

## **NT Survey (Part 2)**

### Pauline Epistles

#### The Letters of the New Testament

- 22 of the 27 books in the New Testament are letters – over 35% of the New Testament.
- Two groups:
  - Pauline epistles (Romans – Philemon)
  - General epistles (Hebrews – Jude)

#### The Pauline Epistles - the letters from Paul:

- Paul wrote 13 New Testament letters.
  - Ordered from longest to shortest.
  - Nine written to churches; four written to individuals.

#### **Romans**

- Written around A.D. 55-57 to Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome.
- Primary themes: The “righteousness of God” and the “gospel of God.”
- Threefold purpose:
  - To instruct the church in the basic doctrines of the Gospel.
  - To show the practical implications of the Gospel.
  - To garner support for expansion of the Gospel to unreached peoples.

#### **1 Corinthians**

- Written from Ephesus around A.D. 55 to a divided church in Corinth.
- Written in response to what had been reported to Paul and a letter that the Corinthians had written to him.
- Primary theme: the “wisdom of the cross.”

#### **2 Corinthians**

- Written around A.D. 56 to a church amidst dissension in Corinth.
- After writing 1 Corinthians, Paul likely visited Corinth and the visit didn't go well. He probably wrote a letter of strong rebuke followed by 2 Corinthians.
- Primary theme: reconciliation in the body of Christ.

#### **Galatians**

- Written around A.D. 49 in response to the Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15).
- Paul is countering Judaizers who are putting regulations on Gentiles to enter the church.
- Paul condemns the false Gospel of faith and works.
  - The false Gospel: Faith + Works = Justification
  - The true Gospel: Faith = Justification + Works
- Note the danger of legalism and the joy of freedom in Christ.

## **Ephesians**

- Written from prison/house arrest in Rome around A.D. 60–61 to church leaders in Ephesus and surrounding areas.
- Overall structure:
  - The Doctrine of the Church (1-3)
  - The Practice of the Church (4-6)
- Mark each time you see the phrase “in Christ” or “with Christ” – 35 times!

## **Philippians**

- Written from prison in Rome around A.D. 61-62 to the church at Philippi (a Roman colony).
- Primary themes: joy and unity in Christ.
- Listen for the heart of a disciple-maker, writing from the persecuted to the persecuted.

## **Colossians**

- Written from Rome around A.D. 60 to a church in Colossae that Epaphras had founded and Paul had never visited.
- Paul is countering Gnostics in Colossae who were denying the deity of Christ.
- Primary theme: The sufficiency of Christ - “Christ is all and in all” (3:11) and we are “made full in Him” (2:10).
- Notice the practical implications of a life that is sustained by Christ alone.

## **1 Thessalonians**

- Written from Corinth around A.D. 50 to a young church in Thessalonica.
- Paul’s fourfold purpose:
  - To encourage new believers.
  - To answer charges against Paul.
  - To explain the second coming of Christ.
  - To warn against idleness.
- Notice the centrality of the word (1:5, 6, 8; 2:2, 4, 8, 9, 13).

## **2 Thessalonians**

- Written from Corinth around A.D. 51 as a follow-up letter to Thessalonica.
- Paul’s threefold purpose:
  - To encourage believers who were facing increasing persecution.
  - To exhort those who were idle to work for the glory of Christ until He comes back!
  - To edify the believers in their pursuit of holiness.
- Note how 18 out of 47 verses deal with the “day of the Lord.”

## 1 Timothy

- Written around A.D. 62-64 to encourage young Timothy as he leads the “big city church” in Ephesus.
- Primary theme: God desires for godly leaders to lead His church.
- Overall structure:
  - Guard the doctrine of the church (1).
  - Guard the worship of the church (2).
  - Guard the leadership of the church (3).
  - Guard the purity of the church (4).
  - Guard the practice of the church (5-6).

## 2 Timothy

- Paul writes this letter, probably his last, around A.D. 65-67 while awaiting his trial and death.
- Paul demonstrates how a Christian martyr should face death.
- Feel the weight of Paul’s concern for Timothy and for the Church.

## Titus

- Written around A.D. 62-64 to Titus, a leader of the church in Crete who had been led to Christ by Paul (2 Cor. 8:23).
- Fourfold purpose:
  - To remind Titus to appoint elders in the church.
  - To warn Titus against false teachers in the church.
  - To instruct Titus how to lead different types of people in the church.
  - To encourage Titus regarding the importance of grace in the church.
- Primary theme: grace leads to godliness (1:4; 2:11ff.; 3:7, 15).

## Philemon

- Written...
  - Around A.D. 60-61 to Philemon, a Christian in Colossae who had come to faith in Christ through Paul.
  - About Onesimus, a slave of Philemon who had come to faith in Christ through Paul.
- Paul writes to...
  - Inform Philemon of Onesimus’ salvation.
  - Ask Philemon to forgive him.
  - Request to visit Philemon.
- Practical Advice for Study...
  - See the picture of Christ as the Redeemer of lost sinners.
  - See the effect of the Gospel on slavery.
  - See how Christ transforms our relationships