

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE



RECAP

- ▶ One of the big changes between the Old & New Testaments is in what God is doing with the movement of His people:
 - ▶ In the Old Testament, God was moving the people of Israel towards a specific **place** (Promised Land) so that they could build a **building** (Temple) that represented the presence of God on earth.
 - ▶ In the New Testament, God is moving the church towards the **nations** so that they can build a **people** who carry the presence of God with them throughout the earth.
- ▶ When the Messiah came, this shift happened & it is chronicled throughout the Gospels >> Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21

ACTS

Genre: History • Written by Luke around 62 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Power**
- ▶ Jesus sends the **Holy Spirit** to empower His disciples as they carry the Good News of His kingdom to the nations of the world.
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Acts 1:8 | But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
- ▶ Acts is an extremely important book that shows what the death of Jesus **accomplished**. The unleashing of the Spirit to indwell believers so that they can advance His kingdom, fulfilling the prayer of Jesus from Matthew 6:10.
- ▶ The question "What must I do to be **saved**" is asked in the book of Acts (16:30). Luke then records 10 conversion examples: Acts 2:37-41; 8:12-13, 26-40; 9:3-18; 10:34-48; 16:11-15, 25-34; 13:8; 18:8).

JAMES

Genre: Epistle • Written by James between 49-50 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Trials**
- ▶ James combines the wisdom of his brother Jesus with the wisdom from the book of **Proverbs** in his own challenging call to live a life wholly devoted to God.
- ▶ Summary Verse >> James 1:22 | But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

- ▶ James was influenced greatly by his brother Jesus' **Sermon on the Mount**, with about 15 indirect references contained within this book. Additionally, due to the short, pithy truths James writes, this epistle is called the "Proverbs of the New Testament."

GALATIANS

Genre: Epistle • Written by Paul between 53-56 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Justification**
- ▶ Paul challenges the Galatian Christians to stop allowing controversial Torah observances to **divide** their church's congregation.
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Galatians 5:1 | For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.
- ▶ Paul's response is to put forward a theological treatise that some call the Christian's "Declaration of Independence" from works-based **religion**. In it, he argues that Christ has set us free from the tyrannical law of the flesh, sin, & death. The result is that we are enabled by the Spirit to live in freedom for the glory of God.
- ▶ Paul reveals his focus through word **repetition**. In six chapters, Paul mentions the Law 31 times, the flesh 18 times, the Holy Spirit 15 times, faith 21 times, the promise 10 times, slavery 11 times, & the Cross 6 times.

JUDE

Genre: Epistle • Written by Jude between 66-80 AD

- ▶ God is the God of **Protection**
- ▶ Jude writes a letter encouraging Christians to **contend** for the faith, even though ungodly persons have crept in unnoticed.
- ▶ Summary Verse >> Jude 1:3 | 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.
- ▶ Whereas Paul wrote Galatians to combat **legalism**, Jude wrote to condemn **libertinism** (those using the Gospel as an excuse to sin).



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