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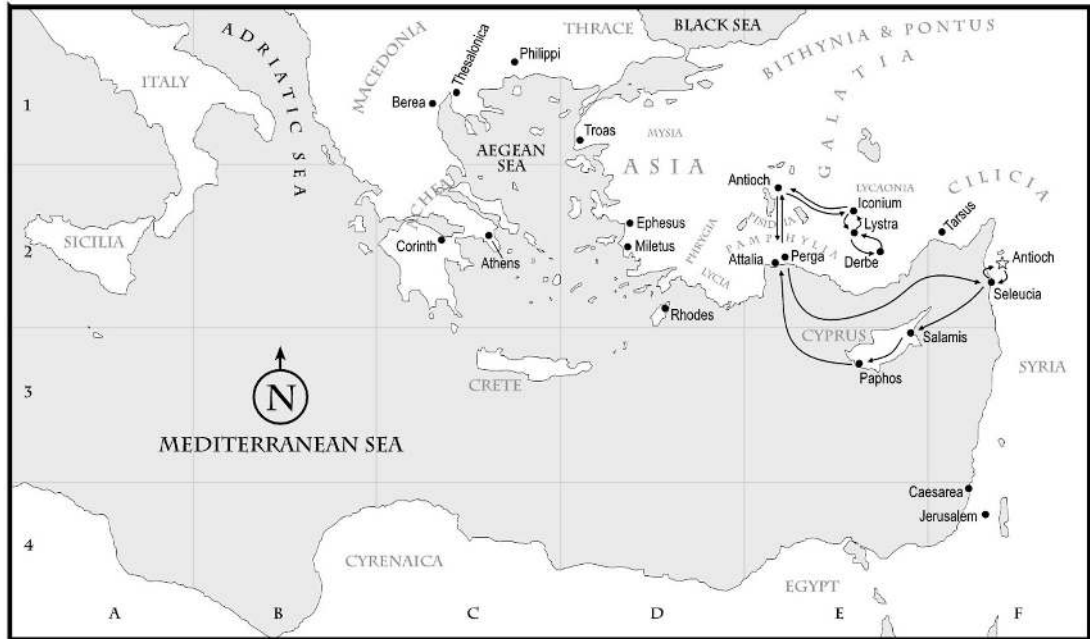
## Session 8

### Those Early Believers

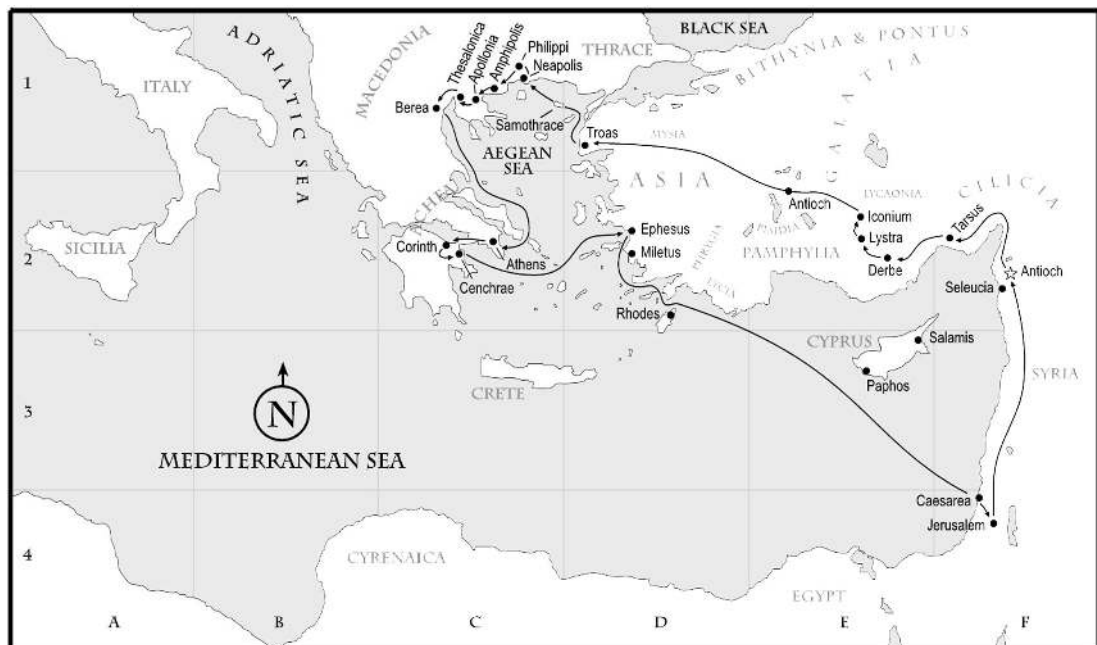
#### The Acts of the Apostles

1. Background
  - A. Author and Recipients
    1. Luke – same as Gospel
    2. Vindicated Christian witness, wherever falsely charged
  - B. Date – Two key dates
2. Theme: The growth and development of the early church
  - A. Who, what, when, why, how and where
  - B. It's place in the New Testament. A vital transition
3. Characteristics
  - A. A model for church life and structure: an evangelistic community
  - B. Two major characters: Peter and Paul
  - C. Two major centers of Christianity: Jerusalem and Antioch
  - D. Systematically organized with great accuracy for details and the Roman world
  - E. Paul's three missionary journeys and then trip to Rome
  - F. Major Sermons in Acts
    1. Peter at Pentecost (2)
    2. Peter in Solomon's Colonnade (3)
    3. Stephen's Defense (7)
    4. Peter at Cornelius' House (10)
    5. Paul at Pisidian Antioch (13)
    6. Paul at the Aeropagus (17)
    7. Paul to the Ephesian elders (19)
    8. Paul Defense before Jews (21-22), Felix (24), Agrippa (26)
4. Contents
  - A. Four sub-themes
    1. The acts of the Holy Spirit
    2. Response to Persecution

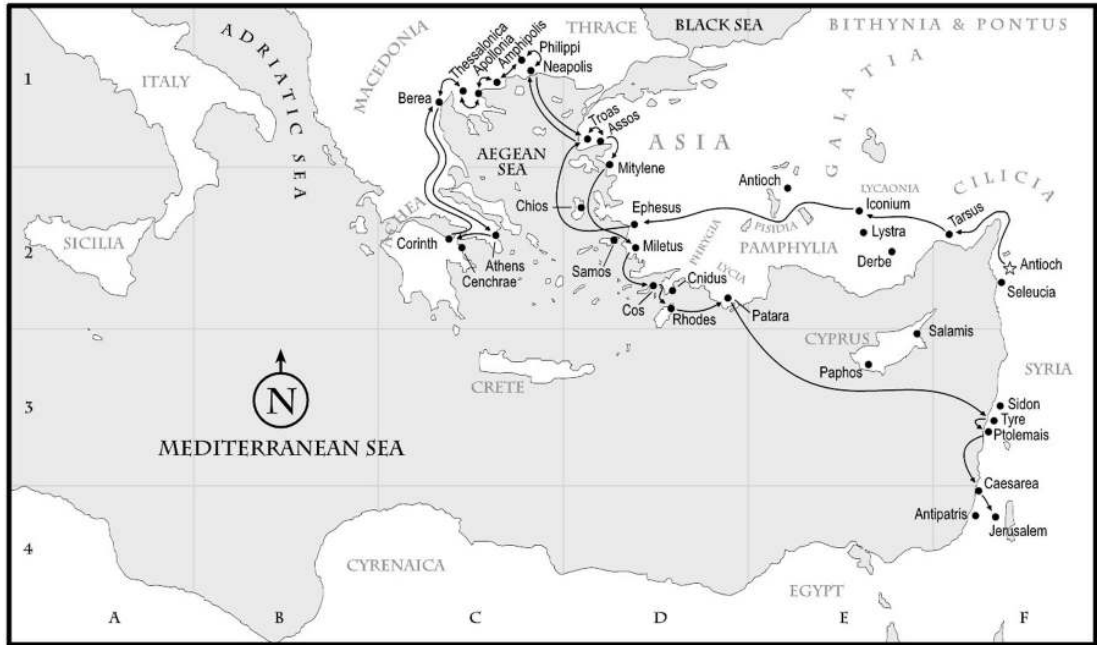
3. Universality of the Gospel
4. The Fullness of Time
- B. Developed in ever-expanding geography (Acts 1:8)
  1. Jerusalem and Judea
  2. Samaria, Gaza, Ceasarea and Antioch
  3. The Ends of the Earth
- C. The Missionary Trips of Paul
  1. The first journey with Barnabas (Acts 13-14)



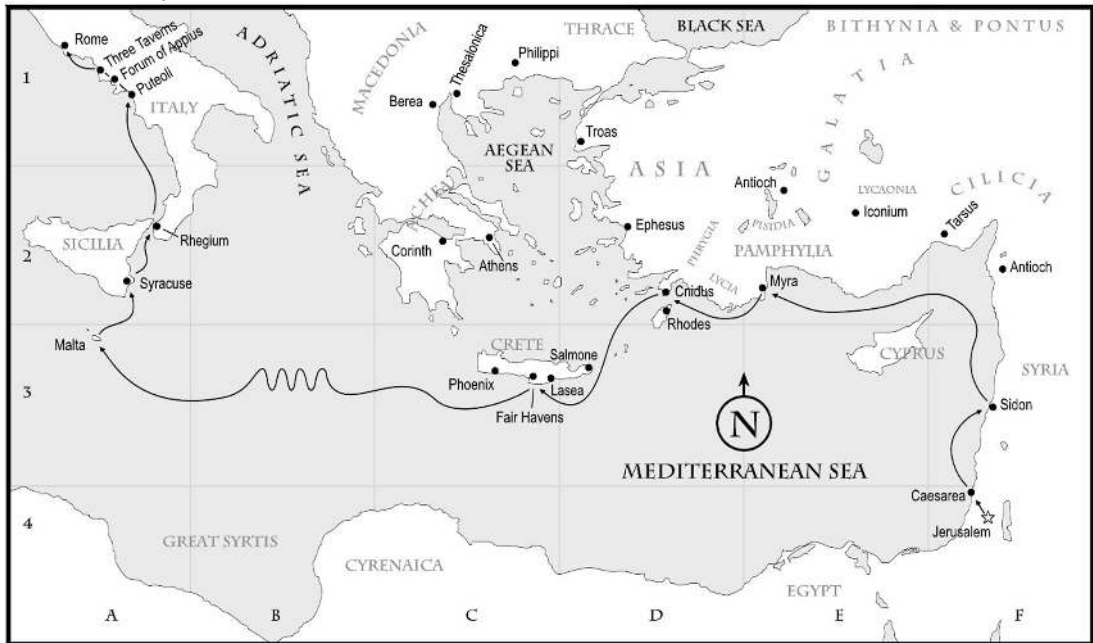
2. The second journey with Silas and Timothy (Acts 16-18:22)



3. The third journey (Acts 18:23-19:21)



4. The final trip to Rome



5. How do you plan for this?

**Church at Beginning of Acts**

120 people  
 Jews  
 Powerless  
 Peter/James  
 Jerusalem

**Church at End of Acts**

Thousands  
 Jews and Gentiles  
 Influential and threatening  
 Paul/Silas & Luke  
 Throughout Mideast, Asia,  
 Europe, Africa

## A Chronology of New Testament Writings

<b>Book</b>	<b>*Date</b>	<b>Location of Recipient(s)</b>	<b>Theme</b>
James	47	Scattered tribes	The Practice of Christianity
Galatians	48-49	Galatia (from Antioch)	Our Freedom in Christ
Matthew	50	Unknown (from Jerusalem)	Jesus is the Messiah
I Thess.	51	Thessalonica (from Corinth)	The Second Coming of Jesus
II Thess.	51	Thessalonica (from Corinth)	Attitudes Toward the Second Coming
I Cor.	55	Corinth (from Ephesus)	Correcting Problems
II Cor.	55	Corinth (from Macedonia)	Persevering in Christ
Romans	57	Rome (from Corinth)	Righteousness that comes from Faith
Luke	59	Unknown (from Rome)	Jesus as the Son of Man
Ephesians	60	Ephesus (from Rome)	The Church as the Body of Christ
Colossians	60	Colosse (from Rome)	Christ is All in All
Philemon	60	Colosse (from Rome)	Restitution in Christ
Philippians	61	Philippi (from Rome)	Unity in Christ
I Timothy	63-65	Ephesus (from Macedonia)	The Importance of Sound Doctrine
Titus	63-65	Crete (from Corinth)	Calling to Personal Purity
Acts	64	Unknown	The History of the Early Church
II Timothy	66-67	Ephesus (from Rome)	Fulfill Your Calling
I Peter	67	Asia (Galatia)	Hope in the Coming Age
II Peter	67	Asia (Galatia)	True Knowledge & False Teaching
Hebrews	68	Unknown	The Superiority of Jesus
Mark	68-69	Rome (from Rome)	Jesus as the Servant of God
Jude	65	Unknown	Oppose False Teaching
John	85	Unknown	To stimulate belief in Jesus
I John	90	Ephesus	That you might know--and love!
II John	90	Ephesus	Truth--receive it, obey it, cherish it
III John	90	Ephesus	True and False Leadership
Revelation	95	Area around Ephesus	The End of the Age

\*Dates and locations are not always exactly known, but the most likely possibility is used primarily to show the books timing as related to other books in the New Testament.

## Session 9

### The Most Dangerous Person in Christianity

1. The danger of the Schofield Bible and subsequent study Bibles
2. Those who don't know they are interpreting
3. Letting Scripture say what it says

4. The less we know about a subject the more overconfident we pretend to be about it

5. Embrace the mystery of the book – 2 Peter 3:16

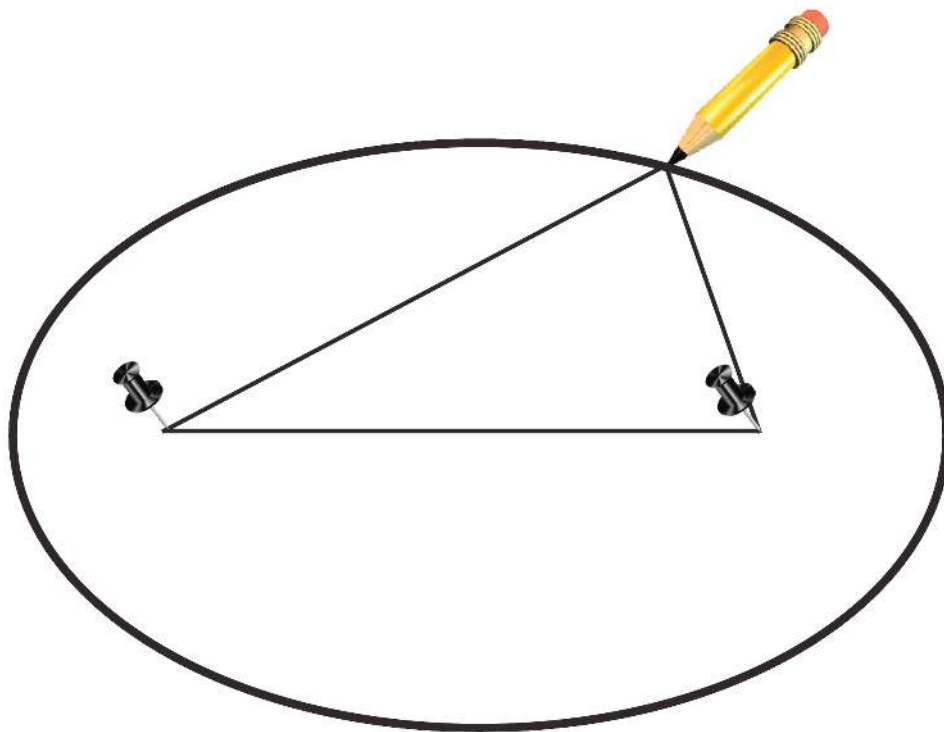
## Session 10

### The Elliptical Playground

Truth is inside a person, not a set of principles, so often two things orbit each other, neither exclusive of the other. The objectivity inside A Relationship -

The playground in which we get to live – elliptical theology

First Amendment example



The boundaries in which God makes himself known and guard against seeing God as the projections of our own best intentions.

- Love and Truth
- Grace and obedience
- God as Abba and God as Judge
- Predestined and Free Will

- Kingdom present – Kingdom future
- Individuality – Unity
- Accountability and Mercy
- God's Activity and Our Participation
- Scripture and Spirit

**The Early Letters**

	<b>Paul</b>	<b>Others</b>
Early Letters	1 & 2 Thessalonians	James
	Galatians	
	1 & 2 Corinthians	
	Romans	
Middle Letters	Ephesians	Hebrews
	Philippians	
	Colossians	
	Philemon	
Later Letters	1 & 2 Timothy	1 & 2 Peter
	Titus other	Jude
		1, 2 & 3 John
		Revelation

**The Book of James**

1. Author: James, the brother of Jesus
  - A. Two other possibilities—both of the original 12 apostles
    1. James the son of Zebedee who died in 44 AD
    2. James the son of Alpheus (Matt 10:3)
  - B. But none as prominent as this James, who could use the title accordingly
    1. Probably the oldest (Matt 13:55) but didn't believe when Jesus was here (John 7:5)
    2. Jesus appeared to him after the resurrection (I Cor 15:7) was numbered among believers in Acts 1:14
    3. Became a leader among the Jerusalem church (Gal 1:19; Acts 15:13)
    4. Reputation as 'camel knees' for his commitment to prayer
  - C. Probably from Jerusalem where he was martyred in 62 AD, by being thrown from the pinnacle of the temple, and being stoned to death thereafter
  
2. Recipient: "to the 12 tribes scattered among the nations"
  - A. Circular letter with wide distribution
  - B. Primarily to Jews, but much application to Gentiles
  - C. Date: Probably the earliest: 47-48 AD
    1. Little church organization at this point
    2. Probably before gospels since references to sermon on the mount carry little verbal agreement with Gospel record
    3. Chasm mentioned between rich and poor did not exist after 66 AD when the Romans trashed Jerusalem
    4. No reference to circumcision
  - C. Theme: The Practice of True Religion
    1. References
      - a. 4:17, If one does not live up to what he knows he sins
      - b. 1:23, not only hearing, but doing

- c. 1:27, to look after orphans and widows, and being unpolluted by the world
- 2. To encourage them in trials, and rebuke for neglect of the transforming power of the gospel
- D. Characteristics
  - 1. Authoritative - almost every other verse is an imperative, yet he addresses them as brethren
  - 2. Very little theological--emphasis is on practical Christianity
  - 3. No personal relationship seems to exist between writer and readers
  - 4. Great similarity to Christ's teaching, especially sermon on the mount
  - 5. Greek style is excellent, comparing to Hebrews and I Peter
  - 6. Large use of illustration especially references to nature
  - 7. Key words: brother, ask, pray, faith, works, sin, tongue, try or tempt, judge

## **The Letters to the Thessalonians**

- 1. Background
  - A. Author and Recipients
    - 1. Paul the Apostle
    - 2. The church in Thessalonica (Acts 17: 1-15)
      - a. His abrupt departure from Thessalonica because of persecution
      - b. Completing his apostolic work by letter- brief, business letters
        - 1. Establishing them in God's kingdom
        - 2. Dealing with problems they faced
  - B. Dates
    - 1. 1 Thessalonians - 50-51 AD, probably the first of Paul's letters
    - 2. 2 Thessalonians - probably within 6 months, since situation almost identical
- 2. **1 Thessalonians**
  - A. Theme: an apostle's encouragement to a young group
    - 1. Encouragement for them in persecution (2:12,4:18)
    - 2. Dealing with criticism against his ministry
    - 3. Instructing recent pagan converts as to how they should conduct themselves. No inherent sense of morality
    - 4. Answer questions concerning the dead in Christ
  - B. Major Characteristics
    - 1. Gentle in tone: a mother caring for her children (2:7)
- 3. **2 Thessalonians**
  - A. Theme: an apostle's encouragement
    - 1. Further instruction on the second coming of Jesus
    - 2. Further instructions on Christian conduct - including a warning to the idle
  - B. Major Characteristics
    - 1. Tone: more direct, terse, reinforcing his previous letter
    - 2. His apostolic concern for them



## The Letter to the Galatians

1. Background: Author and recipients
  - A. Paul the Apostle has never been questioned, with use of a secretary
  - B. Destination
    1. North Galatia - between 53-57
    2. South Galatia (Lystra, Iconium Derbe) - either 48-49 (Pre Jerusalem Counsel) or 51-53 from Antioch or Ephesus
    3. Best Assumption since we know Paul was here twice before (4:13), and earlier date since no reference to Jerusalem Council
    4. Chronology
      - a. Two Visits to Jerusalem Gal 1-2
        1. 3 years after conversion, went to Jerusalem
        2. 14 years later, He went to Jerusalem
      - b. Five Visits to Jerusalem in Acts
      - c. Gal 2:1-10 and Acts 15:1-30
2. Theme – Justification by Faith in Christ (5:1)
  - A. False teachers had moved into Galatian (1:7,5:10,12,6:12-13)
  - B. Some Theological Observations
    1. Revelation vs. Tradition
    2. Negative view of the Law
    3. Moral Freedom Gal 5:13-6:10
    4. The Holy Spirit
    5. Functional Christology
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. Tone: Sharp rebuke (3:1-5, 5:12)
  - B. Next to 2 Corinthians the most biographical, especially 1 – 3 as he validates his apostleship and his illness 4:13
  - C. Versatility in presentation – Scripture, experience, logic, warning, exhortation, allegory
  - D. Only letter of Paul to a group of churches
4. Content : Outline and Contents
  - A. History Gal 1 -2
  - B. Theology Gal 3-4
  - C. Freedom and Transformation Gal 5-6

## The Letters to the Corinthians

1. Both Letters
  - A. Background
    1. Author and Recipients
      - a. The Church at Corinth- Acts 18 – Ministry base for reader to Adrian (1:1)
      - b. Paul, identified in the letter, and early church fathers (95 AD)
      - c. Four Letters
        1. 1<sup>st</sup> letter – 2 Corinthians 5:9
        2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Letter – I Corinthians
        3. 3<sup>rd</sup> letter – 2 Corinthians 2:4

- 4. 4<sup>th</sup> Letter – 2 Corinthians
  - d. The City of Corinth – Port city, 12 major temples- the verb for sexual immorality “to Corinthianize”
- 2. Dates
  - a. Toward the close of his time in Ephesus (16:5-9), around 55 AD
  - b. 2 Corinthians probably written 4 -5 months after I Corinthians
- 3. Common Emphasis in both books
  - a. The nature of the ‘Gospel’
  - b. Authenticating Paul’s apostleship
  - c. Satanic opposition to the Lord’s work
  - d. The need for discipline and judgment for spiritual health of the body

## 2. 1 Corinthians

- A. Theme: Unity in the body of Christ
- B. Major Characteristics
  - 1. Tender concern (4:14-21) for people he loved deeply
  - 2. Direct: Pronoun for ‘you’ is used 146 times
  - 3. Key Terms: discern, spiritual, wisdom, church, authority, love, holy, sanctify
  - 4. Irony (4:8-13)
- C. Contents – a visit from three people (listed in intro)
  - 1. Some problems Paul was concerned about (1-6)
    - a. Division – People focused
    - b. Lawsuits between believers
    - c. Unresolved immorality
  - 2. Some problems the Corinthians had written Paul about (7-13)
    - a. Marriage
    - b. Food offered to idols
    - c. Public worship including spiritual gifts
    - d. The resurrection

## 2. 2 Corinthians

- A. Theme: The motives of true and false ministry
  - 1. To refute the ‘super apostles’
    - a. Probably Judaizers – follow the law, sought unilateral authority
    - b. Sought unilateral spiritual authority and had to undermined Paul’s place to do that
      - 1. Made fun of Paul’s appearance (10:10)
      - 2. Challenged his apostleship (11:5, 12:11-12)
  - 2. An apostle concerned about his flock and dealing with unresolved questions
  - 3. To call them to complete their offering
- B. Major Characteristics
  - 1. The most personal of all his letters, his confidence in their response (7)
  - 2. Most autobiographical
    - a. His sufferings (11:23-29), as an encouragement to others and proof his ministry didn’t come from selfish motives
    - b. His motives (5:14)
    - c. His personality weakness (10:10)
    - d. His thorn in the flesh (12)
    - e. His special revelation (12:3)
  - 3. Key Terms: weakness, strength, grief, peril, tribulation, comfort, boasting, \ truth, ministry, and glory

## The Letter to the Romans

1. Background
  - A. Author and recipients
    1. Paul on his way to Rome with offering (Romans 15:25-26; Acts:18-21)
    2. The church in Rome
  - B. Structure
    1. Introduction 1:1-17
    2. The Gospel and Salvation – our need and provision – 1:18-8:39
    3. The Gospel and the Jewish People – 12:1-15:13
    4. Closing & Personal Greetings – 15:14-16:27
  - C. Theme – The Gospel – a righteousness from God revealed for all who believe (1:16-17)
  - D. Unique Characteristics
    1. Most intense doctrinal and theological writing in the New Testament
      - a. salvation
      - b. justification by faith
      - c. sanctification
      - d. redemption
      - e. ministry of reconciliation
      - f. righteousness
      - g. baptism
      - h. holiness
      - i. freedom from law
      - j. predestination
      - k. glorification
    2. Many Old Testament references – most likely to unify Jewish/Gentile division
      - a. Abraham (4:1-25)
      - b. Adam (5:12-21)
      - c. Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Esau (9:1-15)
      - d. Elijah and the remnant (11:1-4)
      - e. Many quotes from the Old Testament
    3. God's desire for the Jewish Nation (9:1-11:36)
    4. Romans has had a profound and powerful effect on many key individuals in the history of the church, including Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley and William Tyndale.
    5. Primary passages in Romans
      - a. Our helpless condition and need for salvation (1-3)
      - b. Justification by faith, Abraham (4-5)
      - c. Dead to sin, alive to God (6)
      - d. The conflict of the flesh and the spirit (7)
      - e. The work of the Holy Spirit (8)
      - f. God's desire for the Jews (9-11)
      - g. Call to a transformed lifestyle (12)
      - h. The Christian's response to civil authority (13)
      - i. The Christian's response to weaker believers (14)
      - j. Paul's desire to visit and minister in Rome (15)

## **The Middle Letters**

### **Interpretive Key: Reading the Epistles**

Example: Galatians 3:1-5

1. Purpose
    - A. Who is involved?
      1. Author
        - A. Paul's letters, 9 to churches: 4 to individuals
          1. First half or more with indicatives—here's what is true in Christ!
          2. Then takes second part with imperatives—here's how we live in him!
        - B. General Epistles: Hebrews through Jude
      2. Recipients
      3. Secretary, if applicable
      4. Messenger, if applicable
    - B. General Epistles: Hebrews through Jude
  2. Interpretation: What did it mean to original writer and hearers?
    - A. Background -- Cultural Climate
    - B. Context
      1. Immediate
      2. Parallel passages
      3. Author's Intent (example -'scum of the earth' reference in 1 Cor 4:13)
      4. Beware of allegorizing!
    - C. Application: What does it mean today?
    - D. Check - Biblical Context: How does it fit in the story?
- 
2. What does this speak to my life?
    - A. Where does it signal my heart out of bounds?
    - B. How does it inform me to live in him today?
    - C. What does it expose about the ways in which God works?

### **The Prison Epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians**

1. The Prison Epistles - The Context of Paul's Writing
  - A. All four written during some kind of imprisonment or at least house arrest (Eph 3:1, 4:1; Phil 1:7, 13-14; Colossians 4:18, Philemon 1, 9) Three possibilities:
    1. In Caesarea for two years? Acts 23ff - but no inference he was free to preach
    2. In Rome for two years? Acts 28
    3. Some have suggested Ephesus (fought wild beasts, 1 Cor 15:32) though no record of imprisonment there.
  - B. Three are obviously at the same time, given their bearers: Tychichus (Col 4:7, Eph. 6:21) and Onesimus (Colossians 4:17 and Philemon) also Colossians and Ephesians have such similar content and wording that they had to be written at the same time
  - C. Different temper to the Philippian account, Paul is confident of release (1:25), others contain no such hint

- D. Probably the Roman imprisonment, 59-61 AD, the three around the middle and Philippians at its end

## **The Letter to the Ephesians**

1. The Church at Ephesus (Acts 19-20)  
Not writing to address any particular problem, but to expand their understanding of God's goals for his church.
2. Theme – The Church as the body of Christ
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. No personal greetings, perhaps a circular letter
  - B. Equality of Jew and Greek in the body of Christ and unity on matters of faith.
  - C. A developed sense of the trinity
    1. The purpose and will of God
    2. 'in Christ' is used 35 times
    3. The role of the Holy Spirit (1:14, 3:16, 4:30, 5:18, 6:18)
  - D. Two prayers interrupting his unfolding of doctrinal truth (1:15-23;3:14-21)
  - E. Christians in battle against hostile spiritual powers (6:10-17)
4. Relationship with Colossians
  - A. Both stress 'fullness', 'mystery', 'wisdom' and 'knowledge'
  - B. Christ is the unifier and consummator of all things (Head of the Church)
  - C. Both applications speak of putting off the old man and putting on the new, and make practical applications in areas of church, personal and family life.

## **The Letter to the Colossians**

1. The Church at Colosse (Acts 19:10, Col 1:7-8)
  - A. Founded by Epaphras and possibly Timothy (1:1)
  - B. The city and it's relationship to Laodicea and Hierapolis
2. Theme: Christ is all in all! (Christ in you, the hope of glory!)
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. Paul did not found the church. He heard of them by report (1:4) and his face was not familiar to them (2:1). Epaphras founded it (1:7)
  - B. Warmly personal
  - C. Joy and rejoicing major themes, even though he was in prison
  - D. Two major Christological passages (1:13-20, 2:8-15) as well as two minor (1:27-28, 2:2-3)

## **The Letter to Philemon**

1. Philemon of Colosse, an escaped slave

2. Theme – personal letter to help a new convert make restitution for his failure
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. Shortest letter of Paul, only 1 not centered on church issues
  - B. Shows us how early Christianity deal with slavery – not force but freedom
  - C. Shows us Paul’s inner life- not as the founder of churches but as a believer

## **The Letter to the Philippians**

1. Background
  - A. The Church at Philippi- The first European outpost for the Gospel
  - B. Comments on Paul’s Authorship
2. Theme: Unity
  - A. Emphasis on 'one', 'all' 'same', "contending as one man for the faith of the gospel (1:27)
  - B. Major passage – Ch 2
  - C. Jesus Christ was the central fact of Paul’s life from the Damascus experience to his death, and this can be seen throughout his letter.
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. Tone: Warmly personal (“I” used 52 times)
  - B. Joy and rejoicing used often, even though he is imprisoned
  - C. Major passage on the righteousness that comes from faith
    1. His passion for relationship
    2. Fleeing the influence of Judaizers
  - D. Paul as an example – of enduring persecution of ambition and contentment
  - E. Overseers and deacons referred to in salutation and closing

## **The Letter to the Hebrews**

1. Background
  - A. Authorship unknown. Traditionally, Paul, though that is not widely held today.
    1. Doesn't seem to be his style
    2. Though in content it perhaps reflect someone close to Paul
    3. Likely candidates: Barnabus, Apollos, Priscilla
    4. We only know the author was a second-generation believer (2:3)
  - B. Recipients - "To the Hebrews"
    1. A group of Hebrew Christians, very familiar with Old Testament
    2. Some persecution early, now in danger of falling away
  - C. Date: Probably before 70 a.d. when temple was destroyed, for it is not mentioned Timothy released from prison (13:23) probably same as II Timothy reference
2. Theme: The superiority of Jesus and his Covenant
  - Z. Shows how the Old Covenant was fulfilled in Christ
  - B. Warnings throughout of people falling away - Having begun, keep on believing
3. Characteristics

- A. High literary quality - careful construction and elegant diction
- B. Saturated with Old Testament quotes to show Jesus far better
- C. An incredible study on the nature and work of Jesus - 20 different names and titles used
- D. Terrific practicality in personal relationship- "Draw near."
- E. Key words: better, holy, sanctify, sin, sacrifice, blood, high priest, promise, word, covenant, to make perfect
- F. Pivotal passage: Hebrews 10:19-25

## **Sharpening the Focus: Typology**

1. Defined: Correspondence between a person, event or thing in the Old Testament and with a person, event or thing contemporaneous with the New Testament
  - A. Must be specifically highlighted in Word, not arbitrarily chosen by interpreter
  - B. Examples:
    1. The serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14-15)
    2. The temple made without hands (Heb 9:24)
    3. Noah and baptism (I Peter 3:21)
  - B. Not to be confused with allegorizing, which is to look for obscure meanings intrinsic to the interpreter, not the text
  - C. Typology reveals God as the one who acts, as is one aspect of his prophetic revelation
2. Characteristics
  - A. Type does not have to be recognized by the people of that day. The point of correspondence is significant to the later generations because they can see the significance of God's activity
  - B. Examples of Typology
    1. People: David and Jesus as the shepherd/king
    2. Melchizedek as Christ figure
    3. Events: Sabbath rest, Passover, The Exodus
    4. Things: The temple and its furnishings
  - F. Research both the original (type) and the contemporary (antitype), understanding both the correspondence and the differences. Look for God's purpose in drawing the two together

## **Session 13**

### **The Later Letters**

#### **The Pastoral Epistles**

1. The letters: 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus
  - A. How accurate is this designation?
2. Background: Author and recipients
  - A. Authorship – Paul. Review Fourth Missionary Journey
  - B. To two men he'd left to function with apostolic authority in his absence
3. Common Themes: Life in the local church

- A. Sound Doctrine
  - B. Leadership
  - C. How to treat various groups of people
4. Take into account the difference between church as they knew it, and church as we know it today

## **The Letter to Timothy**

1. Background
  - A. Timothy, Paul's traveling companion and representative in Ephesus
    1. Native of Lystra (in Galatia) of Greek father and Jewish mother
    2. Brought up in Jewish faith
    3. Joined Paul on 2nd Missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3)
    4. With Paul of evangelization of Ephesus and knew people there well
    5. With Paul in Rome for first imprisonment (Col 1:1., Phil 1:1)
    6. He was imprisoned at some point and released (Heb 13:23)
    7. Tradition says he was martyred under Domitian (81-96) or Trajan (98-117)
  - B. The Church at Ephesus
    1. Timothy had helped establish it with Paul and was with him most of those first two years the Gospel was established there.
    2. The third of six different snapshots of Ephesus
  - C. Date: after Paul's release from prison around 63-65 AD
2. Theme – The importance of sound doctrine in the life of the church.
  - A. Paul's prophecy in Acts 20:29-30 had come to pass, and Paul had left Timothy there to battle the false teachers. This is his letter of encouragement and instruction.
  - B. Encouragement for Timothy to deal strongly with false teachers. Sound doctrine, instruction, or teaching is used 8 times in book
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. Very affectionate – Father to Son
  - B. Encouragement for Timothy to deal strongly with false teachers. Sound doctrine, instruction, or teaching is used 8 times in book.
  - C. Importance of setting proper leadership and lifestyle in the church.

## **The Letter to Titus**

1. Background
  - A. Titus
    1. Gal 2:3 – Gentile possibly from Antioch
    2. Paul used him to quell problems in Corinth (2 Cor 7:6-16; 8:16-24)
    3. Probably visited Crete on fourth journey and left Titus there
  - B. The church of Crete
    1. A new church in a morally depraved society
    2. A weak church, reflecting that culture instead of being a light to it
  - C. Date: after Paul's release from prison around 63-65 AD



2. Theme – Calling the church to purify in lifestyle
  - A. Crete was well-known throughout Roman world for its moral depravity
  - B. The church was reflecting its culture, instead of being a light to it
  - C. Solution: godly leadership and godly teaching
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. Great passage on how God makes us holy (2:1-14)
  - B. A look at New Testament leadership

## **The Second Letter to Timothy**

1. Background
  - A. Timothy
    1. Paul had been reimprisoned in Rome and had been put on trial.
    2. Most of his friends had deserted him- evidenced loneliness. Only two friends left there: Luke and Onesiphorus
    3. Anxiety for a great falling away- 'everyone in Asia has deserted me'
    4. Wanted Timothy and Mark to come to him
  - B. Date: during a second imprisonment much harsher than the previous
2. Theme – Fulfill your ministry, Timothy
  - A. A shift away from the corporate to a more personal exhortation and an invitation
  - B. Keep the gospel pure – no matter the cost.
3. Major Characteristics
  - A. Great encouragement in the face of hardships
  - B. Paul's concern but also his great confidence God's work and his part in it
  - C. Great passage in Scriptures inspiration

## **Peter's First Letter**

1. Author: Peter, the fisherman
  - A. Tradition is clear and universal
  - B. Problem as to whether he wrote both
    1. Differences in style - I Peter is terrific, and II Peter is sloppy
    2. Explanation - Silvanus (Silas) was secretary of the first (I Peter 5:12); Peter wrote the second himself
  - C. Epistles are very consistent with his preaching (Acts 2) and his life with Jesus (the transfiguration, believers as sheep; leaders as shepherds, his own fiery trial)
2. Recipients
  - A. Christians scattered in what is modern-day Turkey (Galatia)
  - B. Probably toward the end of his life. Peter was martyred in 68 AD under Nero, so a year or so before, from Rome, is widely accepted
  - C. The second Epistle refers to the first (3:1)
3. Theme: Hope in the Coming Age (1:3; 5:12)
  1. Believers under heaving persecution and fear (1:6, 4:12)
  2. He writes to set their hope not on life in this age, but in the age to come

3. We need not then just endure, but rejoice.
4. Characteristics
  1. Suffering used 17 times, 5 for Christ's sufferings and 12 for ours
  2. A strong call to holiness in life and conduct in this age
  3. Defining Christ's role, and the believers as one of servanthood
  4. Familiarity with Paul's writings:

## **Peter's Second Letter**

1. Authorship – Already covered
2. Theme: True knowledge frees us from error (2 Peter 3:17-18)
  - A. Where I Peter deals with persecution from without, 2 Peter deals with error from within
  - B. To expose the false teachers, and set people free to really discover God's truth
  - C. One specific false teaching had to do with the second coming of Jesus
3. Characteristics
  - A. The account of the transfiguration (Ch1) and possible hint of Marks gospel
  - B. Common ground with the Epistle of Jude — Same illustrations and layout, possible Peter made use of Jude

## **Jude's Letter**

1. Author: Most likely Jude, the brother of Jesus and James (1)
  - A. Though he nor James ever referred to their familial relationship with Christ, others did often (I Cor 9:5, Gal 1:19)
  - B. Not an apostle, but a second generation Christian (3) - eliminates other Judas, the apostle other than Iscariot
  - C. Identified as a traveling missionary in I Cor 9:5
2. Recipients:
  - A. Unclear, possibly circular?
  - B. Date: Probably mid 70's - 80's
3. Theme: Oppose False teaching (3)
  - A. False teaching had crept in, especially Gnostic idea that the body is evil and it doesn't matter how you indulge it
  - B. Sound doctrine and right practice go hand in hand
  - C. Where you find false teaching—expose and eliminate it
4. Characteristics
  - A. Style is direct and aggressive
  - B. Organized in groups of 3
    1. Salutation
    2. OT examples of judgment
    3. Rebellious characters
    4. Classifications of those who need help (22-23)
  - C. Use of natural phenomena in illustrations (12-13)
  - D. Uses nonbiblical writings - Assumption of Moses, the Book of Enoch

## Session 14

### John's Letters and Revelation

#### The Letters of John

1. Author: John the Beloved, Christ's apostle
  - A. That's how he is identified, though some have suggested another for II and III John a 2nd generation church leader, John the elder
  - B. But the use of terminology, language, and historical tradition are too clearly John the Apostle
    1. Vocabulary: Father, Son, Spirit, beginning, Word, believe, life, eternal, love abide.
    2. Phrases: the only begotten son, Spirit of truth, to overcome the world
    3. Style identical
    4. A personal observer of Jesus' life
2. **I John**
  - A. Recipients: Gentile believers, with whom John was personally acquainted and for whom he had spiritual oversight--probably around Ephesus (See Rev 1:11)
  - B. Theme: "That you might know-- and love!"
    1. A faith based on surety
    2. To combat the Gnostic heresy
    3. Body is evil -. either led to ascetism (Colosse) or licentiousness (here) ; both distorted the nature of Christ d. Love is central to this book and the normal response of a believer in God -One fifth of all references to love in the NT occur in these three short books
  - C. Characteristics
    1. Simplicity of content and structure
    2. Bluntness of the language--no middle ground, light or darkness
    3. Certain thoughts repeated over--knowing, light, belief, love, righteousness, but with shifting applications
    4. Difficult to outline, since more a series of intertwined concepts than a treatise
3. **2 John**
  - A. Recipient: "To the chosen lady and her children" -- a woman, or figurative for church
  - B. Theme: Truth--receive it, obey it, cherish it!
    1. The nature of Christ
    2. The call to love one another
  - C. Background: False teachers were coming with a distorted gospel, don't receive them!
    - a. You are linked to what you support.
4. **3 John**
  - A. Recipients: Gaius,
  - B. Theme: True and False Leadership
  - C. Background:
    - A. To encourage Gaius and Demetrius in their commitment to truth and faithful service Demetrius may have been one of the rejected missionaries

- B. To identify the error in Diotrephes who 'loves to be first'-- putting people out of church. John himself coming to set him straight

## **Sharpening Our Focus: Six Snapshots of Ephesus**

1. Paul spreads the gospel in Ephesus (Acts 19)
2. On his way back to Jerusalem he invites elders of Ephesus to join him in Miletus and warns them that some of them who would lead others astray (Acts 20)
3. Paul writes the Ephesian letter to them about the nature of the church and its unity
4. Paul writes to Timothy about the confusion and need for true elders in Ephesus (I and II Timothy)
5. John writes three letters there, reminding them that each of them has the ability to discern truth and error (1, 2, & 3 John)
6. John writes in Revelation about their loss of first love.

## **The Book of Revelation**

1. Background
  - A. Author: John, the Apostle
    1. Identifies himself three times as such
    2. Terminology validation: Logos, Lamb, witness, overcome, and truth
    3. World view: cosmic view of light and dark, good and evil
    4. External tradition is clear
  - B. Recipient: Seven specific churches in Asia
    1. The seven churches in Asia (Chapters 2-3), but also a circular
    2. Probably late 90's under the persecution of Domitian (worship of emperor was promoted)
2. Theme: Encouragement in the Last Days
  - A. To inform about the future
  - B. To fortify the church and foster her endurance
  - C. To bring consolation to suffering saints
  - D. To reveal the glory of the Risen Christ his appearance and mission
    1. His self-revelation in ch. 1
    2. As head of the church in chs. 2-3
    3. As the initiator of judgment and guardian of the church in chs 14-18
    4. As the king returning in power and glory in chs. 19
    5. The fullness of his eternal kingdom in chs 20-22
3. Characteristics
  - A. Many parts allusive now, but does not mean they were to first recipients
  - B. Dramatic interplay of cataclysmic events
  - C. Interplay between heaven and earth--actions and reactions of each
  - D. Woes and judgments surrounded by worship and prayer
  - E. Large use of Old Testament - of 404 verses, 278 refer to Old Testament (69%)
  - F. Number 7 used 50 times
  - G. Developed doctrine

1. God as the Creator, Guardian and Judge
  2. Jesus as the reigning king
  3. The Holy Spirit as the one who is teaching the author (1:10), the one who reveals (2:11, 17, 29; 3:6)
  - H. A highly developed view of the church--both locally and universally
  - I. Promises and Admonishments (See below)
4. Content
- A. De-mystifying the book of Revelation
  - B. Four Visions
    1. First Vision      1:9 - 3:22      Adjustment and Direction to the Seven Churches
    2. Second Vision    4:1 -16:21      The Polarizing of History
    3. Third Vision      17:1-21:8      The Destruction of Evil and the Victory of Christ
    4. Fourth Vision    21:9 - 22:5      The Future Glory of God's Life
  - D. The Themes of Revelation
    1. The Refining of God's People
      - a. The power of praise and worship
      - b. Persecution and suffering: calling for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints (13:10; 14:12)
      - c. The hope of our calling
    2. The Sovereignty of God in History
      - a. The polarity to prepare for the end (tribulation and wrath)
      - b. The Victory of Jesus
    3. The Tactics of Hell
      - a. A seductive cultural environment
      - b. To Torment God
    4. The Love and Wrath of God
    5. The Glorious Future for the Beloved
    6. What a crowing touch to the whole panorama of Scripture. The deception at Eden fully swallowed up in the victory of God and his planet brought back in to the full orbit of redemption. Forever we will live in that celestial city with access to the tree of life and God's presence.

## **Sharpening Our Focus: Apocalyptic Language**

1. Major sources: Ezekiel, Daniel, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, Revelation  
Often as visions, where even the observer does not understand all the implications
2. Keys to interpretation:
  - A. Not Chronological: The two-dimensional view - I Peter 1:10-11
  - B. Not all to be understood until it comes to pass - John 14:29
  - C. Always application in the present, in ensuing generations, and the future
  - D. Complex use of literal and figurative elements
    1. Examples: The scroll (a real book or the understanding that God knows all?), lake of fire, the four horsemen
    2. These things are not given to fulfill material curiosity, but for spiritual insight (heart change)
    3. Let the word set the standard for what should be taken literally or figuratively. The key is not to distort the Word. Let it say what it really says.
3. The Vivid Imagery of Apocalyptic writing
  - A. Numbers - rarely literal
    1. 4 - aspects of creation (winds, compass, creatures around throne)

2. 7- Completeness and perfection (or half of 7,31/2 used as a partial time of something more complete; also as time, times and half a time, 42 months, 1260 days)
  3. 12- Church, disciples, tribes, (also 24 elders)
  4. 10 - Suggestive of greatness
  5. Multiples of these used for intensified meaning, e.g. 144,000
  - B. Metaphors - eyes of fire, two-edged sword in his mouth, etc.
  - C. Colors - white, black, red, pale, etc.
  - D. Metals and precious stones
4. In Revelation we also have the added possibility that John was encoding his message so it would not be confiscated by the Romans or create any greater hardship on the church
5. Methods of Interpreting Prophecy
- A. The Interpretive Camps
  - B. Terms: Apokalypsis (revelation), parousia (coming), epiphany (appearing)
  - C. Eschatological Presuppositions
    1. Preterism – Most has been fulfilled in the first century
    2. Futurism - while applicable in the past, it speaks to a future fulfillment
      - a. Pretribulationists
      - b. Midtribulationists
      - c. Posttribulationists
      - d. Postmillennialists -
      - e. Amillennialists
    3. Historicism – fulfilled in the course of church history
    4. Idealism – speaking of spiritual realities, not human events

## Promises To The Church In Revelation

### Chapter

- 1 The time is near  
He has made us kings and priests  
He is coming and every eye will see Him
- 2 You can have the abundance of resurrection life  
You will not be hurt by the second death  
You will have guaranteed access to the marriage feast  
You will share His authority
- 3 You will have guaranteed entrance into eternity  
You will have a place in God's presence  
You will have victory in Jesus
- 4 God does reign on His throne
- 5 Jesus is worthy to bring history to its end  
We will reign upon the earth
- 6 He sovereignty controls the affairs of history
- 7 Not one servant of God will be lost in the tribulation  
Many believers will know the true victory God can give over the enemy's

- greatest attempts to destroy
- We will enter a rest with God and never have needs again
- 8 No believer will face God's wrath
- 9 God will give strong calls for all to repent
- 11 He does reign over all and will reign over the earth totally
- 12 The enemy has already been defeated at his every attempt
- 13 The enemy will not prevail over the saints
- His reign will be short
- 14 Evil will be totally destroyed
- The harvest is coming
- 16-18 The works of the enemy will be laid waste
- The Lamb will overcome
- 19 Jesus Christ will return
- We will see Him face to face in the joy of a marriage feast
- He will bind up Satan and destroy his followers
- 20 He will establish His earthly kingdom
- We will reign in peace with Him
- He will finally put Satan and his hosts in the lake of fire forever
- 21-22 He will give us the new heaven and new

## **Admonishments To The Church In Revelation**

### Chapter

- 2 Live in simplicity and love
- Be faithful, even if it demands death
- Don't compromise with the lifestyle of the world
- Live in purity
- 3 Complete the walk you've begun
- Persevere through any trial
- Be zealous
- 4-5 Worship His worthiness
- 7 Find your identity and purpose only in Him
- Be washed in the blood of the Lamb
- 8 Prayerfully release the promises of God
- 8-9 Have confidence in God's ability to protect and sustain us
- 10 Be a prophetic voice to your generation
- 11 Be confident again in God's victory
- 12 Overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony, and by not loving your life even if it means death
- 13 Persevere in faith
- Be true to God only, no matter how the world goes
- Be faithful in righteousness at any cost
- 14 Live undefiled
- Learn to follow the Lamb wherever He goes
- Be set apart to Him as His possession
- Be truthful in all things
- Give no cause for you to be blamed - be blameless

- Be confident in the destruction of evil  
Choose God and His eternity; don't give in to the way or ends of sin
- 16 Keep awake and alert  
Be ready in spite of anything that goes on around you
  - 17 Be faithful and overcome with the Lamb
  - 18 Don't follow the destructive path of the world - selfishness, greed
  - 19 As the bride, make yourself ready to greet



# The Scripture Story

The Exodus  
1446 BC

722 BC  
The Exile  
586 BC



<b>Adam</b>	<b>Abraham</b>	<b>Moses</b>	<b>David</b>	<b>Isaiah</b>	<b>Nehemiah</b>	<b>Jesus</b>	<b>Paul</b>
c 2100 BC	c 1450 BC	c 1000 BC	c 700 BC	c 450 BC	6/5 BC - 27 BC	35-68 AD	

<b>Genesis</b>	<b>Exodus</b>	<b>1 &amp; 2 Samuel-1 &amp; 2 Kings</b>	<b>Ezra</b>	<b>Nehemiah</b>	<b>Matthew</b>	<b>Acts</b>
	Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth	1 & 2 Chronicles	Amos Hosea Jonah Isaiah Zephaniah Micah Habbakkuk	Haggai Zechariah Malachai	Mark Luke John	James Thessalonians Galatians Corinthians Romans Ephesians Colossians Philippians Philemon Hebrews Timothy Titus Peter John Revelation
<b>Job</b>	Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs		Jeremiah Lamentations Obadiah Nahum Ezekiel Daniel			