:1; see 2:10). The first half of Ephesians lists the believer’s heavenly possessions: adoption, redemption, inheritance, power, life, grace, citizenship, and the love of Christ. There are no imperatives

OVERVIEW OF EPHESIANS								
Outline	THE POSITION OF THE CHRISTIAN				THE PRACTICE OF THE CHRISTIAN			
	PRAISE FOR REDEMPTION 1:1–14	PRAYER FOR REVELATION 1:15–23	POSITION OF THE REDEEMED 2:1–3:13	PRAYER FOR REALIZATION 3:14–21	UNITY IN THE CHURCH 4:1–16	HOLINESS IN LIFE 4:17–5:21	HARMONY IN THE HOME 5:22–6:9	POWER IN THE WORLD 6:10–24
Theme	PRIVILEGES				RESPONSIBILITIES			
Approach	DOCTRINE				CONDUCT			
Location	ROME							
Time Frame	AD 60–61							

in chapters 1–3, which focus only on divine gifts. But chapters 4–6 include thirty-five directives that speak of the believers' responsibility to conduct themselves according to their individual calling. So, Ephesians begins in heaven, but concludes in the home and in all other relationships of daily life. The two divisions are: the position of the Christian (1:1–3:21) and the practice of the Christian (4:1–6:20).

**The Position of the Christian (1:1–3:21)**—After a two-verse prologue, in one long Greek sentence, Paul extols the triune God for the riches of redemption (1:3–14). This hymn to God's grace praises the Father for choosing us (1:3–6), the Son for redeeming us (1:7–12), and the Spirit for sealing us (1:13–14). The saving work of each divine Person is to the praise of the glory of His grace (1:6, 12, 14). Before continuing, Paul offers the first of two very significant prayers (1:15–23; cf. 3:14–21). Here he asks that the readers receive spiritual illumination so that they may come to perceive what is, in fact, true. Next, Paul describes the power of God's grace by contrasting their former condition with their present spiritual life in Christ, a salvation attained not by human works but by divine grace (2:1–10). This redemption includes Jews, yet also extends to those Gentiles who previously were "strangers from the covenants of promise" (2:12). In Christ, the two for the first time have become members of one body (2:11–22). The truth that Gentiles would become "fellow heirs, of

the same body" (3:6) was formerly a mystery that has now been revealed (3:1–13). Paul's second prayer (3:14–21) expresses his desire that the readers be strengthened with the power of the Spirit and fully apprehend the love of Christ.

**The Practice of the Christian (4:1–6:20)**—The pivotal verse of Ephesians is 4:1, because it draws a sharp line between the doctrinal and the practical divisions of this book. There is a cause-and-effect relationship between chapters 1–3 and 4–6 because the spiritual walk of Christians must be rooted in their spiritual wealth. As Paul emphasized in Romans, behavior does not determine blessing; instead, blessing should determine behavior.

Because of the unity of all believers in the body of Christ, growth and maturity come from "the effective working by which every part does its share" (4:16). This involves the exercise of spiritual gifts in love. Paul exhorts the readers to "put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man" (4:22) and "put on the new man" (4:24) that will be manifested by a walk of integrity among all people. They are also to maintain a walk of holiness as children of light (5:1–21). Every relationship (wives, husbands, children, parents, slaves, and masters) must be transformed by their new life in Christ (5:22–6:9). Paul's colorful description of the spiritual warfare and the armor of God (6:10–20) is followed by a word about Tychicus and then a benediction (6:21–24).

## OUTLINE OF EPHESIANS

### Part One: The Position of the Christian (1:1–3:21)

- |  |          |  |           |
|--|----------|--|-----------|
| I. Praise for Redemption . . . . .                 | 1:1–14   | 1. Old Condition: Dead to God . . . . .  | 2:1–3     |
| A. Salutation from Paul . . . . .                  | 1:1–2    | 2. New Condition: Alive to God . . . . . | 2:4–10    |
| B. Chosen by the Father . . . . .                  | 1:3–6    | B. The Christian's Position              |           |
| C. Redeemed by the Son . . . . .                   | 1:7–12   | Corporately . . . . .                    | 2:11–3:13 |
| D. Sealed by the Spirit . . . . .                  | 1:13–14  | 1. Reconciliation of Jews                |           |
| II. Prayer for Revelation . . . . .                | 1:15–23  | and Gentiles . . . . .                   | 2:11–22   |
| III. Position of the Redeemed . . . . .            | 2:1–3:13 | 2. Revelation of the Mystery             |           |
| A. The Christian's Position Individually . . . . . | 2:1–10   | of the Church . . . . .                  | 3:1–13    |
|  |          | IV. Prayer for Realization . . . . .     | 3:14–21   |

### Part Two: The Practice of the Christian (4:1–6:24)

- |   |           |   |          |
|---|-----------|---|----------|
| I. Unity in the Church . . . . .        | 4:1–16    | E. Be Filled with the Spirit . . . . .      | 5:18–21  |
| A. Exhortation to Unity . . . . .       | 4:1–3     | III. Harmony in the Home . . . . .          | 5:22–6:9 |
| B. Explanation of Unity . . . . .       | 4:4–6     | A. Wives: Submit to Your Husbands . . . . . | 5:22–24  |
| C. Means for Unity: The Gifts . . . . . | 4:7–11    | B. Husbands: Love Your Wives . . . . .      | 5:25–33  |
| D. Purpose of the Gifts . . . . .       | 4:12–16   | C. Children: Obey Your Parents . . . . .    | 6:1–4    |
| II. Holiness in Life . . . . .          | 4:17–5:21 | D. Service on the Job . . . . .             | 6:5–9    |
| A. Put Off the Old Man . . . . .        | 4:17–22   | IV. Power in the World . . . . .            | 6:10–24  |
| B. Put On the New Man . . . . .         | 4:23–29   | A. Put On the Armor of God . . . . .        | 6:10–17  |
| C. Grieve Not the Holy Spirit . . . . . | 4:30–5:12 | B. Pray for Boldness . . . . .              | 6:18–20  |
| D. Walk as Children of Light . . . . .  | 5:13–17   | C. Conclusion . . . . .                     | 6:21–24  |



## CHAPTER 1

## SALUTATION FROM PAUL

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

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

## CHOSEN BY THE FATHER

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, 2 Cor. 1:3

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, Rom. 8:28; 1 Pet. 1:2

5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, John 1:12; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 1:21

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. Rom. 3:24

## REDEEMED BY THE SON

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace Rom. 3:24, 25; Heb. 9:12

8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, Rom. 16:25; 2 Tim. 1:9

10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both<sup>a</sup> which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. 1 Cor. 3:22; Gal. 4:4; Col. 1:16, 20

11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance,

being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, Is. 46:10; Rom. 8:17

12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. 2 Thess. 2:13; James 1:18

## SEALED BY THE SPIRIT

13 In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, John 1:17; 2 Cor. 1:22

14 who<sup>a</sup> is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:5; 1 Pet. 2:9

## PRAYER FOR REVELATION

15 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,

16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: Rom. 1:9

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, Col. 1:9

18 the eyes of your understanding<sup>a</sup> being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, Acts 26:18; Eph. 2:12

19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power Col. 2:12

20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, Ps. 110:1; Acts 2:24

21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named,

<sup>1:10</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *both*. <sup>1:14</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *which*.

<sup>1:18</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *hearts*.

## UNDERSTANDING GOD'S BEING

## THE TRINITY

## PART 3: INTERACTION WITHIN THE TRINITY

1:4, 7, 13—Early in Scripture, we can see glimpses of interaction within the Trinity in creation (Gen. 1:1–2, 26) and the confusion of languages at Babel (Gen. 11:7). However, a clearer picture of the way the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit relate to one another emerges in the New Testament, namely in the redemption of people.

The Father decrees the plans to be carried out on humanity's behalf (Eph. 1:4). The Son serves human-kind to implement the Father's plans (Eph. 1:7). The Holy Spirit applies the work of the Son to the daily experience of those who believe in Christ (Eph. 1:13–14).

A similar pattern appears at Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:16–17). The Father announced what Jesus was doing pleased Him. Jesus identified with sinful Israel. The Holy Spirit descended as a sign for those who would believe.

In 1 Corinthians 12:4–6, we see a picture of the Persons of the Trinity interacting to direct the ministry of the church. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to each Christian for use in ministry. The Son establishes the pattern of ministry achieved by the gifted believers. The Father empowers what will be accomplished in a congregation as part of the universal church.

*For the next article, ANGELS, turn to Psalm 104:4 on page 627. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Rom. 8:38, 39; Phil. 2:9, 10

22 And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, [Matt. 28:18-23](#) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:6; Col. 2:9

## CHAPTER 2

### OLD CONDITION: DEAD TO GOD

**A**ND you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

Eph. 4:18; Col. 2:13

2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

Eph. 6:12; Col. 1:21; 3:6

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Gal. 5:16; 1 Pet. 4:3

### NEW CONDITION: ALIVE TO GOD

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Rom. 10:12

5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Rom. 5:6, 8; 6:4, 5

6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,

7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Titus 3:4

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God,

John 1:12, 13; Rom. 4:16; 2 Tim. 1:9

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Is. 19:25

### TRESPASS

**2:5** (Gr. *paraptōma*) (Matt. 6:14; Rom. 5:15; 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 1:7) G3900: Literally, this word means “to fall beside, misstep.” But in the New Testament, it is used only in the figurative sense to refer to sin. In this sense, it means “a lapse or deviation from truth; transgression; willful fault.” Usually, it refers specifically to sins against God, and it often appears in the plural. When compared to its synonym *hamartia*, it may imply unpremeditated violations of God’s law. Scripture makes it clear that the heart of the gospel is God’s grace to forgive our sins even though we have done nothing to deserve forgiveness and are, in fact, dead in our transgressions.

### RECONCILIATION OF JEWS AND GENTILES

**11** Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—

Col. 2:11

12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

**14** For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace,

Gal. 6:15

16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Rom. 6:6; Col. 1:20–22

### KNOWING GOD’S WORD

## WHAT GOD’S WORD TELLS US ABOUT GOD’S PROGRAM

### PART 3: GOD’S WORK IN THE CHURCH

**1:22–23**—Observation alone cannot reveal the nature of the church, the body of Jesus Christ. From observation, the church appears to be a human institution serving religious purposes, but the Bible tells quite a different story.

First, the church is the congregation of all believers in Jesus Christ from all places and times (Eph. 2:19–20; Heb. 12:23). It is all born-again men, women, and children called out of every tribe and nation (Rev. 5:9).

Second, the church is the bride of Christ, which will live and reign with Him throughout all eternity (Eph. 5:31–32; Rev. 19:7).

Third, the church is entrusted with the mission of evangelizing the world during this age (Matt. 28:19–20; Acts 1:8).

Fourth, the church exists in local congregations, which gather regularly for worship, instruction, fellowship, and outreach (Acts 2:42; 14:23; Rev. 1:4).

Fifth, the Holy Spirit gives the church leadership and spiritual abilities to bring its members to maturity in life and ministry (1 Cor. 12:4–11; Eph. 4:11–16).

*For Part 4: GOD’S WORK IN THE FUTURE, turn to Matthew 25:31–32 on page 1080. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.

18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. John 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:13

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, Ps. 118:22 +; 1 Pet. 2:4

21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. 1 Pet. 2:5

## CHAPTER 3

### REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

**F**OR this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, Gal. 3:28, 29

7 of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. Rom. 1:5; 15:16, 18

8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 1 Cor. 15:9; Col. 1:27; 2:2, 3

9 and to make all see what is the fellowship<sup>a</sup> of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;<sup>b</sup> Heb. 1:2

10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:12

11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph. 1:4, 11

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Heb. 4:16; 10:19, 35

13 Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. Phil. 1:14

### PRAYER FOR REALIZATION

**14** For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>a</sup> Eph. 1:3

15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, Phil. 4:19; Col. 1:11

17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— Rom. 8:39; Eph. 1:18

**3:9** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text read *stewardship* (dispensation). <sup>b</sup>NU-Text omits *through Jesus Christ*. **3:14** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S INSTITUTIONS

### THE CHURCH

#### PART 3: THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

**3:21**—The ultimate purpose of the church is to bring honor and glory to its head, Jesus Christ. It does this as it fulfills its two purposes related to God's program for the world.

The first purpose of the church, as it relates to the world, is **evangelism**. This program is spelled out in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20), which has never been rescinded. The program is to “make disciples of all the nations.” The way this is to be done is twofold: by “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” and by “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.” Baptism, thus, is not an optional afterthought; it is a vital part of evangelism and making disciples. In baptism, believers indicate that they have identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (that is, they are part of the universal church, the body of Christ) and with a local church. A responsible parent not only brings a child into the world, but also provides what is necessary for the child's growth and well-being. The church is the same way. Teaching must accompany evangelism so that the children of God can learn all that God expects of them and has provided for them.

Another purpose of the church, as it relates to the world, is **edification**, or building up. According to Ephesians 4:12, believers need to be edified for two goals: “the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry.” Believers need to be built up so that they may realize all that God has provided for Christian living and that they may come to spiritual maturity. They also need to be equipped to perform the work in the body of Christ that God wants them to perform. In a real sense, each member of the church serves in ministry so that the work that God wants to perform through the local church can be accomplished.

*For Part 4: THE OFFICES OF THE CHURCH, turn to 1 Timothy 3:1–13 on page 1336. For an explanation of “The Christian's Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Eph. 1:23

20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 1 Cor. 2:9; Col. 1:29

21 to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Rom. 11:36

## CHAPTER 4

### EXHORTATION TO UNITY

**I**, THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 1 Thess. 2:12

2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love,

3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Col. 3:14

### EXPLANATION OF UNITY

4 *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; Rom. 12:5

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; Heb. 6:6; Jude 3

6 one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you<sup>a</sup> all. Mal. 2:10; Rom. 11:36

### MEANS FOR UNITY: THE GIFTS

7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 1 Cor. 12:7, 11

8 Therefore He says:

"When He ascended on high,  
He led captivity captive,  
And gave gifts to men."<sup>a</sup> Ps. 68:18 ⇨; 1 Cor. 12:4–11

9 (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first<sup>a</sup> descended into the lower parts of the earth? John 3:13; 20:17

### DISPENSATION

**3:2** (Gr. *oikonomia*) (Luke 16:2; 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10) G3622: The word means "household management." In ancient times, the word was often used to describe the work of a person who took care of all the financial affairs of a large household or business (Luke 16:1–2). Paul was entrusted with the stewardship of God's economy, to dispense the riches of Christ to God's household and to preach the Good News (Eph. 3:2–11). Paul uses this same word to describe God's own administration or government of time (Eph. 1:10).

10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) Ps. 68:18; Acts 1:9 ⇨; 2:33; Eph. 1:23

11 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

### PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 1 Cor. 14:20; Col. 2:2

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, Rom. 16:18; 1 Cor. 14:20

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— Eph. 1:22

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit

<sup>a</sup>4:6 NU-Text omits *you*; M-Text reads *us*. <sup>a</sup>4:8 Psalm 68:18

<sup>a</sup>4:9 NU-Text omits *first*.

## UNDERSTANDING GOD'S BEING

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### PART 1: THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**4:3**—One of the most serious errors concerning the Holy Spirit is the belief that He is simply a principle or an influence. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit is as much a Person (individual existence of a conscious being) as the Father and the Son. Two notes concerning the Holy Spirit's nature are worth mentioning:

- The personality of the Holy Spirit.** The Bible speaks of the mind (Rom. 8:27) and will (1 Cor. 12:11) of the Holy Spirit. He is often described as speaking directly to people in the Book of Acts. It was God's Spirit who spoke directly to the leaders of the Antioch church, commanding them to send Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:2). During Paul's second missionary journey, the apostle was forbidden by the Spirit to visit a certain mission field (Acts 16:6–7) and then was instructed to proceed toward another field of service (Acts 16:10).
- The deity of the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit is not just a Person; He is a divine Person. He is often referred to as *God* in the Bible (e.g., Acts 5:3–4). Like God the Father, He is omnipresent, or everywhere at once (Ps. 139:7). As the Son is eternal, so is the Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:14). In short, the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and Son. This is seen during Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:16–17) and is mentioned by Jesus just prior to His ascension from the Mount of Olives (Matt. 28:19–20).

*For Part 2: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION, turn to Titus 3:5 on page 1349. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Col. 2:19

#### PUT OFF THE OLD MAN

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of<sup>a</sup> the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, Eph. 2:2; 4:22

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; Rom. 1:21

19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 1 Tim. 4:2; 1 Pet. 4:3

20 But you have not so learned Christ,

21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, Col. 3:8

#### PUT ON THE NEW MAN

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Rom. 6:4; 7:6; 12:2

25 Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,”<sup>a</sup> for we are members of one another. Zech. 8:16; Rom. 12:5

26 “Be angry, and do not sin”:<sup>a</sup> do not let the sun go down on your wrath, Ps. 4:4; 37:8

27 nor give place to the devil. Rom. 12:19

28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Luke 3:11; Acts 20:35

29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth,

but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 1 Thess. 5:11

#### GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Is. 7:13

31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. Col. 3:8, 19; Titus 3:3; James 4:11

32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Mark 11:25; 2 Cor. 6:10

### CHAPTER 5

THEFORE be imitators of God as dear children. Luke 6:36; 1 Pet. 1:14–16

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. Gal. 1:4; 1 Thess. 4:9

3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; Luke 12:15; Col. 3:5–7

4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. Matt. 12:34, 35; Rom. 1:28; Phil. 4:6; Titus 3:9

5 For this you know,<sup>a</sup> that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 1 Cor. 6:9, 10

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.

8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 1 Thess. 5:5

4:17<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *the rest of*. 4:25<sup>a</sup> Zechariah 8:16 4:26<sup>a</sup> Psalm 4:4 5:5<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *For know this*.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

### WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

#### PART 3: FILLING

5:18—To be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled by the Spirit and is, therefore, crucial to experiencing fully the Christian life. Unlike the indwelling of the Spirit, which is a one-time event, filling is a repeated experience. This is underscored by the use of the present tense (“be filled”) as well as by biblical examples of Christians who were filled more than once (Acts 2:4; 4:31). Just as important, we must observe that filling is a command to be obeyed; it is not an optional add-on feature.

The next most important question is, “How can we be filled with the Spirit?” The prerequisites are confession of sin and yielding to God. The former means we agree with God about our sin; the latter means we dedicate ourselves to God. When we take these two steps, we position ourselves to be filled by the Spirit and controlled by Him so that we develop and exhibit Christ-like character. This Christ-like character is described in Galatians 5:22–23 as the fruit of the Spirit. This fruit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—positions believers to look and live like Jesus, benefits us, and makes the gospel message we proclaim that much more attractive to those around us.

For the next article, SIN, turn to Psalm 51:2 on page 595. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.

9 (for the fruit of the Spirit<sup>a</sup> is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), Gal. 5:22

10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*.

12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. Rom. 1:24

### WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT

13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. John 3:20, 21

14 Therefore He says:

“Awake, you who sleep,  
Arise from the dead,  
And Christ will give you light.” Is. 26:19; 60:1 ✦

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, Col. 4:5

16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Eccl. 11:2; Col. 4:5

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Rom. 12:2; Col. 4:5; 1 Thess. 4:3

### BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, Prov. 23:31

19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, Acts 16:25; James 5:13

20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Ps. 34:1

21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.<sup>a</sup>

### WIVES: SUBMIT TO YOUR HUSBANDS

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. Col. 3:18—4:1

23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 1 Cor. 11:3; Col. 1:18

24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything. Titus 2:4, 5

### HUSBANDS: LOVE YOUR WIVES

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, Col. 3:19

26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, John 3:5; 15:3; 17:17

27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. Song 4:7; Col. 1:22

28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church.

30 For we are members of His body,<sup>a</sup> of His flesh and of His bones. Gen. 2:23

5:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *light*. 5:21<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Christ*. 5:30<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S INSTITUTIONS

### THE CHURCH

#### PART 5: THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CHURCH TO CHRIST

5:25–29—The wonderful relationship that exists between Christ and the church was initiated by Christ who loved the church and gave Himself for it. The intimacies of that relationship are described with seven figures:

- “The shepherd and the sheep” emphasizes both the warm leadership and protection of Christ and the helplessness and dependency of believers (John 10:1–18).
- “The vine and the branches” points out the necessity for Christians to depend on Christ’s sustaining strength for growth (John 15:1–8).
- “Christ as High Priest” and “the church as a kingdom of priests” stresses the joyful worship, fellowship, and service, which the church can render to God through Christ (Heb. 5:1–10; 7:1; 8:6; 1 Pet. 2:5–9; Rev. 1:6).
- “The cornerstone and building stones” highlights the foundational value of Christ to everything the church is and does, as well as Christ’s value to the unity of believers. Love is to be the mortar which solidly holds the living stones together (1 Cor. 3:9; 13:1–13; Eph. 2:19–22; 1 Pet. 2:5).
- “The head and many-membered body” is frequently used in Scripture to illustrate several truths: the church is a vibrant organism, not merely an organization; it draws its vitality and direction from Christ, the head; and each believer has a unique and necessary place in its growth (1 Cor. 12:12–13, 27; Eph. 4:4).
- “The last Adam and new creation” presents Christ as the initiator of a new creation of believers as Adam was of the old creation (1 Cor. 15:22, 45; 2 Cor. 5:17).
- “The bridegroom and bride” emphasizes the intimate fellowship and co-ownership existing between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:25–33; Rev. 19:7–8; 21:9).

For the next article, *HOW GOD’S WORD CAME TO US*, turn to *Deuteronomy 29:29* on page 208. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.

31 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 6:16

32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects *her* husband. Col. 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:1, 6

## CHAPTER 6

### CHILDREN: OBEY YOUR PARENTS

**C**HILDREN, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Col. 3:20

2 “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: Deut. 5:16

3 “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”<sup>a</sup>

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Gen. 18:19; Col. 3:21

### SERVICE ON THE JOB

5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 1 Tim. 6:1

6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, Col. 3:22

7 with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,

8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he

will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he* is a slave or free. Rom. 2:6

9 And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also<sup>a</sup> is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. Rom. 2:11; Col. 4:1

### PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 2 Cor. 6:7

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,<sup>a</sup> against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly places. Luke 22:53; Rom. 8:38

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 2 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 5:16

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, Is. 11:5; 59:17

15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Is. 52:7

16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 1 John 5:4

5:31<sup>a</sup> Genesis 2:24 6:3<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 5:16 6:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *He who is both their Master and yours.* 6:12<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *rulers of this darkness.*

## RECOGNIZING GOD’S INSTITUTIONS

### THE FAMILY

#### PART 5: THE ROLE OF PARENTS

6:4—While God has given fathers and mothers different, but complimentary, roles in the family, they must act as one. Mothers and fathers need to agree on their approach to child rearing and support one another in their efforts with their children. Both parents are to be obeyed and honored equally by their children (Eph. 6:1–2).

Parental responsibility is set out in two ways. First, what they are *not* to do—“Do not provoke your children to wrath.” Parents are not to over-discipline in a reign of terror that will result in bitterly hostile children (Eph. 6:4) or children who give up on life (Col. 3:21). Second, what parents are to do—“But bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” To “bring them up” involves three ideas:

- Parenting is a continuous job.** As long as children are dependents, parents are responsible for rearing them so they become the people God wants them to be.
- Parenting is a loving job.** To “bring up” literally means “to nourish tenderly.” Children should be objects of tender, loving care.
- Parenting is a twofold job.** It involves (1) nurture (lit., “child training”)—all that children need for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual development—and (2) admonition (lit., “corrective” discipline) of the Lord.

Fathers and mothers are God’s constituted home authority (Prov. 1:8; 6:20–22) to nurture children along godly paths and to admonish them away from ungodly ones. While many parents might struggle with disciplining their children, to do so in a loving, corrective manner is what children need and what God has commanded.

*For Part 6: THE ROLE OF CHILDREN, turn to Proverbs 1:8 on page 658. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; Heb. 4:12

#### PRAY FOR BOLDNESS

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—  
Matt. 26:41; Luke 18:1; Phil. 1:4

19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,  
Col. 4:3

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. 2 Cor. 5:20

#### CONCLUSION

21 But that you also may know my affairs *and* how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you;  
Acts 20:4; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2

22 whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and *that* he may comfort your hearts.  
2 Cor. 1:6; Col. 4:8

23 Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace *be* with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.



# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the PHILIPPIANS



## THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS

Paul writes a thank-you note to the believers at Philippi for their help in his hour of need, and he uses the occasion to send along some instruction on Christian unity. His central thought is simple: Only in Christ are real unity and joy possible. With Christ as your model of humility and service, you can enjoy a oneness of purpose, attitude, goal, and labor—a truth Paul illustrates from his own life and one the Philippians desperately need to hear. Within their own ranks, fellow workers in the Philippian church are at odds, hindering the work in proclaiming new life in Christ. Because of this, Paul exhorts the church to “stand fast . . . be of the same mind . . . rejoice in the Lord always . . . but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known . . . and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:1–2, 4, 6–7).

This epistle is called *Pros Philippesious*, “To the Philippians.” The church at Philippi was the first church Paul founded in Macedonia.



## THE AUTHOR OF PHILIPPIANS

The external and internal evidence for the Pauline authorship of Philippians is very strong, and there is scarcely any doubt that anyone but Paul wrote it.



## THE TIME OF PHILIPPIANS

In 356 BC, King Philip of Macedonia (the father of Alexander the Great) took this town and expanded it, renaming it Philippi. The Romans captured it in 168 BC and in 42 BC, the defeat of the forces of Brutus and Cassius by those of Anthony and Octavian (later Augustus) took place outside the city. Octavian turned Philippi into a Roman colony (cf. Acts 16:12) and a military outpost. The citizens of this colony were regarded as citizens of Rome and given special privileges. Because Philippi was a military city and not a commercial center, there were not enough Jews for a synagogue when Paul came (Acts 16:13).

Paul’s “Macedonian Call” in Troas during his second missionary journey led to his ministry in Philippi with the conversion of Lydia and others. Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned, but this resulted in the conversion of the Philippian jailer. The magistrates were placed in a dangerous position by beating Roman citizens without a trial (Acts 16:37–40), and that embarrassment may have prevented future reprisals against the new Christians in Philippi. Paul visited the Philippians again on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:1, 6). When they heard of his Roman imprisonment, the Philippian church sent Epaphroditus with financial help (Phil. 4:18); they had helped Paul in this way on at least two other occasions (4:16). Epaphroditus almost died of an illness yet remained with Paul long enough for the Philippians to receive word of his malady. Upon his recovery, Paul sent this letter back with him to Philippi (2:25–30).

Silas, Timothy, Luke, and Paul first came to Philippi in AD 51, eleven years before Paul wrote this letter. Philippians 1:13 and 4:22 suggest that it was written from Rome, although some commentators argue for Caesarea or Ephesus. Paul’s life was at stake, and he was evidently awaiting the verdict of the Imperial Court (2:20–26).



## CHRIST IN PHILIPPIANS

The great *kenosis* passage is one of several portraits of Christ in this epistle. In chapter 1, Paul sees Christ as his life (“For to me, to live is Christ,” Phil. 1:21). In chapter 2, Christ is the model of true humility (“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,” 2:5). Chapter 3 presents Him as the One “who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (3:21). In chapter 4, He is the source of Paul’s power over circumstances (“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” 4:13).



## KEYS TO PHILIPPIANS

**Key Theme:** *To Live Is Christ*—Central to Philippians is the concept of “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21). Every chapter resounds with the theme of the centrality of Jesus in the

Christian’s life. High points include the following: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (2:5); “I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus” (3:8); and “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (4:13).

**Key Verses:** *Philippians 1:21; 4:12*—“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (1:21).

“I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need” (4:12).

**Key Chapter:** *Philippians 2*—The grandeur of the truth of the New Testament seldom exceeds the revelation of the humility of Jesus Christ when He left heaven to become a servant of humanity. Christ is clearly the Christian’s example; and Paul encourages, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (2:5).

## SURVEY OF PHILIPPIANS

Philippians is the epistle of joy and encouragement amid adverse circumstances. Paul freely expresses his fond affection for the Philippians, appreciates their consistent testimony and support, and lovingly urges them to center their actions and thoughts on the pursuit of the Person and power of Christ. Paul also seeks to correct the problems of disunity and rivalry (2:2–4) and to prevent the problems of legalism and antinomianism (3:1–19). Philippians focuses on encouragement for living in Christ (1:1–26), examples of living in Christ (1:27–3:21), and empowerment for living in Christ (4:1–23).

### Encouragement for Living in Christ (1:1–30)

Paul’s usual salutation (1:1–2) is followed by his thanksgiving, warm regard, and prayer on behalf of the Philippians (1:3–11). For years, they have participated in the apostle’s ministry, and he prays for their continued growth in the real knowledge of Christ. Paul shares the circumstances of his imprisonment and rejoices in the spread of the gospel despite, and because of, his situation (1:12–26). As he considers the outcome of his approaching trial, he expresses his willingness to “depart and be with Christ” (1:23) or to continue in ministry.

**Examples of Living in Christ (2:1–3:21)**—Paul encourages the Philippians to remain steadfast in the face of opposition and coming persecution (1:27–30). He exhorts the Philippians to have a spirit of unity and mutual concern by embracing the attitude of humility (2:1–4), the greatest example of which is the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ (2:5–11). The *kenosis*, or “emptying,” of Christ does not mean that He divested Himself of His deity, but that He withheld His preincarnate glory and voluntarily restricted His use of certain attributes (e.g., omnipresence and omniscience). Paul asks the Philippians to apply this attitude to their lives (2:12–18), and he gives two more examples of sacrifice—the ministries of Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19–30).

It appears that Paul is about to close his letter (“Finally, my brethren,” 3:1) when he launches into a warning about the continuing problem of legalism (3:1–9). Paul refutes this teaching with revealing autobiographical details about his previous attainments in Judaism. Compared to the goal of

OVERVIEW OF PHILIPPIANS										
ENCOURAGEMENT FOR LIVING IN CHRIST				EXAMPLES OF LIVING IN CHRIST			EMPOWERMENT FOR LIVING IN CHRIST			
Outline	PAUL’S PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING	PAUL’S AFFLICTIONS PROMOTE THE GOSPEL	PAUL’S AFFLICTIONS EXALT THE LORD	PAUL’S EXHORTATION TO THE AFFLICTED	PAUL’S EXHORTATION TO HUMILITY	PAUL’S CONFIDENCE IN HIS SALVATION	PEACE WITH THE BRETHREN	PEACE WITH THE LORD	PEACE IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES	CONCLUSION
	1:1–11	1:12–18	1:19–26	1:27–30	2:1–4	2:5–30	3:1–21	4:1–3	4:4–9	4:10–19 4:20–23
Theme	SUFFERING			SUBMISSION	SALVATION	SANCTIFICATION				
Approach	DOCTRINE					CONDUCT				
Location	ROME									
Time Frame	C. AD 62									

knowing Christ, those pursuits are as nothing. True righteousness is received through faith, not by mechanical obedience to any law. Paul yearns for the promised attainment of the resurrected body.

**Empowerment for Living in Christ (4:1–23)**—In a series of exhortations, Paul urges the Philippians to have peace with the brethren by living a lifestyle

of unity, prayerful dependence, and holiness (4:13). In 4:4–9 Paul describes the secrets of having the peace of God as well as peace with God. He then rejoices over their gift but explains that the power of Christ enables him to live above his circumstances (4:10–20). This joyous letter from prison closes with greetings and a benediction (4:21–23).

## OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS

### Part One: Encouragement for Living in Christ (1:1–30)

- I. Paul's Prayer of Thanksgiving ..... 1:1–11
- II. Paul's Afflictions Promote the Gospel.... 1:12–18
- III. Paul's Afflictions Exalt the Lord ..... 1:19–26
- IV. Paul's Exhortation to the Afflicted ..... 1:27–30

### Part Two: Examples of Living in Christ (2:1–3:21)

- I. Paul's Exhortation to Humility ..... 2:1–4
- II. Paul's Examples of Humility ..... 2:5–30
  - A. Christ's Example of Humility..... 2:5–16
  - B. Paul's Example of Humility ..... 2:17–18
  - C. Timothy's Example of Humility ..... 2:19–24
  - D. Epaphroditus's Example of Humility ..... 2:25–30
- III. Paul's Confidence in His Salvation ..... 3:1–21
  - A. Warning Against Confidence in the Flesh ..... 3:1–9
  - B. Exhortation to Know Christ ..... 3:10–16
  - C. Warning Against Living for the Flesh ..... 3:17–21

### Part Three: Empowerment for Living in Christ (4:1–23)

- I. Peace with the Brethren ..... 4:1–3
- II. Peace with the Lord ..... 4:4–9
- III. Peace in All Circumstances..... 4:10–19
- IV. Conclusion ..... 4:20–23

## CHAPTER 1

### PAUL'S PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**P**AUL and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops<sup>a</sup> and deacons: 1 Tim. 3:8–13

- 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 1 Cor. 1:4
- 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, Eph. 1:16
- 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, Rom. 12:13
- 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; John 6:29
- 7 just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.
- 8 For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.
- 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,
- 10 that you may approve the things that are

excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. John 15:8; Col. 1:6

### PAUL'S AFFLICTIONS PROMOTE THE GOSPEL

- 12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things *which happened* to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel,
- 13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; Phil. 4:22
- 14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.
- 15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill:
- 16 The former<sup>a</sup> preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains;
- 17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.
- 18 What then? Only *that* in every way, whether

<sup>11</sup> <sup>a</sup> Literally *overseers* <sup>1:16</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reverses the contents of verses 16 and 17.

in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

#### PAUL'S AFFLICTIONS EXALT THE LORD

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, Job 13:16, LXX

20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. Rom. 14:8; Eph. 6:19, 20

21 For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

22 But if I live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruit from *my* labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.

23 For<sup>a</sup> I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is* far better. Ps. 16:11; 2 Cor. 5:2, 8

24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

#### PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO THE AFFLICTED

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, Eph. 4:1, 3; Jude 3

28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation,<sup>a</sup> and that from God.

29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, Matt. 5:11, 12; Eph. 2:8; 2 Tim. 3:12

30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear *is* in me. Acts 16:19–40; Col. 1:29; 2:1

## CHAPTER 2

### PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO HUMILITY

**T**HEREFORE if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, Col. 3:12

2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. Rom. 12:16

3 Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Rom. 12:10; Gal. 5:26

4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 1 Cor. 13:5

### CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, Matt. 11:29

6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 2 Cor. 4:4

### MAGNIFY

1:20 (Gr. *megalynō*) (Luke 1:46; Acts 10:46; 2 Cor. 10:15) G3170: Literally, "to enlarge." Figuratively, it means "to exalt, praise, celebrate, make conspicuous." The root word, *megas*, means "great," so this form means "to make great." This was what Mary did in her *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46). When used of people, it means "to highly esteem" (Acts 5:13). When we magnify God, we are making Him greater and bigger in the eyes of those around us and even in our own hearts.

### FORM

2:6 (Gr. *morphē*) (Mark 16:12; Phil. 2:7) G3444: The Greek word for *form* was generally used to express the way in which a thing exists and appears according to what it is in itself. Thus, in the expression here in Philippians 2:6–7, *form of God* may be correctly understood as the essential nature and character of God. To say, therefore, that Jesus existed in *the form of God* is to say that apart from His human nature Jesus possesses all the characteristics and qualities belonging to God because He is, in fact, God. The word is also used in Mark 16:12 where Jesus appears "in another form" to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. Ps. 22:6; Is. 42:1; John 1:14

8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross. Heb. 5:8

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, Ps. 68:18; 110:1; Is. 52:13; Acts 2:33+; Eph. 1:21; Heb. 2:9

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, Is. 45:23

11 and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father. John 13:13; Rom. 10:9; 14:9

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; Eph. 6:5; Phil. 1:5, 6; 4:15

13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure. Eph. 1:5; Heb. 13:20, 21

14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, Rom. 14:1; 1 Pet. 4:9

15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, Matt. 5:15, 16

16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. 2 Cor. 1:14; Gal. 2:2; 1 Thess. 3:5

1:23<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *But*. 1:28<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads of *your* salvation.

## PAUL'S EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY

17 Yes, and if I am being poured out *as a drink offering* on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 2 Cor. 7:4; 2 Tim. 4:6  
 18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

## TIMOTHY'S EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. Rom. 16:21

20 For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. 2 Tim. 3:10

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

22 But you know his proven character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel. 1 Cor. 4:17

23 Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.

## EPAPHRODITUS'S EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY

25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; 2 Cor. 8:23; 11:9; Philem. 2

26 since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.

27 For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem;

30 because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me. 1 Cor. 16:17

## CHAPTER 3

WARNING AGAINST CONFIDENCE  
IN THE FLESH

**F**INALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you *is* not tedious, but for you *it is* safe. 1 Thess. 5:16

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! Ps. 119:115; Rom. 2:28; Gal. 5:15

3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit,<sup>a</sup> rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, Deut. 30:6; Rom. 7:6

4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 2 Cor. 5:16; 11:18, 22, 23

5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 2 Cor. 11:22

6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. Acts 8:3; 22:4, 5; 26:9-11

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Matt. 13:44

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ Jer. 9:23

9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; Rom. 1:17; 10:3

## EXHORTATION TO KNOW CHRIST

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, Rom. 6:3-5; Eph. 1:19, 20

11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Acts 26:6-8

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 1 Tim. 6:12, 19; Heb. 12:23

13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, Luke 9:62; Heb. 6:1

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. 4:7; Heb. 3:1

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Hos. 6:3; Gal. 5:10

16 Nevertheless, to *the degree* that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule,<sup>a</sup> let us be of the same mind. Rom. 12:16; 15:5; Gal. 6:16

WARNING AGAINST LIVING  
FOR THE FLESH

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Titus 2:7, 8

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: Gal. 1:7

19 whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. Hos. 4:7; 1 Tim. 6:5

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 1:11; 1 Cor. 1:7; Eph. 2:6, 19

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Eph. 1:19; 1 John 3:2

<sup>3:3</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *who worship in the Spirit of God*.

<sup>3:16</sup> NU-Text omits *rule* and the rest of the verse.

## CHAPTER 4

## PEACE WITH THE BRETHREN

**T**HEREFORE, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:8, 27

**2** I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

Phil. 2:2; 3:16

**3** And<sup>a</sup> I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.

Rom. 16:3

## PEACE WITH THE LORD

**4** Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

Rom. 12:12

**5** Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand.

James 5:7-9

**6** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

1 Thess. 5:17, 18

**7** and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

John 14:27

**8** Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Deut. 16:20; Eph. 4:25; 1 Thess. 5:22

**9** The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Rom. 15:33

## PEACE IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

**10** But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.

**11** Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

**12** I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

1 Cor. 4:11

**13** I can do all things through Christ<sup>a</sup> who strengthens me.

John 15:5

**14** Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress.

Phil. 1:7

**15** Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only.

2 Cor. 11:8, 9

**16** For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities.

**17** Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.

Titus 3:14

**18** Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things *sent* from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

2 Cor. 9:12; Heb. 13:16

**19** And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Ps. 23:1

## CONCLUSION

**20** Now to our God and Father *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Rom. 16:27

**21** Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.

Gal. 1:2

**22** All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

**23** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.<sup>a</sup> Amen.

<sup>a</sup>4:3 NU-Text and M-Text read *Yes*. <sup>a</sup>4:13 NU-Text reads *Him who*.  
<sup>a</sup>4:23 NU-Text reads *your spirit*.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

## PRAYER

## PART 4: THANKSGIVING

**4:6**—The importance and spiritual benefits of thanksgiving in our prayer life cannot be overemphasized. The Bible tells us God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). But the question is, “How do you become humble?” The answer is by being thankful. A good rule of thumb for our prayer lives is to be full of worry for nothing (Phil. 4:6), full of prayer for anything (1 Thess. 5:18), and full of thanks for everything. Indeed, thanklessness, at least in part, caused the ancient world to plunge into the terrible depths of sexual depravity (Rom. 1:21). This is why there was a special group of priests in the Old Testament appointed to do nothing else but praise and thank the Lord (2 Chr. 31:2).

There are two main things we are to thank God for:

- We are to thank Him for His work in Creation.** David reminded us of this area of thanksgiving in Psalm 100. Later, John the apostle told us that we will thank God for His work in Creation throughout all eternity. Note the words of this song of praise: “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created” (Rev. 4:11).
- We are to thank Him for His work in redemption.** John also informed us our second song in heaven will feature thanksgiving for God’s work in redemption: “And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood’” (Rev. 5:9).

*For Part 5: COMMITMENT, turn to Proverbs 16:3 on page 672. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the COLOSSIANS



## THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

If Ephesians can be labeled the epistle portraying the “church of Christ,” then Colossians must surely be the “Christ of the church.” Ephesians focuses on the Body; Colossians focuses on the Head. Like Ephesians, the Book of Colossians divides neatly in half with the first portion doctrinal (Col. 1–2) and the second practical (chs. 3–4). Paul’s purpose is to show that Christ is preeminent—first and foremost in everything—and the Christian’s life should reflect that priority. Because believers are rooted in Him, alive in Him, hidden in Him, and complete in Him, it is utterly inconsistent for them to live life without Him. Clothed in His love, with His peace ruling in their hearts, they are equipped to make Christ first in every area of life.

This epistle became known as *Pros Kolossaeis*, “To the Colossians,” because of 1:2. Paul also wanted it to be read in the neighboring church at Laodicea (4:16).



## THE AUTHOR OF COLOSSIANS

The external testimony to the Pauline authorship of Colossians is ancient and consistent, and the internal evidence also is very good. It not only claims to be written by Paul (Col. 1:1, 23; 4:18), but the personal details and close parallels with Ephesians and Philemon make the case even stronger. Nevertheless, the authenticity of this letter has been challenged on the internal grounds of vocabulary and thought. In its four chapters, Colossians uses fifty-five Greek words that do not appear in Paul’s other epistles. However, Paul commanded a wide vocabulary and the circumstances and subject of this epistle, especially the references to the Colossian heresy, account for these additional words. The high Christology of Colossians has been compared to John’s later concept that Christ is the *Logos* (cf. 1:15–23 and John 1:1–18), with the conclusion that these concepts were too late for Paul’s time. However, there is no reason to assume that Paul was unaware of Christ’s work as Creator, especially in view of Philippians 2:5–11. It is also wrong to assume that the heresy refuted in Colossians 2 refers to the fully developed form of Gnosticism

that did not appear until the second century. The parallels only indicate that Paul was dealing with an early form of Gnosticism.



## THE TIME OF COLOSSIANS

Colosse was a minor city about one hundred miles east of Ephesus in the region of the seven Asian churches of Revelation 1–3. Located in the fertile Lycus Valley by a mountain pass on the road from Ephesus to the East, Colosse once was a populous center of commerce, famous for its glossy black wool. By the time of Paul, it had been eclipsed by its neighboring cities, Laodicea and Hierapolis (cf. Col. 4:13), and was on the decline. Apart from this letter, Colosse exerted almost no influence on early church history. It is evident from 1:4–8 and 2:1 that Paul had never visited the church at Colosse, which was founded by Epaphras. On his third missionary journey, Paul devoted almost three years to an Asian ministry centered in Ephesus (cf. Acts 19:10; 20:31), and Epaphras probably came to Christ during this time. He carried the gospel to the cities in the Lycus Valley and years later came to visit Paul in his imprisonment (Col. 4:12–13; Philem. v. 23).

Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians were evidently written about the same time and under the same circumstances, judging by the overlapping themes and personal names (cf. Col. 4:9–17 and Philem. vv. 2, 10, 23–24). Although Caesarea and Ephesus have been suggested as the location of authorship, the bulk of the evidence indicates that Paul wrote all four Prison Epistles during his first Roman imprisonment (see “The Time of Ephesians” and “The Time of Philippians”). If so, Paul wrote it in AD 60 or 61 and sent it with Tychicus and the converted slave Onesimus to Colosse (Col. 4:7–9; see Eph. 6:21; Philem. vv. 10–12).

Epaphras’s visit and report about the conditions in Colosse prompted this letter. Although the Colossians had not yet succumbed (Col. 2:1–5), an encroaching heresy was threatening the predominantly Gentile (1:21, 27; 2:13) Colossian church. The nature of this heresy can only be deduced from Paul’s incidental references to it in his refutation in 2:8–23. It was apparently a religious system that combined elements from Greek speculation

(2:4, 8–10), Jewish legalism (2:11–17), and Oriental mysticism (2:18–23). It involved a low view of the body (2:20–23) and probably nature as a whole. Circumcision, dietary regulations, and ritual observances were included in this system, which utilized asceticism, worship of angels as intermediaries, and mystical experiences as an approach to the spiritual realm. Any attempt to fit Christ into such a system would undermine His Person and redemptive work.

## ✝ CHRIST IN COLOSSIANS

This singularly Christological book is centered on the cosmic Christ—“The head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:10), the Lord of creation (1:16–17), and the Author of reconciliation (1:20–22; 2:13–15). He is the basis for the believer’s hope (1:5, 23, 27), the source of the believer’s power for a new life (1:11, 29), the believer’s Redeemer and Reconciler (1:14, 20–22; 2:11–15), the embodiment of full deity (1:15, 19; 2:9), the Creator and Sustainer of all things (1:16–17), the Head of the church (1:18), the resurrected God-Man (1:18; 3:1), and the all-sufficient Savior (1:28; 2:3, 10; 3:1–4).

## 🔑 KEYS TO COLOSSIANS

**Key Theme:** *The Preeminence of Christ*—The resounding theme in Colossians is the preeminence and sufficiency of Christ in all things. The believer is complete in Him alone and lacks nothing because “in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9); He has “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (2:3). There is no need for speculation, mystical visions, or ritualistic regulations as though faith in Christ were insufficient. Paul’s predominant purpose, then, is to refute a threatening heresy that is devaluing Christ. This false teaching is countered by a positive presentation of His true attributes and accomplishments. A proper view of Christ is the antidote for heresy. Paul also

writes this epistle to encourage the Colossians to “continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast” (1:23), so that they will grow and bear fruit in the knowledge of Christ (1:10). A firm adherence to the true gospel will give them stability and resistance to opposing influences.

**Key Verses:** *Colossians 2:9–10; 3:1–2*—“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power” (2:9–10).

“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth” (3:1–2).

**Key Chapter:** *Colossians 3*—Chapter 3 links the three themes of Colossians (see “Key Word”) together showing their cause-and-effect relationships. Because the believer is risen with Christ (3:1–4), he is to put off the old man and put on the new (3:5–17), which will result in holiness in all relationships (3:18–25).

## 🔍 SURVEY OF COLOSSIANS

Colossians is perhaps the most Christ-centered book in the Bible. In it, Paul stresses the preeminence of the Person of Christ and the completeness of the salvation He provides to combat a growing heresy that is threatening the church at Colosse. This heresy seeks to devalue Christ by elevating speculation, ritualism, mysticism, and asceticism. But Christ, the Lord of creation and Head of the Body, is completely sufficient for every spiritual and practical need of the believer. The last half of this epistle explores the application of these principles to daily life because doctrinal truth (Col. 1–2) must bear fruit in practical conduct (chs. 3–4). The two major topics are: the supremacy of Christ (chs. 1–2) and the submission to Christ (chs. 3–4).

**The Supremacy of Christ (1:1–2:23)**—Paul’s greeting (1:1–2) is followed by an unusually extended thanksgiving (1:3–8) and prayer (1:9–14) on

OVERVIEW OF COLOSSIANS					
Outline	THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST		THE SUBMISSION TO CHRIST		
		THE PREMINENCE OF CHRIST 1:1–2:3	THE FREEDOM IN CHRIST 2:4–23	THE POSITION OF THE BELIEVER 3:1–4	THE PRACTICE OF THE BELIEVER 3:5–4:14
Theme	WHAT CHRIST DID FOR US		WHAT CHRIST DOES THROUGH US		
Approach	DOCTRINE		CONDUCT		
Location	ROME				
Time Frame	AD 60–61				



behalf of the believers at Colosse. Paul expresses his concern that the Colossians come to a deeper understanding of the Person and power of Christ. Even here, Paul begins to develop his major theme of the preeminence of Christ, but the most potent statement of this theme is in 1:15–23. Christ is supreme both in creation (1:15–18) and in redemption (1:19–23), and this majestic passage builds a positive case for Christ as the most effective refutation of the heresy that will be exposed in chapter 2. Paul describes his own ministry of proclaiming the mystery of “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (1:27) to the Gentiles and assures his readers that although he has not personally met them, he strongly desires that they become deeply rooted in Christ alone, who is preeminent in the church (1:24–2:3). This is especially important in view of false teachers who would defraud them through enticing rationalisms (2:4–7), vain philosophy (2:8–10), legalistic rituals (2:11–17), improper mysticism (2:18–19), and

useless asceticism (2:20–23). In each case, Paul contrasts the error with the corresponding truth about Christ.

**The Submission to Christ (3:1–4:18)**—The believers’ union with Christ in His death, resurrection, and exaltation is the foundation upon which their earthly lives must be built (3:1–4). Because of their death with Christ, Christians must regard themselves as dead to the old sins and put them aside (3:5–11); because of their resurrection with Christ, believers must regard themselves as alive to Him in righteousness and put on the new qualities that are prompted by Christian love (3:12–17). Turning from the inward life (3:1–17) to the outward life (3:18–4:6), Paul outlines the transformation that faith in Christ should make in relationships inside and outside the home. This epistle concludes with a statement concerning its bearers (Tychicus and Onesimus), greetings and instructions, and a farewell note (4:7–18).

## OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS

### Part One: The Supremacy of Christ (1:1–2:23)

- I. The Preeminence of Christ . . . . . 1:1–2:3
  - A. Introduction . . . . . 1:1–14
    - 1. Paul’s Greeting to the Colossians . . . . . 1:1–2
    - 2. Paul’s Thanksgiving for the Colossians . . . . . 1:3–8
    - 3. Paul’s Prayer for the Colossians . . . . . 1:9–14
  - B. Christ Is Preeminent in Creation . . . . . 1:15–18
  - C. Christ Is Preeminent in Redemption . . . . . 1:19–23

- D. Christ Is Preeminent in the Church . . . . . 1:24–2:3
- II. The Freedom in Christ . . . . . 2:4–23
  - A. Freedom from Enticing Words . . . . . 2:4–7
  - B. Freedom from Vain Philosophy . . . . . 2:8–10
  - C. Freedom from the Judgment of Men . . . . . 2:11–17
  - D. Freedom from Improper Worship . . . . . 2:18–19
  - E. Freedom from the Doctrine of Men . . . . . 2:20–23

### Part Two: The Submission to Christ (3:1–4:18)

- I. The Position of the Believer . . . . . 3:1–4
- II. The Practice of the Believer . . . . . 3:5–4:6
  - A. Put Off the Old Man . . . . . 3:5–11
  - B. Put On the New Man . . . . . 3:12–17
  - C. Personal Commands for Holiness . . . . . 3:18–4:6
    - 1. Holiness in Family Life . . . . . 3:18–21
    - 2. Holiness in Work Life . . . . . 3:22–4:1
    - 3. Holiness in Public Life . . . . . 4:2–6

- III. Conclusion . . . . . 4:7–18
  - A. Commendation of Tychicus . . . . . 4:7–9
  - B. Greetings from Paul’s Friends . . . . . 4:10–14
  - C. Introductions Regarding This Letter . . . . . 4:15–18

## CHAPTER 1

### PAUL’S GREETING TO THE COLOSSIANS

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, Eph. 1:1

2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colosse:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 4:17; Gal. 1:3

### PAUL’S THANKSGIVING FOR THE COLOSSIANS

3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Phil. 1:3

4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; Eph. 1:15; Heb. 6:10

5 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, 1 Pet. 1:4

6 which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit,<sup>a</sup> as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; Matt. 24:14; John 15:16; Eph. 3:2

7 as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, 2 Cor. 11:23; Philem. 23

<sup>12</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *and the Lord Jesus Christ*. <sup>16</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *and growing*.

8 who also declared to us your love in the Spirit. Rom. 15:30

#### PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE COLOSSIANS

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; Eph. 1:8, 15–17

10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 2 Pet. 3:18

11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; Acts 5:41; Eph. 3:16; 4:2; 6:10

12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. Eph. 1:11; 5:20

13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, Eph. 6:12; 2 Pet. 1:11

14 in whom we have redemption through His blood,<sup>a</sup> the forgiveness of sins. Eph. 1:7

#### CHRIST IS PREEMINENT IN CREATION

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 3:14

16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. Eph. 1:20, 21; Heb. 1:2, 3; 2:10

17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. John 17:5; Heb. 1:3

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. Rev. 1:5

#### CHRIST IS PREEMINENT IN REDEMPTION

19 For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell, John 1:16

20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. 2 Cor. 5:18; Eph. 1:10; 2:14

#### FIRSTBORN

1:15 (Gr. *prōtotokos*) (Luke 2:7; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 1:5) G4416: The first part of this word (*prōtos*) can indicate “first in time” (temporal priority) or “first in place” (preeminence). In this context, preeminence is in the forefront. Thus, the Son of Man is the “chiefborn” among all God’s creatures. See Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 21:16–17; Psalm 89:23, where in the Greek Old Testament *prōtotokos* is used to express the idea of preeminence. Understood as a second, separate description of Jesus’ human nature, this title indicates that the Son in His humanity is the foremost of all creation. But the designation in no way indicates that Jesus Himself was created by God, for the next verse asserts that all things were created in, through, and for Jesus. As a participant in the creation of all things, Jesus cannot be a created being. Instead, He is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Godhead, who has existed from eternity.

21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled 2 Cor. 5:18, 19; Eph. 2:1; Titus 1:15

22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— 2 Cor. 5:18; Eph. 5:27

23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister. John 15:6; Eph. 3:17

#### CHRIST IS PREEMINENT IN THE CHURCH

24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, 2 Cor. 1:5; 7:4; 12:15; Eph. 1:23; 3:1, 13

25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, Gal. 2:7

1:14<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *through His blood*.

### BEGINNING THE NEW LIFE

#### THE WAY TO NEW LIFE

##### PART 2: BASED ON CHRIST'S DEATH

1:22—It has been rightly said that salvation is free, but it is not cheap. Salvation is a gift and costs us nothing, but it cost God everything—the life of His Son Jesus. “The wages of sin is death” (separation from God). God’s gift is “eternal life” (eternal union with God). This is possible because of the death of Jesus on Calvary’s cross (Rom. 6:23). There, Jesus took the penalty for the sins of the world. As He hung upon the cross, He cried, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani” which means, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me” (Matt. 27:46). Jesus was separated from God the Father so that we do not have to be. This is the heart of the atonement. The marvel of it all is that Jesus did this while we were His enemies: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). In giving up His life, Jesus made the one and only way for those enemies to become His friends and adopted sons and daughters of the Father.

*For Part 3: RECEIVED BY FAITH, turn to Acts 16:31 on page 1219. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

**GODHEAD**

**2:9** (Gr. *theotētos*) G2320: In this letter to the Colossians, Paul was specifically battling the Gnostic heresy. The Gnostics spoke of the “fullness of the Godhead” to describe the totality of all deities. However, Paul used it to point to God alone as that fullness. The Greek word *theotētos* for *Godhead* is used only here in the New Testament and designates the totality of God’s nature and person. Since all of God’s fullness resides in Jesus, every spiritual reality is found in Jesus. In Him, we lack nothing. All the fullness of the Godhead “dwells” or “permanently resides” in the body of Jesus, the God-man.

26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. 1 Cor. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:10

27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which<sup>a</sup> is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Rom. 8:10, 11; 9:23; 2 Cor. 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:1

28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Acts 20:20; Eph. 5:27

29 To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily. Eph. 3:7

**CHAPTER 2**

**F**OR I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, Phil. 1:30

2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and *attaining* to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and<sup>a</sup> of Christ,

3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 1 Cor. 1:24, 30

**FREEDOM FROM ENTICING WORDS**

4 Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. Rom. 16:18

5 For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your *good* order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 1 Cor. 14:40; 1 Thess. 2:17; 1 Pet. 5:9

6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 1 Thess. 4:1

7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it<sup>a</sup> with thanksgiving. Eph. 2:21

**FREEDOM FROM VAIN PHILOSOPHY**

8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. Gal. 1:14; 4:3, 9, 10

9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; John 1:14

10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. Eph. 1:20, 21

**FREEDOM FROM THE JUDGMENT OF MEN**

11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins<sup>a</sup> of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, Deut. 10:16; Rom. 6:6; 7:24

12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. Eph. 1:19, 20

13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Eph. 2:15, 16

15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Is. 53:12; Eph. 6:12

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Heb. 8:5; 10:1

**FREEDOM FROM IMPROPER WORSHIP**

18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not<sup>a</sup> seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase *that is* from God. Eph. 1:23; 4:15, 16

**FREEDOM FROM THE DOCTRINE OF MEN**

20 Therefore,<sup>a</sup> if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, *why*, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— Rom. 6:2–5; Gal. 4:3, 9

21 “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,”

22 which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? Titus 1:14

23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh. 1 Tim. 4:8

**1:27**<sup>a</sup>M-Text reads *who*. **2:2**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *both of the Father and*. **2:7**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *in it*. **2:11**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *of the sins*. **2:18**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *not*. **2:20**<sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *Therefore*.

## CHAPTER 3

## THE POSITION OF THE BELIEVER

**I**f then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Ps. 68:18; 110:1; Eph. 1:20

2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. Matt. 6:19–21

3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Rom. 6:2; 2 Cor. 5:7

4 When Christ *who is our life* appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. 1 Cor. 15:43; 1 John 3:2

## PUT OFF THE OLD MAN

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Rom. 6:13; 8:13; Eph. 4:19; 5:3, 5

6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, Rom. 1:18; Eph. 2:2

7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. 1 Cor. 6:11

8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Eph. 4:22

9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,

10 and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, Rom. 8:29; 12:2; Eph. 2:10

11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ is all and in all. Gal. 3:27, 28; Eph. 1:23

## PUT ON THE NEW MAN

12 Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 John 3:17

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*.

14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. 1 Cor. 13; Eph. 4:3; 1 Pet. 4:8

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. John 14:27; 1 Cor. 7:15; Eph. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:18

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Eph. 5:19

17 And whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. 1 Cor. 10:31

## HOLINESS IN FAMILY LIFE

18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Eph. 5:22–6:9; 1 Pet. 3:1

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Eph. 4:31; 5:25

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Eph. 5:24; 6:1

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Eph. 6:4

## HOLINESS IN WORK LIFE

22 Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.

23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, Eccl. 9:10

24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for<sup>a</sup> you serve the Lord Christ. 1 Cor. 7:22; Eph. 6:8

3:24<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *for*.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S INSTITUTIONS

## THE FAMILY

## PART 3: THE ROLE OF THE HUSBAND

3:19—Paul tells the husband to love his wife (Eph. 5:25), while Peter tells the husband to dwell with his wife with understanding and honor (1 Pet. 3:7). The husband cannot live with his wife as Peter says unless he loves her in the way Paul means. The love that the husband is commanded to have for the wife is not primarily sexual or emotional (though both of those concepts are involved); it is a selfless love that seeks not his best, but his wife's best. It is the kind of love that God has for the world (John 3:16) and is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). A husband can only love his wife properly if he is a Christian and under the control of the Holy Spirit.

The two responsibilities the husband has in the family are to dwell with his wife according to knowledge and to render to his wife the honor that is due her because she is his wife. To “dwell together” with his wife means that the husband must take his wife into every aspect of his life. There are to be no private areas of his life where his wife is unwelcome.

The husband is to perform his two duties for a spiritual purpose: “that your prayers be not hindered.” The man who is not taking his wife into every aspect of his life and rendering to her the honor that is due her because she is his wife cannot communicate with her in the way that God intended; hence, he cannot communicate with God either. To make sure that the channel of communication with God is open, the husband must make sure that the channel of communication with his wife is open. Only in this way can he truly love his wife as God intended.

For Part 4: *THE ROLE OF THE WIFE*, turn to 1 Peter 3:1–6 on page 1383. For an explanation of “*The Christian’s Guide to the New Life*,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.

25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Rom. 2:11

CHAPTER 4

**M**ASTERS, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. Eph. 6:9

HOLINESS IN PUBLIC LIFE

- 2 Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; Luke 18:1; Col. 2:7
- 3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, Eph. 6:19, 20
- 4 that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.
- 5 Walk in wisdom toward those *who are* outside, redeeming the time. Matt. 10:16; Eph. 5:15, 16
- 6 Let your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. Eccl. 10:12; Mark 9:50; 1 Pet. 3:15

COMMENDATION OF TYCHICUS

- 7 Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. 2 Tim. 4:12
- 8 I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he<sup>a</sup> may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts, Eph. 6:22
- 9 with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They will make known to you all things which *are happening* here. Philem. 10

GREETINGS FROM PAUL'S FRIENDS

- 10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him), Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2; 2 Tim. 4:11
- 11 and Jesus who is called Justus. These *are my* only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision; they have proved to be a comfort to me.
- 12 Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete<sup>a</sup> in all the will of God. Rom. 15:30; Philem. 23
- 13 For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal<sup>a</sup> for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis.
- 14 Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. 2 Tim. 4:10, 11

INTRODUCTIONS REGARDING THIS LETTER

- 15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that *is* in his<sup>a</sup> house.
- 16 Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea. 1 Thess. 5:27
- 17 And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it." 2 Tim. 4:5; Philem. 2
- 18 This salutation by my own hand—Paul. Remember my chains. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

4:8<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *you may know our circumstances and he may*.  
 4:12<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *fully assured*. 4:13<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *concern*.  
 4:15<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Nympha . . . her house*.

# The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the THESSALONIANS



## THE BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS

Paul has many pleasant memories of the days he spent with the infant Thessalonian church. Their faith, hope, love, and perseverance in the face of persecution are exemplary. Paul's labors as a spiritual parent to the fledgling church have been richly rewarded, and his affection is visible in every line of his letter.

Paul encourages them to excel in their newfound faith, to increase in their love for one another, and to rejoice, pray, and give thanks always. He closes his letter with instruction regarding the return of the Lord, whose advent signifies hope and comfort for believers both living and dead.

Because this is the first of Paul's two canonical letters to the church at Thessalonica, it received the title *Pros Thessalonikeis A*, the "First to the Thessalonians."



## THE AUTHOR OF 1 THESSALONIANS

First Thessalonians went unchallenged as a Pauline epistle until the nineteenth century, when radical critics claimed that its dearth of doctrinal content made its authenticity suspect. But this is a weak objection on two counts: (1) the proportion of doctrinal teaching in Paul's epistles varies widely, and (2) 4:13—5:11 is a foundational passage for New Testament eschatology (future events). Paul had quickly grounded the Thessalonians in Christian doctrine, and the only problematic issue when this epistle was written concerned the matter of Christ's return. The external and internal evidence points clearly to Paul.



## THE TIME OF 1 THESSALONIANS

In Paul's time, Thessalonica was the prominent seaport and the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia. This prosperous city was located on the Via Egnatia, the main road from Rome to the East, within sight of Mount Olympus, legendary home of the Greek pantheon. Cassander expanded and strengthened this site around 315 BC and renamed

it after his wife, the half-sister of Alexander the Great. The Romans conquered Macedonia in 168 BC and organized it into a single province twenty-two years later with Thessalonica as the capital city. It became a "free city" under Augustus with its own authority to appoint a governing board of magistrates who were called "politarchs." The strategic location assured Thessalonica of commercial success, and it boasted a population of perhaps 200,000 in the first century. Thessalonica survives under the shortened name "Salonika."

Thessalonica had a sizable Jewish population, and the ethical monotheism of Judaism attracted many Gentiles who had become disenchanted with Greek paganism. These God-fearers quickly responded to Paul's reasoning in the synagogue when he ministered there on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:10). The Jews became jealous of Paul's success and organized a mob to oppose the Christian missionaries. Not finding Paul and Silas, they dragged Jason, Paul and Silas's host, before the politarchs and accused him of harboring traitors of Rome. The politarchs extracted a pledge guaranteeing the departure of Paul and Silas, who left that night for Berea. After a time, the Thessalonian Jews raised an uproar in Berea so that Paul departed for Athens, leaving orders for Silas and Timothy to join him there (Acts 17:11–16). Because of Luke's account in Acts, some scholars have reasoned that Paul was in Thessalonica for less than a month ("three Sabbaths," Acts 17:2), but other evidence suggests a longer stay: (1) Paul received two separate offerings from Philippi, 100 miles away, while he was in Thessalonica (Phil. 4:15–16). (2) According to 1 Thessalonians 1:9 and 2:14–16, most of the Thessalonian converts were Gentiles who came out of idolatry. This would imply an extensive ministry directed to the Gentiles after Paul's initial work with the Jews and Gentile God-fearers. (3) Paul worked "night and day" (1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:7–9) during his time there. He may have begun to work immediately, but Paul supported himself by tent-making, which took many hours away from his ministry, requiring a longer stay to accomplish the extensive ministry of evangelism and teaching that took place in that city. After Silas and Timothy met Paul in Athens (1 Thess. 3:1–2), he sent Timothy to Thessalonica (Silas also

went back to Macedonia, probably Philippi), and his assistants later rejoined him in Corinth (Acts 18:5; cf. 1 Thess. 1:1 where Silas is called Silvanus). He wrote this epistle in AD 51 there as his response to Timothy's good report.

## CHRIST IN 1 THESSALONIANS

Christ is seen as the believer's hope of salvation both now and at His coming. When He returns, He will deliver (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:4–11), reward (2:19), perfect (3:13), resurrect (4:13–18), and sanctify (5:23) all who trust Him.

## KEYS TO 1 THESSALONIANS

**Key Theme:** *Holiness in Light of Christ's Return*—An unmistakable emphasis upon steadfastness in the Lord (1 Thess. 3:8) and a continuing growth in faith and love in view of the return of Christ (1:3–10; 2:12–20; 3:10–13; 4:1–5:28) run throughout this letter. The theme is not only the returning of Christ, but also the life of the believer in every practical relationship, each aspect of which can be transformed and illuminated by the glorious prospect of His eventual return.

**Key Verses:** *1 Thessalonians 3:12–13; 4:16–18*—“And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints” (3:12–13).

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will

rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (4:16–18).

**Key Chapter:** *1 Thessalonians 4*—Chapter 4 includes the central passage of the epistles on the coming of the Lord when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and those who remain are caught up together with them in the clouds.

## SURVEY OF 1 THESSALONIANS

After Paul's forced separation from the Thessalonians, he grows increasingly concerned about the progress of their faith. His great relief upon hearing Timothy's positive report prompts him to write this warm epistle of commendation, exhortation, and consolation. They are commended for remaining steadfast under afflictions, exhorted to excel still more in their Christian walk, and consoled concerning their loved ones who have died in Christ. The theme of the coming of the Lord recurs throughout this epistle, and 4:13–5:11 is one of the fullest New Testament developments of this crucial truth. The two major sections of 1 Thessalonians are: Paul's personal reflections of the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1–3) and Paul's practical instructions for the Thessalonians (chs. 4–5).

**Personal Reflections (1:1–3:13)**—Paul's typical salutation in the first verse combines the customary Greek (“grace”) and Hebrew (“peace”) greetings of his day and enriches them with Christian content. The opening chapter is a declaration of thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' metamor-

OVERVIEW OF 1 THESSALONIANS								
Outline	PERSONAL REFLECTIONS			PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS				
	PAUL'S COMMENDATION FOR THEIR GROWTH 1:1–10	PAUL'S FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH 2:1–16	TIMOTHY'S STRENGTHENING OF THE CHURCH 2:17–3:13	DIRECTIONS FOR GROWTH 4:1–12	REVELATION CONCERNING THE DEAD IN CHRIST 4:13–18	DESCRIPTION OF THE DAY OF THE LORD 5:1–11	INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOLY LIVING 5:12–22	CONCLUSION 5:23–28
Theme	LOOKING BACK			LOOKING FORWARD				
Approach	DOCTRINE			CONDUCT				
Location	FROM CORINTH							
Time Frame	C. AD 51							

phosis from heathenism to Christian hope. Faith, love, and hope (1:3) properly characterize the new lives of these believers. In 2:1–16, Paul reviews his brief ministry in Thessalonica and defends his conduct and motives, apparently to answer enemies who are trying to impugn his character and message. He sends Timothy to minister to them and is greatly relieved when Timothy reports the stability of their faith and love (2:17–3:10). Paul closes this historical section with a prayer that their faith may continue to deepen (3:11–13).

**Practical Instructions (4:1–5:28)**—The apostle deftly moves into a series of exhortations and instructions by encouraging the Thessalonians to continue progressing. He reminds them of his previous teaching on sexual and social matters (4:1–12) because these Gentile believers lack the moral upbringing in

the Mosaic Law provided in the Jewish community. Now rooted in the Word of God (2:13), the readers must resist the constant pressures of a pagan society.

Paul has taught them about the return of Christ, and they have become distressed over the deaths of some among them. In 4:13–18 Paul comforts them with the assurance that all who die in Christ will be resurrected at His *parousia* (“presence,” “coming,” or “advent”). The apostle continues his discourse on eschatology by describing the coming day of the Lord (5:1–11). In anticipation of this day, believers are to “watch and be sober” as “sons of light” who are destined for salvation, not wrath. Paul requests the readers to deal with integrity toward one another and to continue growing spiritually (5:12–22). The epistle closes with a wish for their sanctification, three requests, and a benediction (5:23–28).

## OUTLINE OF 1 THESSALONIANS

### Part One: Personal Reflections (1:1—3:13)

- I. Paul’s Commendation for Their Growth . . . 1:1–10
- II. Paul’s Founding of the Church . . . . . 2:1–16
- III. Timothy’s Strengthening of the Church . . . . . 2:17–3:13

- A. Satan Hinders Paul . . . . . 2:17–20
- B. Paul Sends Timothy . . . . . 3:1–5
- C. Timothy’s Encouraging Report . . . . . 3:6–10
- D. Paul’s Desire to Visit Them . . . . . 3:11–13

### Part Two: Practical Instructions (4:1—5:28)

- I. Directions for Growth . . . . . 4:1–12
- II. Revelation Concerning the Dead in Christ . . . . . 4:13–18

- III. Description of the Day of the Lord . . . . . 5:1–11
- IV. Instruction for Holy Living . . . . . 5:12–22
- V. Conclusion . . . . . 5:23–28

### CHAPTER 1 PAUL’S COMMENDATION FOR THEIR GROWTH

**P**AUL, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>a</sup> Acts 17:1–9; 1 Pet. 5:12

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, Rom. 1:8

3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, John 6:29; Rom. 16:6

4 knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. Col. 3:12

5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. 2 Cor. 6:6; Heb. 2:3

6 And you became followers of us and of the

Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, Acts 5:41; 13:52; 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:17

7 so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. Rom. 16:19

9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 1 Cor. 12:2; 1 Thess. 2:1

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. Rom. 2:7; 5:9

### CHAPTER 2 PAUL’S FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH

**F**OR you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.

<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*



2 But even<sup>a</sup> after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. Acts 14:5; 16:19–24; 17:1–9

3 For our exhortation *did* not *come* from error or uncleanness, nor *was it* in deceit. 2 Cor. 7:2

4 But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. Prov. 17:3

5 For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God *is* witness. Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 2:17

6 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. 2 Cor. 11:9; 1 Tim. 5:17

7 But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. 1 Cor. 2:3

8 So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. Rom. 1:11; 2 Cor. 12:15

9 For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. Acts 18:3; 20:34, 35; 2 Cor. 12:13

10 You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; 2 Cor. 7:2; 1 Thess. 1:5

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged<sup>a</sup> every one of you, as a father *does* his own children,

12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. 1 Cor. 1:9; Eph. 4:1

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it*

not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. Mark 4:20; Gal. 4:14; 1 Thess. 1:2, 3; 1 Pet. 1:23

14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans, Acts 17:5; Gal. 1:22

15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, Esth. 3:8

16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure* of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost. Gen. 15:16; Matt. 24:6; Luke 11:52

### SATAN HINDERS PAUL

17 But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. 1 Cor. 5:3

18 Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us.

19 For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? Prov. 16:31; Jude 24

20 For you are our glory and joy.

## CHAPTER 3

### PAUL SENDS TIMOTHY

**T**HEREFORE, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone,

<sup>2:2</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *even*. <sup>2:11</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text read *implored*.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

### SHARING OUR FAITH

#### PART 4: HOW TO SHARE

**1:5**—Sharing our faith is a combination of spontaneous conversation about God and premeditated thinking about the gospel. Here are three practical steps to take in witnessing for Christ:

- Regularly talk about God.** Sprinkle your ordinary conversation with occasional references to God's activity in your life. It is much easier to share your faith when your friends know God is an integral part of your life.
- Share your story.** Describe your life before Christ, how you came to trust in Christ, and the changes in your life since that time in five minutes or less. If you came to Christ as a child, consider sharing how God continues to care for you and change you as an adult.
- Know the essence of the gospel.** It is said that the gospel is like an ocean with depths that we will never quite reach but also with shallow parts fit for a child to wade in. It is the latter that we need to focus on when sharing our faith. Work to be able to communicate the essence of the gospel—what a person *must* know to come to faith in Christ, not all that he or she might *want* to know.

When you have opportunity to share Christ with someone, be sensitive to that person's spiritual readiness. If he or she is open, share as much about your story and the gospel as you can. If, however, you sense that the person has heard all he or she wants to, do not force the conversation. Be sure to mention that you would love to talk more another time though.

*For Part 5: WHEN TO SHARE, turn to 2 Timothy 4:2 on page 1344. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

2 and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, Rom. 16:21

3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. Acts 9:16; 14:22; Eph. 3:13

4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. Acts 20:24

5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain. 1 Cor. 7:5; Gal. 2:2

#### TIMOTHY'S ENCOURAGING REPORT

6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you— Acts 18:5; Phil. 1:8

7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith. 2 Cor. 1:4

8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.  
9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God,

10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith? 2 Cor. 13:9

#### PAUL'S DESIRE TO VISIT THEM

11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. Mark 1:3

12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, Phil. 1:9

13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. 2 Thess. 2:17

#### CHAPTER 4 DIRECTIONS FOR GROWTH

**F**INALLY then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; 1 Cor. 15:58; Phil. 1:27

2 for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, Rom. 6:19

5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 1 Cor. 15:34; Eph. 4:17, 18; Col. 3:5

#### COMING

**3:13** (Gr. *parousia*) (1 Thess. 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1; 2 Pet. 1:16) G3952: The Greek word *parousia* literally means “presence.” The word was commonly used in New Testament times to describe the visitation of royalty or of some other important person. Thus, the word signals no ordinary “coming.” The New Testament writers use the word to describe Jesus’ second coming, when He will return to earth in His ultimate, glorious visitation as the King over all.

6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. 2 Thess. 1:8

7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Lev. 11:44

8 Therefore he who rejects *this* does not reject man, but God, who has also given<sup>a</sup> us His Holy Spirit. Luke 10:16; 1 Cor. 2:10

9 But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; Jer. 31:33, 34

10 and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; 1 Thess. 3:12

11 that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, Acts 20:35; 2 Thess. 3:11

12 that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing. Rom. 13:13

#### REVELATION CONCERNING THE DEAD IN CHRIST

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. Lev. 19:28

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 15:13, 20, 23

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 1 Kin. 13:17; 20:35; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Matt. 24:30, 31; 1 Cor. 15:23, 52

17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. John 14:3; 17:24; Acts 1:9; 1 Cor. 15:51–53

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thess. 5:11

**4:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *who also gives*. **4:14**<sup>a</sup> Or *those who through Jesus sleep*

## SANCTIFY

**5:23** (Gr. *hagiazō*) (Matt. 6:9; John 10:36; 17:17; Acts 26:18) G0037: Literally “to make holy, consecrate, set apart.” This state of being holy contrasts with being common or unclean. In the Old Testament, this practice of setting things apart was part of obedience to the law, but in the New Testament, we find all those sanctifying cleansings and rituals were designed to point to *Messiah*. Christians are sanctified by faith in Jesus (Acts 26:18; 1 Cor. 1:2) and by the work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:16). We are also given the opportunity to play a role in the sanctification of others (1 Cor. 7:14). At the same time, we call God’s name holy (Matt. 6:9) and sanctify Him in our hearts through worship (1 Pet. 3:15).

## CHAPTER 5

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

**B**UT concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. Matt. 24:3

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 2 Pet. 3:10

3 For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. Is. 13:6–9; Hos. 13:13

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 1 John 2:8

5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Eph. 5:8

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. Matt. 25:5; 1 Pet. 5:8

7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. Luke 21:34; Acts 2:15

8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. Eph. 6:14

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 9:22

10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 2 Cor. 5:15

11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

## INSTRUCTION FOR HOLY LIVING

12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 1 Cor. 16:18

13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. Rom. 14:1; 15:1; Gal. 5:22; Heb. 12:12

15 See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. Lev. 19:18; Gal. 6:10

16 Rejoice always, 2 Cor. 6:10

17 pray without ceasing, Eph. 6:18

18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

19 Do not quench the Spirit. Eph. 4:30

20 Do not despise prophecies. 1 Cor. 14:1, 31

21 Test all things; hold fast what is good. 1 John 4:1

22 Abstain from every form of evil.

## CONCLUSION

23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 1:8, 9; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 3:13

24 He who calls you *is* faithful, who also will do *it*. 1 Cor. 10:13; Phil. 1:6

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy<sup>a</sup> brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

<sup>a</sup>5:27<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *holy*.

# The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the THESSALONIANS



## THE BOOK OF 2 THESSALONIANS

Since Paul's first letter, the seeds of false doctrine have been sown among the Thessalonians, causing them to waver in their faith. Paul removes these destructive seeds and again plants the seeds of truth. He begins by commending the believers on their faithfulness amid persecution and encouraging them that present suffering will be repaid with future glory. Therefore, amid persecution, expectation can be high.

Paul then deals with the central matter of his letter: a misunderstanding spawned by false teachers regarding the coming day of the Lord. Despite reports to the contrary, that day has not yet come, and Paul recounts the events that must first take place. Laboring for the gospel, rather than lazy resignation, is the proper response.

As the second letter in Paul's Thessalonian correspondence, this was entitled *Pros Thessalonikeis B*, the "Second to the Thessalonians."



## THE AUTHOR OF 2 THESSALONIANS

The external attestation to the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians as a Pauline epistle is even stronger than that for 1 Thessalonians. Internally, the vocabulary, style, and doctrinal content support the claims in 1:1 and 3:17 that it was written by Paul.



## THE TIME OF 2 THESSALONIANS

See "The Time of 1 Thessalonians" for the background to the Thessalonian correspondence. This letter was probably written a few months after 1 Thessalonians, while Paul was still in Corinth with Silas and Timothy (2 Thess. 1:1; cf. Acts 18:5). The bearer of the first epistle may have brought Paul an update on the new developments, prompting him to write this letter. They were still undergoing persecution, and the false teaching about the day of the Lord led some of them to overreact by giving up their jobs. The problem of idleness recorded in 1 Thessalonians 4:11–12 had become more serious

(2 Thess. 3:6–15). By this time, Paul was beginning to see the opposition he would face in his ministry in Corinth (3:2; see Acts 18:5–10).



## CHRIST IN 2 THESSALONIANS

The return of Christ is mentioned more often (318 times) in the New Testament than any other doctrine, and this is certainly the major concept in chapters 1 and 2 of this epistle. The return of the Lord Jesus is a reassuring and joyful hope for believers, but His revelation from heaven holds awesome and terrifying implications for those who have not trusted in Him (2 Thess. 1:6–10; 2:8–12).



## KEYS TO 2 THESSALONIANS

**Key Theme:** *Understanding the Day of the Lord*—The theme of this epistle is an understanding of the day of the Lord and the resulting lifestyle changes. The doctrinal error of chapter 2 has been causing the practical error that Paul seeks to overcome in chapter 3. Some of the believers have abandoned their work and have begun to live off others, apparently assuming that the end is at hand. Paul commands them to follow his example by supporting themselves and instructs the rest of the church to discipline them if they fail to do so.

**Key Verses:** *2 Thessalonians 2:2–3; 3:5–6*—"Not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition" (2:2–3).

"Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ. But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us" (3:5–6).

**Key Chapter:** *2 Thessalonians 2*—The second chapter is written to correct the fallacious teaching that the day of the Lord has already come upon the Thessalonian church. This teaching, coupled with

the afflictions they have been suffering, is causing a great disturbance among the believers who wonder when their “gathering together to Him” (2 Thess. 2:1; 1 Thess. 4:13–18) will take place. Paul makes it clear that certain identifiable events will precede that day and that those events have not yet occurred.

**SURVEY OF  
2 THESSALONIANS**

This epistle is the theological sequel to 1 Thessalonians, which developed the theme of the coming day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:1–11). However, not long after the Thessalonians receive that letter, they fall prey to false teaching or outright deception, thinking the day of the Lord has already begun. Paul writes this brief letter to correct the error and to encourage those believers whose faith is being tested by the difficulties presented by persecution. He also reproves those who have decided to cease working because they believe the coming of Christ is near. Second Thessalonians can be divided into three parts: encouragement in persecution (2 Thess. 1), explanation of the day of the Lord (chs. 2), and exhortation to the church (ch. 3).

**Encouragement in Persecution (1:1–12)**—After his two-verse salutation, Paul gives thanks for the growing faith and love of the Thessalonians and assures them of their ultimate deliverance from those who are persecuting them (1:3–10). They are encouraged to patiently endure their afflictions, knowing that

the Lord Jesus will judge their persecutors when He is “revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire” (1:7–8). Before Paul moves to the next topic, he concludes this section with a prayer for the spiritual welfare of his readers (1:11–12).

**Explanation of the Day of the Lord (2:1–17)**—Because of the severity of their afflictions, the Thessalonians have become susceptible to false teaching (and possibly a fraudulent letter in the name of Paul), claiming that they are already in the day of the Lord (2:1–2). This was particularly disturbing because Paul’s previous letter had given them the comforting hope that they were not destined for the wrath of that day (1 Thess. 5:9). Paul, therefore, assures them that the day of the Lord is yet in the future and will not arrive unannounced (2 Thess. 2:3–12). Paul then concludes with a word of encouragement and a benedictory prayer of comfort before moving to his next topic.

**Exhortation to the Church (3:1–18)**—Paul requests the Thessalonian church to pray on his behalf and to wait patiently for the Lord (3:1–5). Having thus commended, corrected, and comforted his readers, the tactful apostle closes his letter with a sharp word of command to those who have been using the truth of Christ’s return as an excuse for disorderly conduct (3:6–15; cf. 1 Thess. 4:11–12). The doctrine of the Lord’s return requires a balance between waiting and working. It is a perspective that should encourage holiness, not idleness. This final section, like the first two, closes on a benedictory note (2 Thess. 3:16–18).

OVERVIEW OF 2 THESSALONIANS						
Outline	ENCOURAGEMENT IN PERSECUTION		EXPLANATION OF THE DAY OF THE LORD		EXHORTATION TO THE CHURCH	
	THANKSGIVING FOR THEIR GROWTH 1:1–10	PRAYER FOR GOD’S BLESSING 1:11–12	THE EVENTS PRECEDING THE DAY OF THE LORD 2:1–12	THE COMFORT OF THE BELIEVER ON THE DAY OF THE LORD 2:13–17	WAIT PATIENTLY FOR CHRIST 3:1–5	WITHDRAW FROM THE DISORDERLY 3:6–15
Theme	DISCOURAGED BELIEVERS		DISTURBED BELIEVERS		DISOBEDIENT BELIEVERS	
Approach	DOCTRINE				CONDUCT	
Location	FROM CORINTH					
Time Frame	C. AD 51					

## OUTLINE OF 2 THESSALONIANS

### Part One: Encouragement in Persecution (1:1–12)

- I. Thanksgiving for Their Growth . . . . . 1:1–4      III. Prayer for God's Blessing . . . . . 1:11–12  
 II. Encouragement in Their Persecution . . . . . 1:5–10

### Part Two: Explanation of the Day of the Lord (2:1–17)

- I. The Events Preceding the Day  
 of the Lord . . . . . 2:1–12  
 A. First a Falling Away . . . . . 2:1–3  
 B. The Man of Sin Is Revealed . . . . . 2:4–5  
 C. The Restrainer Is Taken Out of the Way . . . . . 2:6–7  
 D. The Second Coming of Christ . . . . . 2:8–12  
 II. The Comfort of the Believer on the Day  
 of the Lord . . . . . 2:13–17

### Part Three: Exhortation to the Church (3:1–18)

- I. Wait Patiently for Christ . . . . . 3:1–5      III. Conclusion . . . . . 3:16–18  
 II. Withdraw from the Disorderly . . . . . 3:6–15

## CHAPTER 1 THANKSGIVING FOR THEIR GROWTH

**P**AUL, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 1:3

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,

4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, 2 Cor. 7:4; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2:14

## ENCOURAGEMENT IN THEIR PERSECUTION

5 *which is* manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; Phil. 1:28; 1 Thess. 2:14

6 since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, Rev. 6:10

7 and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, Jude 14; Rev. 14:13

8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, Deut. 33:2; Phil. 3:19

10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those

who believe,<sup>a</sup> because our testimony among you was believed. Matt. 25:31; John 17:10

## PRAYER FOR GOD'S BLESSING

11 Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power, Col. 1:12; 1 Thess. 1:3

12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Col. 3:17

## CHAPTER 2 THE EVENTS PRECEDING THE DAY OF THE LORD

**N**OW, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, Matt. 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:15–17

2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ<sup>a</sup> had come. Matt. 24:4

3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin<sup>a</sup> is revealed, the son of perdition, Dan. 7:25; 8:25; 11:36; John 17:12; 1 Tim. 4:1

4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God<sup>a</sup> in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Is. 14:13, 14; 1 Cor. 8:5

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

<sup>1:10</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *have believed*. <sup>2:2</sup> NU-Text reads *the Lord*. <sup>2:3</sup> NU-Text reads *lawlessness*. <sup>2:4</sup> NU-Text omits *as God*.

## FAITHFUL

**3:3** (Gr. *pistos*) (1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thess. 5:24; 1 Tim. 1:15; Heb. 11:11) **G4103**: This word originally comes from *peithō*, “to convince” (see 2 Thess. 3:4). It is used in an active sense to mean “one who believes in God or Christ” and in the passive sense to mean “one who is dependable.” It is used to describe those who are reliable and honest in business dealings (Matt. 24:45; Luke 16:11) or in relationships (1 Cor. 4:17). When used in the phrase “this is a faithful saying,” this word means “reliable or trustworthy” (2 Tim. 2:11; Rev. 21:5). Because God is utterly faithful to us, we can have confidence in the complete trustworthiness of all His promises.

7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He<sup>a</sup> who now restrains *will do so* until He<sup>b</sup> is taken out of the way. 1 John 2:18

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. Is. 11:4; Dan. 7:10; Heb. 10:27

9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, Deut. 13:1; John 8:41

10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 1 Cor. 16:22; 2 Cor. 2:15

11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 1 Tim. 4:1

12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Rom. 1:32

### THE COMFORT OF THE BELIEVER ON THE DAY OF THE LORD

**13** But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, Eph. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:2

14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. 1 Cor. 11:2; 16:13

16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, 1 Pet. 1:3; Rev. 1:5

17 comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work. 1 Cor. 1:8

## CHAPTER 3

## WAIT PATIENTLY FOR CHRIST

**F**INALLY, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you, Eph. 6:19

2 and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. Rom. 15:31

3 But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard *you* from the evil one. John 17:15; 1 Cor. 1:9

4 And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you. 2 Cor. 7:16

5 Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

## WITHDRAW FROM THE DISORDERLY

**6** But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he<sup>a</sup> received from us. Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1; 1 Thess. 4:11

7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you;

8 nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, 1 Thess. 2:9

9 not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. 1 Cor. 9:4, 6–14

10 For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. 1 Pet. 4:15

12 Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. Eph. 4:28

13 But *as for* you, brethren, do not grow weary *in* doing good. Gal. 6:9

14 And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Matt. 18:17

15 Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother. Lev. 19:17; Titus 3:10

## CONCLUSION

**16** Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all. Rom. 15:33

17 The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write. 1 Cor. 16:21

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen. Rom. 16:20, 24

**2:7<sup>a</sup>** Or *he* **b** Or *he* **3:6<sup>a</sup>** NU-Text and M-Text read *they*.

# The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to TIMOTHY



## THE BOOK OF 1 TIMOTHY

Paul, the aged and experienced apostle, writes to the young pastor Timothy who is facing a heavy burden of responsibility in the church at Ephesus. The task is challenging: false doctrine must be erased, public worship safeguarded, and mature leadership developed. In addition to the conduct of the church, Paul talks pointedly about the conduct of the minister. Timothy must be on his guard lest his youthfulness become a liability, rather than an asset, to the gospel. He must be careful to avoid false teachers and greedy motives, pursuing instead righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and the gentleness that befits a man of God.

The Greek title for this letter is *Pros Timotheon A*, the “First to Timothy.” The name “Timothy” means “Honoring God” or “Honored by God” and probably was given to him by his mother Eunice.



## THE AUTHOR OF 1 TIMOTHY

Since the early nineteenth century, the Pastoral Epistles have been attacked more than any other Pauline epistles on the issue of authenticity. The similarity of these epistles requires that they be treated as a unit in terms of authorship because they stand or fall together.

The external evidence solidly supports the conservative position that Paul wrote the letters to Timothy and Titus. Postapostolic church fathers, such as Polycarp and Clement of Rome, allude to them as Paul’s writing. In addition, these epistles are identified as Pauline by Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and the Muratorian Canon. Only Romans and 1 Corinthians have better attestation among the Pauline Epistles.

Suggestions of an author other than Paul are supported entirely based on internal evidence. Even though these letters claim to be written by Paul (1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:1), critics assert that they are “pious forgeries” that appeared in the second century. There are several problems with this: (1) Pseudonymous writing was unacceptable to Paul (see 2 Thess. 2:2; 3:17) and to the early church, which was very sensitive to the problem of forgeries. (2) The adjective pious should deceive no

one: a forgery was as deliberately deceptive then as it is now. (3) The many personal facts and names that appear in the Pastoral Epistles would have been avoided by a forger who would have taken refuge in vagueness. Nor would a forger have used expressions like those in 1:13, 15 if he had been an admirer of Paul. The doctrinal teaching and autobiographical details (cf. 1 Tim. 1:12–17; 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:8–12; 4:9–22; Titus 1:5; 3:12–13) fit very well with “Paul, the aged” (Philem. v. 9). (4) What purpose or advantage would these epistles serve as forgeries written years later? There are too many personal elements, and the doctrinal refutations do not refer to second-century Gnosticism. (5) The style and content of the postapostolic writings or apocryphal books differ greatly with these three letters.



## THE TIME OF 1 TIMOTHY

Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles requires Paul’s release from his Roman imprisonment (Acts 28), the continuation of his missionary endeavors, and his imprisonment for a second time in Rome. Unfortunately, the order of events can only be reconstructed from hints because there is no concurrent history paralleling Acts to chronicle the last years of the apostle. The following reconstruction, therefore, is only tentative:

As he anticipated in Philippians (Phil. 1:19, 25–26; 2:24), Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment. It is possible that his Jewish accusers decided not to appear at his trial before Caesar. In fulfillment of his promise to the Philippians (Phil. 2:19–23), he sends Timothy to Philippi to relate the good news. Paul himself went to Ephesus (despite his earlier expectations in Acts 20:38) and to other Asian churches like Colosse (see Philem. v. 22). When Timothy rejoined him in Ephesus, Paul instructed his assistant to “remain in Ephesus” (1 Tim. 1:3) while he journeyed to Macedonia. When he saw that he might be delayed in Macedonia, Paul wrote 1 Timothy, perhaps from Philippi (3:14–15). After he saw Timothy in Ephesus, the apostle journeyed on to the island of Crete where, after a period of ministry, he left Titus to continue the work (Titus 1:5). In Corinth, Paul decided to write a letter to Titus because Zenas and Apollos were making a journey that would take them by way of Crete (Titus 3:13).



He instructed Titus to join him in Nicopolis after the arrival of his replacement in Crete, Artemas or Tychicus (Titus 3:12).

If he went to Spain as he had planned (Rom. 15:24, 28), Paul probably departed with Titus for that western province after his winter in Nicopolis. Early church tradition holds that Paul did go to Spain. Before the end of the first century, Clement of Rome said that Paul “reached the limits of the West” (1 Clement 5:7). Because he was writing from Rome, he evidently had Spain in mind. Paul may have been in Spain from AD 64 to 66. He returned to Greece and Asia—to Corinth, Miletus, and Troas (2 Tim. 4:13, 20)—and may have been arrested in Troas where he left his valuable books and parchments (2 Tim. 4:13, 15).

Now that Christianity had become an illegal religion in the empire (the burning of Rome took place in AD 64), Paul’s enemies were successfully able to accuse him. He was imprisoned in AD 67 and wrote 2 Timothy from his Roman cell after his first defense before the Imperial Court (2 Tim. 1:8, 17; 2:9; 4:16–17). He was delivered from condemnation, but he held no hope of release and expected to be executed (2 Tim. 4:6–8, 18). He urged Timothy to come before that happened (2 Tim. 4:9, 21); and, according to tradition, the apostle was beheaded west of Rome on the Ostian Way.

Paul wrote 1 Timothy from Macedonia in AD 62 or 63 while Timothy was serving as his representative in Ephesus and perhaps in other churches in the province of Asia. Timothy was to appoint elders, combat false doctrine, and supervise church life as an apostolic representative.

## ✝ CHRIST IN 1 TIMOTHY

Christ is the “one Mediator between God and men” (1 Tim. 2:5), and “God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory” (3:16). He is the source of spiritual strength, faith, and love (1:12, 14). He “came into the world to save sinners” (1:15) and “gave Himself a ransom for all” (2:6) as “the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe” (4:10).



## KEYS TO 1 TIMOTHY

**Key Theme:** *Leadership Manual for Church Organization*—The theme of this epistle is Timothy’s organization and oversight of the Asian churches as a faithful minister of God. Paul writes this letter as a reference manual for leadership so that Timothy will have effective guidance for his work during Paul’s absence in Macedonia (1 Tim. 3:14–15). Paul wants to encourage and exhort his

younger assistant to become an example to others, exercise his spiritual gifts, and “fight the good fight of faith” (6:12; cf. 1:18; 4:12–16; 6:20). Timothy’s personal and public life must be above reproach; and he must be ready to deal with matters of false teaching, organization, discipline, proclamation of the Scriptures, poverty and wealth, and the roles of various groups. Negatively, he is to refute error (1:7–11; 6:3–5); positively, he is to teach the truth (4:13–16; 6:2, 17–18).

**Key Verses:** *1 Timothy 3:15–16; 6:11–12*—“But if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory” (3:15–16).

“But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (6:11–12).

**Key Chapter:** *1 Timothy 3*—Listed in chapter 3 are the qualifications for the leaders of God’s church, elders and deacons. Notably absent are qualities of worldly success or position. Instead, Paul enumerates character qualities demonstrating that true leadership emanates from our walk with God rather than from achievements or vocational success.



## SURVEY OF 1 TIMOTHY

Paul’s last three recorded letters, written near the end of his full and fruitful life, were addressed to his authorized representatives Timothy and Titus. These were the only letters Paul wrote exclusively to individuals (Philemon was addressed primarily to its namesake, but also to others), and they were designed to exhort and encourage Timothy and Titus in their ministry of solidifying the churches in Ephesus and Crete. In the eighteenth century, these epistles came to be known as the Pastoral Epistles even though they do not use any terms such as shepherd, pastor, flock, or sheep. Still, this title is appropriate for 1 Timothy and Titus because they focus on the oversight of church life. It is less appropriate in the case of 2 Timothy, which is a more personal than church-oriented letter. The Pastoral Epistles abound with principles for leadership and righteous living.

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul seeks to guide his younger and less experienced assistant in his weighty responsibility as the overseer of the work at Ephesus and other Asian cities. He writes, in

effect, a challenge to Timothy to fulfill the task before him: combating false teaching with sound doctrine, developing qualified leadership, teaching God’s Word, and encouraging Christian conduct. Because of the personal and conversational character of this letter, it is loosely structured around five clear charges that end each section (1 Tim. 1:18–20; 3:14–16; 4:11–20; 5:21–25; 6:20–21): charge concerning doctrine (ch. 1); charge concerning public worship (chs. 2–3); charge concerning false teachers (ch. 4); charge concerning church discipline (ch. 5); and charge concerning pastoral motives (ch. 6).

**Charge Concerning Doctrine (1:1–20)**—After his greetings (1:1–2), Paul warns Timothy about the growing problem of false doctrines, particularly as they relate to the misuse of the Mosaic Law (1:3–11). The aging apostle then recounts his radical conversion to Christ and subsequent calling to the ministry (1:12–17). Timothy, too, has received a divine calling, and Paul charges him to fulfill it without wavering in doctrine or conduct (1:18–20).

**Charge Concerning Public Worship (2:1–3:16)**—Turning his attention to the church at large, Paul addresses the issues of church worship and leadership. Efficacious public prayer should be a part of worship, and Paul associates this with the role of men in the church (2:1–8). He then turns to the role of women (2:9–15), wherein he emphasizes the importance of the inner quality of godliness. In

3:1–7, Paul lists several qualifications for overseers or bishops. The word for “overseer” (*episkopos*) is used synonymously with the word for “elder” (*presbuteros*) in the New Testament, because both originally referred to the same office (see Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5, 7). The qualifications for the office of deacon (*diakonos*, “servant”) are listed in 3:8–13.

**Charge Concerning False Teachers (4:1–16)**—Timothy obviously had difficulties with some of the older men (1 Tim. 5:1) who had left the faith. Paul carefully advises on the issues of marriage, food, and exercise. The closing charge exhorts Timothy not to neglect the spiritual gift given to him.

**Charge Concerning Church Discipline (5:1–25)**—One of the most difficult pastoral duties for the young minister is to lead in the exercise of church discipline. Commencing with the general advice of treating all members of the church as family (5:1–2), Paul concentrates on the two special areas of widows and elders, focusing on Timothy’s responsibility and providing practical instruction.

**Charge Concerning Pastoral Duties (6:1–21)**—In addition, the insidious doctrine was being taught that godliness will eventually result in material blessing. Paul, in no uncertain terms, states “from such withdraw yourself” (6:5). The book closes with an extended charge (6:11–21), which is supplemented by an additional charge that Timothy is to give to the wealthy of this age (6:17–19).

OVERVIEW OF 1 TIMOTHY					
Outline	CHARGE CONCERNING DOCTRINE	CHARGE CONCERNING PUBLIC WORSHIP	CHARGE CONCERNING FALSE TEACHERS	CHARGE CONCERNING CHURCH DISCIPLINE	CHARGE CONCERNING PASTORAL MOTIVES
	1:1–20	2:1–3:16	4:1–16	5:1–25	6:1–21
Theme	WARNING	WORSHIP	WISDOM	WIDOWS	WEALTH
Approach	DOCTRINE			CONDUCT	
Location	FROM MACEDONIA				
Time Frame	C. AD 62–63				

## OUTLINE OF 1 TIMOTHY

<b>Part One: Charge Concerning Doctrine (1:1–20)</b>	
I. Paul’s Past Charge to Timothy . . . . . 1:1–11	III. First Charge: “Wage the Good Warfare” . . . . . 1:18–20
II. Christ’s Past Charge to Paul . . . . . 1:12–17	
<b>Part Two: Charge Concerning Public Worship (2:1—3:16)</b>	
I. Prayer in Public Worship . . . . . 2:1–8	IV. Qualifications of Deacons . . . . . 3:8–13
II. Women in Public Worship . . . . . 2:9–15	V. Second Charge: “Conduct Yourself in the House of God” . . . . . 3:14–16
III. Qualifications of Bishops . . . . . 3:1–7	
<b>Part Three: Charge Concerning False Teachers (4:1–16)</b>	
I. Description of False Teachers . . . . . 4:1–5	III. Third Charge: “Do Not Neglect the Gift” . . . . . 4:11–16
II. Instruction for the True Teacher . . . . . 4:6–10	
<b>Part Four: Charge Concerning Church Discipline (5:1–25)</b>	
I. How to Treat All People . . . . . 5:1–2	IV. Fourth Charge: “Observe These Things Without Prejudice” . . . . . 5:21–25
II. How to Treat Widows . . . . . 5:3–16	
III. How to Treat Elders . . . . . 5:17–20	
<b>Part Five: Charge Concerning Pastoral Motives (6:1–21)</b>	
I. Exhortation to Servants . . . . . 6:1–2	III. Exhortation to the Rich . . . . . 6:17–19
II. Exhortation to Godliness with Contentment . . . . . 6:3–16	IV. Fifth Charge: “Guard What Was Committed” . . . . . 6:20–21

### CHAPTER 1 PAUL’S PAST CHARGE TO TIMOTHY

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith:

Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. Gal. 1:3; Titus 1:4

3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Acts 20:1, 3; Gal. 1:6, 7

4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. Titus 1:14

5 Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith, Rom. 13:8–10; Eph. 6:24

6 from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, 1 Tim. 6:4, 20

7 desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.

8 But we know that the law *is* good if one uses it lawfully, Rom. 7:12, 16

9 knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for *the* lawless and insubordinate, for *the* ungodly and for sinners, for *the* unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, 11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. 1 Tim. 6:15

### CHRIST’S PAST CHARGE TO PAUL

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, 1 Cor. 7:25; 15:10; Col. 1:25

13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. Acts 8:3

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Rom. 5:20; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:22

15 This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Matt. 1:21; 9:13+

16 However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all

longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise,<sup>a</sup> *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1 Chr. 29:11; Ps. 10:16; Heb. 11:27

#### FINAL CHARGE: “WAGE THE GOOD WARFARE”

18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,

19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,

20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. Acts 13:45; 2 Tim. 2:17, 18; 4:14

## CHAPTER 2

### PRAYER IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

**T**HEREFORE I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks be made for all men,

2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. Ezra 6:10; Rom. 13:1

3 For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, Rom. 12:2; 2 Tim. 1:9

4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Ezek. 18:23, 32; John 17:3

5 For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus, Gal. 3:20; Heb. 9:15

6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, Mark 10:45

7 for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ<sup>a</sup> *and* not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. Gal. 1:15, 16; Eph. 3:7, 8

8 I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; Ps. 134:2; Luke 23:34

### WOMEN IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

9 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 1 Pet. 3:3

10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. 1 Pet. 3:4

11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.

12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 1 Cor. 14:34

13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

15 Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

## INTERCESSION

2:1 (Gr. *enteuxis*) (1 Tim. 4:5) G1783: Intercession is the act of petitioning God or praying on behalf of another person or group. The sinful nature of this world separates human beings from God. It has always been necessary, therefore, for righteous individuals to go before God to seek reconciliation between Him and His fallen creation. The sacrifices and prayers of Old Testament priests (Ex. 29:42; 30:7) were acts of intercession that point forward to the work of Jesus. Jesus is, of course, the greatest intercessor. He prayed on behalf of Peter (Luke 22:32) and His disciples (John 17). In the most selfless intercession of all, Jesus petitioned God on behalf of those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). In heaven He intercedes for His church (Heb. 7:25). Finally, because of their unique relationship to God through Jesus, Christians are urged to intercede for all people (1 Tim. 2:1).

## RANSOM

2:6 (Gr. *antilutron*) G0487: Used only here, the word *ransom* in Greek is *antilutron* made up of *anti* (signifying substitution) and *lutron* (the word used for the ransom of a slave or prisoner). The *antilutron* is a payment given instead of a slave or prisoner—that is, in substitution for him. The person holding the slave accepts the payment as a substitute. According to Galatians 3:13, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. The law held us captive in its condemnation, and only Christ could pay the price to release us from this bondage.

## CHAPTER 3

### QUALIFICATIONS OF BISHOPS

**T**HIS *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop,<sup>a</sup> he desires a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,<sup>a</sup> but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;

4 one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence

5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);

6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 2 Tim. 2:26

### QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

8 Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, Ezek. 44:21

1:17<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *to the only God*. 2:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *in Christ*. 3:1<sup>a</sup> Literally *overseer* 3:3<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *not greedy for money*.

9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

10 But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless.

11 Likewise, *their wives must be* reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.

12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well.

13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Matt. 25:21

**SECOND CHARGE: “CONDUCT YOURSELF IN THE HOUSE OF GOD”**

14 These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;

15 but if I am delayed, *I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

God<sup>a</sup> was manifested in the flesh,  
Justified in the Spirit,  
Seen by angels,  
Preached among the Gentiles,  
Believed on in the world,  
Received up in glory. Rom. 10:18; Col. 1:6, 23

**CHAPTER 4**

**DESCRIPTION OF FALSE TEACHERS**

**N**ow the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, Rev. 16:14

2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, Matt. 7:15; Eph. 4:19

3 forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

**INSTRUCTION FOR THE TRUE TEACHER**

6 If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. 2 Tim. 3:14

7 But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. 2 Tim. 2:16; Heb. 5:14

8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Ps. 37:9

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

10 For to this *end* we both labor and suffer reproach,<sup>a</sup> because we trust in the living God, who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Ps. 36:6

**THIRD CHARGE: “DO NOT NEGLECT THE GIFT”**

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit,<sup>a</sup> in faith, in purity. 1 Pet. 5:3

13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

**3:16**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Who*. **4:10**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *we labor and strive*.  
**4:12**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *in spirit*.

**RECOGNIZING GOD’S INSTITUTIONS**

**THE CHURCH**

**PART 4: THE OFFICES OF THE CHURCH**

**3:1–13**—The New Testament uses four terms to describe the leadership of the church: (1) “elder” (Gr., *presbuteros*), which emphasizes the authority to teach or rule in the church; (2) “bishop” (Gr., *episkopos*—overseer), which emphasizes overseeing the spiritual well-being of those in a local church; (3) “pastor” (Gr., *poimen*—shepherd), which emphasizes shepherding, or caring for, the flock. No shepherd has ever given birth to his sheep. It is the responsibility of those in leadership to do for the sheep what they cannot do for themselves and to make sure that they are in good spiritual condition so that they can do what comes naturally, that is, beget other sheep; (4) “deacon” (Gr., *diakonos*—minister), which emphasizes the servant-leader attitude to be employed in a local church. They are not to “lord it over” the flock but are to be ministers, or servants, of those whom the Lord has put under their care.

The function of the office of elder is twofold: (1) teaching and (2) ruling (1 Tim. 5:17). An elder is to be able to teach what the Word of God teaches and to give direction as to how that is to be accomplished in and through the local church.

The qualifications for the office of deacon are essentially the same as those for the elder except that the deacon does not need to be “able to teach.” Deacons are to be spiritually mature and in tune with their elders as they seek to assist them in conducting the ministries and objectives of that local church.

*For Part 5: THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CHURCH TO CHRIST, turn to Ephesians 5:25–29 on page 1305. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Acts 6:6; 2 Tim. 1:6

15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

## CHAPTER 5

### HOW TO TREAT ALL PEOPLE

**D**O not rebuke an older man, but exhort *him* as a father, younger men as brothers,

2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

### HOW TO TREAT WIDOWS

3 Honor widows who are really widows.

4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and<sup>a</sup> acceptable before God. Gen. 45:10

5 Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. Acts 26:7

6 But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.

7 And these things command, that they may be blameless.

8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Is. 58:7; Matt. 18:17; 2 Tim. 3:5

9 Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, *and not unless* she has been the wife of one man,

10 well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.

11 But refuse *the* younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry,

12 having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith.

13 And besides they learn *to be* idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.

14 Therefore I desire that *the* younger *widows* marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

15 For some have already turned aside after Satan.

16 If any believing man or<sup>a</sup> woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.

### HOW TO TREAT ELDERS

17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,"<sup>a</sup> and, "**The laborer is worthy of his wages.**"<sup>b</sup> Deut. 25:4; Luke 10:7

19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Deut. 17:6; 19:15

20 Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.

### FOURTH CHARGE: "OBSERVE THESE THINGS WITHOUT PREJUDICE"

21 I charge *you* before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. Deut. 1:17

22 Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure. Eph. 5:6,7

23 No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.

24 Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding *them* to judgment, but those of some *men* follow later. Gal. 5:19-21

25 Likewise, the good works of *some* are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.

## CHAPTER 6

### EXHORTATION TO SERVANTS

**L**ET as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and *His* doctrine may not be blasphemed. Eph. 6:5

2 And those who have believing masters, let them not despise *them* because they are brethren, but rather serve *them* because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things.

### EXHORTATION TO GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT

3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 2 Tim. 1:13; Titus 1:1

4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions,

5 useless wranglings<sup>a</sup> of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a *means* of gain. From such withdraw yourself.<sup>b</sup> 2 Tim. 3:5

5:4<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *good and*. 5:16<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *man* or. 5:18<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 25:4. <sup>b</sup> Luke 10:7. 6:5<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *constant friction*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits this sentence.

6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain. Heb. 13:5

7 For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is certain*<sup>a</sup> we can carry nothing out. Job 1:21

8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. Prov. 30:8, 9

9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

13 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and *before* Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, John 18:36, 37

14 that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

15 which He will manifest in His own time, *He*

*who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom *be* honor and everlasting power. Amen. Dan. 2:22; John 6:46

#### EXHORTATION TO THE RICH

17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Ecc. 5:18, 19; Jer. 9:23; 48:7

18 *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,

19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. Matt. 6:20, 21; 19:21

#### FIFTH CHARGE: "GUARD WHAT WAS COMMITTED"

20 O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane *and* idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— 2 Tim. 1:12, 14; Titus 1:14

21 by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

6:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *and it is certain*.

## The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to

# TIMOTHY



### THE BOOK OF 2 TIMOTHY

Prison is the last place from which to expect a letter of encouragement, but that is where Paul's second letter to Timothy originates. He begins by assuring Timothy of his continuing love and prayers, and he reminds him of his spiritual heritage and responsibilities. Only the one who perseveres, whether as a soldier, athlete, farmer, or minister of Jesus Christ, will reap the reward. Paul warns Timothy that his teaching will come under attack as people desert the truth for ear-"itching" words (2 Tim. 4:3). But Timothy has Paul's example to guide him and God's Word to fortify him as he faces growing opposition and glowing opportunities in the last days.

Paul's last epistle received the title *Pros Timotheon B*, the "Second to Timothy." When Paul's epistles were collected, the *B* was probably added to distinguish this letter from the first letter he wrote to Timothy.



### THE AUTHOR OF 2 TIMOTHY

Since the Pastoral Epistles must be treated as a unit on the matter of authorship, see "The Author of 1 Timothy" for comments on the origin of 2 Timothy.

Timothy's name is found more often in the salutations of the Pauline epistles than any other (2 Cor.; Phil.; Col.; 1 and 2 Thess.; 1 and 2 Tim.; Philem.). His father was a Greek (Acts 16:1), but his Jewish mother Eunice and grandmother Lois reared him in the knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). Timothy evidently became a convert of Paul (1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2) when the apostle was in Lystra on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:8–20). When he visited Lystra on his second missionary journey, Paul decided to take Timothy along with him and circumcised him because of the Jews (Acts 16:1–3). Timothy was ordained to the ministry (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6) and served as a devoted companion and assistant to Paul in Troas, Berea, Thessalonica, and Corinth (Acts 16–18; 1 Thess. 3:1–2). During the third missionary journey, Timothy labored with Paul and ministered for him as his representative in Ephesus, Macedonia, and Corinth. He was with Paul during his first Roman imprisonment

and evidently went to Philippi (2 Tim. 2:19–23) after Paul's release. Paul left him in Ephesus to supervise the work there (1 Tim. 1:3) and years later summoned him to Rome (4:9, 21). According to Hebrews 13:23, Timothy was imprisoned and released, but the passage does not say where. Timothy was sickly (1 Tim. 5:23), timid (2 Tim. 1:7), and youthful (1 Tim. 4:12) but he was also a gifted teacher who was trustworthy and diligent.



### THE TIME OF 2 TIMOTHY

For a tentative reconstruction of the events following Paul's first Roman imprisonment, see "The Time of 1 Timothy." The cruel and unbalanced Nero, emperor of Rome from AD 54 to 68, was responsible for the beginning of the Roman persecution of Christians. Half of Rome was destroyed in July AD 64 by a fire, and mounting suspicion that Nero was responsible for the blaze caused him to use the unpopular Christians as his scapegoat. Christianity thus became a unlawful, and persecution of those who professed Christ became severe. By the time of Paul's return from Spain to Asia in AD 66, his enemies were able to use the official Roman position against Christianity to their advantage. Fearing for their own lives, the Asian believers failed to support Paul after his arrest (2 Tim. 1:15) and no one supported him at his first defense before the Imperial Court (4:16). Abandoned by almost everyone (4:10–11), the apostle found himself in circumstances very different from those of his first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:16–31). At that time, he was merely under house arrest, people could freely visit him, and he had the hope of release. Now he was in a cold Roman cell (2 Tim. 4:13), regarded "as an evildoer" (2:9), and without hope of acquittal despite the success of his initial defense (4:6–8, 17–18). Under these conditions, Paul wrote this epistle in the fall of AD 67, hoping that Timothy would be able to visit him before the approaching winter (4:21). Timothy evidently was in Ephesus at the time of this letter (see 1:18; 4:19), and on his way to Rome he would go through Troas (4:13) and Macedonia. Priscilla and Aquila (4:19) probably returned from Rome (Rom. 16:3) to Ephesus after the burning of Rome and the beginning of the persecution. Tychicus may have been the bearer of this letter (2 Tim. 4:12).



## CHRIST IN 2 TIMOTHY

Christ Jesus appeared on earth, “abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10). He rose from the dead (2:8) and provides salvation and “eternal glory” (2:10); for if believers “died with Him,” they will “also live with Him” (2:11). All who love His appearing will receive “the crown of righteousness” (4:8) and “reign with Him” (2:12).



### KEYS TO 2 TIMOTHY

**Key Theme: *Endurance in the Pastoral Ministry***—In this letter, Paul commissions Timothy to faithfully endure and carry on the work that the condemned apostle must now relinquish. This set of instructions exhorts Timothy to use the Word of God constantly to overcome growing obstacles to the spread of the gospel. Timothy is in great need of encouragement because of the hardships he is facing, and Paul uses this letter to instruct him about handling persecution from the secular authorities and dissension and deception from within the church. As a spiritual father, Paul urges his young helper to overcome his natural timidity and boldly proclaim the gospel, even if it means that he will suffer for doing so.

**Key Verses: 2 Timothy 2:3–4; 3:14–17**—“You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier” (2:3–4).

“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from

whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (3:14–17).

**Key Chapter: 2 Timothy 2**—The second chapter of 2 Timothy ought to be required daily reading for every pastor and full-time Christian worker. Paul lists the keys to an enduring successful ministry: a reproducing ministry (vv. 1–2), an enduring ministry (vv. 3–13), a studying ministry (vv. 14–18), and a holy ministry (vv. 19–26).



### SURVEY OF 2 TIMOTHY

Paul knows as he writes this final epistle that his days on earth are quickly drawing to a close. About to relinquish his heavy burdens, the godly apostle seeks to challenge and strengthen his somewhat timid but faithful associate, Timothy, in his difficult ministry in Ephesus. Despite Paul’s bleak circumstances, this is a letter of encouragement that urges Timothy on to steadfastness in the fulfillment of his divinely appointed task. Paul calls Timothy a “good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2 Tim. 2:3), and it is clear from the sharp imperatives that this letter is really a combat manual for use in the spiritual warfare: “stir up” (1:6); “do not be ashamed” (1:8, 12–13); “share with me in the sufferings” (1:8); “Hold fast the . . . sound words” (1:13); “That good thing . . . keep” (1:14); “be strong” (2:1);

## OVERVIEW OF 2 TIMOTHY

Outline	PERSEVERE IN PRESENT TESTINGS			ENDURE IN FUTURE TESTINGS		
	THANKSGIVING FOR TIMOTHY'S FAITH 1:1–5	REMINDER OF TIMOTHY'S RESPONSIBILITY 1:6–18	CHARACTERISTICS OF A FAITHFUL MINISTER 2:1–26	APPROACHING DAY OF APOSTASY 3:1–17	CHARGE TO PREACH THE WORD 4:1–5	APPROACHING DEATH OF PAUL 4:6–22
Theme	POWER OF THE GOSPEL		PERSEVERANCE OF THE GOSPEL	PROTECTOR OF THE GOSPEL	PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL	
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT					
Location	ROMAN PRISON					
Time Frame	C. AD 67					

“endure hardship” (2:3); “Be diligent to present yourself approved” (2:15); “Flee . . . pursue” (2:22); “avoid” (2:23); “You must beware” (4:15). Central to everything in 2 Timothy is the sure foundation of the Word of God. Paul focuses on the need to persevere in present testing (chs. 1–2), and to endure in future testing (chs. 3–4).

**Persevere in Present Testings (1:1–2:26)**—After his salutation to his “beloved son” (1:2), Paul expresses his thanksgiving for Timothy’s “genuine faith” (1:5). He then encourages Timothy to stand firm in the power of the gospel and to overcome any fear in the face of opposition. At personal risk, Onesiphorus boldly sought out Paul in Rome, but most of the other Christians failed to stand behind Paul at the time of his arrest. Timothy must remain faithful and not fear possible persecution. Paul then exhorts his spiritual son to reproduce in the lives of others what he has received in Christ (four generations are mentioned in 2:2). He is responsible to work hard and discipline himself like a teacher, a soldier, a farmer, a workman, a vessel, and a servant, following the example of Paul’s perseverance (2:1–13). In his dealings with others,

Timothy must not become entangled in false speculation, foolish quarrels, or youthful lusts, which would hamper his effectiveness. As he pursues “righteousness, faith, love, peace” (2:22), he must know how to overcome error graciously.

**Endure in Future Testings (3:1–4:22)**—Paul anticipates a time of growing apostasy and wickedness when men and women will be increasingly susceptible to empty religiosity and false teaching (3:1–9). Arrogance and godlessness will breed further deception and persecution, but Timothy must not waver in using the Scripture to combat doctrinal error and moral evil (3:10–17). The Scriptures are inspired (“God-breathed”) and with them Timothy is equipped to carry out the ministry to which he was called. Paul’s final exhortation to Timothy (4:1–5) is a classic summary of the task of the man of God to proclaim the gospel despite opposing circumstances. This very personal letter closes with an update of Paul’s situation in Rome along with certain requests (4:6–22). Paul longs to see Timothy before the end, and he also needs certain articles, especially “the parchments” (probably portions of the Old Testament Scriptures).

## OUTLINE OF 2 TIMOTHY

### Part One: Persevere in Present Testings (1:1–2:26)

- |   |        |                                    |         |
|---|--------|------------------------------------|---------|
| I. Thanksgiving for Timothy’s Faith . . . . .         | 1:1–5  | B. Single-Minded Soldier . . . . . | 2:3–5   |
| II. Reminder of Timothy’s Responsibility. . . . .     | 1:6–18 | C. Enduring Farmer. . . . .        | 2:6–13  |
| III. Characteristics of a Faithful Minister . . . . . | 2:1–26 | D. Diligent Workman. . . . .       | 2:14–19 |
| A. Discipling Teacher. . . . .                        | 2:1–2  | E. Sanctified Vessel . . . . .     | 2:20–23 |
|   |        | F. Gentle Servant . . . . .        | 2:24–26 |

### Part Two: Endure in Future Testings (3:1–4:22)

- |   |         |   |         |
|---|---------|---|---------|
| I. Approaching Day of Apostasy. . . . . | 3:1–17  | III. Approaching Death of Paul. . . . . | 4:6–22  |
| A. Coming of Apostasy . . . . .         | 3:1–9   | A. Paul’s Hope in Death . . . . .       | 4:6–8   |
| B. Confronting Apostasy . . . . .       | 3:10–17 | B. Paul’s Situation in Prison . . . . . | 4:9–18  |
| II. Charge to Preach the Word . . . . . | 4:1–5   | C. Paul’s Closing Greetings . . . . .   | 4:19–22 |

## CHAPTER 1

### THANKSGIVING FOR TIMOTHY’S FAITH

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ<sup>a</sup> by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, Titus 1:2

2 To Timothy, a beloved son:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 1 Tim. 1:2

3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, Acts 24:14

4 greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy,

5 when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. Acts 16:1; 1 Tim. 1:5; 4:6

### REMINDER OF TIMOTHY’S RESPONSIBILITY

6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 1 Tim. 4:14

<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Christ Jesus*.

## CALLING

**1:9** (Gr. *klēsis*) (Rom. 11:29; Eph. 1:18; 4:4; Heb. 3:1; 2 Pet. 1:10) G2821: Used in the sense of commission, role, privilege, or responsibility. The word emphasizes a place or position given by another; throughout the New Testament the caller is God. *Calling* is synonymous with *vocation* (Eph. 4:1), a word related to the Latin word for calling (*vocatio*). Here Paul uses both the verb form (*kaleomai*) and this noun to emphasize God's sovereignty in determining the purpose (calling) of our lives and in positioning (calling) us for that role.

7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Rom. 8:15

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, Rom. 1:16; Eph. 3:1; 1 Tim. 2:6

9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, Rom. 16:25

10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, Eph. 1:9

11 to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.<sup>a</sup> Acts 9:15

12 For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. 1 Pet. 4:19

13 Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Rom. 2:20; 6:17; 1 Tim. 6:3; Titus 1:9

14 That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

15 This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

16 The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; 2 Tim. 4:19

17 but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me.

18 The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me<sup>a</sup> at Ephesus. Mark 9:41; 2 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 6:10

## CHAPTER 2

## DISCIPLING TEACHER

**Y**OU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Eph. 6:10; 1 Tim. 1:2

2 And the things that you have heard from me

among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

## SINGLE-MINDED SOLDIER

3 You therefore must endure<sup>a</sup> hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 4:5

4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. 2 Pet. 2:20

5 And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 1 Cor. 9:25

## ENDURING FARMER

6 The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops.

7 Consider what I say, and may<sup>a</sup> the Lord give you understanding in all things. Prov. 2:6

8 Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, Rom. 1:3, 4; 2:16; 1 Cor. 15:4

9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, *even* to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Acts 9:16; 28:31; Eph. 3:1

10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 2 Cor. 1:6; Eph. 3:13

11 *This is* a faithful saying:

For if we died with *Him*,

We shall also live with *Him*. Rom. 6:5, 8

12 If we endure,

We shall also reign with *Him*.

If we deny *Him*,

He also will deny us. Matt. 10:33; Rom. 5:17; 8:17

13 If we are faithless,

He remains faithful;

He cannot deny Himself. Num. 23:19

## DILIGENT WORKMAN

14 Remind *them* of these things, charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Titus 3:9

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Pet. 1:10

16 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

17 And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, 1 Tim. 1:20

18 who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. 1 Cor. 15:12

19 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ<sup>a</sup> depart from iniquity." Nah. 1:7; 1 Cor. 3:11

<sup>11</sup> NU-Text omits of the Gentiles. <sup>18</sup> <sup>a</sup>To me is from the Vulgate and a few Greek manuscripts. <sup>23</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads You must share. <sup>27</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads the Lord will give you. <sup>29</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text read the Lord.

### SANCTIFIED VESSEL

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Rom. 9:21

21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.

22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 1 Tim. 6:11

23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.

### GENTLE SERVANT

24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, Titus 1:9; 3:2

25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, Gal. 6:1; 1 Tim. 2:4

26 and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will. 1 Tim. 3:7

## CHAPTER 3 COMING OF APOSTASY

**B**UT know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 1 Tim. 4:1

2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,

4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 2 Pet. 2:10

5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! Titus 1:16

6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, Matt. 23:14

7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2:4

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; Ex. 9:11

9 but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was. Ex. 9:11

### CONFRONTING APOSTASY

10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 1 Tim. 4:6

11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. Ps. 34:19; Acts 13:44–52; 14:1–6, 8–20

12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. Ps. 34:19

13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Thess. 2:11

### RIGHTLY DIVIDING

2:15 (Gr. *orthotomeō*) G3718: Paul uses this word to mean “teach correctly.” The root words are *orthos*, “straight” and *tomos*, “sharp,” so a literal rendering is “to cut straight.” *Tomos* is used in Hebrews 4:12 to describe the sharp sword of God’s Word. This word is used in the Septuagint in Proverbs 3:6 and 11:5 to mean “cut a line in a straight path,” with the emphasis on “straight” rather than “cut.” The way God’s Word is handled and taught must be correct and right, resulting in conduct that is in line with God’s Word so we can be unashamed before God.

### INSPIRATION OF GOD

3:16 (Gr. *theopneustos*) G2315: The Greek word means “God-breathed,” from *theos* (God) and *pneō* (to breathe). Although it is difficult to fully recreate the thought of this Greek expression in English, we are fairly sure that Paul meant to say that all Scripture was breathed out from God. This is the primary meaning. But the expression could also mean that the Word was “inbreathed,” or inspired, by God. The first definition affirms the Bible’s divine origin; the second speaks of God’s spiritual presence in the Word.

14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, 2 Tim. 1:13

15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 2 Pet. 1:20

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 1 Tim. 6:11

## CHAPTER 4 CHARGE TO PREACH THE WORD

**I**CHARGE *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at<sup>a</sup> His appearing and His kingdom: 1 Tim. 5:21

2 Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 1 Tim. 4:13; 5:20; Titus 2:15

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 1 Tim. 1:10

4 and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 1 Tim. 1:4

5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. Acts 21:8; 2 Tim. 1:8

<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *therefore* and reads *and by* for *at*.

**PAUL'S HOPE IN DEATH**

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 1 Cor. 9:24–27

8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. John 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:12; James 1:12

**PAUL'S SITUATION IN PRISON**

9 Be diligent to come to me quickly;

10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. Col. 4:14

11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.

12 And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. Acts 20:4

13 Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. 1 Tim. 1:20

15 You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words.

16 At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them.

17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 1 Sam. 17:37; Acts 9:15; 23:11

18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve *me* for His heavenly kingdom. To Him *be* glory forever and ever. Amen! Ps. 121:7

**PAUL'S CLOSING GREETINGS**

19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Acts 18:2; 2 Tim. 1:16

20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick. Acts 20:4; 21:29; Rom. 16:23

21 Do your utmost to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.

22 The Lord Jesus Christ<sup>a</sup> be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

**4:22**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Jesus Christ*.

**GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE****SHARING OUR FAITH****PART 5: WHEN TO SHARE**

**4:2**—A famous evangelist once concluded a time of sharing the gospel in Chicago by asking those present to go home that night and consider the claims of the gospel and return the following night prepared to make a decision for Christ. But on that same night, October 8, 1871, the tragic Chicago fire broke out. Before it was finally extinguished, nearly four miles of buildings were consumed and 250 people had died. The evangelist vowed never to share the gospel without inviting people to trust in Christ right then and there.

The question as to when we should share our faith is directly tied to when a person needs to trust in Christ. That time is right now—today. Because people are not promised tomorrow (see Prov. 27:1; Luke 12:19; James 4:13–15), it is always the right time to share our faith, as the Bible makes clear (see Heb. 3:15; 4:7; 2 Cor. 6:2; Is. 55:6).

Thus, we are to tell others about Jesus any time, all the time, in any place and in all places. The apostle Paul shows us how this should be done. He witnessed everywhere at any time, including in a prison at midnight (Acts 16:25–31) and on a sinking ship during a dark and stormy day (Acts 27:20–25).

*For the next article, WALKING IN THE SPIRIT, turn to Psalm 73:1 on page 608. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to TITUS



## THE BOOK OF TITUS

Titus, a young pastor, faces the unenviable assignment of setting in order the church at Crete. Paul writes advising him to appoint elders, men of proven spiritual character in their homes and businesses, to oversee the work of the church. But elders are not the only individuals in the church who are required to excel spiritually. Men and women, young and old, each have their vital functions to fulfill in the church if they are to be living examples of the doctrine they profess. Throughout his letter to Titus, Paul stresses the necessary, practical working out of salvation in the daily lives of both the elders and the congregation. Good works are desirable and profitable for all believers.

This third Pastoral Epistle is simply titled *Pros Titon*, “To Titus.” Ironically, this was also the name of the Roman general who destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70 and succeeded his father Vespasian as emperor.



## THE AUTHOR OF TITUS

Since the Pastoral Epistles must be treated as a unit on the matter of authorship, see “The Author of 1 Timothy” for the authorship of Titus.

Titus is not mentioned in Acts, but the thirteen references to him in the Pauline epistles make it clear that he was one of Paul’s closest and most trusted companions. This convert of Paul (“a true son in our common faith,” Titus 1:4) was probably from Syrian Antioch, if he was one of the disciples of Acts 11:26. Paul brought this uncircumcised Greek believer to Jerusalem (Gal. 2:3) where he became a test case on the matter of Gentiles and liberty from the law. Years later when Paul set out from Antioch on his third missionary journey (Acts 18:22), Titus must have accompanied him because he was sent by the apostle to Corinth on three occasions during that time (2 Cor. 2:12–13; 7:5–7, 13–15; 8:6, 16–24). He is not mentioned again until Paul leaves him in Crete to carry on the work (Titus 1:5). He was with Paul during his second Roman imprisonment but left to go to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10), possibly on an evangelistic mission. Paul spoke of this reliable and gifted associate as his “brother” (2 Cor. 2:13), his “partner and fellow worker” (2 Cor. 8:23), and

his “son” (Titus 1:4). He lauded Titus’s character and conduct in 2 Corinthians 7:13–15 and 8:16–17.



## THE TIME OF TITUS

For a tentative reconstruction of the events following Paul’s first Roman imprisonment, see “The Time of 1 Timothy.”

The Mediterranean island of Crete is 156 miles long and up to 30 miles wide, and its first-century inhabitants were notorious for untruthfulness and immorality (Titus 1:12–13). “To act the Cretan” became an idiom meaning “to play the liar.” Some Jews from Crete were present in Jerusalem at the time of Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11), and a portion of them may have believed in Christ and introduced the gospel to their fellow Cretans. Certainly, Paul would not have had opportunity to do evangelistic work during his brief sojourn in Crete while he was en route to Rome (Acts 27:7–13). The apostle spread the gospel in the cities of Crete after his release from Roman imprisonment and left Titus there to finish organizing the churches (Titus 1:5). Because of the problem of immorality among the Cretans, it was important for Titus to stress the need for righteousness in Christian living. False teachers, especially “those of the circumcision” (1:10), were also misleading and divisive. Paul wrote this letter about AD 63, perhaps from Corinth, taking advantage of the journey of Zenas and Apollos (3:13), whose destination would take them by way of Crete. Paul was planning to spend the winter in Nicopolis (western Greece), and in this letter he urged Titus to join him there upon his replacement by Artemas or Tychicus (3:12). Paul may have been planning to leave Nicopolis for Spain in the spring, and he wanted his useful companion Titus to accompany him.



## CHRIST IN TITUS

The deity and redemptive work of Christ are beautifully stated in 2:13–14: “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”



## KEYS TO TITUS

**Key Theme:** *Conduct Manual for Church Living*—This brief letter focuses on Titus’s role and responsibility in the organization and supervision of the churches in Crete. It is written to strengthen and exhort Titus to firmly exercise his authority as an apostolic representative to churches that need to be put in order, refuting false teachers and dissenters, and replacing immoral behavior with good deeds. Paul uses this letter to remind Titus of some of the details related to his task, including the qualifications for elders and the behavior expected of various groups in the churches. Paul includes three doctrinal sections in this letter to stress that proper belief (orthodoxy) gives the basis for proper behavior (orthopraxy).

**Key Verses:** *Titus 1:5; 3:8*—“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you” (1:5).

“This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men” (3:8).

**Key Chapter:** *Titus 2*—Summarized in Titus 2 are the key commands to be obeyed which ensure godly relationships within the church. Paul includes all categories of people instructing them to show “all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things” (Titus 2:10).

and appoint elders in every city” (Titus 1:5). Not long after Paul’s departure from Crete, he wrote this letter to encourage and assist Titus in his task. It stresses sound doctrine and warns against those who distort the truth, but it also is a conduct manual that emphasizes good deeds and the proper conduct of various groups within the churches. This epistle falls into two major sections: the church’s leaders (ch. 1) and the church’s behavior (chs. 2–3).

**The Church’s Leaders (1:1–16)**—The salutation to Titus is a compact doctrinal statement, which lifts up “His word” as the source of the truth that reveals the way to eternal life (1:1–4). Paul reminds Titus of his responsibility to organize the churches of Crete by appointing elders (also called overseers; see 1:7) and rehearses the qualifications these spiritual leaders must meet (1:5–9). This is especially important in view of the disturbances that are being caused by false teachers who are upsetting some believers with their Judaic myths and commandments (1:10–16). The natural tendency toward moral laxity among the Cretans coupled with that kind of deception is a dangerous force that must be overcome by godly leadership and sound doctrine.

**The Church’s Behavior (2:1–3:15)**—Titus is given the charge to “speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine” (2:1), and Paul delineates Titus’s role regarding various groups in the church, including older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and servants (2:2–10). The knowledge of Christ must effect a transformation in each of these groups so that their testimony will “adorn the doctrine of God” (2:10). The second doctrinal statement of Titus (2:11–14) gives the basis for the appeals Paul has just made for righteous living. God in His grace redeems believers from being slaves of sin, assuring them the “blessed hope” of the coming of Christ that will eventually be realized. Paul urges Titus to authoritatively proclaim these truths (2:15).

In chapter 3, Paul moves from conduct in groups



## SURVEY OF TITUS

Titus, like 1 Timothy, was written by Paul after his release from Roman imprisonment and was also written to an associate who was given the task of organizing and supervising a large work as an apostolic representative. Paul left Titus on the island of Crete to “set in order the things that are lacking,

### OVERVIEW OF TITUS

Outline	THE CHURCH’S LEADERS			THE CHURCH’S BEHAVIOR		
	INTRODUCTION 1:1–4	ORDAIN QUALIFIED ELDER 1:5–9	REBUKE FALSE TEACHERS 1:10–16	SPEAK SOUND DOCTRINE 2:1–15	MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS 3:1–11	CONCLUSION 3:14–15
Theme	PROTECTION OF SOUND DOCTRINE			PRACTICE OF SOUND DOCTRINE		
Approach	DOCTRINE			CONDUCT		
Location	POSSIBLE FROM CORINTH					
Time Frame	C. AD 63					

(2:1–10) to conduct in general (3:1–11). Because of their regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, the behavior of believers as citizens must be different from the behavior of unbelievers. The third doctrinal statement in this book (3:4–7) emphasizes the kindness, love, and mercy of God who saves us “not by works of righteousness which we have

done” (3:5). Nevertheless, the need for good deeds as a result of salvation is stressed six times in the three chapters of Titus (1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14). Paul exhorts Titus to deal firmly with dissenters who would cause factions and controversies (3:9–11) and closes the letter with three instructions, a greeting, and a benediction (3:12–15).

## OUTLINE OF TITUS

### Part One: The Church’s Leaders (1:1–16)

- I. Introduction . . . . . 1:1–4  
 II. Ordain Qualified Elders . . . . . 1:5–9

- III. Rebuke False Teachers . . . . . 1:10–16

### Part Two: The Church’s Behavior (2:1–3:15)

- I. Speak Sound Doctrine . . . . . 2:1–15  
 II. Maintain Good Works . . . . . 3:1–11

- III. Conclusion . . . . . 3:12–15

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

**P**AUL, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, <sup>1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:25</sup>

2 in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, <sup>Num. 23:19</sup>

3 but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

4 To Titus, a true son in *our* common faith:

Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ<sup>a</sup> our Savior. <sup>2 Cor. 2:13; 8:23</sup>

### ORDAIN QUALIFIED ELDERS

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you— <sup>1 Cor. 11:34</sup>

6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. <sup>1 Tim. 3:2–4</sup>

7 For a bishop<sup>a</sup> must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, <sup>Lev. 10:9</sup>

8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

<sup>14</sup>a NU-Text reads *and Christ Jesus*. <sup>17</sup>a Literally *overseer*

## BEGINNING THE NEW LIFE

### THE ASSURANCE OF NEW LIFE

#### PART 1: PROMISE OF GOD

1:2—Some Christians might doubt their salvation simply because they do not *feel* saved, not understanding that the basis for, and assurance of, their salvation is the unchanging promise of God and not changing feelings. In fact, the entire Trinity is involved in the promise and work of salvation:

- The promise and work of the Father in our salvation.** He has graciously promised to accept in Christ all who repent of sin (Eph. 1:6; Col. 3:3). This means we have the right to be in heaven someday, for we are in Christ. God guarantees He will work out all things for our good (Rom. 8:28).
- The promise and work of the Son.** He has promised us eternal life (John 5:24) and abundant life (John 10:10). This covers not only our final destiny, but also our present time here on earth. In fact, right now Jesus is praying for us and ministering to us at His Father’s right hand (Heb. 8:1; 9:24).
- The promise and work of the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit is said to indwell the believer (John 14:16). In addition, He places all believers into the body of Christ, thus assuring us of union with God (1 Cor. 12:13).

*For Part 2: WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT, turn to 1 John 3:24 on page 1399. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*



## BISHOP

**1:7** (Gr. *episkopos*) (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Pet. 2:25) G1985: This word for “overseer” or “bishop” is a compound form of *epi*, “upon, over,” and *skopos*, “one who watches or looks out.” This person is a guardian who watches over and protects members of the church. In the New Testament, it usually refers to someone who holds a particular office or position of leadership in the church. However, in 1 Peter 2:25 it refers to Jesus: “You were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer [*episkopos*] of your souls.”

## SAVIOR

**2:10** (Gr. *sōtēr*) (Luke 1:47; 2:11; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; Titus 1:3; 3:4) G4990: The word is used by Mary and by the angel who proclaimed the good news to the shepherds that the Savior had come (Luke 1:47; 2:11). In the Pastoral Epistles, the expression “God our Savior” and similar ones appear often. In these verses, the appellation seems to describe God the Father. The Old Testament writers speak of God as Savior (see Ps. 24:5; Is. 12:2; 45:15, 21) and so do a few other New Testament writers (Luke 1:47; Jude v. 25). The Son is also called Savior in the Pastoral Epistles (2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6), and in Titus 2:13 the Son is called “our God and Savior,” thus clearly identifying Jesus as God.

9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

## REBUKE FALSE TEACHERS

**10** For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

James 1:26

11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. 1 Tim. 6:5

12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Creteans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,

14 not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. Is. 29:13

15 To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. 1 Cor. 6:12

16 They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. Rom. 1:28; 2 Tim. 3:5, 7

## CHAPTER 2

## SPEAK SOUND DOCTRINE

**B**UT as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine:

2 that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience;

3 the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—

4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Rom. 2:24; 1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 5:14

6 Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded,

7 in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,<sup>a</sup>

Eph. 6:24; 1 Tim. 4:12

8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.<sup>a</sup>

9 Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back,

1 Tim. 6:1

10 not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

Rom. 5:15

12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

Ex. 15:16; Gal. 1:4 +; Heb. 1:3; 9:14

15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. 2 Tim. 4:2

## CHAPTER 3

## MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS

**R**EMIND them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,

Col. 1:10; 1 Pet. 2:13

2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.

3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

1 Cor. 6:11

4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

1 Tim. 2:3; Titus 2:11

5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

John 3:3; Rom. 3:20

<sup>a</sup>2:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *incorruptibility*. <sup>a</sup>2:8<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *us*.

6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, Ezek. 36:26

7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Rom. 8:17, 23, 24

8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. 1 Tim. 1:15

9 But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. 2 Tim. 2:23

10 Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, Matt. 18:17

11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

### CONCLUSION

12 When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Acts 20:4

13 Send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey with haste, that they may lack nothing.

14 And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

15 All who *are* with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

## UNDERSTANDING GOD'S BEING

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### PART 2: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION

3:5—The Holy Spirit performs at least three critical works in preparing unsaved people to become Christians:

- a. **Restraining.** Satan would enjoy nothing more than to destroy people before they make their decision to trust in Jesus as Savior. But the Holy Spirit prevents this from occurring (Is. 59:19).
- b. **Convicting.** Humankind's sin and righteousness are exposed by the Holy Spirit (John 16:8). There are two well-known examples of people being convicted by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts. Felix, a Roman governor, trembled under conviction as he heard Paul preach (Acts 24:25). Then, King Agrippa responded to hearing the gospel by saying: "You almost persuade me to become a Christian" (Acts 26:28).
- c. **Regenerating.** When people repent of their sin and trust in Jesus as Savior, the Holy Spirit gives them a new nature (see 2 Cor. 5:17). Jesus explained this ministry of the Holy Spirit to Nicodemus (John 3:3–7).

For Part 3: *THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CHRISTIAN LIVING*, turn to 1 Corinthians 6:19 on page 1265. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to PHILEMON



## THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

Does Christian brotherly love really work, even in situations of extraordinary tension and difficulty? Will it work, for example, between a prominent slave owner and one of his runaway slaves? Paul has no doubt that it will. He writes a “postcard” to Philemon, his beloved brother and fellow worker, on behalf of Onesimus—a runaway slave, but now Philemon’s brother in Christ. With much tact and tenderness, Paul asks Philemon to receive Onesimus back with the same gentleness with which he would receive Paul himself. Any debt Onesimus might owe, Paul promises to make good. Knowing Philemon, Paul is confident that brotherly love will carry the day.

Since this letter is addressed to Philemon in verse 1, it becomes known as *Pros Philemona*, “To Philemon.” Like 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, it is addressed to an individual, but unlike the Pastoral Epistles, Philemon is also addressed to a family and a church (Philem. v. 2).



## THE AUTHOR OF PHILEMON

The authenticity of Philemon was not called into question until the fourth century, when certain theologians concluded that its lack of doctrinal content made it unworthy of the apostle Paul. But men like Jerome and Chrysostom soon vindicated this epistle, and it was not challenged again until the nineteenth century. Some radical critics who denied the authenticity of Colossians also turned against the Pauline authorship of Philemon because of the close connection between the two epistles (e.g., the same people are associated with Paul in both letters: cf. Col. 4:9–10, 12, 14 with Philem. vv. 10, 23–24). The consensus of scholarship, however, recognized Philemon as Paul’s work. There could have been no doctrinal motive for its forgery, and it is supported externally by consistent tradition and internally by no less than three references to Paul (vv. 1, 9, 19).



## THE TIME OF PHILEMON

Reconstructing the background of this letter, it appears that a slave named Onesimus escaped from

Philemon, perhaps robbing him in the process. Onesimus made his way from Colosse to Rome where he had found relative safety among the masses in the Imperial City. Somehow Onesimus had come into contact with Paul: it is possible that he had even sought out the apostle for help. (Onesimus no doubt had heard Philemon speak of Paul.) Paul led Onesimus to Christ (Philem. v. 10); and although Onesimus had become a real asset to Paul, both knew that, as a Christian, Onesimus had a responsibility to return to Philemon. After Paul wrote his epistle to the Colossians, he appointed Tychicus to be the bearer of that letter. Paul decided to send Onesimus along with Tychicus to Colosse (Col. 4:7–9; Philem. v. 12), knowing that it would be safer, in view of slave-catchers, to send Onesimus with a companion.

Philemon is one of the four Prison Epistles (see Ephesians, Philippians, and especially “The Time of Colossians” for background). It was written in AD 60 or 61 and dispatched at the same time as Colossians during Paul’s first Roman imprisonment (see vv. 1, 9–10, 13, 23). Philemon v. 22 reflects Paul’s confident hope of release: “prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.”

Philemon was a resident of Colosse (Col. 4:9, 17; Philem. vv. 1–2) and a convert of Paul (v. 19), perhaps through an encounter with Paul in Ephesus during Paul’s third missionary journey. Philemon’s house was large enough to serve as the meeting place for the church there (v. 2). He was benevolent to other believers (vv. 5–7), and his son Archippus evidently held a position of leadership in the church (Col. 4:17; Philem. v. 2). Philemon may have had other slaves in addition to Onesimus, and he was not alone as a slaveholder among the Colossian believers (Col. 4:1). Thus, this letter and his response would provide guidelines for other master-slave relationships.

According to Roman law, runaway slaves such as Onesimus could be severely punished or condemned to a violent death. It is doubtful that Onesimus would have returned to Philemon even with this letter if he had not become a believer in Christ.



## CHRIST IN PHILEMON

The forgiveness that the believer finds in Christ is beautifully portrayed by analogy in Philemon. Al-

though Onesimus may have been guilty of a great offense (vv. 11, 18), Paul is moved to intercede on his behalf (vv. 10–17). Paul lays aside his rights (v. 8) and becomes Onesimus’s substitute by assuming any of his debt (vv. 18–19). By Philemon’s gracious act, Onesimus will be restored and placed in a new relationship (vv. 15–16). In this analogy, we are as Onesimus. Paul’s advocacy before Philemon is parallel to Christ’s work of mediation before the Father. Onesimus was condemned by law but saved by grace.



## KEYS TO PHILEMON

**Key Theme:** *New Relationships in Christ*—Philemon develops the transition from bondage to brotherhood that is brought about by Christian love. Just as Philemon was shown mercy through the grace of Christ, changing him from an enemy of God to an adopted son, so he must graciously welcome Onesimus not as a runaway slave, but rather as a brother in Christ. Paul writes this letter as his personal appeal that Philemon receive Onesimus even as he would receive Paul. This letter is also addressed to other Christians in Philemon’s circle, because Paul wants it to affect the Colossian church as a whole.

**Key Verses:** *Philemon vv. 16–17*—“No longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me” (vv. 16–17).



## SURVEY OF PHILEMON

This briefest of Paul’s epistles (only 334 words in the Greek text) is a model of courtesy, discretion, and loving concern for the wellbeing of one who would otherwise face the sentence of death. This tactful and highly personal letter can be divided into three components: the prayer of Paul (Philem. vv. 1–7); the plea of Paul (vv. 8–16) and the promise of Paul (vv. 17–25).

**The Prayer of Thanksgiving for Philemon (vv. 1–7)**—Writing this letter as a “prisoner of Christ Jesus,” Paul addresses it personally to Philemon (a Christian leader in Colosse), to Apphia and Archippus (evidently Philemon’s wife and son), as well as to the church that meets in Philemon’s house. The main body of this compact letter begins with a prayer of thanksgiving for Philemon’s faith and love.

**The Petition of Paul for Onesimus (vv. 8–16)**—Basing his appeal on Philemon’s character, Paul refuses to command Philemon to receive Onesimus. Instead, Paul seeks to persuade his friend of his Christian responsibility to accept as he has been accepted by Christ. Paul urges Philemon to receive Onesimus “no longer as a slave” but as “a beloved brother” (v. 16).

**The Promise of Paul to Philemon (vv. 17–25)**—Paul places any debt Onesimus might owe on his account, but then reminds Philemon of the greater spiritual debt Philemon himself owes as a convert to Christ (vv. 17–19).

Paul closes this effective epistle with a hopeful request (v. 22), greetings from his companions (vv. 23–24), and a benediction (v. 25). The fact that it was preserved suggests Philemon’s favorable response to Paul’s pleas.

## OVERVIEW OF PHILEMON

	THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR PHILEMON	THE PETITION OF PAUL FOR ONESIMUS	THE PROMISE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON
Outline	vv. 1–7	vv. 8–16	vv. 17–25
Theme	COMMENDATION	INTERCESSION	CONFIDENCE
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT		
Location	ROME		
Time Frame	C. AD 60–61		

## OUTLINE OF PHILEMON

Part One: The Prayer of Thanksgiving for Philemon (vv. 1–7) \_\_\_\_\_

Part Two: The Petition of Paul for Onesimus (vv. 8–16) \_\_\_\_\_

Part Three: The Promise of Paul to Philemon (vv. 17–25) \_\_\_\_\_

### THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR PHILEMON

**P**AUL, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy  
our brother,

To Philemon our beloved *friend* and fellow laborer,

2 to the beloved<sup>a</sup> Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: Eph. 3:1  
Col. 4:17

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

4 I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, 2 Thess. 1:3

5 hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints,

6 that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you<sup>a</sup> in Christ Jesus. Phil. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:18

7 For we have<sup>a</sup> great joy<sup>b</sup> and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

### THE PETITION OF PAUL FOR ONESIMUS

8 Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting,

9 *yet* for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*—being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ—

10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, Col. 4:9

11 who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.

12 I am sending him back.<sup>a</sup> You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart,

13 whom I wished to keep with me, that on your

behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel.

14 But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary. 2 Cor. 9:7

15 For perhaps he departed for a while for this *purpose*, that you might receive him forever,

16 no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. Col. 3:22

### THE PROMISE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON

17 If then you count me as a partner, receive him as *you would* me.

18 But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account.

19 I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. 1 Cor. 16:21

20 Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord.

21 Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. 2 Cor. 7:16

22 But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you. 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 1:25; 2:24

23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, Col. 1:7; 4:12

24 *as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. Acts 15:37–39; 19:29; 27:2; Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11

25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen. 2 Tim. 4:22

<sup>2</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *our sister Apphia*. <sup>6</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text read *us*. <sup>7</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *had*. <sup>9</sup> <sup>a</sup>M-Text reads *thanksgiving*.

<sup>12</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *back to you in person, that is, my own heart*.

# The Epistle to the HEBREWS



## THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Many Jewish believers, having stepped out of Judaism into Christianity, want to reverse their course to escape persecution by their fellow Jews. The writer of Hebrews, though, exhorts them to “go on to perfection” (Heb. 6:1). His appeal is based on the superiority of Christ over the Judaic system. Christ is better than the angels, for they worship Him. He is better than Moses, for He created him. He is better than the Aaronic priesthood, for His sacrifice was once for all time. He is better than the Law, for He mediates a better covenant. In short, there is more to be gained in Christ than to be lost in Judaism. Pressing on in Christ produces tested faith, self-discipline, and a visible love seen in good works.

The oldest and most reliable title of this book is *Pros Ebraious*, “To Hebrews.”



## THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS

Like the ancestry of Melchizedek, the origin of Hebrews is unknown. Uncertainty plagues not only its authorship, but also where it was written, its date, and its readership. The question of authorship delayed its recognition in the West as part of the New Testament canon despite early support by Clement of Rome. Not until the fourth century was it generally accepted as authoritative in the Western church, when the testimonies of Jerome and Augustine settled the issue. In the Eastern church, there was no problem of canonical acceptance because it was regarded as one of the “fourteen” epistles of Paul. The issue of its canonicity was again raised during the Reformation, but the spiritual depth and quality of Hebrews bore witness to its inspiration, despite its anonymity.

Hebrews 13:18–24 tells us that this book was not anonymous to the original readers; they evidently knew the author. For some reason, however, early church tradition is divided over the identity of the author. Part of the church attributed it to Paul; others preferred Barnabas, Luke, or Clement; and some chose anonymity. Thus, external evidence will not help determine the author.

Internal evidence must be the final court of appeal, but here, too, the results are ambiguous. Some aspects of the language, style, and theology of Hebrews are very similar to Paul’s epistles, and

the author also refers to Timothy (Heb. 13:23). However, significant differences have led most biblical scholars to reject Pauline authorship of this book: (1) The Greek style of Hebrews is far more polished and refined than that found in any of Paul’s recognized epistles. (2) In view of Paul’s consistent claims to be an apostle and an eyewitness of Christ, it is very doubtful that he would have used the phraseology found in 2:3: “which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.” (3) The lack of Paul’s customary salutation, which includes his name, goes against the firm pattern found in all his other epistles. (4) While Paul used both the Hebrew text and the Septuagint to quote from the Old Testament, the writer of Hebrews apparently did not know Hebrew and quoted exclusively from the Septuagint. (5) Paul’s common use of compound titles to refer to the Son of God is not followed in Hebrews, which usually refers to Him as “Christ,” “Jesus,” and “Lord.” (6) Hebrews concentrates on Christ’s present priestly ministry, but Paul’s writings have very little to say about the present work of Christ. Thus, Hebrews appears not to have been written by Paul although the writer shows a Pauline influence. The authority of Hebrews in no way depends upon Pauline authorship, especially since it does not claim to have been written by Paul.

Tertullian referred to Barnabas as the author of Hebrews, but it is unlikely that this resident of Jerusalem (Acts 4:36–37) would include himself as one of those who relied on others for eyewitness testimony about Jesus (Heb. 2:3). Other suggestions include Luke, Clement of Rome, Apollos, Silvanus (Silas), Philip, and even Priscilla. Some of these are possibilities, but we must agree with the third-century theologian Origen who wrote: “Who it was that really wrote the Epistle, God only knows.”



## THE TIME OF HEBREWS

Because of the exclusive use of the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament) and the elegant Greek style found in Hebrews, some recent scholars have argued that this book was written to a Gentile readership. However, the bulk of the evidence favors the traditional view that the original recipients of this letter were Jewish Christians. In addition to the ancient title “To Hebrews,” there is

also the frequent use of the Old Testament as an unquestioned authority, the assumed knowledge of the sacrificial ritual, and the many contrasts between Christianity and Judaism, which are designed to prevent the readers from lapsing into Judaism.

Many places have been suggested for the locality of the readers, but this letter's destination cannot be determined with any certainty. In the past, Jerusalem was most frequently suggested, but this view is hindered by four problems: (1) It is unlikely that a book addressed to Jews would quote exclusively from the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew Old Testament. (2) Jewish believers were poor (Rom. 15:26), but these readers were able to assist other Christians financially (Heb. 6:10). (3) Residents of Jerusalem would not be characterized by the description in 2:3 because some would have been eyewitnesses of the ministry of Christ. (4) "You have not yet resisted to bloodshed" (12:4) does not fit the situation in Jerusalem. The majority view today is that the recipients of Hebrews probably lived in Rome. The statement "Those from Italy greet you" in 13:24 seems to suggest that Italians away from Italy are sending their greetings home.

The recipients of this letter were believers (3:1) who had come to faith through the testimony of eyewitnesses of Christ (2:3). They were not novices (5:12), and they had successfully endured hardships because of their stand for the gospel (10:32–34). Unfortunately, they had become "dull of hearing" (5:11) and were in danger of drifting away (2:1; 3:12). This made them particularly susceptible to the renewed persecutions that were coming upon them (12:4–12), and the author found it necessary to check the downward spiral with "the word of exhortation" (13:22). While there is disagreement over the specific danger involved, the classic position that the readers were on the verge of lapsing into Judaism to avoid persecution directed at Christians seems to be supported by the whole tenor of the book. Hebrews' repeated emphasis on the superiority of Christianity over Judaism would have been pointless if the readers were about to return to Gnosticism or heathenism.

The place of writing is unknown, but a reasonable estimate of the date can be made. Hebrews was quoted in AD 95 by Clement of Rome, but its failure to mention the ending of the Old Testament sacrificial system with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 indicates that it was written prior to that date. Timothy was still alive (13:23), persecution was mounting, and the old Jewish system was about to be removed (12:26–27). All this suggests a date between AD 64 and 68.

## ✝ CHRIST IN HEBREWS

Christ is our eternal High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. He identified with humanity

in His incarnation and offered no less a sacrifice than Himself on our behalf. Hebrews presents Christ as the divine-human Prophet, Priest, and King. His deity (Heb. 1:1–3, 8) and humanity (2:9, 14, 17–18) are asserted with equal force, and over twenty titles are used to describe His attributes and accomplishments (e.g., Heir of all things, Apostle and High Priest, Mediator, Author and Perfecter of faith). He is superior to all who went before and offers the supreme sacrifice, priesthood, and covenant.



## KEYS TO HEBREWS

**Key Theme:** *The Superiority of Christ*—The basic theme of Hebrews is found in the word "better," describing the superiority of Christ in His Person and work (Heb. 1:4; 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24). The words "perfect" and "heavenly" are also prominent. He offers a better revelation, position, priesthood, covenant, sacrifice, and power. The writer develops this theme to prevent the readers from giving up the substance for the shadow by abandoning Christianity and retreating into the old Judaic system. This epistle is also written to exhort them to become mature in Christ and to put away their spiritual dullness and degeneration. Thus, it places heavy stress on doctrine, concentrating on Christology and soteriology (the study of salvation).

**Key Verses:** *Hebrews 4:14–16; 12:1–2*—"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (4:14–16).

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (12:1–2).

**Key Chapter:** *Hebrews 11*—The hall of fame of the Scriptures is in Hebrews 11 and records those who willingly took God at His word even when there was nothing to cling to but His promise. Inherent to all those listed is the recognition that "without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (11:6).

## SURVEY OF HEBREWS

Hebrews stands alone among the New Testament Epistles in its style and approach, and it is the only New Testament book whose authorship remains a real mystery. This profound work builds a case for the superiority of Christ through a cumulative argument in which Christ is presented as “better” in every respect. In His Person He is better than the angels, Moses, and Joshua; and in His performance He provides a better priesthood, covenant, sanctuary, and sacrifice. Evidently, the readers are in danger of reverting to Judaism because of the suffering they are beginning to experience for their faith in Christ. However, by doing so, they would be retreating from the substance back into the shadow. In addition to his positive presentation of the supremacy of Christ, the writer intersperses five solemn warnings about the peril of turning away from Christ (Heb. 2:1–4; 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:20; 10:19–39; 12:25–29). These parenthetical warnings include cautions against neglect (2:1–4) and refusal (12:25–29). After using the Old Testament to demonstrate the superiority of Christ’s Person (1:1–4:13) and the superiority of Christ’s work (4:14–10:18), the writer applies these truths in a practical way to show the superiority of Christian faith (10:19–13:25).

**The Superiority of Christ’s Person (1:1–4:13)**— Instead of the usual salutation, this epistle immediately launches into its theme—the supremacy of Christ even over the Old Testament prophets (1:1–3). Christianity is built upon the highest form of divine disclosure: the personal revelation of God through His incarnate Son. Christ is therefore greater than the prophets, and He is also greater than the angels, the mediators of the Mosaic Law (1:4–2:18; see Acts 7:53; Heb. 2:2). This is seen in His name, His position,

His worship by the angels, and His incarnation. The Son of God partook of flesh and blood and was “made like His brethren” in all things (2:17) to bring “many sons to glory” (2:10). Christ is also superior to Moses (3:1–6), for Moses was a servant in the house of God, but Christ is the Son over God’s household. Because of these truths, the readers are exhorted to avoid the divine judgment that is visited upon unbelief (3:7–4:13). Disbelief had prevented the generation of the Exodus from becoming the generation of the conquest, and the rest that Christ offers is so much greater than what was provided by Joshua. The readers are therefore urged to enter the eternal rest that is possessed by faith in Christ.

**The Superiority of Christ’s Work (4:14–10:18)**— The high priesthood of Christ is superior to the Aaronic priesthood (4:14–7:28). Because of His incarnation, Christ can “sympathize with our weaknesses,” having been “in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (4:15). Christ was not a Levite, but He qualified for a higher priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek. The superiority of Melchizedek to Levi is seen in the fact that Levi, in effect, paid tithes through Abraham to Melchizedek (7:9–10). Abraham was blessed by Melchizedek, and “the lesser is blessed by the better” (7:7). The parenthetical warning in 5:11–6:20 exhorts the readers to “go on to perfection” by moving beyond the basics of salvation and repentance.

By divine oath (7:21), Christ has become a permanent and perfect High Priest and the “Mediator of a better covenant” (8:6). The new covenant has made the old covenant obsolete (8:6–13). Our Great High Priest similarly ministers in “the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation” (9:11). And unlike the

### OVERVIEW OF HEBREWS

	THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST’S PERSON			THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST’S WORK			THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRISTIAN FAITH			
Outline	THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST OVER PROPHETS	THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST OVER ANGELS	THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST OVER MOSES	CHRIST’S PRIESTHOOD	CHRIST’S COVENANT	CHRIST’S SANCTUARY AND SACRIFICE	ASSURANCE OF FAITH	ENDURANCE OF FAITH	EXHORTATION TO LOVE	CONCLUSION
	1:1–3	1:4–2:18	3:1–4:13	4:14–7:28	8:1–13	9:1–10:18	10:19–11:40	12:1–29	13:1–17	13:18–25
Theme	MAJESTY OF CHRIST			MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST			
Approach	DOCTRINE						CONDUCT			
Location	UNKNOWN									
Time Frame	C. AD 64–68									



former priests, He offers Himself as a sinless and voluntary sacrifice once and for all (9:1–10:18).

**The Superiority of Christian Faith (10:19–13:25)**—The author applies what he has been saying about the superiority of Christ by warning his readers of the danger of discarding their faith in Christ (10:19–39). The faith that the readers must maintain is defined in 11:1–3 and illustrated in 11:4–40. The triumphs and accomplishments of faith in the lives of Old Testament believers should encourage the recipients of “something better” (11:40) in Christ to look “unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (12:2). Just

as Jesus endured great hostility, those who believe in Him will sometimes have to endure divine discipline for the sake of holiness (12:1–29). The readers are warned not to turn away from Christ during such times, but to place their hope in Him. The character of their lives must be shaped by their dedication to Christ (13:1–19), and this will be manifested in their love of each other through their hospitality, concern, purity, contentment, and obedience. The author concludes this epistle with one of the finest benedictions in Scripture (13:20–21) and some personal words (13:22–25).

## OUTLINE OF HEBREWS

### Part One: The Superiority of Christ’s Person (1:1–4:13)

- I. The Superiority of Christ over the Prophets . . . . . 1:1–3
- II. The Superiority of Christ over the Angels . . . . . 1:4–2:18
  - A. Christ Is Superior Because of His Deity . . . . . 1:4–14
  - B. First Warning: Danger of Neglect . . . . . 2:1–4
  - C. Christ Is Superior Because of His Humanity . . . . . 2:5–18

- III. The Superiority of Christ over Moses . . . 3:1–4:13
  - A. Christ Is Superior to Moses in His Work . . . . . 3:1–4
  - B. Christ Is Superior to Moses in His Person . . . . . 3:5–6
  - C. Second Warning: Danger of Unbelief . . . . . 3:7–4:13
    - 1. Danger of Hardening the Heart . . . . . 3:7–19
    - 2. Challenge to Enter His Rest . . . . . 4:1–13

### Part Two: The Superiority of Christ’s Work (4:14–10:18)

- I. Christ’s Priesthood . . . . . 4:14–7:28
  - A. Christ Is Superior in His Position . . . . . 4:14–16
  - B. Christ Is Superior in His Qualifications . . . 5:1–10
    - 1. Aaronic Priesthood . . . . . 5:1–4
    - 2. Melchizedekian Priesthood . . . . . 5:5–10
  - C. Third Warning: Danger of Not Maturing . . . . . 5:11–6:20
    - 1. Dullness of Hearing . . . . . 5:11–14
    - 2. Need for Maturity . . . . . 6:1–8
    - 3. Exhortation to Maturity . . . . . 6:9–20
  - D. Christ Is Superior in His Priestly Order . . . . . 7:1–28
    - 1. Description of Melchizedek . . . . . 7:1–3
    - 2. Superiority of Melchizedek . . . . . 7:4–10

- 3. Imperfection of Aaronic Priesthood . . 7:11–28
- II. Christ’s Covenant . . . . . 8:1–13
  - A. A Better Covenant . . . . . 8:1–6
  - B. A New Covenant . . . . . 8:7–13
- III. Christ’s Sanctuary and Sacrifice . . . . . 9:1–10:18
  - A. Old Covenant’s Sanctuary and Sacrifice . . . . . 9:1–10
    - 1. Old Covenant’s Sanctuary . . . . . 9:1–5
    - 2. Old Covenant’s Sacrifice . . . . . 9:6–10
  - B. New Covenant’s Sanctuary and Sacrifice . . . . . 9:11–10:18
    - 1. New Covenant’s Sanctuary . . . . . 9:11
    - 2. New Covenant’s Sacrifice . . . . . 9:12–10:18

### Part Three: The Superiority of Christian Faith (10:19–13:25)

- I. Assurance of Faith . . . . . 10:19–11:40
  - A. Hold Fast the Confession of Faith . . . . . 10:19–25
  - B. Fourth Warning: Danger of Drawing Back . . . . . 10:26–39
  - C. Definition of Faith . . . . . 11:1–3
  - D. Examples of Faith . . . . . 11:4–40
    - 1. Abel . . . . . 11:4
    - 2. Enoch . . . . . 11:5–6
    - 3. Noah . . . . . 11:7
    - 4. Abraham and Sarah . . . . . 11:8–19
    - 5. Isaac . . . . . 11:20
    - 6. Jacob . . . . . 11:21
    - 7. Joseph . . . . . 11:22
    - 8. Moses’ Parents . . . . . 11:23

- 9. Moses . . . . . 11:24–29
- 10. Joshua and Rahab . . . . . 11:30–31
- 11. Many Other Heroes of Faith . . . . . 11:32–40
- II. Endurance of Faith . . . . . 12:1–29
  - A. Example of Christ’s Endurance . . . . . 12:1–4
  - B. Exhortation to Endure God’s Chastening . . . . . 12:5–24
  - C. Fifth Warning: Danger of Refusing God . . . . . 12:25–29
- III. Exhortation to Love . . . . . 13:1–17
  - A. Love in the Social Realm . . . . . 13:1–6
  - B. Love in the Religious Realm . . . . . 13:7–17
- IV. Conclusion . . . . . 13:18–25

## CHAPTER 1

### THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST OVER THE PROPHETS

**G**OD, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

Num. 12:6, 8

2 has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

3 who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself<sup>a</sup> purged our<sup>b</sup> sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Ps. 110:1 †; John 1:14

### CHRIST IS SUPERIOR BECAUSE OF HIS DEITY

4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Phil. 2:9, 10

5 For to which of the angels did He ever say:

“You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You?”<sup>a</sup>

And again:

“I will be to Him a Father,  
And He shall be to Me a Son?”<sup>b</sup>

2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7

6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says:

“Let all the angels of God worship  
Him.”<sup>a</sup>

Deut. 32:43, LXX, DSS; Ps. 97:7; Rom. 8:29

7 And of the angels He says:

“Who makes His angels spirits  
And His ministers a flame of fire.”<sup>a</sup>

Ps. 104:4

8 But to the Son *He* says:

“Your throne, O God, *is* forever  
and ever;  
A scepter of righteousness *is* the  
scepter of Your kingdom.

Ps. 45:6, 7 †

9 You have loved righteousness and hated  
lawlessness;

Therefore God, Your God, has  
anointed You  
With the oil of gladness more than  
Your companions.”<sup>a</sup>

Is. 61:1, 3 †

10 And:

“You, LORD, in the beginning laid the  
foundation of the earth,  
And the heavens are the work  
of Your hands.

Ps. 102:25–27

### EXPRESS IMAGE

**1:3** (Gr. *charaktēr*) G5481: Used only here in the New Testament, this word means “exact copy.” The root word means “to sharpen.” Literally, this word refers to a tool used for stamping or engraving, a mark imprinted or burned into something that would be the exact copy of the stamp’s likeness. We might think of an impression made on a coin or seal. The author uses this word metaphorically to express the complete similarity of the Son of God to the Father. In this context, the word means that Christ is the exact representation of God’s nature. Since God’s essence, nature, and being are invisible, the Son reveals God to us, for He is an exact visible likeness of God.

11 They will perish, but You remain;  
And they will all grow old like  
a garment;

Is. 34:4; 50:9; 51:6

12 Like a cloak You will fold them up,  
And they will be changed.  
But You are the same,  
And Your years will not fail.”<sup>a</sup>

Heb. 13:8

13 But to which of the angels has He ever said:

“Sit at My right hand,  
Till I make Your enemies Your  
footstool?”<sup>a</sup>

Ps. 110:1

14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

Ps. 103:20; Rom. 8:17

## CHAPTER 2

### FIRST WARNING: DANGER OF NEGLIGENCE

**T**HEREFORE we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

Num. 15:30; Acts 7:53

3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*,

Matt. 4:17; Luke 1:2; Heb. 10:28

4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

Eph. 1:5, 9

### CHRIST IS SUPERIOR BECAUSE OF HIS HUMANITY

5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

2 Pet. 3:13

**1:3**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *by Himself*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *our*. **1:5**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 2:7 <sup>b</sup> 2 Samuel 7:14 **1:6**<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 32:43 (Septuagint, Dead Sea Scrolls); Psalm 97:7 **1:7**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 104:4 **1:9**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 45:6, 7 **1:12**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 102:25–27 **1:13**<sup>a</sup> Psalm 110:1

6 But one testified in a certain place, saying:

“What is man that You are mindful of him,  
Or the son of man that You take care of him?”  
Ps. 8:4–6

7 You have made him a little lower than the angels;  
You have crowned him with glory and honor,<sup>a</sup>  
And set him over the works of Your hands.

8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet.”<sup>a</sup>

“I will declare Your name to My brethren;  
In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 22:22

13 And again:

“I will put My trust in Him.”<sup>a</sup>

And again:

“Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.”<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. 22:3; Is. 8:17, 18

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. 1 Cor. 15:25, 27

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. Acts 3:13; Phil. 2:7–9

10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Col. 1:16

11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, Acts 17:26

12 saying:

14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, John 1:14; Col. 2:15; 2 Tim. 1:10

15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Is. 61:1+

16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.

17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. Phil. 2:7

2:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit the rest of verse 7. 2:8<sup>a</sup> Psalm 8:4–6  
2:12<sup>a</sup> Psalm 22:22 2:13<sup>a</sup> 2 Samuel 22:3; Isaiah 8:17 <sup>b</sup> Isaiah 8:18

UNDERSTANDING OTHER SPIRIT BEINGS

ANGELS

PART 2: MESSENGERS AND SERVANTS

1:14—There are six major ways in which angels have ministered, are ministering, and will minister:

- a. **Angels attend and worship God.** The basic activity of angels appears to be gathering around the throne of God and proclaiming His worthiness (Matt. 18:10; Rev. 5:11).
- b. **Angels protect God’s people.** The Bible records angels delivering people, such as Daniel and Peter, from threatening situations (Dan. 6:22; Acts 5:19). The well-being of all believers is of angelic concern (Heb. 1:14).
- c. **Angels guide God’s people.** Angels directed the women to see the empty tomb and told Jesus’ disciples He was risen (Matt. 28:5–7). An angel guided Philip to the desert where he met the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26). An angel assured Paul that he would reach Rome safely (Acts 27:23–24). Angels likely guide many Christians who do not realize where their help is coming from.
- d. **Angels bring judgment on the wicked.** Angels participated in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:12–13). They struck down Herod when he received worship (Acts 12:23). They pour out bowls of judgment in Revelation (Rev. 16).
- e. **Angels assisted Jesus on earth.** Angels prepared Mary and Joseph for Jesus’ birth (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:26–38). They announced Jesus’ birth to the shepherds (Luke 2:8–15). They ministered to Jesus after His wilderness temptation (Mark 1:13). An angel strengthened Him in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43). Angels rolled away the rock from the tomb and ministered to the women (Matt. 28:2–7). Angels were present at Jesus’ ascension (Acts 1:11).
- f. **Angels will assist Jesus at His return.** An archangel will announce the return of Christ (1 Thess. 4:16). Angels will gather all believers from the ends of the earth (Matt. 24:31). They will separate true believers from false ones (Matt. 13:39, 49–50). They will guard the gates of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:12).

*For Part 3: INTERACTION WITH HUMANS, turn to Daniel 6:22 on page 923. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

### CHAPTER 3 CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES IN HIS WORK

**T**HEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all His house. Num. 12:7

3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. Zech. 6:12, 13

4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things *is* God. Eph. 2:10

### CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES IN HIS PERSON

5 And Moses indeed *was faithful* in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*, Ex. 14:31; Deut. 18:15, 18, 19

6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 3:16

### DANGER OF HARDENING THE HEART

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you will hear His voice, Ps. 95:7-11

8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,

In the day of trial in the wilderness,

9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years.

10 Therefore I was angry with that generation,

And said, ‘They always go astray in *their* heart,

And they have not known My ways.’

11 So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’<sup>a</sup>

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,

15 while it is said:

“Today, if you will hear His voice,

Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”<sup>a</sup>

Ps. 95:7, 8

16 For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed,

### REST

3:18 (Gr. *katapausis*) (Acts 7:49; Heb. 4:3; 4:11) G2663: *Katapausis* means “rest” and specifically refers to God’s “rest” when used in the New Testament. When a person enters God’s rest, he or she does so by trusting confidently in God’s provision for both daily needs and salvation. The author of Hebrews speaks extensively about *katapausis*, describing how the Israelites were not allowed to enter God’s “rest” because of their unbelief and disobedience (Heb. 3:18). However, believers may enter God’s “rest” when they place wholehearted trust in Jesus, ceasing their work as God ceased from His work in creation (Heb. 4:10-11).

*was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? Num. 14:2, 11, 30

17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? Num. 14:22, 23

18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? Num. 14:30

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. 1 Cor. 10:11, 12

### CHAPTER 4

#### CHALLENGE TO ENTER HIS REST

**T**HEREFORE, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. Heb. 12:15

2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them,<sup>a</sup> not being mixed with faith in those who heard *it*.

3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

“So I swore in My wrath,  
‘They shall not enter My rest.’<sup>a</sup>”

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. Ps. 95:11

4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh *day* in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”;<sup>a</sup> Gen. 2:2

5 and again in this *place*: “They shall not enter My rest.”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 95:11

6 Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience,

7 again He designates a certain day, saying in

3:6<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *firm to the end*. 3:11<sup>a</sup> Psalm 95:7-11 3:15<sup>a</sup> Psalm 95:7, 8 4:2<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *profit them, since they were not united by faith with those who heeded it*. 4:3<sup>a</sup> Psalm 95:11

4:4<sup>a</sup> Genesis 2:2 4:5<sup>a</sup> Psalm 95:11

David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said:

"Today, if you will hear His voice,  
Do not harden your hearts."<sup>a</sup> Ps. 95:7, 8

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. Josh. 22:4

9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.

10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.

11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. 2 Pet. 1:10

12 For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Ps. 147:15; Is. 49:2; 1 Cor. 14:24, 25; Eph. 6:17

13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account. Job 26:6; Ps. 90:8

### CHRIST IS SUPERIOR IN HIS POSITION

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. Heb. 10:23

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. Is. 53:3-5

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Eph. 2:18

## CHAPTER 5 AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

**F**OR every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. Heb. 2:17; 8:3

2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Heb. 7:28

3 Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer *sacrifices* for sins.

4 And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron *was*. Ex. 28:1

### MELCHIZEDEKIAN PRIESTHOOD

5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but *it was* He who said to Him:

"You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You."<sup>a</sup> Ps. 2:7 +; John 8:54

6 As *He* also says in another *place*:

"You *are* a priest forever  
According to the order of  
Melchizedek";<sup>a</sup>

Ps. 110:4 +

7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, Ps. 22:1; Matt. 26:39, 42, 44, 53

8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Phil. 2:8

9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, Heb. 2:10

10 called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," Ps. 110:4 +

### DULLNESS OF HEARING

11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 1 Cor. 3:1-3

13 For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. Eph. 4:14

14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Is. 7:15

## CHAPTER 6 NEED FOR MATURITY

**T**HEREFORE, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, Heb. 5:12; 9:14

2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. Acts 8:17; 17:31; 19:3-5; 24:25

3 And this we will<sup>a</sup> do if God permits.

4 For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, Gal. 3:2, 5

5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

6 if they fall away,<sup>a</sup> to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame. Heb. 10:29

7 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; Ps. 65:10

8 but if it bears thorns and briers, *it is* rejected

4:7<sup>a</sup> Psalm 95:7, 8 5:5<sup>a</sup> Psalm 2:7 5:6<sup>a</sup> Psalm 110:4 6:3<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *let us do*. 6:6<sup>a</sup> Or *and have fallen away*

and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned. Is. 5:6

#### EXHORTATION TO MATURITY

9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.

10 For God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labor of<sup>a</sup> love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. Rom. 3:4; 15:25; 1 Thess. 1:3

11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, Col. 2:2

12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb. 10:36

13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, Gen. 22:16, 17

14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."<sup>a</sup> Gen. 22:16, 17

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. Gen. 12:4; 21:5

16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute. Ex. 22:11

17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, Rom. 11:29

18 that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might<sup>a</sup> have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. Num. 23:19; Col. 1:5

19 This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, Lev. 16:2, 15

20 where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 5:10, 11

## CHAPTER 7

### DESCRIPTION OF MELCHIZEDEK

**F**OR this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, Gen. 14:18–20

2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace,"

3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

### SUPERIORITY OF MELCHIZEDEK

4 Now consider how great this man *was*, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.

### SACRIFICE

5:1 (Gr. *thysia*) (Rom. 12:1; Phil. 2:17; Heb. 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:5) G2378: *Thysia* means "sacrifice" and describes both the act of offering a sacrifice and the object of sacrifice. Animals were offered as "sacrifices" under the Mosaic law (Matt. 9:13; Mark 9:49; Luke 2:24). Jesus is the final "sacrifice"; those who accept Him will have eternal life and be counted righteous before God. His "sacrifice" was perfect and removes the need for any further "sacrifice" to be made for sin (Eph. 5:2). Today, believers in Jesus are to offer themselves as a living "sacrifice" to God, continually surrendering their life and heart to Him (Rom. 12:1). Paul describes his ministry and life of faith a continual "sacrifice," one he is more than glad to offer (Phil. 2:17).

5 And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; Num. 18:21–26

6 but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. Gen. 14:19, 20; Rom. 4:13

7 Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.

8 Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he *receives them*, of whom it is witnessed that he lives.

9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak,

10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

### IMPERFECTION OF AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

11 Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need *was there* that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? Heb. 7:18; 8:7

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.

13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.

14 For *it is* evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.<sup>a</sup> Is. 1:1 ✦; Matt. 1:2

15 And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest

16 who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life.

6:10 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *labor of*. 6:14 <sup>a</sup>Genesis 22:17 6:18 <sup>a</sup>M-Text omits *might*. 7:14 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *priests*.

## MAKE INTERCESSION

**7:25** (Gr. *entunchanō*) (Acts 25:24; Rom. 8:27, 34; 11:2) G1793: Literally, this word means “to meet with someone to talk.” By implication, it means “to entreat or plead with someone.” The root words are *en*, “in,” and *tunchanō*, “to obtain.” It is used to describe the way the ruling Jews petitioned Festus to put Paul to death (Acts 25:24) and to describe the way Elijah pleaded with God in prayer (Rom. 11:2). More important to believers, we are told God the Holy Spirit and God the Son intercede with God the Father on our behalf, obtaining our salvation and sanctification in this way (Rom. 8:27, 34).

17 For He testifies:<sup>a</sup>

“You *are* a priest forever  
According to the order  
of Melchizedek.”<sup>b</sup>

Ps. 110:4 +

18 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness,

Rom. 8:3

19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, *there is the* bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

Rom. 5:2

**20** And inasmuch as *He was* not *made priest* without an oath

21 (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him:

“The LORD has sworn  
And will not relent,  
‘You *are* a priest forever<sup>a</sup>  
According to the order  
of Melchizedek’ ”),<sup>b</sup>

Ps. 110:4

22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

Heb. 8:6

23 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing.

24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Rom. 8:34; Jude 24

26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

Eph. 1:20

27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

Lev. 9:7; 16:6

28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which

came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever.

## CHAPTER 8 A BETTER COVENANT

**N**ow *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

Col. 3:1

2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore *it is* necessary that this One also have something to offer.

Eph. 5:2

4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law;

5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See *that* you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.”<sup>a</sup>

Ex. 25:40; Col. 2:17

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

2 Cor. 3:6–8; Heb. 7:22

## A NEW COVENANT

**7** For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

Ex. 3:8; 19:5

8 Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—

Jer. 31:31–34 +

9 “not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD.

10 “For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jer. 31:33; Zech. 8:8

11 “None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

Is. 54:13; Jer. 31:34

12 “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds<sup>a</sup> I will remember no more.”<sup>b</sup>

Rom. 11:27

13 In that He says, “A new *covenant*,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

2 Cor. 5:17

**7:17**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *it is testified*. <sup>b</sup> Psalm 110:4 **7:21**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text ends the quotation here. <sup>b</sup> Psalm 110:4 **8:5**<sup>a</sup> Exodus 25:40 **8:12**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *and their lawless deeds*. <sup>b</sup> Jeremiah 31:31–34

## CHAPTER 9

## OLD COVENANT'S SANCTUARY

**T**HEN indeed, even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. Ex. 25:8

2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, Ex. 40:3

4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; Ex. 16:33; 25:10, 16; 34:29; Lev. 16:12; Num. 17:1–10

5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. Lev. 16:2

## OLD COVENANT'S SACRIFICE

6 Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. Num. 28:3

7 But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and *for* the people's sins *committed* in ignorance; Ex. 30:10; Heb. 5:3

8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. John 14:6

9 It *was* symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience— Heb. 7:19

10 *concerned* only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. Num. 19:7; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:16

## NEW COVENANT'S SANCTUARY

11 But Christ came *as* High Priest of the good things to come,<sup>a</sup> with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

## NEW COVENANT'S SACRIFICE

12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. Dan. 9:24 †; Zech. 3:9; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 10:4

13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, Lev. 16:14, 15; Num. 19:2

14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Luke 1:74; 1 John 1:7

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. Rom. 3:25; Heb. 3:1

## MEDIATOR

8:6 (Gr. *mesitēs*) (Gal. 3:19–20; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:15; 12:24) G3316: This Greek word means “a go-between,” an intermediary between two parties. Paul describes Moses as a mediator of the first covenant: he acted as a liaison between God and the Israelites, communicating the obligations of the covenant to Israel and pleading the Israelites' case before God (see Gal. 3:19–20). In a similar way, Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. He established it through His death, commissioning His disciples to preach the Good News. Now He sits at the right hand of God interceding for Christians (Heb. 7:25).

## PROPITIATION

9:5 (Gr. *hilastērion*) (Rom. 3:25) G2435: Used twice in the New Testament, here translated as “mercy seat,” this term is derived from the Greek verb *hilaskomai*, a word that has three meanings: (1) “to placate” or “to appease”; (2) “to be propitious and merciful”; or (3) “to make propitiation for someone.” The New Testament never describes people appeasing God. Instead, as Luke 18:13 and 1 John 2:2 make clear, the New Testament describes God as being merciful to, or making propitiation for, us. God provides a merciful expiation, or atonement, of the sins of believers through Jesus' death. But since the Bible speaks of God's wrath, it must also speak of the conciliation of God's anger by means of a sacrifice—namely, the sacrifice of His Son. John states that God demonstrated His love to us by sending His Son to become “the propitiation (*hilamos*) for our sins” (1 John 4:10). Just as in the Old Testament God met His people when the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled on the altar, so Jesus' death brings us into fellowship with God.

16 For where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

17 For a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. Gal. 3:15

18 Therefore not even the first *covenant* was dedicated without blood. Ex. 24:6

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, Ex. 24:5, 6; Lev. 14:4, 7

20 saying, “This *is* the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.”<sup>a</sup> Ex. 24:3–8; Matt. 26:28

21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. Ex. 29:12, 36

22 And according to the law almost all things

9:11 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *that have come*. 9:20 <sup>a</sup>Exodus 24:8



are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. Lev. 17:11

23 Therefore *it was* necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. Heb. 8:5

24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 6:20; 8:2

25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another— Heb. 9:7

26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, Gen. 3:19; 2 Cor. 5:10

28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. Matt. 26:28; Rom. 6:10 +; Titus 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:24

CHAPTER 10

**F**OR the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. Heb. 7:19; 8:5; 9:9

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins.

3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year.

4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Mic. 6:6, 7

5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,  
But a body You have prepared  
for Me. Ps. 40:6-8 +

6 In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You had no pleasure.

7 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—  
In the volume of the book it is written  
of Me—  
To do Your will, O God.’ ”<sup>a</sup>

8 Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *offerings* for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure *in them*” (which are offered according to the law),

9 then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.”<sup>a</sup> He takes away the first that He may establish the second.

10 By that will we have been sanctified through

the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. John 17:19; Heb. 9:12

11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. Num. 28:3

12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, Ps. 110:1; Col. 3:1 +

13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. Ps. 110:1 +

14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

16 “This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,”<sup>a</sup> Jer. 31:33, 34 +

17 *then He adds*, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”<sup>a</sup> Jer. 31:34

18 Now where there is remission of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin.

HOLD FAST THE CONFESSION OF FAITH

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, Eph. 2:18; Heb. 9:8, 12

20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, John 14:6

21 and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Eph. 3:12; Heb. 7:19; 10:1

23 Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13

24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. Acts 2:42; Rom. 13:11; Phil. 4:5

FOURTH WARNING: DANGER OF DRAWING BACK

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, Num. 15:30; Heb. 6:6; 2 Pet. 2:20

27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Zeph. 1:18

28 Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on *the testimony of* two or three witnesses. Deut. 17:2-6; 19:15

29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the

10:7<sup>a</sup> Psalm 40:6-8 10:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit O God.  
10:16<sup>a</sup> Jeremiah 31:33 10:17<sup>a</sup> Jeremiah 31:34

covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 1 Cor. 11:29

30 For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,”<sup>a</sup> says the Lord.<sup>b</sup> And again, “The LORD will judge His people.”<sup>c</sup> Deut. 32:35, 36

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Luke 12:5

32 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: Gal. 3:4

33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; 1 Cor. 4:9; Phil. 1:7

34 for you had compassion on me<sup>a</sup> in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.<sup>b</sup> 2 Tim. 1:16

35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. Matt. 5:12

36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: Luke 21:19; Col. 3:24

37 “For yet a little while,  
And He<sup>a</sup> who is coming will come and  
will not tarry. Hab. 2:3, 4 ⇨; Luke 18:8

38 Now the<sup>a</sup> just shall live by faith;  
But if *anyone* draws back,  
My soul has no pleasure in him.”<sup>b</sup> Rom. 1:17

39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. Acts 16:31; 2 Pet. 2:20

## CHAPTER 11

### DEFINITION OF FAITH

**N**ow faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Rom. 8:24

2 For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony.

3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. Ps. 33:6

### ABEL

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. Gen. 4:3–5; Heb. 12:24

### ENOCH

5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”;<sup>a</sup> for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Gen. 5:21–24

6 But without faith *it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

### NOAH

7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. Gen. 6:13–22

### ABRAHAM AND SARAH

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. Gen. 12:1–4

9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; Gen. 12:8; 13:3, 18; 18:1, 9; Heb. 6:17

10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God. Rev. 21:10

11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child<sup>a</sup> when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Gen. 17:19; 18:11–14; 21:1, 2

<sup>10:30</sup> <sup>a</sup>Deuteronomy 32:35 <sup>b</sup>NU-Text omits *says the Lord*.

<sup>c</sup>Deuteronomy 32:36 <sup>10:34</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *the prisoners* instead of

*me in my chains*. <sup>b</sup>NU-Text omits *in heaven*. <sup>10:37</sup> <sup>a</sup>Or *that which*

<sup>10:38</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *My just one*. <sup>b</sup>Habakkuk 2:3, 4 <sup>11:5</sup> <sup>a</sup>Genesis

5:24 <sup>11:11</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *she bore a child*.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

### PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

#### PART 2: REASON FOR PARTICIPATION

**10:25**—The ultimate reason we should participate in a local church is because it is specifically commanded by God. Even since New Testament days, however, some have abstained from doing so. The writer of Hebrews points out that members of a local church have an obligation to one another. They are to provoke one another to good works and to exhort one another to maintain consistent lives worthy of God. This can best be done within the context of a local church. This is why believers are commanded not to forsake the assembling of themselves together.

*For Part 3: BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION, turn to Acts 2:42–47 on page 1198. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born *as many* as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore. Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 32:12; Rom. 4:19

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them,<sup>a</sup> embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Gen. 12:7; Ps. 39:12; John 8:56; Heb. 11:39

14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. Heb. 13:14

15 And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. Gen. 11:31

16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. Ex. 3:6, 15; 4:5; Rev. 21:2

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, James 2:21

18 of whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,”<sup>a</sup> Gen. 21:12 +

19 concluding that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. Rom. 4:17

ISAAC

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. Gen. 27:26–40

JACOB

21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff. Gen. 48:1, 5, 16, 20

JOSEPH

22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. Gen. 50:24, 25

MOSES’ PARENTS

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s command. Ex. 1:16, 22; 2:1–3

MOSES

24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in<sup>a</sup> Egypt; for he looked to the reward. Rom. 8:18; Heb. 13:13

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. Ex. 10:28

28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling

of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. Ex. 12:21

29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*, *whereas* the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned. Ex. 14:22–29

JOSHUA AND RAHAB

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. Josh. 6:20

31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace. Josh. 2:1, 9; 6:23

MANY OTHER HEROES OF FAITH

32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: Judg. 4:6–24; 6:11; 7:1–25; 11:1–29; 12:1–7; 13:24–16:31

33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Dan. 6:22

34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Dan. 3:23–28

35 Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. 1 Kin. 17:22

36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. Gen. 39:20

37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted,<sup>a</sup> were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— 1 Kin. 21:13; 2 Kin. 1:8; Zech. 13:4

38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in dens* and caves of the earth. 1 Kin. 18:4, 13; 19:9

39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Heb. 5:9

CHAPTER 12

EXAMPLE OF CHRIST’S ENDURANCE

**T**HEREFORE we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, Rom. 12:12; 1 Cor. 9:24; Col. 3:8

2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Ps. 69:19 +; 110:1; Luke 24:26; Phil. 2:8

11:13 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *were assured of them*. 11:18 <sup>a</sup> Genesis 21:12 11:26 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *of*. 11:37 <sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *were tempted*.

3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. Matt. 10:24

4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. 1 Cor. 10:13

### EXHORTATION TO ENDURE GOD'S CHASTENING

5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:

“My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,

Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; Prov. 3:11, 12

6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.”<sup>a</sup> Rev. 3:19

7 If<sup>a</sup> you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? Deut. 8:5; Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 23:13

8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 1 Pet. 5:9

9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? Job 12:10

10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Lev. 11:44

11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. James 3:17, 18

12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, Is. 35:3

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: Ps. 34:14

15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; Deut. 29:18; Heb. 4:1

16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. Gen. 25:33; 1 Cor. 6:13–18

17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. Gen. 27:30–40

18 For you have not come to the mountain that<sup>a</sup> may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness<sup>b</sup> and tempest, Deut. 5:22

19 and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.

### MAKE PERFECT

12:23 (Gr. *teleiōō*) (John 19:28; Heb. 5:9; 1 John 2:5) G5048: This word means “to complete, fulfill or achieve the end goal.” Jesus spoke of finishing the work of salvation assigned Him by God (John 17:4) and acted to fulfill prophecies (John 19:28). He is Himself perfect (Luke 13:32; Heb. 7:28). While under the Law, people can never achieve perfection (Heb. 7:19; 10:1); through Jesus’ help they can (John 17:23; Hebrews 10:14). Other things are spoken of as being made perfect as well, including God’s love in us (1 John 2:5; 4:12, 17–18). One of the more well-known and encouraging usages is found in 2 Corinthians 12:9: “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’”

20 (For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned<sup>a</sup> or shot with an arrow.”<sup>b</sup> Ex. 19:12, 13

21 And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”<sup>a</sup>)

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,

23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, Ps. 50:6; 94:2; Luke 10:20; Phil. 3:12; James 1:18

24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Gen. 4:10; Ex. 24:8; Heb. 8:6; 9:15

### FIFTH WARNING: DANGER OF REFUSING GOD

25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven,

26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake<sup>a</sup> not only the earth, but also heaven.”<sup>b</sup> Hag. 2:6

27 Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Is. 34:4; 54:10; 65:17

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may<sup>a</sup> serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Heb. 13:15, 21

29 For our God is a consuming fire. Ex. 24:17

12:6<sup>a</sup> Proverbs 3:11, 12 12:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *It is for discipline that you endure; God . . .* 12:18<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *to that which*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text reads *gloom*. 12:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit the rest of this verse. <sup>b</sup> Exodus 19:12, 13 12:21<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 9:19 12:26<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *will shake*. <sup>b</sup> Haggai 2:6 12:28<sup>a</sup> M-Text omits *may*.

## CHAPTER 13

## LOVE IN THE SOCIAL REALM

**L**ET brotherly love continue. Rom. 12:10  
 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* some have unwittingly entertained angels. Gen. 18:1–22; 19:1; Matt. 25:35

3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also. Matt. 25:36

4 Marriage *is* honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Prov. 5:18, 19; 1 Cor. 6:9

5 *Let your conduct be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”<sup>a</sup> Deut. 31:6, 8; Josh. 1:5

6 So we may boldly say:

“The LORD *is* my helper;  
 I will not fear.  
 What can man do to me?”<sup>a</sup> Ps. 27:1; 118:6

## LOVE IN THE RELIGIOUS REALM

7 Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of *their* conduct.

8 Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and forever. Heb. 1:12

9 Do not be carried about<sup>a</sup> with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.

11 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp.

12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. 1 Pet. 4:14

14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. Lev. 7:12; Hos. 14:2

16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Phil. 4:18

17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. Ezek. 3:17; Phil. 2:29

## CONCLUSION

18 Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. Acts 23:1; Eph. 6:19

19 But I especially urge *you* to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Hos. 6:2 +; Zech. 9:11; Rom. 15:33; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4

21 make you complete in every good work to do

13:5<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5 13:6<sup>a</sup> Psalm 118:6  
 13:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *away*.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

## WORSHIP

## PART 2: THE EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP

13:15—Since worship involves our thoughts, feelings, and actions, it can be expressed in many ways. Worship especially includes praise and thanksgiving, which may be expressed privately or publicly, either by grateful declarations (Heb. 13:15) or by joyful singing (Ps. 100:2; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Portions of early Christian hymns of worship may be preserved in the New Testament (1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:11–13).

One important expression of the church’s worship is remembering Jesus’ death through the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:26). The Lord’s Supper was instituted by Jesus the night before his crucifixion (Matt. 26:26–28) and further explained by Paul (1 Cor. 11:28–32).

Because worship means giving something to God, the cheerful giving of money to God’s work is certainly an act of worship (2 Cor. 9:7). The giving of one’s time to the Lord’s work may be considered worship as well. The use of one’s spiritual gifts in ministry to the body of Christ constitutes an example of worship as service (1 Cor. 12), as does faithfully occupying a church office (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9). Ministry in edifying fellow believers and evangelizing the lost both likewise constitute services of worship.

The single most important act of worship for the Christian, though, is the unqualified presentation of oneself to God as an obedient servant. This dedication involves the body and the mind (Rom. 12:1–2): the body because it contains the tools by which the will of God is carried out; the mind because it coordinates the actions to be executed by the body. When these are gladly devoted to God, they become instruments by which God effects His will on the earth. Such faithful and joyous service makes one’s entire life an act of worship.

*For Part 3: THE REASONS FOR WORSHIP, turn to 2 Chronicles 7:3 on page 451. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

His will, working in you<sup>a</sup> what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Phil. 2:13

22 And I appeal to you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words.

23 Know that *our* brother Timothy has been

set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly.

24 Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.

25 Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

13:21<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *us*.

# The Epistle of JAMES



## THE BOOK OF JAMES

Faith without works cannot be called faith. Faith without works is dead, and a dead faith is worse than no faith at all. Faith must work; it must produce; it must be visible. Verbal faith is not enough; mental faith is insufficient. Faith must be there, but it must be more. It must inspire action. Throughout his epistle to Jewish believers, James integrates true faith and everyday practical experience by stressing that true faith must manifest itself in works of faith.

Faith endures trials. Trials come and go, but a strong faith will face them head-on and develop endurance. Faith understands temptations. It will not allow us to consent to our lust and slide into sin. Faith obeys the Word. It will not merely hear and not do. Faith produces doers. Faith harbors no prejudice. For James, faith and favoritism cannot coexist. Faith displays itself in works. Faith is more than mere words. It is more than knowledge; it is demonstrated by obedience, and it overtly responds to the promises of God. Faith controls the tongue. This small but immensely powerful part of the body must be held in check. Faith can do it. Faith acts wisely. It gives us the ability to choose wisdom that is heavenly and to shun wisdom that is earthly. Faith produces separation from the world and submission to God. It provides us with the ability to resist the devil and humbly draw near to God. Finally, faith waits patiently for the coming of the Lord. Through trouble and trial, it stifles complaining.

The name *Iakobos* (James) in 1:1 is the basis for the early title *Iakobou Epistole*, “Epistle of James.” *Iakobos* is the Greek form of the Hebrew name “Jacob,” a Jewish name common in the first century.



## THE AUTHOR OF JAMES

Four men are named James in the New Testament: (1) James, the father of Judas (not Iscariot), is mentioned twice (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13) as the father of one of the twelve disciples but is otherwise completely unknown. (2) James, the son of Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13), elsewhere called James the Less (Mark 15:40), was one of the twelve disciples. Apart from being listed with the other disciples, this James is completely obscure, and it is

doubtful that he is the authoritative figure behind the epistle. Some attempts have been made to identify this James with the Lord’s brother (Gal. 1:19), but this view is difficult to reconcile with the Gospel accounts. (3) James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John (Matt. 4:21; 10:2; 17:1; Mark 3:17; 10:35; 13:3; Luke 9:54; Acts 1:13), was one of Jesus’ closest disciples, but his martyrdom by AD 44 (Acts 12:2) makes it very unlikely that he wrote this epistle. (4) James, the Lord’s brother (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19), was one of the “pillars” in the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13–21; 21:18; Gal. 2:9, 12). Tradition points to this prominent figure as the author of the epistle, and this best fits the evidence of Scripture. There are several clear parallels between the language of the letter drafted under his leadership in Acts 15:23–29 and the epistle of James (e.g., the unusual word *chairein*, “greeting,” is found only in Acts 15:23; 23:26; and James 1:1). The Jewish character of this epistle with its stress upon the law, along with the evident influence by the Sermon on the Mount (e.g., 4:11–12; 5:12), complement what we know about James “the Just” from Scripture and early tradition.

It has been argued that the Greek of this epistle is too sophisticated for a Galilean such as James, but this assumes that he never had the opportunity or aptitude to develop proficiency in Koine (“common”) Greek. As a prominent church leader, it would have been to his advantage to become fluent in the universal language of the Roman Empire.

For various reasons, some assert that James was a stepbrother of Jesus by a previous marriage of Joseph, or that the “brothers” of Jesus mentioned in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 were really His cousins. However, the most natural understanding of the Gospel accounts is that James was the half-brother of Jesus, being the offspring of Joseph and Mary after the birth of Jesus (Matt. 1:24–25). He apparently did not accept the claims of Jesus until the Lord appeared to him after His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7). He and his brothers were among the believers who awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:14). It was not long before he became an acknowledged leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; Gal. 2:9, 12), and he was a central figure in the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15. Even after Paul’s third missionary journey, James continued to observe the Mosaic Law as

a testimony to other Jews (Acts 21:18–25). Early tradition stresses his Jewish piety and his role in bringing others to an understanding of Jesus as the Messiah. He suffered a violent martyr's death not long before the fall of Jerusalem.

The brevity and limited doctrinal emphasis of James kept it from wide circulation; and by the time it became known in the church as a whole, there was uncertainty about the identity of the James in 1:1. Growing recognition that it was written by the Lord's brother led to its acceptance as a canonical book.



## THE TIME OF JAMES

James is addressed "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1), and it is apparent from verses like 1:19 and 2:1, 7 that this greeting refers to Hebrew Christians outside of Palestine. Their place of meeting is called a "synagogue" in the Greek text of 2:2, and the whole epistle reflects Jewish thought and expressions (e.g., 2:19, 21; 4:11–12; 5:4, 12). There are no references to slavery or idolatry, and this also fits an originally Jewish readership.

These Jewish believers were beset with problems that were testing their faith, and James was concerned that they were succumbing to impatience, bitterness, materialism, disunity, and spiritual apathy. As a resident of Jerusalem and a leader of the church, James no doubt had frequent contact with Jewish Christians from several Roman provinces. He therefore felt a responsibility to exhort and encourage them in their struggles of faith.

According to Josephus, James was martyred in AD 62 (Hegesippus, quoted in Eusebius, fixed the date of James's death at AD 66). Those who accept him as the author of this epistle have proposed a date of writing ranging from AD 45 to the end of his life. However, several factors indicate that this letter may have been the earliest writing of the New Testament (c. AD 46–49): (1) There is no mention of Gentile Christians or their relationship to Jewish Christians as would be expected in a later epistle. (2) Apart from references to the Person of Christ, there is practically no distinctive theology in James, suggesting an early date when Christianity was viewed in terms of Messianic Judaism. (3) The allusions to the teachings of Christ have such little verbal agreement with the synoptic Gospels that they probably preceded them. (4) James uses the word "synagogue" ("assembly," 2:2) in addition to "church" and indicates a very simple organization of elders and masters, that is, teachers (3:1; 5:14), which was patterned after the early synagogue. (5) James does not mention the issues involved in the Acts 15 Council in Jerusalem (AD 49).

## CHRIST IN JAMES

In 1:1 and 2:1, James refers to the "Lord Jesus Christ," and in 5:7–8 he anticipates "the coming of the Lord." Compared to other New Testament writers, James says little about Christ, and yet his speech is virtually saturated with allusions to the teaching of Christ. The Sermon on the Mount is especially prominent in James's thinking, with about fifteen indirect references (e.g., James 1:2 and Matt. 5:10–12; James 1:4 and Matt. 5:48; James 2:13 and Matt. 6:14–15; James 4:11 and Matt. 7:1–2; James 5:2 and Matt. 6:19). This epistle portrays Christ in the context of early Messianic Judaism.



## KEYS TO JAMES

**Key Theme:** *Faith That Works*—Throughout his epistle, James develops the theme of the characteristics of true faith. He effectively uses these characteristics as a series of tests to help his readers evaluate the quality of their relationship to Christ. The purpose of this work is not doctrinal or apologetic but practical. James seeks to challenge these believers to examine the quality of their daily lives in terms of attitudes and actions. A genuine faith will produce real changes in a person's conduct and character, and the absence of change is a symptom of a dead faith.

**Key Verses:** *James 1:19–22; 2:14–17*—"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (1:19–22).

"What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (2:14–17).

**Key Chapter:** *James 1*—One of the most difficult areas of the Christian life is that of testings and temptations. James reveals our correct response to both: to testings, count them all joy; to temptations, realize that God is not their source.



## SURVEY OF JAMES

James is the Proverbs of the New Testament because it is written in the terse moralistic style of Wisdom Literature. It is evident that James was



profoundly influenced by the Old Testament (especially by its Wisdom Literature) and by the Sermon on the Mount. But James’s impassioned preaching against inequity and social injustice also earns him the title of the Amos of the New Testament. Because of the many subjects in this epistle, it is difficult to outline; suggestions have ranged from no connection between the various topics to a unified scheme. The outline used here is: the test of faith (James 1:1–18); the characteristics of faith (1:19–5:6); and the triumph of faith (5:7–20).

**The Test of Faith (1:1–18)**—The first part of this epistle develops the qualities of genuine faith regarding trials and temptations. After a one-verse salutation to geographically dispersed Hebrew Christians (1:1), James quickly introduces his first subject, outward tests of faith (1:2–12). These trials are designed to produce mature endurance and a sense of dependence upon God, to whom the believer turns for wisdom and enablement. Inward temptations (1:13–18) do not come from the One who bestows “every good gift” (1:17). These solicitations to evil must be checked at an early stage or they may result in disastrous consequences.

**The Characteristics of Faith (1:19–5:6)**—A righteous response to testing requires that one be “swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” (1:19), and this broadly summarizes the remainder of the epistle. Quickness of hearing involves an obedient response to God’s Word (1:19–27). True hearing means more than mere listening; the Word must be received and applied. After stating this principle (1:21–22), James develops it with an illustration (1:23–25) and an application (1:26–27). A genuine faith should produce a change in attitude from partiality to the rich to a love

for the poor as well as the rich (2:1–13). True faith should also result in actions (2:14–26). In Romans 4, Paul used the example of Abraham to show that justification is by faith, not by works. But James says that Abraham was justified by works (2:21). Despite the apparent contradiction, Romans 4 and James 2 are really two sides of the same coin. In context, Paul is writing about justification before God while James writes of the evidence of justification before people. A faith that produces no change is not saving faith.

Moving from works to words, James shows how a living faith controls the tongue (“slow to speak,” 1:19). The tongue is small, but it has the power to accomplish great good or equally great evil. Only the power of God applied by an active faith can tame the tongue (3:1–12). Just as there are wicked and righteous uses of the tongue, so there are demonic and divine manifestations of wisdom (3:13–18). James contrasts seven characteristics of human wisdom with seven qualities of divine wisdom.

The strong pulls of worldliness (4:1–12) and wealth (4:13–5:6) create conflicts that are harmful to the growth of faith. The world system is at enmity with God; and the pursuit of its pleasures produces covetousness, envy, fighting, and arrogance (4:1–6). The believer’s only alternative is submission to God out of a humble and repentant spirit. This will produce a transformed attitude toward others as well (4:7–12). This spirit of submission and humility should be applied to any attempts to accrue wealth (4:13–17), especially because wealth can lead to pride, injustice, and selfishness (5:1–6).

**The Triumph of Faith (5:7–20)**—James encourages his readers patiently to endure the sufferings of the present life in view of the future prospect of

### OVERVIEW OF JAMES

	THE TEST OF FAITH		THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FAITH				THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH			
Outline	THE PURPOSE OF TESTS 1:1–12	THE SOURCE OF TEMPTATION 1:13–18	FAITH OBEYS THE WORD 1:19–27	FAITH REMOVES DISCRIMINATION 2:1–13	FAITH PROVES ITSELF BY WORKS 2:14–26	FAITH CONTROLS THE TONGUE 3:1–12	FAITH PRODUCES CHARACTER 3:13–5:6	FAITH ENDURES AWAITING CHRIST’S RETURN 5:7–12	FAITH PRAYS FOR THE AFFLICTED 5:13–18	FAITH CONFRONTS THE ERRING BELIEVER 5:19–20
Theme	DEVELOPMENT OF FAITH		WORKS OF FAITH				POWER OF FAITH			
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT									
Location	PROBABLY FROM JERUSALEM									
Time Frame	C. AD 46–49									

the coming of the Lord (5:7–12). Believers may be oppressed by the rich or by other circumstances; but as the example of Job teaches, they can be sure that God has a gracious purpose in His dealings with them. James concludes his epistle with some

practical words on prayer and restoration (5:13–20). The prayers of righteous men (e.g., elders in local churches) are efficacious for the healing and restoration of believers. When sin is not dealt with, it can contribute to illness and even death.

OUTLINE OF JAMES	
<b>Part One: The Test of Faith (1:1–18)</b>	
I. The Purpose of Tests . . . . . 1:1–12	II. The Source of Temptations . . . . . 1:13–18
<b>Part Two: The Characteristics of Faith (1:19–5:6)</b>	
I. Faith Obeys the Word . . . . . 1:19–27	V. Faith Produces Character . . . . . 3:13–5:6
II. Faith Removes Discrimination . . . . . 2:1–13	A. Faith Produces Wisdom. . . . . 3:13–18
III. Faith Proves Itself by Works . . . . . 2:14–26	B. Faith Produces Humility. . . . . 4:1–12
IV. Faith Controls the Tongue. . . . . 3:1–12	C. Faith Produces Dependence on God. . . . . 4:13–5:6
<b>Part Three: The Triumph of Faith (5:7–20)</b>	
I. Faith Endures Awaiting Christ’s Return. . . . . 5:7–12	III. Faith Confronts the Erring Believer. . . . . 5:19–20
II. Faith Prays for the Afflicted. . . . . 5:13–18	

**CHAPTER 1  
THE PURPOSE OF TESTS**

**J**AMES, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad:

Greetings. Acts 12:17

**2** My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, Acts 5:41; 1 Pet. 1:6

**3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. Rom. 5:3–5

**4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

**5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 1 Kin. 3:9; Jer. 29:12; Matt. 7:7

**6** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. Mark 11:23, 24

**7** For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

**8** *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. James 4:8

**9** Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. Job 14:2

**11** For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

**12** Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive

the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Matt. 10:22; 1 Cor. 9:25; James 5:11

**THE SOURCE OF TEMPTATIONS**

**13** Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

**14** But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.

**15** Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Job 15:35; Rom. 5:12; 6:23

**16** Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

**17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Num. 23:19; John 3:27

**18** Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. John 1:13; Eph. 1:12, 13; 1 Pet. 1:3, 23

**FAITH OBEYS THE WORD**

**19** So then,<sup>a</sup> my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; Prov. 17:27

**20** for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

**21** Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. Col. 3:8

**22** But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Matt. 7:21–28

<sup>a</sup>19 NU-Text reads *Know this or This you know*.

WISDOM

1:5 (Gr. *sophia*) (Luke 2:52; Rom. 11:33; 1 Cor. 1:17; 12:8; Eph. 1:17; Col. 2:3) G4678: The Greek word *sophia* occurs often in the New Testament, and typically refers to the spiritual or intellectual capacity of human beings (Luke 2:52) or even of God (Rom. 11:33). More abstractly, it can mean something like a body of learning or instruction (Acts 7:22) and be very practical (as here in James 1:5; cf. 3:17). It can also be personified, perhaps reflecting the Old Testament proverbs (as Matt. 11:19). Paul often used the word to represent unspiritual, worldly wisdom that believers must reject (as 1 Cor. 1:17, 19). In 1 Corinthians 12:8, however, it refers to the wisdom God imparts as a spiritual gift.

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; Luke 6:47

24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. John 13:17; James 2:12

26 If anyone among you<sup>a</sup> thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. Ps. 34:13

27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world. Is. 1:17; Matt. 25:34–36; Rom. 12:2

CHAPTER 2

FAITH REMOVES DISCRIMINATION

**M**Y brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the* Lord of glory, with partiality. Lev. 19:15; 1 Cor. 2:8

2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes,

3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"

4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? Ex. 20:6; Luke 12:21; 1 Cor. 1:27

6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? Acts 13:50; 1 Cor. 11:22

7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? 1 Pet. 4:16

8 If you really fulfill *the* royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"<sup>a</sup> you do well; Lev. 19:18

9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. Deut. 1:17

10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. Deut. 27:26

11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery,"<sup>a</sup> also said, "Do not murder."<sup>b</sup> Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. Ex. 20:13, 14; Deut. 5:17, 18

12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. James 1:25

13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. Job 22:6; Prov. 21:13; Mic. 7:18; Rom. 12:8

FAITH PROVES ITSELF BY WORKS

14 What *does* it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? Matt. 7:21–23, 26; 21:28–32

15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, Luke 3:11

16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? 1 John 3:17, 18

17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your<sup>a</sup> works, and I will show you my faith by my<sup>b</sup> works.

19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?<sup>a</sup>

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? John 8:39; Heb. 11:17

23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."<sup>a</sup> And he was called the friend of God. Gen. 15:6; 2 Chr. 20:7

24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way? Heb. 11:31

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

CHAPTER 3

FAITH CONTROLS THE TONGUE

**M**Y brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. Matt. 23:8; Luke 6:37

1:26<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *among you*. 2:8<sup>a</sup> Leviticus 19:18 2:11<sup>a</sup> Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18 <sup>b</sup> Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17 2:18<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *your*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *my*. 2:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *useless*. 2:23<sup>a</sup> Genesis 15:6

2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. 1 Kin. 8:46; Ps. 34:13

3 Indeed,<sup>a</sup> we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Ps. 32:9

4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

Ps. 12:3; 73:8; Prov. 12:18; 15:2

6 And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. Prov. 16:27

7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

8 But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Ps. 140:3

9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Gen. 1:26; 5:1; 9:6

10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

11 Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening?

12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.<sup>a</sup> Matt. 7:16–20

#### FAITH PRODUCES WISDOM

13 Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. Gal. 6:4

14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. Rom. 2:17; 13:13

15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. Phil. 3:19

16 For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. 1 Cor. 3:3

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Rom. 12:9; 1 Cor. 2:6, 7; James 2:1

18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. Prov. 11:18

### CHAPTER 4

#### FAITH PRODUCES HUMILITY

**W**HERE do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members? Rom. 7:23

2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet<sup>a</sup> you do not have because you do not ask.

3 You ask and do not receive, because you

#### PARTIALITY

2:1 (Gr. *prosōpolēmpsia*) (Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25) G4382: *Prosōpolēmpsia* refers to favoritism; that is, favoring one person over another and treating each accordingly. It is rarely used in the New Testament. Three of its four occurrences are in reference to God, stating that He shows no partiality toward anyone in meting out final judgments (Rom. 2:11), in whom He punishes (Col. 3:25), or in whom He rewards (Eph. 6:9). “Whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free” (Eph. 6:8). Here, he urges believers not to show favoritism toward one potential brother in Christ over another based on status or wealth (James 2:1).

#### GENTLE

3:17 (Gr. *epieikēs*) (Phil. 4:5; 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 3:2; 1 Pet. 2:18) G1933: This word appears in only five verses in the New Testament. Believers are encouraged to be gentle (Phil. 4:5), and indeed it is listed as a required trait for bishops (1 Tim. 3:2–3). Servants must submit to their masters, both the gentle and the harsh (1 Pet. 2:18). “Wisdom that is from above” is described as “peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. Job 27:8, 9; Ps. 66:18

4 Adulterers and<sup>a</sup> adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Gal. 1:4

5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”? Gen. 6:5

6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

“God resists the proud,  
But gives grace to the humble.”<sup>a</sup> Prov. 3:34

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Eph. 4:27; 6:11

8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. 2 Chr. 15:2; Is. 1:16; 1 Pet. 1:22

9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. Job 22:29

11 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law.

3:3<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Now if*. 3:12<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Neither can a salty spring produce fresh water*. 4:2<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *Yet*.

4:4<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Adulterers and*. 4:6<sup>a</sup> Proverbs 3:34

**ANOINT**

**5:14** (Gr. *aleiphō*) (Matt. 6:17; Mark 6:13; Luke 7:38; John 11:2; 12:3) G0218: The Greek word *aleiphō* was commonly used in Greek literature to describe a medicinal anointing. Another Greek word, *chriō*, was used to describe a sacramental anointing. The distinction is still observed in modern Greek, with *aleiphō* meaning “to daub” or “to smear,” and *chriō* meaning “to anoint.” Furthermore, oil was one of the most common medicines of biblical times. Thus, James was prescribing both prayer and medicine in this verse.

But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. Matt. 7:1-5; 1 Pet. 2:1-3

12 There is one Lawgiver,<sup>a</sup> who is able to save and to destroy. Who<sup>b</sup> are you to judge another?<sup>c</sup> Rom. 14:4

**FAITH PRODUCES DEPENDENCE ON GOD**

13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will<sup>a</sup> go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”;

14 whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Job 7:7

15 Instead you *ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” Acts 18:21

16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 1 Cor. 5:6

17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin. Luke 12:47

**CHAPTER 5**

**C**OME now, *you* rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you!* Luke 6:24

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Job 13:28; Matt. 6:19

3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Rom. 2:5

4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.<sup>a</sup> Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:15

5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as<sup>a</sup> in a day of slaughter.

6 You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

**FAITH ENDURES AWAITING CHRIST’S RETURN**

7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned.<sup>a</sup> Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Matt. 5:12; Heb. 10:36

11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. Num. 14:18; Job 42:10

12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and *your* “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.<sup>a</sup> Matt. 5:34-37

**FAITH PRAYS FOR THE AFFLICTED**

13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Ps. 50:14, 15

14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. Mark 6:13; 16:18

15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Is. 33:24

16 Confess *your* trespasses<sup>a</sup> to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Num. 11:2

17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 1 Kin. 17:1; 18:1; Acts 14:15

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. 1 Kin. 18:1, 42

**FAITH CONFRONTS THE ERRING BROTHER**

19 Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, Gal. 6:1

20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul<sup>a</sup> from death and cover a multitude of sins. Rom. 11:14; 1 Pet. 4:8

<sup>a</sup>4:12 NU-Text adds *and Judge*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *But who*. <sup>c</sup> NU-Text reads *a neighbor*. 4:13 M-Text reads *let us*. 5:4 Literally, in Hebrew, *Hosts* 5:5 NU-Text omits *as*. 5:9 NU-Text and M-Text read *judged*. 5:12 M-Text reads *hypocrisy*. 5:16 NU-Text reads *Therefore confess your sins*. 5:20 NU-Text reads *his soul*.

## The First Epistle of the Apostle

# PETER



### THE BOOK OF 1 PETER

Persecution can cause either growth or bitterness. Response determines the result. In writing to Jewish believers struggling amid persecution, Peter encourages them to conduct themselves courageously for the Person and program of Christ. Both their character and conduct must be above reproach. Having been born again to a living hope, they are to imitate the Holy One who has called them. The fruit of that character will be conduct rooted in submission: citizens to government, servants to masters, wives to husbands, husbands to wives, and Christians to one another. Only after submission is fully understood does Peter deal with the difficult area of suffering. The Christians are not to think it “strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you” (1 Pet. 4:12), but are to rejoice as partakers of the suffering of Christ. That response to life is truly the climax of one’s submission to the good hand of God.

This epistle begins with the phrase *Petros Apostolos Iesou Christou*, “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ.” This is the basis of the early title *Petrou A*, the “First of Peter.”



### THE AUTHOR OF 1 PETER

The early church universally acknowledged the authenticity and authority of 1 Peter. The internal evidence supports this consistent external testimony in several ways. The apostle Peter’s name is given in 1:1, and there are definite similarities between certain phrases in this letter and Peter’s sermons as recorded in the Book of Acts (cf. 1 Pet. 1:20 and Acts 2:23; 1 Pet. 4:5 and Acts 10:42). Twice in Acts, Peter used the Greek word *xylon*, “wood, tree,” to speak of the cross, and this distinctive use is also found in 1 Peter (see Acts 5:30; 10:39; 1 Pet. 2:24). The epistle contains several allusions to events in the life of Christ that held special significance for Peter (e.g., 2:23; 3:18; 4:1; 5:1; cf. 5:5 and John 13:4).

Nevertheless, critics since the nineteenth century have challenged the authenticity of 1 Peter on several grounds. Some claim that 1:1–2 and 4:12–5:14 were later additions that turned an anonymous address or a baptismal sermon into a Petrine epistle. Others argue that the sufferings experienced by

readers of this letter must refer to the persecution of Christians that took place after the time of Peter in the reigns of the emperors Domitian (AD 81–96) and Trajan (AD 98–117). There is no basis for the first argument, and the second argument falsely assumes that Christians were not being reviled for their faith during the life of Peter. Another challenge asserts that the quality of the Greek of this epistle is too high for a Galilean like Peter. But Galileans were bilingual (Aramaic and Greek), and writers such as Matthew and James were skillful in their use of Greek. It is also likely that Peter used Silvanus as his scribe (1 Pet. 5:12; Paul calls him Silvanus in 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; Luke calls him Silas in Acts 15:40–18:5), and Silvanus may have smoothed out Peter’s Greek in the process.



### THE TIME OF 1 PETER

This letter is addressed “to the strangers scattered,” or more literally, “pilgrims of the Dispersion” (1 Pet. 1:1). This, coupled with the injunction to keep their behavior “honorable among the Gentiles” (2:12), gives the initial appearance that the bulk of the readers are Hebrew Christians. A closer look, however, forms the opposite view that most of these believers were Gentiles. They were called “out of darkness” (2:9), and they “once were not a people but are now the people of God” (2:10). Their former “aimless conduct received by tradition from [their] fathers” was characterized by ignorance and futility (1:14, 18; cf. Eph. 4:17). Because they no longer engage in debauchery and idolatry, they are maligned by their countrymen (1 Pet. 4:3–4). These descriptions do not fit a predominantly Hebrew Christian readership. Though Peter was an apostle “to the circumcised” (Gal. 2:8), he also ministered to Gentiles (Acts 10:34–48; Gal. 2:12), and a letter like this would not be beyond the scope of his ministry.

This epistle was addressed to Christians throughout Asia Minor, indicating the spread of the gospel in regions not evangelized when Acts was written (Pontus, Cappadocia, Bithynia; 1 Pet. 1:1). It is possible that Peter visited and ministered in some of these areas, but there is no evidence. He wrote this letter in response to the news of growing opposition to the believers in Asia Minor (1:6; 3:13–17; 4:12–19; 5:9–10). Hostility and suspicion

were mounting against Christians in the empire, and they were being reviled and abused for their lifestyles and subversive talk about another kingdom. Christianity had not yet received the official Roman ban, but the stage was being set for the persecution and martyrdom of the near future.

Peter's life was dramatically changed after the Resurrection, and he occupied a central role in the early church and in the spread of the gospel to the Samaritans and Gentiles (Acts 2–10). After the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, little is recorded of Peter's activities. He evidently traveled extensively with his wife (1 Cor. 9:5) and ministered in various Roman provinces. According to tradition, Peter was crucified upside down in Rome prior to Nero's death in AD 68.

This epistle was written from Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13), but scholars are divided as to whether this refers literally to Babylon in Mesopotamia or symbolically to Rome. There is no tradition that Peter went to Babylon, and in his day, it had few inhabitants. On the other hand, tradition consistently indicates that Peter spent the last years of his life in Rome. As a center of idolatry, the term "Babylon" was an appropriate figurative designation for Rome (cf. the later use of "Babylon" in Rev. 17–18). Peter used other figurative expressions in this epistle, and it is not surprising that he would do the same with Rome. His mention of Mark (1 Pet. 5:13) also fits this view because Mark was in Rome during Paul's first imprisonment (Col. 4:10). This epistle was probably written shortly before the outbreak of persecution under Nero in AD 64.

## ✝ CHRIST IN 1 PETER

This epistle presents Christ as the believer's example and hope in time of suffering in a spiritually hostile world. He is the basis for the Christian's "living hope" and "inheritance" (1 Pet. 1:3–4), and the love relationship available with Him by faith is a source of inexpressible joy (1:8). His suffering and death provide redemption for all who trust in Him: "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed" (2:24; cf. 1:18–19; 3:18). Christ is the Chief Shepherd and Overseer of believers (2:25; 5:4); and when He appears, those who know Him will be glorified.



### KEYS TO 1 PETER

**Key Theme:** *Suffering for the Cause of Christ*—The basic theme of 1 Peter is the proper response to Christian suffering. Knowing that his readers will be facing more persecution than ever before, Peter

writes this letter to give them a divine perspective on these trials so that they will be able to endure them without wavering in their faith. They should not be surprised at their ordeal because the One they follow also suffered and died (1 Pet. 2:21; 3:18; 4:1, 12–14). Rather, they should count it a privilege to share the sufferings of Christ. Peter therefore exhorts them to be sure that their hardships are not being caused by their own wrongdoings, but for their Christian testimony. They are not the only believers who are suffering (5:9), and they must recognize that God brings these things into the lives of His children, not as a punishment but as a stimulus to "perfect" them in Christ (5:10). Peter wants to overcome the attitudes of bitterness and anxiety, replacing them with dependence on and confidence in God.

Another theme is stated in 5:12: "I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God." In this epistle, Peter frequently speaks of the believer's position in Christ and future hope, and he does so to remind his readers that they are merely sojourners on this planet: their true destiny is eternal glory "when His glory is revealed" (4:13). The grace of God in their salvation (1:1–2:10) shall give them an attitude of submission (2:11–3:12) in the context of suffering for the name of Christ (3:13–5:14).

**Key Verses:** *1 Peter 1:10–12; 4:12–13*—"Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into" (1:10–12).

"Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (4:12–13).

**Key Chapter:** *1 Peter 4*—Central in the New Testament revelation concerning how to handle persecution and suffering caused by one's Christian testimony is 1 Peter 4. Not only is Christ's suffering to be our model (4:1–2), but also, we are to rejoice in that we can share in His suffering (4:12–14).



### SURVEY OF 1 PETER

Peter addresses this epistle to "pilgrims" in a world that is growing increasingly hostile to Christians.

These believers are beginning to suffer because of their stand for Christ, and Peter uses this letter to give them counsel and comfort by stressing the reality of their living hope in the Lord. By standing firm in the grace of God (1 Pet. 5:12) they will be able to endure their “fiery trial” (4:12), knowing that there is a divine purpose behind their pain. This letter logically proceeds through the themes of the salvation of the believer (1:1—2:12); the submission of the believer (2:13—3:12); and the suffering of the believer (3:13—5:14).

**The Salvation of the Believer (1:1—2:12)**—Addressing his letter to believers in several Roman provinces, Peter briefly describes the saving work of the triune Godhead in his salutation (1:1–2). He then extols God for the riches of this salvation by looking in three temporal directions (1:3–12). First, Peter anticipates the future realization of the Christian’s manifold inheritance (1:3–5). Second, he looks at the present joy that this living hope produces despite various trials (1:6–9). Third, he reflects upon the prophets of the past who predicted the gospel of God’s grace in Christ (1:10–12).

The proper response to this salvation is the pursuit of sanctification or holiness (1:13—2:10). This involves a purifying departure from conformity with the world to godliness in behavior and love. With this in mind, Peter exhorts his readers to “desire the pure milk of the word, that [they] may grow” (2:2) by applying “the word of God which lives and abides forever” (1:23) and acting as a holy priesthood of believers.

**The Submission of the Believer (2:13—3:12)**—

Peter turns to the believer’s relationships in the world and appeals for an attitude of submission as the Christlike way to harmony and true freedom. Submission for the Lord’s sake to those in governmental (2:13–17) and social (2:18–20) authority will foster a good testimony to outsiders. Before moving on to submission in marital relationships (3:1–7), Peter again picks up the theme of Christian suffering (mentioned in 1:6–7 and 2:12, 18–20) and uses Christ as the supreme model: He suffered sinlessly, silently, and as a substitute for the salvation of others (2:21–25; cf. Is. 52:13—53:12). Peter summarizes his appeal for Christlike submission and humility in 3:8–12.

**The Suffering of the Believer (3:13—5:14)**—Anticipating that growing opposition to Christianity will require many of his readers to defend their faith and conduct, Peter encourages them to be ready to do so in an intelligent and gracious way (1 Pet. 3:13–16). Three times he tells them that if they must suffer, it should be for righteousness’ sake and not because of sinful behavior (3:17; see 2:20; 4:15–16). The end of this chapter (3:18–22) is an extremely difficult passage to interpret, and several options have been offered. Verses 19 and 20 may mean that Christ, during the period between His death and resurrection, addressed demonic spirits or the spirits of those who were alive before the Flood. Another interpretation is that Christ preached through Noah to his pre-Flood contemporaries.

As believers in Christ, the readers are no longer to pursue the lusts of the flesh as they did formerly,

OVERVIEW OF 1 PETER										
Outline	THE SALVATION OF THE BELIEVER		THE SUBMISSION OF THE BELIEVER				THE SUFFERING OF THE BELIEVER			
	SALVATION OF THE BELIEVER	SANCTIFICATION OF THE BELIEVER	SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT	SUBMISSION IN BUSINESS	SUBMISSION IN MARRIAGE	SUBMISSION IN ALL OF LIFE	CONDUCT IN SUFFERING	CHRIST’S EXAMPLE OF SUFFERING	COMMANDS IN SUFFERING	MINISTER IN SUFFERING
	1:1–12	1:13–2:12	2:13–17	2:18–25	3:1–8	3:9–12	3:13–17	3:18–4:6	4:7–19	5:1–14
Theme	HOLINESS		HARMONY				HUMILITY			
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT									
Location	ROME OR BABYLON									
Time Frame	C. AD 63–64									



but rather the will of God (4:1–6). In view of the hardships that they may suffer, Peter exhorts them to be strong in their mutual love and to exercise their spiritual gifts in the power of God so that they will be built up (4:7–11). They should not be surprised when they are slandered and reviled for their faith because God has a purpose in all things, and the time of judgment will come when His name and all who trust in Him will be vindicated (4:12–19). They must therefore “commit their souls to Him in doing good” (4:19).

In a special word to the elders of the churches

in these Roman provinces, Peter urges them to be diligent but gentle shepherds over the flocks that have been divinely placed under their care (5:1–4). The readers as a whole are told to clothe themselves with humility toward one another and toward God who will exalt them at the proper time (5:5–7). They are to resist the Adversary in the sure knowledge that their calling to God’s eternal glory in Christ will be realized (5:8–11). Peter ends his epistle by stating his theme (“the true grace of God”) and conveying greetings and a benediction (5:12–14).

### OUTLINE OF 1 PETER

#### Part One: The Salvation of the Believer (1:1—2:12)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| I. Salvation of the Believer . . . . . 1:1–12 | II. Sanctification of the Believer . . . . . 1:13—2:12 |
| A. Salutation . . . . . 1:1–2                 | A. “Be Holy” . . . . . 1:13–21                         |
| B. Hope for the Future . . . . . 1:3–4        | B. “Love One Another” . . . . . 1:22–25                |
| C. Trials for the Present . . . . . 1:5–9     | C. “Desire the Pure Milk of the Word” . . . . . 2:1–3  |
| D. Anticipation in the Past . . . . . 1:10–12 | D. “Offer Up Spiritual Sacrifices” . . . . . 2:4–10    |
|   | E. “Abstain from Fleshly Lusts” . . . . . 2:11–12      |

#### Part Two: The Submission of the Believer (2:13—3:12)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| I. Submission to the Government . . . . . 2:13–17 | III. Submission in Marriage . . . . . 3:1–8    |
| II. Submission in Business . . . . . 2:18–25      | IV. Submission in All of Life . . . . . 3:9–12 |

#### Part Three: The Suffering of the Believer (3:13—5:14)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| I. Conduct in Suffering . . . . . 3:13–17            | A. Elders, Shepherd the Flock . . . . . 5:1–4 |
| II. Christ’s Example of Suffering . . . . . 3:18—4:6 | B. Saints, Humble Yourselves . . . . . 5:5–9  |
| III. Commands in Suffering . . . . . 4:7–19          | C. Benediction . . . . . 5:10–14              |
| IV. Minister in Suffering . . . . . 5:1–9            |   |

### CHAPTER 1 SALUTATION

**P**ETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, James 1:1

2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace be multiplied. Is. 52:15 +

#### HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, Eph. 1:3

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, Col. 1:5

### TRIALS FOR THE PRESENT

5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. John 10:28

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, Matt. 5:12; 2 Cor. 4:17; James 1:2

7 that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, Job 23:10

8 whom having not seen<sup>a</sup> you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, John 20:29

9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *known*.

## ANTICIPATION IN THE PAST

10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you,

11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 2 Pet. 1:21

12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us<sup>a</sup> they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into. Eph. 3:10

## “BE HOLY”

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance;

15 but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, 2 Cor. 7:1

16 because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”<sup>a</sup>

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; Acts 10:34

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers,

19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Is. 53:7 +

20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you Rom. 3:25; Gal. 4:4

21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Acts 2:24, 33

## “LOVE ONE ANOTHER”

22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit<sup>a</sup> in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, Acts 15:9; Heb. 13:1

23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,<sup>a</sup> John 1:13; James 1:18

24 because

“All flesh *is* as grass,  
And all the glory of man<sup>a</sup> as the  
flower of the grass.

The grass withers,  
And its flower falls away, Is. 40:6–8

25 But the word of the LORD endures  
forever.”<sup>a</sup>

Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you. Is. 40:8; John 1:1

## SALVATION

1:9 (Gr. *sōtēria*) (Luke 1:69, 71; Acts 4:12; Rom. 1:16) G4991: This word literally means “preservation, deliverance from enemies, rescue from danger, safety.” In a spiritual sense, salvation is all these things. We are preserved from death and rescued from the realm of Satan. This word encompasses both the initiation of salvation (Luke 19:9), all phases of redemption, and the final consummation of our salvation at the return of Christ (Rom. 13:11; Heb. 9:28). Indeed, this is one of the words uttered at the very throne of God: “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number . . . standing before the throne and before the Lamb . . . crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation [*sōtēria*] belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Rev. 7:9–10).

## CHAPTER 2

## “DESIRE THE PURE MILK OF THE WORD”

1 **T**HEREFORE, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, Heb. 12:1

2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 3:2

3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious. Heb. 6:5

## “OFFER UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES”

4 Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

“Behold, I lay in Zion  
A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,  
And he who believes on Him will by  
no means be put to shame.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 28:16 +

7 Therefore, to you who believe, *He is* precious; but to those who are disobedient,<sup>a</sup>

“The stone which the builders  
rejected  
Has become the chief  
cornerstone,”<sup>b</sup> Ps. 118:22

8 and

“A stone of stumbling  
And a rock of offense.”<sup>a</sup>

1:12<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *you*. 1:16<sup>a</sup> Leviticus 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7  
1:22<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *through the Spirit*. 1:23<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *forever*.  
1:24<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *all its glory*. 1:25<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 40:6–8 2:2<sup>a</sup> NU-Text  
adds *up to salvation*. 2:6<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 28:16 2:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *to those  
who disbelieve*. <sup>b</sup> Psalm 118:22 2:8<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 8:14

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. *Is. 8:14* +; 1 Cor. 1:23

9 But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; *Acts 26:18*

10 who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. *Hos. 1:9, 10; 2:23*

**“ABSTAIN FROM FLESHLY LUSTS”**

11 Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, *James 4:1*

12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. *Phil. 2:15*

**SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT**

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, *Matt. 22:21*

14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do good.

15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—

16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. *Rom. 6:14, 20, 22; Gal. 5:13*

17 Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. *Prov. 24:21*

**SUBMISSION IN BUSINESS**

18 Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. *Eph. 6:5–8*

19 For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. *Matt. 5:10*

20 For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. *Luke 6:32–34*

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us,<sup>a</sup> leaving us<sup>b</sup> an example, that you should follow His steps: *Matt. 16:24; 1 John 2:6*

22 “Who committed no sin,  
Nor was deceit found in His  
mouth”;<sup>a</sup> *Is. 53:9* +

23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; *Is. 53:7* +; *Luke 23:46*

24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. *Is. 53:4, 5, 11* +; *Rom. 7:6; Heb. 9:28*

25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer<sup>a</sup> of your souls. *Is. 53:5, 6; Ezek. 34:23; Zech. 13:7* +

**CHAPTER 3**

**SUBMISSION IN MARRIAGE**

**W**IVES, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, *Matt. 18:15; 1 Cor. 7:16; Eph. 5:22*

2:21<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *you*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *you*.  
2:22<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 53:9 2:25<sup>a</sup> Greek *Episkopos*

**RECOGNIZING GOD’S INSTITUTIONS**

**HUMAN GOVERNMENT**

**PART 3: OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HUMAN GOVERNMENT**

2:13—It is impossible for a believer to be a good Christian and a bad citizen at the same time. As children of God, our responsibility to human government is threefold:

- a. **We are to recognize and accept civil powers as ordained by God.** “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God” (Rom. 13:1). This truth applies even to atheistic human governments unless, of course, the law is anti-scriptural. In that situation the believer must obey God rather than humans (Acts 4:18–20). In fact, when Paul wrote those words in Romans 13:1, the evil emperor Nero was on the throne (see also Titus 3:1).
- b. **We are to pay our taxes to human government** (see Matt. 17:24–27; 22:21; Rom. 13:7).
- c. **We are to pray for the leaders in human government.** “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior” (1 Tim. 2:1–3). Paul exhorted us to pray for those who are in authority that we may lead a quiet life. We are to pray that they hold their offices in godliness and honesty (1 Tim. 2:1–3).

*For the next article, ISRAEL, turn to Amos 3:2 on page 958. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

2 when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear. 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:6

3 Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel— 1 Tim. 2:9

4 rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. Rom. 2:29

5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,

6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. Gen. 18:12

7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. Job 42:8; 1 Cor. 12:23; Eph. 5:25

8 Finally, all of *you be* of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, *be* tenderhearted, *be* courteous;<sup>a</sup>

#### SUBMISSION IN ALL OF LIFE

9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. Prov. 17:13; Matt. 5:44; 25:34

10 For

“He who would love life  
And see good days,  
Let him refrain his tongue from  
evil,  
And his lips from speaking deceit. Ps. 34:12–16

11 Let him turn away from evil and  
do good;

Let him seek peace and pursue it. Ps. 37:27

12 For the eyes of the LORD *are* on the  
righteous,

And His ears *are open* to their  
prayers;

But the face of the LORD *is against*  
those who do evil.”<sup>a</sup> John 9:31

#### CONDUCT IN SUFFERING

13 And who *is* he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? Prov. 16:7

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are* blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.”<sup>a</sup> Is. 8:12; James 1:12

15 But sanctify the Lord God<sup>a</sup> in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; Ps. 119:46; Titus 3:7

16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. Heb. 13:18

17 For *it is* better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

#### CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF SUFFERING

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us<sup>a</sup> to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited<sup>a</sup> in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which

3:8<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *humble*. 3:12<sup>a</sup> Psalm 34:12–16 3:14<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 8:12  
3:15<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *Christ as Lord*. 3:18<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *you*. 3:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *when the longsuffering of God waited patiently*.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S INSTITUTIONS

### THE FAMILY

#### PART 4: THE ROLE OF THE WIFE

3:1–6—This passage describes submission to her husband as a responsibility of the married woman (other roles for women are covered in such passages as Prov. 31:10–31 and Titus 2:3–5). Of note, a wife is to submit to her husband's leadership, not to men in general. This does not mean the wife is by nature inferior to the husband. In marriage, two people become one through the joining of their intellects, emotions, and wills. However, to keep their union from fracturing or destroying itself, one member is charged to lead and one to submit.

The wife's submission to her husband is part of her “adorning,” which makes her truly beautiful (1 Pet. 3:3). This inner beauty is of great value in God's sight (3:4). The believing women of the Old Testament who hoped to be the human channel for the Messiah to come into the world made themselves beautiful by being submissive to their own husbands. This is supremely illustrated in the relationship between Sarah and Abraham. Wives today, then, are exhorted to do what Sarah did, to be submissive to their husbands, letting the consequences rest with God, and thus become Sarah's daughters (3:6). For the wife who will do this, God promises that, if her husband is either an unbeliever or out of fellowship with God, her submission can be the very means God will use to bring him into a proper relationship with God (3:1–2). The wife's submission may even lead to the husband's salvation.

*For Part 5: THE ROLE OF PARENTS, turn to Ephesians 6:4 on page 1306. For an explanation of “The Christian's Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

21 There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Rom. 10:10; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5

22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Ps. 110:1; Rom. 8:38

#### CHAPTER 4

**T**HEREFORE, since Christ suffered for us<sup>a</sup> in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

2 that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

John 1:13

3 For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime<sup>a</sup> in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of *you*.

5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Acts 10:42

6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

Rom. 8:9, 13; 1 Pet. 1:12; 3:19

#### COMMANDS IN SUFFERING

7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

Rom. 13:11

8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”<sup>a</sup>

Prov. 10:12

9 *Be* hospitable to one another without grumbling.

2 Cor. 9:7; Heb. 13:2

10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2; 12:4

11 If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Cor. 10:31; Eph. 4:29

12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

James 1:2

14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.<sup>a</sup> On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

Matt. 5:11, 16

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters.

16 Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.<sup>a</sup>

17 For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Is. 10:12; Luke 10:12

18 Now

“If the righteous one is scarcely saved,  
Where will the ungodly and  
the sinner appear?”<sup>a</sup>

Prov. 11:31

4:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *for us*. 4:3<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *time*. 4:8<sup>a</sup> Proverbs 10:12 4:14<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. 4:16<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *name*. 4:18<sup>a</sup> Proverbs 11:31

### FACING PROBLEMS IN THE NEW LIFE

#### SUFFERING

##### PART 1: KINDS OF SUFFERING

3:17—There are three basic kinds of suffering, all of which can bring pain and adversity to the believer.

- a. **Physical suffering.** This occurs when a part of our body is injured or begins to malfunction, resulting in a disharmony between it and the rest of the body. Several factors can be involved in physical suffering. It can be caused by an accident or by carelessness (2 Sam. 4:4). It can be due to birth irregularities (John 9:1). It can result from internal disorders (Luke 8:43). Finally, physical suffering may be caused by Satan (Job 2:7; Luke 13:16).
- b. **Mental suffering.** In many ways, this suffering is even more intense than physical suffering. Justified or unjustified concern over some matter can easily produce mental anguish. Paul himself experienced “fear, and much trembling” and “anguish of heart” (1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 1:8; 2:4, 13; 7:5).
- c. **Spiritual suffering.** Spiritual suffering can come from the world (1 John 2:15–17), the flesh (Rom. 7:18–24), or the devil (Acts 13:8–11; 16:16–18; 1 Thess. 2:18).

For Part 2: PURPOSES OF SUFFERING, turn to Job 2:7 on page 530. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.

19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator. 2 Tim. 1:12

## CHAPTER 5

### ELDERS, SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

**T**HE elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Matt. 26:37; Rom. 8:17, 18

2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly,<sup>a</sup> not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 1 Tim. 3:3

3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; Ps. 33:12; Ezek. 34:4

4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. 2 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 13:20

### SAINTS, HUMBLE YOURSELVES

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

“God resists the proud,  
But gives grace to the  
humble.”<sup>a</sup> Prov. 3:34; Is. 57:15; Eph. 5:21

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,  
7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because<sup>a</sup> your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

### STEWARD

**4:10** (Gr. *oikonomos*) (Luke 12:42; Rom. 16:23; Gal. 4:2; Titus 1:7) G3623: This term is based (in part) upon a word usually translated as “house.” It denoted either a household steward, an administrator, or a government official who had oversight involving financial matters. A household steward managed financial affairs for a wealthy individual for whom he worked or, as was usually the case, to whom he was or had been enslaved (Luke 12:42; 16:1, 3, 8). The term came to be applied to Christian ministers and even Christians in general, who are all slaves of Christ (1 Cor. 4:1; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10). Because the position entailed great trust, good stewards needed to be faithful, honest, and wise (Luke 12:42; 1 Cor. 4:2; Titus 1:7).

### BENEDICTION

10 But may<sup>a</sup> the God of all grace, who called us<sup>b</sup> to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. 1 Cor. 1:9

11 To Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. Rev. 1:6

12 By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. Acts 20:24; 2 Cor. 1:19

13 She who is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, greets you; and *so does* Mark my son. Acts 15:37, 39

14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**5:2**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text adds *according to God*. **5:5**<sup>a</sup> Proverbs 3:34  
**5:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *because*. **5:10**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *But the God of all grace . . . will perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *you*.

## The Second Epistle of the Apostle

# PETER



### THE BOOK OF 2 PETER

First Peter deals with problems from outside the church; 2 Peter deals with problems from inside the church. Peter writes to warn the believers about the false teachers who are peddling damaging doctrine. He begins by urging them to keep close watch on their personal lives. The Christian life demands diligence in pursuing moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and selfless love. By contrast, the false teachers are sensual, arrogant, greedy, and covetous. They scoff at the thought of future judgment and live as if the present would be the pattern for the future. Peter reminds them that although God may be longsuffering in sending judgment, ultimately it will come. In view of that fact, believers should maintain lives of godliness, blamelessness, and steadfastness.

The statement of authorship in 1:1 is very clear: “Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ.” To distinguish this epistle from the first by Peter it was given the Greek title *Petrou B*, “Second of Peter.”



### THE AUTHOR OF 2 PETER

No other book in the New Testament poses as many problems of authenticity as does 2 Peter. Unlike 1 Peter, this letter has very weak external testimony, and its genuineness is hurt by internal difficulties as well. Because of these obstacles, many scholars reject the Petrine authorship of this epistle, but this does not mean that there is no case for the opposite position.

**External Evidence:** The external testimony for the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter is weaker than that for any other New Testament book, but by the fourth century it became generally recognized as an authentic work of the apostle Peter. There are no undisputed second-century quotations from 2 Peter, but in the third century it is quoted in the writings of several church fathers, notably Origen and Clement of Alexandria. Third-century writers were generally aware of 2 Peter and respected its contents, but it was still cataloged as a disputed book. The fourth century saw the official acknowledgment of the authority of 2 Peter despite some lingering doubts.

For several reasons 2 Peter was not quickly accepted as a canonical book: (1) Slow circulation kept it from being widely known. (2) Its brevity and contents greatly limited the number of quotations from it in the writings of early church leaders. (3) The delay in recognition meant that 2 Peter had to compete with several later works that falsely claimed to be Petrine (e.g., the Apocalypse of Peter). (4) Stylistic differences between 1 and 2 Peter also raised doubts.

**Internal Evidence:** On the positive side, 2 Peter bears abundant testimony to its apostolic origin. It claims to be by “Simon Peter” (2 Pet. 1:1), and 3:1 says “Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle.” The writer refers to the Lord’s prediction about the apostle’s death in 1:14 (cf. John 21:18–19) and says he was an eyewitness of the transfiguration (2 Pet. 1:16–18). As an apostle (1:1), he places himself on an equal level with Paul (3:15). There are also distinctive words that are found in 2 Peter and in Peter’s sermons in Acts, as well as unusual words and phrases shared by 1 and 2 Peter.

On the negative side, a few troublesome areas challenge the traditional position: (1) There are differences between the style and vocabulary of 1 and 2 Peter. The Greek of 2 Peter is rough and awkward compared to that of 1 Peter, and there are also differences in informality and in the use of the Old Testament. But these differences are often exaggerated, and they can be explained by Peter’s use of Silvanus as his secretary for 1 Peter and his own hand for 2 Peter. (2) It is argued that 2 Peter used a passage from Jude to describe false teachers and that Jude was written after Peter’s death. However, this is a debated issue, and it is possible that Jude quoted from Peter or that both used a common source (see “The Author of Jude”). (3) The reference to a collection of Paul’s letters (3:15–16) implies a late date for this epistle. But it is not necessary to conclude that all of Paul’s letters were in mind here. Peter’s contact with Paul and his associates no doubt made him familiar with several Pauline Epistles. (4) Some scholars claim that the false teaching mentioned in 2 Peter was a form of Gnosticism that emerged after Peter’s day, but there is insufficient evidence to support this stand.

The alternative to Petrine authorship is a later forgery done in the name of Peter. Even the claim that 2 Peter was written by a disciple of Peter cannot

overcome the problem of misrepresentation. In addition, 2 Peter is clearly superior to any pseudonymous writings. Despite the external and internal problems, the traditional position of Petrine authorship overcomes more difficulties than any other option.



## THE TIME OF 2 PETER

Most scholars regard 3:1 (“Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle”) as a reference to 1 Peter. If this is so, Peter had the same readers of Asia Minor in mind (see “The Time of 1 Peter”), although the more general salutation in 1:1 would also allow for a wider audience. Peter wrote this epistle in response to the spread of heretical teachings which were all the more insidious because they emerged from within the churches. These false teachers perverted the doctrine of justification and promoted a rebellious and immoral way of life.

This epistle was written just before the apostle’s death (2 Pet. 1:14), probably from Rome. His martyrdom took place between AD 64 and 66 (if Peter were alive in AD 67 when Paul wrote 2 Timothy during his second Roman imprisonment, it is likely that Paul would have mentioned him).



## CHRIST IN 2 PETER

Apart from the first verse of his epistle, Peter employs the title “Lord” every time he names the Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ is the source of full knowledge and power for the attainment of spiritual maturity (2 Pet. 1:2–3, 8; 3:18). Peter recalls the glory of Jesus’ transfiguration on the holy mountain and anticipates His *parousia*, “coming,” when the whole world, not just three men on a mountain, will behold His glory.



## KEYS TO 2 PETER

**Key Theme:** *Guard Against False Teachers*—The basic theme that runs through 2 Peter is the contrast between the knowledge and practice of truth versus falsehood. This epistle is written to expose the dangerous and seductive work of false teachers, and to warn believers to be on their guard so that they will not be “led away with the error of the wicked” (2 Pet. 3:17). It is also written to exhort the readers to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (3:18) because this growth into Christian maturity is the best defense against spiritual counterfeits. This letter serves to remind its readers of the foundational elements in the Christian life from which they must not waver (1:12–13; 3:1–2). This includes the certainty of the Lord’s return in power and judgment.

**Key Verses:** 2 Peter 1:20–21; 3:9–11—“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (1:20–21).

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness” (3:9–11).

**Key Chapter:** 2 Peter 1—The Scripture clearest in defining the relationship between God and man on the issue of inspiration is contained in 1:19–21. Three distinct principles surface: (1) that the interpretation of Scriptures is not limited to a favored elect but is open for all who “rightly [divide] the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15); (2) that the divinely inspired prophet did not initiate the Scripture himself; and (3) that the Holy Spirit (not the emotion or circumstances of the moment) moved holy men.



## SURVEY OF 2 PETER

Peter wrote his first epistle to encourage his readers to respond properly to external opposition. His second epistle focuses on internal opposition caused by false teachers whose “destructive heresies” (2 Pet. 2:1) can seduce believers into error and immorality. While 1 Peter speaks of the new birth through the living Word, 2 Peter stresses the need for growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ. The best antidote for error is a mature understanding of the truth. Second Peter divides into three parts: cultivation of Christian character (ch. 1); condemnation of false teachers (ch. 2); and confidence of Christ’s return (ch. 3).

**Cultivation of Christian Character (1:1–21)**—Peter’s salutation (1:1–2) is an introduction to the major theme of chapter 1, that is, the true knowledge of Jesus Christ. The readers are reminded of the “great and precious promises” that are theirs because of their calling to faith in Christ (1:3–4). They have been called away from the corruption of the world to conformity with Christ, and Peter urges them to progress by forging a chain of eight Christian virtues from faith to love (1:5–7). If believers do not transform profession into practice, they become spiritually useless, perverting the purpose for which they were called (1:8–11).

This letter was written not long before Peter’s



death (1:14) to remind believers of the riches of their position in Christ and their responsibility to hold fast to the truth (1:12–21). Peter knew that his departure from this earth was imminent, and he left this letter as a written legacy. As an eyewitness of the life of Christ (he illustrates this with a portrait of the Transfiguration in 1:16–18), Peter affirms the authority and reliability of the prophetic word. The clearest biblical description of the divine-human process of inspiration is found in 1:21: “but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

**Condemnation of False Teachers (2:1–22)**—Peter’s discussion of true prophecy leads him to an extended denunciation of false prophecy in the churches. These false teachers were especially dangerous because they arose within the church and undermined the confidence of believers (2:1–3). Peter’s extended description of the characteristics of these false teachers (2:10–22) exposes the futility and corruption of their strategies. Their teachings and lifestyles reek of arrogance and selfishness, but their crafty words are capable of enticing immature believers.

**Confidence of Christ’s Return (3:1–18)**—Again, Peter states that this letter is designed to stir up the minds of his readers “by way of reminder” (3:1; cf. 1:13). This very timely chapter is designed to remind

them of the certain truth of the imminent *parousia* (this Greek word, used in 3:4, 12, refers to the second coming or advent of Christ) and to refute those mockers who will deny this doctrine in the last days. These scoffers will claim that God does not powerfully intervene in world affairs, but Peter calls attention to two past and one future divinely induced catastrophic events: the Creation, the Flood, and the dissolution of the present heavens and earth (3:1–7). It may appear that the promise of Christ’s return will not be fulfilled, but this is untrue for two reasons: God’s perspective on the passing of time is quite unlike that of people, and the apparent delay in the *parousia* is due to His patience in waiting for more individuals to come to a knowledge of Christ (3:8–9). Nevertheless, the day of consummation will come, and all the matter of this universe will evidently be transformed into energy from which God will fashion a new cosmos (3:10–13).

In light of this coming day of the Lord, Peter exhorts his readers to live lives of holiness, steadfastness, and growth (3:14–18). He mentions the letters of “our beloved brother Paul” and significantly places them on a level with the Old Testament Scriptures (3:15–16). After a final warning about the danger of false teachers, the epistle closes with an appeal to growth, and a doxology.

OVERVIEW OF 2 PETER							
Outline	CULTIVATION OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER		CONDEMNATION OF FALSE TEACHERS			CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST’S RESURRECTION	
	GROWTH IN CHRIST 1:1–14	FOUNDATIONS OF BELIEF 1:15–21	DANGER OF FALSE TEACHERS 2:1–3	DESTRUCTION OF FALSE TEACHERS 2:4–9	DESCRIPTION OF FALSE TEACHERS 2:10–22	MOCKERY IN THE LAST DAYS 3:1–7	MATURITY IN VIEW OF THE DAY OF THE LORD 3:11–18
Theme	HOLINESS		HERESY			HOPE	
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT						
Location	PROBABLY ROME						
Time Frame	C. AD 64–66						

## OUTLINE OF 2 PETER

<b>Part One: Cultivation of Christian Character (1:1–21)</b>	
I. Salutation . . . . . 1:1–2	III. Grounds of Belief . . . . . 1:15–21
II. Growth in Christ . . . . . 1:3–14	A. Experience of the Transfiguration . . . . . 1:15–18
	B. Certainty of the Scriptures . . . . . 1:19–21
<b>Part Two: Condemnation of False Teachers (2:1–22)</b>	
I. Danger of False Teachers . . . . . 2:1–3	III. Description of False Teachers . . . . . 2:10–22
II. Destruction of False Teachers . . . . . 2:4–9	
<b>Part Three: Confidence of Christ’s Return (3:1–18)</b>	
I. Mockery in the Last Days . . . . . 3:1–7	III. Maturity in View of the Day of the Lord . . . 3:11–18
II. Manifestation of the Day of the Lord . . . . 3:8–10	

### CHAPTER 1 SALUTATION

**S**IMON Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Gal. 2:8; Eph. 4:5

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, Dan. 4:1

#### GROWTH IN CHRIST

3 as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust. 1 Thess. 2:12; 1 Pet. 1:5

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 2 Cor. 1:20; 3:18; 7:1

8 For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Gal. 6:10

9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. John 15:2

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 1 John 2:9–11

11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you

abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 1 Pet. 5:12

13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding *you*,

14 knowing that shortly I *must* put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 2 Cor. 5:1, 4

#### EXPERIENCE OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

*Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35*

15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.

16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 1 Cor. 1:17; Eph. 1:19–22; 1 Pet. 5:4

17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matt. 17:5

18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. Matt. 17:1

#### CERTAINTY OF THE SCRIPTURES

19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed,<sup>a</sup> which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; Prov. 4:18; Rev. 2:28; 22:16

20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,<sup>a</sup> Rom. 12:6

21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God<sup>a</sup> spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit. 2 Sam. 23:2; 2 Tim. 3:16

<sup>1:19</sup> <sup>a</sup> Or *We also have the more sure prophetic word.* <sup>1:20</sup> <sup>a</sup> Or *origin*

<sup>1:21</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *but men spoke from God.*

## INTERPRETATION

**1:20** (Gr. *epilysis*) G1955: Used only here, this word is translated as “interpretation.” It is used to make it clear that no prophecy in the Scriptures was made up by its author or comes from the prophet’s own interpretation of the world. Rather, as the next verse explains, “prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21). In other words, Scripture, while assembled and written down by humans, ultimately comes from God, and is therefore inerrant.

## CHAPTER 2

## DANGER OF FALSE TEACHERS

**B**UT there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.

1 Tim. 4:1, 2

2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.

3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does<sup>a</sup> not slumber.

## DESTRUCTION OF FALSE TEACHERS

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

5 and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;

6 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;

Gen. 19:1–26

7 and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked

Gen. 19:16, 29

8 (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)—

Ps. 119:139

9 *then* the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,

Ps. 34:15–19

## DESCRIPTION OF FALSE TEACHERS

10 and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,

Jude 4, 7, 8

11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

Jude 9

12 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

Jude 10

13 *and* will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. *They are* spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,

Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 11:20, 21; Phil. 3:19; Jude 12

14 having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children.

Jude 11

15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

16 but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man’s voice restrained the madness of the prophet.

17 These are wells without water, clouds<sup>a</sup> carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.<sup>b</sup>

Jude 12, 13

18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped<sup>a</sup> from those who live in error.

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

John 8:34

20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

Matt. 12:45; Heb. 6:4–6

21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

Luke 12:47

22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,”<sup>a</sup> and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”

Prov. 26:11

## CHAPTER 3

## MOCKERY IN THE LAST DAYS

**B**ELOVED, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder),

2 Pet. 1:13

2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us,<sup>a</sup> the apostles of the Lord and Savior,

2 Pet. 1:21; Jude 17

3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come

<sup>a</sup>2:3 M-Text reads *will not*. <sup>b</sup>2:17 NU-Text reads *and mists*.

<sup>a</sup>2:18 NU-Text omits *forever*. <sup>b</sup>2:18 NU-Text reads *are barely escaping*.

<sup>a</sup>2:22 Proverbs 26:11 <sup>b</sup>3:2 NU-Text and M-Text read *commandment of the apostles of your Lord and Savior or commandment of your apostles of the Lord and Savior*.

in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,

2 Pet. 2:10

4 and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation.”

Gen. 6:1–7

5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,

Gen. 1:6, 9; Ps. 24:2

6 by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water.

Gen. 7:11, 12, 21–23

7 But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

2 Thess. 1:8; 2 Pet. 3:10, 12

#### MANIFESTATION OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Ps. 90:4

9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us,<sup>a</sup> not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Is. 30:18; Ezek. 33:11; Hab. 2:3

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.<sup>a</sup>

Ps. 102:25, 26; Matt. 24:42, 43 ↗

#### MATURITY IN VIEW OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

1 Pet. 1:15

12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

Ps. 50:3; Mic. 1:4; 1 Cor. 1:7, 8

13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise,

#### PURE

3:1 (Gr. *eilikrinēs*) (Phil. 1:10) G1506: Taken from *heilē*, “sun,” and *krinō*, “to judge,” this word describes the process of holding something up to the sunlight to expose any imperfections. It was used to describe metals or liquids that were unsullied by foreign substances. In the New Testament, this word is used twice, both times to denote a person who is free from falsehood, pure, and sincere. In Philippians 1:10, Paul urges believers to be morally pure in this way: “That you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere [*eilikrinēs*] and without offense till the day of Christ.”

look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Is. 65:17; 66:22; Rev. 21:1

14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

1 Cor. 1:8; 15:58

15 and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

Rom. 2:4

16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures.

1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Tim. 3:16

17 You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

Mark 13:23; Eph. 4:14

18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.

Eph. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:18

3:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *you*. 3:10<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *laid bare* (literally *found*).

## The First Epistle of the Apostle

# JOHN



### THE BOOK OF 1 JOHN

God is light. God is love. God is life. John is enjoying a delightful fellowship with this God of light, love, and life, and he desperately desires that his spiritual children enjoy the same fellowship.

God is light. Therefore, to engage in fellowship with Him we must walk in light and not in darkness. As we walk in the light, we will regularly confess our sins, allowing the blood of Christ continually to cleanse us. Christ will act as our defense attorney before the Father. Proof of our “walk in the light” will be keeping the commandments of God and replacing any hatred we have toward others with love. Two major roadblocks to hinder this walk will be falling in love with the world and falling for the alluring lies of false teachers.

God is love. Since we are His children, we must walk in love. In fact, John says that if we do not love, we do not know God. Additionally, our love needs to be practical. Love is more than just words; it is actions. Love is giving, not getting. Biblical love is unconditional in its nature. It is an “in spite of” love. Christ’s love fulfilled those qualities and when that brand of love characterizes us, we will be free of self-condemnation and experience confidence before God.

God is life. Those who fellowship with Him must possess His quality of life. Spiritual life begins with spiritual birth. Spiritual birth occurs through faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in Jesus Christ infuses us with God’s life—eternal life. Therefore, one who walks in fellowship with God will walk in light, love, and life.

Although the apostle John’s name is not found in this book, it was given the title *Ioannou A*, “First of John.”



### THE AUTHOR OF 1 JOHN

The external evidence for the authorship of 1 John shows that from the beginning it was universally received without dispute as authoritative. It was used by Polycarp (who knew John in his youth) and Papias in the early second century, and later in that century Irenaeus (who knew Polycarp in his youth) specifically attributed it to the apostle John. All the Greek and Latin church fathers accepted this epistle as Johannine.

The internal evidence supports this universal tradition because the “we” (apostles), “you” (readers), and “they” (false teachers) phraseology places the writer in the sphere of the apostolic eyewitnesses (cf. 1 John 1:1–3; 4:14). John’s name was well known to the readers, and it was unnecessary for him to mention it. The style and vocabulary of 1 John are so similar to those of the fourth Gospel that most scholars acknowledge these books to be by the same hand (see “The Author of John”). Both share many distinctively Johannine phrases, and the characteristics of limited vocabulary and frequent contrast of opposites are also common to them. Even so, some critics have assailed this conclusion on various grounds, but the theological and stylistic differences are not substantial enough to overcome the abundant similarities.

The traditional view is also rejected by those who hold that the fourth Gospel and these three epistles were written by John the “elder” or “presbyter,” who is to be distinguished from John the apostle. But the only basis for this distinction is Eusebius’s interpretation in his *Ecclesiastical History* (AD 323) of a statement by Papias. Eusebius understood the passage to refer to two distinct Johns, but the wording does not require this; the elder John and the apostle John may be one and the same. Even if they were different, there is no evidence for contradicting the consistent acknowledgment by the early church that this book was written by the apostle John.



### THE TIME OF 1 JOHN

In Acts 8:14, John is associated with “the apostles who were at Jerusalem,” and Paul calls him one of the “pillars” of the Jerusalem church in Galatians 2:9. Apart from Revelation 1, the New Testament is silent about John’s later years, but early Christian tradition uniformly tells us that he left Jerusalem (probably not long before its destruction in AD 70) and that he ministered in and around Ephesus. The seven churches in the Roman province of Asia, mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3, were evidently a part of this ministry. Although there is no address in 1 John, it is likely that the apostle directed this epistle to the churches that were within the realm of his oversight.

The believers in these congregations were well

established in Christian truth, and John wrote to them not as novices but as brethren grounded in apostolic doctrine (1 John 2:7, 18–27; 3:11). The apostle does not mention his own affairs, but his use of such terms of address as “beloved” and “my little children” gives this letter a personal touch that reveals his close relationship to the original recipients. First John was probably written in Ephesus after the Gospel of John, but the date cannot be fixed with certainty. No persecution is mentioned, suggesting a date prior to AD 95 when persecution broke out during the end of Domitian’s reign (AD 81–96).

Advanced in years, John wrote this fatherly epistle out of loving concern for his “children,” whose steadfastness in the truth was being threatened by the lure of worldliness and the guile of false teachers. The Gnostic heresy taught that matter is inherently evil, and a divine being therefore could not take on human flesh. This resulted in a supposed distinction between the “man Jesus” and the “spiritual Christ” who came upon Jesus at His baptism but departed prior to His crucifixion. Another variation was Docetism (from *dokeo*, “to seem”), the doctrine that Christ only seemed to have a human body. The result in both cases was the same—a flat denial of the Incarnation.

The Gnostics also believed that their understanding of the hidden knowledge (*gnosis*) made them a kind of spiritual elite, who were above the normal distinctions of right and wrong. This led in most cases to deplorable conduct and complete disregard for Christian ethics.

## ✝ CHRIST IN 1 JOHN

The present ministry of Christ is portrayed in 1:5–2:22. His blood continually cleanses the believer from all sin, and He is our righteous Advocate before the Father. This epistle places particular emphasis on the incarnation of God the Son and the identity of Jesus as the Christ (1 John 2:22; 4:2–3), in refutation of Gnostic doctrine. Jesus Christ “came by water and blood” (5:6). He was the same indivisible Person from the beginning (His baptism) to the end (His crucifixion) of His public ministry.



## KEYS TO 1 JOHN

**Key Theme:** *Fellowship with God*—The major theme of 1 John is fellowship with God. John wants his readers to have assurance of the indwelling God through their abiding relationship with Him (1 John 2:28; 5:13). Belief in Christ should be manifested in the practice of righteousness and love for the brethren,

which in turn produces joy and confidence before God. John writes this epistle to encourage this kind of fellowship and to emphasize the importance of holding fast to apostolic doctrine.

First John is also written to refute the destructive teachings of the Gnostics by stressing the reality of the Incarnation and the emptiness of profession without practice. These antichrists fail the three tests of righteous living, love for the brethren, and belief that Jesus is the Christ, the incarnate God-Man.

**Key Verses:** 1 John 1:3–4; 5:11–13—“That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full” (1:3–4).

“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God” (5:11–13).

**Key Chapter:** 1 John 1—The two central passages for continued fellowship with God are John 15 and 1 John 1. In John 15, we see the positive side of fellowship, that is, abiding in Christ. In 1 John 1, we see the other side, notably that when Christians do not abide in Christ, they must seek forgiveness before fellowship can be restored.



## SURVEY OF 1 JOHN

John writes his first epistle at a time when apostolic doctrine is being challenged by a proliferation of false teachings. Like 2 Peter and Jude, 1 John has a negative and a positive thrust: it refutes erroneous doctrine and encourages its readership to walk in the knowledge of the truth. John lists the criteria and characteristics of fellowship with God and shows that those who abide in Christ can have confidence and assurance before Him. This simply written but profound work develops the meaning of fellowship in the basis of fellowship (1 John 1:1–2:27) and the behavior of fellowship (2:28–5:21).

**The Basis of Fellowship (1:1–2:27)**—John’s prologue (1:1–4) recalls the beginning of apostolic contact with Christ. It relates his desire to transmit this apostolic witness to his readers so that they may share the same fellowship with Jesus Christ, the personification of life. This proclamation is followed by a description of the conditions of fellowship (1:5–2:14).

The readers’ sins have been forgiven, and they enjoy fellowship with God. As a result, they know

“Him who is from the beginning” and are strengthened to overcome the temptations of the Evil One (2:12–14). The cautions to fellowship are both practical (the lusts of the corrupt world system which opposes God, 2:15–17) and doctrinal (the teachings of those who differentiate between Jesus and the Christ, 2:18–23). In contrast to these antichrists, the readers have the knowledge of the truth and an anointing from the Holy One. Therefore, it would be foolish for them to turn away from the teachings of the apostles to the innovations of the antichrists. The antidote to these heretical teachings is abiding in the apostolic truths that they “heard from the beginning,” which are authenticated by the anointing they have received (2:24–27).

**The Behavior of Fellowship (2:28—5:21)**—The basic theme of 1 John is summarized in 2:28—assurance through abiding in Christ. The next verse introduces the motif of regeneration, and 2:29—3:10 argues that regeneration is manifested in the practice of righteousness. Because we are children of God through faith in Christ, we have a firm hope of being fully conformed to Him when He appears (3:1–3). Our present likeness to Christ places us in a position of incompatibility with sin because sin is contrary to the Person and work of Christ (3:4–6). The concept in 3:6 does not contradict 1:8 because it is saying that the abider, insofar as he abides, does not sin. When believers sin, they do not reflect the regenerate new man but Satan, the original sinner (3:7–10).

Regeneration is shown in righteousness (2:29—3:10), and righteousness is manifested in love (3:10–23). The apostle uses the example of Cain to illustrate what love is not: hatred is murdering in spirit, and it arises from the worldly sphere of death. John then uses the example of Christ to illustrate what love is: love is practiced in self-sacrifice, not mere profession. This practical expression of love results

in assurance before God and answered prayers because the believer is walking in obedience to God’s commands to believe in Christ and love one another.

In 3:24 John introduces two important motifs, which are developed in 4:1–16: the indwelling God, and the Spirit as a mark of this indwelling. The Spirit of God confesses the incarnate Christ and confirms apostolic doctrine (4:1–6). The mutual abiding of the believer in God and God in the believer is manifested in love for others, and this love produces a divine and human fellowship that testifies to and reflects the reality of the Incarnation (4:7–16). It also anticipates the perfect fellowship to come and creates a readiness to face the One from whom all love is derived (4:17–19).

John joins the concepts he has presented into a circular chain of six links that begins with love for the brethren (4:20—5:17): (1) Love for believers is the inseparable product of love for God (4:20—5:1). (2) Love for God arises out of obedience to His commandments (5:2–3). (3) Obedience to God is the result of faith in His Son (5:4–5). (4) This faith is in Jesus, who was the Christ not only at His baptism (the water), but also at His death (the blood; 5:6–8). (5) The divine witness to the Person of Christ is worthy of complete belief (5:9–13). (6) This belief produces confident access to God in prayer (5:14–17). Since intercessory prayer is a manifestation of love for others, the chain has come full circle.

The epilogue (5:18–21) summarizes the conclusions of the epistle in a series of three certainties: (1) Sin is a threat to fellowship, and it should be regarded as foreign to the believer’s position in Christ (cf. Rom. 6). (2) The believer stands with God against the satanic world system. (3) The Incarnation produces true knowledge and communion with Christ. Since He is the true God and eternal life, the one who knows Him should avoid the lure of any substitute.

OVERVIEW OF 1 JOHN				
Outline	THE BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP		THE BEHAVIOR OF FELLOW	
	THE CONDITIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP 1:1—2:14	THE CAUTIONS TO FELLOWSHIP 2:15–27	THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FELLOWSHIP 2:28—5:3	THE CONSEQUENCES OF FELLOWSHIP 5:4–21
Theme	LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT		LIVING IN GOD’S LOVE	
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT			
Location	FROM EPHESUS			
Time Frame	C. AD 90			

## OUTLINE OF 1 JOHN

### Part One: The Basis of Fellowship (1:1—2:27)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| I. The Conditions for Fellowship . . . . . 1:1—2:14 | E. Love for One Another . . . . . 2:7—14         |
| A. Introduction . . . . . 1:1—4                     | II. The Cautions to Fellowship . . . . . 2:15—27 |
| B. Walk in the Light . . . . . 1:5—7                | A. Love of the World . . . . . 2:15—17           |
| C. Confession of Sin . . . . . 1:8—2:2              | B. Spirit of the Antichrist . . . . . 2:18—27    |
| D. Obedience to His Commandments . . . . . 2:3—6    |  |

### Part Two: The Behavior of Fellowship (2:28—5:21)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| I. Characteristics of Fellowship . . . . . 2:28—5:3 | II. Consequences of Fellowship . . . . . 5:4—21 |
| A. Purity of Life . . . . . 2:28—3:3                | A. Victory over the World . . . . . 5:4—5       |
| B. Practice of Righteousness . . . . . 3:4—12       | B. Assurance of Salvation . . . . . 5:6—13      |
| C. Love in Deed and Truth . . . . . 3:13—24         | C. Guidance in Prayer . . . . . 5:14—17         |
| D. Testing the Spirits . . . . . 4:1—6              | D. Freedom from Habitual Sin . . . . . 5:18—21  |
| E. Love as Christ Loved . . . . . 4:7—5:3           |   |

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

**T**HAT which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— 2 Pet. 1:16

2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— John 1:1, 4, 18; 16:28; 21:24; Rom. 16:26

3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 1:9

4 And these things we write to you that your<sup>a</sup> joy may be full. John 15:11; 16:24

### WALK IN THE LIGHT

5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 John 3:11

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

### CONFESSION OF SIN

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just

<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *our*.

## GROWING IN THE NEW LIFE

### PRAYER

#### PART 2: CONFESSION

1:9—Psalm 51 is one of the most remarkable chapters in the Old Testament. This psalm contains the words of confession uttered by King David after his grievous sins against David, Uriah, Israel, and, ultimately, God (2 Sam. 11). The prayer he offered can serve as a pattern for us when we sin.

- David began by freely admitting his sin (Ps. 51:3–4). This honesty is vital in our confession. God will graciously forgive all our sins, but not on account of our excuses.
- He then displayed genuine sorrow over his sin (Ps. 51:17). Paul wrote the main characteristic of true confession is godly sorrow (2 Cor. 7:10).
- He asked for God's forgiveness (Ps. 51:1, 7–9).
- He believed God had heard him and would restore him (Ps. 51:12–15).

In the New Testament, the most important verse concerning confession is 1 John 1:9. In essence, John told us the means of forgiveness and cleansing is the blood of Christ, while the method of this forgiveness and cleansing is confession. Like David, we must admit our sin, regret the actions of our sin, plead the blood of Christ, and believe that God has indeed done what He promised, namely, to cleanse us from sin and restore us to fellowship and service.

*For Part 3: PETITION, turn to 1 Samuel 1:17 on page 280. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*



## ADVOCATE

**2:1** (Gr. *paraklētos*) (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) G3875: The Greek word *paraklētos* is derived from the preposition *para*, “beside,” and the verb *kaleō*, “call”; hence it originally meant in a passive sense one who is called beside (to offer support). This passive sense was gradually replaced by the more active meaning of “mediator, intercessor.” Here in 1 John 2:1, Jesus takes the role of an intercessor for the sinner. In John 14:16–17, the Holy Spirit is called the *paraklētos*, meaning Helper.

to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Ps. 51:2; Prov. 28:13; Rom. 3:24–26

**10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 John 5:10

## CHAPTER 2

**M**Y little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Heb. 7:25; 9:24

**2** And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. John 1:29; Rom. 3:25

## OBEDIENCE TO HIS COMMANDMENTS

**3** Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

**4** He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. Rom. 3:4

**5** But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. John 14:21, 23; 1 John 4:12

**6** He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. John 15:4; 1 Pet. 2:21

## LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER

**7** Brethren,<sup>a</sup> I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.<sup>b</sup> 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:21

**8** Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. John 12:35; 13:34; 15:12; Rom. 13:12

**9** He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 1 Cor. 13:2

**10** He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 2 Pet. 1:10

**11** But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. John 12:35; 1 John 2:9; 3:15; 4:20

**12** I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. 1 Cor. 6:11

**13** I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men,

## FACING PROBLEMS IN THE NEW LIFE

## TEMPTATION

## PART 1: TEMPTATION BY THE WORLD

**2:15**—The term “world” does not always refer to the universe as created by God. It often is used to describe the community of sinful humanity that possesses a spirit of rebellion against God (1 John 5:19). Because of its opposition to God, the world values what is contrary to God's will: “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). Its temptations to the believer are thus twofold: lust for the sensual and pride in mastery of one's life.

The attraction of the world is amplified by Satan who is head of its system. He is called the “ruler of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) and the whole world is said to be under his power (1 John 5:19, where *wickedness* can also be translated as “wicked one”).

Some of the tragic effects that love of the world will produce in the believer's life are:

- A turning away from the Lord's work and other believers (2 Tim. 4:10);
- Alienation from God (James 4:4);
- Corrupting sins (2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 2:15–17);
- Deception by false teachers (1 John 4:1; 2 John v. 7).

The solution to the love of the world is to have a greater love for the Father (1 John 2:15). The Christian who daily seeks to please God in everything and who strives for spiritual growth through prayer, study of God's Word, and witnessing does not need to fall prey to the temptations of the world.

*For Part 2: TEMPTATION BY THE FLESH, turn to Mark 14:38 on page 109. For an explanation of “The Christian's Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

Because you have overcome the wicked one.  
 I write to you, little children,  
 Because you have known the Father. John 1:1; Rom. 8:15–17  
 14 I have written to you, fathers,  
 Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.  
 I have written to you, young men,  
 Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you,  
 And you have overcome the wicked one. Eph. 6:10

### LOVE OF THE WORLD

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Rom. 12:2; James 4:4  
 16 For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. Eccl. 5:10, 11  
 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1 Cor. 7:31

### SPIRIT OF THE ANTICHRIST

18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the<sup>a</sup> Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:7; 2 John 7  
 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. Deut. 13:13; Matt. 24:24; 1 Cor. 11:19  
 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.<sup>a</sup> John 16:13; Acts 3:14; 2 Cor. 1:21  
 21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.  
 22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. 1 John 4:3; 2 John 7  
 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. John 5:23; 15:23; 1 John 4:15; 5:1  
 24 Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. John 14:23; 2 John 5, 6  
 25 And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. John 3:14–16; 6:40; 17:2, 3  
 26 These things I have written to you concerning those who *try* to deceive you.  
 27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will<sup>a</sup> abide in Him. Jer. 31:33; John 14:16; 16:13

### PURITY OF LIFE

28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when<sup>a</sup> He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 1 John 5:14  
 29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him. Acts 22:14; 1 John 3:7, 10

### CHAPTER 3

**B**EHOLD what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!<sup>a</sup> Therefore the world does not know us,<sup>b</sup> because it did not know Him. John 1:12; 15:18, 21  
 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Ps. 16:11  
 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 4:17

### PRACTICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. Rom. 4:15  
 5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. John 1:29  
 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.  
 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.  
 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Matt. 13:38; Luke 10:18  
 9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. John 1:3; 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:23  
 10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother.  
 11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,  
 12 not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Gen. 4:4, 8

### LOVE IN DEED AND TRUTH

13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. John 15:18; 17:14  
 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother<sup>a</sup> abides in death.  
 15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and

2:18<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *the*. 2:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *you all know*.

2:27<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *you abide*. 2:28<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *if*.

3:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text adds *And we are*. <sup>b</sup> M-Text reads *you*. 3:14<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *his brother*.

you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. Matt. 5:21; Gal. 5:20, 21

**16** By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. John 3:16; 10:11; 15:13

**17** But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? Deut. 15:7

**18** My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. Ezek. 33:31

**19** And by this we know<sup>a</sup> that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. John 18:37

**20** For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. 1 Cor. 4:4, 5

**21** Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. 1 John 2:28; 5:14

**22** And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Ps. 34:15

**23** And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us<sup>a</sup> commandment.

**24** Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. John 14:21, 23; 17:21; Rom. 8:9, 14, 16

## CHAPTER 4

### TESTING THE SPIRITS

**B**ELOVED, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

**2** By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 1 Cor. 12:3

**3** and every spirit that does not confess that<sup>a</sup> Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

**4** You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. John 14:30; 16:11

**5** They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them. John 17:14

**6** We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. 1 Cor. 2:12–16

### LOVE AS CHRIST LOVED

**7** Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 John 3:10, 11, 23

**8** He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

**9** In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Rom. 5:8

**10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Titus 3:5; 1 John 2:2

**11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. Matt. 18:33

**12** No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. John 1:18

**13** By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

**3:19** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *we shall know*. **3:23** <sup>a</sup>M-Text omits us.

**4:3** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *that and Christ has come in the flesh*.

## BEGINNING THE NEW LIFE

### THE RESULTS OF NEW LIFE

#### PART 4: PLACED INTO GOD'S FAMILY

**3:2**—In a general sense, all men and women are the offspring of God in that He is the Creator (Acts 17:28–29). This relationship, however, is not sufficient to offset the penalty of sin, because all persons are sinners separated from God (Rom. 3:23). Therefore, for a person to become a child of God, a miraculous transformation must take place. The Bible refers to this change as being “born again” (John 3:3). Individuals who place faith in Jesus as Savior are born again into a new, spiritual, family relationship with God (Gal. 3:26). They gain God as Father (Eph. 4:6) and other Christians as brothers and sisters (Heb. 3:1). It is significant to note the term “brotherly love,” which Christians are commanded to have for each other (Heb. 13:1), is never used in the Greek language to refer to loving others as though they were your brothers. Rather, it is always used of loving those who *are* your brothers. So it is in the Christian faith: we *are* brothers and sisters with other Christians.

Not only are Christians the children of God by spiritual birth, we are adopted as well (Eph. 1:5). This implies a dramatic transformation of status from slave to son (Gal. 4:1–5). One is no longer in bondage to the master but becomes a free son, possessing all the rights and privileges of sonship. One of these benefits is the right to call God *Abba*, an affectionate term meaning “Father” (Rom. 8:15). This marvelous relationship carries responsibilities with it, as well as privileges. All who have the hope of having their “sonship” perfected someday are presently purifying their own lives. Since they bear the family relationship to God, they must also exhibit the family character.

*For Part 5: RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ENEMIES, turn to Acts 10:14–15 on page 1209. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.*

14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. John 3:17; 4:42

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. Rom. 10:9

16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. John 14:23

17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 1 John 2:28

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

19 We love Him<sup>a</sup> because He first loved us.

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can<sup>a</sup> he love God whom he has not seen? 1 John 2:4; 4:12

21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.

## CHAPTER 5

**W**HOEVER believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. John 1:13; 1 John 2:22; 4:2, 15

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. John 15:10

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. Matt. 11:30; 23:4; John 14:15

### VICTORY OVER THE WORLD

4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our<sup>a</sup> faith. John 16:33; 1 John 2:13; 4:4

5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 1 Cor. 15:57

### ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

6 This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and

blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. John 1:31–34; 14:17

7 For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. John 1:1; 10:30

8 And there are three that bear witness on earth:<sup>a</sup> the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one. John 15:26

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which<sup>a</sup> He has testified of His Son. John 8:17, 18

10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. Rom. 8:16

11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. John 17:2, 3

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life,<sup>a</sup> and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God.

### GUIDANCE IN PRAYER

14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 1 John 2:28; 3:21, 22

15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead* to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is sin *leading* to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. Job 42:3; Jer. 7:16; 14:11

17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not *leading* to death. 1 John 3:4

**4:19**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits *Him*. **4:20**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *he cannot*.

**5:4**<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *your*. **5:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit the words from *in heaven* (verse 7) through *on earth* (verse 8). Only four or five very late manuscripts contain these words in Greek. **5:9**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *God, that*. **5:13**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.

## BEGINNING THE NEW LIFE

### THE ASSURANCE OF NEW LIFE

#### PART 2: WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

**3:24**—It is true we do not need to feel spiritual to have new life in Christ; nevertheless, feelings and emotions do play a role in our salvation. Both Paul (Rom. 8:16) and John (1 John 3:24) inform us we can experience that inner witness of the Holy Spirit to our spirit. What does this mean? It means we can enjoy the quiet confidence given by the Spirit that indeed we have passed from death into life. It means we can now approach the mighty Creator of the vast universe and refer to Him as "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15). *Abba* is a personal and intimate term for one's father. Prior to Pentecost, only Jesus had used the title for God (Mark 14:36). It not only means we can approach the throne of grace with a holy boldness (Heb. 4:16), but we can also experience the blessing of knowing that the Father will welcome us, hear our prayers, and answer them (1 John 3:22).

The apostle Paul experienced this witness during a crisis in his life while preaching in Corinth (see Acts 18:9–10).

*For Part 3: CHANGED LIFE, turn to 1 Corinthians 6:11 on page 1264. For an explanation of "The Christian's Guide to the New Life," and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvii.*

## WORLD

**5:19** (Gr. *kosmos*) (John 3:16; 16:28; Acts 17:24; 1 Tim. 6:7; 1 Pet. 3:3) G2889: The Greek word *kosmos* can mean “adornment” (1 Pet. 3:3) or “order,” and by common extension “the ordered universe” or “world” (John 17:5; Acts 17:24). It is used in the New Testament almost exclusively in this latter sense but with a wide range of nuances. It may refer to the planet Earth generally (Matt. 26:13), specifically in contrast to heaven (John 16:28), or as the place where humans live (1 Tim. 6:7). It is used of humanity generally (John 4:42) or with specific reference to believers (John 3:16–17). Here in 1 John 5:19, *kosmos* represents all the aspects of the created order that are hostile to God and His purposes, all organized evil that the devil controls and directs (cf. 1 John 2:15).

## FREEDOM FROM HABITUAL SIN

**18** We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself,<sup>a</sup> and the wicked one does not touch him.

James 1:27; 1 Pet. 1:23

**19** We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway of* the wicked one. Gal. 1:4

**20** And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Is. 9:6; Luke 24:45; John 17:3; 1 John 4:2

**21** Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

**5:18**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *him*.

## The Second Epistle of the Apostle

# JOHN



### THE BOOK OF 2 JOHN

“Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). These words of the apostle Paul could well stand as a subtitle for John’s second epistle. The recipients, a chosen lady and her children, were obviously standing. They were walking in truth, remaining faithful to the commandments they had received from the Father. John is deeply pleased to be able to commend them. But he takes nothing for granted. Realizing that standing is just one step removed from falling, he does not hesitate to issue a reminder: love one another. The apostle admits that this is not new revelation, but he views it sufficiently important to repeat. Loving one another, he stresses, is equivalent to walking according to God’s commandments.

John indicates, however, that this love must be discerning. It is not a naive, unthinking, open to anything and anyone kind of love. Biblical love is a matter of choice; it is dangerous and foolish to float through life with undiscerning love. False teachers abound who do not acknowledge Christ as having come in the flesh. It is false charity to open the door to false teaching. We must have fellowship with God. We must have fellowship with Christians. But we must *not* have fellowship with false teachers.

The “Elder” of verse 1 has been traditionally identified with the apostle John, resulting in the Greek title *Ioannou B*, “Second of John.”



### THE AUTHOR OF 2 JOHN

Because of the similarity of the contents and circumstances of 2 and 3 John, the authorship of both will be considered here. These letters were not widely circulated early on because of their brevity and their specific address to a small number of people. This limited circulation, combined with the fact that they have few distinctive ideas to add that are not found in 1 John, meant that they were seldom quoted in the patristic writings of the early church. Their place in the canon of New Testament books was disputed for a time, but it is significant that there was no question in the minds of those church fathers who lived closest to the time of John that these two epistles were written by the

apostle. The second-century writers Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria entertained no other view. Only as the details of their origin were forgotten did doubts arise, but the positive evidence in their favor eventually won for them the official recognition of the whole church.

It is obvious that the recipients of 2 and 3 John knew the author’s identity well, although he did not use his name. Instead, he designated himself in the first verse of both letters as “the Elder.” This is not an argument against the Johannine authorship of 2 and 3 John, since the context of these epistles reveals that his authority was far greater than that of an elder in a local church. The apostle Peter also referred to himself as an elder (1 Pet. 5:1), and John uses the distinguishing term “the elder.”

The similarity of style, vocabulary, structure, and mood between 2 and 3 John makes it clear that these letters were written by the same author. In addition, both (especially 2 John) bear strong resemblances to 1 John and to the fourth Gospel. Thus, the external and internal evidence lends clear support to the traditional view that these epistles were written by the apostle John.



### THE TIME OF 2 JOHN

The identification of the original readers of this epistle is difficult because of disagreement regarding the interpretation of “the elect lady and her children” (2 John v. 1). Some scholars believe the address should be taken literally to refer to a specific woman and her children, while others prefer to take it as a figurative description of a local church.

The evidence is insufficient for a decisive conclusion, but in either case, the readers were well known to John and probably lived in the province of Asia, not far from Ephesus. If the figurative view is taken, “the children of your elect sister” (v. 13) refers to the members of a sister church.

In his first epistle, John wrote that several false teachers had split away from the church (“they went out from us, but they were not of us,” 1 John 2:19). Some of these became traveling teachers who depended on the hospitality of individuals while they sought to infiltrate churches with their teachings.

Judging by the content and circumstances of 2 John, it was evidently contemporaneous with

1 John or was written slightly later. Thus, it was probably written about AD 90. All three of John’s epistles may have been written in Ephesus (see “The Time of 1 John”).

not receive him into your house nor greet him” (vv. 9–10).

## † CHRIST IN 2 JOHN

John refutes the same error regarding the Person of Christ in this epistle as he did in his first epistle. Again, he stresses that those “who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh” (2 John v. 7) are deceivers who must be avoided. One must abide “in the doctrine of Christ” (v. 9) to have a relationship with God. The doctrine of the Person and work of Jesus Christ affects every other area of theology.

## SURVEY OF 2 JOHN

This brief letter has much in common with 1 John, including a warning about the danger of false teachers who deny the incarnation of Jesus Christ. John encourages the readers to continue walking in love but exhorts them to be discerning in their expression of love. Second John breaks with two parts: practice the truth (2 John vv. 1–6) and protect the truth (vv. 7–13).

## KEYS TO 2 JOHN

**Key Theme:** *Avoid Fellowship with False Teachers*—The basic theme of this brief letter is steadfastness in the practice and purity of the apostolic doctrine that the readers “have heard from the beginning” (2 John v. 6). John writes it as a reminder to continue walking in obedience to God’s commandment to love one another (practical exhortation, vv. 4–6). His primary purpose is to deliver a warning not to associate with or assist teachers who do not acknowledge the truth about Jesus Christ (doctrinal exhortation, vv. 7–11).

**Practice the Truth (vv. 1–6)**—The salutation (vv. 1–3) centers on the concept of abiding in the truth (mentioned four times in these three verses). The recipients are loved for their adherence to the truth by “all those who have known the truth.” The apostle commends his readers on their walk in truth in obedience to God’s commandment (v. 4), and he reminds them that this commandment entails the practice of love for one another (vv. 5–6). The divine command is given in verse 5 and the human response follows in verse 6.

It has been suggested that 2 and 3 John were written as cover letters for 1 John to provide a personal word to a church (2 John) and to Gaius (3 John) that would supplement the longer epistle. However, there is no way to be sure.

**Protect the Truth (vv. 7–13)**—Moving from the basic test of Christian behavior (love for the brethren) to the basic test of Christian belief (the Person of Christ), John admonishes the readers to beware of deceivers “who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh” (vv. 7–9). In no uncertain terms, the apostle enjoins the readers to deny even the slightest assistance or encouragement to itinerant teachers who promote an erroneous view of Christ (and hence of salvation; vv. 10–11).

**Key Verses:** *2 John vv. 9–10*—“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do

This letter closes with John’s explanation of its brevity: he anticipates a future visit during which he will be able to “speak face to face” with his readers (v. 12). The meaning of the greeting in verse 13 relates to the interpretation of verse 1.

OVERVIEW OF 2 JOHN					
Outline	PRACTICE THE TRUTH			PROTECT THE TRUTH	
		SALUTATION VV. 1–3	WALK IN TRUTH V. 4	WALK IN LOVE VV. 5–6	DOCTRINE OF THE FALSE TEACHERS VV. 7–9
Theme	THE WAYS OF GOD’S PEOPLE			THE WAYS OF FALSE TEACHERS	
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT				
Location	FROM EPHESUS				
Time Frame	C. AD 90				

## OUTLINE OF 2 JOHN

### Part One: Practice the Truth (vv. 1–6)

- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| I. Salutation . . . . . vv. 1–3  | III. Walk in Love . . . . . vv. 5–6 |
| II. Walk in Truth . . . . . v. 4 |                                     |

### Part Two: Protect the Truth (vv. 7–13)

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| I. Doctrine of the False Teachers . . . . . vv. 7–9 | III. Benediction . . . . . vv. 12–13 |
| II. Avoid the False Teachers . . . . . vv. 10–11    |                                      |

### SALUTATION

**T**HE Elder,

To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, Col. 1:5

2 because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:

3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you<sup>a</sup> from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. 1 Tim. 1:2

### WALK IN TRUTH

4 I rejoiced greatly that I have found *some* of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father. 3 John 3, 4

### WALK IN LOVE

5 And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17

6 This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. 1 John 2:5, 24; 5:3

### DOCTRINE OF THE FALSE TEACHERS

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-christ. 1 John 2:19, 22; 4:1, 2

8 Look to yourselves, that we<sup>a</sup> do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we<sup>b</sup> may receive a full reward. Mark 13:9; Gal. 3:4

### ANTICHRIST

**v. 7** (Gr. *antichristos*) (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3) G0500: *Christ* is the Greek word for *Messiah*, or *anointed one* (Matt. 16:16; 27:22). The addition of the prefix *anti* conveys the idea of one opposed to or the opposite from Christ. Only John uses this term here and in his first letter. He makes it clear there is a specific *Antichrist* in mind (1 John 2:18) but also an attitude or mindset capable of producing multiple antichrists (1 John 2:18), which he calls the spirit of *antichrist*. This mindset is revealed by denial of the Father and the Son (1 John 2:22). Here, *antichrist* refers to anyone who deceives in word and intent.

9 Whoever transgresses<sup>a</sup> and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. John 7:16; 8:31

### AVOID THE FALSE TEACHERS

10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; Rom. 16:17

11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

### BENEDICTION

12 Having many things to write to you, I did not wish *to do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. John 17:13; 3 John 13, 14

13 The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen. 1 Pet. 5:13

<sup>3</sup><sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *us*. <sup>8</sup><sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *you*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text reads *you*. <sup>9</sup><sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *goes ahead*.



## The Third Epistle of the Apostle

# JOHN



### THE BOOK OF 3 JOHN

In 1 John, the apostle discusses fellowship with God. In 2 John, he forbids fellowship with false teachers. In 3 John, he encourages fellowship with other Christians. Following his expression of love for Gaius, John assures him of his prayers for his health and voices his joy over Gaius's persistent walk in truth and for the manner in which he shows hospitality and support for missionaries who have come to his church. The phrase "send them forward on their journey" means to provide help for the missionaries' endeavors. Included in this help can be food, money, arrangements for companions, and means of travel. By supporting these men who are ministering for Christ, Gaius has become a fellow worker of the truth.

But not everyone in the church feels the same way. Diotrephes' heart is 180 degrees removed from Gaius's heart. He is no longer living in love. Pride has taken precedence in his life. He has refused a letter John has written for the church, fearing that his authority might be superseded by that of the apostle. He also has accused John of evil words and refused to accept missionaries. He forbids others to do so and even expels them from the church if they disobey him. John uses this negative example as an opportunity to encourage Gaius to continue his hospitality. Demetrius has a good testimony and may even be one of those turned away by Diotrephes. He is widely known for his good character and his loyalty to the truth. Here, he is well commended by John and stands as a positive example for Gaius.

The Greek titles of 1, 2, and 3 John are *Ioannou A*, *B*, and *G*. The *G* is *gamma*, the third letter of the Greek alphabet; *Ioannou G* means "Third of John."



### THE AUTHOR OF 3 JOHN

The authorship of 2 and 3 John was considered together because the contents and circumstances of both books are similar (see "The Author of 2 John"). Although the external evidence for 2 and 3 John is limited (there is even less for 3 John than for 2 John), what little there is consistently points to the apostle John as author. The internal evidence is stronger, and it, too, supports the apostolic origin of both letters.



### THE TIME OF 3 JOHN

The parallels between 2 and 3 John suggest that these epistles were written at about the same time (AD 90). Early Christian writers are unified in their testimony that the headquarters of John's later ministry was in Ephesus, the principal city of the Roman province of Asia (see "The Time of 1 John"). John evidently commissioned several traveling teachers to spread the gospel and to solidify the Asian churches, and these teachers were supported by believers who received them into their homes.

Third John, probably delivered by Demetrius, was occasioned by the report of some of these emissaries (called "brethren" in this letter), who returned to the apostle and informed him of the hospitality of Gaius and the hostility of Diotrephes. The arrogant Diotrephes seized the reins of an Asian church and vaunted himself as its preeminent authority. He maligned John's authority and rejected the teachers sent out by John, expelling those in his church who wanted to receive them.

"Gaius" was a common name in the Roman Empire, and three other men by that name are mentioned in the New Testament: (1) Gaius, one of Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia (Acts 19:29); (2) Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20:4); and (3) Gaius, Paul's host in Corinth, one of the few Corinthians Paul baptized (Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14). The Gaius of 3 John evidently lived in Asia, and it is best to distinguish him from these other men.

In verse 9, John alludes to a previous letter that Diotrephes had spurned. This may have been 1 or 2 John, but it is more likely a letter that has been lost or perhaps was destroyed by Diotrephes.



### CHRIST IN 3 JOHN

Unlike 1 and 2 John, 3 John makes no mention of the name of Jesus Christ. But verse 7 says "they went forth for His name's sake," an indirect reference to our Lord (cf. Acts 5:41, where the identical Greek construction is used to refer back to "the name of Jesus" in Acts 5:40). The concept of truth runs throughout this letter, and Christ is the source and incarnation of truth, as is obvious from John's other writings.



### KEYS TO 3 JOHN

**Key Theme:** *Enjoy Fellowship with the Brethren*—The basic theme of this letter is to enjoy and continue to have fellowship (hospitality) with fellow believers, especially full-time Christian workers. This is contrasted between the truth and servanthood of Gaius and the error and selfishness of Diotrephes. Moving through 3 John, five specific purposes can be discerned from its contents: (1) to commend Gaius for his adherence to the truth and his hospitality to the emissaries sent out by John (3 John vv. 1–6); (2) to encourage Gaius to continue his support of these brethren (vv. 6–8); (3) to rebuke Diotrephes for his pride and misconduct (vv. 9–11); (4) to provide a recommendation for Demetrius (v. 12); and (5) to inform Gaius of John’s intention to visit and straighten out the difficulties (vv. 10, 13–14).

**Key Verse:** *3 John v. 11*—“Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God” (v. 11).



### SURVEY OF 3 JOHN

Third John is the shortest book in the Bible, but it is very personal and vivid. It offers a stark contrast between two men who respond in opposite ways to the itinerant teachers who have been sent out

by the apostle. The faithful Gaius responds with generosity and hospitality, but the faithless Diotrephes responds with arrogance and opposition. Thus, John writes this letter to commend Gaius for walking in the truth (3 John vv. 1–8) and to condemn Diotrephes for walking in error (vv. 9–14).

**The Commendation of Gaius (vv. 1–8)**—The “Elder” writes to one of his beloved “children” whose godly behavior has given the apostles great joy (vv. 1–4). The “brethren,” upon returning to John, have informed him of Gaius’s faithfulness, love, and generosity in their behalf. The apostle acknowledges these actions and urges Gaius to continue supporting traveling teachers and missionaries who go out “for His [Jesus’] name’s sake” (vv. 5–8).

**The Condemnation of Diotrephes (vv. 9–14)**—The epistle suddenly shifts to a negative note as John describes a man whose actions are diametrically opposed to those of Gaius (vv. 9–11). Diotrephes boldly rejects John’s apostolic authority and refuses to receive the itinerant teachers sent out by the apostle. Diotrephes evidently has been orthodox in his doctrine, but his evil actions indicate a blindness to God in his practice.

By contrast, John gives his full recommendation to Demetrius, another emissary and probably the bearer of this letter to Gaius (v. 12). John expresses his hope of a personal visit in the closing remarks (vv. 13–14), as he does in 2 John.

OVERVIEW OF 3 JOHN					
Outline	THE COMMENDATION OF GAIUS			THE CONDEMNATION OF DIOTREPHEs	
	SALUTATION V. 1	GODLINESS OF GAIUS VV. 2–4	GENEROSITY OF GAIUS VV. 5–8	PRIDE OF DIOTREPHEs VV. 9–11	PRAISE FOR DEMETRIUS V. 12
Theme	SERVANTHOOD			SELFISHNESS	
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT				
Location	FROM EPHEsus				
Time Frame	C. AD 90				

OUTLINE OF 3 JOHN	
<b>Part One: The Commendation of Gaius (vv. 1–8)</b> _____	
I. Salutation .....	v. 1
II. Godliness of Gaius .....	vv. 2–4
III. Generosity of Gaius .....	vv. 5–8
<b>Part Two: The Condemnation of Diotrephes (vv. 9–14)</b> _____	
I. Pride of Diotrephes .....	vv. 9–11
II. Praise for Demetrius .....	v. 12
III. Benediction .....	vv. 13–14

## SALUTATION

**T**HE Elder,

To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth: <sup>2</sup>John 1

## GODLINESS OF GAIUS

<sup>2</sup> Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

<sup>3</sup> For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth *that is* in you, just as you walk in the truth. <sup>2</sup>John 4

<sup>4</sup> I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.<sup>a</sup> <sup>1</sup>Cor. 4:15; <sup>1</sup>Thess. 2:19, 20

## GENEROSITY OF GAIUS

<sup>5</sup> Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and<sup>a</sup> for strangers,

<sup>6</sup> who have borne witness of your love before the church. *If* you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well,

<sup>7</sup> because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. <sup>1</sup>Cor. 9:12, 15

<sup>8</sup> We therefore ought to receive<sup>a</sup> such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth. <sup>Matt.</sup> 10:40

## PRIDE OF DIOTREPHES

<sup>9</sup> I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does

## WALK

**v. 3** (Gr. *peripateō*) (Luke 5:23; John 11:9; Col. 3:7) *G4043*: *Peripateō* is used literally to describe the action of walking, or figuratively to describe the way in which one lives. John greatly rejoiced to hear that those he led to Christ were "walking" in the truth (3 John v. 3). Those who "walk" in sin live in sin, those who "walk" in the light live in the light of Jesus (Col. 3:7). Jesus healed a lame man and allowed him to "walk" home (Luke 5:23).

not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting *them* out of the church. <sup>Prov.</sup> 10:8, 10

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but<sup>a</sup> he who does evil has not seen God. <sup>Ps.</sup> 34:14; 37:27; <sup>1</sup>John 3:10

## PRAISE FOR DEMETRIUS

<sup>12</sup> Demetrius has a *good* testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true. <sup>1</sup>Tim. 3:7

## BENEDICTION

<sup>13</sup> I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; <sup>2</sup>John 12

<sup>14</sup> but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

<sup>4</sup><sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *the truth*. <sup>5</sup><sup>a</sup>NU-Text adds *especially*. <sup>8</sup><sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *support*. <sup>11</sup><sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *but*.

# The Epistle of JUDE



## THE BOOK OF JUDE

Fight! Contend! Do battle! When apostasy arises, when false teachers emerge, when the truth of God is attacked, it is time to fight for the faith. Only believers who are spiritually “in shape” can answer the summons. At the beginning of his letter, Jude focuses on the believers’ common salvation, but then feels compelled to challenge them to contend for the faith. The danger is real. False teachers have crept into the church, turning God’s grace into unbounded license to do as they please. Jude reminds these false teachers of God’s past dealings with unbelieving Israel, disobedient angels, and wicked Sodom and Gomorrah. In the face of such danger, Christians should not be caught off guard. The challenge is great, but so is the God who is able to keep them from stumbling.

The Greek title *Iouda*, “Of Jude,” comes from the name *Ioudas* which appears in verse 1. This name, which can be translated as “Jude” or “Judas,” was popular in the first century because of Judas Maccabaeus (died 160 BC), a leader of the Jewish resistance against Syria during the Maccabean revolt.



## THE AUTHOR OF JUDE

Despite its limited subject matter and size, Jude was accepted as authentic and quoted by early church fathers. There may be some older allusions, but undisputed references to this epistle appear in the last quarter of the second century. It was included in the Muratorian Canon (c. AD 170) and accepted as part of Scripture by early leaders, such as Tertullian and Origen. Nevertheless, doubts arose concerning the place of Jude in the canon because of its use of the Apocrypha. It was a disputed book in some parts of the church, but it eventually won universal recognition.

The author identifies himself as “a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James” (Jude v. 1). This designation, combined with the reference in verse 17 to the apostles, makes it unlikely that this is the apostle Jude, called “Judas the son of James” in Luke 6:16 and in Acts 1:13. This leaves the traditional view that Jude was one of the Lord’s brothers, called Judas in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 (see “The Author of James”). His older brother James

(note his position on the two lists) was the famous leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:13–21) and author of the epistle that bears his name. Like his brothers, Jude did not believe in Jesus before the resurrection (John 7:1–9; Acts 1:14). The only other biblical allusion to him is in 1 Corinthians 9:5 where it is recorded that “the brothers of the Lord” took their wives along on their missionary journeys (the Judas of Acts 15:22, 32 may be another reference to him). Extrabiblical tradition adds nothing to our limited knowledge of Jude.



## THE TIME OF JUDE

Jude’s general address does not mark out any particular circle of readers, and there are no geographical restrictions. Nevertheless, he probably had in mind a specific region that was being troubled by false teachers. There is not enough information in the epistle to settle the question of whether his readers were predominately Jewish or Gentile Christians (there is probably a mixture of both). In any case, the progress of the faith in their region was threatened by several apostates who rejected Christ in practice and principle. These proud libertines were especially dangerous because of their deceptive flattery (Jude v. 16) and infiltration of Christian meetings (v. 12). They perverted the grace of God (v. 4) and caused divisions in the church (v. 19).

Jude’s description of these heretics is reminiscent of that found in 2 Peter and leads to the issue of the relationship between the two epistles (see “The Author of 2 Peter”). The strong similarity between 2 Peter 2:1–3:4 and Jude vv. 4–18 can hardly be coincidental, but the equally obvious differences rule out the possibility that one is a mere copy of the other. It is also doubtful that both authors independently drew from an unknown third source, so the two remaining options are that Peter used Jude or Jude used Peter. Both views have their advocates, and several arguments have been raised in support of either side. But two arguments for the priority of 2 Peter are so strong that they tip the scales in favor of this position: (1) A comparison of the two books shows that 2 Peter anticipates the future rise of apostate teachers (2 Pet. 2:1–2; 3:3) while Jude records the historical fulfillment of Peter’s words

(Jude vv. 4, 11–12, 17–18); (2) Jude directly quotes 2 Peter 3:3 and acknowledges it as a quotation from the apostles (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1).

Because of the silence of the New Testament and tradition concerning Jude’s later years, we cannot know where this epistle was written. Nor is there any way to be certain of its date. Assuming the priority of 2 Peter (AD 64–66), the probable range is AD 66–80. (Jude’s silence concerning the destruction of Jerusalem does not prove that he wrote this letter before AD 70.)

## ✝ CHRIST IN JUDE

In contrast to those who stand condemned by their licentiousness and denial of Christ (Jude v. 4), the believer is “preserved in Jesus Christ” (v. 1). Jude tells his readers to “keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (v. 21). But at the same time, the Lord “is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (v. 24).

## ✂ KEYS TO JUDE

**Key Theme:** *Contend for the Faith*—This epistle is intensely concerned with the threat of heretical teachers in the church and the believer’s proper response to that threat. The contents reveal two major purposes: first, to condemn the practices of the ungodly libertines who were infesting the churches and corrupting believers; and second, to counsel the readers to stand firm, grow in their faith, and contend for the truth. Jude says little about the actual doctrines of these “raging waves of

the sea,” but they may have held to an antinomian version of Gnosticism (see “The Time of 1 John”). The readers are encouraged to reach out to those who have been misled by these individuals.

**Key Verse:** *Jude v. 3*—“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (v. 3).

## 🔗 SURVEY OF JUDE

A surprisingly large number of the Pauline and non-Pauline epistles confront the problem of false teachers, and almost all of them allude to it. But Jude goes beyond all other New Testament epistles in its relentless and passionate denunciation of the apostate teachers who have “crept in unnoticed.” Apart from its salutation (Jude vv. 1–2) and doxology (vv. 24–25), the entire epistle revolves around this alarming problem. Combining the theme of 2 Peter with the style of James, Jude is potent despite its brevity. This urgent letter has four major sections: the purpose of Jude (vv. 1–4); a description of false teachers (vv. 5–16); a defense against false teachers (vv. 17–23); and the doxology (vv. 24–25).

**Purpose of Jude (vv. 1–4)**—Jude addresses his letter to believers who are “called,” “sanctified,” and “preserved,” and wishes for them the threefold blessing of mercy, peace, and love (vv. 1–2). Grim news about the encroachment of false teachers in the churches has impelled Jude to put aside his commentary on salvation to write this timely word of rebuke and warning (vv. 3–4). In view of apostates who turn “the grace of our God into lewdness” and deny Christ, it is crucial that believers “contend earnestly for the faith.”

OVERVIEW OF JUDE						
Outline	PURPOSE OF JUDE	DESCRIPTION OF FALSE TEACHERS			DEFENSE AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS	DOXOLOGY OF JUDE
	INTRODUCTION VV. 1–4	PAST JUDGMENT OF FALSE TEACHERS VV. 5–7	PRESENT CHARACTERISTICS OF FALSE TEACHERS VV. 8–13	FUTURE JUDGMENT OF FALSE TEACHERS VV. 14–16	DUTY OF BELIEVERS VV. 17–23	CONCLUSION VV. 24–25
Theme	REASON TO CONTEND				HOW TO CONTEND	
Approach	DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT					
Location	UNKNOWN					
Time Frame	C. AD 66–80					

**Description of False Teachers (vv. 5–16)**—Jude begins his extended exposé of the apostate teachers by illustrating their ultimate doom with three examples of divine judgment from the Pentateuch (vv. 5–7). Like unreasoning animals, these apostates are ruled by the things they revile, and they are destroyed by the things they practice (vv. 8–10). Even the archangel Michael is more careful in his dealings with superhuman powers than are these arrogant individuals. He compares these false teachers to three spiritually rebellious individuals from Genesis (Cain) and Numbers (Balaam and Korah) who incurred the condemnation of God (v. 11). Verses 12 and 13 succinctly summarize their character with five highly descriptive metaphors taken from nature. After affirming the judgment of God upon such ungodly people with a quote from

the noncanonical Book of Enoch (vv. 14–15), Jude catalogs some of their practices (v. 16).

**Defense Against False Teachers (vv. 17–23)**—This letter has been exposing apostate teachers (vv. 8, 10, 12, 14, 16), but now Jude directly addresses his readers (“But you, beloved, remember” v. 17). He reminds them of the apostolic warning that such individuals would come (vv. 17–19) and encourages them to protect themselves against the onslaught of apostasy (vv. 20–21). The readers must become mature in their own faith so that they will be able to rescue those who are enticed or already ensnared by error (vv. 22–23).

**Doxology of Jude (vv. 24–25)**—Jude closes with one of the greatest doxologies in the Bible. It emphasizes the power of Christ to keep those who trust in Him from being overthrown by error.

## OUTLINE OF JUDE

Part One: Purpose of Jude (vv. 1–4)	_____
Part Two: Description of False Teachers (vv. 5–16)	_____
I. Past Judgment of False Teachers . . . . . vv. 5–7	III. Future Judgment of False Teachers . . . . . vv. 14–16
II. Present Characteristics of False Teachers . . . . . vv. 8–13	
Part Three: Defense Against False Teachers (vv. 17–23)	_____
Part Four: Doxology of Jude (vv. 24–25)	_____

### PURPOSE OF JUDE

**J**UDE, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,

To those who are called, sanctified<sup>a</sup> by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: Acts 1:13; Rom. 1:7

2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. Phil. 1:27; Titus 1:4

4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God<sup>a</sup> and our Lord Jesus Christ.

### PAST JUDGMENT OF FALSE TEACHERS

5 But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. 1 Cor. 10:5–10

6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Gen. 19:24

### PRESENT CHARACTERISTICS OF FALSE TEACHERS

8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Ex. 22:28

9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” Zech. 3:2

10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.

11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of

<sup>1</sup>a NU-Text reads *beloved*. <sup>4</sup>a NU-Text omits *God*.

Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

Gen. 4:3–8; Num. 16:1–3, 31–35; 2 Pet. 2:15

**12** These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves. *They are* clouds without water, carried about<sup>a</sup> by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots;

**13** raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Is. 57:20; Phil. 3:19

#### FUTURE JUDGMENT OF FALSE TEACHERS

**14** Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,

**15** “to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

1 Sam. 2:3

**16** These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling *words*, flattering people to gain advantage.

Prov. 28:21; 2 Pet. 2:18

#### DEFENSE AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS

**17** But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Pet. 3:2

**18** how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.

1 Tim. 4:1

**19** These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

**20** But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

**21** keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Titus 2:13

**22** And on some have compassion, making a distinction;<sup>a</sup>

**23** but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire,<sup>a</sup> hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Amos 4:11; Zech. 3:4, 5; Rom. 11:14

#### DOXOLOGY OF JUDE

**24** Now to Him who is able to keep you<sup>a</sup> from stumbling,

And to present *you* faultless

Before the presence of His glory

with exceeding joy,

Eph. 3:20; Col. 1:22

**25** To God our Savior,<sup>a</sup>

Who alone is wise,<sup>b</sup>

Be glory and majesty,

Dominion and power,<sup>c</sup>

Both now and forever.

Amen.

**12**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *along*. **22**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *who are doubting (or making distinctions)*. **23**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text adds *and on some have mercy with fear and omits with fear* in first clause.

**24**<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *them*. **25**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *To the only God our Savior*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text omits *Who . . . is wise* and adds *Through Jesus Christ our Lord*. <sup>c</sup> NU-Text adds *Before all time*.

# The REVELATION

## of Jesus Christ



### THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Just as Genesis is the book of beginnings, Revelation is the book of consummation. In it, the divine program of redemption is brought to fruition, and the holy name of God is vindicated before all creation. Although there are numerous prophecies in the Gospels and Epistles, Revelation is the only New Testament book that focuses primarily on prophetic events. Its title means “unveiling” or “disclosure.” Thus, the book is an unveiling of the character and program of God. Penned by John during his exile on the island of Patmos, Revelation centers on visions and symbols of the resurrected Christ, who alone has authority to judge the earth, to remake it, and to rule it in righteousness.

The title of this book in the Greek text is *Apokalypsis Ioannou*, “Revelation of John.” It is also known as the Apocalypse, a transliteration of the word *apokalypsis*, meaning “unveiling,” “disclosure,” or “revelation.” Thus, the book is an unveiling of that which otherwise could not be known. A better title comes from the first verse: *Apokalypsis Iesou Christou*, “Revelation of Jesus Christ.” This could be taken as a revelation that came from Christ or as a revelation that is about Christ—both are appropriate. Because of the unified contents of this book, it should not be called Revelations.



### THE AUTHOR OF REVELATION

The style, symmetry, and plan of Revelation show that it was written by one author, four times named “John” (Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8; see “The Author of John”). Because of its contents and its address to seven churches, Revelation quickly circulated and became widely known and accepted in the early church. It was frequently mentioned and quoted by second- and third-century Christian writers and was received as part of the canon of New Testament books. From the beginning, Revelation was considered an authentic work of the apostle John, the same John who wrote the Gospel and three epistles. This was held to be true by Justin Martyr, the Shepherd of Hermas, Melito, Irenaeus, the Muratorian Canon, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and others.

The apostolic authorship of Revelation was seldom questioned until the middle of the third century when Dionysius presented several arguments against it. He observed a clear difference in style and thought between Revelation and the books that he accepted as Johannine, and he concluded that the Apocalypse must have been penned by a different John. Indeed, the internal evidence does pose some problems for the traditional view: (1) The Greek grammar of Revelation is not on par with the fourth Gospel or the Johannine Epistles. (2) There are also differences in vocabulary and expressions used. (3) The theological content of this book differs from John’s other writings in emphasis and presentation. (4) John’s other writings avoid the use of his name, but it is found four times in this book. While these difficulties exist, two things should be kept in mind: (1) There are several remarkable similarities between the Apocalypse and the other books traditionally associated with the apostle John (e.g., the distinctive use of terms, such as “word,” “lamb,” and “true,” and the careful development of conflicting themes, such as light and darkness, love and hatred, good and evil). (2) Many of the differences can be explained by the unusual circumstances surrounding this book. The apocalyptic subject matter demands a different treatment, and John received the contents not by reflection but by a series of startling and ecstatic visions. It is also possible that John used a secretary who smoothed out the Greek style of his other writings, and that his exile on Patmos prevented the use of such a scribe when he wrote Revelation.

Thus, the internal evidence, while problematic, need not overrule the early and strong external testimony to the apostolic origin of this important book. The author was obviously well known to the recipients in the seven Asian churches, and this fits the unqualified use of the name “John” and the uniform tradition about his ministry in Asia. Alternate suggestions, such as John the Elder or a prophet named John, create more problems than they solve.



### THE TIME OF REVELATION

John directed this prophetic word to seven selected churches in the Roman province of Asia (Rev. 1:3–4). The messages to these churches in chapters 2 and



3 begin with Ephesus, the most prominent, and continue in a clockwise direction until Laodicea is reached. It is likely that this book was initially carried along this circular route. While each of these messages had particular significance for these churches, they were also relevant for the church as a whole (“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”).

John’s effective testimony for Christ led the Roman authorities to exile him to the small, desolate island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea (1:9). This island of volcanic rock was one of several places to which the Romans banished criminals and political offenders.

Revelation was written at a time when Roman hostility to Christianity was erupting into overt persecution (1:9; 2:10, 13). Some scholars believe that it should be given an early date during the persecution of Christians under Nero after the AD 64 burning of Rome. The Hebrew letters for Nero Caesar (*Neron Kesar*) add up to 666, the number of the Beast (13:18), and there was a legend that Nero would reappear in the East after his apparent death (cf. 13:3, 12, 14). This kind of evidence is weak, and a later date near the end of the reign of the emperor Domitian (AD 81–96) is preferable for several reasons: (1) This was the testimony of Irenaeus (disciple of Polycarp who was a disciple of John) and other early Christian writers. (2) John probably did not move from Jerusalem to Ephesus until about AD 67, shortly before the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. The early dating would not give him enough time to have established an ongoing ministry in Asia by the time he wrote this book. (3) The churches of Asia appear to have been in existence for several years, long enough for some to reach a point of complacency and decline (cf. 2:4; 3:1, 15–18). (4) The deeds of Domitian are more relevant than those of Nero to the themes of the Apocalypse. Worship of deceased emperors had been practiced for years, but Domitian was the first emperor to demand worship while he was alive. This led to a greater clash between the state and the church, especially in Asia, where the worship of Caesar was widely practiced. The persecution under Domitian presaged the more severe persecutions to follow.

Thus, it is likely that John wrote this book in AD 95 or 96. The date of his release from Patmos is unknown, but he was probably allowed to return to Ephesus after the reign of Domitian. Passages such as 1:11; 22:7, 9–10, 18–19 suggest that the book was completed before John’s release.

## ✝ CHRIST IN REVELATION

Revelation has much to say about all three Persons of the Godhead, but it is especially clear in its presentation of the awesome resurrected Christ who

has received all authority to judge the earth. He is called Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:1), the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth (1:5), the First and the Last (1:17), He who lives (1:18), the Son of God (2:18), holy and true (3:7), the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God (3:14), the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David (5:5), a Lamb (5:6), Faithful and True (19:11), The Word of God (19:13), KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (19:16), Alpha and Omega (22:13), the Bright and Morning Star (22:16), and the Lord Jesus Christ (22:21).

This book is indeed “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1) since it comes from Him and centers on Him. It begins with a vision of His glory, wisdom, and power (ch. 1) and portrays His authority over the entire church (chs. 2–3). He is the Lamb who was slain and declared worthy to open the book of judgment (ch. 5). His righteous wrath is poured out upon the whole earth (chs. 6–18), and He returns in power to judge His enemies and to reign as the Lord over all (chs. 19–20). He will rule forever over the heavenly city in the presence of all who know Him (chs. 21–22).

The Scriptures close with His great promise: “Behold, I am coming quickly!” (22:7, 12). “Surely I am coming quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (22:20).

## ✂ KEYS TO REVELATION

**Key Theme:** *The Revelation of the Coming of Christ*—The purposes for which Revelation was written depend to some extent on how the book is interpreted. Because of its complex imagery and symbolism, Revelation is perhaps the most difficult biblical book to interpret, and there are four major alternatives: (1) The symbolic or idealist view maintains that Revelation is not a predictive prophecy, but a symbolic portrait of the cosmic conflict of spiritual principles. (2) The preterist view (the Latin word *praeter* means “past”) maintains that it is a symbolic description of the Roman persecution of the church, emperor worship, and the divine judgment of Rome. (3) The historicist view approaches Revelation as an allegorical panorama of the history of the (Western) church from the first century to the Second Advent. (4) The futurist view acknowledges the obvious influence that the first-century conflict between Roman power and the church had upon the themes of this book. It also accepts the bulk of Revelation (Rev. 4–22) as an inspired look into the time immediately preceding the Second Advent (the “Tribulation,” often seen as seven years; chs. 6–18) and extending from the return of Christ to the creation of the new cosmos (chs. 19–22).

Advocates of all four interpretive approaches

to Revelation agree that it was written to assure the recipients of the ultimate triumph of Christ over all who rise up against Him and His saints. The readers were facing dark times of persecution, and even worse times would follow. Therefore, they needed to be encouraged to persevere by standing firm in Christ in view of God's plan for the righteous and the wicked. This plan is especially clear in the stirring words of the epilogue (22:6–21). The book was also written to challenge complacent Christians to stop compromising with the world. According to futurists, Revelation serves the additional purpose of providing a perspective on end-time events that would have meaning and relevance to the spiritual lives of all succeeding generations of Christians.

**Key Verses:** *Revelation 1:19; 19:11–15*—“Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this” (1:19).

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (19:11–15).

**Key Chapters:** *Revelation 19–22*—When the end of history is fully understood, its impact radically affects the present. In Revelation 19–22, the plans of God for the last days and for all of eternity are recorded in explicit terms. Careful study of and obedience to them will bring the blessings that are promised (1:3). Uppermost in the mind and deep in the heart should be guarded the words of Jesus, “Behold, I am coming quickly.”



## SURVEY OF REVELATION

Revelation is written in the form of apocalyptic literature (cf. Daniel and Zechariah) by a prophet (Rev. 10:11; 22:9) and refers to itself as a prophetic book (1:3; 22:7, 10, 18–19). The three major movements in this profound unveiling are captured in 1:19: “the things which you have seen” (ch. 1); “the things which are” (chs. 2–3); and “the things which must take place after this” (chs. 4–22).

“**The Things Which You Have Seen**” (1:1–20)—Revelation contains a prologue (1:1–3) before the usual salutation (1:4–8). The Revelation was received by Christ from the Father and communicated by

an angel to John. This is the only biblical book that specifically promises a blessing to those who read it (1:3), but it also promises a curse to those who add to or detract from it (22:18–19). The salutation and closing benediction show that it was originally written as an epistle to seven Asian churches.

A rich theological portrait of the triune God (1:4–8) is followed by an overwhelming theophany (visible manifestation of God) in 1:9–20. The omnipotent and omniscient Christ who will subjugate all things under His authority is the central figure in this book.

“**The Things Which Are**” (2:1–3:22)—The messages to the seven churches refer back to an aspect of John's vision of Christ and contain a command, a commendation and/or condemnation, a correction, and a challenge.

“**The Things Which Must Take Place After This**” (4:1–22:21)—John is translated into heaven where he is given a vision of the divine majesty. In it, the Father (“One sat on the throne”) and the Son (The Lion/Lamb) are worshiped by the twenty-four elders, the four living creatures, and the angelic host because of who they are and what they have done (creation and redemption; chs. 4–5).

Three cycles of seven judgments in chapters 6–16 consist of seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls. There is a prophetic insert between the sixth and seventh seal and trumpet judgments and an extended insert between the trumpet and bowl judgments. Because of the similarity of the seventh judgment in each series, it is possible that the three sets of judgments take place concurrently or with some overlap so that they all terminate with the return of Christ. An alternate approach views them as three consecutive series of judgments, so that the seventh seal is the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet is the seven bowls.

The seven seals (6:1–8:5) include war, the famine and death that are associated with war, and persecution. The prophetic insert between the sixth and seventh seals (ch. 7) describes the protective sealing of 144,000 “children of Israel,” 12,000 from every tribe. It also looks ahead to the multitudes from every part of the earth who come “out of the great tribulation.” The catastrophic events in most of the trumpet judgments are called “woes” (8:2–11:19). The prophetic interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets (10:1–11:14) adds more details about the nature of the tribulation period and mentions a fourth set of seven judgments (the “seven thunders”), which would have extended it if they had not been withdrawn. Two unnamed witnesses minister during three and one-half years of the Tribulation (forty-two months or 1,260 days). At the end of their ministry, they are overcome by the Beast, but their resurrection and ascension confound their enemies.

Chapters 12–14 contain several miscellaneous prophecies that are inserted between the trumpet and bowl judgments to give further background on the time of tribulation. In chapter 12, a woman gives birth to a male child, who is caught up to God. The woman flees into the wilderness and is pursued by the Dragon, who is cast down to earth. Chapter 13 gives a graphic description of the beast and his False Prophet, both empowered by the Dragon. The first beast is given political, economic, and religious authority; and because of his power and the lying miracles performed by the second beast, he is worshiped as the ruler of the earth. Chapter 14 contains a series of visions including the 144,000 at the end of the Tribulation, the fate of those who follow the beast, and the outpouring of the wrath of God. The seven bowl judgments of chapter 16 are prefaced by a heavenly vision of the power, holiness, and glory of God in chapter 15.

Chapters 17 and 18 anticipate the final downfall of Babylon, the great harlot sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast.

The marriage banquet of the Lamb is ready and the King of Kings, Lord of Lords leads the armies of

heaven into battle against the beast and his False Prophet. They are cast into a lake of fire (ch. 19).

In chapter 20, the Dragon—Satan—is bound for a thousand years. He is cast into a bottomless pit. During this one-thousand-year period, Christ reigns over the earth with His resurrected saints. At the end of the thousand years, Satan is released, and a final battle ensues. This is followed by the judgment at the Great White Throne.

A new universe is created, this time unspoiled by sin, death, pain, or sorrow. The New Jerusalem, described in 21:9–22:5, is shaped like a gigantic cube, 1,500 miles in length, width, and height (the Most Holy Place in the Old Testament tabernacle and the temple was also a perfect cube). Its multi-colored stones will reflect the glory of God, and it will continually be filled with light. But the greatest thing of all is that believers will be in the presence of God and “they shall see His face.”

Revelation concludes with an epilogue (22:6–21), which reassures the readers that Christ is coming quickly (22:7, 12, 20) and invites all who wish to “take the water of life freely” (22:17) to come to the Alpha and Omega, the Bright and Morning Star.

OVERVIEW OF REVELATION								
Outline	“THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN”	“THE THINGS WHICH ARE”	“THE THINGS WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE”				CONCLUSION	
	REVELATION OF CHRIST 1:1–20	MESSAGES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES 2:1–3:22	PERSON OF THE JUDGE 4:1–5:14	PROPHECIES OF TRIBULATION 6:1–19:5	PROPHECIES OF THE SECOND COMING 19:6–21	PROPHECIES OF THE MILLENNIUM 20:1–15	PROPHECIES OF THE ETERNAL STATE 21:1–22:5	PROMISE OF A QUICK COMING 22:6–21
Theme	VISION OF CHRIST		VISION OF CONSUMMATION					
Approach	PROPHECY							
Location	FROM PATMOS							
Time Frame	C. AD 95–96							

## OUTLINE OF REVELATION

### Part One: “The Things Which You Have Seen” (1:1–20)

- I. Introduction ..... 1:1–8      II. Revelation of Christ ..... 1:9–20

### Part Two: “The Things Which Are” (2:1—3:22)

- I. Message to Ephesus ..... 2:1–7      V. Message to Sardis ..... 3:1–6  
 II. Message to Smyrna ..... 2:8–11      VI. Message to Philadelphia ..... 3:7–13  
 III. Message to Pergamos ..... 2:12–17      VII. Message to Laodicea ..... 3:14–22  
 IV. Message to Thyatira ..... 2:18–29

### Part Three: “The Things Which Will Take Place After This” (4:1—22:21)

- I. Person of the Judge ..... 4:1—5:14  
 A. The Throne of God ..... 4:1–11  
 B. The Sealed Book ..... 5:1–14  
 II. Prophecies of Tribulation ..... 6:1—19:6  
 A. Seven Seals of Judgment ..... 6:1—8:5  
 1. First Seal ..... 6:1–2  
 2. Second Seal ..... 6:3–4  
 3. Third Seal ..... 6:5–6  
 4. Fourth Seal ..... 6:7–8  
 5. Fifth Seal ..... 6:9–11  
 6. Sixth Seal ..... 6:12–17  
 7. 144,000 Jews ..... 7:1–8  
 8. Great Multitude of Gentiles ..... 7:9–17  
 9. Seventh Seal ..... 8:1–5  
 B. Seven Trumpets of Judgment ..... 8:6—11:19  
 1. First Trumpet ..... 8:6–7  
 2. Second Trumpet ..... 8:8–9  
 3. Third Trumpet ..... 8:10–11  
 4. Fourth Trumpet ..... 8:12–13  
 5. Fifth Trumpet ..... 9:1–12  
 6. Sixth Trumpet ..... 9:13–21  
 7. Little Book ..... 10:1–11  
 8. Two Witnesses ..... 11:1–14  
 9. Seventh Trumpet ..... 11:15–19  
 C. Explanatory Prophecies ..... 12:1—14:20  
 1. The Woman ..... 12:1–6  
 2. The War in Heaven ..... 12:7–12  
 3. The War on Earth ..... 12:13–17  
 4. The Beast Out of the Sea ..... 13:1–10  
 5. The Beast Out of the Earth ..... 13:11–18  
 6. The 144,000 ..... 14:1–5  
 7. The Three Angels’ Announcements ..... 14:6–13  
 8. The Harvest Judgment ..... 14:14–20  
 D. Seven Bowls of Judgment ..... 15:1—19:6  
 1. Preparation for the Bowl Judgments ..... 15:1–8  
 2. First Bowl ..... 16:1–2  
 3. Second Bowl ..... 16:3  
 4. Third Bowl ..... 16:4–7  
 5. Fourth Bowl ..... 16:8–9  
 6. Fifth Bowl ..... 16:10–11  
 7. Sixth Bowl ..... 16:12–16  
 8. Seventh Bowl ..... 16:17–21  
 9. Overthrow of the Great Harlot ..... 17:1–18  
 10. Overthrow of Babylon the Great ..... 18:1—19:6  
 III. Prophecies of the Second Coming ..... 19:7–21  
 A. Marriage Supper of the Lamb ..... 19:7–10  
 B. Second Coming of Christ ..... 19:11–21  
 IV. Prophecies of the Millennium ..... 20:1–15  
 A. Satan Is Bound 1,000 Years ..... 20:1–3  
 B. Saints Reign 1,000 Years ..... 20:4–6  
 C. Satan Is Released and Leads Rebellion ..... 20:7–9  
 D. Satan Is Tormented Forever ..... 20:10  
 E. Great White Throne Judgment ..... 20:11–15  
 V. Prophecies of the Eternal State ..... 21:1—22:5  
 A. New Heaven and Earth Are Created ..... 21:1  
 B. New Jerusalem Descends ..... 21:2–8  
 C. New Jerusalem Is Described ..... 21:9—22:5

### Conclusion (22:6–21)

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

**T**HE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear

the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved

WITNESS

**1:5** (Gr. *martyrs*) (Matt. 18:16; Acts 1:8; 1 Tim. 6:12; Heb. 12:1) G3144: Transliterated almost directly into English as *martyr*, this word describes someone who testifies to the truth he or she has experienced. This type of witness has direct knowledge of something and can offer information about it. Legally, this is someone who saw something firsthand and testifies about it in court. The word itself does not imply death, although because so many first-century witnesses of the gospel were killed, it became associated with the death penalty. Believers are called to witness to the truth about Jesus they have known and experienced through the grace of God (Acts 1:8).

us and washed<sup>a</sup> us from our sins in His own blood, **Ps. 89:27** <sup>+</sup>; Is. 55:4; John 8:14; 13:34; Col. 1:18; Heb. 9:14

**6** and has made us kings<sup>a</sup> and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. **1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9**

**7** Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. **Zech. 12:10–14; Matt. 24:30**

**8** “I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End*,”<sup>a</sup> says the Lord,<sup>b</sup> “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” **Is. 9:6; 41:4**

REVELATION OF CHRIST

**9** I, John, both<sup>a</sup> your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. **Phil. 1:7; 2 Tim. 2:12**

**10** I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, **Acts 20:7**

**11** saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and,<sup>a</sup> “What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia:<sup>b</sup> to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

**12** Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, **Ex. 25:37**

**13** and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. **Ezek. 1:26; Dan. 10:5; Rev. 2:1; 15:6**

**14** His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; **Dan. 7:9**

**15** His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; **Ezek. 1:7, 24; 43:2**

**16** He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. **Is. 49:2** <sup>+</sup>; **Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:20; 2:1; 3:1**

**17** And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me,<sup>a</sup> “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. **Is. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12; Ezek. 1:28; Dan. 8:18; 10:10, 12**

**18** “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. **Ps. 68:20; Rom. 6:9; Rev. 4:9**

**19** “Write<sup>a</sup> the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. **Rev. 1:9–18; 2:1; 4:1**

**20** “The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw<sup>a</sup> are the seven churches. **Zech. 4:2; Rev. 2:1**

CHAPTER 2

MESSAGE TO EPHESUS

**T**O the angel of the church of Ephesus write, “These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: **Rev. 1:13, 16**

**2** “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; **Ps. 1:6**

**3** “and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. **Gal. 6:9**

**4** “Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.

**5** “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. **Matt. 21:41**

**6** “But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

**7** “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” **Gen. 2:9; 3:22**

MESSAGE TO SMYRNA

**8** “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,

“These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: **Rev. 1:8, 17, 18**

**9** “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. **Luke 12:21; Rom. 2:17; Rev. 3:9**

**10** “Do not fear any of those things which you

**1:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *loves us and freed*; M-Text reads *loves us and washed*. **1:6**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *a kingdom*. **1:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *the Beginning and the End*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *God*. **1:9**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *both*. **1:11**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *I am through third and*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *which are in Asia*. **1:17**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me*. **1:19**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Therefore, write*. **1:20**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *which you saw*.

## THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION



The Book of Revelation contains special messages directed to churches in seven specific cities throughout the Roman province of Asia, modern-day Turkey. These cities were important trade and communication centers, which were connected by major roads in New Testament times. John addressed the churches in an upside-down “u,” beginning with Ephesus and ending with Laodicea. Each letter may have been intended to be a circular letter read by all the churches.

1 John received his vision and wrote Revelation while in exile on Patmos, an island in the Aegean Sea (Rev. 1:1, 9).

- 2 Ephesus (Rev. 2:1–7): “You have left your first love” (v. 4).
- 3 Smyrna (Rev. 2:8–11): “Be faithful until death” (v. 10).
- 4 Pergamos (Rev. 2:12–17): “I have a few things against you” (v. 14).
- 5 Thyatira (Rev. 2:18–29): “Hold fast what you have till I come” (v. 25).
- 6 Sardis (Rev. 3:1–6): “You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead” (v. 1).
- 7 Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7–13): “I have set before you an open door” (v. 8).
- 8 Laodicea (Rev. 3:14–22): “You are neither cold nor hot” (v. 15).

are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Matt. 10:22; 24:13; James 1:12

11 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” Rev. 20:6, 14; 21:8

## MESSAGE TO PERGAMOS

12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,

“These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: Is. 49:2 ✚; Rev. 1:16; 2:16

13 “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My

name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

14 “But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

Num. 31:16; Acts 15:29; 1 Cor. 6:13

15 “Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.<sup>a</sup>

16 “Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

2 Thess. 2:8

2:15<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *likewise* for *which thing I hate*.

17 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”<sup>a</sup> Ex. 16:33, 34; Rev. 3:12

**MESSAGE TO THYATIRA**

18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

“These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:

19 “I know your works, love, service, faith,<sup>a</sup> and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. Rev. 2:2

20 “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow<sup>a</sup> that woman<sup>b</sup> Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce<sup>c</sup> My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. Ex. 34:15; 1 Kin. 16:31; 21:25

21 “And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.”<sup>a</sup> Rev. 16:9, 11

22 “Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their<sup>a</sup> deeds.

23 “I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. Jer. 11:20; 17:10

24 “Now to you I say, and<sup>a</sup> to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will<sup>b</sup> put on you no other burden. Acts 15:28; 2 Tim. 3:1–9

25 “But hold fast what you have till I come.

26 “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— Matt. 19:28; John 6:29

27 ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’<sup>a</sup>—

as I also have received from My Father; Ps. 2:8, 9 †

2:19<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *faith, service*. 2:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *I have against you that you tolerate*. <sup>b</sup> M-Text reads *your wife Jezebel*. <sup>c</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *and teaches and seduces*. 2:21<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality*. 2:22<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *her*. 2:24<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *and*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *will*. 2:27<sup>a</sup> Psalm 2:9

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION			
Church	Reference	Potential Church Period	Commendation
Ephesus	Rev. 2:1–7	The Apostolic Church (AD 30–300)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rejecting evil</li> <li>• Patient</li> <li>• Labor</li> <li>• Testing false apostles</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> </ul>
Smyrna	Rev. 2:8–11	The Martyr Church (AD 100–313)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enduring suffering and poverty</li> </ul>
Pergamos	Rev. 2:12–17	The State-Sanctioned Church (AD 314–590)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faithfulness to Christ, even in the face of martyrdom</li> </ul>
Thyatira	Rev. 2:18–29	The Catholic Church (AD 590–1517)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love</li> <li>• Service</li> <li>• Faith</li> <li>• Patience</li> </ul>
Sardis	Rev. 3:1–6	The Reformation Church (1517–1700)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few who have remained faithful</li> </ul>
Philadelphia	Rev. 3:7–13	The Revival Church (1700–1900)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faithfulness</li> </ul>
Laodicea	Rev. 3:14–22	The Modern Church (1900–present)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>

28 “and I will give him the morning star. 2 Pet. 1:19  
 29 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. Ex. 32:32;  
 6 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” Rev. 2:7

**CHAPTER 3**  
**MESSAGE TO SARDIS**

“AND to the angel of the church in Sardis write, These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Rev. 1:4, 16

2 “Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.”

3 “Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. Matt. 24:42, 43; 1 Tim. 6:20; Rev. 3:19; 16:15

4 “You<sup>a</sup> have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. Acts 1:15; Jude 23

5 “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from

**MESSAGE TO PHILADELPHIA**

7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,

“These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”;<sup>a</sup> Job 12:14

8 “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it;<sup>a</sup> for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 1 Cor. 16:9; Rev. 3:1

9 “Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Is. 45:14; 49:23; 60:14; Rev. 2:9

10 “Because you have kept My command to

3:2<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *My God*. 3:4<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Nevertheless you have a few names in Sardis*. 3:7<sup>a</sup> Isaiah 22:22  
 3:8<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *which no one can shut*.

**THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION *continued***

Condemnation	Correction	Judgment	Reward
• Lost their love for Jesus	• Remember • Repent • Do the first works	• Removal of lampstand	• Access to the tree of life
• None	• None	• None	• The crown of life
• Tolerated immorality, idolatry, and heresies	• Repent	• The sword of Christ’s mouth	• Hidden manna • A white stone • A new name
• Tolerance of Jezebel and her wickedness	• Repent	• Casting of Jezebel into great tribulation and killing her children	• Ruler over nations • Possession of the morning star
• Deadness despite reputation for life	• Repent • Strengthen what remains	• Approach of Christ Himself	• Clothed in white garments • Permanent listing in the Book of Life • Confession of name before the Father
• None	• None	• None	• An open door • Deliverance from great tribulation • A new name
• Indifference • Over-estimate of status before God	• Repent • Seek genuine spiritual riches	• Expulsion from the mouth of the Lord	• Sharing Christ’s throne



persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Is. 24:17

11 “Behold,<sup>a</sup> I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. Phil. 4:5

12 “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 1 Kin. 7:21

13 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” Rev. 2:7

MESSAGE TO LAODICEA

14 “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans<sup>a</sup> write,

“These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 2 Cor. 1:20; Col. 1:15; Rev. 1:5; 3:7; 19:11

15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. Rev. 3:1

16 “So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,<sup>a</sup> I will vomit you out of My mouth.

17 “Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— Hos. 12:8

18 “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. Is. 55:1; 2 Cor. 5:3

19 “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Job 5:17; Heb. 12:6

20 “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. Song 5:2; Luke 12:36, 37; John 14:23

21 “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. Matt. 19:28

22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ Rev. 2:7

CHAPTER 4  
THE THRONE OF GOD

**A**FTER these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” Ezek. 1:1

2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne. Is. 6:1

3 And He who sat there *was*<sup>a</sup> like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. Ezek. 1:28; Rev. 21:11

4 Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns<sup>a</sup> of gold on their heads. Rev. 3:4, 5; 11:16

5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices.<sup>a</sup> Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the<sup>b</sup> seven Spirits of God. Ex. 37:23; Rev. 1:4; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18

6 Before the throne *there was*<sup>a</sup> a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. Ezek. 1:5; Rev. 15:2

7 The first living creature *was* like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. Ezek. 1:10; 10:14

8 *The* four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

“Holy, holy, holy,<sup>a</sup>  
Lord God Almighty,  
Who was and is and is to  
come!” Is. 6:2, 3; Rev. 1:4, 8

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, Rev. 1:8

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: Rev. 5:8, 14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4

11 “You are worthy, O Lord,<sup>a</sup>  
To receive glory and honor and  
power;  
For You created all things,  
And by Your will they exist<sup>b</sup> and  
were created.” Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:16; Rev. 1:6; 5:12

CHAPTER 5  
THE SEALED BOOK

**A**ND I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Is. 29:11; Ezek. 2:9, 10

2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” Rev. 4:11; 5:9

3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

<sup>3:11</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *Behold*. <sup>3:14</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *in Laodicea*. <sup>3:16</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *hot nor cold*.

<sup>4:3</sup> M-Text omits *And He who sat there was* (which makes the description in verse 3 modify the throne rather than God).

<sup>4:4</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *robes, with crowns*. <sup>4:5</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *voices, and thunderings*. <sup>b</sup> M-Text omits *the*.

<sup>4:6</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *something like*. <sup>4:8</sup> M-Text has *holy* nine times. <sup>4:11</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *our Lord and God*.

<sup>c</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *existed*.

4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read<sup>a</sup> the scroll, or to look at it.

5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose<sup>a</sup> its seven seals.” Gen. 49:9; Is. 11:1, 10; Heb. 7:14

6 And I looked, and behold,<sup>a</sup> in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Zech. 3:9; 4:10; John 1:29; Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5

7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Rev. 4:2

8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Rev. 4:8–10; 8:3; 19:4

9 And they sang a new song, saying:

“You are worthy to take the scroll,  
And to open its seals;  
For You were slain,  
And have redeemed us to God by  
Your blood

Out of every tribe and tongue and people  
and nation, John 1:29; Heb. 9:12; Rev. 4:11; 14:3

10 And have made us<sup>a</sup> kings<sup>b</sup> and priests  
to our God;

And we<sup>c</sup> shall reign on the  
earth.” Ex. 19:6; Is. 61:6

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

12 saying with a loud voice:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
To receive power and riches and  
wisdom,  
And strength and honor and glory  
and blessing!”

13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory  
and power  
Be to Him who sits on the throne,  
And to the Lamb, forever and  
ever!”<sup>a</sup> 1 Chr. 29:11; Phil. 2:10; Rev. 4:2, 3; 6:16; 20:11

14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four<sup>a</sup> elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.<sup>b</sup>

#### WILL

**4:11** (Gr. *thelēma*) (Rom. 1:10; 1 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1, 9, 11; 2:3; 5:17) G2307: This word conveys the idea of desire, even a heart’s desire, for the word primarily expresses emotion instead of volition. Thus, while God has a plan in place that is immutable, that plan is also His heart’s desire. Behind the plan and the counsel is not just a mastermind but a heart of love.

#### REDEEM

**5:9** (Gr. *agorazō*) (Matt. 13:44; 1 Cor. 6:20; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 13:17) G0059: Frequently used in the New Testament, this verb means “buy, purchase.” It may be used literally for buying merchandise of any kind, as a field (Matt. 13:44) or food (Mark 6:37). More interesting is the figurative use represented here in Revelation 5:9, probably based on the analogy with the slave market. Jesus Christ has purchased or redeemed people from enslavement to sin by the blood of His cross and made them to belong to God (1 Cor. 6:20; 2 Pet. 2:1).

## CHAPTER 6 FIRST SEAL

**N**OW I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals;<sup>a</sup> and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.” Rev. 4:7; 5:5–7, 12; 13:8

2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. Ps. 45:4, 5, LXX; Zech. 1:8; 6:3, 11; Matt. 24:5

### SECOND SEAL

3 When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come and see.”<sup>a</sup> Rev. 4:7

4 Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that *people* should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword. Zech. 6:2, 2

### THIRD SEAL

5 When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. Zech. 6:2, 6

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart<sup>a</sup> of wheat for a

**5:4**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *and read*. **5:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *to loose*. **5:6**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *I saw in the midst . . . a Lamb standing*. **5:10**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *them*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text reads *a kingdom*. <sup>c</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *they*. **5:13**<sup>a</sup> M-Text adds *Amen*. **5:14**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *twenty-four*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *Him who lives forever and ever*. **6:1**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *seven seals*. **6:3**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *and see*. **6:6**<sup>a</sup> Greek *choenix*; that is, approximately one quart

denarius,<sup>b</sup> and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.” Rev. 9:4

**FOURTH SEAL**

7 When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.” Rev. 4:7

8 So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth. Lev. 26:22; Ezek. 5:12, 17; 14:21; 29:5; Zech. 6:3

**FIFTH SEAL**

9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 2 Tim. 1:8; Rev. 1:2, 9; 8:3; 20:4

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Zech. 1:12; Rev. 3:7; 11:18

11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were*, was completed. Heb. 11:40; Rev. 3:4, 5; 7:9

**SIXTH SEAL**

12 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold,<sup>a</sup> there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon<sup>b</sup> became like blood. Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Matt. 24:7

13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Rev. 8:10; 9:1

14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. Is. 34:4; Rev. 16:20

15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders,<sup>a</sup> the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, Ps. 2:2-4

16 and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!”

17 “For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?” Zeph. 1:14

**CHAPTER 7**  
**144,000 JEWS**

**A**FTER these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Dan. 7:2; Rev. 7:3; 8:7; 9:4

2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried

with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,

3 saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” Rev. 6:6; 22:4

4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred *and* forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel *were* sealed: Gen. 49:1-27; Rev. 9:16; 14:1, 3

5 of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand *were* sealed;<sup>a</sup>

of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand *were* sealed;

of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand *were* sealed;

6 of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand *were* sealed;

of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand *were* sealed;

of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand *were* sealed;

7 of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand *were* sealed;

of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand *were* sealed;

of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand *were* sealed;

8 of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand *were* sealed;

of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand *were* sealed;

of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand *were* sealed.

**GREAT MULTITUDE OF GENTILES**

9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, Rom. 11:25; Rev. 3:5, 18; 4:4; 5:9; 6:11

10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” Ps. 3:8; Rev. 5:13

11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying:

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,  
Be to our God forever and ever.  
Amen.” Rev. 5:13, 14

<sup>6:6</sup><sup>b</sup> This was approximately one day’s wage for a worker. <sup>6:12</sup><sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *behold*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the whole moon*. <sup>6:15</sup><sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the commanders, the rich men*. <sup>7:5</sup><sup>a</sup> In NU-Text and M-Text *were sealed* is stated only in verses 5a and 8c; the words are understood in the remainder of the passage.

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” Rev. 7:9

14 And I said to him, “Sir,<sup>a</sup> you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Heb. 9:14

15 “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.” Is. 4:5, 6

16 “They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;” Ps. 121:6; Is. 49:10 ↪

17 “for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters.” And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” Ps. 23:1; Rev. 21:4

## CHAPTER 8 SEVENTH SEAL

**W**HEN He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.

3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. Ex. 30:1; Rev. 5:8

4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand. Ps. 141:2

5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw *it* to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. 2 Sam. 22:8; Rev. 4:5; 11:19; 16:18

### FIRST TRUMPET

6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth.<sup>a</sup> And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up. Ezek. 38:22

### SECOND TRUMPET

8 Then the second angel sounded: And *something* like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. Ex. 7:17; Jer. 51:25; Ezek. 14:19

9 And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

### THIRD TRUMPET

10 Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. Is. 14:12; Rev. 14:7; 16:4

## SEAL

**7:3** (Gr. *sphragizō*) (Matt. 27:66; John 3:33; 6:27; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13) G4972: As is clear in this context, a seal is more like that of a notary public than a sealing of an envelope, in that it signifies a mark of identification or authentication. The word *sphragizō* was commonly used of the “impression” of an official’s signet ring made in wax. The legal custom led to a variety of specific nuances for the term: protection (as here), secrecy (Rev. 10:4), official security (Matt. 27:66), and attestation (John 3:33). The Holy Spirit’s indwelling serves to officially identify and certify the believer as God’s child (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30).

## THRONE

**8:3** (Gr. *thronos*) (Matt. 5:34; 19:28; Acts 2:30; Col. 1:16; Rev. 1:4; 3:21) G2362: Our word is simply a transliteration of Greek, indicating the seating place of royalty or important people. From an Old Testament view, all thrones derive their power from God’s ultimate sovereignty and permission (Ps. 47:7) as King over all. Thrones are mentioned more than thirty-five times in Revelation, all except 2:13 and 13:2 (Satan’s limited and temporary throne) referring to God’s rightful reign. Revelation 22:1–3 closes the book with a picture of the river of life flowing from God’s seat of power shared with the Lamb.

11 The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter. Ex. 15:23; Ruth 1:20

## FOURTH TRUMPET

12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. Is. 13:10

13 And I looked, and I heard an angel<sup>a</sup> flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!” Rev. 9:12; 11:14; 12:12; 14:6; 19:17

## CHAPTER 9 FIFTH TRUMPET

**T**HEN the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. Luke 8:31

2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great

**7:14**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *My lord*. **7:17**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *to fountains of the waters of life*. **8:7**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *and a third of the earth was burned up*. **8:13**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *eagle*.

REVELATION 9:3 || 1424

furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Joel 2:2, 10

3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. Judg. 7:12

4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. Rev. 6:6; 7:2, 3; 8:7

5 And they were not given *authority* to kill them, but to torment them *for* five months. Their torment *was* like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. Rev. 9:10; 11:7

6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. Jer. 8:3

7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces *were* like the faces of men. Dan. 7:8; Joel 2:4; Nah. 3:17

8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' *teeth*. Joel 1:6

9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings *was* like the

sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. Joel 2:5-7

10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power *was* to hurt men five months.

11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew *is* Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. Eph. 2:2

12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things. Rev. 8:13; 11:14

SIXTH TRUMPET

13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Rev. 8:3

14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." Rev. 16:12

15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. Rev. 8:7-9; 9:18

16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen *was* two hundred million; I heard the number of them. Ezek. 38:4; Dan. 7:10; Rev. 7:4

NAMES AND TITLES OF SATAN

Name or Title	Reference
Devil	Matt. 4:1
Beelzebub	Matt. 12:24
The wicked one	Matt. 13:19
The enemy	Matt. 13:39
Murderer	John 8:44
Liar	John 8:44
Prince of this world	John 12:31; 14:30
God of this world	2 Cor. 4:4
Prince of the power of the air	Eph. 2:2
Ruler of darkness	Eph. 6:12
The tempter	1 Thess. 3:5
The king of death	Heb. 2:14
A roaring lion	1 Pet. 5:8
Adversary	1 Pet. 5:8
Angel of the bottomless pit	Rev. 9:11
Abaddon (Destruction)	Rev. 9:11
Apollyon (Destroyer)	Rev. 9:11
The dragon	Rev. 12:7
Accuser of our brethren	Rev. 12:10
Serpent of old	Rev. 20:2
The deceiver	Rev. 20:10

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses *were* like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. Is. 5:28, 29

18 By these three *plagues* a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths.

19 For their power<sup>a</sup> is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails *are* like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. Is. 9:15

20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. Deut. 31:29; Dan. 5:23

21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries<sup>a</sup> or their sexual immorality or their thefts. Rev. 21:8; 22:15

## CHAPTER 10 LITTLE BOOK

**I** saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow *was* on his head, his face *was* like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. Rev. 1:15, 16; 4:3

2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and *his* left *foot* on the land, Matt. 28:18

3 and cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. Ps. 29:3–9

4 Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices,<sup>a</sup> I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me,<sup>b</sup> “Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.” Dan. 8:26; 12:4, 9

5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand<sup>a</sup> to heaven Dan. 12:7

6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, Rev. 4:11; 16:17

7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets. Rev. 11:15

8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, “Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.”

9 So I went to the angel and said to him, “Give me the little book.” And he said to me, “Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.” Jer. 15:16

10 Then I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in

## HOLY

**11:2** (Gr. *hagios*) (Matt. 1:18; John 17:11; Acts 4:27; 1 Pet. 1:16) **G0040**: The fundamental idea of the Greek word *hagios* is “separation,” and thus, “to be consecrated and dedicated to God and to His service.” It may describe both things (the “holy city” here; the temple as the “holy place,” Matt. 24:15) or people. Christians are to be dedicated to God and thus holy (1 Pet. 1:16). Describing deity, it is used of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18), Holy Father (John 17:11), and of the holy Servant Jesus (Acts 4:27). The word also occurs as a noun. In the masculine singular it designates God (1 John 2:20) or Jesus (Mark 1:24) as the Holy One. The plural *hagioi* is used for Christians as saints (Phil. 1:1). The neuter form *to hagion* is used of the sanctuary (Heb. 9:1) and of sacrificial meat (Matt. 7:6).

my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. Ezek. 2:10; 3:3

11 And he<sup>a</sup> said to me, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”

## CHAPTER 11 TWO WITNESSES

**T**HEN I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood,<sup>a</sup> saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. Num. 23:18; Ezek. 40:3–42:20

2 “But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months. Ps. 79:1; Ezek. 40:17, 20

3 “And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” Rev. 20:4

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God<sup>a</sup> of the earth.

5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. Num. 16:29; 2 Kin. 1:10–12

6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. 1 Kin. 17:1

7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. Dan. 7:21

8 And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our<sup>a</sup> Lord was crucified.

**9:19**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the power of the horses*. **9:21**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *drugs*. **10:4**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *sounded*.

**9**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me*. **10:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *right hand*. **10:11**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *they*. **11:1**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *And the angel stood*. **11:4**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *Lord*. **11:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *their*.

9 Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow<sup>a</sup> their dead bodies to be put into graves. Ps. 79:2, 3; Rev. 17:15

10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Esth. 9:19, 22; Rev. 12:12; 16:10

11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. Ezek. 37:5, 9, 10; Rev. 11:9

12 And they<sup>a</sup> heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. 2 Kin. 2:11, 12; Is. 14:13; Acts 1:9

13 In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. Rev. 6:12

14 The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly. Rev. 8:13; 9:12

SEVENTH TRUMPET

15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms<sup>a</sup> of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” Ex. 15:18; Is. 27:13; Rev. 8:2; 10:7; 12:10

16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, Rev. 4:4, 11; 5:9, 12, 14; 7:11

17 saying:

“We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come,<sup>a</sup> Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. Rev. 16:5; 19:6

18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,

And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.” Ps. 2:1; Dan. 7:10

19 Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant<sup>a</sup> was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. Rev. 16:21

CHAPTER 12  
THE WOMAN

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. Is. 26:17; 66:6–9

3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. Rev. 13:1

4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. Dan. 8:10

5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. Ps. 2:9; Acts 1:9–11; Rev. 19:15 ✦

6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. Rev. 11:3; 12:4, 14; 13:5

THE WAR IN HEAVEN

7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Rev. 20:2

8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them<sup>a</sup> in heaven any longer.

9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives

11:9<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *nations* see . . . and will not allow.  
11:12<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *I*. 11:15<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *kingdom*. . . has become. 11:17<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *and who is to come*.  
11:19<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *the covenant of the Lord*. 12:8<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *him*.

UNDERSTANDING OTHER SPIRIT BEINGS

DEMONS

PART I: FALLEN ANGELS

12:9—The Bible makes occasional reference to the vast number of angels God created (Matt. 26:53; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11). At some point in the past, a chief angel, Lucifer, led perhaps a third of the angels in rebellion against God (Is. 14:12; Rev. 12:3–4, 9). These fallen angels who have been expelled from heaven to the realms of earth (Rev. 12:9) and the air (Eph. 2:2) are usually equated with the demons of the Gospels and Epistles. Some fallen angels engage in conflict with good angels (Dan. 10:12–13; Jude v. 9). Certain fallen angels are identified as guilty of especially terrible evil and as the objects of a special present punishment (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude v. 6).

For Part 2: RELATION TO SATAN, turn to Matthew 12:24 on page 1062. For an explanation of “The Christian’s Guide to the New Life,” and an outline of all articles, turn to page xlvi.

the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Gen. 3:1, 4; John 12:31

10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. Zech. 3:1; Rev. 11:15

11 “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Luke 14:26

12 “Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” Ps. 96:11; Rev. 8:13; 10:6

### THE WAR ON EARTH

13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*. Rev. 12:5

14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. Ex. 19:4; Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:6; 17:3

15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. Is. 59:19

16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.<sup>a</sup>

## CHAPTER 13

### THE BEAST OUT OF THE SEA

**T**HEN I<sup>a</sup> stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns,<sup>b</sup> and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Dan. 7:2, 7

2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. Rev. 13:4, 12

3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. Rev. 13:12, 14; 17:8

4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” Rev. 18:18

5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue<sup>a</sup> for forty-two months. Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25

6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy

### BLASPHEMY

**13:6** (Gr. *blasphēmía*) (Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:28; Luke 12:10) G0988: Blasphemy is the act of cursing, slandering, reviling, or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God. In the Old Testament, blaspheming God was a serious crime punishable by death (Lev. 24:15–16). It was a violation of the third Commandment, which required that the name and reputation of the Lord be upheld (Ex. 20:7). The unbelieving Jews of Jesus’ day charged Him with blasphemy because they thought of Him only as a man while He claimed to be God’s Son (Matt. 9:3). Actually, the lawlessness of the Jews themselves was causing God’s name to be blasphemed among the Gentiles (Rom. 2:24). By their bitter opposition to Jesus and His gospel, they themselves were guilty of blasphemy (Acts 18:6). Jesus condemned as blasphemy their attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan (Matt. 12:31–32). Christians are commanded to avoid behavior that blasphemes the Lord’s name and teaching (1 Tim. 6:1).

against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. Col. 2:9

7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe,<sup>a</sup> tongue, and nation. Dan. 7:21

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Ex. 32:32; Rev. 17:8

9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. Rev. 2:7

10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Gen. 9:6; Is. 33:1; Rev. 14:12

### THE BEAST OUT OF THE EARTH

11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. Rev. 11:7

12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. Rev. 13:3, 4

13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 1 Kin. 18:38; Matt. 24:24

14 And he deceives those<sup>a</sup> who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 2 Kin. 20:7; 2 Thess. 2:9

15 He was granted *power* to give breath to

<sup>12:17</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *Christ*. <sup>13:1</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *he*.

<sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *ten horns and seven heads*.

<sup>13:5</sup> <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *make war*. <sup>13:7</sup> <sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *and people*. <sup>13:14</sup> <sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *my own people*.



the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. Rev. 16:2

16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, Rev. 7:3; 14:9; 20:4

17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or<sup>a</sup> the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Rev. 14:9–11; 15:2

18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. 1 Cor. 2:14

And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. Rev. 1:15; 5:8; 19:6

3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. Rev. 5:9

4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed<sup>a</sup> from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 2 Cor. 11:2; James 1:18; Rev. 3:4; 5:9; 7:17

5 And in their mouth was found no deceit,<sup>a</sup> for they are without fault before the throne of God.<sup>b</sup>

**CHAPTER 14**  
**THE 144,000**

**T**HEN I looked, and behold, a<sup>a</sup> Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having<sup>b</sup> His Father's name written on their foreheads. Rev. 5:6; 7:3, 4; 14:3; 22:4

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder.

**THE THREE ANGELS'**  
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach

**13:17**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *or*. **14:1**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *His name and*. **14:4**<sup>a</sup> M-Text adds *by Jesus*. **14:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *falsehood*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *before the throne of God*.

**NEW TESTAMENT DREAMS AND VISIONS**

Person	Message of Dream or Vision	Reference
<b>Dreams</b>		
Joseph	Assured of Mary's purity	Matt. 1:20
Wise men	Warned of Herod's plot against Jesus	Matt. 2:12
Joseph	Warned to flee to Egypt	Matt. 2:13
Joseph	Told to return to Nazareth	Matt. 2:19–23
<b>Visions</b>		
Paul	Converted to Christianity in a blinding vision of Christ on the Damascus road	Acts 9:3–9
Ananias	Instructed to minister to Saul in Damascus	Acts 9:10–16
Cornelius	Instructed Peter to come to Joppa	Acts 10:3–6
Peter	Told to eat unclean animals, a message to accept Gentiles	Acts 10:9–18, 28
Paul	Beckoned to do missionary work in Macedonia	Acts 16:9
Paul	Assured of God's presence in Corinth	Acts 18:9–10
Paul	Promised God's presence during his trip to Rome	Acts 23:11
Paul	Viewed the glories of the third heaven	2 Cor. 12:1–4
John	Received a vision of the consummation of this age	Rev. 1–22

to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— Eph. 3:9; Rev. 8:13; 13:7

7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.” Neh. 9:6; Rev. 11:18

8 And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon<sup>a</sup> is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Is. 21:9; Jer. 51:7

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, Rev. 13:14–16; 14:11

10 “he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. Ps. 75:8; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 16:19; 18:6; 20:10

11 “And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.” Is. 34:8–10

12 Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those<sup>a</sup> who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Rev. 12:17; 13:10

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me,<sup>a</sup> “Write: ‘Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.” Eccl. 4:1, 2; 1 Cor. 3:11–15; 15:18, 58; Heb. 4:9, 10

### THE HARVEST JUDGMENT

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat *One* like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You<sup>a</sup> to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” Jer. 51:33; Joel 3:13; Rev. 16:17

16 So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” Joel 3:13; Rev. 16:8

19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Rev. 19:15

20 And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. Is. 34:3; 63:3; Heb. 13:12

### WRATH

14:10 (Gr. *orgē*) (John 3:36; Rom. 1:18; 5:9; Eph. 2:3; Rev. 6:16) G3709: God’s wrath is His holy indignation—His anger directed against sin. The Bible declares all people are “by nature children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3) and that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18). Since Christians have been “justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. 5:9). The magnitude of God’s love is manifested in the cross, where God’s only Son experienced wrath on our behalf. “The day of the LORD’s wrath” (Zeph. 1:18) is identical to “the great day of the LORD” (Zeph. 1:14). These terms refer to “the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev. 6:16), Jesus Christ, that will fall on the ungodly at His Second Coming.

## CHAPTER 15

### PREPARATION FOR THE BOWL JUDGMENTS

THEN I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. Rev. 12:1, 3; 14:10; 21:9

2 And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark<sup>a</sup> and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. Matt. 3:11; Rev. 13:14, 15, 17

3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:

“Great and marvelous *are* Your works,

Lord God Almighty!

Just and true *are* Your ways,

O King of the saints!<sup>a</sup> Deut. 32:3, 4; Ps. 145:17

4 Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?

For *You* alone *are* holy.

For all nations shall come and worship before You,

For Your judgments have been

manifested.” Ex. 15:14; Lev. 11:44; Is. 66:23

5 After these things I looked, and behold,<sup>a</sup> the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. Num. 1:50

6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. Ex. 28:6

14:8 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, which has made*; M-Text reads *Babylon the great is fallen. She has made*.

14:12 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *here are those*. 14:13 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me*. 14:15 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *for You*.

15:2 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *over his mark*. 15:3 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text read *nations*. 15:5 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *behold*.

7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. 1 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 4:6

8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. Ex. 19:18; 40:34

## CHAPTER 16

### FIRST BOWL

**T**HEN I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls<sup>a</sup> of the wrath of God on the earth.” Rev. 14:10; 15:1

2 So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Ex. 9:9–11; Rev. 14:9

### SECOND BOWL

3 Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead *man*; and every living creature in the sea died. Ex. 7:17–21

### THIRD BOWL

4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. Ex. 7:17–20; Rev. 8:10

5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying:

“You are righteous, O Lord,<sup>a</sup>  
The One who is and who was and  
who is to be,<sup>b</sup>  
Because You have judged these  
things. Rev. 1:4, 8; 15:3, 4

6 For they have shed the blood of saints  
and prophets,  
And You have given them blood  
to drink.  
For<sup>a</sup> it is their just due.” Is. 49:26; Matt. 23:34

7 And I heard another from<sup>a</sup> the altar saying, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.” Rev. 13:10; 15:3; 19:2

### FOURTH BOWL

8 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. Rev. 8:12; 9:17, 18

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. Dan. 5:22; Rev. 11:13; 16:11

### FIFTH BOWL

10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. Rev. 8:12; 9:2; 11:10; 13:2

11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because

of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

### SIXTH BOWL

12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. Is. 41:2, 25; 46:11; Jer. 50:38; Rev. 9:14

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 1 John 4:1; Rev. 12:3, 9; 13:11, 14; 19:20; 20:10

14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and<sup>a</sup> of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Luke 2:1; 2 Thess. 2:9

15 “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” Matt. 24:43–; 2 Cor. 5:3

16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.<sup>a</sup> Rev. 19:19

### SEVENTH BOWL

17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” Rev. 10:6; 21:6

18 And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Dan. 12:1; Rev. 4:5; 11:13

19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. Is. 51:17; Rev. 14:8; 17:5, 18; 18:5

20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. Rev. 6:14; 20:11

21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, *each hailstone* about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.

## CHAPTER 17

### GREAT HARLOT IS DESCRIBED

**T**HEN one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me,<sup>a</sup> “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, Jer. 51:13; Nah. 3:4

2 “with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Jer. 51:7

3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the

16:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *seven bowls*. 16:5<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *O Lord*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *who was, the Holy One*. 16:6<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *For*. 16:7<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *another from*. 16:14<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *of the earth and*. 16:16<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *Megiddo*. 17:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me*.

wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. Rev. 13:1; 21:10

4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.<sup>a</sup> Jer. 51:7; Dan. 11:38; Rev. 14:8; 18:12, 16

5 And on her forehead a name *was* written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,  
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS  
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS  
OF THE EARTH. 2 Thess. 2:7

6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. Rev. 6:9, 10; 13:15; 18:24

GREAT HARLOT IS DESTROYED

7 But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

8 “The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.<sup>a</sup> Rev. 3:10; 11:7; 13:3, 8, 10; 17:11

9 “Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. Rev. 13:1, 18

10 “There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. Rev. 13:5

11 “The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. Rev. 13:3, 12, 14; 17:8

12 “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. Dan. 7:20

13 “These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

14 “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful.” Jer. 50:44; 1 Tim. 6:15

15 Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. Is. 8:7; Rev. 13:7

16 “And the ten horns which you saw on<sup>a</sup> the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. Jer. 50:41; Ezek. 16:37, 39; Rev. 18:8, 17, 19

17 “For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their

WRATH

**16:1** (Gr. *thymos*) (Gal. 5:20; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 11:27; Rev. 12:12; 14:8) G2372: Compared with the near synonym *orgē*, the Greek word *thymos* stresses more the various manifestations of anger. *Thymos* implies the underlying and abiding passion involved in wrath. Both words can be used of the holy and just wrath or anger of God against wickedness, which is the basis for judgment of sinners (as here and elsewhere in Revelation). The word is also used for the wrath of Satan (Rev. 12:12) and of people (Heb. 11:27). The plural in 2 Corinthians 12:20 and Galatians 5:20 probably refers to particular outbursts of wrath. The related verb *thymoō* means “to make angry” or, in the passive voice, “to become angry” (only in Matt. 2:16).

kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 2 Thess. 2:11; Rev. 10:7

18 “And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”

CHAPTER 18

BABYLON THE GREAT IS DESTROYED

**A**FTER these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. Ezek. 43:2

2 And he cried mightily<sup>a</sup> with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! Is. 13:19, 21; 14:23; 21:9; 34:11, 13–15

3 “For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” Is. 47:15; Rev. 14:8

4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. Is. 48:20

5 “For her sins have reached<sup>a</sup> to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Gen. 18:20

6 “Render to her just as she rendered to you,<sup>a</sup> and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. Ps. 137:8

7 “In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit *as* queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’ Is. 47:7, 8; Ezek. 28:2–8

8 “Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong *is* the Lord God who judges<sup>a</sup> her. Jer. 50:34; Rev. 17:16; 18:10

**17:4**<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads the filthiness of the fornication of the earth.

**17:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read and shall be present. **17:16**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read saw, and the beast. **18:2**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit mightily.

**18:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read have been heaped up. **18:6**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit to you. **18:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read has judged.

**EARTH MOURNS BABYLON'S DESTRUCTION**

9 “The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning,  
Jer. 50:46; Ezek. 26:16; 27:35; Rev. 19:3

10 “standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’  
Is. 21:9; Rev. 18:17, 19

11 “And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore:  
Ezek. 27:27–34

12 “merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble;  
Rev. 17:4

13 “and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men.  
Ezek. 27:13

14 “The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you,<sup>a</sup> and you shall find them no more at all.

15 “The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

16 “and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!

17 ‘For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.’ Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance  
Is. 23:14; Rev. 18:10

18 “and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What is like this great city?’

19 “They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.’  
Josh. 7:6; Rev. 18:8

**HEAVEN REJOICES BABYLON'S DESTRUCTION**

20 “Rejoice over her, O heaven, and *you* holy apostles<sup>a</sup> and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!”  
Jer. 51:48; Luke 11:49

21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw *it* into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.  
Jer. 51:63, 64; Rev. 12:8; 16:20

22 “The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore.  
Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10

23 “The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall

not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. Is. 23:8; Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10

24 “And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”

**CHAPTER 19**

**A**FTER these things I heard<sup>a</sup> a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord<sup>b</sup> our God!  
Rev. 4:11; 11:15; 19:6

2 “For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.”  
Deut. 32:43; Rev. 15:3; 16:7

3 Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!”  
Is. 34:10

4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” 1 Chr. 16:36

5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both<sup>a</sup> small and great!” Ps. 134:1

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the<sup>a</sup> Lord God Omnipotent reigns!  
Ezek. 1:24

**MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB**

7 “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” Matt. 22:2; 25:10

8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Ps. 132:9; Ezek. 16:10

9 Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ ” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”  
Luke 14:15; Rev. 22:6

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See *that you do not do that!* I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Heb. 1:14; 1 John 5:10

**SECOND COMING OF CHRIST**

11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.  
Is. 11:4; Rev. 3:7, 14; 6:2; 15:5; 19:19, 21

12 His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had<sup>a</sup> a name written that no one knew except Himself. Rev. 1:14-; 2:17; 19:16

18:14<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *been lost to you.* 18:20<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *saints and apostles.* 19:1<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *something like.* <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *the Lord.* 19:5<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *both.* 19:6<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *our.* 19:12<sup>a</sup> M-Text adds *names written, and.*

13 He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. Is. 63:2, 3↔  
 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean,<sup>a</sup> followed Him on white horses.  
 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp<sup>a</sup> sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Ps. 2:8, 9; Is. 11:4; 63:3–6  
 16 And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written:

#### KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Dan. 2:47

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,<sup>a</sup> Ezek. 39:17  
 18 “that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free<sup>a</sup> and slave, both small and great.” Ezek. 39:18–20

19 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Rev. 16:13–16 ↔

20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. Dan. 7:11; Rev. 16:13

21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

## CHAPTER 20

### SATAN IS BOUND 1,000 YEARS

**T**HEN I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. Rev. 1:18; 9:1

2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 2 Pet. 2:4

3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. Dan. 6:17; Rev. 12:9

### SAINTS REIGN 1,000 YEARS

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their

### CROWN

19:12 (Gr. *diadēma*) (Rev. 12:3; 13:1) G1238: A compound of *dia*, “by, through,” and *deō*, “bind,” this word originally referred to the band that a king wore to bind his turban around his head. It was a sign and symbol of sovereign authority. In this case, Jesus has many crowns because He is King over all things. This is contrasted with the seven crowns (one per head) of the dragon in Revelation 12:3.

hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a<sup>a</sup> thousand years. Dan. 7:9; Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3

5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Is. 61:6

### SATAN IS RELEASED AND LEADS REBELLION

7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison

8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. Ezek. 38:2; 39:1, 6; Rev. 20:3, 10

9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. Ezek. 38:9, 16

### SATAN IS TORMENTED FOREVER

10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where<sup>a</sup> the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Rev. 20:14, 15

### GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. Dan. 2:35; 2 Pet. 3:7

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God,<sup>a</sup> and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the* Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. Ps. 69:28

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Rev. 1:18; 2:23; 6:8; 20:12; 21:4

19:14<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *pure white linen*. 19:15<sup>a</sup> M-Text adds *two-edged*. 19:17<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the great supper of God*. 19:18<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *both free*. 20:4<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *the*. 20:10<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *also*. 20:12<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the throne*.

## OVERCOME

**21:7** (Gr. *nikaō*) (John 16:33; Rom. 12:21; Rev. 2:7; 26; 3:5) G3528: This word means “to gain victory” or “get beyond.” It is used by Jesus to set the standard of life for believers in John 16:33: “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Here, and six more times in Revelation, Jesus urges believers and churches to remain faithful to the end. Overcoming is the ultimate demonstration of the reality of one’s faith in Christ and the way to His promised rewards.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:8

15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Rev. 19:20

## CHAPTER 21

## NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE CREATED

**N**OW I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 20:11

## NEW JERUSALEM DESCENDS

2 Then I, John,<sup>a</sup> saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Is. 52:1

3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. Lev. 26:11

4 “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Is. 25:8 +; 35:10 +

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me,<sup>a</sup> “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” Is. 43:19

6 And He said to me, “It is done!<sup>a</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. John 4:10; Rev. 1:8; 10:6; 16:17; 22:13

7 “He who overcomes shall inherit all things,<sup>a</sup> and I shall be his God and he shall be My son. Zech. 8:8 +

8 “But the cowardly, unbelieving,<sup>a</sup> abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” 1 Cor. 6:9; Rev. 20:14

## NEW JERUSALEM IS DESCRIBED

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me<sup>a</sup> and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”<sup>b</sup> Rev. 15:1; 19:7; 21:2

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy<sup>a</sup> Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Ezek. 48; Rev. 1:10

11 having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Rev. 15:8; 21:23; 22:5

12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: Ezek. 48:31–34

13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. Ezek. 48:31–34

14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names<sup>a</sup> of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Eph. 2:20

15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. Ezek. 40:3

16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.

17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred *and* forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

18 The construction of its wall was *of* jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like clear glass.

19 The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation *was* jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, Is. 54:11

20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

21 The twelve gates *were* twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city *was* pure gold, like transparent glass.

**22** But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. John 4:21, 23

23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it,<sup>a</sup> for the glory<sup>b</sup> of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. Is. 24:23; 60:19, 20

24 And the nations of those who are saved<sup>a</sup> shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.<sup>b</sup> Is. 60:3, 5; 66:12

25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). Is. 60:11, 20

26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.<sup>a</sup> Rev. 21:24

**20:14**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text add *the lake of fire*. **21:2**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *John*. **21:5**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me*. **21:6**<sup>a</sup> M-Text omits *It is done*. **21:7**<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *overcomes, I shall give him these things*. **21:8**<sup>a</sup> M-Text adds *and sinners*. **21:9**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me*. <sup>b</sup> M-Text reads *I will show you the woman, the Lamb’s bride*. **21:10**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *the great* and read *the holy city, Jerusalem*. **21:14**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *twelve names*. **21:23**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *in it*. <sup>b</sup> M-Text reads *the very glory*. **21:24**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *of those who are saved*. <sup>b</sup> M-Text reads *the glory and honor of the nations to Him*. **21:26**<sup>a</sup> M-Text adds *that they may enter in*.

27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes<sup>a</sup> an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Joel 3:17; Phil. 4:3

## CHAPTER 22

**A**ND he showed me a pure<sup>a</sup> river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Ezek. 47:1

2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. Gen. 2:9; Ezek. 47:12 †; Rev. 21:24

3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. Ezek. 48:35; Zech. 14:11

4 They shall see His face, and His name *shall be* on their foreheads. Matt. 5:8 †; Rev. 14:1

5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever. Ps. 36:9; Dan. 7:18, 27; Rev. 7:15; 21:23

## CONCLUSION

6 Then he said to me, "These words *are* faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy<sup>a</sup> prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. Heb. 10:37; Rev. 1:1; 19:9

7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

8 Now I, John, saw and heard<sup>a</sup> these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Rev. 19:10

9 Then he said to me, "See *that you do not do that*. For<sup>a</sup> I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." Rev. 19:10

10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. Dan. 8:26; Rev. 1:3

11 "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous<sup>a</sup> still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work. Is. 40:10 †; 62:11; Rev. 20:12

13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.*"<sup>a</sup> Is. 41:4

14 Blessed *are* those who do His commandments,<sup>a</sup> that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. Prov. 11:30

15 But<sup>a</sup> outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. 1 Cor. 6:9; Phil. 3:2

16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and

## QUICKLY

**22:20** (Gr. *tachu*) (Matt. 28:7; Mark 16:8; Rev. 3:11; 22:7) G5035: This word means "soon, without delay, suddenly, or readily." In Scripture it is used to describe the women's haste to leave the empty tomb and tell the disciples what they had seen (Matt. 28:7; Mark 16:8). The Book of Revelation contains more than half of the word's thirteen appearances in Scripture, all of them referring to Christ's imminent return.

## AMEN

**22:20** (Gr. *amēn*) (Matt. 6:13; John 5:24; Jude v. 25; Rev. 3:14) G0281: The Greek word *amēn* is a transliteration of the Hebrew adverb *amen*, which means "truly." Following Old Testament usage, the Greek *amēn* also serves as an exclamation of response: to the promise of the coming Christ (as here in Rev. 22:20); to a prayer (Matt. 6:13); to a doxology (Rev. 1:6); to a blessing at the closing of a letter (Gal. 6:18; Jude v. 25). The response of affirmation in these cases could be translated, "So be it!" Two uses of *amēn* are unique to the New Testament. It is a title of Jesus in Revelation 3:14. The other New Testament use is found in the Gospels where Jesus introduces His own sayings with either *amēn* (Matt. 5:18) or the double *amēn amēn* (John 5:24). Both stress the importance of His words and can be translated by "assuredly" or (the double) by "most assuredly."

the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." Num. 24:17; Rev. 1:1; 5:5

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. Is. 55:1; Rev. 21:2, 9

18 For<sup>a</sup> I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add<sup>b</sup> to him the plagues that are written in this book; Deut. 4:2; 12:32

19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away<sup>a</sup> his part from the Book<sup>b</sup> of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book. Ex. 32:33

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all.<sup>a</sup> Amen.

**21:27**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *anything profane, nor one who causes*. **22:1**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *pure*. **22:6**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *spirits of the prophets*. **22:8**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *am the one who heard and saw*. **22:9**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *For*. **22:11**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *do right*. **22:13**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End*. **22:14**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *wash their robes*. **22:15**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *But*. **22:18**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text and M-Text omit *For*. <sup>b</sup> M-Text reads *may God add*. **22:19**<sup>a</sup> M-Text reads *may God take away*. <sup>b</sup> NU-Text and M-Text read *tree of life*. **22:21**<sup>a</sup> NU-Text reads *with all*; M-Text reads *with all the saints*.