

New Testament Survey

Its Structure, Content, and Theology

Dr. Bill Mounce



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Because Your Spiritual Growth Matters

New Testament Survey
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ISBN: 9781074055066

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Printed in the United States of America

<https://www.biblicaltraining.org/new-testament-survey/bill-mounce>

Overview

Title: New Testament Survey

Speaker: Dr. Bill Mounce

GOALS

1. Gain a broad understanding of the structure of the New Testament.
2. Learn the major players and their roles.
3. Discover the biblical basis for our Statement of Faith.
4. Move beyond knowledge to spiritual growth.

REQUIREMENTS

1. 30 sessions (60 to 90 minutes)
2. Three hours per week (lesson and discussion)

PREREQUISITES

None

FORMAT

Audio

BiblicalTraining.org

BiblicalTraining.org is not-for-profit ministry that gives all people access to a world-class Christian education at no cost. Our classes range from new believers to biblical literacy (“Foundations”), deeper Bible study (“Academy”), and seminary-level training (“Institute”).

We are a 501(c)3 not-for-profit and rely solely on the donations of our users. All donations are tax deductible according to the current US tax codes.

DISTINCTIVES

World class. All Bible classes are taught by world-class professors from major seminaries.

Holistic. We want to see students move through content to deep reflection and application.

Configurable. Ministries can use BT lectures as well as their own to design their educational program.

Accessible. BiblicalTraining is a web-based ministry whose content is provided at no cost.

Community-based. We encourage people to learn together, in mentor/apprentice relationships.

Broadly evangelical. Our materials are broadly evangelical, governed by our Statement of Faith, and are not tied to any one church, denomination or tradition.

Partners. We provide the content and delivery mechanisms, and our partner organizations provide the community and mentoring.

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Your Speaker

Bill is the founder and President of BiblicalTraining.org, serves on the Committee for Bible Translation (which is responsible for the NIV translation of the Bible), and has written the best-selling biblical Greek textbook, *Basics of Biblical Greek*, and many other Greek resources. He blogs regularly on Greek and issues of spiritual growth.

Bill was also a preaching pastor, a professor of New Testament and director of the Greek Language Program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and a professor at Azusa Pacific University.

Robin and he have been married since 1983 and have three adult children. Education

EDUCATION

Ph.D. 1981, in New Testament. Aberdeen University, Aberdeen, Scotland.

M.A. 1977, in Biblical Studies. Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.

B.A. 1975, in Biblical Studies, minor in Greek. Bethel College, St. Paul, Minnesota; Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky, 1971-74.

We are pleased that you have chosen to use materials from BiblicalTraining.org. We trust that you will find them to be of the highest quality and truly helpful in your own spiritual growth and that of your church. Please read through the following guidelines; they will help you make the best use of this guide.

Student's Guide

Listen or watch the lesson. The lesson for each chapter is designed to be listened to outside of your meeting. Each lesson lasts for an hour. This is a crucial step. If the meeting time with your fellow students is going to be productive and encouraging, everyone in the group needs to have listened to and wrestled with the lesson.

Take notes. This guide has the outline for each lesson with a summary of the teaching for each major point. If you are unable to take notes while listening to the lesson, please work through the guide at some point before your meeting.

Questions. Each chapter closes with a series of questions. Some of the questions are data based, confirming that you understand the information. Other questions are more reflective, helping you move beyond the important accumulation of knowledge to challenging you to think through what you are learning about God, yourself and others, and finally to application. Our encouragement is to think through your answers before your meeting and then use the meeting to share your thoughts and interact with others.

Meeting Together. While some people may have to study on their own, we strongly recommend finding a group with which you can study.

A group provides encouragement to finish the class.

Interacting with others, their understanding and insight, is the most effective way to sharpen your own thoughts and beliefs.

Just as you will need the help of others from time to time, so also they will need your help.

Mentor's Guide

If you are leading the group or mentoring an individual, here are some suggestions that should help you.

Your role is to facilitate. This is not an opportunity for you to teach. In fact, the less visible role you take, the better. Your role is to listen and bring out the best in the other people.

Preparation. Be sure to have done your homework thoroughly. Have listened to the lesson and think carefully through the questions. Have an answer for each question that will get the conversation going. A great question is, "What is the Lord teaching you this week?"

Creativity. What works to help one person understand may not help another. So listen to the conversation and pray that the Lord help you bring out the greatest interaction among all the people.

Correct error. This is difficult. If someone says something that isn't right, you don't want to come down on them, telling them they are wrong and shutting down their participation. On the other hand, if you let an obvious error pass, the rest of the group may think you agree and what was said was correct. So look for gracious ways to suggest that perhaps the person's comment was incorrect.

Focus. Stay focused on Jesus and the Bible, not on church or religious traditions.

Lead the discussion. People don't want to listen to a sharing of common ignorance. Lead by asking questions that will prompt others to think.

Silence. Don't be afraid of silence. It may mean nothing more than people are thinking. But if the conversation lags, then ask thought-provoking questions to get the discussion started, and then step out of the way.

Discipleship. Be acutely aware of how you can mentor the

people in the group. Meet with them for coffee. Share some life with them. Jesus' Great Commission is to teach people to obey, and the only way this happens is in relationship.

Men and women. Be aware that men and women tend to learn differently. Don't ask the men to become women in how they answer.

Privacy. All discussions are private, not to be shared outside the group unless otherwise specified.

Goal. The goal of this study is not just increased knowledge; it is transformation. Don't be content with people getting the "right" answers. The Pharisees got the "right" answer, and many of them never made it to heaven (Matt 5:20).

Relationships. Share everyone's name, email and phone number so people can communicate during the week and follow up on prayer requests. You may want to set up a way to share throughout the week using Slack or WhatsApp.

Finish well. Encourage the people to make the necessary commitment to do the work, think reflectively over the questions, and complete the class.

Prayer. Begin and end every meeting with prayer. Please don't do the quick "one-prayer-covers-all" approach. Manage the time so all of you can pray over what you have learned and with what you have been challenged. Pray regularly for each individual in the meeting.

Class Introduction

Lesson 1: Introduction

I. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS CLASS?

Train people so they will know what the bible teaches and that they will be transformed

II. WHO IS THIS CLASS FOR?

New Christians, people with a desire to learn about the faith and leaders

III. THREE STAGES:

A. Head

What the bible teaches

B. Heart

Theology so you learn more about who God is and his relationship to you

C. Hands

Transformation so you change how you live your life

IV. GENERAL CLASS INFORMATION

4. What's one recent example of how your faith made a difference in how you acted toward someone?

1

How was the Bible Written?

I. PASSING ON INFORMATION DURING JESUS'S LIFE

Most teaching was oral and their culture valued transferring information by memory

II. PERIOD OF ORAL TRANSMISSION

The early church was preserving the stories about the life of Jesus and beginning to formulate an understanding of what it meant.

III. WAS THE EARLY CHURCH ACCURATE? (JESUS SEMINAR)

The early church had eyewitnesses, the Holy Spirit reminded them of what Jesus said, and the early Christians were willing to die for what they believed.

IV. PERIOD OF WRITING: AUTHORSHIP AND AUTHORITY

Mark was written by the 50's CE and the other New Testament documents within the next few decades. The authors were mostly apostles or people closely associated with the apostles.

V. WRITING OF THE SYNOPTICS

A. "Synoptic Problem"

How do you explain the similarities and differences that exist among the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke? See Matthew 3:7-10 and Luke 3:7-9; Matthew 27:44 and Luke 23:39-43.

B. What do the Gospels say about themselves?

The goal of the gospel writers was to record events in the life of Jesus to show you who Jesus is and what he taught during his time on earth. See Luke 1:1-4, John 20:30-31 and John 21:25.

C. Reconstruction

Mark was written first, then Matthew and Luke who used Mark and a document referred to as "Q" for their sources.

D. Harmonization

The stories in each of the gospels can be true even though there are some differences in the way the accounts are recorded.

E. The Importance of Trusting the Bible

You must decide whether or not you trust the Bible and consider the Bible authoritative for the way you live your life.

VI. INSPIRATION

A. Definition

The source of Scripture is God.

B. Infallibility

Scripture is true in all that it affirms.

C. Inerrancy

There are no internal contradictions in Scripture and no contradictions between Scripture and science and history.

D. The Method of Inspiration

The dynamic view of inspiration asserts that Scripture is the very words of God, but that God did not override the writing styles and personalities of the writers.

E. The Scope of Inspiration

The view of plenary inspiration asserts that you can trust the accuracy of the Bible there is a reasonable explanation for each apparent contradiction.

Group Questions

1. This lesson has dealt with trusting the Bible from many different angles. What from this lesson brings you the most confidence that the testimony of Scripture is accurate?

11. What are some ideas you have in talking to others about the Bible who have differing presuppositions than your own (e.g., miracles are impossible, so these passages in the Bible must be false)?

2

Can We Trust Our Bible?

I. THE SCOPE OF INSPIRATION

A. "Limited" Inspiration (Infallibility)

1. Definition

Scripture is true in statements that relate to faith and practice, but not necessarily in other areas.

2. Problems

It's difficult to determine how to categorize each statement in Scripture, this position is contrary to 2 Timothy 3:16, the New Testament asserts the historical veracity of Old Testament facts and events and if the authors of Scripture couldn't

record historical facts accurately, how do we know that they got anything else right?

B. Plenary Inspiration (inerrancy)

1. Definition

Scripture has no errors

2. Arguments for Inerrancy

Scripture claims to be inerrant and truth is an essential element of God's character,

Solutions to Apparent Contradictions

The secular source could be wrong, people who witness the same event often describe the details differently so there may be a scenario where both versions could be true (harmonization), you may be misinterpreting the text of Scripture.

II. WHAT DOES INSPIRATION NOT MEAN?

Inspiration applies to the original documents, not copies, inspiration does not apply to footnotes, titles, headings, verse numbers, punctuation, grammatical errors, figures of speech, or approximations, translations are not inspired.

III. WHY DO I THINK THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED?

The Bible claims that it is from God, it makes sense to believe that it is inspired, the work of the Holy Spirit in my life, it is historically accurate, it is internally consistent, numerous prophecies that were made have been fulfilled.

10. Role play a situation in which someone believes that the Gospels are full of contradictions. Explain how we might understand some of these differences.

3

How We Received Our Bible

I. INTRODUCTION

It's helpful to understand how the Bible was written and came to us in its current form.

II. CANONIZATION

A. Why the Canon Developed

The apostles were beginning to die, Christians were beginning to be persecuted for their faith, there was a rise of heresy and people creating false writings.

B. Terms

Canon means the collection of books that are from God and should be in the Bible.

C. Three Criteria for Canonicity

Apostolic authorship, harmony of doctrine and tone, continual usage in the church as a whole.

D. Is the Canon Closed?

Arguments regarding whether or not the Canon should be considered closed.

E. Why I Think the Church Got it Right

No other writings meet the criteria and at the core, it's an issue of faith.

III. TRANSMISSION OF THE WRITINGS

There are differences in the manuscripts because they were copied by hand over hundreds of years.

IV. TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Textual criticism is the process of studying the differences in manuscripts to determine what the original document was.

We have over 5,000 Greek manuscripts, 99 percent of the text is sure, the 1 percent where there are some differences do not affect a core biblical doctrine.

V. TRANSLATIONS

A. Difficulties

The New Testament was written in ancient Greek, languages express thoughts differently, words have a range of meaning, contemporary languages are changing.

B. The Word "Literal"

It is impossible to translate directly from one language to another.

C. Translation Philosophy

1. Formal Equivalence

The translation is word for word as much as possible.

2. Dynamic Equivalence

The goal is to translate the meaning even if the grammatical form is different.

3. Paraphrase

Paraphrase is a thought for thought translation

4. Running Commentary

Versions where the author describes in their own words what it means to them.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Trust your Bible to be an accurate translation, read more than one translation when you study

Group Questions

1. Do you believe the canon is closed or not? Why? How does Jude 3 affect this discussion?

11. What is “dynamic equivalence” and what is an example of that type of translation philosophy? Can you think of any verses where the translator’s theology or interpretation of meaning was added to the Bible? Is this the right thing to do?

4

Mark 1-5

I. INTRODUCTION

Gospel of Mark by Bill Lane, New International Commentary on the New Testament, Gospel of Mark by David Garland, NIV Application Commentary

II. GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE AND PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS

Beginnings, ministry in Galilee, travel ministry, Jerusalem ministry

III. JOHN THE BAPTIST

This was an exciting time because John the Baptist was getting people ready for the coming of the Messiah and the new covenant.

IV. JOHN BAPTIZES JESUS

Jesus chose this as a way to formally begin his public ministry

A. "Beloved Son"

This is a quotation from Psalm two that was used to address the king on his day of coronation.

B. "Suffering Servant"

This is a quote from Isaiah 42:1 referring to the coming Messiah.

V. THE KINGDOM OF GOD (MARK 1:14-15)

Jesus redefined the Kingdom of God as a spiritual reality that was present because of his coming to earth and also something that will come in its fullness in the future.

VI. TWO DAYS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS (MARK 1:16-3:6)

Mark chooses to include stories about Jesus to show you who he is.

VII. "SON OF MAN" (MARK 2:1-12)

A title that Jesus used to refer to himself that has roots in the Old Testament. It indicates both humility and servanthood as well as exaltation and power.

VIII. PARABLES

The primary way that Jesus used to teach people about the kingdom of God.

A. Definition

Stories taken from everyday life for the purpose of teaching one main point.

B. Details

A parable has one main point and the details are secondary.

C. Three Rules for Interpreting Parables

A parable has one main point, the details are secondary in importance to the main point and the parable must have made sense in Jesus' day.

D. Summary of Jesus's Parables

The theme of most of the parables of Jesus is the Kingdom of God.

IX. MIRACLE STORIES (MARK 4:35-5:43)

Jesus was more than just a good man, he was God in the flesh.

7. In what ways do you see Jesus as an Ezekiel-type Son of Man?

8. In what ways do you see Jesus as a Danielic Son of Man?

9. In what ways do you see them combined?

5

Mark 6-11

I. SECOND MAJOR PHASE OF JESUS'S LIFE (MARK 8:27-11:11)

The second part of Mark's Gospel describes the travel ministry of Jesus.

A. Peter's Confession as the Hinge

Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah is the culmination of the account of Jesus' Galilean ministry and the beginning of the account of his travel ministry.

B. Three Cycles

Jesus predicts his death, there is a misunderstanding of what discipleship is and then Jesus teaches about discipleship.

1. Unit 1: Mark 8:31-9:29

Discipleship is total because Jesus expects his disciples to be fully devoted, it is essential for your salvation and it is life long.

2. Unit 2: Mark 9:30-10:31

3. Unit 3: Mark 10:32-11:11

II. HEART AND HAND ISSUES

A. Sanctification

B. Perseverance and Assurance

C. Presenting the Gospel

Group Questions

1. In an overall sense, how do you feel about the statement that discipleship is “total, essential, and lifelong”? (This is not a question asking for theological discussion, but your personal response).
2. How do you feel about the word “Lordship”? Are you going to use it, or have past abuses made it too difficult to use?
3. Do you believe that discipleship is a matter of life and death? Is it optional or mandatory? Why?

10. Christians talk a lot about be servants; have you ever seen some truly be a servant to others? What does it look like, and what does it not look like? How have you been a servant to someone this week?

11. Can you think of any modern parallels to the metaphor of "ransom"?

12. Do role playing on the question of carnality. One person should insist that they are going to get to heaven, even if they have ongoing sin in their life, and that how they lives out their life will have no affect on their eternal destiny.

13. This is really important. Prepare the two-minute presentation of the gospel that is sufficiently complete that if a person responds they will in fact go to heaven. What might a person add that would be unnecessary?

6

Mark 11-13

I. CURSING THE FIG TREE

Jesus uses the fig tree as a metaphor for Israel because they haven't produced spiritual fruit.

II. CONFLICT STORIES

When the Pharisees try to entrap Jesus with questions, he answers them using parables.

III. MARK 13: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

Jesus taught the crowds on the Mount of Olives.

A. Apocalyptic Literature

This is a genre of literature in the first century that uses images to describe events that will happen in the end times when God intervenes in history.

B. The Destruction of the Temple, the Return of Jesus, and the End (Mark 13:1-8)

Jesus describes the order of events.

C. Persecution and the Ethics of Eschatology (Mark 13:9-13)

Jesus describes persecution his disciples will face and also tells that that, "the one who endures to the end will be saved."

D. The “Abomination of Desolation” (Mark 13:14-20)

This was likely a reference to the coming destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 ad.

E. False Christs (Mark 13:21-23)

Miracles by themselves do not produce authenticity.

F. Signs of the Coming of the Son of Man (Mark 13:24-27)

When Christ returns, it will be globally visible, public and unmistakable.

G. Parable of the Fig Tree (Mark 13:28-31)

These verses are most likely referring to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in ad 70.

H. Final Warnings (Mark 13:32-37)

Only God the Father knows the exact time that Jesus will return to earth.

I. Other Passages on Jesus's Return

1. Acts 1:7-8

We don't know exactly when Jesus will return, but it's important for us to do what God has called us to do.

2. Matthew 24:37-25:46

Always be ready for Jesus' return because you don't know exactly when it will be.

J. Prophecy

Old Testament prophets wrote specific descriptions of the coming of the Messiah hundreds of years before Christ came.

1. Typology or Double Fulfillment

God gave prophecies that are often fulfilled in similar ways in different times in history.

2. Foreshortening

Sometimes a prophet envisions something that looks to them like one event but is actually something that is extended over a long period of time.

9. Can you summarize your eschatological beliefs?
Summarize what will happen at the end of times.

10. Identify and answer the disciples' questions.

7

Mark 14-16

I. LAST NIGHT WITH DISCIPLES (MARK 14:1-52)

The Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus and kill him secretly because he was popular with the people.

II. THE PASSOVER

Jesus celebrates the Passover with the disciples and show them how it symbolizes what he is about to do.

A. The Exodus as the Historical Background

The first Passover was the last of the ten plagues placed on Egypt. Putting the blood of a lamb around their door was a symbol that the Israelites belonged to God and it protected them.

B. Jesus Redefines Passover

Jesus says the Passover now points to God's greatest act of salvation, Jesus' death on the cross, in addition to being a reminder of how God saved his people from Egypt.

C. 1 Corinthians 11

An explanation of how the celebration of communion is a reinterpretation of the Passover which points to the death of Christ on the cross.

D. The New Covenant

Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied that God would establish a new covenant.

E. Three Views on the Lord's Supper

People have different views on the significance of the Lord's Supper, also referred to as communion.

1. Transubstantiation and Automatic Forgiveness

The Roman Catholic tradition is that the bread and wine in communion become the literal body and blood of Christ and when you take it, God's grace automatically goes to you and makes a spiritual change.

2. Consubstantiation

This is the view that Christ's body and blood was physically present, but the bread and wine weren't actually his body.

3. Symbolic View

Some people think that communion is a symbol of the death of Christ.

4. Response to Transubstantiation and Consubstantiation

Both views fail to acknowledge that Jesus is using a metaphor. Transubstantiation ignores the doctrine of sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice.

5. Response to the Symbolic View

What you eat and drink in communion represents Christ's death on the cross.

6. Past, Present, and Future Aspects of Communion

We look back at the death of Jesus, we are proclaiming what God has done and we look forward to the day that we will eat and drink with Jesus.

7. Terms and Frequency

Some traditions refer to communion as a sacrament, and some as an ordinance. Scripture does not mandate how often we should celebrate it.

III. THE FINAL EVENTS OF JESUS'S LIFE

The Gospel of Mark gives us quite a few details about the final days of the life of Jesus.

A. The Garden of Gethsemane

After Jesus had prayed, Judas betrayed him. He was put on trial, then scourged and crucified.

B. The Death of Jesus

Jesus' death on the cross and what he said in the process is significant prophetically and spiritually.

C. Atonement

The doctrine of what happened on the cross.

1. What the Atonement Is

Jesus took on the curse of the law in order to pay the penalty for the sin of you and everyone else throughout history.

2. Terms that Describe the Atonement

Sacrificial atonement, propitiation and redemption are words that describe atonement.

3. Debates over Atonement

Jesus' death satisfying God's anger against sin vs. an example of self-giving love that motivates us to love in the same way.

4. Heart Issues

God's love and his justice motivated him, sin is serious, what Jesus did on the cross is sufficient and the message of the Gospel is exclusive because only Jesus could do anything about it.

D. The Resurrection

Jesus was dead and came back to life in a physical body.

E. The Significance of Three Days

Jewish was that the spirit of a dead person would leave the body after three days.

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Matthew 1:1-5:12

I. THE BIRTH OF JESUS

A. The Genealogy

Jesus is a descendant of King David

B. The Angel's Announcement

An angel tells Joseph that Mary is pregnant and still a virgin and the child will be the Messiah.

C. The Virgin Birth

1. Differing Positions on the Supernatural

Materialists or naturalists believe in a closed system of the material world in which no supernatural events can occur. Some people believe in an open system that believes there can be a cause outside of nature for events that happen.

2. The Importance of Believing in the Virgin Birth

The Bible says that miracles can happen, the Bible says that the birth of Jesus was a miracle and the Bible teaches that Jesus is God.

II. THE DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION

A. Definition

Jesus was both fully God and fully human. It's an essential element of the gospel and necessary in order for Jesus to make atonement for our sins.

B. Philippians 2

Jesus gave up the independent exercise of his divine power and lived by the power of the Spirit.

The Sermon on the Mount

I. RESOURCES

Sermon on the Mount by Carson, Christian
Counterculture by John Stott, and some commentaries

II. INTERPRETING THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus speaks in absolutes and the ethical requirements are high.

A. Already, but Not Yet

The Kingdom of God has come, but some aspects are yet to be fulfilled.

B. Avoid Oversimplification

Give the teachings their full force but don't be simplistic when considering the imagery.

C. The Concern is the Heart

Jesus wants your whole-hearted commitment.

III. INTRODUCTION TO THE BEATITUDES

The Beatitudes are the core, and the rest of the Sermon on the Mount explains what they mean.

A. Verse 3: Blessed are the Poor in Spirit

You recognize your inability to be approved by God on your own.

B. Verse 4: Blessed are Those who Mourn

You mourn before God because you recognize your spiritual bankruptcy.

C. Verse 5: Blessed are the Meek

You don't assert yourself over others in pride and arrogance.

D. Verse 6: Blessed are those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

You pursue God as the source of righteousness.

E. Verse 7: Blessed are the Merciful

As we realize our spiritual condition, we treat others with mercy.

F. Verse 8: Blessed are the Pure in Heart

In the deepest places in our heart, we must be fully devoted to God.

G. Verse 9: Blessed are the Peacemakers

If we are meek and merciful, we will seek peace.

H. Verses 10-12: Blessed are Those who are Persecuted for Righteousness's Sake

Rejoice and be glad when you are persecuted for your faith.

I. Call to Action

1. The Salt of the Earth

We should be living our lives in a way that is counter-cultural.

2. The Light of the World

We should live our lives in a way that brings attention to God to the people in our sphere of influence.

3. Wholehearted Commitment

The Beatitudes do not leave room for self-reliance or part-time Christianity.

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Matthew 5:17-7:29; 28:19-20

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

A. Undivided Loyalty: Righteousness (Matt. 5:17-48)

Go requires not only external obedience, but your heart.

B. Introduction (Matt. 5:17-20)

Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament Law, not to abolish it.

C. Anger and Murder (Matt. 5:21-26)

If you are angry with someone, it's the same as murdering them.

D. Lust and Adultery (Matt. 5:27-30)

If you have lustful intent toward someone, it's the same as committing adultery.

E. Divorce (Matt. 5:31-32)

Divorce shouldn't happen except in cases of immorality.

F. Oaths (Matt. 5:33-37)

Keep your word.

G. Retaliation (Matt. 5:38-42)

Personal self-sacrifice displaces personal retaliation.

H. Hatred (Matt. 5:43-47)

Love and pray for your enemies.

I. Conclusion (Matt. 5:48)

Strive to have the same attitude and character as God and depend on him for the strength to do it.

II. UNDIVIDED LOYALTY: ACTS OF PIETY (MATT. 6:1-18)

A. Introduction (Matt. 6:1)

B. Almsgiving (Matt. 6:2-4)

Give to the needy in secret, not to get attention.

C. Fasting (Matt. 6:16-18)

When you fast, don't let others know you are doing it.

D. Prayer (Matt. 6:5-15)

Pray sincerely and in private. Follow the model that Jesus gave us.

E. Undivided Loyalty: Total Commitment (Matt. 6:19-24)

F. Treasure (Matt. 6:19-21)

Commit yourself totally to Jesus, not to material possessions.

G. Two Masters (Matt. 6:24)

You can only serve one master.

H. Undivided Loyalty: Total Trust (Matt. 6:25-34)

Don't worry. Seek God's Kingdom and he will provide everything you need.

I. Final Instructions (Matt. 7:1-12)

Check yourself out before you point out a problem in someone else.

J. Conclusion: Only Two Options (Matt. 7:13-27)

You must choose the wide gate or the narrow gate.

III. THE GREAT COMMISSION (MATT. 28:18-20)

As you go, make disciples, teaching them and baptizing them, and Jesus will be with you.

Group Questions

1. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is speaking forcibly. Do you feel that it is impossible to meet Jesus's standards? If it feels impossible, what would encourage you to still try?

10

Luke

I. INTRODUCTION TO LUKE

The author, Luke, was a Greek physician, writing primarily for a Greek audience. Luke made it clear that the gospel was for everyone, including women and the poor, which were two disenfranchised groups in his society.

II. BIRTH NARRATIVE

Luke emphasizes that even events surrounding the birth of Jesus were a reminder that the Gospel is for all people.

III. TEMPLE VISIT

Jesus began to realize as a young man that God was his father.

IV. BEGINNINGS OF MINISTRY AND TEMPTATION

Jesus began his public ministry when he was about 30 years old. After he was baptized, the Holy Spirit led him into the wilderness to be tempted for 40 days.

V. EARLY MINISTRY

A. Rejection in Nazareth

Jesus spoke in the synagogue in his home town and people rejected him.

B. Capernaum

Capernaum became the center of Jesus' ministry

C. Luke's Version of the Beatitudes

Possibly a way that Jesus began many of his sermons

VI. FOUR STORIES ABOUT “OTHERS”

These are stories about people who are outside the sphere of normal Jewish religious activity.

A. The Centurion’s Servant

Jesus commends the centurion for his faith

B. The Widow’s Son

Widows were considered at the bottom of the social ladder in that society.

C. The Sinful Woman

A sinful woman anoints the feet of Jesus while he is eating a meal with a group of Pharisees.

D. The Women Accompanying Jesus

A group of women was part of a larger group that followed Jesus.

VII. ADDITIONAL STORIES

A. The Parable of the Good Samaritan

A story Jesus told to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?"

B. The Lord's Prayer

God wants us to pray to him boldly.

C. Woe Sayings

Jesus rebuked the religious hypocrites.

D. Stories that Define Discipleship

Radical Christianity requires a high cost and is often not peaceful.

E. God Seeks the Lost

Parables illustrating God's desire to seek and find the lost.

10. God's heart is to seek the lost, and there is great rejoicing when even one is found (Luke 15). Come up with an action plan for yourself or your church that mirrors the heart of God in this way.

11

John 1-12

I. INTRODUCTORY ISSUES

II. CRITICAL ISSUES

Accuracy of John's account, it is theologically more developed, Jesus moves from dialogue to monologue.

A. Date and Purpose of Writing

The Gospel of John was written in the late first century for the purpose of showing that Jesus is the Messiah.

B. Structural Overview

Prologue, book of signs, passion week, epilogue

III. PROLOGUE: THE DIVINE LOGOS (JOHN 1:1-18)

Jesus is God.

IV. THE BOOK OF SIGNS (JOHN 1:19-12:50)

Seven signs with the purpose of showing who Jesus is.

A. John the Baptist (John 1:19-34)

The forerunner of Jesus.

B. The Wedding at Cana and Cleansing the Temple (John 2)

Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding. When he went to the temple and saw that they had turned the court of the Gentiles into a marketplace, he overturned the tables and released animals to protest how irreligious they had become.

C. Nicodemus and the Necessity of Rebirth (John 3)

Jesus talks about being baptized in the water and the spirit and also believing in Jesus and having eternal life.

D. "Belief" in John

According to John, belief is not only intellectual assent, but transferring our trust out of ourselves and into Jesus.

E. The Samaritan Woman (John 4)

Jesus talks to the Samaritan woman about true worship.

F. Jesus Heals like his Father (John 5)

When Jesus referred to himself as Son of God, he was making himself equal with God.

G. Feeding the 5000 and the "I Am" Statements (John 6)

In John 10:30, Jesus said, "I and the Father are one." The Jews knew that Jesus was saying that he is God.

H. Continued Conflict with the Jews (John 7-8)

Jesus made statements about his deity that were related to symbolism in the Jewish festivals they were celebrating.

I. The Man Born Blind (John 9)

Jesus heals a blind man but the religious leaders won't accept that he did it by the power of God.

J. The Good Shepherd (John 10)

Jesus knows us and we know him.

K. Raising Lazarus from the Dead (John 11)

Jesus demonstrates that he is the resurrection and the life.

L. The Triumphal Entry and Rejection (John 12)

Jesus goes to Jerusalem a few days before the Passover celebration and the Jewish leaders and plotting a way to kill him.

Group Questions

1. What part of the prologue of John impacts you the most?
2. Does John's prologue convince you that Jesus is divine? Why or why not?
3. Like the man born blind (John 9), we all have testimonies and ways in which we can share our stories in powerful ways. Reflect on what God has done in your life and how you can share that with others.

10. Identify each of the seven signs in the John 1-12. Which seems most powerful and why?

12

John 13-21

I. STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW

II. THE UPPER ROOM DISCOURSE (JOHN 13-17)

A. Servanthood (John 13:1-20)

Jesus taught servanthood and modeled it with his life.

B. Foot Washing as an Ordinance?

It's not taught in the New Testament as an ordinance like baptism or communion, but it can be a valuable experience.

C. A New Commandment of Love (John 13:34-35)

Love one another as Christ has loved you.

A Definition of Love

In humility, count others as more significant than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3-4)

D. The Upper Room Discourse Continues (John 14)

Jesus reminds them that he is God and comforts and encourages them.

E. The Holy Spirit

1. Monotheistic and Trinitarian

God exists eternally in three persons - Father, Son, Holy Spirit—equal in essences and divine perfection.

2. Another Helper (John 14:15-17)

The Holy Spirit dwells in us to continue the ministry that Jesus began.

3. Brings All to Remembrance (John 14:25-26)

Jesus promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit would cause them to remember what he told them.

4. Bears Witness (John 15:26)

One of the functions of the Holy Spirit is to illuminate what Jesus did and what he taught.

5. Convicts (John 16:7-15)

The Holy Spirit convicts the world of its sin, its lack of righteousness and judgment.

6. Abide in Christ (John 15)

Jesus uses the image of a vine and branches to illustrate the idea of abiding in him.

F. High Priestly Prayer (John 17)

1. Jesus Prays for "Himself" (John 17:1-5)

Jesus wants to glorify God the Father.

2. Jesus Prays for the Eleven Disciples (John 17:6-19)

Jesus prays for unity and to protect them from the evil one.

3. Jesus Prays for Future Disciples (John 17:20-26)

Jesus prays that they would love each other and live in unity so people would know that God has sent him.

Group Questions

1. If you were one of the twelve, what thoughts would be going through your mind as Jesus draws closer to washing your feet?

13

Acts 1-12

I. INTRODUCTION

II. STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW

III. THE BIRTH AND EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH (ACTS 1-5)

A. The First Forty Days (Acts 1)

Choosing the twelfth disciple and a repeat of the promise of the coming Holy Spirit.

B. Pentecost (Acts 2)

1. The Coming of the Holy Spirit and Speaking in Tongues

The Holy Spirit came to dwell in individual believers in a permanent way.

2. Joel's Prophecy

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

3. Language Used for the Coming of the Holy Spirit

Descriptions of the initial experience of the Holy Spirit being given and descriptions of the coming of the Holy Spirit in the ongoing experience of a Christian.

C. Peter's Sermon

Four basic elements are Jesus' life, crucifixion of Jesus, resurrection of Jesus and a call to repentance. This is referred to as the kerygma.

1. The Story Continues

2. Boldness (Acts 4:19-20, 29-31)

The church prayed for boldness to communicate the gospel in the hostile environment they faced. Your personal testimony can be powerful.

3. The Sovereignty of God (Acts 2:23,39; 4:27-38)

God is in charge.

4. Additional Stories

People in the church shared with each other. Some were beaten for telling others about Jesus and they considered it an honor to suffer.

IV. THE SECOND PHASE OF THE CHURCH'S EXPANSION: SAMARITANS (ACTS 6-9)

Do You Have to be a Jew to be a Christian?

The first theological battle in the church was how Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians would live and worship together.

A. Stephen (Acts 6-7)

Stephen recounts that the Jewish nation has a history of rejecting God's servants and refers to the Jewish leaders as, "stiff-necked" and "resisting the

B. Philip in Samaria (Acts 8)

Philip went to a non-Jewish area to preach the gospel and people there believed.

The Delay of Receiving the Holy Spirit

The believers in Samaria received the Holy Spirit when leaders of the Jewish church came to meet with them.

C. Saul (Acts 9)

Saul's conversion was an important event in the history of the early church.

V. THE THIRD PHASE OF THE CHURCH'S EXPANSION: GENTILES (ACTS 10-11)

A. Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10:1-11:18)

Peter's vision and interaction with Cornelius shows that the Gospel is meant for the Gentiles as well as the Jews.

B. The Church in Antioch

Antioch becomes the center of the Gentile church.

C. Closing

The Gospel is for all people.

9. What was the church's first theological battle? Can you think of any modern parallels?

10. Reflect on the explanation of the delay in the giving of the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans make sense. Do you think this is a normative experience?

14

Acts 13-15 and Galatians

I. ACTS 13-14: PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

A. Commission (Acts 13:1-3)

The church in Antioch commissioned Barnabas and Saul to go out and preach the gospel.

B. Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12)

Saul is called Paul from now on. The Roman governor believed their message.

C. Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:13-52)

When you believe in Jesus, you receive forgiveness for your sins and it releases you from the burden of the law.

D. Iconium (Acts 14:1-7)

Barnabas and Paul face opposition from Jews who are not Christians.

E. Lystra and Derbe (Acts 14:8-20)

Paul healed a crippled man, causing the people to think that Barnabas and Paul are Greek gods.

F. Return through Lystra and Iconium to Antioch (Acts 14:21-28)

Paul reminded the believers that they will face persecution and conflict.

II. GALATIANS

A. Background

After Paul preached, Jews told the new Christians that they still needed to follow the Jewish Law and they were questioning Paul's authority.

B. Introduction: Curse rather than Blessing (Gal. 1:1-10)

Paul curses the people that were preaching a gospel that was different from the one he preached.

C. Paul's Apostleship (Gal. 1:11-2:14)

Paul defends his apostleship.

D. Triumph of Grace over Law (Gal. 2:15-4:7)

We are justified by faith in Christ, not by works of the law.

1. Definition of Justification and Righteousness

Justification is a legal term describing how God's righteousness is imputed to us.

2. Not by Works of the Law

Legalism is the opposite of salvation by faith.

3. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith

We are justified because we believe Jesus is God and because of what he did on the cross.

E. Crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20)

We have died to our old way of living and we now live a life characterized by faith.

F. Freedom in Christ (Gal. 5:1-6:10)

The way we live should change because of our relationship with God.

G. Live by the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 22-24)

We can live our lives being led by the Spirit because he gives us the power to do it.

H. New Creation (Gal. 6:15)

Because of our relationship to God, he makes us a new creation.

I. The Message of Galatians

We have been made right by God because we believe that Jesus is who he says he is and because of what he did on the cross, and we should live our lives accordingly.

III. ACTS 15: JERUSALEM COUNCIL

A. Background: The Debate (Acts 15:1-5)

One of the first theological questions of the church was, "Must I be a Jew to be a Christian?"

B. The Council's Decision and Letter (Acts 15:6-35)

Discussion about how the Jews and Gentiles can fellowship in the church.

Probably written before the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15.

10. Discuss the difference between walking by the Spirit and living legalistically.

11. Discuss whether you think the Judaizers in Acts 15 were Christians?

15

Acts 15:36-18:22 and 1-2 Thessalonians

I. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY (ACTS 15:36-18:22)

A. Context

The conclusion of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 is that you are not required to be Jewish to be a Christian.

B. Disagreement over Mark

Paul and Barnabas disagree about whether or not they should take Mark with them on their next missionary journey. They decide to separate, so Paul takes Silas and Barnabas takes Mark.

C. Asia Minor and Timothy (Acts 16:1-10)

Paul and Silas meet Timothy and take him with them.

D. Philippi (Acts 16:11-40)

Philippi was a colony of Rome so you had the same rights and privileges you would if you were living in Rome.

E. The Conversion of Lydia (Acts 16:11-15)

When Paul preached, Lydia believed his message and she was baptized.

F. An Exorcism

Paul cast a demon out of a young woman slave. Her masters couldn't make money off her anymore, so they threw Paul and Silas in prison.

G. The Conversion of the Philippian Jailer

Paul and Silas were miraculously released from prison but stayed to present the gospel to the jailer.

H. Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)

Paul preached in the synagogue, then the Jews started a riot to protest what he was saying.

I. Berea (Acts 17:10-15)

When Paul left, Silas and Timothy stayed to disciple the new believers.

J. Athens (Acts 17:16-34)

Paul spoke on Mars Hill and presented Jesus by using the imagery of their idol to an unknown God.

K. Corinth (Acts 18:1-17)

The people in the synagogue did not accept Paul's preaching so he started preaching next door to the synagogue and stayed there for a year and a half.

L. Return to Antioch (Acts 18:18-22)

Paul stops in Ephesus and Jerusalem on his way back to Antioch.

II. 1 THESSALONIANS

Paul wrote this letter to encourage new believers that were facing persecution.

A. Background

B. Greeting and Thanksgiving (1 Thess. 1)

Paul greets the believers in Thessalonica and is thankful they they responded to the message of the gospel.

C. Paul Reviews his Time with Them (1 Thess. 2)

Paul reminds them that while he was there, he loved, served and encouraged them.

D. Paul Sent Timothy (1 Thess. 3)

Paul was writing the letter in Corinth and Timothy brought it to Thessalonica.

E. The Necessity of Christian Education

It's important for new believers to know that it's normal to experience persecution and conflict as they begin to live out their faith.

F. The Necessity of Persecution

Jesus and believers before us experienced persecution and if we live our lives being led by the Spirit, we will, too.

G. The Necessity of Perseverance

Perseverance is an essential aspect of our relationship with God.

H. Responding to Timothy's Report (1 Thess. 4-5)

Core Topics for a Young Church (1 Thess. 4:1-12)

The importance of hard work and sexual purity are two topics that Paul addresses in 1 Thessalonians.

I. Eschatology (1 Thess. 4:13-5:11)

Knowing that we will be with God forever is a great encouragement. We should be ready for Jesus' coming anytime.

J. Conclusion

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks, do not quench the Spirit, abs

III. 2 THESSALONIANS

A. Persevere in the Face of Persecution (2 Thess. 1:5-12)

Our prayers for our enemies should be that they repent and become Christians.

B. Jesus's Return is Future (2 Thess. 2)

Persevere in your faith because Jesus is coming back again.

C. Idleness (2 Thess. 3)

If anyone is not willing to work, don't pay their way.

16

Acts 18:23-21:26 and 1 Corinthians 1-6

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

I. EPHESUS (ACTS 18:23-19:41)

A. Apollos (Acts 18:23-29)

Apollos was preaching the baptism of John the Baptist until Priscilla and Acquila explained the gospel to him.

B. Disciples of John the Baptist (Acts 19:1-7)

Paul preached the Gospel to them and they accepted it.

C. Paul's Ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-20)

Paul used Ephesus as a central base for more than two years.

D. Writing of 1 Corinthians in Ephesus

Paul writes to the church he planted in Corinth regarding some problems he heard about there.

E. Riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:21-41)

A silversmith that made idols of Artemis started a riot against Paul because as people believed the gospel, they bought fewer idols.

II. TRAVEL TOWARD JERUSALEM (ACTS 20:1-21:14)

Paul travels back toward Jerusalem by going through Corinth and collects donations along the way to help the church in Judea.

A. Writing of 2 Corinthians in Macedonia

Paul stops in Macedonia and writes 2 Corinthians there.

B. Writing of Romans in Corinth

Paul stays about 3 months in Corinth and writes his letter to the Romans.

C. Return to Jerusalem (Acts 20:3b-6)

On his way to Jerusalem, he stops at the seaport of Miletus to say goodbye to the Ephesian elders.

III. 1 CORINTHIANS

A. Commentaries

The commentary by Craig Blomberg is written for lay level study and one by Gordon Fee has more technical information.

B. Historical Background

Corinth was a large city, highly commercialized with a large temple that emphasized worship involving prostitutes.

C. Structural Overview

In the first half, Paul responds to information from a member of the church named Chloe. The second half is evidently a response to a letter with questions that the Corinthians sent Paul.

D. Divisions in the Church (1 Cor. 1:10-4:21)

People in the church were following personality cults rather than focusing on the message of the gospel.

1. Lack of Focus on Jesus

Paul wants the church to be unified and focusing on the preaching of what Jesus did on the cross.

2. Human Wisdom vs. Divine Wisdom

The foolishness of God is wiser than men.

3. Unity

The gospel is the vehicle by which the Spirit works in their lives to bring them into relationship to God and helps them understand the things of the Spirit.

4. Practical Issues Regarding Division in the Church

Genuinely love and be willing to serve each other in practical ways.

E. Moral Issues (1 Cor. 5-6)

1. Sexual Immorality (1 Cor. 5)

If someone is living an immoral lifestyle in your community of faith, it's important to deal with it.

2. Church Discipline

The goal of church discipline is restoration.

17

1 Corinthians 7-16 and 2 Corinthians

1 Corinthians

I. MARRIAGE (1 COR. 7)

A. Asceticism (1 Cor. 7:1-7)

If you are married, don't neglect the sexual needs of your marriage partner.

B. Unmarried (1 Cor. 7:8-9)

If you are unmarried or widow, it's ok to marry, but in some ways, it's better to stay single if you have the gift of celibacy.

C. Married (1 Cor. 7:10-11)

If you are married, stay married.

D. Mixed Marriages (1 Cor. 7:12-16)

Stay married if you can. Let the unbelieving spouse leave if they want to.

E. General principle (1 Cor. 7:17-24)

Each person should lead the life God has called them to.

F. Engaged (1 Cor. 7:25-35)

Paul's preference is to stay single to focus on serving the Lord.

G. Death and Remarriage (1 Cor. 7:39-40)

If your spouse dies, you are free to remarry.

H. Legitimate Reasons for Divorce

God designed marriage to be for life,

I. Remarriage

Passages that teach about divorce, remarriage and forgiveness.

II. FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS (1 COR. 8)

The question of voluntarily limiting your freedom in situations that might cause someone to fundamentally question their faith.

III. WORSHIP (1 COR. 11:2-14:40)

A. Men and Women Relationships (1 Cor. 11:2-16)

Live in such a way that you honor the relationships you have in your family and your church.

B. The Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-34)

Partake in communion to remember what God has done for you, reflect on your relationship with God and others, and look forward to his coming again.

C. Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 12-14)

Exercise the spiritual gift that God gives you for the common good of your faith community.

IV. THE RESURRECTION (1 COR. 15)

Christ's resurrection is central to our faith. We will also receive a physical resurrection body.

V. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE (2 COR 5)

Discussion of what happens to our soul when we die and when we receive our resurrected body.

Group Questions

1. Do we live in a sense of urgency that the Lord could return quickly, without warning? When you think about Jesus returning any time, how does this change how you think about life?

10. In 1 Cor. 11, Paul discusses how men's and women's hairstyles signal their relationship status with each other and God. Since hairstyles no longer mean the same thing for us, what are some of those signs in our own culture?

18

Romans 1-4

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Commentaries

Broadman and Holman by Robert Mounce, Baker by Tom Schreiner, Eerdmans by Douglas Moo.

B. Historical Setting

Written at the end of Paul's third missionary journey. It's the most systematic presentation of biblical theology in the Bible.

C. Structural Overview

Chapters 1-4 focus primarily on sin and salvation, chapters 5-8 on sanctification, chapters 9-11 on Jews and their relationship to Gentiles and God's overall plan, and chapters 12-16 on ethics.

II. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ROMANS (ROM. 1:1-15)

Paul identifies himself and greets his audience which is the people in Rome.

III. THEME VERSES (ROM. 1:16-17)

The gospel is the power of God for salvation and the righteous will live by faith.

A. The Power of the Gospel (Rom. 1:16)

The gospel is powerful even though it seems weak to the world. It came to the Jews first, then to everyone else.

B. The Essential Nature of the Gospel (Rom. 1:17)

Faith is being fully convinced that God is able to do the very thing that he has promised he would do.

C. Old Testament Proof (Hab. 2:4; 3:17-19)

The righteous will live by faith.

IV. THE UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OF ALL PEOPLE (ROM. 1:18-3:20)

Everyone apart from Christ is unrighteous.

A. The Gentiles, Who Have General Revelation (Rom. 1:18-32)

There are universal truths that God has made known to all people.

B. The Jews, Who Have the Law (Rom. 2:1-3:8)

It's not enough to be born into a Jewish family. Your life must be changed.

C. Summary and Scriptural Proof (Rom. 3:9-20)

All have sinned. We can't make ourselves right with God by our own efforts.

V. RIGHTEOUSNESS DEFINED: JUSTIFICATION (ROM. 3:21-4:25)

A. Justification is Through Christ (Rom. 3:21-26)

1. Relation of Justification to the Law (Rom. 3:21)

The righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the Law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it.

2. Through Faith in Christ for All (Rom. 3:22-25a)

We are justified by God's grace and he redeems us.

3. Hilasterion (Propitiation; Expiation)

Christ's death on the cross appeases God's wrath toward our sin.

4. The Justice of God's Actions (Rom. 3:25b-26)

The death of Jesus was necessary for God to be just and also forgive your sins.

5. Justification is through Faith (Rom. 3:27-4:25)

B. Abraham was Justified by Faith (Rom. 4:1-8)

Abraham was forgiven because of his faith and trust in God, just like we are.

C. Abraham was not Justified by Circumcision (Rom. 4:9-12)

Abraham is the father of all who believe, including the Gentiles, because he had faith in God before he was circumcised.

D. The Promise is by Faith (Rom. 4:13-17a)

It applies to anyone, not only people with a certain ethnic heritage or religious activity.

19

Romans 5-11

VI. RIGHTEOUSNESS LIVED OUT (ROM. 5-8)

A. The Christian's Joy (Rom. 5:1-21)

The benefits of knowing for sure that we are justified.

1. Description of the Benefits (Rom. 5:1-11)

We are at peace with God, we can rejoice even when circumstances are difficult, our hope is secure.

2. Sufficiency of Christ's Sacrifice (Rom. 5:12-21)

Jesus' death on the cross is sufficient to cover our sins.

B. Moral Implications of Justification: Sanctification (Rom. 6)

Sanctification is our growth toward being like Christ.

1. Dead to Sin but Alive with Christ (Rom. 6:1-14)

Since the mastery of sin over your life is gone, live like a different person.

2. Slaves to Christ (Rom. 6:15-23)

You are either a slave to sin or a slave to righteousness.

C. Freedom from the Law's Condemnation (Rom. 7:1-25)

We struggle with sin, but God gives us the power to overcome it and forgives us when we fail.

D. The Work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:1-39)

The Holy Spirit lives in us and is at work with the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

1. The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:1-17)

As we respond to the leading of the Spirit in our lives, we change the way we think and act.

2. Future Hope of the Believer (Rom. 8:18-30)

God can redeem any situation we face to help us become more like Jesus.

3. Summation: The Justification and Love of God (Rom. 8:31-39)

We can never be separated from the love of God.

VII. RIGHTEOUSNESS VINDICATED (JEW AND GENTILE QUESTION) (ROM. 9-11)

How is it that the Jews rejected Jesus even though they knew about the promises God made to Abraham?

A. The Justice of the Rejection (Rom. 9:6-29)

1. A Remnant Still Exists, by Election (Rom. 9:6-13)

God knew that not all Jews would accept Jesus as Messiah but that there would be a remnant who would.

2. God's Sovereignty is Righteous (Rom. 9:14-29)

Sometimes we don't understand why God does things the way he does, but that doesn't mean that he is unfair. Our perspective is limited and God's is not.

a) Double Predestination

Some people believe that God chose people to respond to him and that he chose others to reject him.

b) Issues in Election

If you can't say, "no," then you really didn't say, "yes," and it challenges our doctrine of justice.

B. The Cause of the Rejection (Rom. 9:30-10:21)

The Jews rejected Jesus because they pursued righteousness by works, not by faith.

C. A Future for Ethnic Israel (Rom. 11:25-26)

These verses indicate that there is a future for ethnic Israel in God's redemptive plan.

D. Closing: The Unsearchable Depth of God's Wisdom (Rom. 11:33)

There are some things that we will not completely understand about God because of our limited perspective.

11. Create an outline of the argument of Romans 9 in your own words.

20

Romans 9-16

Review of the Structure of Romans

Apart from Christ, everyone is a sinner, it is possible to be right with God because of Jesus' death on the cross, we are at peace with God, the Holy Spirit leads us in the process of sanctification, and salvation history includes both Jews and Gentiles.

VIII. RIGHTEOUSNESS LIVED OUT (ROM. 12-15)

A. The Relationship Between Theology and Ethics

What we believe should make a difference in how we act.

B. Responsibility to God: Be Transformed (Rom. 12:1-2)

Spiritual formation.

1. Our Motivation (v. 1a)

We grow in our faith in response to the mercies of God.

2. Present ALL of Yourself to God as a Sacrifice (v. 1b)

There is no room for compartmentalization of our thoughts or actions.

3. Refuse to Be Like the World (v. 2a)

The mold of the world is powerful and seduces many people.

4. Insist on Following God's Will (v. 2b)

The Holy Spirit will transform us if we follow his leading.

C. Responsibility to the Church (Rom. 12:3-21)

Our growth in humility should express itself in unity and genuine love for those in your faith community.

D. Responsibility to the Government (Rom. 13:1-7)

Our duty is to obey the civil authorities because God has put them there.

1. The Question of Civil Disobedience

There are times for civil disobedience.

2. How Do You Decide? Ethical Hierarchy

Our allegiance to God and other people is primary.

E. Responsibility to Society (Rom. 13:8-14)

We should live in a way that demonstrates how to love God and others.

F. Responsibility of the Weak and the Strong (Rom. 14:1-15:13)

1. Issue of weak and strong people and causing people to stumble.

Two Groups of People

Mostly Jews who had stricter dietary laws than the gentiles.

2. Opinion and Adiaphora

Some areas of faith and practice deal with secondary issues on which believers may have different opinions.

3. Causing Another to “Stumble”

Stumbling means you are leading someone to sin, not just annoying them because of their preferences.

4. Instructions to the Weak and the Strong

Don't pass judgment or despise others, but build each other up.

5. Instructions Specifically for the Strong

Don't quarrel over opinions. Sometimes it's better to limit your freedom for the sake of the church and the glory of God.

21

Acts 21:27-28:31 and Ephesians

I. ACTS 21:27-28:31

Paul's imprisonment and series of trials on his way to Rome.

A. Mob, Arrest, and Defense (Acts 21:27-22:29)

Paul enters the temple with a person that people think, wrongly, is an uncircumcised Gentile. The protest becomes a mob and Paul is arrested.

B. Four Trials: Sanhedrin, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa (Acts 22:30-26:32)

The account of the trials is to show that Paul did not do anything wrong.

C. Final Jewish Rejection (Acts 28:17-29)

When Paul preached the gospel to the Jews in Rome, they rejected it.

II. EPHESIANS

A. Introduction

1. Prison Epistles

Paul wrote the New Testament letters when he was under house arrest in Rome.

2. Circular Letter

Ephesians was meant to be read by the believers in Ephesus and then circulated to other believers living in nearby cities.

3. Two-Fold Structure and Resources

The first three chapters focus on theology and the last three focus on ethics.

B. Part I: Theology (Eph. 1-3)

1. Our Spiritual Blessings (Eph. 1:3-14)

Paul lays out in detail some of the things that God has done for us.

a) Election (Eph. 1:4)

God chose you.

b) Adoption (Eph. 1:5-6)

God adopted us to be in relationship with him, so we are fellow-heirs with Jesus.

c) Redemption (Eph. 1:7-10)

Because of what Jesus did on the cross, our sins are forgiven.

d) Inheritance (Eph. 1:11-12)

God promises us an inheritance in heaven.

e) Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14)

The Holy Spirit lives in us and helps us to persevere so we can receive our inheritance.

2. Who We Are Individually in Christ (Eph. 2:1-10)

a) Dead in Sin (Eph. 2:1-3)

Before our relationship with Jesus, we were dead in sin.

b) God Saved Us (Eph. 2:4-10)

God saved us by grace through faith to show his love for us.

c) Implications of God Saving Us

The more you understand how much God loves you and what you were saved from, the more you will want to live your life by God's power and leading.

3. Who we are Corporately as the Church (Eph. 2:11-22)

Christ broke down the wall of hostility between the Jews and Gentiles.

4. Closing Prayer for Spiritual Maturity (Eph. 3:14-21)

Paul's desire was that the people who believed the gospel that he preached would pursue spiritual maturity. Theology must always end in doxology.

C. Part II: Ethics (Eph. 4-6)

1. Walk in Unity (Eph. 4:1-16)

Encouragement for the Jews and Gentiles to grow to maturity together.

2. Walk in Holiness (Eph. 4:17-32)

Live a sanctified life. The image Paul uses is putting off your old self and putting on your new self.

3. Walk in Love (Eph. 5:1-6)

Be imitators of God in the way you treat other people.

4. Household Codes (Eph. 5:22-6:9)

Guidelines for how people within a family should relate to each other.

5. Armor of God (Eph. 6:10-20)

The battle we face each day is against spiritual forces, so our armor must be spiritual, also.

10. The armor of God in Ephesians 6 sometimes seems to be unrelated to what comes prior. Examine this material and the prior chapter—can you identify a relationship?

22

Philippians

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Acts 16

Paul preached in Philippi on his second missionary journey. He baptized Lydia and explained the gospel to the jailer after Paul and Silas were miraculously freed from prison.

B. Purpose

The believers in Philippi sent him money to support his ministry so he wrote a letter to thank them.

C. Philippi

The city was a Roman colony with a predominately Greek culture. Possibly not even a synagogue there.

D. Commentaries

NIV series by Frank Thielman, Eerdmans by Gordon Fee.

II. SALUTATION (PHIL. 1:1-2)

Paul is under house arrest in Rome and Timothy is with him. He specifically references the overseers and deacons in Philippi.

III. THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER (PHIL. 1:3-11)

A. Paul's Affection for the Philippian Church

Paul had a strong emotional connection with the believers in the church in Philippi.

B. Paul's Prayer

Paul prays that the believers there will grow deeper in their walk with God

IV. IMPRISONMENT (PHIL. 1:12-26)

A. The Sovereignty of God in Spreading the Gospel (Phil. 1:12-18a)

The Jews tried to kill Paul to stop the spread of the gospel, but because he is now under house arrest in Rome, he can preach to the imperial guard, the household of Caesar, other people in Rome and write letters to people like the believers in Philippi.

B. Assurance of Innocence and Release (Phil. 1:18b-26)

Paul makes comments indicating that he is optimistic that he will soon be released.

V. CALL FOR UNITY (PHIL. 1:27-2:18)

Paul encouraged the believers in Philippi to have less rivalry and more unity

A. Goal of Unity (Phil. 1:27-30)

The goal is to be worthy of the gospel of Christ.

1. Indicative/Imperative

An indicative verb indicates a statement of fact.
An imperative verb is a command.

2. Stand Firm in One Spirit

Do not waver in your commitment to Jesus or each other.

3. Two Consequences

We will strive together for the faith of the gospel and we will not be frightened by those who are persecuting us.

B. Call to Unity (Phil. 2:1-4)

1. Same mind

Because you are joined together with Christ, have the same mindset.

2. Same Love, One for Other

In humility, treat others as more significant than yourselves.

C. Example of Christ's Humility (Phil. 2:5-18)

1. Humiliation (Phil. 2:6-8)

Jesus was the exact representation of God. He became a human and put the needs of all people ahead of himself to the point that he died on the cross so everyone could be saved.

2. Exaltation (Phil. 2:9-11)

Because of Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, he is declared Lord.

3. Consequences of the Truth (Phil. 2:12-18)

Work out what it means to live your life as a disciple of Jesus. Do it without grumbling, complaining, gossiping and slandering.

D. Personal Comments (Phil. 2:19-29)

Paul is sending Timothy and Epaphroditus back to Philippi with this letter.

E. Stand Firm in the Lord (Phil. 3:1-4:1)

Persevere in your faith.

F. Series of Admonitions

Don't worry. Set your mind on things that are true, honorable, just, pure lovely, commendable and excellent.

G. Being Content and Salutation (Phil. 4:1-23)

Be content.

23

Colossians and Philemon

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Prison Epistles

B. Colossians and Philemon.

C. Commentaries

NIV Application Series by Dave Garland, Eerdmans by F. F. Bruce, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries by N. T. Wright

D. Background on Colossians

Small agrarian town. Paul may have not been there but he evangelized Epaphras who was from there.

II. COLOSSIANS

A. Salutation, Thanksgiving, and Prayer (Col. 1:1-14)

Paul and his team were praying for spiritual maturity for the believers.

B. The Supremacy of Christ (Col. 1:15-20)

Paul emphasizes the Christology of Jesus, possibly because people in the Colossian church were downplaying or misrepresenting who he was.

1. Jesus is Fully God

Jesus is the visible exact representation of the invisible God.

2. Jesus is Firstborn

Possibly either an allusion to the supremacy of Jesus or to the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah.

3. Jesus is Creator

Jesus created everything.

4. Jesus is Pre-Existent

Jesus existed before all things.

5. Jesus is Sustainer

Everything holds together because of Jesus.

6. Jesus is Head of the Church

As believers we function under the authority of Jesus.

7. Jesus is Firstborn from the Dead

Jesus was the first to be raised from the dead to receive his glorified body and fully participate in the new age.

8. Jesus Reconciled All Things

Jesus is the one way that you come to peace with God.

C. Summary of Pauline Theology (Col. 1:21-23)

An explanation of how you become a disciple of Jesus and persevere in your faith.

D. Paul's Ministry to the Church (Col. 1:24-2:5)

Paul is glad for the chance to suffer for the cause of Christ so he can continue to encourage the believers in Colossae to grow in maturity in their faith.

E. Getting to the Issue at Hand (Col. 2:1-5)

Paul encourages the believers in Colossae to believe what he has taught them and not be swayed by false teaching that seems logical.

F. Colossian Heresy (Col. 2:6-23)

1. Spiritual Climate of Syncretism

It was common for the Roman and Greek religions to worship multiple gods and rely on superstitious practices.

2. Emphasis on Food Laws

The importance of food laws was often associated with people practicing Judaism.

3. Animism and Angel Worship

Belief in spirits and demons was common.

4. Solution to the Colossian Heresy (Col. 2:6-23)

Don't be deceived by philosophy and human tradition, and focus on the centrality of who Jesus is and what he did on the cross.

G. Ethical Instructions (Col. 3:1-4:6)

Paul uses the imagery of "putting off" some things so you can "put on" other things. He also talks about how people in families should act toward each other. He also talks about slavery in a way that became the see of the abolition movement.

III. PHILEMON

A. Philemon and Onesimus

Philemon was a wealthy person who owned Onesimus as a slave. Onesimus escaped to Rome and became a believer because of Paul.

B. Paul's "Appeal" to Philemon

Paul asks Philemon to forgive Onesimus and accept him back.

C. Slavery

1. Paul's Apparent Acceptance of Slavery

Paul does not explicitly denounce slavery.

2. Planting Seeds for the Abolition of Slavery

Paul asserts the equality of slave and master.

24

The Pastoral Epistles

I. BACKGROUND AND RESOURCES

Word Biblical Commentary by William Mounce, New International Biblical Commentary by Gordon Fee.

It's likely from reading 2 Timothy that Paul was released from house arrest in Rome, then later rearrested and put in a Roman prison.

II. 1 TIMOTHY

A. The Problems in Ephesus

Paul had warned them earlier that some of their elders come in later and lead them astray. Paul's solution is to remind Timothy that he knows sound doctrine and encourage him to stand up to false teachers.

B. Timothy

Paul was Timothy's spiritual father and they were good friends. 1 and 2 Timothy were written to encourage and instruct Timothy in his ministry in Ephesus.

C. How to Deal with Heresy

1. Teach Right Doctrine and Correct Error

Teach what is true about who Jesus is and what he did on the cross.

2. Teach Right Behavior

It's often true that people who teach heresy act in ways that are not Christ-like.

3. Be Willing to Confront

Paul encourages Timothy to not be quarrelsome, and correct his opponents with gentleness.

4. Avoid False Teachers after Warning Them

If a person stirs up division, warn them and then have nothing to do with them.

5. Recognize the Cause

These false teachers knew what they were teaching was wrong and they taught it anyway to gain wealth or power. Sometimes the problem is moral and not intellectual.

6. Watch Yourself in the Process

Watch your character as well as what you are teaching.

D. The Role of Women in Public Worship (1 Tim. 2:8-15)

1. Instruction to Men (1 Tim. 2:8)

Men should pray without anger or quarreling.

2. Instruction to Women about Dress (1 Tim. 2:9-10)

Women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel.

3. Women during the Teaching (1 Tim. 2:11-15)

a) Quietly

The word has the sense of, "quiet spirit."

b) Submissiveness

Doesn't say to whom, but most likely their husband or church leadership.

c) I Do Not Permit a Woman to Teach...

The question is to what situations does this apply?

4. The Rationale (1 Tim. 2:14-15)

The creation of Adam and Eve.

Additional Reading: Word Biblical Commentary by William Mounce, First Timothy 2:11-12 by Tom Schreiner, Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood by Wayne Grudem and John Piper

E. Leadership Qualifications

It's sometimes difficult to determine how to put into practice the qualifications that Paul recommends for elders.

1. Character

Managing their household, time commitment.

2. Men Only

This is a debated topic but seems to be what the Bible means.

3. Oversight and Teaching Ability

General authority and the ability to rebuke false teaching.

4. Above Reproach

Fundamentally your life should show that you are living in a way that glorifies God.

5. A "One-Woman" Man

Faithfulness to his wife and honoring behavior toward her and other women.

6. Not a Recent Convert

Mature in their faith.

7. Proven Manager of Home and Family

If children are not following the Lord, it may not be the right time for them to take on the responsibility of the position of elder.

8. Appointment

A process is important so you can tell what a person is really like.

III. TITUS AND 2 TIMOTHY

Titus was a pastor in Crete. 2 Timothy was primarily written as a personal letter to his friend Timothy to encourage him to persevere.

Group Questions

1. In the pastoral epistles, Paul closely connects sinful behavior with false teaching. Reflect on why one might influence the other. Is this a connection you have observed?

25

Hebrews

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Resources and Nature

NIV Application Commentary Series by George Guthrie, Eerdmans - Epistle to the Hebrews by F. F. Bruce. Part of the group known as general epistles.

B. Authorship, Date, and Recipients

The author is not named. It was likely written before a.d. 70. It was written to Jewish Christians.

C. Themes

Supremacy of Christ over all things, warning passages that emphasize the importance of perseverance.

D. Structural Overview

Supremacy of Christ over angels, supremacy of Christ over Moses, supremacy of Christ over the Jewish sacrificial system, and some warning passages interspersed.

II. SUPREMACY OF CHRIST (HEB. 1:1-3)

Eight basic truths about Jesus

III. SUPREMACY OVER ANGELS (HEB. 1:4-2:18)

Some elements of Judaism worshipped angels

A. A Series of Old Testament Quotations

Psalm 2:7, 2 Samuel 7:14, Psalm 45

B. Warning #1 (Heb. 2:1-4)

Do not drift away from the truth about who Jesus is and what he has done to provide salvation.

C. Continues with Jesus's Supremacy (Heb. 2:5-18)

Jesus became human to free us from slavery to sin, and now is crowned with glory and honor.

D. Exposition #1: Call to Be Faithful (Hebrews 3-4)

The author of Hebrews writes like a pastor because he teaches you theology then stops occasionally to encourage people to be faithful.

IV. A POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXAMPLE OF FAITH (HEB. 3:1-19)

Compares the faithfulness of Jesus to the unfaithfulness of the Jews.

V. BE FAITHFUL TO ENTER THE REST (HEB. 4:1-13)

God promised that the Jews could enter into rest but they didn't.

VI. THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST TO THE JEWISH SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM (HEB. 4:14-10:18)

Christ's sacrifice accomplished salvation for all but Jewish sacrifices on their own did not accomplish anything.

A. Transition (Heb. 4:14-16)

The author was exhorting people to be faithful then began talking about Jesus as the high priest.

B. Jesus as the High Priest (Heb. 5:1-10)

1. Background: High Priests and Melchizedek

The priests in the Old Testament came from the tribe of Levi. The Bible does not give the genealogy for Melchizedek.

2. Jesus as the Superior High Priest

Jesus was not from the tribe of Levi, he was appointed by God like Melchizedek.

C. Warning #2 (Heb. 5:11-6:20)

1. Encouragement toward Spiritual Maturity

You ought to be teachers, but you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God.

2. The Danger of Apostasy

It is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened...

3. The Arminian and Calvinist Debate

Arminians say that you can lose your salvation. Calvinists say that you can't.

4. The Real Problem

Is it possible for someone who experienced a relationship with Christ to abandon him then come back?

5. Encouragement (Heb. 6:9-20)

God is going to be true to his commitment and true to his promise to you, so hang in there.

D. Superiority of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7)

Melchizedek was superior in his priesthood over that of Aaron and Jesus is a priest like Melchizedek, so Jesus is superior to the Jewish sacrificial system.

E. Superiority of Jesus's New Covenant (Heb. 8:1-10:18)

1. The New Covenant Makes the Old Obsolete (Heb. 8:7-13)

Jeremiah 31 describes the new covenant as a new way that God relates to his creation. It will be written on the heart, not on tablets of stone.

VII. EXPOSITION #2: THE ASSURANCE OF OUR FAITH (HEB. 10:19-11:40)

Chapter 10 warns you that if you go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment. Chapter 11 gives a definition of faith and reflects on people of faith throughout history.

VIII. ETHICAL INSTRUCTIONS (HEB. 12:1-13:19)

Since we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, let us run with endurance the race set before us, looking to Jesus who endured the cross and is seated at the right hand of God.

IX. CONCLUSION (13:22-25)

Hebrews 13:20, “Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” That’s his summation of the entire book and again you have this really neat idea that God equips us and it is his energy that allows us to do what is pleasing in his sight.

Group Questions

1. The author of Hebrews says that Jesus also experienced as a human being what you and I experience, and that in this way, he can serve as our high priest. Do you think of Jesus in this way—as a human, experiencing the things that we do? How does the doctrine of his humanity influence your faith?

26

James

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Author and Date

The author is James, the brother of Jesus and also the head of the church in Jerusalem. It was probably written between a.d. 40-50.

B. Theme, Structure, and Resources

The theological theme is sanctification. A good commentary is NIVAC by David Nystrom.

II. JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS

A. Contradiction with Paul

Some of the statements in James about faith and works seem to contradict statements in Paul's letters.

B. Be Doers, Not Only Hearers (James 1:19-27)

The purpose of God's Word is for us to hear it and then do it.

C. Solution: "Justification" Has a Range of Meaning

All words have a range of meaning and the one that applies in any situation depends on the context.

D. Consequences of Hearing but Not Doing

Faith that doesn't have works cannot save.

III. PAIN AND SUFFERING

It's important to distinguish pain caused by living in a fallen world and pain caused by persecution. God can redeem pain you experience by helping you mature in your faith.

A. You will Meet Trials

Everyone experiences trials. If you are experiencing a trial it's not necessarily the result of sin you committed.

B. Respond in Joy Because of What the Trials Do

Respond in joy as you are experiencing trials because we can mature spiritually in the process.

C. The Goal

The goal is that we become more like Jesus.

D. Other Passages

Romans 5:1-5 has the same theme of persevering in suffering can produce character and hope. The problem of pain is a significant question: How can a good and powerful God allow suffering?

E. Resources

A Grace Disguised by Jerry Sittser, Misty Our Momentary Child by Carol Gift Page, When God Interrupts by Craig Barnes, The Problem of Pain by C. S. Lewis

IV. WHAT IS JUSTICE?

Justice must be defined by what God does. Our perspective as humans is limited, so by our standards, some of the things God does or allows seem unjust.

V. TEMPTATION AND SIN

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. (James 1:12-15)

A. The Necessity of Persevering Under Temptation

When you stand the test and persevere, you will receive the crown of life.

B. The Source of Temptation

The source of temptation is not God.

C. Our Own Desires (James 1:14)

We are tempted to sin because our desires pull us and our passions push us.

D. Friendship with the World (James 4:1-4)

Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself to be an enemy of God.

E. Solutions to Sin and Temptation

There is a promised blessing if you resist and endure temptation. Don't be friends with the world. There is a battle going on inside of us. God is on our side. Humble yourself and draw near to God.

Temptation is not sin. It's how you choose to respond to temptation that determines if you sin or not.

VI. THE TONGUE

A. James 1:26

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

B. James 3:1-12

The tongue is powerful. The consequences of what you say can be destructive.

C. How Can the Tongue Be So Powerful?

What you say shows who you really are. Comments that you make to others and about others can be encouraging or destructive.

9. Reading James brings up questions about whether people we know are truly saved, since even though they profess to be Christians, their works do not match up. It was argued in the lecture that rather than trying to figure out if someone is truly a Christian, we should do something about it. Do you know any such people? What is God calling you to do, specifically?

10. If someone asked you why the immutability of God mattered, what would you say?

27

Peter and Jude

I. 1 PETER

A. Introduction

1. Authorship and Date

Written in the 60's by the apostle Peter, possibly with the help of a secretary.

2. Themes

Encouragement to persevere and be faithful when you are experiencing suffering as a result of your faith. Look forward to the return of Jesus in the future.

B. Salutation (1 Pet. 1:1-2)

If you are a believer, you are temporarily in the world but your citizenship is in heaven.

C. Basic Idea Summarized (1 Pet. 1:3-9)

We are exiles because God has caused us to be born again. We have a living hope, we have an inheritance, and we must live out our lives in holiness and obedience.

D. Fact of Suffering (1 Pet. 1:6-7)

Sometimes you suffer because you live in a sinful world and sometimes because someone persecutes you because of your faith.

1. Perspective: Suffering is Only for a “Little While”

Suffering is painful when you are experiencing it, but it is only for a short time when you compare it to eternity.

2. Remember What Suffering Accomplishes

When you persevere, God commends you, it produces character and hope and you become more like Christ.

3. Present Faithfulness and Future Orientation Combined

We love God even though we haven't seen him and as a result, God has saved us.

4. Motivations for Godly Living

You should be like Jesus, God judges impartially based on your deeds, Jesus paid a high cost to redeem you.

E. Other Themes in 1 Peter

1. The Priesthood of All Believers

God invites us directly into his presence.

2. Be Prepared to Make a Defense

When people ask you about the hope that you have in God, be ready to explain it to them.

II. 2 PETER

A. Authorship

1. Written by the Apostle Peter

2. The Relationship Between 2 Peter and Jude

Both deal with a situation involving false teachers, so it's likely that Jude used what was relevant from 2 Peter as part of his letter.

B. Important Verses in 2 Peter

1. 2 Peter 1:20-21

"No prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." Also 2 Peter 3:16 and 2 Peter 3:8.

III. JUDE

A. Introduction

Probably a brother of Jesus. Written in the late 60's.

B. Historical Situation (Jude 3-4)

1. "Contend"

Jude is calling his audience to fight aggressively for the faith.

2. "Faith"

Faith refers to our personal faith in Jesus, and also to describe the set of core beliefs that define who we are as believers.

3. "Once for All Delivered to The Saints"

By the time Jude was written, the basic teaching of who Jesus is and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus is set.

4. "Certain People Have Snuck in"

The false teachers became leaders in the church. They were devoid of the Spirit.

C. Description, Condemnation, and Solution to False Teachers (Jude 5-23)

You must be faithful in your walk with God, because if you turn away, you will be punished.

1. Don't Be Surprised (Jude 17-19)

No matter how well your church seems to be doing, don't be surprised with ungodly people come in and try to cause divisions.

2. Devote Yourself to Your Own Spiritual Growth (Jude 20-21)

You need to be growing spiritually so that you can deal with false teachers when they come.

3. Fight for The Faith (Jude 22-23)

Be ready to deal with people who are doubting their faith, those who might be almost convinced to follow false teaching, and the false teachers themselves.

D. Doxology (24-25)

The power to deal with false teachers and the situations they cause comes from, "...him who is able to keep you from stumbling."

10. Imagine talking to someone who believes that it was only in church councils in later centuries that the Scriptural canon was developed, and therefore they may have gotten it wrong. What do 2 Pet. 3:16 and Jude 3 each contribute to the discussion?

28

John's Letters

I. INTRODUCTION TO JOHN'S LETTERS

A. Author and Date

Written in the late first century by the Apostle John that also wrote the Gospel of John.

B. False Teaching of Pre-Gnosticism

A belief in dualism which teaches that there are the two separate realms of the material and the spiritual. Material is evil and spiritual is good. Their goal is to leave the material world and move into a spiritual existence.

C. John's Answer to Gnosticism

Jesus is fully human as well as God, it's important to love your brother, as we live out our lives and grow in love and obedience, we have assurance that we are in relationship with God.

II. 1 JOHN

A. John Asserts His Authority (1 John 1:1-4)

John is writing this letter based on his relationship to God and his personal experience of physically being with Jesus.

B. Role of On-Going Sin in the Life of the Believer (1 John 1:5-2:6)

The message of the false teachers was to sin all you want and God will forgive you.

1. Biblical Dualism

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in the darkness, we lie. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

2. The Exegetical Issue of Strong Language

John pictures the world as black and white to make an important point about the false teachers, but he also admits there is gray.

3. Assurance (1 John 2:1-6)

a) Assurance is Based in Forgiveness (1 John 2:1-2)

Part of your assurance that you are a Christian is that when you do sin, you will be forgiven if you ask.

b) Assurance is Contained in Our Obedience (1 John 2:3-6)

If you are in relationship with God, the way you live will change.

c) Assurance Through the Inner Witness of the Holy Spirit

Part of the function of the Holy Spirit is that he is in our lives and subjectively internally confirming that we are his children.

d) True Belief

There is a direct relationship between salvation and sanctification.

4. Command to Love (1 John 2:7-17)

a) The Same Commandment that Jesus Taught

Jesus commanded us to love one another.

b) Love versus Hate of a Brother

It matters how we relate to each other.

c) What is Love?

As you look at the effects of God's love, you can come to a better understanding of what love is.

d) Loving God versus Loving the World

What you think about, how you spend your money and how you use your time are indications of what you think is important.

5. Antichrists (1 John 2:18-27)

a) Lack of Perseverance Shows They Are Not Christians

Since they left, they may not have been believers in the first place.

b) They Deny the Reality of the Incarnation

Jesus was both fully God and fully human.

Group Questions

1. One of the primary things John is confronting in 1 John is the idea that it doesn't matter how we live our lives, and that we can sin all we want and God will forgive us. What are the primary reasons that drive people to think this way? Do you tend to fall into any of these traps? What are the best ways to convince and motivate someone (ourselves and others) that it does matter?

29

Revelation

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Resources

New International Commentary on the New Testament by Robert Mounce, What are We Waiting For by Robert Mounce, Breaking the Code to Understanding the Book of Revelation by Bruce Metzger

B. Author and Date

Written in the mid 90's by the Apostle John

C. Apocalyptic Genre

Apocalyptic literature deals with the end times using symbolic language. A common theme is the fight of good versus evil.

D. Three Key Questions for Interpretation

1. Symbolism: Metaphorical or Literal?

The pictures that John paints in the Book of Revelation are symbols, but they are symbols of real things.

2. Relationship of the Three Cycles: Linear or Cyclical?

It's possible that John is using all three cycles as a description of the same series of events because at the end of each of them it sounds like final judgment.

3. What is the Central Theme?

It's going to get worse, God is going to win, so be faithful.

II. LETTERS TO THE CHURCHES (REV. 2:1-3:7)

These are real churches and God has an individual message for each one.

A. Vision of the Future

Revelation is not specific about the time frame referred to by, "After this," in 4:1.

1. Preterism

All the events in the book of Revelation, including the return of Jesus, were fulfilled by a.d. 70 when the Roman army destroyed the temple in Jerusalem

2. Church Historical School

The events in 4:2 up to the time of Christ refer to historical events stretching over a 2,000 year period.

3. Futurism

There is a huge time gap between the end of chapter 3 and the beginning of chapter 4 and everything is in the future. Dispensationalists fit in this group.

4. Middle Position

Most of the prophecies were fulfilled by a.d. 70, but prophecies often have multiple fulfillments that go in cycles. There will be an ultimate fulfillment with an Antichrist that is worse than anything we have seen. Events will grow in intensity and there will be an end of time.

III. THRONE ROOM SCENE (REV. 4-5)

The imagery is meant to describe the holiness, grandeur, majesty and power and everything that is God's.

IV. CYCLE #1: SEVEN SEALS AND INTERLUDE (REV. 6-7)

The scroll can't be opened until all seven seals are broken. At the end you have judgment, God's salvation and people living with God with the Lamb in their midst.

V. CYCLE #2: SEVEN TRUMPETS AND INTERLUDE (REV. 8-11)

Six trumpets sound, there is an interlude, then the seventh trumpet sounds and there is judgment.

VI. THE DRAGON AND THE TWO BEASTS (REV. 12-14)

A. The Birth of Jesus (Rev. 12:1-6)

Jesus is born, Satan tries to destroy him, but Jesus is caught up to God and his throne.

B. Michael and the Dragon (Rev. 12:7-17)

Satan's defeat was before Adam and Eve. John is doing the best he can to record the vision he is experiencing.

C. The First Beast from the Seas (Rev. 13:1-10)

John wants to encourage believers to persevere even though the beast looks frightening.

D. The Second Beast (The False Prophet) (Rev. 13:1-10)

Revelation describes the Antichrist as a human being that had a mortal wound but did not die, and will likely claim to be God. Satan will work miracles through him.

VII. THE VIEW FROM HEAVEN (REV. 14)

A call for endurance of the saints and an encouragement to be faithful even though you are experiencing persecution.

VIII. CYCLE #3: SEVEN BOWLS AND JUDGMENT (REV. 15-28)

The third cycle of seven. Even after these events, people don't repent.

IX. FINAL VICTORY (REV. 19:1-20:10)

A. Hallelujah, Marriage, and Judgment (Rev. 19)

Marriage supper of the marriage between the bride, which is all believers, and the Lamb, which is Jesus. Also you have the judgment of other people.

B. The Millennium (Rev. 20:1-10)

Three positions to explain the period of the millennium are post-millennialism, pre-millennialism and amillennialism.

30

Annotated Statement of Faith

I. ARTICLE ONE: SCRIPTURE

The Bible is the infallible word of God, the supreme rule for faith and practice.¹

The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament² came

1 Infallibility – Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him (Prov 30:5). Your word is truth (John 17:17). Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35). For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished (Matt 5:18). The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ (Gal 3:16). And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual (1 Cor 2:13). But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you (John 14:26). When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you (John 16:13-14).

2 Canonicity – There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures (2 Pet 3:16). Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this

from the very mouth of God¹ and are without error in the originals, faithfully preserved through the centuries. Scripture is therefore the unique and supreme guide for all it affirms, including both belief and behavior.²

The teachings of the Bible are sufficient for salvation and sanctification.³ While there are questions of meaning and application over which we may agree to disagree, there is nothing for which we are responsible to God in terms of our salvation and sanctification that is not expressed in Scripture, either in precept or principle.

From these convictions flow the following articles of faith.

book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book (Rev 22:18-19).

1 Inspiration – Lectures 1-2 – All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17). For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:21).

2 Plenary inspiration – All Scripture is breathed out by God (2 Tim 3:16). For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account (Heb 4:12-13).

3 Sufficiency of Scripture – All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17).

II. ARTICLE TWO: TRINITY

There is one God,⁴ infinitely perfect,⁵ without change,⁶ creator of all yet not created,⁷ distinct from His creation yet everywhere present,⁸ perfectly balanced in all His attributes,⁹ omniscient over all time,¹⁰ wholly sovereign.¹¹ He alone is the

4 Monotheism – Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one (Deut 6:4). You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth (Exod 20:4). For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim 2:5).

5 Perfection –

6 Immutability – The Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change (James 1:17). Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb 13:8). Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end (Ps 102:25-27).

7 Creation – All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3). For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him (Col 1:16).

8 Omnipresence –

9

10 Omniscience –

11 Sovereignty – For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose” (Isa 46:9-10). I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted (Job 42:2). Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases (Ps 115:3). And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers Rom 8:28-29). In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will (Eph 1:11).

sole object of worship.¹

God exists eternally in three persons—Father, Son, Holy Spirit—equal in essence and divine perfection, all three uncreated, executing distinct but harmonious offices.²

III. ARTICLE THREE: GOD THE FATHER

God the Father is an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. He concerns himself mercifully in the affairs of his creation, hearing and answering prayers, saving from sin all who come to him through Jesus Christ. All life is to be lived ultimately for his glory.

1 Worship – You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments (Exod 20:3-6).

2 Trinity – Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19). The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all (2 Cor 13:14). Eph 1:3-14.

IV. ARTICLE FOUR: GOD THE SON

God the Son is fully God³ and fully human,⁴ without confusion

3 Divinity – John 1:1-19, 34; 10:30; Mark 1:1; 2:10; Col 1:15-20 – These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20:31). In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:1-3). No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known (John 1:18). This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God (John 5:18). Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? (John 14:9). Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name "Immanuel" (which means, God with us) (Matt 1:23). No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Matt 11:27). I and the Father are one (John 10:30). Whoever sees me sees him who sent me (John 12:45). To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen (Rom 9:5). He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation (Col 1:15). For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily (Col 2:9). Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13). He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power (Heb 1:3). But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom" (Heb 1:8). Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet 1:1). I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Rev 22:13).

4 Humanity, Incarnation – Matt 1:18-25; John 1:14 – And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy – the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21). But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified (Heb 10:12-14). For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the

or mixture, the unique and only Son.¹ He existed before time,² was conceived by the Holy Spirit,³ born of the virgin Mary,⁴ lived a sinless life,⁵ died on the cross as the sacrifice for our sins,⁶ was physically raised from the dead as prophesied,⁷ ascended into heaven,⁸ and is now exalted,⁹ sitting at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for the saints as the sole

voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God (1 Thess 4:16). Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:9-11). By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already (1 John 4:2-3).

1 Uniqueness – Mark 1:11 (Psalm 2:7); John 1:18 – You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased (Mark 1:11). No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known (John 1:18).

2 Pre-existence – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1).

3 Son of God – Matt 1:20-23.

4 Virgin birth – Matt 1:20-23.

5 Sinlessness – For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin (Heb 4:15). For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh (Rom 8:3).

6 Atonement – For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

7 Mark 16:1-8; kerygma (Acts 2:22-32).

8 Ascension – And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight (Acts 1:9).

9 Exaltation – Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:9-11). If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Rom 10:9).

mediator.¹⁰ He will return to earth,¹¹ and ultimately every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.¹²

V. ARTICLE FIVE: GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

God the Spirit is sent to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.¹³ He fully indwells every true believer¹⁴ as a guarantee of his inheritance,¹⁵ guides and empowers them,¹⁶ gifts them for ministry,¹⁷ interceding in

10 Intercession – For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim 2:5).

11 Return – see Article Ten: Eschatology

12 Lordship – Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:9-11). If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Rom 10:9).

13 But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged (John 16:7-11).

14 Indwelling – Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing (Acts 2:33).

15 Guarantor – In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory (Eph 1:13-14).

16 Guide –

17 1 Cor 12-14; Rom 12:3-8; Eph 4:11-12.

accordance with the will of God,¹ witnessing to Jesus.²

VI. ARTICLE SIX: ANTHROPOLOGY (DOCTRINE OF MAN)

Adam and Eve were both created in the image of God, Adam from the dust of the ground and Eve from his side.³ They disobeyed God and died, spiritually and physically.⁴ Therefore, all people are objects of wrath,⁵ sinners by nature

1 Intercession – In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will (Rom 8:26-27).

2 But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me (John 15:26).

3 Creation – So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Gen 1:27). The LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature (Gen 2:7). So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man (Gen 2:20-21).

4 Death – And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Gen 2:16-17). So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate (Gen 3:6).

5 Hamartiology – And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved (Eph 2:1-3). For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all

and by choice.⁶ They are dead in their sins and incapable of pleasing God.⁷ Without the direct intervention of God, they will live separated from God, die in their sins, and receive the condemnation that their sin deserves.⁸

VII. ARTICLE SEVEN: SOTERIOLOGY (DOCTRINE OF SALVATION)

Salvation from sin and access to God is available only through

ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth (Rom 1:18). What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory (Rom 9:22-23).

6 Hamartiology – Rom 3:9-20 – If, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous (Rom 5:17-19). For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 6:23). All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). And you were dead in the trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1). God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom 5:8).

7 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom 8:8). And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind (Eph 2:1-3).

8 Condemnation – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 6:23). 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 set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom 8:5-8).

the work of Christ on the cross,¹ given by God's grace, mercy, and love,² received solely by faith³ in Jesus Christ.⁴ In conversion, the believer is drawn by God to Himself,⁵

1 Sufficiency of the Atonement – Mark 15:33-41; Isa 52:13-53:12 – “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29). Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree” (Gal 3:13). For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21). In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (Eph 1:7). God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom 5:8).

2 God as Savior – Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 – But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved– and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast (Eph 2:4-9).

3 Salvation by faith – Rom 3:21-25; Gal 2:15-4:7 – For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast (Eph 2:8-9). For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith” (Rom 1:16-17). Who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began (2 Tim 1:9). The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all ... are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom 3:22,24). Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied (Matt 5:3-6). And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him (Heb 11:6). Also Rom 4; Heb 10:19-11:40.

4 Kerygma – Acts 2:22-36 –

5 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him (John

repents and turns from his sins,⁶ is redeemed,⁷ declared wholly righteous,⁸ born again,⁹ made alive in Christ as a new creature,¹⁰ reconciled to God,¹¹ becomes a child of God,¹² and is

6:44).

6 Repentance – Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

7 Redemption – And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev 5:9).

8 Justification – For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith” (Rom 1:16-17). But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus (Rom 3:21-26).

9 Regeneration – Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.... Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:3, 5).

10 New creation – Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (2 Cor 5:17). Also Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:9.

11 Reconciliation – For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Rom 5:10).

12 Children of God – But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12). See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are (1 John 3:1). The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him (Rom 8:16-17). See what kind of love the

filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit¹ through whom he is empowered for a life of obedience.² The cross is sufficient to cover the sins of all who believe.³ Ultimately, it is only the elect who believe.⁴

Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:1-2).

1 Holy Spirit – And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.... The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him (Rom 8:14,16-17).

2 Sanctification – see Article Seven: Sanctification.

3 Sufficiency – If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous (Rom 5:17-19).

4 Election – Rom 9:6-29 – For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified (Rom 8:29-30). He chose us in him before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4). All who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain (Rev 13:8). You do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand (John 10:26-29). As many as were appointed to eternal life believed (Acts 13:48).

VIII. ARTICLE EIGHT: SANCTIFICATION (DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS)

God's will for every believer is his sanctification.⁵ It is the necessary⁶ and certain⁷ fruit of salvation, yet not meritorious; it is God alone who saves.⁸ Through the work of the Spirit, saints are called and enabled to live lives of holiness,⁹ "in" but not "of" the world,¹⁰ fully dedicated disciples of Jesus

5 Rom 6 – For this is the will of God, your sanctification (1 Thess 4:3). What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? (Rom 6:1-2). What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? (Rom 6:15-16).

6 Necessity – Rom 6, Jas 1:19-25; 2:14-26; – Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked (1 John 2:4-6). Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord (Heb 12:14).

7 Transformation –

8 See Article Six.

9 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure (Phil 2:12-13). For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me (Col 1:29). Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen (Heb 13:20-21).

10 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world (John 17:15-16).

Christ,¹ persevering to the end.² Disciples are declared to be sanctified through the work of Christ³ and are also called to become sanctified in the experiences of life.⁴ The disciple's life will be characterized, among many,⁵ by battle with sin,⁶

1 Lordship – Mark 8:34-38; 9:33-37; Matt 5:8; 6:19-24 – Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matt 28:19-20).

2 Perseverance – warning passages in Hebrews (3-4; 5:11-6:20; 10:26-31) – But the one who endures to the end will be saved (Matt 24:13). For we share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end (Heb 3:14). And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister (Col 1:21-23). The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him (Rom 8:16-17). And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done (Rev 20:12). 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 it might become plain that they all are not of us (1 John 2:19). Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.... The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels (Rev 2:10-11; 3:5). Also discussion of the Holy Spirit as our guarantor.

3 Positional sanctification –

4 Experiential sanctification –

5 Rom 12; Gal 5:16-6:10; Eph 4-6; Phil 4:4-9; Col 3; 1 Thess 4:1-12; 5:14-22.

6 1 John 1:5-2:6; Rom 7 –

repentance,⁷ sexual purity,⁸ gracious speech,⁹ prayer,¹⁰

7 Repentance – If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:6-9).

8 Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to live and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you (1 Thess 4:1-8). But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God (Eph 5:3,5). Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor 6:14-18).

9 Tongue – James 3:1-12 – Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear (Eph 4:29). Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving (Eph 5:4). Do all things without grumbling or questioning (Phil 2:14). If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless (Jas 1:26).

10 Matt 6:7-15; James 5:13-20 –

suffering,¹ persecution,² being different from the world,³ living

1 Suffering – Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rom 5:2-5). In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Pet 1:6-7). But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed (1 Pet 3:14). But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed (1 Pet 4:13). Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name (1 Pet 4:16). And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brothers (Rom 8:28-29). For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us (Rom 8:18). Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (Jas 1:2-4).

2 Persecution – Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you (Matt 5:10-12). Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (2 Tim 3:12). Also Heb 12:3-17.

3 Different – You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven (Matt 5:13-16). I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Rom 12:1-2). Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord (2 Cor 6:17). For they

for the glory of God.⁴ Growth toward holiness brings with it assurance of salvation⁵ and a desire to share the gospel with sinners.⁶

themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come (1 Thess 9-10).

4 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory (Rom 9:22-23).

5 Assurance – My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked (1 John 2:1-6). By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother (1 John 3:10). We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death (1 John 3:14). Whoever keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us (1 John 3:24). And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14). The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him (Rom 8:16-17). Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them (Heb 7:25). Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water (Heb 10:19-22). Also Rom 9:15-24.

6 Evangelism – In your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you (1 Pet 3:15).

IX. ARTICLE NINE: ECCLESIOLOGY (DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH)

The church consists of all true disciples of Jesus Christ.¹ All things exist under the supremacy of Christ, and therefore Christ and Christ alone is the head of the church.² The local expression of the church is comprised of disciples gifted for the work of building up the body of Christ,³ living in unity,⁴ bound together by love.⁵ While different local expressions may have different emphases, all are commanded to make disciples, which includes both evangelism and teaching obedience to all that Jesus taught.⁶ The church is to be committed to the reading of Scripture, the exhortation to

1 Body of Christ –

2 Headship of Christ – And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all (Eph 1:22-23). Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matt 28:19-20).

3 Spiritual gifts – To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good (1 Cor 12:7).

4 Unity – I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them (John 17:20-26). Also Phil 1:27-2:11

5 Love – 1 John 2:7-17.

6 Balance – Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matt 28:19-20).

obedience, and teaching of the doctrinal truths of Scripture,⁷ as well as to all that is necessary for the edification of the body, including worship, singing, prayer, and service, all to the glory of God.⁸

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be valued and observed.⁹ They are visible signs representing spiritual truths; they do not accomplish salvation.¹⁰ Baptism is the washing of the believer, signifying that in conversion he has died to his old life and has been raised with Christ into a newness of life in which the power of sin is broken.¹¹ The Lord's Supper is the present proclamation of Christ's atoning death, and looks forward to his return.¹²

7 Worship – Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching (1 Tim 4:13).

8 Worship – Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart (Eph 5:19). Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God (Col 3:16). So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31).

9 Valued – And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:18-20). And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

10 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Pet 3:21).

11 Baptism – Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (Rom 6:3-4). Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Pet 3:21).

12 Lord's Supper – Mark 14:12-25; 1 Cor 11:17-34 – For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he

X. ARTICLE TEN: ESCHATOLOGY (DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS)

Jesus will return—personally, visibly to all, suddenly¹—and all disciples living and dead will be bodily caught up to meet Him.² At the final judgment, the unrepentant will be raised to the resurrection of judgment and everlasting punishment in hell.³ Believers, while already having passed from darkness to light,⁴ will be raised⁵ to the resurrection of life,⁶ and will enjoy the everlasting, personal presence of God in His heavenly kingdom.⁷ God’s plan of creation, redemption, and

comes (1 Cor 11:26).

1 Return – Mark 13; Matt 24-25; 1 Thess 4:13-5:11; 2 Thess 2:1-12; Revelation –

2 Rapture – For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord (1 Thess 4:16-17).

3 Final judgment of Wicked – Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:11-15).

4 Realized eschatology –

5 Resurrection – 1 Cor 15; 2 Cor 5:1-10 –

6 Rev 19-22 –

7 Final judgment of Righteous – And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away” (Rev 21:3-4).

glorification will be complete.⁸

This is the hope for which we long, which helps to motivate us now toward godly living, and which propels us to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with a lost and dying world.

8 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified (Rom 8:30).