
The Pauline Epistles

International Educational Fellowship School of Ministry

The Pauline Epistles

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Introduction

It is recommended that the student have his or her Bible handy as they work through the manual. The student should look up given Scripture references and find answers to the study questions in the Bible itself before reading the answers given in the back of the manual. The manual is not meant to replace Bible study, but to aid and encourage it. Therefore the manual will frequently direct the student back to the Scriptures in search of answers.

It should be noted that not all of Paul's letters are addressed in this manual. This text only covers Paul's Prison and Pastoral Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, 1-2 Timothy, and Titus). It should also be noted that the books are not treated in this manual in chronological sequence. Instead, they are examined in the order in which they are found in modern translations of the Bible.

The student will occasionally be asked questions by the text. After answering them, the student should check his/her answers in the back of this manual. Other "review" questions will have answers which will vary greatly in accordance with the individual student's own experiences and environment. The student is encouraged to answer these questions in order to see how the Scriptures apply to his or her life.

Bible study is only effective to the extent that it is applied to life. So let the letters Paul wrote have the same effect on you that they were meant to have on their original readers.

God bless you as you do so.

Chapter One

Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

Authorship

The book of Ephesians itself names Paul as its author, (see 1:1 and 3:1), and the early church unanimously concurred. Paul, as he often states in the New Testament, was specially called by God to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:8, Acts 22:21, Romans 11:13 and Galatians 2:7,8).

Date and Destination

Paul wrote this letter while in prison, as seen in verses 3:1, 4:1 and 6:20. Cross referencing the Acts account with other historical records places Paul's imprisonment in Ceasarea from A.D. 57-59. It might have been during this time that Paul wrote Ephesians, or it might have been during a later imprisonment such as the one in Rome, recorded in Acts 28.

It is thought that Paul wrote this letter at about the same time he wrote his letter to the Colossians. Tychicus seems to have delivered both of these letters, as seen in Ephesians 6:21, 22 and Colossians 4:7,8. Also, the letters are strikingly similar.

The book we call "Ephesians" may in fact be a letter Paul wrote to Gentile churches in general. These churches would include both those founded by Paul and those founded by others. The evidence for this belief includes the following facts:

- Some of the ancient manuscripts of the book do not include the words "in Ephesus" in 1:11; thus the people being addressed in these manuscripts are simply, "the saints, the faithful in Christ Jesus". And apart from 1:1, there is not mention of "Ephesus" or "Ephesians" anywhere in the letter.
- There are no personal greetings in the letter. No one saint in the congregation is addressed by name. This would seem natural if the letter had been

written to many churches, and somewhat less so if it was written to one particular church with whom the Apostle was well acquainted.

- In 1:15 Paul speaks of having heard about the faith and love of these Christians, as if he had no personal knowledge of these things. In Paul's writings, this statement is only paralleled by statements made to churches Paul had not founded (Romans 1:8-10 and Colossians 1:3-8). Yet Paul had founded the church in Ephesus (Acts 19).

- Paul speaks of the certainty that his audience has heard of his ministry to the Gentiles (3:2), but the Ephesian Christians had experienced this ministry for three years (Acts 20:21).

- Paul addresses no problems in the letter which are uniquely Ephesian. When Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, he wrote about problems in their meetings (I Corinthians 11:17). When he wrote to the Galatians churches, he expressed alarm over their desertion of his gospel for another "gospel" (Galatians 1:6,7). And when he wrote to the Thessalonians believers, he addressed problems caused by a false teaching on the Lord's return (I Thessalonians 2:1,2). However, in the letter we call "Ephesians", Paul only addresses problems which are common among the churches.

For these reasons, this letter is best understood as a general epistle written to many churches. Because of the calling of God on the apostle's life and (more importantly) the great emphasis the letter places on God's work among the Gentiles, it seems safe to assume the letter was written to churches which were predominantly Gentile.

Theme: The Identity of the Gentile Believers

Paul spends the first three chapters explaining who the Gentile believers have become in Christ. He also emphasizes that this new standing before God has been brought about God's love, mercy and grace, not by the believer's own efforts. These three chapters are perhaps best summarized by 2:19 - "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household."

The last three chapters may best be summarized by 4:1 - "As a prisoner of the Lord, then I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received." After having established the believers in the knowledge of their new identity, Paul now urges practical application of

this knowledge. Here he exhorts the believers to live in a manner worthy of their new identity in Christ.

The whole book of Ephesians is based on the new identity of the believers - both its spiritual reality and its translation into practical loving service. The book as a whole may best be summarized by 5:8 - "For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light."

Outline of Ephesians

- I. How Gentiles Became Members Of God's Family (Chapters 1-3)
 - A. The Gentile Believers Were Chosen by God - Chpt. 1
 - B. The Gentile Believers Were Brought Near To God Through Christ - Chpt. 2
 - C. The Gentile Believers Were Made Heirs Through The Gospel - Chpt. 3
- II. How Members of God's Family Should Live (Chapters 4-6)
 - A. The Members of God's Family Should Aim For Unity - Chapter 4
 - B. The Members of God's Family Should Live Lives of Love - Chapter 5
 - C. The Members of God's Family Should Wear God's Armor - Chapter 6

How Gentiles Became Members of God's Family (Section I -- Chapters 1-3)

The Gentiles Were Chosen by God - Chapter 1

Paul barely begins his letter before he bursts into praising God for the things which He has done in the lives of the believers. In verses 3-10, Paul speaks of the work of God done in all the Believers' lives; in verses 11-12, the works done specifically in the Jewish believers' lives. In verses 13-14 the works done specifically in the Gentile believers' lives.

Read verses 11-14. How did God mark the Gentile believers as being truly His own people?

The seal in the New Testament symbolizes several things, including a) authority; b) approval; c) authenticity; d) ownership; and e) a guarantee.

Judging by verses 14, the seal of the Holy Spirit in verses 13 seems to signify at least ownership and a guarantee. The Holy Spirit's residence in those Gentiles shows that they belong to God; it also is the guarantee of a future inheritance "which will be received at their redemption". This redemption of God's people undoubtedly refers to the glorified bodies they will receive at the Lord's return. (This is stated in similar terms, but more clearly in Romans 8:23.)

Since Paul has heard of the faith and love of these saints, he has been consistently thanking God for them and praying for them (1:15-16). He asks God to give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they may know Him better (1:17). He also says in 1:18-19 that he prays that, having the eyes of their hearts opened, they will come to know three things:

- The hope to which God has called them. This hope is the final glorification which is referred to in verse 14.
- The riches of God's glorious inheritance in the saints. Not only do the saints have a glorious inheritance in God, but God has a glorious inheritance in the saints. In Romans 8:23, Paul speaks of the saints' glorification as being an adoption of the saints by God. Just as the adoptions of this world bring joy to the fathers as well as to His adopted children. In Ephesians, Paul writes much of the exalted position the believers have in the eyes of God. Here he prays toward the same end that he writes: that the believers will know how special they are to God.
- God's incomparably great power for those who believe. In order to demonstrate what he means by this, Paul to the power of God as manifested in Christ by His resurrection from the dead and His ascension over and above every person, power and authority that is or ever will be (20-21). Paul further states that God has put everything for the Church (1:22-23). Thus we see the incomparably great power of God and the fact that this power is "for us who believe," (verse 19), for God did all these things in Christ for the benefit of the Church.

In verse 23 Paul speaks of One who "fills everything in every way." This verse follows a short series of verses which speak of the great exaltation of Christ by God; and, of course,

Christ is this One spoken of in verse 23. (This is made even more clear in Chapter 4 where Paul states that Christ ascended above the heavens "in order to fill the whole universe" (verse 10).

Few would be surprised that Paul would speak in such terms of Jesus Christ. What is surprising is that Paul says in 1:22-23 that the church is the very fullness of this One who fills all things. This is because Paul sees the lives of the believers as being intertwined with the life of Christ. The believers and Christ are one in spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17).

Therefore, when Christ is physically seated in the heavenly realms, the believers are said to be with Him (Ephesians 2:6). And when the "Jewish believers" evangelized the Gentiles, it is said that Christ "preached peace" to them (Ephesians 2:17). The lives of the two are intertwined.

Ephesians 1:23 may be better understood when compared with Colossians 1:24, where Paul says he is filling up in his own body what is lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions. This in the same way, the life of Jesus is not found only in Jesus, but in every one of His people as well. Therefore, the Church is the fullness of Christ in that Christ is connected to the Church and the Church is connected to Christ.

Now although Paul identifies the Church with Christ he consistently reaches and assumes the subjection of the Church to Christ (e.g. Ephesians 5:24). As there is submission even within the Godhead, (see John 5:19 and 16:13), so there is submission within this being. Admittedly these things are not easily explained or understood. As Paul himself said concerning them, "This is a profound mystery" (Ephesians 5:32).

The Gentile Believers Were Brought to God through Christ (Chapter 2)

Paul begins chapter two with a short series of descriptions of what God has done for these believers. These descriptions tell what the believers used to be, what they are now, and how God brought them from the old into the new.

In the spaces provided below, record what these Scriptures say about the condition of the believers before their regeneration and what God did to bring them into their present condition.

Ephesians 2:4-6

a. Believer's former condition:

b. What God did:

Ephesians 2:12-13

a. Believer's former condition:

b. What Christ did:

Although Paul is speaking to Gentiles, note in verse 3 that the Jewish believers had been in the same condition. Undoubtedly, Paul's reason for describing the former horrid state of the believers is to emphasize the fact that they did not earn their new found position before God. They have attained their new position strictly through the grace of God and their having put their faith in Him (2:9). In contrast to the idea that the believers have made themselves what they are, Paul declares that they are the workmanship of God (2:10).

Which verse in 2:1-10 gives the reason for what God did in our lives? What reason does it give?

Record in the spaces provided below that these verses say God has done for the believers:

1:3

1:4

1:5

1:7

1:8

2:5

2:6

Paul does not just speak of what God has done for the believers, but what God has done for them because of their union with Jesus Christ. In verses 1:3 - 1:14, Paul connects the work of God in the believers to their union with Christ no less than 10 times; in verses 2:1-10, another 5 times. It is because of the believers' union with Christ that God blesses them and works mightily on their behalf.

What do you think Paul's motive is for emphasizing: (a) God's work in bringing the saints from darkness to light? (b) the believers' union with Christ as being the grounds from God's work on their behalf?

As Proverbs 16:18 states, "Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." In emphasizing what God did, Paul is moving the believers away from the thought that they have accomplished their own salvation. And by emphasizing that God showed them this mercy only because of Christ, Paul moves them further from this thought. Thus he attempts to keep them from a self-destruction attitude of pride, so that they will continue to place their trust in God and not in themselves.

Paul consistently credits God with the transformation of the believers. He wants the praise and glory to go to Him. However, he also strongly desires for the believers to know the full nature of their exalted position before God.

In Ephesians 1:23, Paul states that the Church is the Body of Christ. Now in Ephesians 2:11-22, we see the formation of that Body. That is, how Gentiles have been united with Jews in Christ.

In 2:11-12, Paul speaks again of the former state of the Gentile believers. From verse 11, list the four ways in which Paul says that the Gentiles were separated from God and His people.

The Gentiles had indeed been far from God and His people. So far from God that they sometimes sought to worship Him through fornication and idolatry. So far from His people that it astonished the Jews when God first began to pour His Spirit out on them (Acts 10:45).

Yet Paul says in Ephesians that they have been "brought near" (2:13). The separateness spoken of in 2:12 no longer exists. Gentiles who believe in Jesus are not joined in believing Israel. But how?

Ephesians 2:14 says that Christ is "our peace," the One who brings Jew and Gentile together. He is our peace because He has "destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility." That such a barrier and wall had existed is obvious in Luke 4, where an attempt was made on the life of Jesus for speaking of God's mercy to gentiles; and also by the fact that Paul started a near riot in Jerusalem by speaking to Jews of his God given mission to the Gentiles. However, Paul says that this barrier has been destroyed, torn down.

You can find the answers to the following questions in Ephesians 2:14-18.

What was the cause of the wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile?

How did Christ demolish this wall?

The Law of Moses was undoubtedly the most divisive wall between people groups in human history, for it was a wall erected by God Himself. God, through the Law, separated and distinguished the people of Israel from all the other people on earth. However, when Christ died, He abolished the Law (2:15), thus tearing down the wall that divided Jews and Gentiles. And when this wall came down, all lesser walls of distinction came down with it (Colossians 3:11). Therefore, in Christ, all believers constitute but one Body (Ephesians 4:4). This is a truth that Paul emphasized and reemphasizes in Ephesians.

List the four different ways in 2:14-18 in which Paul says the Jewish and Gentile believers have been made one.

As God formed Adam from the dust of the earth, so Christ formed "one new man" from among the Jews and the Gentiles. As throughout the book of Ephesians, Paul here directs this remarks to Gentile believers. They are, Paul continues, "no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household" (2:19).

From verse 20 to the end of chapter two, Paul writes metaphorically of the Jewish and Gentile believers being built together "to become a holy temple in the Lord" (verse 21). This temple has, as its chief cornerstone, Christ Himself.

The thought of the Church *becoming* a holy temple in the Lord might seem troubling because in 1 and 2 Corinthians Paul speaks of the church as already being the Temple of God. The reason for this difference, however, is that while in 1 and 2 Corinthians, Paul is stressing the point that God lives in the believers, in Ephesians, Paul is writing about the formation and growth of the Church. This is seen most clearly in verse 21 where Paul speaks of how the building "rises", an implication of the continuing addition of new converts to the Church.

The "chief cornerstone," used to symbolize Christ here, was, according to some historians, the most important foundation stone. It was the stone chosen to be the beginning and the basis for the rest of the building. Starting with the foundation stone, all the other stones of the building had to be rightly aligned with the chief cornerstone in order to form the building.

This belief certainly fits the context of Ephesians 2:19-22, for here Paul states that in Christ "the whole building is joined together and rises . . ." Indeed, the growth of the Church occurs through the aligning of more and more people's lives with Christ. And when people align themselves with Christ, they are aligning themselves with all other Jews and Gentiles who align themselves with Christ. As Paul states here in the Temple Metaphor, they are "built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit."

The Gentile Believers Were Made Heirs through the Gospel (Chapter 3)

In 3:1-6, Paul speaks of a mystery of God made known to him as well as to the other Apostles and Prophets. The mystery which has been revealed to them is the truth written in chapter two, namely the inclusion of the Gentiles in one body with the Jews through "the gospel".

The gospel or "good news" of which Paul speaks is the message that Christ through His death has brought about the reconciliation of men to God. It had been prophesied in the Old

Testament that Gentiles would one day be included among God's people and it has been revealed to the prophets and Apostles that the time for that to happen is now and the means by which it happens is the Gospel.

Considering what is written in Ephesians 3:1-6, so you see why Paul, speaking to Gentiles in the Temple Metaphor, says that the Apostles and Prophets are the foundation of the building? Explain your answer.

That the uniting of Jew and Gentile in the Church has enormous implications for both the Jews and the Gentiles is obvious. However, Paul goes far beyond this thought.

According to 3:10, God's manifold wisdom is being made known through the Church to whom?

In the Old Testament, we see instances of God displaying His grace through His people to the spiritual hosts of heaven - both good and evil. We see God commanding Abraham to slay His son Isaac (Genesis 22), and the Lord's angel staying Abraham's hand and staying Abraham's hand saying, "Now I know that you fear God. . ." (Genesis 22:11-12). We see God pointing out to Satan the faithfulness of His servant Job and allowing Satan to wreak havoc in Job's life in order that Satan might know the depth of this faithfulness. Now, here in Ephesians we see God displaying His wisdom through the Church "to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms". That Paul has the evil hosts of heaven in mind here seems clear by Ephesians 6:12, where he uses this same term to describe the spiritual forces of evil.

A key word in 3:10 is "now". Now the wisdom of God is being made known through the Church . . ." Why is the time now? Because God's eternal purpose has been accomplished in Christ Jesus (3:11). This eternal purpose was to break down the dividing wall spoken of in Chapter two and make way for both Jew and Gentile to freely and confidently approach God (3:12).

However, there are those who do not accept the reality of this accomplished purpose of God and for this reason we find Paul in prison. But the very fact that Paul is willing to suffer for this message bears strong testimony to the truth of it. Therefore, as Paul writes the believers, these sufferings are their glory (i.e., shows the reality of God's call on them), so no one should be discouraged by them (3:13).

From 3:14-3:19, we find a prayer of Paul's for the believers. In it he prays that God will empower the believers for three reasons.

What is the first reason, as stated in verse 17?

What are the next two (related reasons that Paul prays for the empowerment of the believers (found in verses 18 and 19)?

In 3:17-19, Paul prays that God will somehow empower the believers to know that which is beyond their comprehension, which is the incredible love of Christ. What will be the result of this prayer of Paul's being answered (found in verse 19)?

Do you know a person who has great confidence in Christ's love for them? Aren't they full of expectation, full of joy -- full of God? This is Paul's prayer for all the believers: That they would come to an understanding of Christ's love and thus become beautiful, radiant people who are full of God.

At this point, Paul realizes he is asking God for something incredible. Yet he also realizes, as he states in verse 20, that God is able to do beyond all we can ever ask or imagine.

Stop and think for a moment of the awesomeness of God. It would seem to us that there are very few limits to our imaginations.

Yet God has the power to do far more than we have the power to imagine. he used this power to create the universe out of nothing. And this same power is now at work in those who believe.

As Paul says in 3:21: "To Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen".

Ephesians Section I Review Questions

1. In Ephesians 1:18 Paul mentions that God has a glorious inheritance in the saints. Do you ever think of yourself as being as special and valuable to God as this verse indicates?

2. Read Chronicles 17:1-19. In 1 Chronicles 17, God through the prophet Nathan tells David of the glorious future of his descendants. David responds in worship, remembering the

former humble estate of his family. How do you respond to God in light of what He has done for you? (See Ephesians 2:1-7).

3. Read Ephesians 3:8, 3:19 and 3:20. Notice in these verses that Paul preaches the inexplorable (8) and prays for the believers to know the unknowable (19), to a God who can do the unimaginable (20). Christians often speak of things which words can never contain. Even the preaching of Paul was not adequate to convey the riches of the Christ of which he spoke. What might thinking on the unsearchability of these riches do for your attitude toward evangelism?

Paul says that coming to a knowledge of Christ's love would enable the believers to be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. How has thinking of God's love for you effected you in the past?

How might thinking on Ephesians 3:20 change your prayer life?

How Members of God's Family Should Live (Section II -- Ephesians Chapters 4-6)

The Members of God's Family Should Aim for Unity (Chapter 4)

Although the theme of the book of Ephesians is the identity of the Gentile believers, Paul's goal in writing Ephesians is not to have the believers know their identity. No, the reason Paul writes this letter is to encourage these Christians to live lives that are pleasing to God and profitable to themselves. The emphasis Paul places on their identity is a means to this end.

Paul spends much of the first half of the letter establishing the believers in the knowledge of their new identity. He then begins the second half with these words: "As a prisoner of the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received" (4:1).

The Greek word translated "worthy" here literally means "equal in weight to." So Paul is actually beseeching the believers to live lives equal in weight to the enormous call God has placed on them. In other words, the outstanding call the Christian has on his or her life should be equalled by the outstanding manner in which he or she lives. This of course is an

incredible request, but Paul proceeds from her to tell, in very practical terms, how it can be accomplished.

In Philippians 1, Paul speaks to the believers about conducting themselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel. Then he says if they do so, they will be standing "firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the Gospel" (Philippians 1:27).

Such is the case in Ephesians as well: The appeal for the believers to live up to the call on their lives is immediately followed by an appeal for unity (4:1-5). How is such unity accomplished? Through humility, patience and love (4:2).

In 4:4-6, Paul points to seven things which are common among Christians. What are they?

In the mind of Paul, Christians just have too much that unites them for them to be anything but united. However, even in the midst of this unity, there is diversity. This is because Christ manifests His grace in different ways through the believers by giving them different gifts (4:7-8).

Back in 1:19-23, Paul speaks of God exalting Christ over all things and all persons everywhere and making Him the head over everything for the sake of the Church. Here in 4:7-16, we see the same thought in greater detail. Christ is exalted above the heavens to fill all things and immediately moves to benefit the Church by sending the special ministry gifts listed in 4:11.

Paul doesn't speak here of the specific functions of these ministries. Instead he speaks of the general goals and outcomes of these ministries and the effect they are to have on the Church.

According to 4:12, what is the immediate effect the ministries of 4:11 are to have on the believers?

According to verse 16, how does the Body of Christ experience growth?

A wrong concept of the fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4:11 can hinder both the ministers and the other believers. If ministers see themselves as directly responsible for the growth of the Body, they will not seek to stimulate the rest of the Body to action. And, if the believers see the fivefold ministers as being directly responsible for their growth they will fail to fulfill their own responsibilities toward one another. In either case, the end result will be a lack of loving service within the Body accompanied by a lack of growth.

Christ gives the church the five special ministry gifts of 4:11 in order to prepare the other believers for their own works of service. But, it is not until these works are carried out that the Body grows.

According to the author of Hebrews, those who are mature can distinguish good from evil (Hebrews 5:14). That Paul believes this, can be seen here in 4:14. The growth and maturing of the Body of Christ will leave it invulnerable to false teachers.

According to 4:15, instead of being tossed about by false teachings, what will the mature Church be doing?

When the Church comes to maturity, divisive false doctrines will be gone and the believers will unite in love around truth (4:13-16). This maturity will come about when the believers walk in the truth that the true ministers of Ephesians 4:11 bring them. Thus we see that even the diversity of the various gifts in the Body of Christ is for the uniting of the Body of Christ.

In 4:7-16, Paul reveals the vision of the Lord has for His Church and the responsibility of each believer to play a part in the fulfillment of this vision. The Lord has given to every believer a purpose and goal in life, which is to contribute to the growth and development of the Body until it is proportionate to the head Jesus Christ.

Therefore, Paul insists the believers must no longer live the aimless lives they once lived as unregenerate Gentiles (4:17). Those who are still unregenerate gentiles are darkened in their understanding due to the hardness of their hearts and they have abandoned themselves to their insatiable desires for sensual pleasure (4:18-19).

These believers did not come to a knowledge of Christ through these pursuits (4:20). Instead, they were taught to turn from their old self, receive a change of mind and to put on the new self (4:22-24).

In the mind of Paul and the other Apostles, true conversion means a changed life. In fact, the initiation rite of the early church -- baptism -- is the portrayal of a life being changed.

For each thing Paul says the believers were taught on the left, write out the parallel thought concerning baptism on the right.

Ephesians 4:22:
Were taught to put off the old self.

Colossians 2:11-12:

Ephesians 4:23:
Were taught to be made new in the attitude of their minds.

1 Peter 3:21:

Ephesians 4:24:
Were taught to put on the new self.

Galatians 3:27:

After speaking in 4:22-23 of the general turnabout in the believer's life, Paul begins to speak specifically of how it should continue. His first instruction is that truthful speech should replace falsehoods in the Church.

The reason for this is that Christians are all of one Body (4:25). Paul continues from here with practical instructions and explanations.

According to 4:26, what time limit should be put on anger? What (according to 4:27) might be the result if such a time limit is not set?

According to 4:28, what should be done in place of stealing? Why?

According to 4:29, what requirement must words meet in order to be worth speaking? Why?

Words have tremendous impact on people. In Romans 10:17, Paul says that people are saved when they hear and believe the spoken Gospel. And in Titus 1:10-11, Paul speaks of people who are ruining entire households with their words.

Here in Ephesians 4:29, Paul tells the believers to be careful with their words so that they will be helpful in building others up when they speak. Did you know Paul speaks earlier in the chapter of a type of speech which builds up other Christians? It is in verse 15.

List the two things about the speech Paul writes of in 4:15 which builds people up.

The truth spoken in 4:15 is that which opposes the false teachings spoken in 4:14. In other words, it is that which relates to right and true doctrine. However, this truth must be spoken "in love" for whatever is done apart from love is done in contradiction of the truth that demands we love one another. And often even people who are inclined to depart from truth will be drawn to it when it is spoken in love.

Some of the cults who have sprung from Christianity teach that the Holy Spirit is not a Person. Yet the Scripture teaches otherwise. The Holy Spirit is a Person and like most persons, the Holy Spirit has likes and dislikes, things, which please Him and things which make Him sad.

As implied in 4:30-31, what five things cause the Holy Spirit to experience grief?

By contrast, what three things in 4:32 apparently please the Holy Spirit?

In the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6, Jesus taught us to ask God to forgive us in the same way we forgave others (which should make us take forgiving others very seriously).

However, Paul expresses a similar thought in a different way in 4:32.

What is the difference between what Jesus teaches in Matthew 6:12 and what Paul teaches in Ephesians 4:32? What do you think the reason for this difference is?

What Jesus has in mind in Matthew 6 is the day-to-day shortcomings of the Christian disciples. What Paul has in mind in Ephesians 4:32 is the time when the believer first came

to Christ and received forgiveness for a life of sin. This, Paul says, should encourage believers to forgive one another.

The Members of God's Family Should Live Lives of Love (Chapter 5).

As natural children imitate their parents, so the spiritual children of God should imitate their Father and live lives of love (5:1-2). They should follow the example of Christ whose love offering of Himself for His people was "a fragrant offering and sacrifice of God" (5:2).

Do you see an implication for the believer in the pleasure God took in Christ's sacrifice of love?

After beginning chapter five with this positive exhortation to love others, Paul begins to write again about shunning sin. In 5:3, he states that there should "not be even a hint of sexual immorality or of any kind of impurity or of greed, because these are improper for God's Holy people". This instruction of course is in keeping with the general theme and purpose of Ephesians. The believers are special people and should therefore live special lives.

Paul also states that obscenity, foolish talk and coarse joking are "out of place" among God's people (5:4). With what does he say (in the same verse) such speech should be replaced?

Does it surprise you that Paul uses thanksgiving in contrast to the unclean speech he mentions in 5:4? Giving thanks to God is high on Paul's list of priorities. In fact, in the 87 chapters attributed to Paul in the New Testament, he uses the words "thank", "thanks", "thanked", "thankful", "thanksgiving" and "thanksgivings" (all in reference to thanking God

or Christ) a total of 45 times. This is more than once every two chapters. As the Christian's life is dominated by Christ, so should his or her conversation be. And one of the dominate aspects of our speech toward Christ should be thanksgiving.

Going back to 5:4, note once again that Paul is implying that the identity of the believers should motivate them to live in a Godly fashion. However, Paul uses a different form of motivation for Godly behavior in 5:5-6: the fear of being shut out of God's Kingdom and inheriting His wrath.

Although Paul more often encourages rather than warns believers (and this is especially so in Ephesians), it is his desire that believers know both the kindness and the sternness of God (Romans 11:22). Not everyone will respond to positive motivation and such people need to be warned. The remarks of Ephesians 5:5-6 are especially for these people.

In Ephesians 4:14, Paul speaks of men who bring false teachings into the Church. Now in 5:6 Paul indicates that some are trying to deceive the believers "with empty words". Considering the context of the verse, along with the complete verse itself, what attempted deception do you think is taking place?

Starting in 5:8 Paul reverts back to appeal for the Christians to live in the light of the knowledge of who they are. They are no more darkness, but light and should live as such.

Living in the light produces goodness, righteousness and truth in the believer's life (5:9); so the believer should find out what God's will is, in order that he or she can live in this light (5:10). Whereas the deeds of light produce good fruit, the deeds of darkness are fruitless, so the believer should not be involved in them, but "expose them," or show them to be what they really are (5:11).

But, how should believers go about exposing the deeds of darkness? By talking much about them? No, for Paul says it is shameful even to mention them (5:12). How then? By the way they live their lives. When the believers live as children of light, the brightness of their lives reveals the contrast between good and evil works. It will also impact the world around them (1 Peter 2:12).

As seen in 5:14, what impact does the believer's righteous lifestyle seem to make on the world around him?

Because of the impact possible to make on others' lives, the believers should be very careful about how they live and make the best possible use of their time (5:15-16). Rather than being foolish, they should come to an understanding of God's will (5:17), and rather than being drunk, they should be filled with the Spirit (5:18).

The command to be filled with the Spirit in 5:18 is, in the Greek, linked to 5:19-21. Make a list of what these verses say will accompany this filling with the Spirit.

The Spirit's direction to submit to one another in 5:21 is followed by detailed instructions as to who submits to whom. These instructions are given in 5:22-6:9 and are interspersed with instructions on how the person being submitted to should have toward the one who submits.

Paul begins these instructions by teaching that wives should submit to their husbands. The husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the Church. Therefore, the wife submits to the husband "as to the Lord" (5:22-33). Indeed, her submission to her husband is done out of her reverence for the Lord (5:21).

Sometimes when the subject is brought up, someone might ask, "Should a Christian woman submit to an unbelieving husband?" Or: "What if the Christian woman's husband, whether he be a Christian or not, demands that she do something sinful?"

While Paul does not specifically instruct Christian women who are married to unsaved men, Peter does in 1 Peter 3:2-1 where he states Christian women should submit to their unbelieving spouses and that this will tend to attract their husbands to the Gospel.

As to whether or not a wife should submit to the demand of the husband to commit sin: The passage on the required submission of the wife is best understood in light of the entire book of Ephesians which is addressed to all the *saints* (1:1).

This of course includes the married Christian woman. As one reads through the book of Ephesians they find the Apostle issuing many commands which are binding upon all the saints Paul is not giving commands to wives as saints and then exempting them from obedience if their husbands forbid them to obey. Obedience to the husband is not the ultimate act of submission to the Lord but is only part of the larger framework of obedience the Apostle calls for. Therefore, the wife cannot out of obedience to her husband do something which the Scripture forbids or refrain from doing something the Scripture demands.

In 5:23, Paul states that the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, "of which He is the Savior." Thus, Paul mentions both the headship and the Saviorship of Christ. Paul says the wife should acknowledge the headship of her husband as the Church acknowledges the headship of Christ.

However, in 5:15-29, the husband is called to imitate not the headship, but the Saviorship of the Lord. He is to love her the same way Christ loved the Church in surrendering Himself up for it (5:25-27).

The portrait Paul gives the husbands of Christ's care for the Church is love in its most extreme form for another's utmost good. Christ died so that Church would be for Him a radiant bride without any blemish or defect. In the same way, Paul says, husband should love their wives (5:28). As the husband cares for his own body, so he should for his wife who is one flesh with him. This also relates to Christ's care and concern for the Church, who is one flesh with Him (5:29-39).

Note that in the instructions given to the husbands and wives, Paul only instructs each partner to fulfill their own role. The husband is not to subject the wife to himself for that would not be loving. And the wife is not to nag the husband to love her, for that would not be submissive. Neither partner should try to compel the other partner to fulfill their role, for in doing so they will fail to fulfill their own role. So Paul tells each to do their own part, and this is how he ends the chapter (5:33).

The Children of God Should Wear God's Armor (Chapter 6)

Chapter six of Ephesians begins with instructions to the Christian children among the believers. They are told to obey their parents "in the Lord" or according to the Lord's will (6:1). This proper, and with it comes a special promise from God (6:2-3).

There are limitations to this commandment, just as there are to the command given to the wives to submit to their husbands. Children who are told by their parents to disown or disobey Christ are under no obligation to obey their parents. Indeed they are obligated to disobey. Many children, out of obedience to Christ, have been punished or killed or disowned and cast out into the street by parents. The disobedience shown to their parents by these children is just as pleasing to God as the more common obedience Paul commands here

in Ephesians. However, apart from the exceptions just mentioned, children who obey their parents are pleasing God and putting themselves in a position to obtain His promise.

Fathers should not exasperate their children, but (by way of contrast) bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord (6:4). As the loving husband makes it easier for the wife to be submissive, so the father who obeys this instruction will inspire greater obedience in his children.

As the relationship between the husband and wife is a shadow of the relationship between Christ and the Church, also the relationship between slave and master, spoken of in 6:5-9, is a shadow of the relationship between Christ and the believer. The slave is to obey his master as if he is rendering obedience directly to Christ (6:5). This obedience is to be rendered whether the master is watching or not, because the Lord always sees, and He is the one the slave should seek to please (6:6).

This instruction can easily be applied to the relationship between employer and employee. The employee should work wholeheartedly for his or her employer, both when they can be seen and when they cannot be seen by the employer.

Although Paul says elsewhere that such wholehearted service makes the Gospel attractive to others (Titus 2:9-10), he makes no such statement here. What reason does Paul give slaves (employees) to obey their masters (employers)? (This reason is found in 6:8).

In 6:9 Paul urges masters to be good to their slaves. He reminds them that they are fellow slaves of God along with their own slaves; and God will judge them alongside of their slaves without favoritism.

Paul begins 6:10 with the word "Finally." He is about to give the believers one last exhortation. It is an exhortation which to some extent is a summary of the things he has already spoken of in this letter.

He urges them to be strong in God and to put on His armor so they can stand against the devil's schemes (6:10-11). He points out that our war is not with people, but with the unseen wicked spiritual forces in the heavens (6:12). Therefore, God's spiritual armor is needed to be able to remain standing (6:13).

But what is this armor? It is the very spiritual attributes and realities Paul endorses throughout the book of Ephesians. Only by clothing themselves in these, can Christians triumph in spiritual warfare.

Record how the pieces of armor listed on the left side protect the Christian as shown in the references on the right side. Explain how the attributes and realities listed on the left hand side are shown to protect the church in the references listed on the right hand side.

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| a. | The belt of truth (6:14) | Ephesians 4:14-15
Ephesians 4:21-22 |
| b. | The breastplate of righteousness (6:14) | Ephesians 4:22-24
Ephesians 5:5-9 |
| c. | The readiness that comes from the Gospel of peace (6:15) | Ephesians 2:17 |

In addition to the above pieces of armor, Paul includes the following:

The shield of faith (6:16). This, Paul says, is able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Perhaps the arrows Paul has in mind are the arrows of accusation and condemnation before which those who seek justification by the law are unprotected. Those who seek justification by faith are protected from these.

The helmet of salvation (6:17). The fact that the believer is told to take the helmet of salvation, indicated that the salvation spoken of there is not that which place at conversion. It is more likely the salvation which takes place at the return of the Lord, which must be latched on to at this present time. (See 1 Timothy 6:12 for another example of this thought).

The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (6:17). This is the one offensive piece of armor spoken of in this passage. It is possible that Paul is speaking of Scripture here, specifically Old Testament Scripture. Jesus used this as a weapon when under attack by Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). However, it is also possible that the word of God spoken here is the preached Gospel which liberates people from the rule of Satan and is thus a might offensive weapon against his forces.

In the Greek, verse 18 is connected to taking up of the final three pieces of armor. In the Church's struggle against the rulers of darkness, ongoing prayer for its members is essential.

In 6:19-20, Paul requests prayer from himself. His desire is that God will enable his to boldly proclaim the gospel in words given by the Holy Spirit. What he probably has in mind here is the opportunity he will soon have to preach the gospel to a Gentile ruler at his upcoming trial. (See Philippians 1:19-20 for a more clear expression of this thought).

Because Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13), there is the possibility that the Gentile believers will become discouraged when hearing of his imprisonment (see Ephesians 3:13). In order to prevent this, Paul sends Tychicus (6:21-22).

Paul now ends this letter with hearty blessing upon all the faithful saints (6:23-24).

Ephesians Section II Review Questions

1. Read Ephesians 4:16. What small part are you playing to build up the Body of Christ?

2. In Ephesians 5:13-14, Paul indicates that the godly lifestyle of the believer can actually draw people to Christ. Have you ever seen this happen?

3. Paul describes the armor of God in Ephesians 6:14-17. Do you remember a time when you put one of the pieces of armor to use and saw it benefit yourself or someone else?

Chapter Two

Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Authorship

The author introduces himself as Paul in 1:1. The early church had no dispute with this.

Date and Destination

Paul may have written this letter while imprisoned in Caesarea in approximately A.D. 57-59. Or he may have written from a Roman prison in approximately A.D. 61. In 1:1 the letter is addressed to the saints in Philippi. Paul's introduction to these believers is recorded in Acts 16.

Theme: Servanthood

This is a strong emphasis in this letter on joy which leads many to conclude that the theme of the letter is joy. However, a greater emphasis seems to be placed on servanthood. The verses which may best state the theme of Philippians are 2:3-4: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

Outline of Phillipians

Philippians: The Joy of Serving

- I. The Joy of Serving in the Gospel (Chapter 1)
- II. The Joy of Serving in Humility (Chapter 2)
- III. The Joy of Serving in Christ (Chapter 3)

IV. The Joy of Serving in Peace (Chapter 4)

The Joy of Serving in the Gospel (Chapter 1)

Often in Paul's epistles to the churches he introduces himself as an apostle. However, here in Philippians, he introduces himself and Timothy as servants of Christ Jesus. The probable reason for the difference in the introductions is the difference in the quality of the relationships Paul has with the different churches. When the relationship between the apostle and the church is poor, as in the case with the Corinthian and Galatian churches where Paul's apostleship is being contested, Paul establishes his authority by introducing himself as an apostle. Where the relationship is good, Paul sees no need to do so. (See I Thessalonians 1:1 and II Thessalonians 1:1).

Paul's relationship with the Philippians church is a good one. His authority is not seriously questioned. The fact that he introduces himself as a servant of Christ Jesus may be a mild appeal to the authority he has, but it is more likely used to encourage the Philippians Christians to see themselves as servants. For if even Paul is a servant, then servanthood is not beneath them.

Note the warmth and affection Paul has for the Philippians Christians (as seen in 1:3-4). Every time he remembers them, he thanks God for them; and every time he prays for them, he prays with joy.

In verse 5 Paul gives the reason for the joy he speaks of in verse 4: It is for their partnership in the gospel from the time he met them until this present time. Considering Philippians 4:4-16, what might Paul have in mind when he speaks of the Philippians "partnership in the gospel?"

In verse 6 Paul speaks of His confidence that God will complete the work He has started in these Philippians - or, in other words, bring them safely into His coming Kingdom. This might be the confidence he has for God's work in all the churches (with the exception of the Galatian Church). However, given the content of verse 6 and the fact that Paul's confidence seems above ordinary, it seems likely that it is a special confidence which has been inspired by the Philippians continued active partnership in the gospel.

Did you know it was a New Testament principle that persistence in the way of the Lord will bring about a safer spiritual future? God will respond to those who respond to Him and strengthen them in times of trial so that they will stand.

How is this principle seen in the following passages?

a. Hebrews 6:7-10

b. Revelation 3:10

In verse 7 Paul says that the Philippians Christians are in his heart, for, (as he explains in verse 8), they are sharers in God's grace with him. The fact that they are sharing in God's grace with him could mean that they have found favor with God just as Paul has. However, it is probably more likely that Paul again is referring to the partnership the Philippians have in his ministry through their gifts to him.

Paul has a specific prayer for the Philippians Christians. It is that the love that they have will develop in its spiritual intelligence and understanding (verse 9).

According to verse 10-11, what will happen if these Christian's love abounds in knowledge and insight?

In Romans 10:2 Paul speaks of the unbelieving Jews' failure to integrate the zeal that they had for God with true knowledge. Therefore, their zeal does them no good. An implication of this verse is the zeal combined with knowledge would benefit them. However, the knowledge-less zeal he possess fails to bring them to a state of having favor with God.

As knowledge can turn zeal for God into a profitable thing, so knowledge can cause the loving believers to be profitable to one another and pleasing to God. It is the desire of God that believers speak the truth to one another in love (Ephesians 4:15). However, if the believers do not have knowledge and insight as to what truth is, the love that they have for one another is not empowered by the ability to benefit one another in the deepest possible way. For example, a pastor any truly love his church and desire to benefit them, but if he is not empowered by knowledge and insight, his doctrine will be tainted. This will cause him to harm as well as help his people and leave him in the state of being less than pure and blameless in the sight of God.

What positive effect does Paul see his imprisonment as having had (verse 12)?

Paul rejoices in the fact that other people have become emboldened by his self sacrificing stand for the gospel and have begun to speak out themselves for the truth (verse 18). However, although some do so out of a heart of love for Paul, others by doing so seek to cause him more misery in his imprisonment (verse 17).

Read Galatians 5:19-21. What two works of the flesh spoken of her are found in Philippians 1:15-17 and are the cause of the insincere preachers' antagonistic attitude toward Paul?

Now read Matthew 6:1-3, Matthew 6:5, and Matthew 6:16. Does what Jesus says in these verses apply in anyway to the motives of the false preachers of Philippians 1:17? Explain your answer.

According to Philippians 1:18, what is Paul's response to the false preachers' attempts to hurt him? Why?

In verse 19 Paul expresses his confidence that "what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance." The thing which Paul speaks of as having happened to him is the same thing he speaks of having happened to him in verse 12 - namely, his imprisonment. However, the deliverance he speaks of in verse 19 is not a release from prison. Paul has an entirely different thing in mind as he speaks of deliverance.

What is this deliverance Paul talks about, as described in verse 20?

In this chapter we see the great commitment of Paul to Christ and His gospel. Although he has been imprisoned he rejoices, as the gospel is advancing. Deliverance for him is not to be released from prison, but to glorify Christ, even if he has to die to do it.

Note here in 1:20-26 two things about Paul's attitude toward his body: a) It is to be used to glorify God on the earth. b) It is the life of it that is keeping him from the presence of the hand in Heaven.

Have you ever made a choice about something in which you really had no choice? That is what Paul does in verses 22-26. He wonders which he should prefer, life or death. The decision, he says, is tearing him apart (verse 23). Yet he says in verse 23 that to die, to be with Christ, would be better by far than to live on in the body. So what makes Paul's choice so difficult?

Paul's example of servanthood begins in verse 1 and is seen all through this letter. Although Paul greatly longs to depart to be with Christ, he has long ceased to live for himself or to make decisions based on his own desires. So in this passage, we see Paul's intense desire to be with Christ being equaled by his intense desire to benefit other people.

In 1:27-30 we see Paul's vision for the Philippian Church. Although the theme of his letter is servanthood, Paul's goal in writing this letter is to unite the church in the face of opposition. Servanthood is the means to this end.

What do we learn about the Philippian Church from 1:29-30?

As the hearts of the Philippian Christians go out to Paul in his suffering, so the apostle's heart goes out to the Philippian Christians in their suffering. His desire for them is the same desire he has for himself: that they will stand strong for the gospel in the face of their tormentors. What kind of attitude does Paul (in verse 29) indicate the believers should have toward their suffering Christ?

Philippians Chapter 1 Review Questions

1. Read 1:4-5. Whose ministry have you supported in some way from the early days of your Christianity until now? What kind of fruit has the ministry produced?

2. Read 1:12. Have you ever suffered an apparent setback, only to find that it is some way served to advance the gospel?

The Joy of Serving in Humility (Chapter 2)

In Phillipians 1:27-30 we see how the church should look from the outside. Now in 2:1-4, we see how it should look from the inside. The goal of this epistle is to unite the Church in their stand against the apposition. But the road that brings the church to this destination is humility and servanthood.

What command does Paul give the Christians in verse 3 of this section?

While pride would tend to cause contention and strife, humility promotes unity. When people seek to take the lowest place and serve others they are working for the common good

and not seeking prominence for themselves. Instead, they are looking to benefit others. It is exactly this kind of other-mindedness that Paul seeks for the Philippians Church as he writes in verse 4 that the believers should not only look to their own interests, but to other people's interests as well.

In Philippians 2:6-11 Paul writes of the pre-incarnate glory of Christ, of His self-abasement and of His present exalted state. This section is, of course, an extremely important passage on the doctrine of Christ. Many Scriptures might seem to give the impression that Christ was less than God, the Creator. Paul explains this complicated issue in Philippians 2:6-11. Jesus was by nature God, but took on the nature of a servant. Yet it is clear in other Scriptures that He never stopped being God (e.g. John 5:18; Colossians 2:9). Sometimes He is spoken of as being “less” than the Father, because He has become less in form and position, having wrapped Himself in the nature of a servant. At other times He is spoken of as the Father's equal, for within the servant's form the Deity remains unaltered and undiluted. A verse which perhaps makes this even more clear is Romans 9:5.

Write out Romans 9:5 in the space provided below.

Although Philippians 2:6-11 gives us an important doctrinal statement on the Person of Christ, Paul was not using this passage to teach the Philippians about Christ. Instead, he was referring to that which they undoubtedly already knew about Christ.

The purpose of Paul's exposition on the Person of Christ is found in 2:5. What is this purpose?

Verse 5 not only gives the reason for verses 6-11, but it also continues the thoughts expressed in verses 3 and 4, for Paul has not changes subjects. He is still speaking of humility and servanthood in the Church, for Christ was the living example of verses 3 and 4.

The Greek word translated "grasped" in verse 6 could have also been translated as "seized". If it had been translated as such, the idea in verse 6 would be that Jesus did not have equality with God and did not think about saying it. However, the context decided not to grasp or hold on to the equality He had with God by nature. How is this especially seen in verse 3?

Just as Christ, who was the equal of the Father, chose to esteem the Father as better than Himself, so the Philippian Christians who are equally members of God's family are exhorted by Paul to consider one another better than themselves.

As Paul mentions, in chapter one, some people, with whom the Philippians might well have been acquainted, preached the gospel out of selfish ambition. (1:17). Paul tells the Philippians they should do nothing out of selfish ambition (2:3). He then speaks of the Christ who was incredible in appearance and form and yet cared nothing from impressive appearance. Indeed He cared so little about reputation that He willingly died the disreputable death of one who dies on a cross.

As already stated, Paul's main intention in 2:6-11 is to show the Philippian Christians the attitude of humble servanthood which they need to adopt. However, Paul only uses verses 6-8 to show them how Christ humbled Himself. Then from verses 9-11 he speaks of the incredible way in which God has exalted the Man Jesus. His name is above every other name. Every knee will bow to Him and every tongue will acknowledge His Lordship.

Since Paul's main objective in 2:5-11 is to promote humility, why do you think he does not stop after verse 8? Why does he go on to speak of Christ's glorification and complete dominion?

The Bible constantly implores us to humble ourselves before God and allow Him to exalt us. Here in the life of Jesus we see someone who humbled Himself in the most extreme manner and was subsequently exalted by God in the most extreme manner.

In verse 12, Paul exhorts the believers to be obedient, as Christ Himself was obedient (verse 8). Paul does not want their obedience to lessen in his absence, but to grow (verse 12).

Verses 12-13 present us with a paradox. The believers are told to work out their salvation, because it is God who is working in them. So who does the work, the believer or God? And if salvation is by grace through faith, (as Ephesians 2:8-9 says) how can it be "worked out" at all?

In answer to the first question verses 12-13 make it plain that the believers and God are working together. The fact that Paul gives the command to the Christians to work out their salvation makes it plain that God does no work along for the believer's salvation. And the fact that Paul speaks of God's work points to the fact that God is the one who initiates the work. The believers are called to cooperate with God by yielding to His work in their lives.

As to the question of salvation being by grace through faith, the salvation spoken of in Ephesians 2:8-9 is the deliverance from the old life which took place when the believer was regenerated. However, the Bible makes it clear that the person who truly has faith will be engaged in good works (James 2:17). In fact the Bible constantly points to works as what we'll be judged by at the throne of Christ (Matthew 25:34-46; II Corinthians 5:10).

In verse 15 Paul speaks of the believers becoming blameless and pure. In verse 14 he tells them how to become this way. How does Paul say the believers can become pure and blameless?

In verse 15 what is the symbolic significance of the believers shining "like stars in the universe?"

Paul speaks on verse 17 of his possible upcoming execution as his "being poured out like a drink offering," or being offered up to God. This "drink offering" is said to come upon the sacrifice and service of the Philippians' faith, which is the financial gift they had sent him. That Paul sees martyrdom as being poured out as a drink offering means he sees it as an act of worship of God. That he sees the Philippians' gift as a sacrifice means he sees it as an act of worship as well.

In Verse 17 what is Paul's response to his possible upcoming martyrdom? How does he tell the Philippians to respond (in verse 18)?

Paul now writes of the possibility of a visit from Timothy to Philippi. Back in 2:4 he says that the believers should look to the interests of others and not just their own interests. That Timothy is such a man can be seen in verses 20-21. Note that being concerned for the Philippians' welfare in verse 20 is equated with looking to the interests of Jesus Christ in verse 21.

In 25-30 Paul speaks of sending back Epaphroditus (probably with this letter). Epaphroditus is the messenger the Philippians sent to Paul with their financial aid (4:18). Sometime while he was away from Philippi Epaphroditus became sick and almost died. In verse 29 Paul says that the Christians should honor men like Epaphroditus. He gives the reason for this in verse 30. What is it?

Philippians Chapter 2 Review Questions

1. Do you know a Christian who is shining "like a star in the universe" (2:15) by the way that he or she lives among the unbelievers?

2. How do you think Christians can look out for the interests of others (2:4)?

The Joy of Serving in Christ (Chapter 3)

In verse 1 Paul tells the Christians to rejoice in the Lord. That is, to rejoice because they are in the Lord. There are men who seek to remove these believers from a place of favor with their Lord. Paul calls these men "dogs. . . men who do evil. . . mutilators of the flesh" (verse 2).

As can be seen by verse 3, the men of who Paul speaks are the preachers of circumcision who taught that men needed to be circumcised to find favor with God. It is ironic that Paul uses the terms of verse 2 to describe them, because: a) the term "dogs" was used by the

circumcises in reference to the uncircumcised. b) circumcision was a rite that was initiated by God Himself. So how could the people who preach it be called evil, or mutilators?

The explanation for this seeming contradiction is that God's plan for the redemption of mankind contains different stages which are governed by different commandments. For example, the Old Testament name of Jehovah which was continually mentioned by the Jews under the Old Covenant is not mentioned even once in the New Testament. So it is with circumcision.

How does Paul describe "the true circumcision" in 3:3?

"The flesh" might best be understood by what we are in our own strength, apart from God's help. In verses 4-6 Paul speaks of his own flesh by credentials. While the mutilators of verse 2 are trying to get these Gentile believers to identify with Israel through circumcision, Paul was himself a natural born Israelite. He was born of parents who spoke the language of the Jews (the Hebrew language, which he himself spoke). Not only was he circumcised, but he was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth, the day Moses commanded that male children be circumcised.

Paul speaks of these fleshly credentials for two reasons: a) to show that as for as the flesh is concerned, he is the equal of any of the preachers of circumcision. b) to emphasize that such credential really amount to nothing.

In verse 7 Paul says the fleshly credentials he once felt were profit, were now counted by him as loss. In fact to him, everything was less than nothing compared to knowing Christ (verse 8).

In verse 8 Paul tells how sincere he is about his declaration that he considers everything a loss compared to knowing Christ. How does he do this?

What two different types of righteousness does Paul describe in verse 9 and how might a person obtain each of them? Which one does Paul choose?

In verses 10-11 Paul speaks of different ways in which he wants to know Christ. In verse 10 he mentions one way which sound strange, which many Christians might have omitted. What is it?

In Paul's mind living for Christ inevitably brings persecution and suffering (see Romans 8:17). At one time Paul did not see the incredible profit he now sees in knowing Christ and he persecuted those who did. When Jesus appeared to him, he realized the preciousness of knowing Christ and gladly numbered himself among those who suffered for Him.

In verse 11 Paul speaks of his intense desire to attain to the resurrection of the dead. The word which is translated "resurrection" here is used only here in the New Testament, and it speaks not of the general resurrection which everyone who dies will experience.

The resurrection and perfection are closely joined together. This is why Paul says in verse 12 that he has yet to be made perfect. There was an early heresy that the resurrection of the dead was purely spiritual and had nothing to do with the physical body.

Some claimed to have experienced this resurrection and with it perfection. However, Paul tells these Christians who have great respect for him and his word that even he has not

attained to this. It is the thing for which Christ Jesus took hold of him (verse 12) and the prize which he presses forward to obtain (verse 14).

In light of verses 12-14, what is the viewpoint to which Paul exhorts the Philippians Christians in verse 15?

In verse 15 Paul says that everyone who is mature should take the same view as he exhibits in verses 12-14. The word translated "mature" in verse 15 is the same word translated as "perfect" in verse 12. In verse 12 it is something he has not attained, and yet in verse 15 it seems that both he and others have attained it.

In the mind of Paul, it seems that perfection will not be attained by anyone this side of the resurrection. So the Christian who is as perfect or complete as can be in this life is the one who realizes he is not perfect and has an intense desire for progress in the faith.

Paul exhorts these believers to follow his example, even though others are not (3:17-18). Why does Paul call them enemies of the cross of Christ? Because "their God is their stomach (3:19). This could be talking about people who are still teaching Old Testament dietary restrictions, which the cross of Christ did away with (Colossians 2:15-17). Or it might be speaking of people who are given over completely to sensual appetites. In this case they are enemies of the cross because the cross was to bring about death to the self-life (II Corinthians 5:15).

In either case, the apostle says that these people have set their minds on the things of this earth (3:19). However, the Christian is looking to another place and another time, as He waits for the return of his Savior from Heaven (3:20).

Philippians Chapter 3 Review Questions

1. Read 3:4-6. Does it seem strange to you that a man with this background would be called by God to evangelize the Gentiles? What might this tell us about God?

2. Read 3:13-14. What do you think hinders some Christians from pressing forward in Christ?

The Joy of Serving in Peace (Chapter 4)

In verse 1, Paul writes that "you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!" He is referring to the things he writes in chapter 3; recognizing a need for growth, pressing forward to know Christ, and looking forward to the Lord's return.

Paul pleads with two women in the congregation to be in harmony in the Lord (verse 2). These workmen have in the past worked with Paul in the cause of the gospel (verse 3). These women seem to have high positions in the church and Paul tells the believers to be helpful to them (verse 3).

The themes of joy and rejoicing are found throughout this letter. Although these believers are being persecuted, Paul wants them to rejoice because of their position in Christ (4:4). Indeed, this is not only a command of Paul, but of Jesus Himself, (see Matthew 5:11-12).

The Christian should have a reputation of gentleness (4:5). How can he do this in the face of persecution? By knowing that the Lord is near (4:5). Whether Paul means here the return of the Lord or the Lord's daily watchful care for His own, it unclear. However, either thought can apply to this command of gentleness.

In 4:7 Paul speaks of obtaining the very peace of God, a peace that surpasses all human comprehension. In verse 6, Paul shows the Christians how to obtain this peace.

According to verse 6 how many things should the Christian allow himself to be anxious about?

In Matthew 6:27 Jesus speaks of the uselessness of worry. It can accomplish nothing positive. Therefore Paul calls for repentance from anxiety. The first step toward the peace spoken of in 4:7 is a decision to stop worrying.

However Paul does not only tell the Christians to avoid worrying. He tells them with what to replace it. According to Paul what should the Christian do instead of worrying?

The words translated "prayer" and "petition" in 4:6 are very close in meaning, and Paul probably uses them both to indicate the thorough mess with which the Christian should pour out his or her heart to God. This pouring out of the heart in prayer and petition should be accompanied by something else: thanksgiving. Christians should remember in a vocal manner the things which God has already done for them.

Many Christians miss the peace offered to them in verse 7, because they do not meet all the requirements of verse 6. They may pray and petition without deliberately choosing not to worry. Or they may pray and petition but fail to give thanksgiving, or fail to thank God with

a serious contemplation of His goodness toward them. It is important that all the conditions of verse 6 are met in order to ensure the fulfillment of the promise of the peace of God in verse 7.

In verse 4:8-9 Paul writes of two themes which are linked together throughout the Bible; thinking and doing. Christians should think about the things that are right and fill their minds with the things that are good (verse 8). Then they should do the things that are right and good (verse 9). In Joshua 1:8, God tells Joshua to keep the Law in his mind constantly so that he will be careful to obey it. We will never do what we do not think about. Therefore we would fill our minds with good things. And yet there must be an overflow of these good thoughts. What is meditated on in the heart and mind must be brought forth in word and deed.

What is the promise in verse 9 to those who obediently Paul's good example?

Doing the Word of God will unleash God's power in our lives. This is found in Philippians 4:9 where God will manifest Himself by giving the person who obeys Him peace. It is found in Joshua 1:8 where Joshua is told he will be successful if he obeys the Law. It is found in John 14:21 where Jesus promises to manifest Himself to those who obey His command. Paul loves God, so he obeys Him. He loves the believers, so he says to them "be like me". He wants the God of peace to be with them.

In verses 4:10-13 Paul speaks of his great rejoicing over the gift the Philippians sent him. However, he also speaks of the ability he has to thrive in any and all circumstances.

According to verse 13, how does Paul cope with even the worst of circumstances?

Throughout this letter, Paul shows that he is not overwhelmed by his circumstances. In his imprisonment his mind and prayers are with the Philippians (1:3-4). Instead of being filled with sorrow because of his chains, he rejoices because his chains have brought about the advance of the gospel (1:12-18). How can he be like this? It is because he is intimately involved with Christ. He is looking to Christ and relying on Him and making Him his source of strength.

In 4:14-19 Paul speaks of how the Philippians have supported him in his ministry from the earliest days of their acquaintance. In verse 11, he tells them that he does not rejoice over their gift because of a sensed need on his part. Now in verse 18 he gives one reason for his rejoicing: they have pleased God. The fact that Paul calls their gift an offering means that he sees this gift as a holy thing. As stated already in the comments on 2:17, this gift is an act of pleasing worship to God, and, for this, Paul rejoices.

There is another reason Paul gives for rejoicing over this gift. It is found in 4:17. What is it?

Again we see the selfless attitude of the apostle. Although he is in a position of great discomfort and desperate need, he is thinking of the benefit of others.

Verses 20-23 close the letter with a doxology, greetings and a benediction.

Philippians Chapter 4 Review Questions

1. Read 4:6. What are some things Christians tend to be anxious about?

2. Have you ever experienced the incomprehensible peace of God which Paul speaks of in 4:7?

Chapter Three

Paul's Letter to the Colossians

Author

The author identifies himself as Paul (1:1) and the early church agreed that the apostle Paul wrote this letter. Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles.

Date and Destination

Colossians was written at about the same time as Ephesians and may be dated between A. D. 57 - 59 or the very early 60's. The people to whom Paul writes belong to a church which was founded not by Paul, but by Epaphras (1:7), who has told Paul of the church (1:8). These saints do not know Paul personally (2:1). These Christians live in Colossae and were probably converted during Paul's ministry in Ephesus, when the gospel went out to all of the province of Asia (Acts 19:10).

Theme: The Superiority of Christ

The books of Ephesians and Colossians are so similar that they have been called "the twin epistles." They are not identical twins, however. The focus of Ephesians is on the church, while the focus of Colossians is on Christ.

False teachers have infiltrated the Colossian church, denying the complete sufficiency of Christ and teaching Old Testament regulations and manmade requirements. To counter this, Paul emphasizes the absolute supremacy of Christ. By doing this he shows the believers that, having Christ, they need nothing else. The verses which perhaps best express both the theme

and the purpose of this letter are 2:9-10. "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the lead over every power and authority.

Outline of Colossians

Colossians: The Superiority of Christ

I. Christ's Superiority Declared (chapters 1-2)

A. Christ is Superior To All Creation (chapter 1)

B. Christ is Superior To The Law (chapter 2)

II. Christ's Superiority Applied (chapters 3-4)

A. Christ's Superiority Seen in Church Unity (chapter 3)

B. Christ's Superiority Seen in Sincere Ministers (chapter 4)

Christ's Superiority Declared (chapters 1-2)

Christ is Superior to All Creation

Paul starts his letter with an introduction of himself and Timothy and as pronounced blessing of grace and peace to the Colossian saints, (1:1-2) it is significant to note that Paul introduces himself as an apostle. In his letters to the churches, Paul only introduces himself as an apostle if his readers do not know him or if his authority and gospel are being challenged. In this instance, both are the case.

In verses 1:3-4 Paul expresses his appreciation for the work God has done in the Christians by telling them that he and Timothy always thank God for them. They do this because Epaphras, the founder of the Colossian church, has told them of the faith and love of these people (1:4 and 8).

Paul consistently prays for these believers and this is what he prays: that God would fill them with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding (verse 9).

When God answers this prayer, the following will happen:

Verse 10 - The believers will be able to live a life worthy of the Lord and pleasing to Him in every way. Of course as person cannot please God unless he or she knows exactly what will please God. Since we were created by God for His own pleasure and purposes it is vital that we know what His will for us is.

Verse 10 - The believers will be able to be fruitful in every good work.

The "fruitfulness" of which Paul speaks here is likely referring to the believers' profitability to other believers and to mankind in general. In knowing God's will the believer is not only equipped to please God, but to benefit other people as well.

Verse 10 - The believers will increase in the knowledge of God.

It is a principle of Scripture that God reveals Himself to those who do His will (this can be seen in Joshua 1:8, John 14:21 and Philippians 4:9.). Thus the believer who finds the will of God and does it not only pleases God and benefits others, but he or she obtains a greater experiential knowledge of God as well.

According to 1:11-12 what will happen to the believers who receive a revelation of God through the doing of His will? (Write these verses out.)

A greater revelation of God will always strengthen the believer by releasing more of God's power in his or her life. This will cause the believer to have greater patience and endurance and will fill him or her with a joyful thankfulness to God.

In verse 12 Paul states that the Father has qualified the believers to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. How has the Father done this? He has done this by drawing the believers to His Son (John 6:44). In verses 12-14, Paul says things which sounds very much like things the Lord Jesus said to him when He first called him.

Write out the following passages:

Colossians 1:12-14

Acts 26:17-18

Now list the points of similarity between the passages:

Verse 15-20 speak of the overwhelming supremacy of Christ. He is the image of the invisible God (verse 15) because He is God manifested in a human body (2:9). The term "firstborn," used twice in these verses, denotes preeminence. How does verse 16 show that the word "firstborn" in verse 15 is speaking of preeminence?

A false religion of the time taught that there were two gods: one who made the material world and one who made the spiritual world. The one who made material world was evil, and the one who made the spiritual world was evil.

Paul openly contradicts this philosophy in stating that Christ is the maker of all things both the visible (material) and invisible (spiritual) worlds (verse 16). In verse 17 Paul's statement that Christ is before all things shows that Christ Himself is uncreated. Indeed, all things which are created are dependent on Him (also in verse 17).

While verse 15 - 17 speak of Christ's supremacy in consideration of His eternal Deity, verse 18 - 20 speak more of His preeminence after His incarnation. As a man He is the Head of the Church and the firstborn from among the dead (verse 18). God's fullness dwells in the man Christ and God is reconciling all things to Himself.

Can you see how the idea of God reconciling all things to Himself contradicts the thought that an evil god made the material world, apart from the wishes of the god who made the spiritual world? Since God made all things He is concerned about all things. Although all things have followed man into a fallen state God has made provision for their restoration (as is stated more clearly in Romans 8).

God has started this reconciliation process with people among whom are the Colossian Christian to whom Paul writes. As he states in verses 20 and 21, Christ reconciled the believers to God through the cross. The death of Christ on the cross was to make a way for people to be presented to God "holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation" (verse 22) However, this presentation is conditional.

What condition (as recorded in verse 23), must the Colossians meet in order to be presented to God in the resplendent manner described in verse 22?

Verses 24 - 27 sound much like Ephesians 3:1-13. In both passages Paul defines his ministry and speaks of his sufferings. However, in Colossians he says that the mystery of the gospel has been disclosed to the saints, while in Ephesians he specifies that it has been disclosed to the apostles and prophets among the saints.

Paul's attitude toward sufferings is admirable in verse 24. He rejoices in the privilege of suffering for God's people. However, in the same verse, he speaks of his sufferings in an even more exalted way. How does he do this?

In Matthew 25:34-45 we see that the Lord equates good and bad treatments of His people with good and bad treatments of Himself. Thus in Acts 9 when He stops the persecutor Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, He asks him, ". . . why do you persecute me?" This Saul is Paul the apostle who now sees other people persecuting Christ by persecuting him.

In verse 27 Paul speaks of a "mystery" God is choosing to make know through him to the Gentiles. It is a simple one. What is it?

Since Christ is the preeminent one spoken of in verses 15-20, and since Christ Himself is the very hope of glory, Paul proclaims Him. The goal that Paul strives for is to bring people to the place of completeness in Christ.

Christ is Superior to the Law

The struggling Paul refers to in 2:1 refers back to the struggle he speaks of in 1:29. In his effort to bring people to find their completeness in Christ, Paul must struggle in many ways. he must struggle against people's resistance to the message, struggle with false

doctrines in the church and face imprisonments and trials as well. Paul wants to encourage and write fully understand and know the person of Christ. (2:2).

What reason does Paul give in 2:3 for calling Christ the mystery of God in 2:2?

In chapter two Paul speaks very directly concerning the attempted deception which is taking place among the Colossians. In verse 4 Paul tells these believers why he takes the opportunity to tell them all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ (verse 3): It is so they will not be deceived. The false religion which is being proclaimed to these believers emphasizes what its adherents call knowledge.

However, Paul says that all true knowledge is found in Christ. Therefore if someone is united to Christ, he or she is united to the source of all wisdom and knowledge.

Since Christ is the source of all these things, Paul tells the believers to root their lives in Him and build their lives in Him as their foundation (2:6- 7). They should become stronger in their faith in Him and be thankful for their relationship with Him (verse 7).

In verse 8 Paul issues a warning against listening to people who are promoting philosophies which are not based on the person of Christ. Paul describes these philosophies as "hollow and deceptive."

In verse 9 Paul tells why good and genuine philosophy is based on Christ, as opposed to the human tradition spoken of in verse 8. Why is it?

Because the fullness of Deity resides in the man Christ (verse 9), that is because He is fully God, the believer has no need outside of Him (verse 10). As God, Christ is not only their Creator, but their Head (Colossians 2:10).

The false teachers who are infiltrating the Colossians church are preaching the need of circumcision for right standing with God. However, Paul tells the believers that they have already been circumcised by putting off their sinful nature at baptism (2:11-12).

Concerning baptism, there are many who teach that in order for it to be valid it must follow some certain formula or have the right words spoken over it or be performed by an alleged priest. However, Paul says that the believer is raised with Christ in baptism through his or her faith in the power of the God who raised Jesus (2:12). Peter says that baptism saves us in that it is the pledge of a good conscience toward God (I Peter 4:21). So the Scriptures seem to say that it is not the formula or the words or the person who baptizes that makes a baptism valid. Instead it is the right attitude in the heart of the person being baptized which makes it valid. In verse 15 Paul further states that Christ has disarmed the powers and authorities and triumphed over them by the cross. Read carefully the context verses 11 - 16 provide for verse 15. Judging by this context, what weapon is Paul saying Christ disarmed the powers and authorities of in verse 15?

The idea of the Law being used as a weapon against people can also be found in Romans 7. There Paul states that sin used the Law to slay him (spiritually). Here in Colossians 2 we see Paul portraying the Law as a weapon again, only this time not into the hands of sin, but in the hands of Satan.

In keeping with this thought, it is significant that Paul says in Colossians 2:14 that the written code (Mosaic Law), "was against us and stood opposed to us." For in describing the Law in this way, Paul includes himself among the Gentile believers as one who found the Law to be an unbearable burden. Yet he had been raised and trained from his earliest youth to keep it (Philippians 3:4-5; Acts 22:3).

Write out how Peter describes the Law in Acts 15:10:

Peter, like Paul, had been raised in the strict Jewish tradition (see Acts 10:14). Yet like Paul he realized he could not come close to fully keeping the Law.

If men like Paul and Peter were unable to fulfill the requirements of the Law, can you imagine how hard it would have been for these Gentiles of Colossae to fulfill them? These believers had not only not been trained in the Law, but they had been trained to live in total contradiction of it. However, false teachers have been teaching the believers that they must obey the Law in order to obtain right standing with God. So Paul lets the believers know of the cancellation of the Law through the death of Christ (2:14).

In verse 16, Paul tells the believers a way to apply what he says about the Law in verse 14-15. What is this way?

In Isaiah 1:13-14 God speaks of all the holy days of the Mosaic Law using exactly the same terms as Colossians 2:16. However, in Isaiah God grieves over the wrong attitude of His people as they celebrate these holidays, while in Colossians Paul says the believers should allow no man to judge them concerning what they do on these days.

Paul gives two reasons for saying that all of the holy days spoken of by Moses could safely be ignored. These two reasons are found in verse 14 and 17. What are they?

In 2:18 Paul tells the believers not to be defrauded by people who promote false humility and angel worship. The people who are promoting these things among the Colossians claim to have received divine visions in which they were directed to these things (verse 19). Paul says that these unspiritual people have lost connection with the head (verse 20). That is, instead of being connected to Jesus Christ and receiving spiritual nourishment from Him (verse 20) they are promoting views which if accepted will destroy the people who accept them (verse 18).

As seen in Colossians 2:20-21, the believers in Colossae have begun to be swayed by the false teachers of which Paul speaks. They have submitted themselves to teachings and rules which are human in their origin (2:22). The rules of which Paul speaks in verses 2:20-23 have to do with the meticulous observance of regulations which place manmade restrictions on the human appetites. They undoubtedly include dietary regulations and may include celibacy as well - even for people who are married. Paul says that these regulations appear to be wise, but in actuality do nothing to curb the sin nature at all (verse 23).

What is the difference between the false teachers' attempt to subdue the sinful nature, (as seen in Colossians 2:23), and Paul's viewpoint in Galatians 5:16?

Review Questions

1. Read Colossians 1:15-17 and 2:9-10. What do these Scriptures do for your attitude toward Christ and for your faith in Him?

2. Read Colossians 2:4, 8, 17, 18, and 23. Do you see something which these verses have in common? They all speak of things which appear to be more than they actually are. For example, the fine sounding arguments of verse 4 are actually deceitful. The philosophy of verse 8 is hollow. The regulations of verse 23 appear to be wise and yet they are not helpful in the least. How do you think the Christians in your area may be engaged in practices and/or beliefs which appear to be spiritual, but in reality are not?

Christ's Superiority Applied (chapters 3-4)

Christ's Superiority Seen in Church Unity

Since the believers have been raised with Christ, (through baptism, as seen in 2:12), they should look to those things which are in Heaven where Christ is (2:1). The false teachers have been trying to fix the believers' eyes on themselves and on the physical elements of this world. However, Paul says they should focus their attention on those things which are above the earth in Heaven.

Here we find the secret of walking in the Spirit. It is fixing our attention on Christ and not ourselves. It is putting our confidence in Him and not in our own human efforts. In verse 3 Paul gives a good reason as to why this should be. We have died with Christ, and our lives are now wrapped up with Him in God. This entanglement with Christ and our envelopment with Him in God assures us that when Christ appears in His glory, we will be glorified with Him (verse 4).

However, although the believer's focus should be on Christ, this does not mean he should have no self-consciousness at all. For Paul also says, watch your life ..." (I Timothy 4:16).

Although self control is something the Spirit produces, it is something the believer must exercise.

For this reason, Paul, after encouraging the believers to rely on Jesus, begins to tell them to take control of their lives. As stated in verse 3, the believers life is in Christ; now Paul begins to speak of death. The believer is to slay the things which proceed from his or her earthy nature (verse 5). These are things to be gotten rid of (verse 8).

The displacement of the old self which took place at baptism means that the old person's practices are to be eradicated (verse 9). The new person the believers have put on is becoming more and more like God (verse 10). In this new person there remains no racial, cultural, or social distinctions, but Christ is all and is in all (verse 11).

Since this is the case, Paul commands the believers to "clothe" themselves in five specific spiritual attributes (verse 12). What are these attributes?

List all the ways in which Paul appeals for church unity in verse 13-15.

The peace of Christ spoken of in verse 15 is sometimes believed to be a personal assurance of well being. However, a close reading of the entire verse, as well as the verse surrounding it makes it clear that Paul is speaking of peace between the members of the church.

Verse 16-17 are extremely similar to Ephesians 5:18-20. However, in Ephesian the believers are called upon to be filled with the Spirit, while in Colossians they are called upon to be filled with what?

In I John the anointing or Holy Spirit and the message of Christ are closely identified with each other (see I John 2:23 and 27). For the Holy Spirit brings to us the message of Christ, and to the extent we make room for His message, we make room for Him. Thus being filled with the message of Christ will produce the same results as being filled with the Holy Spirit, for the two experiences are in reality one.

However, there is a reason for Paul's using a different term in Colossians. It is his desire that the believers in Colossae not depart from the faith as they have been taught it, but rather to be strengthened in it and dominated by it (3:16; 2:6-7).

In verses 3:18-4:1, Paul gives instructions to the Christians with regard to relationships within their households. These instructions are almost identical to instructions he gives in Ephesians 5:22-6:9.

In verse 18, what reason is given to the wife to submit to her husband?

In verse 19, in Paul's instruction to the husbands what does Paul see as being incompatible with love?

As seen in verse 20, what is one way in which children can please the Lord?

According to verse 21, why is it important that fathers do not embitter their children?

Christians in general are called to encourage one another in their walk with the Lord. Here in 3:21 Paul specifically calls on fathers not to embitter their children for this will discourage them in their walk with the Lord.

In Leviticus 19:15 God commands the Israelites to show no partiality to the poor or the great. How does God show an impartial attitude between masters and slaves in Ephesians 6:9 and Colossians 3:22-25.

Christ's Superiority Seen in Sincere Ministers (Chapter 4)

According to 4:1, what do masters and slaves have in common?

In 4:2 Paul exhorts the believers to persist in prayer, and in verses 3 and 4 he requests prayer for himself for an opportunity to preach the gospel. Paul's chains have denied him this opportunity for the moment.

However, the believers in Colossae still have this opportunity and they are to use it (4:5). Their conversation should be gracious and peaceful. This will put them in proper position to share the message of Christ (4:6).

Verses 7-9 when cross-referenced with Ephesians 6:21-22 and Philemon 10-12 make it appear that Paul wrote Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon at about the same time and sent all three letters out at one time.

There is some interesting information to be found in verses 10-15. In verse 10 Paul says that Mark is the cousin of Barnabas, which might have something to do with the controversy Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15:37-40. Luke is said to be a doctor in verse 14, and Paul indicates that he is a Gentile. (See verses 14 and 11.) This makes Luke the only Gentile contributor to the New Testament.

Chapter Four

The Pastoral Epistles: 1 Timothy

Definition

"The Pastoral Epistles" is a term used to designate Paul's two letters to Timothy and one letter to Titus. Two things distinguish them from the rest of Paul's epistles: (1) They are among the last things that Paul wrote, reflecting the concerns which burdened Paul near the end of his life. (2) They are addressed not to a congregation but to two young men who were functioning in pastoral roles. They are highly personal, practical and unsystematic in nature. They express Paul's concern for the evolving need for structure in the churches.

Authorship

Each of the Pastoral Epistles begins with an explicit identification of the Apostle Paul as its author.

Date

Paul's missionary journeys occupied approximately the years A.D. 48-56. From 56-60 Paul was slowly making his way through the Roman courts, arriving ultimately in Rome. From 61-62 he was held in house arrest and then it can be surmised, he was released (Acts ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome). Later as he traveled, he left Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete and then later writing them a letter. The approximate dates of 1 Timothy and Titus are 63-66. After being recaptured and once again imprisoned Paul wrote Timothy a second letter, 2 Timothy, approximately A.D. 67.

The Recipients

Timothy. Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother (Acts 16:1). No mention is made of his father's faith but his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were both known for their sincere faith. Paul became like a spiritual father to the young man, referring to him as my true son in the faith (1 Timothy 1:2) and my dear son (2 Timothy 1:2). Paul took him on as a companion and he became one of the apostle's most trustworthy fellow-laborers (Romans 16:21; 1 Cor. 16:10; Phil. 2:19-22; 1 Thess. 3:2). Several of Paul's epistles include Timothy in the salutations (2 Cor., Phil., Col., 1 Thess., Phile.).

Titus. Considerably less is known of Titus. He was one of Paul's converts, or at least a protégé (Titus 1:4). He was a Gentile (Gal. 2:3). He was given one of Paul's most difficult and delicate assignments - to represent the apostle in troubled Corinth (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6,7, 13-15; 8:6, 16-17). When Paul visited Crete with Titus, he left him behind to further the work the two had begun (Titus 1:5).

1 Timothy

Major Topics in Timothy

- The necessity of being on guard against false teachers in the church (1:3-7; 4:1-3,7; 6:3-5).
- Statements regarding the Person and Work of Jesus Christ (1:15-17; 2:3-5; 3:16; 6:13-16).
- Qualifications and duties of elders and deacons (3:1-13; 5:17-20).
- The care of widows in the church (5:3-16).
- Appropriate behavior for women (2:9-15).
- Attitudes toward money (6:6-10, 17-19).

Purpose

The purpose of 1 Timothy is to inform us how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, the church (3:15).

Outline and Description of 1 Timothy

Salutation: 1:1-2

The teaching of the church is characterized by grace and not by law. 1:3-20.

Timothy should avoid false teachers of the law. 1:3-7

Compare this section with 4:1-8; 6:3-5, 20, 21 where Paul also warns against heretical teachers in the Ephesians church. Paul gives a thorough description of these false teachers. They are characterized by (1) teaching false doctrines (1:3; 6:3); (2) teaching Jewish myths (Tit. 1:4); (3) wanting to be teachers of the Old Testament law (1:7); (4) building up endless, farfetched, fictitious stories based on obscure genealogical points (1:4; 4:7; Tit. 3:9); (5) being conceited (1:7; 6:4); (6) being argumentative (1:4; 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:23, Tit 3:9); (7) using talk that was meaningless (1:6) and foolish (2 Tim. 2:23; Tit 3:9); (8) not knowing what they were talking about (1:7; 6:4); (9) teaching ascetic practices (4:3); and (10) using their position of religious leadership for personal financial gain (6:5).

Their teaching promotes controversy. 1:3,4 What were the myths and endless genealogies? Probably these are mythical stories built on Old Testament history (genealogies). They were empty of any spiritual value and only led to further speculation, questions, and arguments. These did not further God's work which is by faith.

Their teaching does not produce love. 1:5. Unlike aimless speculations, the purpose of Paul's instructions was love. It is the kind of love that flows from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. God's truth always purifies the human spirit while error putrefies it.

False teachers do not know what they are talking about. 1:6,7. Those who have wandered away from this kind of love in this way (v. 5), he is selfish and teaches to satisfy

his own ego and not the needs of the hearers. He seeks to impose a legal system based on the law while never understanding the purpose of the law.

Timothy should understand the purpose of the law. 1:8-11

The law is good. 1:8

The law is not bad, in fact in Romans 7:12 Paul says it is "holy righteous, and good". Paul again says in Galatians 3:24,25: "So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law." So for the law to have benefit it must be used properly. There is an inappropriate legalistic use that must be discarded.

The law is made for the unrighteous. 1:9,10

The Law is designed to show people their sinfulness. Thus, the Law is not for one who has already repented from his sin and turned to Christ. That person is no longer under the Law and should now walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:13-26). The Law is intended for those who remain unconvinced of their sin.

The law is contrary to the glorious Gospel. 1:11

Everything that is taught should conform to the Gospel. The law, used wrongfully, will cause individuals to seek salvation by works or by good deeds. The glorious Gospel is one of grace apart from works. Salvation is a free gift paid for by the death of Jesus Christ. To add the law to the gospel makes it another gospel. The one who proclaims another Gospel is to be eternally condemned (Gal. 1:9)!

Timothy should be mindful of God's abundant grace. 1:12-14

Paul remembers his background of violent opposition to the Gospel. He was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man. He is overwhelmed by grace of the Lord who appointed him to his service. Everything he lacked, God's grace had more than amply

provided. God delights in choosing those whom the world thinks incompetent to be His vessels of grace (1 Cor. 1:26-31).

Timothy should receive the grace of God poured out on sinners. 1:15-17

This reflects the purpose of the coming of Christ Jesus. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17). He came to salvage sinners from their spiritual destitution. Paul sees himself as the worst because of his violent opposition to the Gospel (Acts 9:1,2). If God was gracious enough to save Paul, He is patient and gracious enough to save anyone. The ultimate sinner became the ultimate saint; God's greatest enemy became His greatest servant.

Contemplating God's grace filled Paul with awe and adoration of the Lord. In v. 17 the phrase "King eternal" emphasizes God's sovereignty over all the ebb and flow of human history. Immortal and invisible speak of His eternity and His spiritual essence. The only God emphasizes His uniqueness in all the universe. It is to Him that all honor and glory belongs.

Timothy should hold on to faith and a good conscience. 1:18-20

Fight the good fight. 1:18

Earlier in his ministry, prophecies were made to Timothy that reinforced Paul's conviction that Timothy was a fit soldier to conduct the battle against error in the Ephesian church. This prophecy apparently provided knowledge of abilities which Timothy or others may not have recognized. He may have thought of himself as too young or inexperienced. These prophecies then enabled him to develop and use gifts which would otherwise have remained dormant. The uniqueness of prophecy is found in its dependence on "revelations" (either about unknown facts or about future events), and its purpose is to strengthen the ministry of the church in some specific way.

Do not lose faith and a good conscience. 1:19,20

Faith and a good conscience are vital for ministry. Failure in one brings failure in the other. Rejected implies a strong, deliberate thrusting away (compare Rom. 11:1,2). Those who have rejected the pleading of the conscience also find their faith destroyed (1 Tim. 4:1; 6:10). Theological error is often rooted in moral failure.

Verse 20 gives an example of Hymenaeus and Alexander. Paul's prescription for these two blasphemers was that they be handed over to Satan. This refers to excommunication from the congregation (see 1 Cor. 5:1-5) and abandonment to realms controlled by Satan (see 2 Cor. 4:4). The congregation is a haven and protection for believers without which they would suffer painful disadvantage. Out in the world, away from the fellowship and care of the church, they would be taught not to blaspheme. The purpose of this drastic action is more remedial than punitive (2 Cor. 2:5-8; 2 Thes. 3:14-15).

Assignment

1. Compare 1:8-11 with Romans 7:7, 12, 14. Describe the function of the law and how it relates to the believer.

2. Describe the steps that are necessary for a (1) pure heart, (2) a good conscience, and (3) a sincere faith (These steps will be based upon your overall understanding of the Christian life).

3. The phrase "trustworthy saying" is found in 1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Timothy 2:11, and Titus 3:8. What is the trustworthy saying that is given in each instance?

The Conduct of the Church Protects the Truth. 2:1-3:16

Prayer promotes opportunities to proclaim God's grace. 2:1-7

From his concerns about false teachers, Paul now turns his attention to matters relating to church conduct. The way a church behaves reflects the truth of the church. The first principle concerns the matter of prayer.

Prayer is of first importance. 2:1. What often comes last in a church's priorities should actually come first. Not much weight should be placed on the distinctions between request, prayers, intercession. All kinds of prayer should be made. Thanksgiving should also play a prominent part.

Prayer is made for those in authority. 2:2. The content of the prayer is not given but almost certainly he was instructing that requests be made for the salvation of the populace and its governors. A certain result of the salvation of a governor is that he will not interfere with the proclamation of the gospel. Even if he does not believe, prayer for those in leadership may result in more freedom which brings about greater opportunities. Times of political and social upheaval are excellent times in which to die for Christ, but hard times in which to live for Him.

Prayer for those in authority promotes opportunities to proclaim God's grace.

2:3-7

God wants everyone to be saved. 2:3-4. The reason that the prayer for the salvation of others pleases God is that it is a prayer according to his will (1 John 5:14). God who is a savior by nature, wants all men to be saved. God desires that no one perish (2 Peter 3:9), that the entire human race come to know the truth through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Of course not all come to salvation, Paul is not teaching universalism.

Salvation is possible only through Jesus Christ. 2:5-6. The reason that God wants everyone to be saved is because the cost of providing the salvation has already been paid by Jesus Christ. Paul gives three unquestioned truths of the Gospel: (1). There is only one God. (2). There is only one way for everyone to approach Him - through the Man who was God in the flesh, Christ Jesus. (3). This Jesus gave Himself up to die on the cross as a ransom for the human race. The Greek word for "ransom" was used most commonly for the price paid to redeem a slave. Similarly, Christ paid the ransom price of his own life to free us from the slavery of sin. This ransom was paid for all men which emphasizes the substitutionary nature of Christ's death. Compare Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:4,5,6.

Salvation is proclaimed by individuals. 2:7. This task of proclaiming the Gospel was not given to angels or to a select few Christians but to everyone. Compare Romans 10:13-15.

Public prayer is led by holy men. 2:8

Undoubtedly Paul wanted all Christians to offer up prayers for a widespread spiritual awakening among the populace and its rulers. Yet in public, Paul specified that men everywhere are to lead the congregation in prayer. These men are to be holy and not characterized by anger or disputing. Broken human relations affect one's ability to pray (Matt. 5:22-24; 6:12; 1 Peter 3:7).

The behavior of godly women promotes respect for God. 2:9-15

Inner qualities are of greater value than outward show. 2:9,10

Next Paul turns to the women in the congregation. Their adornment should not emphasize the external, but the internal. Their appearance should be simple, moderate, and free from ostentation. Paul is not declaring a total ban on the wearing of jewelry or braided hair. Rather, he is expressing caution in a society where such things were signs of extravagant luxury and proud personal display. Christians must be careful about letting a pagan culture set their fashions. Compare 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

Submission to authority follows God's divine order. 2:11-15

Evidently in the church at Ephesus were women who were very aggressive and tended to dominate the church. Paul appeals to them on the basis of the order of creation to exhibit a teachable spirit. Although the remarks are directed primarily to women, the principles of submission and teachability apply to everyone.

Women are to have proper attitudes toward male leadership. 2:11, 12. There are two possible explanations for this verse. Some maintain that Paul prohibited teaching only by women not properly instructed, i.e. the women at Ephesus. These women tend to exercise authority over men. Others say that Paul did not allow a woman to be an official teacher in the church. She was not to exercise authority over a man who was functioning as an overseer. The word translated “quietness” in v. 11 and “silent” in v. 12, does not mean complete silence or talking. It is clearly used elsewhere (Acts 22:2; 2 Thes. 3:12) to mean "settled down, undisturbed, not unruly."

Creation order is to be observed. 2:13,14. The reason Paul makes this appeal to the women is because of the creation order, i.e. Adam was formed first then Eve. Thus the man-woman relationship set forth in this passage is grounded in creation which makes the restriction universal and permanent. Paul appears to argue that since it was the woman who was deceived (Gen. 3:1-6), she is not to be entrusted with the teaching function of an overseer in the public worship services of the assembled church. There is absolutely no indication that women are inferior or any less gifted than men. These are instructions regarding the functioning of a local church not the value or worth of an individual. Women can have areas of leadership and teaching but they are not to exercise authority over men who are ordained as overseer in the local church.

Women are saved through childbearing. 2:15. This is one of the most difficult verses in the Bible to interpret. There are three possible meanings of this verse: (1) it speaks of the

godly woman finding fulfillment in her role as wife and mother in the home; (2) it refers to women being saved spiritually through the most significant birth of all, Jesus Christ; (3) it refers to women being kept physically safe in childbirth. The first seems more likely. A woman will find her greatest satisfaction and meaning in life, not in seeking the male role, but in fulfilling God's design for her as wife and mother with all faith, love and holiness with propriety (i.e. self-restraint).

Qualified leadership promotes maturity in the church. 3:1-7

Now Paul turns to the matter of qualified leadership. Many churches fail to function properly because there is a shortage of qualified leaders. He has said earlier that women are not to have authority over a man, now Paul shows the kind of man that is to have authority in the local church. Little is said of the function of an overseer; the chief emphasis lies upon his moral and spiritual qualifications.

An overseer desires a noble task. 3:1

In the Greek culture, overseer was a presiding official in a civic or religious organization. Here it refers to a man who oversees a local congregation. The equivalent work from the Jewish background of Christianity is "elder". The terms "overseer" and "elder" are used interchangeably in Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2. It is noble for a man to set his heart (to study, labor, and sacrifice in order to equip himself) on leadership in the church.

An overseer must be a mature man. 3:2-7

The very nature and importance of the office made it necessary that only qualified men be appointed. Their duties were to (1) preach and teach (5:17); (2) to direct the affairs of the church (3:5; 5:17); (3) to shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2); and (4) to guard the church from error (Acts 20:28-31). There are 15 qualifications given. In summary they are the marks of maturity that could apply to any Christian: (1) above reproach - to have

nothing in one's conduct on which someone could ground a charge or accusation. (2) Husband of but one wife - a one-woman man. Although there are many meanings that are given. However, it seems that the best one is that the affections of an overseer must be centered exclusively on his wife. If he is not married, he must keep himself morally sexually pure. (3) Temperate; (4) self-controlled; (5) respectable; and (6) hospitable relate to personal qualifications. (7) Able to teach - This includes both the willingness and the skill or ability to teach the Scriptures as well as to refute those who mishandle it (Titus 1:9).

Next there are four negative phrases given: (8) not given to much wine (Titus 1:7); (9) not violent but (10) gentle; (11) not quarrelsome; and (12) not a lover of money (Titus 1:11). He neither relishes fighting with others nor pursues his ministry for personal gain (1 Peter 5:2).

An overseer must (13) manage his own family well. The most reliable means (although not infallible) means of determining the quality of one's potential leadership is by examining the behavior of his children. Failure in a home raises a red flag about one's ability to lead a congregation. He must (14) not be a recent convert or he will be exposed to the deadly sins of pride and conceit and fall under the same judgment of the devil.

The last requirement concerns his standing before the community: (15) a good reputation with outsiders. It is important that overseers achieve and maintain a good reputation before unbelievers.

Deacons also meet certain qualifications. 3:8-13

These must also be men of quality, even though their function in the congregation is significantly different. "Deacon" literally means "a humble servant." Generally, their service was meant to free the elders to give full attention to prayer and ministry of the word (Acts 6:2,4). Because of their public profile in the church and the servant nature of their work, deacons must have strong qualities of maturity and piety.

Verse 11 says their wives must also reflect certain qualities. They were most likely the wives of deacons or a group of female deacons (Phoebe, Rom. 16:1). The text allows for both views. Again the stress is not on function but on the quality of the person.

The Faith of the Church Must Be Carefully Guarded. 3:14-6:10

The faith of the church is the truth about Jesus Christ. 3:14-16

Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church. Therefore, what a church believes and teaches about Him is of utmost importance. There may be disagreement about the organization of a church but there must be unity on the basic doctrines of the Person of our Lord.

The church reveals the living God 3:14,15

Here Paul simply affirms the crucial role of the universal church as the support and bulwark - not the source - of God's truth. The church is the pillar in that it upholds and supports the Gospel before the world. The church is foundation of the truth in that it supports and maintains the truth in opposition to all attacks upon it.

The truth about Jesus Christ reveals the mystery of godliness. v. 16

The truth about godliness being a mystery means that it was hidden but it has now been revealed. This mystery is great (large, important) in that it is overwhelmingly large in scope. Compare Ephesians 3:2-13. There six elements in this early hymn about Christ: (1) God appeared in a body. This refers to the incarnation of Christ. The eternal God became flesh (John 1:14; Phil. 2:6-11). (2) He was vindicated by the Spirit refers to God's demonstration through the resurrection (Acts 2:24-26) by the Holy spirit that the crucified Jesus is Lord and Messiah. (3) He was seen by angels refers to the fact that His entrance into heaven was observed by angels (Phil. 2:9-11). (4) He was preached among the nations and (5) He was believed on in the world refer to the progressive fulfillment of God's redemptive plan through

His preordained means (1 Cor. 1:18-2:5). (6) He was taken up in glory refers to His ascension (Eph. 4:10).

Assignment

1. Study the qualifications for elders given in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Which of the qualifications do you think you meet? With which qualifications do you struggle the most? How would you use these qualifications to examine other men for leadership?

The faith of the church will be abandoned by some in the last days. 4:1-5

Because truth is hated by those who reject it, we now have a warning of a coming departure from the faith. The church is never safe from those who would destroy her faith. In Acts 20:29-31 Paul warns the Ephesian church: "I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard."

Those abandoning the faith are taught by deceiving spirits and demons. 4:1

Spiritual error is seldom due to innocent mistakes. It is more often due to the conscious strategies of God's spiritual enemies (Eph. 6:12). Deceiving spirits and demons are behind those who teach such things.

Their character is unholy. 4:2

Their unholy character is shown by two descriptions: (1) hypocritical liars and (2) those whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They have no feelings of guilt and are thus ready to do the biddings of Satan.

Their teaching is contrary to God's truth. 4:3-5

Paul now gives two examples of their false asceticism: (1) they forbid people to marry. They teach that abstinence from marriage puts one on a higher spiritual plane than one who is married. They believe that all appetites relating to the body are evil and should be rooted out, including normal desires for sex and food. They (2) order them to abstain from certain foods. They teach that abstaining from certain foods, and perhaps from all foods at certain seasons is esteemed meritorious and a special virtue. This unbiblical asceticism arose out of the mistaken belief that the material world was evil. But those who believe and know the truth can gratefully receive and use the things God has created to be received. This is true because everything God has created is good. But these good things can be abused as adultery is an abuse of the marital sexual relationship and gluttony is an abuse of a normal appetite of food.

The faith of the church is upheld by a good minister of Jesus Christ. 4:6-16

He focuses on godliness. 4:6-8. One of the works of a good minister of Christ Jesus is that he is a faithful conduit of the truth to other Christians. He is to warn the people of the dangers that lie ahead. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. To do this Timothy was to remember the truths of the faith and the things that Paul had taught him. It is important for a good minister to nourish his own soul on the truths which he gives to others. Timothy is to refuse godless myths and old wives' tales (1:4).

Instead, he is to train himself for godliness. Train yourself pictures the Greek athlete who disciplines his body with righteous exercise and strenuous training. It is in this way that Timothy is to discipline himself to be godly.

In v. 8 Paul speaks of the greater value of godliness over physical training. Godliness has a far greater value because it has promise for both the present life and the life to come. Godliness color all aspects of temporal and eternal life, bestowing its blessings on all that it touches.

He puts his hope in the living God. 4:9-10. There is a tendency for Christians to put their hope in something other than the living God. We are to have the same mind set that Paul declared in Philippians 1:21: "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." To hope in material gain, in the approval of others, or in the things of this world will never bring the eternal rewards that are available to those who have believed in the living God who is the Savior. God is the Savior of all in that he offers salvation to all and saves all who come to Him. Obviously this does not mean that God saves every person from eternal punishment, for such universalism would contradict the clear testimony of Scripture.

He sets a proper example in his personal life. 4:11-14. Now Paul prods Timothy to be firm and courageous in his ministry. There are three duties which are important for him: (1) He must not be intimidated by his relative youthfulness or what others might think of it.

Instead he was to demonstrate his maturity by living a life that would be the pattern for other Christians in every area of life. (2) He must attend to his public ministry by the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, and to teaching. (3) He is to exercise his gift. This gift was given to him through a prophetic message. To build Timothy's confidence in his ministry, Paul reminds him that his giftedness came to him from the hand of God through a body of elders. Who and when we do not know.

He watches his life and doctrine closely. 4:15-16. Because of the overwhelming responsibility of his ministry, Timothy is to keep a sharp eye on his private life and public ministry. The result will be that he will be God's instrument in bringing about the salvation of others.

The faith of the church is upheld when the church behaves like a family. 5:1-6:10

After giving advice on Timothy's personal life and ministry, Paul now turns to advice on how to relate effectively to various groups in the church. The basic principle is that they are to be treated as he would the members of his own family.

The principle is explained. 5:1, 2

Paul's mention of father, brothers, mothers, and sisters shows that his is thinking of the church as a family and each member must be treated with family affection.

Widows are to be taken care of properly. 5:3-16

Throughout the Old and New Testament widows, along with orphans and aliens, are viewed as special objects of God's mercy. As such they are to be taken under the wing of the congregation (Deut. 10:18; 24:17-21; Acts 6:1-7; James 1:27). Evidently the care of widows was becoming a major burden so Paul gives some guidelines so that the care will be given properly.

Families take care of their own members. 5:3-8,16

Widows are placed in three categories. First in v. 3 and v. 5, he mentions those widows who are really in need. She is one who does not have a family and is left all alone. In fact she has no place to look for help but to God and His people. The widow-prophetess Anna, described in Luke 2:36-38, is an excellent description of a widow who is really in need.

Second (vs. 4, 8, 16) are the widows who have children or grandchildren. The first responsibility for caring for the needy falls on the family. The family is put their religion into practice by caring for their own family. James calls this "religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless" (James 1:27). By repaying their parents and grandparents in this way pleases God. In verse 8 Paul goes a step further. Failure to provide (to think ahead, to provide by seeing needs in advance) for these family members gives the lie to any claim to know God and becomes a denial of the faith. Indeed, such a failure renders the irresponsible family worse than an unbeliever, since even many non-Christians understand and fulfill their family responsibilities.

Third is the widow who lives for pleasure (v. 5). With her the church does not have a direct responsibility to provide for her needs.

Widows without families must meet certain qualifications to be cared for by the church. 5:9-10

There three qualifications given in order to be put on the list of widows. (1) She must be over sixty. Evidently younger than that she would be able to work and support herself. (2) She must have been faithful to her husband. The Greek here is literally "a one-man woman." Compare the qualification for overseers in 3:2 and Titus 1:6. (3) She must be well known for her good deeds. Her reputation for godly living is well know. The examples given span the realms of home, church, community, and include child-raising.

Younger widows are not to be put on the list. 5:11-15

Paul gives two reasons for this. First (vs. 11,12), the younger women might be faced with normal sexual desires which would overcome their dedication to Christ. Evidently when widows were put on the list, they made a pledge to serve Christ entirely without the thought of remarriage. Second (vs. 13-15), younger and more energetic widows would have a more difficult time resisting the temptations connected with idleness. So Paul recommends younger widows to marry, have children, and to manage their homes.

Elders are given special respect by the church. 5:17-25

Now Paul makes mention of the special care that the church is to have for her elders. These are men who occupy official positions of leadership in the church. Their task is to direct the affairs of the church. They have the oversight of the affairs of the congregation, with the deacons providing help whenever it is needed.

They are to be given financial support. 5:17-18

For their oversight, elders received a stipend. Those whose work is preaching and teaching were especially worthy of double honor. That this honor should include financial support is supported by the two illustrations from Scripture. (1) Animals are fed while they work and (2) the fact that a worker deserves wages. While an elder may refuse support as Paul did (1 Cor. 9:15-23), Paul clearly believed and repeatedly taught that a congregation should offer financial support to those laboring in preaching and teaching.

Their sins are given public exposure. 5:19-21

Keenly aware that even elders are not exempt from temptation and sin, instruction is given on dealing with those who do sin. First (v. 19), Paul says to use great caution in receiving an accusation against an elder. No accusation is to be heard unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. This would separate the valid accusations from the false ones. Second (v.20), as a warning to others, those who sin are to be rebuked publicly. Third (v. 21), for whatever reason, Paul strongly told Timothy to follow through on these instructions.

Timothy is to carry out his task under the authority of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels.

They should not be appointed hastily. 5:22-25

One way to avoid painful situations involving the discipling of an elder is to be careful about who is ordained in the first place. Those who hastily ordain an elder and he falls into sin share some of the blame for the negative consequences to their church.

Verse 23 is a bit of personal advice to Timothy about his health. In view of Timothy's physical ailments, and perhaps because safe drinking water was often difficult to find, Paul advised him to drink a little wine.

In testing men as to their fitness for office, Paul (vs. 24,25) emphasizes the difficulties inherent in choosing qualified candidates for the ordination. There are two classes of sins: (1) some are obvious and (2) others trail behind them. That is why time is essential in choosing men. Time will many times reveal the character faults that will bring shame upon a church through a sinning elder. Good deeds are the same way. Some are obvious and others can only be discovered after examination.

Slaves are to treat their masters honorably. 6:1-2

Under normal circumstances slaves and masters had no associations outside the institution of slavery. But as many became Christians, they found themselves in the same body of believers. Usually Paul included warnings to masters not to abuse their authority but here he only addresses slaves. They are to view their masters worthy of full respect. This same phrase is used of God in 1:17 and 6:16 and of elders in 5:17. This attitude is necessary lest God's reputation and the Christian faith be slandered. Then those who have believing masters should work all the harder since the one receiving the benefits is also in the family of faith.

The heretics and the greedy are to be recognized. 6:3-10

In this section Paul discusses those who teach false doctrine. This is where he began this epistle. Most of the time heretics are recognizable by their greed - they think that godliness is a means of great gain.

Heretics do not agree with the doctrine about Christ. 6:3-5. We learn three things about heretics in these verses. First, they have theological problem. They teach a different doctrine about Christ. They do not agree with the teaching of Jesus Christ. Second, they are conceited and understand nothing. Their conceit keeps them from being taught by the Lord. The Lord is near to those who walk in humility. Those who are humble will hear from God but the proud cannot be taught by the Lord. Their pride only leads to disunity (envy, quarreling, etc.). Three, they have been robbed of the truth by Satan.

The greedy are not content with what they have. 6:6-10. Godliness does not give financial gain (v. 5); it itself is gain when accompanied with contentment. God-given sufficiency which does not depend on material circumstances is indeed of great gain. It is not money in itself that causes greed but one's attitude toward money. Three phases describe a greedy person's attitude toward wealth: (1) want to get rich (v.9); (2) the love of money (v. 10), and (3) eager for money (v.10).

The Hope of the Church Affects the Lifestyle of the Church. 6:11-21

The hope of the church is the return of Jesus Christ to this world. The expectation of this event will affect one's lifestyle. As John says in 1 John 3:3: "Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

The appearing of Jesus Christ will certainly take place. 6:11-16

Flee sin and pursue righteousness. 6:11.

Be obedient until Jesus Christ appears. 6:12-14. We are to be obedient by fighting the good fight of faith (v. 12) by giving our best effort to this most worthwhile of all struggles. When we are told to take hold of eternal life Paul means for us to fully appropriate the life that we now have in Jesus Christ.

Be aware of the character of God. 6:15, 16. Here we have an inspiring doxology to the God who is the cause and object of it all: The ultimate Ruler of the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the only eternal one who dwells where no man can survive or approach or even see (John 1:18). He deserves awesome reverence combined with complete humility (Job 42:1-6).

The appearing of Jesus Christ should affect one's attitude toward money. 6:17-

20

Do not put your hope in wealth. 6:17. Those who are rich tend to be arrogant, that is they assume that their wealth came by their own devices. This naturally leads to pride. Also, they put their hope in wealth, depending on it for their security. They forget that God provides everything for our enjoyment.

Lay up treasure for the coming age. 6:18-19. Wealth accumulated only for this world will one day lose all its value and be totally wasted. But, we can use our wealth to gain eternal dividends (Luke 16:1-12). When Paul says, "Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share he is telling the wealthy how to lay up treasure for themselves for the coming age when Jesus comes back.

The faith is to be maintained in view of His coming. 6:20-21. Paul closes this letter by making a final appeal to Timothy to guard the faith and to turn away from that which destroys faith.

Assignment

1. How is one who is young to gain the respect of those who are older (4:11-14)?

2. Discuss how a church is to handle leaders who have been accused of wrongdoing (3:17-20).

3. List 8 or more observations about money from 6:5-10, 17-19.

Chapter Five

The Pastoral Epistles: 2 Timothy

Introduction

Paul was a prisoner in a Roman dungeon when he wrote this, the last of his epistles, to Timothy. The date is approximately A.D. 67. Not long afterward, according to tradition, the apostle was beheaded.

Purpose

The purpose of 2 Timothy is to encourage Timothy and us to be faithful in ministry in the face of hardship.

Major Topics

- The reality of hardship and suffering for those involved in ministry (1:18-12, 15; 2:8,9; 3:10-13; 4:10, 14-15).
- The inerrancy and purpose of the Scriptures (3:15-17).
- The necessity of preaching the Word (4:2-5).
- The person and work of Jesus Christ (1:9-10; 2:8, 11-13).

Outline and Description of 2 Timothy

Salutation: 1:1, 2

One who ministers must be steadfast. 1:1-2:13

Certain qualities characterize steadfastness. 1:6-18

Sincere faith confirms one's participation in the Gospel. 1:3-5. Paul felt very close to Timothy. In fact he longed to see him so that he (Paul) would be filled with joy. He knew

Timothy's sincere (unhypocritical faith) because this kind of faith was also expressed in Timothy's mother and grandmother.

Zeal is present because of God has done for each person. 1:6, 7. Because Paul was persuaded that Timothy possessed true faith, he urged him to "keep at full flame" his God-given ability for ministry. God's gift must be used if they are to be kept at their full potential. Gifts are not given in full bloom; they need to be developed through use. The gift (which is not described) was given to Timothy through a prophetic message (1 Tim. 4:14) and confirmed by the laying on of hands by the elders (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). The "laying on of hands" signified that the leadership publicly recognized Timothy's giftedness.

Therefore, Timothy was not to be timid. Since God has gifted each individual who is a believer (1 Peter 4:10), every believer does not need to be timid but confident in God's wisdom and power. (1) God has given us a spirit of power. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:4: "My message and preaching were. . . a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power." (2) God has given us a spirit of love. 1 Timothy 1:5 says, "The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." (3) God had given us a spirit of self discipline. 1 Timothy 4:7 says, ". . .train yourself to be godly."

Courage is necessary because of hardships. 1:8-12

The uniqueness of the Gospel brings hardships. 1:8-10. The Gospel is unique and it is in opposition to the world's system. Therefore one who accepts the Gospel lives under a different authority. He is called to a holy life, not one of indulging his sinful pleasures. He is called according to the Lord's purpose and grace, not for his own plans and works. This grace has been revealed through the appearing of the Lord Jesus. This grace has come through the One who has destroyed death, which is the product of sin, and has brought life

and immortality into view (In the past the Gospel was purposed by God, in the present it is revealed by Christ, and in the future it brings life and immortality.).

The certainty of the Gospel makes the suffering worthwhile. 1:11, 12. No matter how severe the suffering might be, we can entrust our destiny to the Lord Jesus Christ. We can be confident of God's complete vindication in the end therefore we do not need to be ashamed.

Diligence to the Gospel is expressed by: 1:13-18

Guarding the truth. 1:13, 14. Hold the truth with faith and love in Christ Jesus. To be balanced, a commitment to the truth always requires faith and love. Since truth can be become diluted, it must be guarded from becoming distorted, diluted, or added to. The Holy Spirit aids in guarding the truth.

Being loyal to those who proclaim the truth. 1:15-18. Here Paul gives an illustration of those who deserted him and of those who refreshed him and were not ashamed of his chains.

Certain duties characterize steadfastness. 2:1-13

Being strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2:1

The grace that is referred to here is the means by which an individual receives salvation. It is wholly based on God's mercy and is not dependent on any works of righteousness that one does (Ephesians 2:8.9). It is appropriated by faith the complete sufficiency of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

Since the tendency is always toward legalism (that of adding works to salvation), the grace of God must be at the forefront of a ministry. It is the pride of man that leads him to think he can do something to earn his salvation. One's strength comes not from developing a set of rules but from holding fast to the grace of the Lord Jesus.

Entrusting the truth to reliable men who will be qualified to teach others. 2:2

It is by this means that Christianity will be perpetuated. The message remains the same: that which was revealed to Paul by the Holy Spirit and affirmed by many witnesses. This message must then be entrusted to others. It must be entrusted to those who are reliable and are qualified to teach others. Those who are qualified are described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus.

Enduring hardship. 2:3-7

We are to endure hardship as a soldier who seeks only to please his commanding officer. 2:3,4

A Roman soldier's single-minded purpose, righteous discipline, and unquestioning obedience to his commanding officer combine to make the figure of a soldier an apt one for a servant of the Gospel.

As an athlete. 2:5

An athlete is one who must obey the rules or be disqualified. Like an athlete, a Christian must have strong qualities of discipline, self-control, endurance, and a certain toughness.

As a farmer. 2:6,7

A farmer is known for his hard work. A diligent farmer will receive his share of the crops. The three illustrations have in common the point that success is achieved through discipline, hard work, an single-mindedness.

The motivation for enduring hardship comes from. . . (2:8-13)

Remembering Jesus Christ. 2:8

Christ is the reason why we endure hardship. As the world treated Him, so we can also expect the same treatment. If we lose sight of Him and all that He is and has done for us, discouragement will overcome us and we will become powerless and ineffective. Since He is risen from the dead, He is now alive and sustaining His children. Being descended from David reminds us that He is coming one day as King of kings and Lord of lords (2 Samuel 7).

Remembering the suffering of Paul because of the Gospel. 2:9,10

The phrase chained like a criminal means that Paul is suffering like a criminal of the most shameful and disgraceful kind. But though Paul was bound, the Word of God could not be bound and many people were obtaining eternal salvation. The “elect” refers to those who had believed and were chosen in Christ before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:3-6). Enduring hardship for the Gospel is never in vain: its rewards are eternal.

Remembering the certainty of future consequences. 2:11-13

Here are 4 phrases beginning with "if". Here the "if" does not imply but states the certainty of fulfillment. The first "if" refers to a believer's mystical identification with the death and life of Christ (Colossians 3:3; Romans 6:2-23). The second "if" is between suffering and glorification (Romans 8:17). Christ endured and will one day reign and those saints who endure will one day reign with Him (Revelation 3:21). The third "if" speaks of the possibility of apostasy (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 John 9) and the Lord's ultimate rejection of those who professed Christ only temporarily (like Judas Iscariot). The fourth "if" speaks not of the apostate, but of a true child of God who nevertheless proves unfaithful (i.e. when Peter denied Christ). Christ's faithfulness to Christians is not contingent on their faithfulness to Him.

Assignment

1. In 2:2 Paul speaks of a method of spreading the message to others. Who are people you can train who will be qualified to teach others? Begin to develop a plan of action to follow the pattern of the Apostle Paul.

2. How would you encourage someone who is afraid and timid (1:6)? What steps should he take?

One who ministers must be doctrinally sound. 2:14-4:8

Each one must be diligent in maintaining doctrinal soundness. 2:14-26

It is important that those who serve in a public ministry be committed to sound doctrine. They should be in basic agreement with the leadership of the church and seek to uphold the commitment of the church to the truth.

By correctly handling the word of truth. 2:14-19

Error is destructive to faith. 14, 16-18. There are many who only want to argue about the Scripture. With them, the Bible many times becomes a book to argue and debate about and it loses in relevance in daily living. Therefore they quarrel about words (v. 14) and persist in godless chatter (v. 16). By doing this they only ruin those who listen (v. 14), become more and more ungodly, cause man to wander from the faith (v. 18) and destroy the faith of some (v. 18). They destroyed the faith of some by denying a future bodily resurrection (v. 18). In 1 Corinthians 15:12-19, Paul says that to deny bodily resurrection was to deny Christ's resurrection. And if Christ has not been raised, faith is in vain, all the apostles are false witnesses, the penalty for sin has not been paid, those saints who have died are eternally lost, and believers are to be pitied more than all men.

The word of truth leads to godly behavior. The workman (v. 15) who presents himself to God does not need to be ashamed when he correctly handles the word of truth. One who is lazy does not apply due diligence and thus will be ashamed. To be an acceptable minister demands strenuous and exhausting toil. It involves comparing Scripture with Scripture and listening to what God is telling him through its pages. Then as he becomes mature, he will have trained himself to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:14).

In spite of those who are mishandling the word, God's solid foundation stands firm. The foundation refers to all believers, the true church of God. There are two characteristics of God's people: (1) The Lord knows those who are his. Even though there may be error and

confusion in the church, the elect are known (recognized, acknowledged, loved) by Him. To know that you are known by the Lord results in great security for each believer. (2) Those who acknowledge the Lord, must turn away from wickedness. In his first epistle John says, "No one who is born of God will continue to sin because God's seed remains in him, he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God." True trust in God for security must reveal itself in a life of effective separation from unrighteousness.

Being a clean instrument. 2:20-21. In any church, which Paul uses here to symbolize a local church, there are containers for noble purposes and some for ignoble. This refers to the faithful and the unfaithful in the church. We are to cleanse ourselves (v.21) from that which makes us unusable. What is clean and set apart for special use can easily get contaminated and be rendered unusable through contact with the corrupt.

By being faithful in our conduct. 2:22-26. The way to remain usable is described in v. 22. One is to flee evil, to pursue righteousness, faith and love and to be at peace with others who are honest before God (v. 22).

There will always be contact in the church with fellow Christians who are divisive, who have fallen into false teaching. So in vs. 24-26, Paul tells us what our response is to be to them. (1) The Lord's servant should not be a fighter but a promoter of unity (v. 24). (2) He must gently instruct those who oppose him with the goal of seeing them repent of their rebellion and coming to a knowledge of the truth (v. 25,26). False teaching and all its negative consequences in the church are always the handiwork of Satan, but God in His grace often salvages the situation through the Christlike ministry of His servants.

Each must understand the characteristics of the last days. 3:1-9

People will be godless. 3:1-5

The "last days" is a term which includes the entire period between the first century and Christ's return. During this time, according to the prediction, the world will see terrible times

of social degeneration. Paul gives a list of 19 general characteristics that can be expected of godless people in the last days. These are always present but they will intensify as Christ's return draws near.

Those who do not acknowledge the truth when they hear it, will be led astray.

3:6-7

There are those who prey upon those who are weak-willed. Those who are dominated by sin and evil lusts will find themselves controlled by evil and wicked people. Paul mentions weak-willed women but the application is to anyone who is carnal and immature. They are easy targets for false teachers. (Ephesians 4:14).

Those who have depraved minds will eventually be rejected. 3:8,9

The reference to Jannes and Jambres and their opposition to Moses draws not on the Old Testament but on a widespread Jewish legend about two of Pharaoh's magicians who competed against Moses and lost (Exodus 7:11, 9:11). Those who oppose the truth will not get very far, their folly will be clear to everyone. (Compare 1 Timothy 5:24,25).

The preaching of the word is the vital ministry of the church. 3:10-4:8

Those who faithfully proclaim the Word will face severe opposition. 3:10-13

Just as Paul endured much, so will everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus, be persecuted. Those who are evil will become more evil and those who are deceived will be more deceived. Error feeds on itself.

Those who proclaim must be faithful to the Scripture. 3:14-4:5

By being confident in the Scriptures. 3:14, 15. As the Scriptures made Timothy wise for salvation so will they bring salvation to all who respond in faith.

By realizing the crucial role of the Scriptures. 3:16, 17. All Scripture is God-breathed in that God's words were given through men superintended by the Holy Spirit so that their writings are without error. The Word of God is profitable for teaching (instructing believers

in God's truths), rebuking those in sin (1 Timothy 5:20: 2 Timothy 4:2), correcting those in error, and training in righteousness those who are new believers in God's ways. With the Scriptures the man of God can be thoroughly equipped for every good work (v. 17).

However, Paul does not mean that a heady knowledge of the Scriptures is all we need. In 1 Corinthians 2:4,5 he mentions the necessity of the Holy Spirit's power when the Scriptures are taught. He says that his message and his preaching "were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom but on God's power." It is the Word of God empowered by the Spirit of God that equips men and women for every good work.

By being diligent in proclaiming God's Word. 4:1-8

It would be difficult to see how Paul could have made his charge (v. 1) to Timothy any more weighty. The charge is made (1) in the presence of God who will judge the living and the dead, (2) in view of His appearing and (3) in view of His kingdom.

Because of the importance of the charge, Paul says to preach the Word. Do not preach psychology, politics, etc., but proclaim God's truth, the Word. Be prepared at all times to correct, rebuke, and encourage. Since the time is coming when people will not want the truth, we are told to discharge all the duties of your ministry (v. 5).

The best example of this diligence is Paul himself. He knows that his death is certain and soon (v. 6). There would be no release from this Roman jail. The time has come for my departure (a term commonly used as a euphemism for death). He is confident of his steadfastness in the ministry (v. 7); therefore he has no fear of facing the Lord, the righteous Judge (v. 8). He knows that he will be awarded a crown of righteousness which will be given to all who love the Lord's appearing. Diligence in proclaiming God's Word will be given an eternal reward.

Paul reminds us of God's faithfulness in the midst of adversity. 4:9-22

Here he remembers those who were involved with him in his ministry. He is alone only Luke is with him and Paul desires the fellowship of Timothy and Mark (9-13). He is not bitter toward those who had harmed him (v. 14) or deserted him (v. 16). Instead Paul recognizes God's right to execute justice (v. 14) and God's right to show grace to those who fled from Paul. Christians were being killed in Rome and most had fled to avoid persecution. No matter what happened, Paul knew that some day he would be brought safely into Christ's heavenly kingdom (16-18).

Assignment

1. 3:14-17 is a major statement on the Scriptures. List five observations on the Scriptures from these verses.

2. 4:1-5 speaks of the urgency of the task of preaching. List all the principles you learn about this task from these verses.

Chapter Six

The Pastoral Epistles: Titus

Introduction

Titus was a Gentile convert (Galatians 2:3) who had served and traveled with Paul (Galatians 2:1-3). Possibly Titus worked with Paul in Ephesus. From there Titus was sent to Corinth to help that church with its work (2 Corinthians 7:6,7; 8:6,16).

After they had left Timothy behind in Ephesus, Paul and Titus traveled on to Crete. After a short while, Paul left Titus there to provide direction and appoint leadership for the church. Later Paul wrote this epistle and had it delivered to Titus.

Crete was the fourth largest island of the Mediterranean. In New Testament times life in Crete had sunk to a deplorable moral level. The dishonesty, gluttony, and laziness of its inhabitants were proverbial.

The basic theme of Titus is "doing what is good." This concept is mentioned eight times (1:8,16; 2:3,7,14; 3:1,8,14). Also in Titus there are two classic summary statements of Christian doctrine (2:11-14; 3:4-7).

Theme

Grace promotes good works among God's people.

Outline and Description of Titus

Salutation. 1:1-4

Qualified elders are Entrusted with God's Work. 1:5-9

Paul and Titus ministered together in Crete (1:5) but they did not have time to organize churches. So Paul left Titus behind to appoint elders in every town. Although the method of appointing them is not mentioned, their purpose and qualifications are clearly given.

Elders have at least three functions (compare 1 Peter 5:1-4):

He is entrusted with God's work. (1:7). God needs people to accomplish His work. A man is not to use this office of elder (bishop) to build his own career - he is serving as a steward of God. Therefore elders must be chosen who will accurately reflect the mind and heart of God.

Elders are to be qualified. 1:6-8. As in 1 Timothy 3:2-7, Paul lists the qualifications for elders. There the qualification list numbered 15; here it is 17. Yet both lists cover essentially the same qualities. These qualifications are the marks of maturity. An individual will not achieve perfection in any of these qualities but his life should consistently reflect them. Also, these are the qualities of all mature believers, men or women, elder or not.

In v. 7, Paul switches from the term "elder" to "overseer". The two works are plainly interchangeable in the apostle's thinking. They refer to the same church office.

He is to encourage others by sound doctrine. 1:9. Sound doctrine is correct teaching in keeping with that of that apostles. Others are encouraged by sound (healthy) doctrine. This teaches them why and how to do what is good and to live in harmony with God.

He is to refute those who oppose sound doctrine. 1:9. There will always be those who rebel against the truth and there must be men of maturity to resist and refute those rebels.

False Teachers Must Be Identified In The Local Church. 1:10-16

Having mentioned those who oppose the truth, Paul now describes them and offers advice on how to handle them.

They do exist within the church. 1:10

Wherever the truth exists, those who resist the truth will be present. They are rebellious against the leadership in church and against the Lord Himself. They are the kind who talk a lot but their speech has no substance and it doesn't lead to obedience. They are those who deceive others. They give the appearance of being someone they are not. The circumcision groups were those who taught that for salvation or sanctification or both, it was necessary to be circumcised and to keep Jewish ceremonial law (compare Galatians: 6-9; 3:1-5).

They must be silenced. 1:11

The consequences of allowing these to teach is that whole households can be ruined. They must be silenced (compare 2 Timothy 2:23-26). Their motive is not the good of the church but their own financial status. Only continued harm will come if they are allowed to speak in the church.

They must be sharply rebuked. 1:12-14

Their reputation was that of a Cretan. The quotation is from the poet Epimenides who lived 600 years earlier and was held in high esteem by the Cretans. By Paul's day the saying had become a proverb which merely emphasized the low reputations of Cretans generally. In Greek literature, to "Cretanize" was to lie. Since this was true about these teachers, their negative influence needed to be remedied. Paul's desire is that the believers in the church be sound in the faith, that they pay no attention to Jewish myths or follow those who reject the truth.

They are unfit for doing anything good. 1:15, 16

The problem with them is that their minds and hearts are corrupted. These teachers possibly taught rigid rules about eating, drinking, marriage, etc. However, Christ teaches that purification is largely a matter of the internal rather than the external (Mark 7:15; Luke 11:39-41). Nothing outside can corrupt one who is internally pure; but someone who is

internally impure corrupts all he touches. Certain disciplines have value only when the heart is pure. External habits do not bring about internal purity.

Godly Behavior is Expected of All Groups in the Church. 2:1-10

Since Paul had just addressed the problem of those who were trying to make others conform to their brand of holiness, he explains what true, genuine holiness looks like. It is the opposite of those who are rebellious, mere takers, and deceivers and of those who are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for doing anything good." Sound doctrine is necessary to bring about proper behavior (v. 1).

Teach older men to manifest maturity. 2:2

These marks of maturity should be complimented by three Christians virtues of faith, love and endurance (hope).

Teach older women to be reverent. 2:3

They are warned against the sins of those who have too much time on their hands. Instead they should use their time teaching what is good to younger women.

Teach younger women to be good wives and mothers. 2:4,5

Seven qualities are mentioned of what they are to be. By manifesting these qualities they would earn the respect of outsiders and thereby prevent God's word from being maligned. Christian wives and mothers can still be sure that the Lord will honor those who value that which He values and He will ultimately vindicate those who are faithful to these values.

The primary responsibility of young women is the home (note 4 of 7 qualities refer directly to the home). For another portrait of a godly women see Proverbs 31. Her priority is to be in the home even though there may be circumstances that dictate she has to work outside the home.

Encourage young men to do what is good. 2:6-8

Paul encourages them first of all to have self-control since this is where many are the most deficient. Some form of the word "self control" is used in all four age groups. It is important for all Christians to be self controlled, that is to be moderate and sensible and have self restraint. v. 7

Since Titus was a young man, he also received some advice. Paul was concerned that Titus teach in such a way that those in opposition would have nothing bad to say about him. They might disagree with the details but they would have no argument about the character of the teacher.

Teach slaves to be trustworthy. 2:9,10

Slaves made up a significant portion of first century Christians. From the world's perspective, a slave would not have to do or be any of these things that Paul commands. But as a Christian the perspective looks different. A Christian slave is in fact serving, not his earthly master, but the Lord Jesus Christ who will vindicate him in the end (Colossians 3:23-24). In the meantime he must avoid giving offense and concentrate on following Christ's example in his humiliation (compare 1 Peter 2:18-25).

The grace of God promotes Godly behavior. 2:11-14

These verses briefly describe the effect that grace should have on believers. Grace leads to the rejection of ungodliness and leads to holier living.

The grace brings salvation to all believers. 2:11

Salvation is available to all but true only for those who by faith trust Jesus Christ alone for their eternal salvation. The word for introduces the doctrinal basis for the ethical commands just given (2:1-10).

This grace teaches believers to say "no" to sin and "yes" to righteousness. 2:12

“Teaches” refers to more than instruction; it includes the whole process of training a child - instruction, encouragement, correction, and discipline. The gospel of grace affects

one's present behavior by focusing on God's unmerited favor in the past. (compare 2:14). Paul warns us in Romans 5:20-6:4 on the seriousness of taking advantage of God's grace by continuing to practice sin. Those who have "died with Christ" do not need to be enslaved by the power of sin. Freedom is possible through the Spirit whom He has given unto us.

This grace gives believers a blessed hope. 2:13

Another motivation for godly living is the hope of the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Some day Christ will return and then believers will be rewarded for their steadfastness and perseverance in the faith.

This grace is provided through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. 2:14

He gave Himself for us. He was our substitute. He bore our sins in His own body on the cross. He died in our place.

He gave Himself to redeem us from all wickedness. We are born in slavery to sin. Children do not have to be taught to lie, steal, or cheat. They do that in spite of all our efforts to the contrary. And the consequences of sin are disastrous. James says that "when sin is full-grown, it gives birth to death" (1:15). Now Jesus has come to set us free, to redeem from all wickedness.

He gave Himself to purify for Himself a holy people. We are not only saved from something (wickedness) but we are saved to something (holiness). Christ wants a people who are His very own - who act like He wants us to - who willingly identify with His kingdom. A people who are holy are a people eager to do what is good.

This grace motivates believers to do what is good. 2:15-3:11

Doing good is to be taught with all authority. 2:15

Doing good involves being good citizens within the community. 3:1, 2

Paul lists seven qualities expected of Christian citizens. They should be an influence for good in the community in every way, demonstrating the liveliness of Christ to all through courteous and gracious behavior.

Doing good is motivated by grace. 3:3-8

By remembering from what we were saved. 3:3

We are reminded that apart from God's grace people degenerate into little more than animals wrangling over bones. People are foolish -- not wise, deceived and enslaved by all passions and pleasures instead of being self controlled. Far from being peaceable, considerate, and humble, people are contentious and at enmity with one another. This is where we once were (Ephesians 2:21-3).

By remembering the kindness and love of God our Savior. 3:4-7

(1) He has saved us not because of our righteousness but because of His mercy (compare Isaiah 64:6). (2) He saved us through the washing of rebirth. When we are saved our sins are washed away. This refers to the cleansing that came at our salvation. Our sins are forgiven and our motivation for holy living is changed. (3) He saved us through renewal of the Holy Spirit. Not only is the Holy Spirit an integral part of our salvation but He is also a guiding, empowering, cleansing Person. The Holy Spirit has been poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ. Through the Spirit is given "the message of wisdom, the message of knowledge, faith gifts of healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in different kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of the one and same Spirit." (1 Cor. 12:7-11). (4) He saved us giving us the hope of eternal life. 3:7 All believers have a part in an inheritance "that can never perish, spoil, or fade" (1 Peter 1:4).

By remembering that our devotion should be to doing what is good. 3:8

Good works go hand in hand with sound doctrine.

3. Church discipline is referred to in 3:9-11 in dealing with a person who is divisive. Compare Matthew 18:15-20 and 1 Cor. 5:1-13. From these passages write down some principles of church discipline. Remember, the purpose of church discipline is always restoration. Only if they are unrepentant are they to be put out of the church.

Chapter Seven

Paul's Letter to Philemon

Authorship

The authorship of this letter is the apostle Paul.

Date and Destination

This letter was written at about the same time as Ephesians and even closer to the time of the Colossians. It may have been written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

The destination of the letter is Colossae. That this is so can be seen by cross referencing 1:1-2 with Colossians 4:17. Although the letter is addressed to more than one person, it speaks almost exclusively to Philemon, who appears to be a close friend of Paul's.

Theme: A Plea for Onesimus

Onesimus has been a slave of Philemon's, but has run away and has perhaps stolen from Philemon as well (12). Such behavior warrants the death penalty under Roman law. However after Onesimus has left Philemon he finds Paul in prison, undoubtedly, because he deliberately seeks for him. Through his contact with Paul he becomes a Christian and is helpful to Paul (verses 10-13).

However, he is still Philemon's slave, so Paul does right in sending him back. He sends him back with a pleas for mercy from Philemon. This pleas is the main theme of the letter which may best be seen in verse 10 - "I appeal to you for my son, Onesimus. . ."

Outline and Description of Philemon

Paul introduces himself as a prisoner in verse 1 and addresses the letter to Philemon, who is called a "dear friend and fellow worker" and to Apphia and Archippus (verse 2). Apphia may well be the wife of Philemon. It is possible that Archippus is their son but in view of verse 22 and Colossians 4:17, it might be more likely he is a guest in Philemon's home, in which a church is said to meet (2).

What does verse 2, in connection with Romans 16:5, tell us about the early church?

In verse 4-7, Paul begins to speak exclusively to Philemon. (The words "you" and "your" are singular here in the Greek.) Paul is thankful to God for Philemon, because he has heard, (perhaps from Epaphras - see Colossians 1:7-8), of Philemon's faith in Jesus and love for the saints (4-5). Paul prays that Philemon will actively share his faith out of an understanding of the good things Christians have in Christ (verse 6).

The fact that Paul prays this way, coupled with his charge to Archippus in Colossians 4:17, may say something about the problems in the church in Colossae. Perhaps Archippus has been failing to fulfill his ministry. Perhaps Philemon can help more than he has so far. Undoubtedly, Paul sees these two men as instruments through whom God can greatly strengthen the church in Colossae.

Even while in prison, Paul has received great joy and encouragement from Philemon (verse 7). Why?

1 John 5:1 indicates that those who love God will love His children as well. Paul is a man who greatly loves God and therefore greatly loves God's people as well. So when he hears that God's people are being benefited it brings him encouragement and joy (verse 7).

As an apostle, Paul could exercise his spiritual authority over Philemon and order him to forgive Onesimus (verse 8). However, he chooses to make no explicit appeal to his apostleship, instead entreating Philemon to welcome Onesimus (verse 17).

Rather than referring to himself as an apostle, how does Paul refer to himself as an apostle, how does Paul refer to himself in the following verses?

Verse 1

Verse 9

Verse 13

Verse 17

Although Paul does not make a direct appeal to his authority as an apostle, the ways in which he describes himself do not lessen the pressure he is putting on Philemon. Indeed they increase it. Paul's appeal in verse 17 so understates Paul's authority that it will undoubtedly make Philemon uncomfortable with any decision other than compliance with Paul's wishes. Philemon thinks of Paul as much more than a partner.

Paul also seeks to persuade Philemon through references to Philemon's relationship to Paul. What does Paul call Philemon in the following verses?

Verse 1

Verse 7

Verse 20

How does Paul press Philemon to welcome Onesimus in peace in the following verses?

Verse 12

Verses 15-16

Verses 18-19

Verse 20

Verse 21

The name Onesimus means "useful". Paul admits to Philemon that in the past Onesimus has not been useful (verse 11). However, because of his conversion, Onesimus has become a person who is useful to Paul and to Philemon (verse 11).

How does Paul describe Onesimus in the following verses?

Verse 10

Verse 12

Verse 16

When Onesimus left Philemon he was only Philemon's slave. Now, because of his conversion he is a brother as well (verse 16). In Paul's general instructions to Christian slave owners, he urges kindness and fairness (Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1). However, here is a

situation in which the slave is a brother in Christ, which would emphasize the call for kindness all the more.

So Paul urges Philemon to "welcome him as you would welcome me" (verse 17). Paul is not above begging Philemon for this. However, this welcoming back into Philemon's household is not Paul's true desire. His true desire is something he makes plain and yet never explicitly asks for.

What is Paul's true desire in this matter (verses 13-14)?

In verses 15-16 Paul speaks of the possibility of Onesimus having left for awhile so that Philemon could have him back for good. That is, perhaps God caused Onesimus to depart, then find Paul and become a Christian, so Philemon could have him back as a brother forever. Whatever Philemon's decision is, this will be the result: Onesimus will be with Philemon in God's Kingdom forever.

Philemon Review Questions

1. Read verse 6. Paul believed Philemon played a big role in the development of the Colossian church, and he prayed for his ministry. Who do you think of as people playing important roles in the Church and being in need of your prayers?

2. Read verse 11. How have you seen God turn useless people into useful people?

The Pauline Epistles

Final Examination

1. According to Ephesians, how does God mark his people?
2. List 3 of the five things which a seal symbolizes
3. According to Ephesians 1:18-19, what three things did Paul want the Ephesians to know?
4. From verse Ephesians 2:11, list the four ways in which Paul says that the Gentiles were separated from God and His people.
5. According to Ephesians 3:10, God's manifold wisdom is being made known through the Church to whom?
6. List the fivefold ministry gifts of Ephesians 4:11.
7. List the spiritual armor of Ephesians 6:14-17
8. What is the theme of Philippians?
9. What was Paul's main purpose in writing Philippians 2:5-11?
10. What was Paul describing when he discussed being "poured out like a drink offering?"
11. Who planted the church in Colossae (1:7)?
12. What is the theme of Colossians?
13. In Colossians, what is the secret of walking in the Spirit?
14. To which books do the Pastor Epistles refer?
15. (True or False) The Pastoral Epistles were written at the end of Paul's ministry.
16. (True or False) Titus was a Jew.
17. (True or False) According to the Pastoral Epistles, the Law is not good.

18. According to 1 Timothy 1:9,10, the purpose of the law is to _____.
19. _____ was used most commonly for the price paid to redeem a slave.
20. (True or False) the word translated "quietness" means that a woman is never to talk during a church service.
21. (True or False) The terms "elder" and "overseer" refer to the same office.
22. (True or False) As we approach the end of time, we will have less and less trouble with evil.
23. (True or False) Universalism means that everyone will one day be saved.
24. (True or False) Universalism is taught in the Scriptures.
25. (True or False) Money is the root of all evil.
26. (True or False) Spiritual gifts are not given full bloom, they must be developed.
27. According to 2 Timothy 1:6, God has given us a spirit of _____,
_____, and _____.
28. (True or False) It is not important to believe in the literal resurrection of Christ.
29. (True or False) All Scripture comes from the "Breath of God".
30. The basic theme of Titus is _____.
31. (True or False) Christians should be good citizens of the country in which they live.
32. (True or False) The hope of the return of Jesus Christ will affect one's lifestyle.
33. The name Onesimus means _____.

Answers To Study Questions

Chapter 1: Ephesians

1. With the seal of the Holy Spirit
2. Ephesians 2:4-6
 - a. dead in transgressions
 - b. made us alive
 - c. raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him
3. Ephesians 2:12-13
 - a. separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world, far away
 - b. brought us near through the blood of Christ
4. Verse 4 - "Because of his great love for us"
5. 1:3 - Blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ
 - 1:4 - Chose us in him (Christ) before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight
 - 1:5 - predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ
 - 1:7 - Forgave us our sins
 - 1:8 - Lavished his grace on us with all wisdom and understanding
 - 2:5 - Made us alive with Christ
 - 2:6 - Raised us up with Christ and seated us with him
6. Your answer
 - a. I believe Paul's reason for emphasizing God's work is found in 2:9: ". . .so that no one can boast." Paul is trying to keep the believers from becoming proud. Also see Romans 11:25
 - b. This will emphasize even more that the believers have not attained to their position on their own merits. Even to obtain mercy from God is dependent on another one and not one the believer.
7. separate from Christ
excluded from citizenship in Israel
foreigners to the covenants of the promise
without hope and without God in the world
8. The Law (See 2:15)
9. By His death (2:15)
10. Who has made the two one (verse 14).
 - to create in Himself one new man out of the two (verse 15)
 - in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross (verse 16)
 - we both have access to the Father by one Spirit (verse 18)
11. In Ephesians Paul emphasized that the Church is made up of both Jews and Gentiles. The apostles and prophets were the one who first had this revelation and began Gentile evangelism.
12. the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms
13. that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith
14. 18). so they may have power to grasp the hugeness of Christ's love
 - 19). and to know this love that passes all understanding
15. The believers will be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.
16. one body; one Spirit; one hope; one Lord; one faith; one baptism; one God and Father of all
17. Preparation for works of service
18. In love as each part does its work

19. Speaking the truth in love
20. Colossians 2:11-12
 - Pulling off the sinful nature
 - I Peter 3:21
 - The pledge of a good conscience toward God
 - Galatians 3:7
- Have clothed yourselves with Christ
21. The time limit set on anger is sunset (4:26). If the Christian remains angry past sunset, he or she is giving the devil a foothold (4:27).
22. Work So as to have something to share with those in need.
23. They must be helpful for building up other according to their need so they benefit those who listen
24. It is truthful
 - It is spoken in love
25. bitterness; rage; anger; brawling; slander
26. kindness; compassion; forgiveness
27. In Ephesians 4:32 Paul is talking to people who have been forgiven by God, while in Matthew 6:12 Jesus speaks of people who are seeking forgiveness from God. Your answer. I believe the difference is caused by the apostle and Jesus speaking of two different kinds of forgiveness. (This is further explained beneath the study question.)
28. Your answer. I believe Paul is implying that sincere love is extremely pleasing to God.
29. Thanksgiving
30. That people who live ungodly lives can somehow escape God's wrath.
31. It draws people to Christ.
32. Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs singing and making music in the heart to the Lord
 - Giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of Jesus
 - Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ
33. The Lord will reward whatever good that is done
34. a) The belt of truth protects the Church from false doctrines. It will also protect the believers from the deceitful desires of the old self.
 - b) It sets the Christian apart from the old life which is corrupted by deceitful desires. It keeps them from being partners with the disobedient.
 - c) It causes the lost to be evangelized.

Chapter 2 - Philippians

1. The fact that they provided support to Paul in his ministry
2. a) These Christians are expected to be kept by God for salvation, because God remembers the work and love they have shown Him as they helped and as they continue to help them.
3. They will be able to discern what is best and will be pure and blameless until the day of Christ and be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to God's glory and praise.
4. It has caused the gospel to advance.
5. envy; selfish ambition

6. Your answer. As the people of which Jesus spoke did good things with bad motives and received no reward, so these preachers with false motives would have no rewards.
7. He rejoices! Because Christ is being preached.
8. For Paul deliverance means to glorify God, whether by life or death.
9. The thought of his being able to help the Philippian church if he stays.
10. It is a persecuted church.
11. They should consider it an honor.
12. Do nothing out of selfish ambition, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.
14. That the Philippian Christians adopt the same attitude Christ had.
15. In verse 3 Paul is telling Christians to think of their equals as if they were superiors. If Jesus did not have full equality with the Father, Paul's reasoning would be inconsistent, for, if such were the case, Jesus would be thinking of His superior as His superior, instead of thinking of His equal as His superior, as Paul was telling the Philippians to do.
16. Your answer. I believe Paul wanted to show the results of humility. He wanted the Philippians to know that if they would humble themselves God would exalt them. (See Luke 18:14 and I Peter 5:6.)
17. By doing everything without complaining or arguing. (Verse 14 should be understood in connection with verses 12 and 13, which talk about obeying God.)
18. Their blameless and pure lives will shine in the darkness of a crooked and depraved generation.
19. He is glad and rejoices. They should be glad and rejoice with him.
20. He almost died for the work of Christ and risked his life to make up for the help the Philippians could not give Paul.
21. They worship by the Spirit of God, glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.
22. By letting them know that he has already lost all things for Christ.
23. A righteousness of our own which comes through the Law. A righteousness from God which comes through faith in Christ. Paul chose the righteousness of God.
24. The fellowship of sharing in his sufferings.
25. The viewpoint that they are not perfect and need to press forward to obtain perfection.
26. Zero
27. Present his requests before God through prayer, petition and thanksgiving.
28. The God of peace will be with them.
29. Through Christ
30. It is the reward the Philippians will receive from God for their act of mercy. ("What may be credited to your account.")

Chapter 3 - Colossians

2. Points of similarity:
 - Deliverance from power of Satan.
 - Being brought under God's power (or Kingdom).
 - Receiving a place (or inheritance) among God's people.
3. By stating that Christ created all things. Why is He the firstborn? Because He is the Creator.

4. They must continue in the faith, established and firm and not be moved from the hope held out in the gospel.
5. He says that they are filling up (or completing) of the afflictions of Christ.
6. That Christ in them in the hope of glory.
7. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him.
8. All the fullness of the Deity lives in Him in bodily form.
9. The Law of Moses.
10. "A yoke which neither we or our fathers could bear."
11. Don't let anyone judge them by what they eat or drink or with regard to a religious festival, a new moon celebration or a Sabbath day.
12. Christ canceled the written code with its regulations (the Law). These days are a shadow of the things that were to come, while the reality is in Christ.
13. The false teachers tried to subdue the sinful nature by treating the body harshly, while Paul wrote that those who lived by the Spirit would not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.
14. compassion; kindness; humility; gentleness; patience
15. Bear with one another.
 Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.
 Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
 Put on love.
 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.
16. the word of Christ
17. It is fitting in the Lord.
18. Harshness.
19. By obeying their parents in everything.
20. If they do, their children will become discouraged.
21. By expecting both groups to treat the other group well and by not favoring either group over the other.
22. They both have a master

Chapter 7 - Philemon

1. It often met in homes.
2. Because Philemon has refreshed the hearts of the saints.
3. a prisoner of Christ Jesus
 an old man and a prisoner of Christ Jesus
 as being in chains for the gospel
 a partner
4. our dear brother and fellow worker
 brother
 brother
5. verse 12 - By saying that Onesimus is his very heart
 verses 15-16 - By speaking of the good things that might be happening because of Onesimus' running away and by telling Philemon that Onesimus is dear to him and should be even more dear to Philemon.
 verses 18-19 - By offering to pay whatever Onesimus might owe Philemon and reminding Philemon that he owes his life to Paul.

verse 20 - By telling Philemon he desires benefit from him in the Lord and by asking Philemon to refresh his heart. (In verse 7, Paul speaks of how Philemon has refreshed the hearts of other Christians.)

verse 21 - By telling Philemon he is confident that he will obey him by doing even more than he was asking.

7. That Philemon will send Onesimus back to minister to Paul in his imprisonment.

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The Pauline Epistles

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