

New Testament Survey

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Introduction

This study is designed to give the student an extensive view of the New Testament. In studying the geography of the world, we begin with a globe that shows us the various continents and oceans. Then we note how these continents are divided into countries, and the countries into provinces or states. If we reverse this method of study, we make it very difficult.

Many people try to study the Bible in this way. They try to study it intensively before they study it extensively. They want to get the meaning of a verse without knowing the teaching of the chapter. Or they seek to grasp the meaning of a chapter, not knowing its actual setting or teaching of the book in which it is found. Obviously this is not the best way to get to the true meaning of Scripture. Now, in light of these observations, a word of explanation: Our studies in the ensuing months will be aimed at the extensive method, rather than the intensive. We will seek to lay a foundation of knowledge upon which you can build accurately and intensively.

Let us look, first of all, at the composition of the New Testament. The twenty-seven books can be classified into three major groups:

1. Historical
2. Doctrinal
3. Apocalyptic

The Gospels relate to the past, while Acts and the epistles relate to the present and then the Revelation

relates to the future. Truths found in the Gospels are historically illustrated in Acts, doctrinally unfolded and applied in the Epistles, and symbolically presented in the Apocalypse (Revelation).

Chronological Divisions

Chronological divisions are based on the literary characteristics of the books:

1. Historical Literature: Matthew through Acts (5 books)
2. Epistolary Literature: Romans through Jude (21 books)
3. Prophetical Literature: Revelation (1 book)

Literary Divisions

The literary divisions do not necessarily follow the chronological order, but they do reflect the logical order of God's program. For instance, it is essential that we have an understanding of the Gospels and Acts to really appreciate the epistles and Revelation. The life of Christ and the facts relative to the origin and order of the Church are fundamental and foundational. The Church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being "the chief cornerstone" (see Ephesians 2:20).

Summary

Below is a brief summary of the teaching of the books of the New Testament:

Matthew*: Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews

Mark*: Jesus, the Servant of the Lord

Luke*: Jesus as the Son of man

John*: Jesus as the Son of God

Acts: This is a continuation of Luke's Gospel. It presents the risen Christ working through His apostles, empowered by the Holy Spirit. The main theme is the birth and expansion of the Church.

Pauline Epistles: These provide an interpretation of the person and work of Jesus Christ and apply His teachings to the lives of believers. Some of these epistles were written to churches to correct errors, while others were written to individuals.

The remaining epistles may be grouped under two headings:

Suffering Epistles: Hebrews, James, and 1 Peter. These epistles were written specifically in order to counteract suffering.

False Teaching Epistles: 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, and Jude. These epistles were written in order to counteract apostasy.

Apocalypse—the Book of Revelation: This book is truly a revelation and unveiling of Jesus Christ (see the very first verse). When you read this book, please keep this in mind. The majesty of Jesus Christ is brought before our wondering eyes

*The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke):

Why are these books called the synoptic gospels? It is as one has said, they "see together." They are looking at the Lord Jesus Christ. It is obvious from their writing that they saw many of the same things, so they are called synoptic gospels, because they view the Lord together. These gospels have much in common. It would be impossible for me to show all that they have in

common, for it is far too much to count. Instead, I would like to bring the differences to your attention tonight. One must be careful in generalizing. While each is considered truth, to a certain extent each book is unique and the differences should be noted.

Differences between the Synoptic Gospels:

Matthew presents Jesus Christ as King.

Mark presents Him as a servant.

Luke presents Him as the Son of Man.

There are just a few differences between the synoptic gospels and John's gospels. It is very important that we get this.

1. The Synoptics give a presentation of the Lord Jesus. John gives the interpretation of the Lord Jesus.
2. The Synoptics show Christ outwardly - We see the King, the Servant, and the Son of Man. John's gospels show Him inwardly. We really note who He is, where He came from, what He is going to do, and where He is going to return.
3. The Synoptics show Him as what He is. John shows us who He is.
4. The Synoptics show Him as the Lion-Ox-man of Ezekiel's vision. [The Lion represents the lion of the Tribe of Judah in Matthew's gospel, the ox represents Christ as Servant in Mark's gospel, and the man represents Christ as the Son of Man in Luke's gospel.] John shows Him as the eagle - the eagle flies and soars into the heaven.

Matthew 25:1-13

Describe an Eastern Wedding. The Lord took this well-known custom to illustrate an important spiritual truth (i.e. The kingdom of heaven is likened to...). Describe the bridesmaids – the foolish and the wise. The foolish took their lamps, but took no oil. The Lord said to them “I know you not.” The wise had oil in their vessels. The spiritual truth found in this parable is that one had the Holy Spirit, while the other did not.

As a result of this passage, explain what happens at the new birth: One is born of the Spirit, sealed by the Spirit, and indwelt by the Spirit. Regeneration, not reformation, occurs at the new birth. The professing church is marching forth to meet the bridegroom. They all appear to be the same, yet there is a vital difference - some have oil in their lamps and some do not. Some have never been born again. Even devils believe and tremble. Consider the profession- of Simon the sorcerer in Acts 8. The religionist needed the new birth. See 1 Timothy 1:15. Christ came to save sinners. The unchurched need the new birth. Consider the Philippian jailer of Acts 16.

The Bridegroom tarried. The maidens slept. At midnight the cry arose, “The Bridegroom cometh.” Some were ready, welcomed the Bridegroom and went into the marriage feast.

Describe the coming of the Lord here. See also 1Thessalonians 4 - the rapture of the Saints. Those who were not ready to meet him in their hurried preparations missed His coming. Frantically they rushed to the feast, but the door was shut. They cried earnestly,

“Lord, Lord open to us.” The Lord’s answer is found in verse 12 and an exhortation follows - watch and be ready. Not every one that saith unto me “Lord, Lord” shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many will say, “We have prophecied in thy name, cast out devils, done many wonderful works” and He will say “I never knew you, depart from Me.”

The Gospel of Luke

Introduction

The Writer

Luke, the “beloved Physician,” is the writer. He was a Greek - a Gentile. The first mention of him is in Acts 16:10. “We” endeavored to go into Macedonia. He is mentioned three times in the following Scripture references: Colossians 4:14, Philemon 2:4, and 2 Timothy 4:11. Luke also wrote the book of Acts.

The Date and Recipients

The book of Luke was written around A.D. 60. This makes it the third gospel to be written. It was addressed to Theophilus in the former treatise (see Acts 1:1) — nothing is known of this brother. Internal evidence also reveals that it was written for Gentiles, and in particular, the Greeks. They were the philosophers, the thinkers. They had long sought after the “perfect man.” Luke’s work was designed to fulfill that quest. Luke takes time to explain Jewish customs and sometimes substitutes Greek names for Hebrew ones.

Key word: Son of man

Key verse: Luke 23:47 “Truly this was a righteous man.”

The Purpose

The purpose of writing is clearly defined in the first four verses. Luke 1:4 reveals the major purpose, which is “That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.” In Ezekiel’s vision, the third creature had the face of a man. In the third

gospel, the Gospel of Luke, Christ is presented as the “Son of man.” The Greeks made their gods in the likeness of men. Luke presents deity in the likeness of man. This, then, is really “the Gospel of the Son of man.” Matthew, who presented “Christ as King” to the Jews, traced His genealogy to Abraham, via David. In other words, he showed the “royal line.” Luke traces the genealogy right back to Adam, setting Him forth as the Son of man. As such, He becomes more than the King of Israel. He becomes a Savior to all men (see Luke 2:10-11). There are thirty or more parables, sayings, and incidents in Luke unrecorded by the other three gospel writers. [Ecco Homo “Behold the man” - Ecco Deus “Behold your God”]

Luke humanized the Lord and yet preserved His deity as no other writer did. Luke alone tells us that the babe was wrapped in swaddling clothes and that the child grew. He was subject to his parents. He was brought up with them. Luke is endeavoring to show that the Lord was made in the likeness of man. He fully tasted of humanity, joining Himself to us in birth, in childhood, and in youth. In doing so (that is, in being a very man), He might, in His own blessed person, bring man near to God. John, in his gospel reveals the Divine-Human One. Luke, in his gospel reveals the Human-Divine One.

Let us consider further the Manhood of the Master. Luke presents Him more frequently at prayer than do the other evangelists:

Prayer at His baptism (Luke 3:21-22)

Prayer after a crowded day (Luke 4:42)

Prayer as an escape from popularity (Luke 5:15-16)

Prayer with His own (Luke 9:18-31)

Prayer on the Mount (Luke 9:29)

Prayer after success (Luke 10:21)

Prayer as a habit (Luke 11:1)

Prayer for a backsliding disciple (Luke 22:31-32)

Prayer in Gethsemane (Luke 22:39-46)

Prayer from the Cross (Luke 23:34-46)

Luke 18:1 says, “Men ought always to pray.” Luke contrasts the Perfect Man very severely with all other men, whose spiritual ruin he depicted in narratives and parables peculiar to his gospel. All of the following examples illustrate man’s ruin: (1) The good Samaritan, (2) The rich man and Lazarus, (3) The prodigal son, and (4) The penitent thief. The priesthood of Christ is based upon His manhood. Read Hebrews 2:17-18 and Hebrews 4:14-16. Notice the description of Moses and Aaron.

Luke beautifully links the manhood and priesthood of our Lord in his gospel. See below:

1. Luke 1-3: The Man, “made like unto His brethren.” He is one with us in our descent from Adam. He is one with those who confessed their sins and were baptized.

2. Luke 4:1-13: The Man, tempted as we are.

3. Luke 4:14-19:27: Here we see the Man touched with the feeling of our infirmities, the Man of cosmopolitan interest, the Man full of sympathy, the Man of prayer, and the Man tempted in all points, yet sin apart.

4. Luke 19:28-23:56: This passage shows us the Man, perfect through sufferings.

“I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected” (see Luke 13:32).

5. Luke 24: The Man, in resurrection and ascension. He is still a man after His suffering. He talked, He ate, and He walked with His disciples. As a Man, He ascended into Heaven. Hebrews 4:14 says, “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.”

Finally, please note His dependence on prayer, His need of the Holy Spirit (see Luke 1:35, Luke 3:22, Luke 4:1, and Luke 10:21), His poverty (Luke 20:24, Luke 9:58), His sympathy and His identification with the human race. Satan ruined the first man, but was defeated by the second man, Jesus Christ.

Let us briefly consider the sympathizing Jesus. He loved the lowly, the poor, and the outcast. See Him with the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-18), the sinful woman (Luke 7:37), Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2), publicans and sinners (Luke 15:1), the deserted beggar (Luke 16:20-21), lepers (Luke 17:12), and the dying thief (Luke 23:43). Consider also His tears for Jerusalem (see Luke 19:41).

Outline of the Book

I. Luke 1:5-Luke 2:52

The Preparation of the Savior

II. Luke 3:1-Luke 4:15

The Introduction of the Savior

III. Luke 4:16-Luke 9:50

The Ministry of the Savior

IV. Luke 9:51-Luke 18:30

The Mission of the Savior

V. Luke 18:31-Luke 23:56

The Passion of the Savior

VI. Luke 24:1-53

The Resurrection of the Savior

Additional Notes:

Some interesting features of the gospel:

Part One: His Perfect Humanity (Chapters 1-4)

Part Two: The Galilee Ministry (Chapters 4-9)

Part Three: The Jerusalem Journey (Chapters 9-19)

Part Four: The Calvary Sacrifice (Chapters 19-23)

Seven “Crises” in the life of the Lord as recorded by Luke:

1. His birth
2. His baptism
3. His temptation
4. His transfiguration
5. His crucifixion
6. His resurrection
7. His ascension

Acts

Introduction

The Writer

The writer is undoubtedly Luke. He also wrote Luke's Gospel. Compare Acts 1:1 with Luke 1:1-4. He was known as "the beloved physician" (see Colossians 4:14).

The Title of the Book

To many, the present title is quite inadequate because the content of the book deals chiefly with the work of only two apostles, namely Peter and Paul. The title, "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" seems more appropriate. In the twenty-eight chapters, the Holy Spirit is mentioned seventy times. The Holy Spirit's coming, filling, empowering, and guiding are all enumerated in this book.

The Purpose

The first purpose is vital to the message in Acts 1:1—"of all that Jesus began to do and to teach..." The Lord Jesus began His work on earth and continues to work from heaven, through the Holy Spirit. The second purpose is key to the analysis provided in Acts 1:8—"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." We learn four things from this verse:

(1) The central subject of Christian witness is Christ.

(2) The exclusive source of Christian witness is the Church.

(3) The widening sphere of Christian witness embraces the world.

(4) The unfailing secret of Christian witness is the Holy Spirit.

Note how the thought “ye shall be witnesses of Me” is developed in the book.

Chapters 1-7: Witness in Jerusalem, the city. The witness at Jerusalem was chiefly to the Jews.

Chapters 8-12: Witness in Judea-Samaria and beyond, into the provinces. The witness in Judea-Samaria was the transition period between the first and the third.

Chapters 13-28: Witness to the uttermost parts of the earth, into the world. The witness to the uttermost parts was chiefly to the Gentiles.

In each of these ministries, Christ is the theme, the Church is the means and the Spirit is the power.

The relationship of Acts, both to the Gospels and the Epistles, is unique. Acts is supplementary to the Gospels. For instance:

(1) It shows how the keys of the kingdom of heaven, given to Peter (see Matthew 16:19) were used by him in admitting the Jews, in Acts 2, and the Gentiles, in Acts 10, into the church through the Gospel.

(2) The prediction regarding the Church (see Matthew 10:18), “I will build my church” is fulfilled in Acts.

(3) The promise of the Spirit in John 14:26 is fulfilled in Acts.

(4) The commission given in Matthew 28:19-20 and Luke 24:46-47, was implemented in Acts. Thus, this book supplements the Gospels.

The Values

Let us now consider the values of the book.

1. The Historical value: Luke touches secular history, geography, and biography. Luke gives us the history of the first 60-65 years of Christianity (30 years in Luke and 30 more in Acts). It begins in a manger in Bethlehem and extends to the center of the Roman Empire.
2. The Biographical value: Almost eighty people are listed on the record and they are drawn from every walk of life - kings, judges, and governors. Peter and Paul could be said to be the main characters in the unfolding drama. Other notable individuals were Stephen, Philip "the evangelist," Barnabas, Timothy, Apollos, Aquila and Priscilla, John Mark, and Silas. Most of these we hear of again in Paul's Epistles.
3. The Doctrinal value: The observant reader will discover some of the fundamentals of the faith, such as the Deity and Manhood of Christ, His vicarious death and particularly His resurrection, His ascension, His coming again, the forgiveness of sins and the judgment that is to come. These vital truths are fearlessly proclaimed by the apostles. Many seed thoughts are found in the book, which are later developed in the Epistles.
4. The Dispensational value: This value lies in the record of the transition from Judaism to Christianity. It is the bridge between the Old and the New Covenant.

Hebrews is the break between the two. It also draws the distinction between the Church and the Messianic Kingdom.

5. The Spiritual value: The Acts is a record of the Spirit-begotten, Spirit-filled, and Spirit-guided Church. Please note the intimate relationship between the Holy Spirit and the various churches. Also note His relationship with various individuals. We would do well to cultivate this relationship today.

The Outline

Acts 1:8 provides us with a basis for the outline of the Book.

A - Ye shall be my witnesses (Persons)

B - In Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts (Places)

(1) The Apostolic Commission (Acts 1:1-11)

(2) The Gospel in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-8:3)

(3) The Gospel in Samaria (Acts 8:4-11:18)

(4) The Gospel in the Uttermost Part (Acts 11:19-21:14)

(5) The Gospel in Caesarea and Rome (Acts 21:15-28:29)

Much of this book revolves around Peter and Paul. Peter is prominent in the first twelve chapters where the church's center is at Jerusalem. From chapter 13, Paul takes over as he reaches out to the Gentiles. The church's center is moved to Antioch.

One could not give an outline of the Acts without mentioning the three missionary journeys of Paul. The first missionary journey is recorded in Acts 13-14, the second missionary journey takes place in Acts

15:36-18:22, and the third missionary journey is recorded in Acts 18:23-21:14.

Highlights of the Book

- The overall working of the Holy Spirit. Through Him we have:

Power (Chapter 1),

Utterance (Chapter 2),

Boldness (Chapters 3-4)

Wisdom (Chapter 6)

- The Lord's ascension
- The advent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
- The establishment of the Church
- The stoning of Stephen
- The conversion of Saul of Tarsus
- The bringing in of the Gentiles
- Paul's three missionary journeys
- Paul's imprisonment, which ends in Rome

Romans

Introduction to the Epistles

So far, we have discussed the historical section of the New Testament, namely the Gospels and Acts. We now turn our attention to the epistles, which could be termed the doctrinal section. Of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, twenty-one are in the form of letters. Each writer, though inspired by the Spirit, leaves the impress of his own personality on his writings. For instance:

- Paul is the apostle of faith.
- Peter is the apostle of hope.
- John is the apostle of love.
- James is the apostle of works.
- Jude is the apostle of vigilance.

The New Testament is broken up into three groups of writings.

1. Nine Christian Church epistles (Romans – II Thessalonians)
2. Four pastoral and personal epistles (1 Timothy – Philemon)
3. Nine Hebrew Christian epistles (Hebrews – Revelation)

Let us focus our attention on Paul's epistles. None were sent to churches, but four were sent to individuals. The chronological order is interesting and important to observe:

I & II Thessalonians—A.D. 52-53

I & II Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans—A.D. 57-58

Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon—A.D. 62

I & II Timothy and Titus—A.D. 67-68

Each of these groups has a particular theme:

Group 1 - The Coming of Christ

Group 2 - The Cross

Group 3 - The Christ

Group 4 - The Congregation

These epistles are of inestimable value to us today.

Introduction to Romans

Now for the Roman epistle itself, Coleridge said that it was the most profound piece of writing in existence.

Luther said that it was the chief book in the New Testament. Godet said, in studying it, we find ourselves, at every word, face to face with the unfathomable.

The Writer and Background

Paul wrote the book of Romans. He had always wanted to visit Rome. "I am ready to preach the Gospel to you who are at Rome." On his third missionary journey while staying at Corinth, he wrote this epistle in lieu of a visit. Soon after this, he was arrested in Jerusalem. Eventually he arrived at Rome, but not as a freeman.

The Outline

The theme of the letter is redemption (see Romans 3:24). Five aspects of redemption are carefully developed by Paul.

I. Introduction (Romans 1:1-17)

II. Sin—The Need for Redemption (Romans 1:18-3:20)

A. Gentile sin (Romans 1:18-2:16)

B. Jewish sin (Romans 2:17-3:8)

C. Universal sin (Romans 3:9-20)

III. Justification—The Provision of Redemption (Romans 3:21-5:21)

IV. Sanctification—The Effect of Redemption (Romans 6:1-8:39)

A. Union with Christ (Romans 6:1-23)

B. Conflict of natures (Romans 7:1-25)

C. Victory by the Spirit (Romans 8:1-39)

V. Jew and Gentile—The Scope of Redemption (Romans 9:1-11:36)

A. Israel's past: God's judgment for sin (Romans 9:1-33)

B. Israel's present: God's offer of salvation (Romans 10:1-21)

C. Israel's future: God's promise of restoration (Romans 11:1-36)

VI. Service - The Fruit of Redemption (Romans 12:1-15:13)

VII. Conclusion and Greetings (Romans 15:14-16:27)

Some prefer the following analysis:

I. Doctrinal: Basic doctrines of the Gospel expounded (Romans 1-8)

II. Dispensational: Israel's past, present, and future outlined (Romans 9-12)

III. Practical: Doctrine of the Gospel applied to individuals (Romans 12-16)

A. Exposition (a. Sin problem, Romans 1-8)

B. Explanation (b. Jew problem, Romans 9-11)

C. Application (c. Life problem, Romans 12-16)

Please note the "therefores" of Romans:

Romans 2:1 "Therefore, thou art inexcusable o man."

Romans 5:1 "Therefore, being justified by faith."

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation."

Romans 12:1 "I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God."

The following are some of the great doctrines in Romans:

1. The total unregenerate state of man.
2. The righteousness of God revealed.
3. The justification of the believer.
4. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit.
5. The sanctification of the believer.
6. The consecration of the believer.

Let us mention briefly some of these cardinal doctrines:

Righteousness—the quality of being right or just. It is an attribute of God used also to describe that gracious gift

of God to man, whereby all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are brought into right relationship with God. This righteousness or right relationship cannot be attained by either obedience to the law or any merit of man's own. Faith in Christ is the only means of obtaining this. The man who trusts in Christ miraculously becomes "the righteousness of God in Him" (Him being Christ).

This righteousness has two aspects: There is the righteousness that is imputed or reckoned to us on account of our faith in Christ (Romans 3:21-7:6). There is also the righteousness that is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit (Romans 7:7-8:39). The faith thus exercised in Christ for salvation brings us into a vital union and right relationship with God, and inevitably produces righteousness of life through the Spirit.

Justification—this denotes an act of acquittal, signifying the establishment of a person as just, by acquittal from guilt. Justification is the legal and formal acquittal from guilt, by God, as Judge. It is also the pronouncement of the sinner, who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, as righteous. This doctrine is spoken of in three ways: (1) Justified freely by God's grace (Romans 3:24), (2) Justified by Jesus' blood (Romans 5:9), and (3) Justified by faith (Romans 5:1). In effect, the believer is absolutely acquitted from guilt and brought into a right relationship with God.

Sanctification - this denotes a separation to God. It is the conduct of the life befitting those who have been separated. It is also a term used of separation from both evil things and evil ways. This sanctification is God's will for the believer (see 1 Thessalonians 4:3). It is also His purpose for calling him with the Gospel (see 1 Thess.

4:7). Sanctification must be learned from God (see 1 Thess. 4:4) as He teaches it through the Word (see John 17:17-19). The believer must pursue it earnestly and not deviate (1 Timothy 2:15).

Holy character, brought about by sanctification, cannot be transferred or imputed. It is an individual possession that is built up, little by little, as the result of obedience to the Word of God. Sanctification is seen in two aspects:

1. Positional Sanctification: This aspect of our sanctification is entirely out of our power. It is absolutely the result of the work of the Lord Jesus on the Cross.
2. Practical Sanctification: This is the result of the work of the Spirit in us. Practical Sanctification is the gradual molding of the believer into conformity with Christ. It means holiness in everyday life. It means victory over indwelling sin. It means God's will being done perfectly in our lives.

1 Corinthians

The Apostle Paul was the writer of this epistle. The epistle was written to the Church at Corinth, but is directed “to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” (see 1 Corinthians 1:2).

Julius Caesar founded Corinth, the capital of Achaia, Greece, in 45 B.C. It was a great commercial center. It also boasted of one of the greatest temples in the world. This temple was dedicated to the goddess Aphrodite. A vile system of worship was practiced here. This corrupted religion wreaked havoc on the morals of Corinth as a city, and also on the local church, thereby explaining the gross sins denounced in chapter 5.

Paul preached for eighteen months in this city during his second missionary tour. The result of his labor was the planting of a church. Acts 18 describes for us Paul’s experiences during this time. While Paul was in Ephesus during his third missionary journey (see Acts 19:1-41), news was brought to him by some of the household of Chloe that things were not good at Corinth (see 1 Cor. 1:11). In addition to this, the Corinthian Church had written a letter to Paul, requesting answers to certain problems that had arisen in the church (see 1 Cor. 7:1). These problems were plentiful, as seen below. They seemed to be concerned with the following:

- Things offered to idols (1 Corinthians 8:1)
- Disorder with regards to the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11)
- Spiritual gifts and their use (1 Corinthians 12:1, 14)

- The resurrection of Christ and the saints (1 Corinthians 15:2)

- The collection for saints in need (1 Corinthians 16:1)

This analysis opens up the following outline to us:

A. The Introduction (1 Corinthians 1:1-9)

B. Reply to the reports from Chloe (1 Corinthians 1:10-6:20)

C. Reply to the letter from the Church (1 Corinthians 7:1-16:9)

D. The Conclusion (1 Corinthians 16:10-24)

The report from Chloe would include a description of 1 Corinthians 1:11. There were contentions as well as people who were glorying in wisdom (see 1 Cor. 1). There was carnality (see 1 Cor. 3), immorality, and the taking of each other to law (see 1 Cor. 6). The objective of this epistle was to correct these errors and throw light on social, domestic, and other perplexities.

Another popular division of 1 Corinthians is centered on 1 Corinthians 1:30. Christ who has made “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption” unto us:

Wisdom (1 Cor. 1-4)

Righteousness (1 Cor. 5-10)

Sanctification (1 Cor. 11-14)

Redemption (1 Cor. 15-16)

Let us now look at an analysis of the book:

I. The Divisions in the Church (1 Corinthians 1-4)

A. Party spirit obscures the lordship of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:10-17)

- B. Party spirit obscures the nature of the Gospel
- C. Party spirit obscures the nature of Christian ministry

II. Disorders in the Church (1 Corinthians 5-14)

- A. Moral disorder (1 Corinthians 5-6)
- B. Social disorder (1 Corinthians 7-10)
- C. Ecclesiastical disorder (1 Corinthians 11-14)

III. Doctrinal Disorder (1 Corinthians 15)

A. Concerning the resurrection

Let us now look more closely at some of the apparent errors in the Corinthian Church. There is an exposure of man-exalting schisms: Paulinians, Apollonians, and Cephasites. The Pauline loyalists doubtlessly championed Gospel freedom and would claim primacy for Paul as the founder of their church. The Apollos clique was composed of the intellectuals, carried away by the silver tongue of the Alexandrine expositor. The Cephas block was presumably inclined toward Judaism, whose boast would be in Peter as the authoritative voice of the apostles and the mother church at Jerusalem. There was even a "Christ" party. They claimed His name in a factious way, which implied superiority to all others. Paul's answer to all this is found in 1 Corinthians 3:1-9.

The next open sore was that of immorality (see 1 Corinthians 5:1). This gross error was apparently left unjudged. See 1 Corinthians 5:13. The Paulinians - Apollonians - Cephasites and the others were glorying in the flesh. They were puffed up, but they should have been mourning that this evil had not been dealt with.

The next error was that of a brother going to law against another brother (see chapter 10). In 1 Corinthians 10:2,

Paul reminds them that the saints shall judge the world. In 1 Corinthians 10:3 he reminds them that the saints shall judge angels. So then, as 1 Corinthians 10:4 shows, the Church is able to judge in disputes involving brethren.

Now note the words in 1 Corinthians 7:1, "Now concerning the things whereof you wrote to me..." The former evils were what had been reported verbally to him by the household of Chloe. The church had written to him about the evils that we will now discuss.

In chapter 7 is Paul's reply concerning the matters of marriage, celibacy, and divorce. Chapters 8-10 show us the extent of our Christian liberty. When problems of conscience are being faced, Paul sets forth a number of guiding principles:

- Nothing is to remain in one's life if it causes another Christian to stumble (1 Corinthians 8:9, 13).
- The preaching of the Gospel is not to be hindered, rather aided (1 Corinthians 9:12, 22).
- All things are to be done to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Chapter 11 provides us with the proper conduct of women in assembly. She should have her head covered. She should keep silent in assembly (1 Cor. 14:34). It then goes on to provide us with the proper conduct at the Lord's Supper.

Chapters 12-14 touch on three major aspects, including the nature and use of spiritual gifts as the burden of Paul. Chapter 13 shows us that these gifts are to be exercised in love. In 1 Corinthians 14:40, Paul shows that all things have to be done decently and in order.

Chapter 15 is the classic chapter on the resurrection of the body. Christ's resurrection is described in 1 Corinthians 15:1-19. In 1 Corinthians 15:20-58, the application of this great truth is made.

The message of the epistle is "The Lordship of Christ." The Lord's full title is "Lord Jesus Christ" and it is never given to Him except when the writer is seeking to emphasize the Lordship of Christ. This is significant then when we discover that this title is given to our Lord six times in the first ten verses of the epistle. The name "Lord" also occurs frequently throughout the epistle. There is deep significance in this, because all the disorders that had crept into their lives and into the church had arisen through failure to recognize Jesus Christ as Lord.

Consider some of the language used, such as the use of the temple of the Holy Spirit in contrast to the temple of Aphrodite. The sins of the city (i.e. sexual immorality, drunkenness) had been brought into the assembly. Note the references to the Judgment Seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians

The Apostle Paul was the writer of this epistle. The epistle was written to the Church at Corinth, but is directed “to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” (see 1 Corinthians 1:2).

The Purpose for Writing

Paul’s first letter caused him much concern and he was anxious to know their reaction. Titus, whom he had met at Macedonia, brought him the news for which he longed. Evidently, the majority in the church received his admonition and corrective ministry and submitted themselves to it. The fact that disorders and abuses had been corrected and many had expressed their love for Paul and Titus constituted a great spiritual victory. Unfortunately, Titus’ report revealed that there were Jewish elements in the church that resented Paul and his message of grace. This accounts for the vehement style of the latter part of the epistle. Chapters 10-13 contain Paul’s rebuke to those who opposed his ministry and questioned his apostolic authority.

This epistle is one of Paul’s most personal.

Chapters 1-7 are a defense of his ministry.

Chapters 8-9 are a plea for them to fulfill their ministry of giving.

Chapters 10-13 are a defense of his apostleship.

The Characteristic Features

There are many enduring doctrinal affirmations in the epistle. They include:

- References to the character and workings of God (2 Cor. 1:3-4, 2 Cor. 2:14, 2 Cor. 4:5-6, 2 Cor. 5:8-21, 2 Cor. 6:14-18, and 2 Cor. 4:7-15).
- The contrast between the old and new covenants (2 Cor. 3).
- The future state (2 Cor. 5:1-10).
- The ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:10-21).
- The Christian stewardship of money (2 Cor. 8-9).

The general consensus of opinions is that this epistle is almost impossible to analyze. It is the least systematic of all Paul's epistles.

Robert Lee offers the following outline in his outlined Bible:

I. An Explanation (2 Corinthians 1-7)

He explains the reason for his delay in visiting them and why he spoke so plainly and sternly in his first letter. He gives an explanation as to why he was so concerned about their spiritual state, and he also gives an account of his sufferings.

II. An Exhortation (2 Corinthians 8-9)

He exhorts them to fulfill promptly their promise of relief for the needy saints, especially since he had boasted of them to the Macedonian churches.

III. A Vindication (2 Corinthians 10-13)

A change in the apostle's tone can easily be detected here - there is sternness and irony as he vindicates his apostleship and proves his right to their love and respect.

Mr. Smart of the Emmaus Bible School gives the following analysis:

I. 2 Corinthians 1-7 deals with the general subject of ministry:

A. Its source

B. Its characteristics

C. Its results

II. 2 Corinthians 8-9 illustrates the divine principle of giving:

A. It should be voluntary

B. It should be generous

C. It should be to the Lord

III. 2 Corinthians 10-13 shows Paul as he refutes his opponents with a record of revelations received, privation endured, and results achieved as an apostle of Christ.

There is no epistle which gives us a more intimate look into the heart of Paul than this one. At the time of writing it could have been Paul's darkest hour.

Disappointment, apprehensiveness, and physical illness had attacked Paul in a cruel way. "For when we were come into Macedonia," he writes, "our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears" (see 2 Corinthians 7:5).

2 Corinthians 1:8-9 reveals an apostle, "pressed out of measure, above strength, in so much that [he] despaired even of life." He says, "We had the sentence of death in ourselves." In chapter 4 he tells about the "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." In 2

Corinthians 4:16, he speaks of “the outward man perishing.”

Despite his great affliction, while waiting for Titus at Troas, he discovers a door of the Lord opened to him. How characteristic! He evidently preached the Gospel effectively in Troas and an assembly was formed. He revisits this local church on his return journey to Palestine. See Acts 20:6-12.

Judaistic teachers were a small, but powerful group at Corinth. They belonged to the Cephas party. Some Judaizing representatives from Jerusalem had visited the assembly at Corinth carrying “letters of commendation” (see 2 Cor. 3:1). This is what they were saying:

He was bold only from a distance (see 2 Cor. 10:1-2).

His outward appearance was base, and his speech was contemptible (see 2 Cor. 10:1, 10).

Compared to them, he was inferior despite his pretensions (see 2 Cor. 10:12, 18).

What he preached was but a poor edition of the gospel (see 2 Cor. 11:4).

The Corinthian church was a poor-grade church in so far as it was Pauline (see 2 Cor. 11:7-9, 12-13).

He was not truly an apostle (see 2 Cor. 11:5, 2 Cor. 12:11-12).

He did not have the qualifications or credentials that they from Jerusalem had (see 2 Cor. 11:22-12:18).

His refusing financial support was only admitting to inferiority (see 2 Cor. 12:16-19).

Points of Interest

- The character of God (see 2 Cor. 1:3-4)
- The triumphant ministry of Christ (see 2 Cor. 2:14)
- Ours is a spiritual ministry, not a legal one (see 2 Cor. 3)
- The power of Satan (see 2 Cor. 4:3-4)
- Our absolute salvation and the judgment seat of Christ (see 2 Cor. 5)
- The transforming power of the Gospel (see 2 Cor. 5)
- Separation from all evil (see 2 Cor. 6)
- The principles of giving (see 2 Cor. 8-9)
- Vindication of apostleship (see 2 Cor. 10-11)
- Exposure of false teachers (see 2 Cor. 10-11)
- The all-sufficient grace of God (see 2 Cor. 12)

Galatians

The Readers

Galatia was a Roman province in Asia Minor. It was populated chiefly by Gauls who emigrated from France in 300 B.C. They were a very impulsive, changeable people.

This probably accounts for their enthusiastic reception of Paul when he first came to them (see Galatians 4:14). "But ye received me as an angel of God, even as Jesus Christ," and accounts no doubt for their sudden swing to "another gospel" (see Galatians 1:6).

Paul said, "I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." Paul probably had this situation in mind when he wrote to the Ephesian church four years later, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

The Occasion and Object of Writing

The Judaizers were a perpetual menace to Paul's work. They refused to accept the Gospel of pure grace and insisted that unless the believer kept the Law of Moses and submitted to the rite of circumcision, one could not be saved. These men were quick to take advantage of the weakness and immaturity of the new churches planted by Paul. Their insidious doctrine was readily accepted by some of the new converts; this caused confusion and wrecked the faith of some. Such teaching is the very negation of Christianity.

Paul wrote to the Galatians to establish at least two things: (1) that the Lord Jesus delivered his ministry to him, and (2) that his authority and message were divine. This probably puts the message of the epistle in a nutshell:

Paul defends his apostolic authority (Galatians 1:10-2:15)

Paul's defense of old exposition of salvation and sanctification of faith alone (Galatians 3-6).

The aim of this great epistle is to show that Christianity rests on the principle of faith and Judaism is based on the "by works" principle. There can be no more fellowship between them than there was between Sarah and Hagar or between Isaac and Ishmael (see Galatians 4). The consideration of this epistle brings us to the end of what we have mentioned before as the evangelical epistles (i.e. Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians).

Read Romans to be grounded in Christian doctrine.

Read Corinthians to be guided in Christian practice.

Read Galatians to be guarded against deceptive error.

Sidlow Baxter presents a very interesting analysis. He entitles the epistle "Liberation through the Gospel."

Then he proceeds to divide it up as follows:

1. The Authenticity of the Gospel (Chapters 1-2)

A. Genuine as to its origin

B. Genuine as to its nature

2. The Superiority of the Gospel (Chapters 3-4)

A. In the new relationship it produces

B. In the privileges it releases

3. The True Liberty of the Gospel (Chapters 5-6)

A. Love-service ends law-bondage

B. The Spirit ends flesh-bondage

This epistle truly is the Magna Carta of spiritual emancipation. The truth expounded played a great part in the Reformation. Luther said, "This is my epistle."

The Galatians were a simple, rural people and understood certain terms. Paul uses some of these to illustrate great spiritual truths. These consist of words such as:

- Fruit-bearing: the fruit of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23)
- Burden-bearing: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." (see Galatians 6:2)
- Seed-bearing: Whatsoever a man soweth (see Galatians 6:7). Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not (see Galatians 6:9).
- Brand-bearing: I bear in my body the marks (or brands) of the Lord Jesus (see Galatians 6:17).

Some of the great truths expressed:

There is no other gospel than that which Paul preached. Note the admonition in Galatians 1:8-9. Paul's Gospel was received as a direct revelation from God, not from man (see Galatians 1:11-12).

Justification by faith is the theme against the Judaizers' claim of "by works." Note and memorize Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ [...]"

Galatians 4 teaches that there is no salvation through the Law. Legality brings barrenness to the soul and a loss of spiritual joy.

The “works of the flesh” are contrasted with the “fruit of the Spirit” revealed in Galatians 5. [Study these carefully.]

Chapter 6 is full of instruction with regards to the following:

1. Restoring an erring believer (Galatians 6:1)
2. Bearing one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2)
3. The unalterable principle of reaping what is sown (Galatians 6:7-8)
4. The fact that our glory should be in the cross of Christ (Galatians 6:14)
5. In Christ, we are new creatures (Galatians 6:15)

One of the best and most simple outlines is as follows:

Chapters 1-2 are devoted largely to setting forth the nature of Paul’s apostleship.

Chapters 3-4 are a statement of what His gospel really is. It is a message of grace that calls you forth.

Chapters 5-6 show that after receiving His Gospel, there lies the necessity of living it out. The power of the cross and the energy of the Spirit are presented as efficacious, rather than the effects to keep the law.

Ephesians

Introduction

Ephesus was a great city in Asia Minor. She called herself the first city of Asia. Apart from Paul's visit to Rome, this was the most important center visited by Paul. Ephesus was an important center commercially, intellectually, and religiously. She also boasted one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the glistening temple of Diana, who was the great goddess of the Ephesians (see Acts 19:43).

The history of the Ephesian Church can be traced in detail throughout the New Testament. Paul founded and established the church in Acts 19:20. The spiritual maturity and capacity of the church can be ascertained in that he fed them "strong meat" (see Ephesians 1:3-14). Moreover, this epistle warns against the conflict with evil spirits (see Ephesians 6:10). This was a real menace at Ephesus (see Acts 19:11-17).

The letters to Timothy, who was left at Ephesus to carry on the work (see 1 Timothy 1:3), show the next stage in its history. False teachers had begun to show their erroneous doctrine, so Paul sends instructions to Timothy regarding sound doctrine and proper behavior in the church.

In Revelation 2:1-7, the last chapter is written in the history of this church. It is a sad word. It is an inglorious end; she has left her first love, Christ (see Rev. 2:4). When she did not repent of her condition, as instructed, Church history shows that she was removed and her lamp stand no longer shone as a witness in Ephesus.

Paul made a short visit to Ephesus during his second missionary tour (see Acts 18:19-20). On his third missionary journey he stayed for upwards of two years (see Acts 19:10). His stay among them probably accounts for the spiritual maturity of the local assembly.

The Theme

In Ephesians, the church is seen as the body of Christ. He is “Head over all things to the church, which is His Body.” The themes of the first three chapters are:

1. The origin of the church
2. The formation of the church
3. The purpose of the church

The second three chapters depict and describe the Christian’s “walk” and “warfare.” Dean Farrar says that “this epistle is unparalleled.” Dr. A.T. Pierson called it “Paul’s third heaven epistle.” It is the Mount Pisgah of the New Testament from which we survey God’s purposes from eternity to eternity. From its glorious heights, we view the “ages past” (Ephesians 3:5), the “present age” (Ephesians 3:10), and the “ages to come” (Ephesians 2:7).

Analysis

Let us now illustrate more fully the aforementioned truths:

Part I - Doctrinal

Ephesians 1-3

1. The Origin of the Church (Ephesians 1)
 - a. The Father elects (Ephesians 1:1-6)
 - b. The Son redeems (Ephesians 1:7-10)

- c. The Spirit applies (Ephesians 1:11-14)
- d. Paul's prayer for the church (Ephesians 1:15-23)
- 2. The Formation of the Church (Ephesians 2)
 - a. Salvation (Ephesians 2:1-10) - But God who is rich in mercy (Eph. 2:4)
 - b. Reconciliation (Ephesians 2:11-18) - But now...made nigh (Eph. 2:13)
 - c. Association (Ephesians 2:19-22) - But ye are fellow citizens (Eph. 2:19)
- 3. The Purpose of the Church (Ephesians 3)
 - a. The revelation of the mystery (Ephesians 3:1-7)
 - b. The purpose of the mystery (Ephesians 3:8-13)
 - c. The prayer for appreciation of the mystery (Ephesians 3:14-21)

Part II - Practical

Ephesians 4-6

- 1. Christian Conduct (Ephesians 4-6:9)
 - a. In Church Life (Ephesians 4:1-16) - Walk in unity
 - b. In Personal Life (Ephesians 4:17-24) - Walk in purity
 - c. In Social Life (Ephesians 4:24 to Ephesians 5:17):
 - 1. Walk in truth (Ephesians 4:25)
 - 2. Walk in love (Ephesians 5:1)
 - 3. Walk in light (Ephesians 5:8)
 - 4. Walk in wisdom (Ephesians 5:15)
 - d. In Domestic Life (Ephesians 5:18 to Ephesians 6:9):
 - 1. Walk in the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-21)

2. Wives and Husbands – submission and love
(Ephesians 5:22-23)

3. Children and parents – honor and discipline
(Ephesians 6:1-4)

4. Servants and masters – obedience and justice
(Ephesians 6:9)

2. Christian Conflict (Ephesians 6:10-20)

a. The warrior (Ephesians 6:10-11)

b. The warfare (Ephesians 6:12)

c. The weapons (Ephesians 6:13-20)

This epistle was not directed to novices in the Christian faith, but to those who, having achieved some maturity in spiritual experience, wished to go on to fuller knowledge and life. One cannot but conclude that the theme of the letter is the Church in its universal aspect rather than the local aspect. This teaching permeates especially the first three chapters. We learn that the sphere of the believer's activities is in "the heavenlies." This is a spiritual locality rather than a geographical one. See Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 1:10, Ephesians 1:20, Ephesians 2:6, 10, and Ephesians 6:12.

One other outline is necessary to illustrate the central theme, the Church as the Body of Christ, its witness within the world, and its conflict against the forces of evil.

The Church in the Purpose of God (Ephesians 1:3-14)

The Church and the Power of God (Ephesians 1:15 to Ephesians 2:10)

The Church as the Household of God (Ephesians 2:11-22)

The Church as the Revelation of God (Ephesians 3:1-13)

The Church as the Fullness of God (Ephesians 3:14-21)

The Church and the Standards of God (Ephesians 4:1 to Ephesians 6:9)

The Church and the Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20)

There is also described for us the dynamic of the Church's life, which is "The Holy Spirit:"

He is the seal of our acceptance (Ephesians 1:13).

He is the means of access to God (Ephesians 2:18).

He is the source of revealed truth (Ephesians 3:5).

He is the secret of universal power (Ephesians 3:16).

He is the bond of unity (Ephesians 4:3-4).

He is the stimulus of joy (Ephesians 5:18).

He is the armorer for conflict (Ephesians 6:17)

Below are additional notes that may be helpful for a study in Ephesians.

Our Wealth in Christ - Part I (Ephesians 1-3)

Our spiritual blessings in Christ:

1. Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4)

2. Predestined unto the adoption of children (Ephesians 1:5-6)

3. Redemption through his blood (Ephesians 1:7-8)

4. Revelation—made known the mystery of his will (Ephesians 1:9-10)

5. Inheritance—in whom also we have obtained an inheritance (Ephesians 1:11-12)

6. Sealed by the Spirit—after we believed (Ephesians 1:13-14)

Ephesians 1:15-23 reveals a prayer for spiritual perception. That we may know:

- What is the hope of His calling
- The riches of His inheritance in the Saints
- The exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe

Paul's other prayer in Ephesians 3:13-21 is threefold. The apostle prays that we may be:

1. Strengthened by the power by His Spirit
2. Rooted and grounded in love
3. Filled with the fullness of God

Ephesians 2 depicts what we once were and what we now are in Christ.

1. What we once were - without Christ:

- A. Spiritually dead
- B. Subject to Satan
- C. Controlled by the flesh
- D. Under Divine condemnation

2. What we now are - in Christ

- A. Quickened

B. Raised

C. In the Heavenlies

D. Objects of superlative favor

[But now in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:11-18). Now therefore ye are (Ephesians 2:19-22)]

Ephesians 3:

- Revealing of the divine mystery (Ephesians 3:1-12)
- Receiving of divine fullness (Ephesians 3:13-21)

Our Walk in Christ – Part II (Ephesians 4-6)

Philippians

This was the first epistle ever written to a Christian Church in Europe. Paul's visit to Europe, not ostentatious in character, had tremendous repercussions throughout the whole continent. His going there was the result of what we now know as the "Macedonian Vision," described for us in Acts 16:9. The context clearly shows that it was God's will for the Gospel to enter into Europe.

Philippi was a Roman colony. It was named after Philip, father of Alexander the Great (see Acts 16). Very few Jews lived at Philippi, probably because it was a "military colony," rather than a "mercantile city." This would account for the fact that the opposition Paul and his companions received was from the Philippians themselves.

The church at Philippi held a unique place in the heart and affections of the apostle. Being a personal letter, he uses terms of endearment profusely, more profuse than in any other epistle he wrote. Some examples of this are found in the following verses:

Philippians 4:10 "Your affectionate considerateness hath flourished again."

Philippians 4:14 "You communicated with me in my affliction."

Philippians 4:18 "I have all" and "abound." "I am full" having received from Epaphroditus your offering.

Philippians 1:7 Paul writes, "I have you in my heart."

Philippians 1:8 Paul writes, “How greatly I long after you.”

Three times in four chapters, the adjective “beloved” flows from the apostle’s pen. Then the climax is reached in Philippians 4:1 where he addresses them as “dearly beloved,” “longed for,” “his joy and crown,” and again “dearly beloved.” These terms, I believe, are not the mere use of words, or meaningless endearments; they are the expressions of genuine love, conceived and nurtured in the love of Christ.

This epistle, though not one of the most remarkable or deepest, nevertheless is undoubtedly one of the sweetest. The theological teaching is more incidental, than on purpose. Despite this, there are a few gems of truth and doctrine couched in its content. For instance, the components of a true assembly are mentioned Philippians 1:1. These include “saints,” “bishops,” and “deacons.” Then, one must mention Philippians 2:5-11, which is the leading doctrinal passage of the epistle and deals with the “incarnation” and “exaltation” of Christ. This tremendous truth is unveiled when the Christian attribute of humility is being taught. This splendid theological paragraph is unveiled in a background of strife, vain glory, wrong self-esteem, disunity, murmurings, and disputing. The careful reader will not miss the prominent and recurring truths in the epistle.

1. Christian joy and rejoicing (this is mentioned eleven times)
2. Gain in Christ (Philippians 1:21-23, Philippians 3:7-8, and Philippians 4:19)
3. Teaching by example:

A. Christ (Philippians 2:5-11)

B. Timothy (Philippians 2:19-24)

C. Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-30)

D. Paul (Philippians 3:1-4:9)

This epistle will never grip our heart as it should unless we perceive and appropriate the fourfold presentation of Christ in relation to the believer's life. Fortunately, the chapters lend themselves to Christ. They also accurately present the four-fold picture of Christ. Furthermore, we find a key verse in each chapter expressing the key idea.

Chapter 1: Christ is the believer's life

Key verse: "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21)

Chapter 2: Christ is the believer's mind

Key verse: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5)

Chapter 3: Christ is the believer's goal

Key verse: "That I may know him" (Philippians 3:10)

Chapter 4: Christ is the believer's strength

Key verse: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13)

Christ our life - Christ our mind - Christ our goal - Christ our strength.

Please note also another theme that permeates the letter: "The Gospel."

- Fellowship in the Gospel (Philippians 1:5)

- Confirmation of the Gospel (Philippians 1:7)

- Progress of the Gospel (Philippians 1:12)

- Defense of the Gospel (Philippians 1:16)
- Worthy of the Gospel (Philippians 1:27)
- Striving for the faith of the Gospel (Philippians 1:27)
- Service in the Gospel (Philippians 2:22)
- Labor in the Gospel (Philippians 4:3)
- Beginning of the Gospel (Philippians 4:15)

Despite its frequent mention, no attempt is made by the apostle to define the term.

Philippians 1: This chapter describes the zenith of Christian living - that Christ may be magnified in my body, in life or death. He says that, "For me to live is Christ." Paul also describes here the blessedness of being with Christ and that the gain we receive is far better.

Philippians 2: This chapter illustrates precept by example and that the act of self-humbling leads to the exaltation by the Father.

Philippians 3: This chapter contains the Christian's primary objective, "Suffer the loss of all things that I may win Christ."

Philippians 4: This chapter describes the abiding presence of Christ, who stands guard over our hearts—removing all anxious thoughts. He grants us peace and gives us strength, supplying all our need.

Colossians

We have now reached the group of letters known as the Prison Epistles. They are as follows: Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon.

Colossians 2:1 would convey to us that Paul had never visited Colosse, but indirectly this church probably owed its existence to him. See Acts 19:10, which says “all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus.” It is believed that Epaphras and Archipus heard Paul preach at Ephesus and carried the message to their hometown of Colosse. The result was the establishment of an assembly of Christians. The Colossian believers met together and held their meetings in Philemon’s house (see Philemon 2).

Why did Paul write this letter?

The apostle Paul probably heard of conditions in Colosse through Epaphrus, possibly a fellow prisoner while he was in the Roman prison. That there were errors in the church there is no doubt. This is what called forth the corrective ministry of the epistle. Judaism’s bondage was threatening their spiritual existence. (Note the references to meats and drinks, Sabbaths, new moons, circumcision, and holy days - see Col. 2:11, 14, 16).

There were also certain phases of the Gnostic heresy prevalent. Note the references to philosophy, angel worship, asceticism, and will worship in Col. 2:8 and Col. 2:18-23. Gnosticism attacked the deity and person of Christ. It taught that each revelation of God became successively weaker; so Jesus Christ being the last link in the chain was nothing more than a superman and was

not divine. Paul replies to this heresy with an unparalleled description of the deity and glory of Christ (see Col. 1:13-22). Every believer should be familiar with this passage.

In this connection, please note Col. 2:9, "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Contrast this with Gnosticism. Christ was divine and unique; Christ was God manifest in flesh. Christ is the heart of this epistle, as He is of all the Scriptures. The supreme dignity, glory, and unapproachable pre-eminence of the Lord Jesus are viewed from various standpoints:

Christ is seen as "All in all."

- In Deity: He is equal with God, the image of God (Col. 1:15), and the fullness of God (Col. 1:19). See Col. 2:9.
- In Creation: He is the creator of the Universe (Col. 1:16). He is the cause, head, and goal of the created Universe.
- In Providence: He is the sustainer of the Universe (Col. 1:17). He is the origination, manifestation, sustentation, and consummation of the Universe.
- In Church: He is the Head of the Body (Col. 1:18). He is the supreme, paramount, predominant, and preeminent One.
- In Redemption: He is the only Redeemer (Col. 1:20-22).
- In Gospel Mystery: Christ in you is the hope of glory (Col. 1:27).

The heresy, which was enslaving some of the believers at Colosse, denied this and was closely connected with philosophy (Col. 11:8). It had a "show of wisdom" (see Col. 2:23). It therefore appealed to those of higher

intellect (Intelligencia). Are we exempt from this today? What is being attacked more today than the deity of Christ? We need to be familiar with the “Christ of the Colossians” that we might avoid the “Colossian error.”

The epistle can be analyzed as follows:

Christ - The Fullness of God to Us

I. Introductory Thanksgiving: Col. 1:1-8

A. Opening prayer for “fullness” and “worthy walk:” Col. 1:9-14.

B. The rest of the epistle is based on this prayer.

II. Doctrinal: “That ye may be filled with the knowledge of Christ who is:” Col. 1-2

A. The fullness of God in creation (Col. 1:15-18)

B. The fullness of God in redemption (Col. 1:19-23)

C. The fullness of God in the Church (Col. 1:24-Col. 2:7)

D. The fullness of God versus heresy (Col. 2:8-23)

III. Practical: “That ye may walk worthy” Col. 3-4

A. The new life – and believers individually (Col. 3:1-11)

B. The new life – and believers reciprocally (mutual-shared) (Col. 3:12-17)

C. The new life – and domestic relationships (Col. 3:18-21)

D. The new life – and employment obligations (Col. 3:22-Col. 4:1)

E. The new life – and they who are without (Col. 4:1-6)

IV. The Conclusion: Col. 4:7-18

We have stressed thus far the doctrinal side of the epistle, but let us now dwell a little on the practical side. Colossians 3:1-4 says that we should live Christ, we should seek Christ, we should show Christ and we should love Christ.

We are risen with Christ; this is our past.

Our life is hid with Christ in God; this is our present.

When Christ shall appear we shall also appear with Him in Glory; this is our future.

Colossians 3:5 says that we have to mortify our members; we have to crucify them. In connection with this, please study Colossians 3:5-9. Colossians 3:10 says that we have to put on the “new man.” In this connection, please study Colossians 3:10-17.

Following almost with unbroken sequence there come exhortations to wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants, and masters. There is a striking similarity between this portion of Colossians and Ephesians 5 and 6. In fact, it is worthy of note that there is a close affinity between Ephesians and Colossians. One has calculated that 78 out of the 95 verses in Colossians have a “marked resemblance” to verses in Ephesians.

Before leaving the epistle, let us hearken again to its superlative presentation of the all-pre-eminent God-Man Savior, who is the “fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

He is the visible form of the invisible God.

He is the heir of all creation.

In Him the universe was created.

He IS or WAS before the universe.

In Him the universe coheres.

He is the Head of the Body, the Church.

He is the firstborn from among the dead.

In conclusion, please note the sevenfold salvation, which is ours in Christ, the incomparable One.

Inheritance: "Partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12)

Deliverance: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness" (Col. 1:13)

Translation: "And hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love" (Col. 1:13)

Redemption: "In whom we have redemption through His blood" (Col. 1:14)

Forgiveness: "Even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14)

Reconciliation: "And you hath He reconciled" (Col. 1:21)

Transfiguration: "To present you holy and blameless in His sight" (Col. 1:22)

1 Thessalonians

Paul proceeded on to Thessalonica after his visit to Philippi, where he was flogged (see Acts 16). The record of his visit there is found in Acts 17:1-10. For three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Old Testament, showing that Jesus was the Christ. The result was that some of them believed, including some Jews, a great number of Greeks, and some chief women.

Those who rejected the message also stirred up opposition against the missionaries and they, as well as the believers, were forced to leave the city. The Thessalonians “turned to God from idols.” See 1 Thess. 1:9. This would lead us to believe that the church was largely Gentile, because Jews were typically not idolaters. Another interesting point is the absence of Old Testament references. This letter was probably written just a few months after their conversion to God from idols. The reading of the epistle brings us to the conclusion that they were well-grounded in the faith.

Paul had taught them the doctrines of the Trinity (see 1 Thessalonians 1:1-6), election (see 1 Thessalonians 1:4), the Second Coming, which is mentioned in every chapter, and finally, practical sanctification (see 1 Thessalonians 4:1-4). Their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope, declares them to be a healthy, aggressive group of believers.

The Purpose of Writing

Timothy probably had returned to Thessalonica for a period of time in order to strengthen and comfort the suffering and persecuted believers. When Timothy left

them, he proceeded to Corinth, where he reported to Paul the conditions as they were in the church (see Acts 18:5).

The report was favorable for the most part, however a few defects still existed. The epistle was written to correct the following issues:

Some had stopped working in view of the Lord's coming.

Others mourned the loss of loved ones.

Some were not walking as they should have been.

Immorality was present.

Some were defrauding their brethren.

The Theme

Just as Christ is the heart of Colossians, His Coming is the heart of I Thessalonians.

Chapter 1: Conversion and the Second Advent

Chapter 2: Service and the Second Advent

Chapter 3: Purity and the Second Advent

Chapter 4: Bereavement and the Second Advent

Chapter 5: Alertness and the Second Advent

Paul relates this to the Christian experience through each of the chapters.

Chapter 1: The Lord's Coming is an inspiring hope for the young convert.

Chapter 2: The Lord's Coming is an encouraging hope for the faithful servant.

Chapter 3: The Lord's Coming is a purifying hope for the believer.

Chapter 4: The Lord's Coming is a comforting hope for the bereaved.

Chapter 5: The Lord's Coming is a rousing hope for the sleepy Christian.

Further analysis:

Chapter 1: A child born – Conversion

Chapter 2: A child nursed

Chapter 3: A child taught to walk

Chapter 4: A child comforted

Chapter 5: A child taught to fight

Their work of faith was that they turned to God. Their labor of love was to serve the living and true God. Their patience of hope was to wait for his Son from Heaven. Please note the classic passage that deals with the Lord's Coming, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, we are told to honor the overseers who are overseers indeed. 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 detail some of the work of overseers. Direct commands are given in the following verses, such as "rejoice evermore" (1 Thessalonians 5:16), "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), "in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:18), "quench not the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19) and finally, in 1 Thessalonians 5:22, we are to "abstain from the appearance of evil."

2 Thessalonians

The Recipients and Its Purpose

The readers and recipients of 2 Thessalonians were the believers at Thessalonica. The purpose of the second epistle is unique. It was written from Corinth just a few months after the first one. The teaching of the first epistle had not had all the desired effects; a new problem, relative to the Lord's coming and the Day of the Lord, had arisen and some were disturbed greatly by this. Some false teachers were teaching that the Day of the Lord had come.

2 Thessalonians 2:2 gives the distinct impression that the origin of this teaching arose: (1) from a complete distortion of Paul's first letter, (2) from a forged letter bearing his signature, (3) from false reports that Paul himself believed this, or (4) from imaginary revelations of the Spirit. Therefore, the second epistle was written to counteract this notion and to place the doctrine of the Lord's coming in correct focus. The result of these false teachings was that some fanatics had left their employment, and were a burden to the fellowship. The soil of idleness germinates "busy bodies" (see 2 Thessalonians 3:11) and also endangers and disturbs the harmony of the assembly (see 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12).

The Theme

The theme is the same as the first epistle - the Lord's Coming. As a point of interest, the Lord's Coming is referred to over 300 times in the New Testament. This is the central theme of this epistle. Each of the chapters

provides significant aspects that contribute to this overarching theme:

Chapter one offers comfort from the hope of Christ's imminent return.

Chapter two gives a word of caution regarding the exact time of Christ's return.

Chapter three provides a command that is relative in the light of Christ's return.

Let me explain these observations a little more:

Chapter 1 shows the believers at Thessalonica suffering considerably for their faith. They were enduring the tribulations and persecutions (see 2 Thess. 1:4). To encourage them, Paul wrote of the destruction of those that troubled them (see 2 Thess. 1:7-10).

Chapter 2, however, is prophetic and Paul would instruct them and us as to the "when" and "how" of His coming. Paul says in effect, that the Day of the Lord has not come. Two things must happen first. There must first be the falling away or "the apostasy," and then the man of sin must be revealed (see 2 Thess. 2:3).

Chapter 3 is full of practical exhortations in view of the Lord's coming. We should wait with patience, watch with endurance, and work until He comes. The corrective ministry of this epistle had immediate and lasting effects on the character of this church. For centuries later it was known as the "Orthodox Church", being sound in doctrine, It was also known as the "Model Church." This brings us to believe that a church with a correct understanding and perspective of the Lord's Coming will be orthodox in its doctrine, holy in character, and evangelical in nature.

The first and second letters give us an entirely different view of the Lord's coming. In the first epistle, it was a question of the dead believers missing the eternal glory of eternity. To counteract this, Paul, by revelation from the Lord, expounded what we know today as the "Rapture of the Church." At this event, dead believers will be resurrected, living believers will be changed, and together we will be raptured to meet the Lord in the air. That settled forever the question of those who had fallen asleep in Christ.

The second epistle deals with a much different phase of the Lord's coming. While the first letter deals with the rapture, the second deals with the revelation. The differences between the two are as follows: The Rapture is when the Lord comes to the air for His Saints. It has everything to do with the Church and involves a blessing for believers. The revelation, on the other hand, is the coming of the Lord to the earth with His Saints. It has everything to do with the world and involves the Lord's wrath being poured out upon the unbelievers.

There are two terms which we would do well to consider at this point. One of them is in the immediate context, and the other is distinct from and completely unrelated. Let us consider both the Day of Christ and the Day of the Lord.

The Day of Christ is:

- Always spoken of in connection with believers.
- Made reference to six different times in the New Testament.
- Enacted in the air.
- A period of joy and reward.

- Always closely associated with the Rapture and the Judgment Seat of Christ.

On the other hand, The Day of the Lord is:

- Always referred to in connection with unbelievers.
- The subject of Old Testament prophecy (never the Day of Christ).
- Enacted upon earth.
- A period of judgment and punishment. A “great and terrible day” (see Joel 2:31).

Furthermore, angels are prominent in connection with the Day of the Lord, but they are never mentioned in connection with the day of Christ. Having explained this, apply it to our present study. The believers were suffering. They were afflicted and persecuted. Some false teachers took these tribulations and applied them as pertaining to the Day of the Lord.

Paul reminds them that certain things must happen before the Day arrives. These include the apostasy and the revelation of the “man of sin.” We believe that the full-blown apostasy will not take place until the Church has been removed. We also believe that the revelation of the “man of sin” will not be consummated until the removal of the Restrainer, which is the Holy Spirit.

Analysis

2 Thessalonians 1 - The Day of the Lord and the judgment of the ungodly

2 Thessalonians 2 - The Day of the Lord and the Man of Sin

2 Thessalonians 3 - The Day of the Lord and the Christian's moral obligation There is one more suggested outline. It is as follows:

2 Thessalonians 1 - Anticipation of the Day of the Lord

2 Thessalonians 2 - Description of the Day of the Lord

2 Thessalonians 3 - Proper conduct in view of the Day of the Lord

1 Timothy

Of Paul's epistles there can be made two divisions. These two divisions make up the prison epistles and the pastoral epistles. The prison epistles consist of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, while the pastoral epistles include 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. These are the latest of Paul's writings and are dated towards the end of his life.

1 Timothy was a personal letter from Paul to Timothy, his son in the faith. Let us look at Timothy's biography for a moment. Timothy was of mixed Jewish and Gentile parentage. His mother and grandmother were devout Jewesses, women of faith, who taught him the Word from his childhood (see 2 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 3:15). He lived in Lystra and was probably converted there during Paul's first visit, which is described in Acts 14. When Paul revisited Lystra (see Acts 16), Timothy is described as a "disciple." His spiritual progress was so pronounced that Paul invited him to accompany him on his missionary journey.

Timothy's character is revealed in Paul's writings to him:

He was timid (2 Timothy 6:7).

He was subject to stomach trouble (1 Timothy 5:23).

He was affectionate (2 Timothy 1:4).

He was warned not to give way to youthful lusts (2 Timothy 2:22) and not be ashamed of the Gospel (2 Timothy 1:8).

He was commended for his loyalty more than any of Paul's other companions (1 Corinthians 16:10, Philippians 2:19, 2 Timothy 3:10).

Paul entrusted him with some of the more difficult tasks at Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus, despite his comparative youth.

The Purpose of Writing

Paul had predicted some years before that heresies would arise in the church at Ephesus (see Acts 20:28-32). This had taken place (see 1 Thessalonians 1:3). The errors were "fables," endless genealogies, (see 1 Timothy 1:4) and vain jangling (see 1 Timothy 1:6). False teachers were refuting the truth that Paul had taught in Ephesus for three years. There were the Judaizers and the Gnostics. The Judaizers taught that law and grace had to be mixed for salvation. The Gnostics had their endless genealogies [describe these] and Paul regarded their doctrine as fables, being nothing more than the fruit of man's imagination.

The Theme

The theme of the epistle centers around the words of 1 Thessalonians 3:15, "That thou may know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth." The church is God's instrument for the display of His truth, the truth of which the church is the pillar and ground, which is stated in 1 Thessalonians 3:16.

The phrase, "without controversy" is such a contrast to the phrases "vain janglings" and "fables" that Paul uses to describe Gnosticism. God was manifest in the flesh. Then note the phrases, "preached unto the Gentiles" and

“believed on in the world.” This goes far beyond the boundaries of Judaism with its narrow, national limits. This verse proclaims the voluntary humiliation and ultimate exaltation of Christ. Let the church proclaim this, as this is her function. She is the pillar and ground of truth concerning Jesus, from His incarnation to His glorification.

Analysis

The Charge to Timothy:

1. Regarding the faith - 1 Timothy 1
 - A. The nature of the gospel (1 Timothy 1:1-11)
 - B. Paul’s commission (1 Timothy 1:12-17)
 - C. Timothy’s charge (1 Timothy 1:18-20)
2. Regarding Prayer - 1 Timothy 2
 - A. The subjects of prayer (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
 - B. The reasons for prayer (1 Timothy 2:3-7)
 - C. The manner of prayer (1 Timothy 2:8)
 - D. Respective places of men and women in the church (1 Timothy 2:9-15)
3. Regarding Elders & Deacons - 1 Timothy 3
 - A. Qualifications of elders/bishops (1 Timothy 3:1-7)
 - B. Qualifications of deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13)
 - C. Behavior in the house of God (1 Timothy 3:14-16)
4. Regarding Timothy’s own ministry - 1 Timothy 4-6
 - A. Toward the whole church (1 Timothy 4)
 - B. Towards widows (1 Timothy 5:3-16)

- C. Towards elders (1 Timothy 5:1, 17-22)
- D. Towards servants (1 Timothy 6:1-2)
- E. Towards the covetous (1 Timothy 6:6-10)
- F. Towards the wealthy (1 Timothy 6:17-19)