**New Testament Survey Notes**

**Textbooks**

**Required:**

Palmer, David A. *Casket Empty: God’s Plan of Redemption Through History,* New Testament Study Guide (Crossway, 2016).

**Strongly Recommended**:

Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2007)

Oakes, John M. *From Shadow to Reality: A Study of the Relationship Between the Old and the New Testament* (Spring, Texas: Illumination Publishers International, 2006)

Schedule:

Feb 18-19  Historical, Cultural and Religious Background to the New Testament. Begin study of the four gospels. Text: Ch 1,2 (you will be reading this after the lecture)

March 26  Finish the four gospels Text: Ch 3,4 (read before the lecture)

April 22-23 Acts and begin Letters of Paul Text: Ch 5,6,7

May 27-28  Finish Letters of Paul, Hebrews, General Epistles and Revelation. Text: Ch 8,9,10.

Introduction to the New Testament

I. Background to the New Testament

Romans 5:6 You see that, at just the right time, while we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

Right time The first time in all human history all the factors created perfect storm for God to send the Messiah.

Right place In the Near East, in Palestine, at the crossroads of three continents.

Right language Greek—the first *lingua franca*

Right political situation Pax Romana Political stability, Roman roads, Mediterranean as a means of transport. Judaism has a privileged position, religiously, in the Roman Empire.

Matthew 5:17 Jesus the spiritual fulfillment the Prophets.

a. In that he, unlike any other human before him, literally fulfilled all the requirements of the Law of Moses.

b. In that through his actions he satisfied the penalty for all of us who did not fully obey the Law of Moses.

c. Everything the OT anticipated finds its fulfillment in Jesus (prophecies, foreshadows and prefigures, etc.)

d. Jesus completes/explains more fully what was only implied by the Law of Moses.

I. Biblical historical background to the NT.

Captivity in and Exodus from Egypt as a foreshadow of our being saved from spiritual slavery.

Captivity in and Restoration from Babylon as a foreshadow of our captivity and restoration to a relationship with God.

A father offers up his one and only son on Mt. Moriah/Jerusalem

A favorite son betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery in Egypt for 20 pieces of silver.

A powerless Jewish baby boy is born, a powerful king is jealous and kills male children.

Out of Egypt I called my son (Hos 11:1) True of Joseph, Moses, Israel, Jesus and us.

II. Prophetic historical background to the NT. “Between the Testaments.”

(Pfeiffer has a book of that name)

Daniel Prophesies

1. Daniel 8:3-4, 19-20 Rise of the two-horned Persian/Mede Empire whose longer horn (Cyrus) charged first West (Lydia), North (Babylon) and South (Egypt). (Isaiah 44-45 names Cyrus)

2. Daniel 8:5-8, 21-22 Rise of the prominent-horn who charges from the West—Alexander the Great and subsequent four Greek dynasties.

Note: Josephus tells us that Jewish scribes showed Alexander Daniel 8.

The four Prominent horns. Antigonus, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy

The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent the four kingdoms that will emerge from this nation but will not have the same power.

3. Daniel 8:9-14, 23-25 11:29-34 Rise of the 5th horn, Seleucius (312 BC), who will conquer (v. 9) to the South (Mesopotamia) East (Persia, Media, Elam) toward the Beautiful Land (Palestine)

The Persians’ and the Seleucids’ rule over the Jews was relatively benign. They allowed the Jews to worship as they pleased and gave them religious and some political autonomy. All this changed with Antiochus Epiphanes.

And of his great grandson Antiochus Epiphanes (167-164 BC), who oppressed and persecuted the Jews by desecrating the temple and abolishing sacrifice for three years.

This is exactly what happened

1 Maccabees 1:46-47 Antiochus Epiphanes banned sacrifices, defiled the sanctuary, sacrificing pigs in the temple, ordering people to forget the Law. Penalty for not obeying was death.

1 Maccabees 1:57-58 “On the fifteenth day of Chislev in the year 145 (Nov, 167 BC) the king [Antiochus Epiphanes IV] erected the abomination of desolation above the altar; and altars were built in the surrounding towns of Judah and incense offered at the doors of the houses and in the streets. Any books of the Law that come to light were torn up and burned. Whenever anyone was discovered possessing a copy of the covenant or practicing the Law, the king’s decree sentenced him to death.

4. Daniel 8:25, 11:34-35 Establishment of the Maccabeean/Hasmonean rule in Israel in 164 AD, as celebrated in Hannukuh (the Feast of Dedication John 10:22-39)

This is when the Hasidim—the “Devout” formed, who eventually became the Pharisees. (1 Maccabees 2:42) They are the ones who refused to compromise their commitment to the Law of Moses. They were the supporters of the Maccabees who defeated Antiochus Epiphanes.

Daniel 8:12 “Because of rebellion” God is in control. Why did this happen? Because the Jews had not been faithful.

Daniel 8:25 but he (Antiochus Epiphanes) will be destroyed, but not by human power

Daniel 8:14 2300 evenings and mornings = 1150 days.

The actual desecration lasted from late Nov 167BC – Dec 25 (the 25th of Chislev), 164 BC Judas Maccabeeus successful revolt establishing the Maccabeean kingdom.

Daniel 11:31-35

1 Macabbees 4:36-40 52-61 Eight days of Hannukah, Dedication of the temple. Also called the Festival of Lights (Josephus)

The tradition is that the menorah burned for eight days despite the fact that only one day’s supply of dedicated oil was found. (but this is not in any of the original accounts).

Judas Maccabaeus was considered a deliverer of Israel (and a prefigure of the Messiah).

The Maccabeean/Hasmonean dynasty ruled 164-63 BC, when Pompey conquered Jerusalem and Palestine for Rome.

Under the Hasmoneans, the temple leadership fell to the Saducees, who were aristocrats, who were more willing to accept Greek (and later Roman) culture, and who rejected belief in the final resurrection.

5. Daniel 11:36-45 A prophecy about the Battle of Actium in 31 BC and the final destruction of Greek/Ptolemaic power under Marc Antony and Cleopatra.

At this time, Rome set up the Idumean half-Jew Herod (the Great) I as client-king over Judea and all of Palestine (Galilee, Samaria, Judea).

Herod ruled until 4 BC. He rebuilt the second temple on grand proportions.

Herod’s rule included Samaria. The Samaritans were another half-Jewish group who were the result of deportations by the Assyrians in the 8th century BC. They had their own Old Testament, which was the Samaritan Pentateuch.

6. Birth of John the Baptist and ministry of John the Baptist, who is the bridge from the Old to the New Testament.

Malachi 3:1-2, Malachi 4:5-6 OT side of the bridge Mark 1:2-4 NT side of the bridge. Jesus said that JTB came “in the spirit and power of Elijah.” (Luke 1:17) He also said “He is the Elijah who was to come. (Matthew 11:14)

III. Jewish expectations of the Messiah.

Expectation of a conquering Messiah

Expectation of a suffering Messiah

Expectation of a priestly Messiah

Qumran, for example.

Old Testament Expectations from Casket Empty:

Kingdom of God as a coming reign of God Zechariah 14:9

The royal Son of Man Daniel 7:13-14

The Son of David 2 Samuel 7 Is 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5-6, Ezekiel 34:23-24, Zech 12:8-10

Atonement for sin Isaiah 53:6 Daniel 9:24

A new covenant Jeremiah 31:31-34 Hosea 2:14-20

A pouring out of the Holy Spirit—the Day of the Lord Joel 2:28-29, Isaiah 44:3-5, Ezekiel 36:25-27.

Completion of blessing to Abraham on all nations Genesis 22:18, Isaiah 2:2, Isaiah 60:1-3, Zech 8:23.

Resurrection from the dead Genesis 22, Jonah 2, Daniel 12:2-3, Ezekiel 37:1-14

Final judgment of the world Dan 12:2-3, Psalm 96:9-13, Isaiah 63:1-6,

New heaven and new earth Isaiah 65:17-19, Isaiah 66:22-23, Ezekiel 47:1-12.

Jewish groups:

Sadducees Remnant of Hasmonean power. Much more willing to compromise with Greek culture. More tied in to the temple. Primarily used the Torah. Denied the final resurrection.

Pharisees Legacy of the Hasidim from Maccabeean period. More tied in to the emerging Synagogue Judaism. Used all the prophets and writings. A stronger Messianic expectation. Believed in the final resurrection. (Daniel)

Zealots, Sicarii. A small sect of violent terrorists who sought to eject Rome by force. These guys would definitely look for a conquering Messiah.

Essenes. An ascetic sect, headquartered in Qumran, who rejected the high priest in Jerusalem as a heretic.

They practiced strict asceticism, multiple baptisms in mikvas. They carefully preserved Hebrew biblical texts.

Their writings included the idea of two different Messiah-figures. A priestly Messiah and a conquering/suffering Messiah.

IV. The Greek world. Jesus grew up in a Jewish world, but also in a Greek and a Roman world.

1 Cor 1:22 Jews look for miracles, Greeks look for wisdom.

Strongly influenced by Greek philosophers.

Aristotle, Plato, Stoics, Epicureans, Pythagoreans, Atomists, Mystery religions, Gnosticism.

Stoics and Epicureans in Acts 17

Mystery religions in Colossians

Gnostics in 1 John

Greeks would see God as impersonal, distant, uninvolved, unchanging, impassive

These have a strong influence on the New Testament writings.

For example, John calls Jesus logos, which was a key Greek idea.

The culture of the Roman world was Hellenism (Alexander the Great)

The language of education and culture was koine Greek

Most Jews read the Old Testament in Greek (the Septuagint)

Greeks strongly emphasized sports (Olympics, for example) Paul used Greek athletics examples.

V. The Roman world.

Focused on political rule, economic power, trade, rule of law.

Rome/Western Christianity

Have relatively less influence on New Testament writings, but a LOT of influence on Western Christianity.

Jews have a privileged position in Rome. Their religion is protected as no other.

Roman setting:

Octavian/Augustus 27 BC – 14 AD Jesus born

Tiberius 14 AD – 37 AD Jesus dies, church established

Caligula 37-41

Claudius 41-54 First NT books, Jews and Christians kicked out of Rome AD 49 (Pricilla and Aquila)

Nero 54-68 Matthew – Luke written, Paul, Peter executed

Galba 68-69

Otho 69

Vitellius 69

Vespasian 69-79 Destruction of Jerusalem (prophesied by Jesus in Matthew 24) John written?

Titus 79-81

Domitian 81-96 Revelation written, John dies

Language background:

Hebrew not spoken by Jews. It was a dead language (like Sanskrit for Hindus and Latin for RCs), but learned by Jews in their schools.

Greek was the “lingua franca” of the Roman world, especially the Eastern part of the empire.

Aramaic was the spoken language of the Jews. Jesus spoke in Aramaic, not Greek.

Latin was only spoken by Roman soldiers and government elites.

**The four gospels**

The Synoptic Gospels Synoptic literally means same view.

Mark, Matthew Luke

John was written significantly later, records, seemingly purposefully, different events. It is a kind of follow-up, filling in the gaps of the Syn0ptics.

Synoptic same/combined view

Mark: As early as the late 40s. Probably the 50s.

Matthew: 60s? Before Luke? Definitely before AD 70

Luke: About AD 64 (because of what is in Acts)

The key event/date is the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 which is clearly a future event in Matthew and Luke.

John: Late 70s or 80s

The Synoptic Gospels:

Focus on ministry in Galilee

Focus on journey from Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem

Jesus only gradually reveals who he is to the public

Focus on parables, miracles and teaching to the crowds

Focus on the Kingdom of God

John:

Focuses on Jerusalem

Does not focus on interaction with the apostles before Ch 13

Few if any parables.

Many more and earlier claims about self

Emphasis on Jewish festivals and 3-year chronology

Overview:

A. In Mark Jesus is a Man of action and he is the Suffering Servant and Savior of Mankind. Some have called it the gospel most adapted to the Romans, but this is doubtful. It is not likely Mark has Rome in mind (although Mark may have actually lived in Rome (2 Tim 4:11).

Mark the most dramatic.

B. In Matthew he is the Messiah because he fulfills the Old Testament messianic expectation—especially the messianic prophecies. (Matthew 5:17).

Matthew the most Jewish. Matthew the most structured.

C. In Luke Jesus is the Messiah because his life and ministry to the sick, to the poor, to Gentiles—to Outsiders in general, meet the messianic expectation (especially of Isaiah 61:1,2).

Luke the most thematic.

D. In John Jesus is the Messiah because of his claims about himself and because of his miracles.

John the most theological. John the most adapted to Greek culture.

And, may I add:

E. In Hebrews, Jesus is the Messiah as the High Priest of a new and better covenant, offering intercession for us in the presence of God.

The life of Jesus, Messiah and Son of God

1. Visit to Zechariah and Elizabeth

 The first moment of the NT fulfills, completes the expectation of the last moment of the OT. The birth of John the Baptist fulfills Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 and Malachi 4:5-6. John is the Elijah who was to come (Matthew 11:14) He will go before the Lord (Jesus) in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17)

2. Visit of Gabriel to Mary

3. Birth of Messiah 6 BC, escape to Egypt 1 yr+ later?, return to Nazareth after 4 BC when Herod died.

4. Visit to Jerusalem as a boy at 12 years. 6-7 AD

5. Ministry of John the Baptist. 26-27 AD The Kingdom of God is at hand. Matthew 3:1.

6. Baptism, temptation in the wilderness and preparation for Jesus’ ministry.

6. Ministry of Jesus, primarily in Galilee. 27-30 AD The Kingdom of God is at hand (Mark 1:15)

7. Trip from Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem. (especially in Luke)

8. Passion story: Entry, arrest, trial, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. 30 AD

9. Ascension of Jesus (Acts 1)

Now, let us go through the four gospels, beginning with Mark.

**The Gospel of Mark**

**Notes**

Theme of Mark:

Jesus: Messiah and Son of God: suffering servant and savior of mankind.

Theme verse: Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Basic Outline of Mark:

I Mark 1:1-13 Prologue: Preparing for Jesus’ ministry

II Mark 1:14-8:26 Galilean ministry

III Mark 8:27-16:8 (or 16:20) Passion and Death of Jesus

I & II in my Bible 17 pages III 19 pages Conclusion: Mark places great importance to the passion and death of Jesus.

a. Great emphasis on the suffering and death of Jesus for our salvation.

b. Emphasis on Jesus raising up the disciples.

Notice the transition verse:

Mark 8:31-38 As I will serve and suffer, so will you, as disciples serve and suffer.

Jesus’ purpose is our purpose. Jesus lifestyle is our lifestyle.

More detailed Outline:

I Mark 1:1-13 Prologue: Preparing for Jesus’ ministry

II Galilean ministry

1. Mark 1:14-3:12 The Kingdom of God
2. Mark 3:13-6:6 Jesus disciples versus outsiders
3. Mark 6:7-8:26 Jesus’ mission

III Passion and death of Jesus: The suffering servant dies for mankind.

1. Mark 8:27-10:45 Jesus, the Servant of mankind
2. Mark 10:46-Mark 10:46-13:37 The Son confronts the Jews
3. Mark 14:1-15:47 Trial and death of Jesus
4. Mark 16:1-8 Resurrection of Jesus

Author of Mark:

Mark! The one in whose home the apostles hid when Jesus was killed.

The one who abandoned Paul and Barnabas

The one who, later, was Paul’s trusted assistant

The “young man” who fled naked from the scene of Jesus’ arrest?

Mark 14:51.

[Note: The consensus of scholars is that Mark 16:9-20 was not in the original. Reasons include:

1. It is not found in Codex Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and the most of the most authoritative very early manuscripts.

2. The change from 16:8 to 16:9 is too abrupt, even for Mark!

3. The vocabulary and style are VERY different.

4. Other Mark manuscripts have a different, shorter ending, providing evidence that others saw a need to provide an ending to Mark.

Explanations:

1. There was an original ending to Mark which was subsequently lost. (more likely)

2. Mark ended at Mark 16:8 (less likely)

3. Mark 16:9-20 was in the original/autograph of Mark (least likely)

Comment: No important doctrine is added or removed by this passage (although I sure wish I could use Mark 16:16]

Features of Mark

Probably the first of the gospels written.

Was Mark a source (along with oral tradition and personal experience) for Matthew? Probably.

The unanimous tradition of the early Church fathers (Irenaeus, Eusebius [quotes Papias, from very early second century “the interpreter of Peter”] for example) is that Mark was a scribe for Peter and that his gospel reflects the teaching of Peter. This is supported by 1 Peter 5:13 “my son Mark.”

Is Mark the anonymous witness in Mark 14:51?

Date of writing? 50s AD or (less likely if Mark was a companion of Peter) late 40s AD, or possibly the very early 60s AD.

Liberal scholars want to push this well into the 60s or even to the 70s. This is probably more due to their agenda than to the evidence.

Quite a bit shorter than the other gospels.

Mark 1:1-4 Q: What significant content in the other synoptics is notably missing in Mark?

John the Baptist’s birth, Virgin birth, dedication, travel to Egypt, youth of Jesus, genealogy.

Jesus’ visits to Jerusalem

Very truncated post-resurrection accounts.

Q: Any theologically significant things missing? Virgin birth

Why? My guess. In the late 40s, there were sufficient eye-witnesses and sufficient group memory that Mark did not feel the need to cover these points. This information was common knowledge. Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark is not trying to create a comprehensive story.

Style of Mark:

Vivid, fast-paced, action-packed narrative, with an authoritative Jesus completely in control.

1. Very simple Greek—a small vocabulary. Clearly Mark’s first language is not Greek.

2. Fast-paced: Greek *euthys* immediately 42 times (Matthew 5, Luke 1 time)

Ex: Mark 1:10,12,18,20,21,23,28,29,30,42,43

Illustration: John Madden Boom!!! (tough actin’ Tinactin) Jesus: a man with a mission.

Q: Are you a man or a woman with a mission?

The point of Mark in showing Jesus as a man of action is that his disciples, too, are called to a radical lifestyle of service and suffering.

3. Use of historical present (past action in present tense) (151 Mark, 93 Matthew, Luke 11 times)

Present tense puts you in the action. You are walking with Jesus. You are in the huddle. You are one of the disciples.

Illustration: Early radio broadcasts of baseball games in the 30s. Broadcasters made a fake live broadcast, complete with fake fan noise, etc. Why? So people feel part of the action.

Example Mark 1:21

Things to look for in Mark:

1. Authority of Jesus emphasized. Mark 1:25 The miracles mentioned are the ones which point particularly to his authority (power over nature (storms, etc.), demons, etc.)

2. People are amazed by Jesus. Mark 1:27 Awe: Who is this? 4:41, 8:27.

This action-packed, authoritative leader of whom people are amazed is one reason that Mark has been characterized as the gospel for the Romans. [plus the fact that Mark was probably in Rome with Paul and Peter]

My response: Well, it may play well with the Romans and people of their sort, but in AD 50 outreach to Latin-speaking, Roman people had not even begun.

[Note: Robert Carrillo disagrees with me and believes it was in fact written with a specifically Roman audience in mind]

3. Attacks by Satan on Jesus and the disciples. 1:21-24, 1:34, 3:11, 5:7, 6:7,13

4. Jesus’ suffering, even before Jerusalem.

5. Outsiders becoming insiders (kind of like Luke—hints that Gentiles will become Christians) Ex: only the Centurion, in all the gospel, truly understands Jesus (Mark 15:39) Levi, a tax collector responds 2:13-17, Syrophoenician woman believes (7:24-30).

6. Small characters (not the apostles) are heroes. Woman with bleeding (5:25-34) Blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52 a blind man sees while the seeing are blind), a woman anoints Jesus for burial (14:3-9) and a poor woman gives much (12:41-44)

7. Apostles put in a relatively negative light. 4:13,40, 6:37,52, 7:18, 8:4,32, 9:19,32,38, 10:13,37,41 and many, many more. They fail to understand, they are surprised at his power, they miss that he is Messiah, they are prideful and self-focused, and Jesus rebukes them. They totally miss that Jesus must suffer, so that he has to remind them repeatedly. Note, in Mark, the restoration of the apostles is not mentioned. The last thing we see of them is running away at Jesus’ hour of greatest need.

The point to take from this is that in Mark, the apostles are stand-ins for us. We can see us responding as they did and can reflect on how we are like them. “There, but for the grace of God, go I.”

8. Material about authentic discipleship.

9. Mark’s Jesus is more “human”—more emotional. Compassion 1:41, 6:34, grief (3:5) indignation 10:14, anger (3:5), deep anxiety at nature of his death (14:33-34). He is less “powerful” in that he does not know the time of his return (13:32) and his ability to do miracles is limited by the faith of his hearers (6:5)

Literary style:

1. Topical rather than chronological (John is even more so, Luke is less so)

Examples: 1:21-45 demons being cast out.

 2:1-3:6 controversy/authority emphasized

 4:1-34 kingdom parallels

2. Intercalation (sandwiching)

Mark begins a story, inserts an event which also illustrates the point, then finishes the story.

Mark 3:20-35 v. 20-21 rejected by family v. 22-30 rejected by religious leaders v. 31-35 rejected by family.

Mark 5:21-43 v. 21-24 Jarius v. 25-34 woman healed v. 35-43 Jarius (cont.)

Mark 11:12-25 v. 12-14 fig tree v. 15-19 Clears temple/judgment of God’s people v. 20-25 fig tree (cont.)

Assignment: Find another example of intercalation

Another feature:

3. Triads

3 boat scenes 4:35-41 6:45-52, 8:14-21

3 predictions of his death 8:31-38, 9:31-37, 10:32-45

3 denials

Assignment: Find another triad.

This raises a question: If Mark rearranged material chronologically, does this raise questions about inerrancy?

Chicago Statement:

* **Article XIII.**
* *WE AFFIRM*  the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.
* *WE DENY*  that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

4. Use of irony. Whereas John use verbal irony (When I am lifted up.. Jn 3:14)

 Mark uses situational irony.

Mark3:22f Teachers of the Law accuse Jesus of serving Satan, but in the process they prove that they are servants of Satan.

Mark 15:31-32 “He saved others, let him save himself.” When Jesus is purposefully NOT saving himself so that he can save others.

A harder assignment: Find another situational irony.

**The Text Let’s spend a little time with the text of Mark**

**I. Mark 1:1-13 Preparation for Jesus’ ministry**

1:1 The beginning of the gospel…. Mark gets right down to business. Thepreceeding 30+ years were relatively insignificant. Now the story gets started.

Mark begins by quoting Malachi 3:1 (and Isaiah 40:3)

Mark (and God) sees the Gospel to be in complete coherence with the Old Testament. v. 2 Like the prophets said….

“Behold, I will send my messenger who will prepare the way…. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple.”

Why does Mark begin here?

Because this is the connection with the OT. The OT ends by God saying the next thing you will see is the messenger who will prepare the way for the Messiah.

Proclamation: There is a prophet among you for the first time since Malachi. The kingdom of God is coming. The Messiah is here.

Like JTB says in the parallel Matthew 3:2 “The kingdom of God is at hand.”

Like it says in Luke 7:28, the least in the kingdom is greater than John the Baptist. Why? Because we have what he did not have. We have the Holy Spirit, and that is what the baptism of John did not include. (Acts 19:3 then whose baptism did you receive?)

Why did John baptize? “To prepare the way” Q: How? By calling to repentance.

How to prepare to receive the message of Jesus? Repentance.

Mark 1:9-13 Jesus baptized. Jesus went into the desert to prepare.

1:11 Like John the Baptist (v. 7,8) God puts his stamp on the event. The fulfillment of the ages is upon us.

Then… boom! (v. 12 at once…)

Notice: Jesus went into the desert for 40 days to prepare to come and save God’s people from slavery to sin.

 Moses went into the desert for 40 years to prepare to come and save God’s people from slavery.

Notice: Mark does not mention the specific temptations by Satan.

**II The Galilean Ministry Mark 1:14-3:12 The Kingdom of God is here.**

Mark will hit on his main themes immediately!

Mark 1:14-20 The calling of the first disciples. Note, we are hitting the theme of raising up the disciples immediately.

v. 14 JTB already said the time has come (v. 7-8). God has already said the time has come (v. 11), now Jesus is saying the time has come. Do you get the message? The time has come. (2 Corinthians 6:2…. Urgency)

Q: What is the first point Mark is having Jesus make about discipleship?

v. 17 Now is the time to come. v. 20 They came without delay. Q: What is the message?

Was this the first time he had met James and John? No! (John 1:35-42)

Note: At once (v.18) Without delay (v. 20) Jesus is a man of action who is calling us to be people of action.

The point: The kingdom of God has come. All that worldly stuff is now of much less importance. He may not literally be asking us to physically do what they did, but he definitely is asking us to, in our minds and hearts, do what they did.

Mark 1:21-34, 40-45 The power and authority of Jesus over both spiritual and physical illness.

1:21-24 Note the amazement (v. 22) and the authority (v. 22)

And notice also the irony (v. 24) the demons are the first to acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah.

v. 25 Jesus tells a demon to be quiet and the demon obeys.

v. 43 Jesus tells the man healed of leprosy to go and show himself to the priest and he disobeys.

The point: Hey, even the demons obey, so why don’t you obey.

v. 28 quickly v. 29 immediately. Jesus is about his mission. He is urgent.

v. 35-39 Jesus may be a powerful man of action with great authority, but even he needed to pray.

v. 38 Why did Jesus come? To preach. What about you? (note: Mark 10:45 we know that this is not the only reason he came…. Suffering, serving and dying to save us)

Mark 2:1 This thing is cranking. Things are happening fast. There is already such a crowd that people cannot even get into the house.

Mark 2:1-12 Jesus’ authority. Q: How much authority does Jesus have? He can even forgive sins!!!

By the way, which is easier? (v. 9) I have always wondered….

2:12 The people were amazed.

Q: Are you amazed by Jesus? We tend to lose our amazement over time.

Mark 2:13-17 Back to the theme of the call to discipleship. The calling of Matthew.

The point: Your past does not matter. Jesus is turning things upside down. All that matters is your answer to this question: Will you answer the call to “come, follow me.”

Mark 2:18-28 How much authority does Jesus have? “The Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath.” He has authority, even over the Sabbath. This is blow-away for a Jew.

v. 28 I am the Lord of the Sabbath! Imagine the people’s jaws dropping to the floor. They don’t even know what to day. They are beyond amazed.

Jesus: Now that I am here, everything is new. I am not improving things. I am starting from scratch. Get on board.

**The Book of Matthew**

**Notes**

Theme of Matthew: Jesus the [Jewish] Messiah is the culmination of salvation history and brings salvation from sin to all people.

Or

The Messiah is here and has brought salvation to all people.

Theme verse Matthew 5:17

5:17 Jesus fulfills the Law and the Prophets. Jesus does this in a wide variety of ways.

a. In that he, unlike any other human before him, literally fulfilled all the requirements of the Law of Moses.

Leviticus 18:5: “For the man who obeys them will live by them.”

b. In that through his actions he satisfied the penalty for all of us who did not fully obey the Law of Moses.

c. In that his life fulfilled all the Messianic expectations in the OT. the foreshadows and prefigures contained in the entire Law of Moses (the sacrifices, the festivals, the laws, the items in the tabernacle, etc.) John 5:39

Everything the Old Testament anticipated finds its fulfillment in Jesus.

d. Jesus completes/rounds out/explains more fully what was only implied by the Law of Moses. Progressive Revelation. This is the sense in which the term is used most directly in the Sermon on the Mount. Ex: not just avoiding adultery

 Ex: not just murder Ex: not just loving your neighbor.

Other theme verses (according to the book Four Portraits, one Gospel) Matthew 1:21 “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he ill save his people from their sins”, Matthew 28:18-20

Secondary Theme of Matthew: The Kingdom of Heaven/God

A. In Luke Jesus is the Messiah because his life and ministry meet the messianic expectation.

B. In John Jesus is the Messiah because of who he says he is and because of his miracles.

C. In Matthew he is the Messiah because he fulfills “all the Law and the Prophets”

Things to bear in mind:

I. A strong Jewish element. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Jewish messianic expectation.

1. Jewish customs, such as hand-washing (15:2) not explained, where Luke or Mark explain them.

2. Use of untranslated Aramaic words such as korban(27:6) raka (5:22).

3. Kingdom of Heaven rather than Kingdom of God, presumably because of Jewish sensitivities about using the name of God.

4. Only Matthew has Jesus telling people his mission was only to Israel (10:5-6, 15:24)

5. Unlike Luke and Mark which have favorable material about Samaritans, their only mention in Matthew is the prohibition against interacting with them. 10:5.

Emphasis on fulfillment of historical messianic prophecies

(In Luke Jesus is the Messiah because his life and ministry meet the messianic expectation. In John Jesus is the Messiah because of who he says he is and because of his miracles. In Matthew he is the Messiah because he fulfills “all the Law and the Prophets”)

II. Jewish leaders strongly criticized.

III. Five long discourses with a topical arrangement. (most structured)

Five major discourses—extended sermons. Each is ended by the phrase: “And it came about when Jesus finished these words….”

1. Sermon on the Mount Ch 5-7

2. Commissioning of the Twelve Ch 10

3. Parables of the Kingdom Ch 13

4. Life in the Church Ch. 18

5. Woes on the Pharisees , The time of the end. Ch 23-25.

IV. Structure: Discourse/narrative/discourse/narrative

V. Jesus as “God with us.” Jesus as Son of God Jesus as Son of David

VI. Importance of Peter.

VII. Matthew has more careful attention to structure than any of the gospels (with the possible exception of John)

VIII. Despite its length—28 chapters—Matthew has the most concise writing style of the four gospel writers (whereas Mark is the opposite)

Outline of Matthew:

1:1-2:17 Genealogy and Birth narrative

3:1-4:16 Preparation for Jesus’ ministry

4:17-11:1 Ministry of Jesus to Israel

11:2-20:34 Reactions to Jesus. Believers become more faithful. Non-believers opposition grows.

21:1-26:1 Jesus in Jerusalem.

26:27:56 Passion and death

27:57-28:20 Resurrection and Commission of the disciples

Date of authorship: The “consensus” of scholars is post-AD 80, but this presupposes that Jesus could not prophesy the events of AD 70 and that its supposed anti-Jewish sentiment reflects a post AD 85 when the anti-Nazarene statement was added to Synagogue worship.

This “consensus” is false!

More likely it was written before Luke who appears to rely on Matthew and who wrote about AD 64-65, based on end of Luke/Acts.

Author: The Church fathers are unanimous that it was written by Matthew.

The first witness, Papias (AD 140), may or may not have said that Matthew was written by Matthew in Aramaic or in Jewish style. The witness of church fathers is somewhat weak evidence. As to content, it has been pointed out that Matthew/Levi, as a tax collector probably had strong Greek and strong writing skills. Also, content such as material about tax collectors and about money points to someone at least broadly like Matthew. Arguably, he is the most likely apostle candidate to be the author from internal evidence.

Who depends on who? Was Mark written first? Did Matthew and Luke use Mark and “Q”? This is the majority opinion, but definitely is not consensus. Many still hold that Matthew was the first. 45% of Matthew is nearly identical to Mark, while about 20% is additionally similar to Luke.

Augustine: Matthew first, Mark used Matthew and Luke used both. This view eliminates the need to hypothesize “Q”.

Prophecy fulfillment:

Note: The OT quotations in Matthew are translated directly from the Hebrew, suggesting (unlike the other gospel writers who quote from the Septuagint) that his primary OT was the Hebrew Bible.

“This was to fulfill” Here Matthew is helping us out in case we do not get it.

Below, \* = Matthew uses the “this was to fulfill” formula. Possibly he does this when it is not as obvious to his hearers that these are indeed prophecy fulfillment.

\*1:22-23 Isaiah 7:14 virgin birth

2:5-6 Micah 5:2 Birth in Bethlehem

\*2:15 Out of Egypt I called my son. Hosea 11:1. Note that critics accuse

Matthew here of taking Hosea 11:1 out of context, but this is a shallow understanding of the OT and the principle of foreshadowing.

1. Out of Egypt God called Moses, the prefigure of Christ.
2. Out of Egypt God called his people Israel, a foreshadow of our own being called out of Egypt.
3. Out of Egypt God called Jesus as the savior of his people out of Egypt.
4. Out of Egypt God calls every one of us, all of who are slaves to sin (John 8:31f)

\*2:17-18 Jeremiah 31:15 Tears in Ramah for the death of children.

\*2:23 He will be called a Nazarene In the Hebrew, the word Nazareth is *nazaret*,the same as the word branch. It is very interesting that God caused the Messiah, Jesus, to be raised in Nazareth because Nazareth means branch. There are several Old Testament passages which prophesy that the Messiah will be called the branch, which can also be interpreted as Nazarene. It is interesting and wonderful that Jesus was both the branch of Jesse and a Nazarene. This is one of hundreds of amazing pieces of evidence which proves conclusively that the entire Bible is inspired by God. The relevant passages are
Isaiah 11:1,2 Jeremiah 23:5 Zechariah 3:8 and Zechariah 6:12. Branch passages.

3:3 As in Mark, JTB fulfills Isaiah 40:3

\*4:14-16 Jesus, despite being born in Bethlehem Ephrathah, is from Zebulun/Naphtali (show the two maps)

5:17 Jesus fulfills the Law and the Prophets (John 5:26). Jesus does this in a wide variety of ways.

1. In that he, unlike any other human before him, literally fulfilled all the requirements of the Law of Moses.
2. In that through is actions satisfied the penalty for all of us who did not fully obey the Law of Moses.
3. Most importantly, in that his life fulfilled the foreshadows and prefigures contained in the entire Law of Moses (the sacrifices, the festivals, the laws, the items in the tabernacle, etc.)
4. Jesus completes/rounds out/explains more fully what was only implied by the Law of Moses. This is the sense in which the term is used most directly in the Sermon on the Mount.

\*8:17 Jesus fulfills Isaiah 53:4 by healing many.

10:34-35 Jesus fulfills Micah 7:6 when families divide over the gospel.

11:2-6 John the Baptist prepares the way for the Messiah/Jesus Mal 3:1.

\*12:17-21 The Messiah a humble and gentle servant. Isaiah 42:2

13:14-15 Parables not to be understood by the hard-hearted Isaiah 6:9

\*13:35 Messiah to speak in parables Psalm 78:2

15:7-9 Disobedience Isaiah 29:13

\*21:4-5 Jesus enters Jerusalem on a colt, the foal of a donkey Zech 9:9

21:13 The temple a den of robbers Isaiah 56:7 Jer 7:11

21:16 Praise from the lips of children Psalm 8:2

21:42 Jesus rejected and becomes the capstone Ps 118:22

26:31 Shepherd struck and sheep scattered Zechariah 13:7

\*27:9-10 Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver Zechariah 11:12-13

**Look how Matthew uses prophecy to tell us about Jesus:**

1. Matthew 1:20-23 (Isaiah 7:14) The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel” (which means God-with-us).

This tells us that:

Jesus is the son of man

Jesus is the son of God

Jesus is God-with us. He is God, and he is with us. .

“all this” (v.22) was to fulfill this expectation

from his birth (1:22) to his ascension,

and even beyond (Matthew 28:20) Jesus is God with us.

2. Matthew 2:15 (Hosea 11:1) tells us that Jesus is Saviour, as he goes down into Egypt in order to call us out of Egypt and slavery to sin.

Out of Egypt I called my son. Hosea 11:1. Note that critics accuse

Matthew here of taking Hosea 11:1 out of context, but this is a shallow understanding of the OT and the principle of foreshadowing.

1. Out of Egypt God called Moses, the prefigure of Christ.
2. Out of Egypt God called his people Israel, a foreshadow of our own being called out of Egypt.
3. Out of Egypt God called Jesus as the savior of his people out of Egypt.
4. Out of Egypt God calls every one of us, all of who are slaves to sin (John 8:31f)

3. Matthew 2:23 (Isaiah 11:1-2, Jeremiah 23:5, Zech 3:8, 6:12)

Hebrew: nazer = shoot, branch.

Isaiah 11:1-2 Messiah is the branch of Jesse

Jeremiah 23:5 A king who will rule wisely. A branch of David.

Jesus is both the Branch of Jesse/David and a Nazarene.

Jesus is King of Kings. That he is royalty. 2:23 He will be called a Nazarene

4. Matthew 12:15-21 Isaiah 42:1-4. Jesus a humble and gentle servant.

Jesus was the most powerful man who ever lived, yet he dealt gently with us sinners. That is a great comfort to me.

1. Matthew 21:4-5 (Zechariah 9:9-10) Riding on a colt. Jesus is King “your king”, but not the kind of king the world expects. He is a gentle and humble king. Ex:Matt 11:30 My yoke is easy and my burden light.

Zech 9:10 Our king will rule from the River to the ends of the earth.

Is Jesus the king of your life? Are you a citizen of his kingdom? Then you will obey the constitution of that kingdom which is in Matthew 5-7.

6. Matthew 27:6-10 (Zech 11:10-13) Jesus valued as a slave (approximate price for a slave was $30) Jesus' blood money was used to take care of Gentiles. (v. 7)

All of us rejected Jesus

All of us sold him out for the price of a slave.

Zech 11:13“the price at which they priced me.” Jesus is God

Jesus in Matthew:

God made four covenants with Israel. Jesus fulfilled all four (and Matthew takes the time to point out all four)..

1. The covenant with Noah (Genesis 9:8-17) Matt 24:37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

2. The covenant with Abraham Through you all nations will be blessed Matthew 1:1-17 (Genesis 12:1-3 for example)

3. The covenant with Moses Matthew 5

4. The covenant with David. (2 Sam 7:11-16) see below on Son of David

Jesus is:

a. Son of Abraham (Matthew 1:2)

b. Son of Moses/Second Moses Parallels

Moses like Jesus,

1. A jealous king wanted to hill him as a baby. (2:13)

2. Children die at the hands of that jealous king (2:20)

3. Both came out of Egypt (v. 15)

4. Both returned home when the jealous king died. (v. 19)

5. Both were in the desert for forty days.

c. Jesus called the “Son of David” Matthew 1:1 (9 times on Matthew, only 3 times in Mark, Luke)

It stresses David taking the throne and, 14 generations later, Israel losing the throne in the exile, which is a (messianic) expectation of Jesus taking the throne back again.

Enters Jerusalem as David did on Palm Sunday Matt 21:9 2 Sam 6:12-16 was a preenactment, etc.)

d. Jesus is king as the son of Solomon as well.

The visit of the Magi was foreshadowed in the OT in the visit of the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon to bring gifts, acknowledging his kingship

Matthew 2:11 Gentiles are the first to acknowledge Jesus as King, and to worship him.

(amplified in Matthew 12:42). Here we see Jesus as the second Solomon.

(Matthew 12:42)

This points out that Jesus is king, not just of the Jews, but of the Gentiles.

e. Jesus is the second Jonah as well Matthew 12:39-41. (offers life to save Gentiles, gambling over his clothes, raised from dead on 3rd day, Comes from Gath Hepher (3 km from Nazareth)

But Jesus fulfills all the Old Testament messianic prefigures. He is

Son of God (at his baptism Matt 3:17 and transfiguration Matt 17:5) Psalm 2:7

Son of Man Daniel 7:13.

The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 Matt 16:21 The Messiah must suffer Matthew 20:24-28 The greatest is the servant of all.

f. But Jesus fulfills all the Old Testament messianic prefigures.

More typological fulfillments

Matthew 4:1-11 The temptations in the desert of Jesus by Satan are specifically a fulfillment of the temptations of Israel while in the desert.

Jesus quotes Deut 8:3, 6:16 and 6:13.

Matthew 12:6 Jesus is “greater than the temple.” Jesus’ body IS the temple (John 2:19).

Matthew 12:1-14 Jesus is greater than the Sabbath (based on OT examples)

**Notes for Book of Luke**

Theme: God’s salvation, as predicted by the prophets has arrived in the coming of the Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth. He is the savior of the world and this salvation is now spreading throughout the world (including that of the Gentiles, of course).

Theme verses: Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David as Savior has been born to you: he is the Messiah, the Lord.

Luke 19:9-10 Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.”

The purpose of Luke is:

1. Assuring hearers/readers of the reality of what they have learned.

2. Calling them to continued faithfulness and ***participation*** in God’s salvation.

In Matthew Jesus fulfills the messianic expectation through fulfilling specific prophecies and prefigures. In Luke, Jesus fulfills the messianic pattern in his ministry and in bringing salvation today more than specific historical prophecies.

Features unique to Luke to note:

Historical details, including names, places and dates. (A more orderly account Luke 1:3-4)

Universal appeal of the gospel (role of Gentiles in Jesus’ ministry)

Jesus’ concern for outsiders, the poor, “sinners”, women, Samaritans

Reversal of fortune (poor become rich, rich become poor, sinners are righteous and the “righteous” are sinners)

Emphasis on role of women in Jesus’ life and ministry

Jesus described as Savior (as well as Christ, Lord and Prophet) (as opposed to Messiah in Matthew and Son of God in John)

The promise of a Savior for all people (especially from Isaiah)

Narrative of the journey to Jerusalem (this theme is carried into Acts)

Jesus as a man of prayer (nine prayers of Jesus appear in Luke, of which only two are found in the other three gospels baptism [3:21, leprosy healing 5:16, before calling the Twelve 6:12, with his disciples in private 9:18, at the transfiguration 9:28, before teaching disciples to pray 11:1, prayer in view of trials 18:1, 21:36 22:40. Also, two of Jesus’ parables in Luke are about the need to pray (Luke 11:5-13, Luke 18:1-8])

Use of the word “today” in reference to salvation

Emphasis on the coming of a new age and on the Holy Spirit and its role in bringing in the Kingdom of God (This is particularly notable, of course, in Acts, but it is foreshadowed in Luke, for example in 1:15, 1:41-44, 1:67, 2:25-27, 3:22, 4:1,14,18, 10:21

Emphasis on the training of the apostles (In Mark they are inept, in Matthew they are faithless and in Luke they are being prepared for the mission they will complete in Acts.

Other facts to bear in mind:

Luke/Acts almost certainly a single document—written at the same time, by the same author. It may have been divided because the whole thing could not fit on a standard sized scroll.

Acts 1:1 “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all Jesus began to do and to teach.” (note: Theophilus is also mentioned in Luke 1:3)

Who is Theophilus? Is he, literally, a lover of God? Is he an actual person-a recent convert to whom Luke wrote

Luke the longest book in the New Testament. We have more words of Luke than of Paul or John.

Luke as an historian:

**1. Only Luke mentions written sources for his gospel (Luke 1:1)**

**2. Luke takes extraordinary care to give historical context to his account.**

**3. Luke takes extraordinary care in his investigation of the facts, including interviews with multiple eye-witnesses (Luke 1:2-3) and a “more orderly” account.**

**4. Luke gives a detailed genealogy, but he does so through Jesus’ father rather than through Jesus’ mother.**

**Historical events unique to Luke:**

**1. Vision of Zechariah and birth of John.**

**2. Visit of Mary to Elizabeth**

**3. Angel’s visit to Mary**

**4. Census of Augustus.**

**5. Shepherd’s visit.**

**6. Jesus’ presentation at the temple.**

**7. Jesus at the temple at the age of twelve.**

**8. Resurrection appearance at Emmaus.**

Birth of Jesus. Matthew’s account focuses on Joseph. Luke focuses on Mary.

Here we see emphasized Luke’s theme of turning the world upside down and salvation for the Gentiles.

Outline of Luke

**I Prologue 1:1-4**

**II Birth account of Jesus 1:5-2:52**

**III Preparation for Jesus’ ministry 3:1-4:13**

**IV The Galilean Ministry 4:14-9:50**

**V Journey to Jerusalem 9:51-19:27**

**VI Conflict and Controversy in Jerusalem 19:28-21:38**

**VII Passion and Death of Jesus 22:1-23:56**

**VIII The Resurrection and Ascension 24:1-53**

**Examples from the text of Luke**

I Luke 1:1-4 A more orderly account.

II Birth Narrative.

The point of this section is that Jesus is the fulfillment of the pious Jewish messianic expectation. The best the Jews have to offer in terms of piety and righteousness are those whose expectation is fulfilled in Jesus.

Zechariah and Elizabeth (middle aged) are both priestly descendants and observe all the Lord’s commands

Joseph and Mary (very young) are humble servants of God, faithfully fulfilling the commands regarding purification and dedication

Simeon (very old) is extremely righteous and devout and is waiting for the expected Messiah.

The same holds for Anna, who is the female equivalent of Simeon. She is fully devoted to worship, fasting and prayer.

Theme of this section: The arrival of God’s promised Savior and the fulfillment of God’s prophets and promises.

Luke is setting the stage for his entire narrative.

Luke 1:5-25 Our first turnaround example.

Elizabeth is old (past menopause) and barren

Message: The old will be more productive than the young

The barren will be fruitful.

Also, notice Luke 1:15 Luke and the Holy Spirit

1:15 John the Baptist filled with Holy Spirit from birth

1:41-44 Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit

1:67 Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit

2:25-27 The Holy Spirit was on Simeon, the Messiah was revealed by the HS

3:22 Holy Spirit descends on Jesus

4:1 Jesus full of the Holy Spirit

4:14 Jesus returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit

Luke 1:26-29 Gabriel appears to Mary

Facts about Mary:

1. She was very young.

2. She was female.

3. She was poor.

4. She was defenseless and vulnerable

What does God say to her? (v. 28) Talk about a turnaround!

1. You are highly favored. (Imagine that!!!)

2. God is with you. Talk about good news.

But think about it. What is the good news? You will be pregnant. You will be the object of scorn and great shame, and, almost certainly, your betrothed will put you away. Your life in Jewish society is OVER!

Mary’s amazing response: Luke 1:34-38

Luke 1:38 I am the Lord’s Servant. May it be to me as you have said.

Luke 1:45 (Elizabeth to Mary) Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished. A great memory verse!

Why? Luke 1:38, 45

A great memory verse Luke 1:45 “Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.”

Luke 1:51-53 (Mary’s song) He has performed mighty deeds with his arm (Isaiah 53:1 Jesus is the arm of the Lord);

 He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts

 He has brought down the rulers from their thrones

 but has lifted up the humble

 He has filled the hungry with good things

 but has sent the rich away empty.

III. Luke 4:14-30 Jesus’ sermon at Nazareth. Luke chooses this to begin his story of Jesus’ ministry. Perhaps it was not actually at the beginning, as it is found considerably later in Mark 6:1-6 (although whose chronology is more “accurate” is debatable)

Now, imagine you know nothing of this particular sermon, but bearing in mind what you know about Jesus’ message, Q: What do you think would be the content of his first lesson to those who know him in his home town?

Read Luke 4:16-21

Why does Luke choose this particular sermon? Because if fits his theme. Jesus announces that he is the fulfillment of God’s promise—he is the Messiah and introduces his ministry of offering salvation. Luke 4:18-19 (not surprisingly quoting from Isaiah) “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

His message, His good news, his salvation: (quoting Isaiah 61:1-2)

1. Good news for the poor (in spirit?)

2. Freedom for (spiritual) prisoners Q: How has God freed you?

3. Healing for the (spiritually) sick. Q: How has God healed you?

4. Release the (spiritually) oppressed. Q: What oppression has God freed you from?

5. The favor of the Lord. Q: How has God shown you favor?

Q: Which is most important to you?

 This is an excellent summary of Luke’s picture of Jesus.

(remember, we earlier pointed out that Jesus fulfills the messianic expectation through the pattern of his life more than through specific things he does)

Q: What were people thinking when Jesus said, “***Today*** (there is that word today) this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Why does Luke choose this particular sermon? Because if fits his theme. Jesus announces that he is the fulfillment of God’s promise—he is the Messiah and introduces his ministry of offering salvation—but not salvation in the form we would think.

How is he received? Not all that well. They try to throw him off a mountain. Why? Because, as is typical for Luke, Jesus declares that God loves the Gentiles too! (Luke 4:24-27) Elijah was sent to a widow in Zarephath, near Sidon and he healed, not a Jew, but Namaan the Syrian).

Brilliantly (under inspiration of course), Luke chooses a story which foreshadows Jesus’ entire ministry. His outreach to the downtrodden. His ultimate rejection and murder at the hands of his own people—the ones who, by rights ought to have received him as one of their own.

The difference: This time he walked through the crowd. (4:30). Such was not to be the case in Jerusalem.

From here, Luke proceeds immediately to Jesus’ ministry to the poor and the downtrodden, fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-2. In Luke he does this before he chooses the first disciples (unlike in Mark).

He frees the prisoners/the demon-possessed (Luke 4:31-37)

Jesus heals the sick (Luke 4:38-40, 5:12-14, 17-26)

Jesus releases the oppressed (Luke 4:41)

All this is used to point to the breaking out of the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:43)

All this continues the theme that the high and mighty—the self-righteous—will being brought low and the low and despised—the outcasts and outsiders will be lifted up in the Kingdom of God.

Examples in Luke:

An outsider—a Centurion—has more faith than anyone in Israel (Luke 7:1-10)

A poor widow’s son is raised from the dead, rather than the child of an important person (7:11-17)

A prostitute is praised for her humility and love, while the arrogant and wealthy in the house are rebuked by Jesus for not even showing common hospitality to the lowly Jesus (Luke 7:36-50)

(other examples: Luke 18:9-14 Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, Luke 15:11-32 the Prodigal Son, Luke 19:1-10 Zacchaeus, Luke 23:39-43 Repentant thief on the cross)

As Jesus said, to summarize Luke’s perspective, “Those who have been forgiven much love much and those who think they need little forgiveness love little (7:47)

Other examples of Jesus turning things upside down:

The rich fool Luke 12:13-21

Do not invite the rich to banquets, but invite the poor, the lame and the blind

Luke emphasized the goodness of Samaritans often as well:

James and John rebuked for calling fire down on a Samaritan village Luke 9:51-16

The Parable of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:29-37

The only leper who returns to thank Jesus is a Samaritan Luke 17:11-19

Luke also gives prominence and respect to women. He lists 13 women in Jesus’ life not mentioned in the other three gospels.

Elizabeth

Mary

Ana

Widow of Nain Luke 7:12-15

Woman who anoints Jesus’ feet Luke 7:36-50

Women who supported Jesus financially Luke 8:1-3

Woman healed of bleeding Luke 8:43-48

Mary and Martha Luke 10:38-42

Crippled woman “daughter” of Abraham healed on the Sabbath Luke 13:10-17

The poor widow Luke 21:1-4

Women are especially prominent surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus

Daughters of Jerusalem lament the death of Jesus Luke 23:27-31

Women were the chief witnesses and comforters of Jesus at the crucifixion Luke 23:49

Women were the first to witness the resurrection Luke 23:55-24:11

Women are consistently shown in a positive light relative to men in an equivalent position. (Elizabeth is faithful 1:25, Zechariah is not 1:18)

1. Parables about the poor, disadvantaged, despised and oppressed (and miracles to help them as well). Theme of reversal.

Luke 10:25-37 Parable of the Samaritan.

Luke 12:13-21 Parable of the rich fool.

Luke 13:10-17 Healing a crippled woman (on the Sabbath!)

Luke 14:7-14 Do not take the places of honor. V. 13 invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.

Luke 14:16-24 Parable of the Great Banquet (the poor the sinners and the Samaritans enter heaven in front of the Jews)

Luke 15:1-32 Parable of the Lost Coin, Lost Sheep and Lost(Prodigal) Son. Unlike the Pharisees, God seeks out the sinner to bring him back and to bless him.

Luke 16:19-31 Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The ultimate parable in this genre.

Luke 17:11-19 Healing the lepers. Notice, it was the Samaritan who came back and thanked him!

Luke 18:1-8 The persistent widow.

Luke 18:9-14 The Pharisee and the Tax Collector.

Luke 18:15 Let the children come to me.

Luke 18:35-43 A blind beggar receives his sight.

Discipleship: Jesus is training the twelve to take on his ministry when he leaves.

Luke 9:1-6 Sending out the twelve. Teaching how to evangelize. (also in Matthew 10:1-42 with much more detailed instructions and Mark 6:7-13)

[aside: the only contradiction in the entire Bible I have not been able to work out is Luke 9:3 and Mark 6:8]

Luke 9:23-27 The cost of discipleship

Luke 9:46-48 Greatness in the kingdom

Luke 9:57-62 The cost of discipleship

Luke 10:1-23 Sending out the 72. Teaching how to evangelize (not in Matthew, Mark, John)

Luke10:38-42 Mary is the ideal disciple, not Martha.

Luke 11:1-13 Teaching to pray

Luke 12:1-11 Be on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees.

Luke 12:22-34 Do not worry (note v. 33 and give to the poor)

Luke 12:35-48 Be watchful. Parable of the wise manager. (also Luke 16:1-13)

Luke 14:25-35 Counting the cost of discipleship

Luke 18:18-29 The rich ruler. Blessings for giving up everything to follow Jesus.

Luke 17:1-10 Watch yourselves. Warning against sin and teaching about faith.

**Luke is movement toward Jerusalem.**

**Acts is movement away from Jerusalem.**

**Luke 9:30 They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.**

**Luke 9:44 “Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.”**

**Luke 9:51 Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem where he will be taken up (*analepsis*)**

**The die is cast. The end is near. The Savior must die in Jerusalem.**

**Book of John**

**Matthew: Jesus is revealed through his fulfillment of prophecy and of the Jewish messianic expectation. Theme verse: Matthew 5:17 I did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.**

**Mark: Theme of Mark:**

**Jesus: Messiah and Son of God: suffering servant and savior of mankind.**

**Theme verse: Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**

**Luke: Jesus is revealed as Messiah primarily through his ministry to the sick, downtrodden, women, the outcast and the Gentile. Theme verse: Luke 2:11 (to lowly shepherds) Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.**

**John: Jesus is revealed through his miracles and through his statements about himself.**

**Central Theme**

**Jesus is the divine son of God who reveals the father, providing eternal life to all who believe in him**

**Key Verse: John 1:14 and/or 3:16**

**Purpose John 20:30-31**

**But these are written that you may believe[a] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

**Date of writing John is writing in the late 70s or 80s**

Probably as the first generation begins to die off. Most or perhaps even all the other apostles were dead. John had had 40-50 years to think about what was key to the gospel (but perhaps not emphasized in the synoptics)

Background :

Unique things about John:

Things in the synoptics but not in John:

No parables

No exorcisms

No table fellowship

Very little emphasis on the Kingdom of God

No birth, baptism, temptation, transfiguration, agony in the Garden, Lord’s Supper

Things in John but not the synoptics:

More dialogues 5:19-47, 6:25-59, 7:14-44, 8:12-59, 9:40-10:21, 10:22-42, 12:23-36

More personal conversations/interviews 3:1-21 (Nicodemus), 4:1-38 (woman at well)

The interviews have a pattern:

Jesus gives an enigmatic metaphor which provokes thought

Confusion

Jesus explains the metaphor

Jesus identifies himself

More private teaching with the disciples 14:1-16:37 (but only once he enters Jerusalem)

Raising of Lazarus the key turning point (as opposed to the cleansing of the temple) that led to the execution of Jesus.

Characteristics of John to note:

I. Jews put is a relatively negative light “The Jews.”

A.D. 70 - Fall of the Temple

Council of Jamnia -

1. Reject the Septuagint - Set the Hebrew Canon

2. The prayer of “Minim” - A curse on Christians

Minim = Heretic

**2. Chronology** based on festivals and ministry of three years.

Here we begin to see the theme of Jesus replacing/being greater than the Jewish festivals.

Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath, (and of booths, Passover)

1. Jesus greater than the Sabbath Jn 5:1-18

2. Jesus greater than Passover Jn 6:1-70

3. Jesus greater than Booths/Tabernacles Jn 7:1-9:41

4. Jesus greater than Festival of Lights (Chanukkah) Jn 10

3. Far more emphasis on Judean ministry

80% of material is unique to John (as compared to the synoptics)

**4. Simple Vocabulary - Deep theology**

**More philosophical (for example using the word logos) yet more Jewish in perspective**

**Symbols and metaphors** (light, life, bread, gate, door, shepherd, etc.

5. Often hard to know who is speaking: Jesus or John (ex. Jn 3:16-21)

**6. Miracles as signs** of who Jesus is

**John 1:19-12:50 The book of signs.**

The signs reveal Jesus’ identity and call for us to make a decision. (that is the pattern, as mentioned above)

In the synaptics they point to the kingdom of God having come.

7 signs

[knew the heart and thoughs of Nathanael 1:43-50]

water to wine 2:1-11

healing of official’s son 4:43-54

healing at pool of Bethesda 5:1-5

feeding of 5000 6:1-14

walking on water 6:16-21

man born blind 9:1-12

resurrection of Lazarus 11:1-44

[miraculous catch of fish John 21:1-13]

Themes of the signs: purpose: to cause people to believe, to give validity to Jesus’ claims about himself, and to give glory to God (John 2:11)

Miracles have a pattern:

Miracle

Response or challenge

Follow-up teaching

Response

**7. The use of irony** (ex. John 3:14 When I am lifted up….

Can anything good come from Nazareth? John 1:46

 Irony is an important feature in this gospel. The author is fond of setting up situations in which the reader knows something important that some of the actors/speakers in the narrative do not know. In that situation the actors are made to say something of far greater significance than they know. Examples include 4:12 (are you greater than Jacob?) ; 7:27, 35–36; 8:22; 11:50; 12:12–15, 19; 13:37; 19:19.

**8. Dualistic language** – Life-Death, Light –Darkness, Truth –False, Believe-Unbelief, Things above-Things below

**9. Beloved disciple**

**10. Words** very strongly emphasized:

Believe 98 times (~15/gospel)

Life 35 times (~6 times/gospel)

11. Emphasis on who Jesus is. Jesus does not hide who he is at all. He makes it clear from the beginning exactly who he is.

12. 7 I AM statements

I AM the bread of life 6:35

I AM the light of the world 8:12,9:5

I AM the door (and the gate) 10:7

I AM the good shepherd 10:1,14

I AM the resurrection and the life 11:25

I AM the Way the Truth and the Life 14:6

I AM the true vine 15:1

All are metaphors

John does not rely on the Synoptics, but he assumes his readers are aware of the other three gospels. This will explain why he does not include the Lord’s Supper, birth, etc.

Outline:

I. Prologue 1:1-1:18

II. Book of Signs 1:19-12:50

III. Book of Glory Passion Story 13:1-20:31

IV. Epilogue 21:1-21:25

The rest of our outline will look at the seven signs and their relationship to the Jewish festivals.

I. Water to wine Jn 2:1-11. v. 11 “He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith

in him”

metaphor/symbol: the marriage feast in heaven. Isaiah 25:6 Eschatology

empty jars = Jewish ritual wine = New Covenant

John: 2:11 God’s glory was revealed and people (the disciples in this case) put their faith in Jesus.

Here Jesus turns water to wine in a parallel to Moses turning water to blood.

Is it a coincidence that the first recorded miracle is Moses and evidence that he is to be the deliverer of Israel is turning water to blood (Exodus 7)? I doubt it. With this miracle we are introduced to the second and greater Moses.

Jesus and Moses a huge theme in John. John 3:14 I am the fulfillment of Moses in this: Just like he lifted up the snake, so I will be lifted up. The symbolism is awesome. See Numbers 21:4-9.

Also, notice in John 4:1-26 Jesus tells the woman at the well that he is the Messiah because he is the one who will, like Moses, give water, but this water will well up to eternal life. Jn 4:13-14. 4:26 I am the Messiah (because I give this water).

II. Jesus heals official’s Son 4:43-54 “the second miraculous sign” skip for lack of time.

III. 3rd sign. Healing at the pool of Bethesda John 5:1-9

Here we begin to more clearly the theme of Jesus replacing/being greater than the Jewish festivals.

Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath, (and of booths, Passover)

1. Jesus greater than the Sabbath Jn 5:1-18

2. Jesus greater than Passover Jn 6:1-70

3. Jesus greater than Booths/Tabernacles Jn 7:1-9:41

4. Jesus greater than Festival of Lights/Feast of Dedication (Chanukkah) Jn 10

John 5:18 Result: The Jews tried even harder to kill him. Why? He claims to be equal to God.

“My father is always at work and I, too, am working” (v17-18) Thus showing his supremacy, even over the Sabbath.

IV Sign #4 Feeding 5000.

Theme: Jesus is the antitype to Moses and will replace the Passover.

Type: Marriage feast with God

John 6:4 The Jewish Passover was near. (to set up the connection)

Jesus made bread during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Jesus gives bread (like the manna) and fish.

People’s response: Increased faith. 6:14 “Surely this is the Prophet” (cf

What did Moses do? Gave bread (fulfilled by sign #4), part the Red Sea (fulfilled by sign #5), gave water (John 7:38). Jesus will do all these things.

John 5:45 I am greater than Moses. If you believed Moses, you would believe me (and therefore would not be offended that I healed on the Sabbath). You are rejecting Moses

Jesus is reenacting the saving events in Jewish history.

V Sign #5 (a bit of an aside, which only makes sense if you realize that John is showing Jesus as the antitype of Moses in the miracles he worked) Jesus walks on water Jn 6:16-24

John’s emphasis: Jesus walks on the water as a parallel to Moses parting the water. An Exodus/Passover scene.

v. 20 “It is I” (I AM that I AM *ego eimi*) (Recalls Exodus 3:14) Do not be afraid. Suddenly they are on the other side (recalling the crossing of the Red Sea)

VI. Discourse on Jesus as Bread of Life. A key discourse in John!

Read 6:30-35

6:30 Jews demand a sign again (recall clearing the temple)

Jesus: I gave you bread. I am greater than Moses. Isn’t that testimony enough?

6:35 In fact: I AM the bread of life.

John 7:1-9:41 Tabernacle Discourses. Feast of Tabernacles or Booths.

The Tabernacle discourses include many claims of Jesus

1. Jn 7:16-19 “If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. Response: You are demon-possessed.

2. 7:37-38 I am the source of living water.

* + Response: He is the Prophet. He is the Christ. Tried to seize him

3. 8:12 I AM the light of the world.

* + Response: Many put their faith in him.

4. 8:46 Sinless

* + Response: A Samaritan and Demon-possessed.

5. 8:51 If anyone keeps my word, he will never see death. (I am greater than Abraham)

* + Response: You are demon-possessed

6. 8:58 Before Abraham was born, I AM. (claims to be God)

* + Response: Picked up stones to stone him.

Feast of Tabernacles or *sukkoth* (literally, tabernacle) as it

is known in Hebrew. It is one of the three feasts commanded by the Lord that all males should annually attend (Ex. 23:17; 34:23) and what Josephus calls the “most holy and most eminent” of the three feasts of the Hebrews

1. Harvest Festival (Fall Harvest)

2. A remembrance of wilderness wandering—of living in intimate fellowship with God.

Jesus’ point: I am tabernacling with my people (John 1:14 The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us)

John 7:37 If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.

Jesus is drawing their attention to the Miracle of Moses bringing water from a rock.

 Note, the context is Feast of Booths with its water theme. An important part of Tabernacles for us is the water-pouring ceremony.

During the Feast of Tabernacles a priest marched in procession from the Temple to the Pool of Siloam. He filled a golden pitcher with water from the Pool of Siloam, after which he recited Isaiah 12:3. ”With joy, you will draw water from the well of salvation.” With a solemn procession from the Pool of Siloam. (which is where the man born blind had to wash). Then the crowd marched with the priest and the pitcher, passing through the Water Gate (this is why it had that name) to the temple (which was dedicated on the last day of Tabernacles) carrying myrtle and willow twigs, tied to a palm branch in the right hand, and a citron or lemon in the left. They sang the praise Psalms 113-118. On the 7th day they did this seven times. The water was poured out at the altar of burnt offering. The water was a symbol of the Holy Spirit, drawing attention to the Messianic age.

Jesus spoke of offering streams of living water on the last great day of the feast (7:37)—the day that they **did not do** the water ceremony.

Again, at Tabernacles and on the cross, Jesus fulfills this expectation.

Jesus: The Messianic age has come. The new Moses is here

See the response 7:40-43. Surely this is the Prophet (the one like Moses in Deut 18:17)

Next: John 8:12 I am the light of the world. Again, this has a direct reference to the Feast of Tabernacles.

**The Illumination of the Temple**

The two major ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles were the water procession and the illumination of the Temple. Most commentators maintain that the setting of Jesus’ self-proclamation as the Light of the World is the nightly illumination of the Court of Women that took place during the Feast of Tabernacles.

The meaning of the illumination of the Temple was similar to that of the pouring of the water. The light shining out of the Temple into the darkness around was seen ‘as a symbol not only of the Shekinah (God’s glory manifested in the Most Holy above the ark) which once filled the Temple, but also of the ‘great light’ that ‘the people that walked in darkness’ were to see, and which was to shine ‘upon them that dwell in the land of the shadow of death’ (Isa 9:2).

It seems most probable that it was in the context of this illumination ceremony that Jesus said: “I am the light of the world’ he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

By proclaiming Himself as the light of the world, Christ revealed Himself to be the fulfillment of the Messianic pillar of fire that guided the Israelites through the wilderness.

The figure of living water typifies Christ as the Savior, while that of the Light represents Jesus as the Revealer of God’s will for mankind.

John 8:27-30 When you have lifted up the Son of Man (look at the irony!!!) they you will know that I am the one I claim to be.

**John 9:1-41 Sign #6 Healing of the man born blind. Jesus proves that he is the light of the world.**

John 9:3-5. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

[also note, v. 3 that the man was blind so that the glory of God might be seen]

Note that this miracle involves both water (from the Pool of Siloam, no less) and light, recalling the two great ceremonies at Tabernacles.

When the man washed the dirt from his eyes in the Pool of Siloam, a brilliant light entered his eyes for the first time.

Note that the man’s faith (and the amount of light he has) grows more and more as the story goes along:

v. 11 the man Jesus.

v. 17 the Prophet.

v. 33 he is from God.

v. 38 Lord, I believe!!!

John 10: Context: The feast of Dedication Hanukkuh. (John 10:22)

John 10:7 I am the gate John 10:11, 14 I am the good shepherd.

Note: The shepherd discourse in Ezekiel 34:2-10 was part of the Hanukkah liturgy.

Also note that the need for the dedication of the temple was because of bad shepherds (Daniel 11, 1st Macabbees)

David as a foreshadow. He laid down his life for the sheep 1 Samuel 17:34)

John 10:14-18 I am the good shepherd, and I am also the sacrificial sheep! I am a willing knowledgeable sheep!

v. 19 Response: You are demon possessed! You are mad!!! (again, John calling us to make a choice about Jesus)

John 10:22 Jesus in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication. This is a feast associated with the rededication of the temple after the abomination of desolation of Antiochus Epiphanes. Judas Maccabaeus was considered a deliverer of Israel (and a prefigure of the Messiah). This was like a resurrection of Judaism, as if from the dead. The point of this feast is that God will resurrect his people. Theme of this section is that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, as demonstrated when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus shows his ministry to be parallel to the Feast of Dedication in John 10:25-28 I will resurrect my people.

**John 11: Sign #7 (for John) the greatest sign of Jesus’ ministry. The Raising of Lazarus** no time to cover this.

This more or less ends our topic, but….

By the way, the greatest example of Jesus fulfilling the expectation of a Jewish Passover is in the third Passover of his ministry, which is his final and greatest sign.

Jesus was offered as the sacrificial Passover lamb on the eve of the Passover.

His blood was spread on a wooden beam, as was done during the original Passover.

None of his bones were broken, as was reenacted at every Passover.

He celebrated the last Seder with his apostles, at which he tells him that from now on, He will be the bread and the wine that is offered at the Passover.

Then Jesus became the sacrificial lamb that saves all of us from our own spiritual Egypt.

He is the lamb, slain from the creation of the world. (Rev 13:8). For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the antitype to the Feast of Passover, which is the Lord’s Supper. 1 Cor 5:8.

By the way, Jesus also fulfilled the expectation contained in the Feast of Firstfruits. The Passover was the 14th of Nisan. The Feast of Firstfruits was on 15th of Nisan. This was the day that Jesus was raised from the dead, because Jesus is the firstfruit from the dead. 1 Cor 15:20.

**The Book of Acts**

Theme of Acts:

There is not so much a single theme, as there are multiple themes or lines to the story, as this is an historical document.

The themes are mostly established in the first chapter.

I. The work of the Holy Spirit in establishing the Church. Acts 1:2, 1:4-5, 1:7, 1:16

II. The Kingdom of God revealed. Acts 1:3, 1:6

III. The growth and development of the Church. 1:8

Timeline

AD 30 Pentecost Acts 2

32 Church Scattered after Stephen martyred. Acts 8:1-3

33 or 34 Conversion of Saul/Paul Acts 9:1-22

about 37 First Gentiles baptized. Acts 10-11:18

42 or 43 Barnabas joins Paul in Antioch. Acts 11:22-24

45-47 Paul’s first missionary journey Acts 13-14

48 Council in Jerusalem. Acts 15 (14 years after Paul’s conversion)

48-52 Paul’s second missionary Journey (end fixed by Gallio’s

 proconsulship) Acts 16-18:22

52-57 Paul’s third missionary journey Acts 18:23-Acts 21:16

57 Paul arrested in Jerusalem

57-59 Paul a prisoner in Caesarea

60-62 Paul a prisoner in Rome Book of Acts ends.

62 Probably freed. Went to Spain?

65 (?) Martyrdom in Rome

Luke: Jesus goes to Jerusalem.

Acts: Jesus goes out from Jerusalem (through his apostles)

**I. Acts and Jesus**

Acts 1:1 All Jesus began to do and to teach. Here we see that Jesus is still a major character in Acts. Jesus continues to work in Acts.

Examples:

He works miracles: Acts 3:6,10,30, Acts 9:34, Acts 13:11, Acts 14:3.

He is seen at God’s right hand Acts 7:55-56.

He appears to Saul Acts 9:4-5.

He speaks to Ananias Acts 9:10-16.

He tells Peter to go to Cornelius’ house Acts 10:13-15.

He comforts Paul and Silas in prison Acts 18:9-10.

He sends Paul to preach to the Gentiles Acts 22:17-21.

He tells Paul he must go to Rome in chains Acts 23:11

This is Jesus’ church. Matthew 28:20 I will be with you always.

As we go through Acts, be mindful of Jesus in the background

**II. Even more so, we see the Holy Spirit acting and controlling events in Acts.**  This is the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent.

Acts of the Apostles could very well be called Acts of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:2 Jesus gave instruction through the Holy Spirit.

1:4-5 Wait for the Holy Spirit.

1:7 Power from the Holy Spirit.

1:16 The Holy Spirit spoke the prophecies

2:1-4 The Holy Spirit falls on the apostles.

2:17-18 Pouring of the Holy Spirit prophesied in Joel.

4:8 Peter spoke, as he was filled by the Holy Spirit.

4:25 He spoke through David.

4:31 They were filled with the Holy Spirit and the house was shaken.

5:32 The Holy Spirit witnesses to the resurrection.

6:3-6 Those known to be full of the Holy Spirit chosen to lead.

7:55 Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit.

8:29 The Holy Spirit tells Philip to share with the Ethiopian Eunuch.

9:31 The Church strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit.

10:19 The Holy Spirit tells Peter to go with the three Gentile visitors.

10:44-47 The Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his house (confirming that salvation was for the Gentiles too).

11:28 The Holy Spirit tells Agabus about a famine in the Roman world.

13:2-4 The Holy Spirit set apart Barnabas and Saul for missionary work, and sends them off.

13:52 The disciples filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

15:28 The Holy Spirit influenced the decision of the Jerusalem Council.

16:7 The Spirit of Jesus prevents them from going to Bithyia.

20:22 Paul compelled by the Holy Spirit to go to Jerusalem.

20:23 The Holy Spirit warns Paul of danger.

20:28 The Holy Spirit makes and chooses elders.

21:11 The Holy Spirit tells Agabus how Paul will die.

Today: Jesus’ Mission: Our Mission Bear in mind that the Holy Spirit empowers us and guides us as we put into effect Jesus’ mission.

**III. Acts and the Kingdom of God.**

Acts 1:3 What was Jesus talking about? The Kingdom of God.

Acts 2:17-21 The Kingdom comes, as prophesied in the OT.

Acts 10 The Kingdom comes to the Gentiles.

Acts 8:12 Philip proclaims the Kingdom

Acts 14:22 We are on our way into the kingdom of God

Acts 19:8 He persuaded them about the kingdom of God.

Acts 20:25 Paul preached everywhere about the Kingdom of God.

**IV. Acts as a story of the growth and development of the Church and the spread of the gospel.**

Acts 1:8 This is the theme verse for the Book of Acts.

A scary vision. Yet, that is what they did.

Acts is not just a series of nice, unconnected stories. It is a record of a movement which, in the end, completely, absolutely, totally, forever, changed the world. It is hard for us to imagine how much they changed the future course of human (and eternal) history.

Growth of the Church in Acts.

Acts 2:41 Three thousand added that day.

Acts 4:4 The number of disciples grew to five thousand.

Acts 5:14 More and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.

Acts 5:28 You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. Part I of Acts 1:8 completed.

Acts 6:7 The number of disciples increased rapidly and a large number of priests were obedient.

Acts 8:4 Those scattered preached the word wherever they went.

Acts 9:31 The Church grew in numbers throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria. Part II of Acts 1:8 completed.

Acts 11:24 a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Acts 16:5 the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

Acts 17:6 These men have caused trouble all over the world. (completing stage 4 of Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth) Part III of Acts 1:8 “completed.”

The Roman Empire was an amalgam of an ancient polytheism, local gods, Greek philosophies (Pytharorean, Epicurean, Stoic, Neoplatonist), Gnosticism, Greek, Egyptian and Persian Mystery religions and Persian dualist religions.

Logically, it makes absolutely no sense that a Jewish movement, led mostly by poor, uneducated people, from a relatively insignificant province in the Roman empire, with a world view diametrically opposed to that of the Roman/Greek world, following a leader who was executed at a young age—one who never wrote anything and who never left a 100 mile radius of his place of birth, who did not even speak Greek could do what none of the barbarians could do—conquer Rome.

This is what we need today. The only hope for this world is for us to change the world all over again. We need a new revolution like that we find in Acts.

1. Early on it was the incomparable zeal and personal conviction of those who had personally known Jesus of Nazareth and those directly influenced by these witnesses. This was a Jesus movement. What do we learn from that?

2. Add to this the powerful truth-claims related to fulfilled prophecies, miracles and the resurrection. The movement was based on truth-claims which were supported by evidence and which made sense. What do we learn from that?

As the immediacy of the events faded and as these influences naturally were reduced somewhat as well, why did the church continue its exponential growth? These two alone were not enough for Christianity to conquer the Pagan religions and Greek philosophy.

3. Because of the obvious and inescapable moral/ethical superiority of the adherents to this growing Christian movement.

4. Because, after Origen, Christian theology was seen as intellectually on par with the Stoicism and neo-Platonism if its day, but with much to offer to the common person that these did not offer.

Christianity answered the answers that thinking people ask far better than any other world view out there.

5. Having been established as a movement with intellectual credentials, the church offered meaning, purpose and dignity for both poor and rich, for both the intellectual and the uneducated. Perhaps most significantly of all, it offered the same meaning and purpose and nearly the same dignity for both male and female—something that the mystery religions and the “true philosophy” absolutely did not offer. Many of the influential church members in the first three centuries were female and this is no accident.

6. Because it is the truth and God was behind this movement.

Acts 1:8 fulfilled:

Act I Acts Ch 3-7 They reach Jerusalem stage #1.

Then God a`1 sked the Jews to do something they were NOT inclined to do. To go to Samaria and the ends of the world required them to do things they were not at all comfortable doing. It broke every stereotype and preconceived notion about the specialness of the Jewish people they had.

Act II Acts 8:1, 4-5 A persecution breaks out and God scatters the church.

Philip preaches in Samaria.

Now the unclean half-Jewish Samaritans hear the word of God.

Surprisingly, to us, this did not equate with converting Gentiles.

A Jewish Prayer: Thank you God that you did not make me a woman or a Samaritan!

In going from Galilee to Jerusalem, the Jews went around Samaria.

The Jews (including the apostles and the disciples) hated the Samaritans and did not think them worthy of the kingdom.

But Philip preaches in Samaria.

Act III Acts 8:26-29

v. 26 An angel tells Philip to go.

v. 29 The Holy Spirit told him to go. Praise God an angel and the Holy Spirit intervened here, otherwise Philip would not have done this. Why?

The Ethiopian eunuch is probably a Jewish convert (not born Jewish).

He was barely more Jewish than a Samaritan.

Worse than that, he was a eunuch.

Eunuchs were “unclean.” Philip has to reach out to and hop in a chariot with an unclean person.

An angel told him to do it!!! Will you go and bring the gospel to “unclean” people? (Spanish speaker, homeless, gay person, old, young…)

Will you go to uncomfortable places and people?

We have completed stage 2: Judea and Samaria. But that is not all!

Act IV. Acts 10 Now Gentiles will come into the church. God had said dozens of times, through Abraham ALL NATIONS will be blessed. But the church does not want to do this. They did not get it.

We can read the Bible our whole lives and NOT GET IT.

Acts 10:9-16 Peter has three visions.

v. 13 GOD says “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.

And Peter says to the God of the universe. “Surely not!!!”

Acts 10:19 The Holy Spirit tells Paul to go with Cornelius’ men.

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking.

The Holy Spirit interrupted his sermon in the middle!!!

Finally Acts 10:47-48 OK. I guess we better baptize Gentiles.

God sent Peter to an uncomfortable place. Aren’t you glad he went?

Act V Last episode.

Acts 28:2,4 “Islanders” is a bad translation. The barbarians. These are not Jews. They are not half-Jewish Samaritans. They are not unclean Jewish converts. They are not civilized Greco-Roman converts. They are barbarians.

But what are these barbarians doing for a ship-load of dangerous criminals?

These barbarians showed unusual kindness. They built a fire, welcomed them, took them into their homes.

This is a sort of re-enactment of the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

The story of the good barbarians.

At the end of acts, the church had not yet reached the “barbarians.”

Acts 28 is a sort of foreshadowing of the church reaching, literally, all nations, daring great danger, crossing every barrier—language, economic, culture, prejudice.

What about you?

What is the moral of the story? God is sending us out.

God is empowering us with the Holy Spirit.

But when he says go into all the world—to the ends of the earth—he is quite serious.

Who do you hesitate to share with? A rich person? A Sikh person? A gay person?

Who is the “barbarian” in your life?

Acts 2:1-41 as the model sermon

Jesus fulfilled all the OT messianic prophecy, therefore he is Messiah.

Jesus did marvelous sign, wonders and miracles, therefore he is Lord.

Because of your sin, you put him to death on the cross.

But God raised him from the dead.

Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins and to receive the Holy Spirit.

Repeated in Acts 3:11-26

Repeated in Acts 10:34-48

Repeated in Acts 13:16-41 People claim Paul and Peter preached a different gospel. Proved wrong by this parallel.

Also implied in Acts 17:1-3

The only other “sermon” in Acts is Acts 17:16f , but this is more of a public lecture about Christianity than a preaching of the gospel.

Acts 2:42-47 as model of worship and church life.

Repeated in Acts 4:32-37

Apostle’s teaching

Fellowship

Breaking of bread (Lord’s Supper) (breaking of bread in homes = meals)

Prayer

They had everything in common.

Two important scenes in Acts:

Acts 17:16-34 Paul explains Christianity to Athenian intellectuals at the Areopagus. Jerusalem meets Athens.

Most visitors to Athens were extremely impressed with its architecture and its history of great learning and philosophy. Paul was not so impressed. In fact, he was “greatly distressed.” Are we “greatly distressed” at the worldliness around us? Athens was described by contemporaries as a “forest of idols.”

v. 18 Paul confronts the Epicureans and Stoics.

Epicureans: A philosophical pseudo-religion, founded by Epicurus in 307 BC.

Epicurus was an atomist which was the closest equivalent of an atheist at that time. A more accurate description would be deism which proposes a God/designer who does not interact with his creation (Newton, for example) He was a skeptic of God intervening in human affairs. The greatest “good” in Epicureanism is pleasure and the absence of pain, but most Epicureans were not hedonists (pleasure for pleasure’s sake), but rather preached a modest lifestyle, avoiding extremes. Epicureans might fit in well in today’s modern society, except for their emphasis on moderation.

Stoicism: A philosophy founded in the 3rd century BC by Zeno. Similar to Buddhism. It teaches detachment from emotion (thus stoicism). Its concept of God is found in nature/creation. They have been described as panentheists (God is in everything). This “God” is completely impersonal—kind of like the “Force” of Star Wars. To the Stoic, the best indication of the quality of one’s life is not his/her beliefs, but the way he lives his life. The ideal person is the sage—the virtuous and wise person.

Notice Paul in Acts 17:16-34

v. 17 he **reasoned** in the Synagogue in the market and with the Greek philosophers

v. 22-23 He found common ground. “I see that you are extremely religious in every respect.”

v. 24-28 He described a much superior world view/God to them

God is Creator. (v. 24, 28) He exists outside of Creation. (disproves Stoicism)

God is close by. (v. 27 he is not far from us) (disproves deism and Epicureanism)

God is personal and has given us a purpose. (v. 27)

God will bring everything into judgment. Evil will be defeated (disproves dualism) v. 30,31

Paul quotes from Aretas, a Stoic Philosopher. “For we are his offspring.”

Acts 20:17-38 Paul’s farewell address to the church he held most dear. Like Matthew 28:18-20 or Acts 1:3-8 for Jesus

20:18 You know how I lived in the province of Asia…. Q: How did Paul live? Let it challenge you. Imagine being able to say to those who know you, “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you.”

v. 19 I served the Lord with great humility… Imagine having served with such humility that you could look at those you had ministered to in the eyes and make this bold statement.

v. 19 and with tears…. Note the passion of Paul for those he ministered to. Have you cried for them? What were these tears about?

v. 20-21 What did Paul preach? Repentance and faith. Where? “publicly and from house to house.”

v. 22-24 Q: Why to Jerusalem? (because the Holy Spirit told him)

Paul wanted to preach to the powerful in Rome. The only plan he could think of was to go to Jerusalem and get himself arrested, so he could be sent to Rome in chains.

What would you be willing to do to see the gospel spread?

v. 24 I consider my life worth nothing.

v. 25-27 How could Paul feel “innocent of the blood of all men.”? He took every opportunity “to proclaim to you the whole will of God.”

Can you look at your family and make this declaration?

Can you look at your classmates or co-workers or neighbors and declare yourself before them to be “innocent of the blood of all men.”?

Intro to the letters of Paul:

1. Occasional Epistles 1,2 Cor, Gal, Eph, Phil, Coll, 1,2 Thess

2. Pastoral Epistles 1,2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon

3. General Epistles (to the whole church) Romans? James, Hebrews, Peters, Johns, Jude.

Our Bible: Organized by length (like the Qur’an and not very logical)

Paul’s letters, Chronicological:

Gal 48

1,2 Thess 51-52

1,2 Cor 55-56

Romans 57

Prison letters:

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon 60-62

2nd imprisonment

1,2 Timothy, Titus 63-65.

**The Book of Romans**

**Notes**

Background:

Theme: Salvation/Justification by Faith.

Subtheme: God is joining Jew and Gentile in the kingdom of God.

Paul is both writing a mature summary of his theology and writing a pastoral letter to deal with the divisions between Greek and Jewish Christians in Rome.

If the [only] theme of Romans is, as Reformation commentators claimed, justification by faith, then how do we explain Romans 9-11 and 14?

Reformers: Romans 1-4 the heart of the book. 21st century popular theology: Romans 9-11 is the heart of the book.

Is Romans vertical (God ⇔man) or horizontal (Jew⇔Gentile) Probably the best answer is both.

Theme Passage: Romans 1:17 The righteous will live by faith or… Those who by faith are righteous shall live.

Style: A diatribe. A staged argument with a perceived opponent of what Paul is teaching here (probably a Judaizing believer) (Malachi and James are diatribes)

Date of writing: About AD 51-53 based on Acts 18:12 which tells us Paul stayed in Corinth about 1-1/2 years and which also mentions Gallio. We know from an inscription found in Delphi that Gallio was a brother of Seneca and a proconsul of Achaia under Claudius, which fixes the date.

Background to Romans: The earliest church in Rome was almost certainly mainly Jewish in character (Acts 2:10). But then Claudius kicked the Jews out of Rome because of strife with the Christians (Chrestus) in AD 49.

Then the Roman church was primarily Gentile

By AD 52 Jews were beginning to return to Rome and perhaps were not pleased that the church was no longer culturally Jewish.

This is born out, both when Paul challenges the religious arrogance of the Jews throughout the book, and when he challenges that of the Gentiles in 11:18-25.

Outline of Romans:

I. 1:1-17 The Righteousness of God.

II. 1:18-32 The Gentiles are lost.

III. 2:1-29 The Jews are lost.

IV. 3:1-20 All are lost.

V. 3:21-5:21 Salvation is by faith, through the blood of Jesus.

VI. 6:1-8:27 The Way of Holiness

VII. 8:28-11:36 Man’s unbelief and God’s gracious choice.

VIII. 12:1-16:27 Living by faith.

**Shorter Notes on Romans for class:**

I. 1:1-17 The Righteousness of God.

Rom 1:5 We are called to the obedience that comes from faith.

Rom 1:16 The gospel is the power that brings salvation to everyone who believes.

First to the Jew, then to the Gentile. Why first to the Jew? See Ch. 4.

v. 17 From faith to faith. By faith from first to last. It is all about faith!

Rom 1:17 A possible theme verse: Those who through faith are righteous, shall live. (also in Rom 3:26,28, Rom 4:5, Rom 5:1, Gal 3:11)

II. 1:18-32 The Gentiles are lost.

To the Gentiles, Paul says v. 18 “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

Gentile sinners are under the wrath of God.

Several times in this section Paul says of those who suppress the truth that God “gives them over” (v. 24,26,28) to their sins and their consequences.

Of course, this is the section which contains the only highly specific NT statement condemning homosexual practice. Rom 1:24-27.

The Jews in this diatribe are saying Amen! That is why God ought to favor the Jews.

III. 2:1-29 The Jews are lost.

To the self-righteous Jews who are thinking Paul is supporting their view of the Gentiles, Paul says:

Rom 2:1-4 You judge yourself. You are being judgmental.

Rom 2:9 Both salvation (ch 1) and judgment are “First for the Jew and then to the Gentile.

Rom 2:25-26 Circumcision is of no value to those who break the law.

IV. 3:1-20 All are lost.

Rom 3:1-2 Paul is VERY sensitive to the Jew’s defensiveness.

There is MUCH advantage to being Jewish!!

But when it comes to salvation, there is none. Why?

Rom 3:8-9 No advantage. Jews and Gentiles alike are lost. All are lost.

Rom 3:20 Through the Law we become conscious of sin.

Similarly: Rom 5:20 and Rom 7:13 Sin became utterly sinful.

V. 3:21-5:21 Salvation is by faith, through the blood of Jesus.

Summary of this section: Rom 3:23-24 One of the great passages in the entire NT.

All have sinned and fallen short.

All are (potentially) justified by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. v. 25 to be received by faith.

Great Bible words:

**3:24 Justified (Gr. *dikios)***

 ***-*aligned with, -declared “not guilty.”**

**3:24 redemption (Gr. *apolytrosis*)**

 **- payment for, ransom**

**3:25 atonement at-one-ment**

**3:25 faith (pistos) Meaning? Ch 4**

**3:25 righteousness Righteous means things are as they should be—as God intended.**

Rom 3:26 God is both just and he justifies.

Romans 4 The faith of Abraham. Abraham is the paradigmatic person of faith who demonstrated with absolute certainty that salvation is by faith, not by works, and not by obeying the Law of Moses.

The key idea here: Romans 4:3, quoting Genesis 15:6. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.

Rom 4:10-11 This happened before he was circumcised. “the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. (the Jewish Christians are not happy right now)

Rom 4:16 Abraham is a prefigure, a prototype of all those who are saved by faith.

v. 17 many nations.

Some great passages on faith.

Romans 4:18 He believed against hope.

Q: What did he believe? He believed God’s promises and he acted on that belief.

Rom 4:20 Abraham was “fully persuaded.” Are you?

Rom 5 The result of our faith:

v. 1 justified

v. 1 peace with God

v. 2 access to God

v. 2 we will stand/confidence

v. 4-5 we have hope.

Romans 5:12-19 A very difficult passage about the “fall” of mankind through the sin of Adam.

Summary: Jesus is like Adam but

v. 18-19 The result of one sin was condemnation for all.

The result of one act by Jesus on the cross is life for all people.

Jesus is not like Adam.

v. 15 But the gift is not like the trespass. The judgement followed one sin, but the gift follows many sins.

VI. 6:1-8:27 The Way of Holiness

Rom 6:1-7 Paul in his diatribe: No! I am not an antinomian. Antinomians teach that because of grace, Christians are not under obligation to the moral law.

When we are baptized into Christ, we are buried with him, and we are also raised with him.

The rest of the chapter: Slaves to sin or slaves to righteousness. Rom 6:11.

Rom 7 The famous passage about the flesh. Ex Rom 7:21-24.

Q: Is talking about himself before he became a Christian or after? A great debate and divide over this amongst scholars.

Answer. Both. Much more so before, but even now, though Paul is no longer a slave to sin, but a slave to righteousness, we all know that, even now, the flesh has this effect on us.

Romans 8:1-27 Life by the Holy Spirit. The best passage on the Holy Spirit in the Bible?

Romans 8:1-4 a summary. Romans 8:26 The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness.

Similar to Galatians: Living by the flesh/Law or living by the Holy Spirit.

VII. 8:29-11:36 Man’s unbelief and God’s gracious choice.

Romans 8:28-39 God’s predestination.

Romans 8:29-30 Predestination: Two options.

Calvinism: There are two categories of people, the elect and the reprobate, and God predestines all people to be one or the other. This is TULIP

Total depravity

Unconditional election

Limited atonement

Irresistible grace

Perseverance of the saint.

Wrong.

Those God FOREKNEW he predestined to be conformed to his likeness.

Those whom God, in his foreknowledge, knew would be saved through the blood of Jesus, he also predestined them to the possibility of that salvation.

1 John 2:2 Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, not only for the elect.

2 Cor 5:15 He died for all.

1 Tim 2:4 God desires all people to be saved. That is his will. Is his will always done? No!

Romans Ch 9-11 is a lengthy explanation of why God is now choosing/favoring the Gentiles over the Jews. Remember… First for the Jews, then for the Gentiles.

Rom 9:1-5 Paul is VERY emotional. v. 3 I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people.

v. 4-5 Great advantages for being a Jew (as said previously in Rom 3:1-2 and again in Rom 10:1-4

Rom 9:6 Paul explains himself. Not all Israel (physically) are Israel (spiritually).

He repeats this in Galatians.

But… Rom 9:13 The older (Jews) will serve the younger (Gentiles) Jacob I loved, Esau I hated (Malachi 1:2-3).

If it is good for the goose, it is good for the gander.

Rom 9:15 I will choose whom I will choose. You were happy when I chose you, so am I not still sovereign?

God’s predestination is about blessing, not about punishment.

Why is Paul so emotional? Why is God so angry? Because the Jews are angry at God for being so gracious to the Gentiles! They are like Jonah.

Rom 9:20 But who are you, oh man, to talk back to God?

Why is he now turning from the Jews to the Gentiles? Rom 9:32

Rom 10 Somewhat of a repeat of Romans 9

Rom 11 The natural branches (Jews) are being broken off, and the unnatural branches (Gentiles) are being grafted in.

Rom 11:11-12

But you Gentiles, do not DARE to take this for granted, or you, too, will be cut off.

Rom 11:17-21.

Rom 11:25-26 A difficult passage.

VIII. 12:1-16:27 Living by faith.

In view of all this, what does God want from the Romans/us?

Rom 12:1-2 To willingly offer ourselves to God as our true act of worship.

Rom 12 Practical advice for us to show Christian love to one another and to outsiders.

Rom 13 Love is demonstrated through submission to one another and even to governing authorities.

Rom 14 The weak and the strong.

Rom 14:1-12 Word to the “weak” (ie those who are bothered by their conscience in a particular area such as tattoos, alcohol, certain entertainment…)

Do not judge the strong. 14:10

Rom 14:13-18 Word to the strong. 12:16 Do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. (in other words, keep it to yourself and do not hurt the conscience of the weak. Do this in privacy)

Summary: Rom 14:19-21

Rom 15 Weak and strong continued. Rom 15:7

Paul’s plans to visit Rome and Spain.

Rom 16 Greetings.

Romans 16:1 Phoebe is a sister in Cenchrea, which is the port of Corinth. Paul is writing this letter in Corinth.

16:3 Pricilla and Aquila have gone back to Rome, after being expelled by Claudius.

16:5 Rome appears to consist of house churches.

We see that women had a very significant role in church life and were close friends of Paul.

**Longer notes on Romans:**

**I. Romans 1:1-17 The Righteousness of God.**

Romans 1:1-7 Paul’s greeting.

1:1 Paul a. a servant/slave (*doulos*) of Christ b. and an apostle.

Paul is a servant first, then an apostle (Matthew 20:24-28 the greatest…)

Q: How does this apply in our relationships with one another in the Church?

Q: Why does he mention his apostleship? He did not plant the church in Rome. He cannot assume their submission to his authority for that reason. Paul’s authority a major issue in what he is about to write.

How can Paul be an apostle if there are only supposed to be 12 apostles? (Rev. 21:14 is clear there are 12 apostles, 1 Cor 15:5 “the twelve”

1 Cor 15:8-9 Paul says he is an apostle abnormally born. ie. he is an apostle but not one of the twelve. (note: Barnabus Acts 14:14 and James Gal 1:19 the definition of apostle for the NT church was not as set as we might think.)

Paul: You should pay careful attention to what I am saying because:

v. 2 It was foretold by the prophets

v. 3-4 It was confirmed by the Holy Spirit

 v. 5 I am the specially chosen apostle to the Gentiles (all the nations)

 v. 6-7 I am connected to all the churches. (you who are loved by God probably is pulling in the Jews there)

v. 5 What are we called to? Answer: To the obedience that comes from faith. (literally the obedience of faith. Johnson “For that obedience which is faith”)

Note: this exact phrase is found in Romans 16:26 which cannot be a coincidence.

Q: Are you obedient?

Q: Where ought our obedience come from?

Q: Where else might obedience come from for some of us?

Q: Does obedience imply faith? Does obedience imply salvation?

Q: Does faith imply obedience? Does faith imply salvation?

Here is his point: The key to EVERYTHING is faith!!!

1:5-6 Here we have evidence of a Gentile audience “all the nations” “yourselves” (In Romans 4:1 Abraham is “our forefather” so Jewish audience is also implied)

Romans 1:8-15 Paul REALLY wanted to come to visit them. Honest!!!

Q: Why does Paul want to come to visit the church in Rome? (v. 8)

Because of their faith, of course!!

Q: Why would this motivate him? (Because everything follows faith)

My personal church to visit: Jakarta. Why? Because of their faith.

Romans 1:16-17 Paul’s theme passage and the essence of the entire book of Romans.

v. 16 This message is the power *dunamis.* The power for what? To save those who believe it.

Saved in what sense? Saved in that we are righteous in this life and that we become a united people of God—enter his kingdom. This is a communal salvation, not just an individual salvation. Already but not yet.

1:16 First for the Jew…. This was the truth literally. Q: Why for them first? (Romans 4… Because of the faith of Abraham.)

1:17 A more literal translation: He who by faith is righteous will live. (quoting Hab 2:4) (Also in Romans 3:26, 3:28, 4:5, 4:11, 5:1, Gal 3:11 which was written before Romans)

Q: Will live in what sense? (both now and in the future)

Q: What are some other ways that we seek to be saved?

Righteous means to live in a right, aligned relationship with O & A and with God.

It is by faith “from first to last.” A thoroughly faithful faith. You cannot escape this, the most basic truth of the scriptures. There is no secret, other way to salvation.

**II. Romans 1:18-2:16 The Gentiles are lost.**

Romans 1:18-32 The only rational world view is Christian monotheism. Those who reject are not rejecting rationality but God.

Romans 1:18-20 Unbelievers must actively, willfully suppress the truth in order to not believe.

Q: What truths must they suppress in order to not believe in a Creator/God?

1. Design in the universe.
2. Moral truth.
3. The existence of anything at all. (v. 20)

Q: What might be some rational arguments against this?

1. Given the pain and suffering….
2. You cannot see him. But how do we know that there is dark energy? How do we know that there is dark matter? By the facts of the observable universe.

1:18 God’s wrath is being revealed… Is this because God does not love us? Absolutely not. He gives us a choice. It is US who suppress the truth, not God. God is love and God is just, but his wrath does not disprove his love. Love gives a choice, but with choice comes consequences.

1:21-23 If we choose to deny the truth of God, our thinking overall becomes darkened. If we accept a completely incorrect world view, all the assumptions we make about reality will be warped.

Q: Is this an unfair exaggeration?

Foolish in what sense? In that they worship the things created rather than the creator of those things (v. 25). This is a diatribe against idolatry, but let us apply it to the present day. They worship success, money, property, pleasure…. It is foolish to worship the thing created rather than the one who created it.

This certainly what atheist scientists do.

1:24-32 If we willfully choose to disbelieve in the obvious—the God of the Bible, then he gives us over (v. 24, 26, 28). To what? To the things we have worshipped. We become depraved. Is this because God does not love us? NO!!! It is because he loves us enough to give us a choice, including the consequences of that choice.

2 Thess 2:9-11 false miracles and signs… God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe what is false.

God gives us a choice. He says, if that is what you want, then that is what you get. God will not force us to believe in him.

Ezekiel 7:19-21 They will loathe their gold.

Things you can buy Things you cannot buy

Medicine health

Books knowledge of God, wisdom

Position character

Attention love

v. 26-27 he uses homosexuality as an example of what depravity looks like. It is an illustration and certainly a main point.

v. 32 God: All humans are fully aware that these things are evil, yet they choose to do them willfully. In fact, they use their creativity to invent ways of doing evil (v. 30). The Gentile says, “Who, me?” God says, “Yes, you!”

Do not be deceived by the world into thinking they are innocent. They know exactly what they are doing.

Johnson uses the analogy of a big party where someone dies right then and there, and then everyone goes on partying as if nothing had happened. The have to willfully deny the truth to do this.

God is not like the gods of the Greeks. He is not capricious. His love is predictable, but so is his anger and his wrath.

At this point, the Jews are saying to themselves: Yeah, those Gentiles are really depraved. They really deserve the wrath of God. They are about to throw the first stone (John 8:1f)

God is about to catch them in their hypocrisy. Besides, in Romans 2:2 and 3:9-20 he is going to tell the Jews that they are in fact not even more righteous than the Gentiles.

Ch 1 The Gentiles are lost.

Ch 2 The Jews equally lost.

**III. Romans 2:17-29 The Jews are lost.**

Q: What does it mean to be judgmental? Dictionary: “One who forms a lot of opinions—usually critical ones about other people.” “Having or displaying and excessively critical point of view.” This described the Jews Paul is talking to.

Romans 2:1-4 You (Jew) who judge the “sinner” are a hypocrite because you do the same thing.

Q: Did the Jews literally act as sinfully as the Gentiles? Probably not, but in the light of James 2:8-11, anyone who breaks the Law is a lawbreaker and is subject to judgment.

This applies to us a Christians as well. Are we like the brother who stayed home in the Parable of the Prodigal Son? Q: In what ways do you tend to be judgmental?

You judgmental people ignore the fact that God was kind, tolerant and patient with you (v. 4) (Matthew 18:21-35 Parable of Unmerciful Servant)

Being judgmental = showing contempt for God’s kindness. Do we see it this way?

f

Why is God kind, tolerant and patient? Because he wants us to repent.

2:5-11 You (who? The judgmental Jew of Christian) are storing up wrath for yourself.

v. 9 God is fair. Salvation is “first for the Jew” but judgment will also be “first for the Jew” The Jews get the first shot, whether they like it or not.

What is the principle here and in Romans 2:5-16? God is fair and just, whether we like it or not. Those who have been given more, God will expect more of them. This is not good news for the Jews.

Romans 2:7 Is this works salvation? No!

Note: Some have interpreted Romans 2:12-16 as offering hope to those who have never heard of Christ. Perhaps, but that is not the point of this passage. His point is that, because the Jews were given great knowledge, they are more subject to judgment. This is proved by 2:17-29.

Romans 2:17-24 Paul takes on the self-righteous Jew (or Christian, for that matter).

2:28-29 Jewishness, all along, was a spiritual thing, not a physical thing.

Real (New Testament) circumcision is of the heart Coll 2:11-12 baptism is a spiritual circumcision.

What was their mistake? They saw the outside as more important than the inside. Clearly, this could happen to us!

At this point, the Jew is feeling pretty depressed. What good, then, was it to be Jewish? Paul will respond to that in great detail in Romans 9:1-9 Theirs is the covenant, , the law, the temple, etc.

Romans 1:18-32 The Gentiles are lost.

Romans 2:1-29 The Jews are also lost.

Romans 3:1-20 All are equally lost.

**IV. Romans 3:1-20 All are lost.**

Romans 3:1-2 Jews. Do not be depressed. There is great advantage in having been a Jew. “They have been entrusted with the very words of God.” (also see Romans 9:1-4) The fact that most Jews did not combine Jewishness with faith is not to be blamed on God!!!

 v. 4 Let God be true, and every man a liar. (similar to Romans 9:20 “Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?”)

Romans 3:5-8 Part of the “diatribe” Similar to Romans 6:1 Apparently, some of Paul’s opponents have been accusing him of supporting antinomianism (an antinomian is one who is so strongly against legalism that he or she does not believe in applying social norms at all)

Romans 3:9 “What shall we conclude, then? Are we any better?

Q: Who is “we”? Answer: It is the Jews. (or anyone else who thinks he or she is “better.”)

Why? “Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin” (this is why Romans 2:12-16 should give extremely small hope to Gentiles who do not come under Christ).

Romans 3:10 A key passage to Paul “There is no difference.” He could have said, “There is no essential difference.”

Romans 3:11 No one seeks God…. no one does good (quoting Psalms 14:3

Right now, I am feeling a bit defensive…. You are telling me I have not done a single good thing? Ever? That is not what he is saying. He is NOT saying no one has ever done a good thing. He is saying that no one does good (Mark 10:17-18)

I am still feeling defensive. Don’t some people seek God? In fact, doesn’t Jeremiah 29:11-12 tell us to seek God with all our hearts, and if we do we will be found by him? I did! Isn’t Paul exaggerating?

Q: Are you a good person? Bible: No, you are not.

Q: Is Romans 3:13-18 true of you? Apart from Jesus, yes it is.

Romans 3:19-20 The purpose of the law (presumably the Law of Moses, but for Gentiles it would be the law of their conscience): It made us realize how truly sinful we were and how much we needed the grace of God. It made sin truly sinful. “Through the law we became conscious of sin.”

Or as Paul puts it in Romans 7:13 “so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. (also Romans 5:20)

Summary of Romans 1:18-3:20 We are in deep trouble!!!!!

**V. Romans 3:21-5:21 Salvation is by faith, through the blood of Jesus.**

Romans 3:21-30 God’s solution to the problem. Salvation by faith, through the blood of Jesus.

3:21-30 is the heart of the book of Romans.

3:21 The Law and the Prophets testify that a different kind of righteousness was coming. (Isaiah 53, Daniel 9, Jeremiah 31:31f, Ezekiel 36:24-27 and many more)

This should not be a surprise, especially to the Jews!

3:22 a righteousness that is by faith from first to last.

3:22-23 There is no difference. Q: What is this a reference to? v. 23 In case you did not already get the point in Romans 3:10-18—all have sinned.

3:24 Here is the great news we have been waiting for.

Q: What does “justified” mean. (Greek: *dikios*) To be justified means to be aligned with. To be declared “not guilty”.

It means to be made righteous (even though you are not). It is to be “just as if I’d“ never sinned.

redemption. (Gr. *apolytrosis*) Payment for. Ransom.

Question: Who was paid this redemption price? Medieval Christianity had the “Ransom Theory” of salvation, which is that Satan owned us and he was paid the ransom “money.” Gordon appears to support this idea in his book: “we have been bought back from the Devil’s pawn shop.” This is probably a mistake. A better theory is the “Satisfaction Theory” which proposes that the ransom satisfied the penalty required to release us from the consequences of sin. In this case, the “satisfaction”/ransom was paid to God.

Anselm: Cur Deus Homo (Why the God-Man, or Why God Became Man)

Theories of Atonement in the 12th Century

Anselm of Canterbury **The Satisfaction Theory** The debt was paid to God in that it made satisfaction for the consequences of sin.

Gregory the Great and Bernard of Clairvaux **The Ransom Theory** Jesus’ death paid the price to Satan to ransom us

Peter Abelard **The Moral/Exemplary Theory** Jesus set the example and if we follow this example, we will be saved.

Also: The Cappadocian Fathers: **The Deification Theory** God became man so that man can become like God.

Anselm completed what may be his most influential work in 1098 while Archbishop of Canterbury. With this work he turned to the doctrine of salvation—a thing which all Christians care about. The technical term for the study of salvation is soteriology. He invented what came to be known as the Satisfaction Theory of Atonement. This is the theory of atonement which is the most common one among both Protestants and Catholics today (at least to the small minority among us who actually have a theory of atonement). Anselm’s argument is as follows. Because of God’s nature, everything he is, he is infinitely. Sin is infinitely sinful and requires infinite restitution. Only an infinite being could make infinite atonement for infinite sin. Yet, in order for a being to make atonement for human sin, that being must be human. Therefore, God had to become man so that an infinite being could make infinite atonement for infinitely sinful sin. And thus the title for Anselm’s greatest work: Why the God-man.

Anselm’s argument is compelling on more than one front. Its explanation of why God became man seems superior to the only alternative offered by others before Anselm. The Greek Cappadocian fathers had proposed that God became man so that man could become like God (deification).

Anselm’s satisfaction theory also appears superior to other theories of atonement. One rival theory is the ransom theory, which proposes that Jesus died to pay a ransom to release us from slavery to Satan. This was the favorite theory of the church fathers. It was the accepted theory of redemption of Bernard of Clairvaux and virtually all of Anselm’s contemporaries. Its chief proponent, historically, was Gregory the Great. Anselm strongly criticized the ransom theory, arguing that God surely owes nothing to Satan. The ransom theory puts God on almost the same footing as Satan. We can see why Anselm rejected the soteriological theory of his contemporaries.

The third influential theory of atonement is that of Peter Abelard. Abelard, also a contemporary of Anselm, proposed the moral/exemplary theory, which is that Jesus became man in order to set a perfect example for us to follow. Jesus’ love awakes our love for God and leads to our salvation.

 Why did God become man?

Gregory of Nazianzus "What has not been assumed has not been healed;

It is what is united to his divinity that is saved. .

Anselm To make infinite atonement for infinite sin.

The satisfaction theory of atonement may be compelling, but it is worth noting that it ran somewhat counter to the thinking of Anselm’s time. For more than six hundred years, nearly all were baptized as infants. Therefore, the connection between salvation and baptism had weakened in people’s minds. For several hundred years, the Catholic idea of penance has been teaching people that the finite actions of finite people could make atonement for their own sins. Although the official doctrine of the Church was that salvation is by grace through the blood of Jesus, a huge system of penance and indulgences had arisen which surely implied to the unsophisticated believer that we are saved by our own works of penance. The doctrine of Purgatory, which was still developing in Anselm’s day, was to take this idea even a step further. If, as Abelard proposed, infinitely sinful sin requires an infinite atonement, then how does this fit with penance and indulgences? This is one of the central paradoxes of Medieval Roman Catholicism. The paradox has not been removed in modern Catholicism.

3:25 A sacrifice of atonement at-one-ment A sacrifice that makes us at one with God. A sacrifice that removes (for us anyway) the consequences of sin.

How? “through faith” We offer faith in lieu of death and God accepts this.

What is the definition of this word faith (Gr. *pistis*)? We will allow Romans 4 answer that question.

v. 25 and 26 He did this to demonstrate his justice. This could be confusing. How could God NOT punishing us for our sins demonstrate his justice?

Note: In our Jacoby, Smuley Boteach, Shabir Alli debate both the Rabbi and the Imam agreed that this is NOT just.

What does justice demand in this case? Romans 6:23 Ezek 18:4 Death!

This is the mystery of the gospel. God is at the same time just and the one who justifies. Justice and justification seemed to be at odds, but God solved this problem by showing the intensity of his judgment in the death of Jesus.

When Jesus died, it made sin utterly sinful because we could see in the most stark possible terms the horror and consequences of sin.

v. 27 No boasting. Q: Who was tempted to boast? The Jews (God is God of the gentiles too… v. 29)

v. 28 …saved by faith apart from works OF THE LAW (note: not faith apart from works)

v. 30 Here is why there is “no difference” (v. 23)

v. 31 How does faith uphold the law? By proving that works cannot save us.

**Romans Ch 4.** The supreme example of salvation by faith, not works: Abraham.

This chapter is extremely important and deserves more attention than we normally give it.

Romans 4:3 Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.

Q: How much “credit” does our work earn before God? Zero!!! Nothing to boast about at all. v. 4 What did God owe Abraham? Nothing!!!

Abraham, here, is a type of all who are saved by faith (4:16 he is the father of us all), so we better pay careful attention.

Q: What did Abraham believe?

Answer: He believed that God would do what he said he would do.

Genesis 15:1-6 makes this clear.

 He believed that if he totally put his trust for his life in God rather than in himself, God would meet all his needs.

If only we could have the faith of Abraham!!!

Question for all of us: **What do you believe?** If you believe the right thing, it will be credited to you as righteousness.

Q: Which is harder, working (Rom 4:2) or believing/trusting in God?

4:4-8 work = obligation. What do we gain by works? Not much.

 What do we gain by trusting God? Righteousness. (Note that he equates faith with trust)

Aside: Faith (pistos) have a range of meaning in the Bible. It can mean something close to belief (Hebrews 11:1,6). It can mean something closer to trust (Romans 4). It can be used as equivalent to obedience (Hebrews 3:18-19) In the Medieval Church “faith” meant a system of beliefs.

4:9-12 Paul seems to make too big of a deal out of the relative timing of Abraham’s circumcision. Why? His faith (and therefore his righteousness) preceded his circumcision. Conclusion: Righteousness is not gained by works of the law. (and remember Romans 2:25-29 about true circumcision)

Another conclusion. Abraham was reckoned as righteous while he was still a Gentile—before he was Jewish!

4:12 Who will be saved? Answer: Those who walk in the footsteps of Abraham.

Q: Where will walking in the footsteps of Abram take you?

a. Out of Ur. (technically, actually Haran) Genesis 12:1-5 (give up all you brought with you)

 Q: What do you need to walk away from? Luke 14:33, 9:61-62)

 An encouraging verse Genesis12:6-7 If, like Abraham, we leave Ur, like him, we will receive the promised land (heaven)!

b. To Mount Moriah. Genesis 22:11-15 (give up even the things God gave you)

 Q: What do you need to bring to Moriah?

4:13-15 Which do you live by? Law or faith?

4:15 Q: What does it mean when Paul says “where there is no law there is no transgression”? Rom 7:13 Romans 5:20

4:16 Who are Abraham’s offspring? (Who did the Jews think were his offspring?)

Is Abraham your father? Have you left Ur and have you gone to Moriah?

4:17 If we walk by faith—if we walk in the footsteps of Abraham, God will give life to the dead, and call things that are not as if they are. What a great passage!!!

Notice both in 4:17 and in 4:18 he talks about the father of many nations. This goes back to Genesis 17:5 and it reminds the readers that this salvation for the Gentile was in the mind of God all along.

4:18-23 The standard:

1. believe “**against hope**.” (v. 18)

 v. 19 After all, his body was “as good as dead.”

 v. 119 Sarah’s womb was dead. This is life from the dead, almost literally.

 v. 20 He did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise.

2. v. 21 Abraham was “**fully persuaded**” that God could do what he said he would do.

Q: Are you fully persuaded? How can you know if you are, in fact, fully persuaded?

4:23 “It” was credited to him. Q: What was credited to him? His belief (v. 24)

Do you REALLY believe that God raised Jesus from the dead?

Conclusion: Then you will be credited with righteousness.

**Romans Ch. 5**

Romans 5:1-11 The result of our faith in Jesus Christ.

v. 1 justified

v. 1 peace with God. What is it like to be at war with God?

v. 2 access to God. A relationship with God in prayer.

v. 2 We will stand. Confidence in our relationship with God.

v. 4-5 Hope (meaning: confident faithful expectation about the future)

v. 3 We rejoice in our sufferings. Interesting that he puts this in here. Why?

Perhaps to point out that it is not simply hope from Jesus but hope that also results from our putting our faith into practice.

5:6-8 At just the right time… The point is this: Do you realize how fortunate and blessed we are? How great and how amazing and how unwarranted is the grace of God!!!! How much does God love us? Jesus died.

What was your situation? v. 6 Helpless, hopeless, powerless.

At just the right time:

1. for us personally

2. Best time for Jesus to come. First time in all history:

 World language

 World government

 World peace (pax Romana)

 At the crossroads of Europe, Africa and Asia

 If Jesus had some earlier or later, his impact would have been less.

v. 8 Q: Who or what would you die for?

5:9-11. We have been justified and we will be saved. Q: Aren’t justified and saved the same?

No. Justified has to do with the past. Saved has to do with the future. We are saved “already, but not yet.”

Romans 5:12-19 One of the most difficult passages in the entire Bible.

Adam and Jesus. They are very similar and they are very different.

Romans 5:12, 17, 18. Here is a central question. What did the sin of Adam do?

Are the doctrines of “Original Sin” and “Total Depravity” supported by these verses? Zwingli: “In Adams, fall, we sinned, all.”

These passages say this about the result of Adam’s sin:

1. Sin entered the world.
2. Death came to all (but which kind of death? Physical or spiritual or both?)
3. All sinned.

All sinned. Not all are responsible for Adam’s sin, but, because of what Adam did, all of us will sin. We are “fallen.” We have a propensity to sin that came into the world because of Adam’s sin. We have knowledge that Adam did not have and that knowledge is not good for us.

5:13 “sin is not taken into account when there is no law” This “taken into account” is a relative thing. Explanation: Rom 5:20, Rom 7:13 …so that sin might increase… …. So that sin might become utterly sinful.

Q: Do you understand that sin is utterly sinful?

In other words, when the law came, our understanding of, and therefore our responsibility for sin became greater because it was more completely recognized for what it is.

5:14 Nevertheless (ie. despite this) death reigned, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command (because there were no written commands from God before Moses). In other words, people were lost before Moses.

Q: Would Adam and Eve have been immortal if they had not sinned?

Q: Did they become spiritually “dead” when they sinned?

Q: Do we inherit the inevitability of death from Adam or do we inherit the inevitable propensity toward sin or both?

These are debatable, but what is not debatable is that we did NOT become responsible for the sin of Adam and, therefore, guilty before we even sinned (Original Sin and Total Depravity). This would clearly violate Ezekiel 18:4 and many other passages, as well as a common sense understanding of God’s justice.

5:15 A key point. But the gift is not (exactly) like the trespass. (1 Cor 15:45-49)

The next section is an analogy which is not perfectly analogous. The gift and the trespass are largely analogous.

v. 16-17 The gift is not like the trespass.

The gift: Jesus

The trespass: Adam They are similar but different.

One act led to many sins

Those many sins led to the other act.

The gift followed many sins, while the condemnation followed one sin.

v. 18-19 In this sense, they are similar: The result of one sin was condemnation for all and the result of one act (Jesus’ voluntary death on the cross) was life for all men.

v. 20 Did the Law of Moses literally make trespass increase? No, but it increased our awareness of sin and it made us more culpable. It made sin utterly sinful (7:13)

Here is a question: Why should we Christian study the Law (for example Leviticus)? So that we can understand the sinfulness of sin.

**VI. Romans CH 6-8 The Way of Holiness**

**Romans 6** Practical application of Romans 1-5

6:1-4 This is one of those “diatribe” verses. Paul is addressing a critic of his gospel here.

So, what is the application??? What is NOT the application? We should not take advantage of God’s grace. God forbid that interpretation!!!!

Why? Because we are dead.

Q: What are some characteristics of a dead person? Unresponsive, unaffected, unavailable…. How does this apply to us and sin?

The point: When we participate in the death of Jesus in baptism, we become dead to sin. So…. We should act that way.

Q: What do “we were buried with him” and “baptized into his death” mean?

Perhaps it means that it is at this point that his death officially pays the penalty that our sins would have brought onto ourselves.

v. 4 We should live a new life. Free of guilt, safe, filled with hope.

6:5-14 Paul explains himself through if… then… statements.

v. 5. If we have been united with him in his death….

Q: What if we have NOT been united with him in his death?

Q: What if a person has NOT been baptized into Christ? (Note: the only two places which use the phrase “Into Christ” are Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27. Both mention baptism. The reason is that the only way “into Christ” is in baptism. If we have not been baptized “into Christ” then we are not “in Christ” (which, by the way, is the most common NT phrase used to describe a saved person).

Q: Is this works salvation? Absolutely not. This is something done to us. We are buried. We do not bury ourselves.

v. 8 If we died with Christ….

Q: What if we did not die with Christ?

Romans 6:11 a great passage. Count yourself dead to sin.

Q: Are we literally dead to sin? Are we unaffected by/not tempted by sin?

Paul’s point seems to be this. Let us become what God already considers us to be. We are already, but not yet. Well…. Let’s move in the direction of yet.

6:13 What do you offer yourself to? Your time, your attention, your energy, your focus, your emotions, your…..

Q: What is the opposite of offering yourself to sin?

 In view of the fact that we have died with Christ, let us offer them to God!!!

v. 15-22 more or less repeats v. 1-14. Paul must really want us to get it.

The point here: We are all slaves. True, absolute freedom is not part of the human condition. The question is this: Whose slave are you? (Richard Rogers: Whose fool are you?)

Q: What are some “advantages” of slavery?

6:21 In the words of Mark Wilkinson. “How is that working for you?”

6:23 What are wages? The thing one earns for doing something.

The wages of sin are death?

Q: What is eternal life the “wage” of? Answer: There are none! Jesus paid for that.

**Romans 7 The vicious cycle of the Law.**

Romans 7:1-6 Paul uses marriage as an analogy to us, our sinful nature and the Law.

Q: Why does he use marriage as an analogy? (Because we get that illustration). When we sin we are intimately and irrevocably tied to that sin. This is similar to his slavery analogy in 6:16-20.

7:4 We died to the Law. What does that mean? It is like a marriage. The only way out of a marriage (legally, biblically) is by death. When we were baptized, we were freed from dependence on sin (as will be illustrated abundantly in Romans 8) Coll 2:13-15

Romans 7:6 GREAT NEWS!!!! We serve God in a totally new way. What is that way? We serve God freely and voluntarily. We do what we want to do for God rather than what we had to do for God. Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that you were set free. “the way of the Spirit.” God influences us rather than making us avoid sin and do what is to his glory. This is so much better!!!

Romans 7:7-24. Let us not get caught up in the details here. Paul is “ranting” Let us ask what impression we get from this passage.

The classic question: Is Paul talking about himself BC (before he was baptized) or AC (after he became a Christian). This is a big debate.

My thoughts: Both!!! Paul is not dumb. He has thought this through. He is well aware that his readers will wonder about this. He is leaving it somewhat ambiguous on purpose.

Bottom line: Can you relate, as a Christian, to Romans 7:7-24? Of course you can. And Paul is writing this to disciples, so let us apply it to ourselves.

The point. Romans 7:13 (looking back to 7:7-8)

Q: Was this the only purpose of the Law? Certainly not. Paul is using hyperbole to get our attention.

Let us admit that we are wretched sinners, even if we are free of sin in Christ. Let us turn to Christ. Let us NOT have the attitude of Romans 6:1. Instead, let us have the attitude of Romans 7:24.

Romans 7:25 What is Paul so thankful for? That he has gotten off the works treadmill. (again, Coll 2:11-13 also Gal 5:1, 6)

Q: What aspect of your salvation are you thankful for?

Aside on Romans 7:9. Note that this passage, perhaps as much as any other in the New Testament, quite specifically proves that “Original Sin” is a false doctrine. Paul was not “saved” as a child, but he was “safe” (using Gordon Ferguson’s terminology here). He was not saved, but he was alive because there was a time when he was young at which he had not yet sinned and therefore had not yet become enslaved to sin—when he was innocent.

**Romans Ch. 8 Life in the Spirit.**

Romans 8:1-4

I really love Romans 8:1 Is there any more encouraging passage in the entire Bible?

Q: Do you occasionally feel condemned? Why? Probably because you have not

Romans 8:2 The Law of sin and death is kind of like the law of gravity. (To illustrate: drop a book to the floor) What if you disagree with this law?

8:3 Why was the Law powerless? (It had no provision for removing the consequences of falling short of the Law, and as it says in James 2:10 Whoever is guilty on a single point of the Law is guilty of breaking all of it!

8:3b. Jesus came “in the likeness of sinful man.”

Q: In what sense was Jesus in our likeness? (in his physical limitation, living in a mortal body, and in his being tempted in every way, just like us Hebrews 4:14-5:3)

What the Law could not do, Jesus did! How? He fulfilled all the requirements of the Law (8:4) (a la Matthew 5:17) Both in that he fully obeyed the Law and in that he, nevertheless, paid the full penalty required of the Law for those who do not keep it.

1. He kept it.

2. He took the penalty for those who did not keep it. WOW!!!

Q: Are the requirements of the Law met because we do not live according to the sinful nature? NO!!!!

The reverse. We live according to the Spirit because Jesus met the righteous requirements of the law.

v. 3 He was a sin offering (Hebrew: *chatat*). And a much better one than a bull (Leviticus 4:3-7), which only created ceremonial cleanness, not righteousness.

Sin offering (offense against God)

Guilt offering (offense against fellow human)

8:4b But, in order for that to apply to us, we need to “live according to the Spirit.”

Q: What does that mean? Paul is about to explain.

Romans 8:5 It is a mind set on what the Spirit desires in our lives.

Romans 8:5-13. Is Paul stating a fact or describing an ideal?

Romans 8:11 As long as the Holy Spirit is living in us, we have absolute assurance of heaven. (parallel: Ephesians 1:13-14 a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance)

8:12The Spirit in us does not cause us to stop sinning, but it causes us to stop being slaves (v. 7 nor can it do so). We no longer have to sin.

Q: How do we live according to the Spirit (v. 5, 6, 13)? (Galatians 5:25 (keep in step with the spirit) Colossians 3:1-2 (set your hearts and minds) Matthew 6:19-21 (treasures in heaven))

Romans 8:14-17 (and 8:23). We are family! v.23 children already but not yet.

What kind of sons and daughters are we?

Q: In what sense are we adopted? (Ephesians 1:5 predestined to be adopted)

Q: How is an adopted child different from a natural one? (he is chosen)

Q: Is this like being a foster child?

Q: What is the Holy Spirit’s role in this? (v. 16, a bit like Rom 8:26)

v. 17 Q: What do we inherit? (what Christ inherits) How does that feel to you?

8:17 b. Of course, we also inherit some of his sufferings (Coll 1:24 “I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking with regard to the suffering of Christ.” Wow!)

8:18-25 Another tough passage (but not with so many doctrinal implications!).

Get the big picture. What is he trying to get us to think about? He is trying to get us to picture the glory of the future we will experience with Christ. Do not take this too literally.

He is personifying “the Creation.” Even Creation will be transformed .

v. 23 Wait. Aren’t we already adopted as sons? (firstfruits… anticipation. Jesus is the firstfruit from among the dead 1 Cor 15:20-28 read this.) Already, but not yet…. We are adopted already and not yet. We have our redemption already but not yet.

v. 24-25 His point: We need to have hope, which is confident expectation about the future.

Q: What do you hope for? What can you see, by faith, God doing in this life and in the future life?

8:26-27 In the same way…. In the same way as what? In the same way that the Holy Spirit says with our spirit that we are God’s children (all the way back in 8:16)

The Holy Spirit helps us in our prayers and in our weaknesses.

v. 26 groans. Words that express the deepest emotional longing.

Words cannot express our inmost concerns and desires.

Q: What kind of prayer is this? Answer: One where we stop speaking and the Holy Spirit “speaks.”

Suggestion: Sometimes we need to stop talking when we are “praying”. We have been trained to think that praying is talking to God? Why? Because that is what public prayer is like (obviously), but Romans 8:26-27 suggests differently.

Suggestion: Try to be aware of the Holy Spirit as a partner when you are praying.

(and even as your living as we “keep in step with the Spirit.”)

**Romans 8:28-39** BIG doctrinal implications here.

But first, let us get the big picture. The point of this passage is that we can be extremely confident of our salvation in Christ. God will take care of us.

Q: How confident do you feel in Christ and in God?

8:28 Have you been in a situation in which you found it nearly impossible to see how God could use it for good?

God works all things for the good of whom? (of those who love him)

Q: Is God’s will always done? (Matthew 6:10 apparently not) But God can even use those things which are NOT according to his will for our good.

Romans 8:29 Does foreknowledge imply predestination? (in human logical terms, it seems to, but not to God. To a human, if God knows who will be saved and who will be lost, this is equivalent to him choosing this result)

To paraphrase: Those who God, in his foreknowledge, knew would be saved through the blood of Jesus, he predestined the possibility of that salvation (as will be discussed in Ch 9)

Calvinism: TULIP.

Total depravity

Unconditional election

Limited atonement

Irresistable grace

Perseverence of the saints.

Is this what Paul is talking about in Romans 8:30? At first glance, the answer seems to be yes. But we know from many other passages that this is not true. (For example 1 Tim 2:4 (all saved(, Deut 30:19-20 (choose life), 2 Cor 5:15 (he died for all), 1 Jn 2:2 (for sins of whole world) and hundreds of other passages that imply we have free will and God desires all to be saved and that Jesus died for all not just for a few)

A basic rule of biblical interpretation (hermeneutics): First of all ask what the passage cannot possibly mean.

v. 30 (in a sense, because of Jesus’ death) all are predestined, but not all of those predestined are called (because not all hear), and not all of those who are called are justified (saved), and not all of those who are justified are glorified (make it to heaven).

But…. For those God foreknows, all of these are true of all of them, and that is what Paul is talking about.

Who is predestined, called, justified and glorified?

Calvinism: A tiny minority of all people. All others were created in order to go to hell.

Paul (in my opinion): those he foreknew (v. 29)

Thomas Aquinas on free will:

“God, therefore, is the first cause, who moves causes both natural and voluntary. And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their actions from being natural, so by moving voluntary causes He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary; but rather is He the cause of this very thing in them, for He operates in each thing according to his own nature.”

Romans 8:31-39 Is this good support for doctrine of “perseverance of the Saints”, more commonly known as “once saved, always saved.”

Answer, it could be, but that is REALLY stretching this passage and besides, if that is true, then we will need to throw Hebrews out of the Bible.

(parallel passage: John 10:27-29 “no one can snatch them out of my hand” True, but we can leave him.)

It is true that “nothing can separate us from the love of Christ” with the obvious exception being that we can separate our selves.

We can and should feel totally confident in Christ. Do you feel this way?

**VII. Romans 9:1-11:36 Man’s unbelief and God’s gracious choice. or**

 **God rejects Israel and chooses the spiritual children of Abraham.**

Romans 9:1-5 Paul is getting really emotional here. Why? Because he wants all of Israel to be saved. v. 3 I would be willing to go to hell if the Jews could be saved.

Paul continues the thought begun in Romans 3:1-2 about the advantage and the glory of the Jews. v. 4 Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises, as well as the patriarchs and the physical ancestry of Jesus Christ!

Why is Paul getting so emotional? He is about to explain to the Jews why God, in his predestination, has rejected them and chosen the Gentiles. This is a message they are not particularly ready to hear!

But…. If Jews do not combine this legacy with faith, then they will not be saved by this legacy.

v. 7 “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” In other words, the children of faith and of promise will be reconciled. (v. 8) He is using the context of the passage in Genesis 15:6 “Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

Background context: We should remember that this is a diatribe in which his opponents are Jews who are really upset that salvation is given so freely to the Gentiles to the point that they do not even need to obey the Law of Moses, whereas many Jews are not being saved.

Romans 9:6-9 “Not all Israel are Israel.” (v. 6) It is the children of promise who are saved, not the physical descendants of Abraham. (v. 8) Galatians 4:21-31.

In two senses:

1. Not all physical Israel are spiritual Israel.

2. Not all spiritual Israel are physical Israel.

Q: What should we rely on? The promise. What promise? That Abraham would have children like the grains of sand and the stars of the sky. In other words, in the promise of salvation/righteousness by faith.

Romans 9:10-18 God’s predestination.

What is God’s predestination like? God’s predestination is not about punishing. It is about blessing.

It is always about his plan to bring salvation through the faith of Abraham.

v. 11 election. Some are elected.

[aside: In Calvinism there are two categories of people, the elect and the reprobate. The problem: “reprobate” is not found in the Bible!!!!!]

9:12-14 “The older will serve the younger” (Genesis 25:19-26) “Jacob I loved, Esau I hated” (Malachi 1:2-3) “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.” (Exodus 33:19) Paul seems to border on harsh here. Why? In the context, because the Jews are complaining to God because he wants to save the Gentiles. This is something God will not tolerate.

Note: In all three Genesis 25:19-26, Malachi 1:2-3 and Exodus 33:19 are about God choosing Israel over others. They did not complain about that!!!!

Genesis 25:19-26 “The older will serve the younger” is a prefigure of the Jews serving the Gentiles.

Malachi 1:2-3 Did God hate Esau? No! He chose Jacob. He blessed Esau too, by the way!!!!!

Romans 9:16 Here is the point. These unseen Jewish opponents feel that the Jews deserve salvation. Paul tells them that it is a gift of mercy which come by promise to those who believe God “It does not depend on man’s desire or effort.” They do not deserve salvation!!!!

Q: Does it bother you that God “hated Esau” and “loved Jacob”?

Jeremiah 12:1 Jeremiah questions God’s justice.

Q: Are there things about God you, frankly, do not like?

Romans 9:17-29 More examples.

Did God predestine that Pharaoh go to hell? No! He predestined that he would do those things which led to the deliverance of Israel as a foreshadow of our salvation in Christ.

Both with Pharaoh and Judas, the purpose was to free his people from slavery.

But in neither case did God predestine their condemnation. Both could have repented.

v. 19 The diatribe opponent is saying: It this is so, then if we sin, it is God’s fault. Then I am not responsible when I sin. It is all God’s will.

My response: Good luck trying that ploy with God.

v. 20 “Who are you, O man, to talk back to God.” God appears to be pretty tough here. Why? Because the Jews are upset that the Gentiles are being saved.

v. 22-29 Paul quotes from several prophecies which demonstrate that 1. The Gentiles will be saved (Hoseah 2:23m Hosea 1:10) and 2. Only a remnant of the Jews will be saved. (Isaiah 10:22-23, Isaiah 1:9

Summary: Sure, God predestines what he will, but ALL of it is about his desire to save as many as possible. “first the Jews, but then the Gentiles.”

God: If I used the stubbornness and sinfulness of the Jews in order to help Gentiles to be saved, aren’t you happy that they are saved?

Romans 9:30-33 Paul summarizes his argument so far.

If the Jews are lost, it is because they did not join the law with faith. They were religious, but not faithful.

If the Gentiles are saved, despite not having the law, it is only by faith.

The righteous will live by faith. For those who seek salvation by works, Jesus is a stumbling block.

Q: How do you seek salvation? How do you seek righteousness?

**Romans CH 10**

Romans 10:1-2 Paul is, in a sense, repeating the argument of Romans 9. So, he starts, as he did in Romans 9:1-5, with positive things about the Jews. They sure are zealous!!! (but they are zealous about the wrong thing). Paul was a perfect example of this “zeal without knowledge.”

10:3 They did not submit to God’s righteousness. Q: What is God’s righteousness? It is the righteousness which is gained by belief. In other words, rather than trust in God, they had trusted in themselves and their own ability to obey the Law.

10:4 But Christ is the end of the Law. (Matthew 5:17 again, where he is called the fulfillment of the Law, only stated in a different way).

“The end” does not mean that the law no longer exists, but that he fulfilled it, destroying (potentially) the slavery it held over us.

10:5 Here is what Jesus put an end to: Leviticus 18:5 “For the man who obeys them will live by them.”

(this is as opposed to “Abraham believed, and it was credited to him as righteousness”)

Romans 10:6-13 Paul uses multiple quotes from the OT to prove that what he is saying is exactly what was taught in the Law itself!

Romans 10:6-8 Deuteronomy 30:12-14 Salvation is attainable. It is possible for you (Paul actually does not quote this fact, in 30:11). It is not up in heaven (30:12) or across the sea (30:13 which for land-locked Israel is equivalent to up in heaven). How is it attained? 30:14 By obeying. By obeying what? The commandment to believe.

Deuteronomy 30:16 The command is to 1. Love God, 2. Walk in his ways and 3. Keep his commands. This seems a tall order. How can anyone accomplish this?

Answer:

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 explains this. Now choose life. Choose to trust totally in God for your righteousness, not in self.

Romans 10:9-11 is Paul’s version of Deuteronomy 30:12-14. How do we love god, walk in his ways and keep his commands? Not by observing the Law!!! Paradoxically, it is by making Jesus Lord of our life and fully trusting in him (again, this is Paul’s equivalent to Deuteronomy 30:19-20.

Romans 10:9-13 Q: Is this a solid “proof text” that actual confession with our mouth that Jesus is Lord is a prerequisite for salvation?

Confess = *homologeo* = to say the same thing, to agree.

Matthew 10:32-33 Whoever confesses me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies me before men, I will also deny him before…

1 John 2:23 4:15 The one who confesses the Son has the Father

2 Cor 9:13 confession of the gospel.

1 Tim 6:12-13 Timothy gave a good confession.

10:10 “For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified.” OK. I get that. But what about “and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”

Of course, the key concept is belief/trusting in God (v. 11, quoting Isaiah 28:16), but is the actual physical confession (presumably with the lordship being actual!) required for salvation?

Can we assume, then, even though it does not say so, that those baptized in Acts 2 gave some sort of verbal confession? Probably.

Answer: Well, it certainly seems to be saying this. For me, I intend to ask anyone I baptize to make some sort of confession.

10:13 Paul equates “calling on the name of the Lord” with “Anyone who trusts in him” of 10:11. (again, using Deut 30:14)

Q: Is this “calling on the name of the Lord” equivalent to confession that Jesus is Lord? Answer: Yes, it seems to be.

Note: This passage is used as a proof-text that baptism is not necessary for salvation. It says that if we confess that Jesus is the Lord and believe he was resurrected, we are saved. “Where does it mention baptism”, the evangelical asks. See….. Baptism is not part of salvation.

Response. You cannot use one passage in the Bible to disprove another. Both Acts 2:38, Romans 6:2-4 and Romans 10:10-13 are true. Besides, Paul had already stated Romans 6:2-4. Do we think he had forgotten what he had said? And remember, he said Romans 6:2-4 BEFORE he said Romans 10:10-13.

Besides, in Acts 2:36 when the people ask what they need to do, in essence, to call on the name of the Lord (Acts 2:21), Peter told them to repent and be baptized.

As Gordon points out, in Romans 10:14-15, the order is hearing, accepting/believing, and calling. Clearly, calling includes the means of doing that calling, which is in baptism. This is the pattern in Acts 2:21-38. (note: In both Acts 2:21 and Romans 10:13 Joel 2:32 is quoted. This proves that Peter saw repentance and baptism as contained in calling on the name of the Lord.

Acts 22:16 is the proof text that disproves this is a proof text against the necessity of baptism. Q: How do we call on the name of the Lord? Answer: By being baptized.

Besides, 2 Timothy 2:19 Those who call on the name of the Lord (ie those who are saved) must turn from sin.) This clearly connects calling on the Lord to repentance as well.

[Gordon also makes the good point that the biblical writer mentions the most important issue related to salvation most consistently. For the Gentiles, repentance was the issue, so Luke mentions this very consistently, for example in his “Great commission” (Luke 24:46-47) and in Acts 2:37-38, whereas, for the Jews, it was the confession that Jesus is Lord which was the sticking point.]

Romans 10:14-17 Our obligatory evangelism passage in Romans. Hey, folks, let’s not get too hung up in the details. Let us not worry about the Jews this and the Jews that. Let’s get the word out there so that people can hear it, have the opportunity to believe it, repent, confess and be baptized.

10:16 If some Jews do not accept this message, it obviously does not invalidate it!

10:17-21 Paul uses several prophecies to prove that God had told Israel that their unbelief would be used to save the Gentiles, so stop complaining. Deuteronomy 32:21 (10:19) is perfect for making this point!

“I will make you [Jews] envious through accepting those who are not Jews—who have no understanding.

Paul is still hoping that this jealousy will cause some Jews to be saved.

Isaish 65:1-2 Those I sought [Israel] ignored me, but those I did not seek and who did not seek me [Gentiles] found me.

Paul: God told you this would happen. So do not complain.

**Romans CH 11**

By now, the Gentiles (us) are feeling pretty good—maybe too good, so God brings us back down to earth. We will not go through this chapter in detail, because it can be summarized fairly simply.

11:1-6 Contrary to what the whining Jews were saying, God did NOT reject Israel. They are acting like Elijah who whined to God, saying he was the only one. Not true, says God. There are 7000, even in the Northern Kingdom/Samaria who are true believers in Jehovah. God is willing, waiting and able to save any Jew who combines his background with faith.

11:7-10 But those who refuse, I will harden.

This is one of the more difficult teachings in Romans. God gives us over to the things we choose to worship. He accepts our decision, taking another tactic which is to give us over to our sin in the hopes that this will bring us to our knees.

He hardens because he loves (believe it or not)

Like Romans 1 He gave them over….yg

11:11-12 Besides, it is not too late. Like Paul said, “now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2)

11:13-24 Now Paul turns to chat with the Gentile Christians. Do not get all “holier than thou” on me.

God is so amazing, he can even turn the rejection of the Jews into a blessing for all. v. 15 Their rejection of Jesus got him killed, and got them condemned, but God used it to bring salvation to all. The Jews drove the disciples out of Jerusalem. God uses that to save people as well. Everything the Jews did to hurt Jesus and his church turned out to help Jesus and to help his church. Cool.

11:13-16 If you Gentiles are saved, remember that it was “first for the Jews, then for the Gentiles.” If it were not for them, you would never have been saved. So stop being so prideful.

The way Paul puts this is a bit indirect. Israel are the “firstfruits” of the saved, without which the whole batch (including the Gentiles) would not have been saved. The reason the branches (Gentiles) are saved is that the root (Israel) was holy and, potentially saved, first.

11:17-24 Do not be prideful, you Gentile Christians. You are grafted into the vine, but the Jews were in there already. You do not support the root (the Jewish Christians) but the root (Israel, and especially Jewish Christians) supports you.

v. 19 The potentially prideful Gentile Christian says. “Hey, I am so good that God broke off a Jewish branch so that I could be grafted in.”

Illustration: If you ICOC members think you are hot stuff, and God’s gift to Christianity and the world, God will happily knock you off of your high horse.

God says, you arrogant dog! If you are grafted in at all, it is only by grace, through faith. If you continue in your prideful attitude, you will be cut off as were the Jew.

v. 22-24 Which is more likely to be cut off, the grafted-in branches (Gentile believers) or those who were naturally part of the vine (Jewish Christians). Easy question. You can be cut off and they can be re-grafted in very easily if you persist in your arrogance, and if they return to faith.

v. 22b a good proof text against “once saved, always saved.”

“For there is no difference…..”

Romans 11:25-27 Does Paul teach that at the end-times there will be a full conversion of all the remaining Jews? NO!!!!

v. 26 And so all (true) Israel will be saved. Do not forget what he said earlier, “Not all Israel is Israel” (Romans 9:6)

11:28-32 Paul is still talking to the Gentiles. Sure, the Jews who do not come to Christ are your enemy right now, but God (and Paul) still loves them, so pray for them. It may not be too late for them.

11:33-36 Paul summarized the first 11 chapters. To him be glory forever.

**VIII. Romans 12:1-16:27 Living by faith. Practical Applications**

Romans 12:1 Therefore…. Q: Therefore what? Therefore, given that you are only saved by grace, through faith and trusting in God…. Therefore, since salvation is by faith….

Q: Are you motivated by grace? (Titus 2:11 it teaches us to say no…, 2 Corinthians 5:14 it compels us)

If so, good, then Paul has the following advice to you.

Romans 12:1-2 What does God want from you? What does God expect as the only reasonable response from us, given what he has done? He wants you to be a living sacrifice.

Q: Isn’t that an oxymoron? How can something that has been killed be alive?

Paul uses the burnt offering as an illustration. Leviticus 1:1-9.

A sweet-smelling sacrifice (ie one that we can give, not just Jesus and one which pleases God)

Instruction: Clean the body but not the head. Then burn them entirely.

When you burn a sacrifice, how much is left? Not much!!

Eph 5:1-2 Jesus gave his life as a burnt offering. Jesus did not only offer his death, he also offered his life.

God wants us to give our lives to him. To hold nothing back. To lay our life on the altar.

“in view of God’s mercy.” We give this sacrifice, not in order to be saved, but as a voluntary sacrifice BECAUSE we are saved.

12:2 Let God transform your mind as you do this.

The result:

THEN you will know and understand God’s will.

Q: Do you want to know God’s will for your life? Are you sure?

How do we know God’s will?
a. Scripture 2 Tim 3:16, Prov 15:22

b. Wise, spiritual advice. Prov 11:14, 1 Kings 12:1-11.

c. By God transforming our minds when we present our bodies as a living sacrifice. We then gain personal wisdom and insight into God’s will.

d. By prayer Colossians 1:9

We need to blend these means. Some situations will require one means and another will require another of these means to know God’s will.

Q: How has God transformed your mind/thinking?

Romans 12:3 The lens through which we ought to view ourselves?

Answer: The lens of faith. In other words, we should be realistic about where we are at, but we should have faith in how God will change us.

Q: Which is worse: To think of yourself too highly or to think of yourself too lowly?

To judge ourselves: 1. Soberly 2. through faith.

Romans 12:4-8 How should we view ourselves? From the perspective of the gifts God has given us. Even as we work through sin and even as we have weaknesses, we need to have vision for God using us. We have a gift and we should use it. (parallel 1 Peter 4:10-11 use your gift with all your heart)

12:4 This is how the Church should function. We belong to one another and our gifts belong to the church, not to ourselves, if we view things correctly. (1 Cor 12:12-26 is a parallel passage)

God made bees to make honey. He made stars to shine. What did he make you to do? Advice: Do it!

12:9-13 Relationships in the body.

The key point: Be devoted to one another.

How?

By hating evil v. 9

By loving good v.9

By honoring one another v. 10

By being zealous v. 11

By being joyful v. 12

By staying faithful, personally v. 12

By meeting needs in the body v. 13

By being hospitable v. 13 Q: Which do you need to work on?

Romans 12:14-21 Relationships with outsiders.

These can be applied to fellow-Christians, but they are principally for outsiders.

Q: When you read this passage, what words come to mind?

Q: Are these natural ways to behave? NO!!!

Bless your persecutors v. 14

Rejoice with those who rejoice (even though it is not a personal victory for you) v.15

Mourn with those who mourn (even though you have no reason to mourn) v. 15

Hang out with people you do not like. v. 16

Live at peace, even with those who do not want to live at peace with you. v. 18

If you can, do not offend your non-Christian friends. Do what is right in their eyes (2 Corinthians 8:21) v. 18

Do not take revenge/turn the other cheek. v. 19-20

Q: Which is harder: to do what is right in the eyes of God (inner things) or what is right in the eyes of non-believers? (outer things)?

Remember: Why are we doing this? “In view of God’s mercy” (Romans 12:1) We should view all of Romans Ch 12-16 in this light.

Romans 12:20-21 Q: What do you want to do to your enemies?

God’s advice: Overcome evil with good. This is a hard thing.

**Romans Chapter 13 Submission**

Romans 13:1-7 Submit, to the extent that it is possible within a Christian context, to the government. [Note: Some of the things stated here are not strictly true v 3]

Note: There are exceptions. For example Acts 4:18-22 (judge which is right… we cannot help speaking), Acts 5:27-32. (We must obey God, rather than men)

What, then, is the principle for when we make exceptions to obeying our boss/our government?

Should we pay taxes, even if our government does immoral and unchristian things? The simple answer: Yes!

If it was 1775/76 What would you have done?

What about a Syrian who has several different governments, all claiming authority over his life?

Romans 13:8-14 A somewhat confusing list of commands. Here is the crucial point: Clothe yourself with Christ.

Q: What does that mean? Act as Christ would act in any situation.

14:b Paul applies it to sinning. One way to “clothe yourself with Christ” is to do everything you can to avoid sinning.

**Romans Ch 14 The Weak and the Strong**

Rom 14:1-4 What is the definition of a “weak” Christian in this context?

It is a believer who has a particularly sensitive conscience which does not allow him/her to do something which is not technically sinful.

The key here is not to agree with them, but to accept them and not to judge them (for example, you are just legalistic).

v. 3 Both groups must accept one another.

The “strong” should not look down on the “weak.”

The “weak” should not criticize the “strong.” (v. 10)

Q: Which are you more likely to be?

A recent example: A church in our fellowship in Eastern Washington teaches that a woman must wear a head covering in church and when praying.

Romans 14:5-12 Paul is speaking principally to the “weak” Christian here—the one who is tempted to judge.

The issue at hand are not our issues. Fortunately for us, this is not our issue, as it allows us to look at the issue without prejudice.

Our issues: What movie to watch, what to post on facebook, eating in a bar, dancing at a night club, playing poker for money, going to a casino, missing church for a family event etc… There are a limitless number of potential applications.

Paul’s point is that it is between that person and God—it is not our business on such debatable matters.

But aren’t I my brother’s keeper? Not on debatable matters.

Principle (v. 12) They belong to God first, not to you.

v. 13 transition to talking to the “strong” brother or sister.

Romans 14:13-23 Now he is addressing principally the supposedly “strong.” Apparently, the responsibility to deal with these issues lies principally with them.

Note: “strong” vs “weak” is not a judgment of better or worse. The strong may be right, but right is not necessarily better.

Romans 14:16 At first glance, this may appear to be advice to confront the “weak” Christian for being so legalistic, telling them to change their opinion.

This is NOT what he is saying.

Paul is telling us that if there is something we consider not sinful which is a stumbling block to a “weaker” disciple, we should be willing to give up our freedom for the sake of the conscience of the weak. The solution (v. 16) is to not do it in front of the weak brother or sister.

We should be willing to not drink alcohol or to not listen to certain music or to go to certain movies, especially if it is a public matter where the weak will observe us doing this thing.

Note v. 18 If you serve Christ in this way, you will have human approval

v. 19 Here is the main point: It is far more important to build up the body than it is for your to do what you are free to do.

v. 20 Do not be a stumbling block. Do not hurt your brother for the sake of your freedom.

Q: Can something which is not sinful be sinful? Yes. This applies to both the weak and the strong.

1. It is sinful for the “strong” to do an otherwise unsinful thing if it can reasonably be thought to be a stumbling block to the “weak.” (v. 21-22)

2. It is sinful for the weak disciple to do what he or she believes to be wrong in their heart. Romans 14:23. Any action which we cannot do in good faith, we should not do.

Ex: If there is a movie you do not feel good about, tell people. Do not watch it.

Note: There is an even more thorough discussion of this topic in 1 Cor 8:1-13 v. 13 “If food causes my brother to fall, I will never again eat meat so that I won’t cause my brother to fall.” Also 1 Cor 10:14-33 in which he teaches the same thing, but also gives some room for the strong to not always be controlled by the weak, particularly if what is done is done in private. v. 23 “Everything is permissible”, but not everything is helpful.

v. 22 This is perhaps the hardest part. In certain cases it is wrong for us to even express our opinion. Even verbally approving of an act which could be a stumbling block can be hurtful and therefore sinful.

**Romans CH 15**

Romans 15:1-13 How to maintain unity with one another.

v. 1 Bear with one another’s failings. Q: Are there “failings” of members of your church you find it hard to bear with?

v. 5 Unity with one another. Find consensus and try to speak with one voice.

v. 7 Accept one another. Q: Is there a kind of Christian you find it hard to accept?

v. 8-13 Specifically, Jews and Gentiles should live at peace with one another.

Romans 15:14 As disciples, we are “competent to counsel one another”

Romans 15:15-16 We are all priests (1 Peter 2:9). As priests, our “priestly duty” is to proclaim the gospel, and Paul is not embarrassed to declare it to the Gentiles, even if the Jews do not like it.

Q: What is your priestly duty? (priests are mediators between man and God 1 Tim 2:5 and Jesus is the only mediater. Hmmm….)

Paul: I have done this from Jerusalem to Illyricum (present-day Croatia—as close has he has come to Rome up to that time.)

Romans 15:20-29 So, that is why I am coming to see you. I want to come through Rome to preach to the unevangelized in Spain.

Some scholars believe that Paul was freed from prison in Rome and went to Spain before being rearrested and later executed in Rome by Nero.

Paul’s plan as described in Romans 15 came to fruition, except it involved being imprisoned and coming to Rome in chains. Would you go through this kind of treatment for the privilege of preaching the gospel?

**Romans CH 16 Greetings.**

In this chapter we get a feeling for the fact that the primitive church was a true family. The early disciples really got around. They would go anywhere and do anything to spread the gospel.

Romans 16:1 Phoebe is a sister in Cenchrea, which is the port of Corinth. Paul is writing this letter in Corinth.

16:3 Pricilla and Aquila have gone back to Rome, after being expelled by Claudius.

16:5 Rome appears to consist of house churches.

16:7,11, 21 We learn for the first time that Paul had relatives who were Christians.

We see that women had a very significant role in church life and were close friends of Paul.

16:17-19 Paul’s parting concern is for the unity of the church.

16:23 An inscription in Corinth confirms that this Erastus is genuine (not that any of us doubted Luke).

**1 Corinthians**

Letter from Paul during the third missionary journey about AD 56-57 from Ephesus (1 Corinthians) and Macedonia (2 Corinthians).

Theme of 1 Corinthians: Unity and Christian love.

Corinth on the Isthmus between mainland Greece and the Peloponnesian Peninsula. A great center of commerce and a very Roman city—famous for its very sinful, pagan lifestyle. A tough place to start a church.

Paul had stayed there for 1.5 years—longer than any church except Ephesus.

In 1 Corinthians Paul is responding to news and questions that have come to him (1 Cor 7:1)

Problems:

Division.

Arguments over who is the greatest leader.

Members suing one another in outside courts.

Immorality in the church not dealt with.

Dishonoring the Lord’s Supper with gluttony and drunkenness.

Out-of-control and disorderly worship in which, it seems, the women have taken charge to a significant extent.

Other questions (not necessarily problems)

Marriage and divorce.

Strong vs Weak—Is it OK to eat meat that has been sacrificed to idols.

The nature of the physical resurrection from the dead.

1 Cor 1:10 a theme verse?

Theme of 1 Corinthians: Unity and Christian love.

**2 Corinthians**

A follow-up to 1 Corinthians. The person disfellowshipped because of 1 Cor 5, Paul is now asking them to receive him again into the fellowship.

Similar issues, as they are attracted to “Super apostles.” 2 Cor 11:5, 12:11

2 Corinthians is one of the most quotable of New Testament books.

It has quite a bit about our ministry/evangelism.

2 Cor 2:14-16 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession…

2 Cor 3:12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold.

2 Cor 3:16-18 And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate/reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Cor 4:1-2 We commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience.

2 Cor 4:5 For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.

2 Cor 4:13 It is written: “I believed: therefore I have spoken.” In the same spirit of faith, we believe and therefore we speak.

2 Cor 4:16-18

2 Cor 5:11 We try to persuade people.

2 Cor 5:14-15

2 Cor 5:18-21

Also 2 Cor 7:8-13 The best passage on repentance in the NT

2 Cor Ch 8-9 (the most quoted passage in our churches) Generosity. About the contribution. Actually, this is about a special contribution.

2 Cor 10-12 Paul defends his ministry, listing the incredible hardships he endured for the sake of the kingdom of God.

2 Cor 12:8-10 When I am weak, then I am strong.

Galatians Bible Study

Living by Law vs Living by the Spirit

Interesting facts about Galatians.

1. Unlike Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, Corinth, Galatia is not a city but a region of what is now Turkey. In fact, it is not clear what churches were in Galatia at the time. Paul traveled there (Acts 16:6) but we know of no church he started there.

2. Galatia is in the highlands of central Turkey. Its capital was Ancyra, now Ankara, the capital of Turkey.

3. The Gauls were a Celtic people (like the Irish and Galicia in Spain). Other Gauls settled into what is now France. Rome called France Gaul. (*omnia Galia es divise en tres partes*, cisalpine, transalpine and helitican Gaul)

Theme verse in Galatians Gal 5:1 (or Galatians 5:6)

The first potentially fatal crisis has come upon the churches in Galatia. Judaizers have been insisting that Gentiles be circumcised and are even beginning to push a whole range of First Covenant laws and Jewish customs on Gentile converts (for example Gal 4:10,11 special days, months, seasons and years), insisting that salvation depends on such outward works. (Gal 5:2-4 justified by law and 6:12-13 for example).

These evangelists have been going around to churches planted by Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus, trying to turn people away from Paul’s law-free grace-centered gospel. In this dispute, everything is at stake as far as Paul is concerned.

Theme:

Living by Law vs Living by the Spirit or Living by faith.

Date 48 AD after first missionary journey. Close to Acts 15?

Galatians 1:1-2 Why does Paul lead off with such a note of authority (Romans 1:1 Paul a servant, Phil 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants, Colossians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God)?

Outline:

Gal 1-2 Paul’s experience

Gal 3-4 The Galatian’s experience

Gal 5-6 Live by the Spirit, not the Law.

Galatians 1:6-9

Wow! Paul is pretty upset here!

Q: What did Jesus get angry about? (those who do not forgive others Matt 18:32-35, those whose religion leads people away from God Matt 23;15)

What did Paul get angry about? (Those who would replace grace with law-keeping see also Gal 3:1, Gal 5:12)

Gal 5:2-4 Paul’s definition of falling away here: Trying to be justified by law-keeping. This is a church attender!

They sought salvation by being good—by doing good things, by works. But this does not work. It is like living on a treadmill.

We are tempted to rely on outward works/religiousness rather than on the blood of Jesus to become righteous before God.

Gal 2:20-21 Paul: It is not about circumcision or uncircumcision. No, “I have been crucified with Christ?”

“I no longer live.” God took care of the problem. He replaced the body of death with the body of life in the Holy Spirit. The man who was working himself into a relationship with God is gone!

Then: We lived by being good. Now, we live by faith. Much better!

Sum it up so far: Gal 2:21

Gal 3:10-14

Q: Why are those who rely on religion (works of the law) rather than on God under a curse? I do not want to be under a curse!!!!

a. Because “the righteous will live by faith.” (v. 11) Q: As opposed to what? Ans: as opposed to living by the law.

b. Because the alternative is “The person who does these things will live by them.” (v. 12) (Leviticus 18:5, Romans 10:5). Q: Has anyone here lived by them? Would Paul’s opponents have claimed to have lived by them? (Gal 2: Paul reminded Peter that he did not keep the Law) So, why are they imposing these legalistic practices? (Because that is what the flesh wants to do)

v. 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of living by works by being cursed himself. (using Deut 21:23)

v. 14 He redeemed us. What a great word. Redeemed: Purchased back.

Dictionary: 1. compensate for the faults or bad aspects of (something). 2. Gain or regain possession of (something) in exchange for payment.

"Billy redeemed his drums from the pawnbrokers"

This reminds me of Hosea 3:1-5 God told Hosea to buy back Gomer.

In this story, we are Gomer. We should feel very grateful.

Gal 3:26-29 But….. IN CHRIST You are all sons (or daughters) of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Through faith, not through works. Amen!

Gal 4:21-31 An extended metaphor (v. 24)

Isaac: Freedom us

Ishmael: Slavery Jews who reject Jesus

Hagar: Physical Jerusalem, Mt. Sinai. Her children are slaves

Sarah: The New Jerusalem whose children are free.

v. 29 Jews (Ishmael) persecuted the Christians (Isaac)

vs. 30 Sarah sent Hagar away. God sent the Jews away from Jerusalem in AD 70.

Note how God literally manipulates history in order to teach us, as Christians, about our relationship with him. Amazing!

Outside of Christ we were under Law. We were slaves. Colossians 2:13-15 describes this state. The Law that stood opposed to us. But Christ nailed the law (the obligation) to the cross, so we are not under law.

We were Ishmael, now we are Isaac.

We were children of Hagar, now we are children of Sarah.

We were slaves, now we are free in Christ.

Gal 4:31 An important transitional verse. We are Isaac! We are the circumcision.

Gal 5:1 A very odd statement: The reason we were set free was so that we could be free.

Because the Judaizers are using their freedom to make slaves of people 5:1b “do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Gal 5:1 Free from what? (not sin in this context) Freedom from Law. Free from the obligation to serve God. Free to serve God because you want to.

Slavery: I have to. (slavery to what?)

Freedom: I want to.

Free at last, free at last; Thank the Lord I am free at last.

Do not go back to “I have to.”

Q: Why do you pray? Why do you share your faith? Why do you give to the needs of the church? Why do you avoid sin? Is it out of freedom of slavery?

5:5-6 The only thing that matters is faith, expressing itself in love. Really? Yes!

As opposed to faith expressing itself through \_\_\_\_\_\_(obedience, works)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We express our faith in Jesus by the things we do out of love.

Q: What are you doing out of love for Jesus?

In a couple of weeks I am going to Nigeria, Cameroon, Congo. Why? Because I want to.

Why do you pray…..

We have the privilege of expressing our faith in God, not merely through works or obedience, but through these things motivated by love.

Gal 5:7-12 Paul is really getting emotional here. Q: Why?

Gal 5:13-15. The proper use of Christian freedom. It is certainly not to indulge our sinful nature. What are you using your freedom for?

An announcement: You do not have to share your faith. In fact, if you don’t want to, maybe you shouldn’t. You do not have to leave your job which limits your ability to serve God. You do not have to go on a mission team or to study the Bible with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q: What is a proper use of Christian freedom? Serving others.

Consider the irony: Paul says that we are no longer slaves (Gal 4:21-31). He tells us that, instead we are truly free in Christ (Gal 5:1), yet what does he tell us to do with our freedom? To become slaves. Voluntary slaves.

What is it like to be a voluntary slave.

This so much superior that living in obligation.

Willingly give it up!!! Why, because we want to.

In Christ we can do this, because of all the things we have.

There is so much more joy and fulfillment in Christ than outside of Christ.

Gal 5:16-18 Living by the Spirit versus living by the flesh. (note, this is discussed later in the treatment of Gal 5:25-26)

Q: In the context of Galatians, what does the flesh desire? (to love according to law, rule, obligation, things of this world)

What, then, does the Spirit desire? (to live in freedom and to show faith in love)

Gal 5:19-21 The acts of the flesh. (just mention this)

Gal 5:22-24 The fruit of (result of) the Spirit. Q: What is his point in saying that “there is no law against any of these things” There is irony here.

Gal 5:25-26. Q: What do you think it means to “keep in step with the Spirit”?

Actually, here is an outline:

1. Gal 5:16 Walk by the Spirit.

2. Gal 5:18 led by the Spirit.

3. Gal 5:25 live by the Spirit.

4. Gal 5:25 keep in step with the Spirit.

Being \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by the spirit versus being \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by what?

Q: What is his point in this rather pointed emphasis on the Holy Spirt?

Perhaps the key is 5:18 (you are not under the law) and v. 16 (you will not gratify the desires of the flesh}.

His point seems to be that listening to the Holy Spirit is far more likely to lead to personal righteousness than living by law/slavery to rules/obligation.

Here is a hard question for us rationalistic CoC’ers: How do we walk, get led, live and keep in step with the Spirit?

Summary:

Your are free in Christ. Isn’t that awesome? There is AMAZING grace in that, but what you do with your freedom will determine the quality of your live in Christ. Let us use our freedom to make our lives a sacrifice, and let us listen to, live by and keep in step with the Spirit.

**Ephesians**

Paul to the Ephesians: A letter to those nearest and dearest to his heart.

1. Spent 3 years there, including a little riot.

2. Stopped at Troas on way to Jerusalem for arrest, trial and death to say hello to the elders. Acts 20 his most emotional sermon.

3. Sent his right hand man, Timothy, to take care of the church.

4. John was a shepherd there from the 70s on.

5. John was buried there.

Ephesians written from jail about AD 62 (Eph 3:1)

Some scholars question Paul’s authorship of Ephesians, but they do so largely because of their own presuppositions about Paul’s view of the church (they say the writer of Ephesians has too high a view of the church). They also argue from writing style, but this is a very questionable basis for arguing. Most likely Paul wrote this book, but it is difficult to prove.

Eph 1:3 Every spiritual blessing IN CHRIST.

The point: We are one IN HIM. Outside of him we were not one, to say the least!

Our oneness is IN HIM!

So, what do we have IN HIM?

v.4 holy and blameless

v. 5 We have adoption into his family!!! God took us in. He chose us!!! In Roman tradition, adopted sons had full inheritance.

The way Paul puts it: Eph 2:1-7!!! This is what we have in Christ. What did we have outside of Christ? This is not a pretty picture.

More on adoption:

Eph 2:11-18. Here he is talking to Gentiles.

The audience of Ephesians is GENTILES (unlike Hebrews and Romans)

Where were we at? Spiritually, you were an orphan.

a. v. 11 Uncircumcized (I can live with that)

b. v. 12 Separate from Christ

c. v. 12 Excluded from citizenship

d. v. 12 Without hope

e. v. 12 Without God Talk about being on the outside looking in.

v. 14-18

a. He has made the two (Jew and Gentile) one

b. He has destroyed the barrier

Look at what we have in the International Church of Christ! Black, white, Hispanic Asian, country music fan, rocker and hip-hop, old and young and yes, even Republican and Democrat!!!!

We are one. Q: How are we one? IN CHRIST!!!

v. 17 In context: Who was “near” the Jews. Who was “far away” Us!

Good news! It does not matter how far away you are.

v. 17 Q: is there a separate Holy Spirit for the black and the white?

 For the old and the young?

 For the rich and the poor?

 For the male and the female?

Q: Do we still have dividing lines in the church, and hostilities?

Yeah!

He is our peace!!! v. 14

You want to get close to your brother or sister: come close to Jesus.

Q: What else do we have IN CHRIST?

Eph 1:7-14

a. Redemption.

b. Forgiveness

v. 8 I love this word lavish…. Lavish

Pour so much on that you can hardly even hold it. (but v. 8 he did it with wisdom and understanding so as to not totally spoil it….)

v. 9 He let us in on the mysteries hidden for ages.

Q: What is this mystery?

v. 11 chosen

v. 13 included

The Mystery Revealed.

Ephesians 2:19-22.

We are not strangers around here.

v. 19 We say “hello brother, hello sister.” What about “Hello, fellow-citizen.”

v. 19 Members of the same household. Welcome home. This is your family. (not just this is your spiritual family) (undo the power point briefly on zoom so people can see each other)

v. 20 Our unity is based on where we stand.

Our foundation is Jesus Christ, but with the Bible as our standard (the apostles and prophets). Our family covenant is in place. We do not need to negotiate terms.

v. 21 We are a building. We are a temple.

This is SO important. We rise and we fall together. Our society is so individualistic. We are a dwelling for God TOGETHER

In the religious world you go to the church that “meets your needs.”

I do not join the family that “meets my needs.” You are my family. I ain’t going nowhere else!!!!!

Ephesians 3:2-13 Mystery

Q: What is this mystery?

v. 6 The mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel: members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

v. 8-10 I was nothing, but for some reason God gave the mystery to me.

I love Eph 3:10!!!!! His intent (plan) was that now, **through the church** the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.

I don’t even know what that means!!!! But it is awesome.

In Him and through faith in him, we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Ephesians Ch 1-3 Theology.

Ephesians Ch 4-6 Application.

Which is it?

1. Paul is giving some cool theology, but the theology is there to support his real purpose, which is to admonish them in Christian living.

Or

2. Paul is giving a deep treatise on the theology of Christ, and throws in a few useful applications at the end to illustrate what he just taught.

My answer: Neither. That is a false dichotomy. Paul states his theology of Christ and then illustrates his theology of Christ with many practical examples, specifically about life in the Church. They are both examples of and applications of….

The rest of Ephesians:

Eph 4:1-16 The basis of Christian unity.

Eph 4:17-5:20 Instructions for holy living.

Eph 5:21-6:9 The way of humility and submission in God’s household.

Eph 6:10-20 Spiritual warfare.

**Philippians and Colossians**

Both written during Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome about AD 61-62

Both have an incredibly positive and hopeful outlook, given that Paul is in prison.

Two parallel themes in both Colossians and Philippians:

Christ in You

Living in Christ

In Christ, In Him, In the Lord 164 times in Paul alone.

What do we have in Christ?

Philippians 1:1 Saints in Christ Jesus

Philippians2:1 Encouragement in Christ.

Philippians 3:1 Called of God in Christ Jesus

Phil 4:7 peace of God in Christ

Philippians 4:19 in Christ all your needs met

[Coll 1:14, Redemption in Christ

Coll 2:11-12 In Christ we put off the flesh

Colossians 2:10 We have fullness in Christ

Coll 2:11 In him we were circumcised with a circumcision done by Christ]

**Philippians: To Live is Christ**

Theme: Life in Christ.

Theme verse: Philippians 1:21 For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Outline:

Phil 1:1-30 To Live is Christ

Phil 2:1-18 Living Like Christ

Phil 3:1-21 Put Your Confidence in Christ

Phil 4:1-23 Practical Living in Christ

Background:

Philippi is the city Paul was called to from Asia Minor on his 2nd missionary journey. This church was very dear to his heart.

Acts 16:6-15

v. 12 Philippi was a Roman (not Greek) city, although it was named after Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great.

v. 13 There was no synagogue there. A new kind of ministry for Paul.

The first church in what we now call Europe.

Points of emphasis in Philippians:

1. Living in Christ, of course, but also

2. Unity 1:27 (with one spirit and one mind) 2:2 (be like-minded) 4:2 (urge Euodia and Syntyche to agree in the Lord)

3. The immanent return of Jesus. Phil 1:6 (the day of Christ Jesus),10 (the day of Christ), 2:16 (the day of Christ) , 3:20-21 (we eagerly await the Savior) , 4:5 (the Lord is near)

**Philippians 1 To Live is Christ**

Phil 1:19-26

Paul is certain of the outcome, but uncertain about the path by which he will reach that outcome. This is faith (Heb 11:1)!!!

v. 19 Paul: I KNOW that through your prayers and by the encouragement of the Holy Spirit that I will be delivered/saved.

v. 20 I EXPECT that I will have sufficient courage

Christ will be lifted up by my life/body, whether by my life or by my death. Q: Is this your attitude about your life?

1:21 For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. The theme verse in Philippians.

Q: Do you believe this? Really?

Paul had labored so hard, had sacrificed so much, could anticipate future hardship and suffering so great, that his heart longed for release from this life.

Do you feel this way? Q: How would you fill in this blank?

For me, to live is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

v. 22 For Paul, continued fruitful labor was sweetly anticipated,

v. 23 but dying in Christ and departing was even sweeter.

v. 24-26 But I believe that I will remain behind. Why?

v. 22 fruitful labor. v. 24 for your sake…. v. 25 for your progress…

**Philippians 2 Living Like Christ.**

Phil 2:3-5 It is to consider others’ needs above your own—to abandon

selfishness. This is a high calling!

b. Phil 2:5 It is to have the mind of Christ, as described in 2:6-8.

Philippians 2:5 Have the same mind-set as Christ.

As described so eloquently in Phil 2:6-11

He made himself nothing.

He took the form of a servant.

He humbled himself

He gave himself over to death for our sake.

**Philippians 3 Put Your Confidence in Christ**

v. 4-6 Q: Why is Paul giving his resume here?

These guys think they are something special—that they have something to boast about—that they have a great spiritual resume. If anyone is something special, it is me.

Paul: I have more reason to put confidence in the flesh.

Paul:

I was circumcised in the right way at the right time.

I was a Jew among Jews.

Righteousness? A Pharisee of Pharisees. If legalistic righteousness could bring joy and a relationship with God then Paul would know.

A student of Gamaliel!!! (Acts 22:3)

I was very zealous! I was very committed.

Parallel: Solomon and Ecclesiastes. Solomon: If happiness could be gained through having the things of this life, then Solomon would know. He can save us the trouble of trying it out.

Paul: If happiness and/or righteousness could be gained through being religious, then Paul would know. He can save us the trouble.

He had the right background.

He had the right training.

Phil 3:7-8 All this stuff of the flesh is garbage (v. 8), compared to knowing Jesus Christ.

v. 7 Whatever I had considered gains, I now consider loss.

Paul added up all his accomplishments and they added up to exactly zero!

Actually, less than zero!

Phil 3:8 all a loss compared to knowing Christ

3:9 to be found **in Him.**

3:10 I want to know Christ. How powerful!!!!!!

**Philippians 4 Practical Living in Christ**

Sample passage: Phil 4:8 think about such things.

Unity

Rejoicing

Contentment.

**Colossians**

Colossians, like Philippians, is a prison letter.

Colossae 100 mi. East of Ephesus. Planted by Epaphras. Paul did not visit Colossae as far as we know.

Colossians is all about Christ.

Theme passage: Coll 1:27 Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Most famous passage: Coll 1:15-20 Supremacy of Christ.

My favorite passage: Coll 1:28-29.

Outline:

Coll 1-2 The supremacy and all-sufficiency of Christ.

Coll 3-4 Life in Christ.

The Colossian Heresy:

There is a common theory that Paul is writing Colossians to counteract a philosophy which has captured the church in Colossae called the “Colossian Heresy.” They have been captured by a philosophy. He talks about the stoicaea – ABCs of the world in 2:20-23. In Coll 2 he talks about not being held captive by human-based rules that “lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.”

Theme: The supremacy of Christ. The all-sufficiency of Christ.

* Col 1:1 Paul an apostle of Christ.
* Col 1:2 We are brothers and sisters in Christ.
* Col 1:3 We thank God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
* Col 1:4 Our faith is in Christ Jesus.
* Col 1:7 Epaphras a faithful servant and minister of Christ.
* Col 1:13 God has brought us into the Kingdom of His Son.
* Col 1:14 We have redemption in Him.
* Col 1:14 We have forgiveness of sins in Him.
* Col 1:15 The Son is the image of the invisible God.
* Col 1:15 The Son is the first born over all creation.
* Col 1:16 In Him, through him and for him, all things were created
* Col 1:17 He is before all things.
* Col 1:17 In Him all things hold together.
* Col 1:18 He is the head of the body.
* Col 1:18 He is the beginning, the first born among the dead.
* Col 1:18 He has supremacy in everything.
* Col 1:19 All the fullness of God dwells in Him.
* Col 1:20 He is reconciling all things to Himself, whether in heaven

 or on earth.

* Col 1:20 He made peace through His blood on the cross.
* Col 1:22 We are reconciled by God through Christ’s physical body.
* Col 1:22 We are presented holy in God’s sight by Christ.
* Col 1:24 Christ is the head of the body.
* Col 1:27 God’s glorious mystery is Christ in you.
* Col 1:28 Christ is the one who is proclaimed.
* Col 1:29 Christ’s power works in Paul and us.
* Coll 2:2 The mystery of God is Christ.
* Coll 2:5 Our faith is in Christ.
* Coll 2:6 Christ is Lord. Our lives are rooted in him.
* Coll 2:9 In Christ all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form.
* Coll 2:10 In Christ we are brought to fullness.
* Coll 2:11 In him you were circumcised.
* Coll 2:12 We are buried with Christ and raised with him in baptism.
* Coll 2:13 We are made alive in Christ.
* Coll 2:17 The law is a shadow. The reality is found in Christ.
* Coll 2:20 We died with Christ.
* Coll 3:1 We have been raised with Christ.
* Coll 3:3 Our life is hidden with Christ.
* Coll 3:4 Christ is our life.
* Coll 3:11 Christ is all and is in all.
* Coll 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.
* Coll 3:16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you.
* Coll 3:17 Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Holy Spirit mentioned once in Colossians (look at Paul’s other letters).

 ● Romans 25 times

 ● 1 Corinthians 20 times

 ● 2 Corinthians 10 times

 ● Galatians 15 times

 ● Ephesians 10 times

 ● Philippians 3 times

 ● 1 Thessalonians 4 times

Sample passage: Coll 1:15-20

The practicals of Colossians (ch 3-4) are similar to Ephesians.

Sample passage:

Coll 3:1-4 Since, then. In light of the all-sufficiency of Christ…

**1,2 Thessalonians.**

Church in Thessalonia founded by Paul about AD 50 on the second missionary journey.

It was the capital of Macedonia.

This letter is written from Athens in AD 51 or 52. He sent Timothy (when I could bear it no longer” (to not have news of them) 1 Thess 3:5

1,2 Thessalonians are the most pastoral and least theological of the occasional epistles. They are very personal. Paul is describing the nature of his gospel ministry among them—like a father at times and like a mother at time.

Sample passages:

1 Thess 2:7-12, 17-20 Paul was only in Thessalonica for about 3 weeks (Acts 17:1-9), but look at his relationship with them.

2 Thess 1:3-4.

Also unique to 1,2 Thessalonians is much discussion about the second advent of Jesus—the eschaton. He feels they need encouragement. 1 Thess 4:13-5:11 2 Thess 2:1-12.

The most famous verses in 1,2 Thess is 1 Thess 5:16-19.

**The Pastoral Epistles 1,2 Timothy, Titus**

Written during Paul’s second imprisonment, very close to his death. AD 63-65.

Written to “pastors.” Those overseeing the church. Advice to maintain a healthy church.

Themes: Godly character of leaders.

Advice for appointing elders and deacons.

Proper and effective use of Scripture.

Dealing with false teachers and divisive members.

Maintaining God-honoring worship.

Contentment with regard to material things.

Theme passage: 1 Tim 4:16 Watch your life and your doctrine closely...

My favorite passage: 2 Tim 4:6-8

But I need a passage from Titus Titus 2:11-12 the grace of God… teaches us to say no to all ungodliness…

**Philemon**

Sorry, I am skipping Philemon.

We are now moving on to the General Epistles—those addressed to the church of Christ as a whole. They are sometimes called the Catholic (ie universal) Epistles.

The role of the General Epistles is seen, by some, to balance the emphasis of Paul on salvation by grace, through faith, not by works. Paul was accused of being antinomian—replacing moral law with free grace.

And thus the statement in Hebrews that we must make every effort to enter heaven.

And thus the statement by James that faith without deeds is dead.

And thus the statement by Peter that we must grow in our Christian character, not becoming ineffective and unproductive in our faith—thereby confirming our calling and election.

And thus the reminder by John that we must walk in the light for the blood of Jesus to cleanse us of all sin. 1 John 3:10 Anyone who does not do what is right is not God’s child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister. Would Paul have said 1 John 3:7?

**Hebrews**

I **Audience** Christians generally, but especially those who are of Jewish descent. Second generation Christians (Hebrews 10:32 “Remember those earlier days.” They have “been around” but have not matured in the faith as they should, and therefore need a word of encouragement. Greater persecution is coming and the author is concerned they are not prepared and will not endure. He is concerned that the Jewish Christians might reassimilate into Judaism proper.

II **Date of writing**. Probably AD 65-70. The temple almost certainly still stood. Speaks of the temple ceremonies in the present tense. Hebrews 8:13. Will “soon” disappear. Perhaps the armies of Rome were actually surrounding Jerusalem at the time. After a time of a significant Christian persecution. (10:32-34 sympathized with those in prison, suffered confiscation)AD 64 persecution of Nero?

III **Author** Paul? Probably not, as the writing style is so different from his. Very elegant, sometimes even poetic Greek. Someone deeply acquainted with the Hebrew Scripture. 30 direct quotes and dozens of references. List of heroes of the faith on the assumption that the hearers know who these people are. Whoever the author is has both a very strong Greek and a very strong Jewish background.

Apollos fits all these criteria

Origen: God only knows.

Jerome and Augustine: Definitely not Paul

IV **Style**: Not a letter (no greeting, not addressed to anyone). It is in the style of a sermon, with points like a sermon.

Very elegant Greek. 60 direct quotes from OT, at least 70 other allusions to the OT. Very Jewish in thought pattern and content.

VI **Purpose** To give heart to Christians who have endured, but are tempted to waver in their faith.

VII **Theme**: The preeminence of Jesus Christ.

His deity.

The greatness of his sacrifice.

The greatness of his covenant.

The word “better” 13 times in the book.

The word “perfect” 15 times

VIII **Outline**

I 1:1-2:18 Jesus is greater than the angels: Therefore let us pay attention.

II 3:1-4:13 Jesus is greater than Moses: Therefore let us persevere.

III 4:14-6:12 Jesus is the Great High Priest: Therefore let us move on to maturity.

IV 6:13-7:28 Jesus is a high priest “in the order of Melchizedek.”

V 8:1-10:39 Jesus is the author of a better covenant than that of Moses: Therefore let us persevere to the end.

VI 11:1-12:29 A practical example: The faithful cloud of witnesses. Therefore accept God’s discipline and listen to his voice.

VII 13:1-25 Summary and final advice.

The Greatness of Jesus:

1. Greater than all the prophets. Hebrews 1:1-3

2. Greater than the angels. Hebrews 1:4-14

3. Greater than Moses. Hebrews 3:1-5

4. Greater than Joshua Hebrews 4:1-10

5. Jesus the Great High Priest. Greater than Aaron. Hebrews 4:14-5:10

6. The Priesthood of Melchizedek (and therefore of Jesus) is greater than the priesthood of Aaron Hebrews 7:1-28

7. Jesus is greater than Abraham 7:1-9

8. The Old Covenant foreshadows the greater New Covenant Hebrews 8:1-13

9. The earthly Tabernacle foreshadows the much greater heavenly Tabernacle (the one where Jesus is now) Hebrews 9:1-11.

10. The sacrifice Jesus offers is greater than any of the Mosaic sacrifices. Hebrews 9:12-10:18.

Therefore… Admonitions

1. Pay attention! Hebrews 2:1-18

2. Make every effort. Persevere. Don’t fall in the desert. Hebrews 3:6-4:13

3. Grow up. Mature. Take it higher Hebrews 5:11-6:20

4. Persevere in Christ/Come near to Christ Heb 10:19-39

5. Live by faith. Hebrews 11:1-12:29

Other features:

Christ as out Great High Priest:

A. In Mark Jesus is a Man of action and he is the Suffering Servant and Savior of Mankind.

B. In Matthew he is the Messiah because he fulfills the Old Testament messianic expectation—especially the messianic prophecies. (Matthew 5:17).

C. In Luke Jesus is the Messiah because his life and ministry to the sick, to the poor, to Gentiles—to Outsiders in general, meet the messianic expectation (especially of Isaiah 61:1,2).

D. In John Jesus is the Messiah because of his claims about himself and because of his miracles.

E. In Hebrews, Jesus is the Messiah as the Great High Priest of a new and better covenant, offering intercession for us in the presence of God.

Especially Hebrews 2:14-3:1 Read Heb 2:17-18

Hebrews 4:14-5:10 Read Heb 4:14-15, 5:8

Then all of Hebrews 7, after which Heb 8:1

Warnings against falling away.

Hebrews 3:7-11 They shall never enter my rest.

Hebrews 3:14 We… share in Christ IF we hold firmly till the end….

Heb 6:4-6

Heb 10:26-31

Hebrews 12:14-17 See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and ***defile many.***

Hebrews 12:25 If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth (Moses), how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven (Jesus).

Do you get it?

But… The emphasis in Hebrews is on confidence, not fear. Heb 6:19-20.

If time: Hebrews: Living by Faith.

**The key to perseverance is faith!!!!!**

Heb 11:1 The definition of faith. Q: What is faith?

One person said to me recently. Why are you so into proving the Bible. Faith without evidence is better than faith with evidence. Faith with evidence is really not faith at all. A bad definition!!!

Heb 11:1 Faith, ultimately, comes down to things we cannot see. We cannot see our salvation, we cannot see heaven, we cannot see hell.

Faith in Jesus and in the inspiration of the Bible is supported by much evidence, but in the end, there is always a huge aspect of “things we cannot see.”

Faith requires that we deny our senses. This is not easy.

In many ways, success is the enemy of true faith. We can see success.

The point of Hebrews: v. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for.

Look at these men and women. By faith they denied worldly pleasures, fame and fortune: all for things they could not see.

Why were these men and women commended? Why are they heroes of the faith? They refused what the world calls greatness and staked everything on God. They refused to be deterred by what is seen.

We have something so much greater. We see so much more. How can we deny the faith?

Example: Paul Phil 3:4-9 I consider it all rubbish in order that I might know Christ.

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command. What is seen was made out of what is unseen.

His point: What is unseen is greater than what is seen, because it (what is unseen) created what is seen. Therefore, let us focus on what is unseen: God.

1. By faith Abel... A faithful sacrifice. Why “better” than Cain? We do not know, but we know that his faith was an issue. A “faithful” sacrifice is one we do for God, not for gratification or for praise of men.

He speaks even though he is dead. I don’t know about you, but I want my legacy to count. How can that happen? By faith!!!! By doing thing which you can only do because of faith.

How are you doing in that arena?

2. By faith Enoch... We know almost nothing about him, except that he pleased God? How, by believing that his reward comes from God, not from men or from himself. Hebrews 11:6

Q: **Do you really believe that your reward comes from God?**

Q: How would you know if someone really, at the heart level, believed that their reward comes from God? (not seeking praise of men, etc.)

3. By faith Noah… the key thing “when warned about things not yet seen” (v. 7)

The point: If you look at visible things, you will turn back and lose your faith in God. We need to see things which cannot be seen.

Think about Noah building that ark. That took amazing faith. And Noah had so much less reason to be faithful than we!!!!!!!

Noah preached 100 years. Success? Zero! Where was the fruit?

Us; use your gift to build a ministry through which people in the world can be saved.

4. By faith, Abraham… 11:8 By faith Abraham left… Why? Because of faith in something he could not see. He did not even know where he was going. (a typical male idea of a vacation) The Promised Land, both as type and as antitype. Remember, faith is believing God’s promises. (2 Cor 1:20)

This is a wonderful type of our leaving, following Jesus, and making it to heaven. The difference is we know where we are going (by faith)

Are you ready for the Christian adventure?

By faith, Abraham became a father.

In two senses, he became a father by faith:

1. Literally. It was humanly impossible for Sarah to give birth, yet Abraham believed. (Abram and Sarai laughed at first. Your faith can grow)

2. Figuratively (ie as a prefigure) Romans 4:16-17 He is the father of us all. A great prefigure.

Let’s follow the faithful steps of Abraham:

a. out of Ur. (out of sin)

b. to Mt. Moriah. (the sacrifice of Jesus)

Also note 11:19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise Isaac. A reasoned faith and a deep, unfathomable faith. No wonder he is the father of us all.

What is it you are not willing to give up to God? God is calling you to sacrifice it.

The key to Hebrews 11 (in my opinion)

11:13 All these people were **still living by faith** when they died. They made it!

The challenge to us. They saw it only from afar (by foreshadows and prefigures), yet they were willing to become aliens and strangers.

Q: have you been thinking about returning to the country from which you left?

Q: Are you willing to consider yourself what you are as a follower of Jesus? You are an alien and a stranger. This world is not my home.

*Xenoi* stranger, alien, refugee. We get Xenophobic hatred of foreigners from this.

*Parepidemos* a temporary resident. Staying in a hotel, not a home. A guy with a green card. No roots, no permanent place.

“The world is a bridge. The wise man will pass over it but will not build his house on it.”

Citizens of the Kingdom of God are aliens and strangers in this world.

“To live in the shadow of the second coming is to take seriously the ethic of Jesus. The peculiarity of disciples is not that they wear quaint clothing or don’t use modern technology. Rather their strangeness is located in their embrace of an ethic the world considers nonsense.” [Kingdom Come Hicks and Valentine]

Phil 3:20 Our citizenship is in heaven.

v. 15 you can always go back!

v. 16 but God has a better country prepared for you. Heaven.

All this is foreshadowed in the wanderings of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his sons.

5. By faith Moses…. Moses gave up fame and fortune—things given to him by God!

Vs. 27 he persevered because **he saw him who is invisible**.

Moses gave up **everything** the world valued. Why? Because he wanted people to enter the Promised Land.

To him, disgrace with God’s people was more valuable than all the treasures in Egypt.

Moses and God’s people became sojourners when they passed through the sea, as we, when we are baptized.

11:30 By faith, the walls of Jericho fell. Can you imagine marching around that city 13 times? Willing to look foolish.

Heb 11:32-38. Insignificant people did amazing things, who faced overwhelming odds and made it to heaven. How? By faith, of course.

Vs. 39 None of them received what was promised in their life. None!!!

We do (at least in a sense) as we are saved.

Vs. 40 If they are saved at all, it is only with us.

So what excuse do we have for wavering in our faith

**James**

Theme: Living the Christian Life: Our life must agree with our faith.

Subthemes:

Patience (especially in suffering)

Wisdom

Faith

Humility

Author: James, the brother of Jesus who led the church in Jerusalem from about AD 35 to AD 62 when he was martyred (Josephus) by stoning.

This is the same James who appears to have presided over the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15).

James asks us what is important? His answer is that what will last and what is unchanging is what is important. This is God and God’s Word. The things of the world are fleeting. They are ephemeral. The things the world chases after are of no value. The Word of God and faith in God are of great value.

The closest to “Wisdom literature” in the New Testament. There are affinities with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

Outline:

James does not have an obvious or solid outline, which is consistent with its being a kind of wisdom literature—it is a list of things to bear in mind in living the Christian life.

It is not like Paul’s books, which begin with theology and then apply that theology in the practical matters addressed by the letter.

To the extent that James has theology, it is found indirectly in what is taught.

How to read James:

1. Read it for practical application more than for inspiration.

2. Read it to be challenged and to be made uncomfortable in your too-comfortable life.

Nevertheless…. Here is an outline

1:1-27 Real religion

2:1-3:12 Real faith

3:13-5:11 Real wisdom

5:12-20 The need for prayer.

Theme verse? It is hard to find a theme verse.

James 1:22 or

James 2:17

**1,2 Peter**

1 Peter written from Rome (“Babylon” 1 Pet 4:13) to Christians in modern-day Turkey around AD 64-65. Really to all the churches.

Peter treats the churches as if they are exiles (1 Pet 1:1)—aliens in this world.

Peter was martyred fairly soon after writing this book. (2 Peter 1:14)

A pastoral letter. Peter is speaking as an elder/shepherd 1 Peter 5:1-4

The letters have admonitions to remain faithful, to abhor sin, to continue to grow and to endure suffering as did Christ.

1 Peter has more about suffering than any book outside Job.

A characteristic passage in 1 Peter: 1 Peter 2:21-25 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, wo that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; By his wounds you have been healed.

2 Peter adds a section about the Day of the Lord—the Second coming of Christ, using the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as well as the destruction of the world in the flood of Noah as a warning for us that Jesus will come back and the world will be judged.

A characteristic/summary passage: 2 Peter 3:11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives, as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

**1,2,3 John**

Pastoral letters by the apostle John—probably in the 70s or 80s AD

Style of writing very similar to that of the Gospel of John.

The church has now been decisively cut off from Judaism.

A pre-gnostic belief seems to have entered the church, as evidenced by 1 John 1:1 Him who we have seen with our eyes and our hands have touched. Hearing, seeing, touching.

In 1 John 2:18-19 (also in 1 John 4:6) John condemns the Gnostics/Docetics as antichrists. (BTW the antichrist is mentioned only here and in 2 Thessalonians—not in Revelation)

The Gnostics said that Jesus was a purely spiritual being who merely occupied the body of the person we know of as Jesus of Nazareth. They deny he came in the flesh. Docetism. He only seemed to have a physical body.

Theme: Christian love.

1 John 3-5 is an extended homily about Christian love.

He equates loving God with keeping his commandments and behaving righteously..

Note similarity to James. 1 John 3:4-9

Characteristic passage: This is love: not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:10

I am not covering 2,3 John or Jude.

**Revelation**

Revelation = unveiling. *apokalupsis* αποκαλυψισ vision as a literary device. The word is found in Rev 1:1

Purpose:

1. To show in dramatic fashion that God is in control.

“The purpose of these writings was to stress the virtue of loyalty and of stimulate faith by showing in vivid fashion the certain overthrow of evil and final victory for God’s righteous cause.” (Summers: Worthy is the Lamb)

Revelation is apocalyptic literature. Revelation = apokalupsis = apocalylptic

Characteristics of apocalyptic writing:

1. Generally produced in troubled times.

2. Cryptic (coded) in style (ie. the message is not obvious to the uninitiated)

Why? These books have bad news for God’s enemies. To protect the recipients of the message from their enemies.

3. Prophecy vs Apocalyptic

Prophecy: Mainly preaching and secondarily prediction.

Apocalyptic: Mainly prediction and secondarily preaching.

4. Apocalyptic literature always has a historical setting and significance. Knowledge of the historical situation is very important to understanding the vision.

Daniel: Persecution of the Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes 167-164 BC

Revelation: Domitian’s persecution 96/97 AD

Purpose: to give comfort, assurance and courage in difficult times.

7. Symbolic.

Most of scripture: Take literally unless the context demands a figurative interpretation. Ex: Jesus says, “Go tell that fox…”

Apocalyptic: Take figuratively unless the context demands otherwise.

Ex: The seven churches are seven literal churches.

There was a more or less accepted use of certain symbols.

Numbers used symbolically extensively.

1 = unity, unique, alone.

2 = strength, courage, energy (two are better than one) (two witnesses in Revelation) (two beasts war against the saints = a strong enemy)

3 = divine number. Number of God.

4 = the world (four winds, four cardinal directions, four angels, four creatures in Revelation = the four divisions of the wild animals. Four horsemen = powers of mankind, destructive powers of the world.

6 = sinister, Satan 6 falls one short of seven. Doom. 666 in Revelation.

7 = perfection, completeness 4 + 3 = 7 world + God = perfection. 7 spirits, 7 churches, 7 golden lampstands, 7 stars, 7 sections of Revelation, each in seven parts (7 signs and 7 I Am statements in John)

3-1/2 = incomplete, imperfect. Restless longings unfulfilled, waiting. (time, times and half a time Daniel 7) 3-1/2 used a lot in Revelation 1260 days the church was in the wilderness. Daniel 7:25 12:7 Rev 11:2,3 12:6,14 Rev 13:5

10 = completeness (all your fingers or all your toes) 10 commandments are the whole duty of men. The dragon, the first beast and the scarlet beast all have 10 horns.

Multiples of 10 1000 = ultimate completeness

12 Number of religion. God’s people. 12 tribes, 12 apostles, 12 gates in New Jerusalem.

Ex. 144,000 is the full number of God’s people (12x12x10x10x10) and is certainly NOT literal! The ultimate complete number of God’s people.

8. Dramatic. Apocalyptic literature is very dramatic, vivid, forceful. Uses the grotesque and the terrifying to catch our attention. Rivers of blood, hail, locusts, dragons, death riding a horse with the grave following behind. Animals with many heads and heads with many horns.

How to approach Revelation?

About the visions and imagery: get the big point and do not get caught up in the details.

9. Involves end-times End-time theories (Eschatology):

Preterist a theologian who believes that the Scripture prophecies of the Apocalypse (the Book of Revelation) have already been fulfilled

Amillenialist Amillennialism (Latin: a- "no" + millennialism) is a view in Christian end-times theology named for its rejection of the theory that Jesus Christ will have a thousand-year long, [physical] reign on the earth. ...

Premillenialist The doctrine that the prophesied millennium of blessedness will begin with the imminent Second Coming of Christ.

Postmillenialist The doctrine that the Second Coming of Christ will be the culmination of the prophesied millennium of blessedness.

Historical background:

What is the setting of the book?

Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

96/97 AD Domitian is emperor and he is about to begin an empire-wide persecution of the church for the first time. Trouble and new persecutions are coming on the church.

Theme of Revelation: Peel back the layers of history and even the terrible persecutions and what do we find? **The lamb is on the throne and God is in control.**

Message of Revelation: **Be encouraged and faithful to Jesus Christ. Jesus, not Caesar, is Lord.**

Objective: to comfort persecuted Christians.

Description of Revelation: A “divine picture-book”. “Spiritual cartoons,” representing the historical development of the early Christian church.

Romans appeals to the intellect/mind

Psalms appeals to the emotions

Revelation appeals to the imagination.

Outline of Revelation

Ch 1 Prologue

Ch 2-3 Letters to the Seven Churches

Ch 4-7 The Seven Seals

Ch 8-11 The Seven Trumpets

Ch 12-16 Seven Mystical Figures

Ch 15-16 The Seven Bowls

Ch 17-20 Enemies of the Church Overthrown

Ch 21-22 The Kingdom of God Revealed

The place of Revelation in the Bible:

Outline of the entire Bible:

Genesis 1 God created universe and it was all good—very good.

Genesis 2 God created humans so that he could have an intimate relationship with them and them with each other.

Genesis 3-11 We messed that up really badly. We lost our intimate relationship with God. We were kicked out of the garden.

Genesis 12-Revelation 20 God is fixing the problem

Genesis 21-22 God has fixed the problem and we are back in the garden.

Theme passage:

Rev 12:10-11 We win. We overcome. How?

1. By the blood of Jesus

2. By our testimony

3. By our willingness to sacrifice our lives rather than do the bidding of the dragon.

Very briefly:

Revelation 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him to show to his servants what must soon come to pass (things it is necessary to come to pass shortly).

What is the book about? Things that will soon take place.

Rev 1:1, 22:6 must soon take place

Rev 1:3, 22:10 is at hand (right near by)

Compare to Daniel 9:26 which concerns “the distant future.” (written 550 BC about 167 BC)

Who was the letter to? “to the seven churches…” Rev. 1:4

Rev 1:11 Specifically, to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

Why them? Because these were the churches, more or less, that John himself was shepherd of.

Although it is addressed to the seven churches, it is addressed to all the churches.

We are about to get a look at Jesus. Before you do, form a mental image of Jesus. what do you see?

We will look at three different Jesuses in Revelation. One of them will probably be like the mental image you formed.

Rev 1:12-16 Q: Is this the picture one gets of Jesus in the gospels? Definitely not!!!

The principle picture of Jesus in Revelation (although there are other pictures) is of mind-blowing power.

Revelation 4 Meet God.

Revelation 5 Meet Jesus: The lion and the lamb

Rev 6-17

Rev 6-7 Seven Seals

Rev 8-9 Seven trumpets

Rev 10-15 Seven symbolic creatures

Rev 16-17 Seven bowls

Rev 6-17 Has “encouraging interludes.”

Rev 7 The sealing of the 144,000 who are “a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and the lamb.” (Rev 7:9)

Rev 11 The Two Witnesses Who testify, appear to have been killed, but whom God brings back to life. This is the powerful (2) Church and its witness to the nations.

Rev 12 The battle between the woman and the Dragon.

The woman is:

Faithful Jews.

Mary.

The Church

She overcomes by Rev 12:11

1. the blood of the lamb.

2. the word of her testimony.

3. her willingness to die for Jesus

Rev 18-20:10 All God’s enemies are defeated.

Rev 20:1-10 Satan “bound” for 1000 years, briefly released, and then sent to the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Rev 20:11-15 Judgment Day

Rev 21-22 The New Heaven and the New Earth

Rev 21:1-8 Perfect fellowship with God.

Rev 21:9-26 Perfect protection by God.

Rev 22:1-5 Perfect provision with God.

At the end of Revelation we are back in the garden with God where we were at the beginning. The great narrative of the Bible is completed.

Epilogue: Do not add or take away from this book!!!! Or the plagues in this book will fall on you.

Rev 22:20 Amen, Come Lord Jesus.