

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE



RECAP

- ▶ Carl F.H. Henry >> The Gospel is only Good News when it gets there in time.
- ▶ Max Lucado >> Questions can make hermits out of us, driving us into hiding. Yet the cave has no answers. Christ distributes courage through community; he dissipates doubts through fellowship. He never deposits all knowledge in one person but distributes pieces of the jigsaw puzzle to many. When you interlock your understanding with mine, and we share our discoveries, when we mix, mingle, confess and pray, Christ speaks.

ROMANS

Genre: Epistle • Written by Paul around 57 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Righteousness**
- ▶ Paul shows how Jesus created the new **covenant** family of Abraham through his death & resurrection and the sending of the Spirit.
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Romans 1:16-17 | 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. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."
- ▶ Paul wrote the letter to the church in Rome near the end of his third missionary journey (around 57-58 AD). Paul wanted to take the Gospel to Rome and help the church there, but God had other plans. Instead of Paul going to Rome on his own, he went in Roman **chains**.
- ▶ The words "righteousness," "faith," "law," "all" and "sin" all appear at least **60** times in the 16 chapters of Romans.
- ▶ Outline
 - ▶ Chapters 1-3 >> All have sinned
 - ▶ Chapters 4-7 >> Peace with God through faith
 - ▶ Chapter 8 >> Eternal Assurance
 - ▶ Chapters 9-11 >> What about Israel?
 - ▶ Chapters 12-16 >> Our response

EPHESIANS

Genre: Epistle • Written by Paul around 60-61 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Unity**
- ▶ Paul writes to the church at Ephesus about how to **walk** in grace, peace, and love.

- ▶ The letter to the church in Ephesus is one of four of Paul's "**Prison** Epistles." Along with Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon, this letter was written by the apostle while he was a Roman prisoner in Rome.
- ▶ Ephesians 1:3-14 is one ongoing sentence in the Greek, being a prayer of thanksgiving to God for all that He has done for us "**in Christ.**" This phrase is an expression Paul uses over 200 times in his epistles and is found over 30 times in Ephesians.
- ▶ Paul desired for the church in Ephesus to experience **doctrinal** unity in the midst of their **ethnic** diversity.

COLOSSIANS

Genre: Epistle • Written by Paul between 60-61 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Preeminence**
- ▶ Paul encourages the Colossian Christians to see Jesus as the **center** of all reality, so they don't give in to pressure from false teachers
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Colossians 2:6 | Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,
- ▶ At the time of writing the letter, Paul had not been to Colossae. The church was established by a **leader** named Epaphras. The letter was sent from Rome to Colossae by Tychicus and Onesimus (the subject of Paul's letter to Philemon).
- ▶ While the letter to the Ephesians focuses on the Body (the Church), Colossians focuses on the **Head** (Jesus Christ).

PHILEMON

Genre: Epistle • Written by Paul around 60-61 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Reconciliation**
- ▶ The gospel is powerful to reconcile deeply (and understandably) **estranged** people.
- ▶ Philemon was a resident of Colossae (vv. 1-2), someone who was **converted** through Paul's ministry (v. 19), had a large house where the church met (v. 2), and owned slaves, one of them being Onesimus.
- ▶ Onesimus was a slave who had **runaway** from his master, fled to Rome, and was converted to Christ through Paul's ministry.



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