**Lesson 11- Pauline Epistles**

1. Romans
2. Written around 56-58 AD.
3. Probably written in Corinth at the end of his third missionary journey before leaving for Jerusalem.
4. He tells us he is writing to the Roman church who he says already has a good understanding of the gospel.
5. Key verse: Romans 1:16- The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.
6. Most systematic of all the books.
7. Main theme of Romans is the gospel. Namely, the gospel that presents a righteousness by faith. Meaning God’s righteousness is imputed to us through faith in Christ.
8. 1 Corinthians
9. Written in the mid-50’s AD and was probably written from Ephesus.
10. Sin city of the New Testament
11. 1 Corinthians 6:11- “Such were some of you.”
12. Addressed to “saints.”
13. Addresses many particular church issues.
14. 2 Corinthians
15. Written not long after 1 Corinthians
16. A response to things happening in the church, including criticisms that some people had of Paul himself, saying that Paul did not speak eloquently enough.
17. Multiple factions
18. Galatians
19. Written in mid-50s in response to a false teaching that Christ’s righteousness is not effective for us without our works.
20. The gospel is by grace through faith apart from works of the law.
21. Paul also explains his apostleship coming from the Lord Himself.
22. Galatians 2:20-21- Crucified with Christ with a righteousness not our own.
23. Ephesians and Colossians
24. It is very clear that Ephesians and Colossians were handling many of the same subject matters.
25. Many identical words or phrases between the two books, including themes.
26. Both books were most likely written while he was in prison in Rome in the early 60’s.
27. Begins with deep theological gospel truth: This is who Christ is, this is who you are in Christ, this is what God has done for you in Christ, then as the book continues, he begins addressing the practical issues
28. Paul’s method of teaching: (1) In light of who you are in Christ, (2) Put off these sinful habits, and (3) Put on these righteous habits.
29. Philippians
30. Philippians was written around 62-64 and was written from prison in Rome.
31. “Joy” mentioned 16 times.
32. One of the oldest creeds or hymns we have available from the early church, quoted in 2:6-11.
33. Philippians 2:6-11 and 3:7-11 are worth memorizing.
34. 1 Thessalonians & 2 Thessalonians
35. 1 Thessalonians was most likely around 51 AD from Corinth on his second missionary journey. 2 Thessalonians was written not long after that.
36. Mostly Gentile city, but 1/3 of the population was Jewish.
37. Had to leave Thessalonica early, so these letters clarify things he might have expounded on deeper had he been able to stay longer.
38. Both letters were most likely responses to Timothy and the church after Timothy asked Paul questions on particular theological questions
39. In 1 Thessalonians, he talks about their conversion and his concern that they stay focused on the sound doctrines of Christ, but he ends by speaking about the coming of the Lord. A message of comfort.
40. In 2 Thessalonians the day of the Lord is not mentioned as a comfort to believers, but as a terrifying day for the unrighteous.
41. Pastoral Letters
42. 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon are written to specific pastors rather than to churches as a whole.
43. Dates
44. 1 Timothy, Titus and Philemon written around 62-64 AD.
45. 2 Timothy written around 67-68 AD as a final letter from prison as he awaited his death from Rome.
46. Sound Doctrine
47. The phrase “sound doctrine” or its Greek equivalent is found only four times in the New Testament, every one of those appearances are in the pastoral letters. That shows us that the primary role of a pastor/elder is to proclaim, explain, and defend the flock with sound doctrine.
48. Much of these letters include not only a commitment to maintaining sound doctrine, answering those who oppose, but also maintaining order within the church, handling disagreements, the role of prayer in pastoral ministry, qualifications of elders and deacons, and how the church treats those within the body.
49. Titus
50. Written to a pastor named Titus and also includes qualifications for elders..
51. Philemon
52. Revolves around a runaway slave named Onesimus who ran away from a pastor Philemon and sought refuge with Paul. Paul writes to Philemon asking him to receive this slave as he would if he were Paul himself. This is unheard of in ancient times. He takes a slave and a master and puts them on the same level in Christ and transforms the heart of the master to love the slave as his brother and treat him as he would an honored apostle.

**Bible Study Discussion Questions**

* + - 1. Romans 1:16- How is the gospel the power of God for salvation to believers? This is Paul saying that the gospel is not just to get someone saved, but the power to continue to save them as Christians. What does it look like practically to apply the gospel to save someone from an addiction? Marital struggles? Depression? (**We must apply the gospel to every area of life. This is why Paul repeatedly writes in that same pattern mentioned in the lesson: (1) in light of who we are in Christ, (2) Put off, (3) Put on. Unless we are doing/thinking/saying in light of the gospel, we are striving by our own efforts.)**
      2. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. What does this passage teach us about the gospel and the church as relates to people who are so entrenched in their sin that they come to the church with it as part of their identity? **(Here are people who identify with sin that many apostate churches love to accept. Yet even though these things were more than accepted in Corinth, these people had changed because that’s what the gospel does)**
      3. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 is perhaps the earliest creed in existence. Considering that 1 Corinthians was written no later than the mid-50’s, and that Paul was delivering this as something passed on to him, we are talking about a creed that goes back as far to the beginning as can be imagined. What does this gospel focus on? Why is it important to emphasize Christ Himself? Why is it important to emphasize Christ’s death and that this death was specifically “for our sins”? Why is it important to emphasize that these things are according to the Scriptures? Why is it important to emphasize that He was buried? **(He actually died)** Why is it important to emphasize that He rose again on the third day? **(He actually rose bodily)**
      4. 2 Corinthians 4:1-6- What does this teach us about how people respond to the gospel? Why is 2 Corinthians 4:5 so important when we think about what we ought to do as a church on Sunday mornings or in Bible Studies?
      5. Galatians 2:20-21- What is the Christian’s identity in Christ? What does this mean? Where does our righteousness come from? Why can we not say it comes in any way from ourselves or the law?
      6. Ephesians 4:22-24- Consider Pauls’ pattern: (1) In light of who you are in Christ, (2) Put off these sinful habits, and (3) Put on these righteous habits. How is this displayed in this passage? Look at Ephesians 5 and see if you can find the put off/put on pattern elsewhere.
      7. Colossians 3:1-4- What is the believer’s identity in Christ? How should this change why/how we put off/put on?
      8. Philippians 2:6-11- What does this teach us about the nature of Christ? What does it mean to be in nature God? (**To share the nature of God means you *are* God. It means you are the uncaused first cause. It means you are omnipotent, omniscient, the source of all other things, etc.)** In what sense did Christ refuse to exploit His divinity (Consider Matthew 4:1-11 as one example)? (**Please be careful with accidental heresy here. We cannot use the phrase “emptied Himself” to mean that He ceased to be God on this earth. We must emphasize that Jesus is truly God, truly man. His divinity was always completely there and even while on this earth He was still upholding and sustaining all things by the word of His power. However, as sinless man, He refused to do anything without submitting to the Father. For instance, this is what made Satan’s temptation to turn stone into bread so evil. He was asking Him to prove that He was divine by doing something just to prove it rather than because the Father told Him to. That would have been sin because He would have been acting outside of God’s will.)**
      9. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18- Discuss this passage and why it is so important that we comfort one another this way.
      10. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10- How is the day of the Lord different in the perspectives of believers versus unbelievers.
      11. Read 1 Tim 1:10, 2 Tim 4:3, Titus 1:9, and 2:1 and discuss what the importance of sound doctrine is.
      12. Philemon 1:17. What does it tell us about Paul’s understanding of Christianity that he would say such a thing?