

# BIBLE BOOK INTRODUCTIONS

by Paul Southern

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*Southern's reference guide providing introductions to each biblical book, covering authorship, background, key themes, and historical context to help readers understand each book's place in the canon.*

29 Chapters

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## Southern - 00.1-Biographical Information Paul Southern

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### Biographical Information

Paul Southern Paul Southern was born at Stephenville, Texas on April 16, 1901 and died at Abilene, Texas on July 16, 1999.

He preached the gospel for more than 60 years. Churches of Christ he served included: the South Main congregation in Weatherford, Texas; the Armstrong Avenue congregation in Denison, Texas; the Central congregation in Abilene, Texas (1937-45); the Napoleon Boulevard and the Bardstown congregations in Louisville, Kentucky; and again in Abilene, Texas the following congregations: 16th and Vine (1948-57), Woodlawn (1957-62) and Westgate (1962-70).

Paul was married to Margaret Moore on June 10, 1930 in Fort Worth, Texas. They had two children. Paul Jr became a medical doctor, an internist and authority on tropical medicine, who was on the faculty of The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas. Sylvia became a counselor with a private practice in individual, marriage, and family counseling.

Paul and Margaret traveled extensively, doing mission work in various parts of the United States and in more than 35 countries, including Australia, New Zealand and Denmark.

Paul Southern received a bachelor of arts degree in Bible from Abilene Christian College in 1930. He earned his master's degree from Texas Christian University at Fort Worth, Texas. And he earned a doctorate in 1948 from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. His doctoral dissertation was entitled: "The Distributive Use of KATA."

He first taught at Abilene Christian College/University in 1937, and served as chairman of the Bible department from 1951 until his retirement in 1970.

After retiring, he taught courses at Columbia Christian College in Portland, Oregon; European Christian College in Vienna, Austria; Michigan Christian College in Rochester, Michigan; Macquarie School of Biblical Studies in Sydney, Australia; and South Pacific Bible College in Tauranga, New Zealand.

Paul Southern assisted many people as a personal counselor, and served in numerous organizations including the Abilene Council on Alcoholism, the Texas Association for Mental Health and the National Council on Family Relations.

## Southern - 01-MATTHEW

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### MATTHEW

#### THE TITLE

This gospel bears the name of its penman, Matthew, which means "Gift of God."

#### THE WRITER

Matthew's original name was Levi. He was the son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27), and was called Levi until Jesus chose him to be an apostle. He was by birth a Jew, by calling a publican. His business was the collection of customs from persons and goods crossing the Sea of Galilee, or passing along the shore between Bethsaida and Capernaum, his home. Apparently, he was a man of wealth (Matthew 9:9-10). Matthew refers to himself as "The Publican," perhaps to indicate his sense of humility, felt in having been exalted from the estate of a publican to that of an apostle. We know little of his life and work as an apostle. He is mentioned by name, after the resurrection of Christ, only in Acts 1:13. Tradition says that he remained in Jerusalem 15 years after the ascension and then became a missionary to the Persians, Parthians and Medes. A legend says that he died a martyr in Ethiopia. The New Testament confirms none of these traditions.

#### THE DATE

The date of Matthew's gospel is variously placed from 45 to 70 A.D. The post-apostolic church makes Matthew the first among the gospel records. Irenaeus says Matthew wrote while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, after A.D. 61. Alford says it was published before the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. Tidwell places it about A.D. 60, but thinks it was written after Mark.

#### CANONIZATION AND LANGUAGE

Seventeen independent witnesses of the first centuries attest the genuineness of Matthew's gospel. Post-apostolic church leaders testify that it was written originally in the Hebrew language, and later translated into Greek. However, no traces of the Hebrew original survive. It is possible that Matthew wrote in both languages.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Gospel according to Matthew is to prove that Jesus is the King and Messiah foretold by Old Testament prophets.

#### SUBJECT AND ANALYSIS

The subject is the kingdom of God or of heaven. It is discussed under four headings as follows:

Preparation of the kingdom (1:1-4:16).

Preaching of the kingdom (4:17-16:20).

Passion of the kingdom (16:21-27:66).

Perfecting of the kingdom (Ch. 28).

### CHARACTERISTICS

It is not a chronological but a systematic and topical gospel. Materials are treated in groups-miracles, parables, sermons, etc.

It is a teaching gospel. It contains a number of discourses -- Sermon on the Mount, denunciation of the Pharisees, etc.

It has been called a gospel of gloom and despondency in that it contains no songs of joy like those of Luke.

It is a kingly gospel. It gives the royal descent, speaks of Jesus as a King and of His institution as a kingdom. The Keys of the kingdom are mentioned.

It is an official gospel. Official persons are named. The official capacity of Jesus is given.

It is a Jewish gospel. Matthew wrote primarily for the Jews. The genealogy is traced to Abraham. Jewish symbols and terms are used.

It is a gospel of Jewish antagonism. The Jews antagonize and reject Jesus. Jesus exposes the Jews and rejects their hypocrisy.

### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Draw a map of Palestine during the time of Christ and place on it the names of all the places mentioned in Matthew.

List all the places in Matthew where the term kingdom is used, and from a study of these passages, give the nature, purpose and characteristics of the kingdom of God.

Make a list of the places where each of the following terms is used and from a study of the passages, give the significance of each term: Son of Abraham, Son of man, Son of David, Son of God, Jesus, Christ, Lord.

Study all the parables in Matthew for the light they give on the kingdom.

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## Southern - 02-MARK

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### MARK

#### THE TITLE

This gospel bears the name of its writer, Mark, or John Mark. Marcus was his Latin surname. His Jewish name was John, which means "gift or grace of God."

#### THE WRITER

The writer was not an apostle. He is designated in the New Testament as follows:

John, whose surname was Mark (Acts 12:12; Acts 12:25; Acts 15:37).

John only (Acts 13:5; Acts 13:13).

Mark only (Acts 15:39; Colossians 4:10; Philemon 1:24; 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13).

He was a son of Mary, a woman of Jerusalem, whose home was the gathering place of the disciples (Acts 12:12). Here Peter went when he was released from prison. Perhaps Peter converted Mark on this or some other visit, for he refers to him as "Mark my son" (1 Peter 5:13). He went on to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25), and accompanied them as minister part of the way on the first mission tour (Acts 13:5). For some unknown reason, he quit the party at Perga and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Paul refused to take him on the second tour, so Barnabas, Mark's cousin (Colossians 4:10), chose Mark for his companion and went to Cyprus (Acts 15:36-41). Mark was with Paul during his first imprisonment at Rome (Colossians 4:10; Philemon 1:24). He was also with Peter when Peter wrote his first epistle (1 Peter 5:13). When Paul was in prison at Rome the second time, he asked Timothy to bring Mark there, "for he is useful to me for ministering" (2 Timothy 4:11). Beyond this point, the New Testament is silent concerning Mark. Tradition says that he visited Egypt, founded the church of Alexandria, and died a martyr.

#### THE GOSPEL

The date: Probably about 60 A.D. and certainly before 70 A.D.

Where written: External evidence favors Rome as the place.

Language: All indications are that it was written in Greek.

For whom written: It is a gospel for the Romans. There is no reference to the Jewish law, the genealogy of Jesus is omitted, all doubtful Jewish words are explained, Jewish money is reduced to Roman currency, Jewish customs are explained, etc.

Purpose: To chronicle the activities of Christ in such a way as to convince the Romans that Jesus possessed real manhood crowned with glory and power.

Subject: Jesus the Almighty King.

Characteristics:

It is a gospel of activity and energy. It is the actional gospel, portraying the active career of Jesus. Mark emphasizes the works rather than the discourses of Christ. "Immediately," "anon," "by and by," "forthwith," "as soon as," "shortly," "straightway" are terms that indicate rapid succession. These words occur more than 40 times. "Straightway" is the key word.

It is a gospel of power over devils. They recognize Jesus as God's Son, and are here made subject to Him.

It is a gospel of wonder. Everywhere Jesus is depicted as a man of wonder. He causes wonder, awe, and terror among the multitudes.

It is a gospel of vivid detail. Everything is graphically reported.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

The word straightway or its equivalent is used more than forty times in Mark. List all the places where it occurs, and note carefully the pictorial element in the narrative

How many parables occur in Mark? Why so few?

Make a list of all the miracles that appear in Mark. Why are so many given in this book?

Why does Mark omit the genealogy of Christ?

Make a list of all the places to which Jesus retired, and indicate the circumstances preceding and following each period of withdrawal.

In studying the four gospel narratives note:

Matthew shows that the Jews valued men as descendants of Abraham.

From Mark we learn that the Romans valued men as they controlled empires.

According to Luke the Greeks valued men on the basis of man as such.

John shows that the church values men as immortal souls made in the image of God.

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## Southern - 03-LUKE

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### LUKE

#### THE TITLE

The third gospel gets its name from the writer, Luke (light-giving), or Lucas, which is an abbreviated form of Lucanus.

#### THE WRITER

The name Luke occurs three times in the New Testament (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24). Combining tradition with scripture, we have the following indefinite outline of his life: According to Eusebius, Luke was a native of Antioch in Syria, and according to Paul, he was a physician (Colossians 4:14). Tradition says that he was also a painter. He must have been a Gentile, for he is not reckoned among those "of the circumcision" by Paul (Colossians 4:11-14). The "We Sections" of Acts indicate that Luke was a companion of Paul, and writer of Acts of Apostles. Apparently, he joined Paul at Troas on the second tour and journeyed with him to Philippi (Acts 16:11-40). He remained at Philippi until Paul returned on the third tour. Luke then joined the missionary party again, accompanying Paul to Caesarea and finally to Rome (Acts 20:1-17; also chapters 20-28). We know nothing of his age and death. In his preface (Luke 1:1-4), the writer indicates that he was not an eyewitness of the Lord from the first.

#### THE GOSPEL

The date: Probably about A.D. 60-63 while Luke was with Paul at Caesarea or in Rome.

Place where written: As indicated above, probably Caesarea or Rome.

Addressee: Theophilus, a Gentile, and probably a native of Italy.

Subject: Jesus the Savior of all men.

Source of information: Luke was guided by the Holy Spirit. Whether he witnessed any or all of the facts recorded in the narrative cannot be decided with any degree of certainty.

Language: It was written in Greek.

Characteristics: Tidwell (The Bible Book by Book) gives the following:

It is a gospel of song and praise (1:46-55; 1:68-79; 2:14, 29-32).

It is a gospel of prayer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:28; 11:1; 23:34,46).

It is a gospel of womanhood (1:42-45; 1:46-55; 2:36-38; 7:12-15; 7:36-50; 8:1-3; 8:48; 10:38-42; 13:16; 23:28).

It is a gospel of the poor (3:12; 5:27,29,30; 7:36-50; 8:43-48; 15:30; 15:11-32; 16:19-31; 14:7-24; 19:1-9; 23:39-43).

It is a Gentile gospel. The genealogy traces Christ's lineage back to Adam instead of Abraham, for Adam was a representative of all humanity. Luke presents Jesus as a joy to all the people (2:10,32).

It is a gospel for the Greek. Greeks were interested in perfect humanity. Thought, beauty, speech, and spirit were cultivated to the highest point. Hence Luke presents Jesus as perfect, the Savior of all men.

It is an artistic gospel. Luke was the most cultured of the gospel writers. His gospel has been called the most beautiful book in the world.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Six miracles and eleven parables are peculiar to Luke. List and study them in detail.

Study the following characteristic phrases which occur in Luke and list the places where each is found:

"Son of Man."

"Son of God."

"Kingdom of God."

The Gospel According to Luke emphasizes Christ's interest in the last, the least, and the lost. As you read the book, list all the illustrations of each of these groups.

Study the following songs recorded by Luke and explain the Latin title associated with each:

"Magnificat" (Luke 1:46-55).

"Benedictus" (Luke 1:67-79).

"Gloria in Excelsis" (Luke 2:14).

"Nunc Dimittis" (Luke 2:29-32).

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## Southern - 04-JOHN

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### JOHN

#### THE TITLE

The fourth gospel is named for its writer, John, which means "Grace of God," or "God's gift." John, the same as Johanan, is a contraction of Jehohanan.

#### THE WRITER

From internal and external evidences we learn the following things about the writer:

He was a son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of James (Mark 3:17).

It is thought that John's mother was a sister of the Lord's mother (Mark 15:40-41; Matthew 27:56; John 19:25-27). If so, he was a cousin to Jesus.

He was probably born in Bethsaida, and was a fisherman (Matthew 4:21).

He was probably one of the two whom John the Baptist turned to the Lord (John 1:40).

Knowledge of Jewish customs indicates that he was a Jew.

He was one of the twelve apostles (Mark 3:14-19).

He was an eye-witness of what he wrote, having accompanied Jesus during the Lord's ministry (John 1:14; 1 John 1:1-4).

He was one of the three most intimate with Jesus (Matthew 17:1; Matthew 26:37).

He is the writer of First, Second and Third John, and Revelation.

Scriptural references show that he was present at the ascension (Acts 1:13); on Pentecost (Acts 1:26; Acts 2:1); with Peter in prison (Acts 3:1-26). He protested against the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:13), and remained at Jerusalem during the great persecution (Acts 8:1). Fifteen years after Paul's first visit he was still in Jerusalem (Acts 15:6). The subsequent story of his life is largely traditional. It is thought that he moved to Ephesus, and from there was banished under Domitian's persecution to the island of Patmos where he was forced to work in mines. On Patmos he received the visions of The Revelation (Revelation 1:9). Tradition says he later returned to Ephesus and died around 95 A.D. The New Testament makes no mention of this.

#### THE GOSPEL

The date: Perhaps between A.D. 85 and 95, though dates suggested by men range from 68 to 96.

Place of writing: It was probably written in Ephesus.

Circumstances prevailing: The gospel had been preached in all the Roman Empire, Jerusalem had fallen, Christianity had been sorely persecuted, and most of the New Testament had already been written.

Ones addressed: Christians of all nationalities are in mind.

Style: Simplicity, sameness, repetition, parallelism, contrasts.

Subject: Jesus, the Divine Christ, the Son of God.

Purpose: To cultivate and cherish the spiritual life of Christians.

Characteristics (Tidwell, The Bible Book by Book):

It is the gospel for the church.

It is the spiritual gospel

It is a gospel of feasts, which furnish material for much of Christ's teaching.

It is a gospel of testimony, proving Jesus is Christ.

It is a gospel of belief (See John 20:30-31).

It is a gospel of symbols. Mystic numbers (3,7) and many symbols are used.

It is a gospel of the Incarnation. "The word became flesh," etc. (1:14).

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Notable omissions: Baptism, temptation, transfiguration, instituting of the Lord's Supper, agony in Gethsemane, and parables of Christ. Why are these great events not given in the Gospel According to John?

In the light of the Gospel According to John explain:

The causes of unbelief.

The results of unbelief.

Study the night scenes of the book.

Study the "I Am's" of Christ recorded by John.

Note in detail the special discourses of Jesus that are found in the book.

Make a list of the ones who came to worship Jesus.

Discuss the following viewpoints of the gospel writers:

Matthew explains the messianic functions of Christ.

Mark presents the active work of Jesus.

Luke describes the character of Christ as the Savior.

John magnifies the person of the Lord.

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## Southern - 05-THE GOSPELS - QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

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### THE GOSPELS - QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

MULTIPLE CHOICE: Underline the correct answer.

Matthew was a (lawyer, physician, tax-collector).

Luke was a (publican, physician, fisherman).

(John, Mark, Luke) has been described by some as "The interpreter of Peter."

(Matthew, Luke, John) was called "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

"Straightway" is the key word of (John, Mark, Matthew).

The most cultured of the gospel writers was (John, Luke, Mark).

(Matthew, Luke, John) records the first miracle performed by Jesus.

John wrote (1, 3, 5) books of the New Testament.

(Mark, Luke, Matthew) wrote the book of Acts.

(Luke, Mark, John) wrote the book of Revelation.

The period between the Testaments covers about (688, 800, 400) years.

Jesus was born in (Bethany, Bethlehem, Jerusalem).

Jesus was probably crucified on (Sunday, Tuesday, Friday).

Jesus was crucified on Mount (Hermon, Calvary, Tabor).

The river (Nile, Ganges, Jordan) flows through Palestine.

During Christ's time the Jews were under (Roman, Greek, Persian) rule.

The forerunner of Christ was (David, Paul, John the Baptist).

Peter was a (carpenter, fisherman, farmer).

(Peter, Philip, Judas Iscariot) betrayed Jesus.

Gethsemane is a (garden, town, state).

(Thieves, Barabbas, Judas) was (were) crucified with Christ.

The Sermon on the Mount is found in (Acts, Romans, Matthew).

A parable is a (miracle, prayer, story).

COMPLETION: Fill in the correct word.

Luke traces the genealogy of Christ back to \_\_\_\_\_.

Matthew traces the genealogy of Christ back to \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ is called the kingly gospel.

\_\_\_\_\_ is called the gospel of activity and energy.

\_\_\_\_\_ is called the gospel of womanhood.

\_\_\_\_\_ is called the gospel for the church.

\_\_\_\_\_ was primarily the gospel for the Romans.

\_\_\_\_\_ was primarily the gospel for the Greeks.

\_\_\_\_\_ was primarily the gospel for the Jews.

\_\_\_\_\_ was the last written of the four gospels.

NAME THE GOSPEL CHARACTERIZED BY EACH OF THE FOLLOWING LINES:

\_\_\_\_\_ The kingly gospel.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of activity and energy.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel for the church.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of song and praise.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of testimony.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of symbols and mystic numbers.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel for the Jews.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of the Incarnation.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of womanhood.

\_\_\_\_\_ The official and organic gospel.

\_\_\_\_\_ The artistic gospel.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel for the Gentiles.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of wonder.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of vivid detail.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of feasts.

\_\_\_\_\_ The spiritual gospel.

\_\_\_\_\_ The didactic or teaching gospel.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel for the Romans.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of prayer.

\_\_\_\_\_ The gospel of power over demons.

IDENTIFY THE FOLLOWING HOLY SONGS:

\_\_\_\_\_ The Magnificat.

\_\_\_\_\_ Nunc Dimittis.

\_\_\_\_\_ Gloria in Excelsis.

\_\_\_\_\_ The Benedictus.

TRUE -- FALSE: Encircle the correct answer (T or F).

All of the gospel writers were apostles T F

The gospel of John is noted for its many parables T F

Mark accompanied Paul on part of his first mission tour T F

The gospel of John is one of the synoptic gospels T F

John was a cousin of Jesus T F

The gospel of John was written on the Isle of Patmos T F

Matthew was a Gentile T F

Luke accompanied Paul on some of his mission tours T F

John's gospel was written before the church was established T F

Matthew refers to himself as "The publican" T F

"Jesus" is the proper name of our Lord T F

The word Christ means savior T F

The word Messiah means "anointed" T F

Matthew lists 42 generations in the genealogy of Christ T F

Joseph and Mary, parents of Jesus, were of the house of David T F

The parents of John the Baptist were of the tribe of Levi T F

The Pharisees believed in both the oral and written law T F

The Sadducees believed in the resurrection T F

A publican was a tax collector T F

Jesus was baptized in the sea of Galilee T F

The temptation of Jesus came before His baptism T F

The Gospel according to John tells of Jesus' baptism T F

The sermon on the mount is recorded by Matthew in Chs. 5,6,7 T F

The names of the twelve apostles are found in Luke 10:1-42 T F

The gospel according to John tells of the temptation of Jesus T F

Luke has been called "the gospel of song and praise" T F

Parables and miracles are the same T F

The Jews valued men as they wielded empires T F

At first the apostles preached only to the Jews T F

Temptation is a sin T F

Exodus 3:15 contains the first Messianic prophecy T F

Matthew names five women in the genealogy of Christ T F

Quirinius was governor of Syria when Christ was born T F

John the Baptist was six months younger than Jesus T F

John the Baptist was the Elijah predicted by Malachi T F

The term Baptist is a God-given name T F

John the Baptist never doubted that Jesus was the Christ T F

John the Baptist was in the kingdom of Christ T F

The church was established during John the Baptist's lifetime T F

The temptation of Jesus was as real as His baptism T F

The baptism of Jesus is described in Matthew 3:1-17 T F

The temptation of Jesus is related in Matthew 4:1-25 T F

Peter was the first disciple of the Lord T F

The sermon of the Mount was preached on Mount Olivet T F

Jesus gives fornication as the only ground for divorce T F

Jesus taught that it is wrong to stand to pray T F

Peter was a married man T F

There were two apostles by the name of Judas T F

There have been only twelve apostles T F

The church was established when the twelve were chosen T F

Jesus taught that the laborer is worthy of his hire T F

Jesus performed His first miracle at Cana in Galilee T F

Jesus healed every sick person that He saw T F

The Pharisees accused Christ of having a demon T F

Parables and miracles are the same T F

It was lawful for David to eat the holy bread T F

It was unlawful to heal on the Sabbath T F

Man was made for the Sabbath T F

Man will have to account for every idle word he speaks T F

To be saved man must obey the will of God T F

Jesus remained in the tomb 72 hours T F

In the parable of the sower the seed is the word of God T F

In the parable of the sower the birds represent the devil T F

MATCHING: Connect the proper reference with each quotation below.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

"Except one be born anew, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."

"This is my beloved Son...hear ye him."

"Upon this rock I will build my church."

"I am the light of the world."

"He continued all night in prayer to God."

"She hath done what she could."

References:

(a) Mark 14:8 (b) John 1:14 (c) Luke 23:34 (d) John 8:12

(e) Luke 6:12 (f) Mark 16:16 (g) John 3:3 (h) Matthew 7:16

(i) Matthew 16:18 (j) Matthew 17:5

TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

The Period between the Testaments.

Palestine during the time of Christ.

The Jewish sects and parties.

The sins that crucified Christ.

Physical phenomena which accompanied the crucifixion of Christ.

The seven statements Christ made while on the cross.

The appearances of Christ after His resurrection.

The great commission.

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## Southern - 06-ACTS

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### ACTS

#### TITLE

The book is called "The Acts", or "The Acts of the Apostles" because it contains the doings of some of the apostles. The titles are misleading, however, because the book does not contain all the acts of all the apostles. The work of only two, Peter and Paul, is given in detail. A better title would be "Acts of the Holy Spirit Through the Apostles," since the Holy Spirit is the active agent (Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4, etc.). The important thing is man's response to the contents of the book.

#### WRITER

The authorship of Acts is ascribed to Luke for the following reasons:

It is addressed to Theophilus (Acts 1:1), to whom the writer had formerly written a record of the life of Christ (Luke 1:3). The gospel of Luke is the only record that meets this condition.

The two books are quite similar in style, vocabulary, etc.

After the thirteenth chapter, the pronoun "we" indicates that the writer was a traveling companion of Paul. From Paul we learn that Luke was with him part of the time (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:23). For facts concerning Luke's life the student is referred to the outline on the Gospel According to Luke.

#### THE DATE

Luke probably wrote the book of Acts from Rome during Paul's first imprisonment. It records 33 years of Christian history, reaching from Tiberius Caesar to Nero, Roman emperors. Since the story ends abruptly without giving an account of Paul's death or release, it is thought that the apostle was still a prisoner (Acts 28:30-31). The book was probably written about A.D. 63 or 64, although New Testament chronology is often hard to determine.

#### PURPOSE

Acts of Apostles is a continuation of the writer's former treatise (Luke), and records the birth, growth and development of the Christian religion after the ascension of Jesus. It shows how the apostles carried on the work commanded by Jesus of evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8). The book is the best available commentary on the great commission (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-47). It is truly a book of conversions.

#### ANALYSIS (See Acts 1:8 for the plan of evangelization)

Preaching the gospel "in Jerusalem" (Acts 1:1-26; Acts 2:1-47; Acts 3:1-26; Acts 4:1-37; Acts 5:1-42; Acts 6:1-15; Acts 7:1-60; Acts 8:1).

Preaching the gospel "in all Judea and Samaria" (Acts 8:2-40; Acts 9:1-43; Acts 10:1-48; Acts 11:1-30; Acts 12:1-25).

Preaching the gospel "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 13:1-52; Acts 14:1-28; Acts 15:1-41; Acts 16:1-40; Acts 17:1-34; Acts 18:1-28; Acts 19:1-41; Acts 20:1-38; Acts 21:1-40; Acts 22:1-30; Acts 23:1-35; Acts 24:1-27; Acts 25:1-27; Acts 26:1-32; Acts 27:1-44; Acts 28:1-31).

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Identify each of the following: Barnabas, Elymas, Sergius Paulus, Bereans, Aquila, Priscilla, Justus, Crispus, Gallio, Eutychus, Demetrius, Agrippa, Bernice, Tertullus, Felix, Festus, Gaius, and Aristarchus.

Study the following events recorded in Acts, giving chapter reference for each:

- \_\_\_\_\_ The ascension of Jesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Peter's second sermon.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Baptism of the apostles with the Holy Spirit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Selection of Matthias to succeed Judas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Defense and death of Stephen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ First mention of the name Christian.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Death of Ananias and Sapphira.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment of the seven deacons at Jerusalem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul's address at Antioch in Pisidia.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Beginning of Paul's first missionary journey.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Jerusalem conference on circumcision.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul's sermon at Troas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stoning of Paul at Lystra.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul's address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul's defense before Festus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul's speech on Mar's Hill (Areopagus).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul's defense before Agrippa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ First persecution of the apostles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paul's address to the mob in Jerusalem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Peter's vision at Joppa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demetrius and the riot at Ephesus.

\_\_\_\_\_ Paul's defense before the Jewish Sanhedrin.

\_\_\_\_\_ Paul's defense before Felix.

\_\_\_\_\_ The work of Apollos at Ephesus.

\_\_\_\_\_ The death of Eutychus.

Give the name identified by each of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Where the disciples were first called Christians.

\_\_\_\_\_ Disciple who told Saul what to do to be saved.

\_\_\_\_\_ Doctor of the law who taught in Jerusalem.

\_\_\_\_\_ Disciple who tried to buy the gift of God with money.

\_\_\_\_\_ Man who lied to the Holy Spirit about his money.

\_\_\_\_\_ The first Gentile convert.

\_\_\_\_\_ The first Christian martyr.

\_\_\_\_\_ Man selected to take the place of Judas.

\_\_\_\_\_ "The field of blood."

\_\_\_\_\_ Country from which the eunuch came.

\_\_\_\_\_ Disciple whom Peter raised from the dead at Joppa.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tanner with whom Peter lodged at Joppa.

\_\_\_\_\_ Disciple who introduced Paul to the Jerusalem brethren.

\_\_\_\_\_ Herod's chamberlain who befriended Tyre and Sidon.

\_\_\_\_\_ Man of Galilee who stirred up a rebellion.

\_\_\_\_\_ Town where Peter saw the sheet let down from heaven.

\_\_\_\_\_ Apostle whom Herod killed with the sword.

\_\_\_\_\_ Man of Damascus who lived on Straight Street.

\_\_\_\_\_ Jerusalem deacon whose name means "Crown."

\_\_\_\_\_ Place which Paul described as "no mean city."

\_\_\_\_\_ Writer of the book of Acts.

\_\_\_\_\_ Person to whom Acts is addressed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Word in Acts indicating the writer was with Paul some of the time.

\_\_\_\_\_ City in which the gospel was first preached.

- \_\_\_\_\_ People noted for searching the scriptures daily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Man who forsook Paul on the first mission tour.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eloquent Alexandrian Jew who knew only the baptism of John.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Capital of the Roman province of Judea.
- \_\_\_\_\_ City in which Paul was baptized.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A seller of purple, first convert in Philippi.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Famous centurion who became a Christian.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the city in which the temple of Diana was located.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Silversmith who stirred up riot against Paul at Ephesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Man who was almost persuaded to be a Christian.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Island upon which Paul was shipwrecked going to Rome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ City in which Mar's Hill (Areopagus) was located.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Man and wife with whom Paul lived in Corinth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ City in which Paul first preached the gospel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Man who waited for a convenient season to obey the gospel.

Study the following cases of conversion. At the bottom, give the reference for each. Indicate with a cross (X) in each case where special mention is made of (H) hearing, (F) faith, (R) repentance, (C) confession or (B) baptism.

Pentecost

Samaritans

Eunuch

Saul

Cornelius

Lydia

Jailor

Corinthians

H

F

R

C

## B

### CONVERSION TO GOD

#### IMPORTANCE OF CONVERSION

Conversion is a Bible theme that has to do with peace and happiness in this life, and everlasting joy in the world to come. Eternal life depends upon whether one has been truly converted to God. Jesus said: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). Therefore we are correct in saying that all converted persons who remain faithful unto death will be saved eternally (Revelation 3:21). All other responsible persons who refuse to obey God shall suffer eternal destruction (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9).

#### MEANING OF CONVERSION

What constitutes conversion is a moot question. The word literally means a "turning." From the New Testament standpoint, conversion means a turning from sin to walk with Christ. Jesus said: "I am the way...no one cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Conversion involves the remission of sins. It is that spiritual change which accompanies the turning of a sinner from sin to God (Acts 3:19).

#### MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

In conversion, God has a part and man has a part. The fact that salvation is a matter of grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) does not remove man's responsibility. God supplies the grace; man becomes the recipient of divine grace when he renders obedience to the Son of God. This process of obedience consists of three definite changes in man: a change of heart, a change of life and a change of state.

#### CHANGE OF HEART

The change of heart comes first, for the heart must be right before the other changes can be effected. Obedience must be from the heart (Romans 6:17). Peter declared that faith is the divine means of changing the heart. "God - made no distinction between us (Jews) and them (Gentiles), cleansing their heart by faith" (Acts 15:8-9). Divine faith is based on testimony (John 20:30-31). It comes by hearing God's word (Romans 10:17). However, it is important to note that faith alone is insufficient, for "faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:26; Galatians 5:6).

#### CHANGE OF LIFE

In the second place, there must be a change of life. This is brought about by repentance. In the great commission, Jesus told the disciples to preach repentance unto salvation (Luke 24:46-49). This repentance is a change of mind with respect to sin. It involves godly sorrow for sin and is followed by a reformation of life (2 Corinthians 7:8-11). On Pentecost, Peter said: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38). God now commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

#### CHANGE OF STATE

Man must finally change his state (relationship) before he is converted to God according to the New Covenant. He must be born again, born of the water and the Spirit (John 3:5). Baptism is the sacred ceremony ordained by Jehovah to change the state of a penitent believer. By this means he is brought into Christ (Galatians 3:27), saved from past sins and added to the church (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:47). But before one can be scripturally baptized, he must confess his faith in Christ (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9-10). The person who stops short of this divine process has not been truly converted to God.

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## Southern - 07-ROMANS

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### ROMANS

#### THE TITLE

This book bears the title "Romans" because it is addressed "to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints" (Romans 1:7).

#### THE WRITER

This book was written by Paul (Romans 1:1). Tertius was his stenographer (Romans 16:22). Little is known of Paul's family. His father was of the tribe of Benjamin (Php 3:5), and a Pharisee (Acts 23:6). In Acts 23:16 reference is made to Paul's sister and her son in Jerusalem. The New Testament nowhere mentions Paul's mother. He was a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, but was educated in Jerusalem under the great teacher Gamaliel (Acts 23:3). The date of Paul's birth is unknown, but it is thought that he was a little younger than the Lord. Our first introduction to him in the New Testament is in Acts 7:58, where he was encouraging the stoning of Stephen. In Acts 9:1-43 (also 22 and 26) we read of his conversion. From this point on the book of Acts is filled with his activities. He probably died a martyr at Rome (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Scholars generally agree that the book was written from Corinth about A.D. 58 during Paul's second visit in Greece (Acts 20:1-3; Romans 1:11; Romans 1:13; Romans 1:15; Romans 15:23-33; Romans 16:1-2; Romans 16:21; Romans 16:23; Acts 19:21-22; Acts 24:17). It is thought that I and II Thessalonians, Galatians, I and II Corinthians preceded Romans in time. Romans probably comes first in order among the letters in the New Testament because of its theological importance. As with all New Testament scriptures, the contents are of far greater importance than time and place of writing.

#### TO WHOM WRITTEN

The book was written to the saints at Rome (Romans 1:7) where there were several congregations (Romans 16:5; Romans 16:15). Their origin is obscure. Some of those present on Pentecost could have carried the gospel back to Rome (Acts 2:10). When the Jerusalem church was scattered following the death of Stephen, some disciples could have gone to Rome (Acts 8:4; Acts 11:19). The membership in Rome included both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 1:6-15; Romans 7:1).

#### OCCASION OF THE LETTER

Paul had long cherished a desire to go to Rome (Acts 19:21). According to Romans 15:24-33, he soon hoped to go. Perhaps he wanted them to know of his teaching before his arrival. With a burning thirst for souls, he probably felt that the great city of Rome would be a fruitful field of labor. Furthermore, he had just written Galatians, stressing the human side of redemption. Romans stresses the divine side. The purpose of the letter was to present a systematic exposition of the

gospel, and to justify Paul's mission to the Gentiles. Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, probably carried the letter to Rome (Romans 16:1-2).

#### THE THEME

The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16-17).

#### ARGUMENTS PRESENTED

Jews and Gentiles alike are guilty before God.

Therefore all men need a Savior.

Christ died for all men.

All can be saved through faithful obedience to Christ.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Study the Epistle to the Romans in the light of the following analysis:

Following a personal introduction, Paul states the fundamental thesis (1:1-17).

All men, both Jews and Greeks, are under condemnation and need God's righteousness (1:18-3:20).

Righteousness is not achieved by keeping the Law but by complete trust in Christ (3:21-4:25).

God's grace through Christ is sufficient to save (Chs. 5-8).

The rejection of Israel is explained in its relation to God's purpose (Chs. 9-11).

In view of God's grace a Christian is obligated to live a life of practical devotion (12:1-15:13).

In the concluding section Paul presents a number of personal matters and bids them farewell with some timely warnings (15:14-16:27).

What is the relation between the Old and the New Covenants?

What does the Epistle to the Romans teach concerning sin?

Discuss the similarities and contracts between Adam and Christ.

With Romans 12:1-21; Romans 13:1-14; Romans 14:1-23; Romans 15:1-13 as a source, write a paper on "The Practical Duties of a Christian."

Study the meanings of the following key words as they are used in Romans: sin, power, righteousness, justification, atonement, redemption, adoption, propitiation, predestination, election.

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## Southern - 08-FIRST CORINTHIANS

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### FIRST CORINTHIANS

#### THE TITLE

This book is called I Corinthians because it is the first of two letters addressed to the church of God at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:1).

#### THE WRITER

In 1 Corinthians 1:1 we learn that Paul, "an apostle of Christ Jesus," was the writer. The lesson sheet on Romans reviews his life.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

According to best chronology, and from statements found in Acts 19:1-41, it has been generally concluded that Paul wrote the letter from Ephesus in the spring of A.D. 57.

#### THE CITY OF CORINTH

At the time Paul visited it, Corinth was the chief city of Greece, with around 400,000 inhabitants. It had two harbors and enjoyed great commercial activity. Its metropolitan population included Jews, Greeks, Italians, Romans, Syrians, Egyptians, sailors, traders and slaves. Its wealth was as proverbial as the vice and profligacy of its inhabitants. Religion and philosophy had been prostituted, and intellectuality was placed above moral life. Pagan vices were prevalent and idolatry was rampant. Such a premium was placed on prostitution that the expression "a Corinthian woman" became synonymous with a harlot.

#### THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

Paul established the Corinthian church on his second missionary tour (Acts 18:1-18). About three years prior to this letter he entered Corinth alone. Later he was joined by Silas and Timothy from Macedonia. For eighteen months Paul worked night and day. While there he made his home with Aquila and Priscilla, who were tent-makers. As a result of his labors, "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). After leaving Corinth, Paul came to Ephesus and later went back to Jerusalem and Antioch (Acts 18:18-22). In the meantime, Apollos worked some with the church at Corinth (Acts 18:24-28; Acts 19:1).

#### OCCASION OF THE LETTER

On his third tour Paul returned to Ephesus where he spent three years (Acts 19:1-41; Acts 20:31). While he was there, some members of the Corinthian church, Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus, and members of the house of Chloe (1:1; 16:17), visited him and brought unfavorable news concerning moral and spiritual conditions in Corinth. The city was one of the most wicked of ancient times, and many shameful practices and departures had developed in the church. News

regarding such an unfavorable situation served as the occasion for this letter.

## PURPOSE OF THE LETTER

The purpose of the letter was to correct the immoral practices and doctrinal errors which had developed in the congregation. The Corinthian correspondence is an excellent textbook on local church life.

## OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

The cause, curse and cure of divisions (Chs. 1-4).

Fornication in the church (Ch. 5).

Lawsuits in the church (Ch. 6).

Marriage and divorce evils (Ch. 7)

The sin of idolatry (Chs. 8 and 10).

Defense of Paul's apostolic authority (Ch. 9).

Woman and her place in the worship (11:2-16; 14:34-46).

Desecration of the Lord's Supper (11:17-34).

Jealousies over spiritual gifts (Chs. 12-14).

Defense of faith in the resurrection (Ch. 15).

Collections for the saints, personal matters, benediction (Ch. 16).

## EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Discuss the difference between earthly and heavenly wisdom.

What does Paul mean by "the foolishness of preaching?"

Discuss the dangers of following men.

Explain Paul's attitude toward marriage. Was he opposed to marriage under all conditions?

Can a practice be right in one place and wrong in another?

What does Paul teach concerning the matter of rights?

Discuss the nature of love as to its supremacy, its marks, its power and its permanence.

In the light of 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, explain the absence of spiritual gifts in the church today.

Study Paul's description of the resurrected body.

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## Southern - 09-SECOND CORINTHIANS

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### SECOND CORINTHIANS

#### THE TITLE

This book is called II Corinthians because it is the second of two letters addressed to the church at Corinth (2 Corinthians 1:1). Suggestions found in 1 Corinthians 5:9 and elsewhere cause some scholars to assume that Paul wrote another letter to the Corinthians, but only two have come down to us. It is possible that we have in I and II Corinthians everything that Paul wrote to the Corinthian church.

#### THE WRITER

From 2 Corinthians 1:1 we learn that Paul, "an apostle of Jesus Christ," was the writer. Elsewhere in these outlines we have given a brief summary of his life.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

It was written from some point in Macedonia, probably in the fall of A.D. 57. Some name Philippi as the exact place of writing.

#### OCCASION OF THE LETTER

Shortly after Paul wrote I Corinthians, Demetrius and his guild of silversmiths stirred up a riot in Ephesus and Paul nearly lost his life (Acts 19:1-41; 2 Corinthians 1:8-10). At the urging of the brethren, the apostle departed on his journey to visit the churches of Europe. He had hoped to meet Titus at Troas with good news from Corinth. When Titus failed to show up, Paul became anxious and proceeded immediately into Macedonia (2 Corinthians 1:15-16; 2 Corinthians 2:12-13). Somewhere in Macedonia he met Titus and in response to the good news wrote this second letter (2 Corinthians 7:5-7).

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LETTER

Second Corinthians is both didactic and appreciative. Paul rejoices that the church reacted favorably to his first letter (2 Corinthians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 7:9; 2 Corinthians 7:15-16), and now proceeds to convey further counsel on needful matters. It contains a medley of emotions-joy, grief, indignation. The letter is the least systematic and perhaps the most personal of all Paul's epistles. It is invaluable as a source book on the life and character of the apostle. Solicitude for the Corinthians, defense of Paul, warnings against error, instructions in matters of duty and joy over spiritual triumphs make the letter an interesting treatise. The keynote is loyalty to Christ. The extreme emotion of the writer's mind is expressed in the following words: tribulation, consolation, boasting, weakness, simplicity, manifest, manifestation, folly. The predominant word is tribulation, although in the English version it occurs in various synonyms.

#### SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Paul's account of the character of his spiritual labors (Chs. 1-7). Here the apostle portrays his feelings over the condition of the Corinthian church, and shows his relief after the coming of Titus. The central theme is consolation in tribulation, with an undercurrent of apology and suppressed indignation.

Instructions concerning collections for the poor saints (Chs. 8,9). The apostle appeals for and tells of the blessedness of liberality.

Paul's defense of his apostolic authority (Chs. 10-13). Judaizing teachers everywhere were trying to destroy Paul's influence as an apostle and bring churches under bondage to the Jewish law. In this division of the book Paul tells what his apostolic labors had cost him in earthly sufferings.

#### TOPICS FOR SPECIAL STUDY

The inner man vs. the outer man (4:16-18; 5:1-10).

The grace of giving (Chs. 8 and 9; also 1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Galatians 4:13; Acts 9:1-43).

Personal attacks on Paul (2:17; 4:3; 10:10; 11:6).

When, how, why and of what things did Paul boast? (11:16 to 12:13).

Discuss the attitude that Christians should have toward erring church members (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11).

Using the Corinthian letters as your source, prepare a paper on "The Man Who Would Preach," a study of the gospel preacher and his work.

Under what conditions should Christians defend themselves?

Study Paul's vision of the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:1-4). Did the vision have any connection with his thorn in the flesh? (2 Corinthians 12:5-10).

Study the history of Corinth as given in unabridged Bible encyclopedias.

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## Southern - 10-GALATIANS

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### GALATIANS

#### THE TITLE

This book is called "Galatians" because it is addressed to "the churches in Galatia" (Galatians 1:2; Galatians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 16:1).

#### THE WRITER

From Galatians 1:1 we learn that Paul the apostle was the writer.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Since the date and place of writing are indefinite, we shall not attempt a lengthy discussion of these matters. Scholars have suggested several dates ranging from A.D. 50 to A.D. 58; and three different places of writing: Ephesus, Macedonia and Corinth. We have no data in the epistle indicating the exact date of writing.

#### THE COUNTRY OF GALATIA

Politically it was the Roman province of Central Asia Minor, and included Lycaonia, Isauria and parts of Phrygia and Pisidia. Geographically it was the center of the Celtic tribes. The exact location is a moot question between two schools of thought. Exponents of the South Galatian theory make it include churches founded by Paul on his first mission tour: Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Acts 13:14-52; Acts 14:1-24). The North Galatian school interprets the term to mean a strip of country in the north of Asia Minor, occupied by the Celts. Again, we are more concerned with the contents of the epistle than with exact locations of the ones addressed.

#### THE CELTIC TRIBES

Celtic tribes from Northern Europe invaded Asia Minor about 280 B.C. They were subdued by the Romans in 189 B.C. and incorporated into the Roman province of Galatia in 25 B.C. Galatia means "the land of the Gauls" (Celtae-Galatae-Galli). The people were impulsive, quick-tempered, hospitable and fickle. They received impressions quickly, and just as hastily gave them up. After receiving Paul enthusiastically, they suddenly turned away from him, and from the gospel (1:6-9; Colossians 4:13-15).

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCHES

The origin of the churches of Galatia is indefinite. As indicated above, some think that the Galatians of this letter were people of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. If so, Paul converted them on his first mission tour (Acts 13:1-52; Acts 14:1-28). However, Acts 16:6 indicates that the term Galatia meant something besides the foregoing places. It has been suggested that Europeans returning home after Pentecost established churches in Galatia. Others think that Paul

might have evangelized the country while he was in Tarsus before going to Antioch. At any rate, we know that he visited them on his second tour (Acts 16:6); that he became sick and preached while there (Galatians 4:13-15), and that he also visited them while on his third journey (Acts 18:23).

#### OCCASION FOR THE LETTER

Paul left the churches running well (Galatians 5:7). Shortly afterwards, Judaizing teachers crept in teaching that the Jewish law was binding upon Christians (Ch. 3). They accepted Jesus as the Messiah, but claimed that salvation is reached through the works of the law, and that Gentiles should be circumcised (5:1-6). In order to carry their point, they tried to undermine Paul's apostolic authority by saying that he was not one of the apostles, and that he received his doctrines from men and not from the Lord (Chs. 1 and 2).

#### PURPOSE OF THE LETTER

The purpose of the letter was to correct these errors, and show that salvation is a matter of faithful obedience to the gospel of Christ and not to the law of Moses.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

From encyclopedias learn all that you can concerning Celtic tribes and Gallic people.

Study the dangers of fickleness as discussed in Galatians.

What reasons does Paul give to prove that his teaching did not come from men?

What evidence does Paul give of his divine call?

Study points of correspondence between Galatians and Romans.

Contrast one under the Law and one under faith.

Examine closely Paul's teaching on the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

Note carefully the following words as used in Galatians: bondage, liberty, flesh, spirit, servant, lust, righteousness, faith.

In what way are Christians the seed of Abraham?

In what sense are Christians to bear one another's burdens when each man must bear his own burden?

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## Southern - 11-EPHESIANS

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### EPHESIANS

#### THE TITLE

This epistle is called "Ephesians" because it is addressed to "the saints that are at Ephesus" (1:1).

#### THE WRITER

From the inscription in verse 1 we learn that Paul was the writer.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Evidence indicates that Paul wrote the letter about A.D. 62 during his first imprisonment at Rome (6:20; Acts 28:30-31). Apparently it was written about the time of the Colossian letter, and Tychicus was the bearer of both (6:21; Colossians 4:7; Colossians 4:16). Some scholars hold that Philemon was also sent at the same time.

#### THE CITY OF EPHESUS

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia, and a great religious, commercial and political center. It was noted for two famous buildings: the great theatre which had a seating capacity of 50,000; and the temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Ephesus has been called the third capital of Christianity, being the center of gospel work in Asia. Jerusalem, birthplace of the church, is the first, and Antioch, center of mission work, is the second. Next to Rome, Ephesus was the most important city that Paul visited.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

The Ephesian church was probably founded by Paul. He visited there toward the close of his second missionary tour and preached in the synagogue. Leaving behind him Priscilla and Aquila, he continued on to Jerusalem (Acts 18:19; Acts 18:21). On his third journey, Paul came to Ephesus again (Acts 19:1), and remained there about three years (Acts 19:8-10; Acts 20:31). On the return from his third mission trip, he stopped at Miletus, 30 miles away, and sent for the elders of Ephesus to whom he delivered the famous farewell address recorded in Acts 20:1-38.

#### THE EPISTLE

Since the words at Ephesus (1:1) do not appear in some ancient manuscripts, some suppose this letter to be "the epistle from Laodicea," referred to in Colossians 4:16. Others think that it was a circular letter to the churches of Asia Minor. Being a prison epistle, it is filled with pathos. The church, the body of Christ, is the theme. The letter is quite similar to, but also quite different from Colossians. Each is half doctrinal and half practical. Ephesians discusses church-hood, or the church as the body of Christ; Colossians discusses Christ-hood, or Christ the head of the church. From the contents we conclude that no special circumstances prompted the writing of the

Ephesian letter. The general object of the epistle is to present the ground, the course, the aim and end of the Lord's church. The Ephesian assembly is, in some respects, set forth as a sample or type of the universal church. Throughout the epistle we read of the church in the singular, never in the plural. Paul shows that the origin of the church is the will of God; the course of the church is by the satisfaction of the Son; the end of the church is a life of dedication directed by the Holy Spirit through the word. The epistle is said to present the profoundest truth revealed to men. Since Paul spent such a long time among the Ephesians, perhaps no church group was better prepared to appreciate and appropriate the great spiritual principles contained in the epistle.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

##### Completion

The Ephesian letter was written about the year A.D. \_\_\_\_\_.

Ephesians was written while the writer was in prison at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ wrote the letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesus has been called the \_\_\_\_\_ capital of Christianity.

Some identify Ephesians as "the epistle from \_\_\_\_\_."

The New Testament records that Paul visited in Ephesus \_\_\_\_\_ times.

Ephesus' temple of \_\_\_\_\_ was one of the seven ancient wonders.

Paul first visited Ephesus on his \_\_\_\_\_ missionary journey.

On his second visit to Ephesus, Paul spent about \_\_\_\_\_ years there.

Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders was delivered at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ carried the Ephesian letter to Ephesus.

Ephesians was written about the time of the \_\_\_\_\_ letter.

The church, the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ, is the theme of Ephesians.

Colossians discusses \_\_\_\_\_-hood.

Some think that Ephesians was a \_\_\_\_\_ letter.

##### Topics for further study

From Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias learn all that you can about the city of Ephesus.

Summarize the teaching of Ephesians concerning the church under the following headings: origin, work, and end.

Prepare a brief paper on "The Gospel in Ephesians."

Summarize the principles of Christian sociology set forth in Ephesians, noting the following relationships: husband-wife; child-parents; servant-master; church-community.

Make a list of all the blessings in Christ.

Give Paul's description of the "children of light."

What does Ephesians teach concerning God's "eternal purpose?"

Explain the exalted nature and office of Christ as presented in Ephesians.

In all human relations what should be the Christian's relation to Christ?

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## Southern - 12-PHILIPPIANS

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### PHILIPPIANS

#### THE TITLE

This book is called Philippians because it is addressed to "all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi" (Php 1:1).

#### THE WRITER

The first word in the letter names Paul as the writer. In normal correspondence at that time it was in keeping with good style for the writer to sign his name first.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Internal evidence indicates that Paul wrote the letter about A.D. 63 toward the close of his first imprisonment in Rome (1:12-14; 2:24; 4:32). Some vain attempts have been made to fix it at Corinth, or at Caesarea. Neither place, however, suits the contents.

#### THE CITY OF PHILIPPI

Philip, King of Macedonia, and father of Alexander the Great, conquered the city from Thrace in 358 B.C., and named it for himself. The Philippi which Paul visited was a Roman colony (Acts 16:12), founded by Augustus Caesar after Augustus and Antony conquered Brutus and Cassius in the famous battle of Philippi, 42 B.C. It is noted in both history and literature, being mentioned prominently in Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." Located on the East-West trade route, Philippi had great commercial importance. Since the city was a colony of Rome, her citizens enjoyed some special privileges and benefits.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

Directed by a vision from God, Paul visited Philippi for the first time on his second mission tour. Lydia and her household were converted. She furnished him a home while he continued his missionary work there. Soon Paul and Silas were beaten and cast into prison. But at midnight they sang and prayed, an earthquake came, they preached the word, and the jailor was converted (Acts 16:13-40). Paul probably visited them again on his third missionary tour while en route from Ephesus to Greece, and on his return spent the Passover there (Acts 20:1-6). The Philippians kept in touch with him, ministering unto his needs (Php 4:14-18). The cruel treatment of Paul at Philippi, his reaction to it, and the charm of his personal fervor seemed to knit a bond of profound love between him and the church. Some have called the church Paul's favorite congregation.

#### THE EPISTLE

The Philippians seem to have been some of the best Christians of the age, and to them Paul directed his most endearing epistle. It contains no rebuke with local bearing, but is filled with

tenderness. Love and praise are prominent features. The devotion of the Philippian church caused Paul to rejoice, and since Epaphroditus, who had brought their aid to him, was about to return from Rome to Philippi, the apostle had an opportunity to send them this letter of thanks (Php 4:18). The letter should be read often as a spiritual tonic. The key words are love, joy and unity. The object of the epistle seems to be the expression of profound Christian affection. No letter is so warm in its expressions of love.

## EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

### Completion

\_\_\_\_\_ was the writer of the Philippian letter.

Philippians was written while the writer was in prison at \_\_\_\_\_.

The Philippian letter was written about the year A.D. \_\_\_\_\_.

The city of Philippi was named for \_\_\_\_\_ of Macedonia.

The Battle of Philippi was fought in \_\_\_\_\_ B.C.

Paul visited Philippi for the first time on his \_\_\_\_\_ mission tour.

The first convert to Christianity in Philippi was \_\_\_\_\_.

The New Testament indicates Paul visited Philippi \_\_\_\_\_ times.

\_\_\_\_\_ carried the Philippian letter to Philippi.

Philippians should be read often as a \_\_\_\_\_ tonic.

While at Philippi the first time, Paul abode in the house of \_\_\_\_\_.

The Philippi which Paul visited was a colony of \_\_\_\_\_.

The Philippian letter contains no \_\_\_\_\_ with local bearing.

The Philippian church sent "\_\_\_\_\_ and again" unto Paul's need.

The name of \_\_\_\_\_ appears with that of Paul in the salutation of the Philippian letter.

The Philippian letter is perhaps Paul's most \_\_\_\_\_ epistle.

Topics for further study.

From encyclopedias learn more concerning the historical and literary importance of Philippi.

Outline the facts which Philippians gives concerning Paul's condition when he wrote the letter.

In the light of 2 Corinthians 8:1-2 what would you conclude regarding economic conditions of the Philippians?

The Philippian assembly has been described as a model church. What does the epistle indicate concerning the congregation's organization, eldership, missionary zeal, benevolence, moral life and other gospel activities?

What was Paul's prayer for the Philippians?

Describe the mind of Christ as given in Philippians.

Give Paul's description of a devoted Christian life.

Discuss Paul's feeling of imperfection as presented in Philippians.

What does Paul give as a cure for anxiety?

Note the teachings of the epistle on joy, unselfishness, citizenship and the proper sense of values.

Make a list of the different names used to refer to our Lord.

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## Southern - 13-COLOSSIANS

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### COLOSSIANS

#### THE TITLE

This epistle gets its name from the fact that it is addressed "to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ that are at Colossae" (Colossians 1:2).

#### THE WRITER

From the first verse we learn that Paul was the writer.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

It was written about A.D. 62 during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. Ephesians and Philemon were written about the same time (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:24; Colossians 4:7-9; Colossians 4:18; Philemon 1:11; Philemon 1:23). Since Paul mentions several times his hopes of visiting friends in Philippi and Colossae (Php 2:24; Philemon 1:22), the theory has been advanced by some that he wrote Colossians from an Ephesian rather than a Roman prison. There is no good evidence, however, that Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus. References in the imprisonment letters indicate conclusively that Paul wrote Colossians from Rome toward the close of his life.

#### THE CITY OF COLASSAE

Colossae, at one time one of the chief cities of Phrygia, was about 100 miles east of Ephesus. It was one of tri-cities, Laodicea being only ten miles away, and Hierapolis, thirteen (4:13). At the time of this letter, Colossae was of little importance as a commercial center but it was a vigorous gospel community and played a decisive role in Christian activities.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

Although it is stated that "all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word" during Paul's long stay in Ephesus (Acts 19:10), in Colossians 2:1 it is intimated that Paul had never visited Colossae. The church was likely established by a fellow-worker under Paul's direction. Epaphras is named by many as the founder (Colossians 1:6-7; Colossians 4:12-13). However, Paul kept in touch with the church (1:3,4,9; 2:5-7; Philemon 1:9-23). He had a keen interest in their spiritual life and development.

#### THE EPISTLE

The major danger which confronted the Colossian church was an Oriental philosophy called Gnosticism, taught by certain false teachers who had come among them. In this letter Paul discusses four aspects of the error, namely: (1) Philosophic (2:3,4,8); (2) ritualistic, or Judaistic (2:11,14,16,17); (3) Visionary, or angel-worship (1:16; 2:10,15,18); (4) Ascetic practices (2:20-23). The main purpose of the book is to show that Christ is the head of the church (1:18), and that the

Christian is made full in Him (2:10). Christ is presented as the source of all creation (1:15-17), and man's hope of redemption (1:12-14). Central Asia Minor was a fertile field for religious speculation, and Colossae was greatly affected by speculative theories. Under the influence of the Iranian belief in intermediate agents, false teachers had disturbed the Colossians by insisting on unscriptural rites of purification whereby Christians were to prepare themselves for the presence of God. These false teachers declared that all creation is evil and, therefore, its source must be evil. Since God is in no wise evil, they taught that He could not have created matter. Man's body, being material, was looked upon as essentially evil. Man, according to this theory, could not approach God directly. The false notion arose that intermediate agents or aeons created man and that only through these intermediary beings could sinful man approach a holy God. The Colossian letter was written to answer these false teachings and practices and to show that Christians have the privilege of approaching God only through Jesus Christ, their Mediator. The letter was probably delivered by Tychicus (4:7,8).

## EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

### Completion of Famous Quotations

"And he is the head of the body, the \_\_\_\_\_."

"Set your affections on things above, not on things on the \_\_\_\_\_."

"Continue in \_\_\_\_\_, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

"Above all these things put on \_\_\_\_\_ the bond of perfectness."

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the \_\_\_\_\_."

### True-False Statements

Paul was by himself when he wrote Colossians T F

Paul wrote the Colossian letter from Ephesus T F

Epaphras established the Colossian church T F

Epaphras carried the letter to the Colossian church T F

Before writing this letter, Paul visited the Colossian church T F

Persons named in the letter: (Unscramble).

hyttomi \_\_\_\_\_

papsrahe \_\_\_\_\_

custcyih \_\_\_\_\_

sumsineo \_\_\_\_\_

tarharsicus \_\_\_\_\_

scramu \_\_\_\_\_

babarans\_\_\_\_\_

tussuj\_\_\_\_\_

elku\_\_\_\_\_

sdmea\_\_\_\_\_

ansymph\_\_\_\_\_

ppsuihcra\_\_\_\_\_

Important subjects discussed: (Unscramble)

cchru\_\_\_\_\_

smitbap\_\_\_\_\_

ggnniis\_\_\_\_\_

yaprer\_\_\_\_\_

llyowr sicev\_\_\_\_\_

tiisanrho agecra\_\_\_\_\_

sleaf cheatgnis\_\_\_\_\_

Topics for further study

Study the doctrine of the person and pre-eminence of Christ as presented in Colossians.

Note carefully the contrast in the true and the false philosophy of religion.

What warnings are given regarding libertinism?

What evidences of ascetic practices are discussed in the epistle?

Summarize the Christian graces presented in Colossians.

Study all references in the epistle to angels, mysteries, Lord, fullness, secrets, will-worship, head, body, and severity.

What modern applications of the Colossian heresies are seen in Romanism, Christian Science and Holiness movements?

Consult Bible encyclopedias for further information regarding Gnosticism.

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## Southern - 14-FIRST THESSALONIANS

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### FIRST THESSALONIANS

#### THE TITLE

This book is so called because it is the first of two epistles addressed to "the church of the Thessalonians" (1 Thessalonians 1:1).

#### THE WRITER

Paul is named as the writer in the first verse of chapter 1.

#### THE CITY OF THESSALONICA

The town was formerly called Therma (Bath, or Hotwells), and was situated on the Thermaic Gulf almost 100 miles southwest of Philippi. In 315 B.C., Cassander, King of Macedonia, named it for his wife Thessalonica, half-sister of Alexander the Great. During Paul's time, it was a great commercial and political center, being the Roman capital of one of the four districts of Macedonia. The modern town goes by the name of Salonika. It compares favorably with many Mediterranean ports. During World War I it was the main seaport to the entire Balkan area.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

It was written from Corinth about A.D. 52 or 53 (Acts 17:14-16; Acts 18:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-6).

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

Paul established the church on his second missionary tour. After leaving Philippi, the party passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica where they spent three Sabbaths preaching in the synagogue (Acts 17:1-34; Acts 1:1-26; Acts 2:1-47; Acts 3:1-26; Acts 4:1-37). On account of persecution by the Jews, they went on to Berea. Leaving Silas and Timothy there, Paul went on to Athens, and finally to Corinth where he spent eighteen months. Silas and Timothy rejoined him there (Acts 17:4-18:11). While Paul was in Thessalonica he received support from the Philippians (Php 4:16). The evangelization of Thessalonica had far-reaching consequences. Here the normal course of the gospel was realized, for from this radiating center was "sounded forth the word of the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 1:8). In no other Macedonian community was there found a more effective sounding board for the gospel.

#### THE EPISTLE

This is probably the first epistle by Paul, and perhaps the first written document of the Christian religion. It is full of the spirit of love for the Thessalonians, whose "work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope" was remembered by the apostle. The main idea is consolation (4:17,18). The keynote is hope, and the key words are afflictions and advent.

## EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

### Questions

Who was with Paul when he wrote this letter? (1:1).

What are some of the things in the church for which Paul is thankful? (1:2-6).

Give a description of Paul's ministry at Thessalonica (2:1-16).

Who hindered Paul from returning to Thessalonica? (2:1-16).

Describe Paul's great solicitation for the Thessalonians (3:1-10).

Was Paul's prayer in 3:11 ever answered? (Acts 20:1-4).

What duties and exhortations are enjoined? (4:1-12; 5:12-22).

What does Paul say about Christ's second coming? (4:13-18; 5:1,2).

What should be our attitude in view of His second coming? (5:3-11).

Complete the following quotations:

"For from you \_\_\_\_\_ out the word of the Lord."

"But we were \_\_\_\_\_ among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children."

"Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ our way unto you."

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus will God bring with him."

"Abstain from all \_\_\_\_\_ of evil."

"\_\_\_\_\_ all things: hold fast that which is good."

"\_\_\_\_\_ no the Spirit."

### Topics for further study

What evidences in I Thessalonians indicate that many of the Thessalonians came into the church directly from heathendom?

Discuss the position held by many that I Thessalonians is one of the most gentle and affectionate of Paul's letters.

Note statements in the epistle regarding the deity of Jesus.

What does the epistle teach regarding the use of sexual instinct?

Why were the Thessalonians unduly alarmed concerning their Christian dead?

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## Southern - 15-SECOND THESSALONIANS

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### SECOND THESSALONIANS

#### THE TITLE

This epistle is called II Thessalonians because it is the second of two letters addressed to "the church of the Thessalonians" (1:1).

#### THE WRITER

Paul, who wrote the first Thessalonian letter, was also the writer of this one. This fact we learn from the first verse of chapter one.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

This letter was probably written from Corinth in A.D. 53, and just a few months after the first epistle. Two things indicate this date: (1) the fact that almost the same conditions are described in each -- persecution and trial; expectation of the Lord's hasty return; idleness in view of the Lord's speedy return; disorderly conduct; (2) the fact that Silas and Timothy were with Paul at the time each letter was written (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1).

#### THE EPISTLE

For information concerning Thessalonica and the establishment of the church there, the student is referred to the section on I Thessalonians. The reasons for writing this second letter are apparent. The chief object was to correct an erroneous idea among the Thessalonians that the Lord would return soon and bring the world to an end. In the first letter, Paul tried to comfort them concerning their Christian dead. His effort did more than he intended. They expected Christ to return during their lifetime, hence many quit their secular work and were just waiting in idleness for His coming (2 Thessalonians 3:6-13). The second letter attempts to correct these errors, and to warn the church concerning false teachers who tampered with Paul's authority. This is the shortest letter written by Paul to any church. The general theme is patient waiting for the Lord. There is a lack of special greetings. The epistle has been called a letter of warning.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

##### Question

Name the things commendable in the church (1:3,4).

What will become of those who obey not the gospel? (1:5-10).

Compare the introduction with that of I Thessalonians (1:1,2).

Tell of the moral disorders in the church (3:6-11).

How are we to deal with the disorderly? (3:6,14,15).

What advice does Paul give about idlers? (3:12).

What indicates Paul's name had been forged? (2:1,2,15; 3:17).

What will precede the Lord's second coming (2:3).

Who is the man of sin? (2:4-12).

When will the man of sin be destroyed? (2:8).

How are people called to be Christians? (2:13-15).

How did Paul conduct himself while in Thessalonica? (3:7-9).

In his request for prayer, what does Paul ask? (3:1-5).

What happens when one refuses to believe the truth? (2:10,11).

Complete the following quotations:

"If any would not \_\_\_\_\_, neither should he \_\_\_\_\_."

"Yet count him not as an \_\_\_\_\_, but admonish him as a \_\_\_\_\_."

"\_\_\_\_\_ yourselves from every brother that walketh \_\_\_\_\_."

"And for this cause God shall send them a strong \_\_\_\_\_."

"For we behaved not ourselves \_\_\_\_\_ among you."

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a \_\_\_\_\_ away first, and that \_\_\_\_\_ of sin be revealed, the son of \_\_\_\_\_."

Topics for further study

Using the Thessalonian letters as a source, write a brief paper on the second coming of Christ.

Discuss the judgment of the wicked as set forth in II Thessalonians.

What does the epistle teach concerning labor relations and economic conditions?

Give evidences that the Thessalonians had misunderstood Paul's teaching regarding Christ's second coming.

What attitude should the church have toward a brother that is withdrawn from?

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## Southern - 16-FIRST TIMOTHY

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### FIRST TIMOTHY

#### THE TITLE

This epistle gets its name from the fact that it is the first of two letters by the writer to Timothy

#### THE WRITER

The first verse names Paul as the writer.

#### THE ADDRESSEE

The letter is addressed "unto Timothy, my true child in faith" (1:2). Timothy was an inhabitant of Lystra (Acts 16:1-2), and was probably converted by Paul on his first mission tour (Acts 14:1-7). Timothy's father was a Greek, but his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice were devout Jewesses (Acts 16:1, 2 Timothy 1:3-5). He had been carefully taught the Jewish scriptures (2 Timothy 3:14-15). Timothy joined Paul on the apostle's second mission tour (Acts 16:3-4), and is everywhere spoken of in terms of high praise (1 Thessalonians 3:2; Php 2:19-23). He was left by Paul at Ephesus to work with the church there (1 Timothy 1:3). Paul longed to have Timothy with him as death approached the aged apostle (2 Timothy 4:9; 2 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:21).

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Although the time and place of writing are indefinite, the letter was probably written between A.D. 64 and 66 from some place in Macedonia (Php 2:24; Philemon 1:22). Some commentators believe the letter was written between Paul's first and second imprisonment in Rome.

#### PURPOSE AND CONTENTS OF THE LETTER

The purpose of the letter is two-fold:

To offset the false doctrines of Jewish teachers (4:7-10; 6:3-5, 20, 21).

To guide and encourage Timothy in his evangelistic duties.

Concerning public devotions (2:1-8).

Concerning the duties and behavior of Christian women (2:9-15).

Concerning church officers (3:1-13).

Concerning Timothy's teaching (3:14-16; 4:1-10).

Concerning Timothy's personal holiness (4:11-16).

Concerning the treatment of offenders, of widows, of elders, of slaves, of the rich; and the duties of these several classes of persons (Chs. 5,6). This letter has been compared to "pearls of various

sizes and colors, loosely strung on one thread."

## KEY-WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

Characteristic key-words and expressions are: "faithful is the saying;" "godliness"; "fables"; "genealogies"; "profane babblings"; "sound doctrines."

## EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Summarize the life of Timothy (Acts 14:6-20; Acts 16:1-3; Acts 17:14-15; Acts 18:5; Acts 20:4; Romans 16:21; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 16:10; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Php 1:1; Php 2:19-23; Colossians 1:1; 1 Timothy 1:3-5; 1 Timothy 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:3-6; 2 Timothy 4:9; 2 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:21).

With I Timothy as a text, describe the kind of a man a preacher should be.

Summarize the teaching of I Timothy concerning the nature of God and His sovereignty.

Discuss the attitude which the church should have toward elders (5:1,17,19).

What directions does Paul give concerning widows? (5:3-16).

What does Paul say about money, covetousness, etc.? (6:6-10, 17-19).

Under what conditions did Paul tell Timothy to "use a little wine?" (5:23).

With 1 Timothy 6:3-16 as a scriptural source, prepare a sermon outline on the subject: Flee, Follow, Fight.

Explain "the mystery of godliness" described in 1 Timothy 3:16.

List all the words used to designate the church in I Timothy.

In what connections does Paul use the statement, "Faithful is the saying?"

Note all the athletic, military, and other figures in I Timothy.

What warnings does Paul give regarding false doctrines and apostasy?

## A STUDY OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

### Qualifications of elders

There are three words in the Greek New Testament which are used to designate the men in charge of a local congregation of Christians. The words are not synonymous, but they are used interchangeably with reference to the same group of persons. Each word represents some particular phase of the elders' office, work or duties. There is no distinction in rank or office suggested by these words, for they are all applied to the same persons. Each of these Greek words is translated by a pair of English words. Thus, in the English New Testament we find six words used to designate the ones charged with the oversight of the local congregation.

Presbuteros: Translated by two English words, elder and presbyter. The word suggests an older man, hence refers to age and experience (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 5:1; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1).

Episkopos. Translated by two English words, bishop and overseer. The word suggests supervision, direction and oversight, hence refers to function (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:7; 1 Timothy 3:1, Php 1:1).

Poimain: Translated by two English words, pastor and shepherd. The word suggests nurture, feeding, and teaching, hence refers to tender care and compassion (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 2:25; 1 Peter 5:2).

An elder must have each of the following qualifications:

1 Timothy 3:1-7

Without reproach

Husband of one wife

Temperate

Sober-minded

Orderly

Given to hospitality

Apt to teach

No brawler

No striker

Gentle

Not contentious

No lover of money

Rules well his own house

Not a novice

Good testimony from without

Titus 1:5-9

Blameless

Husband of one wife

Having children that believe

Not self-willed

Not soon angry

No brawler

No striker

Not greedy of filthy lucre

Given to hospitality

Lover of good

Sober-minded

Just

Holy

Self-controlled

Sound in the faith

A man must possess these qualifications before his appointment to the eldership.

Qualifications of deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

They must be grave, or sober-minded.

They must not be double-tongued, or two-faced.

They must not be given to much wine.

They must not be lovers of money.

They must hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.

They must be proved.

They must be blameless.

They must be husbands of one wife.

They must rule their children and their own houses well.

They must serve well.

A man must possess these qualifications before his appointment to the diaconate.

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## Southern - 17-SECOND TIMOTHY

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### SECOND TIMOTHY

#### THE TITLE

This is the second of two letters by the same writer to Timothy.

#### THE WRITER

From the first verse we learn that Paul was the writer.

#### THE ADDRESSEE

The letter is addressed "To Timothy, my dearly beloved son" (1:2), who was at Ephesus at this time.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

This epistle was written from Rome during Paul's second imprisonment, and just before his martyrdom, A.D. 67 (1:4, 16, 17; 4:6-9, 11,21).

#### PURPOSE AND CONTENTS OF THE LETTER

One object of the letter was to request Timothy to come to him speedily (4:9,11,21). It was also written to further instruct Timothy in church matters, and to explain to him Paul's personal affairs. Internal evidence indicates that this letter was the last which the apostle wrote before his death. Being the last will and testament of one who was not "behind the chiefest of the apostles," it is important for the dying counsels which it contains. More personal than I Timothy, this last letter depicts Paul's pitiable plight in his closing days. Warnings against disputes and false doctrines, exhortations to purity of life, strong expressions of affectionate regard, and consolation for suffering Christians are important subjects discussed. "Hasten," "Come," "Greatly desiring to see thee," "Do diligence to come shortly," and "Come before winter" are some of the key-expressions. Personal allusions are conspicuous, more than twenty names being mentioned. The letter is full of fatherly instructions and exhortations. It carries home to every heart Paul's earnest and impassioned eloquence.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

##### Completion

Paul became an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ was the name of Timothy's grandmother.

Paul told Timothy to preach the \_\_\_\_\_.

Because he was sick, \_\_\_\_\_ had been left in Miletus.

\_\_\_\_\_ was the only traveling companion with Paul at this time.

True - False

Lois and Eunice were ungodly women. T or F

Timothy had been taught the Holy Scriptures from youth. T or F

Persecution is inseparable from a devoted Christian life. T or F

The resurrection is part of the gospel. T or F

Demas was always loyal to Christ. T or F

Multiple Choice

II Timothy was written about A.D. (67, 60, 55).

II Timothy was written from (Ephesus, Rome, Macedonia).

Timothy, addressee of II Timothy, was in (Philippi, Athens, Ephesus).

Paul had left a cloak at (Antioch, Troas, Miletus).

(Eunice, Lois, Prisca) was the name of Timothy's mother.

Identification

"Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season." Ch. \_\_\_v. \_\_\_.

"In the last days grievous times shall come." Ch. \_\_\_v. \_\_\_.

"From a babe thou has known the sacred writings." Ch. \_\_\_v. \_\_\_.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God. Ch. \_\_\_v. \_\_\_.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." Ch. \_\_\_v. \_\_\_.

"But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Ch. \_\_\_v. \_\_\_.

Topics for further study

What was "the gift of God" which Paul asked Timothy to keep aglow?

Summarize the teaching of II Timothy on immortality.

Study the grievous times described in chapter 3.

Make a list of all the persons mentioned in II Timothy.

What symptoms of asceticism are discussed in the epistle?

What persons were largely responsible for Timothy's early religious training?

Does the expression, "Come before winter," have any special significance?

List everything in the epistle concerning the life and work of a gospel preacher.

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## Southern - 18-TITUS

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### TITUS

#### THE TITLE

This letter bears the name of the person to whom it is addressed.

#### THE WRITER

Verse 1 of the first chapter names Paul as the writer.

#### THE ADDRESSEE

The epistle is addressed to "Titus, my true child after a common faith" (1:4). Since Titus is not mentioned in Acts of Apostles, all that we know of him is found in the epistles of Paul. He was a Greek by birth (Galatians 2:3), but was converted to Christianity by Paul (Titus 1:4). He went up with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem for the conference on the circumcision of the Gentiles (Galatians 2:1; Acts 15:1-41). Later he went with Paul on his preaching tours, and is often mentioned by the Apostle in terms of approbation and affection (2 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Corinthians 7:5-7; 2 Corinthians 7:13-15; 2 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 8:16-24; 2 Corinthians 12:17-18; 2 Timothy 4:10). Being the son of Gentiles, Titus was not circumcised (Galatians 2:3-5). From the important services he was called upon to perform we conclude that he was highly responsible and respected.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

This letter was probably written from Macedonia or Corinth about A.D. 67, some time between I and II Timothy (Titus 3:12; 2 Timothy 4:20). One thing seems evident, namely -- it belongs to a period when Paul was not a prisoner.

#### THE GOSPEL IN CRETE

Crete is a large, mountainous island south of Greece in the Mediterranean Sea. Nothing is known of the first introduction of the gospel there. Jews from Crete were present on Pentecost (Acts 2:11), and perhaps returned with the good tidings. On his voyage to Rome as a prisoner, Paul stopped at Fair Havens, a harbor in the island (Acts 27:7-15). Some writers think that he visited there again after his first imprisonment in Rome, and at this time he left Titus to look after the work. We do know that Titus had been left there (Titus 1:5). Creditable evidence indicates that Paul had done some preaching in Crete, but had left hurriedly before the churches were regularly organized (Titus 1:5). The island abounded with wealthy and influential Jews. A combination of moral weaknesses made Cretans proverbial for their vices. Classical writers tell of their greed, ferocity and fraud, falsehood, and gluttony. This state of general depravity was confirmed by the testimony of their own writers (Titus 1:12; Cf. Epimenides). Titus had the tremendous task of working among and helping to organize the churches of Crete.

## PURPOSE AND CONTENTS OF THE LETTER

### Purpose

The purpose of the book was to console Titus regarding the work Paul had left him to do. The Cretans have been described as unsteady, untruthful, quarrelsome, licentious and intemperate (Titus 1:10-16). The work of Titus among such people must have been difficult.

### Contents

Qualifications of elders (1:5-9).

How to deal with false doctrines (1:10-16).

Instructions concerning aged men and women (2:1-8), and servants (2:9,10).

The grace of God (2:11-14; 3:4-8).

Exhortations to Titus (2:15; 3:1-3, 8-15).

## EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

List the number of times the word Savior is used in the book.

Give the qualifications of elders as set forth in Titus (1:5-9).

Compare these qualifications (1:5-9) with those given in 1 Timothy 3:1-16.

What instructions are given concerning aged men? aged women? younger men? younger women? servants? (2:1-10).

What is said in Titus about the grace of God (2:11-14; 3:4-8).

Note how many times the key-words "good works," "good tidings" occur.

How many times does the expression "sound doctrine" occur?

The thought of sober-mindedness occurs at least six times in Titus. What impressions does this fact give? List the references.

Why did Paul have Timothy circumcised, but not Titus? (Galatians 2:3-5; Acts 16:1-3).

Make a list of the different persons named in Titus.

How do you account for the fact that the name of such a valued and trusted man as Titus is not mentioned in Acts of Apostles?

What does the Epistle to Titus teach concerning congregational independence?

Was Titus left in Crete for a temporary purpose or a more permanent one?

What evidence is there that the Cretan churches were not in existence when Paul passed by Crete on his voyage to Rome? (Acts 27:1-44).

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## Southern - 19-PHILEMON

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### PHILEMON

#### THE TITLE

This letter bears the name of the person addressed.

#### THE WRITER

The Apostle Paul was the writer of this epistle as we note in verse 1.

#### THE ADDRESSEE

Philemon lived at Colossae, and was probably converted by the preaching of Paul (Colossians 4:9; Colossians 4:17; Philemon 1:2; Philemon 1:10; Philemon 1:19). A church met in Philemon's house (v. 2). The letter indicates that he was a man of wealth and influence. His humility and liberality toward needy brethren showed his noble Christian character.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

This letter was written about A.D. 62 during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome (1,2; 23;24). Ephesians and Colossians were written about the same time.

#### THE GOSPEL IN COLOSSAE

It is difficult to determine who established the church in Colossae. Many name Epaphras as the founder (Colossians 1:6-7; Colossians 4:12-13). However, some suppose that Paul visited Colossae and founded the church on his third mission tour (Acts 18:23-28; Acts 19:1). We do know that he kept in close touch with the church, and that he and Philemon were knitted together in the bonds of friendship (Colossians 1:3-4; Colossians 1:9; Colossians 2:5-7; Philemon 1:1-2; Philemon 1:9; Philemon 1:23). It has been supposed that Philemon was an officer in the Colossian church, that Apphia was his wife, and that Archippus was minister of the church. The New Testament gives no definite evidence in support of these assumptions.

#### PURPOSE AND CONTENTS OF THE LETTER

Onesimus, one of Philemon's household slaves, had robbed his master and fled to Rome where he was converted under Paul's preaching (10-20). How Paul and Onesimus were brought together is nowhere mentioned, but Paul seemed to consider it an act of providence. The purpose of the letter was to effect a reconciliation between Onesimus and Philemon. Hence Paul admonished Onesimus to return home, and asked Philemon to receive him back, "no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved" (12-16). The letter is one of four personal epistles by Paul. It differs from his other letters in that it contains no doctrine and is aesthetical in character. In this book we notice the transforming power of the gospel on society. Although Christianity recognized the existence of slavery, its principles of brotherhood softened the harsh relations between social

classes and paved the way for freedom and democracy. The epistle is a wonderful illustration of Paul's delicacy and tenderness of character. It has been called "the polite epistle." Certainly, it is a noble example of Christian love.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

True-False

Paul wrote five personal letters (T F)

The epistle to Philemon is doctrinal (T F)

Philemon was a member of the church at Colossae (T F)

Philemon was probably converted by the preaching of Paul (T F)

Philemon was an unscrupulous business man (T F)

At the time of this letter, Paul was a prisoner at Rome (T F)

Onesimus was a slave of Philemon (T F)

Onesimus had run away to Corinth (T F)

Onesimus was converted by the preaching of Paul (T F)

A church met in Philemon's house (T F)

Paul had hopes of visiting Philemon (T F)

Onesimus had stolen from his master (T F)

Paul urged Onesimus to remain in Rome (T F)

Paul refused to pay Philemon for what Onesimus had stolen (T F)

Archippus was probably Philemon's wife (T F)

Topics for further study

In the light of Philemon explain how Christianity deals with slavery.

Summarize the ethical teaching of Philemon.

Compare Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 with Philemon.

Discuss the proper attitude of Christians toward a penitent person with a bad record behind him.

Learn all that you can concerning each person named in Philemon.

Write a paper on "Slavery in the Roman Empire."

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## Southern - 20-HEBREWS

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### HEBREWS

#### THE TITLE

This book is titled Hebrews because it is thought to have been addressed to Hebrew Christians.

#### THE WRITER

The writer's name is nowhere mentioned in the epistle, and scholars disagree concerning its authorship. However, the weight of evidence favors Paul. Others sometimes named as the writer include Luke, Apollos, Barnabas, Clement, and Priscilla. Concerning the authorship Origen said: "Who wrote the Epistle God only knows certainly." It is not within the province of this survey to discuss such a controversial issue. Suffice it to say that the Holy Spirit inspired the materials for the Christian's admonition and learning.

#### THE ONES ADDRESSED

The epistle is addressed to Hebrew Christians. Whether they constituted one local congregation, or lived in a special locality, or were Jews of the "Dispersion" living in Gentile lands is a matter of dispute. Some scholars believe that they were Hebrew Christians scattered over the old Jewish settlement of Judea. Others hold that the writer is addressing Jewish Christians in a more definite locality.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

When and where this epistle was written cannot be definitely determined. That it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 is evident, and some place the date A.D. 62-64. It was probably written in Rome, Italy, though some name Jerusalem and others Alexandria as the point of origin.

#### THE CONTENTS

The theme of this book is the superiority of Christianity over Judaism. It begins with the beginning, "sweeps across the prophetic centuries to 'these last days,' and passes beyond the races run by men to the judgment of God." Here we see the prophets of the past, an interpretation of the present, and a prediction of the future. No informed person can read this epistle with an unbiased mind and fail to see that Christianity with the gospel of Christ has superseded Judaism with the law of Moses. A formal treatise on Christian doctrine, its practical aim was to encourage Hebrew Christians to renounce the shadows of Judaism for the realities of the gospel. Warnings against apostasy are constantly stressed.

#### TOPICS FOR STUDY

Concerning the writer.

There is no proof that someone besides Paul was the writer.

The style, contents and argument are Pauline.

Personal allusions coincide with the known history of Paul.

Paul was thoroughly familiar with the Jewish system discussed.

Scholars of the second century named Paul as the writer.

It was written during Paul's lifetime, for the temple was standing.

It was written by a friend of Timothy (13:23).

The writer was or had been in Italy (13:23,24).

Peter speaks of an epistle by Paul to Hebrews (1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 3:1; 2 Peter 3:15).

The epistle closes with the usual Pauline benediction.

Concerning the ones addressed

They were Hebrew Christians (2:1; 3:1; 4:1; 6:1f).

They had been Christians for some time (5:12-14).

They were acquainted with the writer (13:18,19).

They also knew Timothy who intended to visit them (13:23).

They were in danger of returning to Judaism (12:1-4; 5:11; Chs. 6-9).

They were suffering intense persecutions (12:3,4; 4:15,16).

Apparently they lived in some particular region (13:23).

Apparently they constituted a church with recognized leaders (13:17).

They had been sympathetic toward other Christians (6:10; 10:32f).

They had a tendency to disbelieve Christ (12:1-3; 3:12).

Concerning other matters

Outline the epistle under the general theme, "The Superiority of Christianity over Judaism."

Make a list of all the terms of comparison.

Summarize the teaching of the epistle concerning the high-priesthood of Christ.

Contrast the Levitical priesthood with the Aaronic.

Study closely the writer's use of the typical character of the Old Covenant institutions and ordinances.

Why is the tabernacle used instead of the temple throughout the discussion?

Consider carefully the danger of rejecting the sacrifice of Christ.

What does Hebrews teach concerning salvation by faith?

Discuss the benefits of affliction.

What sources were likely involved in causing the Hebrew Christians to consider returning to Judaism?

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## Southern - 21-JAMES

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### JAMES

#### THE TITLE

This book bears the name of the writer, James (1:1).

#### THE PERSONS NAMED JAMES

Most scholars conclude there are three persons called James in the New Testament.

James the son of Zebedee, one of the twelve, elder brother of John, and sometimes called James the Elder or Great (Matthew 4:21).

James the son of Alphaeus, also one of the twelve, and referred to as James the Less (Matthew 10:3).

James, brother of the Lord, who was not one of the twelve apostles (Matthew 13:55).

#### THE WRITER

Although a moot point, it is believed by many that James the brother of the Lord wrote this book called James. That he was not one of the twelve apostles is indicated by the fact that he did not believe on the Lord until after the resurrection (John 7:2-9; Mark 3:21; Acts 1:13-14). He was a pillar in the early church, being associated largely with the saints at Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; Acts 15:13-21; Galatians 1:19; Galatians 2:9-12). Josephus declared that James was brought before the Sanhedrin by Sadducees, charged of departing from the Jewish Law, and then stoned to death. Clement of Alexander claimed that James was flung down from the gable of the temple, stoned, and beaten to death with a club for speaking to Jews about Christ.

#### THE ONES ADDRESSED

The letter was addressed primarily to the Jews scattered abroad, "twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion" (1:1). Evidently they were Christian Jews, for James called them "My brethren" with respect to the "faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2:1). Some were rich and some poor (2:1-10; 5:1-6). Lust, greed and pride were evidenced among them (4:1-12). They were severely persecuted (1:2-4, 12-18). The general state of the ones addressed is not such as a gospel teacher could look on with satisfaction. The poor were oppressed and dragged before the judgment seats by the rich. These trials were not endured with the patience and humility which might have been expected of them as Christians. Instead of seeking wisdom from God they regarded Him as their tempter. Worldliness of spirit created strifes and dissensions among them. They seemed to believe that their nominal Christian faith would save them, without a holy life.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Jerusalem, where James did most of his work, is believed to be the place of writing. The date is uncertain. Some place it as early as A.D. 40; others as late as A.D. 62. Many conservative scholars believe that it was written around A.D. 48. Their argument is based on several factors. Since the issues of Romans 4:1-25 and Galatians 3:1-29 are absent, it is thought that the book was written before the Jerusalem conference. Evidently it was not written after the dreadful calamity of A.D. 70. The circumstances described and sins condemned are characteristic of early Jewish Christians. Furthermore, there is no reference to Gentile Christians, which allusions would have been natural after A.D. 50. It is probably safe to say that the Epistle of James is one of the earliest of the New Testament books.

## THE PURPOSE AND CONTENTS

The book was written to warn Christian Jews against their besetting sins and to exhort them to steadfastness under persecution. It is one of the seven General Epistles, so called because they were not addressed to particular persons or churches. The general theme is practical religion, or faith at work (1:27; 2:14-26). Abrupt in style, it has been called "The Christian Book of Proverbs." It omits the word gospel, lacks the doctrinal emphasis found in Paul's writings, makes no reference to the work of redemption, the incarnation, the resurrection or ascension, and mentions Christ's name only twice (1:1; 2:1). With the exception of his references to works, James assumes the doctrinal features of the gospel. He is concerned largely with the social and ethical aspects of Christianity. Luther called the epistle of James "a veritable epistle of straw" because it emphasized salvation by works and did not agree with his doctrine of justification by faith only. There is no scriptural basis for Luther's criticism that Paul and James are contradictory concerning salvation. Each taught that man is saved by "faith working through love (Galatians 5:6; Js 2:14-26).

## EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

True-False

The epistle of James was addressed to James, the son of Alphaeus T F

In the New Testament there are four persons called James T F

The epistle of James was written by the son of Zebedee T F

The epistle of James was written from Jerusalem in A.D. 70 T F

James, the brother of the Lord, was one of the twelve T F

James, brother of the Lord, was a pillar in the Jerusalem church T F

The epistle of James is a "General" letter T F

There are seven "General" letters in the New Testament T F

The ones addressed by James were being persecuted T F

Salvation by faith is the theme of James' epistle T F

James and Paul contradict each other on doctrinal points T F

The book of James defines practical religion T F

The epistle of James tells of the resurrection of Christ T F

The name of Christ occurs three times in the epistle of James T F

Points discussed in the epistle of James are closely connected T F

Topics for further study

Does the author of James speak with the tone of the Old Testament background or the New?

List any indication in the epistle that James is Jewish in thought, style, and doctrine.

Compare the epistle of James with the speech of James and the letter recorded in Acts 15:13-29.

Discuss temptation as it is presented in James 1:2-4; James 1:12-16.

List all the things that James commands Christians to do; not to do.

How could the epistle of James be used in employer-employee relations today?

Note the teaching of James on each of the following subjects; wisdom, war, life, prayer, oaths, obedience, wealth, and the tongue.

List all the similes and metaphors used in James.

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## Southern - 22-FIRST PETER

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### FIRST PETER

#### THE TITLE

This book bears the name of the writer (1 Peter 1:1), and is the first of two general epistles by Peter.

#### THE WRITER

Peter was the son of Jonah (Matthew 16:16-17). Before he became a disciple of Christ, he was known as Simon. He was a native of Bethsaida, but seems to have moved to Capernaum where he followed the occupation of fishing. From this work he was chosen to be an apostle of Christ and a fisher of men (Matthew 4:18-22). He was brought to Jesus by his brother Andrew (John 1:40-42). Impetuous, brave and energetic, Peter was a leader among the apostles. He made some mistakes, but was outstanding in the spread of the gospel. He was entrusted "with the gospel of the circumcision" and was one of the pillars of the early church (Galatians 2:6-8). Because of his prominence in the Gospels and in the first fifteen chapters of Acts, we know more about Peter's life than of any other of the twelve apostles. After the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15:1-29; Galatians 2:1-10), we read no more of him in Acts. In Galatians 2:11-21 we read of his presence in Antioch where Paul rebuked him for his cowardice because of Judaizers. Peter was a married man (Matthew 8:14; Mark 1:30; Luke 4:38), and there is no indication that he ceased to live with his wife after he became prominent as an apostle (1 Corinthians 9:5). The New Testament says nothing about when, where, or how he died. The Catholic assumption that Peter was executed in Rome has no basis in the scriptures.

#### THE ONES ADDRESSED

First Peter is addressed to "sojourners of the dispersion." These Jewish Christians had been scattered by persecutions (1:1, 17; 2:11,12; 3:17; 4:1-4, 12-19; 5:8,9). They were sojourning among Gentiles in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia (1 Peter 1:1; 1 Peter 2:12). Although the epistle was addressed primarily to Jewish Christians, it did not exclude Gentiles. Peter presents the church as the true Israel of God's promise (1 Peter 2:4-10).

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

The letter was probably written between A.D. 64 and 67. It appears to have been written from Babylon (5:13), though some take the position that "Babylon" was a mystical name for Rome or Jerusalem. Nothing in the New Testament confirms this view. One theory holds that Peter used "Babylon" to conceal his actual location from Nero. Clement of Rome, Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius all claim that Peter was martyred in Rome when Nero was emperor.

#### PURPOSE AND CONTENTS

The general purpose of the letter, expressed in 5:12, was to console them in their suffering, and to exhort them to faithfulness and duty. An indirect object was to give support to the authority of Paul. Faith, obedience and patience are clearly discussed. The epistle is a summary of the consolations and instructions necessary to encourage Christians in their journey to heaven.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Study Peter's thanksgiving for the blessings of grace (1:3-12).

For the new birth (3-5).

For joyful faith during trials (6-9).

For salvation (10-12).

What obligations grow out of the blessings of grace? (1:13-25).

A godly life (13-16).

Prayerful worship of God because of His love (17-21).

Brotherly love (22-25).

Some further obligations are impressed (Ch. 2)

Christian growth depends upon spiritual food (1-3).

The church of Christ is a living temple (4-10).

The Christian life is a journey, pilgrimage (11,12).

Christians must be obedient to authorities (13-25).

Some ethical relationships (Ch. 3).

Wives must be in cheerful subjection to their husbands (1-6).

Husbands must love their wives (7).

Christians should love each other (8-12).

Christians should endure persecution patiently (13-22).

Encouragement for suffering saints is given (Ch. 4).

Christ died for us; we should live for Him (1-6).

The coming judgment should cause watchfulness (7-11).

Christians should expect to suffer persecutions (12-19).

Peter closes the epistle with divers exhortations (Ch. 5).

There is a charge to the elders (1-4).

There is an exhortation to humility (5-7).

There is an exhortation to watchfulness (8-11).

There are greetings from the brethren at Babylon (12-14).

Topics for further study.

Study Peter's loyalty to Christ, noting carefully what the apostle says about His cross, His suffering, His resurrection, His manifestation, and His exaltation.

Summarize the teaching of the epistle regarding Christian brotherhood, the duties of society, and of domestic life.

Using 1 Peter 3:15 as a text, write a brief paper on Giving a Reason for Your Hope.

Explain the meaning of 1 Peter 3:18-20.

What does the epistle teach concerning obedience to the gospel?

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## Southern - 23-SECOND PETER

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### SECOND PETER

#### THE TITLE

This book bears the name of the writer (1:1), and is the second of two general epistles by Peter (3:1).

#### THE WRITER

For information concerning Peter, the student is referred to the outline of I Peter, and to Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias.

#### THE ONES ADDRESSED

The letter is addressed to "them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Savior Jesus Christ" (1:1). However, the immediate recipients of this epistle were the same people who received Peter's first letter, "sojourners of the dispersion," or Jewish Christians scattered abroad in the five provinces named in 1 Peter 1:1.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

We have no definite information concerning the time and place of writing. Conservative estimates set the date around A.D. 67 or 68. Some scholars conclude from 2 Peter 1:13-16 that Peter's death was imminent. Although the epistle makes no direct reference to its point of origin, many commentators hold that Peter wrote it from Rome just before he died.

#### OCCASION FOR THE LETTER

The libertines and mockers, two classes of false teachers within the church, were causing considerable difficulty. This letter warns the church against them, and exhorts Christians to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). The plea for steadfastness is prominent, in view of numerous heretics threatening the spiritual life of the saints.

#### A COMPARISON WITH I PETER

A comparison of the Petrine Epistles reveals some interesting points. In I Peter the persecutions were from without, whereas II Peter reveals internal troubles. The first epistle often refers to the suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. Second Peter fails to mention these. The spirit of the first letter is that of sweetness and mildness. The underlying tone in II Peter shows severity, anxiety, denunciation. In I Peter the second coming of Jesus is connected with the reward of the faithful saints, whereas in II Peter it is linked with the doom of sinners. The key-note of I Peter is hope; of II Peter, knowledge.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

True-False

Man must have a special revelation to know God's will T F

Peter wrote three general epistles T F

Second Peter was written from Ephesus T F

The key-note of II Peter is knowledge T F

The spirit of II Peter manifests sweetness and mildness T F

II Peter links Christ's return with the happiness of Christians T F

II Peter tells of internal church trouble T F

II Peter mentions the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ T F

II Peter names seven Christian graces T F

A child of God can fall from grace T F

II Peter shows the author anticipated an imminent death T F

Jesus predicted Peter's martyrdom T F

Peter witnessed the transfiguration of Christ T F

The apostle Peter is our day-star T F

All false teachers are cowards T F

All false teachers will be punished T F

A dumb ass had more sense than Balaam T F

Mockers walk in the footsteps of Christ T F

Jehovah counts time by years T F

The Lord will announce the day of His coming T F

Topics for further study

Study the points of similarity and the points of difference in First and Second Peter.

Characterize false teachers as they are presented in II Peter.

What is meant by the expression, "cast them down to hell (tartarus)"? (2:4).

What interpretation do Roman Catholics place on 2 Peter 1:20?

Characterize the libertines and mockers discussed in II Peter.

Give Peter's description of the dissolution of the physical universe.

Since we treasure the dying counsels of great men, it is interesting to note the final precepts of Peter. Holiness appears to him of first importance, steadfastness is the greatest blessing, and the divinity of Christ is his last thought.

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## Southern - 24-FIRST JOHN

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### FIRST JOHN

#### THE TITLE

This letter bears the name of the writer, and is the first of three general epistles by John.

#### THE WRITER

The writer nowhere indicates his name, but the uniform testimony of the early church affirmed that John the apostle was the writer. There is also a close similarity of thought and expression between the Gospel according to John and the epistle. John was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of James. James and John were "surnamed Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). Peter, James and John were the Lord's closest friends, but John held the distinction of being the disciple whom Jesus loved (John 19:26). John was an eyewitness of the person and labors of the Lord (1 John 1:1-4; 1 John 4:14).

#### THE ONES ADDRESSED

We cannot be sure about the destination of this epistle, but it was probably written primarily to the churches in and around Asia Minor, for a large part of John's life was spent at Ephesus. They were of all ages of Christian development, hated of the world, inclined to worldliness, and in danger of being led into doubt by some who denied the divinity of Christ.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

The letter was probably written from Ephesus, but the precise dates are uncertain. The dates suggested range from A.D. 69 to A.D. 100, however most writers fix the time around A.D. 90-95.

#### OCCASION FOR THE EPISTLE

The purpose of the letter was to warn against prevailing errors, and tell the disciples how to be sure to gain eternal life (5:13). One group of false teachers among the brethren questioned the divinity of our Lord (2:18-22; 4:15; 5:1). Others denied His humanity, and thus taught that His incarnation was but a myth (Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 1:1-3; 1 John 4:3; 1 John 5:6). There was a third group who taught that one could worship God with the spirit and indulge in every sin with the body. John refutes this creed by showing that every sin is transgression (2:3-6; 3:4, 8-10; 4:13; 5:16-17). Errors reflected in this epistle crystallized into a philosophy that became known as Gnosticism. It gave pure Christianity a terrific struggle during the second century. Cerinthians, Ebionites and Docetists threatened to undermine the gospel.

#### STYLE OF WRITING

The material resembles a sermon more than an epistle. Although the thought is profound, the language is simple. The book contains many contrasts, parallelisms and repetitions. It reveals the

writer to be both affectionate and severe, as all true disciples should be. The gentlest Christian may be a son of thunder (Mark 3:17).

#### THE THEME

The central theme of this epistle is fellowship with God through Jesus Christ His Son.

#### ANALYSIS

Introduction (1:1-4).

God's light (1:5-2:28). To have fellowship with God we must walk in His light.

God's righteousness (2:29-4:6). Fellowship with God depends upon our doing righteousness.

God's love (4:7-5:3). Fellowship with God depends upon our having love and manifesting its spirit.

God's faithfulness (5:4-12). We cannot have fellowship with God without faith in Him.

Conclusion (5:13-21).

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Summarize the teaching of I John concerning sin.

Learn what the epistle teaches regarding: life, light, fellowship, propitiation, antichrist, anointing, fear, murder and the world.

"Love or Perish" is a popular prescription in modern psychotherapy. What does I John teach on the subject?

Discuss the statement, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not" (1 John 3:6).

Prepare a brief paper on Gnosticism as it is outlined in encyclopedias.

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## Southern - 25-SECOND JOHN

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### SECOND JOHN

#### THE TITLE

The book gets its name from the fact that it is the second of three epistles by John.

#### THE WRITER

A few ancient scholars maintained that II John was written by "John the presbyter," a contemporary of John the apostle. The argument is based on verse 1 where the writer assumes the title of "elder" or "presbyter." However, this fact does not prove that John the apostle did not write the epistle, for "elder" is a title by which Peter also designates himself (1 Peter 5:1). John used the title because he was an elder in a congregation, or because he was one advanced in year.

#### THE ONE ADDRESSED

There is also a difference of opinion concerning the one addressed. Some think that "the elect lady" is a symbolical expression used by John to refer to a nation, a church or to the church in general. Many scholars believe that "the elect lady" was a Christian woman. References to her children imply that she was a mother, and because no mention is made of her husband, it is thought that she was a widow.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

II John was probably written from Ephesus about A.D. 90, shortly after the first epistle.

#### PURPOSE AND CONTENTS

The evident purpose of the letter was to warn the addressee against error and false teachers. The letter shows the warm affection that true gospel preachers have toward those whom they serve. One writer says: "Of the thirteen verses in this epistle, eight are in substance found in the former letter." Characteristic words are love, truth, commandment and walking.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

##### Completion

The word love occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in II John.

The word truth occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in II John.

The word commandment occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in II John.

The word walking occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in II John.

The author of II John refers to himself as "The \_\_\_\_\_."

The addressee of II John is called "the elect \_\_\_\_\_."

II John was probably written from the city of \_\_\_\_\_.

Children of "the elect lady" were walking in \_\_\_\_\_.

John admonished the elect lady "that we \_\_\_\_\_ one another."

Walking after God's commandments is John's definition of \_\_\_\_\_.

True-False

II John was probably written before I John T F

The presbyter John is the same as John the apostle T F

II John is addressed to a particular nation T F

II John was probably written from the Isle of Patmos T F

II John warns against false teachers T F

"The elect lady" probably was a widow T F

"The elect lady" probably lived in Rome T F

II John contains no material found in I John T F

Few deceivers had entered the world T F

John wrote six New Testament books T F

II John mentions "the elect lady's" husband T F

John hoped to visit "the elect lady" T F

Topics for further study

List the characteristics of true discipleship given in the epistle.

What Gnostic heresy is referred to in verse 7?

Does verse 8 suggest degrees of eternal happiness?

Harmonize verses 10 and 11 with 1 Timothy 5:10 and Hebrews 13:2.

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## Southern - 26-THIRD JOHN

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### THIRD JOHN

#### THE TITLE

This book is so called because it is the third of three epistles by John.

#### THE WRITER

It is generally agreed that the writer of this epistle was the apostle John. He calls himself "the elder," and the closing verses are almost identical with those of the second letter. The points presented concerning the authorship of the second would also apply to the third epistle.

#### TO WHOM ADDRESSED

Third John is addressed to an individual by the name of Gaius (1), a personal friend of the writer. The identity of the person is hard to determine. Although some connect him with the Gaius of Romans 16:23 and 1 Corinthians 1:14, it is difficult to identify him with any other person thus named in the New Testament. He was probably a convert of John (3,4). Gaius was known for his Christian hospitality, having cared for "brethren and strangers" (5).

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Third John was probably written from Ephesus some time after First John, perhaps toward the close of the first century.

#### PURPOSE AND CONTENTS

There was some misunderstanding about receiving certain evangelists. The object of this letter was to commend to the hospitality of Gaius some Christians who were strangers in the place where he lived. These Christians probably carried this letter with them as an introduction to Gaius. The contents center around three men: Gaius, a charitable Christian; Diotrephes, an uncharitable church member; and Demetrius, another worthy Christian. The letter is of special importance because it affords us an insight to the church toward the close of the first century, giving both excellencies and defects, noble and ignoble characters.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

##### Completion

The word truth occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in III John.

The word love occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in III John.

The word church occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in III John.

The word friends occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in III John.

The word brethren occurs \_\_\_\_\_ times in III John.

Third John is addressed to \_\_\_\_\_.

The addressee walked in the \_\_\_\_\_.

The writer of III John refers to himself as "the \_\_\_\_\_."

Gaius was probably a convert of \_\_\_\_\_.

True-False

Gaius was a stranger to John T F

Gaius was a Christian T F

Diotrephes was known for his humility T F

Gaius was a charitable man T F

Demetrius was a man of good report T F

Diotrephes had talked about John with wicked words T F

Third John says nothing about prayer T F

John hoped to visit Gaius T F

Gaius showed hospitality toward Christians only T F

John refers to Christians as "friends" T F

Topics for further study

What does the epistle teach concerning praying for prosperity?

Contrast the character of Gaius and Diotrephes.

What happens when an ambitious dictator attempts to control a congregation?

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## Southern - 27-JUDE

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### JUDE

#### THE TITLE

The epistle is named for the writer, Jude.

#### THE WRITER

The writer signs his name as "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (1). It is generally agreed that he was a brother of the Lord (Matthew 13:55), and therefore not one of the apostles, for the brethren of the Lord did not believe on Jesus until after the resurrection (John 7:5; Acts 1:13-22). However, a few expositors try to identify the writer of this epistle as "Judas (Thaddeus) the brother of James," one of the twelve apostles (Luke 6:16; John 14:22). Since Jude does not call himself an apostle, we are inclined to believe that he was not.

#### TO WHOM ADDRESSED

Although the letter is addressed to Christians in general, "To them that are called, beloved in God the father, and kept for Jesus Christ" (1), it was likely intended at first for Jewish Christians in Palestine. Several allusions presuppose an acquaintance with Old Testament scriptures and Jewish traditions. Some critics believe that the epistle was sent to Antioch in Syria and that it was intended for both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

There is no suggestion concerning the place of origin, but critics estimate that it was written about A.D. 66. Evidently it was written before A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed, for Jude would certainly have mentioned that event along with the other persecutions given.

#### PURPOSE AND CONTENTS

False teachers among the brethren were teaching heresies in the congregational meetings. Some of the men were also immoral in conduct. Jude wrote to expose their immoralities and heresies, urging Christians "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (3). This epistle and the second chapter of II Peter are very similar. Some think that Jude wrote first, but in our present state of knowledge it is impossible to reach a definite conclusion regarding the matter. A distinctive feature of the book is the writer's fondness for triplet expressions. It is somewhat terse and picturesque. Alford describes it as an "impassioned invective with epithet on epithet, image on image." The stern warnings concerning the fate of wicked disturbers give some the impression that the writer was a harsh character with little or no pathos. This criticism, however, overlooks the fact that the writer was discussing a very serious problem as he was guided by the Holy Spirit. Some of the words have a definite poetic ring.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Complete the following triplets:

The threefold salutation: "...to them that are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ in God the Father, and \_\_\_\_\_ for Jesus Christ."

The threefold benediction: "\_\_\_\_\_ unto you and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ be multiplied."

Three examples of divine retribution: "...the Lord, having saved a \_\_\_\_\_ out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And \_\_\_\_\_ that kept not their own principality, ...he hath kept...unto the judgment...Even as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_...suffering the punishment of eternal fire."

Three types of wickedness: "They went in the way of \_\_\_\_\_, and ran riotously in the error of \_\_\_\_\_ for hire, and perished in the gainsaying of \_\_\_\_\_."

Three classes of evil-doers: "these are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ after their own lusts."

Three exhortations to Christians: They are to build up themselves in the most holy faith by "\_\_\_\_\_ in the Holy Spirit, \_\_\_\_\_ yourselves in the love of God, \_\_\_\_\_ for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Three expressions of Christian service toward the erring: "And on some have \_\_\_\_\_, who are in doubt; and some \_\_\_\_\_, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have \_\_\_\_\_ with fear."

Doxology: "...\_\_\_\_\_ all time, and \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_."

Topics for further study

List all the things said about evil workers.

What does the epistle teach concerning angels?

Summarize the teaching of the epistle regarding the punishment of sin.

What had the apostles foretold concerning false teachers described by Jude?

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## Southern - 28-REVELATION

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### REVELATION

#### THE TITLE

This book is called the Apocalypse, or Revelation, because it reveals or unveils what otherwise would be hidden. The first word in the Greek text means "revelation."

#### THE WRITER

The writer describes himself as John, a servant of Jesus Christ, "your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus" (Revelation 1:1; Revelation 1:4; Revelation 1:9; Revelation 22:8). Both internal and external evidences indicate that the apostle John wrote the book.

#### THE DATE

Two dates for the composition have been given. A few modern critics place it near the close of Nero's reign, about A.D. 65-70. The early church and many modern scholars set the date around A.D. 95-96, toward the close of Domitian's reign, which extended from A.D. 81 to A.D. 96. Eusebius quotes the testimony of Irenaeus (A.D. 170) which favors the latter view: "revelation was seen no long time since, but almost in our generation, towards the end of the reign of Domitian." Irenaeus had known Polycarp, a disciple of John.

#### THE PLACE OF WRITING

The writer states that the vision of Revelation came to him on the isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:9). Early historians affirm that John was banished to Patmos by Domitian toward the close of his reign, A.D. 95-96. In that lonely prison house of the Aegean Sea, John saw and recorded the visions of Revelation, though some scholars think that he waited until he had returned to Ephesus before writing them.

#### CHARACTER OF THE BOOK

Revelation, like Ezekiel and Daniel, belongs to that class of literature known as "Apocalyptic." The Greek word translated signified in verse 1 means "to give a sign, indicate." By means of symbolic images the book reveals great events in the progress of the church. The theme is the gradual triumph of the people of God. In a symbolic way it describes the fortunes of God's people across the centuries. The kingdom of Christ emerges victorious over all its enemies, and we see the Lord with His saints enjoying the wonders of the glory land.

#### SYSTEMS OF INTERPRETATION

Among Bible students there are four main classes of interpreters.

The Praeterist claims that the prophecies were fulfilled in Jewish history and in the early ages of the church. This system of interpretation connects many of the events with the history of pagan Rome.

The Futurist thinks all the events of the book will be fulfilled just before or just after Christ's second coming. This interpretation is the basis for many pre-millennial theories that contradict the scriptures.

Exponents of the Historical School hold that some prophecies have been fulfilled, some are now being fulfilled, and some will be fulfilled in the future.

The Spiritualist or Idealist thinks that the other interpreters make too much of the time element. He regards Revelation as the pictorial unfolding of great principles, and stresses the moral and spiritual elements. To him the book is "a representation of ideas rather than events."

Because of the formidable problems involved, it is impossible to include in this survey a detailed study of these various systems. In view of the apocalyptic style (1:1), the visions of the book must be treated accordingly. Perhaps it is safe to say that a combination of the historical and the spiritual approaches would be a good, conservative approach to an understanding of the book.

#### EXERCISES FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY

Study in detail the letters to the seven churches (2:1-3:21).

Describe each of the seven mystic figures (Chs. 12-14).

Note the points of similarity in the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven vials.

List all the symbols of perfection found in Revelation, such as words, numbers, instruments, etc.

Without any attempt to understand the symbolic details, read Revelation for the continuous note of victory which it sounds for the faithful saints of God.

List all the passages that predict the end of conflict and the ultimate triumph of the Lamb.

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