

**NT Survey
Introduction**

Content of New Testament

- Lesson #1- Introduction to the New Testament**
- Lesson #2- Historical Background of the New Testament**
- Lesson #3- Introduction to the Gospels**
- Lesson #4- The Gospel of Matthew**
- Lesson #5- The Gospel of Mark and Luke**
- Lesson #6- The Gospel of John**
- Lesson #7 – Acts and Introduction to Paul’s Epistles**
- Lesson #8- The Book of Romans**
- Lesson #9- I Corinthians**
- Lesson #10- II Corinthians and Galatians**
- Lesson #11- Ephesians and Philippians**
- Lesson #12- Colossians and Philemon**
- Lesson #13- I and II Thessalonian s**
- Lesson #14- Introduction to The Pastoral Epistles**
- Lesson #15- I, II Timothy and Titus**
- Lesson #16- Hebrews and James**
- Lesson #17- I, II Peter, I, II and II John and Jude**
- Lesson #18- Revelation**

Suggested Course Syllabus Outline for New Testament Survey

Course Description: An overview study that focuses on the major themes of the New Testament. It surveys the history, literature, and religious ideas of the New Testament. Special attention is given to the history and the times of Christ and the early church within the context of modern textual, literary and historical questions.

Course Objectives:

1. The student will know the main divisions of the New Testament and how each part relates to the whole.
2. The student will know the main themes of each book in the NT.
3. The student will learn how to teach and preach from the main divisions of the NT.
4. The student will understand the significance of the key people in the NT.
5. The student will know the historical background of the NT time period.
6. The student will learn how to apply the Bible in their personal lives.

Course Procedure:

1. The Significance of the NT
2. Historical background of the NT
3. Basic themes of the NT
4. Different categories of the books of the NT, eg Gospels, epistles, history-(Acts) and Revelation
5. Overview of each book of the NT, it's themes, key verses and importance.

Suggested Course Requirements: (What should a teacher expect a student to do?)

- a. Attend all classes and participate in discussion
- b. Take midterm and final exam.
- c. The entire New Testament shall be read in conjunction with our class. (Outside of class time)
- d. Write one page inductive Bible Studies from 5 passages. Write in paragraph form. Make observations, interpretations and applications from the passage. Choose 5-10 verses in one chapter that focus on one theme. Do one Bible Study from each of the following books: 1) Synoptic Gospels 2) Acts 3) Pauline Epistles 4) General Epistles, 5) Revelation
- e. Memorize 10 key scriptures and the John 15 passage listed below. You will write them on the mid term exam and on your final exam.

Matthew 28:19-20
John 8:31-32
Acts 15:8-9
Romans 1:16
I Corinthians 1:18
John 15:1-17

II Corinthians 5:20
Galatians 5:22-23
Ephesians 2:8-9
James 1:12
Hebrews 4:12

Suggested Grading:

60%-Tests, Final exam is 30%, 30%- Mid term test.
10%-Reading of the New Testament in conjunction with the class

30%- Five one page papers.

Suggested Course Text(s): (Hebron Texts)

Meet the Master (Gospels)

The Apostle (Acts)

Letters of Paul (Romans-Philemon)

A New Living Way (Heb- Jude)

Revelation of Christ

**NT Survey
Lesson 1**

Introduction to the New Testament

Lesson Purpose:

- **To introduce the New Testament**

Main Points:

- **Background facts of the NT**
- **The Significance of the NT**
- **The Teaching of the NT**

Desired Outcome

- **They will have a basic grasp of the NT**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give them handout #1**
- **Teach Lesson #1 as outlined**

I. Some basic background facts on the New Testament.

A. The OT was written over a period of 1000 years-(from 1400 BC-400 BC), in Hebrew mostly-small amount in Aramaic. The NT was written over a period of less than 100 years (from about 50AD-95 AD)- in Greek.

B. Testament is best understood by the word Covenant-The Old Covenant (Old Testament) focused on Israel and the law given by Moses. The New Covenant (New Testament) was instituted by Jesus- see Luke 22:20-Lord's supper. The New Covenant (NT) is the fulfillment of what was promised in the Old Covenant (OT). – Jeremiah 31:31-34.

C. The NT begins with 5 narrative books- The Gospels and Acts. The Gospels deal with the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. Acts tells the story of the early church as it developed over the next 30 years. 21 epistles follow- 13 name Paul as the writer (Pauline Epistles). 8- are the work of the apostles or someone closely associated to them (General Epistles). The last book- Revelation of John- tells about the ultimate victory of Christ. It is a unique book- with much symbolic language.

D. The OT was the Bible that Jesus used. Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies.

E. God has revealed Himself in different ways but the main way is through the Bible.

F. Jesus was God's prophet, priest, king and messenger. Jesus is the perfect revelation of God, He was and is God! He was the Divine Word in human form. His teachings represented the mind of God. His acts of mercy and displays of power showed God in action. His acts showed that the kingdom of God had come on mankind.

G. The narratives of Jesus' life and teaching were spoken for 2-3 decades before they were written down. The first NT books were written around 49 AD. God inspired the Scriptures and preserved them for future generations.

H. We do not have the original autographs that the NT books were written on. They were written book by book. Scribes carefully copied the original manuscripts by hand for the first 1500 years until the printing press was invented. Older handwritten copies of the various books of the Bible are called manuscripts. At first in the church the teaching was primarily oral. But because of the need to record what Jesus said, etc. the teachings were written down.

I. Mark is considered to be the oldest Gospel- written about AD 64.

J. The leaders of the early church then met to find a list of authoritative books that they would use for the church. They chose the OT, the 4 Gospels, Acts, the 13 letters of Paul, the letters written by the apostles and their companions. The Council of Carthage (397 AD) decided which books should be officially used in the churches but the church had been using these books already. The Apocrypha are those books written between 400 BC and the birth of Christ which were not included in the canon of scripture according to the Protestants. The Catholic church includes them in their Bible.

K. The primary standard the early church used for authoritative writings was that it had to be written by an apostle or someone close to the apostles. They wanted an eye witness account of what happened.

L. None of the books written after the death of the apostles were included in the NT. The NT came to be authoritative for belief and practice.

II. The Claims of the NT

A. It says that it can't be studied like any other book

B. It is a unique body of literature

1) It is unique in form and content- it records many extra-ordinary events- which display supernatural power- including things happening to and through Jesus. The resurrection is the proof of all Christ did and said. The claims and words of Jesus are the means of salvation.

2) It records the claims of the apostles to interpret and apply Jesus' teachings authoritatively. The apostles claimed he was the Christ. An apostle is one clothed with authority.

3) The Words are received by faith. Faith makes the claims verifiable. Historians tell us that Christ died, faith tells us that He died for our sins.

4) In the NT fact and faith are interlocked, you don't understand the facts unless you read them by faith.

III. The Character and Content of the NT. The primary task of the NT is to witness to the events. What comes first is what happened, then comes the words explaining what happened. The events are not necessarily self-explanatory. You can't separate the event from its interpretation. Eg - Christ's death on the cross.

IV. The Significance of the NT

A) It is revelation- it reveals saving acts in which God has enclosed Himself.

B) It is inspired- because it interprets the significance of these events.

C) It has authority-it is significant because it has the power to lead men to God. It is a book of God's plan of salvation.

V. Background of the NT

Introduction

A. Palestine was basically a land of different tribes.

B. Two things made a big difference in the NT. 1) There was improved communication because of the road system. 2) The might of the Roman Empire controlled this area of the world. Israel became a bridge between Africa and Asia/Europe a bridge between nations. Egypt was the greatest grain grower in the world. The Romans needed the grain for their people.

VI. The teaching of the NT.

A. The Gospel writers were most interested in 3 areas:

1. The teaching of Jesus
2. His mighty works and
3. His death (passion) and resurrection

The Gospels tell as much of the saviour as is necessary to convey the message of salvation.

B. The message of the NT

It is the New Covenant which continues and amplifies the message of the Old Covenant. The Old Testament is a prophetic book which looks forward to a universal kingdom and a king. It looks for a faith which will cover the earth, an inward faith not an outward faith only. The NT is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, the specific fulfillment is found in Jesus.

C. Prominent ideas in the NT

1. The idea of Salvation- The Synoptic Gospels theme is the kingdom of God. John speaks of life eternal, Paul of salvation, redemption and reconciliation. Eternal life is found by entering the kingdom through repentance and belief in Jesus, the Messiah.
2. The person of Christ- (Messiah- the anointed One) Jesus is the central theme of the NT.
 - i. He is the Son of man- Jesus refers of himself as the son of man. Before the resurrection Jesus never refers to himself as the messiah using the term Christos, but he never rejects it either. In the apostolic preaching he is called the Christ. Christ refers to himself as the Christ after the resurrection. Luke 24:26, 46 The resurrection is the unifying factor behind the NT. John 20:31- “that you may believe that Jesus in the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name.”
 - ii. He is a prophet. All prophets are measured against Moses. Each prophet was a foreshadowing of the coming Great Prophet. In the NT time period they were expecting a great prophet. At Qumran they expected a Priestly king, a temporal king and a coming prophet. Jesus ministry was prophetic because He spoke with authority- in the Gospels more space is given to his prophetic activities than any other activities. Matthew particularly seems to measure Jesus against Moses, the greatest prophet until Jesus.
 - iii. He is a Priest- in the OT the basic meaning of priesthood is mediation between God and Man. He acted for man before God. Though sinful himself his divine appointment allowed him to represent man before God. The priest offered a propitiatory sacrifice as an offering- an offering on behalf of another to deal with the problem of sin. But the propitiation was restricted to unwillful sins. There is no sacrifice for willful sin in the OT. The only thing a person could do was to throw himself on the mercy of God. It was this kind of recognition that prompted the idea that animal sacrifice was not as good as obedience. Psalm 40:6-8. Hebrews contains the most elaborate statement of the priesthood of Jesus. Christ’s priesthood is superior because he didn’t come from the priestly tribe. He was a priest w/o sin Heb 4:15.
 - iv. He is also King. In the OT Kingship was the expression of Yahweh’s kingship. Kingship was to reflect the character and reality of Yahweh’s rule. But Israel’s kings failed- they were regarded as a pale prefiguring of the reign of a coming perfect king. The expectation of a coming king was alive at the beginning of the NT time period.

In the NT only two kings are mentioned favorably- David and Melchizedek. Jesus never calls himself king, he accepts it only as he can reinterpret it. Matt 18:33-37. He said my kingdom is not of this world. Jesus is recognized as a king but through other metaphors- 1) shepherd (King) Mt 9:36, feeding of 5000 is a shepherd miracle. John 10.

2) Jesus was a servant king- Mark 10:35-45, Matt 21:1-9

3) Jesus is king by virtue of his special relationship to God. In the OT it is implied or stated that the coming prince would be the Son of David. Jesus never called himself the Son of David but he allowed people to call him this. Jesus’ raised questions that made one think of David’s ancestry. He claimed to be God’s son. Mark 12:1-12. Jesus’ authority rests on this.

**NT Survey
Lesson 2**

Historical Background of the New Testament

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the **Historical Background of the New Testament**

Main Points:

- **The three ethnic groups of the NT- Greeks, Jews and the Romans**
- **The different Jewish groups in the NT.**
- **The key Roman leaders**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will know the most important ethnic groups and key Roman leaders in the NT**

Suggestions for teaching

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I. There were 3 ethnic groups: Greeks, Jews and Romans.

At the end of the OT Time period- 400 BC, Persia was the ruling world power. In 334 BC the Greeks conquered Persia and took over control of Palestine.

A. Greeks- Around 350 BC Alexander the Great a Greek general conquered many nations and ruled from Europe to Egypt. He saw himself as the bearer of Greek culture to that part of the world and he did that by establishing Greek cities, by establishing a trade language- Greek and establishing a road system. He also encouraged intermarriage between Greeks and the people of Asia. When he died at 33 in 323 BC- he left behind a Greek faced world (Hellenistic) world, that lasted 1000 years. But he left behind a fragmented empire when his 4 generals took over different parts of his empire. Palestine was controlled for 100 years by the Ptolemies who came from one of Alexander's generals. They also controlled Egypt and continued the process of Hellenization. During this time a large group of Jews migrated to Alexandria, Egypt. There some scholars produced a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known as the Septuagint. Then the Seleucids who had assumed control of Syria after Alexander's death took over the Ptolemy rule in Palestine.

B. Jews - Around 200 BC Rome was becoming a world power, but Palestine was controlled by the Seleucid Kings- who came from one of the generals of Alexander the Great. In an effort to get money to pay off the Romans, The Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanies (God Manifest) plundered the Jerusalem temple. He offered a pig on the altar at the temple in Jerusalem and an idol of Zeus , a Greek god, was put there.

This angered the Jews and they rebelled. Judas Maccabees led the Jews to independence and the temple was restored in 164 BC. This Hasmonian Dynasty controlled Palestine until there was a civil war and Rome intervened. In 63BC Pompey the Great who was a Roman, conquered Jerusalem and the Jews lost their independence until 1948.

During this time there was a revival of Jewish nationalism. Three great parties were founded in Judaism- the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes. The Hasidim (the righteous ones) were a religious group which opposed Hellenization- making everyone part of the Greek culture. There was a conflict among the Hasidim- whether or not to be involved in politics. Three main groups came from the Hasidim:

1) -The Pharisees- (the separated ones) did not want to become involved in politics so they separated from that. They followed the oral law, they added to the law, they refused to cooperate with the foreign rulers, they believed in angels and the resurrection. They separated themselves from every evil. They criticized Jesus because He didn't keep the law- the rules. They were larger than the Sadducees and were primarily the students and teachers of the OT.

2) The Sadducees (the righteous ones) followed the Torah while rejecting the oral law. They cooperated with foreign rulers. They were the political leaders. They did not believe in the resurrection. These were the priests.

3) The Essenes also came out of the Hasidim- they are not mentioned directly in the NT- they studied scriptures, practiced communal living and the ceremonial law.

4) Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin were a religious body that which controlled Jewish life. It was made up of Sadducees and Pharisees- the chief priest headed it up. They were made up of 70 leaders plus the chief priest.

5) Synagogues- During the exile the Jews developed synagogues to help keep their faith in Yahweh. Every Jewish community had one. The boys were taught the OT there and the entire Jewish community would gather there on the Sabbath for teaching. They were developed when the people were taken from Jerusalem.

Because of the wicked rulers over Palestine, the Jews, including the religious leaders began to look for something, an intervention from God. There was also a revival of Messianic expectation. In Qumran, which was an Essene community, they expected two messiahs, a priestly and a political messiah.

C. Rome.

Rome conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC.

1. **Augustus** Caesar was the Roman Emperor who ruled from 27 B.C to 14 A.D. He brought peace to the Roman Empire. He was the Romans Emperor when Jesus was born.

2. Herod the Great

From 37BC-4 BC Herod the Great ruled over Palestine. Matt 2:1-19, Lk 1:5. He was king of Judea at Rome's direction. He was declared King of the Jews by the Roman senate. He was not a Jew and he was the one who overthrew the Hasmonian Dynasty. He married a Hasmonean to try to make his kingship legitimate. He was a great builder and his crowning achievement was the rebuilding (remodeling) of the Jerusalem temple around 10 BC. This was the third temple. He had great compassion and cruelty. He executed over 1/2 of his family, including at least one wife. He was the Herod that killed the babies in Bethlehem.

3. Herod Antipas

Around 4 BC Herod Antipas was made ruler over Galilee and Peraea - this was the Herod after the birth stories. He executed John the Baptist and ridiculed Jesus when he was sent to him during his passion. He was deposed in 39 AD.

4. Archelaus

When Herod the Great died, Archelaus became ruler over Judea. He was the son of Herod the Great. He ruled from 4BC- 6AD. The Jews protested and Roman intervened in 6 AD and sent their own rulers or procurators such as Valerius Gratus who ruled from 15-26 AD. He is not in the NT narratives. The procurators were governors who maintained the peace and were placed there by the Romans.

5. Pontius Pilate

The Second Procurator was Pontius Pilate who served from 26-36 AD. He was stubborn, harsh.

6. Herod Agrippa I

In 37AD Herod Agrippa I became the next Roman leader over Judea from 37-44AD. He killed James and arrested Peter.

7. Herod Agrippa II

He took over around 44AD. This is the Herod of Acts 25:13ff. The prominent Jewish political party were the Zealots. In 66AD they rose up and killed all the Romans troops in Jerusalem.

8. Vespasian

The Roman general arrived in 67 to put down the uprising. He then went back to Rome and became emperor.

9. Titus

Titus, the Roman general attacked Jerusalem. On Aug 5, 70 AD the last sacrifice was offered in the Jewish temple and on Aug 29 the temple was burnt and destroyed. That may have been the abomination of desolation- Daniel spoke about ?? It has never been rebuilt since that time. The people wanted deliverance from the Romans.

**NT Survey
Lesson 3**

Introduction to the Gospels

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the Gospels, explaining the difference between them.

Main Points:

- The difference between the Synoptics and John.
- The formation of the Gospels.

Desired Outcome

- The student will have a basic understanding of the Synoptics and John and what some scholars have believed helped to form them.

Suggestions for teaching

- Compare how the Synoptics relate to each other using specific passages as examples
- Show the main the differences between the Synoptics and John by using scriptural examples
- Teach the different kinds of “criticisms” as an overview to give knowledge but emphasize those are theories and that God was overseeing the creation of the Gospels- they are inspired by God.
- Give them Quiz #1
- Teach lesson #3 as outlined using examples.
- Give them Handout #3.

I. Introduction to the Gospels

A. Meaning of the Gospels- The Gospels are not biographies because they primarily deal with the last 2-3 years of Jesus' life. Two of them, Matthew and Luke also include his birth. They present Jesus in such a way to show that God acted uniquely in Christ. They not only tell the story of Christ but call the reader to commitment to Him. The synoptic Gospels all seem to be similar but John is very different.

B. Writers of the Gospels. Two of the Gospel writers were not eye witnesses of the events- Mark and Luke. Many consider Mark as the oldest Gospels and that Matthew and Luke drew much of their accounts from Mark's Gospel. Only 31 verses in Mark's Gospel have no parallel in Matthew or Luke. Some scholars believe that there was another source, “Q” that Matt and Luke used.

The Gospels were the first books of the NT to be accepted as authoritative- inspired.

C. Purpose of the Gospels. The Gospels tell about what God has done to save us in His Son Jesus Christ. The gospel writers choose certain events from the life of Jesus beginning with some events surrounding His birth, (Matt. 1--2; Luke 1—2) His youth (Luke 2:41-52), and then they record the last two or three years of Jesus' life. They want us to know that God revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. The authors of the gospels wrote not only to communicate knowledge about Jesus as a person, but also to call the readers to commitment to Him as Lord. All 4 Gospels choose selected events climaxing with Christ's death and resurrection. Each of them have a purpose, that is why they record the various stories. The gospels give us four distinctive pictures of Jesus. There are four accounts of the one gospel (the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ). Why are there four versions of the same story? The church believed that all four gospels were required to declare the full significance of Christ, who He was and what He did. The church adopted symbols for the gospels-- Matthew a lion, Mark an ox, Luke a man, John an eagle (or variations thereof)-- from the fourfold witness to God in Scripture Ezek. 1:5; 10:14;

Rev. 4:7.

1. Matthew-Jesus is a teacher who is greater than Moses. He is the Messiah, the King of the Jews.
2. Mark- Jesus is the suffering servant who reveals his divine sonship on the cross.
3. Luke- Jesus is the key cornerstone in the history of salvation beginning with Israel, fulfilled in Jesus, and communicated by the church. He is the Son of man.
4. John- Jesus is the Divine Son of God. John reveals the mystery of the incarnation, God becoming a man in Jesus. He brings life to those who put their trust in Him.

II. The Synoptic Gospels

A. The Similarity of the Synoptic Gospels. If you carefully study the four Gospels you see that Matthew, Mark, and Luke have much in common. Each of them arrange their material in a similar way, and each gospel shows the life of Jesus in Galilee from His baptism to His death and resurrection. The first three gospels record many of the same incidents or teachings, and often in the same or similar wording. Because of that similarity in arrangement, content, and wording, the first three gospels are called synoptic gospels (from the Greek synopsis, "a seeing together").

B. The Difference between the Synoptic Gospels and John

Synoptics- Jesus is a man of action who tells stories-word pictures, for His disciples.

John focuses on the teachings of Jesus and says little about what he did, compared to the synoptics.

In the synoptics Jesus gives almost 60 parables- John has none.

Synoptics- Jesus teaches about the kingdom of God. John- Jesus teaches about Himself.

Synoptics- Jesus demands silence of those who behold his miracles, But in John- the signs are a revelation of Jesus and His mission.

In the synoptics, Jesus' ministry lasts about a year, and is conducted mainly in Galilee; in John it extends to three years and centers more often in Judea.

The Gospel of John is very different from the other three (synoptics). Even though John is different from the other gospels he also has his purpose in writing- to reveal who Jesus is.

C. Stories in the Synoptics

The synoptics all have the following stories:

John the Baptist's announcement of Jesus the messiah.

The baptism of Jesus

The temptation of Jesus

Teachings and miracles of Jesus (this is the largest part in each of the synoptics.)

Transfiguration of Jesus.

Trial, death and burial of Jesus.

The resurrection of Jesus

D. Themes in the Synoptics

1. At least 60 parables are found in the synoptics. Matt 13 and Luke 15 are especially important in terms of the parables of Jesus.

2. The kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven (Matthew's gospel) is an important theme. God's kingdom is His rule over His creation. It is and is yet to come. It is a secret hidden kingdom. On the day of the Lord that kingdom will finally be seen in its fullness and Christ will be shown to be Lord or King over that kingdom.

3. The miracles which Jesus did are told to reveal who Jesus is.

III. Forms behind the Gospels

A. How did we get the Gospels?

Why are the synoptic Gospels similar and yet different? Of the four gospel writers Mark and Luke were not eyewitnesses of the events they tell. Matthew and John are the only writers of the Gospels who were there. Some believe that there were other sources which possibly contributed to the makeup of the four gospels.

In the last 2 centuries, much has been written about the possible sources. Some believe that the synoptics depend on a prior source that is now lost, except as it is found in the synoptics themselves. Another possibility is that two of the synoptic gospels depend on the other gospel, possibly Mark. Until about 1800, the church generally believed that Matthew wrote the first gospel, Mark abbreviated Matthew, and Luke used both to compose the third gospel.

Then some put forth the idea that the first Gospel to be written was the Gospel of Mark-- and not Matthew. They found that Mark contains 666 verses (excluding 16:9-20.) A total of 606 of these verses reappear in shortened form in Matthew's Gospel of 1,071 verses; 350 of Mark's verses reappear in Luke's Gospel of 1,151 verses. That means that more than one-half of Matthew and one-third of Luke are composed of material from Mark. There are only 31 verses in Mark which have no parallel in Matthew or Luke.

Certain details in Mark's gospel are either omitted or rewritten in Matthew and Luke. Mark's references to Jesus' human emotions-- for example, grief, 14:34, exasperation, 8:12, anger, 10:14, amazement, 6:6, and fatigue, 4:38-- are softened by the other synoptics; and examples of Jesus' ability to perform certain actions, Mark 6:6, are deleted by them, too.

B. Form Criticism

1. After World War I, a new approach to gospel research arose in Germany. They tried to get behind the written sources (eg. Mark, and other sources that they called Q, L, or M) and investigate the forms in which the gospel was transmitted by word of mouth in the period between the death of Jesus (A. D. 30) and the appearance of the first Christian writings of Paul (A. D. 50). They called this form criticism.

2. Another assumption of form criticism is that the early church remembered, shaped, and passed on those aspects of Jesus' teachings and ministry which were relevant to its circumstances. This means that, in addition to telling us about Jesus, the gospels tell us something about the early church that passed on the stories about Jesus. **This is not to say that stories were "made up" by the early church in order to preach about a Jesus who was a figment of someone's vivid imagination. It means, instead, that the early church kept some memories about Jesus alive, while it did not continue others; and one of the reasons for this is that certain events and sayings were much more important in the early church's eyes than others were.**

3. Form criticism has increased our appreciation of the role the early church had in the formation of the gospels. Some form critics, however, have made the mistake of overstating the influence of the church on the gospel, sometimes even implying that the gospels reflect the view of the church instead of what really happened historically.

4. How do we know whether the early church distorted or preserved the essence of the historical Jesus? Fortunately, the New Testament has certain checks that give a reasonable certainty of careful handling on the part of the early church. Some of the apostles were still alive when the gospels appeared in writing. Such eyewitnesses would have encouraged historical accuracy and prevented wrongs from being included in the gospels.

5. Another important fact is that the teachers of Jesus' day taught their disciples to commit their teachings to memory even to the point of memorizing precisely long passages. We also may be assured that the early church did not make up any teachings or concerns which never really occurred in Jesus' life. The synoptic gospels record about 60 parables of Jesus, but not one parable is recorded in the remainder of the New Testament. This shows that only Jesus taught in parables, and the church recorded them correctly.

C. Redaction Criticism

1. Since World War II, some scholars have done gospel research in another area called redaction criticism. These scholars focus on the role of the gospel writers as editors of the material received from the early church, and hence the name redaction criticism (from the German, Redaktion, "editing"). Whatever sources and traditions the writers had, redaction studies have shown that the gospel writers each offered a unique portrait of Jesus, because each writes to a different audience and emphasizes different aspects of the life of Jesus.

Today the four gospels remain our only true source of information about the central figure of the human race- Jesus the Christ.

**NT Survey
Lesson 4**

The Gospel of Matthew

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the Gospel of Matthew

Main Points:

- Jesus is the King of the Jews, the long awaited Messiah
- Key ideas found in the Gospel
- Outline of the Gospel

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the key sections of the book of Matthew and his purpose in writing.

Suggestions for teaching

- Go over Quiz #1
- Follow the outline in the lesson using interaction and illustrations from Matthew.
- Teach Lesson #4 as outlined

Intro- Matthew has probably had a greater influence on Christianity than any other NT writing. For 17 centuries the church took its readings on Sunday and holy Days from Matt and only drew from other gospels where Matt seemed insufficient. The early church used Matthew for teaching new Christians. It also formed a good bridge between the OT and NT because of its emphasis on OT prophecy being fulfilled in Christ. Matthew offers the most systematic arrangement of Jesus' teaching in the New Testament. Because of its emphasis on the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, Matthew is well suited as the opening book of the New Testament. In it the promises of God are recalled and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ is announced. There are over 60 references to the OT. He often writes, "that it may be fulfilled as was spoken by the prophets." Jesus is called Son of David- 7 times. The Gospel of Matthew contains five main sections. See V below.

I. Authorship

Church tradition tells us that Matthew wrote this Gospel. He was Christ's disciple, also named Levi. He used to be a former tax collector, 9:9; 10:3, before he began to follow Christ. Modern scholars have asked this question, if the apostle Matthew wrote the gospel, why did he quote so extensively from Mark (601 of Mark's 678 verses appear in Matthew), who was not a disciple of Jesus. Some believe that an unknown author used material he got from Matthew to write the gospel.

II. Theme of the Gospel

Matthew is full of stories to show Jewish readers that Jesus is the Messiah. There are more quotes from the OT in Matthew than in any other Gospel. Jesus is portrayed as a descendent of the three greatest personalities of the OT. A. Abraham- His genealogy is traced back to Abraham. B. Moses- In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus is a royal teacher who has greater authority than Moses. C. Also He is a descendent of David the greatest King in the OT. He is born in Bethlehem- city of David. Like David he appears as a king- 19:28.- He is the Son of David- 9:27, 12:23, 15:22. But the Gospel also shows that salvation through Christ is for the whole world- Matt 28:19-20.

III. Key ideas in the Gospel

A. Matthew's main subject is the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. 51 times Matt refers to the kingdom of heaven or God- many times on the lips of Jesus. This phrase is used twice as much here than in any other gospel. The phrase "Kingdom of heaven" is used 33 times and is only found in Matthew's Gospel. The kingdom is here but not yet fully revealed. The kingdom is already here in Jesus, but it is not yet fully realized. The term means the rule of God in the universe, in our world and in our life. When the kingdom comes there is transformation. You enter the kingdom by repenting and believing and doing the will of the Father in heaven.- 7:21. The kingdom cannot be earned, 19:23; it can be received only by those who recognize that they do not deserve it, 5:3; 21:31. The primary indication of the presence of the kingdom in the world is the transformation of life, both individually and socially. A person enters the kingdom not by saying the right words, but by doing "the will of My father in heaven", 7:21.

The kingdom extends like a fishing net, gathering people from every part of society, 13:47, offering new life in the life-changing presence of God, 8:11. The kingdom is more valuable than a precious gem, 13:45-46, and it excludes any and all competitors for its allegiance, 6:33.

B. Matthew tried to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ, the fulfillment of OT prophecy. A recurring statement that occurs in this gospel is, "All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet" 1:22; 2:15,17,23). The Gospel of Matthew is full of clues that it was written to convince Jewish readers that Jesus is the Messiah. First, the author makes no attempt to translate or explain Jewish words and practices. Also, the gospel quotes more frequently from the Old Testament than does any other gospel. Most important, however, Jesus is portrayed as a descendant of the three greatest personalities of the Old Testament, although he surpasses them. Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham 1:2, the father of the faith. He is greater than Moses- the prophet of the OT. He is like David- a king, 19:28. He is frequently called "the son of David" 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 21:9; 21:15, although He is actually David's "Lord" 22:41-46.

Matthew wrote primarily to a Jewish audience, but not exclusively. The visit of the wise men from the East, 2:1-12, hints of the gospel's rejection by the Jews and its acceptance by the Gentiles, 21:43. The Great Commission-- the command to "make disciples of all the nations", 28:19-- indicates an interest beyond Judaism. This shows that Matthew was written to Jews and Jewish Christians to show that Jesus is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. It also shows that the gospel was not only for the Jews but also for the Gentile world.

C. Matt has an interest in the church-it is the only Gospel that mentions church. 16:18, 18:17. By the time this gospel was written the church had become the dominant factor in the lives of Christians.

D. It has a strong interest in eschatology- second coming, end of the ages, and final judgment.-Chapters 24 and 25.

E. It has a strong interest in the teachings of Jesus- chaps 5-7, especially concerning the kingdom of God- chapt 13.

F. He shows Jesus is the king to whom God has given power and authority to redeem and judge mankind. 1:1-17; 2:2; 21:1-11; 27:11, 37; 28:18.

IV. Teachings of Jesus in the gospel

There are 5 discourses or teachings of Jesus:

1. Sermon of the Mount-5:1-7:29
2. Commission to the 12- 10:1-42
3. Parables of the Kingdom 13
4. The true meaning of greatness and forgiveness -18:1-35
5. Olivet Discourse- 24:1-25:46

V. Outline of the gospel

It has 5 main sections which end with these words, “When Jesus had ended.” Matt 7:28, 11:1, 13:53, 19:1, 26:1.

A. Chapters 1-2 The story of Jesus' birth. Jesus is shown to fulfill the hopes of David, the greatest king of Israel. He is born in Bethlehem is mentioned five times in chap. 2.

B. His ministry has five sections, each finishing with the words, “When Jesus had ended.”

1. Chapters 3-4 begin with Jesus' baptism by John, His temptation, and the beginnings of His Galilean ministry.

Chaps. 5—7 The Sermon on the Mount, follows; in it Jesus sets forth a new system of ethics, both individual and social, for the kingdom. Throughout the Sermon, Jesus contrasts the law, which was given by Moses, with the kingdom, which is present in Himself-- showing the superiority of the kingdom. He highlights the contrast with two recurring phrases, "You have heard that it was said to those of old... but I say to you." In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus appears as a royal teacher whose authority exceeds that of Moses, the founder of the faith.

2. Chapters 8-10 A series of miracles by Jesus. Chapter 10- Jesus' teaching to His disciples concerning His mission and suffering and ending with the statement, 11:1.

3. Chapters 11-13. Stories that emphasize the difference between the ways of the kingdom and the ways of the world and parables on the nature of the kingdom (chap. 13). The refrain which ends the section is repeated, 13:53.

4. Chapters 14-18. Section four features further miracles, debates, and conflicts from Jesus' ministry. It concludes with words of counsel directed by Jesus to His disciples about the Christian life (chap. 18). The section ends at 19:1.

5. Chapter 19-25. Section five is set in Jerusalem, and recounts clashes between Jesus and the religious leaders ,chaps. 19--22. In the part which follows, Jesus denounces the scribes and Pharisees, chap. 23, teaches about the signs of the end, chap. 24, and tells three parables on judgment. chap. 25.

C) The Conclusion

1. Chaps. 26—28. The account of the betrayal, arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus.

2. The Great Commission 28:18-20. The Gospel of Matthew concludes with Jesus' command to go into all the world and make disciples, baptizing and teaching them in His name. He leaves His disciples with this assurance: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age”.

**NT Survey
Lesson 5**

The Gospel of Mark and Luke

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the Gospel of Mark and Luke

Main Points:

- Jesus is the Suffering Servant of God
- Key ideas found in the Gospel
- Outline of the Gospel

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the key sections of the book of Mark and Luke and the key themes.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give them Quiz #2
- Finish Handout #4 which includes Mark.
- Give them Handout #5
- Follow the outline in the lesson using interaction and illustrations from Mark and Luke
- Teach Lesson #5

The Gospel of Mark- Jesus is the Suffering Servant of God

I. Overview of Mark

Mark was the first Gospel written, and the shortest. It focuses more on what Jesus does than what He says. It can be divided into two parts. Jesus Ministry in Galilee, 1-9 and His ministry in Judaea and Jerusalem, 10-16 It begins with John the Baptist. Then 14 short stories. Then chapt. 4- records a number of parables. Then 17 more stories. The climax is 8:27- “who do people say that I am” –”You are the Christ”. That leads into a prophecy of Christ’s death and a call to discipleship. Jesus is then transfigured and 23 stories are told.

II. The Author

History tells us that Mark was John Mark (Acts 12:12) who was a close companion of Peter and Paul. Mark may have been Peter’s secretary. That is his source for the Gospel. He was not an apostle of Jesus. A church father says he composed the Gospel in Rome. 14:51-52 could be a reference to John Mark. It was probably written in the early 60’s AD. It was written for Gentiles, especially Romans.

III. Key ideas In Mark

A. Jesus is Active- Mark uses a Greek word translated immediately or straightaway 42 times to show that Jesus was busy, the mark of a good servant. It gives the idea that Jesus was rushing from one thing to another.

B. The Passion is a central idea - 3/8 of his book is devoted to the week of Christ’s passion - the suffering of Jesus.

C. The Suffering servant (messiah) of God.

The main point Jesus seems to be making in Mark is that His messiahship and discipleship involve suffering. 10:43-45. The emphasis on suffering in his Gospel may be because of the Christians who were undergoing suffering under Caesar Nero. Jesus is the suffering servant of Isaiah. Discipleship leads to

suffering and self-denial.

D. Jesus is God's son- He wanted to show Jesus as God's Son. 15:39. Even demons recognize Him as God's Son. 1:24, 3:11

E. Jesus is man - No other Gospel depicts His humanity as clearly as Marks. Jesus was disappointed, angry, displeased

F. The Messianic Secret. Mark also has the "Messianic secret"- where people he touches are told to not tell anyone. 1:34. Why? 1. Because the Jews of that day thought of the Messiah as military man coming with a sword to overthrow the Romans, but Jesus came as a servant to save people from their sins. 2. Also he wanted people to have true faith- insight- not to just believe because of the miracles. 3. Because no title could adequately describe who He was.

G. Mark 16:9ff The oldest manuscripts end at 16:8.D. Why was 16:9 ff omitted? Some commentators believe that it originally ended at 16:8 to challenge one's faith- now what do you as a reader believe? They suggest that later editors added 16: 9ff because they thought the Gospel was incomplete. But the essence of the extra verses are found in the other Gospels.

LUKE- Jesus is The ideal Son of Man

Introduction - Luke emphasizes Christ's humanity. Vivid stories tell us who Christ is. The Gospel is more interested in persons, especially those in trouble than in ideas. This may be the most interesting Gospel to read. The Jesus Film uses it. Luke focuses on Jesus' ministry in Galilee and Jerusalem.

I. Authorship . The author does not identify himself by name, but he does tell us a good deal about himself. He was not an eyewitness but he got his Gospel from eye witnesses. He knows enough of what happened to write an orderly, reliable narrative.1:1-4. He is an educated man with the best command of Greek of any New Testament writer. He writes to Theophilus. At some point in his life he joined the apostle Paul. His experiences with Paul served as a firsthand source for Acts. For the author's name we are dependent on later tradition. He writes to tell Gentiles that Christianity was not subversive or superstitious. Luke is a Gentile and writes for Gentiles; he is not interested in matters purely Jewish.. The author substitutes Greek expressions for nearly all Jewish expressions (amen is one of the few exceptions), and he seldom appeals to Old Testament prophecy. When Luke occasionally quotes from the Old Testament, he usually uses quotations which show that "all flesh [Gentiles as well as Jews] shall see the salvation of God" 3:6. He shows Jesus as the perfect man. He seldom appeals to OT prophecy. He spent time with Paul in his travels. Paul writes in his epistles about him calling him - a physician, both beloved and compassionate Col. 4:14. He who was with Paul during his Roman imprisonment Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4:11. The date of Luke's writing can only be guessed from inferences. The Gospel of Luke probably was written sometime shortly after A. D. 70. .

But he is also a serious historian who places Jesus within the context of world history. He presents Jesus and the church as the fulfillment of the history of salvation. He shows Jesus tenderness and care for children and women.

Furthermore, we know that Christianity encountered increasingly hostile opposition in the 50s and 60s. One ancient writer referred to "a class hatred for their abominations, called Christians." Christians were regarded by many unbelievers as believing a "mischievous superstition" which thrived on secrecy, Luke shows that Jesus associated with all sorts of people and that the early church openly proclaimed the gospel, Acts 2:14; 17:22. The truths of the Christian message did not happen in a corner, Acts 26:26, argued the apostle Paul. An implicit argument of Luke-Acts is that if Judaism had earned the toleration of the Roman Empire, then Christianity, which was the fulfillment of the Old Testament, should be

granted the same status. It is reasonably certain that one of Luke's reasons for writing his gospel was to show that Christianity was neither superstitious nor subversive. It appears that Luke intended to supply influential Romans, like Theophilus, with the solid truth about Christians. Luke shows that in every instance where Christians were suspected of sedition against Rome they were judged innocent. Luke 23:4,14,22; Acts 16:39; 17:9; 18:15-16; 19:37; 23:29; 25:25; 26:31.

II. Key Ideas in the Gospel

A. Universal gospel - Luke has the most universal outlook of all the gospels; he portrays Jesus as a man with compassion for all peoples. Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham, the father of the Jews, Luke traces it back to Adam the father of the human race. In Matthew Jesus sends his disciples "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" only, but Luke omits that.

B. Luke is also the most socially-minded of the gospels. When He was in the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus gave the keynote of His ministry by reading from Isaiah 61:1-2: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Like Moses, Jesus accomplished for His people a deliverance- a deliverance from sin to salvation.

In Luke, Jesus' life is presented as a commentary on this passage of Scripture. This is the Gospel of the poor, the outcast. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost- Luke 19:10. He associates with Gentiles, tax collectors and prostitutes. "Blessed are the poor" is found in this gospel. He also warns the rich to be careful. 6:24. He blesses the poor, the hungry, those who weep, and the excluded 6:20-23. Jesus reaches out to a widowed mother who had lost her only son 7:11-17, and to a sinful woman 7:36-50. A Samaritan is praised for his gratitude, 17:11-19. Jesus' identification with sinners leads Him to open His arms to them on the cross, where "He was numbered with the transgressors" 22:37.

C. Jesus also criticizes the rich. "Woe to you who are rich", 6:24, He says; for the tables will turn. The rich are fools because they think life consists of possessing things, 12:13-21. Those wealthy enough to throw dinner parties ought to invite those who cannot repay- "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind"- for God will repay "at the resurrection of the just", 14:13-14.

D. Gospel of joy. For Luke the coming of Christ is good news; and his gospel is one of joy. The births of John and Jesus are announced with words of joy from Mary, Zacharias, the angels, and Simeon. The Gospel closes with this joy. 24:52-53.

E. The gospel of the Holy Spirit. Luke emphasizes the activity of the Spirit in the ministry of Jesus. John the Baptist and his parents are filled with the Spirit, as is Simeon. Jesus begins His ministry "in the power of the Spirit" 4:14; (also 4:1,18; 10:21), and He promises the Spirit to His disciples in their hour of need. Jesus is not alone; the Spirit is always with Him, within Him, empowering Him to accomplish God's purpose.

F. Luke is a gospel of prayer. Jesus prays here more than the other Gospels. The multitude prays as Zacharias serves at the altar, 1:10. Mary prays at the news of salvation, 1:46-55. Jesus prays at His baptism, 3:21, when He chooses His disciples, 6:12, at Peter's confession, 9:18, and at His transfiguration, 9:29. In the solitude of prayer Jesus takes the first steps of ministry, 5:16 and falls to His knees on the Mount of Olives, 22:39-46. He gives His final breath back to God in prayer, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit" 23:46.

G. The Gospel full of vivid stories. The third gospel, in which the great truths of Jesus are communicated primarily through vivid stories. Eg- the Rich man and Lazarus, Pharisee and the tax Collector- 18:9-14, Good Samaritan 15:11-32, Parables of the Lost Son, Lost Sheep and Lost Coin.

III. Outline of Gospel

- A. Chapters 1-2-Intro and Infancy. Luke tells his purpose in writing and the stories of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus.
- B. 3:1-4:13-The preaching of John the Baptist and of Jesus' baptism, genealogy, and temptation.
- C. 4:14--9:28- His TEMPTATION and Transfiguration and ministry in Galilee.
- D. 9-19 Jesus prepares to go to Jerusalem to face the cross The cross is the fulfillment of the divine plan for which He came.
- E 19:28--24:53. The events of Jesus' final week in Jerusalem conclude the gospel, and the ascension serves as a transition from the end of Luke to the beginning of Acts.

The

NT Survey
Lesson 6

Gospel of John

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the Gospel of John

Main Points:

- Jesus is the Son of God
- Key ideas found in the Gospel
- Outline of the Gospel

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the key sections of the book of John and the key themes.

Suggestions for teaching

- Go over Quiz #2
- Continue with Handout #5
- Follow the outline in the lesson using interaction and illustrations from John
- Teach lesson #6

The Gospel of John- Jesus is the Son of God

This is the fourth and most theological of the gospels of the New Testament. The first three gospels portray mainly what Jesus did and how He taught, but the Gospel of John moves beyond the obvious facts of Jesus' life to deeper, more profound meanings. Events and miracles are kept to a minimum in the Gospel of John.

I. Authorship

A. John the apostle. Like the other gospels, John comes to us as an anonymous book. Tradition agrees that the author was John the apostle who was exiled to the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea and who later died in Ephesus sometime after Trajan became emperor of Rome in A. D. 98. The gospel claims to come from an eyewitness 1:14; 1 John 1:1-4. The external and internal evidences suggest that "the beloved disciple" 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20, which appears as a title or nickname for John the apostle, composed the fourth gospel. Ephesus is the most likely place for the gospel's origin, sometime around the close of the first century. It is difficult to say with certainty to whom this gospel was addressed. He mentions no addressee and gives few hints of his intended audience. The gospel uses both Jewish and Greek thought forms in its presentation of Christ. For John, Jesus goes beyond the bounds of Judaism. This gospel reports a fiercer conflict between Jesus and the Jews than the other gospels do. The gospel begins before time 1:1, and it shows that Jesus is timeless. Jesus speaks not to any one nation or ethnic group, but to the human condition. John portrays Jesus for the widest possible readership. This is one reason why the fourth gospel has spoken so deeply to Christians in all ages.

B. Purpose of the gospel. The gospel contains a clear statement of purpose: "These [signs] are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name", 20:31. For John, the sole purpose of life is that, "you may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in Him", 10:38. Thus, John writes that we might know the Father and experience life eternal through faith in the Son.

Why does John present such a different picture of Jesus? John may reveal Jesus as He taught in private, while the other three gospels may recall His public method of address .Mark 4:34. Maybe the other gospels retain the actual form of Jesus' teaching, while John uncovers the essence of Jesus as a person. This does not imply that John disregards historical truth. At some points his gospel probably preserves the facts of Jesus' life more accurately than the other gospels do. For example, Matthew, Mark, and Luke leave the impression that Jesus ministered mainly in Galilee, making only one Passover journey to Jerusalem. This leads one to assume that Jesus' ministry lasted less than one year. John, however, mentions at least three Passover journeys 2:13,23; 6:4; 12:1 and longer periods of ministry in Judea. Nevertheless, it is clear that John is guided more by theological than historical interests. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke begin by showing Jesus' role as the fulfiller of the Old Testament promises of salvation. But John begins with the preexistence of Jesus: "In the beginning was the Word" 1:1. Jesus is divine "the Word was God," 1:1, but He is also human ("the Word became flesh," 1:14). Only as such is He the revealer of the Father.

II. Structure of John's gospel

A. The divisions of the Gospel. The corresponding divisions of the gospel are: Revelation of Jesus 1:19--6:71, Rejection of Jesus chaps. 7--12, and Reception of Jesus. chaps. 13--21.

B. Stories. In the synoptic gospels-- Matthew, Mark, and Luke—Jesus usually utters short sayings. John, records no parables and few of the brief sayings so common to the synoptics. Rather, he tells an incident and then expands on it. For example, Nicodemus chap. 3, the woman at the well chap. 4, the man born blind chap. 9, Lazarus chap. 11, or footwashing chap. 13. Or he takes up an image like , bread (6) , water 7), light.(8), or shepherd (10) and then uses these words as symbols to reveal a fuller revelation of Christ. These discourses are blended so completely with John's own style that many times the reader cannot tell whether it is John or Jesus speaking 3:16.

III. Key Ideas in John

A. Signs and Glory - The fourth gospel consists basically of two parts: a book of "signs" and a book of "glory." The signs reveal Jesus' person chaps. 1--12, and the glory results from Jesus' passion. chapters. 13-20.

B. Titles given to Jesus

In the first chapter, John introduces Jesus by seven key titles: Word, Lamb of God, Rabbi, Messiah, King of Israel, Son of God, and Son of Man. Only in John do we find the seven "I am" sayings:1. "I am the bread of life" 6:35, 2. "I am the light of the world" 8:12, 3."I am the door of the sheep" 10:7, 4. "I am the good shepherd" 10:11. 5. "I and My Father are one" 10:30, 6. "I AM," the way, the truth, and the life" 14:6. 7. and "I am the vine" 15:5. In each of these sayings the "I" is emphatic in Greek. It recalls the name of God, "I AM 'in the Old Testament Ex. 3:14. Jesus also says "before Abraham was, I AM". 8:58.

C. One key word is Believe- In the Old Testament God's words were to be reverently received. So it is with Jesus. In John He begins His messages by saying, "Truly, truly I say to you." Just as in the Old Testament God alone was to be worshiped, in John people are to believe in Jesus alone. Here John stresses his concept of "believing." The verb "to believe" is found nearly a hundred times in the gospel, though the noun "belief/faith" does not occur. For John, saving faith is a verb, carrying the sense of active trust in Jesus; it is not a static noun.

D. Another key word is Love - In John Jesus does not enter into questions of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, swearing, marriage, or wealth as he does in the other gospels. Rather, one's relationships to God others,

and the world are summed up in love. The love which God has for his beloved Son 3:35; 15:9, is passed on by the Beloved to "His own" 13:1. As recipients of God's love, Christians are to love God by loving one another 13:34. This love, which unites believers, 17:1ff, is also a testimony to the world. The key verse of John expresses the basic theological truth of the gospel: John 3:16.

E. The number 7 - There are 7 miracles (signs) listed, 7 witnesses to who Jesus is eg-Samaritan woman- and 7 I am's. They are used as springboards or "signs" for lengthy discussions that reveal important truths about Christ. 7 signs- 1- water to wine- Lord over quality, 2-he heals the nobleman's son- Lord over distance, 3- He heals the lame man- Lord over time 4- he feeds the 5,000- Lord over food/quantity. 5- He walks on water- Lord over nature. 6- He heals the blind man-Lord over helplessness/sight.,7- he raises the dead- Lord over life and death. 5 of the 7 are only found in John. The feeding of 5000 is found in all the Gospels and Matt and Mark tell of him walking on water.

F. Symbolism- Spiritual and physical. John uses many key words that symbolize who Jesus is and how we may know God. The most important are signs, believe and life. There is a contrast between light and darkness. John often writes on two different levels- the physical and the spiritual level- eg- the living water- Ch 4. John is a "spiritual" gospel-not because it is more spiritual than the other three-- but because it expresses spiritual ideas in spiritual language. Among the gospels, therefore, John offers a unique portrait of Christ that has been cherished by believers through the centuries.

John writes with a modest vocabulary, but his words are charged with symbolism. Terms like believe, love, truth, world, light and darkness, above and below, name, witness, sin, judgment (eternal) life, glory, bread, water, and hour are the key words of this gospel. In John 3:16-21, a passage of less than 150 words in Greek, seven of these terms occur.

The world is where God reveals truth, 8:32, light 8:12, and life,14:6, in His Son Jesus Christ. The world is also where persons must decide for or against the witness of Christ, and the decision is judgment, 3:18. Sin is to misjudge Jesus-- to fail to receive Him as the bread of life 6:35, or not to walk in Him as the light of the world 8:12. The Son has come from above to glorify the Father,17:1; and He does so in His "hour", 12:23; 13:1 through His suffering on the cross.

G. Jesus is God's Son. The Gospel of John expresses the uniqueness of the Son's relationship with the Father. The Son existed before the world with the Father; He was sent into the world by the Father; and He goes out of the world to the Father.

H. The Woman caught in Adultery. Our present Gospel of John contains a story that possibly was not written by the original author. The account of the woman caught in adultery 7:53--8:11 differs markedly in style from the rest of John. It is not found in the earlier and better manuscripts of the book. Some believe that it was added at a later date by an unknown author under God's inspiration to express an important truth about Jesus and His attitude toward sinful people. However the story fits with the way Jesus ministered. Maybe it was left out originally because the scribes who copied the manuscripts believed Jesus should have confronted the woman and not let her go so easily.

**NT Survey
Lesson 7**

Acts and Introduction to Paul's Epistles

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the book of Acts and Paul's Epistles

Main Points:

- Acts- The acts of the Holy Spirit in the life of the early church
- 13 Pauline epistles and the 4 main groupings of Pauline epistles.

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the main idea found in Acts
- The student will know the 4 main groupings of Paul's letters.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give them Handout #6
- Follow the outline in the lesson using interaction and illustrations from Acts
- Teach Lesson #7 below.

ACTS- The acts of the Holy Spirit in the early church

Introduction- The Book of Acts is the second volume of a two-volume set written by Luke, the physician. The "former treatise" of Ac.1v1 refers to the Gospel of Luke. Both books were written to Theophilus (Lk.1v3; Ac.1v1). The Acts of the Apostles tells how the early followers of Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit, spread the Good News far beyond Jerusalem to the whole world. Jesus said, "And you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Ac.1v8). This is the three-part outline for the Book of Acts.

I. The Gospel for the world. Acts reveals that the Gospel was for the Jews AND the Gentiles. The Lord had never intended for the message of Jesus to remain in the Jewish culture. Everything before Acts was focused upon God's untiring love for Israel, His chosen people. But from Acts onward, the second part of God's promise to Abraham (Gen.12v1-3) is being fulfilled, "in you shall all families of the earth be blessed."

II. Author. From within the Book of Acts itself, one can learn that the writer was with the Apostle Paul on several occasions. Compare the "we" passages in Ac.16v10-17; Ac.20v5-21v18; Ac.27v1-28v16. Many believe that Luke was "the brother" who was praised by all the congregations (2Cor.8v18). Luke was especially careful to reassure Theophilus that Christians were not a subversive political threat to the Roman Empire. Remember that Luke was the 'beloved physician.'

III. Key Ideas/Events

A. Key persons - The central figures are Peter, Paul and Barnabus.

B. Key verse- Acts 1:8.

C. Persecution. Acts records the growth of the persecution and the persecution the Christians endured.

The persecution came from the Jews at first- specifically at the hands of Saul. The Christians were persecuted because they claimed Jesus was the Messiah. Stephen was the first Christian martyr and Paul was there in agreement with his martyrdom. The early Christians fled because of the persecution but they preached Christ wherever they went.

Philip fled to Samaria and there preached the Gospel and then he was led by the Spirit to the Ethiopian eunuch who he led to Christ. The Gospel was for the Jew and Gentile alike.

D. Pentecosts – The book of Acts is about the move of the Holy Spirit. There are 5 Pentecosts in the book of Acts where the Holy Spirit was poured out.

1. The first Pentecost- Acts 2 took place on the feast of harvest- 50 days after Passover when Jews from all over the world came to praise God. It was called the Jewish feast of Harvest or feast of weeks- the day of first fruits. It was one of the 3 festivals the Jews celebrated. They gave during the festival as God had given to them. Lev 23:15ff; Deut. 16:9-12. They gave the first fruits of their harvest to God. In later Judaism it came to commemorate the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai but that is not clearly stated in the OT. This was one of the three times every year when the Jews were supposed to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem. There were 40 days from Resurrection to Ascension, 10 days until Pentecost. Remember this was all timed by God.

2. The Samaritan Pentecost- Acts 8 When the Holy Spirit came upon the Samaritans.

3. Paul's Pentecost Acts 9- God raises up an apostle to the Gentiles- Saul- Paul.

Paul's strategy was:

i. To go where the Gospel had never been preached before.

ii. To go to synagogues/ Jews first and then to the Gentiles.

iii. To establish churches and appoint leaders in each place.

iv. To revisit the churches to encourage them or write letters back to them.

v. To travel with key men in order to train them for wider leadership.

4. The Gentile Pentecost- Acts 10- Peter was the one God used in this Pentecost at Cornelius' house.

5. The Ephesian Pentecost- Acts 19. This was a multicultural center.

E. Paul's missionary journey. Acts records 3 missionary journeys of Paul. Acts 13- there are at least 9 years between Paul's conversion and 1st missionary trip. Barnabus goes to Tarsus and brings Paul to

Antioch- where converts were 1st called Christians. Barnabus and Saul were then sent out as missionaries- Acts 13:1-3

F. Acts 15- Jerusalem Council. Paul and Peter were there and they agreed that you didn't have to become a Jew to be a Christian. 15:36 ff- Paul and Barnabus disagree and separate-Barnabus takes John Mark and goes to Cyprus, Paul takes Silas and goes to Syria and Galatia. Timothy joins Paul at Lystra in Galatia.

G. The Book of Acts ends with Paul imprisoned in Rome. Apparently, the author could write nothing further. Many scholars believe that after Acts ended Paul was released from prison and then took his 4th missionary journey. Then he was rearrested and taken back to Rome where he was executed. II Tim and Titus were written during that time period. Acts doesn't record Paul's death but tradition tells us that he was beheaded by a Caesar- possibly Caesar Nero (?) in 66 or 67 AD.

Introduction to Paul's epistles

I. Romans is the first of 13 books written by Paul the apostle.

II. Paul.

A. Paul was a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin and a member of the Pharisees.

B. He was also a tentmaker.

C. He was well educated, had studied under Gamaliel and was very zealous for what he believed.

D. He persecuted the Christians until he became one on the Damascus road.

E. He was a Greek by culture and a Roman citizen.

F. He was involved in three missionary journeys listed in the book of Act and possibly a fourth not found in Acts.

G. Books he wrote. The books that Paul wrote can be broken up into 4 parts:

1. His eschatological (doctrine of last things) letters- I & II Thessalonians (50-51 AD),

2. The Soteriological (Doctrine of Salvation) letters- Romans I and 2 Corinthians and Galatians (55-58 AD),

3. The Christological (Doctrine of Christ) letters- Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians. These are also known as the prison epistles (60-62 AD) and

4. The Ecclesiological (Doctrine of the Church) letters- I, II Timothy and Titus (63-67 AD). They are also known as the Pastoral Epistles.

5. Romans and Galatians are the two books that most clearly explain salvation. The main issue in these two books is what does it mean to be saved, what saves us? Paul says we are saved by faith in Jesus alone. The law can't save us, neither can our good works.

**NT Survey
Lesson 8**

The Book of Romans

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the book of Romans

Main Points:

- Romans- The righteousness of God/ God's plan of salvation.

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the main ideas found in Romans

Suggestions for teaching

- Continue filling out Handout #6
- Follow the outline in lesson #8 using interaction and illustrations from Romans

ROMANS- The Righteousness of God (God's plan of salvation for man.)

Introduction- The letter to the Romans is different than Paul's other letters to churches. Normally he had to deal with problems in the church or with his pastors. But here Paul has not been there, the church was not planted by him, now he is only a visitor. So he tells the message of salvation which was the message he preached. This is Paul's most theological letter.

I. When the letter was written.

Paul's Letter to the Roman Christians was written about 57 A.D. near the close of his third missionary tour (compare Rom 15:25 with Ac 20:16). Sometime after Paul wrote Second Corinthians, he probably wrote Romans from Corinth.

I. How the church started.

How did the congregation in Rome begin? It is well known that Jews had been broadly dispersed throughout the Roman Empire. They had established synagogues everywhere. A contingent of Jews appeared in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 30), according to Ac 2:10. Some of these new believers returned to Rome with their new-found faith in Jesus, the Messiah. At any rate, it is clear that Paul was addressing himself to a non-Jewish audience (Rom 1:13).

III. Key Ideas in Romans

A. The cross. In Romans is found the most comprehensive statement about the full meaning of Jesus' cross. Rom 1:16 is the most important verse in the whole letter: The gospel, the Good News about Jesus is where the power of salvation is found for ANYONE--Jew or Gentile--who personally makes a commitment to Christ.

B. Doctrine of Salvation. Paul wrote Rom 1-8 primarily to educate these new believers about the most fundamental teaching regarding salvation. He systematically explained how God makes sinners "righteous" in His presence. Since everyone is a sinner (Rom 3:10, 23), all need salvation. And, the only path to forgiveness is through the mercy of God extended in Christ Jesus. One either fully accepts that this offer from God is true or one rejects it (Rom 3:24-25). If a person truly realizes his or her true condition before God, then the heart will change (Rom 10:9-10) and complete obedience will follow (Rom 1:5; Rom 16:26). However, Paul was quick to point out that personal salvation cannot come through any frail, human attempts to obey any law perfectly (Rom 3:20-21,26-28). Through Jesus Christ, God is the one who justifies sinners (Rom 3:26; Rom 4:5).

C. Righteousness. "Righteous" appears 15 times in Romans, 8 times in Galatians, and only 16 additional times in the remainder of the New Testament! Righteousness does not refer to the way that this spiritual exoneration is accomplished, but only to the act itself. God makes us "righteous" (Rom 5:19) through the obedience of Christ. God considers the new believer as having legally and morally fulfilled all the demands of law because of the righteousness of Jesus. Though no righteous person could be located on earth, no unrighteousness could be found in Christ (Jn 7:18).

D.. Salvation by faith. We are saved by grace through faith. Romans 5:1-2.

E. Freedom from sin and its wages. Then Paul explained what a new life in Christ entails: No longer does an individual need to live under the constant domination of sin, guilt, and death (Rom 7:1-25). God can clear us of the guilt of sin and give us power against this terrible urge. A believer is liberated by the Spirit of God and possesses a serenity of soul, as well as peace with God. All hostilities from God have ceased (Rom 8:1-39). Next, Paul went to great lengths to recount God's original purpose in giving the Law of Moses and how the Jews had been a part of God's master plan to bring all nations home through the grace provided for by the cross of Jesus Christ (Rom 9 -11).

F. The place of Israel. 9-11 Paul deals with God's plan for Israel in history. He loves Israel but the true chosen people are not the physical Jews but the spiritual Jews.

G. Practical Christianity

Paul concluded with many other practical things about how Christians should live in this world (Rom 12 -16).

i) We must serve one another (Rom 12:4-21).

ii) We must be good citizens (Rom 13:1-7).

iii) We must be tolerant and sensitive to the consciences of others who may not agree with our personal scruples (Rom 14:1-15:3).

H. What did Paul mean in 11:26-“All Israel will be saved”? It could be saying that all the Jews would be saved in the end or most scholars believe that it is saying since the church is the new Israel, then all believers- the new Israel, will be saved. .The true Israel or the true Jew are all believers who put their faith in Jesus Christ.

I. Key words—sin, salvation, grace, faith, righteousness, justification, sanctification, redemption, death and resurrection.

IV. Outline of Romans

1:18-3:20- The unrighteousness of man-Gentiles, Jews, and all mankind. The problem of sin in man.

3:21-5:21- Salvation through Justification. Justification is a legal term which means just as if I never sinned. We are saved by grace through faith.

6-8 - Salvation through the righteousness given by God produces freedom.

6- Freedom from sin’s power

7-Freedom from the law’s condemnation

8-Freedom through the power of the Holy Spirit.

9-11- The place of the Jews in history

12-16- Practical Christianity. 16- personal greetings.

V. Key verses.

1:16; 3:23;4; 6:23; 9-11; Who are the true Jews? 12:1-8;

NT Survey
Lesson 9

I Corinthians

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the books to the Corinthians

Main Points:

- The City of Corinth
- I Corinthians

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the kind of culture, environment and problems in the Corinthian church.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give them Quiz #3
- Give them handout #7 and teach Lesson #9.
- Follow the outline in the lesson using interaction and illustrations from the Corinthian letters.

Corinthians

Introduction- Paul believed that Corinth was a strategic center of influence and there was already a large Jewish presence (see Ac.18v4). He planted the church there in midst of a heathen society. They struggled to live holy lives and the letters he wrote to them were to answer their questions and to confront them on certain issues.

I. The City of Corinth.

A. Location. Corinth was a Greek city located on a large isthmus about fifty miles west of Athens and had 500,000 people when Paul arrived there. It was first built in 10,000 B. C. It was one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire after Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. Corinth was the connecting link between Rome, the capital of the world, and the East. Corinth was on a major trade route and had a thriving economy, but the immorality of that part of the world thrived there. Greeks, Romans, Jews, and a mixed multitude of sailors and merchants flocked to this crossroads. By the end of the second century, Corinth was one of the richest cities in the world.

B. Spiritual condition. But Corinth was also full of immorality. It was one of the most wicked cities of ancient times. The marketplace had butcher stalls containing meat which was often dedicated to pagan idols before being sold. This presented a cultural problem for the Christians in Corinth, 1 Corinthians 8. Degradation, immorality, and heathen customs abounded. Pleasure was worshipped more than principles. Professional gamblers and athletes lived there. Slaves, sometimes freed but with no place to go, roamed the streets day and night. And prostitutes (both male and female) were abundant. People from Rome, the rest of Greece, Egypt, Asia Minor-- indeed, all of the Mediterranean world-- loved the lack of standards and freedom of thought that prevailed in the city. There were many religions in Corinth. The Temple of Aphrodite (or Venus) was located in this city. This pagan temple and its 1,000 "religious" prostitutes impacted the city's culture and morals. For this reason, the apostle Paul sometimes had to deal harshly with the converts in the Corinthian church. Because many of the Corinthians had lived in this godless society all their lives, incest had not seemed so bad to the Corinthians.

II. How the Church was established. The congregation was established by Paul during his second missionary journey (see Ac.18v1-11; 1Cor.2v1-2), when Paul went alone from Athens to Corinth in about A. D. 51. There he labored for 18 months with a Jewish-Christian couple, Aquila and Priscilla, who had been expelled from Rome by the emperor Claudius because they were Jews. Silas and Timothy also joined Paul in Corinth. When Paul left Corinth, he left behind a church composed primarily of former heathens -1 Cor. 12:2, most of them apparently from the lower classes, 1 Cor. 1:26f. Some slaves, 1 Cor. 7:21, a few wealthier persons,1 Cor. 11:22-32, and Jews (8:1-13) were among the believers. At Corinth the apostle Paul established a flourishing church, made up of a cross section of the worldly minded people who had flocked to Corinth to participate in the gambling, legalized temple prostitution, business adventures, and amusements available in a first-century city. 1 Cor. 6:9-11. They needed to live together in harmony, although their national, social, economic, and religious backgrounds were very different.

III. The Corinthian correspondence. Paul wrote at least two letters to the church at Corinth. Both deal with divisions in the church, as well as immorality and the abuse of Christian freedom. Many religious scholars believe that Paul wrote four letters and visited the church three different times. During his third missionary journey, Paul received word about immorality in the young congregation at Corinth. He wrote a letter (which has since been lost) against mixing with fornicators,1 Cor. 5:9. The letter apparently failed to achieve its purpose. Sometime later Paul learned,1 Cor. 1:11; 16:17, that the sexual problems persisted, along with many others. Paul responded by writing a second letter (probably 1 Corinthians), in which he referred to various points raised by the Corinthians (see the sections beginning, "Now concerning," 1 Cor. 7:1,25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1). In addition, he condemned the Corinthians for their divisions 1 Cor. 1:10, and their gross immorality, 1 Cor. 5:1.

This letter also failed to correct the abuses at Corinth. Paul then apparently made a visit to Corinth, during which he was rejected 2 Cor. 2:1. From Ephesus Paul then wrote a third letter in which he apparently confronted the willful Corinthians. This letter, which he sent by Titus, has also been lost. Many scholars believe it has been attached to 2 Corinthians and preserved as chapters 10-13 of his epistle.

In anxiety over the possible effect of this drastic letter, and impatient over Titus' delay in returning, Paul traveled north from Ephesus to Macedonia. There Titus met him and, to Paul's relief and joy, reported that the Corinthians had punished the leader of the opposition and repented, 2 Cor. 2:5-11. Paul then wrote a fourth letter (2 Corinthians), recounting his former anxiety and expressing his joy over the reform in Corinth.

I Corinthians- Problems in the Church

Introduction- There were some problems in the church including division in the church, immorality and lawsuits. They also had questions concerning marriage, meat offered to idols, church conduct, the Lord's Supper and the resurrection. 1st Corinthians is unique among the Pauline letters because of the variety of its practical concerns. I Corinthians was written from Ephesus, 1 Cor. 16:8, during Paul's third missionary journey, around A. D. 56. I Corinthians reflects the conflict which took place when Christian experiences and Christian ideals of conduct come into conflict with the concepts and practices of the world around us. There was gross immorality (one particular incestuous relationship), specific instances of trouble between Christians, many practical problems in living the

Christian life, marriage problems, difficulties concerning meat offered to idols and matters of conscience, abuses in partaking of the Lord's Supper, disorderly conduct in the formal assemblies for worship, confusion about the role of women in the church, and heresies about the afterlife, which caused Paul to teach the truth about the resurrection.

Paul wants the church to be united. This letter was written with great distress on Paul's heart. Many of the individual Christians there had recently converted from pagan practices and they were having difficulty in adjusting, i.e. breaking with the past. As long as there are human beings in a congregation, there will be human failures. Paul did not have enough time to ground them well. Paul planned to go back to help them and he apparently did.

I. The Importance of the Cross. Paul focused on the cross, "to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness" 1 Cor. 1:23. The foolishness of the gospel—its offensiveness to cultured Greeks—was an indication of its power to save. To those who respond to the cross and are saved, "Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God" 1 Cor. 1:24. According to Paul, the preaching of the cross is not a human teaching but a revelation of the Spirit, who makes known the mind of Christ 1 Cor. 2:10-16. The centrality of the cross should overcome all divisions in the church.

II. The Challenge of living as a Christian in a heathen society. Many of the problems in Corinth concerned behavior and morals, so Paul focused on ethical advice in his correspondence. The leading principle he uses is that "all things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful", 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23. Christians ought to use their freedom not for self-advantage, but for the glory of God and the good of their neighbors. This principle goes beyond legislating simple "do's and don'ts." Instead, it cultivates a mature and responsible faith which will provide guidance for every moral problem. Paul is teaching here that our relationship with Christ must be lived out in different situations. The new life demands a new way of living, helped by the Holy Spirit.

III. Some Problems in the Church.

A. Problem of division. The first issue Paul deals with is the problem of authority in the church. The believers had divided allegiances based on who had mentored, taught them. Paul said we are all under Christ, not a person. Unity not disunity was the goal. Paul appealed to the Corinthians to mend the divisions within the church, chap. 1-4. Paul reminded the Corinthians that they all were united by the simple, but life-changing, preaching of the cross, 1 Cor. 1:18--2:16. Each church leader builds on the one foundation of Jesus, chap. 3, and therefore labors in behalf of Christ (4).

B. Problem of immorality. In chapter 5 he judges a man who was sleeping with his father's wife.

C. Problem of lawsuits. He rebukes believers for taking lawsuits to court before unbelieving judges, 1 Cor. 6:1-11.

D. Other problems. Paul then addressed certain questions which were brought to him by the Corinthians:

1. Sexuality, 6:12-19,

2. Marriage, chap. 7,

3. Eating food offered to idols, (8). Paul appeals for them to consider others in love and for a responsible use of Christian freedom— not for self-gain. He warns them against things that could lead to idolatry, chap. 10.

IV. Spiritual ministry

A. The Lord's supper- chapter 11. The words of Christ, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood", recall his past death and anticipate his future return.

B. The importance of Spiritual gifts.12-14

1) Spiritual gifts are given to everyone in the body and are to build up the body (12). Paul recognized a variety of gifts 12:4-10, but insisted that "one and the same Spirit" gives them. The body consists of different parts, but remains one organism. Likewise, Christ's body of believers consists of members with different gifts, each given by the one Spirit.

2) Spiritual Gifts must be exercised in love, chapter 13

3) Desire the gifts that build up the body like prophecy and not tongues, I Cor 14.

C. The Resurrection. First Corinthians 15 is our earliest record of the resurrection in the New Testament. Paul wrote that unless Christ has been resurrected, our faith is useless -15:12-19. As death came through Adam, so new life comes through Christ, 15:21,45. The resurrection of Jesus is a "firstfruits" (15:20) of the victory to come. Because of the resurrection the believer can confess, "O death, where is your sting?" (15:55). Paul says if there is no resurrection we have no hope. This teaches us the importance of the resurrection of Christ for our faith. I Cor 15:14-19;15:50 ff- The hope of our own personal resurrection, when we will have victory over death.

H. Conclusion

1) Weekly collection. Finally, he reminded the Corinthians of the weekly collection for the saints in Jerusalem.

2) Travel plans. He concluded with travel plans and greetings chap. 16.

V. Key Verses: 1:18, 27; 3:16-17; 6:19; 9:16, 24-27; 10:13, 31, Chapter 13- Love Chapter; 15:13-19; 50-57.

**NT Survey
Lesson 10**

II Corinthians and Galatians

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the book of II Corinthians and Galatians

Main Points:

- I Corinthians
- Galatians
- The problem of false teachers

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the culture and problems in the Corinthian and Galatian churches.
- He/she will know that salvation is by faith alone.

Suggestions for teaching

- Go over Quiz #3
- Finish Handout #7
- Give them Handout #8 and teach lesson #10.

SECOND CORINTHIANS- We Are Messengers for Christ

This is a very personal epistle of Paul where Paul defends his ministry and his apostleship.

II Corinthians- We Are Messengers for Christ

Introduction- Second Corinthians was written from Macedonia, where Paul met Titus and received news of the church's repentance 2 Cor. 2:12-17. II Corinthians may be Paul's most personal letter because he reveals his love and his anguish for the Corinthian church and defends himself against false teachers. False teachers had entered the church and were challenging Paul's right to call himself an apostle. It has many digressions and is not as systematic or doctrinal as some of his letters. This letter reveals his strong feelings because of the false apostles' charges against him. The letter begins with reference to a painful experience of rejection at Corinth (Paul's third visit). Paul gave thanks that the Corinthians were now reconciled to him, chap. 1, but he remembers his torment over their stubbornness, chap. 2. Chapters 3 and 4 are theological reflections on ministry, and chapters 5 and 6 on reconciliation. In chapter 7 Paul shared his joy at the church's repentance. In chapters 8 and 9 he writes about the collection for the church in Jerusalem. In Chapters 10-13 he defends his ministry against the false apostles.

I. Key Ideas

1. The comfort of God. (1:3-7)
2. We are the aroma of Christ. 2:14-16
3. The ministry of the Spirit 3:7-18
4. The outward struggle and the inner power. 4:1-16
5. The Spirit in us guarantees our inheritance. 5:1-10
6. The ministry of reconciliation. 5:11-21

7. Victory in the midst of the struggles of serving God. 6:1-10

8. Live separated from the world. 6:14-18.

9. Godly sorrow leads to repentance and joy. 7:1-16

10. Principles of Giving in the church. Chapters 8-9.

11. Paul defends his ministry 10-13. He was being attacked by false teachers and he defends his apostleship. They said he was a coward, not one of the original apostles, not qualified to teach. Notice how he begins the letter- Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. His critics were probably Jews- Judaizers.

a. Spiritual weapons of ministry. 10:1-6

b. Paul boasts in the Lord 10:7-18

c. A defense against false apostles. 11:1-15

d. Paul's sufferings for Christ 11:16-33

e. His vision of a third heaven.(12:1-4)

f. His thorn in the flesh. 12:7-10

12. A Reminder and a challenge for purity. 12:11-21. Paul reminds them of what God did when he was there.es.

13. Paul tells the Corinthians to examine themselves,.The letter closes with the only Trinitarian benediction in the Bible.

Conclusion: Paul loved the Corinthians and rebukes them. This is a passionate letter. At times he speaks in frustration, at times in joy. Sometimes he is satirical, at times he shows loving concern. He defends his apostleship and ministry against the false apostles who were trying to discredit him and his teachings. He was not going to allow his apostolic credentials to be questioned by them. He was ready to confront his accusers (2Cor.16v5-6). But he is also concerned how the Corinthians will receive his rebuke. Throughout the letter, there is a suppressed indignation, a deep sadness, and defensiveness He warned the congregation against some errors, instructed them in matters of duty as Christians, and expressed his happiness that they had heeded what he had to say in "First" Corinthians. "Second" Corinthians tells us that we must all be loyal to Christ, not to human personalities. This letter was written with great joy in Paul's heart, yet he was still concerned for this church is such a pagan environment.

II. Key verse 5:17. Other key verses: 2:14-16; 3:17-18; 4:16-18; 5:20-21.

GALATIANS- Taking Care of the Gospel of Grace

I. Background of the Galatian letter

Galatia was a Roman province. It is now southern Turkey. It may have been written around 48 AD before the Council in Jerusalem, Acts 15. The purpose of this letter was to remove the doctrinal errors which had been recently introduced by hostile Judaizers and to urge the Galatian Christians to hold firmly to what they had been taught by Paul at the beginning. Paul had started these congregations on his first missionary journey (Ac.13 and Ac.14) with considerable success, proclaiming "the door of faith" as being open to them (Ac.14v27). Then he revisited them on his second missionary journey

(Ac.16v1-6) and again on his third missionary journey (Ac.18v23).He then received disturbing news that they were falling away from the gospel he had taught them,1:6. Certain religious activists, Judaizers, had visited Galatia after Paul's departure and had persuaded the Christians there that the gospel presented by Paul was insufficient for salvation,1:7

II. The problem of the Judaizers

Judaizers taught that both faith and works, belief in Jesus and obedience to the law are necessary for salvation. Paul taught that both Jews and Gentiles are saved by faith alone. Judaizers were insisting that non-Jewish believers in Christ could not be true Christians until they submitted to circumcision (a Jewish rite from the Old Testament) and by keeping the Law of Moses. These Judaizers had come in and begun to teach a new type of legalism to these Gentile believers. The Judaizers refused to accept the true apostolic teaching (Ac.15v1-31). They felt that they knew the truth about Jesus and they had persuaded them to divert from Paul's teaching. They suggested that Paul had learned his ideas "second-hand" from the apostles who were the true pillars in Jerusalem. These false teachers felt that they themselves had the true story. The Judaizers suggested that Paul was an inferior apostle and that his gospel had no authority,1:10. Paul responded with a powerful defense of his conversion 1:11-17 and of his approval by apostles in Jerusalem,1:18--2:10. The gospel that Paul had delivered to the Galatians was not his own,but it came "through the revelation of Jesus Christ",1:11-12.

The Galatians listened to the Judaizers as they had listened to Paul. Paul did not deny the importance of circumcision or any other Jewish custom to Jews. However, Paul clearly taught that circumcision had nothing whatever to do with personal salvation! The Judaizers were tampering with the essential thrust of the very nature of the Gospel. There was much at stake. If the Judaizers were right, then Christ died on the cross for nothing (Gal.2v21)! Paul taught that a proper relationship with God was based upon believing in Jesus Christ, not by trying to "make points" through obeying law! Christians already had freedom and should not have been made to feel that they were in bondage again. In this brief letter Paul forever settled the question about the relationship which we have with the Law of Moses. The Judaizing threat ended at the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Prior to that time, all Jewish Christians (Messianic believers) were considered to be a "sect" (Ac.24v5), a new branch of Judaism. But, after A.D. 70, all Christians were on their own; they were recognized as separate from Judaism.

III. Similarity of Romans and Galatians.

Romans and Galatians are very similar- the doctrine of salvation is the theme. In Galatians Paul teaches the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. Galatians is one of Paul's most powerful epistles. It helps us understand Paul's life between his conversion and missionary journeys ,1:11-2:14. Beyond its autobiographical value, Galatians ranks as one of Paul's great epistles; in it he proclaims the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Martin Luther, the Reformer, claimed Galatians as "my epistle." Luther was so tied to Galatians, both in interest and temperament, that, together, they shaped the course of the Reformation. Galatians has been called the "Magna Charta of Christian Liberty" because of its emphasis on faith and freedom in Christ.

IV. The Contrasts in Galatians

- A. A different type of "gospel" versus the authentic Gospel (compare Gal.1v6)
- B. Man's reasoning versus God's revelation
- C. Law versus grace; works versus faith
- D. The curse of death versus the blessing of life
- E. Condemnation versus exoneration
- F. Servants in bondage versus sons in freedom
- G. Defeat versus victory
- H. The old covenant versus the new covenant
- I. Living in the flesh versus walking in the Spirit
- J. The works of the flesh versus the fruit of the Spirit
- K. Falling from grace versus standing firm in grace
- L. The world (self) as the object of boasting versus the cross of Christ.

Paul summarizes by saying that the Christian life is the natural fruit which flows from love (Gal.5v6).

V. Structure of the Epistle.

- A. Paul Defends his apostleship and the gospel. 1-2
- B. The Question of Salvation, Chaps. 3-4. In short he argues that that salvation comes not through obeying the Mosaic law, but by receiving the grace of God through faith. In his discussion he uses logic, 3:15-20, quotations from the Old Testament, 3:7-14, a metaphor, 4:1-6, personal authority, 4:12-20, and allegory, 4:21-31 to prove his points..
- C. The consequences of Saving Faith, 5-6.
 1. The Christian is free to love 5:1-15;
 2. The Holy Spirit produces fruit in his life, 5:16-26;
 3. He reaches out to others. the needs of others lay a rightful claim on his life, 6:1-10

VI. Key Ideas

- A. Justification by faith alone. God's plan is that Jews and Gentiles are justified before God by faith alone. This plan began with Abraham who, "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" Gal. 3:6; The law came 430 years after Abraham and was never intended to replace justification by faith. Rather, the law was to point us to Christ 3:24-25. Christ is the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham.
- B. Spiritual Freedom. Paul taught that a proper relationship with God is based upon believing in Jesus Christ, not by trying to earn your way through obeying the law! Christians already had freedom and should not be made to feel that they were in bondage again. Paul teaches that the law shows us our need for Christ- it leads us to Christ. The result of justification by faith is spiritual freedom. – not another form of bondage- to the law. The result of justification by grace through faith is spiritual freedom. Paul

appealed to the Galatians to stand fast in their freedom, and not get "entangled again with a yoke of bondage [that is, the Mosaic law]" 5:1. Christian freedom is not an excuse to satisfy the sinful nature; rather, it is an opportunity to love one another 5:13; 6:7-10. Such freedom does not insulate one from life's struggles. Indeed, it may intensify the battle between the Spirit and the flesh. Nevertheless, the sinful nature has been crucified with Christ, 2:20; therefore the Spirit will bear fruit-- such as love, joy, and peace- in the life of the believer, 5:22-23.

C. Importance of letter. In this letter Paul settled the question about the relationship with the law of Moses. If Paul had failed in teaching that justification is by faith alone, Christianity would have been a sect within Judaism, rather than the universal way of salvation. For Paul, the issue was not whether a person was circumcised, but whether he had become "a new creation" 6:15.

VII. Key verses:- 2:15-16; Gal 2:20; Gal 3:6-7; 3:28; 5:19-23; 6:7-9

**NT Survey
Lesson 11**

Ephesians and Philippians

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the book of Ephesians

Main Points:

- The Church is the Body of Christ.

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the culture and problems in the Ephesian church.
- The student will know the key parts of Ephesians.

Suggestions for teaching

- Pass out Handout #9
- Teach Lesson #11 as outlined.

Prison Epistles- Philemon, Eph, Col and Philippians

These four epistles are called prison epistles which Paul wrote when he was imprisoned in Rome from about 60-64 A.D.

EPHESIANS- The Church is the body of Christ

Introduction- This epistle has been called the Queen of the Epistles. Acts 19 tells about how the church began and Paul's ministry in the church. The church was planted in a place with many other spiritual forces. Paul caused a riot when he preached the Gospel- that Jesus is the only way to God.

I. Historical Background-

A. Of Ephesus. Ephesus was about one mile inland from the eastern portion of the Aegean Sea. A great theater, seating about 50,000 people, was there (see Ac.19v31). Also, one of the seven wonders of the world, the temple of Diana (Artemis), was located in Ephesus. Ephesus proved to be a very powerful springboard for influencing the world for Christ, like Jerusalem and Antioch.

B. Beginning of church. Paul visited Ephesus during his second missionary journey (Ac.18v18-21). He left Aquila and Priscilla there to help them. He spent three years in Ephesus on his third tour (Ac.19v1-14). He exerted so much influence there that the idol-makers became worried and incited a riot against him (Ac.19v21-41). He was compelled to leave for Macedonia (Ac.20v1). Later on, while heading for Jerusalem, he stopped for a quick visit when he met the elders of the Ephesian congregation at Miletus, 50 kilometers to the north. (Ac.20v16-38).

C. Similarity to Colossians. Ephesians is quite similar to Colossians. There are 78 verses between them which are almost the same. Each is devoted half to doctrine and half to practical Christian duty. Colossians portrays Christ as the head of the church, while Ephesians goes further to display Jesus as the

ascended, glorified Christ. In Colossians, Paul is fighting against a serious heresy, but in Ephesians Paul is focusing on the grandeur of Christ in quiet meditation. Some other similarities- 1) putting off the old man putting on the new, 2) instructions to husbands and wives, parents and children and 3) Paul prays for the church in Eph 1:15-22 and 3:14-19 and in Col 1:9-14 and he prays for the mystery of the Gospel to be made known.

II. Key Ideas.

A. The Church is the body of Christ. The major theme of Ephesians is The Church is the mystical body of Christ. God's great master plan was to bring everything together (Eph.1v10) under Christ as head (Eph.1v22-23). We, as the body of Christ on earth, have a part in this plan and the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of God's promise (Eph.1v13-14). Paul describes Christ as the enthroned Lord of the church and creation. The church is his extended body through which He will bring all things to Himself.

B. Unity of the Church. "There is one body" (Eph.4v4), not two (i.e. races). Paul emphasizes the unity of the church. Jews and Gentiles are now one in Christ. Non-Jews could become Christians without first becoming Jewish converts (proselytes). But many Jewish Christians, who had always been prejudiced against the pagan Gentiles, thought that Gentiles should not presume to call themselves followers of the Messiah unless they were first circumcised and obedient to the Law of Moses. In other words, the Jewish believers tended to see themselves as the center, instead of seeing the centrality of Christ. However, Paul taught that they should view the Gentiles as their brothers in Christ--on an equal footing. Jesus stands high above all cultural barriers. Christ is large enough to accommodate all races, divergent positions, culture, problems of humanity (social and family life, see Eph.5v22--6v9), and even the unseen beings (Eph.3v10). The key idea of the book is the relationship between the heavenly Lord Jesus Christ and his earthly body, the church. He reigns above all- 1:21 and has put everything under his feet- 1:22 But He has not forgotten about His church- His people. The church as God's chosen people have been set free from sin by Jesus, and they must live consistently with the oneness which is in Christ.

C. The Picture of the Church

1. The church is like a body, with Christ as head (Eph.1v22-23; Eph.2v15-16).
2. The church is like a building with Christ as the cornerstone (Eph.2v20-22).
3. The church is like a wife with Christ as the husband (Eph.5v21-33).

D. The purpose of the church

- 1) To be holy, blameless and to bring glory to God,
- 2) To do good works- 2:10 and
- 3) To spread the Gospel throughout the earth.

4) The church as the body of Christ is God's instrument of reconciliation of man to man and man to God.

E. A powerful prayer for the Church- 3:14-21

F. The ministry of leadership in the Church, 4:11-16.

G. The need for purity in the church- 4:17-5:20

H. The Christian family 5:22- 6:4

I. Spiritual Warfare. Put on the full armor of God. Eph 6:1-19

III. Key verses:

1:3-4; 1:15ff; Chapter 2:1-10- This is probably the clearest explanation of salvation by grace through faith in all the Bible.

2:8-10- KEY VERSE; 3:14ff- The prayer; 3:1-13- Paul's mission was to proclaim the mystery of Christ. 3:21- powerful verse; 4:11-13 The five -fold ministry gifts in the body of Christ-4:1- Live a life worthy of your calling; 5:22-32- Here Paul shows the marriage relationship between a husband and a wife to be an analogy for expressing Christ's love sacrifice and lordship over the church; 6:10ff- A powerful description of spiritual warfare is found here

PHILIPPIANS- Rejoice in the Lord always

I. Historical Background

A. Roman. Philippi was named after Philip of Macedon who captured the city in 358 B.C. He was the father of Alexander the Great. Eventually Augustus Caesar made Philippi a Roman colony. Philippi was a strategic place for the spread of the Gospel because it was a central place of trade.

B. The Beginning of the church.

1. The Macedonian vision. In the early portion of Paul's second missionary journey, the Lord indicated that He wanted Paul to cross over into Macedonia (Ac.16v9-10), an event which greatly affected those in the West. This was the first congregation ever to be established on European soil. Ac.16v6-40 describes Paul's contact with Lydia and the Philippian jailor's household. Paul may have visited them again when he journeyed from Ephesus to Macedonia (Ac.20v1; 2Cor.2v12-13; 2Cor.7v5-6). We know that he spent time there that spring (Ac.20v6).

2. Imprisonment. When Paul planted this church he was thrown into prison where he and Silas sang hymns of praise and were delivered. Acts 16:25. The theme is rejoice in the Lord. Remember he wrote this from prison. This epistle was written around 60 AD. It is ironic that Philippians was written in

another prison (in Rome) a decade later. ??? Paul, who supported himself, ordinarily refused to receive a preacher's salary because of a principle (1Cor.9v2; Ac.18v3). However, he did accept encouragement and financial support from the Philippian brethren when he was in Thessalonica (Php.4v16-18) and while in Corinth (2Cor.11v9).

II. Key Ideas

A. Christ is all we need. While there may not be a developed single theme, the main thought of Philippians is the all-sufficiency of Christ in any circumstance--good or bad. Christ is the very meaning of life and death (Php.1v20-21).

B. The Joy of being in Christ. More than a dozen passages exude Paul's joy and confidence. He loved them very much and urged them to persevere.

C. Suffering for Christ has a purpose- 1:12-19 Paul was put in prison when he planted the church and now ten years later in another prison in Rome he writes this letter.

D. The desire to go to be with Christ 1:21ff.

E. Imitate Christ's humility 2:1-11

F. Knowing Christ is preeminent over everything 3:7-14 "that I may know Christ..."

G. The secret of contentment- 4:13

H. Thanksgiving. 2:25. Epaphroditus had arrived in Rome from Philippi with an offering of love for Paul. Epaphroditus nearly died, but recovered (Php.2v25-30; Php.4v18). Paul sent him back to Philippi with this letter and with his heartfelt thanks for their gift. He reassured them that they would be victorious if they had the same attitude of Christ, instead of conceited pride.

III. Key Verses

Php.2v5-11; 1:9-11 Paul's prayer; 1:21; 2:1-11- Be humble like Christ; 3:7-11;3:7-8; KEY VERSE 4:12-13

**NT Survey
Lesson 12**

Colossians and Philemon

Lesson Purpose:

- **To introduce the book of Colossians and Philemon**
- **To teach the truth about Christ**
- **To teach the importance of forgiveness**

Main Points:

- **Colossians and Philemon**
- **Jesus Christ is God**
- **Becoming a Christian brings a change in relationship**
- **The problem of Gnosticism**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will know the culture and problems in the Colossian church.**
- **The student will understand the reason behind the letter of Philemon.**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give them Handout #10**
- **Teach Lesson #12.**

COLOSSIANS-The fullness of God is in Christ

I. Background.

A. Importance of Colossae. Colossae was an important city in the province of Phrygia in Asia Minor, east of Ephesus. We don't know if Paul visited it, but he may have on his third missionary journey. This letter was written by Paul while he was a prisoner in Rome, about A.D. 62, and delivered by Tychicus (Col.4v7-8).

B. Relationship to Ephesians. Colossians is the sister epistle to the Ephesians, just as Romans is to Galatians. It was written almost simultaneously by Paul and sent through the same messenger, Tychicus (Eph.6v21-22). The central theme of Colossians is Christ, the theme of Ephesians is the church.

C. Purpose of the letter. Paul wrote the letter to combat wrong teaching about Christ in the church. Paul wrote this letter at the same time he wrote Philemon who was a member of this church. He wrote Philemon in connection with Philemon's runaway (but now converted) slave--Onesimus (Col.4v7-9). Also, Epaphras had brought Paul a report about the church in Colossae which included many encouraging things (Col.1v4-8), as well as some disturbing news about the false teaching that threatened to lead its members away from the truth of Christ. This epistle focuses on the person and work of Christ. It gives us a clear picture of who Christ is- "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all of creation." Colossians 1:15. Christianity is the only religion who makes the claim of the unique divinity of its founder. Religion is man's search for God, while Christianity is God's search for man by becoming a man. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge- 2:10. There

was heresy in the Colossian church but Paul fights against the heresy by recording the truth about Christ. Christ is the all sufficient one. Paul tells the Colossians to put to death the way of the old life and put on the new- the character of Christ. True Christianity affects relationships.eg- husbands and wives. This letter was written to house churches which Paul had not visited. Epaphras may have taken the Gospel to Colossae after hearing the Gospel in Ephesus from Paul.

II. The Problem of Gnosticism. The Colossian heresy combined philosophical speculations, astral powers, reverence to angelic intermediaries, food taboos, and ascetic practices with Judaistic teachings (Col.2v8-23).

A. The Gnostics separated matter from thought. They considered matter as evil and thought (knowledge) as the ultimate means of salvation. This is why they did not want to attribute humanity to Jesus Christ, since humanity (being material), to them, was evil.

B. They believed that Jesus was God but not man because the body was evil. From this false doctrine the Docetic heresy arose. They believed that the body of Christ was only something that "appeared" to be material, but in reality it was not. Such a belief led to an immoral life from which the human spirit was entirely separate and not responsible for the acts of the body. This is the reason why Paul stressed in Col.2v9 that in Jesus Christ, as He appeared on earth, all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt "bodily." He was truly God in the flesh.

C. Rejection of the historical facts of Christ. As a result of the Gnostic philosophical concept of the evil of the body, the Gnostics ignored or diminished the significance of the historic facts of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as not being real, but only allegedly apparent. To them, all the secrets of God were in the mind--a non-material identity. D. Two end results of Gnosticism. Gnosticism developed in two divergent directions.

1. Asceticism- being a complete denial of sexual and other bodily appetites, i.e. virtual asceticism; and
2. Libertinism- coming from the same premises, the practice of unrestrained indulgence of the body (libertinism). They taught that since the body was evil what you did with it didn't matter, therefore you could sin with your body but what was important was your thought- your mind.

E. Paul's response to the heresy. Paul does not confront the heresies that existed in Colossae point by point, but, in a positive manner, he presents related truth. From the subjects he touches upon, we conclude the following:

1. Too much attention was being given to the powers of the spirit world to the detriment of the place given to Christ. In Col.2v18 he speaks of "worshiping of angels," and in other references to the relation of the spiritual creation to Christ (Col.1v16, Col.1v20; Col.2v15).
2. Undue attention was given to outward observances such as feasts and fasts, new moons and sabbaths (Col.2v16f), and probably also circumcision (Col.2v11). These were presented as the true way of self-discipline and the subjection of the flesh (Col.2v20ff).

3. Paul taught the truth about Christ. They were definitely also influenced by Gnosticism, a heresy that plagued the early believers in the first 200 years. The word comes from the Greek word meaning "knowledge". This heresy was refuted not only by the writers of the New Testament Epistles but also by the church fathers who followed the early church. It is from them that we know what Gnosticism taught.

4. Put on Christ. In this letter, Paul counters the teaching which stressed that the way of holiness was through an asceticism that promotes only spiritual selfishness. Paul emphasizes that spirituality is not achieved by self-centered efforts to control the passions, but by putting on Christ, setting one's affections upon Him, and so stripping off all that is contrary to His will (Col.2v20ff; Col.3v1ff).

5. True wisdom comes from those who are in Christ. Furthermore, Paul stresses that, as far as non-material knowledge is concerned, true wisdom is not a man-made philosophy (Col.2v8), but the "mystery" (revealed secret) of God in Christ, who indwells all who receive Him (Col.1v27), without distinction of persons (Col.3v10f).

III. Key verses

1:9-14

1:15-16- **KEY VERSE** Christ is the first born of all creation- that means he is **preeminent** over his creation, not that he was the first one created- that is what the Jehovah Witnesses teach.

2:9

2:13-15

3:12-14

PHILEMON-A LESSON ON FORGIVENESS

I. Introduction. This is Paul's shortest epistle. Philemon's runaway slave Onesimus has been converted and Paul is asking Philemon, who was a member of the Colossian church to receive him back in love. This letter teaches us that Christ changes every relationship in life. In Christ your former slave has become a beloved brother.

II. Date of writing. It was written in the late 50s- early 60s.

III. Purpose of letter. Paul gave Onesimus shelter in his own hired house in Rome, while Paul was awaiting trial. Paul would not betray Onesimus or deliver him back to his master (Philemon) as a fugitive. Paul did not send word to Philemon to come to Rome to get Onesimus and take him back home. Instead, Paul protected and quietly instructed Onesimus about Jesus. Then Paul sent Onesimus back as a friend and as a BROTHER, with a request to Philemon that Onesimus be given his freedom!

IV. Key Ideas

A. Importance of servanthood. The Epistle to Philemon touches upon servitude among the Jews in the time of Christ and His Apostles. The key to Paul's letter to Philemon is the Hebrew fugitive law in Deut.23v15-16. This shows that Paul acted in strict accordance with Mosaic requirements.

B. Forgiveness. Paul did not accuse Onesimus of running away wrongfully. On the contrary, Paul stated that it was because of the merciful providence of God that Onesimus had departed from Philemon for a brief time, so that Onesimus might be received once more later, no longer as a servant, but--far more than as a servant--as a beloved Christian brother! C. Becoming a Christian brings a change in relationship. In this letter Paul besought Philemon to receive Onesimus as he would have welcomed Paul himself--as a partner. Whatever wrong Onesimus may have done to Philemon, even though he may have been unprofitable to him (at the time), Paul now takes upon himself. Paul did not intimate that the wrong was in Onesimus' running away from Philemon. No, whatever wrong Onesimus had done during his "unprofitable" state of bondage, that situation was irrelevant because of the profound change in Onesimus' spiritual status.

D. Love. Paul offered to pay any debt Onesimus owed. In order that there might be no remaining claim of a debt against Onesimus, Paul takes all of Onesimus' debts upon himself, whatever they might be, and becomes a guarantor for Onesimus. The result is that Onesimus was to be viewed as a free man, and no longer as a slave.

V. Key verses.

KV15-16

Other vss-17-19.

**NT Survey
Lesson 13**

I and II Thessalonians

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the Thessalonian epistles.

Main Points:

- The need for sanctification at a deeper level.
- Christ is coming but certain signs will precede it.
- Be faithful in work and your spiritual life until He comes.

Desired Outcome

- That there is a need for a deeper work of sanctification in our lives
- To know the signs of Christ's second coming.
- To be ready for Christ's coming at any moment.
- To know the importance of being active in ministry and work until He comes.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give them Quiz #4
- Give them Handout #11
- Teach lesson #13.

Thessalonians

I. Introduction. These two letters are among the earliest letters written by Paul. Paul probably stayed in Thessalonica from 3 weeks to 6 months. The major theme concerns the return of Christ to earth. The church had met trials and tribulations. They wondered why? Some of their spiritual family had died, where did they go, what happened to them? Paul writes to encourage them by speaking of the coming of Christ. Paul also emphasizes the truth that they are to be responsible Christians here on earth, and not simply look to the future. Paul is trying to establish the young church in a difficult time. Paul speaks about the second coming of Christ in both letters and these letters are sometimes called the Pauline eschatological letters. There does not seem to be heresies in the church.

II. Background of Letters

A. Thessalonica.- It was a seaport and a trading center, the largest city in the province of Macedonia. Today, Salonica (Thessalonica) is the capitol of Greek Macedonia (Ac.17v1-20).

B. Founding of Church. Paul founded the church in 49-50 AD on his second missionary journey. Thessalonica was the first place where Paul's preaching achieved a numerous and socially-prominent following (Ac.17v4). Thessalonica remained a triumphant crown to his efforts (1Th.1v8). The church was made up of some Jewish converts and a large number of Gentiles- former pagans. Paul only stayed there a short time because some local Jews accused him of turning the world upside down and favoring Jesus as king instead of Caesar. Because of that there was a riot and Paul had to leave, Acts 17. Paul

then sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to encourage the believers there. When Timothy returned he gave a good report to Paul of their progress and Paul is encouraged and writes I Thess. However they were confused about Christ's second coming. They thought Christ would come back soon so they wondered about their friends and relatives who died in Christ. Paul speaks about that in both letters. Paul tells them to be alert and watchful. Jesus will come like a thief in the night- when no one expects it.

III. Purpose of letters. Paul's purpose in writing to the Thessalonians is:

- A. To thank them for the encouragement they have provided Paul and for their steadfastness.
- B. To offer a defense of his ministry among them, in answer to some slanderers. (Isn't it amazing that Paul was accused again and again?)
- C. To give them encouragement in the face of continued persecution.
- D. To correct some misunderstandings about Christ's second coming and to correct some behaviour because of their misunderstandings- eg idleness.

FIRST THESSALONIANS- Jesus is Coming Again

I. Date of Writing. It was written around 50-51 AD when he was in Corinth. Paul and his companions had to leave the city of Thessalonica hastily early in the summer of A.D. 50, after making a number of converts and planting a congregation there.

II. Purpose of Writing.

A. The problem of persecution. The sudden departure of Paul and his companions from Thessalonica left the newly-founded congregation exposed to great persecution for which they were not prepared (see Ac.17v5-9). Paul simply did not have time to teach them adequately beforehand. At Paul's earliest opportunity, he sent Timothy back to see how the Thessalonian Christians were faring. When Timothy returned to Paul in Corinth (Ac.18v5), he brought good news about their steadfastness and zeal in propagating the Gospel, but reported that they had certain problems.

B. The problem of sexuality. see 1Th.4v4-7

C. The problem of eschatology. They were concerned that those who had died would be at a disadvantage, not being alive when the coming of the Lord would be realized. Consequently, Paul writes about the coming of the Lord as the result of this concern that existed among the Thessalonians. He wanted to assure them that those who had already died would not miss any of the glory that those who would be alive at the coming of the Lord (1Th.4v13-18) would experience.

Evidently the Thessalonians were confused about the 2nd coming of Christ. In the first letter he tells them that at the second coming the dead in Christ will be raised first then the living. Because Christ's second coming will be like a thief- Paul tells them to be alert and watchful. 4:13- 5:11.

D. The need for Sanctification.

1. Something was lacking in their faith. 3:10.
2. The need for more love. 3:12.
3. The need for holiness. 4:1-6
4. The need for entire sanctification. 5:23-24.

III. Key verses:

I Thess 1- Paul thanks God for their faith which has served as an example to others.

KV-4:16-17 I Thess 4:3; 5:16-18; 5:23-24.

SECOND THESSALONIANS -THE LORD WILL JUDGE

I. Date of Letter. The Second Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians was written in A.D. 51-52 from Corinth a few months after his first letter.

II. Key Ideas.

A. When is Christ coming? Some members from the congregation in Thessalonica believed that, since the coming of the Lord Jesus was imminent, there was no point in continuing to work on this earth. They thought after receiving I Thess that Christ's coming would happen at any moment. Some of those in Thessalonica may have been too watchful assuming that Christ would come at any moment, and many have become idle- waiting for the second coming. Besides that they were being persecuted. Paul says some things must happen first before His coming.

B. Signs of Christ's coming. When Christ comes He will punish those who have persecuted the Thess. Certain signs will precede Christ's second coming.

1. There will be an outbreak of lawlessness,
2. This world-wide rebellion against God would be led by one who would become incarnate in the forces of lawlessness and anarchy. The man of sin or lawless one (antiChrist) will come who will deceive those who do not love the truth. But those who are believers can rejoice because of their salvation. Jesus will utterly destroy the antichrist and judge the unrighteous.

3. The antichrist will be destroyed. There is no mention here of a millennium followed by a battle between God and Satan. Paul simply says that at His coming Jesus will destroy the lawless one and will judge the unrighteous II Thess 2:8-12.

C. How to prepare for Christ's coming.

Yes Christ will come- but we don't know when and the focus is on practical living until He comes. The best way to prepare for His second coming is to live faithfully and obediently now.

We should live ready for Jesus to come any day but we should also plan our lives here as if he wasn't going to come right away. He told the Thessalonians not to live at the expense of others, but to get back to work.

Some of the Thessalonian Christians were apparently confusing the suddenness of the Lord's coming with its immediacy.

III. Key verses-

KV-1:6-8; II Thess 2:3-4. 8, 9: 3:1-3

**NT Survey
Lesson 14**

Introduction to The Pastoral Epistles

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the Pastoral epistles.

Main Points:

- These epistles were written to help the pastors in administration and leadership
- The danger of heresy
- The importance of sound doctrine.

Desired Outcome

- The students will know the basic characteristics of Christian leaders
- The student will know the background of Timothy and Titus and where they ministered.

Suggestions for teaching

- Go over Quiz #4
- Give them Handout #12
- Teach Lesson #14

Pastoral Epistles

I. Introduction. The name given to three letters of the apostle Paul: 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. They are called the pastoral epistles because they show Paul's love and concern as pastor and administrator of several local churches. Timothy was the pastor in Ephesus and Titus was the pastor in Crete. The reason Paul wrote these three letters was to maintain the faith and to ensure the faithfulness of the church. He charged the young pastor Timothy, "Guard what was committed to your trust" 1 Tim. 6:20. This declaration is at the center of the pastoral epistles. Here Timothy, with all the church, is charged to keep the deposit of faith-- the written record or message to be carried on by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

The pressing need of the first two epistles-- 1 Timothy and Titus-- was that many things in Ephesus and Crete, where Timothy was serving, needed adjustment and correction. Paul was advising Timothy and Titus and others in the faith. Paul charged them to avoid heresy, hold to sound doctrine, and maintain purity and piety of life.

II. Background of Letters

A. They were written by the apostle Paul.

B. Date written. The first letter to Timothy and the one to Titus were written during travel and missionary work between Paul's two Roman imprisonments. They were probably written during Paul's 4th missionary journey -which is not recorded in the book of Acts, somewhere between A. D. 61 and 63.

The Second Epistle to Timothy contains Paul's farewell address (2 Tim. 4:6-8), the last words from the apostle shortly before his martyrdom, somewhere between A. D. 65 and 69.

In II Timothy Paul was clearly writing from a prison in Rome (2Tim.1v8). The Book of Acts ends with Paul under house arrest (Ac.28v30-31), but it is probably during his second imprisonment (2Tim.4v16-18).

C. Paul's second imprisonment. Most scholars believe that Paul was acquitted at his first trial. Then he probably returned to Greece and Asia Minor for more missionary work and his 4th missionary journey which Luke does not record in Acts. Later, he must have been re-arrested, taken back to Rome, and beheaded. Many believe that Paul was made the chief scapegoat for Nero's burning of Rome. The insane emperor set fire to Rome in order to rebuild it to his liking. Because Nero was suspected of starting the blaze, he blamed the Christians for it and ordered them all to be executed. In his 2nd imprisonment Paul must have been charged with being a criminal (2Tim.2v9) although his "crime" was preaching the Gospel. Paul resigned himself to the inevitable, but he was very happy with the life of Christian service that he had lived, confident that the cause of Christ would ultimately triumph (2Tim.4v6-8).

III. Summary of the letters. The purpose of the pastoral epistles is to admonish and instruct Timothy and Titus in their pastoral duties. These letters deal with the care and the organization of the church. They are encouraged to guard the Christian faith, to appoint qualified officials, to conduct proper worship, and to maintain discipline both personally and in the churches. They give instructions in the work of the church and show how threats to the doctrinal and moral purity of Christians should be overcome.

IV. Key Messages in both letters to Timothy. The occasion for both epistles is much the same.

A. Danger of false teachers. Paul is deeply troubled by false teaching, 1 Tim. 1:3-11; 2 Tim. 2:23, and apostasy, 1 Tim. 1:6; 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-9, which endanger the church at Ephesus.

B. Danger of false teachings. He warns Timothy to beware of fables and endless genealogies, 1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:4,

C. Danger of unrighteousness. idle gossip, 1 Tim. 5:13; 2 Tim. 2:16, rigid lifestyles based on the denial of things, 1 Tim. 4:3, the problem of wealth, 1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17-19, and religious speculations, 1 Tim. 6:20. He warns that apostasy, in whatever form, will spread, 2 Tim. 2:17. Paul urges Timothy to fight against heresy by teaching sound doctrine, promoting good works, and accepting one's share of suffering for the sake of the gospel, 2 Tim. 1:8; 2:3, 11-13.

V. Timothy

A. His Parentage. Timothy was the son of a mixed marriage; his mother, was a Jewess, and his father was a Greek (Ac.16v1; 2Tim.1v5). His mother evidently instructed him in the Scriptures. He was a

native of Lystra (Ac.16v1) and was highly esteemed by his Christian brethren both there and in Iconium (Ac.16v2).

B. His conversion. Timothy came to know the Lord on Paul's first missionary journey when he visited Lystra.

C. His ministry.

1. The beginning. Paul added Timothy to his group as he traveled with Silas (who had replaced Barnabas). Timothy probably replaced John Mark whom Paul had refused to take along (Ac.15v36ff). To avoid criticism from local Jews, Timothy was circumcised before setting out on Paul's trips.

2. Ministry in Thessalonica. Timothy was first assigned to minister to the believers in Thessalonica. He was associated with Paul and Silas in the greetings of both epistles directed to the congregation

3. Ministry with Paul. He was present with Paul during his preaching at Corinth (2Cor.1v19). Timothy was next heard of during the apostle Paul's Ephesian ministry when he was sent with Erastus on another important mission to Macedonia. From there he was to proceed to Corinth (1Cor.4v17). Apparently, Timothy was of a timid nature; hence, the admonition of Paul to encourage him (1Cor.16v10-11, compare 2Tim.4v17ff). Timothy also went with Paul on the journey to Jerusalem with the collected funds (Ac.20:4-5) and was next mentioned when Paul (then a prisoner) wrote Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians from a prison in Rome.

4. Ministry at Ephesus. When Paul was released from imprisonment and engaged in further activity in the East, as the Pastoral Epistles indicate, it would seem that Paul left Timothy at Ephesus (1Tim.1v3) and appointed him to deal with certain false teachers, to help supervise public worship and the appointment of some Christian leaders.

Although Paul evidently hoped to rejoin Timothy, the fear that he might be delayed occasioned the writing of this first letter to him. This was followed by another when Paul was not only re-arrested, but put on trial for his life.

We have no indication as to whether Timothy was able to come to Paul in Rome as he had been urged to do. Later, Timothy himself became a prisoner (Heb.13v23), but we have no further details.

VI. Titus.

A. His Background and conversion. Titus was a "trouble shooter". Titus was probably a Gentile from Antioch (Gal.2v3) who was brought to Christ by Paul (see Tit.1v4) fourteen years after Paul himself had been converted. A comparison of 1Tim.4v12 and Tit.2v15 suggests that Titus may have been older than Timothy and that he had been the stronger of the two men during the difficulties which had occurred in Corinth (1Cor.16v10; 2Cor.7v13-15). Titus volunteered readily for a delicate task (2Cor.8v17).

B. Ministry with Paul. At that time, when the dispute arose about the circumcision of Gentiles, Titus accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. While there, some dogmatic Jewish brethren insisted that Titus (born a

non-Jew) be circumcised. Paul would not allow it for the sake of principle (Gal.2v5, 16). To do otherwise would imply that all non-Jewish Christians were second-class citizens in the kingdom of God.

Titus remained as Paul's traveling companion and was probably with Paul when he wrote the letter to the Galatians. Titus is not mentioned again until the writing of 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. He was full of affection and enthusiasm for the Corinthian brethren (2Cor.7v15). He was effective, free from all sordid motives, and shared in Paul's spirit and example (2Cor.12v18). Paul regarded him as if he were his own son (Tit.1v4), his brother (2Cor.2v13), and his partner in Christ (2Cor.8v23). The epistle to Titus was probably written almost simultaneously with 1 Timothy from Nicopolis in Macedonia (Tit.3v12).

C. Ministry in Crete. After Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment (circa 64 A.D.), he traveled with Titus in the East. They landed at Crete and evangelized several towns (Tit.1v5). However, Paul was unable to remain any longer. So, he left Titus behind to help appoint some leaders and to organize the Christians in that region.

**NT Survey
Lesson 15**

I, II Timothy and Titus

Lesson Purpose:

- To teach in greater detail the essence of the Pastoral letters.

Main Points:

- Timothy was the pastor in Ephesus
- Titus was the pastor in Crete
- The Inspiration of Scripture
- II Timothy was the last letter Paul wrote before his death

Desired Outcome

- The students will know the key ideas and verses in all three books.

Suggestions for teaching

- Continue with Handout #12
- Teach Lesson #15

I and II Timothy

Introduction- The Epistles to Timothy might be considered our earliest manual of church organization. Within them we find guidelines for the selection of church leaders, 1 Tim. 3:1-13. They also reveal an awareness of the need for standard forms of expressing the faith. For example, the words, "This is a faithful saying," appear four times in the epistles, 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11. Two creeds, or perhaps hymns, also appear, 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:11-13. Finally, 2 Timothy presents the first (and only) pronouncement in the New Testament on the Bible as "Scripture" (referring to the Old Testament, 2 Tim. 3:14-17).

Timothy was a leader in the Ephesian church. Paul writes to Timothy as a person to fulfill the job God has given him to do and as a pastor to lead the church administratively. In these letters to Timothy, Paul's primary concern is to instruct his young associate to guard the spiritual heritage that he has received (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12-14; 2:2) by establishing sound doctrine in the church. In I Timothy Paul writes from Macedonia to young Timothy, 1 Tim. 4:12, who has been left in Ephesus to oversee the congregation, 1 Tim. 1:3. The second epistle was written from Rome where Paul is undergoing a second and harsher imprisonment, 2 Tim. 1:18, 16; 2:9. Luke is with him, 2 Tim. 4:11, and he knows he will die soon, 2 Tim. 4:6.

Key Ideas in I and II Timothy

A. Key words. The message of 1 and 2 Timothy can be summed up by words like remember, guard, be strong, and commit.

B. Sound Doctrine. For Paul, the best way to deal with false teaching and apostasy is to teach "sound doctrine" 1 Tim. 1:10; 4:3. The gospel is a spiritual inheritance and should be passed on. 2 Tim. 2:2. It brings about wholeness or health, not only in belief, but also in good deeds. Sound doctrine is so important in the church that it is something to be pursued, fought for, and even suffered for. The word for "inspiration" 2 Tim. 3:16 means "breathed into by God." As God breathed life into Adam, so he breathes life into the written word, making it useful for teaching, reproof, and correction. Paul gives us, not just a theory about Scripture, but a description of its purpose and its power for salvation. 2 Tim. 3:15.

C. Avoid Heresy. Paul charged them to avoid heresy, hold to sound doctrine and to maintain spiritual maturity. Some scholars do not believe Paul wrote these letters because of among other things he seemed to focus on works, ie salvation by works. But Paul is simply saying that good works are the fruit of a life filled with grace and faith. Paul taught these pastors how to lead the church, how to organize it, how to choose leaders and how to live pure lives, both personally and in the lives of their leaders.

I TIMOTHY-LEAD THE CHURCH PROPERLY IN THE MIDST OF FALSE DOCTRINES

Key Ideas in First Timothy.

There is a warning against false doctrine, 1:1-11 and a reminder of God's mercy. This is followed by instructions on prayer (2:1-7), on public worship 2:8-15, and on the qualifications of bishops and deacons 3:1-13. Then Paul deals with Timothy's responsibility to beware of false teachers that will infiltrate the church, 4:1-5, the characteristics of a fit minister of the gospel, 4:6-16, his duties toward others, 5:1-2, widows 5:3-16, elders, 5:17-25, and servants, 6:1-2. Then Paul again warns against false teaching, 6:3-10, and finally encourages Timothy to, "fight the good fight of faith", 6:11-21.

The heart of this epistle is I Tim 6:20- Guard what was entrusted to you- guard your spiritual heritage. The true church should be characterized by a proper prayer life, a proper organization of leadership and a proper administration of activities in the church.

Chapter 1 -Theme- Fight the Good fight of Faith

Key vs.-1:15-16, 18

Ch 2- Proper Worship

Vs. 8

Vs. 9

vs. 11-15

Ch 3-Theme- Characteristics of Leaders in the Church

Read vs. 1-7

4:1, 12-14, 16

5- take care of widows in the church.

6:9-10, 11-12; 17-19

KV- 6:12

SECOND TIMOTHY-BE A FAITHFUL LEADER TO THE END

The Apostle Paul wrote this Epistle to Timothy, his "dearly beloved son" (1Tim.1v1-2). He wanted to prescribe the path which Timothy should follow in troubled times, both inside and outside the Church. Paul's second Epistle to Timothy was written soon after the first one, approximately 66 A.D., while Paul was expecting his own execution. This was Paul's last letter.

I. Key Ideas:

A) Remember your spiritual heritage and stir up the gift in you. 1:6, B) do not be ashamed, 1:8, C) Hold fast the sound words. Be strong under adversity and to keep the faith 1:13, D) keep what was given to you 1:14, E) Pass on to other leaders what you have learned. 2:2. Paul challenges Timothy to look for godly men to pour his life into using the metaphors of soldier,2:3-4, farmer, experienced worker, and household items 2:20-21 as models for Timothy to imitate as a servant of the gospel. F) study to show yourself approved to God. 2:15, G) Flee sinful youthful desires, 2:22ff H) Be careful of godlessness in the last days, 3:1ff, I) be strong in the face of adversity learning from Paul's example and from the Scriptures,3:10-13, J) The Power of the Word. 3:14-16. K) Preach the Word 4:2, L) Be faithful to your call, 4:5. M) Paul's good fight to the end, 4: 6ff. N) Confidence in a final deliverance, 4:18.

II. Key verses

Look at Paul's assurance of his faith and call- II Tim 1;1:7, 14;2:1-3, 15, 22; 3:1-5,16;4:1-2; KV -4:7-8

TITUS-LESSONS ON BUILDING A STRONG CHURCH

I. Purpose of the Epistle. The purpose of the epistle to Titus was to warn against false teaching and to provide guidance for one of Paul's younger associates on sound doctrine and good works. The precise nature of the teaching was less clear, although it included "Jewish fables," legalism, and disputes over genealogies,1:10,14; 3:9-10. Paul urged Titus to avoid such traps, for anyone associated with them would get caught in his own schemes,3:11.

II. Background. Paul left Titus on the island of Crete to continue establishing churches by appointing "elders in every city." As soon as Artemas or Tychicus came to help in Crete, Titus was to meet Paul in

Nicopolis (on the west coast of Greece) where the apostle planned to spend the winter, Titus 3:1. Probably Paul sent Titus from there on a new mission to Dalmatia (2Tim.4v10).

The letter was probably delivered by Zenas and Apollos (Tit.3v13).

III. Key Ideas.

A. Qualifications for leadership. Paul advises Titus on the qualifications for church elders or bishops, 1:5-9

B. Beware of false teachers, 1:10-16.

C. Ideal characteristics of people in the church. 1) older men, 2:1-2, 2) older women, 2:3-5, 3) younger men, 2:6-8, and slaves, 2:9-10. The grace of God as it is shown in Jesus Christ provides the foundation for such qualities of life, 2:11-15. D. Living as Christians in the culture. The final chapter lists ideal characteristics for Christians in society as a whole, 3:1-2, based on the goodness and grace of God, 3:3-7; right beliefs thus lead to right actions, 3:8-11.

E. Sound Doctrine. Titus emphasizes sound doctrine, 1:9; 2:8,10. We hold fast to the truth of the gospel of our salvation.

F. Good works. Paul challenges believers to good works. Paul summons Titus "to affirm constantly that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works", 3:8. One cannot separate belief from action. We become what we think, and all action is shaped by our beliefs.

G. Opposition. Titus found considerable opposition, especially from the Jews (Tit.1v10), and a strong tendency toward insubordination. Quite possibly, Titus had written to Paul to report this fact and to ask for his spiritual advice.

Consequently, Paul wrote a short letter pressing him to complete the process of organization, to ordain elders, to teach sound doctrine and to avoid empty disputations.

IV. Key verses

1:1-8- Qualifications for church leadership- much the same as I Tim, 2:3ff- older women should teach the younger women, 2:7- Set a good example, 3:3-7

**NT Survey
Lesson 16**

Hebrews and James

Lesson Purpose:

- **To introduce Hebrews and James**

Main Points:

- **These are the beginnings of the General Epistles.**
- **Both are written for Jewish audiences**
- **Jesus is greater than all and His covenant is the greatest**
- **True faith is lived out in genuine works.**

Desired Outcome

- **The students will know that Hebrews was written to show the new covenant is greater than the old and why.**
- **The student will know the importance of faith and works in terms of the way you treat people, how you use your tongue and the way you pray.**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give them Handout #13**
- **Teach Lesson #16**

From Romans- Philemon there are 13 letters that most scholars believe were written by Paul. Hebrews begins what are called the General Epistles.

HEBREWS- JESUS IS GREATER THAN ALL

I. Background

A. Author and date. The author may have been writing from Rome before 70 AD. because the Temple was still standing at the time Hebrews was written (Heb.10v11; Heb.13v10-11). We do not know exactly who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. Perhaps it was Apollos, Barnabas, Priscilla (Prisca), Philip or the Apostle Paul. About the end of the second century, Clement of Alexandria thought that Paul originally wrote the letter in the Hebrew language and that it was later translated by Luke or someone else into polished Greek. Regardless of who wrote it, it is certainly a superb, literary, Greek masterpiece which is well-organized, logical, and comprehensive. The KJV says the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, although those words are not found in the original manuscripts. They are only found in later or newer manuscripts. Most scholars do not believe Paul wrote it. Paul used words differently that the writer of Hebrews- eg faith in Hebrews is belief in the trustworthiness of God, but for Paul faith is a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. Hebrews does not use the following words much, which Paul often uses- Christ Jesus, in Christ or the resurrection.

B. Recipients. The author is writing to people with a Jewish background. Apparently they were in danger of renouncing their Christian faith and returning to Judaism. They had failed in doing good deeds and were slacking in church attendance. The author writes to help encourage them to not leave the faith. The author describes Jesus as the author of their salvation, the finisher of our faith and the great shepherd of the sheep. In Hebrews salvation is called the rest of God, their eternal inheritance and the Most Holy Place. 5:8-10.

II. Key Ideas. The author writes to show that Jesus Christ has replaced Judaism as God's perfect revelation of Himself. It begins that a powerful picture of Christ.

A. Jesus is the perfect, superior One. He is superior to the angels. It begins by showing that Jesus, the Son of God is superior to the angels 1:1-2:18, to Moses 3:1-6 and is the perfect High Priest- 4:14ff. He says that Jesus is like Melchizedek. The author wants us to know that Jesus is the perfect High Priest of God. He uses quotes from the OT to show that Jesus is the supreme revelation of God and THE mediator between man and God the Father. He is described as Heir, Creator, Deity, Preserver, Redeemer and High Priest.

B. The New Covenant is the superior one. Therefore the covenant that Jesus introduced is a new and better covenant- 8:1-13. His sacrifice replaces the sacrifice of bulls and goats- 9:1-10:18. Whoever the author was, this individual wanted to reassure Jewish believers that their faith in Jesus as Messiah was secure and reasonable. He tried to prepare them for the impending disaster--the Temple in Jerusalem, with its attendant animal sacrifices, would soon be destroyed by the Romans, just as Jesus had predicted (Matt.24). There was no further need for the Temple, because Jesus had cleared the way for direct access to God's throne (Heb.4v14-16; Heb.10v19-22; compare Matt.27v51). Animal blood was no longer necessary, because the blood of the Lamb of God (Jn.1:29) now continually takes away sin (Heb.9v18-26). Jesus' system is vastly superior to the abolished Jewish system.

C. The importance of faith. Hebrews 11- the Faith Chapter. Only the letters I John and Hebrews in the NT begin with no greeting and no identification of the author.

D. Warnings to those who fall away. Two troublesome passages: 6:4-6 and 10:26. These are warnings to those who fall away. Remember that there is no place in the Bible where we read that anyone desired forgiveness from Christ but were denied. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. 13:8.

III. Key Verses

1:3-4

2:18

3:12-13

4:14-16

6:1-6

7:26-27

9:12-15;22,27-28

10:19-25

11:1-6

12:1-2, 14

13:20-21

JAMES- FAITH IS REVEALED THROUGH LIVING RIGHT

I. Author/date. James emphasizes practical religion. It reads like a sermon. He calls himself a servant. It was probably written before 62 AD when James was martyred. There were two Apostles with the name of James. One was the brother of John, son of Zebedee. The other was the son of Alphaeus (Matt.10v2-3). However, neither of them is thought to have been the author of this Epistle. The oldest half-brother of Jesus was also named James (Matt.13v55). Jesus appeared to him after He rose from the grave (1Cor.15v7). He was present in Ac.1v14. Later he became a great leader in the Jerusalem congregation (see Ac.12v17; Gal.1v18-19). Most scholars believe that this man wrote this general letter.

Tradition has it that this James spent so much time on his knees in prayer that they became as callous as the knees of a camel!

II. Recipients. It was written to the 12 tribes scattered abroad- in other words Jewish Christians living outside of Palestine. He is writing to Jews, refers to the OT and teaches how to obey God according to God's original intent in the law. For James true religion is found in doing not just believing, hearing, or speaking. True religion is social religion. True religion is doing the right thing in everyday affairs.

The Book of James is the most Jewish book of the New Testament, but would fit well within the stream of Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament. In fact, it has been called "the Proverbs of the New Testament." It is closer in spirit to the Gospel of Matthew than any other New Testament book. This is especially true with regard to the Sermon on the Mount (Matt.5-7). This letter from James is representative of Jewish Christianity of the type found in the Jerusalem congregation, where James was the dominant figure from about A.D. 45 until his martyrdom in A.D. 62.

III. Purpose. It may be that James was trying to bring balance to Paul's message of faith. James emphasis is that faith should lead to works. Is there a contradiction between James and Paul? No Paul is emphasizing that salvation comes by faith alone, your good works cannot save you. But he does teach that faith leads to works- Eph 2:10. James emphasizes the fact that faith leads to good works, in other words your faith is proved by your works. (train illustration) Romans 3:28 and James 2:19. James writes to readers who are inclined to interpret faith as mere intellectual knowledge. He emphasizes that a faith

that does not affect life is not saving faith. That is why he emphasizes works. For Paul faith is entrusting your whole life to God through Christ with the result being that your life is renewed by the fruit of the Spirit.

Paul listened to James' advice in Ac.21v18-26. Though James was a very conservative Jewish believer, he moderated a potentially-explosive situation in Jerusalem and helped to draft a very tolerant letter to the non-Jewish Christians in Antioch regarding their spiritual status (Ac.15v13; Ac.15v19; Gal.2v1; Gal.2v9-12). Though James certainly recognized Paul's role to the Gentiles, he concentrated on his own mission, that of winning his own Jewish brethren to Jesus, the Savior.

IV. Key Ideas.

- A. It was written for Jews
- B. Trials and Temptations 1:2-4
- C. Prayer and faith. 1:5-7
- D. The importance of obedience. 1:22ff
- E. The danger of discrimination. 2:1-13.
- F. Genuine faith leads to good deeds. 1:27; 2:14-26
- F. The danger of the tongue 3:1-12

The Prayer of Faith 5:13ff

V. Key verses- James 1: 2-8, 12,19, 22

KV- 1:26-27

2:1-4, 8-9,14-17- KV also

3:6,9,10, 17; 4:3, 7-8; 5:7-8,13-16

**NT Survey
Lesson 17**

I and II Peter, I, II and II John and Jude

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the epistles of Peter, John and Jude

Main Points:

- These letters were written to combat heresy.
- They were written during times of suffering
- They were written to build assurance and faith.

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the basic ideas in each of the epistles.
- The student will understand the role of suffering in the life of a Christian.
- The student will know that habitual sin will end in a Christian's life.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give them Handout #14
- Teach Lesson #17

FIRST PETER- Hope in the Midst of Suffering

I. Author/recipients- Peter the apostle and it was written in the early 60's AD. Peter wrote from "Babylon," which was sometimes a code word for Rome (see Rev.14v8; Rev.17v5), so it was probably actually written from Rome.

The imprint of Peter upon the early community of Christians was stronger than that of any of the other original Twelve Apostles. He was the most prominent disciple during Jesus' lifetime, and the first twelve chapters of Acts are devoted to his ministry and to that of the church in the East, where he was still the dominant figure. Paul mentioned him in Galatians (Gal.1v18; Gal.2v7-11, 14) and 1 Corinthians (1Cor.1v12; 1Cor.3v22; 1Cor.9v5; 1Cor.15v5), and two New Testament Epistles bear his name. Peter's first letter is one of the seven general letters and is addressed to the five Roman provinces in Asia Minor north of the Taurus Mountains (what is now modern Turkey).

II. Key Ideas

A. Suffering.10 times the word suffering is used in terms of the Christian. He also encounters trials and temptations. These are all allowed to build our faith. They give us opportunities of witnessing for Christ. In the midst of that God has given us a living hope. 1:3. The occasion of writing was persecution in the area, and the letter tries to encourage and equip the readers for the difficult times ahead. Persecution of Christians had hit the church. Since First Peter was probably written in the A.D. 60's, persecution of the severest kind for its recipients was only a few decades away. But persecution had begun. Peter used Jesus' own suffering as the center of his teaching on suffering. Caesar Nero was guilty of sending many

Christians to their deaths. Another key concern was that Christians suffer as Christians, not as lawbreakers.

B. The Call to holiness. I Peter 1:15-16.

C. Christ is the living stone. 2:4ff

D. A chosen people, a royal priesthood. 2:9ff.

E. Living as a wife and husband in the kingdom. 3:1-7

F. The power of love. 4:8

G. Resist the devil. 5:8-9

H. Christian. One of only three instances of the word "Christian" to be found in the New Testament is found here in I Peter. (Ac.11v26; Ac.26v28; 1Pet.4v16).

SECOND PETER- Remain in the Truth

I. Author. Although the author of this letter asserts that he is the Apostle Peter (2Pet.1v1), no book of the New Testament had a more difficult time establishing its authenticity, apostolicity, and its deserved place in the canon (the universally-recognized list of inspired, holy books) as 2 Peter. This was due in part to the fact that 2 Peter was not widely known very early, and, so many people in the second and third centuries A.D. were falsely writing under the name Peter. Nevertheless, the traditional view has remained--that the Apostle Peter was indeed the author.

II. Similarity to Jude. There is a literary relationship between Second Peter and Jude, because the material in 2Pet.2v1-3v3 is very similar to the text in Jd.3-18, in both order and content. The specific application of the two letters, however, is slightly different. Second Peter was occasioned by the presence of a group of false teachers who were about to cause serious problems for his readers. In 2Pet.2 we learn of their licentious life style and in 2Pet.3 of their skepticism about whether Christ would return . This prompted Peter to provide one of the fullest discussions about the end of the world in the whole Bible. The seeming delay of Jesus' return is only apparent, because God lives outside the dimension of time. One day, the "Day of the Lord" WILL occur, and it WILL be accompanied by the total destruction of this physical universe. In the meantime, the readers were warned to be careful, lest they be infected by the false teachers' life style and teachings.

III. Key Ideas.

A. Jesus is the all sufficient one. In him we have everything we need. 1:3-4

B. The inspiration of scripture. 1:12-21.

C. Beware of false teachers. 2:1-22.

D. The Day of the Lord- 3:1-17

FIRST JOHN- You Can Know You have Eternal Life

I. Author/ Date. The Apostle John, the follower of Jesus whom he loved so much (Jn 13:23; Jn 19:26; Jn 20:2; Jn 21:20), wrote this letter, probably about 95 A.D. A few scholars try to date it before the fall of Jerusalem (70 A.D.). A tradition says that John took care of Jesus' mother, first in Jerusalem and then later in Ephesus until she died.

II. Problem of Gnosticism. The main purpose of this epistle was to combat the rising tide of Gnosticism. Later, in the second century, Gnosticism was to become a major threat to the historical truths of the gospel message. Gnostic devotees claimed to have a special "knowledge" which was supposedly not available to ordinary Christians. These "intellectuals" believed, along with the Greek philosopher, Plato, that the human body and spirit were two entirely separate entities. The flesh was allegedly and inherently "evil," while the spirit was "good" and functioned in a completely different manner. Since the material body was considered "evil," these Gnostics were felt forced to reject the teaching that Christ had ever been in a real, physical body. So, they taught that Jesus only "seemed" to have had a body (2Jn 7). In actuality (they claimed) Jesus was only a phantom. However, the Apostle John was very careful to point out that Jesus had been PHYSICALLY present (Jn 1:14; Jn 20:27-31). John and the other apostles saw Jesus closely, heard him at close range, and touched him with their hands--both before and after his resurrection from death (1Jn 1:1-2).

III. Key Ideas.

A. Assurance of salvation. John emphasized that we CAN be certain of our salvation.(I Jn 5:13) As long as one continually "walks in the light (truth) as he (Jesus) is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son purifies us (continually) from all sin" (1Jn 1:7). We must also admit our sin, if we sin (1Jn 1:9).

B. Sin. Can one who is "born of God" commit sin? Answer: certainly! However, it must NOT be habitual (1Jn 3:6, with the Greek present tense). If it is, then that sinner is in league with the Devil (1Jn 3:8)! The true Christian does not PRACTICE that kind of life (1Jn 3:9), though, at times, he or she may occasionally slip and fall. Because of early Gnostic influence, some were claiming that they were now sinless (1Jn 1:8,10)! If such were the case, we wouldn't need Jesus (1Jn 2:1-6). The Gnostic sympathizers were teaching that a mere intellectual knowledge made them acceptable to God, even though they were living immoral lives! John responded with: "The one who PRACTICES good is from God, but the one who PRACTICES evil has never experienced God" (3Jn 11)!

C. Love. In this letter, the Apostle John stressed that we must love one another, according to the wishes of our Savior (Jn 13:34-35; Jn 14:15; Jn 14:23; Jn 15:10-17). The noun "love" appears 17 times and the verb "love" occurs 28 times in these short five chapters!

D. Evidence of salvation- John give three tests that prove our salvation- that we are followers of Christ. 1) Love for the fellow believers (2: 7-10; 3: 10-24; 4: 7-5: 3) 2) Obedience to God's commands (1: 5-2:6; 2: 29-3:10; 3: 23-24; 5: 4-21) and 3) Belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (2: 18-28; 3: 23-4:6; 4: 14-15; 5: 1, 5)

SECOND JOHN- Do Not help the Deceivers

I. Introduction. The Second Epistle of John was a personal letter. One gets the impression that John wrote other similar letters which we do not possess (1Jn.2v14; 3Jn.9. It is addressed from "the elder" to "the elect lady and her children," which could symbolically mean a congregation. It may have been so stated in order to confuse any enemy who might intercept the epistle in dangerous times.

II. The problem of false teachers. The purpose of this letter is similar to that of 1 John--false teachers were traveling from congregation to congregation formally denying that the Jesus, Son of God, had really come in the flesh. Maybe this was the beginning of the Gnostic heresy. John cautioned his friends not to extend even normal hospitality to such people. To do so would imply endorsement (2Jn.10-11). Loving others (2Jn.5-6) must not be construed as encouraging false doctrine!

THIRD JOHN- Help Those who Teach the Truth

I. Background. Like the Epistle to Philemon and Second John, Third John is a private letter addressed to the elder's friend, Gaius, who was a leading member in another congregation. There was a Gaius in Corinth (1Cor.1v14; Rom.16v23); a group of Christians met in his home. One tradition says that this Gaius later became John's scribe. However, we do not know if he is the same Gaius as the one in 3 John. One thing is certain; John truly loved this man. (3Jn.1-5; 3Jn.11). This particular Gaius is commended for his deep devotion to the truth and for showing his practical love to traveling preachers who depended on congregations of true believers to support them.

II. Diotrephes. There was another individual in that vicinity whom John did not appreciate. His name was Diotrephes. He was a self-appointed, domineering man who summarily excommunicated anyone who did not agree with his policies. He was so arrogant that he ignored even John's apostolic credentials. A confrontation was inevitable (3Jn.9-11).

III. The problem of sin. John's teaching about committing sin (1Jn.1v6-10; 1Jn.3v4-10) may be interpreted by his own phrase in 3Jn.11--"a doer of evil." This does not mean the mere commission of an inadvertant, single act of sin, but denotes a habitual sinner, one who deliberately sins often.

JUDE- Fight for the Faith

I. Author. The author of this small letter identifies himself as "Jude (or, Judas), the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (Jd.1). In the early church, there was only one James who could be referred to in this way without further specification, and that was "James, the Lord's brother," as he is called in Gal.1v19. This Jude was probably the same one who is numbered among the physical brothers of the Lord Jesus in Matt.13v55 and Mk.6v13. A few scholars identify Jude as the Apostle Judas (not Iscariot) in Matt.10v2-3, also called Lebbaeus or Thaddaeus (Lk.6v16; Ac.1v13) in some manuscripts.

II. The danger of false teachers. Little is known of the circumstances to which Jude addresses himself, and no one knows the precise time of writing. Jude is quite similar to some of the content of Second Peter (which see). Both writers were alarmed at the inroads which false teachers were making. Jude urges the Christians to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jd.3). The apostasy of which Paul spoke (Ac.20v29-31) was beginning to threaten. It was a very serious situation.

**NT Survey
Lesson 18**

Revelation

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the book of Revelation

Main Points:

- The symbolism of Revelation
- The four different ways to interpret the book of Revelation
- The four visions of Revelation

Desired Outcome

- The student will know how to interpret the fundamental message of Revelation.
- The student will know the key parts and some key verses in Revelation.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give them Quiz #5
- Give them Handout #15
- Teach Lesson #18

REVELATION- The Victory of King Jesus

I. Introduction: The word "Revelation" means "to take the cover off". Therefore, it is an uncovering, especially of the glory of Christ and of what the future holds because of him. This book is full of symbolism and prophecies. What the Book of Daniel was to the Old Testament, Revelation is to the New Testament. Both books were written in an apocalyptic form.

Apocalyptic writing was done during times of persecution or problems, they were written in symbols, in vision and dreams and they taught how God would win in the end. In the book of Revelation the conflict was between the church and the Roman empire. Babylon probably represented the Roman Empire. The message was that even through suffering and possible death Jesus would win in the end and the enemy Satan would be defeated. John was imprisoned on the Island of Patmos where he had this vision.

II. Author and Date. The author is John (Rev 1v1; Rev 1v9; Rev 22v2; Rev 22v8), the same John who wrote the Gospel and the three Epistles of John. This book was written at a time when the Church was being persecuted and threatened. The two most important periods of persecution were during the reigns of Nero in A.D. 54-68 and Domitian in A.D. 81-96. There is still a debate about whether Revelation was written BEFORE Jerusalem fell in 70 A.D. or later (about 95 A.D.). Some who believe the former believe that "Babylon" was the code word for "Jerusalem." Others who accept the later date, traditionally believe that "Babylon" was "Rome," the capitol of the Empire.

III. Recipients. Revelation was addressed to the seven congregations of Asia Minor which are mentioned in Rev.2-3. Most scholars believe that this section was historical--that this letter was written to seven literal congregations in existence at the time that John wrote what he had witnessed. The churches who received the letter were undergoing persecution. The Romans were demanding that the people bow down to worship Caesar and because the Christians refused they were persecuted.

IV. Four different interpretation of Revelation. There are essentially four ways of interpreting Revelation.

A) The Preterist view places the events and visions described as belonging to the past, particularly to the Roman Empire of the First Century A.D. The advocates of this position explain the highly-symbolic character of the book as an endeavor by John to hide the real meaning of what he was saying to the general populace but which would become apparent to the insiders who lived at the time. Those who hold this view believe that the main purpose of Revelation was to encourage the early believers that God would ultimately intervene in the affairs of mankind.

B) The historicist view, says that what we have in Revelation is a panoramic view of history from the First Century until the Second Coming of Christ. This was the view of most of the Protestant Reformers. In our opinion, this is an untenable position because historians have not been able to identify precise events in history which would correspond to the visions symbolized in the Book of Revelation.

C) The symbolic view which states that the Book of Revelation shows the continuing conflict between the forces of good and evil throughout the entire span of human history. According to this view, the Book of Revelation was mainly designed to give encouragement, since at the end good will triumph over evil.

D) The futuristic view which asserts that Rev.4-22 deals with events of the end time. According to this view, the Book of Revelation was not concerned with events of John's own day as much as with later historical events, and particularly those happenings that WILL take place in connection with the Second Coming of the Lord in the future. This view takes seriously the predictive element in the book (Rev.1v19; Rev.4v1). Very definitely the final chapters of Revelation deal with the last days and a definitive change in the things as they are today. Rev.1 deals with the past; Rev.2-3 tells us about things that were current at that particular time and which were to follow; Rev.4-22 informs us about the things which were to follow their time period.

V. Key Ideas

A. A blessing. The book promises a blessing for those who read it (1:3) and there is a curse for those who try to add to or take away from the prophecy. (22:18-19).

B. The End of Time. The question for the church was, would the persecution go on forever? Who will win in the end? John's answer, inspired by God is that the dragon (devil) would be cast down and

overcome by the people of God, Chapter 12, and finally cast into the lake of fire, Ch 19 & 20. God would reign and the church would be triumphant because Christ will win in the end.

C. Four Visions. There are 4 main divisions in the book where John has a vision. Each division records that John was “In the Spirit”. 1:10, 4:2, 17:3 and 21:10

1. First Vision- Christ and the 7 churches. 1:10-3:22

2. Second vision-Christ and the earthly judgments. 4:2-16:21

Throne in heaven and the Lamb

7 seals

7 trumpets

The beasts and warfare

7 bowls of judgment

3. Third vision-Christ and His victories 17:3-21:8

Babylon the Great will fall

Appearance of Christ

Beast is Defeated and Satan is bound

The millennium

Final rebellion and judgment

New heaven and new Earth

4. Fourth vision – Christ and His bride 21:10-22:17

Conclusion-22:18-21

D. The number seven. The number 7 symbolizes completeness or perfection. This number is found 52 times in Revelation.

Eg. 7 beatitudes, 7 churches, 7 spirits, 7 golden lampstands, 7 stars, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 plagues, 7 golden bowls, and seven kings.

VI. Key verses:

1:8

1:12-18

3:7-8

3:20

4-5- THE WORSHIP CHAPTERS

19:1-10 The Hallelujah Chorus

19:11- The Final Victory of the King

20:1-10- The Millennium

20:11-15 The White Throne Judgment

21- The New Jerusalem

22:1-6- The River from the throne of God

22:7-21- The Second Coming of the KING