

God Milk
How then Should We Live? -2
Paul's Other Letters
(8 of 10: Snacks)

Crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.

I Peter 2:2

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Philippians 1:27

Find It

After the Gospels and Acts come the Letters of Paul:

first the letters to churches (meant to be read in assemblies)

Romans presents gospel, introduces Paul & mission plans

1 & 2 Corinthians address difficult problems in the church

Galatians - Ephesians - Philippians - Colossians

(order-kids' trick: "God Eats Pop Corn")

"prison epistles" = letters from jail

1 & 2 Thessalonians

then the letters to individuals

1 & 2 Timothy & Titus to ministers in difficult church work

"pastoral epistles" = letters to church leaders

Philemon regarding a run-away slave who is now a Christian

Each group of Paul's letters is arranged according to size, with the longest first.

Paul's Letter to Philemon

BE FAITHFUL

Circumstances 1:10-18 run-away slave Onesimus (name means “useful”)

Slavery in the ancient world

neither approval or disapproval stated

how to act within existing system

Christianity's transformation of personal relationships

(see instructions to slaves in 1 Timothy 6:1-2)

Psychology and theology of Paul's appeal

Philemon 1:10-11

1 & 2 Thessalonians

BE READY

Thessalonica was founded 315 BC by a Macedonian king (the son of one of Alexander the Great's generals), who named it for his wife Thessalonike (a sister of Alexander). It was on the major ancient road “Via Egnatia”.

Acts 17:1-15 Paul spent 3 weeks there and converted many God-fearing Greeks and some leading women, but some Jews made trouble and followed Paul to Berea. (see 1 Thes 2:1-2)

Author

Paul had an especially close relationship with the church in Thessalonica. He describes himself as having been “gentle as a nurse” (1 Thes 2:7) with them and being self-supporting while there (1 Thes 2:9) thanks in part to help from Philippi–Philprians 4:15-16)

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy wrote 2 Thessalonians together, and Paul signed it himself.

Readers

mostly Gentiles

1 Thes 4:27 (and Acts 17)

Church which serves as a positive example 1 Thes 1:7-8; 4:9-10

Circumstances

1 Thes 3:1-10 Response to a good report of them brought by Timothy

1 Thes 4:13-5:11 What of those who die before Christ's return?

Purpose not to explain details of end, but to urge readiness and to comfort the grieving with assurance of the resurrection. ("rapture")

1 Thessalonians 5:2

2 Thes 3:6-13 "idleness"

2 Thes 1:4 encouragement in persecution

2 Thes 2:1-12 the Day of the Lord

2 Thessalonians 2:15

Letter to the Galatians

BE FREE

Author Apostle Paul Galatians 1-2; 6:11

Readers Jewish Christians returning to legalism

Circumstances Galatians 1:6; 3:1-5; 4:19-21

Paul defends the gospel of salvation by grace (not works of the law) which he received from Christ himself and which was approved by the other apostles.

Often studied with Romans because of similar themes of law (circumcision) vs grace (salvation). *Review steps to salvation from Romans. Galatians 2:20-21*

Ephesians

BE RICH

Author

3:1 Paul, prisoner (4:1,6:20)

Readers

1:1 Saints (that is, all the faithful); 2:11 Gentiles

Content

prayers

1:15-23;3:14-20

contrast BC (before Christ) and In Christ

chapter 2

household instructions

5:21-6:9

The Armor of God
Ephesians 1:3

6:10-20

Philippians

BE JOYFUL

Author

1:1 Paul (3:4-8) & Timothy (2:19-24)

Readers

1:1 saints, bishops, and deacons at Philippi (a helpful church 4:15-17)

Circumstances

Thank-you letter (4:10-13)

Content

Hymn Phlp 2:5-11

Letter of joy, yet full of trouble: prison 1:4,7; 4:14; persecution 1:29-30; false teaching 3:2; in-fighting 4:2.

Philippians 4:8

Colossians

BE COMPLETE

Author

1:1 Paul (4:18) and Timothy

Readers

1:4 & 2:1 Paul hasn't been there!

Colossae is near the larger city of Ephesus, where Paul spent 3 years.

Content

prayer	1:10-14
“put off” and “put on”	3:5-17
household instructions	3:18-4:6

Colossians 1:10

[handout: *More Pauline Epistles*]

Transition

We now have only one book of the New Testament left: Revelation.

The Old Testament tells of *creation*, the *covenant*, and has prophecies of Christ. The New Testament begins with the story of *Christ*, and then of his *church*, with references to the ultimate *completion* of all things. Revelation will complete this series of lessons.

Further Study

Read one of these letters to churches paying special attention to verses which give clues about what might have been the situation in that church that Paul is addressing. Consider what parallels there are to circumstances in churches now, and how the principles Paul teaches apply today.

Read the “Household instructions” in Ephesians 5:21-6:9 or Colossians 3:18-4:6 and consider how you may practice holiness in everyday life. Choose one small, specific thing you can do each day.

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