

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

January 1: Romans 1-2 (Ryan Ingle)

January 1, 2017 ~ The Epistle Study : Romans 1 &2

“and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 1:4 NIV

Our faith, our hope of salvation would not be possible if it wasn't for the love Christ had for us! Keep that in mind as we embark on this year's challenge of immersing ourselves more in the WORD.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.””

Romans 1:16-17 NIV

“But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.”

Romans 2:5 NIV

Christ's death allowed for our sins to be forgiven! There is plenty of sin in this world! God gave man to their own sinful desires in the last chapter. We have to remember not to hold evil will or feelings towards others. The world does look at Christians to see if there is a difference between them and us. If we judge those in the world but yet do the same evil as they do and 'condemn' them, we leave nothing for them to desire!! Show a true heart of forgiveness.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan, for guiding us through the epistles study. I'm glad the first 15 minutes of 2017 was spent meditating on Christ canceling my debt. Truly God's eternal power & divine nature is seen by all. I'm grateful for His forgiveness & incredible patience.

Comment:

Christina McClung:

Thank you

Comment:

Doug Twaddell:

Such an important reminder as we enter the new year. Both at the youth rally and the Excelsior New Year's service, we talked about how Christianity is a "show and tell" religion. Both are important, bit together they are powerfully in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan. Romans 2:5 is very sobering! How much we need to teach those!

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Loved the timing on your post! Thanks for helping us "retain God in our knowledge". I love vs. 16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth".

Comment:

Randy Ingle:

Well done

Comment:

RichardandJeannie Owens:

Do you believe that Roms. 1:27 could refer to the HIV epidemic among other things?

Replies:

Marc Hermon:

"the wages of sin is death". There is no escape for any of us from a physical death. We are guilty and the hearse will be coming for us all. However, there are many sinful behaviors in this world that can clearly bring this death judgement to us sooner than later. Praise be to Jesus who overcame so that we might not take part in the SECOND death!

Replies:

Steven Wright:

An observation RichardandJeannie Owens! Since the HIV virus, is apparently a newcomer, what did they "recieve" as a result via partaking of sexual sin 2,000 years ago? This question is submitted in support of MarcHermon's reply above. There is nothing new about the realities of sin, whether in the now, or, more to the point, after the judgment - without our repentance of sin. A person may die physically having contracted the Aids virus, but that does not mean they are unfit or incapable of seeking an eternity with God spiritually if they become or repent as, a child of God.

January 8: Romans 3-4 (Randy Ingle)

Romans 3-4: Epistles

God's righteousness upheld:

Was there any advantage to being a Jew? To the Jews there was, but as the new law which Christ brought was introduced things were beginning to change. We are justified through faith in Christ Jesus and not of our own deeds.

None of us are righteous, Jews or Greek all are sinful. All have turned away and served sin in one way or another.

In verse 20 it says by works of the law no human will be just in the sight of God, since we read the law we know how to behave. The righteousness of God through faith in Christ to all who believe, there is no distinction (between Jews and Greek). All fall short of the glory of God and justified by grace as a gift, through the blood of Christ.

We are all capable of having faith regardless of circumcision (race). We all can uphold the law through faith.

4. Further explanation is given with Abraham being justified through his faith. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. We also just like him in that we have that same opportunity.

Blessed is the man whom the Lord doesn't count his sin. Why? Because of his faith his works reflected his love for God as any of us are also capable.

Praise God for such a wonderful blessing!!!

Comment:

Charles Fry:

From last week: Romans 1:16

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

And today: Romans 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Comment:

Steven Wright:

A "Beatitude" is found in (4:8).

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

A comparison of Rom 4 and James 2 is probably important here. Many people including Martin Luther feel that they somehow contradict each other which can not be farther from the truth. They both refer to Abraham being justified by his faith. Paul stresses that Abraham's faith was not contingent on the law of circumcision and James stresses that Abraham's faith was a faith that manifested itself in doing good works.

Comment:

Ryan Ingle:

Thank you for the summary!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Randy Ingle! I very much appreciate you (& Ryan) leading discussion with our epistle study. "Justified" & "Credited" are central themes. Although man clearly & totally deserves to be declared guilty, because of his trust in Christ, God declares him righteous. (a righteousness from God, Rom 1:17) Christ's righteousness will be credited to believers as their own b/c He died to pay the penalty for our sins. God cancels the debt & instead credits righteousness. This is why Abraham's faith was "credited to him as righteousness" because it was true faith: complete confidence in God's promise. "Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God!" This justification by faith is universally true. So do not waver! Instead be strengthened and give all glory to God for delivering Christ to death for our sins & raising Him for our justification.

January 15: Romans 5-6 (Ryan Ingle)

January 15 The Epistle Study of Romans 5 - 6

Who woke up this morning praising God for the mercy and grace He has shown us in allowing His only Son to die for our sins?

“through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” (2-4)

It is difficult as a Christian to always realize that our sufferings are good for us...we just want them to be over with but it is helping to build our character!

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (5:8) The best reminder of how much love was shown for us! It is through his grace we have this hope of eternal salvation.

“Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.” 5:18-19

Even though sin entered through the Adam and Eve, which sin is death, eternal life was given to man through one being, the Son of God..

“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (6:1-4) This passage sums it up for us as Christians, through our baptism we have begun a new life...our past has been buried in the waters of baptism!!! Halalualah!!

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires...For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.”

Romans 6:12, 14

Remember, we want to be slaves of righteousness! Do away with what pleases you for such a little time in life and put on Christ, Who has brought you the gift of eternal pleasures of glorifying God!

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (6:23)

Comment:

Charles Fry:

Thank you, Ryan! Great highlights of some truly foundational truths.

Comment:

Steven Wright:

Thank you Ryan! And one of our elders, brother Tom Griffin spoke to these very things this afternoon!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle: Very very good chapters that we should rejoice and think upon!

Steven Wright:

Amen!

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

These chapters are a good pair to read together. Ch 5: The gift of grace covers our sins. Ch 6: but don't take the gift of grace for granted by remaining in your sin.

In other words, our actions can't earn us heaven but they can keep us out.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan! Excellent thoughts pulled from these 2 chapters. Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. Praise God for providing for our redemption!

January 22: Romans 7-8 (Randy Ingle)

Part A: Romans 7

We begin with a parallel of how marriage is like our relationship with Christ. Once we are married we are bound to our spouses until death. When we commit to Christ he wants us to treat it likewise. We should be committed completely to him leaving the world and it's sinful ways behind lest we be as an adulterer who turns back to sin.

God hates divorce. This is further example of his hatred of divorce. To God it is an example of a lack of commitment.

Verse 7 begins with the question of whether or not the law is sin. Is this not what is going on around us today. The world around us is saying the word of God is outdated and wrong even hateful. We have the law and therefore we know what sin is. The law is righteous, as the giver is as well.

The law is good, but sin is where the problem is. We are flesh and are under sin as our bodies war against it. Paul states his own battle with sin as he talks about the good things he wants to do he doesn't and the things he hates, which are sinful he is drawn in by and participates in. Sin dwells in our bodies and tempts us. It causes us to be in constant battle.

Thanks be to God for giving us hope through Christ Jesus.

My posts may be short as I have to text it without a working computer. I will cover chapter 8 tomorrow.

Comment:

Debbie Bolinger:

Thanks for reminding us what God says about divorce...

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

When we are tempted by sin (24/7 for me), can we look to our brethren for some needed "course correction"?

James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

How can we make this happen? Nobody wants to air their dirty laundry or risk being the object of judgement. People may not even want to HEAR about our problems, being embroiled with their own.

Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

Ecc. 4:9-12: Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Denise Waits:

One of my favorite passages, Ginger.

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Paul shared his weaknesses with us, using that as an example for us. He wasn't a bit concerned about how people would view him. He was being edifying in a most personal way and how helpful that has been. We know that we are not alone in fighting sin.

Replies:

Randy Ingle:

Yes, I think that admission by Paul would be something helpful for all to consider. Especially those that have grown weary and fallen away. I have a relative who thinks we all believe we are perfect. I try to let her know we aren't, but she will have nothing to do with listening unfortunately. We are not perfect in fact far from it but need Christ to make us clean. We need to attempt to put away sin as much as possible

Ginger Hermon:

Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?... Nothing but the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ can make any sinner free from the law of sin and death. Praise God that believers are delivered from that power of the law. We are under a covenant of grace; under the gospel of Christ, no longer under the law of Moses (which could point out & condemn sin but could not remove it). This difference is spoken in this chapter with an analogy of being married to a new husband. The second marriage is to Christ. The law's power to condemn no longer threatens us because we are crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:2-7). Through His death we are freed from obligation to the law as a covenant, as the wife is from her vows to her first husband through death. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace (Rom. 6:14). Law provides no enablement to resist the power of sin; it only condemns the sinner. But grace enables it. Titus 2:11-12: For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! Deliverance comes through Him. Randy: I'm grateful for your thoughts on today's study. I especially liked the illustration you used with marriage.

Verse 6 says a lot about the first part of this chapter. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. We have two choices. One to serve our own fleshly desires, or to serve God.

If the spirit of God dwells in you then you will have life through Christ. We can find freedom from sin in our lives through the righteousness of our Savior Jesus Christ.

~Heirs of Christ~

We are not in debt to sin, but to the life that Christ gives to us through HIS righteousness to his father. If we are willing to suffer for a while with him then we can be justified through him.

~Future Glory~

The suffering we see here in our mortal bodies is nothing to endure compared to the glory that awaits us who remain steadfast in our convictions through Christ Jesus.

We were not willingly subjected to sin, but God put us here to manifest a faith in us through Christ, therefore eliminating the sin altogether through him who we are faithful to. If we are only faithful to our own fleshly desires we are dead to Christ and have no hope. We have hope for something we currently can't see, therefore we must be patient. Something that is becoming harder to have is patience because society is all about now. We must strive for it. Anything worth having is worked at, service to God is the same way.

Sometimes when we pray we don't know what to pray for, but the spirit that lies in us knows our needs and does the talking for us. All things work together for those that love him.

29-30 do not mean there is predestination as some may say. Those who hear the word are those who are called but many fail to listen and take heed. Those of us who listen intently will be chosen not of our own goodness, but through faith in Christ.

Nothing can separate us from God if we are faithful to him. We will always be conquerors through God and Christ who love us.

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

There are only two destinations pre-determined by God, Heaven and Hell. The works of people and types of people that will go to these two destinations have also been predetermined. Now it is your choice to decide which pre-determined path you want to follow.

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

If only we had heard this in a sermon today...

Comment:

Charles Fry:

While Romans 7 confesses weakness and failure, Romans 8 shouts victory in Christ, success in the Holy Spirit and security in God's love and faithfulness. Jesus died for me, the Spirit dwells in me, Jesus reigns and intercedes for me, God loves me and wants me. No power in heaven or earth can break the power of God or diminish what he has done, is doing, and promises to do for his children. This is the climax of Paul's argument for gospel as God's power for salvation, to all mankind; Romans 1:16, 3:23, 5:6, 6:23, 7:14, 8:1-2, 8:37-39.

January 29: Romans 9-10 (Ryan Ingle)

January 29, 2017 - The Epistles - Romans 9 & 10

Paul continues to inform us of how greatly troubled he was with the anguish he had for his past sins in verses 1-5. He did not feel worthy of Christ's gift he was allowed to benefit from...but greatly loved the Jews and wanted to "wake them up".

Let's remember God's promise to Abraham through Isaac that he shall be blessed with descendants so vast to be numbered and nations will be formed through his lineage (Genesis 17). It was a requirement of God's that every descendant of Abrahams needed to be circumcised on the eighth day or they were not part of God's chosen (Gen 17:14).

16 - 18 does tell us that God shows mercy on those he chooses to show mercy and compassion on. He also has used people to show his power through them to us as well. We should count ourselves very fortunate God shows mercy to us as sinners!!

19 - 27

Let's watch ourselves when it comes to judging how some people may be treated differently than others from God. I often find myself thinking this as I read the scriptures. Let's not be like Job and question God. Like verse 21 puts it, "Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?"

Paul in vs 30 - 33 is still explaining how the Jews had the law on their side but yet took it for granted. The gentiles received God's mercy, which upset the Jews. The Jews lacked the faith that they needed while they had God right in front of them. Key message is don't take God for granted!!

Romans 10

1-4 Paul states his desire is for the Jews to be saved but they are not following God's new law sent through Christ. Instead, they continue to do their own version with great vigor.

9-13 Paul reminds us of the great blessing we have through Christ's death. We must have faith in Him and believe God raised Him from the dead. There is no longer a distinction made on who is saved...both Jews and Gentiles have the new law.

14 - 21

Paul lets the Jews have it! God was very frustrated with the Jews and their attitudes! They had God on their side yet ignored God's requirements. So God gave salvation to all. The Gentiles now had the same hope of salvation which really made the Jews jealous!!

"Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me." But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.""

Let's take this message to heart! Don't take God's grace and mercy for granted! Let's not be like the Jews and feel we are entitled and others aren't! Don't let pride get between God and yourself!

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! "Out of sight is out of mind" is the reality that pervades much of our daily life but should never apply to God. Being cognizant of Him always, turning our face towards His, reaching out our hand for guidance, praising His name with our lips is 24/7. May we conduct our lives in a worthy manner which brings Glory to Him.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

How ironic! (or is it further evidence the Holy Spirit is at work?) This morning I read Wade's post and enjoyed our Filipino brothers sing, "Beautiful!" What gusto and joy! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1216073151773036/permalink/1224902880890063/> Now I read Romans 10:15. God calls all to be saved! Gospel preachers bring the good news of release from captivity of sin. Israel had the opportunity to hear, since widespread teaching of the gospel occurred. Israel failed to have faith. Praise God for grafting in the Gentiles. May we have zeal based on knowledge of God and spread the gospel! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Exq7F71Z--8> Thank you, Ryan Ingle, for participating in that mission through leading our discussion today in Romans.

February 5: Romans 11-12 (Randy Ingle)

Romans 11-12:

The Remnant of Israel

A majority of Israel failed to believe in Christ as savior. Paul points out himself as a remainder of the Israelites who still are in the right with God, therefore still fulfilling his promise to this nation. He points out that God did not forget the nation he knew before. then he uses Elijah as an example. (1 Kings 19) Elijah pleaded with God thinking he was the only one left faithful. God let him know otherwise. Over 7,000 men had not bowed to Baal. (I hate capitalizing an idol's name, but the Bible does so I will as well) Verse 6 points out grace and election are not separate, and salvation is God's to give and not to do with works.

Reference is made to Is. 29:10 and Deut. 29:4, about how God hardened Israel so they would not see or hear. Hopefully and prayerfully some of them turned to Christ after being away.

Gentiles Grafted in

Paul makes reference to his purpose being to preach to the Gentiles and graft them in. In that maybe some fellow Jews will be made jealous and turn some of them to Christ. Heaping coals of fire on their heads is the first reference I think of.

He then makes a parallel of a tree God=roots, they=base, Gentiles= branches. He tells them not to look down on the branches because they receive also from the nourishment of the roots at the base of the tree.

Mystery of Israel Salvation

The Jews have become blind but we are told it is a temporary situation. The Jews will eventually acknowledge Christ as the messiah. (Is. 59:12 and a redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression declares the Lord.) When the Jews turn to Christ they will be receiving of God's promise to them, and taking away their sin.

The Jews rejected the gospel as a whole and God regarded them as enemies, but he still loved them for their forefather's sake. Much the way David's descendants found themselves when they were found to be wicked themselves part of the kingdom was still theirs because of David. He is ready to receive them again when they turn back to him.

We are all in need of God's divine mercy and grace which he will graciously give to all who humble themselves and accept his son as their savior.

Chapter 12

This chapter I feel we all know it very well. Present yourselves as a living sacrifice that we may find grace in the eyes of the Lord. Once we have accepted the truth we need to also live in it as well. This whole chapter to me puts to rest the idea of once saved always saved. There are rules and a way of life different and unconformed to the world around us.

We are told to essentially love each other and always be bending over backwards to show love and honor to one another, even our enemies we expected to treat well, maybe causing them to see Christ through us.

We are also reminded that we are one body joined together we all have our different functions and not to think more highly than we ought of ourselves because our gifts.

Praise God and in him be the glory, may we always reflect him in our lives.

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

I feel like it would do every Christian good to read Romans 12 each morning to start the day.

Replies:

Kevin Crittenden:

Oh, let's spread the wealth and suggest everyone do that. :-)

Marc Hermon:

as soon as I hit enter I thought the same thing!

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Some comments on Romans 11:26

I've heard people say that Jesus can't return yet because "all Israel has not yet turned to God". I think this is a misunderstanding of this passage. I hope that there are more Jews that accept Christ but I do not think this refers to the "nation" of Israel. The words, "and so" mean "and thus in the following manner", which then refers to Isaiah's prophecy that Jesus would come and take away the sins of the world....definitely starting with "Jacob" but also extending to the Gentiles.

Verse 25 states that Paul is talking about a "mystery" here. What is the mystery that Paul refers to so many times in his writings? He clearly describes it at the end of this book in 16:25-26. It is Jesus Christ being the answer to the promise to Abraham that "all nations" through him might be blessed. There is that word "all" again.

So what word(s) could we put after the word "all" that would make sense with the evidence. How about "all who are obedient to Christ", "all who have called upon the name of the Lord" or "all of Christ's kingdom".

So what does the word "Israel" refer to in verse 26? Paul explains this earlier in 9:1-8. Paul is lamenting the nation of Israel but he says that God's word had not failed and then the key statement, "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. And in verse 8 to make it even more clear, "In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring."

Paul has already explained this in much greater detail in Ch. 2. "No, a man is a Jew (Israelite) if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code."

So, it seems that the evidence of this book should make us be able to paraphrase verse 26 as "And so all of God's people who accept the promise, whether Jew or Gentile, will be saved since the Messiah came and took away our sins."

So, I don't think we can say that Jesus can't return yet. We can say that he hasn't returned yet and we do know that reason:

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that A-L-L should reach repentance."

February 12: Romans 13-14 (Ryan Ingle)

2/11/17 ~ THE EPISTLES ~ ROMANS 13

"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." (13:1)

One of the most difficult verses for most Christians to handle. We look at the world and wonder why leaders are in positions as they are...we have to remind ourselves of Isaiah 55:8-9. Which states "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

We are to listen and follow the law as long as it isn't against God's law for us.

Peter states this in Acts 5:29 which says, "Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"

"This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor." (13:6-7)

I don't know anyone who likes paying taxes! There are reasons why we pay these as it does help to provide for the essentials of our government. If there is corruption, we can take the opportunity to try and fix it through the legal process without I believe it being an act of rebellion against God.

"Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (13:8-9)

We as Christians often overlook just how important love is! What more of an example do we need then for Christ to have come to this earth and suffered for us and died such a cruel death? Christians often times get a bad rap of not showing love to those who don't agree with them or who are different/sinful.

"On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.""

Mark 2:17

Christ was the example of how we should be towards sinners. They are the ones who need His message the most. We are to be reminded to LOVE the sinner, and HATE the sin. We don't hate people but it is often thought that we do. We don't condone what sin is committed but we should always love each other!

"And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh."

(13:11, 14)

Excellent verses for us to memorize! Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord and do not think about gratifying your own sinful desires! How much more important would it be for us to teach this fervently to our children. This is the whole reason Christ died for us as we give into our desires instead of resisting them!

Romans 14

First part of the chapter basically tells us to not quarrel over the small matters. Some followers are stronger in their faith and believe eating meat is fine while others feel they should only eat vegetables. To each person, they should be doing what is right in their own minds, and is scriptural, in serving God.

"If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living."

(14:8-9)

This passage reminds me of the song Do All In The Name of The Lord.

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Colossians 3:17

“You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat. It is written: “ ‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.’ ” So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.” (14:10-12)

We should not have the mindset that we are 'holier than others' and look down upon them. We should as the previous chapter stated, show love towards them. (Vs. 13:9)

“If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.” (14:15)

Let's not be a stumbling block to others who may feel different about a certain issue, such as maybe eating a certain type of meat. It's not worth a big feud over. Make sure we are acting in love towards them!!

“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.” (14:17-19)

Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit is what pleases God. Put aside the quarreling and do what pleases our Lord and Savior!!

A fitting verse to tie in here I believe is found in Matthew; “For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” (23:12)

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! As you stated so well, it is difficult not to be embroiled in the political turmoil and partisan animosity in which our country is immersed. How hard it is (for me) to remember to honor our leaders in such times. How hard it is to remember that all are God's children, all are beloved of Him, all are invited to partake of the feast made possible by His horrific sacrifice on the Cross. By thinking I know what is best, I am indeed exalting myself. Best to keep Col 3:2 in mind: "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan, you put a lot of time & thought in these 2 chapters. Much appreciated. ❤️ I believe if we whole-heartedly consider the second coming of Jesus we will clothe ourselves and live these lessons to the fullest. We need to be fully convinced and keep His return on the forefront of our hearts, soul and mind. Only then will all days and all ways be dedicated to God through holy living and godly service.

February 19: Romans 15-16 (Randy Ingle)

The final chapters of Romans 15 & 16 Epistle Study

We are reminded that those who are strong in the faith need to be able to show compassion to those who are weak. LOVE EACH OTHER! We are to be as Christ was seeing how he did not seek to please himself, but took the burden of the reproach of others upon himself. Paul mentions the former days (Old Testament) that it was written through endurance and encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. We have to work as a unit building one another up to get that encouragement, otherwise people start to feel left out and discouraged. What happens next is people fall away. We should always be caring to each other giving the feeling of togetherness. In the spirit of togetherness we can then be able to glorify God as a group. In this way Christ also welcomed you.

Christ the hope of Jews and Gentiles: Christ became a servant to the Jews, in doing that fulfilling the promise he made to Abraham and the patriarchs and so that Gentiles might glorify God in his mercy. Reference is made to OT scriptures in 2 Sam 22:50; Ps. 18:49; Is. 11:10; Ps. 117:1-2. Through the scriptures we find hope and joy and peace in belief through Christ Jesus. Paul the minister of the Gentiles: At the end of vs 21 is reference to the scripture in Is. 52:15. Where it talks of the Gentiles in future tense as something to come thus fulfilling scripture. Paul is bringing the word to new ears to hear it lest he build on someone else's foundation.

Chapter 16 is mostly greetings and commendations but also warns of smoothtalkers who may try to lead you astray. Not to have anything to do with them

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Two books down for the year. Only 64 more to go! I hope everyone is meeting our goal of just spending more time in the WORD...and not feeling bad if you haven't been able to get to each day's reading. Remember what we read today.

"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope."
15:4

I hope reading the Scriptures is doing this for you. I also appreciate our "reading leaders". I look forward each day to not only reading the passage for the day but also hearing from good brothers and sisters about their thoughts on the passage. I encourage you to continue to make it a life priority to stay in the Word.

Don't be WORLDly, Be WORDly!

Comment:

Charles Fry:

The emphasis on the sufficiency of the scriptures and sufficiency of the church members building each other up in the first half of 15 is good. I appreciate Paul's prayer request in Romans 15:31 (HCSB)

31 Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, that the gift I am bringing to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,

Recognizing both the challenge of opposition from the outside and the challenge of pleasing brethren, even with what would seem like an obvious good thing.

V25-26 in 15 ties us back to Acts 20:1 when Paul left Ephesus en route to Jerusalem via Macedonia and Achaia.

Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

Let us be earnest in prayer with and for each other, that for Christ's sake, great blessings may come upon the souls of Christians.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Randy! I would like to do a study on all the Christians referenced in chpt. 16. :-) If I hear of a brother needing a topic for a sermon a great one would be Priscilla and Aquila. Does anyone know exactly how they risked their life for Paul? I'm assuming it may have been in Corinth or Ephesus.

Replies:

Charles Fry:

Ginger, "how exactly" isn't in the text, but it's a reasonable conclusion that it happened in Ephesus. We know that Priscilla and Aquila accompanied Paul from Corinth to Ephesus (Acts 18:18). They stayed in Ephesus while Paul returned to Antioch (Acts 18:24, 26). They were still in Ephesus when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 16:8, 19) which was before the disturbance/riot that pretty much ended Paul's time in Ephesus (Acts 20:1). Even before the disturbance Paul had mentioned "many who oppose me" in Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:8-9). Later on, when Paul was nearly killed in the temple court, it was Jews from Asia (where Ephesus was) who started that riot, having seen Paul previously in Jerusalem in the company of Trophimus the Ephesian (Acts 21:27-29, also 24:19), so we know there was fierce opposition to Paul in Ephesus on the part of both Jews and Greeks. And, after Paul left Ephesus and while he was still on the road through Macedonia before turning toward Jerusalem, Paul wrote this about his recent experiences in Asia (Ephesus):

2 Cor 1:8-9

8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. NIV

Exactly how Priscilla and Aquila risked their lives for Paul we don't know, but it must have been in those troubles in Ephesus in Asia.

Comment:

Steven Dallas Thompson:
Amen.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

February 26: 1 Corinthians 1-2 (Ryan Ingle)

2/26/17 ~ The Epistles ~ 1 Corinthians 1 & 2

Paul is speaking to the people of Corinth who were having some arguments or taking sides needlessly, they weren't focused on the true meaning of following Christ. Some of them were bragging that they were baptized by Paul or whomever and were missing the point, the true meaning of Paul's teachings about Christ. "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect."

1 Corinthians 1:17

The message of Christ dying for all was getting lost among all this arguing. This division was greatly troubling to Paul as it was forming divisions among them

"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.""

(1:18-19)

Times don't change...we think that those in the world feel the message of the Bible is pure foolishness, both today and back in Paul's time. However, to believers, the message is salvation to us and shows us the power of God in forgiving our sins through his Son!! Those who "claim to know it all" will be destroyed (Pharisees and Sadducees).

...Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

"but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1:23-24). Paul was preaching the true message to help the people of Corinth to get refocused on the power of God. This is an example of how we as well can lose focus of God's message and need to be brought back into the fold again!

Let's also remember Romans 1:4 which states "and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

The remainder of the first chapter can be wrapped up in saying these individuals weren't the brightest or best God had to choose from to spread his message. They were the average people that had an extraordinary message of the power of God and the salvation through Christ type of message to be shared! We as well have that same message and need to remember, like the people of Corinth, not to lose focus of that message in trivial matters but to share it with others; the power of God!!

Ch. 2

Paul states that he himself did not come to them with great pride and fancy speech, the through the power in God's word. He spoke to them just like any normal "Joe" but the message he delivered was through God.

The message being delivered was of God's plan for man all-along. This message is not new but was new to those receiving it. The "experts" of this time had not a clue of God's plan as this is shown through them crucifying Christ.

“But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” (2:9-10, 12)

Man did not know the intentions of God's plan of salvation as we are men, not God. God delivered His message through the Holy Spirit to those who received it so man would know the gift God had given them. -This clearly showed them that man is so inferior to God!

We are able to understand God's message as we have the spirit who talks to us. Those in the world find it foolishness. They don't have the spirit.

John 15:15 sums it up for this passage!

“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”

We have received God's message and have become close to God as a result...we are friends with Christ.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan Ingle! You provided excellent thoughts covering these verses. My Bible had an insightful summary that I'd like to share: "This letter begins with a salutation and Paul's words of thanksgiving, which serve as more than customary courtesy, but actually introduce us to the content of the entire letter (1:1-9). He mentions the unity of the church (1:2), its purity (1:8), its spiritual gifts (1:7), and its future glory (1:7-8). This basically outlines the rest of the epistle. Chapters 1-4 will deal with the divisions which threaten Christian unity. Chapters 5-11 are concerned with the purity and sanctity of the church. Chapters 12-14 will elaborate on the use of their spiritual gifts. Chapter 15 discusses the resurrection and our future glory."

I often contemplate 1:31, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." Paul mentions this is quoted from Jeremiah 9:23-24. Do not boast of your wisdom, strength or riches. Only God and our knowledge and love for Him are worthwhile. We must glorify the Lord instead of ourselves. For wisdom – and all gifts – comes from above.

March 5: 1 Corinthians 3-4 (Randy Ingle)

1 Corinthians Chapters 3-4

Vs 1-9 Paul addresses the group in Corinth about how he had to speak to them as babies in the word because they were not ready to hear and understand in a way that was adequate. They were still concerned about who they were getting the message from rather than the actual message itself.

Paul tells them that while Apollos and himself may have planted and watered them with the truth they are no different in that they will also have to answer on their own, according to what they have done. Paul says we are God's fellow workers and you are the field. God's building.

Paul adds that he, through the grace of God laid the foundation for someone else to build upon. That foundation is Christ. Anyone coming after him needs to take heed of how they build on that foundation since they will have to answer for that. Each of us are tried by fire. If the work they do survives they will be rewarded, but if not and their work is burnt up they will suffer loss, but they may be saved but only through fire. This would apply to anyone who works for the Lord's Church.

16-17 Remind us that we are God's temples and need to conduct ourselves accordingly. It is mostly referring to how we teach here. That we teach the word of God and not something else than what Paul already taught. It would also be wise to reference this as a reminder not to

cause destruction physically to one of God's temples as that would lead to our own destruction as well especially our own bodies. (such as suicide)

18-23 Reminds us not to think too highly of our own thoughts. We need to humble ourselves to be willing to listen to others who have wisdom and try those thoughts to scripture to make sure they are pure. Whether it's life or death future or present are yours, but you are Christ's and Christ is God's.

Chapter 4

We should be more concerned about being servants of Christ and stewards over what he has given to us than what other men may think of us. Paul states that he does not even judge himself, and doesn't know of any accusations against him, but that does not make him guiltless. In the end judgement is God's to have. He will bring the secret things to light along with the purpose of our hearts. Our judgement will then be at hand.

6-7 Discuss how important it is not to go beyond what is written in the scriptures. Sticking to the word is highly important. Nobody has any right to get puffed up over one another. We each have received from God our gifts and abilities and would not have them of our own accord.

8-13 Paul further speaks to their high opinion of themselves and their abilities. He only wishes they were as advanced as they were in their own minds. He then referred to the hardships that he and others had to endure for the furthering of the gospel. He was not boasting in this but informing that maybe they would have a better understanding. It was going to be a point to Paul how many things he would have to suffer for Christ sake.

Paul makes sure they know in the end he wants them to know that he is telling them these things in love. Not that he wants to be the bearer of bad news but to help them with their frame of mind that it may be right before God. He tells them that Timothy has been given to them to be a reminder of the ways of Christ. He lets them know that he will Lord willing come back them again. He has others that he needs to see and help them with their issues.. He then asks them whether they would rather come in a way where it was gentle or with a rod. Remember the rod would drive their foolishness out from them.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Randy Ingle! It was good to be with you on this Lord's Day and we thank you for efforts w/the Seven Bible Studies lesson tonight! While considering chapter 3 & 4 I think it's good to be reminded of the History Of Church In Corinth. It was established at the end of Paul's second missionary journey, about 50AD (Acts 18), the church was a mixture of Gentiles and Jews from the very beginning. Silas and Timothy joined Paul shortly after his arrival. After his conversion, Apollos preached and built up the church in Paul's absence (Acts 18:24-19:1). He converted many of them (1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:4-6,22; 4:6). Unfortunately, Corinth elevated these teachers to a place that was not theirs. There is only one foundation: Jesus Christ (3:10-11). Paul warns, "Therefore, let no one glory in men!"

March 12: 1 Corinthians 5-6 (Randy Ingle)

1 Cor. 5-6 Epistle Study

Chapter 5 The Church is being chastised about how it is not handling one of it's unruly members who is sleeping with his father's wife. Even those outside the Church knew of it and would not do such a thing. This is a public matter and should have been handled promptly, but was not. Matt. 18:15-20 tells us how to handle these matters. Verse 5 speaks as to how Paul has judged him in this matter and chosen to deliver him to Satan in order that he might realize the error and change while there is still time. Leaven is used as an example of something that can be infectious to the whole group if it is to remain a part and not cut out. In this case as a comparison to sin.

He reinforces at the end that he is not meaning the world you can't associate with, but sinfulness in your own members. He wants us and them to know that you can't continue as normal, and nothing to see here attitude when sin is involved. Those who are outside of the Lord God judges, and those inside the body we are to watch over. Many people need to be mindful of these verses rather than Matt 7:1 than always is brought up when we are doing the righteous judgement memorize these for future referencing

Chapter 6 addresses some issues that needed to be dealt with at Corinth and I think it serves as an example to all of us as well. Apparently some of the members had taken issue with. Each other to the point that they were going to court against each other over it. What kind of example does it show to the outside world if we can't settle our own disputes amongst ourselves. That is what Paul was enforcing there.

Verse 3 talks of how we will judge angels, then how are we not able to judge ourselves of these trivial matters. He says that it is an embarrassment to them to have such a problem among them. He said you should rather be defrauded yourselves than to treat each other with this contempt for self gain at the other's expense.

They are then reminded that the unrighteous will not inherit heaven as a reward. The following sins are specifically listed as doomed to eternal punishment: fornication, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, theft, covetousness, drunkenness, revilers, and swindlers.

He says some of them were involved with these activities, but have been forgiven and ceased these things through Christ and the Spirit of God.

The Body Is For God.

There are a lot of things that are ok to do, but are better of if we abstain from them. Things are better off if we are focused on God as our primary goal and not earthly things. He reminds us that our bodies are not for sin but for the Lord. Our bodies will be members of Christ. Our bodies can not be members with Christ and sin at the same time. Members of Christ can't be members with a harlot at the same time. We are to flee from sin, an immoral person sins against their own body. Our bodies are a temple and cannot be a home to sinfulness as well. We are not our own, but Christ's who purchased us with his blood. GLORIFY GOD in the bodies he gave us

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Excellent summary, Randy! Thank you so much. I agree with your thoughts on these 2 passages. The body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Christians should value their bodies as a sacred place where God dwells. Furthermore, Paul uses the illustration of God's high regard for the body when he mentions the resurrection of Christ's body and eventually all believer's resurrection. A body destined for resurrection should not be used for immorality. As you stated, honor and glorify God with your body! (I Cor. 6:20, Romans 6:12-13)

Comment:

Randy Ingle;

Ginger, you are always a great encouragement!

March 19: 1 Corinthians 7-8 (Ryan Ingle)

March 19, 2017 ~ The Epistles ~ 1 Corinthians 7 - 8

One of the questions asked of Paul from the Corinthians was regarding sexual immorality. Paul states that between a husband and wife sexual intimacy is needed. This question could have arisen as regarding relations between a believer and unbeliever in a marriage (vs 14 & 15). It was also brought up due to fornication being a problem of the Corinthian people. Marriage is

still a "contract" or promise between the two individuals and God. The time to refrain from sexual activity needs to be agreed upon by both husband and wife during times of great need for devotion to prayer...and only for a time. Paul states that too great of time away from each other can lead to Satan tempting the relationship if too much time is spent away from sexual relations.

Paul, as we know, was not married and was able to devote himself towards serving God. If one is not able to resist their sexual desires, then it is best for them to marry but to be bound in purity to that spouse.

I would love to encourage a small discussion on vs 10 and 11. This is where I feel Paul is stating separation is not desired by God, but it would be allowed more than a divorce. Is that what others understand these two verses to mean?

If you are a believer and your spouse isn't, and they still wish to be with you, stay with them. You never really know the kind of influence you can have over them. Your handling of the situation could bring them back to God in the end. BUT if they leave, let them as you are not bound.

Please remember Hebrews 13:4 while reading these verses which states, 'Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

Vs 17 - 24

Come as you are...Don't worry about your past. Live your life for God and follow His commands! You were bought with a price!

The remainder of the chapter basically reemphasizes the importance of remaining devoted to God if you are unmarried as that...unmarried. You don't have the added complications of marriage that interfere with your walk with God. Again, if you can't refrain from your sexual desires, get married instead of fornicating!!

If your spouse dies, you are free to marry again if you feel you need to have that companion. However, they must be committed as well to God.

Ch 8

I love the 1st verse. "We all possess knowledge. But knowledge puffs up while love builds up". We need to stand back and make sure we treat each other with LOVE!! Love builds up! We all have knowledge but often our head gets bigger than it really should! When we become too proud, that's usually when we become humbled not necessarily by our choosing. It's also when we forget how to treat others, with love instead of feeling we are better than they are. There were some people who actually believe eating meat 'offered' to idols was wrong. Those who had knowledge to know that idols were...just idols and the offering of meat to them was meaningless to God should not look down on them. They are weak in understanding. Food does not draw us closer to God.

BE CAREFUL!! The weak-minded in Christ may see you, of whom having more knowledge, eat of this meat. This causes them to stumble seeing you eating this meat which they felt should not be eaten of. This weak member of whom Christ died as well for him will sin due to seeing you eat this meat.

In a nutshell, you eating this meat in turn causes him to sin which also causes you to sin as well by tempting him while he saw you as being more knowledgeable than himself. Instead, don't eat the meat if it causes another weaker member to stumble.

Let's remember Romans 14:15 as well. If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in LOVE. Don't by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

We know this passage can be used in multiple cases where we should know our brothers and sisters well enough to try not to tempt them into sin.

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! As for 7:10-11, my NIV reads "To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife."

There are 3 "must"s in there, no "you probably shouldn't"s or "it would be better if you didn't". Now what are some reasons a wife might want to separate (divorce) from her husband?"

1. He physically or mentally abuses her
2. He has sex with prostitutes
3. He is impotent and cannot give her children (Rachel: Give me children or I'll die.)
4. He is a habitual drunkard
5. He does not support the family
6. He chooses to worship idols or otherwise blaspheme against God
7. He leaves the toilet lid up

So what are the recourses left to a wife in these instances? How can she reconcile with her husband?

What are some reasons a man might want to divorce his wife?

1. She is a shrew (See Shakespeare: The Taming of the Shrew)
2. She is unfaithful
3. She still has her father's idols (You-know-who again.)
4. She emasculates him.
5. He no longer feels sexual desire for her
6. He wants a trophy wife as befits his rising social status
7. She does not maintain the house
8. She ignores his children
9. He comes home after a full day in the field, tired and hungry, only to find that the TV is warmer than the kitchen pots and pans.

Can a husband, using his authority, merely "order" a wife to mend her ways? In these situations, was it common to use an elder as an intermediary?

To me, a "trial separation" is a time when a quarreling husband and wife experience life as single people once again. Is it better than life with each other. Separation, then, is tantamount to an early divorce and, as such, is not condoned by God.

Replies:

Steven Wright:

Hello from Iowa everyone! Thanks Randy! For your thoughts! And you also Kevin! I would like to contribute more on the (7:10, 11) question, I do have an extensive study on this at home. I will try to chip in some more later. For now, just this; those two verses pertain specifically to two in a marriage where both are christians. There are specific instructions to specific circumstances in this chapter.

Charles Fry:

What recourses might a wife have? In extreme cases, I recall the story of Abigail defying her husband, to save him and others (1 Sam 25) or Bathsheba counseling with her husband, with the help of Nathan the prophet (1 Kings 1), and Hannah being ardent in anguished prayer (1 Sam 1). It appears to me that all of the polygamous marriages reported in the Bible were far from ideal, to say the least. Also, Isaac and Rebekah had

some rather obvious problems, and I'm pretty sure the relationship between Samson's parents was challenging. I wonder how Chuza, working for Herod, felt about his wife Joanna following Jesus and financially supporting his travels and work?

In most instances the best thing to do for a damaged relationship is work on repair, even if it is hard. That may mean changing one's own attitude and behavior. It may mean seeking help together. In some extreme situations it may mean living apart, maybe in some circumstances even getting legal protection, physically or financially... But the mindset that the marriage covenant must not be broken by the child of God must not be discarded or diluted by worldly influences.

Michael Babb:

Kevin, With the exception of leaving the toilet seat up, why are the reasons separated by male or female? Wouldn't they apply to both sides? Just curious.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan! These 2 chapters can be sensitive ones to cover. You did an excellent job conveying Paul's message. I find Paul's last comment a unique one: "and I think that I too have the Spirit of God." Paul believes he has the illumination of the Spirit on these topics. I like that because it shows Paul's humility and honesty. He was never arrogant about God's truth. When he had a word directly from the Lord (as in 7:10), he made no qualms about sharing it and enforcing it. When he had opinions that were apostolic (as in 7:12 & 25), he gave them with conviction. I have a lot of comments I would like to write about passages covering marriage but instead I'd like to mention life without marriage. The single life - as Paul says - is as much a gift and calling of God as is the married life. We need to encourage those in the church who find themselves in this state & able to focus fully on the Lord (not please self or spouse). There's a special privilege single persons have in which they can find an even higher fulfillment in their work before the Lord. They can be wholly for Him in whatever they do, as no married person can. They can give to their work before God an intensity of concentration that no married person can give. Last Labor Day @ PHill we put in a topic for this very purpose: to encourage those who are single/widowed to abound in the work of the Lord. Rick Sparks gave the lesson titled, "Married or Single?" I imagine those who have found themselves in that state were happy to not have to sit through another lesson on marriage for once. ;-)

March 26: 1 Corinthians 9-10 (Ryan Ingle)

3/26/17 ~ 1 Corinthians 9 & 10

Verses 1 - 18 speak of how one who dedicates their life to teaching the gospel of Christ should be able to earn a living wage for him and his family if needed. Paul, however boasts that he doesn't take money for his work in the gospel. His reward comes from bringing the word to those new believers free of charge.

Paul states in verses 19 - 23 that in order to share the gospel with different types of people, he had to become like those people...not in sin but to take their point of view so he could help them understand the gospel.

The remainder of the chapter is used quite a bit to help us as Christians to keep our focus on Christ. We need to train our bodies and minds to serve Christ. We don't want to be the "loser of the race" for Christ. Athletes train themselves with great attention and focus...dedication. This is how Paul describes himself...focused and determined. So we should be as well.

Chapter 10

Don't forget your past!! Paul tries to remind the Corinthians of their ancestors who were lead from slavery by a cloud God provided them and their passage through the Red Sea. God provided for them during this time as He was their "rock". However, God was very displeased, as he is with us as well, when they gave into temptation. They were scattered in the wilderness as a result of their sins.

Let their mistakes, their sins, be a lesson for you! Don't set you hearts on evil things!!! He warned them not to give into idolatry. Also, abstain from sexual immorality.

God sent snakes to kill these sinful

These Jews who were killed should serve as a reminder not to get too comfortable with your life. If you start becoming proud and think you have done nothing wrong, be extremely careful. No sin is new to this world.

Verse 13 is a widely used, comforting verse for Christians. God will not allow you to be tempted more then what you can handle. Remember that as you live your Christian life.

Flee from your sin [Idolitary]. Paul is assuming he is talking to mature people in Christ. Paul reminds us the cup of thanksgiving is a resemblance of Christ blood. Also, the bread representing Christ's body brings the 'many,' to becoming as one through Christ's death.

When the Israelites at the sacrifices, they were partaking with God. ~ This was a new thought to me regarding the sacrifices offered. I didn't really think about them eating the sacrifice after it was offered to God.

Be careful not to participate in the cup of blessing and also the cup of demons. Don't partake in what has been offered up to idols.

Yes, we are able to do what we so choose as an individual. Just because we can, does not mean we should. We should strive to help others instead of ourselves.

Paul tells the Corinthian people not to be so worried that they scrutinize every piece of meat before them. If an unbeliever invites you over, and you want to go, go. Eat. Enjoy your time. If they offer you a meal, don't worry about eating it unless they come out and say it was offered as a sacrifice. Then abstain from eating...

Be thankful God has provided you the food before you. Be concerned about what God thinks, not what man thinks. Do be watchful however, that you don't cause others to stumble. Do good for others and help where you can. We do this to help others in their life marching towards God.

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! It is too easy to think of "idols" as being stick figures or engraved images that people worshipped "way back when." Certainly WE don't have any such things in our sophisticated culture. But an idol is what we give our allegiance to. In earlier times, you could tell what a city's cultural emphasis was on by looking at the size of the buildings. When the biggest edifice was a church, you knew that there was a high regard for God in that community. Today's biggest structures are skyscrapers devoted to business. I'm not advocating for bigger church buildings, just pointing out that our society turns more and more of its attention to profit and shareholder satisfaction.

If what is important to you is society's emphasis on buying a big house, having a new car every year, getting raises, climbing the social ladder, being "known" in the inner circles, maybe acquiring a trophy wife, and basically buying everything in sight, then idols are a big problem for you. It's not enough for God to be relegated to Sundays and ignored the other days. We cannot serve two masters. Whom will we choose to serve?

Certainly the experiences and failures of the Israelites are there for us to learn from but let us also learn from the failures of 1) ourselves and 2) those around us. Christians need the support of the brethren - none of us are above temptation.

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Well put Kevin!! We do make in today's society idols that are in various forms... We as Christians have to be careful on how we prioritize our lives! Thanks for your comments!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Ryan Ingle: As I mentioned tonight, these sets of verses made for an excellent Lord's Table from you this morning. Thank you! :-) The cup of thanksgiving and bread we break is a participation in Christ. We must never give up communing with one another; if we do, we stop participating in the Lord's Table and risk participation in the Table of Demons. There are so many great verses from these 2 chapters. I always have really liked 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. We must discipline our body to serve Christ. Also, 1 Corinthians 10:13. God is faithful. He will not tempt us more than we can bear. He will provide a way out. We must believe this!

Comment:

Steven Wright:

Thank you Ryan! Cos (cup) Brachah (blessing) "cup of blessing" Paul uses the very name for the cup that Jesus used at the Passover when he instituted his memorial.

April 2: 1 Corinthians 11-12 (Ryan Ingle)

4/2/17 ~ 1 Corinthians 11 - 12

Paul starts addressing the Corinthians in terms of the women not wearing head-coverings as was customary for them when they would pray or prophesy. They were to be in subjection to the man, not being equal with the man.

It was the Greek custom that a man would worship with his head uncovered as he was (vs. 7) the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of man. Verses eight through ten explain this further.

Verses 11 - 17

In the Lord, man and woman are not independent from each other as husband and wife and like in 1 Corinthians 7, there is a duty in that relationship.

A woman who prays to God should be showing their respect in having their head covered (i.e. Longer hair than a man).

Verse 15 states that a woman's long hair is her head-covering and to have it shave/cut short is to be a disgrace.

Any other thoughts on this group of verses would be encouraged.

17 - 34

Paul is not encouraged by how they came together for the Lord's Supper. They would 'come' together as a church but there was so much contention and division between them, they were not celebrating the true reason (Lord's Supper) of their worship.

Let's keep in mind what Paul stated in the first chapter, verse ten. "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

Verse 21 talks of how before they would celebrate the Lord's Supper, they would eat separately. The rich would bring their 'healthy portions' while the poor would not have much.

The excesses from this feast they would have before the Lord's Supper would then be used for the Lord's Supper.

I used to be worried about taking too much of the bread when it was passed around. Taking a bigger piece of the bread is not wrong. This supper was like a meal in these times.

Paul states his is simply delivering the message of the Lord's Supper to them. This set of verses are used multiple times to help remind and prepare ourselves for the Lord's Supper.

I believe in verse 27, the 'unworthy manner' I believe pertains to our mind and how we are focused. If we aren't thinking of the Lord's Supper, but just allowing our minds to wonder, and realizing it we don't try to refocus would be incorrect. We are all unworthy of what Christ did for us. Thank God He gave us this great sacrifice that we have the hope of making it to Heaven one day!!

Chapter 12

Paul moves on to reminding the Corinthians of their past in terms of idols. He addresses the Spirit of God handing out gifts to each individual a special talent. The talents/gifts vary from one person to the next but they all come from the same Spirit.

Verses 12 through 31 go into more detail here regarding the body having multiple parts that make the body complete. This obviously refers to those Christians in the body of Christ. We all have special talents given by God to help make the body complete.

"But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body." (18-20)

We shouldn't think less of others "parts" of the body. Just because we may be the eye, we shouldn't look down at the toe and think we have no use for the toe as it is of lessor value. God has given us our unique talents to make the body as one complete body. Let's never let pride come into the body but be willing to help each other become better and stronger so our body does not suffer from division and become ill. When one member suffers, we all suffer, when one member rejoices, we all rejoice!!!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan Ingle! Very important chapters. Paul tells us that "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them" (v 4). No two gifts are the same and generally no two believers have exactly the same gifts but always these gifts are given for the common good of the church (v 7). Each and every believer has been given the indwelling of the Spirit of God, gifts of the Spirit (Acts 2:38). What we need to remember is that these gifts are given for the Body of Christ - to make the Body complete. These gifts are intended to edify, to strengthen, to feed, to exhort, to encourage and to have the Body of Christ empowered to do the work of Christ. These gifts are always to exalt Christ, to witness of God's power, to build up and to grow by sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Likewise, the idea of headship and authority is important. One thing God looks for from man is voluntary submission. This is what Jesus showed in His life over and over again, and this is exactly what God looks for from both men and women, though it will be expressed in different ways. If we keep our focus on Christ though complete submission we will become as willing servants and use the gifts God has given to glorify the Kingdom.

April 9: 1 Corinthians 13-14 (Ryan Ingle)

4/9/17 ~ 1 Corinthians 13 - 14

Love! Love! Love! How perfect this chapter is to help remind us and center our focus on why God sent His Son to die for us. LOVE!

This chapter in a nutshell lays it right out there for us. It doesn't matter what talent you possess. It doesn't matter how faithful you are...even the faith to move mountains...without LOVE, it is nothing!!!

How many times do you think evil thoughts of others, including your spouse of what they did or didn't do, and you become so irritated. Remember LOVE! It is patient and kind; does not envy or boast (about who cleaned the dishes); it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth! LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS. BELIEVES ALL THINGS, HOPES ALL THINGS, ENDURES ALL THINGS!!!

LOVE NEVER ENDS!!!!

You hear of an occasional story of an elderly couple who when one passes away, it's not long before the other spouse passes away. It's almost like they couldn't live without each other!!! That's what you call love.

Greater yet...(John 15:12-13) This is my command, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

We are to be as Christ, part of His body. If we don't have love, then how can we claim we know Him?

We see such a high divorce rate amongst those in the world ~ even some claiming to have Christ in their hearts ~ reason being...they don't know what true love is to help put aside their differences and to restore Christ as first in their marriage.

8 - 13

Times pass away...prophesying and speaking in tongues will pass as well as knowledge. Christ is what completes perfect love. Without Him, we would not understand love as we do now through His example.

When we were a child, we acted like a child and only saw limited through the eyes of a child. As we grow in our walk with Christ, we become more knowledgeable of Him. We will completely understand Him when we see Him in person.

Ch. 14

Prophesying was such a valuable spiritual gift to do as it took you being in-tune with the Holy Spirit and being close to God.

“On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.” (14:3)

Unless there was one who could interpret the speaking, speaking in tongue was usually only valuable for the person who was speaking.

“The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.” (14:4)

Who would want to listen to instruments being played if they were out-of-tune...not me! Trust me, I've heard my children play. Likewise, if when you speak in tongues, there is no one to interpret, then what good is it to anyone else? Speaking in tongues was meant to spiritually edify and uplift but to be able to prophesy personally brought you closer to God.

“There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me.” (14:10-11)

When speaking in tongue privately in prayer, you needed to make sure your mind was engaged and understanding what you were speaking, otherwise, like when we pray even today, it is fruitless if we are just rambling a memorized prayer without thinking about it, just as it was for speaking in tongues.

“Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.”

(14:13-14)

Verse 19 really brings home the importance here...that speaking was meant to edify others and not just yourself. "Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue." (14:19)

Paul lays it on the line here to the Corinthians! Most of them were just speaking in tongues and not developing themselves further in their connect to God. He essentially tells them to grow up!! What benefit if an outsider comes in and can't understand what is being said? But if the members there in in-tune with God through prophesying, they will feel the spirit amongst them and worship God.

This particular group of verses brought continues to reiterate "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways." (13:11)

Orderly worship...

Paul iterates the importance of keeping the worship service in order here. Paul states that the instruction or song or whatever is presented is only done to edify and build up one another when they are together. Speaking in tongues was to only be done if they had someone to interpret.

Paul also wanted them to take turns if they were prophesying...not to hoard all the time. When the worship service was done correctly, God's message was easy to understand.

Women were to be silent in the service as they were to speak later at home with their husbands if they had questions or something to say. ~ Would this imply women could not speak in tongues or prophesy then as if they could, why wouldn't they be allowed to share God's message?

At the end here, Paul states that what he is writing them here is the truth. It is to be followed.

Paul flat out states anyone who can truly prophesy will know what Paul is writing here is from God. If they don't acknowledge it, then they aren't truly prophesying.

And finally, the scripture used to tell us that our service to God should be done in a "professional manner,"

"So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But all things should be done decently and in order." (14:39-40)

Comment:

Debbie Bolinger:

Amen Brother Ryan!! Have A Blessed Lords Day! Headed to Church now!! When two Loved Ones die close to each other It is called BROKEN HEART SYNDROME! !! It's for Real!!!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Could very well be but we all at times suffer from that one.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! I Corinthians 13 is probably one of the most familiar passages to the world, thanks to marriage ceremonies. However, we often forget the context of Paul rebuking the Corinth church and showing them a more excellent way to exercise spiritual gifts. They were proud (8:1), rude (11:18-22), delighted in evil (chpt 5) and self-seeking (10:24). Gifts that are not exercised in love are useless. It is love that makes gifts beneficial for the edification of others, rather than for the exaltation of self. The basic principle Paul insists on is whatever is done in the church must contribute to the building up of the body. In 12:7 a declaration is made that gifts are given "for the common good" - which follows the principle and action of love. In chpt 14 I believe Paul lays down guiding principles for the church: Mutual Edification (vs. 12, 26) Orderly Meeting (vs 40) and God-ordained Order (Submission: Woman to Man, Man to Christ). You mentioned women not speaking - We know there were women who prayed and

prophesied (11:25) but in the assembly it shows submission as well as a fitting and orderly way of worship by them remaining silent.

April 16: 1 Corinthians 15-16 (Ryan Ingle)

April 16, 2017 ~ 1 Corinthians 15 - 16

Paul starts off by reminding the Corinthian people of the message he had brought to them. The message that all of them should hold fast to unless their belief in salvation is in vain.

Paul's message was of the death and resurrection of their Lord and Savior! Praise GOD!!! This resurrection is the foundation of Christianity. Without Christ's death AND resurrection, God's PERFECT plan for our salvation would not exist. If Christ would have bailed out like most of us would have, with going through what He went through, then our hope would have been lost. This resurrection was predicted from the Old Testament prophecies and came true.

Paul mentions how he was the least worthy to be an apostle. Paul always had a low opinion of himself as he persecuted the church of God. When we, as sinners, remember our prior sinful life before the grace of God allowed our sins to be washed away; God causes this remembrance to help humble us and make us more faithful to Him.

12 - 19

There were many who did not believe in the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection of Christ was essential to prophecies being fulfilled. Paul is essentially saying that if Christ did not raise from the death, then all of what he has told them is a complete lie. There is no point to your faith if Christ did not raise and overcome death!

20 - 29

Death entered this world through Adam but life has been made possible through Christ! Christ will triumph over death as it is His last enemy. Christ will return God's kingdom to Him once he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

The Corinthians apparently would baptize a person in the name of a person who died unbaptized. Paul, by my understanding, is not saying there is meaning here behind doing such practice, but that there would be no purpose doing this if there was no resurrection from the dead. It would also seem those who were practicing this type of baptism did not believe in resurrection, which made no sense as to why you would baptize and not believe in the power of resurrection. I would gladly welcome any thoughts upon this verse if you would like to share your thoughts.

Paul continues by saying what is his purpose of teaching others if not for the resurrection that Christ's death provides us. His life was constantly at risk to share this message with others. Paul makes the point if there is no resurrection, "We eat, we drink, the next day we die" as there is no purpose to life if not for being resurrected in the end. Paul iterates here that being with those who did not believe in resurrection is like poison to yourself.

35 - 41

Paul states that some will ask, so how will the resurrected body look? He basically states how foolish of a question it is to ask. We don't have a way of knowing just exactly how the body looks. Paul states that our bodies will be different from what they currently are now.

"So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." (42-44)

45 - 50

Adam was made from the earth. His physical body was first. Then came the spiritual body that was made possible through Christ.

"And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man." (49)

50 - 58

Our physical body cannot enter into God's kingdom. It will be transformed at that last heavenly trumpet blow. Everyone will be clothed with immortality, including those who have died as they have also been raised from death. This transformation into immortality will be the final overcoming of death as our bodies will be imperishable.

“When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”” (54)

This was foretold in Isaiah 25:8, “He will swallow up death forever.”

““Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (55-57)

All I can say here is HALLELUJAH! Thanks to Christ and His power over death, He has made it possible for us to live eternally with Him, if we prove ourselves faithful to Him.

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (58)

1 Corinthians 16

1 - 4

Paul briefly gives the Corinthians instruction for the offering to be saved up and given upon the first day of the week. These offerings will then be taken by the chosen ones to Jerusalem.

Paul portrays his desire to be with the Corinthian people for a good amount of time. He was currently residing in Ephesus where he is making great progress but is also experiencing resistance to his teachings.

Paul is strongly encouraged with Timothy and hopes he is able to visit the Corinthians. He has tried to no avail to get Apollos to visit them but Apollos wasn't able to at that time.

Verses 13 and 14 very much sums up the message Paul has delivered to the Corinthians in this letter..

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.” (13-14)

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Charles Fry:

Regarding 1 Cor 15:29, I would connect Paul's phrasing here to his description of baptism in Romans 6. When we were dead in sin, we are buried with Christ in baptism in order to be raised to new life. Why be baptized (burying the dead man of sin) if there is no resurrection to new life? If Paul were referring to any aberrant practice, he would have corrected it. He offers no correction, just an oblique reference to an idea he assumed they understood.

John Chrysostom put it this way in the late 4th century in his discourse on the passage: "Sin has brought death into the world, and we are baptized in the hope that our dead bodies will be raised again in the resurrection. If there is no resurrection, our baptism is meaningless and our bodies will remain as dead as they are now." Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 40.2.

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Thank you for your understanding here.

John Morris:

Hesitant to jump in here...but here goes. Had someone ask about this passage several months ago after it was discussed in a Bible class, and shared my understanding (what follows). This position makes sense to me, but please pick it apart, brethren, if you see holes in it.

As I alluded to in class, the words for "dead" in 1 Cor. 15:29 are plural; hence, an equally accurate translation throughout the verse could be "the dead ones." Additionally, the two appearances of "for" in the verse are the Greek word "huper," which in this construction (with the genitive) means "in behalf of." In light of all this, the verse could be rightly rendered: "Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized in behalf of the dead ones, if the dead ones do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized in behalf of the dead ones?" In fact, unknown to me until I just now checked, the ESV actually reads: "Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?"

This, of course, raises questions, and I do not claim to be the last word by any means. Lots of explanations have been offered by commentators. But it seems that Paul is simply referencing some practice that was known to him and to his readers at Corinth. We know from extra-biblical references that proxy baptism was definitely being practiced in the second century, but admittedly have no proof outside of the Bible that it was going on in the first century. Absence of evidence, however, is not always evidence of absence. =) Since the face value reading is generally the right one, I tend to lean in the direction that Paul is, in fact, highlighting an unscriptural rite that was being practiced by others—the "they" (notably, not "we," "us," or "you")—just to help make his point.

But why would Paul mention a practice that is wrong without condemning it? Doesn't him referencing it basically equal an endorsement? That's the rub, I know, and I don't personally think so.

Two examples come to mind which may be analogous:

First, in 1 Cor. 9:24-25, Paul compares the Christian life to those competing in the Greek games (something with which his Corinthian readers would be quite familiar—they were celebrated every second year, and at the time of the epistle were either being hosted by Corinth or its nearby neighbor Isthmia. Corinth had, at the very least, hosted them recently, and for a number of years). The parallel is powerful, and makes his point well, but is Paul endorsing the games? Seems doubtful, since the games opened with a sacrifice to Poseidon (the local deity), and the male athletes competed in many of the events in the nude. Paul just alluded to the games as something the readers would be familiar with, to make a point with no insinuation as to rightness or wrongness.

Mt. 12:27 may serve as another example (though not as compelling, in my opinion). While arguing against the Pharisees' assertion that He cast out demons by the power of Satan, Jesus said, "And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons [i.e. your disciples] cast them out?" Interesting question. Was this reference to Pharisaic exorcists (which Josephus also mentions) an acknowledgement that they really had power? Possibly, but I'm hesitant to say so with certainty. Whether the Pharisaic exorcists had real power or not may not have been relevant to Jesus' argument. The Pharisees at least claimed and/or believed that their exorcists had power from God, and so that alone undermined their attempt to misrepresent the source of Jesus' power over demons.

Ultimately, if I haven't fallen prey to rambling, I think someone can allude to something in making a point without agreeing with it. If we thought long and hard about it, I'm pretty sure we could think of instances where we've done that sort of thing ourselves. Paul was trying to

help the Corinthians see that a bodily resurrection was really coming someday. And along with many other arguments he cited, he seems to simply be saying in 1 Cor. 15:29, "If there's no coming resurrection, then why are those folks over there ("they") going to the trouble to have baptisms on behalf of those who've already died? They obviously are expecting a resurrection one of these days."

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, John & Charles. Good discussions & things to ponder upon. Please do not hesitate to jump in and offer feedback during our studies. Everyone's participation is truly edifying and sincerely appreciated. <3

Charles Fry:

John and Ryan, we've only scratched the surface of the 200 or so catalogued explanations for what Paul referred to in 1 Cor. 15:29. :)

I prefer what I already offered, but also have some admiration for the cleverness of connecting the baptism of 1 Corinthians 15:29 to that baptism mentioned in Matthew 20:22-23, the baptism of suffering, of martyrdom, in view of Paul's reference to danger and daily threats of death in v30-32.

John, in my opinion the strongest support for the idea that this is something practiced by someone outside the church is the "they" language, not "we" or "you" in v29. If it were any aberrant activity within the church Paul would surely have addressed it as such. It is hard to imagine who might be doing such a thing among pagans or Jews, but we don't know what we don't know.

I don't think we have any problem seeing that his point in mentioning it at all is to support belief in the resurrection of the dead, Jesus first, ourselves to follow, certainly not to vaguely teach or uphold any doctrine not presented elsewhere in scripture.

There certainly are instances of using "bad" things to illustrate truths, as when Jesus compared himself to a strong home invasion robber overcoming Satan in his household (Matthew 12:29) or the repeated references to the 2nd coming as like "a thief in the night" (Matthew 24:43, 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10, Revelation 3:3, 16:15). We have no trouble discerning that these illustrations are not an endorsement of robbery or theft.

The reference to running in chapter 1 Corinthians 9 can be understood somewhat similarly, a negative thing mentioned to highlight a need for discipline and dedication, yet there are included qualifiers in what Paul references there. The illustration clearly isn't intended to suggest Christians compete against each other, as he already wrote about that in chapters 1-4, and revisits it in 12-14. He clearly wasn't condoning paganism in the illustration, as he'd already commented about idolatry in chapter 8 and resumed that theme in 10. He'd already written about the holiness and sanctity of the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit and vessel of honor in service to God and in marriage in 6-7, so no one would think he was endorsing something quite contradictory to those doctrines in his sports illustration. Plus Paul plainly puts the Greek athletes in the "they" column in 9:25, not "we" or "you," which might reflect on the analogous language in 15:29.

I do have less uncertainty about Jewish "exorcists" and Jesus acknowledging that there were others who did in fact cast out demons. No one had the sort of power over demons that Jesus did, but then no one could heal diseases like Jesus could either, and we wouldn't understand his mention of physicians as obliquely pejorative. Josephus does indeed mention such things, attributing the wisdom to cast out demons to something passing along from King Solomon (but his glowing description of a Jewish exorcist performing for Emperor Vespasian really does

smell like sleight of hand; see Antiquities 8.2.5). The reference in Tobit 8 (during the intertestamental period) also sounds less than credible, but affirms that there were efforts to exorcise demons. There are references to exorcism using psalms and herbs and ritual bathing in various sources including the Dead Sea Scrolls. No doubt there was fakery in that area, as also in "medicine," or other pretenses to power (like Simon the sorcerer) but I don't think there is any reason to suppose Jesus meant less than he said or that none of those who honestly invoked the power of God to cast out demons were ever successful (recall Mark 9:28-29).

I don't know if this constitutes "picking apart" your thoughts, John, but I hope not. Your take on the passage is very reasonable. I'd take pleasure in being able to talk about such things face to face from time to time.

Marc Hermon:

John Morris I lean more towards this view also. It seems that there was some group who had devised this type of baptism and Paul is simply pointing out that even "they" believe in a resurrection or "they" wouldn't be performing that "strange" practice. Perhaps he has even spoken against that practice to them before and is again referencing that group. We don't have a need for Paul to condemn them here to understand that the practice was incorrect. To me it is somewhat similar to when Paul was also proclaiming the resurrection of Christ to the Corinthians' neighbors 70 miles to the east in Athens.

"Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; "for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:"

Paul was not condoning their polytheism here or praising "their own poets" when he quotes them. He is simply again using some of the cultural ideology to point them to the truth.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

April 23: 2 Corinthians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

April 23

2 Corinthians 1 & 2 & 3

Just as Christ has shown His love for us in helping us through tough times, so are we there for each other during the good times and bad times.

Paul speak of their great testing while in Asia. This testing tried them so much so that he didn't think they would make it through. It was God's protection and their prayer that helped Paul through this time. Paul truly shows his love and excitement for the Corinthian people here!

Paul tells the people of Corinth that his message if truly from God. Paul did not make it to see them as he did not want to make things awkward between them. He did not want them to feel he was watching their every action but wanted to remind them we are all on the same mission for the Lord.

Ch 2

Paul shows his deep love for them that he is writing this letter to them instead of visiting him. The Corinthians were a benefit to him as well to help encourage and cheer him along on his work for God. This letter brought him great pain to write as he loved them so much.

Paul states the purpose of his letter is regarding a wrong done in their midst. A man has caused them grief from his sin and needed forgiveness. Paul states he forgive him like they were forgiving him as well. He encouraged them not to be overly harsh to this man but to show love to him through their forgiveness. Paul informs them that as they forgive, he forgives, as does Christ. Paul strongly encourages this as he didn't want to give Satan another stronghold.

Paul states he went to Troas to preach God's word to a very welcoming crowd. However, he was wanting to meet Titus there so he could get word on how things were going with the Corinthians he left to go to Macedonia.

Paul goes on to say that Christ's message that is told to those who hear it and are righteous, to them it is a sweet and pleasing aroma to them. But to those who are evil it is like a horrible stench. Paul states that he does not peddle in God's word for profiting himself but he earnestly seeks to please God by sharing His truth.

Ch 3

Paul tells of the new law that Christ brought to us. The old law which Moses brought to God's people is now past and over with. This new law is from the Spirit of God and will last for eternity. Paul mentions how bold he is with this new exciting message! He is excited like a child who is in a candy shop with a twenty dollar bill...but even more excited then that! This message is to save many people through Christ's death.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! It's a great blessing the church has the example from 2 Corinthians 2. Paul admonishes the Corinthian Christians - and us - that a brother whom church discipline has

imposed can lovingly be restored to fellowship if they show genuine sorrow and repentance. I am curious... I have always had in my mind this set of passage is in reference to the incident recorded in 1 Corinthians 5. I'm curious if this is our 7 Bible Studies Group thought as well?

Comment:

Charles Fry:

Yes, Ginger, I do think Paul's reference to sorrow and repentance is in regard to the problem described in 1 Cor 5. I think the resumption of the theme of sorrow and repentance coming up in chapter 7 is in view of the same situation and the difficulty it had created for the church.

April 30: 2 Corinthians 4-5 (Ryan Ingle)

April 30 ~ 2 Corinthians 4 - 5

Paul's mission was to edify those he was preaching to about Christ and the new law. This was not well received as we have had multiple instances where Paul's trenching were met with great resistance and persecution. Paul states his message is from God for everyone to see. They don't use deception or trickery like others of this time. The gods of this world have blinded many to the truth that Paul is preaching.

Paul continues to state they aren't extraordinary in looks but just your average person carry around this blessed message from God. The death of Christ continues to encourage and strengthen Paul and the others in their work! Many trials he has been through but he continues no matter what he has to face in adversity.

Ch 5

Paul, like us, are excited about moving out of this earthly tent into an everlasting building Made from God where we will never have to relocate again.

Paul continues to say that while we are in this body, we know that we are separate from God so we are living by faith at this point. Since we are away from him while living in this tent, we aim to please God while away so we will receive the desired reward at the end. No one will escape the judgement of God!!

Everything Paul did was for the Lord God. He is showing the Corinthians also his love for them as well. He is hopeful through his actions that those who see him will understand he does what he does for God and as an example for others. Christ's death was for all.

"And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." 5:15

We should in turn be willing to live for Christ.

Paul states he is not there to make himself look good to others but to help them to become more "Christ-like". They once evaluated Christ through a worldly view but no longer. Paul understands now that the message of Christ is reconciliation. He wishes all to see and understand this message.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan! It's been a busy weekend for your family but you persevered! You are a very good example to all of us! <3 These chapters assigned today gives a wonderful account of the apostle's courage and patience under all their sufferings. "Therefore we do not lose heart!"

Paul vindicates their ministry from the accusation of false teachers & those who charged them as deceitful workers. Their constancy and perseverance in their work are declared: "We faint not under the difficulty of our work, nor do we desist from our labor." And their steadfastness was owing to the mercy of God. From the same mercy and grace from which they received the

apostleship, they received strength to persevere in the work of the office (Rom. 1:5). In chapter 5 Paul shows the reasons why they did not faint under their afflictions. Namely, a happy life after this present life is ended in that everlasting blessedness of the unseen world!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

May 7: 2 Corinthians 6-8 (Ryan Ingle)

2 Corinthians 6 - 8 ~ May 7

Paul instructs the Corinthians not to take for granted the gift of salvation God has blessed them with (words of great wisdom!)

Paul lists several tribulations here that He and others have endured to bring the message of God to the message.

How many of us complain when we have to do something that gets us out of our comfort zone...especially if it possibly entails talking with others about Christ...and yet Paul did what he did. Kinda makes you feel a little non worthy of Christ death!

Paul reminds them to have no part with evil, those who God.

“What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.” Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” And, “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.””

We, as Christians, need to keep in mind our bodies are a living temple for God. When we go out into the community we need to remember we are being watched.

Ch 7

Paul encourages the Corinthians that with God's eternal promise of salvation, that they should all purify themselves for God.

Paul tells them again of his love for them and wishing that they would accept his message of repentance. He is also longing for their love towards him as well as they are an encouragement for him on his difficult journey. He isn't trying to lay a guilt trip on them.

He continues by telling them how he was greatly encouraged in his trip to Macedonia in finding Good comforting him through Titus. Titus brought news of the Corinthians concern and longing for Paul and how that greatly encouraged Paul and how appreciative he was of their concern.

Paul admits he was not sorry for the grief his previous letter brought the Corinthians as the sorrow it brought led to their repentance.

This letter reminds me of when a parent corrects a child. Yes they may be sad at first but then the parent pours on the love to show them that they are still loved even after they had been corrected. "Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter." (9-11)

Paul admits that he wrote the letter to them to show also how dedicated they were to Paul and the others and his teachings about God.

Titus was greatly encouraged as well by them. Paul was excited to see that his boasting to Titus about them was not in vain, that they received him well. "I am glad I can have complete confidence in you." (7:16)

I will post later this afternoon on chapter 8.

Comment:

Steven Wright:
Thanks brother!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan! Paul has always been completely open and sincere in his relations with Christians in Corinth but false prophets have been trying to persuade them that he does not really love them. These chapters display Paul's true love and tenderly appeals them to stay away from false teachers and believers. The Corinthians are benefactors of his love and affection. The letter's purpose was not to deal with the offender but to test their loyalty and devotion to Paul as their apostle. They did not disappoint, for their sorrow did not leave them bitter and hostile, but led to repentance. They became sorrowful as God desired and were benefited instead of harmed by the letter. Great verse in chapter 8, "they (Macedonians) gave themselves first to the Lord." This was a good encouragement to Corinth to finish the charity they had started in sincere willingness and love.

Cont'd:

Happy Mother's Day to all those lovely mother's who have tried so hard to raise their family up in the Lord!

First off. I truly and sincerely apologize! I missed reporting on chapter 8 from last week. I've been so occupied with home repairs for selling our old home I totally spaced it. So I will make a quick recap on that chapter before proceeding with today's lessons.

Romans 15:26 makes mention of the Macedonians and their generous giving to those in need in Jerusalem. "For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem."

The Christians in Jerusalem were poor due to war and famine at this time. Also, keep in mind the gentiles were not well received by the Jews either as God's new law also showed favor to the gentiles as well.

Titus is being sent to collect the charity from the Corinthians for those Christians in Jerusalem who are in desperate need. Paul really shows his appreciation for the Macedonians and uses them as an example to help encourage the Corinthians. "But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving." (8:7)

Paul continues to encourage in verses 8 - 15 by telling them to finish their work... For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has.. and continues to remind them they have plenty now and later, when they don't have so much, they will be repaid by others abundance.

Titus and possibly Luke and Apollos I think were the ones being sent out to collect the charity Paul is asking them to give.

"Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it." (8:24)

May 14: 2 Corinthians 9-10 (Ryan Ingle)

Ch. 9

Paul continues to encourage them by basically saying I have really built up this image with others of how great the Corinthians are and how eager they are to help. Now, since I've built you up in the eyes of others, Paul basically says don't screw it up as I'm sending additional men to help you in your generosity giving.

It's kinda funny here as Paul says I have complete confidence in you guys but I think giving you more incentive will help you follow through on your great generosity.

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." (9:6-8)

I think this group of verses is one of the most read/quoted verses in the Bible! God really does provide what we need! Verse 8 says, "... Having all that you need..." This reminds me of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. If we don't have an essential need met, it is very difficult for us to move to the next level. If we don't need to worry about where our next meal is coming from, we can focus more on our spiritual life. God does provide for us!!

At the end of this chapter Paul really helps to send those message home to the Corinthians on their generosity being rewarded! "Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you."

(9:13-14)

Ch. 10

Paul really did have to drive the message home with the Corinthians that his message was true. There was so much false teachings going on that it was difficult to always have the truth and not stay away from it.

Now Paul was bold in his last letter to them but really has been kind and loving here in this letter. He starts off by warning them that they need to stay on the righteous path so he doesn't have to be bold with them when he is able to be with them as it is unpleasant for both Paul and the Corinthians. We are separate from the world even though we live in it.

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (4-5)

Our strength and power is not of this world but of a greater force from God!

Paul continues to make his case here in 7 - 11 to the Corinthians against those who opposed Paul and his teachings. Paul's intent was to keep them on the right path towards Christ in his letters. Some may think Paul, in person, was not bold in his demeanor. Paul here states he will be bold with all of need be at the time of his arrival at Corinth.

Verses 12 - 18

Paul helps the Corinthians to know he is not being prideful here in his message. He is not competing with others. He's not going outside God's boundaries in his message to them. Paul's message has always been since Christ's teachings and not these newly made-up teachings others are teaching. Some would say that Paul is just trying to teach a message like their message of Christ but house message was not from their teachings but from God.

Paul ends this chapter by saying his message is intended to reach far beyond Corinth and is hopeful the Corinthians will continue sharing and teaching God's word. He encouraged them not to get boastful in sharing the message but to boast in Christ and be encouraged through God's approval in them.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Charles Fry:
This surely was a time of furious activity for Paul, mending fences, dealing with fierce opposition, hastening from church to church and region to region, all for the the sake of the Lord, the gospel, the churches.

The Romans connection is good to notice, as Paul wrote that letter shortly after this one, and from Corinth. The final list of travelers for the trip taking the contribution to Jerusalem is in Acts 20:4, which does include Luke in the "we" of the next verse.

2 Corinthians 9:15 (CSB)
15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks for your faithfulness to the study despite so many physical needs in your life right now, Ryan! We sincerely appreciate your posts. I really love 2 Cor. 9:15. God is the ultimate example of giving. He selflessly gave His Son. All true Christian giving is in response of eternal gratitude for this gift which is beyond description.

May 21: 2 Corinthians 11-12 (Ryan Ingle)

2 Corinthians 11 - 13 ~ May 21, 2017

Paul continues his message of grave concern towards the Corinthians and how some are being misled by false teachings. He states in verses 1 - 4 of his great love for them and how, just like Eve being deceived, they are being deceived as well by those who are trying to cloud the truth and speak evil of Paul.

Verses 5 - 15 Paul admits he isn't a polished speaker like those "super-apostles" but at least Paul has the knowledge that they don't possess as he is truly being sent out for Christ's sake. Paul states he has never charged nor will he ever for his teachings giving to the Corinthians. He states even when he did have needs while with them, other churches supported him so he was not a burden to them. Paul is really expressing his frustration and discouragement here with them! Paul is trying to get this out in the open with them before his planned arrival so things aren't so awkward.

Paul states he plans on never charging them monies like the false teachers do. He states their actions are from the devil as the devil is very much about to masquerade as something he isn't in order to deceive anyone. Paul warns these false teachers will not get away with it, God will hold them accountable.

16 - 21

Paul is on his "soap box" now in telling them not to treat him like a fool, but if they do, let him have his time here for boasting a little about himself. Vs 20 "In fact, you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or puts on airs or slaps you in the face."

21 - 29

Paul admits this kind of talk he is writing is out of his norm...but emphasizes how ridiculous these false teachers are in their message and the Corinthians for accepting their teachings. In the next group here of verses it is a good reminder of how difficult Paul's life was as a Christian and what he went through!!!

"Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches." (23-28) WOW!!! Paul finishes up this chapter on how he really has done a lot for Christ's sake. He shows more of what makes him human, that he has slipped out of places to keep from being torched/killed. Paul shows that he has truly done a lot for Christ and for the Corinthians!!

Ch 12

Paul continue his boasting to the Corinthians. Now he goes into talking about a man who he knew, I believe he is speaking of himself here, who went up into the third heaven. He is one who describes different degrees or level of heaven in his writings. I would be happy to hear thought of others here but I believe he is speaking of his time on the road to Damascus. It states in verse 4, " was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell." If this is true, then obviously we don't have a full account of Paul's vision in Acts 9.

Paul mentions hear as well, he was given a "thorn in his flesh". This is a result of God allowing a messenger of Satan to keep him humble in him being tempted. We know through many cases in time Paul considers himself to be the least apostle due to his constant remembrance of he prior times before his conversion.

Paul Howe Ed hear makes a good point in terms that this burden was great for him to handle so he prayed three times to God to remove it from him. God's response was, my grace is

sufficient. Paul figured out that his weakness was what made him stronger. There are times where our trials are meant to persist to help us learn a lesson. Perhaps our dependence on God!! But we also know, God's grace covers our sins!

"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (12:9-10)

Vs 11 - 13

Paul lays into them by saying you have driven me to this point as instead of them speaking good will of Paul and holding fast to his teachings, they have taken to the false teachers doctrines instead. He treated them as he did the other churches and even didn't require support from them like he needed from other and yet he is having to chastise them here for their following other doctrines.

Vs 14 - 18

Paul states he is ready to come see them again and reassures them that he won't be a burden to them. In fact, he will again selflessly give of himself for them. He feels however, the more he loves and shows love towards them, the less he is loved in return. Paul has heard rumors of trickery he is alleged of using on the Corinthians and calls them out on it. He even brings Titus and the others he has sent to them as examples of the same spirit being used through all of them to edify the Corinthians.

Vs 19 - 21

Paul has made known his true and earnest desire to see them! However, he is leery of what he will find and how he will be received. He states as well he is not being judged for his action by the Corinthian people but from God. He does not want tensions between them but is trying to encourage them that his trip will go well.

Ch 13

I should start this chapter out with remind us of the famous passage often referenced in Matthew 18:15-17. "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

One could also reference Deut. 19:15 as well which states the same message as well.

That being said, Paul reminds them of the two prior times he was with them and the correction that was made regarding the sinning and continuation of it amongst some members.

Paul makes a firm commitment to deal with the sin that is causing problems with the Corinthians. He is reassuring them that Christ is speaking through him regarding this issue with sin plaguing them. There will be no "weakness" shown here as the power of God will be shown.

Paul encourages them to examine themselves to see if Christ is in them. This is a good passage for reminding ourselves to also examine ourselves as well that we don't get stagnant in our own spiritual lives!

Paul reaffirms that his weaknesses here help him instead of hindering him. It's that weakness that keeps him humble and allows God to work in him. Paul is very hopeful in this letter helping change the Corinthians before he comes as he doesn't want to be harsh towards them.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan Ingle! I've been behind on posts this week. Getting studies in thankfully. Just want you to know how grateful we are for your earnest efforts! You put a lot of time in these

posts and have encouraged us! Tonight we had a good review of 2 Corinthians @ the Phill bible study. These studies are a great blessing. ❤️

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

May 28: Galatians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Galatians 1 - 3 ~ May 28, 2017

This is a little commentary I found in the history of Galatians before we get started with the chapters.

Galatia was a Roman province in Central Asia Minor. Paul traveled here on each of the three journeys he made to spread the message about Jesus. The Galatians received both Paul and his gospel announcement warmly. Later some people Paul calls agitators came and challenged Paul's leadership as well as the foundation of his teaching. So Paul wrote to answer the threat to his status as an apostle and to reaffirm the core message that faith in the messiah is the basis of membership in God's new community.

Ch 1

After Paul's greeting, he doesn't waste any time!! "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ." (6-7)

Paul goes on to tell them that if someone is preaching another form of gospel, let them be accursed by God.

Paul continues to validate his gospel he preached as not being from man, but from a revelation from Christ Jesus.

Paul then reminds them of his previous life as a devout Jew who persecuted the Christians until he was informed of his need for change from God.

Paul really makes note here how he did not really have any time with the other apostles...meaning his message was truly coming from God.

Paul reminds us here as we finish up this chapter how important it was for God to use Paul.

Paul was such a fearless leader he tried spreading the message as best as I could. He persecuted the Christians as he felt they weren't following God's doctrine but following false teachings.

Ch 2

Paul meets with the other apostles in Jerusalem finally. He brought with himself Titus and Barnabas. Paul presents the gospel to them to show that his message was truly from God and that he was not preaching this message falsely.

"James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised." (2:9)

Paul makes note of calling out Peter's hesitation to the new law of accepting the Gentiles when he was around Jewish friends. This "pulling back" from the Gentiles hindered the Jews in their acceptance of the new law. Even Barnabas was led astray.

Verse 12 here links to Acts 15:24-26, "We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. So we all agreed to

choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul is a true warrior here by standing up and proving his commitment to the new gospel! Paul continues in verses 15 & 16 that just because Jews were accepted under the old law and not the (sinful) gentiles, the new law is based on faith in Jesus Christ, and not only based on obedience to a part.

Paul continues to go on and state that Christ came to change the law by the forgiveness of all. The faith in Christ is paramount to the new law and the forgiveness of our sins.

Ch 3

Paul starts in on this chapter showing his displeasure with how the Galatians had so quickly forgotten Christ's message and His death; to which many of them witnessed personally. Paul goes on to say we receive the Spirit through our faith in Christ and not by the works of the law. The Galatians had allowed their eyes to be blinded by false teachings. Paul states that faith is critical in the walk with Christ. “So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?” (3:5)

“Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.” (8-9)

It gets difficult at times for us to keep our minds focused on God and having faith he will help us through our trials. The Galatians were having this issue as well with their faith. Often I have heard it said, if only we could have been there to see Christ 'a death, it would be proof enough to believe whole-heartedly in our religion. Look at the Galatians, they had it and still struggled with their faith.

Vs 10 - 15

Paul makes the point that the law is not what saves a person but that the law is the curse. Christ was the redeemer from the law for man. “He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.” (3:14)

God promised Abraham vests amounts of descendants. Gentiles were now able to be saved as well though their faith in Christ. Not just the Jews who obeyed the old law. Christ brought salvation to all people, therefore the law was no longer needed. The law was needed until Christ came to this earth and His death for all took place.

The law was in place to protect them until Christ brought faith into play. Now that faith is needed for salvation, the new law is no longer needed. Now all who share in faith have the promise.

Comment:

Butch O’Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Yes, thank you, Ryan Ingle! What a blessing for congregations to receive a letter from an apostle. This weekend Murray Road asked John Lee to write a letter to the church and present it during the Memorial Day meeting. He had excellent insight on strengths and weaknesses we can work on. One from tonight's reading was hold fast to doctrine! Keep the zeal, brothers and sisters! Reading the Word daily will keep the church growing.

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Sounds like an excellent lesson. I have often thought that would be beneficial for us now to hear a "letter" written to various churches in today's time. I pray that everyone who was able to attend came away spiritually edified!!

Ginger Hermon:

A lot of very edifying lessons! They are online here: <http://murrayroadcoc.org/Flyer2017.pdf>. Each speaker is hyperlinked to an audio of their lesson. Saturday is available but Sunday is a WIP.

Joanne Caffie:

Your idea sounds exciting Ryan but I'm afraid that many churches are not able to receive such a letter these days. Remember that not all of Paul's letters were edifying. Some of them had to deal with correction. I think it would be more awesome if churches accepted more redirection from an apostle. Great job!

June 4: Galatians 4-6 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, June 4th ~ Galatians 4 - 6

Last week we read about the law and how it was limited on those who were able to take part in it. They were held captive under the law, imprisoned...(3:23-24) Then when Jesus came, the new law was implemented with faith being a key part (3:26-29). Christ death freed all men to be eligible for salvation. Verse 29 ended in saying, "And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."

Ch. 4

The first three verses start out here describing a young boy who is no different than a slave, even though he will be the heir of the estate, until he has matured and received full rights from his father, so also was it from God to the people before Christ.

Paul continues to define the benefit of Christ being born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that we no longer are slaves under the law, but God's child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir (vs 7).

Now Paul has established his thesis that all of God's people, the Jews as well as the Gentiles, came to the inheritance of salvation in Christ out of a similar situation of slavery. Paul views the Gentile Christians' attempt to observe the Mosaic law as a return to slavery under "weak and miserable principles." By their subjection to Mosaic law they are returning to their preconversion slavelike condition. The slavery of Gentiles under "weak and miserable principles" (v. 9) before their conversion and the slavery of Jews under the Mosaic law (the basic principles of the world [v. 3]) before Christ were certainly not similar in all respects. The pagan Gentiles were not enslaved to the Mosaic law; Jews were not enslaved to pagan idolatry. But these two situations of slavery were the same in one respect: Jews and Gentiles were enslaved to something less than the immediate knowledge of God.

Vs 12 - 20

Paul continues to share his concern for the Galatians as well as showing how perplexed he was regarding them. They were so hospitable towards him when he had physical ailments they some of the, would even given of their physical self to help Paul.

The Galatians are struggling to follow after Paul's message as there were false teachers spreading false teaching to them and Paul is calling them out on it.

Vs 21 - 31

Paul reminds them of Hagar and Sarah. Hagar was Abraham's servant and Sarah obviously was his wife. Hagar gave birth the natural way (to Ishmael), and Sarah (to Isaac) through divine intervention.

"Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written: "Be glad, barren woman, you who never bore a child; shout for joy and cry aloud, you who were never in labor; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband."" (25-27)

"But what does Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman." (30-31)

Paul wants them to remember his message and understand this new law was much better for all people. Don't fall victim to the old ways!

Galatians 5

Paul tells them if you chose to follow the old law of with being circumcised, your efforts are pointless and you have no part in Christ. Why would you Galatians want to be under slavery when you have the freedom Christ has brought to you?

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." (5:6)

Paul is wanting to know who is causing them to stray from the truth. "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough." (5:9)

Paul states he has no doubt the person who is causing the confusion will pay the penalty for it. He goes on to state if he was preaching the old law still, why would he be being persecuted.

"For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Paul goes on to say that if they walk with the Spirit, they will go a long ways in following Christ. Do away with the selfish desires of the flesh as they will only destroy you.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law." (5:14, 16-18)

Galatians 6

Paul's final instructions to the Galatians...are great for us to read and remind ourselves of how we should be towards others!! Don't get caught up in pointing out other people's faults, but instead, help them! Be careful not to fall victim to the sin as well.

Continue in Christ love with helping others in their burdens. Don't become arrogant in yourself.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." (6:9-10)

We should be willing to share our good news with those who have helped us. This encourages everyone, especially those (your instructors) who are trying to do good in training others.

"From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus." (6:17)

Paul here is I think demonstrating his exhaustion with regards to the petty little issues he has had to deal with. He is also tired I believe of people doubting his commitment to Christ and the false teachings that were happening at this time.

What a true example Paul was for everyone! He was truly fearless and a dedicated individual towards God!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, brother Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan Ingle! We're flying through the epistles now! Richard and Jeannie Owens edified brethren who attended Prince Road congregation Sunday morning on "time had fully come."
Very timely with our reading on Sunday! 😊 I appreciate Paul's affection to Galatian converts. "My dear children!" I often think upon Gal. 6:9-10.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

June 11: Ephesians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, June 11, 2017 ~ Ephesians 1 - 3

PAUL'S MINISTRY IN THE REGION: Paul first came to Ephesus for a short visit toward the end of his second missionary journey (Ac 18:18-19). Located on the SW coast of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey), Ephesus was one of the great cities in that part of the world. A Roman capital, it was a wealthy commercial center and home for the worship of the goddess Diana (cf. Ac 19:23-41). Though Paul briefly studied with the Jews at the local synagogue and was invited to stay longer, he made plans to visit them again after a quick trip to Jerusalem (Ac 18:20-21).

On his third missionary journey Paul made it back to Ephesus for an extended stay of three years (cf. Ac 19:1,10; 20:31). After his initial success in converting twelve disciples of John (Ac 19:1-7), Paul spent three months teaching in the local synagogue (Ac 19:8). Resistance to his doctrine forced him to leave the synagogue, but he was able to continue teaching in the school of Tyrannus for a period of two years. The end result is that the gospel spread from Ephesus throughout Asia Minor (Ac 19:9-10). A disturbance created by some of the local idol makers finally forced Paul to leave Ephesus (Ac 19:23-20:1).

Toward the end of his third journey, Paul stopped at nearby Miletus, and met with the elders of the church at Ephesus. Reminding them of his work with them, he charged them to fulfill their own responsibilities as overseers of the flock of God, and then bid them a tearful farewell (Ac 20:17-38). (CCEL.org)

In the first fourteen verses, Paul speaks of the blessings we have graciously received through Christ's death and resurrection.

"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (13-14)

15 - 23

Paul continues in his prayer for the Ephesians that they will understand the greatness of Christ salvation. The great power that has been placed in Christ after his death in being placed beside His Father and having full control of the church (His body).

Ch 2

Paul has high words of praise for the Ephesians as they are dead to this past lives of sin and are serving Christ. Luckily, though we are all worthy of an eternal death, Christ's death has graced us with the hope of eternal salvation.

“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (2:4-5, 8-10)

11 - 22

Since Christ brought in the new law through His teachings and ultimately, through death, both Jews and Gentiles were brought together in God’s plan of salvation.

“by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.” (2:15-16)

The Jews didn't like the fact that the Gentiles were also now part of God's plan!! Christ brought peace to earth through his message but the Jews struggled as they felt they were better than the Gentiles.

Paul was excited to be able to deliver this message to the Gentiles at Ephesus that were now able to receive God's promise as well. We, as Gentiles ourselves, should be able to read Ephesians and be excited as well knowing we are just like the Ephesians here. Without Christ, we would also be lost! Praise God!!

“In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”
(2:21-22)

Ch 3

Paul starts off in this chapter by stating God's marvelous plan for salvation was hidden from generations of Gentiles until Christ came to this earth to die for all people.

“This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.” (3:6)

7 - 13

Paul remains very humble as a servant of Christ's! He always places himself as the least among the apostles even though he, I believe, had the most influence and devout servitude! While in prison for the Gentiles, he continues to keep an up-beat attitude towards God's people. It's really awesome how God chose to use Paul, who persecuted Gentiles, to relay the message of salvation to them now.

“In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” (3:12)

The remainder of the chapter is a very beautiful prayer from Paul to Christ regarding the Ephesians.

I can't help but to recall the marvelous song created by verses 20 - 21!

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” (20-21)

<https://youtu.be/zetpK950L1U>

“Acappella-Now to Him”

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, brother Ryan!

Comment:

Steven Wright:
Thank you Ryan! Just had a chance to read and listen!

Comment:

Debbie Bolinger:
Thanjs 4 sharing!!!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thank you, Ryan Ingle! love, love, love the beautiful prayer put in to song! God's sovereign purpose and planning- chapter 1. We are His workmanship to do good works- chapter 2. And a conclusion from the apostle that God's power and love is immeasurably more than men can imagine- chapter 3. A beautiful prayer of thanksgiving that encourages our souls! ❤️

June 18: Ephesians 4-6 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, June 18, 2017 ~ Ephesians 4 - 6

Happy FATHER'S Day!

Ch 4

Again, Paul reinforces his previous comment in ch 3 of him being in prison for his service to God. He continues telling the Ephesians how they should live their lives for God in the first few verses. He speaks of staying unified as a body...“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” (4-6)

When we start having divisions amongst ourselves, that's what leads to satan getting his stronghold on us. Paul wanted to make sure they stayed true to God.

Paul goes on to mention Christ's appearance on earth for a time and how while he was here on earth, he gave us the apostles, prophets, the evangelist, the pastors and teachers to help in this unification of His body here on earth.

These aides in our walk are meant to help support our spiritual development in Christ's body so that we don't give into false teachings...“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (4:16)

Paul finishes out the chapter by telling them not to be as the other Gentiles and continue sinning. Continue in what you have been taught and share with others the great message of Christ.

These are a couple verses each one of us should know as we have heard them quoted very often for good reason.

“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Anyone who has been stealing must steal no

longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.”
(25-28)

Ch 5

“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)” (5:8-9)
Paul shows his approval of the Ephesians here by stating, "but now you are light in the Lord."

“But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”” (5:13-14)

How many of us have picked a piece of wood outside and found the insects scatter quickly as the light has exposed them? Let's make sure as being Christians we don't have anything to hide...as we are to be the light of the world...exposing evil and overcoming evil with goodness (light)

“...Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (18-20)

Well referenced group of verses here! If we immerse ourselves in psalms, hymns, and songs from the spirit, just think how much our own spirits will be lifted up as well as we will be praising God. Most people love to sing as it uplifts them and others around them.

The remainder of this chapter addresses the husband and wife relationship. The first part speaks of how the wife should submit to their husband as he is the head of the house. That seems like such a old-time concept anymore as "women are to be equals.

“In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body.”(28-30)

And men! Don't be thinking it's a oneway street! We aren't off the hook! "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.” (25-28)

We have very specific instructions to treat our wives correctly and to love them as Christ loved His church. Just cause the woman is to submit to the husband doesn't mean the man abuses the woman. Let's all keep in mind that we have to keep Christ as the center of our families and to love Him first, even before our spouses!

Ch 6

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” — which is the first commandment with a promise—” (1-2)

The purpose here is for the children to understand they aren't supreme. If a child get away with things, then they learn they don't need to listen to anyone. However, if they are taught to obey their parents, then they will also obey God and His commandments. We, as parents, have a critical role here in developing our children correctly so they will respect God as well as us.

“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this,

take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
(6:13-17)

Paul's final words to the Ephesians is one that we use on a regular basis ourselves. The devil knows our weaknesses! Even with knowing that, our time here on earth is our testing period to see if we will be like Christ. If we will be like Paul. Christ we perfect, so we know we can't attain to that level. Paul, even though he felt he was the least apostle, he was one of the strongest in my opinion. He had the humbled attitude as his former life always weighed on him. We should have that same feeling though as our past life should remind us of how we have changed and that we always need God's grace! The armor of God in this passage is key to us passing the test here on earth.

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”
(6:18-20)

We should all have this attitude, that we pray for one another. Such a beautiful ending to Paul's letter here!

I wanted to add that we are blessed at Pleasant Hill to have John Lee with us this week. He referenced Paul's prayer here and starts that it was interesting Paul did not pray that God would help him to get out of jail, nor provide for his daily rations, but that God would continue to help him in his courage to continue spreading His word!

Ephesians is such an encouraging letter as it was not a corrective letter but of encouragement that they were on the right track. This was a relief for Paul while he was in prison to know how they were doing.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, brother Ryan!

Comment:

Marc Hermon:
These three chapters should be revisited often by all Christian readers. Outstanding!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Some of my favorite chapters & verses were in Sunday's study. Full of instruction for Holy living. Thanks, Ryan!

Comment:

Charles Fry:
Priorities for Christian Life.
4:1-5:21, discipleship.
5:22-33, Christian marriage.
6:1-4, Christian parents and children.
6:5-9, Christians in the workplace
6:10-20, Christian maturity, take your stand.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

June 25: Philippians 1-2 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, June 25 ~ Philippians 1 - 2

Paul starts the letter out with a prayer of thanksgiving. Paul had helped start this church in Philippi on his second mission trip for the Gentile people. Paul is writing to them as he is concerned with the amount of chastisement they are receiving and wants to encourage them on their walk for Christ.

“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.” (1:9-11) - Paul has a way with words in his prayers! He had a very close connection with Christ obviously!!

Paul is encouraged that he is in chains as it has helped spread the gospel even more. His influence and refusal to back down from preaching and teaching Christ's message has emboldened other Christians to also take confidence in spreading the word as well.

Paul knows there are some preaching the message out of envy and rivalry towards Paul while other preach out of love for Paul to help him in spreading the word. Paul here emphasizes it doesn't trouble him the motives behind the preaching. He is just excited Christ's message is being taught to unbelievers.

Paul is unshaken from his preaching of the gospel and is convinced all his trials and sufferings will be rewarded through God in the end. Paul's example in all these letters weren't just an example to those he wrote the letters to, but as well for us as he was very devoted to spreading Christ's message to all even though the Jews did not like it. Paul was more than willing to die for Christ's sake as he knew where he would be going...do you know with certainty where you will end up?

“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.” (21-26)

Even with his confidence in his future, he was still willing to stay here on earth to continue helping others in their walk with Christ. Paul was a truly humble man!

Paul encourages them to stay true to the gospel...keep yourselves clean and true to God so whether Paul sees or hears about them in the near future, he will know they are suffering for the gospel as well. “For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.” (1:29-30)

Ch 2

Paul starts of in the 2nd chapter by telling them to put aside your self ambitions and to put on Christ's humility. “then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.” (2:2)

He encourages them to put others before themselves...to be humble. "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (5-8) Christ's example here was to be humble and place himself last...then God raised him to the highest place! This is not an easy challenge Paul places in front of them but he tries to get them in the correct mindset to be servants of Christ

"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain."
(2:12-16)

When we don't keep ourselves humbled properly, that is usually when we complain/grumble about our current situation. Stop! Put yourself back in proper perspective. Remember, we are servants for God. Put others need before ours! Remember the children's song, J.O.Y.? Paul concludes this chapter by saying he is eager to send Epaphroditus back to the Philippine people. He highly praises his work and thanks them for sending him to help. Paul states, "But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs." (2:25) He tries to relieve them of their concern for him as he almost gave his life in service for Christ.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan Ingle! I'm so thankful to have this letter. It's full of encouragement to stand firm in the face of persecution and to rejoice regardless of circumstance. Paul is a great example of this to us. No king self. Christ came not to be served but TO serve. Christians should have an attitude of self-sacrificing humility and love for others. As you referenced:JOY.

July 2: Philippians 3-4 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, July 2 ~ Philippians 3 & 4

Paul starts out by warning them of these false teachers who were trying to mix the old law with the new law. Paul mentions the various "proofs" he has for his own faith in verses 5 - 6. This is Paul's way of saying, they think they are righteous in what they have done, I have a 'more qualified resume.'

Paul goes on to state, I put all that former life, all of what I used to be, aside. It is not important. I am following Christ wholeheartedly now!! He no longer is concerned about the old law as Christ changed everything. We live by faith (and works) for God now.

"I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead." (3:10-11)

Paul admits he has not attained his goal for Christ but that he is well on his way. He has put the past behind him, as much as he could, and is only looking forward. We all know Paul struggled a lot from reflecting on his former sins in writings but Paul here really is trying to show his dedication for Christ.

Paul believes they are doing a good job but wants to encourage them as it is needed again to stay with following Christ the true way. Don't follow those who choose the "easy way" or false teachings way. Stick with his teachings about Christ (keep your blinders on so you stay focused on Christ).

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body." (3:20-21)

Chapter 4

Paul ends this letter with his true and earnest showing of love towards them. He encourages them to remain strong in continue in the ways Christ has established for them.

Paul makes clear mention of Euodia and Syntyche here as special women who have helped him in his dealings with the gospel. It would seem that either they were in disagreement with each other. I don't find any other information regarding them

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you." (4:4-9)

Very much true living words for a Christian to live by and help shape your children in like manner.

It is so easy as Christians, as human beings, to worry about different things happening in life. It is at that time where we should remember where our true strength lies...in prayer! God wants us to give him our burdens, our worries. It is what keeps us as Christians humble. To realize we, as mere humans, need God's help!!

Vs 4 reminds me of the song, "Rejoice in the Lord".

Paul again share his appreciation for them and their concern for him. However, Paul truly shows them and us that his strength comes through the Lord. No matter if he is going through good times or bad, he finds his strength where we should as well.

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." (13)

As Paul ends his letter by thanking them for the gifts they sent him, he states they were the only ones who really helped him out from Macedonia. Paul has a real true connection with them for the grace they have shown to him.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, brother Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan! Love this "thank you epistle!" Paul wonderfully expresses joy in Christ as he encourages believers to rejoice in the Lord. It is important for us to be good stewards so we can help brethren like the Philippians church did with Paul. "They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God!" (4:18) And when we are recipients we should be well grounded in prayer and thanksgiving giving praise to God and His Church for the many provisions we are blessed with. "My God shall supply all your needs" (4:19)

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

July 9: Colossians 1-2 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, July 9 ~ Colossians 1 - 2

I am going to post links to the VBR (Video Bible Recordings) YouTube site for Colossians that John Lee presented over his study. He really went into detail explaining Colossians very well. These videos are somewhat lengthy so they could very much be broken up throughout your day or even week.

<https://youtu.be/ZBYuyCNGo8w?list=PLfKbn0ITecpZ9m4uK-WGgVanMjisseVOt>

Purpose of Colossians:

- [] Ch 1 & 2 cover the preeminence of Christ.
- [] Ch 3 & 4 show what a Christian should do.
- [] To combat errors (Jewish and Greek) creeping into the church

Paul was in Rome in prison when he wrote this letter to the believers at Colossae. Paul had never met with them face to face but communicated through Epaphras to the Colossians people. They were having the same issues as most other churches where false teachings were creeping into the church. The Colossians people were being pressured to follow the Jewish law and extra rules.

Ch 1

“the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel that has come to you. In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God’s grace.” (5-6)

Paul speaks to them regarding Christ and the love Christ showed to all man kind through His teachings and ultimately His death on the cross.

Paul is encouraged seeing their faith they have and how it has grown.

“And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.” (1:18)

Paul here is helping them to understand the importance of Christ and that He is the supreme being. Do away with the old law as when Christ came to earth to establish the church, and then die on the cross for all mankind, it did away with the old law.

“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—” (21-22)

Paul make the point of sin having dominion over mankind but through Christ's death, it has been taken away. No more sacrifices were required of man.

Ch 2

“My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.” (2-4)

Paul shows his love for all who are trying to follow Christ's teachings and his desire for them to be successful in fighting against evil.

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” (6-7)

We should all continue to live for Christ as Paul instructs here. Let us never forget what took place for us to have our sins so easily forgiven.

“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (13-15)

“Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules:” (2:20)

The remainder of the chapter Paul is asking them why they are reverting and struggling with the old law and its teachings. There were some who were not letting go of the old law and trying to incorporate it with Christ's church. Paul was instructing them to do away with it.

I would strongly encourage you to follow the YouTube link and listen to John's lessons. I did not go into as much detail as normal to allow more time for the videos.

Comment:

Steven Wright:
Thanks Ryan!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan! Glad you referenced this! I am grateful for Dwain Stoop's zeal and vision for this good work. John too. I got goosebumps while reading 1:6. "All over the world!"... the rapid spread of the gospel into every quarter of the Roman Empire within 3 decades of Pentecost is remarkable!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
Just to think how miraculous that had to be at that time. We have such instant communication now we don't realize the difference and difficulty this would be.

Ginger Hermon:
Providential that's for sure!

Comment:

Denise Waits:

Thank you for the video links!

July 16: Colossians 3-4 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, July 16 ~ Colossians 3 & 4

Link for VBR if you want to us this as an additional study aide.

<https://youtu.be/ZBYuyCNGo8w?list=PLfKbn0ITtecpZ9m4uK-WGgVanMjsseVOt>

*I am so sorry I posted so late!! I have been having some family issues and have regretfully not been able to post until now.

Ch 3

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” (1-4)

What a awesome way to start a fresh new week out by reading this passage here. It helps remind us of the importance of keeping a proper mindset and focus on our end goal of heaven!! It's difficult to sometime think of such things when you are surrounded by the world and have to be in the world, as with the case here with the Colossians. Paul reminds them to keep their focus on things above, not on earthly things.

Paul continues in vs 5 - 10 to tell them to "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your early nature..." Be done with your former life. Don't continue to live as you once did but take on the new body of Christ. God's wrath is coming because of the sins he lists in vs 5.

“You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.” (7-8)

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” (3:12-14)
In all these things, we are to have love. Hate can so easily creep in to our emotions and thought, we have to on constant guard of it.

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”
(16-17)

Some of the most quoted verses! If you meditate on those two verses and truly take in Paul's message, how could you not praise God and have the love of Christ in you?

Ch 4

“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” (4:5-6)

Make the most of every opportunity...I think a lot of us get too comfortable with those in the world and don't help them and influence them the way we should. It is so important for us to watch our conversations in the world as Paul states here. We can so easily turn people completely off by what we say and how we act. If they don't see a difference between others and ourselves, then what would make them desire to have what we have and are trying to attain?

Paul finishes the letter by asking them to remember him in chains, that he is thinking of them and praying they stand firm in the truth of God.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

It was good to commune and worship with you and your family today, Ryan! Thanks for these links. I watched a few while I snapped and canned green beans tonight. John provided a lot of good thoughts and illustrations for these 2 chapters. As a whole the book of Colossians is one we could definitely recommend to a new Christian and retention for an existing Christian. It's filled with reverence to our Lord and rules for holy living. Chapter 3 has many of my most beloved verses. 3:2; 3:12; 3:16; 3:18-9; 3:23.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

July 23: I Thessalonians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, July 23, '17 ~ Thessalonians 1 - 3

Good morning! Yet another blessed Lord's Day we have been given to help remind us of the great sacrifice that was made for each of us!! Let us rejoice in this blessing and not take it for granted!!

We are studying a new book written from Paul around 51 AD. In order to understand this letter, I would recommend you do a little extra reading from Acts 17: 1 - 9 regarding Paul's visit originally to Thessalonica. He joined the Jews in the synagogue three different Sabbath days to persuade all in attendance of Christ's death and resurrection. Some Jews were persuaded while others weren't.

“But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.” When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil.”

(Acts 17:6-8).

So this letter was written as at first Paul was concerned thinking possibly the people there would lose faith with all the uproar caused in Thessalonica but as Timothy was sent out to report back to Paul, Paul finds great reassurance in Timothy's message.

Ch 1

Paul's excitement is well displayed here in the first chapter. The key verses to take from chapter 1 I think are “You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,” (6 - 8)

Paul continues in telling them the message has spread to others of how they stopped worshipping idols and replaced it with worshipping the true living God.

Ch 2

Paul states their message was not in vain. It was well received by them. There was opposition to their message but it didn't slow them down or cause them to "water down" the message. Paul states frankly that their message is directly from God and His approval. Paul states their message was delivered with love and not malice intent like others would try.

Paul mentions the fact that they worked extra hard just so they wouldn't require the help and support from them. He references a parent-child relationship here in verses 11 - 12 "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory." Train up a child....is just the same as training up an adult here...

“For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God’s churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own people the same things those churches suffered from the Jews who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to everyone” (14-15)

I just found this to be an interesting reference here of "the churches" suffering. I know it would have been difficult going through this transition time...especially having the Jews to contend with. I just don't see how at this time the Jews would have any doubt they killed the true messiah after seeing the veil torn in two, the darkness and everything else that happened during the death of Christ.

Paul wraps up the chapter by stating how he misses and longs to be with the them but acknowledges Satan is standing in the way. Paul, however, many times has also acknowledged his prisoner time as being beneficial in many ways as well.

“For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.” (19-20)

Ch 3

Paul states that he sent Timothy to find out how things were going for the Thessalonians since he could not see them first hand. He was very apprehensive thinking they could be lost due to how much resistance there was from the Jews against Paul's message. Paul didn't know how they would handle the persecution but when he received Timothy's report he was very delighted to find they were doing well.

Timothy reported of all the fond memories they had for Paul, Silas and Timothy and how they longed once again to see them. The same is felt towards them. The apostles continue to pray for them during this time.

“May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.” (3:13).

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, brother Randy! May you have a great day in the LORD!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

You as well brother!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks for sharing your research and thoughts on today's study, Ryan! Lots of great verses in these 3 chapters. If I'm ever writing a card to faithful brethren this is one place I would go to collect words of encouragement.

July 30: I Thessalonians 4-5 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, July 30 ~ 1 Thessalonians 4 - 5

Good Lord's Day morning to all!

We are scheduled to read chapters 4 & 5. In chapter 4 Paul states they should continue to follow Paul's instruction, as they already have been doing, even more earnestly. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor," (3-4). Paul makes it very clear that even though worldly people may practice sexual immorality, they were to treat their body's of the utmost purity. Don't take advantage of others and understand that it won't be man, but God, whom you will fear for violating this instruction.

Vs 9 - 12 Paul complements them for the love they have already shown for others but encourages them again to continue even harder in that love. Keep your nose down and work hard! Be an example for those not in the body of Christ by their actions, which will earn their respect in their doing so. Great advice for all of us:) If you think you are doing something well for Christ, Paul here would encourage you to try even harder... Don't be content but always improve yourself!!!

Paul finishes of the chapter addressing one of their concerns regarding the death of those who proceeded them in death. Paul reassures them that those who were following God's law will not only be raised when the trumpet sounds, but will proceed them who are living, with Christ in the clouds as we all will then be reunited together forever to be with Christ. Hallelujah!!!

Ch 5

Paul continues addressing their final concerns. He tell the Thessalonica people that the end times will come like a thief in the night. When everyone is proclaiming peace and safety, everything is good, no need to worry about your salvation, that's when the end times will be. Even worse then labor pains...

These times won't fool those who are faithful to Christ like they were... They are of light, not darkness. They don't go out like those who get drunk at night do but instead shine in the light of day. "But let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ," (8-9). We should live in Him in such a way to glorify Christ by shining our light into the dark world who is lost in their darkness. Christ did not die for us so that we would forever be lost, without any hope, but so those who are both awake and asleep have the hope of salvation. Paul basically states not to worry about them as they have that same salvation as they have.

Paul goes on to state that should show their true gratitude to those who work hard in Christ. Hold them in the highest regard. Help encourage those who are weak or struggling. Those who are tired or disheartened, encourage and strengthen them. Show your love to all through your patience with them. Also, make sure no one pays evil for evil.

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (16-18) True advice that all of us should take to heart and follow! We don't do this enough... If you believe you do pray enough and give thanks, then based off these two chapters, Paul would tell you to do it even more!

Don't get too haughty about thinking your doing everything correct in the Lord is the message I get from these two chapters. Paul states they were doing a great job but to keep it up and strive to be even better.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

You are most welcome Butch O'Neal. You have a blessed LORD'S Day!!

Butch O'Neal:

Thanks again, and I pray the very same for you, Ryan Ingle!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! This set of scriptures has provided great encouragement to many Christians, not just the Thessalonians. How we long for the Lord's return and grand reunion with his saints! I always appreciate the instruction we have here to be joyful always and give thanks in all circumstances "for this is God's will for you."

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Well said! Paul was very much delighted the Thessalonians were doing so well given their situation.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

August 6: 2 Thessalonians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, August 6, '17 ~ 2 Thessalonians 1 - 3

It appears that only a few months passed between the first and second letters here. Paul starts the first chapter out by stating how well pleased he was of them as Paul, Silas, and Timothy would boast about them and how well they gave handled their persecutions and trials. He was also encouraged by their love for each other as it continued to grow.

Paul states that God's judgement will prevail on those who have wronged them when Christ returns in the clouds with his powerful angels. Those who do not know Him will be cast into everlasting destruction. "on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you." (1:10)

Paul states he continues in prayer for them in belief that all of what they do is for the Lord and done in faith for Him. The prayer is done in hopes the Christ will be glorified by their actions .

Ch 2

The Thessalonians needed this letter for clarification to Paul's original teachings and first letter again as there were false teachings being used to deceive them that Christ time of return was soon at hand. Paul makes mention here of the Antichrist returning before Christ comes back who will cause great deception of those who aren't firm in their faith for Christ. (I believe it isn't all that difficult to figure out which religion this will come from...) "He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." (2:4)

"And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time." (2:6) is answered by turning to Revelations 20:1-6 talking about Satan being chained for a thousand years so as not to truly deceive nations until he is unchained.

"And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming." (2:8) This should give us as Christians great comfort knowing Christ is so powerful that a mere breath from Christ's mouth will overthrow Satan!

"...They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness." (10-12) It truly feels like there are those who no matter what you may say to them, continue to believe a lie or argue with you regarding religion. They refuse to love the truth!! They delight in wickedness. All one can do is plant the seed and hope it grows through the thorn bushes eventually.

"So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word." (2:15-17) Let's remember, even through our toughest trials we go through, it's not typically as challenging as was during this

time of the church being established. But even if it comes to that point, which could be very likely in the near future, remember Christ and the grace He has shown for us and the true example of love He had for each and every one of us.

Ch 3

Paul continues to ask for prayers as his work was very challenging dealing with evil and wicked people. He continues to encourage them that God is faithful and will deliver them from evil. He states he is hopeful they will remain faithful to the things he commands.

Paul finishes this letter by warning them of those who were idle and not working diligently in the Lord. He reminds them of how busy they were in teaching the message while they were there. They worked for their meals and even paid to eat while they were present to set the example for them. Some commentaries speculated that these idle members were already thinking Christ would return soon so they gave up their work so they would "be ready" for when Christ returned. "For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."" (3:10)

Paul instructs those not willing to work to settle down from being disruptive and to earn the food they eat.

My question I would like to throw out here is, the beggars who stand on the corner saying they are homeless, do you help them by giving them money or not? :) I know this is speaking of those members in the church...

"Take special note of anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard them as an enemy, but warn them as you would a fellow believer."

(14-15) This is great advice for us to follow but remember as it states in the tail end of these two verses, 'to warn them as you would a fellow believer'. We don't want to push them away but show love to them and concern for their spiritual being. They need love and proper reminders of God's will for them as part of Christ's body.

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! I had the same thought about the panhandlers who certainly seem able-bodied, standing at the intersections. I remember one guy, years ago, who held a sign saying how hungry he was. We went home, Kathleen fixed up a plate of food, and we took it back to him. He just put it on the ground, in the dirt, and went on trying to get money. Stupid us, right?

There are many, many jobs out here, help wanted signs everywhere because it's so hard to live in this area with a service-industry job. And yet we have a large number of folks with Need Work signs, or Homeless Vets, or whatever.

Yes, we are to help our neighbors but I don't think it's a Christian ideal to be taken advantage of. I'm thinking that communities have programs in place to help the truly needy and I'm sure there are many of those. If you feel inclined to help someone, make a donation to one of those programs.

Replies:

Jamie Ingle:

Yes it's hard when your help is just tossed away but that will be counted against them as you are doing what God asked you to do. Not disagreeing with your suggestions just a passing thought.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Denise Waits:
Anyone want to discuss God sending a delusion?

Replies:

Kevin Crittenden:
You mean Jesus' meat breath?

Ryan Ingle:

I would love to but I'm not sure I could do it justice. I believe you also should take into account the first chapter in Romans where it talks about God giving them over to their own desires. The truth is out there and if people refuse to acknowledge it, what can one do? "Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen."

Romans 1:24-25 NIV

There are people out there who just refuse to listen to sound reasoning for various reasons. I know why you are curious about this verse as I was thinking about it while I was reading and studying this myself.

Perhaps Charles Fry would like to add his thoughts on the meaning of 2:11.

Comment:

Charles Fry:

Denise Waits, there is a precursor for the statement about delusion, that those deceived have no love for truth and prefer a lie. They've cut themselves off not just from God but even from consideration of truth. There are numerous examples of God giving people what they want, to their own detriment. Note the setup for crossing the Red Sea in Exodus 14:

Exodus 14:2-4 (NIV-WS)

2 "Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. 3 Pharaoh will think, 'The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.' 4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." So the Israelites did this.

How was Pharaoh deluded, his heart hardened? By his greed to recapture the Israelites and the perception that they were trapped and vulnerable. This was an occasion of God "sending delusion".

In the wilderness when the Israelites grumbled against Moses and God, craving meat, God warned that he would give them what they wanted and lots of it, until they were sick of it.

Numbers 11:18-20 (NIV-WS)

18 "Tell the people: 'Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow, when you will eat meat. The Lord heard you when you wailed, "If only we had meat to eat! We were better off in

Egypt!” Now the Lord will give you meat, and you will eat it. 19 You will not eat it for just one day, or two days, or five, ten or twenty days, 20 but for a whole month—until it comes out of your nostrils and you loathe it—because you have rejected the Lord, who is among you, and have wailed before him, saying, “Why did we ever leave Egypt?””

That story actually turned out even worse when God "gave them over" to their own appetites, when they didn't believe God's promise and greedily gathered up enormous quantities of the quail on the first day of the migration.

This is what happened with Ahab in the story of the prophet Micaiah, (1 Kings 22). There was a lying spirit and false prophets, but the truth was presented, only to be rejected, preferring the lie. Ahab took the truth seriously enough to disguise himself, but he still went to battle, deluded.

This is what God does when people, nations, reject obvious truth preferring self deception.

Romans 1:18-19, 21-25 (NIV-WS)

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them....

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! I'm so grateful to have Paul's letters. Stand fast! Establish in every good word & work! Direct your hearts into the love of God! Wait patiently for Christ! Don't grow weary in doing good!

Comment:

Steven Dallas Thompson:

Great job.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

August 13: 1 Timothy 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, August 13 ~ 1 Timothy 1 - 3

Paul is now out of prison visiting the Macedonian people when he wrote this letter. Paul sends Timothy to address concerns regarding the Ephesian church that had arisen since his original letter. Paul's message was being distorted along with Jewish customs being exercised in place of the original message. This letter to Timothy was meant to encourage and influence him on helping correct matters needing addressed until Paul could return to Ephesus himself.

Ch 1

Paul urges Timothy to stay on top of those who were spreading false doctrine and irrelevant ideas set to mislead and divert studying from God's word. Paul emphasizes the goal of this command is love, that comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. These current teachers want to teach the law but have no clue what they are even talking about.

Verses 8 - 11 Paul speaks that the law is written for the lawbreakers and that those who are righteously following God's law.

Paul states that he feels it's a great privilege God showed such great mercy and love to allow Paul the honor of showing His word! He states that his former sins were caused through ignorance and unbelief but the love of Christ turned him around.

"Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life." (15-16)

If you believe you have sinned so much that you can't be forgiven, just look at Paul... Christ used him as an example of the most extreme being forgiven and actually being used to deliver His message!! What a great example using Paul, chief among sinners.

Paul finishes the chapter by telling Timothy that he is entrusting him to fulfill the prophecies foretold of him how he will be such a devout brother in teaching Christ's message. Paul makes mention that there have been some, Hymenaeus and Alexander, [as well as Philetus (2 Timothy 2:17)] who have went astray from Christ's message and have been spreading the message that Christ has returned. To them, he had given them over to Satan in hopes they will have a wake-up call like what Paul wishes to happen in 1 Corinthians 5:5, "hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.". Paul hopes that this stern discipline causes them to 'hit rock bottom' so they will get their life back on track in serving God properly.

Ch 2

Paul goes into how the worship service should be for us worshipping God. Pray. Pray for all, including those ruling over us so that we can have peaceful lives living for Him.

He mentions, as we all know, God wants all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Verse 5 speaks of there being only one God and one mediator between God and mankind, Christ!! (This scripture helps validate a separation between God and Christ).

Remainder of chapter continues to speak of how men and women should be in worshipping. Verse 11 is widely used to reference woman not teaching over man. I know when I was baptized, I was immediately placed in an older age group where a man was the teacher. Once baptism has taken place I do see it necessary for the young man to be taught by men instead of woman unless it is not possible due to circumstances...

Ch 3

This chapter specifically goes over officers of the church such as elders and deacons. Men should all strive to attain this level of purity, whether or not they should desire the position or not. It's not an easy task to complete by any means but verse 13 puts it well, "Those who have served will gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus." Paul states he desires to soon be with them again but wanted this letter to proceed his arrival in case he was delayed.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ryan Ingle:
You're more than welcome:)

Comment:

Charles Fry:
Thank you, Ryan! Important information in this letter!
Most commentaries do place the time of writing 1 Timothy after the imprisonment at Rome in Acts 28, after the letters to the Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. However, I believe the time and circumstances of the writing are Paul's departure from Ephesus at the end of Acts 19, and first few verses of Acts 20, when Paul went from Ephesus to Macedonia, before his imprisonment. Then, a few months after writing to Timothy, when Paul was en route to Jerusalem from Macedonia and Achaea, he summoned the elders Timothy had appointed in Ephesus to meet him, as reported in the second half of Acts 20, telling them among other things that he would never see their faces again.

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
Thank you for your insight. Paul was a very dedicated spiritual man for God! To know that he was going to give his life for the message he was teaching is very inspirational. I appreciate your understanding here on the timing of this letter!

August 20: 1 Timothy 4-6 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, August 20 ~ 1 Timothy 4 - 6

Chapter 4

Paul continues instructing Timothy regarding his visit with the Ephesian people. He instructed Timothy that there will be deceiving spirits in the last days whom will forbid eating certain foods and forbid marriage. It's interesting that just recently the Pope came out with the message that

priest may soon be allowed to marry. There are several religions that forbid eating certain foods but here Paul makes it clear God doesn't forbid the eating of any types of food that are eaten with a thankful spirit.

If Timothy goes by what he had been taught and stays true to Christ's message, he will prove faithful and help those Christians who could easily stray from the message. Don't get caught up in needless stories and keep yourself spiritually exercised as well as a little physical exercised helps:)

“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” (4:8)

“Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”
(4:12)

We, as Christians, need to remember that even though we may have young members in our bodies, they can be tremendous examples of even how we should conduct ourselves at times! I have seen many younger members do outstanding jobs in the faith... Be of encouragement and don't look down on them. We don't want to hinder their growth in any way!!

“Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” (15-16)

Very good ending to this chapter on verses we should pounder!!

Chapter 5

Treat the elderly men and women as you would your parents, and younger men and women as brothers or sisters.

If a widow has children or grandchildren and she is in need of help, it is there responsibility to "step up to the plate" and help her out where possible. This pleases God to see their debt repaid to the widow.

The widow without a family places her faith in God and prays most of the time. These widows I believe it would be the church's responsibility to help them through the church if there are no other avenues of help!

Paul is very clear here of the importance in this matter...“Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

(5:8) I am sure if that family who is trying to do the right thing in helping the widow out can't physically or financially support the widow can ask for help from the church is they earnestly need it.

Widows over sixty who have been a very good and faithful servant of others may be placed in need of help like previously stated. Younger ones are believed to not keep faithful add their desires will get the best of them. They are actually encouraged to remarry to prevent them from talking away from Christ through needless gossiping and busybody activities...

Elders who are doing correct in the Lord and maintaining the flock well should not be hindered from doing their duties. However, if they are running and need corrected, let it be done through two or three witnesses. This reproving should be done before everyone so that the other elders will be reminded to keep themselves faithful and not led astray by sin.

Chapter 6

Those who are slaves should not slander themselves by not doing well for their masters as this reflects poorly upon their faith. If their master is also of their faith they should show no disrespect to them and should even do more for their masters.

If there are those who teach contrary to our message, from Christ, and do not correct their errors but instead continue in spreading false teachings "they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions" (6:4). They are in it to make money off religious people. But those who are truly in godliness should understand that we came into this world penniless, and will leave this world penniless. As long as you have the essentials like clothing and bread on the table is what matters. Those who desire more can easily be led astray with other desires. "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." (6:10)

"But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses." (11-12)

Timothy was encouraged to help those who were rich to direct their attention to godliness as their gains will far exceed anything this world has to offer. "Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share." (6:18)

Good messages for all of us to take in! Paul finishes the letter by telling Timothy to keep the faith and not get caught up in needless chatter.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
You're welcome. Have a blessed LORD'S Day!!

Butch O'Neal:
You too, my brother!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan! Such important chapters for all Christians in all times. Warnings, instruction and encouragement. "Flee from all of this... pursue righteousness... fight the good fight of faith..."

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

August 27: 2 Timothy 1-2 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, August 27 ~ 2 Timothy 1 & 2

Timothy struggled when he went to Ephesus after the first letter. Paul went back to Ephesus as a result to help Timothy. Paul was feeling this would be it for him as he was once again imprisoned and sent to Rome after confronting the false teachers, i.e. Alexander and Hymenaeus, regarding their teachings. The movement had grown in false teaching which made it more difficult to reestablish Christ's true message

Ch 1

Paul reminds Timothy of the strong roots he has in the message of Christ through his mother and grandma. He urges him to stay strong in the faith and understanding...don't be ashamed of the message he should be teaching others. Be bold just like himself (Paul).

"That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day."

(1:12)

Here is a perfect verse showing where Paul's mindset was...he was not worried about what mere humans would do to him as he knew God would protect him even in death. His message was key to continuing the fight against false teachings.

Paul goes on to mention the help he received for the household of Onesiphorus while in Rome and how he wishes God's mercy shown upon him.

Ch 2

Paul urges Timothy to stay true and strong in Christ! Don't get entangled by nonsense and lies that are being spread but spread the truth!!

Even though, I, Paul, am chained, Christ's message is not! It is free from being chained!!

"Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself." (11-13)

Paul goes on to tell Timothy to remind the faithful not to be quarrelsome over words.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2:15)

One of the most quoted scripture heard from the pulpit!! Paul instructs Timothy and others to keep themselves in the Word to help keep themselves on track with God.

Avoid godless chatter as that produces nothing profitable for yourself or others! There have already been those who have fallen away as a result of godless chatter.

“Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”” (2:19)

“Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.” (2:23-24)

Not only was this a problem back in the time of Timothy and Paul, but still continues to today! Meaningless arguments that don't inform those around us of God's true message. Satan's way of distracting everyone so no one benefits from the message of Christ.

Comment:

Butch O’Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

September 3: 2 Timothy 3-4 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, Sept 3 ~ 2 Timothy 3 & 4

Ch 3

Paul continues in his instructing of Timothy here of how the end times will be. Seems as though Paul could have been looking into the future around our time now...

Paul warns of women who are gullible as their sin convicts their depressed spirit to believing any "truth" and never really learn the real truth. Verse 8 talks about Jannes and Jambres who I think could have possibly been two of Pharaoh's magicians who opposed Moses and Aaron in Exodus 7.

Paul goes on to remind Timothy of all that Paul had been through (and the great example he was for Timothy). Paul continues by stating anyone who truly wants to live their life for Christ WILL be persecuted while false teachings will increase and become even worse.

Once again, we are privileged in today's reading to have will quoted scripture in our reading...“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (16-17)

Ch 4

Continue in your preaching of Christ's message as all will be judged by God and Christ in the end. The time will come when people won't put up with sound doctrine but will want to soothe their "itching ears" with doctrine that makes them "feel good" about themselves and their lifestyles...Sounds familiar in most religions now-a-days.

Paul instructs Timothy to continue to stand firm in the teachings even through it all. Do the hard work. Continue in preaching the message as my time is now at an end. Paul feels comfortable with how well he has run the race. He knows there is a crown for him in heaven.

Paul once again shows his concern here by telling Timothy to hurry as his time is short here on earth and that there are those who have strayed from the faith. Be especially careful of Alexander as he strongly opposes their message.

Paul mentions that while everyone deserted him in his time of need during his trial. Christ, however, strengthened him and helped him spread the message.

I wish everyone a great week and hopefully most were able to make it to a Labor Day meeting in Iowa or California:)

Comment:

Joanne Caffie:

Thanks Ryan for the reminder that I need to have another "scriptural" conversation with my sister-in-law about the TRUTH. She's been attending a church with a female preacher and seems to have convinced herself that she's following the Lord. These passages will give me another chance to show her how she could possibly be straying away from God's Word. Again, thanks

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

I will pray for the wisdom and strength in this matter and that God will help as well.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

No problem. Have a great week:)

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks for your diligence to this study, Ryan! As well, for your and Jamie's hospitality this weekend. You're a great blessing in the Kingdom. I love these 2 chapters. Full of truths and encouraging verses.

Replies:

Ginger Hermon:

And since I won't be in class the next few months due to teaching I'll ask here. I assume it is a metaphor on the reference to the lion's mouth. Correct?

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

September 10: Titus 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, September 10 ~ Titus 1 - 3

Ch 1

Paul puts Titus in charge of working with the churches in Crete. The churches in Crete were having some issues similar to those in Ephesus where false teaching was being administered. Some teachings were including former Jewish traditions that were not in accordance to the new law.

As Paul starts out with his instructions to Titus, he goes into the qualifications of an elder who is overseeing the church. It is very important here that as we look over the instructions as our own churches are concerned, that we don't take this matter lightly as if there is an elder placed who does not meet these qualifications we could be placing the whole church at risk!

Paul tells Titus to get a grip on these false teachers as they are only in it for deceiving families while making a quick buck. They aren't concerned about teaching truth but teaching falsehoods. Shut them down quickly as they claim to be religious but aren't!
"They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good." Titus 1:16

Ch 2

Titus is instructed to teach by example how the older generation should be so that they will model to the younger generations of how Christians should act. Let this example be enough that hopefully those who are spreading false teachings look towards changing their lives as they see nothing wrong but envy your actions and desire to be like you.

"For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age," Titus 2:11-12

We are to be separate and live lives above reproach. Live lives that are pleasing to God and make those around us desire to be Christ-like as well. --When I look at those in the world they typically don't have much to look forward to...except drinking and other acts that are unclean. It would seem a somewhat depressing view on life by just drinking and partying all the time without a true purpose in life. They may think the very same of us as they don't understand the true purpose to life, not to be of this world but to live in such a way that we make it into heaven if we prove ourselves here on earth.

Ch 3

Paul reminds Titus to encourage the people on Crete to respect authority and not be quarrelsome. Remind them we were once just like them before we knew the love of God

through His son. We did not deserve this love but through God's grace and mercy He allowed all the hope of being saved eternally.

Don't get caught up in useless quarrels over law and other trivial matters. If you run across a quarrelsome person, warn them once or twice to stop. If they persist, be done with them. My thought here is of those who were still holding onto Jewish customs that works not change their ways but wanted to continue in showing false doctrine...

Paul finishes out the letter by stating we need to keep focus on doing good in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives. Let's evaluate our own lives and make sure we are productive for Christ as well!!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
You're very welcome! Good luck on tomorrow's posting as I hope it's not a repeat for you:)

Butch O'Neal:
Thanks, I'm praying!

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

September 17: Philemon (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, September 17 ~ Philemon

Paul is writing to Philemon regarding his former slave, Onesimus who were both from Colossi. From what I have researched, Onesimus had run away from Philemon at some point. Then while Paul was in prison, Onesimus had become very helpful to Paul as it's believed he helped deliver the letters from Paul to both the Ephesians and Colossians. Paul's wish was for Philemon to forgive Onesimus and accept him as a brother in Christ. Upon Onesimus's running away, it was believed not only did Philemon lose his slave but that items were stolen by Onesimus. Paul had a special relationship with Philemon so this letter coming from Paul would give greater meaning coming to Philemon.

Now Philemon was a leader in the church in Colossi. Paul speaks of how encouraged he is to know of Philemon's love for God and those faithfully serving God. Paul trusts that Philemon's love has deepened as well since he first was brought into Christ's body.

Paul states that instead of ordering Philemon to accept his message here, he appeals to him on the basis of love regarding Onesimus. Paul felt he should send Onesimus back to him even though he truly needed him to help continue his work from prison. In sending him back, he was hopeful that Philemon would see him as his slave who ran away, but now a brother to him through Christ.

Paul continues in stating that he wishes Philemon to welcome him back just as hopefully he would embrace Paul. If there are any debts Onesimus owes, Paul himself will make it right...and kindly reminds Philemon how much he owes Paul for all he has done for him.

This was going to be a true test for Philemon on whether he truly has accepted the love of Christ and is displaying it. Paul had full confidence in Philemon to accept Onesimus as his brother in Christ.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Such an amazing letter! Thanks, Ryan!

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

September 24: Hebrews 1-4 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, Sept 24 ~ Hebrews 1 - 4

CH 1

As Hebrews begins, the Jews are being addressed regarding how God communicated with them in the past. Now, God speaks through His Son who was appointed heir of all things... And through whom also He made the worlds. This verse helps prove Christ was there from the beginning of time when God formed the world and shows the distinction between God and Christ.

After Christ's death for our sins, he sat down at God's right hand and has been placed above the angels.

My question would be are the angels the lowest level in the hierarchy of beings in heaven.?

The latter half of the chapter finishes out glorifying the Lord and praising Him by showing His great power in creating the universe. God will never change and will always remain even when this world is no longer.

"You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end." Hebrews 1:12

Oh how insignificant we are and the world we live on while in this earthly body!

CH 2

It's all the more important that we don't drift away from this new message, not delivered by angels, but through Christ himself! If those who received the message from angels did not get away from being held responsible then, even more now is the level of importance coming directly from Christ. Not only did Christ validate the new law, but so did God in verse 4. "God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will." Hebrews 2:4 NIV

Why should God even care for such a lowly being as man and woman? Christ was made to be human while on this earth. While here on this earth, He was lower than the angels as he was human while here. Now that Christ has died, we are made his footstool and everything is subject under a Him.

Christ died for man. To allow all God's people the same opportunity to be saved through Him. Christ had to become like us in order to free us from eternal death. It wasn't for the angels he died but for each and every one of Abraham's descendants. Christ knows how to help us in our temptations as when he was made human, he also was tempted.

CH 3

Brothers and sisters in Christ! Keep your focus on that which is good!! Christ was faithful as Moses was faithful to God. Christ, being the son of God, is of greater being than Moses was. Let us prove faithful, just as Moses and Christ were, as we are Christ's house if we hold fast the Christian and rejoicing of the hope from to the end.

“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,”
Hebrews 3:12-14 NKJV

We have the example of the Israelites who did not have the belief in their heart as their hearts were hardened, who were wandering in the wilderness for forty years until they were no longer. God stated they would never enter His rest. Let us not be like them by letting our hearts be hardened and fall away from God. Let's help one another on this journey to stay faithful and true to God so that all of us will be able to enter God's rest in heaven!!

CH 4

God's promise of entering His rest still remains. Let's not fall short of what's expected of us! Those who hardened their hearts didn't enter into God's rest. Their disobedience was their downfall. Let it not be ours.

“Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”
Hebrews 4:11-13 NKJV

Does the word of God convict you? Does it make you realize you are unworthy of the grace God is showing to you? Do you meditate on it day and night? Good if it does! If it doesn't make you get determined, keep in mind what happened to those who hardened their hearts and refused to follow God. Upon the completion of our life here on earth, we are done! There is no turning back and saying sorry to God when we are dead!! Get your act together and follow Him, not the world who cannot save you.

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
Hebrews 4:15-16 NKJV

Sounds like a great invitation to the end of a sermon doesn't it? Christ knows our weaknesses! He knows our strengths as well! He wants us to follow Him and know the peace He knows! He doesn't want anyone to perish as he died for each of us! He knows His father doesn't renege on His promises either. If you prove faithful, you will enter His eternal rest. If not, you will enter into everlasting destruction where you will never rest in peace!

The choice is yours! His promise is true and everlasting!! May you choose wisely!

Have a blessed week serving the Lord your God!!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Charles Fry:

In heaven's hierarchy the word "angels" (i.e. messengers) seems to be the generic term for the hosts of heaven. God's representatives are often called the "angel of the Lord." Some mighty angels, like Michael and perhaps Gabriel are "prince" (arch) angels, but still angels. Perhaps somewhat like the fact a general, a captain, a sergeant, or a private, can each be called a soldier. The word angel speaks of the nature of God's heavenly host and doesn't necessarily say anything about the rank of a particular angel.

Psalms 148:2

2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

October 1: Hebrews 5-7 (Randy Ingle)

Monday, Oct 1 ~ Hebrews 5 -7

Chapter 5: High priests were chosen in order to sacrifice for the sins of people. They would also need to do it for themselves as well. They are given that authority by God, not by man. Christ did not make himself high priest, but was appointed to it by God.

Psalms 110 David speaks of this 6th verse of his Lord in the order of Melchizedek.

God designated Christ, as a sacrifice for our sins. Through his suffering and obedience he learned and became the perfect sacrifice.

He then warns about the need to ready and discern the truth. They should have been able to be teachers by now. Instead they still needed to be taught. They weren't ready for "solid food" Solid food is for those who are studied and ready to know good from evil.

Chapter 6: he continued to encourage growth in knowledge of Christ. Some are falling away that have once known the truth. If we are studied in the truth and grounded then they will be less likely to be led astray.

They need to be surrounded by good things rather than thrones and thistles. He then reaffirmed the need to stay strong in the faith and not become sluggish. God will not forget those who remember him. They are to be imitators of those who exemplify faithfulness.

We all share a promise that is as strong as God's oath to Abraham. Christ is the forerunner on our behalf that if we trust in him we have a hope that will endure.

Chapter 7: Chapter 7 goes into the history of the priests. Christ is the replacement of an order of priests, of which there were many. Those who hope in him, hope on one who is eternal. There was a need for a change in law along with this change. Christ lives to make intercession for all who seek it through him.

Thankful for the opportunity to give a review of this as I'm on vacation this week. Sunday's are too hard for my schedule, but glad for the opportunity.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Randy! We sincerely appreciate you using some of your time off by edifying us! 😊 The priestly office was a sacred and highly esteemed institution for the Jews. The excellence of Christ's priesthood above the Levitical priesthood is shown in these chapters. By receiving the Lord Jesus they would have a much better high priest, a priesthood of a higher order, and consequently a better covenant, law and testament. Our High Priest holds power of endless life; not only to keep himself alive, but to give spiritual and eternal life to all who rely upon his sacrifice and intercession. God promised to appoint another priest, a permanent priest — which implies someone who is perfect in himself and perfect in his work. Psalm 110:4. Once again, wonderful to have your guidance this week. Enjoy your well-earned time off.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Randy! Enjoy your vacation!

October 8: Hebrews 8-10 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, October 8, 2017, Hebrews 8 - 10

CH 8

Christ is the high priest who sits at God's right hand. Priest would bring their offerings for a sacrifice but Christ's offering was the most perfect offering to ever be made. Moses was instructed in very specific detail regarding the tabernacle. If there had not been any issue with the first covenant, then there would not have been any need for Christ to bring the new covenant.

The Jews did not remain faithful to God's covenant in the old law which in turn caused God to bring in the new covenant.

Vs 11 states, "No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

Hallelujah!!

CH 9

The tabernacle is briefly described again with emphasis showing the ritual taking place yearly by the high priest entering the most holy place. God was separated from man in this type of setup as only the high priest was allowed in and that only with blood to cover his sins and the sins of the people. This was only a temporary means for worship and forgiveness until the new law would be in place through the perfect sacrifice as animal sacrifices went sufficient for God. As Christ came to this earth as high priest, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made of human hands. He did not enter through the use of goat or bulls blood. While the box and ashes of the goats and build was sprinkled on the ceremonially unclean in the first covenant; Christ blood cleanses us of our sins. Christ is the mediator of this new covenant as he was the unblemished sacrifice who was offered for all sins.

The first covenant was put into place by the death of an animal. Death and the sprinkling of the blood was required for the cleansing to complete.

"In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." 9:21-22

Christ was the complete and perfect sacrifice that purified all. With man, it was required on a yearly basis for the high priest to enter the most holy place. With Christ, it was required of His death only once...Showing to power of this new covenant God put into place. Christ's death was truly magnificent in this way!!

“so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.” 9:28

CH 10

God was not truly satisfied with the sacrifice of animals. No matter how many sacrifices were offered, they could not completely take away the sins of the people. Christ was the plan to completely take away sin as he was completely pure and free of sin. He was of heaven, not of this earth.

“First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them”—though they were offered in accordance with the law. Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” 8-10

Priest would offer sacrifices daily but those sacrifices went enough to cover the sins of the people. Christ was only needed to be sacrificed once to complete all sacrifices. This was affirmed by the Holy Spirit as this new law was not written in stone or written on paper but carved on the lining of the people's hearts.

Because of this great everlasting sacrifice, which ended the need for sacrifices, let us draw near to God with sincere hearts. “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” 24-25

Don't take for granted this gift, this sacrifice and continue to deliberately sin. Don't be in risk of hell fire that will consume you for your sins!!! Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the account of two or three witnesses. So you think you will get away from the punishment coming to you for trampling the Son of Good underfoot?

“For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” 30-31

Persevere!! Keep the faith!! Don't shrink back from evil but expose it in love.

“You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.” 10:36

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Steven Wright:
thank you brother Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! Hebrews is such a good book. I've heard several lessons from brothers in Hebrews 10. 5 "lettuce" lessons 🥬 & 4 conditions needed to draw near to God.

October 15: Hebrews 11-13 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, October 15 ~ Hebrews 11 - 13

CH 11

Good Lord's Day Morning to all!! We begin our study today with the chapter considered the faith chapter.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” 11:1

We understand, that through faith, the worlds were made by God even though we can't see God Himself. It's important we understand the significance faith has played in Bible times as well as today.

Without faith in the belief that God created the world and all its inhabitants, and in knowing the Bible to be true based in that faith.

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” 11:6

This chapter helps recap several examples in the old testament where faith was displayed and how strong their faith was like Moses and Abraham. Very good reminder for us when we perhaps feel our faith wavering.

CH 12

Put away sin and all the things that hinder you in your Christian walk!! Kerri your eyes focused on Christ as you endure this race for the eternal prize. Keep in mind what Christ endured and don't lose heart and become discouraged.

Those hardships you are enduring, rejoice that the father is discipling you and showing His love for you. He is teaching you lessons in life like your earthly father did. No discipline is enjoyable at the time is administered but keep in mind this discipline will produce a harvest of righteousness!!

"Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees." 12:12

It's hard when being corrected to see the big picture. We are worried about ourselves at that time. Keep in mind this discipline is meant to make you stronger for the Lord's work and reason you to think less of yourself?

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;” 12:14-15

We've got to look out for one another and help each other through tough times! We're all in this together so we all will hopefully win the prize!!

Remember! We serve a HOLY God! He is a just God. We won't get away from his wrath if we are unfaithful! All of earth will perish by an all-consuming fire! As the beginning of this chapter stated, keep your focus on the goal of eternal life.

CH 13

“Let brotherly love continue. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.” 13:1-2

Remember those who taught you of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Vs 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever!! He never changes but man's ways do... Keep that in mind.

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” 13:15-16

Let's remember this passage as we go to church! Sing praises that will praise and glorify God above.

“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.” Hebrews 13:17

Comment:

Al Bown:

Very strong chapters.....

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Yes indeed brother Al!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! These chapters are an inspiration. I love the imagery displayed in Hebrews 12:1-3. Heroes of faith surrounding us; cheering us on, bearing testimony to the power of faith. And the supreme witness accomplishing our eternal redemption. Giving hope that our present suffering is far outweighed by the prospect of future glory! ❤️ Run with perseverance and fix our eyes on Jesus so we may joyfully assemble in that heavenly city!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Very edifying to say the least!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Very edifying scripture! You're welcome!

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

October 22: James 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, October 22 ~ James 1 - 3

James, a brother of Jesus, wrote this letter to help address the new gentile converts who were coming into the church (Acts 15:13-21). This letter was addressed to the twelve tribes of Israel. This letter addresses the need for action (works) in your Christian life and how important they are.

CH 1

Count it Joy when you are going through trails as this produces perseverance. Perseverance produces maturity in your Christian body. It's hard when we go through these trails but it is what makes you and shows your true belief in God! Those who preserve through their trials are blessed as they will receive the crown of life.

If you lack wisdom, then ask God for understanding and believe with all your being that God will deliver that wisdom for you. If you doubt God will deliver what you need, you will not receive it. God is looking for true belief of the individual.

When a poor person gets a break in life, cheer for them. When a rich person is humbled, cheer as well. Prosperous times flee by quickly like wildflowers.

It is so very important to remind ourselves of this next statement! Don't blame God when you are tempted saying God is tempting me. That's not possible. Your desires are bringing sin into your life, which if not cut out can ultimately lead to death.

...Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires." 19-20

How many of us really need to work on our anger as it does get the best of us at times! Often times the anger is due to some kind of selfishness we have when we should be patient or faith in God instead to handle our issues.

Don't merely just read the scripture and hear the word and then forget what you just heard of read, use it and keep it in your mind. Make good use of what you have learned!! You will be blessed for following the perfect law you have learned.

"Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." 26-27

Watch what you say!!! So many times I hear people who claim to have religion in their life swear like sailors! They speak filthy just like everyone else in the world. There is no separation from them and the world.

The last verse is beautiful in the fact of putting your faith into action in helping others! Widows and orphans need our help! In doing so you are demonstrating God's love for them.

CH 2

Watch how you treat others. Don't show favoritism to a well dressed individual that you wouldn't likewise show towards a poor person dressed in tattered clothing. In so doing you are harvesting evil thoughts in showing favoritism. Keep in mind who God sees as being put on earth as being rich spiritually.

“But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.” 9-10
Be cautious in not only this treatment in rich verses poor, but also with showing favoritism in others talents as well. Placing people who possibly sing better at the front of the church or who look more pleasing to the eyes... Use mercy upon others as the same level of mercy will be shown into you.

The next group of verses is critical for Christians to understand!! “In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” 2:17 faith workout works is useless! Likewise works without faith is useless as well. God requires both!! “You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” 2:24, 26

CH 3

“The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” 3:6, 8

Consider your words carefully! When teaching the body of Christ, great importance on what the tongue says is needed! From this scripture here, or tongue can start a small fire which will manifest itself into a great wildfire! As Christians we really need to be mindful of what we are going to say as we don't want to spread wildfires either knowingly or unknowingly!! Out of a mouth that praises God also comes cursing? Be careful with such a powerful small part of our body!!

Being wise as a Christian is shown through your actions and staying humble. Being wise is not shown by bragging of your wisdom. Being wise as a Christian is not trying to upstage others and flaunt yourself as being wise. Being unpredictable in temperament is not showing wisdom of God.

“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.” 3:17

Live peacefully with each other.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, brother Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

U r so welcome, Butch O'Neal

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! This is another wonderful book. I love how our studies intertwine! It seems to be that James wrote this letter as leader from the Jerusalem congregation to Christians dispersed after the stoning of Stephen. His instruction & encouragement would have given great joy in the face of their difficulties.

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

You are so correct! James is such a critical book to our understanding!!

October 29: James 4-5 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, October 29th ~ James 4 & 5

CH 4

Be careful with what you desire as worldly possessions! Don't get carried away with your earthly possessions and covet what your neighbor has... God will not provide what you don't need. If you desire to be friendly with the world and have all the world has, you are an enemy of God's.

It's good to remind ourselves of this... "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 4:6. This is why God loves humble people as they desire God and his righteousness over what the world has to offer them. When we are proud and have all we need, we feel less dependant on God to provide for our needs.

Change your behavior. Flee from evil and the devil will flee from you. Humble yourself before God! Be in mourning of your past and change for the better as you embrace God.

God is the judge. He made the law. Don't go around judging each other, trying to find fault with brothers and sisters, but instead be more interested in making sure you are following the law!

Don't get too certain of the future! "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." 4:14. We don't even know if we will be here the next minute in time! Death is always waiting, ready to knock on our door... When addressing things of the future, we should say, "If it is the Lord's will...". When we take this stance, it helps to keep us humble as we understand how insignificant we really are in this life.

Lastly, "If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them." 4:17. If we see something we can do that is a good deed and don't do it, we are sinning. Don't boast of how great you are in the deeds you do as this is not showing a humble spirit.

CH 5

James makes note here of how the wealthy among them are going to receive what is coming their way. They have mistreated their workers and have hoarded their wealth to themselves. Their time is coming!

Be patient! The Lord's coming is very near. Don't cause issues with your brothers and sisters for you will be judged for your actions. God is always near! Keep in mind how patient Job was through his persecution from Satan.

If you're in trouble, pray! If you're happy, pray! If you're sick, all of the elders to pray. Always try earnestly to pray to God in all times. Pray for one another. "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." 5:16

If you are able to turn a person who is in error back to God, has saved a soul from perishing.

James offered many great tidbits of information that is still relevant yet today. Excellent letter for us to refresh ourselves on regarding not only having faith but doing works as well.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, brother Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
You're certainly welcome brother Butch O'Neal!

Comment:

Joyce Ingle:
Very good passages

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Ryan: thank you for covering yet another excellent epistle! I hadn't remembered until tonight this is the only place Job is mentioned in the NT.

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

November 5: 1 Peter 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, November 5 ~ 1 Peter 1 - 3

Peter is leading a church in Rome during this time (60 AD). He hears of other churches in neighboring Roman provinces are struggling with persecutions so he writes this letter to help encourage them through their struggles.

CH 1

Peter starts the letter out by reminding them of the great gift they have received in the death of Christ. This inheritance can never perish as it is eternal for God.

Peter addresses their persecution as this trial they are going through is a proving ground for their sincere faith in Christ. This trial proves your faith is strong if you overcome these persecution, which will result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. He reminds them that even though you have not seen Him, you show your love for Him and belief in Him. The result of such actions of faith is the salvation of their souls.

He tells them these persecutions were foretold by the prophets themselves as to how Christ would endure persecutions and those who followed after His death.

Keep your focus! Remember the have given you through Christ Ave know it will be revealed at His final coming. Put off your evil desires you had when you were in ignorance and put on what is Holy.

“for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”” 1 Peter 1:16

Since God is the judge, live your life in fear and respect of God, knowing God is a righteous judge. Your salvation was bought with a huge price; the blood of Christ, a perfect lamb from from blemish or defect. He was chosen before the world began for the end times. Because of Christ, you know God.

You have put on a new life, one where you shed the sins of your past. You have a new life that is imperishable.

CH 2

“Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.” 1 Peter 2:1-3

Christ is referred to as a living stone, rejected by humans but chosen by God... And that we are also like living stones and are being built into a spiritual house. In Ephesians 2:19-22 it states, “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

Stones were used to build altars and also houses. We are being used as stones to build a spiritual house for God. We need to remember to never lose faith in Christ as he is that previous stone, rejected by man. He has become the cornerstone upon which all other stones

rest upon. This stone causes non-believers to stumble and fall as it is what they are destined to do.

God however had called us out of the darkness and into the light, so that we who accept and do His will, will praise Him. The gentiles were reminded of how once they were not the people of God, but now they have received mercy through Christ's death.

Peter warns them to keep themselves from sinful desires that wage war against the soul. Also to live your lives in such a way that even though those who persecute you see your good deeds and glorify God on that day.

Peter goes on instructing them to submit to authority and how through their faith and actions they will show their love for God to others.

Peter reminds them how even when Christ was being insulted he did not retaliate against them but entrusted Himself into God who is the ultimate judge.

CH 3

Wives without husbands in the body of Christ, submit yourselves to them as this will help your husbands see the purity and reverence and hopefully be won over. "Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands," 1 Peter 3:4-5

Let your inner beauty show through! Likewise, husbands treat your wife with respect as the weaker partner. Remember you're both on the same mission in life.

"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing." 3:9

Love one another and be compassionate towards them. Turn from evil and do good!

"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

1 Peter 3:12

Even if you do suffer for doing good, it is better for you. Make such a reputation that when those of the world speak evil of you and slander you, feel ashamed of their slander.

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." 3:15-16

Remember Christ also went through this kind of matter for your sake

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, brother Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

You're welcome!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Such a short letter, yet much wisdom and guidance in Christian life and duties. Thank you, Ryan!

November 12: 1 Peter 4-5 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, November 12 ~ 1 Peter 4 & 5

Ch 4

Peter continues addressing the new Gentiles who recently converted to follow Christ. Christ suffered. Now you are suffering in the body. Resisting your desires of the sinful nature in return for pleasing God. Peter reminds them they have spent enough time living the sinful lives of the past. Those sinners will be “called on the carpet” before God who will judge them.

Peter encouraged them to remain sober so they could earnestly pray. Love one another with sincere love! Use your special talent to help others! Let your gift glorify God through Jesus as a testimony to Him.

When life gets hard being a Christian as those around you persecute you and speak evil of you, rejoice as you are following Christ! Remember, Christ was persecuted before you.

CH 5

Peter speaks elder to elder here at the beginning of this chapter. He instructs them to be good shepherds of their flocks that they care for. Not because you have to, but because you want to. You should be eager to serve and eager to be an example for your flock. You should not use the position to lord it over others. When the Chief Shepherd returns, your crown awaits you who have faithfully carried this mission.

Younger members who aren't elders submit yourselves to your elders. Be humble towards each other. Remember, God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.

Cast all your anxiety on Him. Be alert and sober minded as the devil is always prowling around looking to devour whomever he chooses. Stand firm in your faith. Know that others are going through the same kinds of trials. God will deliver those who are faithful to Him to eternal life with Him.

Comment:

Debbie Bolinger:

We need 2 be mindful of this all of the time.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! Some of the strongest and best arguments against sin are taken from the sufferings of Christ. He died to destroy sin; and though he cheerfully submitted to the worst sufferings, he never gave way to the least sin.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan!

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

November 19: 2 Peter 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, November 19 ~ 2 Peter 1 - 3

My apologies in this being posted so late. I hope it didn't cause you to miss your reading today!

Peter knows his time is very short now on earth as Nero was close to executing him. He wants to remind believers in Christ of his first hand experience of being with Christ. Many false teachers were trying to spread doubt that Christ would ever return since His coming had not taken place yet.

CH 1

Peter starts by reminding them how great of gift we received through Christ. We have the knowledge of knowing how to please God as a result of His son. We have escaped the evil of this world through Christ, he is our salvation!!

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.” 5-7 Peter makes it clear it is critical to keep these qualities in your life, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of Christ. Without them, you will forget the cleansing of your sins. Do these things and you will never stumble. Peter knew his time was short. He really wanted to drill the message into them and remind them before he no longer could.

Peter affirms his time with Christ and that the message he has spoken is true. He confirms he was there on the mountain when God spoke of Christ.

Peter goes on in reminding them all of what happened was foretold in prophecy. Keep focused on the prophesy as it is the light that helps you overcome the darkness. “For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

2 Peter 1:21

CH 2

Peter warns them of false teachers that were present during earlier times as well as now. They will try to cause divisions among you - but know their destruction will be swift!! Unfortunately, they will take followers with them into their destruction as they will not be able to determine right from wrong.

Peter is the example of the angels who rebelled in heaven being casted into hell. He also used the example of Noah and saving his family during much darkness in the world as to God's ability to save those who were righteous. Peter continues by showing how God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah by burning the cities to Ash and yet saving Lot from the destruction as

another example of God saving righteous people. God is able to separate the righteous from the wicked - keep this in your memory, never forget even when I, Peter, am no longer. Be careful of these powerful false teachers and others who wish to mislead you. They act all powerful and flaunt the strength and wealth around. Yet angels who are much more powerful would never consider such behavior. Remember, they will receive their reward from God! They have no shame! They are like wild animals who carouse around in broad daylight. They don't sorry about their sin as they are so entrenched in it.

There's a special place reserved for these individuals, the darkest of darkness in hell. These evil individuals lurk around for the weak. They promise freedom but yet are slaves to sin.

"If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud."” 2 Peter 2:20-22

Peter clearly has issue with these false teachers who were leading people away from Christ's message of salvation. He truly shows his love for these people in this letter. He is concerned how things will go with them when Peter is no longer with them.

CH 3

Peter continues in warning them to stand guard against these individuals who would try to lead them away by saying where is this coming? They make light of it to cast doubt in the believers. However, they forget the creation. They forget the power of God! The God who created the earth, then destroyed it with the flood, and in the end through fire.

Peter assures them by saying, "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:8-9

God is a merciful judge who wishes no one to perish. In His time all things will come to an end. The end will come like a thief in the night. The elements will be destroyed by fire.

Keep yourselves pure. Keep yourselves holy. Live godly lives as you look for God's return. Your reward has been promised with a new heaven and Earth. Keep yourself spotless and pure, blameless! Remember, Christ's patience brings more people to salvation. Peter refers to Paul's writings here. He makes note that some unwise, ignorant individuals try to understand his writings but distort his message.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan! What an encouragement this book is. Timeless as well! The Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials. The Lord is not slack concerning His promises. He is patient; not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance. Therefore make every effort... 1:5-10!

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

November 26: 1 John 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, November 26 ~ 1 John 1 - 3

CH 1

This letter starts out very similarly to Peter in the fact the author (believed to be John) addresses the fact he was present when God (Christ) was here on earth. This Christ, who brings eternal life to us, was witnessed by us that we may proclaim Him to others so that they may enjoy the fellowship with us because of Him.

How great are the following verses the I can't leave any of it out! We should meditate on these verses often as we think we are living our lives for God, but when you really get down to it, we are often times tricking ourselves. The Devil is a Sly Old Fox!

"...God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us."

1 John 1:5-10

Make sure this passage is highlighted in your bible

CH 2

Christ is our atonement for our sins!! "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—" Romans 3:23-25

Just like in the first chapter where if we still walk in darkness, we are not part of Him, so also if we claim to "know Him", but yet don't follow His commands, we are liars! "But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did." 1 John 2:5-6

Make sure you are following the greatest commandment... To love one another! If a brother or sister hates another, they are walking in darkness. They do not know the light. They have been blinded by darkness!! -How true, and how scary this fact is! Darkness is powerful. Look at how much hate is in the world and how it seems to continue to rise!

"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.

The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.” 1 John 2:15, 17

Be on the utmost guard against your earthly desires. Don't let this world entice you and pull you away from God! Remember, this earth will pass away and what awaits us will be far superior to anything this earth has to offer. Also keep in mind, if you get wrapped up in this world, far greater pain and agony awaits you when your life is complete here on earth.

Verse twenty reassures these gentiles they have been following the truth. No less come from this truth.

Who then is a liar? The one who denies Christ. If you deny Christ is the Son of God you deny the Father! Whoever acknowledges the Son, has the Father.

Don't be deceived by those who wish to lead you astray! You know the truth. Remain in it deeply and the truth will remain in you for eternity! Through eternal life!

“If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.” 2:29

Do those who are of the world know you're with Christ? Can they see a difference in you from others? Can other Christians see you are of Christ?

CH 3

This verse alone would fill your heart with joy today as we go and worship Christ our savior!! “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.” 3:1

We will see Christ the way he is as we will be transformed like Him! Praise God! This should motivate each and everyone of us to do our best in serving God!

No one who lives deeply in Christ makes a practice of sin. We should try to abstain from sin as it separates us from Christ and endangers our soul. Don't let others lead you astray from God! “No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.” 1 John 3:9-10

We should not be like Cain as he killed his brother. Caine actions were evil where Abel was righteous. He followed God's command... Don't be surprised if the world hates you. They don't understand you if you truly are of Christ. “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death.” 1 John 3:14

We should be as Christ in love. He died for us!! So also should we show love towards our brothers and sisters who are in need. If we have a material possession one of our brothers or sisters is in need of and we don't try to help, how can we say we are part of God? “Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” 1 John 3:18

God is all-powerful and all-knowing! He knows our true heart. We should practice His greatest command, “And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.” 23-24

Can you see others who are Christians living this example in their lives? They truly just love other people and want to help them. They show hospitality and humility. These are the

individuals I feel who truly reflect Christ! Let's all strive to show true love towards each other and God!

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.” John 15:12-13

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Marc Hermon:
1 John is such a good read.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan! I started to post last night but fell asleep while typing 😴 I really love this book. John does a wonderful job exhorting Christians to live by faith and remember the one who lives in you is greater than the one who is in the world. Praise God we have assurance of salvation because we are redeemed!

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=GXI0B4iMLuU>
MercyMe - Greater

December 2: 1 John 4-5 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, Dec 2 ~ 1 John 4 - 5

CH 4

Be on your guard!! Don't allow yourselves to be fouled by false prophets. Test them as to whether Christ is the Son of God. If they say He isn't, this is the sign of an Antichrist.

“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” 1 John 4:4

John goes on to further explain how the world understand those from the world and those who are from God understands and listens to us.

Love is from God and of God. Everyone who lives has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God. Good showed His true love in sending Christ to die for us. “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 4:11

“If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God.” 1 John 4:15

If we truly love and truly love God, we should not fear if our love is perfect love. God showed us how to love. If we love God and hate our brother, then they are liars. If you don't love your brother or sister you have seen, how can you love God, whom you have not seen?

CH 5

“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.” 5:1-2

In order to overcome this world, we need to have the love of God. We need to believe in His Son and know that Christ is the Son of God.

Christ was born through the watery baptism and shed his blood on the cross. The spirit gives testimony to this. God's testimony is greater than man's and so we know this to be true.

“Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”
1 John 5:10-12

John wraps this letter up by reaffirming that if you believe in the Son of God, you may have eternal life through Him. We have confidence in knowing if we all of God, He hears us.

If you see your brother or sister sinning, you should pray for them, if it isn't the unforgivable sin.

“We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.” 1 John 5:20

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
Your welcome!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan! The Greatest Commands will be on my mind tonight after reading this passage.

♥ <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-yo2Y5iGqU>

Replies:

Joanne Caffie:
Thank you Ginger... That was a very refreshing thing to hear at 6am in the morning

Ginger Hermon:

Joanne Caffie Have a joyous day! Love you sweet sister! ♥♥

Joanne Caffie:
And you as well!!!

Comment:

Francisco Pagulayan:

Thanks for the good passage and a reminder for me too, great!!!!!!! Good job brother

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

December 10: 2 John (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, Dec 10 ~ 2 John

John starts out by addressing himself as an elder. He clearly had great standing in Christ's church and helping to establish it.

He starts out addressing his letter to the election lady and her children. Elect her is obviously referring to be chosen by God. We know the church is referred to as the Bride of Christ in Revelations. We are also referred to as children of God. If anyone has a different take on this please share but I just believe that's all he is referring to here.

John finds great joy in knowing some are following in the truth. John reiterates the command of love and its importance. "And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love." 1:6

He warns of those who don't believe Christ was human on earth, to start away from them as they are deceivers. Don't lose out on what we have worked for... The reward is too great to miss out on by following such people. If anyone confess to you without this type of belief, don't let them into your house or welcome them. If you do, you share in their wickedness!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
You're most certainly welcome?

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks, Ryan Ingle!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
You're welcome

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

December 17: 3 John (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, December 17 ~ 3 John 1

John writes this letter to Gaius wishing good health upon him. John mentions how encouraged he is to receive reports of how Gaius continues to walk in the faith and truth. John writes of how much great joy is brought to him when he sees others walking in truth.

John has received reports of how Gaius has been helping complete strangers who were traveling stay for a short time and "wear" the Christian belief well. Those "strangers" are making the report of the love shown to them while visiting Gaius and others there with him.

Diotrephes was a leader who opposed John's authority. He refuses to welcome John so John makes mention of addressing this matter and the malicious nonsense Diotrephes is spreading when he visits in the future. He also refused to welcome other Christian visitors who want to visit the church.

John then iterates the importance of not imitating what is evil (possibly also referring to how Diotrephes is acting). Anyone who does what is good is of God. Anyone who does evil had not seen God.

Demetrius is mentioned here is being spoken of very highly by everyone who knows him.

John states he plans on visiting them soon as he doesn't want to write much at this time but would rather deliver his message in person soon.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Marc Hermon:
Thanks Ryan, you've been flying through Bible books these last three weeks. Only one more book to go!

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:
Lol! I think I can do it:)

Comment:

Ginger Hermon: A very short letter but excellent source showing how important it is to have hospitality and love extended to the church. Thank you, Ryan. I have great joy knowing you walk in the Truth! 😊❤️

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

December 24: Jude (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, December 24 ~ Jude

Jude was a brother to Jesus. He starts off by saying a servant of Jesus here as he had an active role in the church.

Jude here states his excitement for the gospel but makes it clear he's not writing regarding this excitement but his have concern of infiltrators seeking to mislead and corrupt the message of Christ. We were warned this would happen and now it is here. We need to fight for this message with everything we have to keep it pure for everyone..

He goes on to remind them how the Israelites were led from Egypt but destroyed those who did not obey and believe in God. He also reminds them of the angels who defected from God...also spoken of in 2 Peter 2:4. Jude emphasizes here of their eternal destruction to show what happens for going against God. Also the example of Sodom And Gomorrah and surrounding cities who they have into sexual immorality and now suffer from eternal fire.

We know that from Daniel 10:13 and 12:1 that Michael was a chief angel for God. Michael would stand up in defense of God's people as he stood against Satan here. Revelations 12:7 speaks of this battle with Michael and his angels against the dragon and his angels if you're interested in reading of this battle. Deuteronomy 34:5-5 speaks of the Lord burying Moses. It is possible that Michael could have buried Moses body so that the devil would not even know where he was buried with fear the devil would make an idoltry sacrifice to Moses is his body was known of its location.

Even Michael, the chief angel, did not dare condemn or slander Satan but left it up to the Lord God, who is the Judge of all. Yet these people slander whatever they don't understand. They are in severe trouble for their actions.

Jude goes on to describe these individuals very harshly. Even Enoch predicts this time happening and how Christ would be coming back to judge these ungodly individuals of their actions. "These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage." (vs. 16)

"But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life." 20-21

Jude encourages them like us to keep our minds focused on God until our time is over. When Christ returns to bring us the eternal life we so eagerly await.

What an excellent book to conclude our reading this year! This book really wraps up a lot of what the others books spoke of regarding false teaching and keeping yourself pure and on track for Christ.

I can't believe this will be the last post in this study this year! It has been an interesting experience. I have truly enjoyed the comments from others! I am truly hopeful everyone feels richly edified through these studies and look forward to next year!

Comment:

Beverly Schoonover Wattenbarger:

Thank you Ryan. I appreciate all the time and efforts that have gone into this study. I'm looking forward to next year. God's blessings

Comment:

Marc Hermon:

Thank you Ryan for your dedication to this study group this year. It was a good work.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, Ryan! I have been edified by your posts!

Comment:

Joanne Caffie:

I am always edified by you my brother. Thank you so much for taking time from your busy schedule to lead us in the path of righteousness. May God reward your efforts!

Comment:

Steven Wright:

Thank you brother! I have appreciated your thoughts very much in these overviews. Thanks for this good work! Much love to you and your family!

Comment:

Yvonna Hartman:

Thank you Ryan for your work each week. I have enjoyed this study very much.

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:

Thank you, Ryan! I owe you.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Such an important lesson Jude brings to the early church and to us: being saved by grace does not give us a license to sin. We must be on guard against such teachings.

Ryan: I would also like to sincerely thank you for encouraging the saints this past year. You helped me stay accountable for reading through the Bible. I can honestly answer I've grown. I know you have as well. Thanks not only for these posts each Sunday but also teaching nearly every Wednesday night @ PHill. You are a great blessing in our life. Thanks to all your family as well, especially Jamie. It wasn't always easy (moving to new home, new job, court dates, etc.)

but you persevered! God has been glorified and we are grateful. ❤️ Love you!

