

NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

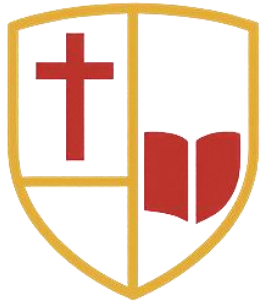
DR. THOMAS T. HALE

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Gain a clear, historically grounded,
and theologically informed
understanding of the New Testament



LEGACY SCHOOL OF MINISTRY



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SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

Teacher's Notes

Instructor: Thomas T. Hale

“A comprehensive study of the New Testament’s history,
literature, and theology.”

Legacy School of Ministry
New Testament Survey Teacher’s Guide
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PREFACE

The New Testament stands as the foundation of Christian faith and practice. Its pages reveal the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the birth and expansion of the early church, the theological framework of the apostles, and the hope of Christ's return. This book was written to provide a clear, structured, academically grounded, and pastorally rich survey of all 27 New Testament books.

My goal is simple: to equip believers, students, and ministers with a resource that is both **scholarly** and **accessible**, **thorough** yet **practical**, and deeply rooted in the life-changing message of Scripture. Each lesson blends historical background, theological insight, literary structure, and ministry application — all designed to help readers understand the New Testament as a unified story of God's redeeming work.

Whether you are teaching a class, preparing sermons, discipling new believers, or studying for personal growth, I pray this survey strengthens your understanding and deepens your devotion to Christ.

To God be the glory.

— **Thomas T. Hale, D.D.**

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LESSON 1 — MATTHEW

1. Overview

The Gospel of Matthew serves as the literary and theological bridge between the Old and New Testaments. Written with a distinctly Jewish orientation, it presents Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah who fulfills the promises made to Israel. Matthew's Gospel is carefully structured, weaving narrative and discourse into a unified portrait of Jesus as King, Teacher, and Emmanuel — “God with us.”

Matthew emphasizes Jesus' authority, His interpretation of the Law, and His inauguration of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Gospel is pastoral in tone yet theologically rich, offering a vision of discipleship rooted in obedience, humility, and mission. It is the most “teaching-heavy” of the four Gospels, making it foundational for Christian instruction and spiritual formation.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The early church unanimously attributed this Gospel to **Matthew (Levi)**, the former tax collector turned apostle. His background in record-keeping and financial detail aligns with the Gospel's structured teaching blocks, numerical groupings, and careful organization.

Early Christian writers such as Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, and Eusebius affirm Matthew's authorship. While modern scholarship sometimes debates this, the traditional attribution remains strong and historically credible.

Date

Most scholars place the writing of Matthew between **AD 60–70**, though some propose AD 70–85. The Jewish tone suggests it was written before the final

break between synagogue and church, yet after the resurrection and spread of the early Christian movement.

Audience

Matthew writes primarily to **Jewish Christians** who are wrestling with their identity in light of Jesus' messianic claims. They face pressure from both synagogue authorities and the surrounding Greco-Roman culture. Matthew's Gospel reassures them that following Jesus is the true fulfillment of Israel's story.

3. Historical Background

Matthew's Gospel emerges from a time of significant tension and transition for the early church. Jewish believers in Jesus were navigating:

- **Synagogue pressure** to maintain traditional interpretations of the Law
- **Roman pressure** to assimilate culturally
- **Internal questions** about the relationship between the Old Covenant and the New

Matthew addresses these concerns by showing that Jesus is the fulfillment — not the abolition — of the Law and the Prophets.

Jewish Context

Matthew contains more Old Testament quotations than any other Gospel (over 60). He frequently uses the formula: **“This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet...”** This signals to Jewish readers that Jesus completes the story of Israel.

Political Context

Israel was under Roman occupation, and messianic expectations were high. Many longed for a political deliverer. Matthew clarifies that Jesus' kingship is spiritual, redemptive, and universal.

Religious Context

The Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes held significant influence. Matthew highlights Jesus' authority over their traditions and interpretations, showing Him as the true interpreter of the Law.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Matthew writes to:

- Demonstrate that Jesus is the promised Messiah
- Show that Jesus fulfills the Old Testament
- Teach the ethics and values of the Kingdom
- Form disciples who obey Jesus' teaching
- Prepare the church for mission to the nations

Major Themes

1. Jesus as Messiah and King

Matthew's genealogy, birth narrative, miracles, and teachings all point to Jesus as the Davidic King.

2. Fulfillment of Scripture

Matthew repeatedly shows how Jesus fulfills prophecy, patterns, and promises.

3. The Kingdom of Heaven

A central theme unique to Matthew. The Kingdom is both present and future, spiritual and ethical.

4. Discipleship

Discipleship involves obedience, humility, sacrifice, and mission.

5. Authority of Jesus

Jesus speaks and acts with divine authority — over Scripture, demons, nature, sin, and the nations.

6. The Church

Matthew is the only Gospel to use the word “church” (ekklesia). He presents the church as the community built on the revelation of Jesus’ identity.

5. Structure of the Book

Matthew organizes his Gospel around **five major teaching discourses**, echoing the five books of Moses:

1. **Sermon on the Mount** (5–7)
2. **Mission Discourse** (10)
3. **Parables of the Kingdom** (13)
4. **Community Discourse** (18)
5. **Olivet Discourse** (24–25)

These discourses are framed by narrative sections that reveal Jesus’ identity and mission.

A simple structural outline:

1. **Birth and Preparation of the King** (1–4)
2. **Proclamation of the Kingdom** (5–7)
3. **Power of the Kingdom** (8–10)
4. **Parables of the Kingdom** (11–13)
5. **Progress of the Kingdom** (14–20)
6. **Climax of the Kingdom** (21–25)
7. **Passion and Resurrection** (26–28)

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Birth and Preparation of the King (Chapters 1–4)

A. Genealogy (1:1–17)

Matthew begins with a genealogy that anchors Jesus in Israel's story — son of Abraham, son of David. The genealogy is structured in three sets of fourteen generations, emphasizing God's sovereign orchestration of history.

B. Birth Narrative (1:18–25)

The virgin birth fulfills Isaiah 7:14 and reveals Jesus as “God with us.” Joseph's obedience models faithful discipleship.

C. Visit of the Magi and Herod's Opposition (2:1–23)

Gentile Magi recognize Jesus' kingship, while Herod responds with hostility. This contrast foreshadows the mixed responses Jesus will receive.

D. John the Baptist and Jesus' Baptism (3:1–17)

John prepares the way, calling Israel to repentance. Jesus' baptism reveals His identity as the beloved Son and inaugurates His public ministry.

E. Temptation in the Wilderness (4:1–11)

Jesus resists Satan's temptations by relying on Scripture, succeeding where Israel failed.

F. Beginning of Ministry (4:12–25)

Jesus proclaims the Kingdom, calls disciples, and demonstrates His authority through healing.

II. Sermon on the Mount (Chapters 5–7)

The Sermon on the Mount is the ethical heart of Matthew's Gospel. Jesus describes the character, values, and lifestyle of Kingdom citizens.

A. Beatitudes (5:1–12)

Jesus blesses the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, and the persecuted — redefining true blessedness.

B. Salt and Light (5:13–16)

Disciples are called to influence the world through holiness and good works.

C. Fulfillment of the Law (5:17–20)

Jesus does not abolish the Law but fulfills it. True righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees.

D. Six Antitheses (5:21–48)

Jesus deepens the Law's intent, addressing anger, lust, divorce, oaths, retaliation, and love for enemies.

E. Spiritual Disciplines (6:1–18)

Giving, prayer, and fasting must be practiced with sincerity, not for show.

F. Kingdom Priorities (6:19–34)

Jesus teaches trust in God's provision and calls disciples to seek first the Kingdom.

G. Judging, Asking, and the Golden Rule (7:1–12)

H. Warnings and the Wise Builder (7:13–29)

The sermon ends with a call to obedience — hearing and doing Jesus' words.

III. Ministry of Power and Authority (Chapters 8–10)

Matthew presents a series of miracles that demonstrate Jesus' authority over disease, nature, demons, and death.

A. Ten Miracles (8–9)

These miracles reveal Jesus' compassion and power. They also show the varied responses of faith and unbelief.

B. Mission of the Twelve (10)

Jesus commissions His disciples, giving them authority and preparing them for persecution.

IV. Parables of the Kingdom (Chapters 11–13)

This section marks a major turning point in Matthew's Gospel. As opposition intensifies, Jesus increasingly uses parables to reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom to those with receptive hearts while concealing truth from those hardened in unbelief. Matthew emphasizes that parables are not merely illustrations but instruments of both revelation and judgment.

A. Rising Opposition and Unbelief (Chapters 11–12)

Matthew presents a series of escalating conflicts that reveal the spiritual climate of Israel during Jesus' ministry.

1. Responses to Jesus' Ministry (11:1–19)

- **John the Baptist's question** ("Are You the One who is to come?") reflects the tension between messianic expectation and Jesus' unexpected approach.
- Jesus affirms John's prophetic role and rebukes the crowds for their fickleness — they rejected John's austerity and Jesus' compassion.
- This section highlights the human tendency to resist God's work when it does not match preconceived expectations.

2. Woes on Unrepentant Cities (11:20–24)

Despite witnessing miracles, cities like Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum remained unrepentant. Jesus warns that their judgment will be more severe than that of pagan cities. This underscores a key theme: **greater revelation brings greater responsibility.**

3. Invitation to Rest (11:25–30)

In contrast to the heavy burdens of Pharisaic legalism, Jesus offers rest to the weary. His yoke is easy because it is rooted in grace, not performance. This passage reveals the heart of Jesus — gentle, humble, and welcoming.

4. Sabbath Controversies (12:1–14)

Jesus challenges Pharisaic interpretations of Sabbath law, asserting His authority as “Lord of the Sabbath.” This conflict exposes the deeper issue: the Pharisees’ rigid traditionalism blinded them to God’s compassion.

5. Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit (12:22–37)

When the Pharisees attribute Jesus’ miracles to demonic power, Jesus warns them about the danger of persistent, willful rejection of the Spirit’s testimony. This is not a momentary doubt but a hardened posture of unbelief.

6. The Sign of Jonah (12:38–45)

Jesus refuses to perform signs on demand, pointing instead to His death and resurrection as the ultimate sign.

7. Redefining Family (12:46–50)

Jesus declares that true family consists of those who do the will of the Father. This prepares the reader for the formation of the church as the new covenant community.

B. Parables of the Kingdom (Chapter 13)

Matthew gathers a collection of parables that reveal the nature, growth, and challenges of the Kingdom of Heaven.

1. The Parable of the Sower (13:1–23)

This foundational parable explains the varied responses to the Word.

- Hard soil: hardened hearts
- Rocky soil: shallow commitment
- Thorny soil: divided loyalties
- Good soil: receptive, fruitful hearts

Jesus teaches that **fruitfulness is the true evidence of Kingdom life.**

2. The Parable of the Weeds (13:24–30, 36–43)

Good and evil coexist until the final judgment. This parable encourages patience and trust in God's timing.

3. Mustard Seed and Leaven (13:31–33)

The Kingdom begins small but grows expansively and permeates everything it touches. This is a message of hope for discouraged disciples.

4. Treasure and Pearl (13:44–46)

The Kingdom is of incomparable value, worth sacrificing everything to obtain.

5. The Net (13:47–50)

A final judgment will separate the righteous from the wicked. This reinforces the urgency of repentance.

6. The Scribe Trained for the Kingdom (13:51–52)

Disciples are called to bring out treasures both old and new — honoring the Old Testament while embracing the new revelation in Christ.

V. Growing Conflict and Journey Toward Jerusalem (Chapters 14–20)

As Jesus moves toward Jerusalem, the tension intensifies. Matthew highlights both the increasing clarity of Jesus' mission and the disciples' ongoing misunderstanding.

A. Miracles of Compassion and Power (14–15)

1. Feeding the 5,000 (14:13–21)

Jesus demonstrates compassion for the crowds and reveals His divine ability to provide abundantly.

2. Walking on Water (14:22–33)

This miracle reveals Jesus' authority over creation and exposes the disciples' struggle with fear and faith.

3. Confrontation with Pharisees (15:1–20)

Jesus teaches that true defilement comes from the heart, not external rituals. This is a major theological shift from ritual purity to heart purity.

4. Ministry to Gentiles (15:21–39)

The healing of the Canaanite woman and the feeding of the 4,000 show that the Kingdom extends beyond Israel.

B. Revelation of Jesus' Identity (Chapter 16)

1. Peter's Confession (16:13–20)

Peter declares Jesus to be “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus affirms this revelation as divinely given and introduces the concept of the **church** — the community built on the revelation of His identity.

2. Prediction of the Cross (16:21–28)

Jesus reveals that His mission involves suffering and death. Peter’s resistance shows how deeply the disciples misunderstood the nature of the Messiah.

C. Transfiguration and Discipleship (Chapter 17)

Jesus’ glory is revealed to Peter, James, and John. The Father’s voice affirms Jesus’ identity and commands the disciples to listen to Him. This event strengthens the disciples for the coming trials.

D. Kingdom Relationships (Chapter 18)

Jesus teaches about humility, care for the vulnerable, reconciliation, forgiveness, and church discipline. The parable of the unforgiving servant underscores the necessity of extending mercy.

VI. Ministry in Jerusalem (Chapters 21–25)

A. Triumphal Entry and Temple Cleansing (21)

Jesus enters Jerusalem as the humble King, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9. His cleansing of the temple asserts His authority over Israel’s worship.

B. Controversies and Woes (22–23)

Jesus engages in debates with Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes. The seven woes condemn hypocrisy, legalism, and spiritual blindness.

C. Olivet Discourse (24–25)

Jesus teaches about the destruction of the temple, the signs of the end, and the need for watchfulness. Parables such as the ten virgins and the talents emphasize readiness, stewardship, and faithfulness.

VII. Passion, Death, and Resurrection (Chapters 26–28)

A. Last Supper and Gethsemane (26)

Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper and submits to the Father's will in Gethsemane.

B. Trial and Crucifixion (27)

Matthew highlights the injustice of the trial and the cosmic significance of Jesus' death.

C. Resurrection and Great Commission (28)

The risen Christ commissions His disciples to make disciples of all nations. His authority and presence frame the church's mission.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Matthew 5–7 — Sermon on the Mount

The ethical heart of the Gospel, revealing the character of Kingdom citizens.

Matthew 16:13–20 — Peter's Confession

A turning point in the Gospel and the foundation of the church.

Matthew 28:18–20 — Great Commission

The global mission of the church rooted in Jesus' authority and presence.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Jesus as Messiah, Son of David, Son of God, new Moses, Emmanuel.

Kingdom Theology

The Kingdom is present and future, spiritual and ethical.

Scripture and Fulfillment

Jesus completes the story of Israel.

Discipleship

Obedience, humility, sacrifice, and mission.

Ecclesiology

The church as the community built on the revelation of Jesus' identity.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Discipleship is holistic and demands obedience.
- The Kingdom transforms character and priorities.
- Mission is central to Christian identity.
- Jesus fulfills every longing of Scripture.
- The church must embody Kingdom values.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Matthew's use of the Old Testament shape our understanding of Jesus' identity?
2. What does the Sermon on the Mount reveal about the nature of true righteousness?
3. How do the parables of Matthew 13 describe the growth and challenges of the Kingdom?

4. Why is Peter's confession a turning point in the Gospel?
5. How does Matthew portray the tension between Jesus and the religious leaders?
6. What does the Great Commission teach about the mission and identity of the church?
7. How does Matthew balance the themes of judgment and mercy?
8. In what ways does Matthew call believers to deeper obedience and discipleship?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

Messiah (Christos)

The anointed King promised in the Old Testament. Matthew emphasizes Jesus as the fulfillment of messianic expectations.

Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew's preferred term for God's reign breaking into human history. It is both present (in Jesus' ministry) and future (in final judgment and restoration).

Fulfillment

A major theme in Matthew. Jesus fulfills prophecy, patterns, and promises from the Old Testament.

Righteousness

Not merely external rule-keeping but heart-level obedience aligned with God's will.

Disciple

A learner and follower of Jesus who embraces His teaching and mission.

Hypocrisy

A major concern in Matthew. Jesus confronts religious leaders who honor God with their lips but not their hearts.

Ekklesia (Church)

The community built on the revelation of Jesus' identity. Matthew is the only Gospel to use this term.

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

1. Emphasize Matthew's Jewish Context

Students often miss how deeply rooted Matthew is in the Old Testament. Highlight the genealogy, fulfillment quotations, and parallels to Moses.

2. Use the Sermon on the Mount as a Discipleship Framework

Encourage students to see this sermon not as idealistic but as the core ethic of Kingdom living.

3. Explain the Purpose of Parables

Many assume parables are simple illustrations. Matthew 13 shows they reveal and conceal truth depending on the heart's condition.

4. Highlight the Turning Point at Peter's Confession

This moment shifts the Gospel from revelation to preparation for the cross.

5. Connect the Great Commission to the Entire Gospel

Matthew begins with "God with us" (1:23) and ends with "I am with you always" (28:20). This book is framed by presence and mission.

6. Encourage Students to See the Unity of the Gospel

Matthew is not a collection of stories but a carefully crafted theological narrative.

13. Suggested Reading (Instructor-Level)

Commentaries (Accessible Academic)

- R.T. France — *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT)
- Craig Blomberg — *Matthew* (NAC)
- Michael Wilkins — *Matthew* (NIVAC)

Background & Theology

- N.T. Wright — *Matthew for Everyone*
- Craig Keener — *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*
- David Turner — *Matthew* (BECNT)

Teaching Helps

- John Stott — *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*
- Jonathan Pennington — *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Matthew presents Jesus as the promised Messiah who fulfills Israel's story and inaugurates the Kingdom of Heaven. Through narrative and teaching, Matthew reveals Jesus' authority, compassion, and mission. The Gospel calls disciples to a life of obedience, humility, and Kingdom-centered living.

The Sermon on the Mount provides the ethical foundation for discipleship. The parables reveal the mysterious growth of the Kingdom. The journey to Jerusalem highlights Jesus' identity and mission, culminating in His death and resurrection. The Great Commission sends the church into the world with Jesus' authority and presence.

Matthew's Gospel is both deeply theological and intensely practical. It forms disciples who understand Scripture, embrace Kingdom values, and participate in God's mission.

LESSON 2 — MARK

1. Overview

The Gospel of Mark is the shortest and most fast-paced of the four Gospels, presenting Jesus as the powerful yet suffering Son of God. Mark's narrative is vivid, urgent, and action-oriented, often using the word "immediately" to propel the story forward. His Gospel emphasizes what Jesus **does** more than what He **says**, highlighting His authority over sickness, demons, nature, and sin.

Mark also presents a profound theology of discipleship. The disciples frequently misunderstand Jesus, struggle with faith, and fail at critical moments. This is not to shame them but to show that discipleship is a journey of growth, dependence, and transformation. Mark's Gospel is pastoral in its honesty: following Jesus is costly, but He is worth everything.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Early Christian tradition identifies **John Mark** as the author. He was a companion of both Peter and Paul, and the early church fathers (Papias, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria) state that Mark wrote down Peter's eyewitness accounts. This explains the vivid detail, immediacy, and eyewitness flavor of the narrative.

Date

Most scholars date Mark between **AD 55–65**, possibly written in Rome. This places it during or just before Nero's persecution, which may explain the Gospel's emphasis on suffering and endurance.

Audience

Mark writes primarily to **Gentile believers**, likely Roman Christians. Evidence includes:

- Explanations of Jewish customs
- Use of Latin terms
- Emphasis on persecution and endurance

Mark's Gospel encourages believers facing hardship to remain faithful to the suffering Messiah.

3. Historical Background

Roman Context

Rome was a center of power, wealth, and brutality. Christians faced suspicion and, at times, violent persecution. Mark's portrayal of Jesus as the suffering Son of God would have strengthened believers living under pressure.

Jewish Context

Although written for Gentiles, Mark is deeply rooted in Jewish expectations of the Messiah. However, Mark emphasizes that Jesus' messiahship is not political or militaristic — it is defined by suffering, service, and sacrifice.

The Messianic Secret

A unique feature of Mark is Jesus' repeated command for people not to reveal His identity. This "Messianic Secret" highlights:

- The danger of misunderstanding Jesus as a political liberator
- The need for the cross to define His identity
- The gradual revelation of who Jesus truly is

Mark's Gospel invites readers to discover Jesus' identity through His actions and His suffering.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Mark writes to:

- Present Jesus as the powerful yet suffering Son of God
- Encourage believers facing persecution
- Clarify the nature of true discipleship
- Show that the cross is central to Jesus' mission

Major Themes

1. Jesus as the Son of God

Mark begins with this declaration (1:1) and builds his entire narrative around it.

2. Authority of Jesus

Jesus demonstrates authority over:

- Demons
- Sickness
- Nature
- Sin
- Tradition

His authority is immediate and undeniable.

3. Discipleship

Mark portrays discipleship as:

- Costly
- Misunderstood
- Dependent on Jesus
- Marked by failure and restoration

4. The Cross

The cross is not a tragic end but the purpose of Jesus' mission. Mark devotes a large portion of his Gospel to the passion narrative.

5. Suffering

Believers are called to follow the suffering Messiah. Mark encourages endurance and faithfulness.

5. Structure of the Book

Mark's Gospel can be divided into two major halves:

I. Who Is Jesus? (Chapters 1–8)

Jesus' identity is revealed through His actions and authority.

II. What Does It Mean to Follow Him? (Chapters 8–16)

Jesus teaches about suffering, discipleship, and the cross.

A more detailed outline:

1. **Preparation and Early Ministry (1:1–13)**
2. **Galilean Ministry (1:14–8:26)**
3. **Journey to Jerusalem (8:27–10:52)**
4. **Jerusalem Ministry (11–13)**

5. Passion and Resurrection (14–16)

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Preparation and Early Ministry (1:1–13)

A. Prologue (1:1–3)

Mark begins abruptly: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” This sets the tone — Jesus is the divine Son whose mission brings good news.

B. Ministry of John the Baptist (1:4–8)

John prepares the way through preaching repentance and baptizing. He points to the One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

C. Baptism of Jesus (1:9–11)

The heavens open, the Spirit descends, and the Father affirms Jesus as His beloved Son. This Trinitarian moment inaugurates Jesus’ ministry.

D. Temptation in the Wilderness (1:12–13)

Mark’s brief account emphasizes Jesus’ victory over Satan and His identification with humanity.

II. Ministry in Galilee (1:14–8:26)

A. Calling of the First Disciples (1:14–20)

Jesus calls fishermen to follow Him and become “fishers of men.” Discipleship begins with a decisive response.

B. Ministry of Authority (1:21–45)

Jesus teaches with authority, casts out demons, heals the sick, and cleanses a leper. Mark highlights the immediacy and power of Jesus' ministry.

C. Growing Crowds and Growing Opposition (2:1–3:6)

Five conflict stories reveal tension with religious leaders:

1. Healing the paralytic
2. Eating with sinners
3. Question of fasting
4. Sabbath controversies
5. Healing on the Sabbath

These conflicts foreshadow the opposition that will lead to the cross.

D. Parables and Miracles (4–5)

Jesus teaches in parables and demonstrates authority over:

- Storms
- Demons
- Disease
- Death

These miracles reveal His divine identity.

E. Rejection at Nazareth (6:1–6)

Even Jesus' hometown rejects Him. This highlights the theme of unbelief.

F. Mission of the Twelve (6:7–13)

Jesus sends His disciples to preach, heal, and cast out demons.

G. Feeding Miracles and Teaching (6:30–8:26)

Jesus feeds the 5,000 and later the 4,000, revealing His compassion and power. The disciples struggle to understand, showing their spiritual blindness.

III. Journey to Jerusalem (8:27–10:52)

A. Peter's Confession (8:27–30)

Peter declares Jesus to be the Christ. This is the turning point of the Gospel.

B. First Prediction of the Cross (8:31–9:1)

Jesus reveals that the Messiah must suffer. Peter rebukes Him, showing misunderstanding.

C. Transfiguration (9:2–13)

Jesus' glory is revealed, confirming His identity.

D. Teaching on Discipleship (9:14–10:52)

Jesus teaches about:

- Faith
- Humility
- Marriage
- Wealth
- Servanthood

The section ends with the healing of blind Bartimaeus — a symbol of true spiritual sight.

IV. Ministry in Jerusalem (11–13)

A. Triumphal Entry (11:1–11)

Jesus enters Jerusalem as the humble King.

B. Cleansing of the Temple (11:12–19)

Jesus asserts His authority over Israel's worship.

C. Controversies with Religious Leaders (11:27–12:44)

Jesus debates Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes.

D. Eschatological Discourse (13)

Jesus teaches about the destruction of the temple and the end of the age.

V. Passion and Resurrection (14–16)

A. Last Supper (14:12–26)

Jesus institutes the new covenant in His blood.

B. Gethsemane (14:32–42)

Jesus submits to the Father's will.

C. Trial and Crucifixion (14:53–15:47)

Mark emphasizes Jesus' innocence and the injustice of His trial.

D. Resurrection (16:1–8)

The empty tomb reveals Jesus' victory. Mark ends abruptly, emphasizing awe and fear.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Mark 1:1–15 — The Beginning of the Gospel

Reveals Jesus' identity and mission.

Mark 8:27–38 — The Turning Point

Peter's confession and Jesus' call to take up the cross.

Mark 10:45 — The Mission of the Son of Man

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 15 — The Crucifixion

The centurion's confession reveals Jesus' true identity.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Jesus is the powerful yet suffering Son of God.

Discipleship

Following Jesus requires self-denial, sacrifice, and faith.

The Cross

The cross is central to Jesus' identity and mission.

Faith and Unbelief

Mark contrasts genuine faith with fear, confusion, and hardness of heart.

The Kingdom

The Kingdom breaks into the world through Jesus' authority and compassion.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Discipleship is costly but rewarding.
- Jesus understands suffering and walks with His people.
- Ministry requires humility and servanthood.
- Faith grows through obedience, not perfect understanding.
- The cross shapes Christian identity and mission.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Mark's fast-paced style shape our understanding of Jesus' ministry?
2. Why does Mark emphasize Jesus' authority?
3. What does the "Messianic Secret" reveal about Jesus' mission?
4. How does Mark portray the disciples' struggles?
5. What does Mark teach about suffering and discipleship?
6. Why is Mark 10:45 a key verse for understanding the Gospel?
7. How does Mark prepare believers to endure hardship?
8. What does the abrupt ending of Mark communicate?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Son of God
- Authority
- Discipleship
- Messianic Secret
- Suffering Servant
- Kingdom of God
- Ransom

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the contrast between Jesus' power and His suffering.
- Highlight the disciples' failures as encouragement for modern believers.
- Use Mark 8–10 as a framework for teaching discipleship.
- Show how Mark's Gospel strengthens believers facing hardship.

13. Suggested Reading

- R.T. France — *The Gospel of Mark*
- James Edwards — *Mark* (PNTC)
- William Lane — *Mark* (NICNT)
- David Garland — *Mark* (NIVAC)

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Mark presents Jesus as the powerful yet suffering Son of God whose mission centers on the cross. His Gospel calls believers to follow Jesus with humility, endurance, and faith. Mark's vivid narrative encourages disciples who struggle, reminding them that Jesus is patient, compassionate, and sovereign.

LESSON 3 — LUKE

1. Overview

The Gospel of Luke presents Jesus as the compassionate Savior of all people — Jews and Gentiles, men and women, rich and poor, insiders and outsiders. Luke’s Gospel is the most literary of the four, marked by polished Greek, vivid storytelling, and careful historical detail. Luke emphasizes Jesus’ humanity, His concern for the marginalized, His dependence on the Holy Spirit, and His commitment to prayer.

Luke writes with a pastoral heart and a historian’s precision. His Gospel is the first volume of a two-part work (Luke–Acts), showing how God’s salvation begins in Israel, is fulfilled in Jesus, and expands to the ends of the earth through the Spirit-empowered church. Luke’s portrait of Jesus is warm, compassionate, and deeply relational — a Savior who seeks the lost, heals the broken, and welcomes the outcast.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Early Christian tradition identifies **Luke the physician**, a companion of Paul, as the author. Evidence includes:

- The “we” sections in Acts
- Paul’s references to Luke as a coworker (Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24)
- Luke’s polished Greek and medical vocabulary
- The unified style of Luke–Acts

Luke was likely a Gentile, making him the only non-Jewish author in the New Testament.

Date

Most scholars date Luke between **AD 60–70**, though some propose AD 70–85. A date in the early 60s is plausible because Acts ends with Paul alive in Rome, suggesting Luke wrote before Paul's death.

Audience

Luke writes to **Theophilus**, likely a Gentile patron or official, and to a broader Gentile audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs, emphasizes universal salvation, and highlights God's concern for all nations.

3. Historical Background

Greco-Roman Context

Luke writes in a world shaped by Roman power, Greek culture, and Jewish religious tradition. His Gospel addresses:

- The marginalized status of the poor
- The role of women in society
- The tension between Jews and Gentiles
- The political realities of empire

Luke shows that Jesus brings salvation that transcends social, ethnic, and economic boundaries.

Jewish Context

Luke roots Jesus firmly in Israel's story — from the temple scenes in chapters 1–2 to the fulfillment of prophecy throughout the Gospel. Yet he also shows that Israel's Messiah brings salvation to the nations.

Historical Accuracy

Luke emphasizes eyewitness testimony, careful investigation, and chronological detail. His Gospel is both theological and historically grounded.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Luke writes to:

- Provide an orderly, reliable account of Jesus' life
- Strengthen believers in their faith
- Show that Jesus is the Savior of all people
- Highlight the role of the Holy Spirit
- Prepare readers for the mission of the church in Acts

Major Themes

1. Universal Salvation

Luke emphasizes that Jesus came for all — Jews, Gentiles, men, women, rich, poor, righteous, and sinners.

2. Compassion for the Marginalized

Luke highlights Jesus' ministry to:

- Women
- Children
- The poor
- Samaritans
- Tax collectors
- Sinners

3. The Holy Spirit

Luke emphasizes the Spirit's role in:

- Jesus' conception
- His baptism
- His ministry
- The church's mission

4. Prayer

Jesus prays at every major moment:

- Baptism
- Choosing the Twelve
- Transfiguration
- Gethsemane
- On the cross

5. Joy and Praise

Luke's Gospel begins and ends with worship. Joy permeates the narrative.

6. Reversal Theme

The humble are exalted; the proud are brought low. This theme appears in Mary's Magnificat and throughout the Gospel.

5. Structure of the Book

Luke's Gospel follows a clear geographical movement:

1. **Prologue and Birth Narratives (1–2)**
2. **Preparation for Ministry (3–4)**
3. **Ministry in Galilee (4–9)**
4. **Journey to Jerusalem (9–19)**

5. **Ministry in Jerusalem (19–21)**
6. **Passion and Resurrection (22–24)**

The “Journey to Jerusalem” section (9:51–19:27) is unique to Luke and contains many of Jesus’ most beloved parables.

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Birth and Childhood Narratives (Chapters 1–2)

A. Annunciations (1:5–38)

Luke begins with parallel announcements:

- Gabriel appears to Zechariah (John the Baptist)
- Gabriel appears to Mary (Jesus)

These stories highlight God’s initiative and the miraculous nature of salvation.

B. Mary’s Visit to Elizabeth (1:39–56)

Mary’s Magnificat celebrates God’s mercy, justice, and reversal of human expectations.

C. Births of John and Jesus (1:57–2:40)

Luke emphasizes:

- Humility (manger, shepherds)
- Joy (angelic praise)
- Fulfillment of prophecy

D. Jesus in the Temple (2:41–52)

At age twelve, Jesus reveals His awareness of His divine mission.

II. Preparation for Ministry (Chapters 3–4)

A. Ministry of John the Baptist (3:1–20)

John calls Israel to repentance and prepares the way for Jesus.

B. Baptism and Genealogy (3:21–38)

Jesus is affirmed by the Father and empowered by the Spirit. Luke traces Jesus' genealogy back to Adam, emphasizing His universal mission.

C. Temptation in the Wilderness (4:1–13)

Jesus resists Satan's temptations through Scripture and Spirit-dependence.

III. Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)

A. Jesus' Mission Statement (4:14–30)

In Nazareth, Jesus reads Isaiah 61 and declares its fulfillment. This sets the tone for His ministry: good news to the poor, freedom for the oppressed.

B. Miracles and Teaching (4:31–6:49)

Jesus demonstrates authority over:

- Demons
- Sickness
- Nature
- Sin

He calls disciples and teaches the Sermon on the Plain.

C. Compassion and Inclusion (7–8)

Luke highlights Jesus' ministry to:

- A Roman centurion
- A widow
- A sinful woman
- A demon-possessed man

D. Confession and Transfiguration (9:18–50)

Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ. Jesus predicts His death and is transfigured before His disciples.

IV. Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)

(Unique to Luke — the “Travel Narrative”)

This section contains many beloved parables:

- Good Samaritan
- Rich Fool
- Prodigal Son
- Lost Sheep
- Lost Coin
- Rich Man and Lazarus
- Persistent Widow
- Pharisee and Tax Collector

Luke emphasizes Jesus’ compassion, teaching, and call to repentance.

V. Ministry in Jerusalem (19:28–21:38)

A. Triumphal Entry (19:28–44)

Jesus weeps over Jerusalem.

B. Cleansing of the Temple (19:45–48)

Jesus confronts corruption.

C. Teaching and Controversies (20–21)

Jesus debates religious leaders and teaches about the end times.

VI. Passion and Resurrection (Chapters 22–24)

A. Last Supper (22:1–38)

Jesus institutes the new covenant.

B. Gethsemane (22:39–46)

Jesus prays in anguish yet submits to the Father.

C. Trial and Crucifixion (22:47–23:56)

Luke highlights Jesus' innocence and compassion:

- He heals the servant's ear
- He forgives His executioners
- He saves the repentant thief

D. Resurrection and Ascension (24:1–53)

Jesus appears to disciples, explains Scripture, and ascends. Luke ends with joy and worship.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Luke 4:18–19 — Jesus' Mission Statement

Defines Jesus' ministry as Spirit-empowered compassion.

Luke 10:25–37 — Good Samaritan

Redefines neighbor-love and challenges prejudice.

Luke 15 — Parables of Grace

Reveals God's heart for the lost.

Luke 24 — Emmaus Road

Shows Jesus as the fulfillment of Scripture.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Jesus is the Spirit-anointed Savior, compassionate and fully human.

Pneumatology

The Holy Spirit empowers Jesus and the church.

Soteriology

Salvation is universal, gracious, and transformative.

Ethics

Luke emphasizes mercy, generosity, humility, and justice.

Prayer

Prayer is central to Jesus' life and ministry.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- The church must welcome the marginalized.
- Ministry must be Spirit-empowered and prayer-saturated.
- God's grace seeks the lost and restores the broken.
- Discipleship involves compassion, generosity, and humility.
- Jesus' example calls believers to cross cultural and social boundaries.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Luke's portrayal of Jesus differ from Matthew and Mark?
2. What does Luke teach about the role of the Holy Spirit?
3. How do the parables in Luke 15 reveal God's heart?
4. Why does Luke emphasize Jesus' ministry to outsiders?
5. How does the "Journey to Jerusalem" shape the Gospel's message?
6. What does Luke teach about prayer and dependence on God?
7. How does Luke connect Jesus' mission to the mission of the church in Acts?
8. What does the Emmaus Road story teach about interpreting Scripture?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Universal Salvation
- Holy Spirit
- Reversal Theme
- Compassion
- Prayer
- Joy
- Outcasts
- Parables of Grace

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Highlight Luke's unique parables — they are central to his theology.
- Emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' ministry.
- Use Luke 4:18–19 as a framework for understanding the Gospel.
- Show how Luke prepares readers for the book of Acts.
- Encourage students to see Jesus' compassion as a model for ministry.

13. Suggested Reading

- Joel Green — *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT)
- Darrell Bock — *Luke* (BECNT)
- N.T. Wright — *Luke for Everyone*

- Kenneth Bailey — *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Luke presents Jesus as the compassionate, Spirit-empowered Savior who brings salvation to all people. His Gospel emphasizes prayer, joy, reversal, and the inclusion of the marginalized. Luke prepares readers for the mission of the church in Acts, showing that the story of Jesus continues through His Spirit-filled followers.

■ LESSON 4 — JOHN

1. Overview

The Gospel of John stands apart from the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) in both style and content. John presents Jesus not only as the Messiah but as the eternal **Word (Logos)** made flesh — the One who reveals the Father and brings eternal life to all who believe. John’s Gospel is deeply theological, emphasizing the identity of Jesus, the necessity of belief, and the relational nature of eternal life.

John structures his Gospel around **signs, discourses, and personal encounters** that reveal Jesus’ divine identity. His writing is simple in vocabulary yet profound in meaning, inviting readers into a deeper understanding of who Jesus is. John’s Gospel is pastoral, evangelistic, and contemplative — a masterpiece designed to lead readers to faith and deeper fellowship with God.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Early Christian tradition attributes the Gospel to **John the apostle**, the son of Zebedee and one of Jesus’ closest disciples. Internal evidence supports this:

- The author claims to be an eyewitness (John 19:35; 21:24).
- The “beloved disciple” appears in key moments.
- The Gospel reflects intimate knowledge of Jewish customs, geography, and private conversations.

While some modern scholars debate authorship, the traditional view remains strong and historically grounded.

Date

Most scholars date the Gospel between **AD 85–95**, making it one of the last New Testament books written. This later date explains:

- The developed theological reflection
- The mature understanding of the church's mission
- The pastoral tone addressing emerging false teachings

Audience

John writes to a broad Christian audience, likely including both Jews and Gentiles. His purpose is evangelistic and pastoral — to strengthen believers and lead unbelievers to faith.

3. Historical Background

Religious Context

By the time John wrote, the early church was facing:

- Growing separation from the synagogue
- Early forms of Gnosticism
- Confusion about Jesus' identity
- Persecution from both Jews and Romans

John responds by presenting Jesus as the true revelation of God — fully divine, fully human, and the only source of eternal life.

Cultural Context

John writes in a Greco-Roman world familiar with philosophical concepts like “logos.” He uses this term to connect with his audience while redefining it in light of Jesus.

Church Context

John's Gospel complements the Synoptics by focusing on:

- Jesus' identity
- The meaning of His signs

- The relational nature of salvation
- The role of the Holy Spirit

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

John states his purpose explicitly:

“These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” — John 20:31

John writes to inspire **faith, understanding, and eternal life.**

Major Themes

1. Jesus as the Divine Son

John emphasizes Jesus’ deity:

- “In the beginning was the Word...”
- “I and the Father are one.”
- “Before Abraham was, I AM.”

2. Belief

Belief is not intellectual assent but relational trust. John uses the verb “believe” nearly 100 times.

3. Eternal Life

Eternal life is not merely future; it is present, relational, and rooted in knowing God.

4. Signs

John selects seven signs to reveal Jesus’ identity:

- Water to wine
- Healing the official's son
- Healing the paralytic
- Feeding the 5,000
- Walking on water
- Healing the blind man
- Raising Lazarus

5. Light and Darkness

A major motif symbolizing revelation and rejection.

6. The Holy Spirit

The Spirit is the Helper, Teacher, and Advocate.

7. Love

John emphasizes God's love, Jesus' love, and the call for believers to love one another.

5. Structure of the Book

John's Gospel is organized around two major sections:

I. The Book of Signs (Chapters 1–12)

Jesus reveals His identity through signs and teaching.

II. The Book of Glory (Chapters 13–20)

Jesus prepares His disciples, goes to the cross, and rises again.

A more detailed outline:

1. **Prologue** (1:1–18)
2. **Early Ministry and Signs** (1:19–4:54)

3. **Feasts and Controversies (5–10)**
4. **Raising of Lazarus and Final Signs (11–12)**
5. **Upper Room Discourse (13–17)**
6. **Passion Narrative (18–19)**
7. **Resurrection and Commission (20–21)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Prologue: The Word Made Flesh (1:1–18)

A. Eternal Identity of the Word

Jesus is eternal, divine, and the agent of creation.

B. Incarnation

“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” John emphasizes both Jesus’ divinity and humanity.

C. Revelation of the Father

Jesus makes God known.

II. Early Ministry and Signs (1:19–4:54)

A. Testimony of John the Baptist (1:19–34)

John identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God.

B. Calling of the First Disciples (1:35–51)

Jesus invites disciples into relationship.

C. Wedding at Cana (2:1–12)

Jesus’ first sign reveals His glory.

D. Cleansing of the Temple (2:13–25)

Jesus asserts authority over worship.

E. Nicodemus and New Birth (3:1–21)

Jesus teaches the necessity of spiritual rebirth.

F. Samaritan Woman (4:1–42)

Jesus crosses cultural boundaries to offer living water.

G. Healing the Official's Son (4:43–54)

A sign of Jesus' life-giving power.

III. Feasts, Signs, and Controversies (5–10)

A. Healing at Bethesda (5)

Jesus claims equality with God.

B. Feeding the 5,000 and Bread of Life Discourse (6)

Jesus is the true bread from heaven.

C. Feast of Tabernacles (7–8)

Jesus is the light of the world.

D. Healing the Blind Man (9)

A sign of spiritual sight and blindness.

E. Good Shepherd Discourse (10)

Jesus is the shepherd who lays down His life.

IV. Raising of Lazarus and Final Signs (11–12)

A. Raising of Lazarus (11)

A climactic sign revealing Jesus as the resurrection and the life.

B. Anointing at Bethany (12:1–11)

A prophetic act of devotion.

C. Triumphal Entry and Unbelief (12:12–50)

The nation's mixed response to Jesus.

V. Upper Room Discourse (13–17)

A. Foot Washing (13)

A model of servant leadership.

B. Farewell Discourses (14–16)

Jesus prepares His disciples for His departure and promises the Holy Spirit.

C. High Priestly Prayer (17)

Jesus prays for His disciples and future believers.

VI. Passion and Resurrection (18–21)

A. Arrest and Trial (18–19)

Jesus willingly submits to the Father's plan.

B. Crucifixion (19)

John emphasizes Jesus' sovereignty even in death.

C. Resurrection (20)

Jesus appears to Mary, the disciples, and Thomas.

D. Restoration of Peter (21)

Jesus restores and recommissions Peter.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

John 1:1–18 — The Prologue

A theological foundation for Jesus' identity.

John 3:16 — God's Love

The heart of the Gospel.

John 10 — The Good Shepherd

Jesus' pastoral care and sacrificial love.

John 11 — Raising Lazarus

A sign pointing to Jesus' own resurrection.

John 17 — High Priestly Prayer

Jesus' intercession for His people.

John 20:31 — Purpose Statement

The reason John wrote his Gospel.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Jesus is:

- Eternal Word
- Son of God
- I AM
- Light of the world
- Bread of life
- Good Shepherd
- Resurrection and life

Soteriology

Salvation is relational — knowing God through Jesus.

Pneumatology

The Spirit is the Helper, Teacher, and Advocate.

Ecclesiology

The church is a community of love, unity, and mission.

Eschatology

Eternal life begins now through belief.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Jesus invites believers into deep relationship.
- Ministry must reflect Jesus' love and humility.
- The Spirit empowers believers for mission.
- Eternal life is a present reality, not just a future hope.
- The church must embody unity and sacrificial love.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does John's portrayal of Jesus differ from the Synoptics?
2. What does the Prologue teach about Jesus' identity?
3. Why are signs important in John's Gospel?
4. How does John define "belief"?
5. What does the Good Shepherd discourse reveal about Jesus' heart?
6. How does the Upper Room Discourse prepare believers for mission?
7. What does John 17 teach about unity?
8. How does John connect Jesus' identity to eternal life?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Logos
- Eternal Life
- Signs
- Belief
- Light and Darkness
- I AM Statements
- Holy Spirit (Paraclete)

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the relational nature of eternal life.
- Highlight the seven signs and seven "I AM" statements.
- Use John 13–17 as a discipleship framework.
- Encourage students to see belief as trust, not mere knowledge.
- Show how John complements the Synoptic Gospels.

13. Suggested Reading

- D.A. Carson — *The Gospel According to John*
- Andreas Köstenberger — *John* (BECNT)
- Leon Morris — *The Gospel of John*
- N.T. Wright — *John for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

John presents Jesus as the eternal Word made flesh, the divine Son who reveals the Father and brings eternal life to all who believe. Through signs, discourses, and personal encounters, John invites readers into a relationship of trust, love, and obedience. His Gospel is evangelistic, pastoral, and deeply theological — a call to believe and live in the light of Jesus' identity.

LESSON 5 — ACTS

1. Overview

The book of Acts is the Spirit-empowered continuation of Jesus' ministry through His apostles and the early church. Written as the second volume of Luke's two-part work (Luke–Acts), it traces the expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and ultimately to the ends of the earth. Acts is both historical and theological — a narrative of God's mission, the Spirit's power, and the church's birth and growth.

Acts shows how the risen Christ continues His work through the Holy Spirit, forming a new community that embodies the Kingdom of God. It highlights the church's unity, generosity, courage, and resilience in the face of persecution. Acts also provides the historical framework for the New Testament epistles, showing how the gospel spread through the ministry of Peter, Paul, and others.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Acts is written by **Luke**, the beloved physician and companion of Paul. Evidence includes:

- The “we” sections in Acts, indicating Luke's presence
- Stylistic and thematic unity with the Gospel of Luke
- Early church testimony (Irenaeus, Clement, Eusebius)

Luke writes as a careful historian, theologian, and missionary.

Date

Most scholars date Acts around **AD 62–70**, with a strong case for the early 60s:

- Acts ends with Paul alive in Rome

- No mention of Paul's death (AD 64–67)
- No mention of the destruction of the temple (AD 70)

Audience

Acts is addressed to **Theophilus** and a broader Christian audience. Luke writes to strengthen believers, defend the faith, and show the unstoppable advance of the gospel.

3. Historical Background

Political Context

Acts unfolds in the Roman Empire, a world of:

- Imperial power
- Pagan religion
- Social stratification
- Occasional persecution

Yet the Pax Romana (Roman peace) and Roman roads facilitated missionary travel.

Religious Context

Judaism was diverse, with Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots. The early church emerged from Judaism but quickly expanded to include Gentiles.

Cultural Context

Acts reflects a multicultural world where Greek language and culture shaped communication. Luke shows how the gospel transcends cultural barriers.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Luke writes Acts to:

- Show the continuation of Jesus' ministry through the Spirit
- Trace the expansion of the gospel
- Demonstrate the unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ
- Encourage believers facing persecution
- Provide a theological foundation for the church's mission

Major Themes

1. The Holy Spirit

The Spirit empowers, guides, fills, and directs the church.

2. Mission

Acts is a missionary narrative — the gospel moves outward in ever-widening circles.

3. The Church

Acts presents the church as a Spirit-filled, generous, unified, and courageous community.

4. The Word of God

The Word spreads despite opposition.

5. Salvation

Salvation is for all — Jews, Gentiles, men, women, slaves, and free.

6. Persecution

Opposition strengthens the church and advances the mission.

5. Structure of the Book

Acts follows Jesus' commission in Acts 1:8:

“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

I. Witness in Jerusalem (Chapters 1–7)

Birth and growth of the church.

II. Witness in Judea and Samaria (Chapters 8–12)

Persecution leads to expansion.

III. Witness to the Ends of the Earth (Chapters 13–28)

Paul's missionary journeys and the gospel's arrival in Rome.

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. The Church in Jerusalem (Chapters 1–7)

A. Ascension and Promise of the Spirit (1:1–11)

Jesus commissions His disciples and ascends. The church waits in prayer for the Spirit.

B. Pentecost and the Birth of the Church (2:1–47)

The Spirit descends with power. Peter preaches, and 3,000 are saved. The early church practices fellowship, generosity, and worship.

C. Signs, Wonders, and Opposition (3–5)

Peter heals a lame man. The apostles face persecution but respond with boldness. The church grows in unity and holiness (Ananias and Sapphira).

D. Appointment of the Seven (6:1–7)

The church addresses internal needs through Spirit-filled leadership.

E. Stephen's Ministry and Martyrdom (6:8–7:60)

Stephen becomes the first Christian martyr. His death sparks a wave of persecution — and expansion.

II. The Gospel Spreads to Judea and Samaria (Chapters 8–12)

A. Philip's Ministry (8)

Philip preaches in Samaria and leads the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ.

B. Conversion of Saul (9:1–31)

Saul encounters the risen Christ and becomes Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

C. Peter's Ministry and the Gentile Inclusion (10–11)

Peter's vision and Cornelius' conversion reveal that the gospel is for all. The Jerusalem church affirms Gentile inclusion.

D. Persecution and Deliverance (12)

Herod persecutes the church. Peter is miraculously freed from prison.

III. The Gospel to the Ends of the Earth (Chapters 13–28)

A. Paul's First Missionary Journey (13–14)

Paul and Barnabas preach in Cyprus and Asia Minor.

B. Jerusalem Council (15)

The church affirms salvation by grace through faith — not by the Law.

C. Paul's Second Journey (16–18)

Paul plants churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth.

D. Paul's Third Journey (18–21)

Paul strengthens churches and ministers in Ephesus.

E. Arrest, Trials, and Journey to Rome (21–28)

Paul is arrested in Jerusalem, testifies before rulers, and appeals to Caesar. He survives shipwreck and arrives in Rome, preaching boldly.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Acts 1:8 — The Mission Mandate

The outline of the entire book.

Acts 2 — Pentecost

The birth of the Spirit-empowered church.

Acts 9 — Conversion of Saul

A turning point in salvation history.

Acts 10 — Gentile Inclusion

The gospel breaks ethnic barriers.

Acts 15 — Jerusalem Council

Affirms salvation by grace.

Acts 28 — Gospel in Rome

The mission reaches the heart of the empire.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers, guides, fills, and directs the church.

Ecclesiology

The church is a Spirit-filled, unified, generous, and missional community.

Missiology

The gospel advances through preaching, miracles, suffering, and the Spirit's leading.

Soteriology

Salvation is by grace through faith, available to all.

Christology

The risen Christ continues His work through the Spirit and the church.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- The church must depend on the Holy Spirit.
- Mission is central to the church's identity.
- Unity and generosity are marks of a healthy church.
- Persecution is not a setback but a catalyst for growth.
- God uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things.
- The gospel crosses every cultural, ethnic, and social barrier.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Acts show the continuation of Jesus' ministry?

2. What role does the Holy Spirit play in the life of the church?
3. How does Acts 2 shape our understanding of Christian community?
4. Why is the conversion of Saul so significant?
5. What does the Jerusalem Council teach about salvation?
6. How does Acts challenge the church's approach to mission today?
7. What can we learn from Paul's perseverance?
8. How does Acts encourage believers facing opposition?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Holy Spirit
- Witness
- Pentecost
- Apostles
- Mission
- Gentile Inclusion
- Church
- Persecution

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Use Acts 1:8 as the framework for teaching the entire book.
- Highlight the Spirit's role in every major movement.
- Emphasize the unity and generosity of the early church.
- Show how Acts connects to Paul's letters.
- Encourage students to see themselves in the ongoing mission of God.

13. Suggested Reading

- F.F. Bruce — *The Book of Acts*
- Darrell Bock — *Acts* (BECNT)
- John Stott — *The Message of Acts*
- Craig Keener — *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Acts presents the Spirit-empowered expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. It shows how the risen Christ continues His work through the church, forming a community marked by unity, generosity, courage, and mission. Acts calls believers to depend on the Spirit, embrace the mission of God, and carry the gospel to the ends of the earth.

LESSON 6 — ROMANS

1. Overview

The book of Romans is Paul's most comprehensive and systematic presentation of the gospel. Written to a church he had not yet visited, Romans lays out the universal need for salvation, the nature of justification by faith, the transforming power of the Spirit, the place of Israel in God's plan, and the ethical implications of the gospel for Christian living.

Romans is both theological and pastoral. Paul addresses deep doctrinal issues while also offering practical guidance for unity, holiness, and mission. The letter is structured like a carefully crafted argument, moving from humanity's problem (sin) to God's solution (salvation), to the Spirit-empowered life (sanctification), to God's sovereign plan (Israel), and finally to the believer's response (service).

Romans has shaped Christian theology for centuries and remains foundational for understanding the gospel, grace, and the Christian life.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Romans is unquestionably written by **Paul the apostle**. Internal and external evidence is overwhelming:

- Paul identifies himself in 1:1.
- Early church fathers unanimously affirm Pauline authorship.
- The letter reflects Paul's theology, vocabulary, and missionary concerns.

Date

Romans was written around **AD 56–57** during Paul's three-month stay in Corinth (Acts 20:2–3). This places it near the end of his third missionary journey.

Audience

Paul writes to the **church in Rome**, a mixed community of Jewish and Gentile believers. Tensions between these groups (especially after Jews returned from Claudius' expulsion) form part of the background for Paul's emphasis on unity, humility, and God's plan for Israel and the nations.

3. Historical Background

Rome as a Cultural Center

Rome was the capital of the empire — a diverse, multicultural, and religiously pluralistic city. The church likely began through Jewish pilgrims who encountered the gospel at Pentecost (Acts 2).

Jewish–Gentile Tensions

Claudius expelled Jews from Rome around AD 49. When they returned, Gentile believers had become the majority. This created tension over:

- Law and grace
- Food laws
- Holy days
- Identity and privilege

Paul addresses these issues with pastoral wisdom.

Paul's Missionary Purpose

Paul writes Romans to:

- Prepare for his visit to Rome
- Raise support for a mission to Spain
- Unify the church around the gospel
- Clarify his teaching on justification and the Law

Romans is both a missionary letter and a theological masterpiece.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes Romans to:

- Present the gospel clearly and comprehensively
- Unite Jewish and Gentile believers
- Show that righteousness comes through faith
- Explain the role of Israel in God's plan
- Call believers to Spirit-empowered living
- Encourage sacrificial service and unity

Major Themes

1. The Righteousness of God

A central theme — God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel.

2. Universal Sin

All people — Jew and Gentile — are under sin and need salvation.

3. Justification by Faith

God declares sinners righteous through faith in Christ.

4. Life in the Spirit

Believers are empowered to live holy lives through the Spirit.

5. God's Sovereignty

God's plan includes Israel and the nations.

6. Christian Ethics

The gospel transforms relationships, worship, and daily living.

5. Structure of the Book

Romans follows a clear theological progression:

1. **Sin** (1–3) — Humanity's universal need
2. **Salvation** (3–5) — Justification by faith
3. **Sanctification** (6–8) — Life in the Spirit
4. **Sovereignty** (9–11) — God's plan for Israel
5. **Service** (12–16) — Practical Christian living

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. The Need for Salvation: Universal Sin (1:18–3:20)

A. Gentile Sin (1:18–32)

Paul shows that Gentiles are without excuse — creation reveals God's power, yet humanity suppresses the truth.

B. Jewish Sin (2:1–29)

Possessing the Law does not guarantee righteousness. True circumcision is of the heart.

C. Universal Sin (3:1–20)

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Humanity is universally guilty.

II. The Gift of Salvation: Justification by Faith (3:21–5:21)

A. Righteousness Revealed (3:21–31)

God justifies sinners through faith in Christ. The cross demonstrates God’s justice and mercy.

B. Abraham as Example (4)

Abraham was justified by faith before the Law — a model for all believers.

C. Results of Justification (5:1–11)

Peace with God, hope, and reconciliation.

D. Adam and Christ (5:12–21)

Adam brought death; Christ brings life.

III. The Power of Salvation: Sanctification (6–8)

A. Freedom from Sin (6)

Believers are united with Christ in His death and resurrection.

B. Freedom from the Law (7)

The Law reveals sin but cannot save.

C. Life in the Spirit (8)

One of the greatest chapters in Scripture:

- No condemnation
- Spirit-empowered living
- Adoption as God's children
- Future glory
- God's unbreakable love

IV. The Plan of Salvation: Israel and the Nations (9–11)

A. Israel's Past (9)

God's sovereign choice in salvation.

B. Israel's Present (10)

Israel's unbelief is rooted in rejecting Christ.

C. Israel's Future (11)

God is not finished with Israel — a future restoration awaits.

V. The Practice of Salvation: Christian Living (12–16)

A. Living Sacrifices (12:1–2)

Worship involves total surrender.

B. Spiritual Gifts and Love (12:3–21)

The church is a body marked by love and service.

C. Submission to Authorities (13:1–7)

Believers honor governing authorities.

D. Love and the Law (13:8–14)

Love fulfills the Law.

E. Unity in Disputable Matters (14–15)

Paul urges patience, humility, and acceptance.

F. Paul's Mission and Greetings (15–16)

Paul outlines his missionary plans and greets many coworkers.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Romans 1:16–17 — The Theme of the Letter

The gospel is the power of God for salvation.

Romans 3:21–26 — Justification by Faith

The heart of Paul's theology.

Romans 5 — Peace and Hope

The blessings of justification.

Romans 8 — Life in the Spirit

Assurance, adoption, and God's love.

Romans 12:1–2 — Living Sacrifices

The ethical heart of the letter.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Soteriology

Justification, redemption, reconciliation, adoption.

Hamartiology

Sin is universal and enslaving.

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers sanctification.

Ecclesiology

The church is a unified body of Jews and Gentiles.

Theodicy

God is righteous in His dealings with Israel.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- The gospel transforms every area of life.
- Justification brings peace, hope, and identity.
- The Spirit empowers believers to overcome sin.
- Unity in the church is essential.
- Worship involves daily surrender.
- God's love is unshakeable.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. Why does Paul begin Romans with the theme of universal sin?
2. How does Romans 3:21–26 define justification?
3. What does Romans 8 teach about the Spirit's role?
4. How should Christians understand Israel's place in God's plan?
5. What does it mean to be a "living sacrifice"?
6. How does Romans challenge modern views of identity and morality?
7. Why is unity so important in Romans 14–15?
8. How does Romans shape our understanding of mission?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Justification
- Righteousness
- Sanctification
- Flesh vs. Spirit
- Adoption
- Sovereignty
- Living Sacrifice

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Use Romans 1–8 as a framework for understanding salvation.
- Emphasize the Spirit's role in sanctification.
- Help students see the unity of doctrine and ethics.
- Clarify the relationship between Israel and the church.
- Encourage practical application of Romans 12–15.

13. Suggested Reading

- Douglas Moo — *The Epistle to the Romans*
- Thomas Schreiner — *Romans* (BECNT)
- John Stott — *The Message of Romans*
- N.T. Wright — *Romans* (NIB)

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Romans presents the gospel in its fullest form — humanity's need, God's provision, the Spirit's power, and the believer's response. It unites doctrine and practice, theology and mission, faith and obedience. Romans calls believers to embrace the righteousness of God, live by the Spirit, and offer themselves as living sacrifices in service to God and others.

LESSON 7 — 1 CORINTHIANS

1. Overview

First Corinthians is Paul's pastoral response to a deeply troubled church. The believers in Corinth were gifted, enthusiastic, and spiritually alive — yet divided, immature, and morally compromised. Paul writes to address a wide range of issues: divisions, immorality, lawsuits, marriage, food sacrificed to idols, worship practices, spiritual gifts, and confusion about the resurrection.

This letter is intensely practical. Paul applies the gospel to real-world problems, showing that Christian maturity is measured not by giftedness but by love, holiness, and unity. 1 Corinthians is essential for understanding church life, spiritual gifts, Christian ethics, and the centrality of the resurrection.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter is unquestionably written by **Paul the apostle**. Internal evidence (1:1; 16:21) and early church testimony confirm this.

Date

Written around **AD 54–55** during Paul's extended ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19).

Audience

Paul writes to the **church in Corinth**, a diverse congregation of Jews and Gentiles living in a wealthy, immoral, cosmopolitan city. Corinth was known for:

- Commercial prosperity
- Religious pluralism
- Sexual immorality
- Social stratification

The church reflected both the beauty and the brokenness of its environment.

3. Historical Background

Corinthian Culture

Corinth was a major port city, rebuilt by Rome in 44 BC. It was:

- Wealthy
- Diverse
- Competitive
- Status-driven
- Morally lax

The phrase “to Corinthianize” meant to live immorally.

Church Challenges

The Corinthian church struggled with:

- Pride
- Factions
- Sexual immorality
- Misuse of spiritual gifts
- Confusion about marriage
- Idolatry
- Disorderly worship
- Denial of bodily resurrection

Paul writes with both firmness and tenderness, calling them back to the gospel.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Correct doctrinal and moral errors
- Address questions the church had sent him
- Promote unity and love
- Clarify spiritual gifts
- Defend the resurrection
- Call the church to holiness

Major Themes

1. Unity in Christ

The church must not divide around personalities or preferences.

2. Holiness

Believers must live differently from the surrounding culture.

3. Love

Love is the supreme Christian virtue and the measure of maturity.

4. Spiritual Gifts

Gifts are for building up the body, not self-promotion.

5. The Cross

The cross overturns worldly values and human pride.

6. Resurrection

The bodily resurrection is essential to the Christian faith.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Divisions in the Church (1–4)**
- 2. Moral and Ethical Problems (5–7)**
- 3. Food and Idolatry (8–10)**
- 4. Worship and Spiritual Gifts (11–14)**
- 5. Resurrection (15)**
- 6. Final Instructions (16)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Divisions and the Message of the Cross (Chapters 1–4)

A. Factions in the Church (1:10–17)

The church is divided around leaders (Paul, Apollos, Cephas). Paul calls for unity rooted in Christ, not personalities.

B. The Wisdom of the Cross (1:18–31)

The cross overturns human wisdom. God chooses the weak and foolish to shame the strong.

C. Paul's Ministry Example (2–4)

Paul models humility, dependence on the Spirit, and servant leadership. He warns against pride and calls the church to imitate him.

II. Moral and Ethical Issues (Chapters 5–7)

A. Church Discipline (5)

A case of blatant immorality is tolerated. Paul commands the church to act for the sake of purity and restoration.

B. Lawsuits Among Believers (6:1–11)

Believers must not take one another to secular courts. The church should resolve disputes internally.

C. Sexual Purity (6:12–20)

The body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Sexual sin is incompatible with Christian identity.

D. Marriage, Singleness, and Divorce (7)

Paul offers pastoral guidance for various relational situations. He affirms both marriage and singleness as gifts.

III. Food Sacrificed to Idols and Christian Liberty (Chapters 8–10)

A. Knowledge vs. Love (8)

Knowledge puffs up; love builds up. Believers must consider the conscience of others.

B. Paul's Example of Self-Denial (9)

Paul gives up his rights for the sake of the gospel.

C. Warning Against Idolatry (10)

Israel's failures serve as warnings. Believers must flee idolatry and glorify God in all things.

IV. Worship and Spiritual Gifts (Chapters 11–14)

A. Head Coverings and Gender Roles (11:2–16)

Paul addresses cultural expressions of honor and propriety.

B. The Lord's Supper (11:17–34)

The Corinthians were abusing the meal. Paul calls for self-examination and unity.

C. Spiritual Gifts (12–14)

1. Unity and Diversity (12)

The church is one body with many members. Every gift is needed.

2. The Way of Love (13)

Love is superior to all gifts. Without love, gifts are meaningless.

3. Orderly Worship (14)

Prophecy and tongues must be exercised with clarity and order.

V. The Resurrection (Chapter 15)

A. Centrality of the Resurrection (15:1–11)

The resurrection is foundational to the gospel.

B. Consequences of Denying the Resurrection (15:12–34)

Without resurrection:

- Faith is futile
- Preaching is useless
- Believers are still in sin

C. Nature of the Resurrection Body (15:35–58)

Paul describes the transformation from perishable to imperishable. Death is swallowed up in victory.

VI. Final Instructions (Chapter 16)

Paul gives practical instructions on giving, travel plans, and greetings. He ends with a call to love and faithfulness.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

1 Corinthians 1:18–31 — The Wisdom of the Cross

God's power is revealed in what the world considers foolish.

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 — The Body as Temple

A foundation for Christian ethics.

1 Corinthians 13 — The Love Chapter

The heart of Christian maturity.

1 Corinthians 15 — The Resurrection

The cornerstone of Christian hope.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Christ crucified is the center of Christian identity.

Ecclesiology

The church is a unified body with diverse gifts.

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers believers for service.

Ethics

Holiness, love, and self-denial mark Christian living.

Eschatology

The resurrection guarantees future hope.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Unity is essential for a healthy church.
- Holiness must shape every area of life.
- Love is the measure of spiritual maturity.
- Spiritual gifts are for service, not status.
- The resurrection gives hope in suffering.
- Christian liberty must be guided by love.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. What causes divisions in churches today, and how does Paul address them?
2. How does the cross challenge worldly values?
3. Why is church discipline important?
4. How should Christians navigate issues of conscience and liberty?
5. What does 1 Corinthians 13 teach about love?
6. How should spiritual gifts operate in the church?
7. Why is the resurrection essential to the Christian faith?
8. How does 1 Corinthians call believers to maturity?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Division

- Wisdom of the Cross
- Church Discipline
- Christian Liberty
- Spiritual Gifts
- Love
- Resurrection

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the pastoral nature of Paul's corrections.
- Use 1 Corinthians 13 as a lens for evaluating spiritual maturity.
- Help students understand the cultural background of Corinth.
- Clarify the purpose and function of spiritual gifts.
- Highlight the centrality of the resurrection.

13. Suggested Reading

- Gordon Fee — *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*
- Anthony Thiselton — *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*
- Craig Blomberg — *1 Corinthians* (NIVAC)
- David Garland — *1 Corinthians* (BECNT)

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

1 Corinthians is Paul's pastoral response to a gifted but troubled church. He applies the gospel to issues of unity, morality, worship, and doctrine. The cross is the foundation of Christian identity, love is the measure of maturity, and the resurrection is the anchor of hope. This letter calls believers to holiness, humility, and love in every area of life.

LESSON 8 — 2 CORINTHIANS

1. Overview

Second Corinthians is Paul's most personal and vulnerable letter. Unlike 1 Corinthians, which focuses on doctrinal correction and practical issues, 2 Corinthians reveals Paul's heart as a pastor, missionary, and spiritual father. He writes to defend his ministry, restore his relationship with the church, encourage generosity, and confront false apostles who were undermining his authority.

This letter is a window into the emotional and spiritual cost of ministry. Paul shares his sufferings, fears, weaknesses, and triumphs. He teaches that true Christian ministry is marked not by worldly success or charisma but by humility, integrity, suffering, and the power of God working through human weakness.

2 Corinthians is essential for understanding Christian leadership, suffering, reconciliation, generosity, and spiritual warfare.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter is unquestionably written by **Paul the apostle**. Internal evidence (1:1; 10:1) and early church testimony confirm this.

Date

Written around **AD 55–56**, shortly after 1 Corinthians, likely from Macedonia during Paul's third missionary journey.

Audience

Paul writes to the **church in Corinth** and the surrounding region of Achaia. The church had been influenced by:

- False apostles
- Critics questioning Paul's authority
- Misunderstandings about suffering and ministry
- Confusion about giving and generosity

Paul writes to restore trust and reaffirm the gospel.

3. Historical Background

A Painful Relationship

Paul's relationship with Corinth had been strained:

1. He planted the church (Acts 18).
2. He wrote 1 Corinthians to address major issues.
3. He made a "painful visit" that went badly.
4. He wrote a "severe letter" (now lost) calling for repentance.
5. Titus brought news that many had repented.
6. Paul writes 2 Corinthians to rebuild trust and defend his ministry.

False Apostles

A group of self-promoting teachers had infiltrated the church. They boasted in:

- Eloquence
- Credentials
- Visions
- Financial success

Paul counters by boasting in his **weakness**, showing that true ministry reflects the crucified Christ.

Cultural Context

Corinth valued:

- Rhetorical skill
- Wealth
- Social status
- Public honor

Paul's humility and suffering seemed unimpressive by Corinthian standards — yet they revealed the true power of God.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Defend his apostolic ministry
- Encourage reconciliation
- Explain the nature of true ministry
- Promote generous giving
- Confront false apostles
- Teach the power of weakness

Major Themes

1. Ministry and Suffering

True ministry involves hardship, weakness, and dependence on God.

2. Reconciliation

God reconciles us to Himself and gives us the ministry of reconciliation.

3. Generosity

Giving is an act of grace, joy, and partnership.

4. Spiritual Warfare

Satan blinds minds; believers fight with spiritual weapons.

5. Weakness and Power

God's power is made perfect in weakness.

6. Integrity

Paul defends his sincerity, transparency, and faithfulness.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Paul's Defense of His Ministry (1–7)**
- 2. The Collection for Jerusalem (8–9)**
- 3. Paul's Defense Against False Apostles (10–13)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Paul's Defense of His Ministry (Chapters 1–7)

A. Comfort in Affliction (1:1–11)

Paul begins with praise to the “God of all comfort.” He explains that suffering equips believers to comfort others.

B. Paul's Integrity and Travel Plans (1:12–2:13)

Critics accused Paul of being unreliable. Paul explains his change of plans and emphasizes sincerity and transparency.

C. Forgiveness and Restoration (2:5–11)

Paul urges the church to forgive and restore a repentant offender. This models gospel reconciliation.

D. The New Covenant Ministry (2:14–4:6)

1. Aroma of Christ (2:14–17)

Believers spread the fragrance of Christ.

2. Ministers of the New Covenant (3)

The new covenant brings life, freedom, and transformation by the Spirit.

3. Treasure in Jars of Clay (4:1–6)

The gospel shines through human weakness.

E. Suffering and Hope (4:7–5:10)

1. Weakness and Glory (4:7–18)

Affliction is temporary; glory is eternal.

2. Eternal Perspective (5:1–10)

Believers long for their heavenly dwelling.

F. Ministry of Reconciliation (5:11–6:10)

1. New Creation (5:17)

In Christ, believers are made new.

2. Ambassadors for Christ (5:18–21)

God reconciles the world through Christ.

G. Appeal for Holiness and Restoration (6:11–7:16)

Paul urges the church to separate from idolatry and embrace holiness. He rejoices at their repentance after the “severe letter.”

II. The Collection for Jerusalem (Chapters 8–9)

A. Example of the Macedonians (8:1–7)

They gave generously despite poverty.

B. Christ as the Model of Giving (8:8–15)

Jesus became poor so believers could become rich.

C. Integrity in Handling Money (8:16–24)

Paul ensures transparency in the collection.

D. Principles of Generous Giving (9)

- Sow generously
- Give cheerfully
- God supplies abundantly
- Giving glorifies God

III. Paul’s Defense Against False Apostles (Chapters 10–13)

A. Spiritual Warfare (10:1–6)

Believers fight with spiritual weapons, not worldly ones.

B. Paul’s Apostolic Authority (10:7–18)

Paul’s authority comes from Christ, not human credentials.

C. Exposure of False Apostles (11:1–15)

They disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.

D. Paul’s “Foolish” Boasting (11:16–33)

Paul boasts in his sufferings, not achievements.

E. The Thorn in the Flesh (12:1–10)

God’s power is made perfect in weakness. Paul embraces weakness as the pathway to divine strength.

F. Final Warnings and Exhortations (12:11–13:14)

Paul urges repentance and unity. He closes with a blessing of grace, love, and fellowship.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

2 Corinthians 1:3–7 — God of All Comfort

Suffering equips believers to comfort others.

2 Corinthians 3 — New Covenant Ministry

The Spirit brings life and transformation.

2 Corinthians 4:7–18 — Treasure in Jars of Clay

God’s power shines through human weakness.

2 Corinthians 5:17–21 — New Creation and Reconciliation

The heart of Paul’s ministry.

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 — Power in Weakness

A foundational text for Christian leadership.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Theology of Suffering

Suffering is not a sign of failure but a means of displaying God's power.

Theology of Ministry

True ministry is marked by humility, integrity, and dependence on God.

Theology of Reconciliation

God reconciles believers to Himself and calls them to reconcile with others.

Theology of Giving

Generosity reflects God's grace and advances His mission.

Theology of Weakness

Weakness is the arena for God's strength.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Ministry requires vulnerability and honesty.
- God uses weak, broken vessels to display His glory.
- Reconciliation is central to the gospel.
- Generosity is an act of worship and partnership.
- Spiritual leadership requires integrity and humility.
- Suffering is not a detour — it is part of God's design.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does 2 Corinthians redefine Christian leadership?
2. Why does Paul emphasize weakness as the pathway to God's power?
3. What does the "ministry of reconciliation" look like today?
4. How does Paul model integrity in ministry?
5. What principles of giving can the modern church learn from chapters 8–9?
6. How does Paul's "thorn in the flesh" shape our understanding of suffering?
7. Why were the Corinthians attracted to the "false apostles"?
8. How does 2 Corinthians encourage believers facing discouragement?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Comfort
- New Covenant
- Reconciliation
- Weakness
- Generosity
- Spiritual Warfare
- False Apostles

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the emotional depth of the letter.
- Highlight the contrast between worldly and godly leadership.
- Use 2 Corinthians 5 as a framework for teaching reconciliation.
- Help students see suffering as formative, not destructive.
- Encourage reflection on integrity in ministry.

13. Suggested Reading

- Murray Harris — *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*
- Paul Barnett — *2 Corinthians* (NICNT)

- David Garland — *2 Corinthians* (NAC)
- N.T. Wright — *Paul for Everyone: 2 Corinthians*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

2 Corinthians reveals Paul's heart as a pastor and apostle. He defends his ministry, encourages generosity, confronts false teachers, and teaches that God's power is made perfect in weakness. This letter calls believers to embrace humility, integrity, reconciliation, and Spirit-empowered endurance. It is a profound guide for Christian leadership and spiritual maturity.

LESSON 9 — GALATIANS

1. Overview

Galatians is Paul's passionate defense of the true gospel — salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone. Written to churches in the region of Galatia, the letter confronts a crisis: false teachers (often called “Judaizers”) were insisting that Gentile believers must obey the Mosaic Law, especially circumcision, to be fully accepted by God.

Paul responds with urgency, clarity, and pastoral intensity. He argues that adding anything to Christ undermines the gospel entirely. Galatians is a declaration of Christian freedom, a defense of justification by faith, and a call to live by the Spirit rather than the flesh.

This letter has shaped Christian theology for centuries and remains essential for understanding grace, freedom, and the life of the Spirit.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Galatians is unquestionably written by **Paul the apostle**. Internal evidence (1:1; 5:2) and early church testimony confirm this.

Date

Two main views exist:

- **Early date (AD 48–49)** — written before the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)
- **Later date (AD 54–55)** — written during Paul's third missionary journey

The early date is compelling because Paul does not mention the Jerusalem Council, which addressed the very issue Galatians confronts.

Audience

Paul writes to the **churches of Galatia** — likely in southern Galatia (Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe). These were predominantly Gentile believers influenced by Jewish-Christian teachers demanding adherence to the Law.

3. Historical Background

The Judaizer Controversy

False teachers were insisting that Gentile Christians must:

- Be circumcised
- Keep dietary laws
- Observe Jewish festivals
- Submit to the Mosaic Law

Their message was: **“Christ is good — but not enough.”**

Paul sees this as a direct attack on the gospel.

Paul’s Relationship with Galatia

Paul had preached the gospel in Galatia during a time of physical weakness (4:13–15). The Galatians had received him with joy and affection — but now were turning away from him and the gospel.

Cultural Context

Galatia was a mix of:

- Pagan Gentiles
- Jewish communities
- Roman influence

This created fertile ground for confusion about identity, law, and grace.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Defend the gospel of grace
- Refute legalism
- Affirm justification by faith
- Defend his apostolic authority
- Call believers to Spirit-empowered living
- Warn against returning to slavery under the Law

Major Themes

1. Justification by Faith

Believers are declared righteous through faith in Christ, not by works of the Law.

2. Freedom in Christ

Christ frees believers from the Law's condemnation and from slavery to sin.

3. The Holy Spirit

The Spirit empowers believers to live holy lives.

4. The Cross

The cross is the center of Christian identity and freedom.

5. New Creation

What matters is not circumcision but becoming a new creation in Christ.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Personal Defense of Paul's Apostleship (1–2)**
- 2. Doctrinal Defense of Justification by Faith (3–4)**
- 3. Practical Defense of Christian Freedom (5–6)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Paul's Defense of His Apostolic Authority (Chapters 1–2)

A. The Crisis in Galatia (1:1–10)

Paul expresses shock that the Galatians are turning to “another gospel.” He pronounces a curse on anyone who distorts the gospel.

B. Paul's Divine Calling (1:11–24)

Paul received the gospel by revelation from Christ, not from human teachers.

C. Paul's Relationship with the Apostles (2:1–10)

The Jerusalem apostles affirmed Paul's gospel and mission to the Gentiles.

D. Confrontation with Peter (2:11–14)

Paul rebukes Peter for withdrawing from Gentile believers. This incident illustrates the danger of legalism.

E. Justification by Faith (2:15–21)

A foundational passage:

- We are justified by faith, not works
- The Law cannot save
- “I have been crucified with Christ”

II. Doctrinal Defense of Justification by Faith (Chapters 3–4)

A. The Galatians' Foolishness (3:1–5)

They began by the Spirit but were trying to continue by the flesh.

B. Abraham as the Example of Faith (3:6–14)

Abraham was justified by faith before the Law existed.

C. Purpose of the Law (3:15–29)

The Law was a temporary guardian until Christ came. Believers are now sons of God through faith.

D. Adoption and Sonship (4:1–7)

Believers receive the Spirit of adoption, crying “Abba, Father.”

E. Paul's Pastoral Appeal (4:8–20)

Paul pleads with the Galatians as a spiritual father.

F. Allegory of Hagar and Sarah (4:21–31)

Two covenants:

- Hagar: slavery
- Sarah: freedom

Believers belong to the free woman.

III. Practical Defense of Christian Freedom (Chapters 5–6)

A. Freedom in Christ (5:1–12)

“Stand firm... do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” Circumcision as a requirement nullifies grace.

B. Life in the Spirit (5:13–26)

1. Works of the Flesh

Sexual immorality, idolatry, jealousy, anger, etc.

2. Fruit of the Spirit

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Spirit produces what the Law cannot.

C. Restoring One Another (6:1–5)

Believers gently restore those caught in sin.

D. Sowing and Reaping (6:6–10)

Spiritual investment leads to spiritual harvest.

E. Final Warning and Benediction (6:11–18)

Paul writes with large letters to emphasize his point. He boasts only in the cross.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Galatians 2:20 — Crucified with Christ

A foundational statement of Christian identity.

Galatians 3:1–14 — Faith vs. Law

Paul contrasts Spirit-empowered faith with flesh-driven works.

Galatians 4:4–7 — Adoption

Believers are sons and heirs through Christ.

Galatians 5:1 — Freedom in Christ

The theme of the letter.

Galatians 5:16–26 — Life in the Spirit

The Spirit produces fruit that the Law cannot.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Soteriology

Justification is by grace through faith alone.

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers believers to live holy lives.

Ecclesiology

All believers are one in Christ — no Jew or Gentile, slave or free.

Ethics

Christian ethics flow from the Spirit, not the Law.

Christology

Christ redeems from the curse of the Law and brings freedom.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Legalism destroys joy and freedom.
- The gospel must be guarded with vigilance.
- Christian identity is rooted in union with Christ.
- The Spirit, not the Law, produces holiness.
- Pastors must confront false teaching with courage.

- Freedom must be used to serve others in love.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. Why was Paul so urgent and forceful in Galatians?
2. How does Paul define justification by faith?
3. What is the purpose of the Law in God's plan?
4. How does the Spirit empower believers to live holy lives?
5. What does Christian freedom look like in practice?
6. Why is legalism so dangerous?
7. How does Galatians challenge modern forms of performance-based Christianity?
8. What does it mean to boast only in the cross?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Justification
- Law vs. Grace
- Freedom
- Adoption
- Fruit of the Spirit
- Works of the Flesh
- New Creation

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the emotional intensity of the letter.
- Clarify the difference between legalism and obedience.
- Use Galatians 5 as a framework for spiritual formation.
- Highlight the pastoral heart behind Paul's rebukes.
- Show how Galatians complements Romans.

13. Suggested Reading

- F.F. Bruce — *The Epistle to the Galatians*

- Timothy George — *Galatians* (NAC)
- Douglas Moo — *Galatians* (BECNT)
- N.T. Wright — *Paul for Everyone: Galatians and Thessalonians*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Galatians is Paul's passionate defense of the gospel of grace. He confronts legalism, defends justification by faith, and calls believers to live in the freedom and power of the Spirit. This letter is a declaration of Christian liberty, a warning against adding anything to Christ, and a call to Spirit-empowered holiness. Galatians remains a vital guide for understanding grace, identity, and the life of the Spirit.

LESSON 10 — EPHESIANS

1. Overview

Ephesians is Paul's soaring vision of God's eternal plan for the church — the body of Christ, the temple of the Spirit, and the family of God. Written from prison, the letter is both deeply theological and intensely practical. Paul lifts the reader into the heavenly realms to behold the riches of God's grace, then brings them back to earth to walk in unity, holiness, love, and spiritual strength.

Ephesians emphasizes the cosmic scope of salvation: God's plan from eternity past, accomplished in Christ, applied by the Spirit, and displayed through the church. It is a letter of identity — who believers are in Christ — and a letter of calling — how believers should live in light of that identity.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul** as the author (1:1; 3:1). Early church tradition strongly supports Pauline authorship.

Date

Written around **AD 60–62** during Paul's first Roman imprisonment. Ephesians is part of the "Prison Epistles" (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon).

Audience

Likely a **circular letter** intended for multiple churches in Asia Minor. Ephesus was the leading city in the region, known for:

- The temple of Artemis
- Wealth and trade
- Magic and occult practices

- A large, diverse population

The church included both Jews and Gentiles.

3. Historical Background

Ephesus

A major port city, religious center, and commercial hub. Paul ministered there for nearly three years (Acts 19), resulting in:

- Miracles
- Conversions
- Conflict with idol-makers
- A strong, Spirit-filled church

Spiritual Climate

Ephesus was steeped in:

- Magic
- Sorcery
- Idolatry
- Spiritual fear

Paul emphasizes Christ's supremacy over all spiritual powers.

Church Context

The church faced:

- Pressure from pagan culture
- Tension between Jewish and Gentile believers
- Need for unity and maturity

Paul writes to strengthen their identity and calling.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Reveal God's eternal plan for the church
- Strengthen believers in their identity in Christ
- Promote unity between Jews and Gentiles
- Encourage holy living
- Equip believers for spiritual warfare

Major Themes

1. Union with Christ

Believers are “in Christ” — a phrase used over 30 times.

2. The Church

The church is:

- Christ's body
- God's temple
- God's family
- God's masterpiece
- The bride of Christ

3. Spiritual Blessings

Believers are chosen, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, sealed, and empowered.

4. Unity

Christ breaks down the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile.

5. Spiritual Warfare

Believers must stand firm against spiritual forces.

6. Holy Living

Identity leads to lifestyle — walk worthy of your calling.

5. Structure of the Book

Ephesians divides neatly into two halves:

Chapters 1–3 — Doctrine: Our Wealth in Christ

Chapters 4–6 — Duty: Our Walk in Christ

A more detailed outline:

1. **Spiritual Blessings in Christ** (1)
2. **Salvation by Grace** (2:1–10)
3. **Unity of Jews and Gentiles** (2:11–22)
4. **Paul’s Ministry and Prayer** (3)
5. **Unity and Maturity in the Church** (4:1–16)
6. **Holy Living** (4:17–5:21)
7. **Household Relationships** (5:22–6:9)
8. **Spiritual Warfare** (6:10–20)
9. **Final Greetings** (6:21–24)

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Our Wealth in Christ (Chapters 1–3)

A. Praise for Spiritual Blessings (1:3–14)

A single sentence in Greek — a hymn of praise. Believers are:

- Chosen

- Predestined
- Adopted
- Redeemed
- Forgiven
- Sealed with the Spirit
- Inheritors of God's promises

This is identity-shaping theology.

B. Paul's Prayer for Revelation (1:15–23)

Paul prays that believers would know:

- The hope of their calling
- The riches of their inheritance
- The greatness of God's power

Christ is exalted above all powers.

C. Salvation by Grace (2:1–10)

One of the clearest summaries of the gospel:

- Dead in sin
- Made alive with Christ
- Saved by grace through faith
- God's workmanship, created for good works

D. Unity of Jews and Gentiles (2:11–22)

Christ breaks down the dividing wall. Believers are one new humanity, one body, one temple.

E. Paul's Ministry and Prayer (3)

Paul reveals the mystery: Gentiles are fellow heirs. He prays for believers to be strengthened, rooted in love, and filled with God's fullness.

II. Our Walk in Christ (Chapters 4–6)

A. Walk in Unity (4:1–16)

Paul urges believers to:

- Walk worthy
- Maintain unity
- Use their gifts
- Grow into maturity

Christ gives leaders to equip the church.

B. Walk in Holiness (4:17–5:21)

Believers must:

- Put off the old self
- Put on the new self
- Speak truth
- Forgive
- Walk in love
- Walk in light
- Walk in wisdom

C. Walk in Love and Submission (5:22–6:9)

The “household code”:

- Wives and husbands
- Children and parents

- Slaves and masters

Marriage reflects Christ and the church.

D. Stand Firm in Spiritual Warfare (6:10–20)

The armor of God:

- Belt of truth
- Breastplate of righteousness
- Shoes of peace
- Shield of faith
- Helmet of salvation
- Sword of the Spirit

Prayer is the atmosphere of warfare.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Ephesians 1:3–14 — Spiritual Blessings

Identity rooted in God's eternal plan.

Ephesians 2:1–10 — Salvation by Grace

From death to life.

Ephesians 2:11–22 — One New Humanity

Unity in Christ.

Ephesians 4:1–16 — Unity and Maturity

The church grows through gifted leaders and serving members.

Ephesians 6:10–20 — Armor of God

Spiritual warfare and perseverance.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Trinitarian Salvation

- Father chooses
- Son redeems
- Spirit seals

Ecclesiology

The church is central to God's plan.

Soteriology

Salvation is by grace, through faith, for good works.

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers unity, holiness, and warfare.

Christology

Christ is exalted above all powers and fills all things.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Identity in Christ shapes behavior.
- Unity is essential for a healthy church.
- Spiritual maturity requires truth, love, and service.
- Marriage reflects the gospel.
- Believers must be equipped for spiritual warfare.
- The church is God's instrument for displaying His wisdom.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Ephesians shape our understanding of Christian identity?
2. What does it mean to be “in Christ”?
3. How does Ephesians 2 define salvation?
4. Why is unity so central in Ephesians?
5. What does the armor of God teach about spiritual warfare?
6. How does Paul describe the church’s role in God’s plan?
7. What does Ephesians teach about marriage and family?
8. How can believers grow into maturity?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- In Christ
- Spiritual Blessings
- Mystery
- Unity
- New Humanity
- Walk
- Armor of God

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the “sit, walk, stand” pattern (Watchman Nee).
- Highlight the Trinitarian structure of chapter 1.
- Use Ephesians 4 as a framework for church leadership.
- Teach spiritual warfare with pastoral balance.
- Encourage students to memorize key passages.

13. Suggested Reading

- Harold Hoehner — *Ephesians*
- Clinton Arnold — *Ephesians* (ZECNT)
- John Stott — *The Message of Ephesians*
- N.T. Wright — *Paul for Everyone: Ephesians*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Ephesians presents God's eternal plan for the church — chosen, redeemed, united, empowered, and called to walk in holiness, love, and spiritual strength. It reveals the believer's identity in Christ and the church's role in God's cosmic purpose. Ephesians calls believers to unity, maturity, and Spirit-empowered living as they stand firm against spiritual forces.

LESSON 11 — PHILIPPIANS

1. Overview

Philippians is Paul's letter of joy, gratitude, and encouragement to a beloved church. Written from prison, the letter radiates confidence in Christ, affection for the Philippian believers, and a call to unity, humility, and perseverance. Philippians is deeply relational — Paul's bond with this church is warm, personal, and mutually supportive.

The letter centers on the theme of **joy in Christ**, regardless of circumstances. Paul models a Christ-centered mindset that transforms suffering into opportunity, conflict into unity, and anxiety into peace. The Christ Hymn in chapter 2 is one of the most profound Christological passages in the New Testament, revealing Jesus' humility, incarnation, and exaltation.

Philippians is a pastoral masterpiece — encouraging believers to live with Christlike humility, joyful endurance, and gospel partnership.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul** as the author (1:1), and early church tradition unanimously affirms this.

Date

Written around **AD 60–62** during Paul's first Roman imprisonment.

Audience

Paul writes to the **church in Philippi**, the first church he planted in Europe (Acts 16). The congregation included:

- Lydia, a wealthy businesswoman
- The Philippian jailer and his family
- Former slaves
- Roman citizens

It was a diverse, generous, and mission-minded church.

3. Historical Background

Philippi

A Roman colony known for:

- Military veterans
- Roman citizenship
- Loyalty to Caesar
- Pride in Roman culture

This background explains Paul's emphasis on **citizenship in heaven** (3:20).

Paul's Relationship with the Church

The Philippians:

- Supported Paul financially
- Sent Epaphroditus to care for him
- Shared in his suffering
- Loved him deeply

Paul writes with gratitude and affection.

Occasion for the Letter

Paul writes to:

- Thank them for their financial support

- Update them on his imprisonment
- Encourage unity
- Address conflict between Euodia and Syntyche
- Warn against false teachers
- Strengthen their joy in Christ

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Encourage joyful perseverance
- Promote unity and humility
- Thank the church for their partnership
- Warn against legalism and false teaching
- Exalt Christ as the believer's life and goal

Major Themes

1. Joy in Christ

Joy appears repeatedly — rooted not in circumstances but in Christ.

2. Humility

The Christ Hymn models self-emptying humility.

3. Unity

Paul urges the church to stand firm “with one mind.”

4. Partnership in the Gospel

The Philippians supported Paul financially and prayerfully.

5. Christ as Life

“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

6. Heavenly Citizenship

Believers belong to a greater kingdom.

7. Contentment

Paul learned contentment in all circumstances.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Thanksgiving and Prayer (1:1–11)**
- 2. Paul’s Imprisonment and Example (1:12–30)**
- 3. Christlike Humility and Obedience (2:1–18)**
- 4. Examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19–30)**
- 5. Warning Against False Teachers (3:1–21)**
- 6. Exhortations to Unity and Joy (4:1–9)**
- 7. Thanksgiving for Support (4:10–23)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Greeting, Thanksgiving, and Prayer (1:1–11)

A. Greeting (1:1–2)

Paul and Timothy greet the saints, overseers, and deacons.

B. Thanksgiving for Partnership (1:3–8)

Paul rejoices in their partnership in the gospel “from the first day until now.”

C. Prayer for Spiritual Growth (1:9–11)

Paul prays for:

- Abounding love
- Discernment
- Purity
- Fruitfulness

II. Paul's Imprisonment and Example (1:12–30)

A. The Gospel Advances Through Suffering (1:12–18)

Paul's chains have served to advance the gospel. Even rival preachers cannot steal his joy.

B. To Live Is Christ (1:19–26)

Paul wrestles between:

- Desire to depart and be with Christ
- Desire to remain and serve the church

C. Call to Unity and Courage (1:27–30)

Believers must stand firm together and suffer for Christ with courage.

III. Christlike Humility and Obedience (2:1–18)

A. Appeal for Unity (2:1–4)

Unity flows from humility — considering others above oneself.

B. The Christ Hymn (2:5–11)

One of the most profound Christological passages:

- Christ's preexistence
- Incarnation
- Humility
- Obedience unto death
- Exaltation by the Father

C. Work Out Your Salvation (2:12–18)

Believers cooperate with God's work in them. Paul calls them to shine as lights in the world.

IV. Examples of Christlike Servants (2:19–30)

A. Timothy

A model of genuine concern and proven character.

B. Epaphroditus

A faithful servant who risked his life for the gospel.

V. Warning Against False Teachers (3:1–21)

A. Beware of Legalists (3:1–6)

Paul rejects confidence in the flesh.

B. Paul's Testimony (3:7–11)

He counts all things loss for the surpassing worth of knowing Christ.

C. Pressing Toward the Goal (3:12–16)

Paul pursues Christ with single-minded devotion.

D. Heavenly Citizenship (3:17–21)

Believers await Christ, who will transform their bodies.

VI. Exhortations to Unity, Joy, and Peace (4:1–9)

A. Reconciliation (4:1–3)

Paul urges Euodia and Syntyche to agree in the Lord.

B. Rejoice Always (4:4–7)

Paul commands joy, gentleness, prayer, and peace.

C. Think on These Things (4:8–9)

A call to meditate on what is true, honorable, and pure.

VII. Thanksgiving for Support (4:10–23)

A. Contentment in All Circumstances (4:10–13)

Paul learned contentment through Christ's strength.

B. Generosity of the Philippians (4:14–20)

Their giving is a fragrant offering to God.

C. Final Greetings (4:21–23)

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Philippians 1:6 — He Who Began a Good Work

Confidence in God's ongoing work.

Philippians 1:21 — To Live Is Christ

A life-defining statement.

Philippians 2:5–11 — The Christ Hymn

The humility and exaltation of Christ.

Philippians 3:7–11 — Knowing Christ

Paul's ultimate pursuit.

Philippians 4:4–9 — Joy and Peace

A blueprint for emotional and spiritual stability.

Philippians 4:13 — Strength in Christ

Contentment through Christ's power.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Christ is:

- Preexistent
- Incarnate
- Humble
- Obedient
- Exalted
- Returning King

Soteriology

Salvation includes justification, sanctification, and glorification.

Ecclesiology

The church is a community of partnership, unity, and mutual care.

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers joy, unity, and perseverance.

Ethics

Christian ethics flow from Christlike humility and love.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Joy is rooted in Christ, not circumstances.
- Humility is essential for unity.
- Suffering can advance the gospel.
- Christian maturity involves pressing toward Christ.
- Contentment is learned through dependence on Christ.
- The church must support gospel workers generously.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Paul model joy in suffering?
2. What does the Christ Hymn teach about Jesus' nature and mission?
3. How does humility promote unity in the church?
4. What does it mean to "work out your salvation"?
5. How does Paul define spiritual maturity in chapter 3?
6. What practices lead to peace in Philippians 4:4–9?
7. How does Philippians challenge modern views of success and identity?
8. What does true contentment look like?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Joy
- Partnership
- Humility
- Christ Hymn
- Citizenship
- Contentment
- Peace

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the relational warmth of the letter.
- Use Philippians 2 as a model for Christlike humility.
- Highlight the theme of joy in every chapter.
- Encourage students to memorize key passages.
- Show how Philippians shapes emotional and spiritual resilience.

13. Suggested Reading

- Gordon Fee — *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*
- Moisés Silva — *Philippians*
- John Stott — *The Message of Philippians*
- N.T. Wright — *Paul for Everyone: Philippians*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Philippians is Paul's joyful, affectionate letter to a beloved church. It calls believers to Christlike humility, unity, perseverance, and joy. The letter reveals the heart of Christian maturity — knowing Christ, serving others, and finding contentment in every circumstance through His strength. Philippians remains a timeless guide for joyful, Spirit-empowered living.

LESSON 12 — COLOSSIANS

1. Overview

Colossians is Paul's exalted portrait of Christ's supremacy over all creation, all spiritual powers, and all aspects of the Christian life. Written to a church Paul had never personally visited, the letter addresses false teachings that threatened to diminish Christ's sufficiency. Paul responds not with philosophical argumentation but with one of the most breathtaking Christological declarations in Scripture.

The heart of Colossians is simple and profound: **Christ is enough**. He is the image of the invisible God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, the head of the church, the fullness of deity in bodily form, and the source of reconciliation and new life. Because Christ is supreme, believers must reject legalism, mysticism, asceticism, and any teaching that adds to or subtracts from the gospel.

Colossians is a call to root one's life in Christ, walk in His power, and reflect His character in every relationship.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul** as the author (1:1; 1:23–25). Early church tradition strongly affirms Pauline authorship.

Date

Written around **AD 60–62** during Paul's first Roman imprisonment. Colossians is part of the "Prison Epistles" (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon).

Audience

Paul writes to the **church in Colossae**, a small city in the Lycus Valley of Asia Minor. The church was likely founded by **Epaphras**, one of Paul's coworkers (1:7–8).

3. Historical Background

Colossae

Once a significant city, Colossae had declined in prominence by Paul's day. It was known for:

- A diverse population (Jews, Greeks, Phrygians)
- Local mysticism
- Folk spirituality
- Angel worship
- Philosophical speculation

The Colossian Heresy

The false teaching appears to have been a **syncretistic blend** of:

- Jewish legalism
- Ascetic practices
- Mystical visions
- Angel worship
- Philosophical speculation
- Emphasis on secret knowledge

Paul counters this by exalting Christ as the **fullness of God** and the **source of all wisdom**.

Paul's Relationship with the Church

Paul had not visited Colossae personally (2:1), but he cared deeply for them through Epaphras, who brought news of their faith and concerns.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Exalt Christ's supremacy
- Refute false teaching
- Encourage believers to remain rooted in Christ
- Teach practical Christian living
- Strengthen the church's unity and maturity

Major Themes

1. Supremacy of Christ

Christ is preeminent in creation, redemption, and the church.

2. Fullness in Christ

Believers are complete in Him — nothing else is needed.

3. New Identity

Believers have died with Christ and been raised with Him.

4. True Knowledge

Wisdom is found in Christ, not in human philosophy.

5. Holy Living

New identity leads to new behavior.

6. Household Relationships

Christ transforms marriage, parenting, and work.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Christ's Supremacy and Paul's Ministry (1:1–2:5)**
- 2. Warning Against False Teaching (2:6–23)**
- 3. New Life in Christ (3:1–17)**
- 4. Christlike Relationships (3:18–4:1)**
- 5. Prayer, Mission, and Final Greetings (4:2–18)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Christ's Supremacy and Paul's Ministry (1:1–2:5)

A. Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1–14)

Paul thanks God for:

- Their faith
- Their love
- Their hope
- The gospel's growth

He prays for spiritual wisdom and strength.

B. The Christ Hymn (1:15–20)

One of the highest Christological passages in Scripture:

- Christ is the image of the invisible God
- Firstborn over all creation (preeminent, not created)

- Creator and sustainer of all things
- Head of the church
- Fullness of God dwelling in Him
- Reconciler of all things through the cross

C. Paul's Ministry for the Church (1:21–2:5)

Paul rejoices in suffering for the church. He labors to present every believer mature in Christ.

II. Warning Against False Teaching (2:6–23)

A. Rooted in Christ (2:6–7)

Believers must continue in Christ as they began — by faith.

B. Warning Against Deception (2:8)

Human philosophy and tradition cannot replace Christ.

C. Fullness in Christ (2:9–15)

Believers are:

- Complete in Christ
- Circumcised spiritually
- Buried and raised with Him
- Forgiven
- Freed from the Law's condemnation
- Victorious over spiritual powers

D. Rejecting Legalism (2:16–17)

Food laws, festivals, and Sabbaths are shadows — Christ is the substance.

E. Rejecting Mysticism (2:18–19)

Visions and angel worship lead away from Christ.

F. Rejecting Asceticism (2:20–23)

Self-made religion has no power to stop sin.

III. New Life in Christ (3:1–17)

A. Seek the Things Above (3:1–4)

Believers have died and risen with Christ. Their life is hidden in Him.

B. Put Off the Old Self (3:5–11)

Paul lists sins to “put to death”:

- Sexual immorality
- Greed
- Anger
- Malice
- Slander

C. Put On the New Self (3:12–17)

Clothe yourselves with:

- Compassion
- Kindness
- Humility
- Patience
- Forgiveness
- Love

Let the peace of Christ rule and the word of Christ dwell richly.

IV. Christlike Relationships (3:18–4:1)

A. Wives and Husbands

Mutual love, respect, and Christlike sacrifice.

B. Children and Parents

Obedience and gentle instruction.

C. Slaves and Masters

Work done “as unto the Lord.”

V. Prayer, Mission, and Final Greetings (4:2–18)

A. Prayer and Watchfulness (4:2–4)

Paul urges persistent prayer and clarity in gospel witness.

B. Wise Conduct Toward Outsiders (4:5–6)

Grace-filled speech and wisdom in relationships.

C. Final Greetings (4:7–18)

Paul honors coworkers and encourages the church.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Colossians 1:15–20 — The Supremacy of Christ

A majestic declaration of Christ’s deity and authority.

Colossians 2:6–15 — Fullness in Christ

Believers are complete in Him.

Colossians 3:1–4 — Seek the Things Above

Identity shapes desire.

Colossians 3:12–17 — The New Self

A portrait of Christlike character.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Christ is:

- Fully God
- Creator
- Sustainer
- Redeemer
- Head of the church
- Victor over spiritual powers

Soteriology

Believers are forgiven, reconciled, and made alive in Christ.

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers transformation and unity.

Ecclesiology

The church is Christ's body, rooted in Him.

Ethics

Christian ethics flow from union with Christ.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Christ must remain central in all teaching and ministry.
- Legalism, mysticism, and asceticism undermine the gospel.
- Identity in Christ empowers holy living.
- The church must cultivate Christlike character.
- Spiritual maturity requires rooting oneself in Christ's fullness.
- Ministry must aim to present every believer mature in Christ.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Colossians exalt Christ above all things?
2. What were the dangers of the Colossian heresy?
3. How does Paul describe the believer's identity in Christ?
4. Why is legalism powerless to change the heart?
5. What does it mean to "seek the things above"?
6. How does Colossians shape our understanding of spiritual warfare?
7. What does Christlike character look like in daily life?
8. How can the church stay rooted in Christ's sufficiency?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Supremacy of Christ
- Fullness
- Mystery
- New Self
- Legalism
- Asceticism
- Spiritual Wisdom

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the Christ Hymn as the theological center.
- Clarify the nature of the Colossian heresy.
- Use Colossians 3 as a framework for spiritual formation.

- Highlight the contrast between “shadow” and “substance.”
- Encourage students to memorize Colossians 1:15–20.

13. Suggested Reading

- Douglas Moo — *The Letters to the Colossians and Philemon*
- F.F. Bruce — *Colossians, Philemon*
- N.T. Wright — *Colossians and Philemon*
- David Garland — *Colossians* (NIVAC)

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Colossians presents Christ as supreme over all creation, all spiritual powers, and all aspects of the Christian life. Paul refutes false teaching by exalting Christ’s sufficiency and calling believers to root their lives in Him. The letter emphasizes new identity, holy living, and Christlike relationships. Colossians remains a powerful reminder that **Christ is enough — fully, completely, eternally.**

LESSON 13 — 1 THESSALONIANS

1. Overview

1 Thessalonians is one of Paul's earliest letters — possibly the earliest New Testament writing. It is a warm, affectionate letter to a young church thriving under persecution. Paul writes to encourage them, strengthen their faith, clarify misunderstandings about Christ's return, and urge them toward holy living.

The tone of the letter is deeply pastoral. Paul expresses gratitude, affection, and pride in the Thessalonian believers. He reminds them of his gentle ministry among them, celebrates their steadfastness, and comforts them regarding believers who have died. The letter is filled with hope, holiness, and encouragement — a model of pastoral care for a young congregation.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul**, along with **Silas** and **Timothy**, as the authors (1:1). Early church tradition unanimously affirms Pauline authorship.

Date

Written around **AD 50–51** during Paul's second missionary journey, likely from Corinth (Acts 18). This makes it one of the earliest Christian documents.

Audience

Paul writes to the **church in Thessalonica**, a major port city in Macedonia. The church was composed of:

- Some Jews
- Many God-fearing Gentiles
- Former idol worshipers

They were facing persecution from both Jews and pagans.

3. Historical Background

Thessalonica

A strategic city:

- Capital of Macedonia
- Located on the Via Egnatia (major trade route)
- Loyal to Rome
- Religiously pluralistic

Paul's Ministry There

Paul planted the church during his second missionary journey (Acts 17). He preached in the synagogue for three Sabbaths, but persecution forced him to leave prematurely.

The Church's Situation

The Thessalonians were:

- Young in the faith
- Facing persecution
- Confused about the return of Christ
- Concerned about believers who had died
- Tempted by sexual immorality
- Pressured by pagan culture

Paul writes to strengthen and stabilize them.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Encourage a persecuted church
- Defend his ministry
- Urge holiness and sexual purity
- Clarify the fate of deceased believers
- Teach about Christ's return
- Promote love, hope, and steadfastness

Major Themes

1. Encouragement

Paul affirms their faith, love, and hope.

2. Holiness

A call to sexual purity and moral integrity.

3. Pastoral Care

Paul models gentle, nurturing leadership.

4. Eschatology

Christ's return is a major theme — especially the resurrection of believers.

5. Perseverance

Endurance in suffering is a mark of genuine faith.

6. Love and Community

Brotherly love is essential for church life.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Greeting and Thanksgiving (1)**
- 2. Paul's Ministry and Affection (2–3)**
- 3. Exhortations for Holy Living (4:1–12)**
- 4. Teaching on Christ's Return (4:13–5:11)**
- 5. Final Instructions and Benediction (5:12–28)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Greeting and Thanksgiving (Chapter 1)

A. Greeting (1:1)

Paul, Silas, and Timothy greet the church.

B. Thanksgiving for Their Faith (1:2–10)

Paul celebrates:

- Their work of faith
- Labor of love
- Steadfastness of hope

The Thessalonians became examples to believers everywhere. They turned from idols to serve the living God and wait for His Son from heaven.

II. Paul's Ministry and Affection (Chapters 2–3)

A. Paul's Conduct Among Them (2:1–12)

Paul defends his ministry:

- Not from error or impurity
- Not seeking glory
- Gentle like a nursing mother
- Encouraging like a father

A beautiful model of pastoral leadership.

B. Their Reception of the Word (2:13–16)

They received the gospel as God’s Word and endured persecution.

C. Paul’s Longing and Concern (2:17–3:5)

Paul was torn away from them and deeply concerned for their faith.

D. Timothy’s Encouraging Report (3:6–10)

Timothy brings good news of their faith and love.

E. Paul’s Prayer for Them (3:11–13)

Paul prays for love, holiness, and blamelessness at Christ’s coming.

III. Exhortations for Holy Living (4:1–12)

A. Pleasing God (4:1–2)

Paul urges them to excel still more.

B. Sexual Purity (4:3–8)

God’s will is their sanctification. They must avoid sexual immorality and live in holiness.

C. Brotherly Love (4:9–10)

They excel in love but must continue growing.

D. Quiet, Responsible Living (4:11–12)

Work diligently, live quietly, and behave properly toward outsiders.

IV. Teaching on Christ's Return (4:13–5:11)

A. The Fate of Deceased Believers (4:13–18)

Paul comforts them:

- The dead in Christ will rise first
- Believers will be caught up together
- We will always be with the Lord
- Encourage one another with these words

B. The Day of the Lord (5:1–11)

The day will come unexpectedly. Believers must:

- Stay awake
- Be sober
- Put on faith, love, and hope

God has destined them for salvation, not wrath.

V. Final Instructions and Benediction (5:12–28)

A. Instructions for Community Life (5:12–22)

Paul urges:

- Respect for leaders
- Peace among believers
- Patience with all
- Rejoicing always
- Prayer without ceasing

- Gratitude in all things
- Discernment of prophecy
- Avoidance of evil

B. Prayer for Sanctification (5:23–24)

God Himself will sanctify them completely.

C. Final Greetings (5:25–28)

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 — Turning from Idols

A picture of conversion and hope.

1 Thessalonians 2:7–12 — Paul’s Pastoral Heart

Gentle as a mother, encouraging as a father.

1 Thessalonians 4:3–8 — Sexual Purity

God’s will for holiness.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 — The Resurrection Hope

Comfort for grieving believers.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 — Joy, Prayer, Gratitude

A blueprint for spiritual life.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Soteriology

Conversion involves turning from idols to God.

Ecclesiology

The church is a family marked by love, holiness, and mutual care.

Eschatology

Christ's return brings hope, comfort, and motivation for holiness.

Sanctification

God's will is moral purity and spiritual growth.

Pastoral Theology

Paul models tender, relational shepherding.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Encouragement is essential for spiritual growth.
- Holiness is God's will for every believer.
- Pastoral ministry requires gentleness, integrity, and affection.
- Hope in Christ's return strengthens perseverance.
- The church must cultivate love, unity, and responsible living.
- Grief is real, but Christian grief is filled with hope.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. What made the Thessalonian church such a strong example?
2. How does Paul model pastoral leadership?
3. Why is sexual purity emphasized so strongly?
4. How does hope in Christ's return shape daily life?
5. What does 1 Thessalonians teach about grief and comfort?
6. How can believers "excel still more" in love and holiness?
7. What does it mean to live quietly and work diligently?
8. How does this letter encourage perseverance in suffering?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Faith, Love, Hope
- Sanctification
- Day of the Lord
- Resurrection
- Encouragement
- Brotherly Love
- Perseverance

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the warmth and relational tone of the letter.
- Use 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 to teach biblical hope.
- Highlight Paul’s pastoral model for ministry training.
- Encourage students to memorize 5:16–18.
- Show how eschatology fuels holiness, not speculation.

13. Suggested Reading

- Gene Green — *The Letters to the Thessalonians*
- F.F. Bruce — *1 & 2 Thessalonians*
- Leon Morris — *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*
- N.T. Wright — *Paul for Everyone: 1 & 2 Thessalonians*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

1 Thessalonians is Paul’s warm, encouraging letter to a young church standing firm under pressure. He affirms their faith, urges holiness, clarifies the hope of Christ’s return, and models pastoral care. The letter calls believers to joyful endurance, moral purity, and steadfast hope as they await the coming of the Lord.

LESSON 14 — 2 THESSALONIANS

1. Overview

2 Thessalonians is Paul's follow-up letter to a young church facing persecution, confusion about the return of Christ, and disruption caused by false teaching. While 1 Thessalonians emphasized encouragement and hope, 2 Thessalonians brings clarification, correction, and strengthening.

The church was shaken by claims that “the day of the Lord” had already come. Some believers, thinking the end was imminent, had stopped working and were living disorderly lives. Paul writes to reassure them, correct misunderstandings, and call them to steadfastness, discernment, and disciplined living.

This letter is pastoral and corrective — a balanced blend of comfort and warning, hope and responsibility.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul**, along with **Silas** and **Timothy**, as the authors (1:1). Early church tradition strongly affirms Pauline authorship.

Date

Written around **AD 51–52**, shortly after 1 Thessalonians, likely from Corinth.

Audience

Paul writes to the **church in Thessalonica**, still young in the faith and enduring persecution from both Jews and Gentiles.

3. Historical Background

Persecution

The Thessalonian believers were suffering for their faith. Paul writes to strengthen their endurance and assure them of God's justice.

False Teaching

A forged letter or false prophecy had circulated, claiming the day of the Lord had already arrived. This caused fear, confusion, and instability.

Disorderly Conduct

Some believers had stopped working, assuming Christ's return was imminent. Paul addresses this firmly.

Pastoral Concern

Paul writes with:

- Gratitude
- Reassurance
- Correction
- Encouragement
- Authority

He wants the church to stand firm in truth and holiness.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Encourage perseverance in persecution
- Correct false teaching about the day of the Lord

- Clarify signs that must precede Christ's return
- Command believers to work diligently
- Strengthen the church's faith and discipline

Major Themes

1. Perseverance

Endurance under persecution is a mark of genuine faith.

2. God's Justice

God will repay affliction to persecutors and grant relief to believers.

3. The Day of the Lord

Paul clarifies that it has not yet come.

4. The Man of Lawlessness

A figure of rebellion who will appear before Christ's return.

5. Truth vs. Deception

Believers must stand firm in apostolic teaching.

6. Discipline

Idle and disruptive believers must be corrected.

5. Structure of the Book

1. **Encouragement in Persecution (1)**
2. **Clarification About the Day of the Lord (2)**
3. **Exhortations to Discipline and Diligence (3)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Encouragement in Persecution (Chapter 1)

A. Greeting (1:1–2)

Paul, Silas, and Timothy greet the church with grace and peace.

B. Thanksgiving for Growth (1:3–4)

Paul praises:

- Their growing faith
- Their increasing love
- Their steadfastness in persecution

C. God's Righteous Judgment (1:5–10)

Paul assures them:

- God will repay affliction to persecutors
- God will grant relief to believers
- Christ will return in glory
- Judgment will come upon those who reject the gospel

This is both comfort and warning.

D. Prayer for Worthiness (1:11–12)

Paul prays that God would:

- Make them worthy of their calling
- Fulfill every good purpose
- Glorify Christ in them

II. Clarification About the Day of the Lord (Chapter 2)

A. Do Not Be Shaken (2:1–2)

Paul urges them not to be alarmed by false claims that the day of the Lord has already come.

B. Signs That Must Come First (2:3–12)

1. The Rebellion

A widespread falling away from truth.

2. The Man of Lawlessness

A figure who:

- Exalts himself
- Opposes God
- Performs counterfeit signs
- Deceives those who reject truth

3. The Restrainer

Something or someone currently restrains this lawlessness until the appointed time.

4. Christ's Victory

The Lord Jesus will destroy the man of lawlessness with the breath of His mouth.

C. Stand Firm in the Truth (2:13–17)

Paul reminds them:

- They are chosen
- They are called through the gospel

- They must hold fast to apostolic teaching

He prays for comfort and strength.

III. Exhortations to Discipline and Diligence (Chapter 3)

A. Request for Prayer (3:1–5)

Paul asks for prayer that:

- The word of the Lord would spread
- He would be delivered from wicked people

He prays for their steadfastness.

B. Warning Against Idleness (3:6–12)

Some believers were refusing to work. Paul commands:

- Avoid those walking in idleness
- Follow Paul's example of hard work
- Work quietly and earn one's own living

C. Do Not Grow Weary in Doing Good (3:13)

A pastoral encouragement to persevere.

D. Discipline with Love (3:14–15)

Correct the disorderly, but treat them as brothers, not enemies.

E. Final Blessing (3:16–18)

Paul prays for peace and signs the letter personally to prevent forgery.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

2 Thessalonians 1:3–4 — Growth Under Pressure

Faith and love flourish in persecution.

2 Thessalonians 1:7–10 — Christ’s Revealing

A vivid picture of Christ’s return.

2 Thessalonians 2:3–12 — The Man of Lawlessness

A key eschatological passage.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 — Stand Firm

Hold fast to apostolic teaching.

2 Thessalonians 3:6–15 — Discipline and Work

A call to responsible living.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Eschatology

Christ’s return is future, visible, and victorious.

The Man of Lawlessness

A figure of rebellion preceding Christ’s return.

Divine Justice

God will vindicate His people and judge the wicked.

Sanctification

Believers must grow in holiness and steadfastness.

Ecclesiology

The church must practice loving discipline.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Encourage believers facing persecution.
- Teach eschatology with clarity and balance.
- Correct false teaching firmly but pastorally.
- Promote disciplined, responsible living.
- Practice church discipline with love and restoration in mind.
- Strengthen believers to stand firm in truth.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Paul encourage believers who are suffering?
2. What misunderstandings about Christ's return does Paul correct?
3. Who is the "man of lawlessness," and why does Paul mention him?
4. How does 2 Thessalonians balance comfort and warning?
5. What does the letter teach about work, responsibility, and idleness?
6. How should the church practice discipline?
7. What does it mean to "stand firm" in the truth?
8. How does this letter help believers discern false teaching?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Day of the Lord
- Man of Lawlessness
- Rebellion
- Perseverance
- Discipline
- Apostolic Teaching
- Divine Justice

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the pastoral tone — firm but loving.

- Clarify eschatological terms without speculation.
- Use chapter 3 to teach biblical work ethic.
- Highlight the importance of discernment in the church.
- Show how Paul balances encouragement and correction.

13. Suggested Reading

- Gene Green — *The Letters to the Thessalonians*
- F.F. Bruce — *1 & 2 Thessalonians*
- D. Michael Martin — *1, 2 Thessalonians* (NAC)
- N.T. Wright — *Paul for Everyone: 1 & 2 Thessalonians*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

2 Thessalonians strengthens a persecuted church by clarifying the truth about Christ's return, correcting false teaching, and calling believers to steadfastness and disciplined living. Paul assures them of God's justice, Christ's victory, and the importance of standing firm in apostolic teaching. This letter remains a vital guide for discernment, perseverance, and responsible Christian living.

LESSON 15 — 1 TIMOTHY

1. Overview

1 Timothy is Paul's pastoral instruction to his young protégé Timothy, whom he left in Ephesus to confront false teaching and establish healthy church leadership. The letter is intensely practical, dealing with doctrine, worship, leadership qualifications, pastoral care, and the conduct of God's household.

Paul writes as a spiritual father to a younger minister facing pressure, opposition, and complex church dynamics. The tone is warm, authoritative, and deeply pastoral. 1 Timothy is essential for understanding biblical leadership, church order, and the character required of those who shepherd God's people.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul** as the author (1:1–2). Early church tradition strongly affirms Pauline authorship.

Date

Likely written around **AD 62–64**, after Paul's first Roman imprisonment and before his final arrest.

Audience

Paul writes to **Timothy**, serving as pastor/representative in **Ephesus**, a major city with:

- False teachers
- Spiritual warfare
- Cultural pressure
- Confusion about leadership roles

Timothy is young, timid by temperament, and facing strong opposition.

3. Historical Background

Ephesus

A major center of:

- Pagan worship (Temple of Artemis)
- Magic and occult practices
- Wealth and trade
- Philosophical speculation

The church faced internal and external challenges.

False Teaching

Paul warns against:

- Myths and genealogies
- Speculative teaching
- Misuse of the Law
- Asceticism
- Greed
- Disruptive behavior

These teachers were destabilizing the church.

Timothy's Role

Timothy was tasked with:

- Correcting false doctrine
- Appointing qualified leaders
- Restoring order in worship
- Teaching sound doctrine

- Modeling godliness

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Strengthen Timothy's leadership
- Confront false teaching
- Establish qualifications for elders and deacons
- Provide instructions for worship
- Guide pastoral care of various groups
- Teach godliness and contentment

Major Themes

1. Sound Doctrine

Healthy teaching is essential for a healthy church.

2. Godliness

True spirituality is marked by character, not speculation.

3. Church Leadership

Elders and deacons must be above reproach.

4. Pastoral Responsibility

Timothy must teach, correct, and model godliness.

5. False Teaching

The church must guard the gospel.

6. The Household of God

The church is God’s family, requiring order and integrity.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Charge to Confront False Teachers (1)**
- 2. Instructions for Worship and Roles (2)**
- 3. Qualifications for Elders and Deacons (3)**
- 4. Warning Against Apostasy (4)**
- 5. Instructions for Pastoral Care (5)**
- 6. Teaching on Slaves, Teachers, and Wealth (6)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Confronting False Teaching (Chapter 1)

A. Greeting (1:1–2)

Paul greets Timothy as his “true child in the faith.”

B. Charge to Oppose False Teachers (1:3–7)

Timothy must confront:

- Myths
- Endless genealogies
- Speculative teaching

The goal of instruction is love from a pure heart.

C. Proper Use of the Law (1:8–11)

The Law is good when used lawfully — to expose sin, not to save.

D. Paul's Testimony of Grace (1:12–17)

Paul celebrates God's mercy in saving him, the "chief of sinners."

E. Timothy's Charge (1:18–20)

Timothy must fight the good fight and hold to faith and a good conscience.

II. Instructions for Worship and Roles (Chapter 2)

A. Prayer for All People (2:1–7)

Believers must pray for:

- All people
- Kings and authorities

God desires all to be saved.

B. Conduct in Worship (2:8–15)

Paul addresses:

- Men: prayer without anger
- Women: modesty, good works, quiet learning

The passage emphasizes order, learning, and godliness.

III. Qualifications for Church Leaders (Chapter 3)

A. Overseers/Elders (3:1–7)

Qualifications include:

- Above reproach
- Faithful in marriage
- Self-controlled

- Hospitable
- Able to teach
- Not violent or greedy
- Good reputation

B. Deacons (3:8–13)

Deacons must be:

- Dignified
- Honest
- Not addicted to wine
- Not greedy
- Faithful in family life

C. The Church as God's Household (3:14–16)

A beautiful confession of Christ:

- Manifested in the flesh
- Vindicated by the Spirit
- Proclaimed among the nations
- Taken up in glory

IV. Warning Against Apostasy (Chapter 4)

A. Deceiving Spirits and False Teaching (4:1–5)

Some will depart from the faith through:

- Demonic deception
- Asceticism
- Legalism

B. Timothy's Personal Responsibilities (4:6–16)

Timothy must:

- Train in godliness
- Set an example
- Devote himself to Scripture
- Use his spiritual gift
- Persevere in teaching

V. Instructions for Pastoral Care (Chapter 5)

A. Treating the Church as Family (5:1–2)

Older men as fathers, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters.

B. Care for Widows (5:3–16)

Paul gives detailed instructions for:

- True widows
- Family responsibility
- Church support

C. Elders (5:17–25)

Paul addresses:

- Honoring elders
- Protecting against false accusations
- Correcting sinning leaders
- Avoiding favoritism

VI. Instructions on Slaves, Teachers, and Wealth (Chapter 6)

A. Slaves and Masters (6:1–2)

Believers must honor God in their work relationships.

B. False Teachers and Godliness (6:3–10)

False teachers are driven by:

- Pride
- Controversy
- Greed

Paul warns that the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

C. Charge to Timothy (6:11–16)

Timothy must:

- Flee sin
- Pursue righteousness
- Fight the good fight
- Keep the commandment

D. Instructions to the Wealthy (6:17–19)

The wealthy must:

- Not be arrogant
- Be generous
- Store up treasure in heaven

E. Final Charge (6:20–21)

Guard the deposit of truth.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

1 Timothy 1:15 — Christ Came to Save Sinners

Paul's testimony of grace.

1 Timothy 2:1–7 — Prayer and God's Desire for All

A call to intercession.

1 Timothy 3:1–13 — Leadership Qualifications

Foundational for church governance.

1 Timothy 4:12 — Example for Believers

Timothy's youth is not a barrier to leadership.

1 Timothy 6:6–10 — Godliness with Contentment

A warning against greed.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Ecclesiology

The church is God's household, requiring order and godly leadership.

Soteriology

Christ came to save sinners; the gospel must be guarded.

Sanctification

Godliness is essential for leaders and members alike.

Pneumatology

The Spirit empowers teaching, discernment, and perseverance.

Ethics

Holiness, modesty, generosity, and integrity are central.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Pastors must guard doctrine and confront error.
- Leadership requires character, not charisma.
- The church must care for vulnerable members.
- Godliness is essential for effective ministry.
- Wealth must be handled with humility and generosity.
- Young leaders must model maturity and courage.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. What does 1 Timothy teach about the nature of pastoral ministry?
2. Why are leadership qualifications so important?
3. How should the church confront false teaching?
4. What does Paul mean by “godliness with contentment”?
5. How does 1 Timothy shape our understanding of worship?
6. What does it mean to “guard the good deposit”?
7. How can young leaders overcome insecurity?
8. How does this letter guide the modern church?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Sound Doctrine
- Godliness
- Elders
- Deacons
- Household of God

- False Teaching
- Contentment

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the pastoral tone — firm, loving, fatherly.
- Use chapter 3 to teach leadership development.
- Highlight the contrast between true and false teachers.
- Encourage students to see ministry as character-driven.
- Show how 1 Timothy complements Titus.

13. Suggested Reading

- William Mounce — *Pastoral Epistles*
- Philip Towner — *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*
- John Stott — *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*
- George Knight — *The Pastoral Epistles*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

1 Timothy is Paul's foundational manual for church leadership and pastoral ministry. It calls for sound doctrine, godly character, and orderly worship. Paul equips Timothy to confront false teaching, appoint qualified leaders, care for the church, and model godliness. This letter remains essential for shaping healthy churches and faithful ministers.

LESSON 16 — 2 TIMOTHY

1. Overview

2 Timothy is Paul's final letter — his last will and testament to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy. Written from a cold Roman dungeon during Paul's second imprisonment, the letter carries the tone of a dying mentor passing the torch to his successor. Paul knows his execution is near, and he writes with urgency, affection, and unwavering confidence in Christ.

This letter is a call to **courage, faithfulness, endurance, and loyalty to the gospel** in the face of suffering, false teaching, and cultural pressure. It is deeply personal, filled with names, memories, warnings, and final instructions. 2 Timothy is essential for understanding Christian perseverance, pastoral ministry, and the cost of discipleship.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul** as the author (1:1). Early church tradition unanimously affirms Pauline authorship.

Date

Written around **AD 64–67**, during Paul's second Roman imprisonment — shortly before his martyrdom under Nero.

Audience

Paul writes to **Timothy**, serving in Ephesus, facing:

- False teachers
- Opposition
- Fear and discouragement

- Pressure from the surrounding culture

Paul writes to strengthen Timothy's resolve.

3. Historical Background

Paul's Final Imprisonment

Unlike his earlier house arrest, Paul is now:

- In a dungeon
- Cold and isolated
- Abandoned by many coworkers
- Awaiting execution

He writes with the clarity of a man who knows his time is short.

Timothy's Situation

Timothy is:

- Young
- Naturally timid
- Facing strong opposition
- Leading a difficult church
- Tempted to shrink back

Paul writes to embolden him.

False Teaching

The Ephesian church faced:

- Empty talk
- Speculation
- Asceticism

- Denial of the resurrection
- Moral compromise

Paul urges Timothy to guard the gospel.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Encourage Timothy to stand firm
- Pass the gospel to faithful leaders
- Warn against false teachers
- Call Timothy to endure suffering
- Give final instructions before death

Major Themes

1. Endurance

Suffering is part of gospel ministry.

2. Loyalty to the Gospel

Guard the deposit entrusted to you.

3. Passing the Torch

Train faithful leaders who will teach others.

4. Scripture

The Word of God is inspired and equips believers for every good work.

5. Apostasy

Some will turn away from truth.

6. Finishing Well

Paul models faithful perseverance to the end.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Encouragement to Courage and Loyalty (1)**
- 2. Call to Endurance and Faithful Ministry (2)**
- 3. Warning About Apostasy and Scripture's Authority (3)**
- 4. Final Charge and Personal Farewell (4)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Encouragement to Courage and Loyalty (Chapter 1)

A. Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1–5)

Paul recalls Timothy's sincere faith, passed down from his mother and grandmother.

B. Stir Up the Gift (1:6–7)

Timothy must rekindle his spiritual gift. God has given a spirit of:

- Power
- Love
- Self-discipline

C. Do Not Be Ashamed (1:8–12)

Timothy must not be ashamed of:

- The testimony of Christ

- Paul's imprisonment
- The gospel

Paul reminds him of God's grace and calling.

D. Guard the Good Deposit (1:13–18)

Hold to sound teaching. Guard the gospel through the Holy Spirit. Paul contrasts:

- **Phygelus and Hermogenes** — who abandoned him
- **Onesiphorus** — who refreshed him

II. Call to Endurance and Faithful Ministry (Chapter 2)

A. Be Strong in Grace (2:1–2)

Timothy must:

- Be strengthened by grace
- Entrust the gospel to faithful men
- Build a multiplying ministry

B. Three Images of Endurance (2:3–7)

Paul uses:

- A soldier — focused and disciplined
- An athlete — competing according to the rules
- A farmer — hardworking and patient

C. Remember Jesus Christ (2:8–13)

Paul endures suffering because:

- Christ is risen
- The gospel is unstoppable

A trustworthy saying affirms:

- If we die with Him, we live with Him
- If we endure, we reign
- If we deny Him, He denies us
- If we are faithless, He remains faithful

D. Rightly Handling the Word (2:14–19)

Timothy must avoid:

- Quarreling
- Empty talk
- False teaching

He must rightly divide the Word of truth.

E. Vessels for Honor (2:20–26)

Timothy must:

- Flee youthful passions
- Pursue righteousness
- Correct opponents with gentleness

III. Warning About Apostasy and Scripture's Authority (Chapter 3)

A. The Last Days (3:1–9)

Paul describes people who will be:

- Lovers of self
- Lovers of money
- Lovers of pleasure
- Having a form of godliness but denying its power

False teachers oppose truth like Jannes and Jambres.

B. Paul's Example (3:10–13)

Timothy knows Paul's:

- Teaching
- Conduct
- Purpose
- Faith
- Love
- Endurance
- Persecutions

All who desire to live godly lives will face persecution.

C. The Inspiration of Scripture (3:14–17)

Timothy must continue in Scripture, which is:

- God-breathed
- Profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, training
- Able to equip believers for every good work

A foundational passage for biblical authority.

IV. Final Charge and Personal Farewell (Chapter 4)

A. Preach the Word (4:1–5)

Timothy must:

- Preach the Word
- Be ready in season and out
- Reprove, rebuke, exhort
- Endure hardship

- Do the work of an evangelist

B. Paul's Final Testimony (4:6–8)

Paul knows his death is near:

- “I have fought the good fight”
- “I have finished the race”
- “I have kept the faith”

A crown of righteousness awaits him.

C. Personal Requests and Final Greetings (4:9–22)

Paul mentions:

- Demas — who deserted him
- Luke — faithful companion
- Mark — now useful again
- Alexander — a dangerous opponent

He asks Timothy to bring:

- His cloak
- His books
- His parchments

Paul ends with confidence in God's presence and deliverance.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

2 Timothy 1:7 — Spirit of Power, Love, and Self-Control

A call to courage.

2 Timothy 2:2 — Multiplying Leaders

The foundation of discipleship.

2 Timothy 2:15 — Rightly Handling the Word

A charge to faithful teaching.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 — Inspiration of Scripture

A cornerstone of biblical doctrine.

2 Timothy 4:6–8 — Finishing the Race

Paul's final testimony.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Scripture

Inspired, authoritative, sufficient.

Suffering

Essential to gospel ministry.

Perseverance

Endurance is the mark of true faith.

Leadership

Faithful leaders must guard, teach, and pass on the gospel.

Eschatology

Christ will judge the living and the dead.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Ministry requires courage and endurance.
- The gospel must be guarded and passed on.
- Scripture is the foundation for all teaching.
- Leaders must correct with gentleness.
- Finishing well is more important than starting well.
- Faithfulness matters more than fame.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. What does 2 Timothy teach about courage in ministry?
2. How does Paul model endurance in suffering?
3. Why is Scripture essential for ministry?
4. What does it mean to “guard the good deposit”?
5. How can leaders train others to carry the gospel forward?
6. What does Paul’s final testimony teach about finishing well?
7. How does 2 Timothy prepare believers for opposition?
8. What does this letter reveal about Paul’s heart for Timothy?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Endurance
- Guard the Gospel
- Sound Doctrine
- Apostasy
- Inspiration
- Finishing the Race
- Multiplying Leaders

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the emotional weight of Paul’s final words.
- Use chapter 3 to teach biblical authority.
- Highlight the four generations of discipleship in 2:2.

- Encourage reflection on finishing well.
- Show how 2 Timothy complements 1 Timothy and Titus.

13. Suggested Reading

- William Mounce — *Pastoral Epistles*
- Philip Towner — *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*
- John Stott — *The Message of 2 Timothy*
- George Knight — *The Pastoral Epistles*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

2 Timothy is Paul's final, heartfelt charge to Timothy — a call to courage, endurance, and loyalty to the gospel. Paul urges Timothy to guard the truth, preach the Word, endure suffering, and finish well. This letter remains a timeless guide for pastors, leaders, and all believers who desire to remain faithful to Christ in a world of pressure and opposition.

LESSON 17 — TITUS

1. Overview

Titus is Paul's pastoral letter to his trusted coworker Titus, whom he left on the island of Crete to establish order in the churches and appoint qualified leaders. The letter is brief but packed with practical instruction on leadership, doctrine, godly living, and dealing with false teachers.

The heartbeat of Titus is this: **sound doctrine produces sound living**. Paul emphasizes that the gospel must lead to transformed character, healthy households, and a credible witness in a corrupt culture. Titus is a blueprint for building strong, orderly, and mission-minded churches.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul** as the author (1:1). Early church tradition strongly supports Pauline authorship.

Date

Likely written around **AD 63–65**, after Paul's first Roman imprisonment and before his final arrest.

Audience

Paul writes to **Titus**, serving on the island of **Crete**, a place known for:

- Moral corruption
- Dishonesty
- False teachers
- Chaotic religious practices

Titus is tasked with bringing order, appointing leaders, and teaching sound doctrine.

3. Historical Background

Crete

A large Mediterranean island with a reputation for:

- Immorality
- Violence
- Dishonesty (“Cretans are always liars...”)
- Pagan worship
- Social disorder

The Cretan culture made church leadership and discipleship especially challenging.

Titus

A trusted coworker of Paul:

- A Gentile convert
- A strong, reliable leader
- Paul’s representative in difficult situations
- Previously involved in the Corinthian church

Paul trusts Titus with tough assignments.

False Teaching

The churches in Crete faced:

- Jewish myths
- Legalism
- Empty talk

- Immoral behavior
- Teachers seeking financial gain

Paul writes to equip Titus to confront these issues.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Establish qualified elders
- Confront false teachers
- Teach sound doctrine
- Promote godly living
- Strengthen the church's witness in society

Major Themes

1. Sound Doctrine

Healthy teaching leads to healthy living.

2. Godly Leadership

Elders must be above reproach and able to teach truth.

3. Good Works

Believers must be “zealous for good works.”

4. Grace

God's grace trains believers to live holy lives.

5. Church Order

The church must be structured and disciplined.

6. Witness

Christian conduct impacts the credibility of the gospel.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Qualifications for Elders (1:1–16)**
- 2. Instructions for Godly Living (2:1–15)**
- 3. Christian Conduct in Society (3:1–11)**
- 4. Final Instructions and Greetings (3:12–15)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Qualifications for Elders and Confronting False Teachers (Chapter 1)

A. Greeting (1:1–4)

Paul emphasizes:

- His apostleship
- The truth that accords with godliness
- The hope of eternal life
- Titus as his “true child”

B. Appointing Elders (1:5–9)

Titus must appoint elders in every town. Qualifications include:

- Above reproach
- Faithful in marriage
- Children who believe
- Not arrogant, quick-tempered, violent, or greedy

- Hospitable
- Self-controlled
- Able to teach sound doctrine
- Able to refute false teachers

C. Confronting False Teachers (1:10–16)

Paul describes false teachers as:

- Rebellious
- Empty talkers
- Deceivers
- Especially those of the circumcision group

They must be silenced because they:

- Upset households
- Teach for shameful gain
- Promote myths

Paul quotes a Cretan poet: “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” He uses this cultural insight to highlight the need for strong leadership.

II. Instructions for Godly Living (Chapter 2)

A. Sound Doctrine for All Groups (2:1–10)

Paul gives instructions for:

1. Older Men

- Sober-minded
- Dignified
- Self-controlled
- Sound in faith, love, and endurance

2. Older Women

- Reverent
- Not slanderers
- Not addicted to wine
- Teachers of good

3. Younger Women

- Love husbands and children
- Be self-controlled
- Pure
- Kind
- Submissive

4. Younger Men

- Self-controlled
- Model good works

5. Slaves

- Respectful
- Honest
- Faithful

The goal: **to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.**

B. Grace as the Teacher (2:11–15)

Grace:

- Brings salvation
- Trains believers to renounce ungodliness
- Teaches us to live self-controlled, upright, godly lives
- Points us to the blessed hope — Christ's return

Believers are redeemed to be “zealous for good works.”

III. Christian Conduct in Society (Chapter 3)

A. Submission to Authorities (3:1–2)

Believers must:

- Be subject to rulers
- Be obedient
- Be ready for good works
- Speak evil of no one
- Show gentleness

B. The Gospel Motivation (3:3–7)

A beautiful summary of salvation:

- We were once foolish and enslaved
- But God saved us
- Not by works
- But by His mercy
- Through the washing of regeneration
- Renewal by the Holy Spirit
- Justified by grace
- Made heirs of eternal life

C. Devotion to Good Works (3:8)

Believers must devote themselves to good works.

D. Avoiding Divisive People (3:9–11)

Avoid:

- Foolish controversies

- Genealogies
- Quarrels about the Law

A divisive person should be warned twice, then avoided.

IV. Final Instructions and Greetings (3:12–15)

Paul gives:

- Travel plans
- Instructions to help Zenas and Apollos
- A reminder to devote themselves to good works
- Final greetings

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Titus 1:5–9 — Qualifications for Elders

A foundational text for church leadership.

Titus 2:11–14 — Grace That Trains Us

Grace empowers holiness.

Titus 3:3–7 — Salvation by Mercy

A rich summary of the gospel.

Titus 3:8 — Devotion to Good Works

Good works flow from grace.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Ecclesiology

The church must have qualified leaders and sound doctrine.

Soteriology

Salvation is by mercy, through the Spirit's regenerating work.

Sanctification

Grace trains believers to live holy lives.

Ethics

Christian behavior must reflect the gospel.

Missiology

Good works enhance the church's witness.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Strong leadership is essential for healthy churches.
- Sound doctrine must shape daily behavior.
- Grace empowers holiness — not legalism.
- The church must confront false teaching firmly.
- Christian witness depends on godly conduct.
- Good works are the fruit of salvation, not the root.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. Why does Paul emphasize leadership qualifications so strongly?
2. How does Titus show the connection between doctrine and behavior?
3. What does “grace trains us” mean in practical terms?
4. How should the church confront false teachers?
5. What does Titus teach about the church's witness in society?
6. How does Titus 3:3–7 summarize the gospel?
7. Why are good works essential to Christian living?
8. How can churches cultivate healthy leadership and discipleship?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Sound Doctrine
- Elders
- Good Works
- Regeneration
- Grace
- False Teachers
- Godliness

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the cultural background of Crete.
- Use Titus 1 for leadership training.
- Highlight Titus 2:11–14 as the theological center.
- Show how Titus balances grace and good works.
- Encourage students to see Titus as a church-planting manual.

13. Suggested Reading

- William Mounce — *Pastoral Epistles*
- Philip Towner — *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*
- John Stott — *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*
- George Knight — *The Pastoral Epistles*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Titus is Paul's concise manual for building healthy churches. It emphasizes sound doctrine, godly leadership, and good works flowing from grace. Paul equips Titus to confront false teaching, establish order, and teach believers how to live in a way that honors Christ and strengthens the church's witness. Titus remains a vital guide for church leadership, discipleship, and mission.

LESSON 18 — PHILEMON

1. Overview

Philemon is Paul's shortest and most personal letter — a warm, persuasive appeal on behalf of **Onesimus**, a runaway slave who encountered Paul, came to faith in Christ, and became a beloved coworker. Paul writes to **Philemon**, a wealthy Christian and leader of a house church, urging him to receive Onesimus back not as a slave but as a **beloved brother**.

This letter is a living illustration of the gospel's power to transform relationships, heal social divisions, and create a new kind of community in Christ. While Paul does not directly attack the institution of slavery, he undermines it from within by appealing to love, equality in Christ, and the new identity believers share.

Philemon is a masterpiece of pastoral tact, gospel persuasion, and Christian reconciliation.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Paul** as the author (1:1). Early church tradition unanimously affirms Pauline authorship.

Date

Written around **AD 60–62** during Paul's first Roman imprisonment — the same period as Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

Audience

Paul writes to:

- **Philemon** — a wealthy Christian and host of a house church
- **Apphia** — likely Philemon's wife
- **Archippus** — possibly their son or a church leader
- **The church in Philemon's house**

The letter is personal but intended to be read publicly.

3. Historical Background

Slavery in the Roman World

Slavery was:

- Widespread
- Socially accepted
- Not race-based
- Often harsh
- Legally absolute

A runaway slave could face severe punishment.

Onesimus

Likely:

- A slave belonging to Philemon
- Ran away (possibly stealing from him)
- Encountered Paul in prison
- Became a Christian
- Became useful (“Onesimus” means “useful”)

Paul sends him back — a risky act — but with a transformed identity.

Philemon

A respected Christian leader:

- Wealthy enough to own slaves
- Hosted a house church
- Known for love and generosity

Paul appeals to his character and faith.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Paul writes to:

- Appeal for Onesimus's forgiveness and restoration
- Encourage Philemon to treat him as a brother in Christ
- Model gospel-shaped reconciliation
- Demonstrate the power of Christian love
- Show how the gospel transforms social relationships

Major Themes

1. Reconciliation

The gospel restores broken relationships.

2. Christian Brotherhood

Believers are equal in Christ.

3. Love and Persuasion

Paul appeals through love, not command.

4. Transformation

Onesimus is no longer “useless” but “useful” in Christ.

5. Partnership

Christian fellowship involves mutual sacrifice.

6. Subversion of Social Structures

Paul undermines slavery by elevating Onesimus’s identity.

5. Structure of the Book

1. **Greeting and Thanksgiving (1–7)**
2. **Paul’s Appeal for Onesimus (8–16)**
3. **Paul’s Confidence and Final Requests (17–22)**
4. **Final Greetings (23–25)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Greeting and Thanksgiving (Verses 1–7)

A. Greeting (1–3)

Paul writes with:

- Affection
- Partnership language
- Acknowledgment of Philemon’s leadership

B. Thanksgiving for Philemon’s Love (4–7)

Paul praises Philemon for:

- His faith
- His love for the saints

- Refreshing the hearts of believers

This sets the tone for the appeal to come.

II. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus (Verses 8–16)

A. Appeal Through Love (8–9)

Paul could command — but chooses to appeal “for love’s sake.”

B. Onesimus's Transformation (10–12)

Paul calls Onesimus:

- His “child”
- His “very heart”
- A changed man

C. Voluntary Goodness (13–14)

Paul wants Philemon's response to be voluntary, not forced.

D. Providence in Onesimus's Flight (15–16)

Paul reframes the situation:

- Perhaps he left for a season
- So he could return forever
- Not as a slave
- But as a beloved brother

This is the theological heart of the letter.

III. Paul's Confidence and Final Requests (Verses 17–22)

A. Receive Him as You Would Receive Me (17)

A radical request — Paul elevates Onesimus to apostolic status.

B. Paul Offers to Repay Any Debt (18–19)

Paul writes with his own hand, guaranteeing repayment. He gently reminds Philemon:

“You owe me your very self.”

C. Refresh My Heart (20–21)

Paul expresses confidence that Philemon will do even more than asked — possibly implying manumission.

D. Prepare a Guest Room (22)

Paul hopes to visit, reinforcing accountability.

IV. Final Greetings (Verses 23–25)

Paul sends greetings from:

- Epaphras
- Mark
- Aristarchus
- Demas
- Luke

He ends with a blessing of grace.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Philemon 8–9 — Appeal Through Love

Paul models pastoral persuasion.

Philemon 10–12 — Onesimus's Transformation

A picture of conversion and spiritual fatherhood.

Philemon 15–16 — Brother, Not Slave

The gospel reshapes identity and relationships.

Philemon 17 — Receive Him as You Would Me

Radical equality in Christ.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Union with Christ creates a new identity.

Soteriology

Conversion transforms character and relationships.

Ecclesiology

The church is a family of equals in Christ.

Ethics

Love, forgiveness, and reconciliation are central.

Social Implications

The gospel undermines oppressive structures from within.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Pastoral leadership requires wisdom, tact, and love.
- The gospel transforms relationships and social dynamics.
- Forgiveness and reconciliation are essential to Christian community.
- Leaders must advocate for the vulnerable.
- Christian love goes beyond obligation to sacrificial action.
- The church must model equality and dignity for all believers.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Paul model gospel-shaped persuasion?
2. What does Philemon teach about reconciliation?
3. How does the gospel transform social relationships?
4. Why does Paul appeal rather than command?
5. What does “receive him as you would receive me” imply?
6. How does this letter challenge modern issues of justice and dignity?
7. What can pastors learn from Paul’s approach?
8. How does Philemon illustrate the power of Christian community?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Reconciliation
- Brotherhood
- Appeal
- Transformation
- Partnership
- Forgiveness
- Equality in Christ

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the relational warmth of the letter.
- Highlight Paul's rhetorical skill and pastoral tact.
- Use Philemon to teach conflict resolution.
- Show how the gospel reshapes social structures.
- Encourage reflection on modern applications of reconciliation.

13. Suggested Reading

- N.T. Wright — *Paul for Everyone: Colossians & Philemon*
- F.F. Bruce — *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon*
- Douglas Moo — *Colossians and Philemon*
- John Stott — *The Message of Philemon*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Philemon is Paul's personal, pastoral appeal for reconciliation between Philemon and Onesimus. It demonstrates the gospel's power to transform relationships, elevate human dignity, and create a new community in Christ. Paul models love, persuasion, and leadership rooted in grace. This short letter remains a profound example of Christian forgiveness, equality, and unity.

LESSON 19 — HEBREWS

1. Overview

Hebrews is a powerful sermon-letter written to Jewish Christians who were weary, discouraged, and tempted to drift back into Judaism to avoid persecution. The author presents Jesus as the **supreme revelation of God**, the **perfect High Priest**, and the **mediator of a better covenant**. Through a series of rich comparisons, Hebrews demonstrates that Christ is superior to angels, Moses, the priesthood, the sacrificial system, and the old covenant.

The letter blends profound theology with urgent pastoral exhortation. It calls believers to perseverance, warns against falling away, and encourages them to draw near to God with confidence. Hebrews is essential for understanding the continuity between the Old and New Testaments and the full significance of Christ's person and work.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The author is **unknown**. Possibilities include:

- Paul
- Apollos
- Barnabas
- Luke
- Priscilla

The early church accepted Hebrews as authoritative even without knowing the author.

Date

Likely written between **AD 60–70**, before the destruction of the temple (since sacrifices are spoken of in the present tense).

Audience

Jewish Christians facing:

- Persecution
- Social pressure
- Weariness
- Temptation to return to Judaism

The author writes to strengthen their faith and anchor them in Christ.

3. Historical Background

Jewish-Christian Context

The audience was deeply familiar with:

- The Law
- The priesthood
- The sacrificial system
- The tabernacle
- The covenant

The author uses this background to show how Christ fulfills and surpasses all of it.

Persecution and Pressure

Believers were:

- Publicly shamed

- Confiscated of property
- Tempted to shrink back
- Growing spiritually sluggish

Hebrews calls them to endurance.

Purpose of the Letter

To show that **Jesus is better** — better than anything they might return to.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

The author writes to:

- Exalt Christ's supremacy
- Encourage perseverance
- Warn against apostasy
- Explain the new covenant
- Strengthen weary believers
- Show the fulfillment of the Old Testament in Christ

Major Themes

1. Christ's Supremacy

Jesus is superior to angels, Moses, priests, and sacrifices.

2. High Priesthood of Christ

Jesus is the perfect, eternal High Priest.

3. New Covenant

A better covenant with better promises.

4. Perseverance

Believers must hold fast and not drift away.

5. Faith

Hebrews 11 defines and illustrates true faith.

6. Worship

Believers can approach God with confidence.

5. Structure of the Book

1. **Christ's Supremacy (1–2)**
2. **Christ Superior to Moses (3–4)**
3. **Christ's Priesthood (5–7)**
4. **New Covenant and Sacrifice (8–10)**
5. **Faith and Endurance (11–12)**
6. **Practical Exhortations (13)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Christ's Supremacy Over All (Chapters 1–2)

A. Christ Superior to Angels (1:1–14)

God has spoken through His Son, who is:

- Radiance of God's glory
- Exact imprint of His nature
- Creator and sustainer
- Enthroned forever

B. Warning Against Drifting (2:1–4)

Believers must pay close attention to the gospel.

C. Christ's Humanity and Suffering (2:5–18)

Jesus became human to:

- Destroy the devil
- Free those enslaved by fear
- Become a merciful High Priest

II. Christ Superior to Moses (Chapters 3–4)

A. Jesus Greater Than Moses (3:1–6)

Moses was a servant; Christ is the Son.

B. Warning Against Unbelief (3:7–19)

Israel's wilderness rebellion is a warning.

C. Entering God's Rest (4:1–13)

A promise of rest remains for God's people.

D. Approach the Throne of Grace (4:14–16)

Jesus sympathizes with our weaknesses.

III. Christ's Superior Priesthood (Chapters 5–7)

A. Jesus the Great High Priest (5:1–10)

Appointed by God, perfect through suffering.

B. Warning Against Immaturity (5:11–6:12)

A call to grow and avoid falling away.

C. God's Promise and Oath (6:13–20)

Hope is an anchor for the soul.

D. Melchizedek and Christ (7)

Christ's priesthood is:

- Eternal
- Superior
- Based on an indestructible life

IV. The New Covenant and Christ's Sacrifice (Chapters 8–10)

A. A Better Covenant (8)

Based on better promises.

B. Earthly vs. Heavenly Sanctuary (9:1–14)

Christ ministers in the true heavenly sanctuary.

C. Once-for-All Sacrifice (9:15–28)

Christ's sacrifice is final and effective.

D. Perfected Forever (10:1–18)

The Law could not perfect; Christ's offering does.

E. Exhortations to Persevere (10:19–39)

Draw near, hold fast, encourage one another.

V. Faith and Endurance (Chapters 11–12)

A. Definition of Faith (11:1–3)

Faith is assurance and conviction.

B. Heroes of Faith (11:4–40)

Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others.

C. Run the Race with Endurance (12:1–3)

Fix your eyes on Jesus.

D. God's Loving Discipline (12:4–17)

Discipline produces holiness.

E. Unshakable Kingdom (12:18–29)

God is a consuming fire.

VI. Practical Exhortations (Chapter 13)

A. Love and Hospitality (13:1–6)

Brotherly love, purity, contentment.

B. Respect for Leaders (13:7–17)

Imitate their faith; obey their guidance.

C. Benediction (13:20–25)

A beautiful prayer of peace and equipping.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Hebrews 1:1–4 — The Supremacy of the Son

A majestic Christological introduction.

Hebrews 4:14–16 — Throne of Grace

Confidence in Christ's priestly compassion.

Hebrews 7 — Melchizedek and Christ

Christ's eternal priesthood.

Hebrews 10:19–25 — Draw Near, Hold Fast

A call to worship and perseverance.

Hebrews 11 — The Hall of Faith

Examples of enduring faith.

Hebrews 12:1–3 — Run with Endurance

Fix your eyes on Jesus.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Jesus is:

- Divine
- Human
- High Priest
- Mediator
- Sacrifice

- King

Soteriology

Salvation is complete, final, and perfect in Christ.

Covenant Theology

The new covenant fulfills and surpasses the old.

Sanctification

Believers grow through discipline and perseverance.

Eschatology

An unshakable kingdom awaits.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Christ must be central in all teaching and worship.
- Believers must persevere through trials.
- The church must encourage one another.
- Leaders must teach the continuity of Scripture.
- Confidence in Christ's priesthood strengthens weary believers.
- The gospel calls us to maturity, not complacency.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Hebrews present Jesus as superior to all?
2. What does Christ's priesthood mean for believers today?
3. Why are the warnings in Hebrews so strong?
4. How does Hebrews connect the Old and New Testaments?
5. What does it mean to "enter God's rest"?
6. How does Hebrews 11 define faith?
7. What does it mean to run the race with endurance?

8. How does Hebrews encourage believers facing discouragement?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- High Priest
- New Covenant
- Melchizedek
- Rest
- Faith
- Perseverance
- Sacrifice

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the sermon-like structure of Hebrews.
- Use Hebrews 4 and 10 to teach assurance and access to God.
- Clarify the Old Testament background for students.
- Highlight the pastoral heart behind the warnings.
- Encourage memorization of Hebrews 12:1–3.

13. Suggested Reading

- F.F. Bruce — *The Epistle to the Hebrews*
- William Lane — *Hebrews* (WBC)
- Thomas Schreiner — *Hebrews*
- N.T. Wright — *Hebrews for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Hebrews presents Jesus as the supreme revelation of God, the perfect High Priest, and the mediator of a better covenant. It calls believers to perseverance, warns against drifting, and encourages them to draw near to God with confidence. Hebrews is a theological masterpiece and a pastoral exhortation to remain faithful to Christ, who is better than anything else we might turn to.

LESSON 20 — JAMES

1. Overview

The book of James is a powerful, practical letter calling believers to authentic, lived-out faith. Written with prophetic sharpness and pastoral concern, James confronts hypocrisy, favoritism, uncontrolled speech, worldliness, and empty religion. He insists that genuine faith produces visible fruit — obedience, compassion, humility, and perseverance.

James is often called the “Proverbs of the New Testament” because of its wisdom-style teaching, vivid imagery, and direct exhortations. It is intensely practical, addressing real-life issues in the Christian community. James does not contradict Paul’s teaching on justification by faith; rather, he emphasizes that **true faith is demonstrated by works**.

This letter is essential for discipleship, spiritual formation, and Christian ethics.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The author identifies himself as **James**, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1). Most scholars identify him as:

- **James, the brother of Jesus**
- Leader of the Jerusalem church
- A pillar of the early church (Gal. 2:9)

Date

Likely written **AD 45–48**, making it one of the earliest New Testament writings.

Audience

James writes to the “**twelve tribes in the Dispersion**” — Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Roman Empire due to persecution.

They faced:

- Poverty
- Oppression
- Social tension
- Trials
- Temptation
- Internal conflict

James writes to strengthen and correct them.

3. Historical Background

Jewish-Christian Context

The audience was deeply familiar with:

- Old Testament wisdom
- The Law
- Prophetic calls to justice
- Synagogue life

James uses this background to call them to authentic obedience.

Social Tensions

Many believers were:

- Poor
- Marginalized
- Exploited by wealthy landowners

James confronts injustice and calls for endurance.

Internal Church Issues

The churches struggled with:

- Favoritism
- Quarreling
- Gossip
- Worldliness
- Lack of compassion

James writes with urgency and clarity.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

James writes to:

- Call believers to authentic faith
- Confront hypocrisy and worldliness
- Encourage perseverance in trials
- Promote justice and compassion
- Teach wisdom and humility
- Correct misuse of speech

Major Themes

1. Faith and Works

True faith produces obedience.

2. Trials and Perseverance

Trials refine faith and produce maturity.

3. Wisdom

God gives wisdom generously to those who ask.

4. Speech

The tongue has destructive or life-giving power.

5. Wealth and Poverty

God defends the poor and warns the rich.

6. Humility

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

7. Prayer

Prayer is powerful and essential.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Trials, Wisdom, and Temptation (1)**
- 2. True Religion and Impartial Love (2:1–13)**
- 3. Faith and Works (2:14–26)**
- 4. The Tongue and True Wisdom (3)**
- 5. Worldliness and Humility (4)**
- 6. Warnings to the Rich and Call to Patience (5:1–12)**
- 7. Prayer, Healing, and Restoration (5:13–20)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Trials, Wisdom, and Temptation (Chapter 1)

A. Joy in Trials (1:2–4)

Trials produce:

- Perseverance
- Maturity
- Completeness

B. Asking for Wisdom (1:5–8)

God gives wisdom generously to those who ask in faith.

C. The Poor and the Rich (1:9–11)

The poor are exalted; the rich are humbled.

D. Temptation and Desire (1:12–18)

Temptation comes from internal desires, not from God. Every good gift comes from the Father.

E. Hearing and Doing (1:19–27)

True religion involves:

- Quick listening
- Slow anger
- Doing the Word
- Caring for the vulnerable
- Keeping oneself unstained by the world

II. True Religion and Impartial Love (2:1–13)

A. Warning Against Favoritism (2:1–7)

Showing favoritism to the rich violates the gospel.

B. The Royal Law (2:8–11)

“Love your neighbor as yourself.” Partiality is sin.

C. Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment (2:12–13)

Believers must show mercy because they have received mercy.

III. Faith and Works (2:14–26)

A. Faith Without Works Is Dead (2:14–17)

Empty confession cannot save.

B. Examples of Abraham and Rahab (2:18–26)

Their faith was demonstrated by action.

James emphasizes that **works are the evidence, not the basis, of justification.**

IV. The Tongue and True Wisdom (Chapter 3)

A. Warning to Teachers (3:1–2)

Teachers will be judged more strictly.

B. Power of the Tongue (3:3–12)

The tongue is:

- Small but powerful
- Capable of great destruction

- Inconsistent in blessing and cursing

C. Two Kinds of Wisdom (3:13–18)

Earthly wisdom:

- Jealous
- Selfish
- Disorderly

Heavenly wisdom:

- Pure
- Peaceable
- Gentle
- Merciful
- Sincere

V. Worldliness and Humility (Chapter 4)

A. Source of Conflict (4:1–3)

Quarrels come from selfish desires.

B. Friendship with the World (4:4–6)

Worldliness is spiritual adultery.

C. Call to Humility (4:7–10)

Submit to God. Resist the devil. Draw near to God. Humble yourselves.

D. Judging Others (4:11–12)

Only God is judge.

E. Arrogant Planning (4:13–17)

Life is a vapor — submit plans to God’s will.

VI. Warnings to the Rich and Call to Patience (5:1–12)

A. Judgment on Oppressive Rich (5:1–6)

God condemns:

- Exploitation
- Greed
- Luxury at others’ expense

B. Patience in Suffering (5:7–11)

Look to:

- The farmer
- The prophets
- Job

God is compassionate and merciful.

C. Integrity in Speech (5:12)

Let your “yes” be yes.

VII. Prayer, Healing, and Restoration (5:13–20)

A. Prayer in All Circumstances (5:13–15)

Pray when suffering. Sing when joyful. Call elders for anointing and prayer.

B. Confession and Healing (5:16–18)

Confess sins to one another. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful.

C. Restoring the Wandering (5:19–20)

Turning a sinner back saves a soul from death.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

James 1:2–4 — Joy in Trials

Trials produce maturity.

James 1:22 — Doers of the Word

Authentic faith acts.

James 2:14–26 — Faith and Works

Works demonstrate genuine faith.

James 3:1–12 — Power of the Tongue

Speech reveals the heart.

James 4:7–10 — Humility and Submission

A call to repentance and nearness to God.

James 5:16 — Prayer and Confession

Prayer is powerful and effective.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Soteriology

Faith that saves is faith that works.

Sanctification

Holiness is practical and visible.

Wisdom

True wisdom is moral, relational, and peace-producing.

Ethics

Justice, compassion, and integrity are essential.

Prayer

Prayer is central to spiritual life and healing.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Authentic faith must be lived out in daily life.
- Trials are opportunities for growth.
- The church must reject favoritism and embrace compassion.
- Speech must be disciplined and life-giving.
- Humility is essential for spiritual health.
- Prayer and confession strengthen community.
- Leaders must model integrity and wisdom.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does James define authentic faith?
2. Why are trials essential for spiritual growth?
3. What does James teach about the power of speech?
4. How does James challenge favoritism in the church?
5. What is the relationship between faith and works?
6. How does James describe true wisdom?
7. What does humility look like in practice?
8. How can the church cultivate a culture of prayer and confession?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Trials
- Wisdom
- Faith and Works
- Tongue
- Worldliness
- Humility
- Prayer

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the practical nature of James.
- Use James 3 to teach about communication and conflict.
- Clarify the relationship between James and Paul on faith and works.
- Encourage memorization of key passages.
- Highlight the prophetic tone of justice and compassion.

13. Suggested Reading

- Douglas Moo — *The Letter of James*
- Peter Davids — *The Epistle of James*
- Craig Blomberg — *James (ZECNT)*
- N.T. Wright — *James for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

James calls believers to authentic, lived-out faith — a faith that endures trials, rejects favoritism, controls the tongue, pursues wisdom, practices humility, and expresses itself through good works. This letter is a powerful guide for Christian ethics, discipleship, and spiritual maturity. James challenges believers to be doers of the Word, not hearers only.

LESSON 21 — 1 PETER

1. Overview

1 Peter is a pastoral letter written to Christians scattered across Asia Minor who were experiencing social pressure, slander, and suffering because of their faith. Peter writes to encourage them to stand firm in grace, live holy lives, and endure suffering with hope and joy.

The letter emphasizes **identity, holiness, submission, and suffering**. Peter reminds believers that they are God's chosen people, called to reflect Christ's character in a hostile world. He anchors their hope in the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of future glory.

1 Peter is essential for understanding Christian suffering, holiness, and the church's witness in a world that does not share its values.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Peter**, the apostle of Jesus Christ, as the author (1:1). Early church tradition strongly affirms Petrine authorship.

Date

Likely written around **AD 62–64**, shortly before Peter's martyrdom under Nero.

Audience

Peter writes to believers in:

- Pontus
- Galatia
- Cappadocia

- Asia
- Bithynia

These were mostly Gentile Christians living as social outsiders.

3. Historical Background

Social Persecution

The believers faced:

- Slander
- Social exclusion
- Verbal abuse
- Economic pressure
- Hostility from neighbors

This was not yet state-sponsored persecution, but it was painful and destabilizing.

Cultural Context

Christians were misunderstood as:

- Disloyal to Rome
- Anti-social
- Strange in their moral values
- Rejecting traditional gods

Peter writes to help them respond with grace and holiness.

Peter's Pastoral Heart

Peter writes as:

- A witness of Christ's sufferings

- A shepherd
- A fellow elder
- A man who knew failure and restoration

His tone is warm, encouraging, and deeply pastoral.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Peter writes to:

- Encourage believers to stand firm in suffering
- Remind them of their identity in Christ
- Call them to holiness and good works
- Teach submission in various relationships
- Strengthen their hope in future glory

Major Themes

1. Hope

A living hope through the resurrection.

2. Holiness

Be holy as God is holy.

3. Suffering

Suffering is part of the Christian calling.

4. Identity

Believers are God's chosen people, a royal priesthood.

5. Submission

Christlike submission in relationships and society.

6. Shepherding

Leaders must shepherd God's flock with humility.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Salvation and Identity (1:1–2:10)**
- 2. Holiness and Submission (2:11–3:12)**
- 3. Suffering and Christ's Example (3:13–4:19)**
- 4. Leadership and Humility (5:1–14)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Salvation and Identity (1:1–2:10)

A. Greeting and Praise for Salvation (1:1–12)

Believers have:

- A living hope
- An imperishable inheritance
- Joy in trials
- Salvation foretold by prophets

B. Call to Holiness (1:13–25)

Because God is holy, believers must:

- Set their hope fully on grace
- Live in reverent fear
- Love one another deeply

C. New Identity in Christ (2:1–10)

Believers are:

- Living stones
- A spiritual house
- A holy priesthood
- A chosen race
- A royal priesthood
- A people for God's possession

Their purpose: to proclaim God's excellencies.

II. Holiness and Submission (2:11–3:12)

A. Conduct Among Unbelievers (2:11–12)

Live honorably so that unbelievers may glorify God.

B. Submission to Authorities (2:13–17)

Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

C. Slaves and Masters (2:18–25)

Endure unjust suffering by following Christ's example.

D. Husbands and Wives (3:1–7)

Wives: respectful conduct and inner beauty. Husbands: honor wives as co-heirs of grace.

E. Unity and Blessing (3:8–12)

Believers must pursue peace and bless others.

III. Suffering and Christ's Example (3:13–4:19)

A. Suffering for Righteousness (3:13–17)

Do not fear; honor Christ as Lord.

B. Christ's Suffering and Victory (3:18–22)

Christ suffered once for sins and now reigns in glory.

C. Living for God's Will (4:1–6)

Believers must abandon sinful desires and live for God.

D. Love, Service, and Sobriety (4:7–11)

Be self-controlled, hospitable, and faithful stewards.

E. Fiery Trials (4:12–19)

Do not be surprised by suffering. Rejoice in sharing Christ's sufferings.

IV. Leadership and Humility (5:1–14)

A. Shepherding the Flock (5:1–4)

Elders must:

- Shepherd willingly
- Not for shameful gain
- Be examples
- Await the Chief Shepherd's reward

B. Humility and Vigilance (5:5–11)

Believers must:

- Clothe themselves with humility

- Cast anxieties on God
- Resist the devil
- Stand firm in faith

C. Final Greetings (5:12–14)

Peace to all who are in Christ.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

1 Peter 1:3–9 — Living Hope

Hope rooted in Christ's resurrection.

1 Peter 1:15–16 — Be Holy

A call to reflect God's character.

1 Peter 2:9–10 — Identity of God's People

A foundational passage on Christian identity.

1 Peter 2:21–25 — Christ's Example in Suffering

Christ suffered for us, leaving an example.

1 Peter 4:12–19 — Fiery Trials

Suffering is part of God's refining work.

1 Peter 5:6–11 — Humility and Spiritual Warfare

Cast your cares; resist the enemy.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Christ is:

- The cornerstone
- The suffering servant
- The shepherd and overseer of souls
- The risen Lord

Soteriology

Salvation is:

- New birth
- Living hope
- Future inheritance
- Present sanctification

Ecclesiology

The church is:

- A priesthood
- A holy nation
- A spiritual house

Theology of Suffering

Suffering:

- Refines faith
- Follows Christ's pattern
- Leads to glory

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Identity in Christ sustains believers in suffering.
- Holiness is essential for witness.

- Submission reflects Christ’s humility.
- Leaders must shepherd with integrity.
- Suffering is not a sign of failure but of faithfulness.
- Hope in future glory strengthens present endurance.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Peter encourage believers facing suffering?
2. What does it mean to be a “royal priesthood”?
3. How does 1 Peter connect holiness with identity?
4. What does Christ’s example teach about suffering?
5. How should Christians respond to hostility or slander?
6. What does 1 Peter teach about leadership and humility?
7. How does hope shape Christian endurance?
8. How can the church live honorably among unbelievers?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Living Hope
- Holiness
- Submission
- Suffering
- Priesthood
- Identity
- Shepherding

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the pastoral tone — Peter writes as a shepherd.
- Use 1 Peter 2:9–10 to teach Christian identity.
- Highlight the theme of suffering as refining.
- Encourage students to memorize 1 Peter 5:6–7.
- Show how 1 Peter prepares believers for cultural pressure.

13. Suggested Reading

- Karen Jobes — *1 Peter*
- Thomas Schreiner — *1, 2 Peter, Jude*
- Edmund Clowney — *The Message of 1 Peter*
- N.T. Wright — *1 Peter for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

1 Peter is a pastoral letter of hope, holiness, and endurance. Peter encourages suffering believers by reminding them of their identity in Christ, calling them to holy living, and pointing them to future glory. The letter teaches that suffering is part of the Christian calling and that believers must respond with humility, submission, and steadfast faith. 1 Peter remains a powerful guide for Christians living in a world that does not share their values.

LESSON 22 — 2 PETER

1. Overview

2 Peter is the apostle's final written message — a farewell letter urging believers to grow in godliness, resist false teachers, and remain steadfast in the truth. Peter writes with the urgency of a man who knows his time is short. His tone is pastoral, prophetic, and protective.

The letter addresses two major threats:

1. **Internal corruption** — false teachers promoting immorality and denying Christ's return.
2. **Spiritual stagnation** — believers failing to grow in virtue and knowledge.

Peter responds by calling the church to spiritual maturity, reminding them of apostolic eyewitness testimony, affirming the reliability of Scripture, and warning of divine judgment on false teachers.

2 Peter is essential for understanding spiritual growth, biblical authority, discernment, and the hope of Christ's return.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter identifies **Peter** as the author (1:1). He refers to:

- His eyewitness experience of the Transfiguration (1:16–18)
- His impending death (1:14)
- His previous letter (3:1)

Early church tradition affirms Petrine authorship, though some debated it due to stylistic differences from 1 Peter.

Date

Likely written around **AD 64–67**, shortly before Peter's martyrdom under Nero.

Audience

The same general audience as 1 Peter:

- Believers in Asia Minor
- Facing false teaching
- Needing encouragement to grow in godliness

3. Historical Background

False Teachers

The church faced dangerous teachers who:

- Denied Christ's return
- Promoted sexual immorality
- Mocked judgment
- Twisted Scripture
- Appealed to sinful desires

Their influence threatened the church's holiness and hope.

Peter's Imminent Death

Peter writes knowing:

- His departure is near (1:14)
- He must leave the church with a lasting reminder
- His words will serve as a final pastoral legacy

Apostolic Authority

Peter emphasizes:

- Eyewitness testimony
- Prophetic Scripture
- Apostolic teaching

He wants believers anchored in truth, not novelty.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Peter writes to:

- Encourage spiritual growth
- Warn against false teachers
- Affirm the certainty of Christ's return
- Strengthen confidence in Scripture
- Remind believers of apostolic truth

Major Themes

1. Spiritual Growth

Add to your faith virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love.

2. Authority of Scripture

Prophecy came by the Holy Spirit, not human invention.

3. False Teachers

God will judge them as He judged angels, the ancient world, and Sodom.

4. Divine Judgment

God's justice is certain, even if delayed.

5. Christ's Return

The Day of the Lord will come unexpectedly.

6. Holy Living

Believers must live in holiness as they await the new heavens and new earth.

5. Structure of the Book

1. **Call to Spiritual Growth (1:1–21)**
2. **Warning Against False Teachers (2:1–22)**
3. **The Day of the Lord and Final Exhortations (3:1–18)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Call to Spiritual Growth (1:1–21)

A. Greeting and Blessing (1:1–2)

Peter emphasizes:

- Precious faith
- Grace and peace multiplied
- Knowledge of God as the source of growth

B. God's Provision for Godliness (1:3–4)

Believers have:

- Everything needed for life and godliness
- Great and precious promises
- Participation in the divine nature

C. The Ladder of Virtues (1:5–11)

Add to your faith:

1. Virtue
2. Knowledge
3. Self-control
4. Perseverance
5. Godliness
6. Brotherly affection
7. Love

These qualities prevent spiritual stagnation.

D. Peter's Imminent Departure (1:12–15)

Peter writes to leave a lasting reminder after his death.

E. Eyewitness Testimony and Prophetic Scripture (1:16–21)

Peter affirms:

- He saw Christ's glory at the Transfiguration
- Scripture is more certain than experience
- Prophecy came by the Holy Spirit

This is a foundational passage on biblical inspiration.

II. Warning Against False Teachers (2:1–22)

A. Description of False Teachers (2:1–3)

They:

- Introduce destructive heresies
- Deny the Master

- Exploit with false words

B. Examples of Judgment (2:4–10)

God judged:

- Fallen angels
- The ancient world (Noah)
- Sodom and Gomorrah

He will judge false teachers too.

C. Character of False Teachers (2:10–16)

They are:

- Arrogant
- Sensual
- Blasphemous
- Greedy
- Like Balaam

D. Empty Promises (2:17–22)

They promise freedom but are slaves of corruption. Their final state is worse than the first.

III. The Day of the Lord and Final Exhortations (3:1–18)

A. Reminder of Apostolic Teaching (3:1–2)

Peter wants them to remember:

- The prophets
- The apostles
- The command of the Lord

B. Scoffers and the Delay of Judgment (3:3–7)

Scoffers deny Christ's return. Peter reminds them:

- God judged the world by water
- He will judge again by fire

C. God's Patience (3:8–10)

God delays judgment because:

- He is patient
- He desires repentance

But the Day of the Lord will come suddenly.

D. Holy Living in Light of the End (3:11–14)

Believers must:

- Live holy and godly lives
- Look for the new heavens and new earth
- Be diligent to be found blameless

E. Paul's Letters and Scripture (3:15–16)

Peter affirms:

- Paul's writings are Scripture
- Some twist them to their destruction

F. Final Exhortation (3:17–18)

Grow in:

- Grace
- Knowledge

- Stability

To Christ be glory forever.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

2 Peter 1:3–11 — The Ladder of Virtues

A roadmap for spiritual growth.

2 Peter 1:16–21 — Eyewitness Testimony and Inspiration

A foundational text on biblical authority.

2 Peter 2 — False Teachers

A sobering warning.

2 Peter 3:8–10 — The Day of the Lord

God's patience and judgment.

2 Peter 3:18 — Grow in Grace

The final command of the letter.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Bibliology

Scripture is inspired, authoritative, and reliable.

Christology

Christ is:

- Glorified
- Returning

- Judge and Savior

Soteriology

Salvation leads to transformation and growth.

Sanctification

Spiritual growth is intentional and progressive.

Eschatology

The Day of the Lord is certain and purifying.

Theology of False Teaching

False teachers are morally corrupt and spiritually dangerous.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Spiritual growth requires intentional effort.
- Scripture must be the foundation for discernment.
- False teaching must be confronted boldly.
- God's patience is an invitation to repentance.
- Hope in Christ's return motivates holiness.
- Leaders must leave a legacy of truth for future generations.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. Why does Peter emphasize spiritual growth so strongly?
2. How does 2 Peter describe false teachers?
3. What does 2 Peter teach about the authority of Scripture?
4. Why do some people mock the idea of Christ's return?
5. How does God's patience relate to His judgment?
6. What does it mean to "grow in grace and knowledge"?
7. How can believers guard themselves from deception?

8. What legacy does Peter leave for the church?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Virtue
- Knowledge
- False Teachers
- Inspiration
- Day of the Lord
- Patience
- Growth

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the urgency of Peter's final words.
- Use chapter 1 to teach spiritual formation.
- Use chapter 2 to teach discernment.
- Use chapter 3 to teach eschatological hope.
- Encourage students to memorize 3:18.

13. Suggested Reading

- Thomas Schreiner — *1, 2 Peter, Jude*
- Douglas Moo — *2 Peter and Jude*
- Gene Green — *Jude & 2 Peter*
- N.T. Wright — *2 Peter and Jude for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

2 Peter is the apostle's final, urgent call to spiritual growth, discernment, and steadfast hope. He warns against false teachers, affirms the authority of Scripture, and reminds believers of the certainty of Christ's return. The letter ends with a powerful command: **Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** This message remains vital for the church today.

LESSON 23 — 1 JOHN

1. Overview

1 John is a pastoral letter written to strengthen believers' assurance, expose false teachers, and call the church to genuine fellowship with God. John writes with fatherly affection, repeatedly addressing his readers as "little children." His message is simple yet profound: **true believers walk in light, love, and truth.**

The letter confronts early forms of Gnosticism — teachings that denied Jesus' true humanity, minimized sin, and separated spiritual experience from moral obedience. John responds by grounding the church in the apostolic message, emphasizing the incarnation, and offering clear tests of genuine faith.

1 John is essential for understanding Christian assurance, holiness, love, and discernment.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The letter does not name its author, but early church tradition strongly attributes it to **John the apostle**, the author of the Gospel of John and Revelation.

Internal evidence supports this:

- Similar vocabulary and themes to the Gospel of John
- Emphasis on eyewitness testimony
- Fatherly pastoral tone

Date

Likely written **AD 85–95**, near the end of John's life.

Audience

John writes to a network of churches in and around **Ephesus**, facing:

- False teachers
- Confusion about Jesus' identity
- Division within the church
- Doubts about salvation

3. Historical Background

Early Gnosticism

False teachers promoted ideas such as:

- Jesus only *appeared* to be human (Docetism)
- Salvation through secret knowledge
- Sin does not affect fellowship with God
- Morality is irrelevant to spirituality

John counters these errors with apostolic clarity.

Church Division

Some false teachers had left the church (2:19), causing confusion and discouragement among believers.

Pastoral Concern

John writes to:

- Reassure true believers
- Expose false claims
- Strengthen fellowship
- Call the church back to love and obedience

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

John writes to:

- Provide assurance of salvation
- Refute false teaching
- Call believers to holiness
- Emphasize love as the mark of true faith
- Strengthen fellowship with God and one another

Major Themes

1. Assurance

“You may know that you have eternal life.”

2. Fellowship

True fellowship is with the Father and the Son.

3. Light and Darkness

Believers walk in light; false claims are exposed.

4. Love

Love is the defining mark of God’s children.

5. Truth

Right belief about Jesus is essential.

6. Sin

Believers do not live in habitual, unrepentant sin.

7. Discernment

Test the spirits; not every teaching is from God.

5. Structure of the Book

1. **Prologue: The Word of Life** (1:1–4)
2. **Walking in the Light** (1:5–2:14)
3. **Warning Against the World and Antichrists** (2:15–27)
4. **Children of God and Righteous Living** (2:28–3:24)
5. **Love as the Mark of God’s Children** (4:1–21)
6. **Faith, Obedience, and Assurance** (5:1–21)

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Prologue: The Word of Life (1:1–4)

A. Eyewitness Testimony

John emphasizes:

- Hearing
- Seeing
- Touching

The Word of Life — Jesus — was truly human.

B. Purpose

That believers may have:

- Fellowship with God
- Fullness of joy

II. Walking in the Light (1:5–2:14)

A. God Is Light (1:5)

His nature defines truth and holiness.

B. False Claims Exposed (1:6–10)

Three false claims:

1. Claiming fellowship while walking in darkness
2. Claiming to be without sin
3. Claiming not to have sinned

John counters each with truth.

C. Christ Our Advocate (2:1–2)

Jesus is:

- Our advocate
- The atoning sacrifice for our sins

D. Tests of Obedience and Love (2:3–11)

True believers:

- Keep God's commands
- Walk as Jesus walked
- Love their brothers and sisters

E. Encouragement to All Believers (2:12–14)

John affirms:

- Children
- Young men

- Fathers

Each stage of spiritual growth.

III. Warning Against the World and Antichrists (2:15–27)

A. Do Not Love the World (2:15–17)

The world offers:

- Lust of the flesh
- Lust of the eyes
- Pride of life

These are passing away.

B. Antichrists and False Teachers (2:18–23)

They deny:

- Jesus as the Christ
- The Father and the Son

C. Abide in the Truth (2:24–27)

The anointing (the Holy Spirit) teaches and guards believers.

IV. Children of God and Righteous Living (2:28–3:24)

A. Confidence at Christ's Coming (2:28–29)

Righteous living reveals new birth.

B. Identity as God's Children (3:1–3)

We are God's children now — and will be like Him.

C. Sin and the Children of God (3:4–10)

Believers do not practice sin as a lifestyle.

D. Love in Action (3:11–18)

Cain is the model of hatred; Christ is the model of love. Love is practical and sacrificial.

E. Assurance Before God (3:19–24)

Obedience and love bring confidence.

V. Love as the Mark of God’s Children (4:1–21)

A. Test the Spirits (4:1–6)

True teachers confess Jesus Christ come in the flesh.

B. God Is Love (4:7–12)

Love originates in God. God demonstrated love through Christ.

C. Perfect Love Casts Out Fear (4:13–21)

Fear is incompatible with mature love. We love because He first loved us.

VI. Faith, Obedience, and Assurance (5:1–21)

A. Faith and Love (5:1–5)

Believers:

- Love God
- Love His children
- Keep His commands
- Overcome the world

B. Testimony About the Son (5:6–12)

God testifies that eternal life is in His Son.

C. Assurance of Eternal Life (5:13)

John's purpose statement: "That you may know you have eternal life."

D. Confidence in Prayer (5:14–17)

Believers can pray with boldness.

E. Final Exhortations (5:18–21)

Keep yourselves from idols.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

1 John 1:5–10 — Walking in Light

Honesty about sin is essential for fellowship.

1 John 2:1–2 — Christ Our Advocate

Jesus intercedes for believers.

1 John 3:1–3 — Children of God

Identity rooted in God's love.

1 John 4:7–12 — God Is Love

Love is the essence of God's nature.

1 John 5:13 — Assurance

Confidence in eternal life.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Jesus is:

- Truly human
- Truly divine
- The atoning sacrifice
- The source of eternal life

Soteriology

Salvation produces:

- Obedience
- Love
- Truth
- Victory over sin

Pneumatology

The Spirit:

- Teaches
- Assures
- Guards against deception

Ecclesiology

The church is a family marked by love.

Ethics

Holiness and love are inseparable.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Assurance is grounded in truth, not emotion.

- Love is the primary mark of Christian maturity.
- Holiness is evidence of new birth.
- False teaching must be confronted with clarity.
- The church must cultivate discernment.
- Confession and honesty about sin strengthen fellowship.
- Identity in Christ fuels obedience and love.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does 1 John help believers gain assurance of salvation?
2. What does it mean to “walk in the light”?
3. How does John define true love?
4. Why is right belief about Jesus essential?
5. How does 1 John address habitual sin?
6. What does it mean to “test the spirits”?
7. How does love cast out fear?
8. What idols threaten believers today?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Light
- Love
- Truth
- Antichrist
- Fellowship
- Assurance
- New Birth

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the pastoral, fatherly tone of John.
- Use 1 John 1:5–10 to teach confession and honesty.
- Highlight the three tests of genuine faith:
 - **Doctrinal** (right belief)

- **Moral** (obedience)
- **Social** (love)
- Encourage memorization of 1 John 4:7–12.
- Show how 1 John complements the Gospel of John.

13. Suggested Reading

- John Stott — *The Letters of John*
- Colin Kruse — *The Letters of John*
- Karen Jobes — *1, 2, & 3 John*
- N.T. Wright — *1, 2, & 3 John for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

1 John is a pastoral letter calling believers to assurance, holiness, and love. John exposes false teaching, clarifies the marks of genuine faith, and anchors believers in the truth of Jesus Christ. The letter teaches that true Christians walk in light, love their brothers and sisters, confess sin, and remain faithful to the apostolic message. 1 John remains a powerful guide for spiritual discernment and authentic Christian living.

LESSON 24 — 2 JOHN

1. Overview

2 John is a short pastoral letter from the apostle John, written to a Christian community (symbolically addressed as “the elect lady and her children”). The letter reinforces two essential themes:

1. **Walk in truth and love**
2. **Guard against false teachers who deny Christ’s incarnation**

John writes with fatherly affection and apostolic authority. He warns the church not to extend hospitality or support to traveling teachers who distort the gospel — especially those denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

2 John is a concise but powerful reminder that **love must be discerning**, and **truth must be protected**.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Traditionally attributed to **John the apostle**, based on:

- Vocabulary similar to 1 John and the Gospel of John
- Emphasis on truth, love, and Christ’s incarnation
- Early church testimony

Date

Likely written **AD 85–95**, near the end of John’s life.

Audience

Addressed to:

- “The elect lady and her children” — likely a metaphor for a local church
- Possibly also referencing a respected Christian woman and her household

The letter is pastoral, relational, and protective.

3. Historical Background

Traveling Teachers

In the first century, Christian teachers traveled between churches. Hospitality was essential for ministry — but it also created vulnerability.

False Teachers

John warns against:

- Early Gnostic influences
- Teachers denying Jesus’ true humanity
- Those who “run ahead” and do not remain in apostolic teaching

These teachers threatened the church’s doctrinal foundation.

Church Vulnerability

Because hospitality was a sign of fellowship, supporting false teachers could unintentionally spread error.

John writes to protect the church from deception.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

John writes to:

- Encourage believers to walk in truth and love
- Warn against false teachers
- Instruct the church not to support those who deny Christ
- Strengthen unity and discernment

Major Themes

1. Truth

Truth is foundational to Christian identity and fellowship.

2. Love

Love is obedience to God's commands.

3. Christology

True doctrine affirms Jesus Christ come in the flesh.

4. Discernment

Love must be paired with truth to avoid deception.

5. Fellowship

Hospitality must not extend to false teachers.

5. Structure of the Book

1. **Greeting in Truth and Love (1–3)**
2. **Call to Walk in Love and Obedience (4–6)**

3. **Warning Against False Teachers (7–11)**
4. **Final Greetings (12–13)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Greeting in Truth and Love (Verses 1–3)

A. Address to the Elect Lady

John writes with affection and pastoral warmth.

B. Truth as the Basis of Fellowship

Truth:

- Dwells in believers
- Unites the church
- Endures forever

C. Blessing of Grace, Mercy, and Peace

Rooted in truth and love.

II. Call to Walk in Love and Obedience (Verses 4–6)

A. Joy in Faithfulness

John rejoices that some of the church's members walk in truth.

B. The Command to Love

Love is not new — it is the command from the beginning.

C. Love Defined

Love = walking according to God's commandments.

Truth and love are inseparable.

III. Warning Against False Teachers (Verses 7–11)

A. Deceivers Denying Christ’s Incarnation

John identifies:

- Many deceivers
- Those denying Jesus Christ come in the flesh
- The “antichrist” spirit

B. Guarding Against Loss

Believers must:

- Watch themselves
- Hold fast to the truth
- Not lose their reward

C. Do Not Support False Teachers

John instructs:

- Do not receive them
- Do not give them hospitality
- Do not participate in their work

This is not a call to hostility — but to **discernment**.

Supporting false teachers spreads false teaching.

IV. Final Greetings (Verses 12–13)

A. Desire for Face-to-Face Fellowship

John prefers personal conversation over writing.

B. Greetings from the Sister Church

Likely another congregation in the region.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

2 John 4 — Walking in Truth

A pastor's joy in faithful believers.

2 John 6 — Love and Obedience

Love is defined by obedience to God's commands.

2 John 7 — Christological Discernment

False teachers deny the incarnation.

2 John 10–11 — Guarding Fellowship

Hospitality must not enable false teaching.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Affirms:

- Jesus Christ truly came in the flesh
- Denial of the incarnation is heresy

Ecclesiology

The church must:

- Walk in truth
- Walk in love
- Guard its fellowship

Ethics

Love is obedience, not sentiment.

Discernment

Truth determines the boundaries of fellowship.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Truth and love must remain inseparable.
- Churches must guard against false teaching.
- Hospitality is a ministry — but must be discerning.
- Leaders must protect the flock from deception.
- Love is expressed through obedience to God's commands.
- Fellowship requires doctrinal unity on essential truths.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. Why does John emphasize both truth and love?
2. How does 2 John define Christian love?
3. Why is the incarnation essential to Christian faith?
4. How should the church respond to false teachers today?
5. What does it mean to “not receive” false teachers?
6. How can churches balance hospitality with discernment?
7. What does 2 John teach about the nature of fellowship?
8. How does this letter complement 1 John?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Truth
- Love
- Incarnation
- Deceiver
- Antichrist
- Fellowship
- Discernment

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the balance of truth and love.
- Use 2 John to teach doctrinal boundaries.
- Highlight the importance of Christ's incarnation.
- Show how 2 John addresses early Gnostic errors.
- Encourage reflection on modern forms of false teaching.

13. Suggested Reading

- John Stott — *The Letters of John*
- Colin Kruse — *The Letters of John*
- Karen Jobes — *1, 2, & 3 John*
- N.T. Wright — *1, 2, & 3 John for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

2 John is a brief but powerful letter calling the church to walk in truth and love while guarding against false teachers who deny Christ's incarnation. John emphasizes that love is obedience, truth is essential, and fellowship must be discerning. This letter remains a vital guide for protecting the church's doctrinal integrity and cultivating genuine Christian love.

LESSON 25 — 3 JOHN

1. Overview

3 John is the most personal letter in the New Testament. Written by the apostle John to a faithful believer named **Gaius**, the letter contrasts two very different kinds of church leadership:

- **Gaius** — a model of hospitality, truth, and love
- **Diotrephes** — a controlling leader who rejects apostolic authority
- **Demetrius** — a faithful brother with a good testimony

The letter focuses on **hospitality toward traveling gospel workers**, the importance of **walking in truth**, and the danger of **self-exalting leadership**.

3 John is a pastoral gem — a window into early church dynamics and a timeless guide for healthy Christian leadership and fellowship.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

Traditionally attributed to **John the apostle**, based on:

- Vocabulary shared with 1 & 2 John
- Similar themes: truth, love, walking in the light
- Early church testimony

Date

Likely written **AD 85–95**, near the end of John's life.

Audience

Addressed to **Gaius**, a respected Christian leader known for:

- Faithfulness
- Hospitality
- Support of missionaries

The letter also references:

- **Diotrephes** — a domineering leader
- **Demetrius** — a faithful brother with a good reputation

3. Historical Background

Traveling Missionaries

In the early church:

- Teachers and evangelists traveled between congregations
- Hospitality was essential for ministry
- Churches were expected to support faithful workers

The Problem

Diotrephes:

- Rejected John's authority
- Refused hospitality to missionaries
- Spread malicious accusations
- Expelled faithful believers from the church

This created division and hindered gospel work.

John's Purpose

To:

- Commend Gaius
- Confront Diotrephes

- Encourage support for faithful workers
- Affirm Demetrius's good reputation

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

John writes to:

- Encourage Gaius in his faithful hospitality
- Warn against Diotrephes's abusive leadership
- Commend Demetrius
- Promote support for gospel workers
- Strengthen the church's commitment to truth and love

Major Themes

1. Truth

Walking in truth is the foundation of Christian life.

2. Hospitality

Supporting gospel workers is essential ministry.

3. Leadership

Contrast between humble and domineering leadership.

4. Reputation

A good testimony matters.

5. Fellowship

Partnership in the gospel unites believers.

6. Structure of the Book

- 1. Greeting and Commendation of Gaius (1–8)**
- 2. Condemnation of Diotrephes (9–11)**
- 3. Commendation of Demetrius (12)**
- 4. Final Greetings (13–15)**

.7. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Greeting and Commendation of Gaius (Verses 1–8)

A. Greeting from “the Elder” (1–2)

John prays for Gaius’s health and prosperity — a rare personal touch.

B. Joy in Gaius’s Faithfulness (3–4)

John rejoices that Gaius walks in truth. This is one of the most tender statements in Scripture: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

C. Commendation for Hospitality (5–8)

Gaius:

- Shows love to strangers
- Supports traveling missionaries
- Acts faithfully
- Helps advance the gospel

John urges him to continue this ministry.

II. Condemnation of Diotrephes (Verses 9–11)

A. Rejection of Apostolic Authority (9)

Diotrephes refuses to acknowledge John’s authority.

B. Character of Diotrephes (10)

He:

- Loves to be first
- Spreads malicious accusations
- Refuses hospitality
- Hinders others from showing hospitality
- Expels faithful believers

This is a portrait of toxic leadership.

C. Call to Imitate Good, Not Evil (11)

John urges believers to follow godly examples.

III. Commendation of Demetrius (Verse 12)

A. A Good Testimony

Demetrius is:

- Well spoken of by everyone
- Affirmed by the truth itself
- Commended by John

A model of faithful Christian character.

IV. Final Greetings (Verses 13–15)

A. Desire for Personal Fellowship

John hopes to visit soon.

B. Peace and Greetings

A warm, relational conclusion.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

3 John 4 — Walking in Truth

A pastor's greatest joy.

3 John 5–8 — Hospitality to Gospel Workers

Partnership in mission.

3 John 9–10 — Warning Against Diotrephes

A cautionary tale of abusive leadership.

3 John 11 — Imitate Good

Character matters.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Ecclesiology

Healthy churches require:

- Humble leaders
- Hospitality
- Submission to apostolic teaching

Missiology

Supporting missionaries is essential gospel work.

Ethics

Truth and love must shape relationships.

Leadership

Authority must be exercised with humility, not domination.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Hospitality is a vital ministry.
- Leaders must guard against pride and control.
- Churches must support faithful workers.
- A good reputation is valuable in ministry.
- Truth and love must guide all relationships.
- Toxic leadership must be confronted with courage.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. What does Gaius teach us about faithful Christian living?
2. Why is hospitality so important in the early church — and today?
3. What warning does Diotrephes provide for modern leaders?
4. How does 3 John define true Christian leadership?
5. Why is a good testimony important for ministry?
6. How can churches cultivate a culture of support for missionaries?
7. What does it mean to “walk in truth”?
8. How does 3 John complement 2 John?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Truth
- Hospitality
- Leadership
- Testimony
- Fellowship
- Mission
- Authority

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize the contrast between Gaius and Diotrephes.
- Use 3 John to teach healthy vs. unhealthy leadership.
- Highlight the importance of supporting missionaries.
- Encourage reflection on personal reputation and influence.
- Show how 3 John fits with 1 & 2 John as a pastoral trilogy.

13. Suggested Reading

- John Stott — *The Letters of John*
- Colin Kruse — *The Letters of John*
- Karen Jobes — *1, 2, & 3 John*
- N.T. Wright — *1, 2, & 3 John for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

3 John is a personal, pastoral letter highlighting the importance of truth, love, hospitality, and godly leadership. John commends Gaius for his faithfulness, warns against Diotrephes's prideful control, and affirms Demetrius's good testimony. The letter teaches that the church must support gospel workers, walk in truth, and cultivate humble, Christlike leadership.

LESSON 26 — JUDE

1. Overview

Jude is one of the most urgent and confrontational letters in the New Testament. Written by **Jude, the brother of James and half-brother of Jesus**, the letter warns believers about false teachers who have infiltrated the church, twisting grace into license and denying Christ's authority.

Jude originally intended to write a letter celebrating salvation, but the crisis in the church forced him to shift gears and write a battle cry: **“Contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.”**

The letter is vivid, using Old Testament examples, Jewish traditions, and sharp imagery to expose the character and destiny of false teachers. Yet Jude ends with one of the most beautiful doxologies in Scripture — a reminder that God keeps His people from falling.

Jude is essential for understanding spiritual discernment, apostasy, and the believer's call to stand firm in truth.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The author identifies himself as:

- **Jude,**
- “a servant of Jesus Christ,”
- “brother of James.”

This strongly indicates **Jude, the brother of Jesus** (Matt. 13:55).

Date

Likely written AD 65–80, during a time of rising false teaching.

Audience

Jude writes to **believers threatened by false teachers**, likely in Jewish-Christian communities familiar with:

- Old Testament stories
- Jewish traditions
- Apocryphal literature

3. Historical Background

False Teachers

Jude confronts teachers who:

- Pervert grace into immorality
- Reject authority
- Cause division
- Are driven by sensuality
- Deny Jesus Christ as Lord

These teachers were not outsiders — they had **crept in unnoticed**.

Jewish Background

Jude references:

- The Exodus generation
- Fallen angels
- Sodom and Gomorrah
- Cain, Balaam, and Korah
- Jewish traditions like the dispute over Moses' body

His audience understood these references well.

Crisis in the Church

The danger was internal corruption, not external persecution.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

Jude writes to:

- Urge believers to contend for the faith
- Expose false teachers
- Warn of divine judgment
- Encourage perseverance
- Strengthen the church's discernment

Major Themes

1. Contending for the Faith

The gospel must be defended.

2. Apostasy

Falling away is real and dangerous.

3. Judgment

God judges rebellion — past, present, and future.

4. False Teachers

Their character, behavior, and destiny are exposed.

5. Perseverance

Believers must keep themselves in God's love.

6. God's Keeping Power

God is able to keep His people from falling.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Greeting and Purpose (1–4)**
- 2. Examples of Judgment (5–7)**
- 3. Character of False Teachers (8–16)**
- 4. Call to Perseverance (17–23)**
- 5. Doxology (24–25)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Greeting and Purpose (Verses 1–4)

A. Greeting (1–2)

Jude addresses believers as:

- Called
- Loved
- Kept

A powerful identity statement.

B. Purpose of the Letter (3–4)

Jude urges believers to:

- **Contend for the faith**
- Recognize false teachers who have slipped in
- Resist those who distort grace into immorality

II. Examples of Judgment (Verses 5–7)

Jude uses three historical examples:

A. Israel in the Wilderness (5)

Saved from Egypt, yet judged for unbelief.

B. Fallen Angels (6)

Angels who abandoned their proper domain are kept in chains.

C. Sodom and Gomorrah (7)

Judged for sexual immorality and unnatural desires.

These examples show that **rebellion always leads to judgment.**

III. Character of False Teachers (Verses 8–16)

A. Arrogance and Immorality (8–10)

They:

- Reject authority
- Defile the flesh
- Blaspheme what they do not understand

B. Three Old Testament Parallels (11)

They follow the way of:

- **Cain** — hatred and rebellion
- **Balaam** — greed and corruption
- **Korah** — rejection of God's appointed leaders

C. Vivid Metaphors (12–13)

False teachers are:

- Hidden reefs
- Waterless clouds
- Fruitless trees
- Wild waves
- Wandering stars

D. Prophecy of Judgment (14–16)

Jude quotes Enoch to emphasize coming judgment.

False teachers are:

- Grumblers
- Boasters
- Driven by lust
- Manipulators

IV. Call to Perseverance (Verses 17–23)

A. Remember Apostolic Warnings (17–19)

Apostles predicted such false teachers.

B. Keep Yourselves in God's Love (20–21)

By:

- Building yourselves up in the faith
- Praying in the Spirit
- Waiting for Christ's mercy

C. Responding to the Straying (22–23)

Jude gives three pastoral instructions:

1. **Have mercy on the doubting**
2. **Save others by snatching them from the fire**
3. **Show mercy with caution**

A balance of compassion and discernment.

V. Doxology (Verses 24–25)

One of the most beautiful doxologies in Scripture:

- God is able to keep believers from falling
- God presents them blameless with great joy
- God alone deserves glory, majesty, dominion, and authority

A triumphant ending to a warning-filled letter.

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Jude 3 — Contend for the Faith

A call to defend apostolic truth.

Jude 5–7 — Examples of Judgment

God's justice is consistent.

Jude 20–21 — Keep Yourselves in God's Love

A blueprint for perseverance.

Jude 22–23 — Rescue the Straying

Mercy and discernment in action.

Jude 24–25 — Doxology

God's keeping power.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Bibliology

The faith is “once for all delivered.”

Christology

False teachers deny Christ's lordship.

Soteriology

Believers are:

- Called
- Loved
- Kept

Eschatology

Judgment is certain for the rebellious.

Sanctification

Believers must actively persevere.

Demonology

Jude references angelic rebellion and spiritual realities.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- The church must guard against false teaching.
- Grace must never be twisted into license.

- Believers must grow in faith, prayer, and hope.
- Leaders must confront deception with courage.
- Mercy must be shown to the doubting and straying.
- God’s keeping power gives confidence and joy.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. Why does Jude urge believers to “contend for the faith”?
2. What do Jude’s examples teach about God’s judgment?
3. How does Jude describe false teachers?
4. What does it mean to “keep yourselves in God’s love”?
5. How should believers respond to those who are doubting or straying?
6. What comfort does the doxology provide?
7. How does Jude balance warning and encouragement?
8. How can the modern church apply Jude’s message?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Contend
- Apostasy
- Judgment
- False Teachers
- Mercy
- Perseverance
- Doxology

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize Jude’s urgency and pastoral heart.
- Use Jude 3 to teach doctrinal clarity.
- Highlight Jude’s vivid imagery and Old Testament references.
- Encourage students to memorize Jude 24–25.
- Show how Jude complements 2 Peter.

13. Suggested Reading

- Thomas Schreiner — *1, 2 Peter, Jude*
- Gene Green — *Jude & 2 Peter*
- Richard Bauckham — *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus*
- N.T. Wright — *2 Peter and Jude for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Jude is a powerful call to defend the faith, resist false teaching, and persevere in God's love. Jude exposes the character and destiny of false teachers while urging believers to grow in faith, prayer, and hope. The letter ends with a triumphant reminder that God is able to keep His people from falling and present them blameless with great joy.

LESSON 27 — REVELATION

1. Overview

Revelation is the final book of the New Testament — a prophetic, apocalyptic, and pastoral message given to the apostle John while exiled on the island of Patmos. It unveils the spiritual reality behind earthly events and reveals the ultimate victory of God through Jesus Christ.

The book is filled with vivid imagery, symbolic numbers, heavenly visions, cosmic conflict, and triumphant hope. Revelation was written to persecuted believers to assure them that:

- Jesus is Lord
- Evil will not prevail
- God’s justice will be established
- The church will overcome
- A new creation is coming

Revelation is not meant to frighten believers but to **strengthen their faith, fuel their worship, and anchor their hope** in the Lamb who reigns.

2. Authorship & Date

Authorship

The book identifies its author as **John** (1:1, 1:4, 1:9). Early church tradition affirms this as **John the apostle**, author of the Gospel and letters of John.

Date

Most scholars date Revelation around **AD 95–96**, during the reign of Emperor Domitian, a time of increasing pressure on Christians.

Audience

Written to **seven churches in Asia Minor**:

- Ephesus
- Smyrna
- Pergamum
- Thyatira
- Sardis
- Philadelphia
- Laodicea

These churches faced persecution, compromise, false teaching, and spiritual apathy.

3. Historical Background

Roman Persecution

Christians faced:

- Social ostracism
- Economic pressure
- Accusations of disloyalty to Rome
- Occasional violence

Revelation strengthens believers to endure.

Imperial Cult

Rome demanded emperor worship. Refusal marked Christians as enemies of the state.

Apocalyptic Genre

Revelation uses:

- Symbolic imagery
- Visions
- Numbers
- Cosmic conflict

This genre reveals spiritual realities behind earthly events.

Pastoral Purpose

Revelation comforts the suffering and confronts the compromising.

4. Purpose & Themes

Purpose

John writes to:

- Reveal Jesus Christ in glory
- Encourage perseverance
- Warn against compromise
- Expose the true nature of evil
- Announce God's coming judgment
- Reveal the hope of new creation

Major Themes

1. The Sovereignty of God

God rules history and will bring it to its appointed end.

2. The Victory of the Lamb

Jesus conquers through His death and resurrection.

3. Worship

Heaven is filled with worship of God and the Lamb.

4. Judgment

God will judge evil, vindicate His people, and renew creation.

5. Perseverance

Believers must overcome through faithfulness.

6. New Creation

A restored heaven and earth where God dwells with His people.

5. Structure of the Book

- 1. Prologue and Vision of Christ (1)**
- 2. Messages to the Seven Churches (2–3)**
- 3. Heavenly Throne Room (4–5)**
- 4. Judgments: Seals, Trumpets, Bowls (6–16)**
- 5. Conflict with Evil Powers (12–14)**
- 6. Fall of Babylon (17–18)**
- 7. Return of Christ and Final Judgment (19–20)**
- 8. New Heaven and New Earth (21–22)**

6. Detailed Teaching Outline (Expanded)

I. Prologue and Vision of Christ (Chapter 1)

A. Revelation of Jesus Christ (1:1–3)

A blessing for those who read and obey.

B. Greeting to the Seven Churches (1:4–8)

Jesus is:

- The faithful witness
- Firstborn from the dead
- Ruler of kings

C. Vision of the Glorified Christ (1:9–20)

Jesus appears in radiant glory, holding the churches in His hand.

II. Messages to the Seven Churches (Chapters 2–3)

Each message includes:

- Commendation
- Correction
- Warning
- Promise to the overcomer

A. Ephesus — Lost First Love

Orthodox but loveless.

B. Smyrna — Faithful in Suffering

Encouraged to remain faithful unto death.

C. Pergamum — Compromise with Idolatry

Faithful yet tolerating false teaching.

D. Thyatira — Tolerating Immorality

Love and service mixed with corruption.

E. Sardis — Spiritually Dead

A reputation for life but inward death.

F. Philadelphia — Faithful and Weak

Commended for endurance.

G. Laodicea — Lukewarm and Self-Deceived

Called to repentance and renewed fellowship.

III. Heavenly Throne Room (Chapters 4–5)

A. Worship of the Creator (4)

God is enthroned in glory.

B. Worship of the Lamb (5)

Jesus is worthy to open the scroll because He was slain.

This is the theological center of Revelation.

IV. Judgments: Seals, Trumpets, Bowls (Chapters 6–16)

A. Seven Seals (6–8:1)

Judgments unfold as the Lamb opens the seals.

B. Seven Trumpets (8–11)

Intensified judgments calling for repentance.

C. Seven Bowls (15–16)

Final outpouring of God's wrath on evil.

These judgments reveal God's justice and the seriousness of sin.

V. Conflict with Evil Powers (Chapters 12–14)

A. The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon (12)

Symbolic portrayal of spiritual warfare.

B. The Two Beasts (13)

Political and religious powers opposing God.

C. The Lamb and the 144,000 (14)

A picture of faithful believers.

VI. Fall of Babylon (Chapters 17–18)

A. Babylon the Great

Symbol of worldly power, immorality, and idolatry.

B. Judgment of Babylon

God brings down corrupt systems.

VII. Return of Christ and Final Judgment (Chapters 19–20)

A. The Rider on the White Horse (19:11–16)

Christ returns in glory and victory.

B. Defeat of Evil Powers (19:17–21)

C. The Millennium (20:1–6)

Interpretations vary, but Christ reigns.

D. Final Judgment (20:11–15)

The dead are judged; death and Hades are destroyed.

VIII. New Heaven and New Earth (Chapters 21–22)

A. New Creation (21:1–8)

No more death, sorrow, or pain.

B. New Jerusalem (21:9–27)

A radiant city where God dwells with His people.

C. River of Life and Tree of Life (22:1–5)

Eden restored.

D. Final Exhortations (22:6–21)

“Come, Lord Jesus.”

7. Key Passages (Expanded)

Revelation 1:12–18 — Vision of Christ

Jesus as the risen, glorified Lord.

Revelation 4–5 — Throne Room Worship

The heart of Revelation’s theology.

Revelation 12 — Cosmic Conflict

Spiritual warfare unveiled.

Revelation 19:11–16 — Return of Christ

The victorious King.

Revelation 21–22 — New Creation

The ultimate hope of believers.

8. Theology of the Book (Expanded)

Christology

Jesus is:

- The Lamb
- The Lion
- The Judge
- The King
- The Alpha and Omega

Eschatology

Revelation reveals:

- Christ's return
- Final judgment
- Resurrection
- New creation

Theology of Evil

Evil is real but defeated.

Worship

Heaven is centered on worship of God and the Lamb.

Perseverance

Believers overcome through faithfulness.

9. Ministry Application (Expanded)

- Suffering believers can endure with hope.
- Worship is central to spiritual resilience.
- The church must resist compromise.
- Christ's victory shapes our present faithfulness.
- God will judge evil and renew creation.
- Revelation fuels courage, not fear.

10. Discussion Questions (Expanded)

1. How does Revelation encourage believers facing suffering?
2. What does the throne room vision teach about God's sovereignty?
3. How should the church respond to the messages to the seven churches?
4. What does Revelation teach about spiritual warfare?
5. How does the Lamb's victory shape Christian hope?
6. What is the significance of the new heaven and new earth?
7. How can believers "overcome" in daily life?
8. How does Revelation shape worship and discipleship?

11. Key Terms & Concepts

- Apocalypse
- Lamb
- Overcomer
- Babylon
- New Creation
- Judgment
- Worship

12. Teaching Tips & Pedagogical Notes

- Emphasize Revelation's pastoral purpose.
- Avoid speculative interpretations; focus on major themes.
- Use chapters 4–5 as the theological anchor.
- Highlight the contrast between Babylon and New Jerusalem.
- Encourage students to see Revelation as hope, not fear.

13. Suggested Reading

- G.K. Beale — *Revelation*
- Grant Osborne — *Revelation*
- Craig Keener — *Revelation*
- N.T. Wright — *Revelation for Everyone*

14. Lesson Summary (Instructor Wrap-Up)

Revelation is the triumphant conclusion of Scripture — a book that reveals Jesus Christ as the victorious Lamb and reigning King. It calls believers to persevere, worship, and hope as they await the renewal of all things. Revelation assures the church that evil will be judged, Christ will return, and God will dwell with His people forever in a new creation. It is a book of courage, comfort, and unshakeable hope.