

A hand in a white robe, pointing upwards with the index finger. A bright, glowing yellow light emanates from the palm, creating a strong lens flare effect. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white and light grey.

**The Kingdom,
The Power,
and The
Glory**

Kingdom, Power and Glory

A SURVEY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Fourth Edition

by Jean-Baptiste Sawadogo
and Marcia A. Munger

AN INDEPENDENT-STUDY TEXTBOOK

Developed in cooperation with Global University staff



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School for Evangelism and Discipleship
Global University
1211 South Glenstone
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USA

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THE CHRISTIAN SERVICE SERIES



This Independent-Study Textbook is one of 18 courses (subjects) that make up the GU Christian Service Program. The symbol at the left is a guide for the order of study in the series, which is divided into three units of six courses each. *Kingdom, Power, and Glory* is Course 2 in Unit I.

The units are structured to guide you in systematically going through the entire series. However, you may study this course by itself or study any course in the entire series in any sequence.

Study materials in the Christian Service Program are designed in a self-teaching format for Christian workers. This program will provide a student with the necessary Bible knowledge and skills for practical Christian service. These courses have been especially prepared for Christian workers in all nations and cultures.

ATTENTION

Please read the preliminary instructions for this course very carefully. By following the instructions, you should be able to achieve your goals for the course, and you should not have difficulty preparing for your unit evaluations

COURSE INTRODUCTION

God's New Covenant With Humanity

In this course, you will study the New Testament, the new agreement God made with humanity through Jesus Christ. The New Testament tells how God saved us from eternal destruction and how we can be brought into His kingdom through Christ and experience His power daily. And it describes the glorious return of our Savior and our wonderful destiny in Him.

The first unit gives an overview of all the books of the New Testament and the time during which they were written. It presents the books that tell about Jesus' earthly life and ministry. You will study each of the four Gospel accounts of His unique message and His mighty miracles. Also, you will learn about the land where He lived and the men who wrote about Him.

The second unit examines the books that describe the beginning of the church and its expansion throughout the Roman Empire. In this unit, you will follow the apostles and the believers as they proclaimed the good news of salvation to Jews and Greeks, slaves and masters, honest seekers and skeptics. You will study the letters that were written to the various congregations that sprang up and learn about these congregations' joys and problems. You will see how the church was formed and sustained by the power of God.

The third unit presents the books that were written as the church continued to expand. In this unit, you will learn how it faced persecution by those who hated it and false teaching by those who denied its Lord. You will consider the guidelines that were set down for its leaders and study the glorious vision these books have of the future. In this unit, you will also discover how the New Testament has been passed on to us. You will learn the

reasons why we can rely on it completely as we seek to know God and serve Him today.

As you study all these things, you will realize that the New Testament is God's message to you. The facts you learn will help you understand its truths and teach them to others. God bless you as you study!

The Time between the Testaments

Perhaps you have already studied the Old Testament. If so, you will remember that its historical account closes with the Jews rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. But when the New Testament opens, Jerusalem is under Roman control. What happened in the land of Palestine during the time between the Old and the New Testaments, the “intertestamental” period?

In 586 BC, the last group of Jews was taken away from Jerusalem into captivity under the Babylonians. While these Jews were in captivity, the Persians conquered the Babylonians. The Persians allowed the Jews to go back to Jerusalem, and a small number of them returned. This ended their seventy-year period of exile. The Jews who returned to Jerusalem rebuilt the temple and settled in the land. However, many Jews did not return to Palestine. Some remained in Babylon. The rest were eventually scattered among the nations. In history, this has been called the *diaspora*, a term related to the word *dispersion*, which means “a spreading or scattering.”

Next, the Persians were defeated by young Alexander the Great, whose armies conquered vast territories including Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Alexander's political empire did not long survive his early death at the age of 33. The Greek culture he introduced, though, had a lasting influence on Palestine and the entire ancient world.

After Alexander died in 323 BC, Palestine was controlled by a series of other foreign powers. Antiochus IV (175–164 BC), a ruler of the Seleucid Empire, tried to force the Jews to accept the Greek culture. He forbade their traditional worship and desecrated their temple. In 167 BC, the Jews revolted against

his evil decrees. A few years later, they regained control of Jerusalem and cleansed the temple. Their war for independence continued until 142 BC. This time is known as the Maccabean period, named after Judas Maccabeas (the “hammerer”), the hard-hitting military leader of the Jewish forces.

The period of Jewish independence lasted from 142 BC until 63 BC, when Jerusalem was taken over by the Roman general Pompey. During this time, the Hasmonean rulers continued to struggle against foreign domination. They also fought among themselves. The Hasmonean rulers were descendants of Simon Maccabeas, one of the brothers of Judas. (Judas was killed in 161 BC.) In the meantime, the power of Rome, a major force in the area from about 200 BC onward, continued to grow stronger. The last Hasmonean ruler was killed in 37 BC by Herod the Great, whom Rome appointed ruler of the Jews. Herod was in power at the time of Christ’s birth.

As you begin your study of the New Testament, it will be helpful for you to keep these facts about the intertestamental period in mind. The events that happened during this period influenced the Jewish religion and shaped the world into which Jesus was born.

Course Description

Kingdom, Power, and Glory will help the Christian worker gain an overall knowledge of the content of the New Testament. It emphasizes the historical setting, characteristics, and teachings of the New Testament. It will help the Christian worker understand the New Testament, gain confidence in its reliability, and become better equipped to share its truths with others.

Course Objectives

When you finish this course, you should be able to:

1. Describe the historical background, author, and message of each book of the New Testament.
2. Identify important places associated with the background of the New Testament, the life of Jesus, and the expansion of the early church.
3. Explain why we can rely on the New Testament as the trustworthy and accurate record of the life of Jesus and the teachings of the apostles.
4. Accept the New Testament as God's message to you and share its truths more fully with others.

Textbooks

You will use *Kingdom, Power, and Glory* by Jean-Baptiste Sawadogo and Marcia A. Munger as both the textbook and study guide for the course. The Bible is the only other requirement.

Before You Begin

For Official Credit and a Certificate

Students who are officially enrolled with Global University through the International office in Springfield, MO, USA and have paid the appropriate fees may earn an end of series **Christian Service Diploma** by completing all the course requirements including the final examination for each course. A diploma may be requested from the Registrar's office. Students studying through a center or group should contact their instructor or director for information concerning a diploma.

- Students may officially enroll in the School for Evangelism and Discipleship (SED) courses online at **<http://sed.globalutrainig.com>** or by contacting student services.
- To study and obtain a certificate in one of our offices worldwide please fill out the form located at http://www.globaluniversity.edu/request_info.cfm to determine if there is a study group in your country or area.

This material may be studied for personal enrichment without official enrollment, which does NOT award a transcript or certificate from resources such as www.globalreach.org or by purchasing the book from Global University (<http://www.globaluniversity.edu/PDF/orderSED.pdf>). However, we do ask those who take advantage of these resources to consider making a donation to the Global University Evangelism Fund or Project Timothy. Please visit www.globaluniversity.edu and click on "giving."

Ways to Study this Course

This course has been written so that you can study it by yourself. We like to say "the teacher is in the book." However, you may also study this course in various types of group settings. If you study this course by yourself, all of your work can be completed by following the instructions in this study guide.

If you are studying in a study group, be sure to follow any additional directions your instructor may give.

Your church or group may partner with Global University to open a study group. Visit us online at www.globaluniversity.edu or contact the study group coordinator at Global University for more information.

How to Use this Book

How much time you actually need to study each lesson depends in part on your knowledge of the subject and the strength of your study skills before you begin the course. The time you spend also depends on the extent to which you follow directions and develop skills necessary for independent study. Plan your study schedule so that you spend enough time to reach the objectives stated by the author of the course and your personal objectives as well.

Each lesson includes an introduction, an outline and objectives to guide your study, learning activities, key words, application study questions throughout the lesson, and self-tests at the end of each lesson. Answers to application questions are provided at the end of each lesson, and answers for self-tests at the end of the book, so you may review your learning progress.

Suggestions for Studying

1. Set aside quiet and regular times for your study. It will be easier to concentrate if study is part of your daily habits.
2. Pray as you begin each study session. With an open Bible, the Holy Spirit, and this course, you are in the classroom of the Holy Spirit. Ask the Lord to help you understand the lesson and apply it to your life.
3. Read the lesson introduction, the lesson outline and goals. The lesson outline and objectives will give you an overview of the subject, help you focus your attention on the most important points as you study, and tell you what you should learn.
4. Begin to carefully read the lesson. Look up Bible references and take any notes that may be helpful. The Bible verses reinforce important points in the lesson.

5. Answer the application study questions in the spaces provided. Most of the questions in the lesson can be answered in spaces provided in this textbook. Longer answers should be written in a notebook or journal. As you write your answers, be sure to record the number and title of the lesson. **Do not look ahead at the answers** until you have written your answer. If you give your own answers, you will remember what you study much better. *After* you have answered the application questions, check your answers with those given at the end of the lesson. Then review those you did not answer correctly. The answers are not given in the usual numerical order so that you will not accidentally see the answer to the next question. These application questions are very important. They will help you remember the main ideas presented in the lesson and apply the principles you have learned.
6. At the end of each lesson, complete the self-test, then check your answers using the answer key in the back of the book.
7. At the end of each unit, answer the unit evaluation questions, then check your answers using the answer key provided. Review difficult questions.
8. Take your time and study at a comfortable pace.

How to Answer Study Questions

There are different kinds of study questions and self-test questions in this textbook. Below are samples of several types and how to answer them. Specific instructions will be given for other types of questions that may occur.

Multiple-Choice

A multiple-choice question asks you to choose an answer from the ones that are given.

EXAMPLE

1 The Bible has a total of

- a) 100 books.
- b) 66 books.**
- c) 27 books.

The correct answer is **b)** 66 books. You would make a circle around **b)** as shown above.

(For some multiple-choice items, more than one answer will be correct. In that case, you would circle the letter in front of each correct answer.)

True-False

A true-false question or item asks you to choose which of several statements are true.

EXAMPLE

2 Which statements below are true?

- a) The Bible has a total of 120 books.
- b) The Bible is a message for believers today.**
- c) All of the Bible authors wrote in the Hebrew language.
- d) The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible.**

Statements **b)** and **d)** are true. You would make a circle around these two letters to show your choices, as you see above.

Matching

A matching question or item asks you to match things that go together, such as names with descriptions, or Bible books with their authors.

EXAMPLE

3 Write the number for the leader's name in front of each phrase that describes something he did.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. a) Received the Law at Mt. Sinai | 1) Moses |
| 2. b) Led the Israelites across the Jordan | 2) Joshua |
| 2. c) Marched around Jericho | |
| 1. d) Lived in Pharaoh's court | |

Phrases **a)** and **d)** refer to Moses, and phrases **b)** and **c)** refer to Joshua. You would write 1 beside **a)** and **d)**, and 2 beside **b)** and **c)**, as you see above.

Unit Evaluations and Final Examination

At the end of this course, you will find the unit evaluations. Unit evaluations are NO LONGER counted as part of your course grade. However, unit evaluation scores indicate how well you learned the material and how well you may do on the final examination. After completing each unit evaluation, check your answers with the answers provided at the end of this textbook. You can then review the information in your course text and Bible concerning questions that were difficult for you. Reviewing the objectives, application questions and answers, self-tests, and unit exams will help you to prepare for the final examination. If you are not studying officially with a Global University office or study group you will still benefit by completing the unit evaluations.

The instructions for taking the final examination are available online using your student login and password. The final examination is only required for officially enrolled students (<http://sed.globaluttraining.com>). Students studying through a national office or local study group should contact their instructor or director for information concerning unit evaluations and the final examination.

Additional Helps

For more information concerning our course content, purchases, and the SED Study Group Manual, please visit http://www.globaluniversity.edu/studygroups_forms.cfm.

Also visit us at www.globalreach.org for additional resources.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This course was written by Jean-Baptiste Sawadogo and Marcia A. Munger.

Jean-Baptiste Sawadogo was a graduate of the College Protestant of the Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso. He studied at the International Bible Training Institute in England and pursued graduate work at the University of Ougadougou. He was an instructor at the Assembly of God Bible School in Nagabagré, Burkina Faso.

Marcia A. Munger served for fourteen years as a missionary on the development faculty of ICI University in Brussels, Belgium, and Irving, Texas. She earned her bachelor of arts degree from Biola College in La Mirada, California, and her master of Christian Studies degree from Regent College in Vancouver, Canada.



UNIT ONE:

Jesus' Life and Ministry

Lessons

- 1 The New Testament and Its World**
- 2 Jesus and the Gospels**
- 3 Matthew and Mark**
- 4 Luke and John**

1 The New Testament and Its World

The world into which Jesus Christ came had been shaped by three important influences: the power of the Romans, the culture of the Greeks, and the religion of the Jews. In this lesson, you will see how God used each of these to do the groundbreaking work for the time when His Son would begin His earthly ministry. As Galatians 4:4 says, God sent His Son to us “when the time had fully come.”

This lesson will also give you an overview of the New Testament. Through human writers, God formed it and made it into harmonious unity. Its 27 books include several different kinds of writing. They were written at various times and under varying circumstances. Some were written to deal with certain problems; others were written to tell about specific events. But in all of them there is one important message: God has made a new agreement or *testament* with humanity through Jesus Christ.

The facts you learn in this lesson will help you see how God’s hand was behind the events of history. They will also help you gain a deeper understanding of the wonderful New Testament God has given us.

Lesson Outline

- A. The World of the New Testament
- B. The Books of the New Testament
- C. The New Testament and Its World

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Name ways in which Roman power made possible the rapid spread of the gospel.
2. Identify the most important way in which Greek culture prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.
3. Identify developments in intertestamental Judaism that prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.
4. Describe the major features of Judaism in New Testament times.
5. Describe the general religious condition that existed at the time Christ came.
6. Identify examples of the four kinds of content found in the books of the New Testament.
7. Arrange the New Testament books by their type and historical period.

Learning Activities

1. Read the introduction to this course and study the lesson outline and objectives. These will help you identify things you should try to learn as you study the lesson.
2. Work through the lesson and do all of the exercises. Check your answers with those given at the end of the lesson. Learn the meanings of any key words you do not know. Their definitions are given in the glossary at the end of this textbook.

- 3. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers carefully. Review any items you did not answer correctly.

Key Words

Understanding the key words we have listed at the beginning of each lesson will help you as you study. You will find key words listed in alphabetical order and defined in the glossary at the back of this independent-study textbook. If you are in doubt about the meaning of any of the words on the list, you may look them up now or when you come across them in your reading. Please take time to learn the definitions of any new words, since they are important to a complete understanding of this course.

AD	Judaism	proselyte
apocalyptic	Messiah	Sabbath
BC	pagan	Sadducees
chronology	Palestine	Sanhedrin
circumcision	Passover	scribes
diaspora	Pentecost	Septuagint
Hellenist	Pharisees	synagogue
intertestamental period	philosophy	

A. THE WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Several different forces had a part in shaping the world of the New Testament. For instance, though the Romans ruled Palestine when the New Testament was written, the language of the New Testament itself was Greek. Jesus, whose story is told in the New Testament, was a Jew, the Messiah whose coming the Old Testament Scriptures foretold. Furthermore, in the pages of the New Testament are people who followed many kinds of pagan religions and mystery cults. What were the forces that shaped the New Testament world?

Roman Power

Objective 1. *Name ways in which Roman power made possible the rapid spread of the gospel.*

According to Luke 2:1, “Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.” *Caesar* was the title given to the Roman emperors. In some places in the New Testament, the Roman emperor is also referred to as “king” (1 Peter 2:17 for example). At the time the New Testament was written, the Roman Empire extended from the western end of the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River in the near East. All of this great territory was under the rule of the emperor. The Romans divided their empire into provinces—areas with military bases. Several of these provinces are mentioned by name in the New Testament, such as Macedonia, Achaia, Syria, Asia, Galatia, and Pamphylia.

Roman power and political strength brought about political unity, militarily controlled peace, and freedom of trade and travel. The various nations that Rome conquered were brought under one rule. The Roman peace was enforced, and wars between these nations ceased. Roman citizens were given special protection. They could go anywhere in the empire without fear of being wrongly arrested or harmed. The apostle Paul, for example, who was greatly used by God in spreading the message of Christ to new areas, depended at times on the special protection he enjoyed as a Roman citizen (see Acts 16:38, 22:29).

The Romans excelled in building good roads and strong bridges. These roads were kept free of robbers. The roads connected the capital city of Rome to every part of the empire; it was said that “all roads lead to Rome.” The seas were cleared of pirates. As never before, there was safety, freedom, and ease of travel and communication.

Application

- 1 After Christ finished His ministry on earth, the gospel spread throughout the world in a short time. One reason this happened is that the Romans built roads that connected Rome to
-



Greek Culture

Objective 2. *Identify the most important way in which Greek culture prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.*

Though the Romans were the political rulers of the world, Greek language and thought dominated its culture. *One language and one world!* Such was the motto and ambition of Alexander the Great. When he made his conquests, he took steps to unify all the nations under his control. The Greek language was taught everywhere in his empire. Greek culture was introduced as the pattern for thought and life, and it made a deep impact on the people of the New Testament world. (Greek culture is also called *Hellenistic* culture. This term comes from the word *Hellas*, the original name for the land of Greece. People who were Greek in culture were called *Hellenists*, though they may not have been Greek by birth.)

While Alexander’s political empire was short-lived, its cultural impact was great and long-lasting. For many centuries the whole Mediterranean world had the marks of Hellenistic influence. Greek customs and manners were widespread. Many cities copied the Greek style of architecture. The Greek spirit of inquiry into questions about the origin and meaning of the

universe, God and humanity, and right and wrong were also adopted by the nations that were influenced by Greek culture. Greek became the language of the rulers and the common tongue of the slaves. Letters, poetry, and business communications were all written in Greek. In the New Testament, the term *Greek* was used to refer not only to the people of Greece but also to people who spoke Greek and were of other non-Jewish nations. Greek was used everywhere.

When the Romans came to power, they found in the Greek language an ideal way to communicate with their captured territories. Young Romans were sent to be educated in Greek universities such as those in Athens, Rhodes, and Tarsus. Eventually, Greek was widely spoken in Rome itself.

Application

- 2** Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
- a)** A person had to be born in Greece to be called a *Hellenist*.
 - b)** When the Greek Empire fell apart it lost all its influence.
 - c)** The Romans used the Greek language in dealing with their territories.
 - d)** People of non-Jewish nations are sometimes referred to as *Greeks* in the New Testament, even if they were not Greek in origin.



The Greek language was indeed a matchless vehicle for expressing the Christian message. Because the language was so widely used, the apostles could preach in Greek without needing to use interpreters. The widespread use of the language also explains why all of the New Testament books, written mostly by Jews, were first written in Greek. When Christ came with God's message for the whole world, there was a world-wide language in which it could be communicated.

Application

- 3** The most important way in which Greek culture helped prepare the world to hear the message of Christ was through the Greek
- a)** customs, manners, and styles of architecture, which were adopted in many places.
 - b)** language, which was used throughout the Roman Empire.
 - c)** spirit of inquiry, which sought to understand the meaning of the universe.
-



Jewish Religion

We have learned how God used Roman power and Greek culture to prepare the world to hear the message of Christ. God also used the Jewish people and religion for this same purpose. He revealed himself to the Jews and gave them prophecies about the Messiah who would come. These revelations and prophecies were written down and gathered together in the Old Testament. Old Testament teachings spread into many parts of the world as a result of the developments in Jewish life and religion that occurred during the exile and the intertestamental period. You will study these developments in the next section.

Application

- 4** (Complete the following sentences by writing in the correct names, words, or dates.) After the Jews had been exiled for 70 years, the allowed them to return to Jerusalem. Their empire was later defeated by who died in BC. Then a series of other foreign powers ruled Palestine. The Jews revolted against them in BC. They regained control of Jerusalem and were independent until BC, when Pompey defeated them. Then in 37 BC was appointed ruler of the Jews by



INTERTESTAMENTAL JUDAISM

Objective 3. *Identify developments in intertestamental Judaism that prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.*

Three main developments took place in Judaism during the exile and the intertestamental years. These were the rise of the synagogue form of worship, the conversion of many non-Jews to Judaism, and the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek.

1. *The Synagogue.*

When the Jews went into exile, they took with them the Old Testament Scriptures. These writings formed the basis for their religious practice. During captivity, they could not worship in the temple or offer animal sacrifices. However, their worship of the one true God continued.

They gathered in groups called *synagogues* to discuss and be instructed in the Scriptures. Ten or more male members could

form a synagogue, and there could be more than one synagogue in a city. Synagogue worship included readings from the Law and the Prophets. The prophets had written about the coming of a Messiah who could deliver God's people. As the Jews studied these writings, they began to look for this One who would rescue them from captivity.

2. *The conversion of non-Jews to Judaism.*

During their years of exile in Babylon, the Jews were used by God to make Him known to the Babylonians. The book of Daniel in the Old Testament, for example, records how king Nebuchadnezzar witnessed the power of God in Daniel and his three friends, Jewish youths whom he had captured and brought to Babylon. He was forced to admit that the God of Daniel was “the God of gods and the Lord of kings” (Daniel 2:47). The Jews were given freedom to worship and teach about their God. Though a group of them did return to Jerusalem when they were allowed to, many remained in Babylon and later settled in other places throughout the empire. With them, they carried their beliefs about God and the promise of a coming deliverer. No wonder we read in Matthew 2:1–2 that the Wise Men, led by the star, came from the east to Jerusalem seeking to worship the newborn King of the Jews!

Application

5 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.

- a)** Synagogue worship began during the time the Jews were in Babylon.
- b)** After the exile, the Jews no longer taught the Law.
- c)** Synagogue worship included the study of the Law and the Prophets.



The Jews who did not remain in Babylon or return to Palestine found their way to places such as Egypt, Greece, Macedonia, Rome, and the major cities of Asia Minor. (This scattering of the Jews is referred to as the *diaspora* or *dispersion*, as you learned in the course introduction.) Eventually, there were

settlements of Jews in every nation in the entire area. In fact there were more Jews living outside Palestine than in it.

As a result of the dispersion, the teachings about the one true God and the coming Messiah became widely known. A considerable number of non-Jews in Palestine and elsewhere joined themselves to the Jewish religion, recognizing its superiority to pagan beliefs. These people were called *proselytes* and *God-fearers*. Proselytes submitted to all the requirements of the Law, including circumcision. They were treated as full members of the Jewish community. God-fearers, in contrast, accepted the Jewish teachings but did not take on themselves an obligation to fulfill the Law. They did not have full membership.

3. *The Septuagint.*

Wherever the Jews went, they took their Scriptures and taught them in the synagogues they formed. During this intertestamental time, the Old Testament Scriptures were translated into Greek. This translation was produced in the city of Alexandria in Egypt. It was called the Septuagint, a word meaning “seventy” because, according to tradition, the work of translation was done by seventy-two scholars. This translation helped spread the Old Testament teachings throughout the Greek-speaking world before the birth of Christ. It was used by the Jews, their converts, the writers of the New Testament, and the first preachers of the gospel.

Application

- 6** In your notebook, write a short definition for each of the following.
- a)** Diaspora
 - b)** Proselyte
 - c)** God-fearer
 - d)** Septuagint
 - e)** Synagogue

7 During the intertestamental period, many non-Jews heard about the Messiah who was to come because of the
..... of the Jews into
many nations and the translation of the Old Testament into
the language.



NEW TESTAMENT JUDAISM

Objective 4. *Describe the major features of Judaism in New Testament times.*

We have learned how the intertestamental developments in Judaism prepared the world for the preaching of the gospel. Now let us consider some specific aspects of the Jewish religion itself as it existed in New Testament times. These are referred to often in the New Testament.

The groups. There were two main parties or factions within Judaism: the *Pharisees* and the *Sadducees*. The Pharisees considered themselves to be the true Israel. The name *Pharisee* means “separated.” They followed strictly the written Law and the traditions of the elders, and they accepted the prophetic writings. In following the Law, they were assisted by the *scribes*, who interpreted it and helped them apply it to the changing conditions of everyday life. They believed in the existence of angels and spirits and in the resurrection of the dead. They practiced ritual prayer and fasting and gave tithes of their possessions. They would not work nor allow anyone else to work on the Sabbath. The people, over whom they had considerable influence, respected them as holy men. Zealous for Judaism, they won many non-Jews to their beliefs. Before his conversion to Christ, Paul the apostle was a Pharisee. Both the scribes and the Pharisees were active in the synagogues.

The *Sadducees* accepted only the Law as authoritative. They rejected the traditions of the elders and did not believe in angels, spirits, or the resurrection of the dead. They were more open to

Hellenistic influences and were interested in the priesthood, the temple, and political power. Almost all of them were priests.

Though the Romans were able administrators, many Jews in Palestine greatly resented their rule. They hated paying taxes to the Roman government. Yet Roman rule was a fact of life. As a result, there was a constant undercurrent of Jewish rebellion and unrest. As these political tensions increased, many Jewish leaders gave more and more of their attention to dealing with them.

The ruling council. Under overall Roman rule, however, the Jews were given a degree of authority to govern themselves in political and religious matters. This authority rested in a council of seventy members called the *Sanhedrin*. The high priest was the head of this council, and the members were drawn mostly from the priesthood and the wealthy families. The Sanhedrin included a few Pharisees, who were popular with the people, but the Sadducees were the dominant group.

Application

8 Match each sentence (left) to the group it describes (right).

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| ... a) Accepted only the Law as authoritative | 1) Pharisees |
| ... b) Were the dominant group in the Sanhedrin | 2) Sadducees |
| ... c) Believed in the resurrection of the dead | |
| ... d) Their name means “separated” | |
| ... e) Did not believe in angels or spirits | |
-


The temple. There was a magnificent temple in Jerusalem during the time of Jesus’ ministry. It was called “Herod’s temple” after Herod the Great, the ruler who built it. Both Solomon’s temple and the “second temple” had once stood on the place where it was erected. Solomon’s temple, though, had been destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. The “second temple” was the one rebuilt by the exiles who returned to

Jerusalem before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. This was the temple desecrated by Antiochus IV and then cleansed by Judas Maccabeas, as you will remember from the course introduction. Later, it apparently suffered destruction and was rebuilt by Herod around 20 BC.

Herod's temple was similar to the previous ones. It had several gates, an inner wall beyond which non-Jews could not go, and a heavy veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The ceremonies of the temple were carried out by a company of priests headed by a high priest. Each year every male Israelite had to pay a temple tax (an amount equal to two days' wages) for the building's upkeep and the priests' salaries.

Application

- 9 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
- a) Solomon's temple and Herod's temple were similar.
 - b) The priests and the high priests who served in the temple were paid from money collected through a temple tax.
 - c) Most members of the Sanhedrin were drawn from the common people.
 - d) The temple in Jerusalem during Jesus' ministry was the one rebuilt by the exiles who returned there from Babylon.



The feasts. Though the Jews of the diaspora were widely scattered, they still considered Jerusalem to be their capital. Each year thousands of them, including many proselytes and God-fearers, went there as pilgrims to attend the great religious festivals. There they joined the Jews who lived in Palestine to celebrate the feasts that marked important events in their history. Two of the seven feasts held each year were particularly important in New Testament times. These were the *Passover* and *Pentecost*.

The Passover was the most important feast. It marked the anniversary of the deliverance of the Jews from the Egyptians and their beginnings as an independent nation. Exodus 11–12 tells how God brought about a final plague (punishment) upon

the Egyptians so they would allow the Israelites to leave Egypt and go to the land God had promised to them. By following the instructions God gave them, the Israelites were spared from the plague in which all the firstborn sons and animals of the Egyptians were killed in one night.

Application

10 Read Exodus 12. Then answer the following questions in your notebook.

- a)** What were the Israelites to do (v. 7)?
- b)** What did God say He would do (v. 13)?
- c)** What was the result (vv. 29, 31)?



The Israelites were commanded to observe the Passover Feast each year “as a lasting ordinance” for them and their descendants (Exodus 12:24). All Jewish males living in or near Jerusalem were required to attend the Passover Feast unless they were physically unable to do so. Many Jews of the diaspora, as well as proselytes and God-fearers, also came to Jerusalem for the event. The women also participated. Jerusalem teemed with the huge crowd that gathered for the celebration.

Pentecost was also an important festival in New Testament times. During the intertestamental period, this feast came to be celebrated as the anniversary of the giving of the Law to Moses (Exodus 19). In the Jewish community, the Law and its observance were a powerful, unifying force. The Jews considered the Law to be God’s greatest gift to them (see Psalms 1, 19, and 119). The festival was named Pentecost, a word meaning “50 days,” because it was held 50 days after the Passover.

Application

11 Match each phrase (left) to the feast or feasts it describes (right).

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| a) Feast commanded in Exodus 12:24 | 1) Passover |
| b) Attended by Jews, proselytes, and God-fearers | 2) Pentecost |
| c) Name means “50 days” | 3) Both Passover and Pentecost |
| d) Held to commemorate the giving of the Law | |
| e) Reminder of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt | |



Other Religions

Objective 5. *Describe the general religious condition that existed at the time Christ came.*

God had revealed himself to the Jewish people. As a result of the diaspora, many non-Jews had been converted to Judaism and Judaism was widespread. However, it appears that by New Testament times, Judaism was becoming dominated by an increasingly narrow, racial spirit. For evidence of this, one has only to search the New Testament and observe the attitudes shown by the Jewish leaders described there. It seems that their own politics and affairs had begun to absorb most of their attention.

While the Jews were occupied with their concerns, other religions also claimed the people’s allegiance. Many people followed religions from the east, Egypt, and Asia Minor. Others became involved in the Greek mystery religions, which emphasized the ideas of resurrection and purification. Still others followed cults dedicated to deities and spirits associated with certain places and occupations. There was also the Roman state religion, in which statues of Roman emperors were worshipped as symbols of Roman power.

These factors show that there was a general interest in religion and a search for meaningful answers. People began to wonder if perhaps there was only one universal god. Many wanted to find cleansing from guilt, and there was a great desire to know what happened to people after death. The philosophies of the time had not provided acceptable answers, and people were unsatisfied with the conclusions reached by reason. Many lived lives of hopelessness, spiritual emptiness, corruption, and immorality. What a time for Jesus Christ to come—who would illuminate people’s darkened hearts and minds with the full radiance of God’s glory!

Application

- 12** Circle the letter in front of the sentence that describes the general religious condition at the time Christ came.
- a)** The great majority of people gave allegiance to the Roman state religion because Rome was the dominating political force.
 - b)** Most people followed Judaism, which was well on its way to becoming a worldwide religion.
 - c)** There was a great variety of religions, and people were seeking in different ways to find satisfying answers.
 - d)** The philosophies of the day provided almost everyone with acceptable conclusions regarding God and the meaning of life.
-



B. THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

We have become acquainted with the world of the New Testament—its religions, culture, and politics. Now let us turn our attention to the New Testament itself, the account of the great miracle of God becoming man to bring humanity back to God. It is the *New Testament*, for it announces the new agreement God made with humanity through Christ. While the Old Testament revealed God’s righteousness through the Law, the New revealed it through the grace and truth of Jesus Christ. We will examine

the kinds of content, the authors, and the chronology of the 27 books that make up the New Testament.

The Content of the Books

Objective 6. *Identify examples of the four kinds of content found in the books of the New Testament.*

There are four basic kinds of content in the New Testament: historical, doctrinal, personal, and prophetic. Each of these has certain features. In regard to content, the New Testament books are classified according to the main kind each contains. The Gospel of Matthew, for example, has some prophetic sections. However, most of its content is historical, so it is included among the historical writings.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

The historical books include the four accounts of the life of Christ (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and the account of the beginning of the church (Acts). They are called historical books because their primary purpose is to record events and give facts. They include the names of many people and places. Often, they report words that were said on certain occasions. Many times, they give detailed descriptions of the circumstances and the results of specific actions.

In general, historical writings give information that answers questions such as *What happened? Where did it happen? When did it happen? Who did it? What was said? What was the result?* But the New Testament historical books give much more than the answers to such questions. The Son of God himself is revealed to us through the record of the things He said and did.

Application

- 13** Read Luke 4:31–37. Then in your notebook, write an answer to each of the following questions. Beside each answer, write the number of the verse where the information is given.
- a)** What did Jesus do?
 - b)** Where and when did He do it?
 - c)** What did the people say about Jesus as a result?
 - d)** Who else heard about the thing that happened?
-



THE DOCTRINAL BOOKS

Most of the doctrinal books were letters written to certain groups of believers. They often dealt with specific problems that some of these groups were having as they tried to follow the Christian way of life. In writing to these believers, the authors of these books explained great truths about Jesus Christ and His work for them that they needed to understand. The authors also described the relationship believers have with Christ and how they should live as a result of it. The powerful messages God inspired them to write were not only for those first believers, but for “all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:2).

The doctrinal books include the following: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, and 1 John.

Application

14 Read each Scripture from one of the doctrinal books (left).

Match each one to the phrase that describes the kind of information or message it gives (right).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| a) Galatians 1:1–2 | 1) A reference to a problem the believers had |
| b) Galatians 1:6 | 2) The name of the writer or receiver of the letter |
| c) Ephesians 1:11 | 3) Some instructions on Christian living |
| d) Colossians 3:13 | 4) A statement of a truth about Christ |
| e) Hebrews 1:3 | |
-

THE PERSONAL BOOKS

In addition to the doctrinal and historical books, there are others that could be described as *personal*. These books were letters written to individual believers rather than groups. They are the Epistles of 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and 2 and 3 John. Since they were written to leaders in the church, however, they became important to the whole Christian community. They contain guidelines for choosing church leaders, instructions for the management of church matters, personal advice for those to whom they were written, and other requests and comments.

Application

15 Read the following sections of 1 Timothy. Which one contains guidelines for choosing church leaders?

- a)** 2:1–7
 - b)** 3:8–10
 - c)** 4:11–16
-

THE PROPHETIC BOOK

In general, the prophetic books of the Bible are those in which God has spoken concerning both present and future events. Thus, prophetic writings have two main purposes: 1) to give people a message about their present situation and how they should respond to it, and 2) to reveal future events and God's plan for the world. Though almost all the books of the New Testament contain some prophecy, the book of Revelation is given completely to it.

Revelation had a message for the seven churches of Asia to whom it was written. It also describes the final destiny of the people of God, Satan and his followers, and the heavens and the earth. It shows that Christ, the Lamb who was slain, is completely victorious. It is an example of a special kind of prophetic writing, called *apocalyptic*. This means that its message reveals truth by using symbols and vivid word pictures. For example, the seven churches of Asia are pictured as lampstands (1:12, 20), and Satan is pictured as a dragon (12:7–9).

Application

- 16** Read Revelation 6:12–14. This passage can best be described as having a message concerning
- a)** events that will occur in the future.
 - b)** the response the church should make to present circumstances.

17 Review this section on the New Testament books. Then match each verse (left) to the word that describes the kind of writing of which it is an example (right).

-**a)** I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

1) Historical
2) Doctrinal
3) Personal
4) Prophetic
-**b)** Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.
-**c)** From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace.
-**d)** Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.
-**e)** Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him.



Authors of the Books

The New Testament books were written by eight (or possibly nine) men: Matthew, Peter, John, Mark, Jude, James, Luke, Paul, and the writer to the Hebrews (some Bible scholars believe that Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews). Of these men, all were Jews except Luke. Matthew, Peter, and John were members of Jesus’ original group of twelve disciples. Mark, Jude, and James had associated with the disciples and were part of the Early Church. Luke and Paul knew those who had witnessed Jesus’ earthly life and ministry. The following chart lists each book of the New Testament beside the name of the person who wrote it.

Author	Book	Author	Book
Matthew	Matthew	Peter	1, 2 Peter
Mark	Mark	?	Hebrews
Luke	Luke Acts	Paul	Romans 1, 2 Corinthians

Author	Book	Author	Book
John	John 1, 2, 3 John Revelation	Paul	Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians
James	James	Paul	1, 2 Thessalonians
Jude	Jude	Paul	1, 2 Timothy Titus Philemon

Application

18 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.

- a)** Each New Testament book was written by a different person.
- b)** The author of 1 John was one of Jesus's 12 disciples.
- c)** The apostle Paul wrote the book of Acts.
- d)** Of the known New Testament authors, only Luke was not a Jew.



Chronology of the Books

Objective 7. *Arrange the New Testament books by their type and historical period.*

In the New Testament, the books are grouped according to their content. That is, the historical books are first, the doctrinal and personal books next, and the prophetic book last. However, we will not study the books in this order but in their *chronological* sequence. This means that we will study them according to the specific years of history with which they deal. This procedure will help us gain knowledge of the events that happened in their historical setting.

C. THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS WORLD

The historical events mentioned in the writings of the New Testament took place within a span of approximately 100 years,

from 6 BC to AD 95. This span of time can be divided into three periods: 1) the life and ministry of Jesus, 2) the beginning and growth of the church, and 3) the continued growth and persecution of the church. The following chart shows these three periods and lists in order the books associated with the events of each one.

1. The life and ministry of Jesus: 6 BC–AD 29 Matthew Mark Luke John	
2. The beginning and growth of the church: AD 30–AD 60 Acts James Galatians 1, 2 Thessalonians 1, 2 Corinthians	
3. The continued growth and persecution of the church: AD 60–AD 95 1 Timothy Titus 1 Peter 2 Timothy 2 Peter	
	Romans Colossians, Ephesians Philemon Philippians Hebrews Jude 1, 2, 3 John Revelation

Application

19 In your notebook, make a chart listing each New Testament book by its type and historical period. You will need to review the previous sections to do this. Copy the following model, making it several times larger so you will have space to write the name of each book. The first one is done for you. (The spaces grayed out will have no books listed in them.)

Period	Historical	Doctrinal	Personal	Prophetic
6 BC–AD 29	Matthew			
AD 30–AD 60				
AD 60–AD 95				



Congratulations! You have now come to the end of the first lesson of this course. You have learned many facts about the forces that shaped the world into which Jesus Christ was born and in which He carried out His ministry. You have also studied some of the general features of the books of the New Testament. The following lessons will build on the truths you have learned. Before you take the self-test, review the lesson and be sure you can fulfill each objective.

Self-Test

1 Galatians 4:4 says that Christ came into the world “when the time had fully come.” In your notebook, list four important facts about the New Testament world that give evidence for this truth and show that Christ came at a time when His message could be rapidly communicated. Name the one main fact associated with each of the following:

a) Roman power

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b) Greek culture

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.....

.....

c) Jewish religion

.....

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.....

d) Other religions

.....

.....

.....

.....

2 Match the name or term (right) to each sentence that describes or defines it (left).

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| a) A group of ten or more Jewish men who met to discuss the Scriptures | 1) Caesar Augustus |
| b) The Greek translation of the Old Testament | 2) Alexander the Great |
| c) A non-Jew who submitted to all the requirements of the Law and became a member of the Jewish community | 3) Hellenist |
| d) Roman emperor at the time of Christ | 4) Synagogue |
| e) The Jews who were scattered among the nations | 5) Diaspora |
| f) A Jewish group who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead | 6) Proselyte |
| g) Conqueror who had the Greek language taught everywhere | 7) Septuagint |
| h) Festival celebrating Israel's deliverance from Egypt | 8) Sanhedrin |
| i) Builder of the temple that stood in New Testament times | 9) Pharisees |
| j) A person who was Greek in culture | 10) Sadducees |
| k) A Jewish group who believed in the resurrection of the dead | 11) Pentecost |
| l) Festival celebrating the giving of the Law to Moses | 12) Passover |
| m) Jewish group who accepted the writings of the prophets | 13) Herod the Great |
| n) Council that ruled Jewish politics and religion | |

- 3** Complete each of the following sentences, which refer to the books of the New Testament. Use your notebook for your answers.
- a)** The content of a *historical* book deals mainly with . . .
 - b)** The content of a *doctrinal* book deals mainly with . . .
 - c)** The content of a *personal* book deals mainly with . . .
 - d)** The content of a *prophetic* book deals mainly with . . .
- 4** Match each book (left) to the name of the person who wrote it (right).

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| a) The Gospel of John | 1) Luke |
| b) Acts | 2) John |
| c) 2 Thessalonians | 3) James |
| d) Revelation | 4) Paul |
| e) Titus | |
| f) James | |

- 5** Write the name of each book of the New Testament listed in the space on the chart where it belongs. The first one is done for you.

Matthew	Romans	Philemon
Mark	Galatians	Hebrews
Acts	1, 2 Timothy	Revelation

Period	Historical	Doctrinal	Personal	Prophetic
6 BC–AD 29	Matthew			
AD 30–AD 60				
AD 60–AD 95				

Answers to Application Questions

The answers to your study exercises are given in a different order so you will not easily see the answer to your next question ahead of time. Look for the number you need, and try not to look ahead.

- 10 a)** They were to smear the blood of the lamb on the tops and sides of the door frames of their houses.
b) He said that the blood would be a sign for them and He would pass over them.
c) The firstborn Egyptians were killed, and the Egyptians told the Israelites to leave.
- 1** every part of the empire.
- 11 a)** 1) Passover
b) 3) Both Passover and Pentecost
c) 2) Pentecost
d) 2) Pentecost
e) 1) Passover
- 2 c)** and **d)** are true.
- 12 c)** There was a great variety of religions, and people were seeking in different ways to find satisfying answers.
- 3 b)** language, which was used throughout the Roman Empire.
- 13 a)** He cast a demon out of a man (vv. 33, 35).
b) He did it in a synagogue in Capernaum on the Sabbath (vv. 31, 33).
c) The people said that He had authority and power to cast out evil spirits (v. 36).
d) The people throughout the surrounding areas heard about it (v. 37). (Your answers should be similar.)
- 4** Persians, Alexander the Great, 323 BC, 167 BC, 63 BC, Herod the Great, Rome.

- 14** **a)** 2) The name of the writer or receiver of the letter.
b) 1) A reference to a problem the believers had.
c) 4) A statement of a truth about Christ
d) 3) Some instructions on Christian living.
e) 4) A statement of a truth about Christ
- 5** **a)** and **c)** are true.
- 15** **b)** 3:8–10.
- 6** **a)** The scattering of the Jews among the nations
b) A convert to Judaism who was circumcised and obeyed the Law
c) A person who accepted Judaism but did not try to fulfill the Law
d) The Greek version of the Jewish Scriptures
e) A group of at least ten Jewish men who met to study the Scriptures
- 16** **a)** events that will occur in the future.
- 7** dispersion (or scattering), Greek.
- 17** **a)** 4) Prophetic (Revelation 21:2)
b) 2) Doctrinal (1 Corinthians 12:27)
c) 1) Historical (Acts 16:11)
d) 3) Personal (2 Timothy 4:11)
e) 2) Doctrinal (Romans 6:8)
- 8** **a)** 2) Sadducees
b) 2) Sadducees
c) 1) Pharisees
d) 1) Pharisees
e) 2) Sadducees
- 18** **b)** and **d)** are true.
- 9** **a)** and **b)** are true.

19 Your chart should have the books written in as follows
(within each section the books may be in any order):

Period	Historical	Doctrinal	Personal	Prophetic
6 BC– AD 29	Matthew Mark Luke John			
AD 30– AD 60	Acts	Romans 1, 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1, 2 Thessalonians James	Philemon	
AD 60– AD 95		1, 2 Peter Hebrews Jude 1 John	1, 2 Timothy Titus 2, 3 John	Revelation

LESSON 2 Jesus and the Gospels

Among the countless books written about people's lives, there are none like the four Gospels, for there is no man like Jesus, whose story they tell. The Gospels are fascinating records of His life, filled with the names of people and places and crowded with descriptions of dramatic and significant events. They command the attention of all who read them.

This lesson will help you understand the Gospels better. In Lesson 1, you learned many facts about the background and overall content of the New Testament. In this lesson, you will take a closer look at the first four books of the New Testament. You will learn how these four accounts are alike in the way they tell the story of Jesus and how they are different. You will also learn about the land where Jesus lived and the places where He ministered. Also, you will become acquainted with some of His teachings and the way in which He taught.

Your study of this lesson will give you greater appreciation for the special features of the Gospel accounts. In addition, it will prepare you to study each of them individually.

Lesson Outline

- A. The Four Gospel Accounts
- B. Where Jesus Lived and Ministered
- C. Events in the Life of Jesus
- D. The Teachings of Jesus

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Describe the value and the characteristics of the four Gospel accounts.
2. Identify locations of the four major geographical areas of Palestine.
3. Match descriptions of the districts in Palestine to their names.
4. Identify events and Scriptures associated with the four major periods in Jesus' life.
5. Describe the basis, purpose, method, content, and effect of Jesus' teaching.

Learning Activities

1. Read the lesson development and complete each exercise before you check your answer. In this way, you will see if you have really understood the content. Correct any wrong answers.
2. Study the map of Palestine that is given. Be sure you can find on it each district and city named in the lesson. This will help you visualize the geographical setting of the important events in Jesus' life.
3. Review the lesson and complete the self-test. Be sure to check your answers and correct any that are wrong.

Key Words

controversy	parallel	plateau
Gentile	Passion Week	theme
parable	perspective	

A. THE FOUR GOSPEL ACCOUNTS

Objective 1. *Describe the value and the characteristics of the four Gospel accounts.*

In God's wisdom, He gave us not just one account of Jesus' life but four. We may ask this question: *What is the value of having more than one record of the life of Christ?*

The Value of Having Four Accounts

There are two benefits that arise. First, the variety of accounts serves to draw the attention of many different kinds of people. When the Gospels were first written, each had some special features that appealed to certain groups. Matthew, for example, emphasized the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the life of Christ. This emphasis gave his account increased meaning for the Jews. Mark focused on the dynamic, active ministry of Jesus. He added details to his record that were of interest to Roman readers. Luke wrote his account from the point of view of a Gentile who had a deep understanding of Christ's mission of salvation. Gentile readers could identify with his perspective as he told the story of the onward progress of that mission. John, with his presentation of Christ as the eternal Word, gained a hearing among thoughtful people who were looking for answers to the great questions about the meaning of life, history, and eternity. Ever since they were written, the Gospels have appealed to people of every circumstance, station in life, and national origin. The same continues today.

Second, the variety of accounts serves to emphasize even more the main events of Jesus' life. Each Gospel writer includes some details and information not found in the others. All of the accounts, however, show the overall character of Jesus' life of ministry, His death for sinners, and His resurrection from the grave. In this way, the central message of Christ is made unmistakably plain. Like four master painters, the Gospel writers have each given a portrait of the Son of God. Though each masterpiece presents its great Subject in a different way, in all of them we recognize the same compelling, matchless face.

Application

- 1 In your notebook, state two benefits of having four different Gospel accounts. Use one sentence to state each benefit.
-



The Main Characteristics of the Four Accounts

The Gospel accounts are *selective*. They are not exhaustive lists of everything Jesus said and did. As John remarked, “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (John 21:25). From the multitude of events that occurred during Christ’s earthly life, each author, guided by the Holy Spirit, chose only certain ones to include in his account. Jesus’ childhood and youth, for example, are passed over in silence except for thirteen verses that Luke devotes to them (Luke 2:40–52). The Passion Week, on the other hand, is described in great detail by all four writers. Matthew, Mark, and Luke have much material in common; John, however, includes many things that none of the others do. These facts demonstrate the selectivity of the Gospel accounts.

The Gospel accounts are also *harmonious*. Though each writer was selective in his choice of material, all of them followed the same basic pattern in unfolding the main events of the story. There is the introduction of Jesus to His public ministry by John the Baptist. Next, there are the miracles, teachings, and encounters of Jesus with His disciples, the people, and the Jewish leaders. Most of the events described occur in Galilee or Jerusalem. The division between those who accepted Jesus and those who rejected Him is portrayed. Finally, there is the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, His arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection. In all the accounts are references to various Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus’ life. In a very real sense, there are not four “Gospels” but *one* Gospel—one story of good news about the Son of God who came to save sinners.

Application

- 2** The Gospel accounts are *selective* because they
- a)** say nothing about Jesus' childhood.
 - b)** have very little in common.
 - c)** do not include everything Jesus did and said.
- 3** The Gospel accounts are *harmonious* because they all
- a)** follow the same basic pattern in developing the story.
 - b)** describe all of Jesus' life in great detail.
 - c)** deal mainly with Jesus' ministry in Galilee.
 - d)** include reports of the same main events in Jesus' life.
-



B. WHERE JESUS LIVED AND MINISTERED

We have studied some of the main features of the Gospel accounts. They give the names of many places that are associated with Jesus' life, such as Judea, Galilee, Nazareth, Capernaum, and Jerusalem. In this section, we will study the districts of Palestine in which these places are located, and we will study the overall geography of the land of Palestine.

The Land of Palestine

Objective 2. *Identify locations of the four major geographical areas of Palestine.*

Palestine is the name given to the whole area shown on the following map. Jesus lived most of His earthly life in this land. Look at the map and notice the main kinds of land that are indicated; these form four parallel strips from north to south: 1) the *coastal plain*, which extends from the north at Sidon down to Gaza in the south; 2) the *central mountains*, which extend from Dan and Kadesh in the north to Beersheba in the south; 3) the *valley of the Jordan*, which begins north of the sea of Galilee and extends south to the Dead Sea; and 4) the *eastern table land* or plateau on the east side of the Jordan.

Jesus lived and ministered in the districts of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea on the west side of the Jordan and in the districts

of Decapolis and Perea on the east side of the Jordan. He also went to the cities of Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia. As you read the descriptions of these areas, find on the map each city or district named.

Application

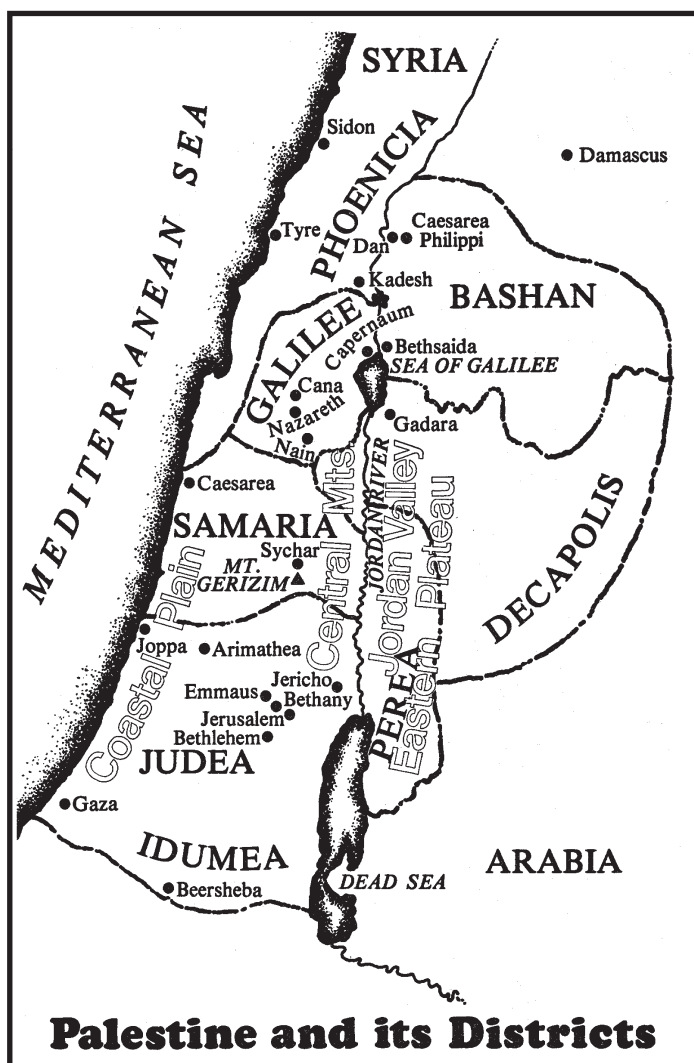
- 4** On the west side of the coastal plain of Palestine is the
- a)** central mountain range.
 - b)** valley of the Jordan.
 - c)** Mediterranean Sea.
- 5** The central range is located
- a)** on the east side of the valley of the Jordan.
 - b)** on the east side of the coastal plain.
 - c)** between the valley of the Jordan and the eastern plateau.
-



The Districts of Palestine

Objective 3. *Match descriptions of the districts in Palestine to their names.*

During New Testament times, there were several districts in the land of Palestine. These districts were under the overall authority of the Roman government.



GALILEE

Jesus grew to manhood in the town of Nazareth in the district of Galilee (Matthew 2:23, Luke 2:51). He performed His first miracle at Cana (John 2:11). Later, He went to the town of Capernaum and stayed there (Matthew 4:13). The more strict Jews of the other districts of Palestine looked down on

the Galileans because Galilee was located close to the Gentile areas of Phoenicia and Decapolis. The Galileans, however, were deeply committed to their faith and loyal to the Jewish nation. Eleven of Jesus' twelve disciples were from Galilee. He spent a good part of His ministry in the towns, villages, and hillsides of this district.

PHOENICIA

The cities of Tyre and Sidon were located in Phoenicia, a coastal area northwest of Galilee. After He was rejected at Nazareth, Jesus went to this district. There, He met the woman of Syrian Phoenicia whose great faith He praised and whose daughter He healed (Mark 7:24–30).

DECAPOLIS

East of Galilee were the districts of Decapolis and Bashan. Decapolis was an association of Greek cities (*Decapolis* means “ten cities”) founded by followers of Alexander the Great. Jesus visited this area (Mark 7:31–35). He ministered in Gadara (also called Gergesa or Gerasa), where He healed a demon-possessed man (Mark 5:1–20, Luke 8:26–39). He also went to the cities of Caesarea Philippi (Matthew 16:13–20).

SAMARIA

The people of the coastal part of Samaria were Gentiles. Those in the mountainous regions, however, were a mixed race. They were descendants of the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel who had intermarried with Gentiles. They had built their own temple on Mt. Gerizim. Though it was no longer standing in Jesus' day, its site was considered sacred. The Samaritans, as people of this mixed race were called, were greatly despised by the Jews of Palestine. Many Jews would not even travel through Samaria. Jesus, however, ministered many times to the people in this district. In His notable conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar, He did not allow the controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans to become the main topic of discussion. Instead, He drew attention to himself as the Messiah (John 4:1–42).

PEREA

Most of the inhabitants of Perea were Jews, though Gentiles also lived there. Perea is often referred to in the New Testament as the land “across the Jordan.” On His way to Jerusalem for the last time, Jesus traveled through this area teaching in its villages and towns (Mark 10:1–45, Matthew 19:1–20:28).

JUDEA

In the district of Judea were located the cities of Bethlehem, Jesus’ birthplace, and Jerusalem, the scene of many crucial events in His life. Near Jerusalem was the town of Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead (John 11:1, 32–44). A few miles away was Jericho, where Jesus healed a blind man (Mark 10:46–52). During His ministry, Jesus made several trips to Jerusalem and the towns near it. A number of times, He attended the great annual Jewish feasts that were celebrated in Jerusalem. It was there that He was tried, crucified, and buried (Luke 22, 23). After His resurrection, He appeared to two of His followers on the road to Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem (Luke 24:13–27). Later on, He gave His disciples instructions about their future ministry and led them toward Bethany. Then He was taken up into heaven out of their sight, and the disciples returned to Jerusalem to wait for the promised Holy Spirit (Luke 24:36–53).

Application

6 Match each phrase (left) to the name of the district it describes (right).

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| a) Jesus' birthplace was located there | 1) Galilee |
| b) The district referred to as the "other side of the Jordan" | 2) Phoenicia |
| c) A coastal district north of Galilee | 3) Decapolis |
| d) The home of a mixed race of Jews and Gentiles | 4) Samaria |
| e) An association of several Greek cities | 5) Perea |
| f) The district in which Mt. Gerizim was located | 6) Judea |
| g) The district where Jerusalem was located | |
-

C. EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

Objective 4. *Identify events and Scriptures associated with the four major periods in Jesus' life.*

You have studied the geography of the land of Palestine and learned some facts about the places where Jesus lived and ministered. In this section, you will examine the events in Jesus' life. As you learned in the first part of this lesson, the Gospel writers all followed the same basic pattern in describing His life.

The events in Jesus' life can be divided into four major periods: 1) His birth and preparation for ministry; 2) His early ministry and popularity; 3) His later ministry and controversy; and 4) His death, resurrection, and ascension. Each Gospel account gives these major periods in the same order. However, the writers arranged the particular incidents within each period according to their own purposes. We must remember that their aim was not primarily to give a strict chronological account but to portray accurately the person of Jesus. The following outline

gives the overall progression of events and the chapters in each Gospel record that are associated with each major period.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST	
Major Periods and Events	Gospel References
1 Birth and preparation for ministry –Birth and growth to manhood –Introduction, baptism, temptation	Matthew 1:1–4:11 Mark 1:1–13 Luke 1:1–4:13 John 1:1–51
2 Early ministry and popularity –Ministry in Galilee –Ministry in Judea –Return to Galilee –Height of popularity	Matthew 4:12–15:20 Mark 1:14–7:23 Luke 4:14–9:17 John 2:1–6:71
3 Later ministry and controversy –Withdrawal to the north –Ministry again in Galilee –Ministry again in Judea –Ministry in Perea –Last trip to Jerusalem	Matthew 15:21–20:34 Mark 7:24–10:52 Luke 9:18–19:28 John 7:1–12:11
4 Death, resurrection, and ascension –Triumphal entry, trial, death, and burial –Resurrection, commission to disciples, and ascension	Matthew 21:1–28:20 Mark 11:1–16:20 Luke 19:29–24:53 John 12:12–21:25

Application

7 Use the chart to match the major period of the life of Christ (right) to each event or Scripture associated with it (left).

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| a) Trial | 1) Birth and preparation for ministry |
| b) Luke 4:14–9:17 | 2) Early ministry and popularity |
| c) Baptism | 3) Later ministry and controversy |
| d) Last trip to Jerusalem | 4) Death, resurrection, and ascension |
| e) John 7:1–12:11 | |
| f) Return to Galilee | |
| g) Mark 11:1–16:20 | |



Of course, this chart is a summary of only the major events and periods in Jesus' life. In the following lessons, you will study each Gospel account and specific incidents that occurred during each major period.

D. THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Objective 5. *Describe the basis, purpose, method, content, and effect of Jesus' teaching.*

We have examined the characteristics of the Gospels, the land where Jesus lived and ministered, and the major events in Jesus' life. Now, let us look more closely at His teaching activity as shown in the Gospels. Teaching was a vital aspect of His work, for He came with a mission to announce the good news to the poor and reveal the truth about God to all humankind. Almost every page of the Gospels is marked by the presence of His warnings, proclamations, exhortations, and explanations. We will consider five important features of His teaching.

Basis

Jesus' teaching was based on the Old Testament as God's Word and upon himself as the only begotten Son of God. He drew from the resources of the Old Testament. He also placed himself in relation to the Old Testament writings as the one who had complete authority to explain their true meaning.

Jesus applied the prophecies and events of the Old Testament to himself. According to Luke 4:18, He read the description of His mission from the book of the prophet Isaiah. He made it clear that He had come to fulfill the Law (Matthew 5:17–20). When He talked to Nicodemus, He spoke of His death on the Cross by referring to an experience the Israelites had in the wilderness (John 3:14, Numbers 21:8–9). When the Pharisees asked Him for a sign, He told them they would be given “the sign of the prophet Jonah”—meaning that He would rise from the grave three days after His death (Matthew 12:39–40). After His resurrection, Jesus met two disciples on the road to Emmaus. As they walked along, He explained to them “what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Luke 24:27).

Jesus also demonstrated that He had a unique position of authority in relation to the Old Testament Scriptures. For example, He said that He was “Lord even of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28). According to Exodus 31:15, no work was to be done on the Sabbath, yet Jesus said that both He and the Father continually worked, even on the Sabbath (John 5:16–17). He healed on the Sabbath and taught that it was lawful for Him to do so (Luke 13:10–17). Jesus also introduced a standard of behavior that was superior to what was revealed in the Old Testament (Matthew 5). These examples show that Jesus placed not only the prophecies of the Old Testament but also its Law in relation to himself as God’s Son.

Application

- 8** Read from Matthew chapter 5 the pairs of verses given in the following chart. Then beside each reference, write a short sentence telling what the Old Testament said. Next to that, write what Jesus said. The first is written in to give you an example.

Verses	“IT WAS SAID”	“I TELL YOU”
21, 22	You shall not murder.	Anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment.
27, 28		
33, 34		
43, 44		

- 9** Circle the letter in front of the statement that most correctly describes the basis of Jesus' teaching.
- a)** Jesus based His teaching on the ideas, thoughts, and traditions held by the religious leaders of His day.
 - b)** Jesus' teachings were based on the Old Testament Scriptures and His authority to interpret them as God's Son.
 - c)** The rules and laws about the Sabbath formed the basis for Jesus' teachings.
-

Purpose

Jesus' purpose was to reveal God and to teach people truths upon which they could build their lives. He said His teachings came from the Father (John 14:10). They were not simply interesting ideas, hopeful thoughts, or entertaining stories. They were the very words of eternal life (John 6:68), words that would last forever (Mark 13:31). People who put Jesus' teachings into practice would find that their lives had a secure foundation (Matthew 7:24).

Method

Jesus taught everywhere as the need arose. He taught in the synagogues (Luke 4:16) and in the temple (John 8:2). He taught on the street (Mark 10:17) and in private homes (Luke 14:1). The number of listeners did not matter to Him. Though He spoke to big crowds, He also took time to talk to single, lonely men and women. Many of His most important teachings were addressed to individuals, such as the one to Nicodemus (John 3). He taught in a variety of places and to a variety of people. He also used several methods. We will examine four of these methods.

PARABLES

Jesus taught many truths by means of parables. A parable is an illustration or story usually drawn from everyday life. As a method of teaching, parables had three advantages: 1) they were easily remembered because the hearers could imagine the story's events even as it was being told, 2) their spiritual messages were

clear both to the educated and the illiterate, and 3) they showed the concern Jesus had for His listeners' needs.

Most parables teach one important truth. The parable of the woman and the coin, for example, illustrates God's persistence in searching for one lost soul (Luke 15:8–10). Some teach more than one lesson. The parable of the lost son illustrates not only God's father-love but also the meaning of repentance and the sin of self-righteousness and unforgiveness (Luke 15:11–32). On some occasions, those who heard the parable were left to draw their own conclusions (Mark 12:1–12). Other times, Jesus stated the truth He was illustrating at the end of the parable (Matthew 25:1–13).

However, Jesus' parables were unlike those told by anyone else, for they could not be separated from His person. Those who did not understand Him did not understand His parables, either. This was a truth Jesus pointed out (Mark 4:11, Matthew 13:13).

SHORT SAYINGS

Jesus used short sayings to fix certain truths in His hearers' minds. Often, these sayings put two opposite ideas together: "Be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16). "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39). "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies" (John 11:25). These sayings were thought-provoking and unforgettable.

OBJECT LESSONS

Jesus also used familiar objects to teach spiritual truths. On one occasion, He had a small child stand in the middle of His disciples and pointed to him as an example of humility (Matthew 18:1–6). On another, He drew attention to some rich people and a poor widow who were putting their offerings in the temple treasury. He used the circumstance to teach a lesson on the meaning of true giving (Luke 21:1–4). To the fishermen, He said, "Come, follow me . . . and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). He said the birds of the air and the lilies

of the field were illustrations of God's care for His creation (Matthew 6:26, 28).

QUESTIONS

Jesus often used thought-provoking questions in His teaching. They went to the heart of people's deep concerns and needs: "What can a man give in exchange for his soul?" He asked His disciples (Matthew 16:26). "Which is easier: to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say 'Get up and walk?'" He challenged the teachers of the Law (Matthew 9:5). Perhaps the most important question of all those He asked His disciples was this one: "Who do you say I am?" (Mark 8:29).

Not only did Jesus ask questions, but He also answered those put to Him by others. When Thomas asked, "How can we know the way?", Jesus gladly replied, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:5–6).

Application

10 Read each passage of Scripture listed (left). Then match the method of teaching (right) to each reference to a Scripture that contains an example of it (left).

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| a) Matthew 13:45–46 | 1) Parable |
| b) Mark 12:38–40 | 2) Short saying |
| c) Luke 6:43, 45 | 3) Object lesson |
| d) Luke 10:3 | 4) Question |
| e) John 4:11–14 | |
| f) John 8:31–36 | |

Content

Jesus' teaching included a wide variety of subjects, yet among these can be found some major themes. He taught about the kingdom of God—its true nature and its demands. He taught about people—our responsibility toward God and the way we

should treat others. He taught about himself—His mission, His unique relationship with God, His death and resurrection, and His second coming.

In some of the Gospel accounts, the teachings on a similar subject are found grouped in one place. For example, a large share of Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God is found in Matthew 13. His teaching concerning future events and the end time is found mostly in Matthew 24–25, Mark 13, and Luke 21:5–38. He may have spoken some of His teachings only once. He may have repeated others several times for the benefit of the different people who came to hear Him. His teachings were not set out in a formal, systematic way, but were organized around His person. Those who would understand His teachings must understand Him.

Effect

Jesus' teaching had a great impact on His hearers. When the chief priests and Pharisees sent some guards to arrest Him, the guards came back empty-handed. "Why didn't you bring him in?" the religious leaders asked. "No one ever spoke the way this man does" was their reply (John 7:45–46). When He ended the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7), His audience was amazed because "he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matthew 7:29). His teachings silenced His enemies (Matthew 22:46) and caused sinners to change their ways (Luke 19:8).

As in the days when He lived on earth, His teachings reach people's hearts today. When I consider what has happened in my country, I see the positive effects Christ's teachings are making. I see people like myself transformed by them. I cannot help but identify with the writer of Hebrews: "The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit" (Hebrews 4:12).

Jesus is revealed in the Gospel accounts as the greatest teacher of all. As we teach His Word, we must follow His example and relate it to people's needs and concerns.

Application

11 Complete each of the following sentences in your notebook.

- a)** The two things that formed the basis for the teaching of Jesus were . . .
- b)** The purpose of Jesus' teaching was to . . .
- c)** Four methods Jesus used in His teaching were . . .
- d)** Three of the major themes of Jesus' teaching were . . .
- e)** Those who listened to Jesus teach said that He taught with . . .



Self-Test

TRUE-FALSE. Circle the number in front of each true statement.

- 1** Because of its emphasis on fulfilled prophecy, the Gospel of Matthew appealed more to Gentile readers than to Jewish readers.
- 2** One benefit that comes from having four Gospel accounts is that the most important facts about Jesus are emphasized because they appear in all the accounts.
- 3** Of the four Gospel writers, only Luke gives a detailed account of the week in Jesus' life that ended with His death.
- 4** Most of the events described in the Gospel accounts took place in the district of Samaria.
- 5** The land of Palestine has four main geographical regions or areas.
- 6** Because they lived close to the Gentile areas of Decapolis and Phoenicia, the Jews of Galilee were not very loyal to the Jewish religion.
- 7** Because the Samaritans were despised by the Jews, Jesus avoided ministering to them in order not to offend His disciples.
- 8** The eastern boundary of the district of Judea was the Jordan river and the Dead Sea.
- 9** In the Gospel records, the specific incidents of Christ's life are not necessarily arranged in chronological order.
- 10** In His teaching, Jesus concentrated on speaking to large crowds rather than to individuals or small groups.

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Circle the letter in front of the phrase that best completes each of the following sentences.

- 11** Some people did not understand Jesus' parables because
- a)** the parables were filled with difficult words.
 - b)** they did not believe He was God's Son.
 - c)** Jesus never explained His parables.
- 12** On one occasion, Jesus pointed to a small child as an illustration of the meaning of humility. This is an example of the method of teaching called
- a)** parable.
 - b)** short saying.
 - c)** object lesson.
 - d)** question.
- 13** Jesus was tested by Satan in the wilderness during the period of His
- a)** preparation for ministry.
 - b)** early ministry and popularity.
 - c)** later ministry and controversy.
 - d)** death, resurrection, and ascension.
- 14** Nazareth, the city where Jesus spent His childhood, was in the district of
- a)** Judea.
 - b)** Perea.
 - c)** Samaria.
 - d)** Galilee.
- 15** The main purpose of the Gospel writers was to
- a)** explain the customs and beliefs of the Jewish religion.
 - b)** tell the events of Jesus' life in strict chronological order.
 - c)** give an accurate portrayal of the person of Jesus.
 - d)** describe everything that Jesus said and did.

COMPLETION. Complete the following sentences by writing in the correct word or words.

16 The district north of Judea is named

17 The third period of Jesus' life is that of His

18 Jesus ascended near Jerusalem close to a town named
.....

19 Jesus spent most of His years of ministry in the two
districts of

20 In His teaching, Jesus applied the prophecies of the Old
Testament to

Answers to Application Questions

- 6** a) 6) Judea
b) 5) Perea
c) 2) Phoenicia
d) 4) Samaria
e) 3) Decapolis
f) 4) Samaria
g) 6) Judea
- 1** (In your own words.) The variety serves to draw the attention of many different kinds of people and emphasize the main events in Jesus' life.
- 7** a) 4) Death, resurrection, and ascension
b) 2) Early ministry and popularity
c) 1) Birth and preparation for ministry
d) 3) Later ministry and controversy
e) 3) Later ministry and controversy
f) 2) Early ministry and popularity
g) 4) Death, resurrection, and ascension
- 2** c) do not include everything Jesus did and said.
- 8** 27–28: You shall not commit adultery; Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
33–34: Do not break your oath; Do not swear an oath at all.
43–44: Love your neighbor and hate your enemy; Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.
- 3** a) follow the same basic pattern in developing the story.
- 9** b) Jesus' teachings were based on the Old Testament Scriptures and His authority to interpret them as God's Son.
- 4** c) Mediterranean Sea.

- 10 a)** 1) Parable
b) 3) Object lesson
c) 3) Object lesson
d) 2) Short saying
e) 4) Question
f) 4) Question

(Of course, many of Jesus' teachings involved more than one of these methods. In Mark 12:13–17, there is a combination of the question-and-answer method with the object lesson method; then, a short saying completes the lesson.)

5 b) on the east side of the coastal plain.

- 11** (In your own words.)
- a)** the Old Testament Scriptures and His authority to interpret them as God's Son.
 - b)** give people words of truth upon which they could build their lives.
 - c)** parables, short sayings, object lessons, and questions.
 - d)** the kingdom of God, how to treat other people, and about himself.
 - e)** authority and not as their teachers of the Law.

LESSON 3 Matthew and Mark

You have already learned many facts about the Gospels—their general characteristics, their geographical setting and historical background, and their wonderful theme, Jesus Christ. You have discovered that the four accounts are harmonious. But you have also found that each one is unique, for you have seen that each writer recorded the story of Jesus in his own particular way.

Now we will turn our attention to the Gospel accounts themselves. First, we will examine the special relationship that exists among Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Then we will consider the Gospels of Matthew and Mark individually. We will notice the distinctive way each one presents Christ's person and ministry.

For example, Matthew referred to Jesus as "Son of David" eight times. Mark used this title only twice. Matthew gave more emphasis to Jesus' fulfillment of prophecy; Mark concentrated on His deeds. You will notice other differences. As you study, may the Lord help you see Jesus in a new way as your Messiah and help you follow His example as the willing, obedient servant of God.

Lesson Outline

- A. Relationship of Matthew, Mark, and Luke
- B. Matthew: Gospel of the Messiah-King
- C. Mark: Gospel of the Servant of God

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Identify the best explanation for the kind of relationship found among the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
2. Discuss the author, emphasis, outline, and special features of the Gospel of Matthew.
3. Discuss the author, emphasis, outline, and special features of the Gospel of Mark.

Learning Activities

1. Study the lesson development and answer each exercise. Compare your answers with the ones given and correct any that are wrong.
2. Read the Gospels of Matthew and Mark as directed. This is a very important part of your study.
3. Find each key word in the glossary and learn its meaning. This will help you understand it each time it is used.
4. Review each part of the lesson, take the self-test, and check your answers.

Key Words

ancestry	Great Commission	research
episode	<i>kerygma</i>	Synoptic
genealogy	Latin	verb

A. RELATIONSHIP OF MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE

Objective 1. *Identify the best explanation for the kind of relationship found among the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.*

As you learned in Lesson 2, all of the Gospel accounts follow the same basic pattern in developing the story of Christ. However, Matthew, Mark, and Luke are much more like each other in the way they develop the story of Christ than any one of them is like John. They tell the story of Christ's life in almost the same way, sometimes even using the same words. For this reason, they have been called the *Synoptic* Gospels (a Greek word meaning "see together").

Application

- 1 Read Matthew 8:1–4; Mark 1:40–45; and Luke 5:12–16. In your notebook, write an answer to the following questions:
 - a) In each account, what did the leper say to Jesus?
 - b) In each account, what did Jesus reply?
 - c) In each account, what did Jesus tell the leper to do?
-

There are many other passages that show a similar degree of resemblance. Yet the Gospels are not simply copies of each other, for the following facts appear when their contents are carefully compared:

1. Matthew and Luke include almost all of the material found in Mark.
2. Matthew and Luke share 200 verses not found in Mark.
3. One-third of Matthew is unique to itself.
4. One-half of Luke is unique to itself.

Many explanations have been proposed to account for these facts. However, the following conclusions seem most acceptable.

1. From the very beginning, there was a body of factual material (called the *kerygma*) about the life of Christ. This material was the central message that was proclaimed by the apostles (see Acts 2:22–24 and 1 Corinthians 15:1–11).
2. The Gospel of Mark is the record of this basic material. It was written by a person who knew the apostles and was closely associated with the church from the beginning.
3. The Gospel of Matthew includes this basic material. To it, Matthew added the notes he took on Jesus' teachings—which he arranged to suit his purpose—and other content.
4. The Gospel of Luke also includes the basic material. Luke added a considerable amount of other content that was the result of his own research. Some of this content consists of parables and miracles not recorded by either Matthew or Mark. It is possible that Luke got his information directly from people who had heard Jesus teach and had experienced His miracles.

It must also be remembered that the authors of the Gospel accounts were inspired by the Spirit of God. Their decisions regarding what to include and how to arrange it were made with His guidance. We can be confident that the records we have are the ones God intended us to have.

Application

- 2** Circle the letter in front of each statement that correctly describes or explains the relationship among the Synoptic Gospels.
- a) Each writer dealt with the basic facts according to his perspective.
 - b) The writers of the Gospel accounts made no conscious attempt to follow a certain pattern in telling the story of Christ. The similarities that exist among their accounts are accidental.
 - c) There are similarities among the Synoptics because the writers imitated each other. It was not possible for them to find out more information on their own.
 - d) Matthew and Luke both include the basic material about Christ that Mark recorded. They each added content that was the result of their own research.
-

B. MATTHEW: GOSPEL OF THE MESSIAH-KING

Objective 2. *Discuss the author, emphasis, outline, and special features of the Gospel of Matthew.*

The Gospel of Matthew is appropriately placed as the first book of the New Testament, for its content provides a fitting link between the Old Testament and the New. We will study its author, emphasis, outline, and special features.

Author

According to tradition, the Gospel of Matthew was written by Matthew the tax-collector, one of Jesus' twelve disciples (Matthew 9:9–13, 10:3). Matthew probably wrote his Gospel sometime between AD 50 and AD 70.

Emphasis

Matthew emphasized Jesus' identity and teaching. He referred to the Old Testament more than 60 times, pointing to Jesus as the royal son of David, the king of the Jews whose life

fulfilled the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. In this way, his Gospel forms the bridge between the content of the Old and New Testaments. In Matthew's writings, Jesus is revealed not as just another prophet or teacher but as the very Son of God who will one day sit on His throne in heavenly glory and judge all nations (16:13–20; 25:31–32). This emphasis made the Gospel of Matthew useful for demonstrating to Jews that Jesus was their long-awaited Messiah, the one whose coming their own prophets had foretold. It also served to help Gentile converts understand the full meaning of Jesus' ministry.

Application

- 3** In the Scripture portions below, Matthew showed that a certain aspect of Jesus' life was fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Read the portions of Scripture. In your notebook, describe the aspect mentioned in each one.

a) 1:23

e) 8:17

b) 2:6

f) 12:18–21

c) 2:23

g) 13:35

d) 3:3

h) 21:5

In addition to emphasizing Jesus' identity as the Messiah, Matthew also drew attention to Jesus' teachings. In fact, more than half of his Gospel is devoted to them. He included several long passages that record Jesus' words on a number of important subjects. The Gospel concludes with Jesus' commission to His followers, a charge in which Jesus himself stressed the importance of His teachings: "Go and make disciples of all nations . . . *teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*" [*italics ours*] (Matthew 28:19–20).

Application

- 4** State a fact about the Gospel of Matthew that shows its emphasis on Jesus' teachings. Use your notebook.
-

Special Features

Besides the emphasis Matthew placed on the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in Jesus' life and teachings, there are some other special features found in his Gospel.

EMPHASIS ON KINGSHIP AND KINGDOM

Matthew is the Gospel of Jesus' kingship and kingdom. At its very beginning, Jesus is identified as the royal son of David of the household of Judah (1:1, 3). The Wise Men who came looking for Jesus at His birth asked where the "king of the Jews" had been born (2:1–2). During His ministry, Jesus spoke many times about His kingdom (see 16:28, for example). Throughout the Gospel, there are 38 references to either the "kingdom of heaven" or the "kingdom of God." A week before His crucifixion, Jesus entered Jerusalem as its king, fulfilling the prophecy given in Zechariah 9:9 (see Matthew 21:1–11).

Though the Jews refused to acknowledge Jesus' kingship, others recognized it. The Canaanite woman who came to Christ on behalf of her suffering daughter called Him by His royal title, "Son of David" (15:22). Pilate had these words written and placed on the Cross where Jesus died: "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews" (27:37).

ATTENTION GIVEN TO GENTILES

Matthew included content and facts that demonstrated his interest in the Gentiles. For example, he gave the names of two Gentile women in his record of Jesus' ancestry (1:5—Rahab and Ruth). He told of the Wise Men who came from the east to worship Jesus (2:1–2). He reported Jesus' words concerning the fact that the kingdom would be taken away from the Jews and given to a people who would produce its fruits (21:43). He closed his Gospel with the Great Commission, in which Jesus told His followers to "make disciples of *all nations*" [italics ours] (28:19).

MENTION OF THE CHURCH

Matthew is the only Gospel in which the word *church* appears. It is found there three times (once in 16:18 and twice in 18:17).

OTHER UNIQUE ASPECTS

Matthew contains nine incidents, ten parables, and three miracles not found in the other Gospels. These include Joseph's vision (1:20–24), the healing of the dumb demoniac (9:32–33), and the parables of the weeds (13:24–30, 36–43) and the talents (25:14–30).

Application

- 5 In your notebook, describe three of the special features found in the Gospel of Matthew. Give an example or a Scripture reference for each one.



Content

The content of Matthew is built around a double outline. One of these has to do with the events in Jesus' life, the other with His teachings. In both cases, Matthew has repeated certain phrases to mark the divisions.

EVENTS AND TEACHINGS

As you discovered in Lesson 2, the events in Jesus' life can be divided into four basic periods. In Matthew's Gospel, however, the more fundamental two-fold division is marked: 1) the period of Jesus' public acceptance and popularity (4:17–16:20) and 2) the period of His decline in favor and public rejection (16:21–27:66). Each of these divisions is introduced by the words, "From that time on Jesus began to. . . ." This division reveals that after a certain time in His ministry, Jesus gave more attention and training to His disciples.

Application

- 6** Read Matthew 4:17 and 16:21. In your notebook, write what Jesus “began” to do in each case and the incident that immediately followed.



The teachings included in the Gospel of Matthew are grouped by topics into five main sections. Each of these is concluded by a phrase such as “When Jesus had finished saying these things. . . .”

Application

- 7** Following are listed the references of the verses that conclude each of the five main sections of teaching. Find the verse and write in your notebook what Jesus “finished” doing in each case. Also write a short description of the subject He had just finished teaching about.

- a)** 7:28
- b)** 11:1
- c)** 13:53
- d)** 19:1
- e)** 26:1



In addition to these five sections of teaching, there are two others: the preaching of John (3:1–12) and the Great Commission (28:18–20).

OUTLINE

In this section, you will read the Gospel of Matthew. Use the following outline to help you. Memorize the title of the outline. In your notebook, answer the question on each section as you do your reading. (*NOTE:* This outline has the same basic divisions as the one given in Lesson 2.) The references for each of the five main sections of teaching and the two other sections are given under the appropriate division.

MATTHEW: GOSPEL OF THE MESSIAH-KING

- I. The King Is Introduced. *Read 1:1–4:11*
The Preaching of John; 3:1–12

Application

- 8** What question did the Wise Men ask King Herod?



- II. The King Announces the Kingdom. *Read 4:12–16:20*
The Sermon on the Mount, 5:1–7:29
The Charge to the Disciples, 10:1–42
The Parables, 13:1–52

Application

- 9** In Matthew 13, which of the parables did Jesus explain?



- III. The King Is Rejected. *Read 16:21–20:34*
The Meaning of Forgiveness; 18:1–35

Application

- 10** List the references for each time Jesus had a discussion with the Pharisees and Sadducees.



- IV. The King Triumphs. *Read 21:1–28:20*
Rebuke and Prophecy; 23:1–25:46
The Great Commission; 28:18–20

Application

- 11** After Jesus asked one of His questions, the Scripture says that no one asked Him any more questions from that day on. In your notebook, state the question and give the reference where it is found.

- 12** Complete or respond to each of the following by writing the appropriate word or phrase in your notebook.
- a)** Matthew's Gospel is an eyewitness account of the life of Christ because Matthew was . . .
 - b)** The content of Matthew is built around a double outline. The divisions Matthew made relate to these two aspects: . . .
 - c)** Five things that are emphasized in or are special features of the Gospel of Matthew are the following: . . .
 - d)** You read Matthew following an outline that had four divisions. List the titles of these four divisions and the chapters and verses each division covers.
-

The Gospel of Matthew depicts the glorious, victorious king Christ really is! Satan could not overcome Him. His enemies could not hinder Him. Death could not hold Him. Let us not doubt His kingship. Let us invite Him to reign in our hearts and seek His kingdom above everything else.

C. MARK: GOSPEL OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

Objective 3. *Discuss the author, emphasis, outline, and special features of the Gospel of Mark.*

The Gospel of Mark emphasizes Jesus' dynamic, active ministry. Guided by the Holy Spirit, Mark showed how Christ fulfilled His mission as the obedient, diligent servant of God. In considering the Gospel account he wrote, we will examine his identity as its author. We will also study its content, emphasis, and special features.

Author

There is general agreement among students of the New Testament that the author of the Gospel of Mark was John Mark, the young man who went with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:13). Mark was a cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10) and a close associate of the apostle Peter. (See 1 Peter 5:13, in which Peter referred to Mark as his "son"—a term of affection.) In fact, it is quite likely that Mark's Gospel

represents the eyewitness report of Peter, with whose preaching and life Mark was well acquainted. Mark himself may also have been present at some of the occasions he described.

Emphasis

Mark's account of Jesus Christ emphasized His life of active service as the Son of God (1:1). As such, it would have great appeal to the Roman mind with its interest in the practical side of life. In contrast to Matthew and Luke, for example, Mark gave no record of Christ's genealogy. This is in keeping with Mark's focus on Jesus' life of service, for the family history of a servant is not important. Mark's emphasis is indicated in other ways as well. The Gospel of Luke is almost twice as long as the Gospel of Mark, yet Luke recorded 20 miracles while Mark included 18 in little over half the space. Though Mark recounted many of Jesus' teachings, he often simply referred to the fact that Jesus taught (see 2:13; 6:2, 6, 34; and 12:35).

Mark also emphasized that Christ carried out His mission with zeal and purpose. Time after time, He was surrounded by large crowds, to whose needs He ministered (3:7–12, 20–21; 4:1–2; 5:21–34; 6:30–44, 53–56; 8:1–13). The Greek word *euthus*—translated by expressions such as “immediately,” “straightway,” and “at once”—appears 42 times in Mark (this word appears only 7 times in Matthew and once in Luke). This expression is used 14 times of Jesus' own actions and indicates the promptness and willingness with which He served. Mark's use of it several times in his account also demonstrated the fact that Christ was hastening towards the goal of His life of service. He told His disciples that “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (10:45).

Application

- 13** Several facts about the Gospel of Mark are given in the sentences that follow. Circle the letter in front of each one that has been presented as an indication of its emphasis on Jesus' life of active service, as the One who served.
- a) It is shorter in length than the accounts of Matthew and Luke.
 - b) It does not include a detailed record of Jesus' family history.
 - c) A greater portion of space is given to telling about the miracles of Christ than in the Gospel of Luke.
 - d) It represents the historical facts about Christ's life and teachings that were preached by the apostles.
-

Special Features

Though the Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels, it contains several features that give it a distinctive character.

FRESH, LIVELY STYLE

Mark often described past events as if they were actually happening at the time he was writing about them. To do this, he used a verb form in Greek called the "historic present." This form could be represented in English by a present form such as *I see*, *you walk*, *he speaks*. However, to most English readers, this would sound unusual and awkward. For this reason, the Greek historic present is usually represented in most English translations by the simple past (*I saw*, *you walked*, *he spoke*).

Notice the two verbs we have italicized that appear in Mark 4:38 as it is translated in the New American Standard Bible: "Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they *woke* Him and *said* to Him, 'Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?'" If we were to use a form closer to the one Mark actually used, the verse would read like this: "Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they *awaken* Him and *say* to Him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are

perishing?” The verse that has the present form makes the story more vivid. This verb form is like the Greek historic present, which Mark used more than 150 times.

Other features of Mark’s style also add to the realism and drama of his account. He used many phrases that give descriptive, vivid details.

Application

14 Find the verses referenced below. For each person or object they name, write in your notebook the details Mark gave as to color, number, age, gesture or action, and so forth.

- a)** 5:39–43; the girl
- b)** 6:39; the grass
- c)** 8:12; Jesus
- d)** 10:49–50; the blind man
- e)** 16:4–5; the young man



DETAILS OF INTEREST TO ROMANS

Certain special features about the Gospel of Mark indicate that it was probably circulated first in Rome. According to Mark 15:21, for example, the man who carried Jesus’ cross was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus (none of the other Gospel accounts name Simon’s sons). Rufus was mentioned by the apostle Paul in his letter to the members of the church in Rome (Romans 16:13). In addition to this reference, there are other places where Mark used a Latin term (Latin was spoken by many Romans) to explain a Greek word (see 15:16, for example, where “Praetorium” is used to explain “palace”). These details show that Mark was especially suited to Roman audiences.

IMPORTANCE OF “THE GOSPEL”

Mark began his account by calling it “the beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1). According to Mark, the message Christ preached was the Gospel (1:14–15). It is so important and valuable a message that it is

worthy of a person's giving his or her life for it (8:35; 10:29). It is a message that must be proclaimed to the whole world (13:10; 14:9).

Content

In writing his account of the life of Christ, Mark chose to let the facts and the record of events speak for themselves. He described a series of episodes, giving a vivid picture of Jesus and of the progress of His ministry. Though his account is brief, it has all the important elements. As we have already pointed out, it includes many details that show that it is the testimony of an eyewitness.

Read the Gospel of Mark using the following outline to guide you. Memorize the title of the outline. In your notebook, write a reply to the study exercises for each part.

Application

MARK: GOSPEL OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

I. The Servant Is Presented. *Read 1:1–13.*

15 What did John the Baptist say Jesus would do?

II. The Servant Works. *Read 1:14–7:23*

16 Read each of the following portions of Mark. In your notebook, write how the people or the disciples reacted to what Jesus did or said.

- a)** 1:21–27
 - b)** 2:1–12
 - c)** 4:35–41
 - d)** 6:1–3
-

III. The Servant Is Refused. *Read 7:24–10:52*

- 17** List the references in these chapters of each time Jesus told His disciples about His death, and briefly describe their response to His announcement.



IV. The Servant Completes His Work. *Read 11:1–16:20.*

- 18** State the question Jesus was asked about himself and who He was by a) the high priest and b) Pilate during His trials. Also, tell how Jesus answered each question.
- 19** Do the following exercises regarding the Gospel of Mark. Write your responses in your notebook.
- a)** Explain the relationship John Mark had with Peter, Paul, and Barnabas.
 - b)** Name two facts about the Gospel of Mark that show its emphasis in the active ministry of Jesus.
 - c)** Give the main headings and the chapter and verse references for each of the four main sections of Mark.
 - d)** Name two special features of the Gospel of Mark and give an example or reference for each.



The Gospel of Mark shows how Jesus was the obedient, faithful, and willing servant of God. Because of this, God also honored Him with unspeakable glory (Philippians 2:9–11). If you and I remain faithful and obedient in our service for God, we will also receive honor (John 12:26).

Self-Test

TRUE-FALSE. Circle the number in front of each true statement.

- 1 The similarities among the Synoptic Gospels indicate that from the earliest time, there was a well-established body of factual material about Jesus' life and teachings.
- 2 Matthew and Luke do not include the basic *kerygma* about Christ that is given in Mark.
- 3 Matthew and Mark share 200 verses not found in Luke.
- 4 More than half of Matthew is devoted to recording Jesus' teachings.
- 5 Matthew's Gospel indicates that most of the Jews recognized Jesus' kingship.
- 6 In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus' teachings are arranged in five major sections.
- 7 It is likely that the Gospel of Mark represents the eyewitness testimony of the apostle Peter, with whom Mark was well acquainted.
- 8 Because Mark emphasized Jesus' active ministry, he did not include any of Jesus' teachings in his Gospel record.
- 9 One of the special features of Mark's Gospel is that it includes the descriptions of more than 25 miracles.
- 10 Mark gives many details that seem to represent the testimony of eyewitnesses.

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Circle the letter in front of the one best answer to each question.

- 11 Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because all of them
 - a) devote most of their space to giving Jesus' teachings.
 - b) appeal to several different kinds of audiences.
 - c) follow the same basic pattern in telling about the life of Christ.
 - d) were written by Jesus' disciples.

12 The most important reason we can say that the Gospel of Matthew forms a bridge between the Old Testament and the New is because it

- a)** tells how the Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus.
- b)** contains the preaching of John the Baptist.
- c)** includes several of Jesus' parables and miracles.
- d)** describes how Jesus ministered to many people with compassion.

13 MATCHING. Match the Gospel (right) to each phrase that describes it (left).

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| a) Was written by a man who went with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey | 1) Matthew
2) Mark |
| b) Includes the names of two Gentile women in its genealogy of Christ | |
| c) Emphasizes Jesus' kingship and kingdom | |
| d) Uses the Greek word <i>euthus</i> ("at once") much more than the other gospels | |
| e) Mentions Rufus, a member of the church in Rome | |

SHORT-ANSWER. Answer these questions as briefly as possible.

14 Matthew marked the two basic periods of Jesus' life with the phrase, "From that time on Jesus began to . . ." Those two basic periods were

.....

.....

15 The Gospel of Matthew had a special appeal to the Jews because it

.....

16 The Gospel of Mark appealed to the practical, Roman mind because it emphasized

.....

17 Mark demonstrated the importance of “the gospel” by calling his account

.....

Answers to Application Questions

10 16:1–4; 19:3–12.

- 1 a)** He said that if the Lord were willing, He could make him clean.
- b)** Jesus said He was willing and told the man to be clean.
- c)** Jesus told him not to tell anyone and to show himself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded as a testimony.

11 Jesus asked how David could call his own son “Lord” (22:41–46).

- 2 a)** Each writer dealt with the basic facts according to his perspective.
- d)** Matthew and Luke both include the basic material about Christ that Mark recorded. They each added content that was the result of their own research.

12 (In your own words)

- a)** one of Jesus’ disciples.
- b)** the events in Jesus’ life and His teachings.
- c)** Jesus’ identity as the Messiah, His teachings, His kingdom and kingship, the mention of the church, and the place of the Gentiles.
- d)** Refer to the lesson to check your answer.

3 a) His birth

- b)** His birthplace
- c)** His home in Nazareth
- d)** The work of His forerunner
- e)** His healing ministry
- f)** His servanthood
- g)** His method of teaching in parables
- h)** His manner of coming to Israel

- 13 b)** It does not include a detailed record of Jesus' family history.
- c)** A greater portion of space is given to telling about the miracles of Christ than in the Gospel of Luke.
- 4** More than half of its content is devoted to giving Jesus' teachings. (You also could have said that it gives the Great Commission, in which Jesus stressed the importance of His teachings.)
- 14** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** Her age—twelve years old.
- b)** Its color—green.
- c)** His response—He sighed.
- d)** His action—he threw his cloak aside.
- e)** His dress and posture—he was dressed in white and was sitting on the right side.
- 5** Three of the special features are these: a) its emphasis on Jesus' kingdom and kingship, b) the attention it gives to the Gentiles, and c) its mention of the church. Refer to the lesson to check the examples and references you have given for each of these. (For part of your answer, you also could have said that Matthew includes several parables, incidents, and miracles not found in the other Gospels.)
- 15** He said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit.
- 6** (Your answer should be similar.) Matthew 4:17 says that Jesus began to preach that the kingdom of heaven was near. After this, He called His first disciples. Matthew 16:21 says that Jesus began to explain that He would die in Jerusalem and be resurrected on the third day. After this, Peter rebuked Him, and Jesus told Peter he did not have the things of God in mind.
- 16 a)** They were amazed.
- b)** They were amazed and gave praise to God.
- c)** They were terrified.
- d)** They were amazed and offended.

- 7 a)** He finished “saying these things.” He had just taught about the wise and foolish builders.
- b)** He finished “instructing his twelve disciples.” He had just taught about rewards.
- c)** He finished “these parables.” He had just given the parable of the net with the good and bad fish.
- d)** He finished “saying these things.” He had just taught about what would happen to the unforgiving servant.
- e)** He finished “saying all these things.” He had just taught about how the wicked and the righteous would be judged.
- 17** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** 8:31–32; Peter rebuked Him.
- b)** 9:30–32; His disciples did not understand Him and were afraid to ask Him about what He had said.
- c)** 10:32–34; no reaction mentioned.
- 8** They asked him where was the one who was born king of the Jews (2:2).
- 18 a)** The high priest asked Him if He were the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One. Jesus replied that He was (14:61–62).
- b)** Pilate asked Him if He were the king of the Jews. Jesus told him it was as he said (15:2).
- 9** Jesus explained the parables of the sower (vv. 18–23) and the weeds (vv. 36–43).

19 (Your answer to a) should be similar. For b) you may have chosen any feature of Mark's Gospel that is mentioned in the section titled Emphasis.)

- a)** John Mark was a close associate of Peter and a cousin of Barnabas. He went with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey.
- b)** Mark emphasized Jesus' active ministry by omitting details about His family history and giving more attention to His miracles.
- c)**
 - I. The Servant Is Presented. 1:1–13
 - II. The Servant Works. 1:14–7:23
 - III. The Servant Is Refused. 7:24–10:52
 - IV. The Servant Completes His Work. 11:1–16:20
- d)** Three of the special features of the Gospel of Mark are these (list two):
 - 1) its fresh, lively style of writing by using the Greek historic present, and using phrases that give vivid details.
 - 2) its details of interest to Romans.
 - 3) Mark's emphasis on the importance of "the Gospel."

4 Luke and John

As you have discovered, it is impossible to read the Gospels without being deeply impressed by the man Jesus—His words, His miracles, His unselfish love. You have seen how Matthew traced His ancestry and proved His right to claim the throne of David. You have seen how Mark showed His life of active, dedicated service. You have also considered aspects of the special relationship that exists among the Synoptic Gospels, of which Matthew and Mark are two.

In this lesson, we will take a closer look at Luke, the third Synoptic Gospel, and John, the Gospel written by the disciple whom Jesus loved. These two Gospels are also distinctive. Luke appealed to the Gentile mind, John to the philosophical. Luke told about the earthly circumstances of Jesus' birth; John portrayed Him as the eternal Word, the One who existed from the beginning.

Yet both Luke and John showed Jesus to be the Son of God and the Savior of humanity. They left no doubt that His main purpose was to provide salvation for everyone in the world. As you study the special insights they had into Jesus' person and ministry, you will be inspired to worship and love Him more.

Lesson Outline

- A. Luke: Gospel of the Savior
- B. John: Gospel of the Son of God

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Identify important facts about the author, emphasis, special features, and content of the Gospel of Luke.
2. Discuss the author, emphasis, special features, and content of the Gospel of John.

Learning Activities

1. Study the lesson development in the usual manner, answering the study exercises and checking your answers.
2. Read the Gospels of Luke and John as directed.
3. Be sure to read each Scripture referenced in the lesson. These verses help illustrate the ideas presented.
4. After you take the self-test, review Lessons 1–4 (Unit One). Then complete the *Unit One Evaluation* and check your answers with the key in the back of this book.

Key Words

deity

discourse

medical

physician

poem

redemption

theological

vocabulary

A. LUKE: GOSPEL OF THE SAVIOR

Objective 1. *Identify important facts about the author, emphasis, special features, and content of the Gospel of Luke.*

The Gospel of Luke was written by the man whom the apostle Paul called “our dear friend Luke, the doctor” (Colossians 4:14). Luke described his Gospel account as a record of “all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven” (Acts 1:1–2). As we examine the Gospel that bears Luke’s name, we will become better acquainted with the Savior whom he loved and served and about whom he so eloquently wrote.

Author

From the evidence given in the New Testament, we can conclude that Luke was a highly-educated Gentile. He was well-versed in the medical knowledge of his day. It is probable that he was a native of Antioch. He also wrote the book of Acts, in which he recorded the events surrounding the church’s formation and expansion. For this reason, the Gospel he wrote can be described more accurately as the first part of a two-volume history of Christianity’s beginnings (the second part being the book of Acts). He was a close friend of the apostle Paul and went with him on several of his missionary journeys, including the last one, which took Paul to Rome.

Application

- 1 Find each Scripture passage referenced below. In your notebook, write a short sentence telling what it says about Luke and his relationship to Paul and the other Christians.
 - a) 2 Timothy 4:11
 - b) Philemon 24
 - c) Colossians 4:14



Emphasis

In writing his account of Jesus' life, Luke emphasized its human, historical, and theological aspects. The *humanity of Jesus* is an important fact that Luke presented. Many Bible students have described the Gospel of Luke as the Gospel of Jesus' manhood. Luke showed that Jesus was one of us and that He shared completely in the common experiences of human life.

Application

- 2** Read each Scripture passage referenced below. In your notebook, write a phrase telling what aspect of human life each shows that Jesus experienced.
- a)** 2:6–7
 - b)** 2:40–52
 - c)** 7:36; 24:42–43
 - d)** 19:41



Luke also stressed the *historical nature* of the life of Christ. He made a careful study of all the important facts so that he could write an accurate account (1:3). He referred to specific events that happened in Palestine at the same time Jesus was born (2:1, 3). He also named the rulers and the high priests who were in power when John the Baptist began his ministry (3:1–3). These details make it possible to relate Jesus' life to a certain time in the region's political history. They establish that Jesus was a historical person who carried out His mission amid the very real circumstances and turmoil of first-century Palestine.

Application

- 3** The following are facts that Luke includes in his Gospel. Circle the letter before each fact that shows his emphasis on the actual *historical nature* of the life of Christ.
- a)** The angel Gabriel told Zechariah to name his son John (1:13).
 - b)** The first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria was the one decreed by Caesar Augustus (2:1–2).
 - c)** Jesus experienced the normal process of childhood and growth (2:40, 52).
 - d)** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea when John the Baptist preached (3:1–2).



Luke also highlighted certain *theological aspects* of Jesus' ministry that had to do with His identity and the meaning of His work of salvation. For example, Luke recorded that Jesus often referred to himself as the "Son of Man." This term was the name the prophet Daniel gave to the person he saw in a vision as described in Daniel 7:13–14. For Daniel, it meant that the one he saw looked like a man, a member of the human race.

Application

- 4** Read Daniel 7:13–14. In your notebook, write a short answer to each of the following questions.
- a)** In what manner did the "Son of Man" come?
 - b)** What was the "Son of Man" given?
 - c)** Who would worship him?
 - d)** What kind of dominion or kingdom would he have?



By using the name "Son of Man," Jesus identified himself with the person Daniel saw in his prophetic vision. But He did more than that. He said that as the Son of Man, He would suffer, die, and be resurrected (Luke 9:22). The disciples could not understand this statement (9:44–45). It showed that the Son

of Man who would come in great power and glory would first be rejected.

Besides emphasizing Jesus' identity as the Son of Man, Luke also stressed His work of salvation and His role as Redeemer. He recorded that Anna, the prophetess, spoke about the child Jesus to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem (2:38). He told how the disciples on the road to Emmaus said they had expected Jesus to be the one who would redeem Israel (24:21).

The process of redemption was established by God and well-known among the Jews. It meant that something (or someone) that was sold could be bought back by a close relative or kinsman of the one who sold it. In this way, it could be restored to its original owner. (The book of Ruth in the Old Testament is a beautiful illustration of this process.) A "redeemer" had to be a relative or kinsman of the one needing help.

Application

- 5** What fact about Jesus did Luke emphasize which shows that He was in a position to be our redeemer? Write your answer in your notebook.



Special Features

In addition to the aspects of Jesus' life that Luke emphasized, there are many special features in his Gospel account. For example, it gives attention to the part played by certain groups of people such as women, children, and the poor. In addition, the words used and the details included show that the author was acquainted with the medical profession. Luke is the most literary of the Gospels; it contains several songs and poems and has rich vocabulary. Its pages also reveal an interest in the worldwide importance of the message of Christ and in the work of the Holy Spirit. All of these features give the Gospel of Luke a special character. Let us look at some examples of each one.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND THE POOR

Luke often gave a fuller description than Mark or Matthew of the women and children who were involved in Jesus' life and ministry. Luke also recorded several stories and parables that deal specifically with poverty and wealth; most of these do not appear in any of the other Gospels.

Application

- 6** Compare Luke's description of Mary and the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26–56, 2:19) with that of Matthew (Matthew 1:18–25). Circle the letter before each fact that only Luke gives.
- a)** At first, Mary was troubled when the angel spoke to her.
 - b)** Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit.
 - c)** Mary was pledged in marriage to Joseph.
 - d)** While visiting Elizabeth, Mary praised and glorified the Lord.
 - e)** In her heart, Mary thought over the things that had happened.
- 7** Read the accounts of the healing of Jairus' daughter (Matthew 9:18–26; Mark 5:23, 35–43; and Luke 8:41–42, 49–56). Which of the following facts about Jairus' daughter is mentioned only by Luke?
- a)** She was about twelve years old.
 - b)** She was the only daughter of Jairus.
-

The parables about poverty and wealth that are unique to Luke include the striking one about the rich fool (12:13–34).

A PHYSICIAN'S PERSPECTIVE

Many Bible scholars have felt that Luke's Gospel shows evidence of having been written by a physician. Luke's account often shows more interest in the sick person than is shown in the accounts of Mark and Matthew. Note, for example, the fuller description Luke gave as compared to Mark of the malady or disease that Jesus healed in the following instances:

Mark 1:30	“in bed with a fever”
Luke 4:38	“suffering from a high fever”
Mark 1:40	“a man with leprosy”
Luke 5:12	“a man . . . covered with leprosy”
Mark 3:1	“a man with a shriveled hand”
Luke 6:6	“a man . . . whose right hand was shriveled”
Mark 14:47	A man’s ear was cut off.
Luke 22:50–51	Jesus healed the man whose ear was cut off.

WORLDWIDE FOCUS

Luke’s Gospel shows that he wanted to make evident the worldwide importance of Jesus’ life and work. In his writings Jesus is revealed not only as a living figure of Jewish history, but also as the Savior of all humanity. Many times His miracles and teachings were directed toward people from Gentile nations. In the following exercise, you will read some of the passages that illustrate this truth. Several of them appear only in Luke’s Gospel account.

Application

- 8** Read each portion of Scripture listed and fill in the missing word or words in the sentence to which it refers.
- a)** 3:6: God’s salvation will be seen by
- b)** 3:38: Jesus descended from, the first man God created and the father of the human race.
- c)** 4:27: Jesus pointed out that the only leper who was healed during the time of Elisha was Naaman the.....
- d)** 10:25–37: The man in Jesus’ story about the good neighbor was a
- e)** 17:16: The only one of the ten lepers whom Jesus healed who returned to thank Him was a
- f)** 24:47: Jesus said that repentance and forgiveness of sins would be preached in His name to



THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Among the three Synoptics, Luke has the most references to the work of the Holy Spirit. He showed how the Holy Spirit was involved in every aspect of the life of Christ. He also highlighted aspects of His ministry in the lives of other significant people. The following exercise will help you discover specific ways in which the Holy Spirit ministered as recorded by Luke.

Application

- 9 Copy the chart and headings in your notebook. Read the verses the chart refers to and write in the information it requests. The first one is completed to give you an example (1:35 has two answers).

Verse(s)	Person	Work of Spirit
1:15	John the Baptist	The Holy Spirit filled him from birth
1:35		
1:41–42		
1:67		
2:25–26		
3:22		
4:1		
4:14, 18		
10:21		
24:49		



LITERARY BEAUTY

Luke included four magnificent songs or poems in his Gospel account. These are the songs of Mary (1:46–55), Zechariah

(1:67–79), the angels (2:13–14), and the prayer of Simeon (2:29–32). Each one is a masterpiece of expression and praise. They give Luke’s book a special beauty. In addition, Luke’s literary ability is also seen in the way he wrote about the events of Jesus’ life and expressed the parables and teachings the Master gave. Notice, for example, the vivid descriptions of the lost son and his jealous brother (15:11–32) and of the pompous Pharisee and the sorrowful publican (18:9–14). Luke’s skillful recording of these teachings of Jesus makes the characters come alive for us.

Luke’s aptitude for narrating events is no less impressive. How profoundly moved and cheered we feel when we read his simple description of Jesus’ appearance to the downcast disciples on the road to Emmaus (24:13–32)! Truly, Luke was a literary artist, and we are the ones who benefit from his talent.

Application

- 10** Review this section on the special features of the Gospel of Luke. Then in your notebook, write a sentence that states an example of each feature listed and give the reference in Luke where the example can be found. A sample is given for the first one.
- a)** The role of women, children, and the poor. *Luke described Mary’s feelings when the angel spoke to her (1:26–38).*
(Do not use this example for your answer, but follow it as a model for stating your own.)
 - b)** A physician’s perspective
 - c)** Worldwide focus
 - d)** The work of the Holy Spirit
 - e)** Literary beauty



Content

The sequence of events in Luke follows the general pattern of that in Matthew and Mark. There is also a considerable amount of information that only Luke includes. Luke’s main goal was

to present Jesus as the perfect man empowered by the Spirit and the Savior of all people; his Gospel is the only one among the Synoptics in which the specific title “Savior” is used for Jesus (2:11).

Use the following outline to guide you as you read through the Gospel of Luke. In your notebook, write answers to the questions for each section. Memorize the heading and the chapter and verse references.

Application

LUKE: GOSPEL OF THE SAVIOR

I. The Savior Is Prepared. *Read 1:1–4:13.*

- 11** Briefly describe the reactions of Mary and Joseph to:
- a)** Simeon’s prayer when Jesus was presented in the temple
 - b)** the response Jesus made about needing to be in His Father’s house.



II. The Savior Ministers. *Read 4:14–9:17.*

- 12** There are accounts in these chapters of ten specific people whom Jesus healed, delivered from evil spirits, or raised from the dead. Name each person and give the references where the event is described.



III. The Savior Endures Conflict. *Read 9:18–19:28.*

Almost all of the content of this section belongs exclusively to Luke. Specifically, most of the material in 9:51–18:14 and 19:1–28 is found only in his Gospel account.

Application

13 The following are descriptions of some of the parables, teachings, and events that appear in this section. Opposite each description, write the reference where the event it describes appears. The first is done as an example.

- a) Jesus described the fall of Satan. *10:18*
- b) Jesus said the “sign of Jonah” would be given.
- c) The Pharisees told Jesus that
Herod wanted to kill Him.
- d) Jesus told about the rich man and Lazarus.
- e) Zacchaeus met Jesus and said
he would change his ways.



IV. The Savior Obtains Humanity’s Salvation.

Read 19:29–24:53.

14 Circle the letter in front of each true statement. The information you need to select the true statements is found in the above section of Luke.

- a) Jesus said the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed because its people did not realize the time when God came to them.
- b) The chief priests and teachers of the Law did not realize that Jesus had spoken the parable of the tenants against them.
- c) Jesus said that signs would appear in the sun, moon, and stars at the time of the coming of the Son of man.
- d) After He was arrested, Jesus was taken to the house of the high priest and brought before the council of elders at daybreak.
- e) Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because Jesus said He was the King of the Jews.
- f) Jesus appeared to the disciples on the road to Emmaus before He appeared to the Eleven in Jerusalem.



In reading Luke's record of Jesus' life, we see how He fulfilled the mission He announced. (See 4:18–19.) The Spirit of the Lord came upon Him; He preached good news to the poor, proclaimed freedom for the prisoners, gave recovery of sight to the blind, released the oppressed, and announced the year of the Lord's favor. What a Savior!

B. JOHN: GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD

Objective 2. *Discuss the author, emphasis, special features, and content of the Gospel of John.*

For many, the Gospel of John is the most beloved book of the Bible. It has unique spiritual depth and beauty; its message arrests the mind and challenges the heart in a powerful, compelling way. Written by the apostle John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” it draws the reader into that intimate fellowship with the Master that was experienced by those who were nearest to Him. As we study the truths it presents, may our fellowship with Jesus become closer and richer as a result.

Author

Most Bible scholars agree that John was the author of the fourth Gospel. He was one of Jesus' 12 disciples. Along with Peter and James, he was in the “inner circle” of the Lord's closest associates (Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33). He was “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). James was his brother, and they both were the sons of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21). He was an eyewitness of the events he recorded (John 1:14; 19:35; 21:24).

Application

- 15** Describe the writer of the Gospel of John by answering the following questions in your notebook. Use the information given in the preceding paragraph and the Scriptures it referred to in writing your answer.
- a)** What was his relationship to Jesus?
 - b)** What was his relationship to the other disciples?
 - c)** What kind of knowledge did he have of the events of Jesus' life?
-



Emphasis

John himself clearly stated the purpose he had for writing his account of the life of Christ.

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30–31)

Thus, John carefully selected his material with one specific goal: to lead people to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. The material John chose emphasized Jesus' works and words. Together, these form convincing evidence that Jesus was who He claimed to be. John also showed how people reacted to Christ; their responses illustrated his main theme of belief.

John gave attention to the *works that Jesus did*. The accounts of seven miracles are included in his Gospel. He called them *signs*, for together they demonstrated Jesus' complete authority as the Son of God and pointed unmistakably to His deity.

Application

16 The seven signs John included are described in the Scripture passages listed on the left. Read each passage, and match it to the phrase that best describes the area of Jesus’ authority it revealed.

-**a)** 2:1–11

....**b)** 4:46–54

....**c)** 5:1–9

....**d)** 6:1–14

....**e)** 6:16–21

....**f)** 9:1–12

....**g)** 11:1–46
- 1) Power to heal across barriers of space and time

2) Power to raise the dead

3) Power over natural law

4) Power to meet human physical need regardless of material limitations

In addition to these seven signs is the greatest sign of them all: Jesus’ resurrection from the dead (chapters 20 and 21). In the words of Paul the apostle, Jesus was “declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4). This event was the crowning proof of His divine Sonship.

John also stressed the *words of Jesus*. Most of the discourses he recorded are those in which Jesus discussed aspects of His own person. Among these are the seven major “I am” passages:

1. “I am the bread of life.”.....

2. “I am the light of the world.”

3. “Before Abraham was born, I am!”

4. “I am the good shepherd.”

5. “I am the resurrection and the life.”

6. “I am the way and the truth and the life.”

7. “I am the true vine”
- 6:35

8:12; 9:5

8:58

10:11

11:25

14:6

15:1

Many Bible scholars have seen these sayings as an expansion of Exodus 3:14, in which God told Moses that His name was “I am.” They not only assert the deity of Christ (see 8:58) but also show how He revealed the Father.

Application

17 Following are three of the “I am” sayings. Each is specifically connected with one of the seven signs that John recorded (refer to study question 16). In your notebook, write each saying. Next to it, state the miracle connected with it and give the reference where it is found.

- a) “I am the bread of life.”
- b) “I am the light of the world.”
- c) “I am the resurrection and the life.”



Besides these passages, John included many other important teachings such as those about the new birth (ch. 3), the living water (ch. 4), the authority of the Son (ch. 5), and the work of the Holy Spirit (ch. 7, 14–16). He also recorded Jesus’ prayer regarding himself and His disciples (ch. 17). This prayer illuminated even more of His nature, His oneness with the Father, and His ultimate plan for all those who would believe in Him.

Along with his emphasis on Jesus’ words and works, John highlighted the *personal interviews Jesus had* with certain people. He showed how Jesus challenged them to believe in Him. The encounters John described are vivid illustrations of the main theme of John’s Gospel—belief in Jesus Christ.

Application

- 18** Read each personal interview referenced below. Write the reference in your notebook. Beside it, put the individual’s name and briefly state how he or she responded to Jesus’ challenge.
- a) 4:43–54
 - b) 9:1–7, 35–38
 - c) 11:17–27
 - d) 18:28–19:16
 - e) 20:24–28
- 19** John emphasized the purpose of his Gospel account by including descriptions of Jesus’ teachings, miracles, and personal interviews. Complete the following sentences by explaining how John used this content to illustrate his main theme of belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
- a) Of all the miracles Christ did, John selected seven of them to demonstrate
 - b) Many of the discourses John recorded were those in which Jesus taught truths about
 - c) John described several of Jesus’ personal interviews to give examples of



As one examines John’s record of Jesus’ words, works, and personal encounters, there can be no doubt why he wrote his testimony: to present the truth that belief in Jesus, the Son of God, is the only and essential key to life itself. (See John 3:36.)

Special Features

The Gospel of John has many special features. We will examine three of the most notable: its relationship to the Synoptics, its vocabulary, and its distinctive view of Christ.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE SYNOPTICS

In comparing the Gospel of John to the three Synoptics, one is struck by the contrast. With all the distinctions they have

among themselves, the Synoptics are still much more like each other than any one of them is like John. For example, Jesus' ministry in Galilee generally occupies the Synoptics, while the Lord's ministry in Judea receives most of John's attention. With the exception of the two miracles recorded in John 6:1–24 and the account of Jesus' trial, death, and resurrection, none of John's content appears elsewhere.

Though these contrasts exist, there are some important links between John and the Synoptics. While most of John's material is different from theirs, none of it contradicts what they give. Instead, it often supplements and provides the background for the events they describe. For example, from a study of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, one might conclude that Jesus' ministry lasted somewhat over a year. But John mentioned three Passovers (and possibly four), feasts that occurred once a year. Thus, we know that Jesus' ministry occupied at least three years. John's information illuminates the synoptic view of Jesus' life in other ways as well.

We have seen that John had a certain goal in mind when he wrote his account. It is possible that the three Synoptics were already in circulation among Christians at the time. If they were, however, he did not duplicate them. As the Holy Spirit directed him, he drew upon his extensive and rich experience as the disciple whom Jesus loved and presented his own unique perception of Him and His mission. Today, we benefit from the deep insights and truths God gave him to share with us.

Application

20 The Gospel of John is related to the Synoptics in that its content

- a)** corrects the information they give.
 - b)** supplements the information they give.
 - c)** is completely unrelated to the information they give.
-



VOCABULARY

Certain terms are used much more frequently in the Gospel of John than in the Synoptics. Among these are the following: *Abide* and *remain*, *believe*, *feast*, *Jew*, *light*, *live* and *life*, *love* (both the noun and verb), *truth* and *true*, *witness*, and *world*. These terms have special significance and meaning. They need to be carefully studied, for they often provide the key to the thoughts John expressed.

DISTINCTIVE VIEW OF CHRIST

All of the Gospels presented Christ as the Son of God. But it was John, perhaps, who declared in the most plain language that Jesus was God and had always existed (John 1:1, 14; 8:58; 17:5). John started the gospel story not *from* the beginning but *in* the beginning. For John, Bethlehem and the manger did not mark the origin of Christ's existence, but the time when He became "flesh."

The Gospel of John also revealed another truth about the person of Christ. John saw that He was the *Word*. Among the Gospel writers, John was the only one who used this term to refer to Jesus. As his readers understood it, the term "word" had several associations. In its ordinary use, it pointed to the means by which people communicate with each other. To the Jews, "the Word of God" was a familiar expression, found often in the Old Testament (see Psalm 33:6 for example). Some of them applied it to the Messiah who was to come. To the Greeks, it signified the manifestation of divine reason. John spoke to all these meanings when he boldly asserted that Jesus was the Word. In this way, he showed the Greeks as well as the Jews that Jesus was God communicating with humans, the full expression of His reason, will, and purpose given in a way that people could understand.

Application

- 21** The following are several references from the Gospel of John. Read the verses. Circle the letter in front of each reference to a verse that is a good example of John's special vocabulary.
- a)** 1:4
 - b)** 2:19
 - c)** 11:57
 - d)** 15:9
 - e)** 18:37
- 22** The distinctive view of Christ that John presented had to do with His
- a)** fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies.
 - b)** ability to work miracles.
 - c)** identity as the Word.



Content

As you read the Gospel of John, notice how the main theme of belief is followed throughout. Notice also how it describes the kind of relationship Jesus had with His Father. As you have already discovered, this Gospel is unique in many ways. In it, Jesus stands forth in His glory as the one and only Son of God (1:14), the one who offers eternal life to all who will believe in Him (3:16).

JOHN: GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD

- I. The Son of God Is Revealed. Read 1:1–51.

Application

23 This chapter records that two people called Jesus the “Son of God.” These two people were

- a) John the Baptist.
 - b) Andrew.
 - c) Philip.
 - d) Nathaniel.
-

II. The Son of God Is Acclaimed. *Read 2:1–6:71.*

24 Jesus made several important statements in these chapters. Match each statement (left) to the name of the person or people to whom He said it (right). The chapters are given to help you.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| a) “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” (2) | 1) The disciples
2) Nicodemus |
| b) “You must be born again.” (3) | 3) The Jews
4) The Samaritan |
| c) “Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst.” (4) | woman |
| d) “Whatever the Father does the Son also does.” (5) | |
| e) “The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.” (6) | |
-

III. The Son of God Is Opposed. *Read 7:1–12:11.*

25 Read the following statements and descriptions of events.

In your notebook, describe how the Jews reacted to each incident. The chapters are given to help you.

- a) Jesus said, “before Abraham was born, I am!” (8)
 - b) The blind man Jesus healed told the Jews that if Jesus were not from God, He could do nothing. (9)
 - c) Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. (11)
-

IV. The Son of God Is Vindicated. *Read 12:12–21:25.*

- 26** Circle the letter in front of each true statement. In your notebook, rewrite each false statement so that it is true.
- a)** Jesus illustrated the importance of serving by washing the disciples' feet.
 - b)** Jesus gave the teaching of the vine and the branches in order to explain the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - c)** The two men who prepared Jesus' body for burial were Philip and John.
 - d)** The third time Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection was when they were out fishing one morning.
-

The Gospel of John shows the unique relationship Jesus had with the Father throughout His life on earth. When He was praying before Lazarus' tomb, He looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me" (John 11:41–42). What great confidence He had in His Father! And through Him, we can have a relationship with the Father, too. John tells us that those who receive Jesus and believe in His name have been given "the right to become children of God" (1:12). What a glorious privilege!

Self-Test

1 MATCHING. Match each statement (left) to the name of the gospel account it describes (right).

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| a) Was written by the same person who wrote the book of Acts | 1) The Gospel of Luke |
| b) Records seven miracles of Jesus and calls them signs | 2) The Gospel of John |
| c) Gives details regarding Palestine's political history | |
| d) Was written by a disciple who was an eyewitness of Jesus' life | |
| e) Declares that Jesus is the "Word" | |
| f) Contains the parable of the rich fool | |
| g) Includes the songs of Mary and Zechariah | |

TRUE-FALSE. Circle the number in front of each true statement.

- 2** Luke is the only one of the Synoptics in which the title of Savior is applied to Christ.
- 3** Both Luke and John describe Jesus' childhood.
- 4** The historical nature of Jesus' life is emphasized more by Luke than by John.
- 5** The terms *truth*, *believe*, and *love* appear more frequently in John than in the Synoptics.
- 6** The Gospel of John reveals the fact that all who met Jesus declared their belief in Him.
- 7** Almost all of the teachings John recorded also appear in the Synoptics.

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Circle the letter in front of the best answer to each question.

- 8** Luke emphasized the theological aspect of Jesus' ministry by including
- a)** certain specific details about the people Jesus healed.
 - b)** the teachings Jesus gave regarding the "Son of man."
 - c)** several parables on the subject of poverty and riches.
- 9** John said that he selected his material carefully to
- a)** show that Jesus was the Son of God and lead people to believe in Him.
 - b)** present a complete description of all the miracles Jesus performed.
 - c)** give a background for the events described in the Synoptics.

Answers to Application Questions

- 14** **a)** True (19:44)
b) False (20:19)
c) True (21:25–27)
d) True (22:54, 66)
e) False (23:6–7)
f) True (24:15, 33–36)
- 1** **a)** When Paul wrote 2 Timothy, Luke was the only one who was with him.
b) Luke was a fellow worker with Paul along with several others.
c) Luke was a dear friend to Paul.
- 15** (Your answers should be similar.)
a) He was the disciple whom Jesus loved and one of Jesus' three closest associates.
b) He was the brother of James and one of the Twelve.
c) He was an eyewitness of the events of Jesus' life.
- 2** **a)** He had a human birth.
b) He experienced childhood and growth.
c) He ate food and had physical need for it.
d) He had human emotions.
- 16** **a)** 4) Power to meet human physical need regardless of material limitations
b) 1) Power to heal across barriers of space and time
c) 1) Power to heal across barriers of space and time
d) 4) Power to meet human physical need regardless of material limitations
e) 3) Power over natural law
f) 1) Power to heal across barriers of space and time
g) 2) Power to raise the dead
- 3** **b)** The first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria was the one decreed by Caesar Augustus (2:1–2).
d) Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea when John the Baptist preached (3:1–2).

- 17 a)** Feeding of the 5,000 (6:1–15, 25–40).
b) Healing of the man born blind (8:12; 9:1–12).
c) Raising of Lazarus (11:17–44).
- 4** (Your answers should be similar.)
a) He came on the clouds of heaven. (Notice that Jesus applied this prophecy to himself.)
b) He was given authority, glory, and sovereign power.
c) All peoples, nations, and people of every language would worship him.
d) He would have an everlasting dominion.
- 18** (Your answers should be similar.)
a) A royal official; he and all his household believed.
b) The man born blind; he declared his belief in Jesus and worshipped Him.
c) Martha; she said she believed Jesus was the Son of God.
d) Pilate; he listened to Christ but gave Him up to be crucified.
e) Thomas; he said Jesus was his Lord and his God.
- 5** (Your answer should be similar.) He emphasized Jesus' humanity, thus showing that He was our close relative, a member of the human race to which we belong.
- 19** (Your answers should be similar.)
a) the power and authority Jesus had as the Son of God.
b) His own person and relationship with the Father.
c) belief and unbelief.
- 6 a)** At first, Mary was troubled when the angel spoke to her.
d) While visiting Elizabeth, Mary praised and glorified the Lord.
e) In her heart, Mary thought over the things that had happened.
- 20 b)** supplements the information they give.
- 7 b)** She was the only daughter of Jairus.
- 21 a)** 1:4.
d) 15:9.
e) 18:37.

- 8** a) all humankind.
b) Adam.
c) Syrian.
d) Samaritan.
e) Samaritan.
f) all nations.
- 22** c) identity as the Word.
- 9** 1:35, Mary: The Holy Spirit came upon her.
1:35, Jesus: He was conceived by the Holy Spirit.
1:41–42, Elizabeth: The Holy Spirit filled her and she prophesied.
1:67, Zechariah: The Holy Spirit filled him and he prophesied.
2:25–26, Simeon: The Holy Spirit gave him a revelation concerning Christ.
3:22, Jesus: The Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form.
4:1, Jesus: The Holy Spirit led Him into the desert.
4:14, 18, Jesus: The Holy Spirit gave Him power for His ministry.
10:21, Jesus: The Holy Spirit gave Him joy.
24:49, the disciples: The Holy Spirit would clothe them with power for witnessing.
- 23** a) John the Baptist (1:34).
d) Nathanael (1:49).
- 10** There are several examples of each of these features mentioned in the lesson. Review the section on special features to check your examples.
- 24** a) 3) The Jews (2:18–19).
b) 2) Nicodemus (3:7).
c) 4) The Samaritan woman (4:14).
d) 3) The Jews (5:18–19).
e) 1) The disciples (6:61–63).
- 11** a) They marveled at what was said (2:33).
b) They did not understand what He said to them (2:50).

- 25 a)** They picked up stones to stone Him (8:59).
b) They threw the man Jesus healed out of the synagogue (9:22, 30–34).
c) They met together and plotted to kill Him (11:45–53).
- 12** (Your answer should match closely.)
1) 4:33–35; a man possessed by an evil spirit
2) 4:38–39; Simon’s mother-in-law
3) 5:12–14; a man covered with leprosy
4) 5:17–25; a paralytic
5) 6:6–11; a man with a shriveled hand
6) 7:1–10; a centurion’s servant
7) 7:11–25; a widow’s only son
8) 8:26–39; a demon-possessed man
9) 8:40–48; a woman who was bleeding
10) 8:49–56; Jairus’ daughter
- 26** (Your answers should be similar.)
a) True (13:1–17).
b) False (15:1–9). Jesus gave the teaching of the vine and the branches in order to show the importance of remaining in Him.
c) False (19:38–42). The two men who prepared Jesus’ body for burial were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.
d) True (21:1–14).
- 13 a)** 10:18.
b) 11:29.
c) 13:31.
d) 16:19–31.
e) 19:1–10.

UNIT ONE EVALUATION

Now that you have completed the first unit, you are ready to answer the *Unit One Evaluation*. Review the previous lessons before you begin. When you have completed the evaluation, check your answers using the answer key in the back of this book. Review the lesson material for any questions you answered incorrectly before continuing to Unit Two.



UNIT TWO:

The Church's Growth

Lessons

5 The Church Is Established

6 The Church Reaches Out

7 The Church Continues to Grow

LESSON 5 The Church Is Established

In Unit 1, you learned facts about the world into which Jesus came and the land in which He lived. Through the eyes of the four evangelists, you saw how He carried out His mission on the hillsides and cities of Palestine. You discovered how He proclaimed the kingdom of God, a kingdom that was made up of all who would put aside their rebellion, accept His salvation, and acknowledge Him as their Lord. You followed Him through the momentous events of the Passion Week—His betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion. And you read the eyewitness accounts of His glorious resurrection. You also learned that He did not remain with His disciples very long after He rose from the dead but told them before He left to wait in Jerusalem until they were “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

As you study the books of Acts, James, and Galatians in this lesson, you will discover just what happened when the disciples gathered in Jerusalem in obedience to Jesus’ instructions. You will find out about the power they received and what happened as a result. You will see how God poured out His Spirit upon Jews and Gentiles alike and how the message of salvation spread throughout the Roman Empire. As you study, may you gain a deeper understanding of the church and the power that is available to you as you serve your risen Lord.

Lesson Outline

- A. Acts: The Church in Action
- B. James and Galatians: Letters to the Young Church

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Describe the author, purpose, and importance of the book of Acts.
2. Give examples of four main features of the book of Acts.
3. Read the book of Acts and note the actions of the church.
4. Discuss the content and historical setting of the epistles of James and Galatians.

Learning Activities

1. Study the lesson development according to the regular procedure. Remember to read in your Bible each Scripture reference and find each key word in the glossary.
2. On the maps that are given, find each place mentioned in the lesson and in the book of Acts. This will help you understand how the gospel message spread.
3. After you have finished the lesson, review it. Then complete the self-test and check your answers.

Key Words

centurion	proconsul	sedition
legalistic	sect	strategy
martyrdom		

A. ACTS: THE CHURCH IN ACTION

The book of Acts tells how the gospel triumphed and spread from Jerusalem, the religious capital of the Jewish world, to Rome, the political capital of the Roman world. We will discover that the resurrected Christ is its central figure, as He worked mightily through His apostles and church by the power of the Spirit.

Author, Purpose, and Importance

Objective 1. *Describe the author, purpose, and importance of the book of Acts.*

As you have already learned, Acts was designed as a sequel to the Gospel of Luke. It is the second part of the history of the beginnings of Christianity that was written by Luke, the close associate and travel companion of Paul the apostle. Luke was an eyewitness of many of the events he described in the book of Acts. His presence during these events is indicated by his use of the pronoun “we” (see 16:10; 20:6; and 27:3; for example). Guided and inspired by the Spirit, he used literary skills and understanding of history to give a vivid and accurate picture of the first years of the church.

The Gospel of Luke concludes with the command Jesus gave to His disciples about waiting for the Holy Spirit to come and the account of His ascension (Luke 24:49, 51). The book of Acts begins with the same two events (Acts 1:4, 9), then describes the disciples’ activities after the ascension. The events described in Acts follow those in Luke in a natural, logical way. Through the book of Acts, Luke continued to instruct Theophilus in the Christian faith, demonstrating to him the certainty of the things he had been taught (Luke 1:4, Acts 1:1).

Acts is important because it provides the authoritative record of the formation of the church and the activities of its main leaders. It is the link between the Gospels and the Epistles, for the Gospels look forward to the establishment of the church while the Epistles demonstrate that it already exists. Without Acts, we would not know how the church began.

Application

- 1 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
 - a) Luke stated that his purpose in writing Acts was to give Theophilus a complete description of the lives of all the apostles.
 - b) The author of the book of Acts knew Paul the apostle personally.
 - c) The book of Acts is important because it is the link between the Old Testament and the four Gospels.
-



Main Features

Objective 2. *Give examples of four main features of the book of Acts.*

Luke did not try to describe everything that happened during the church's early days. As a skilled historian, he selected the most significant incidents and showed how they shaped the overall course of events. We will study the main features of his account.

1. *The book of Acts emphasizes the missionary activity of the church.*

Acts 1:8 can be used as a basic outline of the book. It summarizes the progress of the gospel during the 30 years following the Day of Pentecost. The message of Christ was preached first in Jerusalem (Acts 1–7), then in Judea and Samaria (chaps. 8–12), then throughout the northern Mediterranean region, with Rome as the last place mentioned (chaps. 13–28). In keeping with his historical presentation, Luke recorded the names of various Roman officials who were associated with the events he described (see Acts 24–26, for example, in which Felix, Lysias, Porcius Festus, and King Agrippa are mentioned). Peter is the main leader in chapters 1–12, and Paul in 13–28.

In the book of Acts, we see how the first believers responded to Christ's command to evangelize the world. It shows us their problems and triumphs and gives a practical example of methods that can be followed in missionary work today.

2. *The book of Acts depicts the work of the Holy Spirit.*

The Holy Spirit was involved in every phase of the church's establishment and expansion.

Application

2 Read in Acts the verses below. In your notebook, briefly describe what the Spirit did in each case.

a) 2:1–4

b) 4:23–31

c) 8:14–17

d) 8:29

e) 10:44–48

f) 13:1–4


g) 15:28

h) 16:6–7

i) 19:1–6

j) 20:22–23

k) 20:28



Other truths about the Holy Spirit are seen in Acts. Notice, for example, the judgment Ananias and Sapphira received because they lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1–11). Consider the rebuke the man Simon was given for asking to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18–23).

The book of Acts gives evidence of the Holy Spirit's reality and presence. It shows that the church is a supernatural work of God, brought into being, empowered, guided, and sustained by the Spirit of God himself. There is no other explanation for its success and endurance amidst the severe persecution and opposition it received.

3. *The book of Acts demonstrated the true character of Christianity.*

When the church was first established, Christianity appeared to be a special group within Judaism. Jesus was the Messiah the Jewish Scriptures had prophesied, and in the beginning, the church was made up primarily of Jewish believers. But the message of Christ was for the whole world (Luke 24:47). Acts describes how the gospel began to reach those who were not part of the Jewish community.

Peter, for example, witnessed mainly to the Jews. But God showed him that He had accepted the Gentiles who believed in Christ, and God used Peter to minister to them (Acts 10). Paul preached to the Jews also, but he turned increasingly to the Gentiles when most of the Jews rejected his message (Acts 19:9–10; 26:16–18; 28:28). Acts shows how it became clear that Christianity was not a Jewish sect but a whole new way of life based on faith in Jesus as the Son of God and Savior of all.

Application

- 3** Read Acts 8:1–8 and answer the following question in your notebook: What happened as a result of the persecution that came against the church in Jerusalem?



Besides showing the worldwide significance of Christianity, Acts also defended it against false charges. The book of Acts gave evidence that Christianity was not a political movement whose intent was to oppose the Roman government, as some said it was. When the Jews took Paul to court before Gallio, the proconsul, they accused him of teaching people to disobey the Law. But Gallio dismissed the case, saying that their accusation was not political, but religious (Acts 18:12–16). This was an important incident, for it showed that Christianity was not a seditious movement and therefore not a threat to Roman political power. Luke recorded other incidents that illustrated the same point.

4. *The book of Acts describes the ministry of some of the more prominent leaders God used to establish the church.*

As the early church grew, God raised up leaders to carry out His purpose for it. Luke told about the ministries of several of these leaders, concentrating mainly on Peter and Paul. At the time Acts was written, it was important to show that Paul's apostleship was validated by the same signs that accompanied Peter's ministry. This was important because, unlike Peter, Paul was not one of the original disciples. In fact, he had been a bitter enemy of the young church (Acts 8:1–3; 9:1–3). Luke

gave a good deal of information about Paul that showed that his ministry had divine approval. He demonstrated the similarities that existed between the ministries of the two men. For example, he showed how both men emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 19:2–6) and the importance of the resurrection of Christ (2:24–36; 13:30–37). He presented other ways in which their ministries were alike such as those you will study in the following exercise.

Application

- 4** Following are references to parallel events in the book of Acts concerning the lives of Peter and Paul. In your notebook, briefly describe each pair of events.
- a)** Peter—3:1–10; Paul—14:8–10
 - b)** Peter—5:1–11; Paul—13:6–11
 - c)** Peter—12:1–11; Paul—16:19–30



Along with Peter and Paul, Luke mentioned or described several other leaders such as John, James, Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, James, and Apollos. Each of these men had a part in the events that took place as the church moved forward. God used all of them to bring Jews, Gentiles, Samaritans, proselytes, and even former disciples of John the Baptist (Acts 19:1–3) into one new spiritual community with Christ at its center.

Application

- 5** You have studied some of the main features of the book of Acts. In your notebook, respond to each of the following exercises regarding those features.
- a)** Briefly describe the missionary emphasis of the book of Acts.
 - b)** Give two examples of how the Holy Spirit was involved in the church's establishment and expansion. Include the references.
 - c)** State two ways in which Acts demonstrated the true nature of Christianity.
 - d)** Acts shows that the ministries of Peter and Paul were both validated by similar signs. Give two examples of those signs and the references to them.
-



Content

Objective 3. *Read the book of Acts and note the actions of the church.*

In this section of the lesson, you will read through the book of Acts and follow the progression of the events Luke described. As you read, notice examples of the special features that you learned about in the previous section of the lesson.

ACTS: RECORD OF THE CHURCH IN ACTION

I. The Church Is Founded. *Read 1:1–8:3.*

The period of founding included the commission of the disciples for their work (1:1–11), the coming of the Holy Spirit to give them power (1:12–2:47), the events associated with the church and the gospel witness in Jerusalem (3:1–6:7), and Stephen's preaching and martyrdom with the resulting persecution and scattering of the believers (6:8–8:3).

The coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was an event of the greatest significance. The map entitled "The World of Acts 2" at the end of the lesson shows the areas from which pilgrims came to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost (see Acts 2:5–12). When Peter addressed the vast

holiday crowd and explained what had happened, pilgrims from all of these areas were present in the crowd. No doubt some of them were among the 3,000 who responded to Peter's invitation.

II. The Church Undergoes Change. *Read 8:4–11:18.*

Change occurred when the gospel message reached further into the Gentile world. As greater numbers of Gentiles were converted, the focus shifted away from Jerusalem to Antioch. This period included the ministry of Philip, Peter, and John in Samaria and Judea (8:4–40), Saul's conversion (9:1–31), and the preaching of the gospel in Lydda, Joppa, and Caesarea (9:32–11:18).

During this time, there was a gradual lessening of prejudice against the Gentiles. Peter, for example, ministered to the Samaritans—a people of mixed Jewish and Gentile background (Acts 8:14–17, 25). Later, he lived with Simon the tanner (Acts 9:43). Formerly Peter, as a strict Jew, would never have associated with a man who made his living this way. After this, God sent him to preach the message of Christ to a Roman centurion (Acts 10). These events were significant, for they showed that Gentiles were being accepted as part of God's plan.

III. The Gentile Church Is Planted. *Read 11:19–15:35.*

The events that occurred at the time the Gentile church was planted include the teaching ministry of Barnabas and Paul in Antioch (11:19–30), Peter's escape from prison in Jerusalem (12:1–25), Paul's first missionary journey (13:1–14:28), and the decision made by the Jerusalem Council regarding the Gentiles (15:1–35).

Application

- 6** The church in Jerusalem responded to God's work among the Gentiles (and Samaritans) in several different ways. In your notebook, briefly describe what they did in each of the following cases.
- a)** The Samaritans accepted the Word of God through the preaching of Philip (8).
 - b)** Cornelius and his household believed in Christ and received the Holy Spirit (11).
 - c)** Many Greeks in Antioch turned to the Lord (11).
 - d)** There was controversy in Antioch about whether the Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to discuss the matter with the church there (15).



IV. Paul Carries Out His Program. *Read 15:36–21:16.*

During this period, Paul went on his second and third missionary journeys. Paul began his second missionary journey by visiting the churches that were founded on his first trip. Paul wanted to continue evangelizing in Asia, but the Holy Spirit directed him to Europe (Macedonia) instead (Acts 16:6–10). As a result, several churches were started in Macedonia and Achaia. Paul's third missionary journey took him eventually to Ephesus, where he ministered for three years (Acts 19:10; 20:31).



Application

- 7 Study the maps of Paul's missionary journeys. Circle the letter in front of each true statement. Refer to the maps to help you decide which statements are true.
 - a) On his second and third missionary journeys, Paul went first to areas he had already evangelized and strengthened the believers.
 - b) Paul departed from Jerusalem on all three of his missionary journeys.
 - c) The area of Galatia is much closer to the city of Ephesus than the area of Achaia.
 - d) Ephesus is much closer to Macedonia and Achaia than it is to Galatia.
 - e) Galatia, Achaia, and Macedonia are all about the same distance from Ephesus.

Can you see the strategy in the leading of the Holy Spirit in Paul's ministry? After founding churches in Galatia, Macedonia,

and Achaia, Paul stayed in Ephesus, which was centrally located. From that point, he was able to communicate easily with the surrounding churches while he carried on his ministry in Ephesus. Paul apparently expected the Ephesian elders to continue to oversee the churches, for it was to them that he gave his final instructions when he left for Jerusalem for the last time (Acts 20:22–31).

V. Paul Is Imprisoned in Rome. *Read 21:17–28:31.*

Events leading up to Paul's imprisonment in Rome included his arrest and trial in Jerusalem (21:17–23:30), his imprisonment in Caesarea (23:31–26:32), his voyage to Rome (27:1–28:15), and his imprisonment there (28:16–31).

Application

- 8** In these chapters, Paul witnessed before the Jews and several officials of Rome. In your notebook, briefly describe how each of the following groups or individuals reacted to what Paul said.
- a)** The Jews in Jerusalem (chap. 22)
 - b)** Governor Felix (chap. 24)
 - c)** King Agrippa (chap. 26)
 - d)** The Jews in Rome (chap. 28)



The book of Acts gives a pattern for missionary work (Acts 1:8). In this pattern, three elements are clearly mentioned:

1. The Power—the Holy Spirit
2. The Workers—the Christians
3. The Places—local, national, and worldwide

The book of Acts also shows the importance of prayer in carrying out the plan. The disciples gathered for prayer in response to Jesus' command to wait for the Spirit (Acts 1:14), and the Spirit came (Acts 2:1–4). When they were persecuted for witnessing, the disciples prayed for boldness; the whole place where they were praying was shaken, and they preached

fearlessly (Acts 4:23–31). Peter and John prayed and the Samaritans received the Spirit (Acts 8:14–17). Prayer was indeed the practice of the early church (Acts 2:42).

Acts shows us that whenever God-fearing individuals or groups prayed, God moved by His Spirit. The same is true today. The great revival that took place in Burkina Faso in 1965 came because a handful of students prayed.

Let us learn not only the facts but also the spiritual principles of the book of Acts. If we follow the pattern it reveals, God will pour out His Spirit and many people will be drawn to Christ.

Application

- 9 Evaluate your own church or ministry by comparing its characteristics to those in the early church. Mark an X under “Present” if the quality is evident in your church or ministry or under “Needed” if it needs to be emphasized more. References are given to examples in Acts.

	Present	Needed
Preaching that emphasizes the message of Christ (2:29–36; 13:26–41)		
Daily fellowship and study of the Word (2:42–47)		
Obedience to the Holy Spirit (13:1–3; 16:7)		
Wisdom in making decisions (6:1–7; 15:6–9)		
Missionary vision and outreach (8:4; 16:9–10)		
Prayer in all circumstances (4:23–31; 12:5)		
Confirmation of the gospel message by miracles and signs (3:6–8; 13:6–12; 14:8–10)		
Baptism in the Holy Spirit for all believers (2:4; 8:14–17; 10:44–46; 19:1–7)		



B. JAMES AND GALATIANS: LETTERS TO THE YOUNG CHURCH

Objective 4. *Discuss the content and historical setting of the epistles of James and Galatians.*

There are several New Testament epistles related to the book of Acts. It is likely that these epistles were written during the historical period it covers. They can be divided into three groups:

1. Those that were probably written before the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15:
James
Galatians
2. Those connected with Paul's second and third missionary journeys:
1 and 2 Thessalonians
1 and 2 Corinthians
Romans
3. Those written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome:
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
Philemon

In this lesson, we will consider those belonging to the first group—James and Galatians. (We will study the epistles belonging to the second group in Lesson 6 and those belonging to the third group in Lesson 7. The remaining epistles will be discussed in Lesson 8.)

James: The Standards of a Godly Man

It appears that the epistle of James was written early in the history of the church to the Jewish Christians who lived in Jerusalem and in other cities where the gospel had reached.

AUTHOR

Most Bible scholars agree that the author of the Epistle of James was not James the disciple of Jesus (Matthew 4:21), but

James the brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55; Galatians 1:19). This James did not believe at first (John 7:5, 10). But the resurrected Christ appeared to him (1 Corinthians 15:7), and he was among the disciples who received the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:14). Scripture indicates that he became a leader in the Jerusalem church and was in charge of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:13, 19). Paul met with him and the other elders at the end of his third missionary journey to tell them about God's work among the Gentiles (Acts 21:17–19).

HISTORICAL SETTING

We have learned that the church was strongly Jewish in character at first. In studying James, we see that its overall content and style fits well into this early period. It is addressed to the “twelve tribes”—a Jewish expression (James 1:1). It uses the word for *synagogue* (translated “meeting” in the NIV) to name the place where believers gathered (2:2). Several Old Testament figures are given as examples, such as Abraham (2:20–24), Rahab (2:25–26), and Elijah (5:17–18). These would be familiar to Jewish Christians.

Another fact about James leads us to believe that it belongs to the early period of the church. Although it deals with questions related to the Law, there is no mention of the controversy about the Gentiles or the decision made by the Jerusalem Council. It seems likely that James would discuss this important issue if the Council had already taken place, especially since the author was evidently the leader of the Council.

CONTENT AND OUTLINE

In his letter to his fellow Jews who had accepted Jesus as their Messiah, James expressed his concern for them. He wanted them to have the right attitude toward trials and temptations and to practice the beliefs they professed. He warned them about the dangers of greed and self-centered living and encouraged them to have faith in God. As you read through his letter, use the following outline to guide you.

JAMES: THE STANDARDS OF A GODLY MAN

- I. His Attitude When Tested. *Read 1:1–18.*
- II. His Response to the Word. *Read 1:18–27.*
- III. His Relationships. *Read 2:1–26.*
- IV. His Speech. *Read 3:1–12.*
- V. His Wisdom. *Read 3:13–18.*
- VI. His Humility. *Read 4:1–17.*
- VII. His Patience. *Read 5:1–12.*
- VIII. His Faith. *Read 5:13–20.*

Application

- 10** Circle the letter in front of each correct completion (more than one may be correct). The epistle of James
- a)** uses the Old Testament figure of Abraham as an example of patience.
 - b)** was probably written by James, the Lord's brother.
 - c)** mentions the conclusions of the Jerusalem Council.
 - d)** emphasizes the need to give practical demonstrations of faith.
 - e)** explains the relationship of Gentile believers to the law of Moses.



Galatians: The True Nature of the Gospel

In contrast to James, Galatians deals directly with the whole issue that was debated in the Jerusalem Council. It gives the background for the opinions that were expressed there and shows how Paul responded to the situation in Galatia.

AUTHOR AND HISTORICAL SETTING

Paul visited the area of Galatia on his first missionary journey. This area included the cities of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 13:13–14:23). Together with

Barnabas, Paul established churches in that region and then returned to Antioch of Syria (Acts 14:21–28).

While Paul was in Antioch, he learned that believers in Galatia had accepted a false gospel—a doctrine that people could be saved only if they were circumcised and kept the Law. Paul was horrified (Galatians 1:6). In writing to the Galatians, he spared no effort to make them realize the seriousness of their mistake.

The people who were influencing the Galatians to accept a false “gospel” had the same ideas as those who are described in Acts 15:1–2. But although Galatians deals with the issue that was the subject of the Jerusalem Council, there is no mention of its official decision. This fact makes it seem likely that the epistle was written shortly before the Council. Regardless of when it was written, though, its content is of the greatest importance. It proclaimed the truth that faith in Christ, not observance of the Law, is the foundation of the Christian life. The acknowledgment of this truth formed the basis for the tremendous advances of the gospel among the Gentiles.

CONTENT AND OUTLINE

In the strongest language possible, Paul opposed the legalistic error, denounced its advocates, and defended the true gospel—salvation through faith in Christ alone. He urged the Galatians to reject the false teaching and stand firm in their freedom, using it to serve one another in love. As you read through his letter, follow the outline below.

GALATIANS: THE TRUE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

- I. Divine Origin of the Gospel. *Read 1:1–24.*
- II. Defense of the Gospel. *Read 2:1–21.*
- III. Explanation of the Basis of the Gospel. *Read 3:1–4:7.*
- IV. Concern for Deserters of the Gospel. *Read 4:8–31.*
- V. Exhortation to Apply the Gospel. *Read 5:1–6:10.*
- VI. Boasting in the Gospel. *Read 6:11–18.*

Application

- 11** Circle the letter in front of each correct completion. The epistle of Galatians
- a)** contains a defense of Paul's apostleship.
 - b)** says that Paul received his gospel from the original disciples.
 - c)** states the decision that was made by the Jerusalem Council.
 - d)** uses Abraham as an example of a person whom God accepted on the basis of his faith.



Self-Test

TRUE-FALSE. Place a **T** in the blank space in front of each true statement and an **F** in front of each false statement. Rewrite each false statement so that it is true. The first one is done as an example.

. F . 1 Acts is the link between the Gospels and the Epistles because it describes Jesus’ ministry while He was on earth.

Acts is the link between the Gospels and the Epistles because
..... *It describes the formation or establishment of the church.* ..

..... 2 Luke said that he wrote the book of Acts to instruct his friend, Theophilus, about the truth of Christianity.

Luke said that he wrote the book of Acts to

..... 3 Acts shows that Paul turned increasingly to the Gentiles because his ministry took him further and further away from Jerusalem.

Acts shows that Paul turned increasingly to the Gentiles because

..... 4 The fact that neither James nor Galatians mentions the decision of the Jerusalem Council is evidence that both letters were probably written before the Council was held.

The fact that neither James nor Galatians mentions the decision of the Jerusalem Council is evidence that both letters were probably written

-**5** Paul wrote to the Galatians in response to news that they had accepted a false doctrine regarding the second coming of Christ.

Paul wrote to the Galatians in response to news that they had accepted a false doctrine regarding

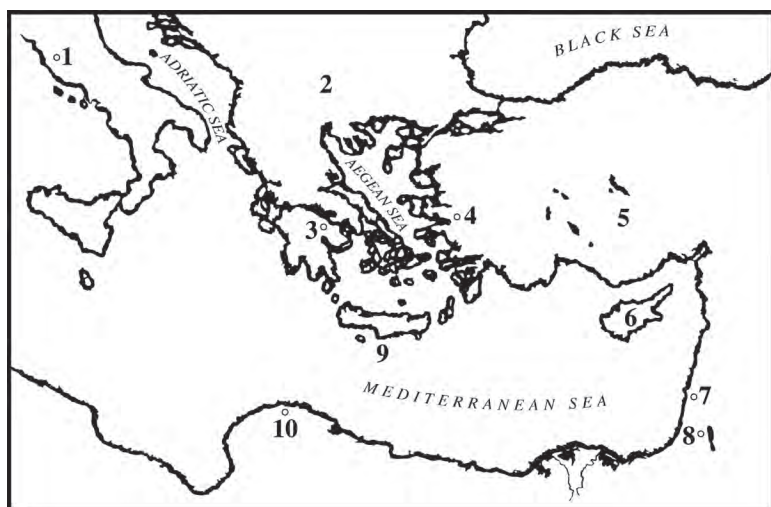
- 6** MATCHING. Match the name of the person, book, or letter (right) to each phrase that describes him or it (left).

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| a) The letter addressed to the
"twelve tribes" | 1) Peter |
| | 2) Paul |
| b) The man who preached on the Day
of Pentecost | 3) Luke |
| | 4) Acts |
| c) The author of the book of Acts | 5) James |
| | 6) Galatians |
| d) The book that describes the progress of
the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome | |
| e) The man who traveled with Paul to Rome | |
| f) The letter that explains the true nature of
the gospel | |
| g) The man God sent to minister
to Cornelius | |
| h) The author of Galatians | |

7 CHRONOLOGY. Following are important events in the book of Acts. Put them in chronological order by writing **1** in front of the event that occurred first, **2** in front of the event that occurred next, and so forth.

- **a)** Paul went on his second and third missionary journeys.
- **b)** Paul went on his first missionary journey.
- **c)** The disciples received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.
- **d)** The believers in Jerusalem were persecuted and scattered into Judea and Samaria.
- **e)** Stephen was martyred.
- **f)** Paul went to Rome to stand trial.
- **g)** The Jerusalem Council made a decision regarding the Gentiles.

8 GEOGRAPHY. Match the number on the map to the phrase that describes the city or place it indicates. In the space beside each phrase, write the name of the city or place. The first one is done to give you an example.



- | | | | |
|---------|---|----|---------------------------|
| . 6 .a) | Island Paul visited on his first journey | a) | <i>Cyprus</i> |
| ... b) | Island Paul visited on his trip to Rome | b) | ..... |
| ... c) | Area Paul went to on his second missionary journey instead of going to Asia | c) | ..... |
| ... d) | City where Paul was imprisoned for two years before he went to Rome | d) | ..... |
| ... e) | City where the disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost | e) | ..... |
| ... f) | City in the area of Libya from which pilgrims came on the Day of Pentecost | f) | ..... |
| ... g) | City where Paul ministered for three years on his third journey | g) | ..... |
| ... h) | Area to which Paul sent Galatians | h) | ..... |
| ... i) | City where Paul was tried before Caesar | i) | ..... |
| ... j) | City where Paul was arrested and tried before being imprisoned in Caesarea | j) | ..... |
| ... k) | City in Achaia that Paul visited on his second and third journeys | k) | ..... |

Answers to Application Questions

- 6** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** They sent Peter and John to them and the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit (8:14–17).
 - b)** At first the believers criticized Peter (11:2–3), but after he told all that happened they praised God (11:18).
 - c)** They sent Barnabas to Antioch and he taught there for a year (11:22, 26).
 - d)** The Jerusalem church leaders met and sent an official delegation and letter regarding the subject to the Gentile believers (15:6–35).
- 1** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** False. Luke stated that his purpose in writing Acts was to instruct Theophilus regarding the certainty of the things he had been taught.
 - b)** True
 - c)** False. The book of Acts is important because it is the link between the Gospels and the Epistles.
- 7 a) and e)** are true.
- 2** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** He came upon the believers and they spoke in tongues.
 - b)** He refilled the apostles and they spoke the Word with boldness.
 - c)** He came upon the Samaritans.
 - d)** He told Philip to speak to the Ethiopian official.
 - e)** He came upon Cornelius and his household.
 - f)** He called Barnabas and Saul to a special work.
 - g)** He led the apostles as they made a decision regarding the Gentile believers.
 - h)** He guided Paul in his missionary journeys.
 - i)** He came upon the disciples in Ephesus.
 - j)** He told Paul what would happen to him.
 - k)** He made certain men to be overseers in the church.

- 8** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** They shouted that Paul was not worthy to live (22:22).
 - b)** He listened to Paul several times but made no decision (24:22–26).
 - c)** He asked Paul if he thought he could convince him to become a Christian in such a short time (26:28).
 - d)** Some were convinced by what he said; others were not. They disagreed among themselves (28:23–28).
- 3** Believers were scattered into Judea and Samaria and preached the message everywhere they went.
- 9** Your answer. I hope that you will seek to have a ministry characterized by all of these qualities.
- 4** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** In Peter's ministry, God healed a man crippled from birth at the temple in Jerusalem; in Paul's ministry, God healed a man lame from birth at Lystra.
 - b)** Peter's judgment against Ananias and Sapphira came to pass; Paul's judgment against Elymas the sorcerer came to pass.
 - c)** Peter was miraculously delivered from prison in Jerusalem; Paul was miraculously delivered from prison in Philippi.
- 10 b)** was probably written by James, the Lord's brother.
- d)** emphasizes the need to give practical demonstrations of faith. (Note on choice a): Job was the example James used for patience.)

- 5 a)** Acts tells about the progress of the gospel and the activities of the men who preached the message of Christ beginning at Jerusalem, then in Judea, Samaria, and the northern Mediterranean region.
- b)** Your answer. You could have used any of the examples given in the answer to study question 2.
- c)** Acts showed that Christianity was 1) not a Jewish sect but a worldwide religion, and 2) not a threat to the political power of Rome.
- d)** Your answer. You could have used any of the examples given in the lesson or in your answer to study question 4.
- 11 a)** contains a defense of Paul's apostleship.
- d)** uses Abraham as an example of a person whom God accepted on the basis of his faith.

LESSON 6 The Church Reaches Out

In Lesson 5, we studied the book of Acts and the epistles associated with the early period of the church—James and Galatians. Our study helped us see the overall progress of the gospel message throughout the Roman Empire and how both Jews and Gentiles became part of the church. It also helped us understand the message of consistent Christian living that James presented to the first Jewish believers and the truth concerning the basis of salvation that Paul explained to the Galatians.

In this lesson, we will consider the letters associated with the church during the years after the Jerusalem Council when Paul made his second and third missionary journeys. We will examine the background of these letters and see how Paul responded to the needs of the new congregations that formed as the church reached into Macedonia, Achaia, and Italy.

We will discover that those early believers had many of the same difficulties we experience. Some of them were confused about the second coming of Christ. Others were torn by divisions among themselves. Still others needed to become mature in their Christian faith and understand more about what it meant to believe in Christ. Through Paul's letters, we will see how God provided guidance and instruction for believers with these various needs.

Lesson Outline

- A. First and Second Thessalonians: Letters to Macedonia
- B. First and Second Corinthians: Letters to Achaia
- C. Romans: Letter to Rome

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the historical background and content of the epistles of 1 and 2 Thessalonians.
2. Discuss the historical background and content of the epistles of 1 and 2 Corinthians.
3. Describe the teaching and historical setting of the epistle to the Romans.

Learning Activities

1. Study the lesson development and complete each exercise. Compare your answers with those given and correct any that are wrong.
2. Read Paul's letters to the Thessalonians, Corinthians, and Romans. On the maps given in Lesson 5, find the cities to which these letters were sent and any other places that are mentioned in the lesson or in your Bible reading.
3. Answer the questions given on the self-test after you have finished the lesson and reviewed it.

Key Words

end-time
joint-heir

justification
sanctification

Travel Epistles

The epistles that were written during Paul's second and third missionary journeys include 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans and are often called the "Travel Epistles." These letters reveal the circumstances and problems of the believers to whom Paul wrote.

A. FIRST AND SECOND THESSALONIANS: LETTERS TO MACEDONIA

Objective 1. *Discuss the historical background and content of the epistles of 1 and 2 Thessalonians.*

The area of Macedonia included the cities of Philippi and Thessalonica. Thessalonica was a seaport as well as a center of trade. During Paul's lifetime, its population may have been close to 200,000.

Historical Background

Sometime after the Jerusalem Council, Paul set out on his second missionary journey, taking Silas with him (Acts 15:36, 40). Timothy joined them in Lystra (Acts 16:1–3), and Luke traveled with them from Troas to Philippi, where he apparently remained (Acts 16:10–40).

After a time of ministry in Philippi, Paul went on to Thessalonica, where he gained many converts. These included some Jews, several prominent women, and a large number of Gentiles. Paul had to leave Thessalonica by night. He stayed for a while in Berea and eventually arrived in Athens (Acts 17:10–15). Timothy remained in Berea and rejoined Paul in Athens later. From there, Paul sent him to visit the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 3:1–5). After this, Paul left Athens and continued on to Corinth, where he ministered for more than a year and a half (Acts 18:11).

While Paul was in Corinth, Timothy brought news of the church in Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:6). In response to this news, Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians. It appears that he received additional information soon after and wrote 2 Thessalonians as a result (2 Thessalonians 2:2; 3:11).

CONTENT AND OUTLINES

In his letters to the Thessalonians, Paul responded to the report and the information he had received about them. We see that they were undergoing persecution and were confused about the second coming of Christ, for both letters refer to these subjects.

Though both letters have similar themes, there are differences in their content. The first letter has a full review of Paul's relationship with the Thessalonians; the second simply has a few references. The first letter explains what will happen to those who have already died in Christ; the second describes the "man of lawlessness" who will appear before the Day of the Lord comes. The first letter contains a general warning against those who are idle; the second says that those who are idle should be avoided as well as warned. Together, both letters represent the teaching that was especially needed by this group of people who had misunderstandings about the Lord's coming and were only recently converted from paganism (1 Thessalonians 1:9). They are the first letters in which Paul discussed end-time events. Read through them, using the following outline to guide you.

FIRST THESSALONIANS: THE HOPE OF CHRIST'S COMING

- I. Greeting and Thanksgiving. *Read 1:1–10.*
- II. Review of Paul's Ministry. *Read 2:1–16.*
- III. Paul's Desire to Visit the Thessalonians. *Read 2:17–3:5.*
- IV. Report of Timothy. *Read 3:6–13.*
- V. Instructions about Christian Living. *Read 4:1–12.*
- VI. Truths about the Lord's Coming. *Read 4:13–5:11.*
- VII. Final Exhortations. *Read 5:12–28.*

Application

- 1** Circle the letter before each correct completion. The epistle of 1 Thessalonians
- a)** was written when Paul was in Athens.
 - b)** tells what will happen to those who have died in Christ.
 - c)** shows that some of the Thessalonians were leading idle lives.
 - d)** describes the “man of lawlessness” who will appear before the Lord returns.
-

SECOND THESSALONIANS: THE VICTORY OF CHRIST’S COMING

- I. Thanksgiving and Prayer. *Read 1:1–12.*
- II. Events Surrounding the Day of the Lord. *Read 2:1–12.*
- III. Exhortation to Steadfastness. *Read 2:13–17.*
- IV. Request and Command. *Read 3:1–15.*
- V. Closing Remarks. *Read 3:16–18.*

Application

- 2** Circle the letter before each correct completion. The epistle of 2 Thessalonians
- a)** says that the Lord Jesus will destroy the “man of lawlessness.”
 - b)** was probably written sometime during Paul’s third missionary journey.
 - c)** contains a specific reference to the report Timothy brought to Paul about the Thessalonians.
 - d)** presents Paul as an example for the Thessalonians to follow regarding working for their daily food.
-

B. FIRST AND SECOND CORINTHIANS: LETTERS TO ACHAIA

Objective 2. *Discuss the historical background and content of the epistles of 1 and 2 Corinthians.*

The cities of Corinth and Athens were located in the area of Achaia. Corinth had been destroyed in 146 BC but was rebuilt by the Romans in 44 BC. It became the capital city of the province of Achaia, and in New Testament times it was wealthy and prosperous. It was also idolatrous and immoral, for its inhabitants worshipped many gods and had a reputation for leading corrupt lives.

Background and Content of 1 Corinthians

We have previously said that Paul ministered in Corinth for more than a year and a half (Acts 18:1–18). It was at this time that the Corinthian church was founded. After this, Paul returned to Antioch, and later he set out on his third missionary journey (Acts 18:23).

Paul's third journey took him to Ephesus, where he remained for more than two years (Acts 19:8–10). While he was there, he received reports about the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 1:11; 5:1; 11:18) and a letter from them containing several questions (1 Corinthians 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12). He may have written an earlier letter as well in response to a previous report (1 Corinthians 5:9). The reports and the letter showed that the Corinthians needed strong teaching about moral standards and other important Christian values. Paul then wrote 1 Corinthians, and he replied to each problem that was raised, explaining the spiritual principle that related to it.

The content of 1 Corinthians can be divided into two basic sections. In the first part, chapters 1–6, Paul dealt with the problems he learned about from the report brought to him by those who were of "Chloe's household" (1 Corinthians 1:11). In the second part, chapters 7–16, he answered the various questions that the Corinthians wrote to him about. The letter is informal in tone. It is as if Paul were having a conversation with

the Corinthians. He asked questions (1:20, 4:7). He pleaded (4:14–16). He warned (4:18–21). He rebuked (5:2, 6). He taught (12:1–6). In all of this, he sought to emphasize the fact that Christ must be Lord in every area of a Christian's private and public life.

Application

- 3** Complete the following sentences in your notebook.
- a)** Paul wrote 1 Corinthians while he was in . . .
 - b)** When Paul responded to the problems of the Corinthians, he sought to emphasize the fact that Christ must be . . .
 - c)** In chapters 1–6 of 1 Corinthians, Paul dealt with . . .
 - d)** In chapters 7–16 of 1 Corinthians, Paul answered . . .



First Corinthians covers a wide variety of topics. Read through it, using the following outline as a general guide to its content.

FIRST CORINTHIANS: PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

- I. Introduction. *Read 1:1–9.*
- II. The Solution to Divisions. *Read 1:10–4:21.*
- III. The Need for Discipline. *Read 5:1–6:20.*
- IV. Counsel Regarding Marriage. *Read 7:1–40.*
- V. Proper Use of Freedom. *Read 8:1–10:33.*
- VI. Behavior in Public Worship. *Read 11:1–14:40.*
- VII. The Gospel and Its Power. *Read 15:1–58.*
- VIII. Concluding Remarks. *Read 16:1–24.*

Application

- 4** First Corinthians shows that Paul applied certain spiritual principles to the problems the Corinthians had. Match the problem (right) to each principle Paul applied to it (left). The chapters are given where the principle is applied.
- | | |
|--|---|
| a) The church is God's building. (3) | 1) Divisions in the church |
| b) Saints will one day judge angels and the world. (6) | 2) Improper behavior at the Lord's Supper |
| c) The bodies of believers are members of Christ. (6) | 3) Public lawsuits between believers |
| d) The Lord's Supper is a declaration of His death. (11) | 4) Sexual immorality |
| e) The body of Christ is one with many parts. (12) | |
-

Background and Content of 2 Corinthians

While Paul was still in Ephesus, he may have visited the Corinthians to deal personally with the problems he wrote to them about in 1 Corinthians. He seems to refer to such a visit in 2 Corinthians 2:1; 12:14, 21; and 13:1–2. If he did, apparently he was not well received. The church was still torn by rival groups, and there was strong opposition to Paul by some false apostles (2 Corinthians 10:7; 11:13). It may be that the letter he referred to in 2 Corinthians 2:3–4, 9 and 7:8–12 is one that he wrote to them after this second visit.

Paul left Ephesus and sent Titus ahead to bring back another report from Corinth. He then proceeded to Troas. Not finding Titus in Troas as he expected, he went on to Macedonia, still deeply concerned about the Corinthians. While he was there, Titus arrived with his report. It showed that there had been a change for the better in Corinth (2 Corinthians 7:6–16), although some were still opposed to Paul. This news formed the background for Paul's writing of 2 Corinthians. He explained

his situation (1:3–2:4), asked the Corinthians to be reconciled to him (6:11–13), rejoiced over the good report he had received (7:6–7), and made a defense of his apostleship (10:1–13:10). He also wrote about the collection for needy brothers in which the Corinthians were participating (8:1–9:15).

This letter is perhaps the most personal of all of Paul's correspondence. Because of the malicious opposition he received from certain people, it was necessary for him to defend himself and his ministry. Otherwise, not only he but also the gospel would be discredited. The letter does not recount the exact accusations. However, we may infer what they were by studying what Paul wrote in response. He used phrases like "so many" (2 Corinthians 2:17), "some people" (3:1; 10:2), "some say" (10:10), and "such people" (11:13) to refer to those who opposed him.

Application

5 Below are some passages in 2 Corinthians in which Paul evidently replied to certain accusations. Read each passage (right) and match it to the kind of accusation to which it would be an appropriate reply (left).

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| ... a) "Paul is proud and boastful" | 1) 3:1–6; 11:5;
12:11–12 |
| ... b) "Paul has no authority or letter of recommendation." | 2) 10:12–18
3) 11:7–15 |
| ... c) "If Paul were a real apostle, he would have the church support him." | |
| ... d) "Paul's apostleship is of an inferior kind." | |



Now read through the entire epistle, using the following outline as a general guide to its contents.

SECOND CORINTHIANS: A DEFENSE OF TRUE MINISTRY

- I. Greeting. *Read 1:1–2.*
- II. The Motives of Paul's Ministry. *Read 1:3–2:13.*
- III. The Character of Paul's Ministry. *Read 2:14–7:16.*
- IV. The Collection for Needy Believers. *Read 8:1–9:15.*
- V. The Authenticity of Paul's Apostleship. *Read 10:1–13:10.*
- VI. Conclusion. *Read 13:11–14.*

Application

- 6** Circle the letter before each true statement. If the statement is false, rewrite it in your notebook so that it is true.
- a)** Second Corinthians was written after Paul received an encouraging report about the Corinthians from Titus.
- b)** The main topic of 2 Corinthians is the second coming of Christ.
- c)** The epistle of 2 Corinthians shows that Paul found it necessary to defend his ministry because false brothers and sisters were saying things about him that were untrue.



Both Corinthian letters demonstrate how Paul dealt with a group of people who were immature and often hostile to him. They always seemed ready to doubt his character and disregard his work among them. In spite of their attitude and lack of spirituality, however, Paul continued to care for them, expressing his deep love and concern (2 Corinthians 12:14–15).

The letters to the Corinthians reveal that many of the early Christians had serious problems. The existence of these problems is not remarkable, though. What is remarkable is that the church not only survived but also grew steadily in spite of them. This is a testimony to the truth that the church is not simply a human organization but rather the supernatural body of Christ, brought into being, sustained, and led forward by God in the person of the Holy Spirit.

C. ROMANS: LETTER TO ROME

Objective 3. *Describe the teaching and historical setting of the epistle to the Romans.*

The apostle Paul directed this letter to all Christians in Rome, the great capital city of the Roman Empire. This letter is perhaps Paul's most important work, for in it he gave a full explanation of God's method and provision of salvation for all humanity. It is profound in its teaching and clear in its application. It is worthy of careful, thorough attention.

Historical Background

As a result of the good report Titus brought about the Corinthians, Paul sent them 2 Corinthians, then resumed his third missionary journey southward. It is likely that he visited Corinth again and wrote to the Romans while he was there, since he had already made plans to go to Rome (Acts 19:21). He sent his letter to the Romans by way of Phoebe, a deaconess in the church of Cenchrea, a city close to Corinth (Romans 16:1–2). At the time Paul wrote, the church in Rome had existed for some time already, for its reputation was widespread (Romans 1:8). It had probably been started by Christians who settled there. Paul knew many of the believers by name, and some were relatives (Romans 16:3–15).

From the contents of Romans, it appears that Paul had several reasons for writing it. He hoped that the Roman Christians would help him carry out a mission to Spain (Romans 15:23–24). In addition, he was concerned that they understand the full meaning of the gospel and not be led astray by false teachers (16:17–19). This concern led him to give them a full presentation of the message of Christ, since he was not able to teach them in person.

Application

- 7** (Circle each right answer.) When Paul wrote to the Romans, he was
- a)** living in Jerusalem.
 - b)** planning to visit them eventually.
 - c)** traveling on his second missionary journey.
 - d)** probably visiting the Corinthians for the third time.
-



Content and Outline

Romans is a reasoned presentation of the heart of the apostle Paul's teaching about the gospel. In this respect, it is unlike several of his other epistles, which were written to correct certain specific errors of belief and conduct. To the universal problem of sin, Romans gives the eternal solution of God's righteousness as revealed in Christ. Its arguments are persuasive, and its style is forceful and logical. It contains several of the most important truths about salvation, including those of justification (set forth in ch. 3:21–5:21) and sanctification (taught in ch. 6:1–8:39). The theme of the book can be found in Romans 1:16:

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Paul followed this theme throughout his epistle as he explained the truths about God's righteousness step by step. Read Paul's letter to the Romans, using the following outline to guide you.

ROMANS: THE REVELATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

- I. The Need for God's Righteousness. *Read 1:1–3:20.*
- II. The Provision of God's Righteousness. *Read 3:21–5:21.*
- III. The Results of God's Righteousness. *Read 6:1–8:39.*
- IV. The Triumph of God's Righteousness. *Read 9:1–11:36.*

V. The Application of God’s Righteousness.
Read 12:1–16:27.

Application

8 The following exercise will help you remember some of the important truths taught in the book of Romans. Fourteen of these truths are stated in the following list, one for each chapter of the book of Romans from 1 through 14. In your notebook, copy the headings of the chart, listing chapters 1–14, one chapter on each line. Next, review each chapter. Then select the sentence that states a truth specifically taught in that chapter and write it opposite the number of the chapter.

TRUTHS TAUGHT IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS	
Chapter	Statement of Truth Taught
1	The heathen are guilty of sin.

- a) Israel will be restored after the full number of the Gentiles has come to be saved.
- b) We are to avoid doing things that cause others to stumble.
- c) The heathen are guilty of sin.
- d) Abraham was justified by faith, and so are we.
- e) We must obey the governmental authorities that exist.
- f) We need to offer our bodies to God as living sacrifices.
- g) All people stand condemned as sinners.
- h) The nation of Israel disobeyed and rejected God.
- i) Adam’s sin brought death, but Christ’s act of righteousness brought life.
- j) We are free from condemnation and joint-heirs with Christ.
- k) We are dead to sin but alive to God.
- l) God chose to have mercy on Israel.
- m) The Jews are guilty of sin.
- n) We have been set free from the Law to serve God by the Spirit.



The teachings of the book of Romans have challenged Christians ever since they were written. They lift believers out of the depths of guilt and condemnation (Romans 3:23) to the heights of future glory in Christ (8:18–21) and guide them into practical ways of expressing God’s love in daily life (12:9–21). I hope that its message will become part of your life.

Application

- 9** Review the historical backgrounds of the epistles you have studied in this lesson. Then copy the following headings in your notebook and write each event listed under the heading that tells when it occurred.

EVENTS IN PAUL’S MINISTRY	
<i>Second Missionary Journey</i>	<i>Third Missionary Journey</i>

- a)** Paul founded the church in Thessalonica.
- b)** Paul founded the church in Corinth.
- c)** Paul received news from Timothy about the Thessalonians.
- d)** Paul received news about the Corinthians.
- e)** Paul wrote to the Thessalonians.
- f)** Paul wrote to the Corinthians.
- g)** Paul wrote to the Romans.

After Paul left Corinth, he concluded his ministry in Achaia and Macedonia, said goodbye to the Ephesian elders in Miletus, and eventually arrived in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17–19). At the close of Paul’s third missionary journey, congregations of believers had been established in Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia, as well as in other places. The church had grown from a small group of believers in Jerusalem into an army of thousands in cities all over the Mediterranean region. When Paul arrived in Jerusalem, though, his circumstances changed. He was arrested and had to continue his ministry not as a free man traveling where he willed but as a prisoner, confined and kept under guard first in Jerusalem, then in Caesarea, and finally in Rome.

Self-Test

1 MATCHING. Match the epistle (right) with the title of its outline as given in this lesson and each fact about its historical background and content (left).

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) Title: The Revelation of
God's Righteousness | 1) 1 Thessalonians
2) 2 Thessalonians |
| b) Replies to several accusations made
against Paul by false apostles | 3) 1 Corinthians
4) 2 Corinthians
5) Romans |
| c) Title: The Victory of
Christ's Coming | |
| d) Written to believers in a city Paul
had not visited | |
| e) Contains three chapters on
the subject of love and the
spiritual gifts | |
| f) Presents a defense of Paul's
ministry as its main subject | |
| g) Describes what the "man of
lawlessness" will do before
Christ returns | |
| h) Title: A Defense of True Ministry | |
| i) Devotes three chapters to
explaining how Israel is related to
God's plan of salvation | |
| j) Title: The Hope of Christ's Coming | |
| k) Tells what will happen to those who
have died "in Christ" | |
| l) Title: Principles of
Christian Conduct | |
| m) Replies to several specific questions
written in a letter to Paul | |

2 SHORT ANSWER. Following are descriptions of each of the groups of believers to whom Paul wrote the letters you have studied in this lesson. In the space following each description, write the name of the city in which the believers lived.

a) These believers had rival groups within their congregation. Certain people among them made false statements about Paul and his ministry.

.....

b) Some of these believers were alarmed because they heard a report that the Day of the Lord had already come. Certain ones did not work and led idle, unproductive lives.

.....

c) The faith of these believers was widely known. When Paul wrote to them, he expressed a hope that they would help him undertake a mission trip to Spain.

.....

d) These believers did not behave properly when observing the Lord's Supper. Their times of worship were disorderly also. They needed to change their conduct in both of these kinds of meetings.

.....

- 3** FILL-IN. Choose the phrase that correctly completes the statement from the two given in parentheses and write it on the space provided.
- a)** Most of the book of Romans is devoted to Paul’s teaching about the
.....
(second coming of Christ) (gospel of God’s righteousness)
- b)** The letters to the Thessalonians refer to the problem some of them had with
.....
(idleness) (disorderly times of public worship)
- c)** First Corinthians is the letter devoted mainly to Paul’s response to
.....
(specific church problems) (attacks on his ministry)
- d)** One reason Paul wrote to the Romans was because he
.....
(had been unable to go and teach them personally)
(wanted to reply to a letter they had sent him)
- e)** First Corinthians gives one whole chapter to Paul’s teaching about the
.....
(future of Israel) (resurrection of the dead)

Answers to Application Questions

- 5** **a)** 2) 10:12–18
b) 1) 3:1–6; 11:5; 12:11–12
c) 3) 11:7–15
d) 1) 3:1–6; 11:5; 12:11–12
- 1** **b)** tells what will happen to those who have died in Christ.
c) shows that some of the Thessalonians were leading idle lives.
- 6** **a)** True
b) False. The main topic of 2 Corinthians is Paul's defense of his ministry.
c) True
- 2** **a)** says that the Lord Jesus will destroy the "man of lawlessness."
d) presents Paul as an example for the Thessalonians to follow regarding working for their daily food.
- 7** **b)** planning to visit them eventually.
d) probably visiting the Corinthians for the third time.
- 3** (Your answers should be similar.)
a) Ephesus.
b) Lord in every aspect of a Christian's private and public life.
c) the problems he learned about by the report of Chloe's household.
d) the questions the Corinthians had asked him in their letter.
- 4** **a)** 1) Divisions in the church (3:1–9)
b) 3) Public lawsuits between believers (6:1–6)
c) 4) Sexual immorality (6:12–17)
d) 2) Improper behavior at the Lord's Supper (11:17–32)
e) 1) Divisions in the church (12:12–26)

8 Your chart should look like this:

TRUTHS TAUGHT IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS	
Chapter	Statement of Truth Taught
1	c) The heathen are guilty of sin.
2	m) The Jews are guilty of sin.
3	g) All people stand condemned as sinners.
4	d) Abraham was justified by faith, and so are we.
5	i) Adam’s sin brought death, but Christ’s act of righteousness brought life.
6	k) We are dead to sin but alive to God.
7	n) We have been set free from the Law to serve God by the Spirit.
8	j) We are free from condemnation and joint-heirs with Christ.
9	l) God chose to have mercy on Israel.
10	h) The nation of Israel disobeyed and rejected God.
11	a) Israel will be restored after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.
12	f) We need to offer our bodies to God as living sacrifices.
13	e) We must obey the governmental authorities that exist.
14	b) We are to avoid doing things that cause others to stumble.

9 Your chart should look like this:

EVENTS IN PAUL'S MINISTRY	
<i>Second Missionary Journey</i>	<i>Third Missionary Journey</i>
a) Paul founded the church in Thessalonica. b) Paul founded the church in Corinth. c) Paul received news from Timothy about the Thessalonians. d) Paul received news about the Corinthians. e) Paul wrote to the Thessalonians.	f) Paul wrote to the Corinthians. g) Paul wrote to the Romans.

LESSON 7 The Church Continues to Grow

In Lesson 6, we studied the “Travel Epistles”—the letters Paul wrote during his missionary journeys. These letters showed us some of the difficulties experienced by new believers in areas that had been recently evangelized. They also showed the personal struggles Paul had in maintaining his authority as an apostle in the face of strong opposition from false brothers and sisters.

In this lesson, we will study the “Prison Epistles”—the letters of Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. These are the letters Paul wrote during his imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28:17–31). They help us see what the church was like during this period of its history, and they also reveal more about Paul’s character.

Ephesians and Colossians, for example, were written to believers who were ready for more teaching about the person of Christ and the nature of the church. On the personal side, Philemon is an expression of Paul’s understanding of Christian brotherhood and forgiveness, and Philippians is his own spiritual self-portrait. As we study these letters, we will see how the church continued to grow and we will learn more about Paul himself and his total dedication to Jesus Christ.

Lesson Outline

- A. Paul's Imprisonment
- B. Philemon: Practical Christian Forgiveness
- C. Ephesians: The Glorious Church
- D. Colossians: The Supremacy of Christ
- E. Philippians: The Testimony of Paul

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. State facts about Paul's arrest and imprisonment.
2. Discuss the historical background, content, and significance of the epistle of Philemon.
3. Identify the distinctive form and state the main doctrinal teachings of the letter to the Ephesians.
4. Describe the historical background and specific doctrinal emphasis of the letter to the Colossians.
5. Discuss the historical background, content, and teaching of the letter to the Philippians.

Learning Activities

1. Study the lesson development and answer the questions according to the regular procedure.
2. Read the epistles of Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians as directed in the lesson. Find the cities of Ephesus, Colosse, and Philippi on the map of Paul's third missionary journey, which is given in Lesson 5.
3. After you take the self-test, review Lessons 5–7 (Unit Two). Then complete the *Unit Two Evaluation* and check your answers with the key in the back of this book.

Key Words

ascetic

intercession

Prison Epistles

purification

restitution

In all four prison epistles, Paul referred to his imprisonment or bonds (Philemon 1; Ephesians 3:1, 4:1; Colossians 1:24, 4:10; Philippians 1:12–13). Through these letters, Paul continued to minister to the churches that had been established in Colosse, Philippi, and the area of Ephesus, even though he was unable to visit them personally.

A. PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT


Objective 1. *State facts about Paul's arrest and imprisonment.*

Paul arrived in Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey and met with the leaders there (Acts 21:17–19). He agreed to sponsor four men in a vow of purification and make a vow himself to show that he was not teaching Jews to completely disregard the Law of Moses (Acts 21:20–26). A few days after he had agreed to do this, he was attacked by a mob while he was in the temple in fulfillment of his vow. Some Jews from Asia had stirred up the crowd against him, saying that he had desecrated the temple by taking Gentiles into areas that were forbidden to them (Acts 21:27–29).

The uproar was so great that the Roman commander sent his soldiers to take Paul into their protection until he could find out what Paul had done to anger the crowd. In an effort to determine what had happened, the commander permitted Paul to defend himself, but Paul's defense before the crowd and the Sanhedrin only served to further infuriate them. When the commander proceeded to examine Paul by scourging, he appealed to his rights as a Roman citizen. Thus, the commander sent him to Caesarea to appear before the governor, Felix. Felix heard his case but delayed in making a decision, and Paul remained in prison in Caesarea for two years. Festus, a new governor, came into office at that time, and Paul's case was reviewed again. At this time, he asked to be tried before Caesar, and he was sent to Rome.

Application

- 1** Review Acts 21–26 and complete the following exercises in your notebook.
- a)** State the number of times in these chapters that Paul made his defense, tell who was his audience each time, and give the references where the occasions are described.
- b)** When Paul appeared before the Sanhedrin, he said that he was on trial because of a certain hope he had. State what that hope was (see 23:1–10).
- c)** We have said in Lesson 5 that one of Luke’s purposes in writing Acts was to show that Christianity was not an anti-Roman political movement. This purpose explains why Acts includes the accounts of times when Paul appeared before several different civil authorities who agreed that he was not doing anything contrary to Roman law. In your notebook, briefly state the opinion that was expressed regarding Paul by each of the following:
 - 1) Claudias Lysias—23:28–29
 - 2) Festus—25:19
 - 3) Agrippa and Festus—26:30–32
- d)** Notice that God had already revealed to Paul that he would testify in Rome (Acts 23:11). How long after this revelation did Paul actually arrive in Rome?



Luke gave a full description of the voyage Paul made to Rome. During this voyage, several notable things happened, including a storm, a shipwreck, Paul’s miraculous deliverance from a poisonous snake on the Island of Malta, and the healing of many people there (Acts 27:13–28:10). These incidents reveal additional aspects of Paul’s character and show his calm resolution and trust in God in the midst of dangerous and life-threatening situations.

After Paul arrived in Rome, he was placed under house arrest (Acts 28:16). But though he was unable to travel, he had complete freedom to teach and preach about Christ (28:30–31). Acts does not tell us the outcome of Paul’s trial before Caesar.

Luke probably had no more information available to him about it at the time he wrote. However, from the evidence we have, it appears that the four prison epistles were written during the time Paul was imprisoned in Rome. We will study the specific historical background and content of each one in the remaining part of this lesson.

Application

- 2** The record in Acts 21–26 of Paul’s imprisonment and his voyage to Rome shows that Paul
- a)** left for Rome within a few days after Felix heard his case.
 - b)** was not able to continue teaching while he was in prison.
 - c)** made use of the fact that he was a Roman citizen when it was helpful to his purposes.
 - d)** was not doing anything that the Roman authorities thought was worthy of death.
 - e)** told the men on the ship that all their lives would be spared along with his.
-

B. PHILEMON: PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN FORGIVENESS

Objective 2. *Discuss the historical background, content, and significance of the epistle of Philemon.*

While Paul was in prison, he became acquainted with Onesimus and led him to the Lord (Philemon 10). Onesimus was a slave who had run away from his master, Philemon, a man whom Paul knew. Philemon may have become a Christian while Paul was in Ephesus. It appears that his home was in Colosse (or possibly in nearby Laodicea) and that he was a member of the church where he lived (Philemon 1–2; Colossians 4:17). Paul sent Onesimus back to his master with a letter—our New Testament book of Philemon—in which he called upon Philemon to forgive Onesimus.

Philemon gives us a glimpse into the society in which many of the first Christians lived. Slavery was a common practice. Some historians have estimated that there may have been up to six million slaves in the Roman Empire during New Testament times. According to Roman law, a master could treat his slave however he wished. If the slave offended him, he could punish him with any degree of cruelty or even put him to death.

In some of his other letters, Paul gave instructions to slaves and masters regarding their relationships (see Ephesians 6:5–9), but the gospel actually introduced life-changing principles of love and brotherhood that would eventually cause Christians to stop the practice of slavery altogether. No doubt Paul realized this. As 1 Corinthians 7:21–23 shows us, he had a high regard for freedom and encouraged others to obtain freedom if they could. There is a hint in his letter to Philemon that he expected Philemon to give Onesimus his freedom (see vv. 14 and 21). Nevertheless, Paul's immediate aim in all his letters, including Philemon, was not to dictate outward social change. It was to instruct believers to live out the gospel in their present situation, regardless of what it was.

The letter to Philemon gives a beautiful and practical example of how Christian forgiveness can be applied to a real situation in which a serious offense has been committed. It also affords us further insight into the character of the great apostle to the Gentiles. Because of Christ's love in him, he reached out to a runaway slave, a person whom most of society would despise and consider worthless. He led him to the Lord and interceded for him with tact and eloquence, offering to pay his debts himself. Read the letter and complete the following exercise.

PHILEMON: PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN FORGIVENESS

- I. Paul's Greeting. *Read verses 1–3.*
- II. Paul's Thanks for Philemon. *Read verses 4–7.*
- III. Paul's Plea for Onesimus. *Read verses 8–21.*
- IV. Paul's Request and Conclusion. *Read verses 22–25.*

Application

- 3** In your notebook, write a brief response to the following questions.
- a)** How had Onesimus offended Philemon?
 - b)** How did Paul ask Philemon to treat Onesimus?
 - c)** What was the basis of Paul's appeal?
 - d)** How did Paul propose for restitution to be made if it was needed?
-



Paul sent his personal appeal to Philemon and his letters to the church at Colosse and the churches in the area of Ephesus by way of a believer named Tychicus. Onesimus accompanied Tychicus as far as the home of his master Philemon (Colossians 4:7–9; Ephesians 6:21–22).

C. EPHESIANS: THE GLORIOUS CHURCH

Objective 3. *Identify the distinctive form and state the main doctrinal teachings of the letter to the Ephesians.*

As we have stated, Tychicus took with him the letter to the Ephesians when he went to Asia accompanied by Onesimus. This letter shows the kind of teaching Paul gave to believers who were past the beginning stages of their Christian walk and reaching out for greater maturity in their spiritual lives.

Distinctive Form

Several facts indicate that Ephesians was a letter originally designed by Paul for circulation among all the churches in the area of Ephesus. The practice of circulating letters among the churches was not unusual. In his earlier letter to the Corinthians, Paul addressed not only them but “all the saints throughout Achaia” (2 Corinthians 1:1). This implies that other churches near Corinth would read the letter as well.

Paul had spent three years in Ephesus, an important center of trade and the location of a famous temple to the goddess Artemis (Acts 19:8–10, 35; 20:31). As a result, many churches were

started in the surrounding cities. While he was imprisoned, Paul responded to the needs of these churches by composing a letter that would be suitable for all of them as well as for the believers in Ephesus. His letter showed them that they were not separate, individual groups but parts of one living organism—the universal body of Christ whose existence was planned by God before the world began.

Some of the ancient copies of Ephesians do not contain the words “in Ephesus” at the beginning. Thus, the letter we have probably represents the copy that was preserved by the congregation in Ephesus. These facts explain why it bears the name of the city of Ephesus but contains no personal greetings to individuals in the church there, as was Paul’s custom. It may be that Paul had Ephesians in mind when he told the Colossians to “read the letter from Laodicea” (Colossians 4:16). This phrase would refer to his circular letter, then on its way from Laodicea to Colosse.

Content and Outline

Ephesians is similar to Romans in that it is not a response to specific church problems but a presentation of a certain doctrinal truth. But whereas in Romans the theme is God’s righteousness (or salvation), the theme in Ephesians is the universal church. Thus, the teaching of Romans is particularly suitable for new Christians and the teaching of Ephesians for those who are more mature in their faith.

In Ephesians, Paul explained the origin of the church, stated the nature of its final destiny, described the behavior of its members, and outlined the character of its warfare. The truths that he expressed concerning the church are profound and far-reaching. Its members were chosen “before the creation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4). Their position is “in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus” (2:6). Their goal is to grow up into “him who is the Head, that is, Christ” (4:15). God’s purpose in all of this is that He might show the riches of His grace and that all will contribute to the praise of His glory (1:6, 12, 14; 2:7).

After expressing these truths, Paul described how believers should live as a result of the spiritual position they have in Christ. His description is specific, practical, and inclusive. He addressed individuals (Ephesians 4:1–5:21), wives and husbands (5:22–33), children and parents (6:1–4), and slaves and masters (6:5–9). He concluded by revealing the true nature of the church's conflict and the secret of its victory (6:10–18).

Application

4 The book of Ephesians

- a)** was probably written as a letter to be circulated among several churches.
 - b)** deals mainly with specific church problems in Ephesus.
 - c)** describes God's eternal purpose for the church.
 - d)** was written while Paul was ministering in Ephesus.
-

Read through the epistle, using the following outline to guide you.

EPHESIANS: THE GLORIOUS CHURCH

- I. The Church in God's Plan. *Read 1:1–14.*
- II. The Church and God's Power. *Read 1:15–2:10.*
- III. The Church as God's Dwelling. *Read 2:11–22.*
- IV. The Church as God's Revelation. *Read 3:1–21.*
- V. The Gifts to the Church. *Read 4:1–16.*
- VI. The Standards of the Church. *Read 4:17–5:21.*
- VII. The Conduct of the Church. *Read 5:22–6:9.*
- VIII. The Warfare of the Church. *Read 6:10–24.*

Application

- 5 In your notebook, make a chart like the one that follows. Then read each Scripture and briefly describe what it says about the feature of the church that is named next to it. The first is done to give you an example.

THE GLORIOUS CHURCH		
Reference in Ephesians	Feature	Description
1:4	Its Origin	By God’s choice before the creation of the world
1:19–20	Its Power	
1:14, 4:30	Its Seal	
1:22	Its Head	
2:20	Its Foundation	
2:10; 5:2, 8, 15	Its Life	
6:12	Its Enemy	
6:13–18	Its Armor	



The teachings of Ephesians help believers understand how they fit into God’s eternal plan that all things in heaven and on earth will be brought together under one head—Christ (Ephesians 1:10). What a privilege to be included in God’s plan as part of the church, the body of Christ! Paul challenged his readers to live worthy of the calling they had received (4:1). May we accept the same challenge.

D. COLOSSIANS: THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

Objective 4. Describe the historical background and specific doctrinal emphasis of the letter to the Colossians.

Colossians was written at the same time as Ephesians. It has similar content but the emphasis is different, for in it Paul responded to certain doctrinal errors that had found their way

into the church at Colosse. Tychicus took this letter with him, along with the letters to Philemon and the Ephesians.

Historical Background

Colosse was a city located to the east of Ephesus. Paul received news of the Colossian church from Epaphras, who ministered there and in the cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis (Colossians 1:7–8; 4:12–13). Although Paul had never visited the Colossian church, he considered himself responsible for its spiritual welfare since it was in the area that was evangelized while he ministered in Ephesus (Acts 19:10).

It appears that Epaphras told Paul of certain errors that the Colossians were adopting. Specifically, they had begun to follow a teaching that promised that they could have a special knowledge of God. This knowledge could be obtained by those who would observe legalistic practices (Colossians 2:9–16), embrace a philosophy that included false humility and the worship of angels (2:8, 18–19), and obey certain ascetic rules (2:20–23). No doubt those who promoted this false doctrine made it sound very Christian.

The legalistic aspect of this teaching had a Jewish source similar to that which Paul had already opposed in his letter to the Galatians. The other aspects were beliefs held by some of the pagan religions of the day. In effect, the whole teaching denied Christ His rightful place as supreme in the universe and head over the church. It substituted an artificial system of human regulations and false humility for the life of true spirituality that is found in Christ.

Application

- 6** Circle the letter before each correct completion. The epistle to the Colossians was
- a)** taken to the Colossian church by Epaphras.
 - b)** Paul's response to news about the church in Colosse.
 - c)** written to believers who were following a false teaching.
 - d)** composed at the same time as the epistle to the Romans.



Content and Outline

Paul responded to the situation in Colosse. He began his letter by reminding the Colossians that they had heard the true gospel from Epaphras (Colossians 1:7). He continued by asserting the full deity of Christ and His total sufficiency as God's complete revelation (1:15–20; 2:2–10). He then exposed the false teaching they had adopted (2:16–19) and explained how their relationship to Christ was the key to godly living (2:20–4:6).

In all of his writing, Paul sought to help the Colossians understand the supremacy of Christ, the creator of all things (1:16, 18). He made clear the great contrast between the empty philosophy that they were following and the fullness that is in Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were hidden (2:3). Paul intended for his letter to be read by the church in nearby Laodicea as well (4:16). This would help prevent the believers there from following the same error.

Read the epistle, using the following outline to guide you.

COLOSSIANS: THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

- I. Introductory Greeting. *Read 1:1–2.*
- II. Christ Supreme in the Universe. *Read 1:3–2:3.*
- III. Christ Supreme over Human Religion. *Read 2:4–23.*
- IV. Christ Supreme in Christian Living. *Read 3:1–4:6.*
- V. Closing Remarks. *Read 4:7–18.*

Application

- 7** Circle the letter in front of the *most complete* description of the false teaching that the Colossians were following. It was
- a)** a philosophy that included laws regarding food and drink and the observance of special days.
 - b)** a human religion made up of legalistic and ascetic practices and the worship of angels.
 - c)** an artificial system of special regulations by which spirituality was supposedly obtained.

- 8** In your notebook, make a chart like the one that follows. Read the verses from Colossians that are listed. In the center column, describe the relationship Christ has to the object named in the right column. The first is done as an example.

CHRIST, THE SUPREME ONE		
<i>Reference in Colossians</i>	<i>Relationship of Christ</i>	<i>Object</i>
1:15	<i>Christ is the image of</i>	the invisible God
1:15		the creation
1:16		all things
1:18		the church
2:15		powers and authorities



Paul's strategy in helping the Colossians see their error was to present the glories of Christ and declare His deity and supremacy. This in itself revealed the poverty of the false teaching they had been following. He reminded them that they had been given "fullness in Christ" (2:10). Those who read his letter and accepted its message would find it impossible to continue in their mistaken beliefs. Its message, however, is just as important for us today as it was for its original readers. Like them, we must be careful that our spiritual lives are centered on Christ. We, too, need to worship Him as the one who alone has total authority over the universe and is the supreme head of the church.

E. PHILIPPIANS: THE TESTIMONY OF PAUL

Objective 5. *Discuss the historical background, content, and teaching of the letter to the Philippians.*

Philippians is an inspiring expression of Paul's personal feelings and ambitions. It shows us the values and ideals that

formed the basis of his ministry. This letter is evidence of the special fellowship between Paul and the believers to whom it was directed. They were loyal to him from the beginning.

Historical Background

It appears that *Philippians* was written somewhat later than *Philemon*, *Ephesians*, and *Colossians*—probably toward the close of Paul’s two-year period of house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30–31). He told the *Philippians* that he hoped to visit them again, which indicated that he expected to be released after his case was heard (*Philippians* 1:23–26). His expectation shows that his case was probably coming up for trial in the near future.

Philippi was the first city Paul visited when he went to Europe on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:6–40). It was a Roman colony and the leading city of the area. He gained several converts there, including Lydia and the Philippian jailer and their households (Acts 16:14–15, 31–34). The city apparently had very few Jews, for Luke made no mention of their being a synagogue. He did not describe any Jewish opposition, either, which Paul usually experienced in the cities where he preached. When Paul left, Luke stayed behind, probably to oversee the new group of believers. He rejoined Paul later. (Note Luke’s use of “we” and “they” in Acts 16:11–12, 40. The “we” does not appear again until Acts 20:5–6.)

Application

- 9 Read *Philippians* 4:10–18 and answer the following question in your notebook. What had the *Philippians* done to show their love and concern for Paul?



Content and Outline

Philippians allows us to see into Paul’s mind and heart in a special way. It reveals the attitude he had toward his circumstances (*Philippians* 1:12–18), the example he followed

(2:1–12), the goals he pursued (3:7–14), and the confidence he maintained (4:12–13, 19).

In addition to these personal subjects, two other themes appear throughout the letter—that of the gospel and that of joy and rejoicing. Though Paul was in a difficult and depressing situation, his heart was full of joy (Philippians 2:17; 4:10). Several times, he encouraged the Philippians to rejoice (2:18; 3:1; 4:4). He did not dwell on the fact that he was imprisoned but focused his attention on the progress of the gospel (1:12–18). He told his readers to live worthy of the gospel (1:27) and named several who were fellow workers in the cause of the gospel (4:3).

Philippians 2:5–11 is an important passage in the letter as well. Along with John 1, Hebrews 1–2, and Colossians 1, it asserts the deity of Christ and helps us understand what took place when Christ became a man. As we read the verses immediately before this passage, however, we discover that Paul had a particular reason for including it.

Application

10 Read Philippians 2:1–11 and answer the following question in your notebook. Why did Paul give this description of Christ in his letter?



Read through the epistle to the Philippians using the following outline as a guide.

PHILIPPIANS: THE TESTIMONY OF PAUL

- I. Paul's Prayer. *Read 1:1–11.*
- II. Paul's Circumstances. *Read 1:12–26.*
- III. Paul's Exhortation. *Read 1:27–2:18.*
- IV. Paul's Plans. *Read 2:19–30.*
- V. Paul's Warnings. *Read 3:1–4:1.*
- VI. Paul's Appeal. *Read 4:2–3.*
- VII. Paul's Example. *Read 4:4–9.*

VIII. Paul's Thanks. *Read 4:10–23.*

Application

11 The letter to the Philippians

- a)** expresses Paul's thanks to them for a gift they sent to help him.
- b)** reveals many of Paul's personal feelings, values, and ambitions.
- c)** was probably written at the beginning of Paul's two-year period of house arrest in Rome.
- d)** was sent to believers who knew Paul and loved him.
- e)** gives a detailed explanation of the doctrine of the church.



For Paul, his life and his teachings were in complete harmony. Without reservation, he could tell the Philippians to follow his example and practice whatever they had learned from or seen in him (Philippians 3:17, 4:9). Can we do the same?

Truly, for Paul to live was Christ (Philippians 1:21). His testimony shows how much God's grace can do in a life that is completely given to Him.

Self-Test

- 1 MATCHING.** Match the epistle (right) with the title of its outline and each fact about its historical background and content (left).

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| a) Originally designed for circulation among all the churches in Asia | 1) Philemon |
| b) Title: The Supremacy of Christ | 2) Ephesians |
| c) Written as a personal appeal to a master to forgive a slave who had offended him | 3) Colossians |
| d) Title: The Glorious Church | 4) Philippians |
| e) Written to believers in the first city Paul visited on the continent of Europe | |
| f) Specifically describes the spiritual armor and warfare of the church | |
| g) Title: The Testimony of Paul | |
| h) Similar in content to Ephesians but written to correct a certain doctrinal error | |
| i) Contains Paul's offer to pay any debts owed by Onesimus | |
| j) Written to oppose a false teaching that included the worship of angels | |
| k) Title: Practical Christian Forgiveness | |
| l) Has an important doctrinal passage in which Christ is presented as a specific example of humility | |

TRUE-FALSE. Place a **T** in the blank space in front of each true statement and an **F** in front of each false statement. Rewrite each false statement to make a true statement

....**2** Luke’s description of Paul’s arrests and trials showed that Christianity was a definite political threat to the Roman government.

Luke’s description of Paul’s arrests and trials showed that Christianity was

....**3** The epistles of Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians are called the Prison Epistles because they were written to believers who were being persecuted.

The epistles of Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians are called the Prison Epistles because
.....

....**4** The Prison Epistles were written after Paul had completed his third missionary journey and had come to Rome to await trial.

The Prison Epistles were written after Paul had
.....

....**5** The epistle to Philemon reveals Paul’s concern for a church that had fallen into doctrinal error.

The epistle to Philemon reveals Paul’s concern for
.....

....**6** Philippians 2:5–11 is important, along with John 1, Hebrews 1–2, and Colossians 1, because it asserts Christ’s deity and describes what will happen just before He returns.

Philippians 2:5–11 is important along with John 1, Hebrews 1–2, and Colossians 1 because it asserts Christ’s deity and
.....

-**7** The book of Ephesians is similar to the book of Romans because it was written to present a certain doctrinal truth rather than to give directions for solving specific church problems.

The book of Ephesians is similar to the book of Romans because it was written to present a certain doctrinal

-**8** Paul's strategy in helping the Colossians see that they were following a false teaching was to name those who were promoting it and tell the Colossians to avoid them.

Paul's strategy in helping the Colossians to see that they were following a false teaching was to

Answers to Application Questions

- 6 b)** Paul's response to news about the church in Colosse.
c) written to believers who were following a false teaching.
- 1 a)** Paul made his defense five times:
1) Before the mob who had seized him in the temple (21:37–22:22)
2) Before the Sanhedrin (23:1–10)
3) Before Felix (24:1–23)
4) Before Festus (25:1–12)
5) Before King Agrippa (26:1–32)
b) It was his hope in the resurrection of the dead.
c) 1) Claudius Lysias said that the accusation had to do with questions about Jewish law.
2) Festus said that the Jews had some differences with Paul about their religion and about Jesus, whom Paul said had been resurrected from the dead.
3) Agrippa and Festus said that Paul had done nothing worthy of death or imprisonment.
d) about two years.
- 7 b)** a human religion made up of legalistic and ascetic practices and the worship of angels.
- 2 c)** made use of the fact that he was a Roman citizen when it was helpful to his purposes.
d) was not doing anything that the Roman authorities thought was worthy of death.
e) told the men on the ship that all their lives would be spared along with his.
- 8** Your answers should be similar.)
1:15 Christ is the image of the invisible God.
1:15 Christ is the first born over the creation.
1:16 Christ is the creator of all things.
1:18 Christ is the head of the church.
2:15 Christ is the conqueror of powers and authorities.

- 3** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** Onesimus had run away from him and perhaps stolen some of his property (vv. 15, 18).
 - b)** He asked Philemon to welcome him as he would welcome Paul and treat him as a brother (vv. 16–17).
 - c)** The basis of Paul’s appeal was love (v. 9).
 - d)** He told Philemon to charge it to Paul’s account. (Paul’s willingness to pay another’s debt certainly shows Christlike attitude.)
- 9** (Your answer should be similar.) They shared in his troubles (v. 14), sent him help when he was in Thessalonica (v. 16), and sent him gifts while he was in prison (v. 18).
- 4 a)** was probably written as a letter to be circulated among several churches.
- c)** describes God’s eternal purpose for the church.
- 10** (Your answer should be similar.) He included it to give the Philippians an example of humility. Could he have chosen a more vivid or compelling example?
- 5** (Your answers should be similar.)
- Its Origin: By God’s choice before the creation of the world
Its Power: Like that which God used to raise Christ
Its Seal: The Holy Spirit
Its Head: Christ
Its Foundation: The apostles and prophets with Christ as the cornerstone
Its Life: One of good works, love, light, and wisdom
Its Enemy: Evil powers in the world and in the heavens
Its Armor: The full armor of God—truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God
- 11 a)** expresses Paul’s thanks for a gift they sent to help him.
- b)** reveals many of Paul’s personal feelings, values, and ambitions.
- d)** was sent to believers who knew Paul and loved him.

UNIT TWO EVALUATION

Now that you have completed the second unit, you are ready to answer the *Unit Two Evaluation*. Review the previous lessons before you begin. When you have completed the evaluation, check your answers using the answer key in the back of this book. Review the lesson material for any questions you answered incorrectly before continuing to Unit Three.



UNIT THREE:

The Church—Problems and Hope

Lessons

- 8** The Church Finds Solutions
- 9** The Church in Conflict and Anticipation
- 10** We Rely on the New Testament

LESSON 8 The Church Finds Solutions

In Lesson 7, we studied the Prison Epistles and saw how they revealed truths about Christ and the church and gave insight into Paul's character and ministry. These letters helped us see how the church became more mature during the time Paul was imprisoned in Rome.

In this lesson, we will study five letters that were written during the years following Paul's first Roman imprisonment. For the church, these were years of continued expansion. They were also years of growing opposition. The relationship between the new faith of Christianity and the ancient religion of Judaism needed to be defined in a more conclusive way.

As the Spirit of God gave direction and wisdom, the leaders of the church responded to each of these challenges. Standards were established for church leaders. Attitudes toward persecution were clarified. The significance of Judaism was explained in the light of God's revelation in Christ. Each of these responses represented another advance for the church. During this period, it gained a fuller understanding of its unique heritage and continued to develop its own special kind of organizational structure.

Lesson Outline

- A. Responding to Growth: Letters to Timothy and Titus
- B. Responding to Persecution: First Letter of Peter
- C. Responding to Judaism: Letter to the Hebrews

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

- 1. Identify aspects of Paul's life and teaching as shown in the Pastoral Epistles.
- 2. Discuss the author, background, and content of 1 Peter.
- 3. Describe important aspects of the background and message of the letter to the Hebrews.

Learning Activities

- 1. Study the lesson development as usual, being sure to find each key word in the glossary and read in your Bible each Scripture passage referenced in the lesson.
- 2. Read the letters of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, 1 Peter, and Hebrews as directed.
- 3. Review the lesson after you have studied it, answered the study questions, and corrected any items you answered incorrectly. Then take the self-test and check your answers.

Key Words

heritage

Levitical

reminiscence

priesthood

Judaizers

Pastoral Epistles

We will begin our lesson by studying the last years of Paul's life. Then we will examine the letters he wrote to Timothy and Titus, two of his associates. As we continue, we will give attention to the first letter of Peter and the letter to the Hebrews. These letters show how the church met the problems that arose during the years that followed Paul's first imprisonment in Rome.

A. RESPONDING TO GROWTH: LETTERS TO TIMOTHY AND TITUS

Objective 1. *Identify aspects of Paul's life and teaching as shown in the Pastoral Epistles.*

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus have been called the Pastoral Epistles because they were written to encourage and instruct these two men in their work of pastoring. They demonstrate the practical side of Paul's wisdom and reveal how he counseled his associates and helped them face the needs of a growing church.

Paul Finishes His Race

As we have already stated, Acts closes without describing the outcome of Paul's trial in Rome or giving any further information about him. However, certain references in the pastoral letters indicate that after his trial, he was released for a time and was able to travel again. In 2 Timothy 4:16–17, for example, Paul wrote that the Lord stood by him in his first defense and that he was “delivered from the lion's mouth.”

Application

- 1** Listed below are Scriptures that name places Paul visited during his time of freedom after his first trial. Next to each reference, write the name of the place given in the corresponding Scripture (sometimes two are mentioned).
- a)** 1 Timothy 1:3
- b)** Titus 1:5
- c)** Titus 3:12
- d)** 2 Timothy 4:20
- e)** 2 Timothy 4:13



Of the three pastoral letters, 2 Timothy was the last to be written. Paul was back in prison again when it was composed, and he did not expect to live much longer. (See 2 Timothy 4:6–7.) It is probable that he was executed under the Roman emperor Nero sometime around AD 64.

Application

- 2** The pastoral letters indicate that Paul
- a)** was confined to Rome after his first release.
- b)** thought he might be set free at the time he wrote 2 Timothy.
- c)** visited Macedonia and other places before he was imprisoned again.



The manner of Paul's death is not known for certain, but the manner of his life is. It was one of glorious victory. He served the Savior he loved with total dedication ever since the momentous day when he met Him on the Damascus road. Through shipwrecks, beatings, stonings, imprisonments, and persecutions he followed his Lord. As a result, the gospel message was preached and churches were established all over the Mediterranean world. What an inspiring example he left for us!

The Ministries of Timothy and Titus

Timothy was a young man of Jewish and Gentile descent, respected by the believers who knew him (Acts 16:1–3). Paul took him along on his second missionary journey, and from then on, he was Paul’s constant companion. He helped Paul during the three-year stay in Ephesus and went with him to Jerusalem as one of the representatives from Derbe (Acts 20:4). Colossians 1:1 and Philemon 1 indicate that he was with Paul during his first Roman imprisonment. When Paul went to Ephesus after his release, he left Timothy there to oversee the work (1 Timothy 1:3). Apparently, he joined Paul in Rome shortly before Paul died (2 Timothy 4:9, 21). According to Hebrews 13:23, he was also imprisoned for a time.

Titus became a Christian in Antioch. When the controversy arose over the question of circumcising the Gentiles, Paul took Titus along with him to Jerusalem to discuss the matter with the leaders there (Galatians 2:1, 3). When difficulties arose in the Corinthian church, Paul sent him there to settle some of the problems. He was effective in this task (2 Corinthians 7:6–16). It appears that he was involved to a great extent in collecting the offerings that were made for the needy saints. Paul called him his “co-worker,” and he was well thought of by the churches (2 Corinthians 8:6, 16–24). When Paul visited Crete after his release, he left Titus there in charge of the work until the arrival of Artemas or Tychicus (Titus 1:5, 3:12). He was probably with Paul during part of Paul’s second Roman imprisonment and later went to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10).

Application

- 3** In front of each phrase that follows, write **1** if it describes Timothy or **2** if it describes Titus.
- ... **a)** Helped deal with church problems in Corinth
 - ... **b)** Was left in charge of the work at Ephesus
 - ... **c)** Was of Jewish and Gentile descent
 - ... **d)** Went with Paul to Jerusalem as a representative from Derbe
 - ... **e)** Was left in charge of the work in Crete
-

The First Letter to Timothy

Paul went to Ephesus sometime after he was released from prison. He left Timothy temporarily in charge of the work there while he continued his travels. He evidently planned to return to Ephesus and wrote to Timothy in case he should be delayed (1 Timothy 3:14–15). No doubt he wanted Timothy to have clear guidelines for dealing with the situation in Ephesus while he was gone.

Application

- 4** According to 1 Timothy 1:3–4, Paul told Timothy to stay in Ephesus to
- a)** collect an offering for the needy saints.
 - b)** tell certain people to stop teaching false doctrine.
 - c)** visit the believers in the surrounding areas.
-

In addition to his opening instructions about false teachers, Paul gave Timothy directions about public worship (1 Timothy 2:1–15), church leadership (3:1–16), widows, elders, slaves (5:1–6:2), and the rich (6:17–19). He also advised him about his personal spiritual life and the conduct of his ministry (1:18–20; 4:1–16; 6:3–16, 20–21). His letter shows

the close friendship he had with Timothy, yet his manner was authoritative. Several times, he reminded his younger associate of his spiritual heritage (1:18; 4:14; 6:12, 20). Perhaps he sensed that Timothy, left in a difficult situation, was especially in need of encouragement in his work and renewal in his calling.

Read Paul's first letter to Timothy, using the following outline to guide you.

FIRST TIMOTHY: INSTRUCTIONS TO A MAN OF GOD

- I. Personal Warning and Appeal. *Read 1:1–20.*
- II. Directions Concerning Church Order. *Read 2:1–3:16.*
- III. Special Advice. *Read 4:1–16.*
- IV. Guidelines for Dealing with People and Situations in the Church. *Read 5:1–6:2.*
- V. Final Charges. *Read 6:3–21.*

Application

- 5** Review Paul's charge to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:11–16, and answer the following questions in your notebook.
 - a)** What was Timothy to flee (see 6:3–10)?
 - b)** What was Timothy to pursue or follow (v. 11)?
 - c)** What was Timothy to fight (v. 12)?
 - d)** What was Timothy to hold or keep (vv. 12, 14)?



The ministerial ideals and the practical guidelines that Paul outlined in 1 Timothy are as relevant for the Christian today as they were for Timothy when he first received them. They should be carefully studied by every person who wants to serve the Lord faithfully.

The Letter to Titus

It appears that Paul went to Crete soon after he wrote his first letter to Timothy (Titus 1:5). Evidently, there were already many believers on the island. Perhaps they had heard the gospel message from pilgrims who were in Jerusalem on the Day of

Pentecost (Acts 2:11). After a time of ministry among these believers, Paul continued his travels, leaving Titus behind to finish organizing the work on the island (Titus 1:5). Titus' task, then, was somewhat different from that of Timothy, who was left in charge of a work that had already been organized.

The content of Titus is similar to that of 1 Timothy. There are instructions for choosing leaders (Titus 1:5–9), directions for dealing with false teachers (1:11, 13; 3:10), and personal admonitions for Titus (2:7–8, 15).

However, Titus contains a more specific emphasis on the importance of correct or sound doctrine in the life of the church. The phrase “sound doctrine” indicates the truth concerning Christ. This truth was sound, or correct, and was not like the erroneous or unsound doctrine of the false teachers.

Application

- 6** In your notebook, write a brief answer to the following questions.
- a)** According to Titus 1:9, what must an elder or overseer be able to do?
- b)** According to Titus 2:1, what was Titus to teach?



Read the letter to Titus, using the following outline to guide you.

TITUS: DIRECTIONS FOR A CHURCH LEADER

- I. Introductory Remarks. *Read 1:1–4.*
- II. Appointing Elders. *Read 1:5–16.*
- III. Teaching Believers. *Read 2:1–3:8.*
- IV. Dealing with Divisive Persons. *Read 3:9–11.*
- V. Closing Instructions. *Read 3:12–15.*

Application

- 7** Review Titus 2:11–14 and 3:4–7. Refer to these Scriptures as you complete the following statements. Write each statement in your notebook.
- a)** (2:13) Our blessed hope is the . . .
 - b)** (2:14) Christ gave himself to . . .
 - c)** (3:5) God saved us because of . . .
 - d)** (3:5) God saved us through the . . .
 - e)** (3:7) We are justified by . . .
 - f)** (3:7) We have the hope of . . .
-

Though the book of Titus is short, it is a valuable handbook for Christian workers. Knowledge of its principles and instructions is a sound foundation for those who wish to build up the body of Christ.

The letters of 1 Timothy, Titus, and 1 Peter (which you will study later) show that the groups of believers had developed more definite patterns of organization. Leaders such as overseers and deacons are mentioned more often in these letters than in those written previously. Their qualifications are described in these letters.

Application

- 8** In your notebook, describe the requirements of a leader regarding each of the following. Review the Scripture passages referenced below to help you state your answers.
- a)** His relationship to his wife and her character (1 Timothy 3:2, 11–12; Titus 1:6)
 - b)** His relationship to his children and their character (1 Timothy 3:4–5, 12; Titus 1:6)
 - c)** His attitude toward money (1 Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2)
 - d)** His reputation among outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
 - e)** His spiritual maturity (1 Timothy 3:2, 6, 9; Titus 1:9; 1 Peter 5:2–3)
-

The Second Letter to Timothy

Timothy was no longer in Ephesus at the time he received Paul's second letter to him (2 Timothy 4:12). He was probably engaged in evangelistic work in Macedonia or Asia. Paul's circumstances had also changed. He was in prison again (2 Timothy 1:8; 2:9).

New Testament descriptions of Paul's trials and imprisonments seem to show that there was a gradual shift in the attitude of the Roman government toward Christianity. At first, Roman officials were indifferent (Acts 18:14–17). Then they were tolerant (Acts 26:30–32). But tolerance became hostility; history shows that many Christians suffered for their faith during the persecutions that began under the Roman emperor Nero in AD 64. Paul may have been one of these. He told Timothy that he was prepared to face death (2 Timothy 4:6).

Second Timothy is a mixture of advice, warning, exhortation, request, and personal reminiscence. As a departing senior officer would instruct the junior officer who was about to succeed him, so Paul instructed Timothy. He encouraged him to be faithful (2 Timothy 1:1–14). He challenged him to be a good workman (2:14–26). He told him about the difficult times that he saw approaching (3:1–9), and he charged him to perform all the duties of his ministry (3:10–4:8). Alone except for Luke, he longed for Timothy to come to him and bring him some of the belongings he had left in Troas (4:9–22).

Read 2 Timothy, using the following outline to guide you.

SECOND TIMOTHY: COMMISSION TO A SUCCESSOR

- I. Opening Greeting. *Read 1:1–2.*
- II. Be Faithful to Your Calling. *Read 1:3–2:13.*
- III. Be Diligent in Your Work. *Read 2:14–26.*
- IV. Be Prepared for the Future. *Read 3:1–9.*
- V. Rely Upon the Scriptures. *Read 3:10–17.*
- VI. Fulfill Your Ministry. *Read 4:1–8.*
- VII. Personal Requests. *Read 4:9–22.*

Application

- 9 In your notebook, make a chart like the one that follows. Complete each line by writing in the missing word or words. Refer to the verses listed on the left side as you complete each sentence. The first one is done to give you an example.

Reference in 2 Timothy	THE MINISTER’S CHARGE
1:14	Guard the good deposit.
2:3	Endure
2:8	Remember
3:14	Continue
4:2	Preach

- 10 Paul responded to the challenge of growth by telling his associates to
- a) appoint men who met the qualifications he gave as leaders.
 - b) wait for him to come and appoint suitable men as leaders.

B. RESPONDING TO PERSECUTION: FIRST LETTER OF PETER

Objective 2. Discuss the author, background, and content of 1 Peter.

During the years following Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome, the church began to experience increasing persecution. The apostle Peter responded to this situation by writing a letter to some believers who were undergoing severe tests and trials.

Author

Peter was one of the three disciples who were closest to the Lord (Matthew 26:37, Luke 9:28). At times, he displayed great spiritual insight (Matthew 16:13–17), but at other times, he failed (Matthew 16:21–23, 26:69–75). As Jesus had prophesied, however, he changed from an unstable disciple into a steadfast

apostle (Matthew 16:18, Luke 22:31–32). We have discovered from our study of Acts that he was a prominent leader in the church and a powerful witness and preacher of the gospel. Like Paul, he traveled widely (1 Corinthians 9:5). Also like Paul, he may have died a martyr's death in Rome sometime after Nero began to persecute the Christians.

Background and Content

Peter wrote the letter of 1 Peter to believers in Asia who were experiencing a time of trial and suffering (1 Peter 1:1, 6; 3:14; 4:12–19). When Peter wrote, Mark had apparently already visited the area, for Peter gave his greeting to the readers (1 Peter 5:13). This indicates that the letter was written sometime after Paul's first Roman imprisonment, for at that time, Mark was planning a visit to the area but had not yet done so (Colossians 4:10).

Though Peter had not met these believers personally, he was aware of their difficulties. Perhaps Mark had described their situation to him. There is no specific information about how they first heard the gospel. However, it is likely that they became Christians as a result of Paul's ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:10). Peter's reference to the "elders" among them is evidence that they were organized into churches (1 Peter 5:1). It is possible that their sufferings were associated with the persecutions that took place under Nero, for Peter said that others were also suffering (1 Peter 5:9).

In his letter, Peter encouraged his readers and reminded them to face their enemies with a Christlike spirit (1 Peter 2:20–23). He contrasted the temporary nature of their earthly suffering with the eternal reality of heavenly glory (1:6–7; 5:10). He stated the nature of the hope they could have in the midst of their trials (1:1–12). He reminded them of their spiritual calling (1:13–2:3). He explained their position as God's chosen people (2:4–12). He instructed them regarding their relationships with civil authorities and each other (2:13–3:7). He exhorted them to continue to do what was right (3:8–22). He described the attitude they should have if they were called upon to suffer for Christ's

sake (4:1–19). He gave counsel to the elders and young men among them and told everyone to trust God (5:1–14).

Read the first letter of Peter, using the following outline to guide you.

FIRST PETER: COUNSEL FOR THE SUFFERING

- I. Our Living Hope. *Read 1:1–12.*
- II. Our Costly Redemption. *Read 1:13–2:3.*
- III. Our Privileged Position. *Read 2:4–12.*
- IV. Our Personal Example. *Read 2:13–25.*
- V. Our Outward Behavior. *Read 3:1–22.*
- VI. Our Inner Attitude. *Read 4:1–19.*
- VII. Our Eternal Glory. *Read 5:1–14.*

Application

11 The letter of 1 Peter

- a)** says that believers need to obey human authorities.
- b)** was addressed to believers who lived in Macedonia.
- c)** lists the qualifications for elders.
- d)** presents Christ as an example to follow when suffering.
- e)** was probably written sometime after Paul's first Roman imprisonment.
- f)** does not have any instructions for leaders to follow.

No doubt the first believers who read 1 Peter were greatly encouraged and comforted by its message of hope. And what a striking testimony it was to the power of God in the life of its author, the apostle Peter. He who once denied his Lord became a man who strengthened his fellow believers (Luke 22:32). Today, we too receive strength from the words the Holy Spirit inspired him to write.

C. RESPONDING TO JUDAISM: LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

Objective 3. *Describe important aspects of the background and message of the letter to the Hebrews.*

Our study of Acts and Galatians has shown that at first, many Jewish Christians found it difficult to understand and adapt to the changes brought about by the work of Christ. The Judaizers insisted upon circumcision for Gentiles, and Paul had to oppose them and defend the true gospel. It appears that other Jewish Christians continued to cling to the temple, its rituals, and the Jewish way of life in general. The author of Hebrews directed his letter to believers such as these.

Author and Background

The exact identity of the author of Hebrews is unknown, for the letter does not mention the writer's name, and there is no definitive information available about who he might have been. However, the early church eventually concluded that it did bear the marks of apostolic authorship and included it in the Canon. Certain Bible scholars have suggested Paul, Barnabas, Apollos, and others as possible authors. However, the letter's form and content do not point conclusively to any one of these. We do know that the author wanted to visit the people to whom he wrote and that he knew Timothy (Hebrews 13:19, 23). It appears that he was not one of the original disciples (2:3). His teaching, though, agrees completely with that of the apostles, and it bears the unmistakable mark of divine inspiration throughout.

The name of the Epistle indicates that it was written to Jewish Christians. Since no city is mentioned, we do not know where these Christians lived. Rome and Jerusalem have been suggested as two of the most likely places (see Hebrews 13:24). The Epistle was probably written sometime in the late sixties before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70.

Application

- 12** Read Hebrews 2:3–4 and 10:32–34. These passages indicate that the Christians to whom Hebrews was written
- a)** received the gospel from those who heard it directly from the Lord.
 - b)** were new Christians facing persecution for the first time.
 - c)** had already suffered for their faith in Christ.
-



Content and Outline

The writer of Hebrews was aware that those to whom he wrote were beginning to draw back from identifying themselves fully with Christ. He saw that they were displaying a tendency to choose the temple and its familiar ritual over obedience to the revelation that God made through His Son. He wrote his letter to show them the grave danger of their position and explain the superiority of Christ and His work over all the ceremonies and institutions of the Law.

He demonstrated how Christ was greater than the angels (1:1–2:18), Moses (3:1–4:13), and Aaron (4:14–7:28). He described how the new agreement was better than the old (8:1–9:28) and how the sacrifice of Christ was the only one that could take away sin (10:1–31). He illustrated the necessity of faith (10:32–12:29) and gave practical ways in which his message could be applied (13:1–25). Woven into his letter are several warnings (such as the one given in 2:1–4) and thirteen exhortations beginning with the words “let us” (see for example 4:1, 16 and 12:1). Look for these warnings and exhortations as you read the letter.

HEBREWS: CHRIST, THE SUPERIOR ONE

- I. His Name Is Higher. *Read 1:5–2:18.*
Comparison: Angels
- II. His Position Is Greater. *Read 3:1–4:13.*
Comparison: Moses and Joshua

- III. His Priesthood Is Everlasting. *Read 4:14–7:28.*
Comparison: Aaron and Melchizedek
- IV. His Covenant Is Eternal. *Read 8:1–9:28.*
Comparison: The Old Covenant
- V. His Sacrifice Is Final. *Read 10:1–31.*
Comparison: Yearly Sacrifices
- VI. His Promise Is Sure. *Read 10:32–12:13.*
Illustration: Heroes of Faith
- VII. His Kingdom Is Unshakable. *Read 12:14–13:25.*
Exhortation: Identify with Christ

Application

13 Following are references to six warnings found in Hebrews. Review each warning and match its reference (right) to the phrase that best expresses its content (left).

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| a) Do not turn away from God in unbelief. | 1) 2:1–4 |
| b) Do not reject the Son of God. | 2) 3:7–19 |
| c) Do not refuse the one who speaks from heaven. | 3) 4:11–13 |
| d) Do not ignore the salvation Christ has made. | 4) 5:11–6:12 |
| e) Do not be disobedient. | 5) 10:19–31 |
| f) Do not continue to be immature. | 6) 12:25–29 |

As we have seen, the letter of Hebrews contains many precious truths about Christ and His work. Its message was important for the Jewish Christians to whom it was directed, and it is important for us today. Like them, we need to realize that Christ is our great high priest, the one to whom all the rituals and ceremonies of Judaism pointed. Like them, we too have a race marked out for us. Let us run it with perseverance, keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1–2). How wonderful to know that He is continually interceding for us before the Father,

even at this very hour. (7:25)! He helped those early Christians face the challenges of growth and opposition and showed them truths about their spiritual heritage. Through His Word, He can give wisdom and guidance to believers today regardless of the problems or needs they may have.

Application

14 Following are four passages in Hebrews in which the priesthood of Christ is compared to aspects of the Levitical priesthood. Complete each sentence by stating the similarity or difference given in the passage.

- a) Aaron was called to be a priest (5:4–6). Christ was called
.....
.....
- b) The Levitical priests served temporarily because they all died (7:23–25). Christ serves
.....
- c) The Levitical priests went into an artificial tabernacle with the blood of animals (9:11–14). Christ entered
.....
- d) The Levitical priests offered sacrifices every year (9:23–28). Christ offered
.....



Self-Test

1 MATCHING. Match the epistle (right) with the title of its outline and each fact about its historical background and content (left).

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| a) Title: Commission to a Successor | 1) 1 Timothy |
| b) Title: Counsel for the Suffering | 2) 2 Timothy |
| c) Describes the relationship between Judaism and Christianity | 3) Titus |
| d) Was written to Paul's associate in Ephesus while Paul continued his travels | 4) 1 Peter |
| e) Title: Christ, the Superior One | 5) Hebrews |
| f) Title: Instructions to a Man of God | |
| g) Was written to a man who was organizing groups of believers on the island of Crete | |
| h) Sent to believers in Asia who were suffering because of persecution | |
| i) Title: Directions for a Church Leader | |
| j) Contains several strong warnings against ignoring the work of Christ | |
| k) Was written while Paul was imprisoned again in Rome | |

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one phrase that best completes each of the following.

- 2** The need for sound doctrine in the church is especially emphasized in the letter of
- a)** Titus.
 - b)** 1 Peter.
 - c)** Hebrews.

- 3** According to the book of Hebrews, the priesthood of Christ has the most similarity to the priesthood of
- a)** the descendants of Levi.
 - b)** Aaron.
 - c)** Melchizedek.
- 4** Paul's letters to his associates show that he expected them to choose church leaders primarily on the basis of their
- a)** enthusiasm and experience in public speaking.
 - b)** desire to serve in the church as leaders.
 - c)** spiritual maturity and ability to govern their families.
- 5** One of the important subjects in the letter of 1 Peter is that of
- a)** teaching sound doctrine in the church.
 - b)** facing suffering with a Christlike attitude.
 - c)** choosing godly people for positions of leadership.

6 SHORT ANSWER. Following are quotations from each of the five letters you have studied in this lesson. Identify each quotation by writing the name of the epistle in the blank space on the right. Sometimes the quotation contains more than one verse.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| a) You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. . . . For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. | a) |
| b) I give you this charge: Preach the Word. . . . I have fought the good fight. . . . Do your best to come to me quickly. | b)
c) |
| c) But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. | d)
e) |
| d) However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. | f) |
| e) Stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer. | |
| f) How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? | |

Answers to Application Questions

8 (Your answers should be similar.)

- a)** He must have but one wife and her character must be worthy of respect.
- b)** He must be able to manage his children. They must have respect for him and be well-behaved. They should be believers.
- c)** He must not pursue dishonest gain or be a lover of money.
- d)** He must have a good reputation among outsiders.
- e)** He must be able to teach and encourage others. He must hold on to the truth. He should not be a recent convert.

1 a) Macedonia

b) Crete

c) Nicopolis

d) Corinth and Miletus

e) Troas

9 (Your answers should be similar.)

1:14 Guard the good deposit.

2:3 Endure hardship like a good soldier.

2:8 Remember Jesus Christ.

3:14 Continue in what you have learned.

4:2 Preach the Word.

2 c) visited Macedonia and other places before he was imprisoned again.

10 a) appoint men who met the qualifications he gave as leaders.

3 a) 2) Titus

b) 1) Timothy

c) 1) Timothy

d) 1) Timothy

e) 2) Titus

11 a) says that believers need to obey human authorities.

d) presents Christ as an example to follow when suffering.

e) was probably written sometime after Paul's first Roman imprisonment.

- 4 b)** tell certain people to stop teaching false doctrine.
- 12 a)** received the gospel from those who heard it directly from the Lord.
- c)** had already suffered for their faith in Christ.
- 5** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** Timothy was to flee from the love of money.
- b)** He was to follow a life of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness.
- c)** He was to fight the good fight of faith.
- d)** He was to hold on to eternal life and keep the commandment that had been given to him.
- 13 a)** 2) 3:7–19
- b)** 5) 10:19–31
- c)** 6) 12:25–29
- d)** 1) 2:1–4
- e)** 3) 4:11–13
- f)** 4) 5:11–6:12
- 6** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** He must be able to encourage others by means of sound doctrine.
- b)** He must teach what is in agreement with sound doctrine.
- 14** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** Christ was called to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek.
- b)** Christ serves permanently, for He lives forever.
- c)** Christ entered the heavenly tabernacle by means of His own blood.
- d)** Christ offered himself once for all time.
- 7** (Your answers should be similar.)
- a)** glorious appearing of Christ.
- b)** redeem and purify us.
- c)** His mercy.
- d)** the washing of rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit.
- e)** grace.
- f)** eternal life.

LESSON 9 The Church in Conflict and Anticipation

In Lesson 8, we studied 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, 1 Peter, and Hebrews. These letters showed how the church developed in its structure, learned how to respond to persecution, and gained a clearer understanding of its relationship to Judaism. In this lesson, we will study the letters that were written in the following years, the years after Paul's death. In many ways, these were difficult years for the young church. False teachers arose to challenge the foundational truths of Christianity. Persecution became more intense. Some believers yielded to the growing temptation to compromise with the world.

But again, the Spirit of God gave wisdom and direction. Through letters written by Peter, Jude, and John, believers were warned about false doctrine. Through the book of Revelation, they were encouraged to remain faithful to Christ despite severe suffering, and they were given a magnificent vision of His glorious return and complete victory. As you study this lesson, you will learn many facts that will help you understand these books. You will discover that they have a powerful message for us today. We face similar kinds of false doctrines and temptations, and we are much closer to the fulfillment of the prophecies of Revelation than the believers who first read them.

Lesson Outline

- A. The Church Opposes Error: 2 Peter, Jude, and 1–3 John
- B. The Church Anticipates Christ's Return: Revelation

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Describe the background and content of 2 Peter, Jude, and 1–3 John and the false doctrines against which they were written.
2. Identify aspects of the historical setting, literary features, and overall message of the book of Revelation.

Learning Activities

1. Study all parts of the lesson as usual.
2. Read the books of 2 Peter, Jude, 1–3 John, and Revelation as directed.
3. Find on the maps given at the end of Lesson 5 the seven churches named in Revelation chapters 2 and 3.
4. Review the lesson and take the self-test. Be sure to correct any items you answered incorrectly.

Key Words

antichrists
apostasy
forecast

Gnosticism
heresies

pervert
tyrannical

We will first study the books that spoke against the internal enemy of the early church: false doctrine. Then we will consider the unique features of the book of Revelation and its wonderful message of hope and triumph.

A. THE CHURCH OPPOSES ERROR: 2 PETER, JUDE, AND 1–3 JOHN

Objective 1. *Describe the background and content of 2 Peter, Jude, and 1–3 John and the false doctrines against which they were written.*

Paul had already warned the Ephesian elders, Timothy, and Titus that evil men would arise and teach things that were untrue (Acts 20:29–30; 2 Timothy 4:3–4; Titus 1:10–11). In the letters of 2 Peter, Jude, and 1–3 John, we see how other leaders of the church responded to the specific kinds of errors that appeared.

The Letter of 2 Peter

The letter of 2 Peter was probably written sometime between AD 65–67. Its content indicates that Peter wrote it to the same believers to whom he sent 1 Peter (2 Peter 1:1; 3:1). It appears that their situation had changed, however. They were now in more danger from false teachers on the inside than from persecution on the outside.

In his letter, Peter drew a contrast between the true knowledge of Christ and the heresies of the false teachers. He described to his readers the completeness of this knowledge and its origin (2 Peter 1:1–21). He warned them about the evil character and destructive doctrines of the false teachers (2:1–22). He prophesied the unbelieving attitude some would take toward the coming of the Day of the Lord (3:1–7). He concluded by exhorting his readers to prepare themselves for that day by living godly lives (3:8–18). The believers who accepted the message Peter presented would be equipped to identify the false teachers in their midst and avoid being deceived by them.

Read the letter, using the following outline to guide you.

SECOND PETER: TRUE CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

- I. The Knowledge of Christ and Its Basis. *Read 1:1–21.*
- II. The False Teachers and Their Judgment. *Read 2:1–22.*
- III. The Day of the Lord and Christian Behavior.
Read 3:1–18.

Application

- 1 According to 2 Peter 2:1–2, the false teachers would
 - a) openly introduce their heresies.
 - b) not gain any followers.
 - c) deny the Lord who bought them.
- 2 Peter said that the false teachers would invent stories to take advantage of the believers (2 Peter 2:3). He said that he did not follow invented stories but that he was an of the majesty of the Lord. He also said that we have the of the prophets that came by men who spoke

(See 2 Peter 1:16, 19, 21.)

- 3 Second Peter 3:1–13 gives several important facts about the Day of the Lord. According to these verses
 - a) the Day of the Lord has not come yet because God wants to give people time to repent.
 - b) those who scoff at the promise of the Day of the Lord do so out of ignorance.
 - c) everyone will be expecting the Lord to return.



Second Peter serves as a solemn warning to any person who tries to destroy the church from within. It declares that the day of judgment for false teachers will certainly come (2 Peter 3:12–13, 17). It also serves as an important reminder to us to be ready for

the coming of the Lord and to “make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him” (3:14).

The Letter of Jude

The writer of Jude was also called Judas; he was the brother of James and the half-brother of Jesus (see Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3, and Jude 1, but note that he is not the same person as Judas the son of James, who is mentioned in Acts 1:13). After the Resurrection, he believed in Christ and was among those who received the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (John 7:5; Acts 1:14). Later, he traveled on missionary journeys, as did the other brothers of the Lord (1 Corinthians 9:5).

Jude is very similar to parts of 2 Peter (compare 2 Peter 3:3 with Jude 18). Jude may have seen Peter’s letter and felt the need to send a similar letter to a group of believers he knew who were facing the same difficulties. Apparently, he had discovered that false teachers had secretly entered their assembly. He wrote to them in haste to warn them, interrupting another project to do so (Jude 3–4). The letter does not mention where these believers lived; Bible scholars have suggested Jerusalem and Antioch as possibilities. Jude likely wrote it sometime after 2 Peter was circulated and before the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. In his letter, he described the present behavior and future judgment of the false teachers (vv. 1–16) and told the believers how they should respond to the situation (vv. 17–25).

Read the letter, using the following outline to guide you.

JUDE: DEALING WITH APOSTASY

I. The Dangerous Presence of False Teachers.

Read verses 1–4.

II. The Description of False Teachers. *Read verses 5–16.*

III. The Response to False Teaching. *Read verses 17–25.*

Application

4 In your notebook, briefly describe the characteristics of the false teachers. The verse references are given to help you.

a) (4) How did these men enter into the church?

.....

b) (4) For what did they exchange the grace of God?

.....

c) (4) Whom did they deny?

.....

d) (8) What did they reject?

.....

e) (16) What did they boast about?

.....

f) (19) What did they lack?

.....

5 Jude told the believers to do several things in response to their situation. Complete each instruction by choosing the correct ending (right) and writing its number in front of the beginning phrase (left).

.... **a)** Contend for the ...

1) Holy Spirit.

.... **b)** Remember the ...

2) people who doubt.

.... **c)** Pray in the ...

3) faith given to
the saints.

.... **d)** Keep yourselves in the ...

4) love of God.

.... **e)** Have mercy on and
rescue the ...

5) prophecy of
the apostles.



Like 2 Peter, Jude is also a solemn warning against those who pervert the gospel and try to lead believers astray. It reminds us today that we should not be surprised when such people appear. As Jude directs, we should meet the situation by holding firmly to the truths of the gospel and reaching out in mercy to those

who have been deceived. God can also keep us from falling and give us a victorious entrance into His presence.

The Letters of 1, 2, and 3 John

We have seen that Peter and Jude warned their readers against scoffers who said that the Day of the Lord was not going to come and against boastful people who lived immorally. As time went on, other deceivers arose among the believers. They said that Christ had not really come in the flesh (2 John 7). The three letters of John were written to instruct believers who were being exposed to the false doctrine of these evil men and to teach them truths about salvation and Christian living as well.

JOHN, THE EYEWITNESS

The author of 1, 2, and 3 John was the apostle John, the same person who wrote the Gospel of John and the book of Revelation. Certain historical writings indicate that he went to Ephesus after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. He ministered there and in the surrounding area until he was exiled to the island of Patmos during the latter part of the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian (AD 81–96). Apparently, he was released after the death of Domitian and returned to the area of Ephesus to continue ministering there. The three epistles were probably written sometime between AD 85–90 and sent first to churches and believers in Asia among whom John had worked. As an eyewitness of the life of Christ and His close friend, he spoke with great authority against those who denied Christ and His coming in the flesh.

THE FALSE TEACHERS

The false teachers against whom John warned the believers did not acknowledge the truth that Christ had actually become a man. In their view, matter was evil and spirit was good. They taught that it was unthinkable for God, who was good, to become a real human being and thus unite himself with physical matter. Some of them said that Christ only *seemed* to be real, that the disciples saw a ghost or a phantom. Others said that a “Christ spirit” came upon the human Jesus at his baptism and left Him

before His crucifixion. Both of these ideas denied the truth that Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh.

Some of these false teachers also believed that a person must strive to escape from the material realm into the spiritual by obtaining a special kind of knowledge. This false teaching came to be called Gnosticism. In contrast to these false ideas, John described the true knowledge that gave assurance of eternal life (see 1 John 2:3; 3:10, 14; and 5:20, for example). He asserted Christ's full divinity and humanity (1 John 1:1–2; 2:22–23).

THE LETTER OF 1 JOHN

John was a purposeful writer. In his Gospel account, he stated that he wrote his book so that people would believe in Christ and receive life (John 20:31). In 1 John, he said that he wrote what he did so that people would know they had eternal life (1 John 5:13). These two purposes are closely related; John wanted to help believers understand their new relationship to God and gain assurance of salvation. The truths he presented about Christ gave answers to the doubts raised by the false teachers.

Application

- 6 In your notebook, copy the chart below. Read each Scripture. Opposite each reference, state the truth it presents. In the last column, write 1 if that truth opposes the false idea that Christ did not come in the flesh. Write 2 if the truth presented opposes the false idea that Jesus was not the Son of God (the Christ). The first one is completed to give you an example.

TRUTHS ABOUT CHRIST IN 1 JOHN		
Reference	Truth Presented	False Belief Opposed
1:1–3	<i>John heard, touched, and saw Christ.</i>	1
2:22		
3:23		
4:1–3		
4:15		



Along with teaching truths about Christ, John emphasized the certainty and assurance a believer can have. He stated the basis of his own knowledge (1 John 1:1–4). He explained the importance of walking in the light (1:5–2:14) and warned the believers against loving the world and being deceived by the antichrists (2:15–27). He also told them how they could know they were children of God (2:28–3:10) and described how they could know that they were in the truth and recognize those who were not (3:11–4:6). He commanded them to love each other (4:7–21) and gave them assurance regarding their relationship to God (5:1–21). Read the letter using the following outline as a general guide to its contents.

FIRST JOHN: ASSURANCE FOR THE BELIEVER

- I. Assurance by Knowing the Truth. *Read 1:1–4.*
- II. Assurance by Walking in the Light. *Read 1:5–2:14.*
- III. Assurance by Possessing God’s Anointing. *Read 2:15–29.*
- IV. Assurance by Doing Right. *Read 3:1–10.*
- V. Assurance by Showing Genuine Love. *Read 3:11–20.*
- VI. Assurance by Having the Spirit. *Read 3:21–4:6.*
- VII. Assurance by Acknowledging Christ. *Read 4:7–21.*
- VIII. Assurance by Observing God’s Commands. *Read 5:1–12.*
- IX. Assurance by Being in Christ. *Read 5:13–21.*

Application

- 7** Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
- a)** John wrote his Gospel and letters from the standpoint of one who knew Jesus from the testimony of others.
 - b)** The false teachers John warned against did not believe that Christ had come in the flesh.
 - c)** The letters of John show that the main problem among the believers to whom he wrote was whether or not the Gentiles should be circumcised.



THE LETTERS OF 2 AND 3 JOHN

Second and Third John are short, personal notes that John intended to follow up with face-to-face visits (2 John 12; 3 John 13–14). Second John was directed to a “chosen lady and her children” (2 John 1). This phrase might have referred to a certain woman and her children. It also could have meant a church and its members (see Paul’s use of “mother” in Galatians 4:26, for example). Since the letter closes by mentioning a “chosen sister,” the second possibility may be the more likely. In any case, John’s concern is evident: he wanted the believers to walk in truth and love (vv. 1–6) and to completely reject the antichrists who denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh (vv. 7–13). Read the letter and complete the exercise that follows.

SECOND JOHN: WALK IN TRUTH AND LOVE

I. Obey God’s Command to Love. *Read verses 1–6.*

II. Reject False Teachers Who Deny Christ.

Read verses 7–13.

Application

- 8** According to 2 John 9–10, are believers required to give hospitality to everyone? Explain your answer.
-



The letter of 3 John was directed to John’s friend Gaius. It also deals with the subject of hospitality. In this case, however, the hospitality John had in mind was the kind that should be shown to fellow Christians. Apparently, there were certain men who were traveling for the sake of Christ (3 John 7). Diotrephes, evidently the leader of the church of which Gaius was a member, refused to help these men (vv. 9–10). Demetrius may have been one of the traveling brothers who took John’s letter to Gaius.

In his letter, John commended Gaius for being hospitable to the brothers who were traveling (3 John 1–8). He said that he

would expose the hindering activities of Diotrephes (vv. 9–10). He encouraged Gaius in his Christian life and recommended Demetrius to him (vv. 11–14). Read the letter and complete the exercise that follows.

THIRD JOHN: PRACTICE CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY

- I. Praise for a Faithful Host. *Read verses 1–8.*
- II. Warning to a Proud Enemy. *Read verses 9–10.*
- III. Commendation of a Good Worker. *Read verses 11–14.*

Application

- 9 (Complete the sentence.) According to 3 John 8, those who show hospitality to believers who travel for the sake of Christ



The letters of 1, 2, and 3 John give us a glimpse into the heart of the “disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 21:20). For him, truth and love were inseparable. Those who knew the truth were those who loved, and those who loved were those who knew the truth. He had the highest standards for both. Each of them found its complete expression in the person of Christ himself (1 John 4:16; 5:20).

Together, 2 Peter, Jude, and the three epistles of John form a strong defense against false doctrines and wrong practices. They help us understand some of the problems that arose in the church during the first century and how the leaders responded to them. In addition, they show that it is important for believers not only to know the truth but also to test those who profess to be teachers to see if they are true followers of Christ.

B. THE CHURCH ANTICIPATES CHRIST'S RETURN: REVELATION

Objective 2. *Identify aspects of the historical setting, literary features, and overall message of the book of Revelation.*

The book of Revelation is a fitting climax to the New Testament (and to the entire Bible). It states that Jesus Christ, the Savior who was born in obscurity and rejected by humanity, will one day return to the earth in great power and glory as its rightful king. It leaves no doubt that all of God's purposes will be fulfilled. We will study its background, special features, content, and interpretation.

Background

The Jews of Palestine were in continual rebellion against their Roman rulers. When this rebellion increased and became widespread during the late 60s, Roman soldiers moved in to crush it. Galilee was subdued. Then the city of Jerusalem was surrounded and besieged. Within its walls, many thousands of Jews died of starvation and disease. Thousands more were killed by the Romans. Finally, after resisting the Romans for several years, Jerusalem fell in AD 70. The magnificent temple was destroyed, leaving not one stone upon another, just as Jesus had prophesied (Matthew 24:2). Years before, He had warned His followers to flee from the city when certain events took place (Matthew 24:15–25). John the apostle may have been among those who left before it was too late. As we have already mentioned, it appears that he went to Ephesus in AD 69 or 70 and worked there and in the surrounding areas.

During the years after the fall of Jerusalem, the Roman attitude toward Christians changed from suspicion to hatred. This hatred was first expressed by Nero, who accused Christians of burning Rome in AD 64 and killed many of them. Later, it took other forms. Christians, who earlier had been instructed to submit themselves to governing authorities (Romans 13:1), now found that it was impossible to obey these authorities.

The emperor Domitian (AD 81–96) insisted that he be worshipped as a god, and those who refused to do so were persecuted. John was possibly one of these. This may have been the reason why he was exiled to the island of Patmos during the latter part of Domitian’s reign (Revelation 1:9). While he was there, God gave him a message for the believers in Asia who were being oppressed by the tyrannical Roman state. God’s message was not just for them, however, for it contains a vision of Christ and His final victory that every Christian needs to see.

Application

10 (Fill in the blanks.) After the destruction of.
John ministered in the area of.
until he was to the
island of during the reign of Domitian.
At the time John wrote Revelation, the Roman attitude
toward Christianity was one of.
Christians could not obey the emperor Domitian because he
commanded them to



Special Features

John expressed the message he received in a form of writing called *apocalyptic* (the book of Daniel in the Old Testament has this same form in some parts). In this type of writing, objects are often used to represent other things. For example, John saw Christ among seven golden lampstands (Revelation 1:12–13). A few verses later, we read that these golden lampstands represent the seven churches to whom John was told to write (1:10–11, 20). In apocalyptic writing, certain numbers also may have another meaning. For example, the number seven often speaks of completeness. The fact that seven churches are addressed (1:11) means that the message is not just for them but

for the church through the ages. The fact that there are seven seals, trumpets, and plagues (bowls) means that God's judgments and purposes for the earth will be completed (see 6:1; 8:2; 15:1; 16:1).

In addition to having some apocalyptic features, Revelation is also closely connected with the writings of the Old Testament. There is no doubt that John was thoroughly familiar with them. In his book, there are more than 275 references to various Old Testament Scriptures. However, John did not merely quote from the Old Testament. He combined the images and pictures used there in new ways that powerfully convey the prophetic truths the Spirit of God revealed to him.

Application

11 Compare the descriptions of the tree of life in Genesis 2:9, 3:22–24, and Revelation 22:1–2, and answer the following questions in your notebook.

- a)** Genesis 3:22–24 tells us that Adam and Eve were not allowed to eat of the tree of life after they sinned. What did John say about the tree of life in Revelation 22:2?
- b)** What do you think is the reason for this difference?

12 Following are four verses from the book of Revelation. Circle the letter in front of each one that is a specific example of apocalyptic writing.

- a)** Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy (1:3).
- b)** In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God (4:5).
- c)** I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads (13:1).
- d)** Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me (22:12).



Content and Outline

The content of the book of Revelation can be divided into four sections that contain the four main visions that John had. Each of these visions contains the phrase “in the Spirit” (Revelation 1:10; 4:2; 17:1–3; 21:9–10).

In the first vision (Revelation 1:10–3:22), John saw Christ among the churches. John was acquainted with these churches, for they were in the area of Ephesus in Asia Minor where he ministered after he left Jerusalem. Christ gave John messages that were especially suitable for these churches, revealing to each one a certain aspect of His character. To the church of Smyrna, for example, He spoke as “the First and the Last” (2:8). To the church at Laodicea, He spoke as “the faithful and true witness” (3:14).

In the second vision (Revelation 4:1–16:21), John saw the throne of God in heaven and Christ as the Lamb who was worthy to open the scroll God had in His hand. John described the content of each seal of the scroll. The seventh seal included the seven trumpets. These were followed by seven plagues or bowls of wrath. The events associated with the seals, trumpets, and plagues portray aspects of God’s judgment of the earth and His will for the redeemed. Christ is shown in this vision as the one who has the authority to set God’s purposes in motion.

In the third vision (Revelation 17:1–21:8), John saw Christ as the conqueror of the evil kings of the earth and their armies. He heard the lament over Babylon and saw its destruction. He saw, too, the final doom of Satan, the judgment of the dead, and the new heavens and the new earth. This third vision shows Christ as the triumphant one, the one who brings world history to its final conclusion.

In the fourth vision, John saw the bride of Christ—the new Jerusalem (Revelation 21:9–22:5). In this vision, Christ is shown as the temple and light of the city, the home of all those whose names are written in His book of life.

Read the book of Revelation, using this outline to guide you.

REVELATION: THE VICTORIOUS CHRIST

- I. Introduction: Greetings and Praise. *Read 1:1–8*
- II. First Vision: Christ Speaks to the Churches.
Read 1:9–3:22.
- III. Second Vision: Christ Controls World Events.
Read 4:1–16:21.
- IV. Third Vision: Christ Conquers Evil Powers.
Read 17:1–21:8.
- V. Fourth Vision: Christ Reigns on His Throne.
Read 21:9–22:5.
- VI. Conclusion: Challenge and Invitation. *Read 22:6–21.*

Application

- 13** In your notebook, write a brief answer to the following questions on the four visions in the book of Revelation.
- a)** First vision: In His message to the seven churches, to whom did Christ make His promises each time (ch. 2–3)?
 - b)** Second vision: Why was Christ worthy to open the scroll (ch. 5)?
 - c)** Third vision: How many angels were necessary to bind Satan and cast him into the Abyss (ch. 20)?
 - d)** Fourth vision: Who will be able to enter the Holy City (ch. 21)?



Meaning

Because of its form and subject material, the book of Revelation is difficult to understand. Through the years, godly people have held differing (and sometimes opposing) opinions regarding its meaning. We will examine the four most important interpretations of its content. Then we will consider the message the book had for its original readers and the message it has for us today.

FOUR INTERPRETATIONS

The *preterist* school of thought holds that the book of Revelation relates only to the immediate time in which it was written. According to this view, the book has no prophetic significance for the future. It is simply a vivid picture of the struggle the church had with the godless power of Rome. This view is good in that it presents the significance the book would have had for its original readers. It is weak because it does not account for many of the events John saw that have not yet occurred, such as the reign of Christ with the martyrs (Revelation 20:4–6).

The *idealist* school of thought believes that Revelation is a symbolic picture of the ongoing conflict between good and evil. Those who hold this view say that the book's real purpose is to reveal God's character and the power of Christ as Savior. This is an important purpose. However, the idealist school is in error because it does not believe that the book's symbols may also point ahead to specific events in the future. It ignores the fact that many biblical prophecies given in symbolic form have already been fulfilled, such as some prophecies in Ezekiel and Daniel.

The *historicist* school sees the symbols of the book of Revelation as a forecast of church history from the Day of Pentecost until Christ's return. In this view, the symbols of the book are linked to historical events that affect the church, some of which have already taken place. (For example, the seals, such as those described in chapter 6, are interpreted as signifying the fall of the Roman Empire, the first-century persecutor of the Christians.) Those who hold this view have many disagreements among themselves because their method allows a symbol to stand for any one of several events or individuals. Therefore, it is impossible for them to arrive at any definite understanding of the book's message.


The *futurist* school maintains that most of the visions given to John concern future events. Those described in chapters 4–19 will take place within a period of a few years shortly before the return of Christ. This period is called the "Great Tribulation."

In this view, for example, the beast of chapter 13 represents the world government and the prostitute (Babylon) of chapter 17 represents the false religion that will exist at the time Christ returns. Some futurists say that the seven churches of chapters 2 and 3 represent seven eras of church history as well as the seven actual churches to whom John wrote.

Application

14 Match the interpretation (right) to each description or example of it (left).

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| ... a) The events in Revelation are like a calendar of church history from the Day of Pentecost until the return of Christ. | 1) Preterist |
| ... b) All the events described in Revelation came to pass shortly after it was written. | 2) Idealist |
| ... c) The fall of Babylon in chapter 18 will occur shortly before Christ returns. | 3) Historicist |
| ... d) The locusts in chapter 9 symbolize evil in the ageless war of good and evil. | 4) Futurist |
| ... e) The two witnesses in chapter 11 will prophesy during the Great Tribulation. | |



Many Christians are convinced that most of the book of Revelation should be interpreted according to the futurist view, especially chapters 4–22. The futurist interpretation is probably the best approach because it allows the prophecies of Revelation to be harmonized with other Bible prophecies. Those who hold it can show how the prophecies of Revelation expand the meaning of the previous prophecies.

For example, in Daniel 7:13 and Acts 1:11, we read that Jesus will return to earth. The futurist interpretation says that various passages in Revelation, such as Revelation 19:11–21, give more details about how He will return and what will happen when He does. In addition, the futurist interpretation shows that

John's vision of the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final separation of the saved and the lost do not simply represent ideas but portray real events that will actually take place.

MESSAGE FOR THEN AND NOW

For the churches in Asia Minor, the book of Revelation contained a message of encouragement and exhortation. The seven letters reveal that some believers were tolerating false doctrine and becoming careless and indifferent toward spiritual things (Revelation 2:4, 14–16, 20; 3:1–3, 15–18). Christ exhorted these believers to respond to His discipline and renew their dedication to Him. The letters also show that some believers were experiencing severe persecution (2:3, 9, 13). The prophecies of the book encouraged them by showing them that God would one day punish the wicked and reward the faithful. Certain symbols in Revelation were probably recognized by these believers as pointing to familiar events or persons. For example, it is likely that they saw in the beast of chapter 13 a picture of the Roman state, which was persecuting them. They learned that God knew their prayers and sufferings (6:9–11; 8:4; 14:13). They found that the martyrs would reign with Christ (20:4) and that God himself would wipe away all tears (21:3–4). Through the prophecy, they were told that they needed to be patient and faithful, for God would punish the beast (Revelation 13:10; 20:10).

Revelation also has a message for us because it was intended for the whole church. We should receive and respond wholeheartedly to its warning, exhortation, and encouragement. There may be times when, like the Ephesians, we need to repent and renew our dedication to Christ (Revelation 2:4–6). There may be times, too, when we suffer affliction and poverty like the believers in Smyrna (2:8–11). At such times, the promises in Revelation can give us great comfort, for they present a vision of our eternal home and assure us that one day God will wipe away all tears (21:3–4; 22:3–5).

The prophecies of Revelation also have significance for us. It is true that some of them predicted the situation that would exist soon after they were written, but it appears that these same prophecies also refer to events that will occur at the end of the world.

They are like other biblical prophecies that have had a double fulfillment. For example, in Genesis 46:4 and 50:24, we read that Jacob's descendants would one day come out of Egypt. This did in fact happen later when Moses led them out (Exodus 12:31–42). Much later, the prophecy was fulfilled again when another descendant of Jacob, Jesus Christ, also came out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15).

In a similar way, some of the prophecies in Revelation have a double fulfillment. For example, many Bible students believe that the prophecy of the beast in chapter 13 points to two things: 1) the Roman government that existed at the time John wrote, and 2) the world power that will be in control during the time just before Christ returns. This prophecy has a warning for us. Like those early Christians, we must be careful not to give our allegiance to any power that demands the worship that belongs to God alone (Revelation 13:5–8; 15:2). Other prophecies in Revelation, such as the ones in chapters 20–22, will have only one fulfillment, for they have to do with eternity and the end of the world.

Application

- 15** A prophecy that has (or may have) a double fulfillment is one that
- a)** actually has only one primary meaning, regardless of its form.
 - b)** quotes at least two times from the Old Testament.
 - c)** points to two similar events separated by a span of time.
 - d)** has one meaning for Christians, another meaning for unbelievers.



It should not surprise us that the prophecies of Revelation often seem difficult to understand. However, we can expect their meaning to become clear when the time arrives for their fulfillment, as has been the case with other prophecies in the Bible. But the book's presentation of the victorious Christ, warnings against apostasy, exhortations to consecration, and call to fellowship can be understood by all Christians, no matter when and where they live.

Application

- 16** The futurist approach to the book of Revelation is good because it
- a)** explains how all the events described were related to the seven historical churches of Asia.
 - b)** gives a detailed description of church history from the Day of Pentecost until now.
 - c)** proves that most of its prophecies are symbolic pictures of the war between good and evil.
 - d)** allows its prophecies to be brought together with and expand previous biblical prophecies.
- 17** A person who had a good understanding of the book of Revelation as explained in this lesson would say:
- a)** “Many of the warnings and commands given in the letters to the seven churches can be applied to believers today.”
 - b)** “Since the prophecies of Revelation were given in symbolic language, they do not refer to real people or events.”
 - c)** “Most of the content of the book of Revelation has little significance for Christians who are not suffering persecution or affliction.”
 - d)** “The book of Revelation contains truths about Christ and His complete victory that all Christians need to know.”
-



The book of Revelation closes the New Testament—and the entire Bible—on a note of victory and warning. It gives a vivid picture of our Savior’s triumph and records the last words John heard Him say: “Yes, I am coming soon” (Revelation 22:20). Let us pay attention to its message and prepare for the events it predicts, serving Christ with all our strength and carrying His gospel to every part of the world.

Self-Test

1 MATCHING. Match the epistle or book (right) with the title of its outline and each fact about its historical background or content (left).

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| a) Commends Gaius for helping Christian brothers who were traveling | 1) 2 Peter |
| b) Title: Assurance for the Believer | 2) Jude |
| c) Is written in an apocalyptic style | 3) 1 John |
| d) Title: Dealing With Apostasy | 4) 2 John |
| e) Title: Practice Christian Hospitality | 5) 3 John |
| f) Has some content similar to that of Jude | 6) Revelation |
| g) Title: The Victorious Christ | |
| h) Was written to give believers assurance of eternal life and oppose teachers who say that Christ was not a real person | |
| i) Title: True Christian Knowledge | |
| j) Title: Walk in Truth and Love | |
| k) Warns a certain lady not to welcome false teachers | |

- 2** Match the epistle or book (right) with each sentence that describes a circumstance of the believers with which the epistle or book deals (left).

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ... a) These believers belonged to seven different churches in Asia. Some were becoming spiritually careless and indifferent, and others were suffering persecution and martyrdom. | 1) Jude
2) 3 John
3) Revelation |
| ... b) These believers had been exposed to false teachers who denied the real humanity and complete divinity of Christ. | |
| ... c) These believers needed to be warned against immoral teachers who had secretly entered in among them and denied Christ. | |
| ... d) These believers lived during the time of the Roman emperor Domitian, who demanded their worship. | |

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one phrase that best completes each of the following.

- 3** Suppose you needed to teach basic truths about salvation to a group of new believers. The book that would be most appropriate to use in your study would be
- a)** 2 Peter.
 - b)** 1 John.
 - c)** 3 John.
 - d)** Revelation.
- 4** The view of Revelation that most easily allows for its prophecies to be harmonized with other Bible prophecies is the
- a)** preterist view.
 - b)** historicist view.
 - c)** idealist view.
 - d)** futurist view.

5 A vivid description of false teachers and the punishment that awaits them is contained in the letter of

- a)** 2 John.
- b)** 3 John.
- c)** Jude.

6 In Revelation 1:12–13, John said that he saw Christ among seven golden lampstands. This passage is an example of

- a)** apocalyptic symbolism.
- b)** double fulfillment of prophecy.
- c)** historical writing.

7 Many of the prophecies of Revelation are difficult to understand because

- a)** God did not intend for us to understand them.
- b)** the time has not yet arrived for their fulfillment.
- c)** they were written many hundreds of years ago.
- d)** they were directed to believers in Asia Minor.

8 CHRONOLOGY. Put the following events in historical sequence by writing 1 in front of the event that occurred first, 2 in front of the event that occurred next, and so forth.

- ... **a)** The apostle John wrote the book of Revelation.
- ... **b)** Jerusalem fell and the temple was destroyed.
- ... **c)** The apostle John was exiled to Patmos.
- ... **d)** Nero burned Rome and blamed the Christians.

Answers to Application Questions

- 9** work together with them for the truth. (Your answer should be similar.)
- 1 c)** deny the Lord who bought them.
- 10** Jerusalem, Ephesus, exiled, Patmos, hatred, worship him as god.
- 2** eyewitness, word, from God. (Your answers should be similar.)
- 11 a)** He said that its leaves were for the healing of the nations.
b) (Your answer should be similar.) The reason for this difference is that Christ has taken away the sin of the nations and made the tree of life available to them.
- 3 a)** the Day of the Lord has not come yet because God wants to give people time to repent.
- 12 b)** In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God (4:5).
c) I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads (13:1).
- 4 a)** They came in secretly.
b) They exchanged it for immorality.
c) They denied Jesus Christ.
d) They rejected authority.
e) They boasted about themselves.
f) They lacked the Spirit.
- 13 a)** He made them to the one who overcomes (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21).
b) He was worthy because He was slain and had purchased people for God with His blood (5:9).
c) One (20:1–3).
d) Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will be able to enter the Holy City (21:27).

- 5 a) 3) faith given to the saints (v. 3).
b) 5) prophecy of the apostles (v. 17).
c) 1) Holy Spirit (v. 20).
d) 4) love of God (v. 21).
e) 2) people who doubt (vv. 22–23).

- 14 a) 3) Historicist
b) 1) Preterist
c) 4) Futurist
d) 2) Idealist
e) 4) Futurist

6 Your chart should look similar to the following:

TRUTHS ABOUT CHRIST IN 1 JOHN		
Reference	Truth Presented	False Belief Opposed
1:1–3	John heard, touched, and saw Christ.	1
2:22	Liars deny that Jesus is the Christ.	2
3:23	We must believe in the name of God’s Son, Jesus Christ.	2
4:1–3	The spirit that comes from God says that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.	1
4:15	God lives in those who acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God.	2

- 15 c) points to two similar events separated by a span of time.
7 b) is true.
16 d) allows its prophecies to be brought together with and expand previous biblical prophecies.
8 No. Believers are not to give hospitality to false teachers who deny Christ (Your answer should be similar.)

- 17 a)** “Many of the warnings and commands given in the letters to the seven churches can be applied to believers today.”
- d)** “The book of Revelation contains truths about Christ and His complete victory that all Christians need to know.”

LESSON 10 We Rely on the New Testament

You have learned many things about the books of the New Testament in the previous lessons. You have learned about the political, religious, and cultural circumstances that surrounded them. You have learned some facts about their authors and considered some reasons why they were written. You have read each one and studied its message.

But there are still some questions that need to be answered. For example, why does the New Testament contain just the 27 books we have studied and no others? How were these books passed on to us? What evidence is there to show that they exist today in the same form in which they were first written during the first century?

You will find answers to these questions in this lesson. You will discover how the New Testament was formed. You will become acquainted with the evidence we have that it has been accurately passed on to us. The facts you learn will help you realize that you can have complete confidence in the New Testament. You can rely on it with assurance as you seek to serve the Lord and live for Him.

Lesson Outline

- A. Formed Under God's Guidance
- B. Faithfully Preserved and Transmitted

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Describe the four main stages in the formation of the New Testament.
2. Relate the reliability of the New Testament to specific facts that support it.

Learning Activities

1. Study the lesson development, paying special attention to the information on the charts. Complete the study questions and check your answers.
2. Find the places associated with the formation of the New Testament on the maps you have been given in this course.
3. After you take the self-test, review Lessons 8–10 (Unit Three). Then complete the *Unit Three Evaluation* and check your answers with the key in the back of this book.

keywords

canon	miniscule	parchment
codex	monastery	uncial
lectionary	papyri	vellum
manuscript		

The Holy Spirit not only inspired the writers of the New Testament books but also guided the church in forming the New Testament and transmitting it to us. Your study of these processes will help you see why you can rely on the New Testament as God's Word for us today.

A. FORMED UNDER GOD'S GUIDANCE

Objective 1. *Describe the four main stages in the formation of the New Testament.*

The formation of the New Testament was a process that went on for several years after the books themselves were written. The books were circulated, gathered into collections, used by church leaders, and officially recognized by church council.

Written by Chosen Men

Not very long after Jesus' ascension, God inspired certain men to write the books you have studied, which we call the New Testament. At first the apostles preached from their own first-hand experience with Christ and showed how He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies (see Acts 2:14–40; 3:17–26; 7:2–53; 8:26–35, for example). Then Paul, Peter, and others wrote letters to various churches and individuals to confirm in writing what they had already explained through preaching and teaching. Later, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote the Gospels so that believers would have an accurate record of Jesus' life and teachings, and Luke wrote the book of Acts. Finally, the apostle John was asked to write the things God revealed to him in order to show believers what would take place in the future (Revelation 1:1, 11). The whole group of 27 writings was produced between AD 49 and AD 95.

Collected by Believers

Some churches exchanged the letters they had received (see Colossians 4:16). Copies were made of the various writings, and before very long, churches in many cities had them.

Not long after the separate writings were circulated and copied, certain ones were grouped together. In the New Testament itself, Peter wrote of Paul's letters as if they were already an accepted unit (2 Peter 3:15–16). Manuscripts have been found in which Paul's letters were all placed together in just such a way. In addition, it appears that the four Gospels were often bound together.

Sometimes Acts was included with this group. Other similar collections were made during the years after the books were written, and soon all the New Testament books were joined together. One important manuscript that we have from the fourth century contains the entire New Testament.

Application

- 1** (Circle the letter of the correct answers.) The New Testament books were
- a)** probably circulated first as separate letters or writings.
 - b)** written over a period of two hundred years.
 - c)** produced before the apostles first began to preach about Christ.
 - d)** confirmations of truths believers had already been taught.
-



Affirmed by Church Leaders

The books of the New Testament were recognized as God's Word by those who received them. As we have seen, Peter regarded Paul's writings as Scripture (2 Peter 3:15–16). In 1 Timothy 5:18, Paul applied the term "Scripture" both to a quotation from the Old Testament, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and something Jesus said: "The worker deserves his wages" (Deuteronomy 25:4; Luke 10:7). Paul and John both expected their letters to be read to the church, as was the custom with Old Testament Scriptures in the synagogue (1 Thessalonians 5:27; Colossians 4:16; Revelation 1:3).

During the years that followed the writing and circulation of the New Testament books, other church leaders in different

places recognized them as God’s Word. They quoted from various New Testament books in their writings, giving them the same respect as was given to the Old Testament Scriptures. The following chart summarizes some of these leaders, when and where they lived, and the books of the New Testament they quoted from or referred to in their writings.

NOTE: the abbreviation c. stands for *circa*, “about the time of,” and signifies an approximate date; the abbreviation fl. stands for *floruit*, “flourished,” and signifies the approximate time when a person was living.

Use of New Testament by Early Church Leaders		
Name and Date	Place	Books used or referred to
Clement of Rome (c. 30–100)	Rome	Matthew, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews
Polycarp (c. 69–155)	Smyrna	Matthew, Acts, Paul’s Epistles, 1 Peter, 1 John
Papias (c. 80–155)	Hierapolis	Matthew, Mark, John, 1 John, 1 Peter
Justin Martyr (c. 100–165)	Rome	Gospels, Acts, 1 Peter, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews, Revelation
Irenaeus (c. 140–203)	Asia Minor, Gaul	All of the New Testament except Philemon and 3 John
Tertullian (c. 150–222)	Carthage	All of the New Testament except Philemon, James, 2 and 3 John
Tatian (fl. 170)	Syria, Rome	Most of the New Testament
Theophilus (c. 115–188)	Antioch	Most of the New Testament

Use of New Testament by Early Church Leaders		
<i>Name and Date</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Books used or referred to</i>
Clement (c. 155–215)	Alexandria	All of the New Testament except James, 2 Peter, 3 John
Origen (c. 185–253)	Alexandria	All of the New Testament except 2 and 3 John
Dionysius (c. 200–265)	Alexandria	All of the New Testament except 2 Peter and Jude

Application

- 2** Find each of the places listed in the previous chart on the map of the Roman Empire given in Lesson 1. The chart giving the use of the New Testament books by church leaders and the map indicate that
 - a)** the book of Revelation was not quoted or referred to in the writings of church leaders until AD 180.
 - b)** Polycarp of Smyrna and Justin Martyr both referred to the Gospels before AD 170.
 - c)** by the time Irenaeus had finished his writings, all of the New Testament books had been referred to except 3 John.
 - d)** leaders outside of Rome did not quote or use the New Testament books in their writings before AD 160.
 - e)** by AD 215, the New Testament books had been used by church leaders in at least five different places, including Egypt and Africa.



The leaders named on the chart not only quoted and referred to the New Testament books, but they also relied on them when opposing false teachers. Irenaeus and Origen, for example, appealed to the New Testament writings when they wrote against errors such as Gnosticism. (You will recall that in Lesson 9, you learned that 1 John was written against an early form of this same kind of false teaching—the idea that spirit is good and matter is evil.) The use these church leaders made of the New Testament books shows their high regard for them.

Recognized by Church Council

Toward the last part of the fourth century, the church leaders gave formal recognition to the books that were accepted as inspired. Those that were accepted were spoken of as belonging to or forming the *canon* of Scripture, that is, the body of writings that were divinely inspired and authoritative.

There were three main reasons why this formal recognition was made: 1) the appearance of other writings that were accepted by some as inspired, 2) the influence of the incomplete list or canon of Marcion, and 3) the persecution of Diocletian.

1. *The appearance of other writings.*

The 27 books of our New Testament were not the only writings about Christ and the apostles that were composed during the first 150 years of the church's existence. Luke said in the introduction to his Gospel account, "Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us" (Luke 1:1). Paul warned the Thessalonians not to believe any letter that contradicted what he said about the Day of the Lord, even if such a letter claimed to be from him (2 Thessalonians 2:2).

Later on, such writings as *1 Clement* (circa AD 96), *The Epistle of Barnabas* (circa AD 130), *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (circa AD 120), and *The Shepherd of Hermas* (circa AD 140) appeared. These writings were devotional and were highly regarded by certain churches. In the second and third centuries, a considerable number of other writings appeared that also claimed to be inspired. Among these were the *Acts of Peter*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and the *Gospel of Thomas*. Many of them were of a fanciful and imaginative nature.

Faced with this situation, the leaders of the church needed to state which books had been accepted by all as the authentic products of the Holy Spirit.

2. The list of Marcion (circa AD 140).

Along with the appearance of other writings, there was the growing influence of the incomplete list or canon of Marcion. Marcion was a false teacher who accepted only the Gospel of Luke and ten of Paul's epistles after he had removed from them everything he did not like. He rejected the other books that had already been recognized by most leaders as being inspired and gathered many followers who accepted his incomplete list. The church leaders needed to affirm the authority of the books that Marcion denied.

3. The persecution of Diocletian.

Another factor that led to the formation of the canon was the law made by the Roman emperor Diocletian in AD 303. According to this law, all sacred books were to be burned. This made it important for the church leaders to give formal recognition to those books that should be preserved and protected from destruction.

Application

- 3** In your notebook, briefly explain how each of the following events led to the formation of the New Testament canon.
- a)** Writings such as The Epistle of Barnabas and The Shepherd of Hermas appeared.
- b)** Marcion accepted only the Gospel of Luke and ten of Paul's epistles.
- c)** The emperor Diocletian made a law that all holy books were to be burned.



A significant event in the formation of the New Testament canon was the Third Council of Carthage, which was held in AD 397. Previous church councils had met in various places, such as the Council of Nicaea (AD 325), the Council of Laodicea (AD 363), and the Damasine Council (AD 382), and various lists were produced. However, at the Third Council of Carthage, the first formal statement was made regarding which books were to

be considered canonical, that is, part of the canon. This statement was a list that named the same 27 books our New Testament contains, no more and no less.

Each book that was included in the canon had to meet all of the following tests:

1. *Apostolicity*. It had to have an apostle or a person who was closely associated with an apostle as its author.
2. *Spirituality*. It had to have a spiritual and moral character of the highest kind, concentrating on the person and work of Christ.
3. *Universality*. It had to have been accepted by the church as a whole.
4. *Inspiration*. It had to give unmistakable evidence that it had been inspired by the Holy Spirit.

It is important to realize that church leaders could not make a writing part of the canon. Either a certain letter or book was inspired by the Holy Spirit and authoritative by its very content or it was not. The leaders' task was to recognize those writings that were worthy of canonical status and include them in the canon. It is evident that the Holy Spirit guided the leaders, for the books they acknowledged have stood the test of time and have been sufficient for the church's every need.

Application

- 4** Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
- a)** Some of the books included in the New Testament canon were not written by an apostle.
 - b)** When the Third Council of Carthage met, the 27 books of the New Testament had already been quoted and referred to by many church leaders.
 - c)** The Third Council of Carthage named the books that met all the tests of canonicity.
 - d)** From many writings that met the four tests for canonicity, the Third Council of Carthage selected only 27.

- 5** Complete the following in your notebook.
- a)** Explain why alternative **d)** in study question 4 is false.
- b)** Explain why some books that were not written by an apostle were included in the New Testament canon.
- 6** Match the stage in the formation of the New Testament (right) with each event associated with it in this lesson (left).
- | | |
|--|----------------|
| ... a) Tatian quoted or referred to most of the New Testament. | 1) Writing |
| ... b) The four Gospels were bound together. | 2) Collection |
| ... c) Peter spoke of Paul's epistles as if they were already formed into a group. | 3) Affirmation |
| ... d) The Third Council of Carthage published the list of books that were canonical. | 4) Recognition |
| ... e) Luke wrote an account of the life of Christ and the beginning of the church. | |
| ... f) Origen used the New Testament when arguing against Gnosticism. | |
-

B. FAITHFULLY PRESERVED AND TRANSMITTED

Objective 2. *Relate the reliability of the New Testament to specific facts that support it.*

In the previous section, we studied how the New Testament was formed. Now we will consider the evidence we have that it has been carefully copied and passed on to us just as it was first written. As we study this evidence, we will discover the reasons why we can be sure that our New Testament is a trustworthy record of the life of Jesus and the teachings of the apostles.

Many Ancient Manuscripts Exist

None of the original manuscripts of the New Testament books has survived—for example, the letter of 1 Corinthians, which Paul himself wrote. However, many hundreds of copies of

them have been found and preserved. Some of these are from as early as the second century after Christ. These manuscripts and writings can be divided into four basic groups: the Greek papyri and parchments, the translations and versions, the quotations made by the church leaders, and the lectionaries or reading lessons used in the churches.

THE GREEK PYPYRI AND PARCHMENTS

As you know, the writers of the New Testament used the Greek language. The original letters and books and the first copies of them were written on a substance called papyrus; later, copies were made on parchment.

Papyrus was a writing substance made from the leaves of the papyrus reed, which grows in Egypt. At first, manuscripts were copied onto rolls of papyrus. Then individual leaves were cut and bound together in a book form called a *codex*. Books today are still made in the same way. Papyrus was not expensive, but it was fragile. In a dry climate such as that of Egypt, papyrus sheets could last for hundreds of years. In a damp climate, though, they easily rotted. Despite their fragility, however, some 88 papyrus manuscripts have survived. The oldest of these that has been discovered to date is the Rylands Papyri 457 (P52). It is from the early part of the second century and contains portions of the Gospel of John. If the Gospel of John was written at the close of the first century (around AD 95), this means that this fragment comes from a manuscript produced less than 50 years later.

Six of the most important papyrus manuscripts are briefly described in the following chart.

NOTE: Papyrus manuscripts are usually referred to by a letter P with a raised number. Sometimes the name of the person who discovered the manuscript is included.

Papyrus Manuscripts of the New Testament		
<i>Number and Name</i>	<i>When Produced</i>	<i>New Testament Portions Included</i>
P52 Rylands Papyri 457	Early 2nd Century	John 18:31–33, 37–38
P75	2nd Century	Most of John chaps. 1–5, 8–9; portions of chaps. 6–7, 10–15; Luke chaps. 3–24
P13	3rd Century	Hebrews 2:14–5:5; 10:8–22; 10:29–11:13; 11:28–12:17
P45 Chester Beatty I	3rd Century	Portions of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts
P46 Chester Beatty II	3rd Century	Most of Paul's epistles except Philemon and the pastorals; Hebrews
P47 Chester Beatty III	3rd Century	Most of Revelation 9:10–17:2

Beginning around the fourth century, New Testament books were copied onto parchment and vellum, more durable (and expensive) writing substances made from animal skins. These were also made into codices. There are more than 270 parchment or vellum uncial manuscripts (written in Greek capital letters), and more than 2,790 miniscule manuscripts (written in cursive or connected Greek letters). Five of the most important of these are listed on the following chart.

Parchment and Vellum Manuscripts of the New Testament		
<i>Name</i>	<i>When Produced</i>	<i>New Testament Portions Included</i>
Codex Vaticanus	Middle 4th Century	Matthew through Hebrews 9:13
Codex Sinaiticus	Late 4th Century	The entire New Testament

Parchment and Vellum Manuscripts of the New Testament		
Name	When Produced	New Testament Portions Included
Codex Alexandrinus	Early 5th Century	The New Testament except two ch. of Matthew, two of John, and most of 2 Corinthians
Codex Washingtonianus	Late 4th-Early 5th Century	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
Miniscule 33	9th Century	Gospels, Acts, Epistles

Application

- 7 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
- a) The oldest papyrus manuscript that exists is from the third century.
 - b) The term *codex* refers to the type of Greek letters that were used in ancient manuscripts.
 - c) The Chester Beatty papyri P45, P46, and P47 were produced during the third century.
 - d) The earliest complete manuscript of the New Testament we have is from the late fourth century.
 - e) More than 2,650 papyrus, vellum, or parchment manuscripts exist of part or all of the New Testament.



EARLY TRANSLATIONS AND VERSIONS

Soon after the New Testament books were written and circulated, they were translated into various languages. Some of these translations were made two hundred years before Codex Vaticanus was produced. Thus they are an even earlier witness to the existence and form of the New Testament. Five of the most important versions are described in the following chart.

Early Versions of the New Testament			
<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>New Testament Portions Included</i>
African Latin	circa AD 150	Latin	Almost all of the New Testament
Diatessaron of Tatian	circa. AD 170	Syriac	An interweaving of the four Gospels
Sinaitic Syriac	4th century	Syriac	Most of the Gospels
Sahidic Version	AD 200	Egyptian (Coptic)	Almost all of the New Testament
Latin Vulgate	AD 384	Latin	The entire New Testament

WRITINGS OF THE CHURCH FATHERS

In addition to the Greek manuscripts and the other language versions of the New Testament, there are many quotations from the New Testament in the writings of various church leaders beginning in the first century. These leaders include most of those listed in the previous chart you have studied, “Use of New Testament by Early Church Leaders.” The quotations by these writers show that manuscripts of the New Testament books were already known in many places at the time they were written. If all the quotations by these church leaders were put together, they would contain almost the entire New Testament.

LECTIONARIES

Besides the Greek manuscripts, the various versions, and the writings of the church fathers, there are also over 2,200 lectionaries that contain portions of the New Testament. These lectionaries were used for the public reading of the Scriptures in the churches. The oldest ones that have been found at this time are from the sixth century.

As you can see, there are at least 5,300 manuscripts of all or part of the New Testament, counting just the Greek papyrus, parchment, and vellum manuscripts and the church lectionaries.

It is interesting to compare the New Testament with other works that were written at about the same time in light of the number and age of the manuscripts that exist today. Three of these works are *Annals of Imperial Rome*, by Tacitus; *Gallic War*, by Julius Caesar; and *The War with Hannibal*, by Livy. All of these are writings about the political and military history of the Roman Empire. Notice how the New Testament compares with these writings as given on the following chart.

Comparison of Manuscript Evidence		
Document	Existing Manuscripts	Number of Years Between Original Writing and Earliest Existing Manuscript
Annals of Imperial Rome	2	800
Gallic War	10	900
War with Hannibal	20	300
The New Testament	More than 5,300	250, some manuscripts from less than 50 years after original

Truly, there is an overwhelming abundance of manuscripts of the New Testament. The sheer amount of evidence provided by the great numbers and early date of the papyri, parchments, vellums, lectionaries, quotations, and versions of the New Testament points to only one inescapable conclusion: *the life, death, and resurrection of Christ is the best-documented event in all of ancient history.*

Application

- 8 When compared with works written by Tacitus, Julius Caesar, and Livy during the same period as the New Testament, there are at least
- a) 10 times more manuscripts of the New Testament.

b) 100 times more manuscripts of the New Testament.

c) 250 times more manuscripts of the New Testament.



Our New Testament Is Completely Reliable

For fourteen centuries, the New Testament existed in manuscript form. Most of these manuscripts were kept in the large churches and monasteries of Europe, and some were kept in the homes of wealthy men. But this situation changed dramatically when printing was invented by Johann Gutenberg in 1437. The first book he printed in Mainz, Germany, in 1456 was the Bible—the Gutenberg Bible as it came to be known. This was a momentous event. Instead of being laboriously copied by hand, Bibles could be rapidly and inexpensively produced by the hundreds. Now everyone could have his or her own copy of the Old and New Testaments.

Many translations have been made of the Bible. Most of the modern ones, including the New International Version, are based on the best readings of all the available Greek manuscripts. There are some minor and insignificant variations among these sources. However, the actual differences among the hundreds of Greek manuscripts amount to so little that they could occupy less than two-thirds of one page of an entire New Testament—one one-thousandth part of the whole. This fact shows that all the manuscripts came from one original. It also shows that the men who copied the New Testament books did so with great care. The agreement among the manuscripts is so close that we can say with assurance that our New Testament faithfully represents the original writings in every respect.

Application

- 9** Most modern translations of the New Testament are based on a text obtained primarily from the
- a)** quotations of the church fathers.
 - b)** lectionaries preserved by the churches.
 - c)** Greek manuscripts in existence.
 - d)** Syriac and Coptic versions.

10 Match the statement about the New Testament (right) with each sentence which gives a fact that supports it (left).

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) During the last part of the second century, Irenaeus used or referred to every book of the New Testament except Philemon and 3 John. | 1) Our New Testament today is a faithful and complete reproduction of the original documents. |
| b) There are around 5,300 manuscripts of part or all of the New Testament compared to 20 of the writings of Livy. | 2) Manuscripts of the New Testament have been found that were made within 50 years after the original writings. |
| c) Differences among the Greek manuscripts amount to less than two-thirds of a page of an entire New Testament. | 3) The entire New Testament was in existence no later than the beginning of the third century. |
| d) The Sahidic version of the New Testament was made in AD 200. | 4) There are at least 250 times more manuscripts of the New Testament than of other writings made at the same time. |
| e) The Rylands Papyrus 467 (P52) dates from the first part of the second century. | |



You and I have the New Testament today because of the work of many faithful, dedicated Christians—those who wrote it as God inspired them; those who carefully copied, preserved, and transmitted it to us; those who patiently compared the hundreds of Greek manuscripts to produce our modern, accurate versions; and those who translated it into our languages. What a priceless treasure it is! It tells us about our incomparable Savior, the wonderful kingdom He came to establish, the power that is ours to serve Him, and the glory that we will share with Him forever. Let us study it with diligence. Let us take its message into our hearts. Let us teach its truth to others with full assurance, knowing that it is the active, living, life-changing Word of God.

Self-Test

1 MATCHING. Match the person or statement (right) to each sentence that describes the person or thing (left).

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a) Emperor who in AD 303
commanded the burning of all
sacred books | 1) Clement of Rome |
| b) A false teacher who denied
the inspiration of several New
Testament books | 2) Marcion |
| c) A church leader who lived
AD 30–100 and quoted from the
New Testament books | 3) Diocletian |
| d) Printed the first Bible in
Mainz, Germany | 4) <i>The Shepherd of Hermas</i> |
| e) Term specifically meaning the
authoritative, inspired books | 5) The Third Council
of Carthage |
| f) A work produced in AD 140 and
not included in the canon | 6) Canon |
| g) Earliest complete Greek
manuscript of the New Testament | 7) Codex Sinaiticus |
| h) Translation of the New Testament
made circa AD 150 | 8) African Latin
Version |
| i) Accepted only Luke and ten of
Paul's epistles | 9) Johann Gutenberg |
| j) Gave official recognition to
canonical books in AD 397 | |

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one phrase that best completes each of the following.

2 The canonical test of apostolicity referred specifically to the

- a)** book's actual contents.
- b)** book's authorship.
- c)** book's effect on its readers.
- d)** churches' regard for the book.

3 Of the following, the earliest witness we have to the form and existence of the New Testament is the

- a)** Latin Vulgate.
- b)** Codex Vaticanus.
- c)** African Latin Version.
- d)** Gutenberg Bible.

4 The significance of the Rylands Papyri 457 (P52) is that it

- a)** was produced within 50 years of the original.
- b)** contains the entire Gospel of John.
- c)** shows that Paul's epistles were already a group.
- d)** dates from the first part of the third century.

5 The importance of the Third Council of Carthage in regard to the formation of the New Testament is that it

- a)** gathered the New Testament books together for the first time.
- b)** described what it meant for a book to be inspired.
- c)** declared which books met all four tests of canonicity.
- d)** excluded all books not directly written by the apostles themselves.

6 When compared to the existing manuscripts of works by Tacitus, Livy, and Julius Caesar, the manuscripts of the New Testament as a whole are

- a)** about the same in number but of an earlier date.
- b)** many more in number and of a much earlier date.
- c)** fewer in number and of a later date.
- d)** greater in number but of a later date.

- 7** A circumstance that led directly to a formal statement regarding the canon was the
- a)** influence of the list of Marcion.
 - b)** collection of the four Gospels into one volume.
 - c)** translation of the New Testament into Syriac.
 - d)** quotation of the New Testament books by Polycarp.
- 8** Of the following, the most important evidence that our New Testament today is a faithful reproduction of the original writings is the existence of
- a)** more than 2,200 church lectionaries found in many different cities.
 - b)** quotations from the New Testament by church leaders in Rome.
 - c)** several translations of the New Testament books into Latin.
 - d)** many early Greek manuscripts that agree closely.
- 9** CHRONOLOGY. Put the following events in historical sequence by writing 1 in front of the event that occurred first, 2 in front of the event that occurred next, and so forth.
- ... **a)** The Third Council of Carthage officially recognized the canonical books.
 - ... **b)** Paul wrote to the Corinthians.
 - ... **c)** Johann Gutenberg printed the first Bible.
 - ... **d)** Peter preached from the Old Testament on the Day of Pentecost.
 - ... **e)** Origen referred to books of the New Testament in arguing against Gnosticism.
 - ... **f)** The African Latin Version of the New Testament was produced.

Answers to Application Questions

- 6** **a)** 3) Affirmation
b) 2) Collection
c) 2) Collection
d) 4) Recognition
e) 1) Writing
f) 3) Affirmation
- 1** **a)** probably circulated first as separate letters or writings.
d) confirmations of truths believers had already been taught.
- 7** **c), d), and e)** are true.
- 2** **b)** Polycarp of Smyrna and Justin Martyr both referred to the Gospels before AD 170.
c) by the time Irenaeus had finished his writings, all of the New Testament books had been referred to except 3 John.
e) by AD 215, the New Testament books had been used by church leaders in at least five different places, including Egypt and Africa.
- 8** **c)** 250 times more manuscripts of the New Testament.
- 3** Suggested answers are as follows:
a) Church leaders needed to decide if these writings were to be accepted as part of the New Testament canon.
b) Church leaders needed to declare that the other inspired books that Marcion rejected were part of the canon.
c) Church leaders needed to decide which books were part of the canon and should be preserved from destruction.
- 9** **c)** Greek manuscripts in existence.
- 4** **a), b), and c)** are true.

- 10 a)** 3) The entire New Testament was in existence no later than the beginning of the third century.
- b)** 4) There are at least 250 times more manuscripts of the New Testament than of other writings made at the same time.
- c)** 1) Our New Testament today is a faithful and complete reproduction of the original documents.
- d)** 3) The entire New Testament was in existence no later than the beginning of the third century.
- e)** 2) Manuscripts of the New Testament have been found that were made within 50 years after the original writings.
- 5 a)** The statement is false because there were only 27 books that met all four tests of canonicity.
- b)** They were included because they were written by someone who was closely associated with an apostle.

CONGRATULATIONS

You have now completed all the unit lessons. We hope that it has been a great help to you. Review the lessons in Unit Three and complete the *Unit Three Evaluation*. When you have completed the evaluation, check your answers using the answer key in the back of this book.

Officially enrolled students should refer to the *Final Exam Instructions* page following the unit evaluation answer key for directions on taking the final exam.

DEAR STUDENT,

We hope this study has made you think about your relationship with God. After studying the lessons and answering all the questions, have you wondered, “Am I really a Christian? Do I know God? Is He real in my life?” We want to give you the opportunity now to have a relationship with God.

We have all done wrong things. We have hurt ourselves and others. The Bible calls that sin and we are all guilty: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Our sin keeps us from knowing God as a loving Father. But God loves us in spite of our sin. He loves us so much He sent His Son to die for us. “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16). When He died, Jesus took the punishment we deserved for our sins.

Do you want to make sure Jesus is your Savior? It is simple:

- Admit that you are a needy sinner separated from God, and ask Him to forgive you.
- Believe in Jesus with all your heart, and let Him know you accept Him as your Savior.

You can talk to God in your own words by saying a prayer like this:

Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner. Please forgive me. I believe You are the eternal Son of God. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. Come into my life. Make yourself real in my life. Be Lord of my life today. Thank You for saving me.

If you prayed this prayer and meant it with all your heart, your sins are forgiven and you have eternal life. Jesus is Lord of your life. The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please read and fill out the questionnaire on the following page and submit it whether you are studying as a enrolled student or simply for personal enrichment. God bless you as your journey of faith continues!

Cut this page and mail to the International Office USA, or scan and email to sed@globaluniversity.edu

Your Name

Address

Email

Phone (optional)

1 Did you pray to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior for the first time while taking this course?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, please share your story

2 Did this course help you lead someone else to Christ?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

3 Did this course help strengthen you as a Christian?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

If yes, how?

4 Would you recommend this course to someone else?

☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Please give us your friend's information and we will contact them about how they can study these materials.

Friend's Name

Address

Email



Phone (optional)

Glossary

The right-hand column lists the lesson in the Independent-Study Textbook in which the word is first used.

<i>Key Word</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Lesson</i>
AD	an abbreviation standing for the Latin words “anno Domini” (“in the year of the Lord”) and signifying a date after the birth of Christ	1
ancestry	line of descent; list of forefathers	3
antichrists	those who deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh	9
apocalyptic	a type of writing in which objects and word-pictures are used to convey meaning	1
apostasy	renunciation or abandonment of religious faith	9
ascetic	marked by strict self-denial	7
BC	an abbreviation standing for the words “before Christ” and signifying a date before the birth of Christ	1
canon	a body of writings that conforms to a certain standard of judgment	10
centurion	a Roman soldier who was in command of 100 men	5
chronology	an arrangement by sequence in time or order of occurrence	1
circumcision	the physical sign of the covenant made on the male organ	1

codex	a book made of manuscript leaves	10
controversy	argument; disagreement	2
deity	the essential nature of a god; a divine being	4
diaspora	the settling of scattered colonies of Jews outside Palestine after they were exiled from it in 587 BC	1
discourse	an extended expression of thought on a subject	4
end-time	having to do with the period of time in the future when the world comes to an end	6
episode	one event in a series of events	3
forecast	prediction or prophecy of the future	9
genealogy	an account of a person's ancestors or line of descent	3
Gentile	a person not of the Jewish race	2
Gnosticism	a belief that matter is evil and that escape from the material world comes through special knowledge	9
Great Commission	the charge or command Jesus gave to His disciples before He ascended to heaven after His resurrection	3
Hellenist	a person who was of the Greek culture, not necessarily Greek by birth	1
heresies	opinions or teachings contrary to the truth	9
heritage	the property that descends to an heir; that which is possessed because of one's birth or situation	8

intercession	the act of making a request in favor of another	7
intertestamental period	the time between the last historical events of the Old Testament and the first historical events of the New Testament, from about 323 BC to 6 BC	1
joint-heir	a person who receives an inheritance along with someone else	6
Judaism	the religion and culture of the Jewish people	1
Judaizers	those who demanded observance of the Jewish Law as a requirement for salvation	8
justification	the act of declaring a person to be righteous on the basis of the righteousness of Christ	6
kerygma	the message concerning salvation through Christ that was proclaimed by the apostles	3
Latin	a language first used in Rome around 900 BC and later throughout Italy, the Western Mediterranean area, and North Africa	3
lectionary	a book of Scripture lessons read during church services	10
legalistic	having a primary emphasis on the keeping of the Law	5
Levitical priesthood	the order of priests from the tribe of Levi that was set apart by God for priestly service (see Numbers 3:5–13)	8
manuscript	a document that is lettered or written by hand	10

martyrdom	the suffering of death because of loyalty to one's religious faith	5
medical	relating to the practice of medicine or the art of treating disease	4
Messiah	title given to Christ showing that He was the one who was chosen by God to do a special work	1
miniscule	a cursive writing style of simplified, small forms	10
monastery	a house for people who have taken certain religious vows	10
pagan	not of the Jewish or Christian religion	1
Palestine	the land of Israel that God promised to Abraham's descendants	1
papyri	manuscripts made of papyrus	10
parable	a story taken from everyday life that illustrates a spiritual truth	2
parallel	extending or lying in the same direction	2
parchment	writing substance made from the skins of sheep or goats	10
Passion Week	the week during which Jesus was betrayed, arrested, tried, and crucified	2
Passover	the Jewish feast held each year to commemorate Israel's deliverance from slavery in Egypt (see Exodus 12)	1
Pastoral Epistles	the letters of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus	8

Pentecost	the Jewish feast that celebrated the giving of the Law to Moses	1
perspective	a view of the relationship between things	2
pervert	to twist or distort the meaning of	9
Pharisees	a sect within Judaism whose members were very strict in following the Law and the traditions of the elders	1
philosophy	a system of thought regarding the nature of reality	1
physician	a person skilled in the art and science of the treatment of disease	4
plateau	a land area of level surface sharply raised above the surrounding land on at least one side	2
poem	a writing that is made to follow certain rules of expression governing its sound pattern, length, or choice of words	4
Prison Epistles	the letters of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon that Paul wrote during his first Roman imprisonment	7
proconsul	the governor of a Roman province that was administered by the Roman Senate	5
proselyte	a non-Jew who submitted to the requirements of the Jewish Law and was a convert to Judaism	1
purification	the act of cleansing, sometimes by a ceremonial procedure	7

redemption	the act of freeing from what harms or distresses; to buy back	4
reminiscence	a practice of thinking or telling about past experiences	8
research	careful investigation for the purpose of discovering facts	3
restitution	the giving of an equivalent for some injury or harm done	7
Sabbath	the seventh day of the week (see Exodus 31:12–17)	1
Sadducees	a sect within Judaism whose members accepted only the first five books of the Old Testament and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead	1
sanctification	the act of separating a believer from evil	6
Sanhedrin	the council of 70 Jewish elders, headed by the high priest, who had authority under overall Roman rule to govern in Jewish affairs	1
scribes	the men who interpreted the Jewish Law and explained how it should be applied to everyday life	1
sect	a religious group with a view that is different from that held by the majority	5
sedition	having the quality of resistance to or rebellion against lawful authority	5
Septuagint	a Greek version of the Old Testament made during the intertestamental time	1

strategy	a careful plan or method for achieving a goal	5
synagogue	a congregation or gathering formed by at least 10 Jewish men in order to read and study the Old Testament Scriptures	1
Synoptic	presenting or taking the same common view; relating to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke	3
theme	a subject or topic of discourse or writing	2
theological	having to do with the study of God and His relation to the world	4
Travel Epistles	the letters of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians	6
tyrannical	characterized by oppressive, unjust control	9
uncial	a writing style of hand-printed, capital letters	10
vellum	a writing substance made from the skins of calves or kids	10
verb	a word that expresses an act, occurrence, or state of being	3
vocabulary	a sum or collection of words used by a group or individual	4

Answers to Self-Tests

Lesson 1

- 1**
 - a)** Because of Roman power, there was safety, freedom, and ease of travel and communication throughout the entire region.
 - b)** As a result of the influence of Greek culture, the Greek language was used everywhere.
 - c)** Through the Jewish religion and the diaspora, prophecies about the coming Messiah were known and studied in many places.
 - d)** A variety of other religions existed, indicating that people were trying in various ways to find spiritual help and satisfaction. (Your answers should be similar.)

- 2**
 - a)** 4) Synagogue
 - b)** 7) Septuagint
 - c)** 6) Proselyte
 - d)** 1) Caesar Augustus
 - e)** 5) Diaspora
 - f)** 10) Sadducees
 - g)** 2) Alexander the Great
 - h)** 12) Passover
 - i)** 13) Herod the Great
 - j)** 3) Hellenist
 - k)** 9) Pharisees
 - l)** 11) Pentecost
 - m)** 9) Pharisees
 - n)** 8) Sanhedrin

- 3**
 - a)** specific events and facts.
 - b)** truths about Christ and the Christian life.
 - c)** instructions given to an individual regarding church leadership and other matters.
 - d)** messages concerning the present and revelations of the future. (Your answers should be similar.)

- 4 a)** 2) John
b) 1) Luke
c) 4) Paul
d) 2) John
e) 4) Paul
f) 3) James

5

Period	Historical	Doctrinal	Personal	Prophetic
6 BC– AD 29	Matthew Mark			
AD 30– AD 60	Acts	Romans Galatians	Philemon	
AD 60– AD 95		Hebrews	1, 2 Timothy	Revelation

Lesson 2

- 1** False
2 True
3 False
4 False
5 True
6 False
7 False
8 True
9 True
10 False
11 b) they did not believe He was God's Son.
12 c) object lesson.
13 a) preparation for ministry.
14 d) Galilee.

15 c) give an accurate portrayal of the person of Jesus.

16 Samaria.

17 later ministry and controversy.

18 Bethany.

19 Judea and Galilee (in any order).

20 himself.

Lesson 3

1 True

2 False

3 False

4 True

5 False

6 True

7 True

8 False

9 False

10 True

11 c) follow the same basic pattern in telling about the life of Christ.

12 a) tells how the Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus.

13 a) 2) Mark

b) 1) Matthew

c) 1) Matthew

d) 2) Mark

e) 2) Mark

14 (In your words)

a) the period of Jesus' public acceptance and popularity.

b) the period of His decline in favor and His rejection.

- 15** (In your words) showed how the Old Testament messianic prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus' life.
- 16** (In your words) Jesus' active ministry in which He willingly and promptly met the needs of many people.
- 17** "the beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God" (1:1).

Lesson 4

- 1 a)** 1) The Gospel of Luke
b) 2) The Gospel of John
c) 1) The Gospel of Luke
d) 2) The Gospel of John
e) 2) The Gospel of John
f) 1) The Gospel of Luke
g) 1) The Gospel of Luke
- 2** True
- 3** False
- 4** True
- 5** True
- 6** False
- 7** False
- 8 b)** the teachings Jesus gave regarding the "Son of man."
- 9 a)** show that Jesus was the Son of God and lead people to believe in Him.

Lesson 5

- 1** F. Acts is the link between the Gospels and the Epistles because it describes the formation or establishment of the church.
- 2** T
- 3** F. Acts shows that Paul turned increasingly to the Gentiles because many of the Jews rejected his message.

4 T

- 5** F. Paul wrote to the Galatians in response to news that they had accepted a false doctrine regarding salvation.

(NOTE: Your rewritten statements need not be exactly like those given, but they should state the same idea.)

- 6** a) 5) James
b) 1) Peter
c) 3) Luke
d) 4) Acts
e) 3) Luke
f) 6) Galatians
g) 1) Peter
h) 2) Paul

- 7** a) 6
b) 4
c) 1
d) 3
e) 2
f) 7
g) 5

- 8** a) 6; Cyprus
b) 9; Crete
c) 2; Macedonia
d) 7; Caesarea
e) 8; Jerusalem
f) 10; Cyrene
g) 4; Ephesus
h) 5; Galatia
i) 1; Rome
j) 8; Jerusalem
k) 3; Corinth

Lesson 6

- 1** **a)** 5) Romans
b) 4) 2 Corinthians
c) 2) 2 Thessalonians
d) 5) Romans
e) 3) 1 Corinthians
f) 4) 2 Corinthians
g) 2) 2 Thessalonians
h) 4) 2 Corinthians
i) 5) Romans
j) 1) 1 Thessalonians
k) 1) 1 Thessalonians
l) 3) 1 Corinthians
m) 3) 1 Corinthians
- 2** **a)** Corinth
b) Thessalonica
c) Rome
d) Corinth
- 3** **a)** gospel of God's righteousness.
b) idleness.
c) specific church problems.
d) had been unable to go and teach them personally.
e) resurrection of the dead.

Lesson 7

- 1** **a)** 2) Ephesians
b) 3) Colossians
c) 1) Philemon
d) 2) Ephesians
e) 4) Philippians
f) 2) Ephesians
g) 4) Philippians
h) 3) Colossians
i) 1) Philemon
j) 3) Colossians
k) 1) Philemon
l) 4) Philippians

- 2** F. Luke's description of Paul's arrests and trials showed that Christianity was *not* a political threat to the Roman government.
- 3** F. The epistles of Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians are called the Prison Epistles because Paul wrote them when he was in prison.
- 4** T
- 5** F. The epistle to Philemon reveals Paul's concern for a slave who had offended his master and needed forgiveness.
- 6** F. Philippians 2:5–11 is important along with John 1, Hebrews 1–2, and Colossians 1 because it asserts Christ's deity and helps us understand what happened when He became a man.
- 7** T
- 8** F. Paul's strategy in helping the Colossians to see that they were following a false teaching was to present truths concerning Christ that would make their errors obvious.

Lesson 8

- 1**
 - a)** 2) 2 Timothy
 - b)** 4) 1 Peter
 - c)** 5) Hebrews
 - d)** 1) 1 Timothy
 - e)** 5) Hebrews
 - f)** 1) 1 Timothy
 - g)** 3) Titus
 - h)** 4) 1 Peter
 - i)** 3) Titus
 - j)** 5) Hebrews
 - k)** 2) 2 Timothy
- 2** **a)** Titus.
- 3** **c)** Melchizedek.
- 4** **c)** spiritual maturity and ability to govern their families.

5 b) facing suffering with a Christlike attitude.

6 a) Titus (2:1, 11)

b) 2 Timothy (4:2, 7, 9)

c) Hebrews (10:12)

d) 1 Peter (4:16)

e) 1 Timothy (1:3)

f) Hebrews (2:3)

Lesson 9

1 a) 5) 3 John

b) 3) 1 John

c) 6) Revelation

d) 2) Jude

e) 5) 3 John

f) 1) 2 Peter

g) 6) Revelation

h) 3) 1 John

i) 1) 2 Peter

j) 4) 2 John

k) 4) 2 John

2 a) 3) Revelation

b) 2) 3 John

c) 1) Jude

d) 3) Revelation

3 b) 1 John.

4 d) futurist view.

5 c) Jude.

6 a) apocalyptic symbolism.

7 b) the time has not yet arrived for their fulfillment.

8 a) 4

b) 2

c) 3

d) 1

Lesson 10

- 1 a) 3) Diocletian
b) 2) Marcion
c) 1) Clement of Rome
d) 9) Johann Gutenberg
e) 6) Canon
f) 4) *The Shepherd of Hermas*
g) 7) Codex Sinaiticus
h) 8) African Latin Version
i) 2) Marcion
j) 5) The Third Council of Carthage
- 2 b) book's authorship.
- 3 c) African Latin Version.
- 4 a) was produced within 50 years of the original.
- 5 c) declared which books met all four tests of canonicity.
- 6 b) many more in number and of a much earlier date.
- 7 a) influence of the list of Marcion.
- 8 d) many early Greek manuscripts that agree closely.
- 9 a) 5
b) 2
c) 6
d) 1
e) 4
f) 3

CS2121 Kingdom, Power, and Glory

UNIT EVALUATIONS

Directions

When you have completed your study of each unit, complete the Evaluation for that unit, and check your answers using the Answer Key in the back of this book.

Read each question carefully. There is one best answer for each question. Circle the answer you have chosen.

Example

- 1 To be born again means to
- a) be young in age.
 - ☒ b) accept Jesus as Savior.
 - c) start a new year.

UNIT ONE EVALUATION

- 1** One way in which Roman power aided the rapid spread of the gospel was by
 - a)** officials acknowledging Jesus as the Son of God.
 - b)** free elections of leaders within the empire.
 - c)** building a system of good, safe roads.
 - d)** waging war against paganism.
- 2** The most important way Greek culture prepared the world to hear Christ's message was
 - a)** by establishing a common currency used everywhere.
 - b)** by establishing a uniform system of time zones.
 - c)** through widespread use of the Greek language.
 - d)** by building good Roman roads.
- 3** Three major developments within Judaism that aided the spread of the gospel were
 - a)** the synagogue, Gentile converts, and the use of the Septuagint.
 - b)** the temple, the synagogue, and the use of the Septuagint.
 - c)** the synagogue, the temple, and ceremonial laws.
 - d)** Bible translation, Sabbath worship, and ritual.
- 4** The council that ruled in Jewish religious and political affairs was called the
 - a)** synagogue.
 - b)** Sanhedrin.
 - c)** diaspora.
 - d)** Hellenist.
- 5** Matthew and Acts belong to the group of New Testament books best described as
 - a)** personal.
 - b)** prophetic.
 - c)** doctrinal.
 - d)** historical.

- 6** We say that the four Gospels are harmonious because they all
- a)** describe everything Jesus said and did.
 - b)** were originally written in the Greek language.
 - c)** follow the same basic pattern in telling about Christ.
 - d)** include the same parables, events, and teachings of Jesus.
- 7** The Gospel accounts are selective because they
- a)** have very little in common.
 - b)** say nothing about Jesus' childhood.
 - c)** do not include everything Jesus did and said.
 - d)** were not intended to be read by all believers.
- 8** Eleven of Jesus' twelve disciples were from the district of
- a)** Judea.
 - b)** Galilee.
 - c)** Samaria.
 - d)** Asia Minor.
- 9** The Gospel writers arranged events in Jesus' life differently to present
- a)** a strict chronological account of His life.
 - b)** different aspects of His person and His teachings.
 - c)** a harmonious account of events about which they were ignorant.
 - d)** as much information as they possibly could about Jesus' life and teachings.
- 10** Three important methods Jesus used in teaching were
- a)** parables, short sayings, and questions.
 - b)** parables, visual aids, and long sermons.
 - c)** parables, charts, and hand-drawn maps.
 - d)** hand-drawn maps, written exams, and oral quizzes.
- 11** The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are so much alike they are called
- a)** the Similar Gospels.
 - b)** the Synoptic Gospels.
 - c)** the Like-Minded Gospels.
 - d)** identical copies of one unnamed Gospel.

- 12** Read Acts 2:22–24. This basic summary of the central facts about Christ’s life is called the
- a) “kerygma.”
 - b) Golden Rule.
 - c) Synoptic Gospels.
 - d) fundamental truths.
- 13** Luke’s Gospel takes the basic material from Mark and adds material probably told to Luke by
- a) Jesus himself.
 - b) the apostle Paul.
 - c) people who had known Jesus.
 - d) the council of the church in Jerusalem.
- 14** Matthew’s Gospel seems to place special emphasis on Jesus as the
- a) Son of Man.
 - b) Messiah of the Jews.
 - c) “Universal Man” bringing salvation to all.
 - d) Son of God who was not really fully human.
- 15** The eyewitness details in Mark make it likely that it is a
- a) recorded court testimony.
 - b) memoir of the apostle Paul.
 - c) memoir told by Jesus himself.
 - d) memoir told by a close friend of Jesus.
- 16** Read Colossians 4:14. Who was Luke, the author of the Gospel of Luke?
- a) A fisherman who traveled with the apostle Peter
 - b) A lawyer who traveled with the apostle James
 - c) A doctor who traveled with the apostle Paul
 - d) A tent-maker who traveled with John Mark
- 17** What book of the New Testament did Luke write besides his Gospel account?
- a) Acts
 - b) Romans
 - c) Philemon
 - d) Colossians

- 18** Of the three Synoptic Gospels, Luke gives the most references to
- a)** the establishment and future of the church.
 - b)** instances of Roman idolatry in Palestine.
 - c)** the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - d)** the importance of fishing in Palestine.
- 19** John is the only one of the Gospels that
- a)** tells about the conflict Jesus had with Jewish leaders.
 - b)** describes Jesus' Galilean ministry.
 - c)** includes Jesus' seven "I am" sayings.
 - d)** asserts Jesus' divinity.
- 20** Read John 20:30–31. What was John's purpose in writing this Gospel?
- a)** To recount everything he knew about Jesus' life
 - b)** To encourage believers who were discouraged
 - c)** To bring people to faith in Jesus as the Son of God
 - d)** To present an irrefutable argument for the deity of Christ

UNIT TWO EVALUATION

- 1** Luke wrote the Book of Acts as
 - a)** a sequel to Mark's Gospel.
 - b)** a memoir of the apostle Peter.
 - c)** a sequel to his own Gospel account.
 - d)** an account of everything Jesus told him.
- 2** One reason Acts is important is because it provides authoritative information about the
 - a)** last days of Jerusalem.
 - b)** final overthrow of the Roman Empire.
 - c)** final imprisonment and martyrdom of Peter and Paul.
 - d)** formation of the church and activities of its early leaders.
- 3** Read Acts 1:8. This verse may be seen as a general outline of the
 - a)** missionary outreach and expansion of the early church.
 - b)** ways the Holy Spirit works in the individual heart.
 - c)** desire the Holy Spirit has to help believers.
 - d)** dreams the apostles had of gaining power.
- 4** The focus of the church began to shift away from Jerusalem and Judea as
 - a)** the Jewish leaders welcomed Christians openly as a branch of Judaism.
 - b)** the Roman leaders asked the apostles to share Christ in Rome.
 - c)** more Gentiles accepted Christ and spread His message.
 - d)** Gentiles became more unpopular in Jerusalem.
- 5** In Acts 15:1–35, the Jerusalem Council decided Gentiles could be Christians and
 - a)** must follow all the requirements of the law of Moses.
 - b)** would always be required to undergo circumcision.
 - c)** must meet only in specially approved synagogues.
 - d)** not be required to undergo circumcision.

- 6** Most Bible scholars believe that James was written by
- a)** James the apostle, brother of John.
 - b)** an unknown leader named James.
 - c)** James the brother of Jesus.
 - d)** James of Galatia.
- 7** Paul probably wrote both letters to the Thessalonian believers from
- a)** Jerusalem.
 - b)** Corinth.
 - c)** Athens.
 - d)** Spain.
- 8** Paul first wrote about end-time events in the letter of
- a)** Romans.
 - b)** Galatians.
 - c)** 1 Corinthians.
 - d)** 1 Thessalonians.
- 9** Second Thessalonians 2 says that Christ will destroy
- a)** all sinfulness.
 - b)** only those who sin after they are saved.
 - c)** someone whom Paul calls “the man of lawlessness.”
 - d)** the kingdom of Satan set up just before the Millennial Reign.
- 10** First and Second Corinthians show us that the two major problems in the church at Corinth were
- a)** wealth and health.
 - b)** divisiveness and sexual immorality.
 - c)** an overemphasis on legalistic purity.
 - d)** unity of doctrine and self-righteousness.
- 11** Second Corinthians was written after Titus reported to Paul that
- a)** the Corinthian believers were more evil than ever before.
 - b)** behavior in the Corinthian church had improved.
 - c)** all the believers had left the city of Corinth.
 - d)** the Romans destroyed Corinth.

- 12** Romans is probably Paul's most important writing because it presents a detailed
- a)** explanation of God's method and provision for salvation for all.
 - b)** plan of God's coming judgment upon sinful believers.
 - c)** account of Paul's method for planting churches.
 - d)** map of the new roads in the city of Rome.
- 13** Read Romans 1:16. This states the theme of Romans, which is the
- a)** need for repentance.
 - b)** need for personal purity.
 - c)** return of Christ in power and glory in the last days.
 - d)** power of the gospel to bring salvation to all through faith.
- 14** Romans 8:1–4 tells us that we have been set free from sin to serve God
- a)** without ever sinning again.
 - b)** through the power of the Holy Spirit living in us.
 - c)** through self-discipline and careful attention to our church leaders.
 - d)** through careful Scripture study and membership in the right church.
- 15** Read Acts 23:11. The real reason Paul was taken to Rome as a prisoner was that
- a)** God wanted him to testify in Rome.
 - b)** Paul foolishly allowed himself to be arrested.
 - c)** Paul had been found guilty and was to be punished.
 - d)** Paul had angered Emperor Nero and was going to be killed.
- 16** Paul's letter to Philemon called upon Philemon to forgive Onesimus, a man who was
- a)** Philemon's runaway slave.
 - b)** Philemon's former boss.
 - c)** Philemon's friend.
 - d)** a Roman soldier.

- 17** Paul's letter to the Ephesians was designed to be read
- a)** by only a few of his personal friends in Ephesus.
 - b)** by the believers in Ephesus, then destroyed.
 - c)** and circulated among several churches.
 - d)** and memorized word for word.
- 18** The main theme of the book of Ephesians is the
- a)** meaning of Christian forgiveness.
 - b)** future of Israel as a nation.
 - c)** danger of legalism.
 - d)** universal church.
- 19** Colossians was written to oppose the erroneous teaching that Christians should seek
- a)** to be baptized in water.
 - b)** the Holy Spirit's power to live holy lives.
 - c)** a special knowledge of God through special practices.
 - d)** the names and ranks of all the angels in order to worship them.
- 20** Read Philippians 4:12–13. What was the source of Paul's strength and joy?
- a)** Perseverance
 - b)** Determination
 - c)** Wealth
 - d)** Christ

UNIT THREE EVALUATION

- 1 The letters to Timothy and Titus are called “pastoral letters” because they
 - a) are filled with lessons taken from sheep and sheep raising.
 - b) are filled with instructions related to pastoring.
 - c) are filled with images from nature.
 - d) place a strong value on sheep.
- 2 The book of Titus can be considered a valuable
 - a) handbook for Christian workers.
 - b) guide to the island of Crete.
 - c) ancient Greek document.
 - d) example of Latin.
- 3 Read 2 Timothy 1:8 and 2:9. Where was Paul writing from?
 - a) A friend’s home
 - b) A local church
 - c) A market
 - d) Prison
- 4 During Nero’s persecution of Christians, the apostle Peter
 - a) apparently died as a martyr for his faith.
 - b) was hidden and protected by believers.
 - c) denied Christ again and was spared.
 - d) denied Christ and died anyway.
- 5 Read 1 Peter 2:21. How are believers to respond to those who persecute them?
 - a) They should flee persecution.
 - b) They should seek revenge.
 - c) They should be Christlike.
 - d) They should weep.
- 6 The author of Hebrews is
 - a) Paul or Barnabas.
 - b) the apostle Silas.
 - c) Paul or Apollos.
 - d) unknown.

- 7** The Hebrew Christians to whom Hebrews was written seemed to be trying to
- a)** hold on to the rituals of the temple and Jewish law.
 - b)** get away from their Jewish roots.
 - c)** ignore other Jewish Christians.
 - d)** ignore Gentile believers.
- 8** According to 2 Peter 2:1–2, the false teachers would
- a)** deny the Lord who bought them.
 - b)** openly introduce their heresies.
 - c)** not gain any followers.
 - d)** run away if confronted.
- 9** Read 2 Peter 3:9. Why is it seemingly taking a long time for the Day of the Lord to come?
- a)** Because humans are impatient and just think it is taking a long time
 - b)** Because God is doing battle with Satan and needs to defeat him first
 - c)** Because God wants more people to have the opportunity to reject Christ
 - d)** Because God wants more people to have the opportunity to accept Christ
- 10** According to Jude 20–21, how are we to combat false teachers?
- a)** Cast them out of the churches
 - b)** Report them to church leaders
 - c)** Pray in the Spirit and ignore them
 - d)** Pray in the Spirit and keep in God's love
- 11** The false teachers John wrote about in these letters taught that Christ was
- a)** the Son of God.
 - b)** not a real human being.
 - c)** neither the Son of God nor a real man.
 - d)** an angel who came down to live within Jesus.

- 12** Revelation is an “apocalyptic” writing, a type of writing that often involves
- a)** vivid imagery and symbolic use of numbers.
 - b)** totally mysterious symbols that really mean nothing.
 - c)** names and numbers that can be interpreted to mean anything.
 - d)** dreams and visions not meant for the leaders of the church to understand.
- 13** The interpretation of Revelation that best allows for fulfillment of its prophecies is the
- a)** historicist.
 - b)** preterist.
 - c)** idealist.
 - d)** futurist.
- 14** Just as in the Old Testament, many prophecies in Revelation have
- a)** a double fulfillment.
 - b)** no fulfillment that we can understand.
 - c)** only one fulfillment, and that is still to come.
 - d)** double fulfillments that already took place.
- 15** The New Testament books were
- a)** written over a period of 200 years.
 - b)** probably circulated first as separate letters or writings.
 - c)** produced before the apostles first began to preach about Christ.
 - d)** never accepted by believers until church leaders approved them.
- 16** During the years following their writing, the New Testament books were recognized
- a)** as important writings but not inspired by God.
 - b)** as important but not equal to the Old Testament.
 - c)** by church leaders throughout the world as God’s Word.
 - d)** by common believers everywhere but in the Latin-speaking world.

- 17** The “canon” of Scripture is a term meaning those writings that were
- a)** recognized as inspired by God.
 - b)** not declared to be inspired by God.
 - c)** suspected of being inspired by God.
 - d)** forced upon the churches by their leaders.
- 18** The Third Council of Carthage in AD 397 was important for issuing
- a)** a demand that 33 books be considered the New Testament.
 - b)** the first list of the 27 books we now know as the New Testament.
 - c)** a decree that no other books but their list of 27 are inspired by God.
 - d)** the first list of 66 books which we now know as the New Testament.
- 19** The oldest known New Testament fragment is from the Gospel of John and dates to within
- a)** 250 years after John wrote his Gospel.
 - b)** 150 years after John wrote his Gospel.
 - c)** 100 years after John wrote his Gospel.
 - d)** 50 years after John wrote his Gospel.
- 20** Actual differences among the hundreds of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament would fill
- a)** more than half of an average printed New Testament.
 - b)** more than 100 pages of an entire New Testament.
 - c)** about 10 pages of the entire New Testament.
 - d)** less than a page of an entire New Testament.

CS2121 Kingdom, Power, and Glory

UNIT EVALUATION ANSWER KEY

Directions

When you have completed a unit evaluation, check your answers using this answer key.

In this key, each question and correct answer is listed, followed by where each correct answer can be found. For example, in the answer below 1.1 indicates that the correct answer is found in Lesson 1, Goal 1.

1 c) Correct answer.

Goal

1.1

Make note of questions you answered incorrectly, and review the lesson material for those questions.

UNIT ONE

	Goal
1 c) building a system of good, safe roads.	1.1
2 c) through widespread use of the Greek language.	1.2
3 a) the synagogue, Gentile converts, and the use of the Septuagint.	1.3
4 b) Sanhedrin.	1.4
5 d) historical.	1.6
6 c) follow the same basic pattern in telling about Christ.	2.1
7 c) do not include everything Jesus did and said.	2.1
8 b) Galilee.	2.3
9 b) different aspects of His person and His teachings.	2.4
10 a) parables, short sayings, and questions.	2.5
11 b) the Synoptic Gospels.	3.1
12 a) “kerygma.”	3.1
13 c) people who had known Jesus.	3.1
14 b) Messiah of the Jews.	3.2
15 d) memoir told by a close friend of Jesus.	3.3
16 c) A doctor who traveled with the apostle Paul	4.1
17 a) Acts	4.1
18 c) the work of the Holy Spirit.	4.1
19 c) includes Jesus’ seven “I am” sayings.	4.2
20 c) To bring people to faith in Jesus as the Son of God	4.2

UNIT TWO

	Goal
1 c) a sequel to his own Gospel account.	5.1
2 d) formation of the church and activities of its early leaders.	5.1
3 a) missionary outreach and expansion of the early church.	5.2
4 c) more Gentiles accepted Christ and spread His message.	5.3
5 d) not be required to undergo circumcision.	5.3
6 c) James the brother of Jesus.	5.4
7 b) Corinth.	6.1
8 d) 1 Thessalonians.	6.1
9 c) someone whom Paul calls “the man of lawlessness.”	6.1
10 b) divisiveness and sexual immorality.	6.2
11 b) behavior in the Corinthian church had improved.	6.2
12 a) explanation of God’s method and provision for salvation for all.	6.3
13 d) power of the gospel to bring salvation to all through faith.	6.3
14 b) through the power of the Holy Spirit living in us.	6.3
15 a) God wanted him to testify in Rome.	7.1
16 a) Philemon’s runaway slave.	7.2
17 c) and circulated among several churches.	7.3
18 d) universal church.	7.3
19 c) a special knowledge of God through special practices.	7.4
20 d) Christ	7.5

UNIT THREE

	Goal
1 b) are filled with instructions related to pastoring.	8.1
2 a) handbook for Christian workers.	8.1
3 d) Prison	8.1
4 a) apparently died as a martyr for his faith.	8.2
5 c) They should be Christlike.	8.2
6 d) unknown.	8.3
7 a) hold on to the rituals of the temple and Jewish law.	8.3
8 a) deny the Lord who bought them.	9.1
9 d) Because God wants more people to have the opportunity to accept Christ	9.1
10 d) Pray in the Spirit and keep in God's love	9.1
11 b) not a real human being.	9.1
12 a) vivid imagery and symbolic use of numbers.	9.2
13 d) futurist.	9.2
14 a) a double fulfillment.	9.2
15 b) probably circulated first as separate letters or writings.	10.1
16 c) by church leaders throughout the world as God's Word.	10.1
17 a) recognized as inspired by God.	10.1
18 b) the first list of the 27 books we now know as the New Testament.	10.1
19 d) 50 years after John wrote his Gospel.	10.2
20 d) less than a page of an entire New Testament.	10.2

FINAL EXAM INSTRUCTIONS

OFFICIALLY ENROLLED STUDENTS ONLY

- Review all course objectives, application questions, self-tests, and unit evaluations in preparation for the final exam.
- Complete the final exam online using your student number and password at <http://sed.globalutrainig.com>.
- Outside the USA, please submit your final exam and student questionnaire to your instructor or national office.

Now that you have finished your study of this course we encourage you to begin the next course in this series or ask your instructor to recommend another course of study.