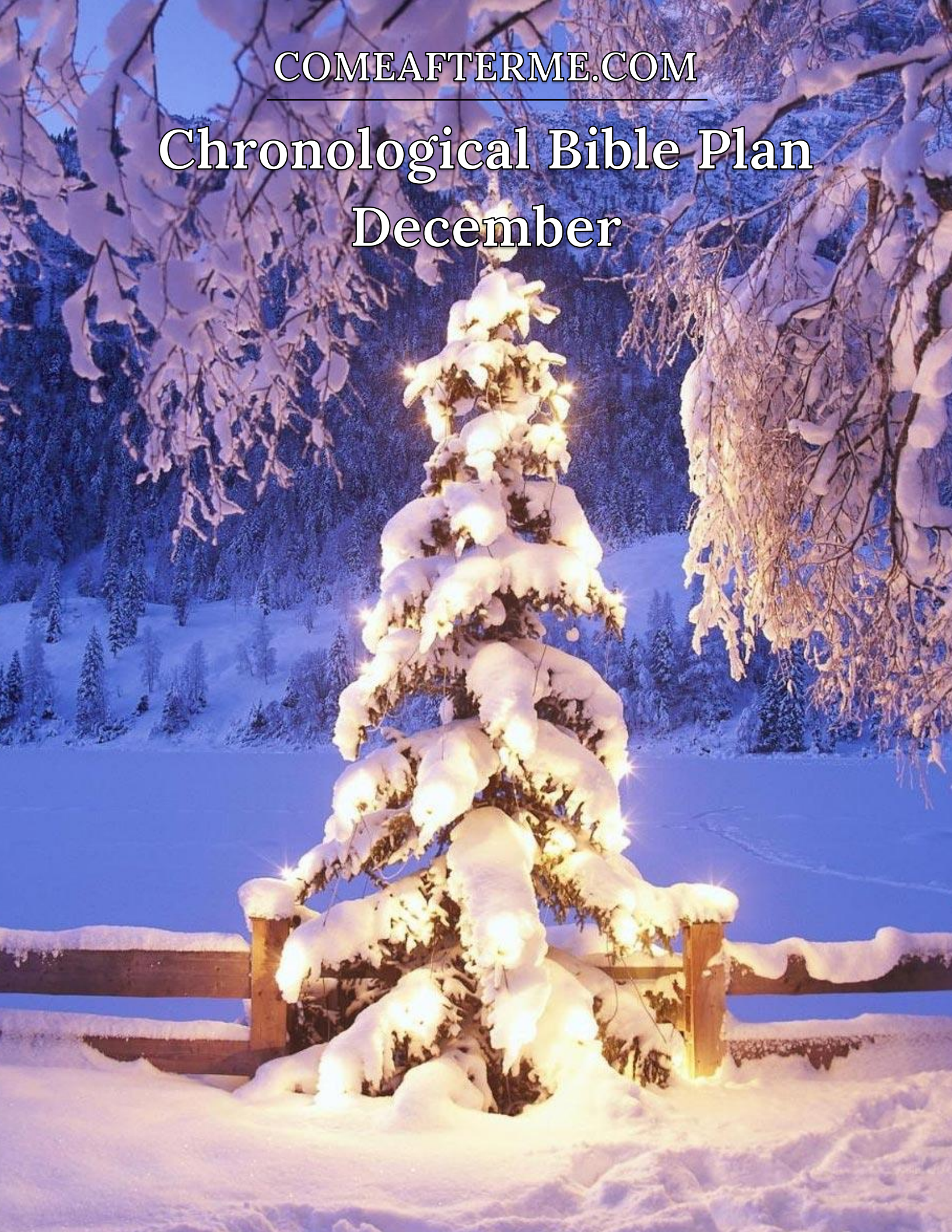


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Chronological Bible Plan December



DECEMBER

**“Every day I will bless you and praise
your name forever and ever” (Ps 145:2)**

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Paul's Third Missionary Journey—Emergency Visit to Corinth (brief and painful) (c. Summer 54)

2 Corinthians 2:1; 12:14; 13:1–3

2:1 For I have decided this for myself, not to come to you again in sorrow.

12:14 Behold, this third *time* I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden *to you*. For I am not seeking your possessions, but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

13:1 This *is* the third *time* I am coming to you. By the testimony of two or three witnesses every word will be established. [Deut 19:15]

2 I have already said when *I* was present the second time, and *although I* am absent now *I* also say in advance to those who sinned previously and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare *anyone*,

3 since you are demanding proof that Christ, who *is* not weak toward you, but is powerful among you, is speaking in me.

Paul's Third Letter to the Corinthians (now lost) / Paul Sends Titus to Corinth (c. Summer 54)

2 Corinthians 2:4; 7:8; 12:17–18

2:4 For out of great distress and anguish of heart I wrote to you through many tears, not so that you may be caused to be sad, but so that you may know the love that I have especially for you.

7:8 For if indeed I grieved you by my letter, I do not regret *it*. Even if I did regret *it* (I see that that letter grieved you, even though for a short time),

12:17 I have not taken advantage of you through anyone whom I sent to you, *have I?*

18 I urged Titus *to go*, and I sent the brother *with him*. Titus did not take advantage of you, *did he?* Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same footsteps?

Paul's Third Missionary Journey—The Great Disturbance in Ephesus (Fall 54)

Acts 19:23–40

Demetrius Incites a Riot

23 Now there happened at that time no little disturbance concerning the Way.

24 For someone named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver replicas of the temple of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen.

25 These he gathered together, and the workers occupied with such things, *and* said, "Men, you know that from this business we get our prosperity,

26 and you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this man Paul has persuaded *and* turned away a large crowd *by* saying that the *gods* made by hands are not gods.

27 So not only is there a danger this line of business of ours *will* come into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Artemis *will* be regarded as nothing—and *she* is about to be brought down even from her grandeur, *she* whom the whole *of* Asia and the *entire* world worship!"

28 And *when they* heard *this* and became full of rage, they began to shout, saying, "Great *is* Artemis of the Ephesians!"

Paul's Friends Prevent Him from Intervening

29 And the city was filled with the tumult, and with one purpose they rushed into the theater, seizing Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians *who were* traveling companions of Paul.

30 But *when* Paul wanted to enter into the popular assembly, the disciples would not let him.

31 And even some of the Asiarchs who were his friends sent *word* to him *and* were urging *him* not to risk himself *by going* into the theater.

"Great is Artemis of the Ephesians"

32 So some were shouting *one thing and* some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority did not know why they had assembled.

33 And *some* of the crowd advised Alexander, *when* the Jews put him forward. But Alexander, motioning *with his* hand, was wanting to defend himself to the popular assembly.

34 But *when they* recognized that he was a Jew, they were shouting with one voice from all *of them* for about two hours, "Great *is* Artemis of the Ephesians!"

The City Clerk Quiets the Crowd

35 And *when* the city secretary had quieted the crowd, he said, “Ephesian men, for who is there among men who does not know the Ephesian city is honorary temple keeper of the great Artemis and of *her* image fallen from heaven?”

36 Therefore *because* these *things* are undeniable, it is necessary *that* you be quiet and do nothing rash!

37 For you have brought these men *here who are* neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess.

38 If then Demetrius and the craftsmen *who are* with him have a complaint against anyone, the court days are observed and there are proconsuls—let them bring charges against one another!

39 But if you desire anything further, it will be settled in the lawful assembly.

40 For indeed we are in danger of being accused of rioting concerning today, *since there* is no cause in relation to which we will be able to give an account concerning this disorderly gathering!” And *when he* had said these *things*, he dismissed the assembly.

Paul’s Third Missionary Journey—Return to Macedonia via Troas (Fall 54)

Acts 20:1

2 Corinthians 2:12–13

20:1 Now after the turmoil had ceased, Paul summoned the disciples, and *after* encouraging *them*, he said farewell *and* departed to travel to Macedonia.

12 Now *when I* arrived in Troas for the gospel of Christ and a door was opened for me by the Lord,
13 I did not experience rest in my spirit, *because* I did not find Titus my brother, but saying farewell to them, I departed for Macedonia.

Paul’s Third Missionary Journey—Timothy and Titus Join Paul in Macedonia (Fall 54)

2 Corinthians 1:1; 7:5–7

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, together with all the saints who are in all Achaia.

7:5 For even *when* we arrived in Macedonia, our body had no rest, but we were afflicted in every *way*—quarrels outside, fears within.

6 But God, who comforts the humble, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

7 and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort *with* which he was comforted among you, *because he* reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

Paul’s Third Missionary Journey—Paul’s Ministry in Macedonia (Fall 54)

Acts 20:2a

2 Corinthians 8:1–5

2a And *after he* had gone through those regions and encouraged them at length,

1 Now we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia,
2 that with a great ordeal of affliction, the abundance of their joy and the extreme depth of their poverty have overflowed to the wealth of their generosity.
3 I testify that *they gave* according to *their* ability, and beyond *their* ability, by their own choice,
4 requesting of us with much exhortation the favor and the fellowship of the ministry to the saints,
5 and not just as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and *then* to us, by the will of God.

Paul’s Fourth Letter to the Corinthians – Part 1 (Fall 54)

2 Corinthians 1:1–2:13

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, together with all the saints who are in all Achaia.

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise to God for His Provision of Comfort

3 Blessed *is* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those *who are* in all affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

5 For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, thus through Christ our comfort overflows also.

6 But if we are afflicted, *it is* for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, *it is* for your comfort that is at work in the patient endurance of the same sufferings that we also suffer.

7 And our hope for you *is* firm, *because we* know that as you are sharers in the sufferings, so also *you will be sharers* in the comfort.

Paul's Afflictions in the Province of Asia (Ephesus; see Acts 19:23–41)

8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, concerning our affliction that happened in the *province of* Asia, that we were burdened to an extraordinary degree, beyond *our* strength, so that we were in despair even of living.

9 But *we* ourselves had the sentence of death in ourselves, so that we would not be putting confidence in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead,

10 who delivered us from so great *a risk* of death, and will deliver *us*, in whom we have put our hope that he will also deliver *us* again,

11 *while* you also join in helping on our behalf by prayer, so that thanks may be given on our behalf by many persons for this gracious gift *given* to us through *the help* of many.

Theme Statement: A Proper Understanding of Paul's Ministry

12 For our reason for boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you, in holiness and purity of motive from God, not in merely human wisdom, but by the grace of God.

13 For we are not writing *anything* else to you except what you can read or also understand. But I hope that you will understand completely,

14 just as you have also understood us in part, that we are your reason for boasting, just as you *are* also ours in the day of our Lord Jesus.

An Explanation of the Changes in Paul's Travel Plans

15 And with this confidence, I was wanting to come to you previously, in order that you may have a second proof of my goodwill, 16 and through you to go to Macedonia, and to come to you again from Macedonia, and to be sent on my way by you to Judea.

17 Therefore, *when I* was wanting *to do* this, perhaps then was I making use of vacillation? Or was I deciding what I was deciding according to the flesh, in order that with me my "yes" may be "yes" and my "no" *may be* "no" *at the same time*?

18 But God *is* faithful, so that our word to you is not "yes" and "no."

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the one who was proclaimed among you by us, by me and Silvanus and Timothy, did not become "yes" and "no," but has become "yes" in him.

20 For as many as *are the* promises of God, in him *they are* "yes"; therefore also through him *is* the "amen" to the glory of God through us.

21 Now the one who establishes us together with you in Christ and who anoints us *is* God,

22 *who* also sealed us and gave the down payment of the Spirit in our hearts.

The Painful (Second) Visit and the Explanation for His Decision Not to Return

23 But I call upon God *as* witness against my life, that *in order to* spare you, I did not come again to Corinth.

24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy, because by faith you stand firm.

2:1 For I have decided this for myself, not to come to you again in sorrow.

2 For if I *cause* you sorrow, then who will make me glad except the one who is caused to be sad by me?

3 And I wrote this very *thing* in order that *when I* came, I would not experience sorrow from those who ought to have made me glad, *because I* have confidence about you all, that my joy belongs to all of you.

4 For out of great distress and anguish of heart I wrote to you through many tears, not so that you may be caused to be sad, but so that you may know the love that I have especially for you.

Forgiveness of the Offender

5 But if anyone has caused sorrow, he has not caused me sorrow, but to some degree—in order not to say too much—to all of you.

6 This punishment by the majority *is* sufficient for such a person.

7 So then, you should rather forgive and comfort him, lest somehow this person should be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

8 Therefore I urge you to confirm *your* love for him.

9 Because for this *reason* also I wrote, in order that I could know your proven character, whether you are obedient in everything.

10 Now to whomever you forgive anything, I also *do*; for indeed, whatever I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, *it is* for your sake in the presence of Christ,

11 in order that we may not be exploited by Satan (for we are not ignorant of his schemes).
 12 Now *when I* arrived in Troas for the gospel of Christ and a door was opened for me by the Lord,
 13 I did not experience rest in my spirit, *because* I did not find Titus my brother, but saying farewell to them, I departed for Macedonia.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) Second Corinthians contains significant biographical information about Paul's varied hardships and revelatory visions that we otherwise would not know. The following outline of what happened after Paul left Corinth assumes that 2 Corinthians is a unity.¹
 - A) Paul's physical absence from Corinth apparently created a theological and administrative vacuum that others moved to fill. Paul may not have appointed specific leaders in the church since the Christians met in the houses of individuals who naturally tended to exert influence over others because of their wealth and social prominence. Paul argued that though they had a myriad of guardians in Christ, they had only one father in the gospel (1 Cor 4:15). This statement suggests that the church was inundated with would-be guides even before any interlopers arrived.
 - B) In two letters, a previous letter now lost (1 Cor 5:9–13) and 1 Corinthians, Paul challenged important persons in the community for their ethical misbehavior and their association with idolatry. Paul sent Timothy to Corinth from Ephesus with 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10–11). The guilty parties did not accept his discipline passively. His bold rebukes caused them to lose face and sparked deep resentment. They counterattacked by impugning his motives, methods, and person to undermine his authority in the church. The result: some members continued as avid supporters of Paul, some wavered, and some comprised a determined element of resistance to his leadership. Anyone who has held a leadership position in a church can probably identify with this scenario.
 - C) Paul ended up changing his plans from what he sketched out in 1 Corinthians 16:5–9. He intended to come to them after passing through Macedonia and perhaps spend the winter with them. Later, he says he wanted to go to Macedonia via Corinth and then return before setting sail for Jerusalem (2 Cor 1:15–16). Instead, Timothy may have returned from Corinth with bad news that caused Paul to make an emergency visit.
 - D) The visit turned out to be bitter and distressing for Paul (1:23; 2:1; 12:14; 13:1). He was the object of an attack by someone in the community (2:5–8; 7:11–12), and no one from the Corinthian congregation took up his defense.
 - E) Paul returned to Ephesus from Corinth and did not go on to Macedonia as previously planned.
 - F) He then wrote the sorrowful letter from Ephesus in lieu of another visit (1:23; 2:3–4; 7:8, 12) in which he sought to test their obedience (2:6). The letter apparently called on them to take action against the offender and to demonstrate their innocence in the matter and their zeal for him before God (7:12).
 - G) After this letter was written, Paul's life became so endangered in Asia that he attributed his survival to God's miraculous deliverance (most likely the great disturbance of Acts 19).
 - H) Titus probably delivered this severe letter to the Corinthians. He stayed to insure their repentance, to cement their renewed commitment to Paul, and to rejuvenate their dedication to the collection for the poor in Jerusalem. Paul had assured Titus of his confidence in the Corinthians' positive response to the letter (7:14) and expected to hear some word from Titus about the Corinthians' response to his letter.
 - I) Apparently, Paul planned to meet Titus in Troas (2:12–13). He had an evangelistic opportunity there, but his nagging worries about the situation in Corinth (see 11:28) caused him to leave this work. Presumably, when Paul realized that Titus was not on the last boat of the season (now autumn), he assumed that Titus would now have to travel by land through Macedonia. He left for Macedonia in hopes of meeting Titus there (2:12–13).

¹ Sourced from David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, The New American Commentary (Broadman & Holman, 1999): 27–30.

- J) Titus's arrival with good news about the repentance of the majority (2:6) and their zeal for Paul greatly comforted him (7:6–7, 9, 11, 13, 15). His expression of joy in chapter seven indicates that the severe letter and Titus's visit had repaired the breach.
- K) Healing a broken relationship takes time, as does complete ethical reformation. Paul responded by writing 2 Corinthians and sending Titus back with two brothers to complete the collection (8:6, 17–18, 22). He defends his activity as an apostle and makes a fervent appeal for the Corinthians to be receptive to him again. Their affection for him, however, had been alienated by the presence of boastful rivals, and he was still concerned that their former openness to him had diminished.
- L) At some point during this time, these interlopers arrived in Corinth. They apparently came off as “superapostles” who were more spiritual, eloquent, and compelling than Paul (11:5, 23; 12:11). It is likely that when they came to Corinth they made inroads with the group in Corinth already at odds with Paul and most receptive to alternative views. The presence of rivals forced Paul to address the issue of how they can discern a true apostle from a huckster, a true witness from an imposter, and true speech from foolishness.
- M) The letter appears to have resolved some issues. Paul spent three months in Greece (Acts 20:2–3) before leaving for Jerusalem with the collection, and, presumably, most of that time was spent in Corinth. The letter to the Romans was therefore probably written from Corinth on the eve of his departure.

Paul's Fourth Letter to the Corinthians – Part 2 (Fall 54)

2 Corinthians 2:14–7:16

The Fragrance of Paul's Ministry

2:14 But thanks *be* to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ, and who reveals the fragrance of the knowledge of him through us in every place.

15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing,

16 to those on the one hand an odor from death to death, *and* to those on the other hand a fragrance from life to life. And who *is* qualified for these *things*?

17 For we are not like the majority who peddle the word of God, but as from pure motives—but as from God—we speak before God in Christ.

The Corinthians are Paul's Letter

3:1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or *do we*, like some, need letters of recommendation to you or from you?

2 You are our letter, inscribed on our hearts, known and read by all people,

3 revealing that you are a letter of Christ, delivered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on tablets of human hearts. [cf. [Exod 24:12](#)]

Paul as Minister of the New Covenant

4 Now we possess such confidence through Christ toward God.

5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as from ourselves, but our adequacy *is* from God,

6 who also makes us adequate *as* servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

7 But if the ministry of death in letters carved on stone came with glory, so that the sons of Israel were not able to look intently into the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, which was transitory,

8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be even more with glory?

9 For if *there was* glory in the ministry of condemnation, by much more will the ministry of righteousness overflow with glory.

10 For indeed what had been glorified has not been glorified in this case, on account of the glory that surpasses *it*.

11 For if what was transitory *came* with glory, by much more what remains *is* with glory.

12 Therefore, *because we* have such a hope, we use much boldness,

13 and not as Moses used to place a veil over his face, in order that the sons of Israel would not stare at the end of what was transitory. [cf. [Exod 34:29–30](#)]

14 But their minds were hardened. For until this very day, the same veil remains upon the reading of the old covenant, not being uncovered, because it is done away with in Christ.

15 But until today, whenever Moses is read aloud, a veil lies upon their heart,

16 but whenever one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. [cf. [Exod 34:34](#)]

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, *there is* freedom.

18 And we all, with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory into glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Paul's Ministry of Proclaiming Christ Not Himself

4:1 Because of this, *since we* have this ministry, just as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart,

2 but we have renounced shameful hidden things, not behaving with craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but with the open proclamation of the truth commending ourselves to every person's conscience before God.

3 But if indeed our gospel is veiled, it is veiled among those who are perishing,

4 among whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, so that they would not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

5 For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus *as* Lord, and ourselves *as* your slaves for the sake of Jesus.

6 For God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," [[Gen 1:3](#)] *is the one* who has shined in our hearts for the enlightenment of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

List of Afflictions—Paul's Suffering Brings Glory to God

7 But we have this treasure in earthenware jars, in order that the extraordinary degree of the power may be from God and not from us.

8 We are afflicted in every *way*, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;

9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed;

10 always carrying around the death of Jesus in our body, in order that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

11 For we who are alive *are* continually being handed over to death because of Jesus, in order that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our mortal flesh.

12 So then, death is at work in us, but life in you.

13 But *because we* have the same spirit of faith in accordance with *what is* written, “I believed, therefore I spoke,” [[Ps 116:10](#)] we also believe, therefore we also speak,

14 *because we* know that the one who raised Jesus will also raise us together with Jesus and present *us* together with you.

15 For all *these things* are for your sake, in order that the grace that is increasing through the many may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

The Hope of the Resurrection

16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but even if our outer person is being destroyed, yet our inner *person* is being renewed day after day.

17 For our momentary light affliction is producing in us an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure and proportion,

18 *because we* are not looking at what is seen, but what is not seen. For what is seen *is* temporary, but what is not seen *is* eternal.

5:1 For we know that if our earthly house, the tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For indeed, in this *house* we groan, *because we* desire to put on our dwelling from heaven,

3 if indeed, even *after we* have taken *it* off, we will not be found naked.

4 For indeed we who are in this tent groan, being burdened for this reason, that we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

5 Now the one who has prepared us for this very *thing is* God, who has given us the down payment, the Spirit.

6 Therefore, *although we are* always confident and know that *while we* are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—

7 for we live by faith, not by sight—

8 so we are confident and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

9 Therefore indeed we have as our ambition, whether at home *in the body* or absent *from the body*, to be acceptable to him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, in order that each one may receive back the *things* through the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Ambassadors for Christ

11 Therefore, *because we* know the fear of the Lord, we are attempting to persuade people, but we are revealed to God, and I hope to be revealed in your consciences.

12 We are not commending ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to boast about us, in order that you may have *an answer* for those who boast in appearance and not in heart.

13 For if we are out of our senses, *it is* for God; if we are of sound mind, *it is* for you.

14 For the love of Christ controls us, *because we* have concluded this: that one died for all; as a result all died.

15 And he died for all, in order that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised.

16 So then, from now on we know no one from a human point of view, if indeed we have known Christ from a human point of view, but now we know *him this way* no longer.

17 Therefore if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; the old *things* have passed away; behold, new *things* have come.

18 And all these *things are* from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

20 Therefore we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as *if* God were imploring *you* through us. We beg *you* on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

21 He made the one who did not know sin *to be* sin on our behalf, in order that we could become the righteousness of God in him.

Paul's Commendable Ministry

6:1 Now *because we* are fellow workers, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

2 For he says, “At the acceptable time I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now *is* the acceptable time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation! [[Isa 49:8](#)]

3 *We are* giving no one an occasion for taking offense in anything, in order that our ministry will not have fault found *with it*,

4 but commending ourselves as servants of God in every *way*, in much endurance, in afflictions, in distresses, in difficulties,

5 in beatings, in prisons, in disturbances, in troubles, in sleepless nights, in going hungry,

6 in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in love without hypocrisy,

7 in the word of truth, in the power of God, with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and left hand,

8 through glory and dishonor, through slander and good repute, *regarded* as deceivers and *yet* truthful,

9 as unknown and *yet* known completely, as dying, and behold, we go on living, as disciplined, and *yet* not put to death,

10 as grieving, but always rejoicing, as poor, but making many rich, as having nothing, and possessing everything.

11 We have spoken freely and openly to you, Corinthians; our heart is open wide.
12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your affections.
13 Now the same *way in* exchange (I am speaking as to children), you open wide *your hearts* also.
14 Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers, for what participation *is there between* righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship *does light have* with darkness?
15 And what agreement *does Christ have* with Beliar? Or what share *does a believer have* with an unbeliever?
16 And what agreement *does the temple of God have* with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said, “I will live in them and will walk about *among them*, and I will be their God and they will be my people.” [[Lev 26:11–12](#)]
17 Therefore “come out from their midst and be separate,” says the Lord, “and do not touch what is unclean, [[Isa 52:11](#)] and I will welcome you, [[Ezek 20:41](#)]
18 and I will be a father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to me,” says the all-powerful Lord. [[2 Sam 7:14](#); [Isa 43:6](#)]
7:1 Therefore *since we* have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of body and spirit, accomplishing holiness in the fear of God.
2 Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have ruined no one, we have defrauded no one.

Titus’ Good Report—Godly Sorrow Brings Repentance

3 I do not say *this* to condemn you, because I have already said that you are in our hearts, so that we die together and we live together.
4 Great *is* my confidence toward you; great *is* my boasting on your behalf; I am filled with encouragement; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction.
5 For even *when* we arrived in Macedonia, our body had no rest, but we were afflicted in every *way*—quarrels outside, fears within.
6 But God, who comforts the humble, comforted us by the coming of Titus,
7 and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort *with* which he was comforted among you, *because he* reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.
8 For if indeed I grieved you by my letter, I do not regret *it*. Even if I did regret *it* (I see that that letter grieved you, even though for a short time),
9 now I rejoice, not that you were grieved, but that you were grieved to repentance. For you were grieved according to *the will of* God, so that you suffered loss in no way through us.
10 For grief according to *the will of* God brings about a repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted, but worldly grief brings about death.
11 For behold how much diligence this very *thing*, being grieved according to *the will of* God, has brought about in you: what defense *of yourselves*, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! In everything you have demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in this matter.
12 Consequently, even if I wrote to you, it was not because of the one who did wrong or because of the one who had been wronged, but in order that your diligence on our behalf might be revealed to you before God.
13 Because of this we have been encouraged, and in addition to our encouragement, we rejoiced much more over the joy of Titus, because his spirit had been refreshed by all of you.
14 For if I have boasted anything to him about you, I have not been put to shame, but as I have spoken everything to you in truth, thus also our boasting to Titus has proven to be true.
15 And his affection for you is all the more *when he* remembers the obedience of all of you as you welcomed him with fear and trembling.
16 I rejoice, because in everything I am completely confident in you.

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Paul's Fourth Letter to the Corinthians – Part 3 (Fall 54)

2 Corinthians 8–9

The Generosity of the Macedonians

8:1 Now we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2 that with a great ordeal of affliction, the abundance of their joy and the extreme depth of their poverty have overflowed to the wealth of their generosity.

3 I testify that *they gave* according to *their* ability, and beyond *their* ability, by their own choice, 4 requesting of us with much exhortation the favor and the fellowship of the ministry to the saints, 5 and not just as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and *then* to us, by the will of God. 6 So we urged Titus that, just as he had previously begun *it*, thus he would also complete for you this *act of grace*.

Paul Urges the Corinthians to Give Liberally

7 But just as you excel in everything—in faith and in speaking and in knowledge and with all diligence and in the love from us *that is* in you—so may you excel in this grace also.

8 I am not saying *this* as a command, but proving the genuineness of your love by means of the diligence of others.

9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that *although he* was rich, for your sake he became poor, in order that you, by his poverty, may become rich.

10 And I am giving an opinion in this *matter*, because this is profitable for you who not only began previously, a year ago, to do *something*, but also to want *to do it*.

11 So now also complete the doing *of it*, in order that just as *you have* the eagerness to want *to do it*, thus also *you may* complete *it* from *what you* have.

12 For if the eagerness is present according to what one has, *it is* acceptable not according to what one does not have.

Paul's Desire for Equality

13 For *this is* not that for others *there may be* relief, *and* for you difficult circumstances, but *as a matter* of equality.

14 At the present time your abundance *will be* for their need, in order that their abundance may also be for your need, so that there may be equality,

15 just as it is written, “The *one* who *gathered* much did not have too much, and the *one* who *gathered* little did not have too little.” [Exod 16:18]

The Delegates and Their Credentials

16 But thanks *be* to God, who has put in the heart of Titus the same devotion on your behalf,

17 because he not only welcomed our request, but being very earnest, by his own choice he went out to you.

18 And we have sent at the same time with him the brother whose praise in the gospel *has become known* throughout all the churches.

19 And not only *this*, but he was also chosen by the churches *as* our traveling companion together with this gift that is being administered by us to the glory of the Lord himself and *to show* our readiness *to help*.

20 *We are* trying to avoid this, lest anyone should find fault with us in this abundant gift that is being administered by us.

21 For we are taking into consideration what is honorable not only before the Lord, but also before people. [cf. Prov 3:4]

22 And we are sending with them our brother whom we have tested many times in many *things* that he is diligent, but now much more diligent *because of his* great confidence in you.

23 If *there is a question* concerning Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker for you. If *there is a question concerning* our brothers, *they are* messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

24 Therefore show to them the proof of your love and our boasting about you openly before the churches.

The Need for Readiness

9:1 For it is unnecessary for me to write to you concerning the ministry to the saints,

2 because I know your readiness *to help*, *concerning* which I keep on boasting to the Macedonians about you, that Achaia has been ready *to help* since last year, and your zeal has stirred up the majority *of them*.

3 But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you would not prove to be empty in this case, so that you may be prepared just as I was saying,

4 lest somehow if Macedonians should come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to speak of you—would be humiliated in connection with this project.

5 Therefore I considered *it* necessary to urge the brothers that they should go on ahead to you and make arrangements in advance for your generous gift that was promised previously, so this would be prepared as a generous gift and not as grudgingly granted.

Divine Principles of Giving

6 Now *the point is* this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap

bountifully.

7 Each one *should give* as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or from compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to cause all grace to abound to you, so that in everything at all times, *because you* have enough of everything, you may overflow in every good work.

9 Just as it is written, “He scattered widely, he gave to the poor; his righteousness remains forever.” [\[Ps 112:9\]](#)

10 Now the one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will provide and multiply your seed, and will cause the harvest of your righteousness to grow,

11 being made rich in every way for all generosity, which is producing through us thanksgiving to God,

12 because the service of this ministry is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but also is overflowing through many *expressions of* thanksgiving to God.

13 Through the proven character of this service *they will* glorify God because of the submission of your confession to the gospel of Christ and the generosity of *your* participation toward them and toward everyone,

14 and *they are* longing for you in their prayers for you, because of the surpassing grace of God to you.

15 Thanks *be* to God for his indescribable gift!

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Paul's Fourth Letter to the Corinthians – Part 4 (Fall 54)

2 Corinthians 10–13

Paul's Appeal to the Corinthians Not to Force Him to Exercise His Apostolic Authority

10:1 Now I, Paul, appeal to you myself by the humility and gentleness of Christ, who when I am present in person *am* humble among you, but *when I* am absent *am* bold toward you—

2 now I ask *when I* am present *that I will* not *need* to be bold with the confidence *with* which I propose to show boldness toward some who consider us as behaving according to the flesh.

3 For *although we* are living in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh,

4 for the weapons of our warfare *are* not merely human, but powerful to God for the tearing down of fortresses, tearing down arguments

5 and all pride that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

6 And we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is completed.

7 You are looking at things according to appearance. If anyone is convinced he himself is Christ's, he should consider this concerning himself again: that just as Christ himself *is*, so also *are* we.

8 For even if I boast somewhat more about our authority that the Lord gave *us* for building you up and not for tearing you down, I will not be put to shame,

9 so that I do not want to appear as if I were terrifying you by my letters,

10 because it is said, "His letters *are* severe and powerful, but his bodily presence *is* weak and his speech is of no account."

11 Let such a person consider this: that what we are in word by letters *when we* are absent, *we will* also *be* in actions *when we* are present.

The Proper Limits of Boasting / What Constitutes Valid Commendation

12 For we do not dare to classify or to compare ourselves with some who commend themselves, but *they* themselves, *when they* measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, do not understand.

13 But we will not boast beyond limits, but according to the measure of the assignment that God has assigned to us as a measure to reach even as far as you.

14 For we are not overextending ourselves, as *if we* had not reached you, because we have reached even as far as you with the gospel of Christ,

15 not boasting beyond limits in the labors of others, but having hope *that as* your faith is growing to be enlarged greatly by you according to our assignment,

16 so that we may proclaim the gospel in the regions that lie beyond you, *and* not boast in the things accomplished in the *area* assigned to someone else.

17 But "the one who boasts, let him boast in the Lord." [[Jer 9:24](#)]

18 For it is not the one commending himself who is approved, but *the one* whom the Lord commends.

Paul's Defense of His Apostleship

11:1 I wish that you would put up with me in something a little foolish—but indeed you are putting up with me.

2 For I am jealous *for* you with a godly jealousy, because I promised you *in marriage* to one husband, to present *you as* a pure virgin to Christ.

3 But I am afraid lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds may be led astray from the sincerity and the purity of *devotion* to Christ.

4 For if the one who comes proclaims another Jesus whom we have not proclaimed, or you receive a different spirit which you did not receive, or a different gospel which you did not accept, you put up with *it well enough!*

5 For I consider myself in no way to be inferior to the preeminent apostles.

6 But even if *I am* unskilled in speech, yet *I am* not in knowledge; certainly in everything *we* have made this clear to you in every *way*.

Paul's Financial Independence During His Ministry Among the Corinthians

7 Or did I commit a sin *by* humbling myself in order that you may be exalted, because I proclaimed the gospel of God to you without payment?

8 I robbed other churches *by* accepting support *from them* for the ministry to you.

9 And *when I* was present with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will keep *myself from being a burden*.

10 *As the* truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia.

11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows *I do!*

12 But what I am doing, I will also do, in order that I may remove the opportunity of those who want an opportunity, that they may be found just as also *we are* in what they are boasting about.

The “Super-Apostles”

13 For such people *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

14 And no wonder, for Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light.

15 Therefore *it is* not a great thing if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

Justification for Foolish Boasting

16 Again I say, do not let anyone think I am foolish. But indeed, if *you do*, accept me even as foolish, in order that I also may boast a little.

17 What I am saying in this project of boasting, I am not saying as the Lord *would say*, but as in foolishness.

18 Since many are boasting according to human standards, I also will boast.

19 For *because you* are wise, you put up with foolish people gladly!

20 For you put up with *it* if someone enslaves you, if someone devours *you*, if someone takes advantage of *you*, if someone is presumptuous *toward you*, if someone strikes you in the face.

21a I say *this* to *my* shame, namely, that we have been weak.

Paul’s Heritage and Trials

21b But in whatever anyone dares to *boast*—I am speaking in foolishness—I also dare to *boast*.

22 Are they Hebrews? I *am* also! Are they Israelites? I *am* also! Are they descendants of Abraham? I *am* also!

23 Are they servants of Christ?—I am speaking as though I were beside myself—I *am* more so, with far greater labors, with far more imprisonments, with beatings to a much greater degree, in *danger of* death many times.

24 Five times I received at the hands of the Jews forty *lashes* less one.

25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked. A day and a night I have spent in the deep water.

26 I *have been* on journeys many times, in dangers from rivers, in dangers from robbers, in dangers from *my own* people, in dangers from the Gentiles, in dangers in the city, in dangers in the wilderness, in dangers at sea, in dangers because of false brothers,

27 with toil and hardship, often in sleepless nights, with hunger and thirst, often going hungry, in cold and poorly clothed.

28 Apart from these external things, *there is* the pressure on me every day of the anxiety about all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I *am* not weak? Who is caused to sin, and I do not burn *with indignation*?

Escape from Damascus

30 If it is necessary to boast, I will boast *about* the things related to my weakness.

31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

32 In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to take me into custody,

33 and I was lowered through a window through the wall in a rope-basket, and I escaped his hands.

Paul’s Visions and Revelations

12:1 It is necessary to boast; *it is* not profitable, but I will proceed to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I know a man in Christ fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or outside the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven,

3 and I know this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows—

4 that he was caught up to paradise and heard words not to be spoken, which *it is* not permitted for a person to speak.

5 On behalf of such a person I will boast, but on behalf of myself I will not boast, except in my weaknesses.

6 For if I want to boast, I will not be foolish, because I will be telling the truth, but I am refraining, so that no one can credit to me more than what he sees *in* me or hears anything from me,

7a even because of the extraordinary degree of the revelations.

Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh

7b Therefore, so that I would not exalt myself, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan, in order that it would torment me so that I would not exalt myself.

8 Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would depart from me.

9 And he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, because the power is perfected in weakness.” Therefore rather I will boast most gladly in my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may reside in me.

10 Therefore I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in calamities, in persecutions and difficulties for the sake of Christ, for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

Proof of Apostleship

11 I have become a fool! You compelled me, for I ought to have been commended by you, for I *am* in no way inferior to the

preeminent apostles, even if I am nothing.

12 Indeed, the signs of an apostle have been done among you with all patient endurance, both signs and wonders and deeds of power.

13 For in what respect are you made worse off more than the rest of the churches, except that I myself was not a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!

Paul's Plan to Visit the Corinthians for the Third Time

14 Behold, this third *time* I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden *to you*. For I am not seeking your possessions, but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

15 But I will spend and be expended most gladly for your lives. If I love you much more, am I to be loved less?

16 But let *it* be. I have not been a burden to you, but *because I* was crafty, I took you by cunning.

17 I have not taken advantage of you through anyone whom I sent to you, *have I*?

18 I urged Titus *to go*, and I sent the brother *with him*. Titus did not take advantage of you, *did he*? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same footsteps?

19 Have you been thinking all this time that we are defending ourselves to you? We are speaking in Christ before God, and all *these things*, dear friends, *are* for your edification.

20 For I am afraid lest somehow *when I* arrive, I will not find you as I want, and I may be found by you as you do not want. *I am afraid* lest somehow *there will be* strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, pride, disorder.

21 *I am afraid* lest *when I* come again my God will humiliate me in your presence, and I will grieve over many of those who sinned previously and have not repented because of their impurity and sexual immorality and licentiousness that they have practiced.

Paul's Warning—I Will Use My Authority If I Must

13:1 This *is* the third *time* I am coming to you. By the testimony of two or three witnesses every word will be established. [[Deut 19:15](#)]

2 I have already said when *I* was present the second time, and *although I* am absent now *I* also say in advance to those who sinned previously and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare *anyone*,

3 since you are demanding proof that Christ, who *is* not weak toward you, but is powerful among you, is speaking in me.

4 For indeed, he was crucified because of weakness, but he lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we will live together with him because of the power of God toward you.

5 Test yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize regarding yourselves that Jesus Christ *is* in you, unless you are unqualified?

6 And I hope that you will recognize that we are not unqualified!

7 Now we pray to God that you not do wrong in any way, not that we are seen as approved, but that you do what is good, even *though* we are *seen* as though unqualified.

8 For we are not able *to do* anything against the truth, but rather *only* for the truth.

9 For we rejoice whenever we are weak, but you are strong, and we pray for this: your maturity.

10 Because of this, I am writing these *things although I* am absent, in order that *when I* am present I may not have to act severely according to the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.

Benediction

11 Finally, brothers, rejoice, be restored, be encouraged, be in agreement, be at peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

12 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

13 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit *be* with all of you.

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Paul's Third Missionary Journey – Third Visit to Corinth (Winter 54/55)

Acts 20:2b–3a

2b he [*Paul*] came to Greece
3a and stayed three months [*at Corinth*].

Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome – Part 1 (Winter 54/55)

Romans 1–4

Introduction and Greeting

1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called *to be* an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,
2 which he promised previously through his prophets in the holy scriptures,
3 concerning his Son, who was born a descendant of David according to the flesh,
4 who was declared Son of God in power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord,
5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship for the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles on behalf of his name,
6 among whom you also are *the* called of Jesus Christ.
7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God, called *to be* saints. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and Occasion—Paul's Burden for Rome

8 First, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being proclaimed in the whole world.
9 For God, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, is my witness, how constantly I make mention of you,
10 always asking in my prayers if somehow now at last I may succeed to come to you in the will of God.
11 For I desire to see you, in order that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, in order to strengthen you,
12 that is, to be encouraged together with you through our mutual faith, both yours and mine.
13 Now I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, that often I intended to come to you, and was prevented until now, in order that I might have some fruit among you also, just as also among the rest of the Gentiles.
14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.
15 Thus I am eager to proclaim the gospel also to you who *are* in Rome.

Theme Statement

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith, just as it is written, "But the one who is righteous by faith will live." [[Hab 2:4](#)]

The Gentiles are Without Excuse

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all impiety and unrighteousness of people, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,
19 because what can be known about God is evident among them, for God made *it* clear to them.
20 For from the creation of the world, his invisible *attributes*, both his eternal power and deity, are discerned clearly, being understood in the things created, so that they are without excuse.
21 For *although they* knew God, they did not honor *him* as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their reasoning, and their senseless hearts were darkened.
22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools,
23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God with the likeness of an image of mortal human beings and birds and quadrupeds and reptiles.
24 Therefore God gave them over in the desires of their hearts to immorality, *that* their bodies would be dishonored among themselves,
25 who exchanged the truth of God with a lie, and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed for eternity. Amen.
26 Because of this, God gave them over to degrading passions, for their females exchanged the natural relations for those contrary to nature,
27 and likewise also the males, abandoning the natural relations with the female, were inflamed in their desire toward one another, males with males committing the shameless deed, and receiving in themselves the penalty that was necessary for their error.
28 And just as they did not see fit to recognize God, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do the things *that are* not proper,
29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greediness, malice, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malevolence. *They are* gossipers,
30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boasters, contrivers of evil, disobedient to parents,

31 senseless, faithless, unfeeling, unmerciful,

32 *who, although they* know the requirements of God, that those who do such things are worthy of death, not only do they do the same *things*, but also they approve of those who do *them*.

The Jews are Also Accountable—There Is No Partiality With God

2:1 Therefore you are without excuse, O man, every one *of you* who passes judgment. For in that which you pass judgment on someone else, you condemn yourself, for you who are passing judgment are doing the same *things*.

2 Now we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who do such things.

3 But do you think this, O man who passes judgment on those who do such things, and who does the same *things*, that you will escape the judgment of God?

4 Or do you despise the wealth of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

6 who will reward each one according to his works: [\[Ps 62:12\]](#)

7 to those who, by perseverance in good work, seek glory and honor and immortality, eternal life,

8 but to those *who act* from selfish ambition and who disobey the truth, but who obey unrighteousness, wrath and anger.

9 *There will be* affliction and distress for every human being who does evil, of the Jew first and of the Greek,

10 but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and to the Greek.

11 For *there* is no partiality with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

13 For it is not the hearers of the law *who are* righteous in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be declared righteous.

14 For whenever the Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature the things of the law, these, *although they* do not have the law, are a law to themselves,

15 who show the work of the law written on their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts *one* after another accusing or even defending them

16 on the day when God judges the secret things of people, according to my gospel, through Christ Jesus.

The Jews' Misplaced Trust in Their Heritage

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God

18 and know his will and approve the things that are superior, *because you* are instructed by the law,

19 and are confident *that* you yourself are a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness,

20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

21 Therefore, the one who teaches someone else, do you not teach yourself? The one who preaches not to steal, do you steal?

22 The one who says not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? The one who abhors idols, do you rob temples?

23 Who boast in the law, by the transgression of the law you dishonor God!

24 For just as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." [\[Isa 52:5\]](#)

25 For circumcision is of value if you do the law, but if you should be a transgressor of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

26 Therefore, if the uncircumcised person follows the requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be credited for circumcision?

27 And the uncircumcised person by nature who carries out the law will judge you who, *though provided* with the precise written code and circumcision *are* a transgressor of the law.

28 For the Jew is not one outwardly, nor *is* circumcision outwardly, in the flesh.

29 But the Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision *is* of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter, whose praise *is* not from people but from God.

Paul Answers the Objections of the Jews

3:1 Therefore, what *is* the advantage of the Jew, or what *is* the use of circumcision?

2 Much in every way. For first, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

3 What is the result if some refused to believe? Their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, *will it*?

4 May it never be! But let God be true but every human being a liar, just as it is written,

"In order that you may be justified in your words,
and may prevail when you are judged." [\[Ps 51:4\]](#)

5 But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? God, who inflicts wrath, *is* not unjust, *is he*?

(I am speaking according to a human perspective.)

6 May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world?

7 But if by my lying, the truth of God abounded to his glory, why am I also still condemned as a sinner?

8 And *why* not (as we are slandered, and as some affirm that we say), “Let us do evil, in order that good may come *of it*?” Their condemnation is just!

The Scriptures Confirm That Both Jew and Gentile Are Guilty Before God

9 What then? Do we have an advantage? Not at all. For we have already charged both Jews and Greeks are all under sin, 10 just as it is written,

“*There* is no one righteous, not even one;

11 *there* is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.

12 All have turned aside together; they have become worthless;
There is no one who practices kindness;
there is not even one. [Ps 14:1–3]

13 Their throat *is* an opened grave;
they deceive with their tongues; [Ps 5:9]
the venom of asps *is* under their lips, [Ps 140:3]

14 whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. [Ps 10:7]

15 Their feet *are* swift to shed blood;

16 destruction and distress *are* in their paths,

17 and they have not known the way of peace. [Isa 59:7–8]

18 The fear of God is not before their eyes.” [Ps 36:1]

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those under the law, in order that every mouth may be closed and the whole world may become accountable to God.

20 For by the works of the law no person will be declared righteous before him, [Ps 143:2] for through the law *comes* knowledge of sin.

God’s Righteousness is Available to All Who Have Faith in Jesus Christ

21 But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, being testified about by the law and the prophets—

22 that is, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. For *there* is no distinction,

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

24 being justified as a gift by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,

25 whom God made publicly available as the mercy seat through faith in his blood, for a demonstration of his righteousness, because of the passing over of previously committed sins,

26 in the forbearance of God, for the demonstration of his righteousness in the present time, so that he should be just and the one who justifies the *person* by faith in Jesus.

Claim—We are Justified by Faith Apart from Works

27 Therefore, where *is* boasting? It has been excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.

28 For we consider a person to be justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

29 Or *is God* the God of the Jews only? *Is he* not also *the God* of the Gentiles? Yes, also of the Gentiles,

30 since God *is* one, who will justify those who are circumcised by faith and those who are uncircumcised through faith.

31 Therefore, do we nullify the law through faith? May it never be! But we uphold the law.

Supporting Argument—Abraham was Justified by Faith, Not Works

4:1 What then shall we say *that* Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh, has found?

2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

3 For what does the scripture say? “And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness.” [Gen 15:6]

4 Now to the one who works, his pay is not credited according to grace, but according to his due.

5 But to the one who does not work, but who believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited for righteousness,

6 just as David also speaks about the blessing of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

7 “Blessed *are they* whose lawless deeds have been forgiven,
and whose sins are covered over.

8 Blessed *is* the person against whom the Lord will never count sin.” [Ps 32:1–2]

Supporting Argument—Abraham was Justified by Grace, Not Law

9 Therefore, *is* this blessing for those who are circumcised, or also for those who are uncircumcised? For we say, “Faith was credited to Abraham for righteousness.” [Gen 15:6]

10 How then was it credited? *While he* was circumcised or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised but while uncircumcised!

11 And he received the sign of circumcision *as* a seal of the righteousness by faith which *he had* while uncircumcised, so that he could be the father of all who believe although they are uncircumcised, so that righteousness could be credited to them, [cf. Gen 17]

12 and the father of those who are circumcised to those who are not only from the circumcision, but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants, *that* he would be heir of the world, *was* not through the law, but through the righteousness by faith.

14 For if those of the law *are* heirs, faith is rendered void and the promise is nullified.

15 For the law produces wrath, but where *there* is no law, neither *is there* transgression.

16 Because of this, *it is* by faith, in order that *it may be* according to grace, so that the promise may be secure to all the descendants, not only to those of the law, but also to those of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

17 (just as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”) [Gen 17:5] before God, in whom he believed, the one who makes the dead alive and who calls the things that are not as *though* they are,

Supporting Argument—Abraham was Justified by Divine Power, Not Human Effort

18 who against hope believed in hope, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was said, “so will your descendants be.” [Gen 15:5]

19 And not being weak in faith, he considered his own body as good as dead, *because he* was approximately a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.

20 And he did not waver in unbelief at the promise of God, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God

21 and being fully convinced that what he had promised, he was also able to do.

22 Therefore it was credited to him for righteousness.

23 But it was not written for the sake of him alone that it was credited to him,

24 but also for the sake of us to whom it is going to be credited, to those who believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

25 who was handed over on account of our trespasses, and was raised up in the interest of our justification.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) Luke tells us that Paul spent three months in Greece before beginning his homeward journey (Acts 20:2b–3a). We surmise that during his stay in Greece (most likely at Corinth, see 2 Cor 13:1, 10), Paul wrote his letter to the Romans. This is suggested by the fact that Paul commends to the Romans a woman, Phoebe, from Cenchrea, a seaport adjacent to Corinth (Rom 16:1–2). Moreover, the Gaius with whom Paul is apparently staying (Rom 16:23) is probably the same Gaius whom Paul baptized at Corinth (1 Cor 1:14). It is also likely (while by no means certain) that “Erastus the city treasurer” (*polis oikonomos*) is the same Erastus who is identified in an inscription as an *aedile* [city commissioner] at Corinth (Rom 16:23).¹

¹ Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996): 2–3.

Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome – Part 2 (Winter 54/55)

Romans 5–8

Peace and Reconciliation Through Jesus Christ

5:1 Therefore, *because we* have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 2 through whom also we have *obtained* access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God.
 3 And not only *this*, but we also boast in our afflictions, *because we* know that affliction produces patient endurance,
 4 and patient endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope,
 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
 6 For *while* we were still helpless, yet at the proper time Christ died for the ungodly.
 7 For only rarely will someone die on behalf of a righteous person (for on behalf of a good person possibly someone might even dare to die),
 8 but God demonstrates his own love for us, *in* that *while* we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
 9 Therefore, by much more, *because we* have been declared righteous now by his blood, we will be saved through him from the wrath.
 10 For if, *while we* were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, by much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life.
 11 And not only *this*, but also *we are* boasting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Adam's Sin Contrasted With God's Gracious Gift

12 Because of this, just as sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned.
 13 For until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not charged to one's account *when there* is no law.
 14 But death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who did not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who is to come.
 15 But the gift is not like the trespass, for if by the trespass of the one, the many died, by much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, multiply to the many.
 16 And the gift *is* not as through the one who sinned, for on the one hand, judgment from the one *sin led* to condemnation, but the gift, from many trespasses, *led* to justification.
 17 For if by the trespass of the one *man*, death reigned through the one *man*, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.
 18 Consequently therefore, as through one trespass *came* condemnation to all people, so also through one righteous deed *came* justification of life to all people.
 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous.
 20 Now the law came in as a side issue, in order that the trespass could increase, but where sin increased, grace was present in greater abundance,
 21 so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul Explains Who We Are In Christ

6:1 What therefore shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, in order that grace may increase?
 2 May it never be! How can we who died to sin still live in it?
 3 Or do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?
 4 Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we may live a new way of life.
 5 For if we have become identified with *him* in the likeness of his death, certainly also we will be *identified with him in the likeness of his* resurrection,
 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified together with *him*, in order that the body of sin may be done away with, *that* we may no longer be enslaved to sin.
 7 For the one who has died has been freed from sin.
 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him,
 9 knowing that Christ, *because he* has been raised from the dead, is going to die no more, death no longer being master over him.
 10 For that *death* he died, he died to sin once and never again, but that *life* he lives, he lives to God.

Paul Exhorts Us to Live Out in Practice What is True of Us in Spirit

11 So also you, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that *you* obey its desires,
 13 and do not present your members to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your members to God *as* instruments of righteousness.
 14 For sin will not be master over you, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Illustration of Master and Slave—We are the Slave of Whatever We Obey

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!
 16 Do you not know that to whomever you present yourselves *as* slaves for obedience, you are slaves to whomever you obey, whether sin, *leading* to death, or obedience, *leading* to righteousness?
 17 But thanks *be* to God that you were slaves of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart the pattern of teaching to which you were entrusted,
 18 and having been set free from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness.
 19 (I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.) For just as you presented your members *as* slaves to immorality and lawlessness, *leading* to lawlessness, so now present your members *as* slaves to righteousness, *leading* to sanctification.
 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with respect to righteousness.
 21 Therefore what sort of fruit did you have then, about which you are now ashamed? For the end of those *things is* death.
 22 But now, having been set free from sin and having been enslaved to God, you have your fruit *leading* to sanctification, and its end *is* eternal life.
 23 For the compensation due sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Illustration of Husband and Wife—We are Released from the Law by Our Death in Christ

7:1 Or do you not know, brothers (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law is master of a person for as long a time *as* he lives?
 2 For the married woman is bound by law to *her* husband while he lives, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of the husband.
 3 Therefore as a result, if she belongs to another man *while* her husband is living, she will be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress *if she* belongs to another man.
 4 So then, my brothers, you also were brought to death with respect to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to the one who was raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.
 5 For when we were in the flesh, sinful desires were working through the law in our members, to bear fruit for death.
 6 But now we have been released from the law, *because we have died to that* by which we were bound, so that we may serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter *of the law*.

The Nature of the Relationship Between the Law and Sin (as seen in Paul's life prior to conversion)

7 What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin? May it never be! But I would not have known sin except through the law, for I would not have known covetousness if the law had not said, "Do not covet." [[Exod 20:17](#)]
 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all *kinds of* covetousness. For apart from the law, sin *is* dead.
 9 And I was alive once, apart from the law, but *when* the commandment came, sin sprang to life
 10 and I died, and this commandment which *was to lead to* life was found with respect to me to *lead to* death.
 11 For sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed *me*.
 12 So then, the law *is* holy, and the commandment *is* holy and righteous and good.
 13 Therefore, *did that which is* good become death to me? May it never be! Rather *it was* sin, in order that it might be recognized *as* sin, producing death through *what is* good for me, in order that sin might become sinful to an extraordinary degree through the commandment.

The Law's Inability to Deliver from the Bondage of Sin (as seen in Paul's life prior to conversion)

14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, sold into slavery to sin.
 15 For what I am doing I do not understand, because what I want *to do*, this I do not practice, but what I hate, this I do.
 16 But if what I do not want *to do*, this I do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.
 17 But now I am no longer the one doing it, but sin that lives in me.
 18 For I know that good does not live in me, that is, in my flesh. For the willing is present in me, but the doing *of* the good *is* not.
 19 For the good that I want *to do*, I do not do, but the evil that I do not want *to do*, this I do.
 20 But if what I do not want *to do*, this I am doing, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin that lives in me.
 21 Consequently, I find the principle with me, the one who wants to do good, that evil is present with me.
 22 For I joyfully agree with the law of God in my inner person,
 23 but I observe another law in my members, at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that exists in

my members.

24 Wretched man *that I am!* Who will rescue me from this body of death?

25 Thanks *be* to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself with my mind am enslaved to the law of God, but with my flesh *I am enslaved* to the law of sin.

Life in the Spirit (union with Christ) Contrasted With Life in the Flesh

8:1 Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation for those *who are* in Christ Jesus.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what *was* impossible for the law, in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did*. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and concerning sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,

4 in order that the requirement of the law would be fulfilled in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

5 For those who are *living* according to the flesh are intent on the things of the flesh, but those *who are living* according to the Spirit *are intent on* the things of the Spirit.

6 For the mindset of the flesh *is* death, but the mindset of the Spirit *is* life and peace,

7 because the mindset of the flesh *is* enmity toward God, for *it is* not subjected to the law of God, for *it is* not able *to do so*,

8 and those who are in the flesh are not able to please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to him.

10 But if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

11 And if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also make alive your mortal bodies through his Spirit who lives in you.

12 So then, brothers, we are obligated not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

13 For if you live according to the flesh, you are going to die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Our Adoption as Sons of God

14 For all those who are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery *leading* to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

16 The Spirit himself confirms to our spirit that we are children of God,

17 and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer together *with him* so that we may also be glorified together *with him*.

Present Suffering and Future Glory

18 For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that is about to be revealed to us.

19 For the eagerly expecting creation awaits eagerly the revelation of the sons of God.

20 For the creation has been subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of the one who subjected *it*, in hope

21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its servility to decay, into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groans together and suffers agony together until now.

23 Not only *this*, but we ourselves also, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves *while we* await eagerly *our* adoption, the redemption of our body.

24 For in hope we were saved, but hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees?

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we await *it* eagerly with patient endurance.

26 And likewise also, the Spirit helps *us* in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as one ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes *for us with* unexpressed groanings.

27 And the one who searches our hearts knows what the mindset of the Spirit *is*, because he intercedes on behalf of the saints according to *the will of* God.

28 And we know that all *things* work together for good for those who love God, for those who are called according to *his* purpose,

29 because *those* whom he foreknew, he also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers.

30 And *those* whom he predestined, these *he* also called, and *those* whom he called, these *he* also justified, and *those* whom he justified, these *he* also glorified.

“If God is for us, who can be against us?”

31 What then shall we say about these *things*? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?

32 Indeed, *he* who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, together with him, freely give us all *things*?

33 Who will bring charges against God’s elect? God *is* the one who justifies.

34 Who *is* the one who condemns? Christ *is* the one who died, and more than that, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? *Will* affliction or distress or persecution or hunger or lack of sufficient clothing or danger or the sword?

36 Just as it is written,

“On account of you we are being put to death the whole day *long*;
we are considered as sheep for slaughter.” [[Ps 44:22](#)]

37 *No*, but in all these *things* we prevail completely through the one who loved us.

38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome – Part 3 (Winter 54/55)

Romans 9–11

Paul's Anguish Over Israel's Failure to Believe

9:1 I am telling the truth in Christ—I *am* not lying; my conscience bears witness to me in the Holy Spirit—

2 that my grief is great and *there is* constant distress in my heart.

3 For I could wish myself to be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my fellow countrymen according to the flesh,
4 who are Israelites, *to* whom *belong* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the *temple*
service, and the promises,

5 *to* whom *belong* the patriarchs, and from whom *is* the Christ according to human descent, who is God over all, blessed forever!
Amen.

God's Word Has Not Failed—His Promise Was to the Israel of Faith, Not Ethnic Israel**(physical descent does not equal participation in the promised blessing)**

6 But *it is* not as if the word of God had failed. For not all those *who are descended* from Israel *are truly* Israel,

7 nor *are they* all children because they are descendants of Abraham, but “In Isaac will your descendants be named.” [[Gen 21:12](#)]

8 That is, *it is* not the children by human descent *who are* children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as
descendants.

9 For the statement of the promise *is* this: “At this time I will return and Sarah will have a son.” [[Gen 18:10, 14](#)]

10 And not only *this*, but also *when* Rebecca conceived children by one *man*, Isaac our father—

11 for *although they* had not yet been born, or done anything good or evil, in order that the purpose of God according to election
might remain,

12 not by works but by the one who calls—it was said to her, “The older will serve the younger,” [[Gen 25:23](#)]

13 just as it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” [[Mal 1:2–3](#)]

God is not Unjust—He is Free to Grant Mercy as He Chooses**(participation in the promised blessing has nothing to do with human effort)**

14 What then shall we say? *There is* no injustice with God, *is there*? May it never be!

15 For to Moses he says, “I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have
compassion.” [[Exod 33:19](#)]

16 Consequently therefore, it does not depend on the one who wills or on the one who runs, but on God who shows mercy.

17 For the scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very *reason* I have raised you up, so that I may demonstrate my power in you, and so
that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” [[Exod 9:16](#)]

18 Consequently therefore, he has mercy on whomever he wishes, and he hardens whomever he wishes.

God is the Creator—We are Accountable to Him**(the fact that we cannot merit participation in the promised blessing does *not* mean that we are not accountable for our sin)**

19 Therefore you will say to me, “Why then does he still find fault? For who has resisted his will?”

20 On the contrary, O man, who are you who answers back to God? Will what is molded say to the one who molded *it*, “Why did you
make me like this?” [[Isa 29:16; 45:9](#)]

21 Or does the potter not have authority over the clay, to make from the same lump a vessel that *is* for honorable use and *one* that
is for ordinary use?

22 And *what* if God, wanting to demonstrate his wrath and to make known his power, endured with much patience vessels of wrath
prepared for destruction?

23 And *he did so* in order that he could make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy that he prepared beforehand for
glory,

God has Called Both Jews and Gentiles to Participate in the Promised Blessing

24 us whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?

25 As he also says in Hosea,

“I will call those *who were* not my people, ‘My people,’
and those *who were* not loved, ‘Loved.’ [[Hos 2:23](#)]

26 And it will be in the place where it was said to them, ‘You *are* not my people,’
there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’” [[Hos 1:10](#)]

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel,

“*Even* if the number of the sons of Israel is like the sand of the sea,

the remnant will be saved,
28 for the Lord will execute his sentence thoroughly and decisively upon the earth.” [\[Isa 10:22–23\]](#)

29 And just as Isaiah foretold,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us descendants,
we would have become like Sodom
and would have resembled Gomorrah.” [\[Isa 1:9\]](#)

Participation in the Promised Blessing is through Faith, Not Works

30 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness—even the righteousness *that is* by faith.

31 But Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law.

32 Why that? Because *they did not pursue it* by faith, but as *if* by works. They stumbled over the stone that causes people to stumble,

33 just as it is written,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble,
and a rock that causes them to fall,
and the one who believes in him will not be put to shame.” [\[Isa 28:16; 8:14\]](#)

Paul Explains Where the Jews Went Wrong

10:1 Brothers, the desire of my heart and my prayer to God on behalf of them *is* for *their* salvation.

2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For ignoring the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ *is the* end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The Law Described the Life to Be Lived by a Righteous People—But Righteousness Itself Comes by Faith

5 For Moses writes about the righteousness *that is* from the law: “The person who does *this* will live by it.” [\[Lev 18:5\]](#)

6 But the righteousness from faith speaks like this: “Do not say in your heart, [\[Deut 9:4\]](#) ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” [\[Deut 30:12\]](#) (that is, to bring Christ down),

7 or “Who will descend into the abyss?” [\[Deut 30:13\]](#) (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

8 But what does it say? “The word is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart” [\[Deut 30:14\]](#) (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim),

9 that if you confess with your mouth “Jesus *is* Lord” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses, resulting in salvation.

11 For the scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” [\[Isa 28:16\]](#)

12 For *there* is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same *Lord is* Lord of all, who is rich to all who call upon him.

13 For “everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” [\[Joel 2:32\]](#)

Israel Cannot Plead Ignorance—the Gospel was Proclaimed to Them by the Prophets, Christ and the Apostles

14 How then will they call upon *him* in whom they have not believed? And how will they believe *in him* about whom they have not heard? And how will they hear about *him* without one who preaches *to them*?

15 And how will they preach, unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “How timely *are* the feet of those who bring good news of good things.” [\[Isa 52:7\]](#)

16 But not all have obeyed the good news, for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?” [\[Isa 53:1\]](#)

17 Consequently, faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing through the word about Christ.

18 But I say, they have not heard, have they? On the contrary,

“Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the inhabited world.” [\[Ps 19:4\]](#)

19 But I say, Israel did not know, did they? First, Moses says,

“I will provoke you *to jealousy* by *those who are* not a nation;
by a senseless nation I will provoke you *to anger*.” [\[Deut 32:21\]](#)

20 And Isaiah is very bold and says,

“I was found by those who did not seek me;
I became known to those who did not ask for me.” [\[Isa 65:1\]](#)

21 But about Israel he says,

“The whole day *long* I held out my hands
to a disobedient and resistant people.” [\[Isa 65:2\]](#)

God Has Not Rejected True Israel

(there is always a remnant which participates in the promised blessing by grace through faith)

11:1 Therefore I say, God has not rejected his people, has he? May it never be! For I also am an Israelite, from the descendants of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

2 God has not rejected his people, whom he foreknew! Or do you not know, in *the passage about Elijah*, what the scripture says—how he appeals to God against Israel?

3 “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have torn down your altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life!” [\[1 Kgs 19:10\]](#)

4 But what does the divine response say to him? “I have left for myself seven thousand people who have not bent the knee to Baal.” [\[1 Kgs 19:18\]](#)

5 So in this way also at the present time, there is a remnant selected by grace.

6 But if by grace, *it is* no longer by works, for otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

7 What then? What Israel was searching for, this it did not obtain. But the elect obtained *it*, and the rest were hardened,
8 just as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,
eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear,
until this very day.” [\[Deut 29:4; Isa 29:10\]](#)

9 And David says,

“Let their table become a snare and a trap,
and a cause for stumbling and a retribution to them;

10 let their eyes be darkened so that they do not see,
and cause their backs to bend continually.” [\[Ps 69:22–23\]](#)

The Gentiles Received Salvation in Spite of Israel’s Rejection of Christ—Paul Wants This to Provoke the Jews to Jealousy

11 I say then, they did not stumble so that they fell, *did they?* May it never be! But by their trespass, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles, in order to provoke them *to jealousy*.

12 And if their trespass *means* riches for the world and their loss *means* riches for the Gentiles, how much more *will* their fullness *mean?*

13 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Therefore, inasmuch as I am apostle to the Gentiles, I promote my ministry,

14 if somehow I may provoke my people to jealousy and save some of them.

15 For if their rejection *means* the reconciliation of the world, what *will* their acceptance *mean* except life from the dead?

Paul Cautions the Gentiles Not to Be Arrogant of Their Inclusion in the Promised Blessing

16 Now if the first fruits *are* holy, *so also is* the *whole* batch of dough, and if the root *is* holy, *so also are* the branches.

17 Now if some of the branches were broken off, and you, *although you were* a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them and became a sharer of the root of the olive tree’s richness,

18 do not boast against the branches. But if you boast against *them*, you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you.

19 Then you will say, “Branches were broken off in order that I could be grafted in.”

20 Well said! They were broken off because of unbelief, but you stand firm because of faith. Do not think arrogant *thoughts*, but be afraid.

21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

22 See, then, the kindness and severity of God: severity upon those who have fallen, but upon you the kindness of God—if you continue in his kindness, for otherwise you also will be cut off.

23 And those also, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, because God is able to graft them in again.

24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree,

how much more will these who are natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

Paul Reveals a Mystery—The Eschatological Salvation of All Israel

(Israel and the Gentiles take turns on the center stage of God’s salvation-historical drama)

25 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of this mystery, so that you will not be wise in your own sight, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in,

26 and so all Israel will be saved, just as it is written,

“The deliverer will come out of Zion;
he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

27 And this *is* the covenant from me with them
when I take away their sins.” [[Isa 59:20–21](#); [27:9](#)]

28 With respect to the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sake, but with respect to election, *they are* dearly loved for the sake of the fathers.

29 For the gifts and the calling of God *are* irrevocable.

30 For just as you formerly were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of the disobedience of these,

31 so also these have now been disobedient for your mercy, in order that they also may now be shown mercy.

32 For God confined them all in disobedience, in order that he could have mercy on them all.

Paul Bursts Into Praise to God for His Great Wisdom

33 Oh, the depth of the riches
and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable *are* his judgments
and *how* incomprehensible *are* his ways!

34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor? [[Isa 40:13](#)]

35 Or who has given in advance to him,
and it will be paid back to him?” [[Job 41:11](#)]

36 For from him and through him and to him *are* all *things*.
To him *be* glory for eternity! Amen.

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Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome – Part 4 (Winter 54/55)

Romans 12:1–15:13

Consecration and Transformation

12:1 Therefore I exhort you, brothers, through the mercies of God, to present your bodies *as* a living sacrifice, holy *and* pleasing to God, *which is* your reasonable service.
 2 And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may approve what *is* the good and well-pleasing and perfect will of God.

Spiritual Gifts for Humble Service

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone who is among you not to think more highly of yourself than what one ought to think, but to think sensibly, as God has apportioned a measure of faith to each one.
 4 For just as in one body we have many members, but all the members do not have the same function,
 5 in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another,
 6 but having different gifts according to the grace given to us: if *it is* prophecy, according to the proportion of *his* faith;
 7 if *it is* service, by service; if *it is* one who teaches, by teaching;
 8 if *it is* one who exhorts, by exhortation; one who gives, with sincerity; one who leads, with diligence; one who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Devotion to Love and Goodness

9 Love must be without hypocrisy. Abhor what *is* evil; be attached to what *is* good,
 10 being devoted to one another in brotherly love, esteeming one another *more highly* in honor,
 11 not lagging in diligence, being enthusiastic in spirit, serving the Lord,
 12 rejoicing in hope, enduring in affliction, being devoted to prayer,
 13 contributing to the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality.
 14 Bless those who persecute, bless and do not curse *them*.
 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.
 16 Think the same *thing* toward one another; do not think arrogantly, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own sight.

Treatment of Irritations and Enemies

17 Pay back no one evil for evil. Take thought for *what is* good in the sight of all people.
 18 If *it is* possible on your *part*, be at peace with all people.
 19 Do not take revenge yourselves, dear friends, but give place to *God's* wrath, for it is written, "Vengeance *is* mine, I will repay," says the Lord. [[Deut 32:35](#)]
 20 But "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him *something* to drink; for *by* doing this, you will heap up coals of fire upon his head." [[Prov 25:21–22](#)]
 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Submission to Governing Authorities

13:1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for *there* is no authority except by God, and those that exist are put in place by God.
 2 So then, the one who resists authority resists the ordinance *which is* from God, and those who resist will receive condemnation on themselves.
 3 For rulers are not a *cause of* terror for a good deed, but for bad *conduct*. So do you want not to be afraid of authority? Do what *is* good, and you will have praise from it,
 4 for it is God's servant to you for what *is* good. But if you do what *is* bad, be afraid, because it does not bear the sword to no purpose. For it is God's servant, the one who avenges for punishment on the one who does *what is* bad.
 5 Therefore *it is* necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience.
 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for *the authorities* are servants of God, busily engaged in this very *thing*.
 7 Pay to everyone *what is* owed: *pay* taxes to whom taxes *are due*; *pay* customs duties to whom customs duties *are due*; *pay* respect to whom respect *is due*; *pay* honor to whom honor *is due*.

Love Fulfills the Requirements of the Law

8 Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another, for the one who loves someone else has fulfilled the law.
 9 For the *commandments*, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not commit murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet," [[Exod 20:13–15, 17](#)] and if *there is* any other commandment, are summed up in this statement: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." [[Lev 19:18](#)]
 10 Love does not commit evil against a neighbor. Therefore love *is the* fulfillment of the law.

Live Carefully—The Day of the Lord is Near

11 And *do* this *because you* know the time, that *it is* already the hour for you to wake up from sleep. For our salvation *is* nearer now than when we believed.

12 The night is far gone, and the day has drawn near. Therefore let us throw off the deeds of darkness and put on the weapons of light.

13 Let us live decently, as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy.

14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and do not make provision for the desires of the flesh.

Do Not Judge a Weaker Brother or Sister—We Will All Give Account to God

14:1 Now receive the one who is weak in faith, *but* not for quarrels about opinions.

2 One believes *he may* eat all *things*, but the one who is weak eats *only* vegetables.

3 The one who eats must not despise the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat must not judge the one who eats, because God has accepted him.

4 Who are you, who passes judgment on the domestic slave belonging to someone else? To his own master he stands or falls, and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One person prefers *one* day over *another* day, and another person regards every day *alike*. Each one must be fully convinced in his own mind.

6 The one who is intent on the day is intent on *it* for the Lord, and the one who eats eats for the Lord, because he is thankful to God, and the one who does not eat does not eat for the Lord, and he is thankful to God.

7 For none of us lives for himself and none dies for himself.

8 For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore whether we live *or* whether we die, we are the Lord's.

9 For Christ died and became alive again for this *reason*, in order that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

10 But why do you judge your brother? Or also, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

11 For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me,
and every tongue will praise God.” [[Isa 45:23](#)]

12 So each one of us will give an account concerning himself.

Do Not Cause a Weaker Brother or Sister to Stumble—Live to Encourage and Edify Others

13 Therefore, let us no longer pass judgment on one another, but rather decide this: not to place a cause for stumbling or a temptation before a brother.

14 I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing *is* unclean of itself, except to the one who considers something to be unclean; to that person *it is* unclean.

15 For if because of food, your brother is grieved, you are no longer living according to love. Do not destroy by your food that person for whom Christ died.

16 Therefore do not let your good be slandered.

17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

18 For the one who serves Christ in this *way is* well-pleasing to God and approved by people.

19 So then, let us pursue what promotes peace and what edifies one another.

20 Do not destroy the work of God on account of food. All *things are* clean, but *it is* wrong for the person who eats and stumbles in the process.

21 *It is* good not to eat meat or to drink wine or *to do anything* by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is weakened.

22 The faith that you have, have with respect to yourself before God. Blessed *is* the one who does not pass judgment on himself by what he approves.

23 But the one who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not *do so* from faith, and everything that *is* not from faith is sin.

Focus on Pleasing Others, Not Yourself

15:1 But we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let each one of us please his neighbor for his good, for the purpose of edification.

3 For even Christ did not please himself, but just as it is written, “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.” [[Ps 69:9](#)]

4 For whatever was written beforehand was written for our instruction, in order that through patient endurance and through the encouragement of the scriptures we may have hope.

5 Now may the God of patient endurance and of encouragement grant you to be in agreement with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus,

6 so that with one mind you may glorify with one mouth the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A Call for Jews and Gentiles to Accept Each Other—Scripture Confirms that Gentiles Participate in the Promised Blessing

7 Therefore accept one another, just as Christ also has accepted you, to the glory of God.

8 For I say, Christ has become a servant of the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God, in order to confirm the promises to the fathers,

9 and that the Gentiles may glorify God for *his* mercy, just as it is written,

“Because of this, I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and I will sing praise to your name.” [[2 Sam 22:50](#); [Ps 18:49](#)]

10 And again it says,

“Rejoice, Gentiles, with his people.” [[Deut 32:43](#)]

11 And again,

“Praise the Lord, all the Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him.” [[Ps 117:1](#)]

12 And again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come,
even the one who rises to rule over the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles will put their hope.” [[Isa 11:10](#)]

13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome – Part 5 (Winter 54/55)

Romans 15:14–16:27

Looking Back—Paul's Ministry in the East

15:14 Now I myself also am convinced about you, my brothers, that *you* yourselves also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to instruct one another.

15 But I have written to you more boldly on *some* points, so as to remind you *again* because of the grace that has been given to me by God,

16 with the result that I am a servant of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, serving the gospel of God as a priest, in order that the offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

17 Therefore I have a reason for boasting in Christ Jesus regarding the things concerning God.

18 For I will not dare to speak about anything except *that* which Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,

19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and *traveling* around as far as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

20 And so, having as my ambition to proclaim the gospel where Christ has not been named, in order that I will not build on the foundation belonging to someone else,

21 but just as it is written, "*Those* to whom *it was* not announced concerning him will see, and *those* who have not heard will understand." [[Isa 52:15](#)]

Looking Ahead—Paul's Plans for Jerusalem, Rome and Spain

22 For this reason also I was hindered many *times* from coming to you,

23 and now, no longer having a place in these regions, but having a desire for many years to come to you

24 whenever I travel to Spain. For I hope *while I* am passing through to see you and to be sent on my way by you, whenever I have first enjoyed your *company* for a while.

25 But now I am traveling to Jerusalem, serving the saints.

26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

27 For they were pleased *to do so*, and they are obligated to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual *things*, they ought also to serve them in material *things*.

28 Therefore, *after I* have accomplished this and sealed this fruit *for delivery* to them, I will depart by way of you for Spain,

29 and I know that *when I* come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

A Request for Prayer

30 Now I exhort you, brothers, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to contend along with me in your prayers on my behalf to God,

31 that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and my ministry in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,

32 so that, coming to you with joy by the will of God, I may rest with you.

33 Now *may* the God of peace *be* with all of you. Amen.

Commendation of Phoebe

16:1 Now I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is also a servant of the church in Cencrea,

2 in order that you may welcome her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever task she may have need from you, for she herself also has been a helper of many, even me myself.

Greetings to Roman Brothers and Sisters

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

4 who risked their own necks for my life, for which not only I am thankful, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

5 also *greet* the church in their house. Greet Epenetus my dear *friend*, who is the first convert of Asia for Christ.

6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my compatriots and my fellow prisoners, who are well known to the apostles, who were also in Christ before me.

8 Greet Ampliatus, my dear *friend* in the Lord.

9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my dear *friend* Stachys.

10 Greet Apelles, who *is* approved in Christ. Greet those of the *household* of Aristobulus.

11 Greet Herodion my compatriot. Greet those of the *household* of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, the laborers in the Lord. Greet Persis, the dear *friend* who has worked hard in the Lord.

13 Greet Rufus, the chosen one in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers with them.

15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints *who are* with them.

16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

A Warning, a Promise and a Prayer for Grace

17 Now I exhort you, brothers, to look out for those who cause dissensions and temptations contrary to the teaching which you learned, and stay away from them.

18 For such people do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own stomach, and by smooth speech and flattery they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

19 For *the report of* your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, and I want you to be wise toward what *is* good, but innocent toward what *is* evil.

20 And in a short time the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you.

Greetings from Paul's Companions

21 Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you, and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my compatriots.

22 I, Tertius, the one who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

23 Gaius, my host and *the host* of the whole church, greets you. Erastus the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus the brother.

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with all of you. Amen.

Closing Doxology

Some manuscripts include vv. 25–27:

[25 Now to the one who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that had been kept secret for eternal ages,

26 but now has been revealed, and through the prophetic scriptures has been made known according to the command of the eternal God, resulting in obedience of faith to all the Gentiles,

27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for eternity. Amen.]

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Paul's Third Missionary Journey—Back Through Macedonia (Spring 55)

Acts 20:3b–5

3b *Because* a plot was made against him by the Jews *as he* was about to set sail for Syria, he came to a decision to return through Macedonia.

4 And Sopater *son* of Pyrrhus from Berea, and Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, and Gaius from Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia, were accompanying him.

5 And these had gone on ahead *and* were waiting for us in Troas.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey—Troas (Spring 55)

Acts 20:6–12

6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread and came to them at Troas within five days, where we stayed seven days.

7 And on the first *day* of the week, *when* we had assembled to break bread, Paul began conversing with them, *because he* was going to leave on the next day, and he extended *his* message until midnight.

8 Now there were quite a few lamps in the upstairs room where we were gathered.

9 And a certain young man named Eutychus who was sitting in the window was sinking into a deep sleep *while* Paul was conversing at length. Being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead.

10 But Paul went down *and* threw himself on him, and putting his arms around *him*, said, "Do not be distressed, for his life is in him."

11 So he went up and broke bread, and *when he* had eaten and talked for a long *time*, until dawn, then he departed.

12 And they led the youth away alive, and were greatly comforted.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey—Miletus (Spring 55)

Acts 20:13–38

From Troas to Assos to Mitylene to Miletus

13 But we went on ahead to the ship *and* put out to sea for Assos, intending to take Paul on board there. For having made arrangements in this way, he himself was intending to travel by land.

14 And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board *and* went to Mitylene.

15 And we sailed from there on the next *day*, *and* arrived opposite Chios. And on the next *day* we approached Samos, and on the following *day* we came to Miletus.

16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not be *having* to spend time in Asia. For he was hurrying if it could be possible for him to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

Paul's Farewell Speech to the Ephesian Elders

17 And from Miletus he sent *word* to Ephesus *and* summoned the elders of the church.

18 And when they came to him, he said to them, "You know from the first day on which I set foot in Asia how I was the whole time with you—

19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, and with the trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews—

20 how I did not shrink from proclaiming to you anything that would be profitable, and *from* teaching you in public and from house *to house*,

21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks with respect to repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus.

22 "And now behold, bound by the Spirit I am traveling to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in town *after town*, saying that bonds and persecutions await me.

24 But I consider *my* life *as* worth nothing to myself, in order to finish my mission and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify *to* the gospel of the grace of God.

25 "And now behold, I know that all *of* you, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom, will see my face no more.

26 Therefore I testify to you on this very day that I am guiltless of the blood of all *of* you,

27 for I did not shrink from proclaiming to you the whole purpose of God.

28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has appointed you *as* overseers, to shepherd the church of God which he obtained through the blood of his own *Son*.

29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 And from among you yourselves men will arise, speaking perversions of the truth in order to draw away the disciples after them.

31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day *for* three years I did not stop warning each one *of* you with tears.

32 "And now I entrust you to God and to the message of his grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

33 I have desired no one's silver or gold or clothing!

34 You yourselves know that these hands served *to meet* my needs and *the needs of* those who were with me.
 35 I have shown you *with respect to* all *things* that *by* working hard in this way it is necessary to help those who are in need, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he himself said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
 36 And *when he* had said these *things*, he fell to his knees *and* prayed with them all.
 37 And there was considerable weeping by all, and hugging Paul, they kissed him,
 38 especially distressed at the statement that he had said, that they were going to see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Paul’s Third Missionary Journey—Syria (Spring 55)

Acts 21:1–6

1 And it happened that after we tore ourselves away from them, we put out to sea, *and* running a straight course we came to Cos and on the next *day* to Rhodes, and from there to Patara.
 2 And finding a ship that was crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard *and* put out to sea.
 3 And *after we* sighted Cyprus and left it behind on the port side, we sailed to Syria and arrived at Tyre, because the ship was to unload *its* cargo there.
 4 And we stayed there seven days *after we* found the disciples, who kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.
 5 And it happened that when our days were over, we departed *and* went on our way, *while* all *of them* accompanied us, together with *their* wives and children, as far as outside the city. And *after* falling to our knees on the beach *and* praying,
 6 we said farewell to one another and embarked in the ship, and they returned to their own *homes*.

Paul’s Journey to Jerusalem (May/June 55)

Acts 21:7–17

7 And *when* we had completed the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. And *after we* greeted the brothers, we stayed one day with them.
 8 And on the next day we departed *and* came to Caesarea, and entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was *one* of the seven, *and* stayed with him.
 9 (Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.)
 10 And *while we* were staying *there* many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.
 11 And he came to us and took Paul’s belt. Tying up his own feet and hands, he said, “This is what the Holy Spirit says: ‘In this way the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up the man whose belt this is, and will deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.’”
 12 And when we heard these *things*, both we and the local residents urged him not to go up to Jerusalem.
 13 Then Paul replied, “What are you doing weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be tied up, but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus!”
 14 And *because* he would not be persuaded, we remained silent, saying, “The will of the Lord be done.”
 15 So after these days we got ready *and* went up to Jerusalem.
 16 And *some* of the disciples from Caesarea also traveled together with us, bringing *us* to a certain Mnason of Cyprus, a disciple of long standing, with whom we were to be entertained as guests.
 17 And *when* we came to Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us gladly.

“To the Jews I became a Jew in order to win the Jews” (Summer 55)

Acts 21:18–26

18 And on the next *day* Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.
 19 And *after* greeting them, he began to relate one after the other *the things* which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.
 20 And *when* they heard *this*, they began to glorify God. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many ten thousands there are among the Jews who have believed, and they are all zealous adherents of the law.
 21 And they have been informed about you that you are teaching all the Jews *who are* among the Gentiles *the* abandonment of Moses, telling them not to circumcise *their* children or to live according to *our* customs.
 22 What then is to be done? Doubtless they will all hear that you have come!
 23 Therefore do this that we tell you: we have four men who have *taken* a vow upon themselves.
 24 Take these *men* *and* purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses so that they can shave *their* heads, and everyone will know that *the things* which they had been informed about you are nothing, but you yourself also agree with observing the law.
 25 But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we have written a letter *after* deciding they should avoid food sacrificed to idols and blood and *what has been* strangled and sexual immorality.”

26 Then Paul took along the men on the next day, *and after he* had purified himself together with them, he entered into the temple *courts*, announcing the completion of the days of purification until the time the offering would be presented on behalf of each one of them.

The Riot and Paul's Arrest at the Temple (Summer 55)

Acts 21:27–36

27 But when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia who had seen him in the temple *courts* stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him,

28 shouting, "Israelite men, help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and the law and this place! And furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple, and has defiled this holy place!"

29 (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, whom they thought that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And the whole city was stirred up, and the people came running together, and they seized Paul *and* dragged him outside of the temple *courts*, and immediately the doors were shut.

31 And *as they* were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the military tribune of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

32 He immediately took along soldiers and centurions *and* ran down to them. And *when* they saw the military tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

33 Then the military tribune came up *and* arrested him and ordered *him* to be bound with two chains, and inquired who he was and what it was that he had done.

34 But some in the crowd were shouting one thing *and* others *another*, and *because* he was not able to find out the truth on account of the commotion, he gave orders to bring him into the barracks.

35 And when he came to the steps, it happened that he had to be carried by the soldiers on account of the violence of the crowd,

36 for the crowd of people was following *them*, shouting, "Away with him!"

Paul's Defense (Summer 55)

Acts 21:37–22:29

Paul Asks the Roman Officer for Permission to Speak

21:37 And *as he* was about to be brought into the barracks, Paul said to the military tribune, "Is it permitted for me to say something to you?" And he said, "Do you know Greek?"

38 Then you are not the Egyptian who before these days raised a revolt and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins?"

39 But Paul said, "I am a Jewish man from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no unimportant city. Now I ask you, allow me to speak to the people."

40 So *when* he permitted *him*, Paul, standing there on the steps, motioned with *his* hand to the people. And *when there* was a great silence, he addressed *them* in the Aramaic language, saying,

Paul Addresses the Crowd in Aramaic

22:1 "Men—brothers and fathers—listen to my defense to you now!"

2 And *when they* heard that he was addressing them in the Aramaic language, they became even more silent. And he said,

3 "I am a Jewish man born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according to the exactness of the law received from our fathers, being zealous for God, just as all *of* you are today.

4 I persecuted this Way to the death, tying up and delivering to prison both men and women,

5 as indeed the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify about me, from whom also I received letters to the brothers in Damascus, *and* was traveling *there* to lead away those who were there also tied up to Jerusalem so that they could be punished.

6 "And it happened that *as* I was traveling and approaching Damascus around noon, suddenly a very bright light from heaven flashed around me,

7 and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'

8 And I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene whom you are persecuting.'

9 (Now those who were with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me.)

10 So I said, 'What should I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Get up *and* proceed to Damascus, and there it will be told to you about all *the things* that have been appointed for you to do.'

11 And as I could not see as a result of the brightness of that light, I arrived in Damascus led by the hand of those who were with me.

12 And a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who live *there*,

13 came to me and stood by *me and* said to me, 'Brother Saul, regain *your* sight!' And *at that* same time I looked up at him *and* saw *him*.

14 And he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know his will, and to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from

his mouth,

15 because you will be a witness for him to all people of what you have seen and heard.

16 And now why are you delaying? Get up, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name!’

17 “And it happened that *when* I returned to Jerusalem and I was praying in the temple courts, I was in a trance,

18 and saw him saying to me, ‘Hurry and depart quickly from Jerusalem, because they will not accept your testimony about me.’

19 And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves know that from synagogue to *synagogue* I was imprisoning and beating those who believed in you.

20 And when the blood of your witness Stephen was being shed, I myself also was standing near and was approving, and was guarding the cloaks of those who were killing him.’

21 And he said to me, ‘Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles!’”

22 Now they were listening to him until this word, and they raised their voices, saying, “Away with such a man from the earth! For it is not fitting *for* him to live!”

23 And *while* they were screaming and throwing off *their* cloaks and throwing dust into the air,

24a the military tribune ordered him to be brought into the barracks,

Paul the Roman Citizen

24b saying he was to be examined with a lash so that he could find out for what reason they were crying out against him in this way.

25 But when they had stretched him out for the lash, Paul said to the centurion standing there, “Is it permitted for you to flog a man *who is* a Roman citizen and uncondemned?”

26 And *when* the centurion heard *this*, he went to the military tribune *and* reported *it*, saying, “What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen!”

27 So the military tribune came *and* said to him, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?” And he said, “Yes.”

28 And the military tribune replied, “I acquired this citizenship for a large sum of money.” And Paul said, “But I indeed was born *a* citizen.

29 Then immediately those who were about to examine him kept away from him, and the military tribune also was afraid *when he* realized that he was a Roman citizen and that he had tied him up.

Paul Before the Jewish Council (Summer 55)

Acts 22:30–23:11

22:30 But on the next day, *because he* wanted to know the true *reason* why he was being accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin to assemble, and he brought down Paul *and* had *him* stand before them.

23:1 And looking intently at the Sanhedrin, Paul said, “Men *and* brothers, I have lived my life in all good conscience before God to this day.”

2 So the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near him to strike his mouth.

3 Then Paul said to him, “God is going to strike you, *you* whitewashed wall! [cf. [Ezek 13:1–13](#)] And are you sitting *there* judging me according to the law, and acting contrary to the law do you order me to be struck?”

4 And those who stood nearby said, “Are you reviling the high priest of God?”

5 And Paul said, “I did not know, brothers, that he was high priest. For it is written, ‘You must not speak evil *of* a ruler of your people.’” [[Exod 22:28](#)]

6 Now *when* Paul realized that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he shouted out in the Sanhedrin, “Men *and* brothers! I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees! I am being judged concerning the hope and the resurrection of the dead!”

7 And *when* he said this, a dispute developed between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.

8 (For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection or angel or spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge *them* all.)

9 And there was loud shouting, and some of the scribes from the party of the Pharisees stood up *and* contended sharply, saying, “We find nothing wrong with this man! But *what* if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?”

10 And *when* the dispute became severe, the military tribune, fearing lest Paul be torn apart by them, ordered the detachment to go down, take him away from their midst, and bring *him* into the barracks.

11 And the next night the Lord stood by him *and* said, “Have courage, for as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”

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A Plot Against Paul is Uncovered (Summer 55)

Acts 23:12–22

12 And *when it was day*, the Jews made a conspiracy *and* bound themselves under a curse, saying *they would* neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.

13 Now there were more *than* forty who had made this conspiracy,

14 who went to the chief priests and the elders *and* said, “We have bound ourselves under a curse to partake of nothing until we have killed Paul.

15 Therefore, now you along with the Sanhedrin explain to the military tribune that he should bring him down to you, as *if you were* going to determine more accurately the things concerning him. And we are ready to do away with him before he comes near.”

16 But *when* the son of Paul’s sister heard about the ambush, he came and entered into the barracks *and* reported *it* to Paul.

17 So Paul called one of the centurions *and* said, “Bring this young man to the military tribune, because he has something to report to him.”

18 So he took him *and* brought *him* to the military tribune and said, “The prisoner Paul called me *and* asked *me* to bring this young man to you *because he* has something to tell you.”

19 And the military tribune, taking hold of his hand and withdrawing privately, asked, “What is it that you have to report to me?”

20 And he said, “The Jews have agreed to ask you that you bring Paul down to the Sanhedrin tomorrow, as *if they were* going to inquire somewhat more accurately concerning him.

21 You therefore do not be persuaded by them, because more *than* forty men of their number are lying in wait *for* him, who have bound themselves under a curse neither to eat nor to drink until they have done away with him. And now they are ready, waiting for you to agree.”

22 So the military tribune sent the young man away, directing *him*, “Tell no one that you have revealed these *things* to me.”

Paul Taken to Caesarea and Presented to Felix (Summer 55)

Acts 23:23–35

23 And he summoned two of the centurions *and* said, “Make ready from the third hour of the night two hundred soldiers and seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, in order that they may proceed as far as Caesarea.

24 And provide mounts so that they can put Paul on them *and* bring *him* safely to Felix the governor.”

25 He wrote a letter that had this form:

26 Claudius Lysias.
To his excellency Governor Felix.
Greetings!

27 This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them *when I came* upon *them* with the detachment *and* rescued *him*, *because I* learned that he was a Roman citizen.

28 And *because I* wanted to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought *him* down to their Sanhedrin.

29 I found he was accused concerning controversial questions of their law, but having no charge deserving death or imprisonment.

30 And *when it was* made known to me there would be a plot against the man, I sent *him* to you immediately, also ordering *his* accusers to speak against him before you.

31 Therefore the soldiers, in accordance with their orders, took Paul *and* brought *him* to Antipatris during the night.

32 And on the next day they let the horsemen go on with him, *and* they returned to the barracks.

33 The horsemen, *when they* came to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, also presented Paul to him.

34 So *after reading the letter* and asking what province he was from, and learning that *he was* from Cilicia,

35 he said, “I will give you a hearing whenever your accusers arrive also,” giving orders *for* him to be guarded in the praetorium of Herod.

Paul’s Defense Before Felix (Summer 55)

Acts 24:1–23

1 And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and an attorney, a certain Tertullus, all of whom brought charges against Paul to the governor.

2 And *when* he had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying, “We have experienced much peace through you, and reforms are taking place in this nation through your foresight.

3 Both in every way and everywhere we acknowledge *this*, most excellent Felix, with all gratitude.

4 But so that I may not impose on you for longer, I implore you to hear us briefly with your *customary* graciousness.

5 For we have found this man *to be* a public menace and one who causes riots among all the Jews throughout the Roman Empire and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes,
 6 who even attempted to desecrate the temple, and we arrested him.
 7 [*this version follows NA²⁷ in omitting this verse*]
 8 *When* you yourself examine *him* you will be able to find out from him about all these *things* of which we are accusing him.”
 9 And the Jews also joined in the attack, asserting these *things* were so.
 10 And *when* the governor gestured for him to speak, Paul replied, “*Because I* know you have been a judge over this nation for many years, I defend myself cheerfully *with respect* to the things concerning myself.
 11 You can ascertain that it has not been more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship.
 12 And neither did they find me arguing with anyone or making a crowd develop in the temple *courts* nor in the synagogues nor throughout the city.
 13 Nor can they prove *the things* to you concerning which they are now accusing me.
 14 But I do confess this to you, that according to the Way (which they call a sect), so I worship the God of our fathers, believing all things *that are* in accordance with the law and that are written in the prophets,
 15 having a hope in God which these *men* also themselves await: *that* there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.
 16 For this reason also *I* myself always do my best to have a clear conscience toward God and people.
 17 So after many years, I came to practice charitable giving and offerings to my people,
 18 in which they found me purified in the temple *courts*, not with a crowd or with a disturbance.
 19 But *there are* some Jews from Asia who ought to be present before you and bring charges against *me*, if they have anything against me,
 20 or these *men* themselves should say what crime they found *when* I stood before the Sanhedrin,
 21 other than concerning this one declaration that I shouted *while* standing there before them: ‘I am being judged before you today concerning the resurrection of the dead!’”
 22 But Felix, *because he* understood the *facts* concerning the Way more accurately, put them off, saying, “When Lysias the military tribune comes down, I will decide your case.”
 23 *He* ordered the centurion *for* him to be guarded and to have some freedom, and in no way to prevent any of his own *people* from serving him.

Paul Under Felix’s Custody (Summer 55 to Summer 57)

Acts 24:24–26

24 And after some days, *when* Felix arrived with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and listened to him concerning faith in Christ Jesus.
 25 And *while* he was discussing about righteousness and self control and the judgment that is to come, Felix became afraid *and* replied, “Go away for the present, and *when I* have an opportunity, I will summon you.”
 26 At the same time he was also hoping that money would be given to him by Paul. For this reason also he sent for him as often as possible *and* talked with him.

Paul’s Appeal to Caesar Before Festus (Summer 57)

Acts 24:27–25:12

24:27 And *when* two years had passed, Felix received as successor Porcius Festus. And *because he* wanted to do a favor for the Jews, Felix left Paul behind as a prisoner.
 25:1 Now *when* Festus set foot in the province, after three days he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.
 2 And the chief priests and the most prominent men of the Jews brought charges against Paul to him, and were urging him,
 3 asking for a favor against him, that he summon him to Jerusalem, *because they* were preparing an ambush to do away with him along the way.
 4 Then Festus replied *that* Paul was being kept at Caesarea, and *he* himself was about to go *there* in a short time.
 5 So he said, “Let those among you *who are* prominent go down with *me*, *and* if there is any wrong in the man, let them bring charges against him.”
 6 And *after he* had stayed among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down to Caesarea. On the next day he sat down on the judgment seat *and* gave orders *for* Paul to be brought.
 7 And *when* he arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges that they were not able to prove,
 8 *while* Paul said in his defense, “Neither against the law of the Jews nor against the temple nor against Caesar have I sinned with reference to anything!”
 9 But Festus, *because he* wanted to do a favor for the Jews, answered *and* said to Paul, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem to be

tried before me there concerning these *things*?"

10 But Paul said, "I am standing before the judgment seat of Caesar, where it is necessary *for* me to be judged. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also know very well.

11 If then I am doing wrong and have done anything deserving death, I am not trying to avoid dying. But if there is nothing *true* of *the things* which these *people* are accusing me, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

12 Then Festus, *after* discussing *this* with *his* council, replied, "You have appealed to Caesar—to Caesar you will go!"

Festus and Herod Agrippa II Discuss Paul's Case (Summer 57)

Acts 25:13–22

13 Now *after* some days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to welcome Festus.

14 And while they were staying there many days, Festus laid out the *case* against Paul to the king, saying, "There is a certain man left behind by Felix *as* a prisoner,

15 concerning whom *when* I was in Jerusalem the chief priests and the elders of the Jews presented evidence, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.

16 To them I replied that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up any man before the one who had been accused met *his* accusers face to *face* and received an opportunity for a defense concerning the accusation.

17 Therefore, *when* they had assembled here, *I* made no delay; on the next *day* I sat down on the judgment seat *and* gave orders *for* the man to be brought.

18 *When they* stood up, *his* accusers began bringing no charge concerning him of the evil deeds that I was suspecting,

19 but they had some issues with him concerning their own religion, and concerning a certain Jesus, who was dead, whom Paul claimed to be alive.

20 And *because* I was at a loss with regard to the investigation concerning these *things*, I asked if he was willing to go to Jerusalem and to be judged there concerning these *things*.

21 But *when* Paul appealed *that* he be kept under guard for the decision of His Majesty the Emperor, I gave orders *for* him to be kept under guard until I could send him to Caesar."

22 So Agrippa *said* to Festus, "I want to hear the man myself also." "Tomorrow," he said, "you will hear him."

Paul's Defense Before Herod Agrippa II and His Sister Bernice (Summer 57)

Acts 25:23–26:32

25:23 So on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with great pageantry and entered into the audience hall, along with military tribunes and the most prominent men of the city. And *when* Festus gave the order, Paul was brought in.

24 And Festus said, "King Agrippa and all who are present with us, you see this man about whom the whole population of the Jews appealed to me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting *that* he must not live any longer.

25 But I understood *that* he had done nothing deserving death himself, and *when* this man appealed to His Majesty the Emperor, I decided to send *him*.

26 I do not have anything definite to write to *my* lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before you *all*—and especially before you, King Agrippa—so that *after* this preliminary hearing has taken place, I may have something to write.

27 For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner and not to indicate the charges against him."

26:1 So Agrippa said to Paul, "It is permitted for you to speak for yourself." Then Paul extended *his* hand *and* began to defend himself:

2 "Concerning all *the things* of which I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate *that* before you I am about to defend myself today,

3 *because* you are especially acquainted with both all the customs and controversial questions with respect to the Jews. Therefore I beg *you* to listen to me with patience.

4 "Now all the Jews know my manner of life from *my* youth, that had taken place from the beginning among my *own* people and in Jerusalem,

5 having known me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that in accordance with the strictest party of our religion I lived *as* a Pharisee.

6 And now I stand here on trial on the basis of hope in the promise made by God to our fathers,

7 to which our twelve tribes hope to attain *as they* earnestly serve *him* night and day. Concerning this hope I am being accused by the Jews, O king!

8 Why is it thought incredible by you *people* that God raises the dead?

9 Indeed, I myself thought it was necessary to do many *things* opposed to the name of Jesus the Nazarene,

10 which I also did in Jerusalem, and not only did I lock up many of the saints in prison, having received authority from the chief priests, but also *when* they were being executed, I cast *my* vote against *them*.

11 And throughout all the synagogues I punished them often *and* tried to force *them* to blaspheme, and *because* I was enraged at

them beyond measure, I was pursuing *them* even as far as to foreign cities.

12 In this activity I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and full power of the chief priests.

13 In the middle of the day along the road, O king, I saw a light from heaven, more than the brightness of the sun, shining around me and those who were traveling with me.

14 And *when* we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Aramaic language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? *It is hard for you to kick against the goads!*’

15 So I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

16 But get up and stand on your feet, because for this *reason* I have appeared to you, to appoint you a servant and witness both *to the things* in which you saw me and *to the things* in which I will appear to you,

17 rescuing you from the people and from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you,

18 to open their eyes *so that they* may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, *so that they* may receive forgiveness of sins and a share among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

19 “Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

20 but to those in Damascus first, and in Jerusalem and all the region of Judea and to the Gentiles, I proclaimed *that they should* repent and turn to God, doing deeds worthy of repentance.

21 On account of these *things* the Jews seized me in the temple *courts* and were attempting to kill *me*.

22 Therefore I have experienced help from God until this day, *and* I stand here testifying to both small and great, saying nothing except what both the prophets and Moses have said were going to happen,

23 that the Christ was to suffer *and* that *as* the first of the resurrection from the dead, he was going to proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.”

24 And *as* he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “You are out of your mind, Paul! *Your* great learning is driving you insane!”

25 But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but am speaking words of truth and rationality.

26 For the king knows about these *things*, to whom also I am speaking freely, for I am not convinced *that* these *things* in any way have escaped his notice, because this was not done in a corner.

27 Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe.”

28 But Agrippa *said* to Paul, “In a short time are you persuading me to become a Christian?”

29 And Paul *replied*, “I pray to God, whether in a short time or in a long time, not only you but also all those who are listening to me today may become such *people* as I also am, except for these bonds!”

30 Both the king and the governor got up, and Bernice and those who were sitting with them.

31 And *as they* were going out, they were talking to one another, saying, “This man is not doing anything deserving death or imprisonment.”

32 And Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

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Paul's Voyage to Rome—From Caesarea to Fair Havens (August/September 57)

Acts 27:1–12

Initial Difficulties

- 1 And when it was decided *that* we would sail away to Italy, they handed over Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius of the Augustan Cohort.
- 2 And we went aboard a ship from Adramyttium that was about to sail to the places along the *coast* of Asia *and* put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.
- 3 And on the next *day*, we put in at Sidon. And Julius, treating Paul kindly, allowed *him* to go to *his* friends to be cared for.
- 4 And from there we put out to sea *and* sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against *us*.
- 5 And *after we* had sailed across the open sea along Cilicia and Pamphylia, we put in at Myra in Lycia.
- 6 And there the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy *and* put us on board it.
- 7 And sailing slowly, in many days and with difficulty we came to Cnidus. *Because* the wind did not permit us to go further, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone.
- 8 And sailing along its coast with difficulty, we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was the town of Lasea.

Paul's Failed Intervention

- 9 And *because* considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous because even the Fast was already over, Paul strongly recommended,
- 10 saying to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage is going to end with disaster and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives!"
- 11 But the centurion was convinced even more by the shipmaster and the shipowner than by what was said by Paul.
- 12 And *because* the harbor was unsuitable for spending the winter in, the majority decided on a plan to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could arrive at Phoenix, a harbor of Crete facing toward the southwest and toward the northwest, to spend the winter *there*.

Paul's Voyage to Rome—From Fair Havens to Malta (October 57)

Acts 27:13–44

The Great Storm and the Loss of Hope

- 13 And *when* a southwest wind began to blow gently, *because they* thought *they* could accomplish their purpose, they weighed anchor *and* sailed close along Crete.
- 14 But not long afterward a wind like a hurricane, called the northeaster, rushed down from it.
- 15 And *when* the ship was caught and *was* not able to head into the wind, we gave way *and* were driven *along*.
- 16 And running under the lee of a certain small island called Cauda, we were able with difficulty to get the ship's boat under control.
- 17 *After* hoisting it up, they made use of supports to undergird the ship. And *because they* were afraid lest they run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor *and* thus were driven *along*.
- 18 And *because we* were violently battered by the storm, on the next *day* they began jettisoning *the cargo*,
- 19 and on the third *day* they threw overboard the gear of the ship with their own hands.
- 20 But *when* neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and *with* not a little bad weather confronting *us*, finally all hope was abandoned *that* we would be saved.

Paul's Intervention and Prophecy

- 21 And *because* many were experiencing lack of appetite, at that time Paul stood up in their midst *and* said, "Men, *you* ought to have followed my *advice* not to put out to sea from Crete, and *thus* avoided this damage and loss!
- 22 And now I urge you to cheer up, for there will be no loss of life from among you, but only of the ship.
- 23 For this night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve came to me,
- 24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul! It is necessary *for* you to stand before Caesar, and behold, God has graciously granted you all who are sailing with you.'
- 25 Therefore keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will be like this—according to the way it was told to me.
- 26 But it is necessary *that* we run aground on some island."

The Ship Drifts Toward Malta

- 27 And when the fourteenth night had come, *as* we were being driven in the Adriatic Sea about the middle of the night, the sailors suspected they were approaching some land.
- 28 And taking soundings, they found twenty fathoms. So going on a little *further* and taking soundings again, they found fifteen fathoms.
- 29 And *because they* were afraid lest somewhere we run aground against rough places, they threw down four anchors from the stern *and* prayed for day to come.

30 And *when* the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship and were lowering the ship's boat into the sea, pretending as if they were going to lay out anchors from the bow,

31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these *men* remain with the ship, you cannot be saved!"

32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it fall away.

Paul Urges Them to Eat

33 And until the day was about to come, Paul was urging *them* all to take *some* food, saying, "Today *is the* fourteenth day you have waited *anxiously*, and you have continued without eating, having taken nothing.

34 Therefore I urge you to take *some* food, for this is necessary for your preservation. For not a hair from your head will be lost."

35 And *after he* said these *things* and took bread, he gave thanks to God in front of *them* all, and *after breaking it*, he began to eat.

36 So they all were encouraged and partook of food themselves.

37 (Now we were *in* all two hundred seventy six persons on the ship.)

38 And *when they* had eaten their fill of food, they lightened the ship *by* throwing the wheat into the sea.

Shipwreck

39 Now when day came, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a certain bay having a beach, onto which they decided to run the ship ashore if they could.

40 And slipping the anchors, they left *them* in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes of the steering oars. And hoisting the foresail to the *wind* that was blowing, they held course for the beach.

41 But falling into a place of crosscurrents, they ran the ship aground. And the bow stuck fast *and* stayed immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence.

42 Now the plan of the soldiers was that they would kill the prisoners lest any escape *by* swimming away,

43 but the centurion, *because he* wanted to save Paul, prevented them from doing what they intended, and gave orders *that* those who were able to swim should jump in first to get to the land,

44 and *then* the rest, *some* of whom *floated* on planks and *some* of whom on anything *that was* from the ship. And in this way all were brought safely to the land.

Paul's Voyage to Rome—Three Months at Malta (November 57 to January 58)

Acts 28:1–10

1 And *after we* were brought safely through, then we found out that the island was called Malta.

2 And the local inhabitants showed extraordinary kindness to us, for they lit a fire *and* welcomed us all, because of the rain that had begun and because of the cold.

3 And *when* Paul had gathered a large number of sticks and was placing *them* on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat *and* fastened itself on his hand.

4 And when the local people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another, "Doubtless this man is a murderer whom, *although he* was rescued from the sea, Justice has not permitted to live!"

5 He, in turn, shook off the creature into the fire *and* suffered no harm.

6 But they were expecting *that* he was going to swell up or suddenly to fall down dead. So *after* they had waited for a long *time* and saw nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds *and* began saying *that* he was a god.

7 Now in the *regions* around that place were fields belonging to the chief official of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us *and* entertained us hospitably *for* three days.

8 And it happened that the father of Publius was lying down, afflicted with fever and dysentery. Paul went to him and *after* praying, he placed *his* hands on him *and* healed him.

9 And *after* this had taken place, the rest of those on the island who had diseases were coming and being healed also.

10 They also honored us with many honors, and *when we* were putting out to sea, they gave us the *things* we needed.

Paul's Voyage to Rome—From Malta to Rome (February 58)

Acts 28:11–16

11 Now after three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered at the island, an Alexandrian *one* with the twin gods Castor and Pollux as its insignia.

12 And putting in at Syracuse, we stayed *there* three days.

13 From there we got underway *and* arrived at Rhegium, and after one day a south wind came up *and* on the second day we came to Puteoli,

14 where we found brothers, *and* were implored to stay with them seven days. And in this way we came to Rome.

15 And from there the brothers, *when they* heard the *news* about us, came to meet us as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns. *When he* saw them, Paul gave thanks to God *and* took courage.

16 And when we entered into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself with the soldier who was guarding him.

Paul's Ministry in Rome While Under House Arrest (58–60)

Acts 28:17–31

Paul Addresses the Jewish Leaders

17 Now it happened that after three days, he called together those who were the most prominent of the Jews. And *when* they had assembled, he said to them, “Men *and* brothers, *although* I had done nothing against *our* people or the customs of our fathers, from Jerusalem I was delivered *as* a prisoner into the hands of the Romans,

18 who, *when they* had examined me, were wanting to release *me*, because there was no basis for an accusation *worthy* of death with me.

19 But *because* the Jews objected, I was forced to appeal to Caesar (not as *if I* had any *charge* to bring against my *own* people).

20 Therefore for this reason I have requested to see you and to speak with *you*, for because of the hope of Israel I am wearing this chain!”

21 And they said to him, “We have received no letters about you from Judea, nor has any of the brothers come *and* reported or spoken anything evil about you.

22 But we would like to hear from you what you think, for concerning this sect it is known to us that it is spoken against everywhere.”

Paul Presents the Gospel

23 And *when they* had set a day with him, many more came to him at his lodging place, to whom he was explaining from early in the morning until evening, testifying about the kingdom of God and attempting to convince them about Jesus from both the law of Moses and the prophets.

24 And *some* were convinced *by* what was said, but *others* refused to believe.

25 So being in disagreement with one another, they began to leave *after* Paul made one statement: “The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through the prophet Isaiah to your fathers,

26 saying,

‘Go to this people and say,

“You will keep on hearing and will never understand,
and you will keep on seeing and will never perceive.

27 For the heart of this people has become dull,

and with *their* ears they hear with difficulty,

and they have shut their eyes,

lest they see with *their* eyes,

and hear with *their* ears,

and understand with *their* heart,

and turn, and I would heal them.”’ [Isa 6:9–10]

28 Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles. They also will listen!”

29 [v. 29 is not well attested for the original text of Acts]

Paul's Ministry While Under House Arrest

30 So he stayed two whole years in his own rented house, and welcomed all who came to him,

31 proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the *things* concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, without hindrance.

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Paul's Letter to the Church in Philippi (c. 59)

Philippians 1–4

Greeting

1:1 Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons.

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving

3 I give thanks to my God upon my every remembrance of you,

4 always in my every prayer for all of you, making the prayer with joy,

5 because of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now,

6 convinced of this same *thing*, that the one who began a good work in you will finish *it* until the day of Christ Jesus,

7 just as it is right for me to think this about all of you, because I have you in my heart, *since* both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel all of you are sharers of grace with me.

8 For God *is* my witness, that I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Prayer

9 And this I pray: that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,

10 so that you may approve what is superior, in order that you may be sincere and blameless in the day of Christ,

11 having been filled *with the* fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

Paul Reflects on His Imprisonment

12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that my circumstances have happened instead for the progress of the gospel,

13 so that my imprisonment in Christ has become known in the whole praetorium and to all the rest,

14 and most of the brothers, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, dare *even* more to speak the word without fear.

15 Some even because of envy and strife preach Christ, but some also because of good will.

16 The latter *do so* from love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.

17 The former proclaim Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction in my imprisonment.

18 What is the result? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice. But also I will rejoice,

19 for I know that this will turn out to me for deliverance through your prayer and the support of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 according to my eager expectation and hope, that I will be put to shame in nothing, but with all boldness, even now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether through life or through death.

21 For to me to live *is* Christ and to die *is* gain.

22 But if *it is* to live in the flesh, this *is* fruitful work for me, and which I will prefer *I do* not know.

23 But I am hard pressed between the two options, having the desire to depart and to be with Christ, for this is very much better.

24 But to stay on in the flesh *is* more necessary for your sake.

25 And because I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith,

26 so that *what* you can be proud of may increase in Christ Jesus because of me through my return again to you.

Stand Firm in the Face of Opposition

27 Only lead your lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent I hear your circumstances, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one soul contending side by side for the faith of the gospel,

28 and not letting yourselves be intimidated in anything by your opponents, which is a sign of destruction to them, but of your salvation, and this from God,

29 because to you has been graciously granted on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer on behalf of him,

30 having the same struggle which you saw in me and now hear about in me.

A Call for Unity and Mutual Consideration

2:1 Therefore, if *there is* any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,

2 complete my joy, so that you are in agreement, having the same love, united in spirit, having one purpose.

3 *Do* nothing according to selfish ambition or according to empty conceit, but in humility considering one another better than yourselves,

4 each of you not looking out for your own interests, but also each of you *for* the interests of others.

Jesus—the Supreme Example of Humility

5 Think this in yourselves which *was* also in Christ Jesus,

- 6 who, existing in the form of God,
did not consider being equal with God something to be grasped,
7 but emptied himself
by taking the form of a slave,
by becoming in the likeness of people.
And being found in appearance like a man,
8 he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to the point of death,
that is, death on a cross.
9 Therefore also God exalted him
and graciously granted him the name above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
of those in heaven and of those on earth and of those under the earth,
11 and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ *is* Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Work Out Your Salvation

- 12 Therefore my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.
13 For the one at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure, is God.
14 Do all *things* without grumbling and disputing,
15 in order that you may become blameless and innocent, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as stars in the world,
16 holding fast to the word of life, for a source of pride to me in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.
17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and rejoice with all of you.
18 And *in* the same *way* also you rejoice and rejoice with me.

News About Timothy

- 19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I also may be encouraged *when I* know your circumstances.
20 For I have no one like-minded who *will* sincerely be concerned about your circumstances.
21 For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.
22 But you know his proven character, that like a child with a father he served with me for the gospel.
23 Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see my circumstances.
24 And I am convinced in the Lord that I myself will arrive shortly also.

News About Epaphroditus

- 25 But I considered *it* necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, but your messenger and servant of my need,
26 because he was longing for all of you and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.
27 For indeed he was sick, coming near to death, but God had mercy on him and not *on* him only, but also *on* me, so that I would not have grief upon grief.
28 Therefore I am sending him with special urgency, in order that *when* you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less anxious.
29 Therefore welcome him in the Lord with all joy, and consider such *people* highly honored,
30 because on account of the work of Christ he came near to the point of death, risking his life in order that he might make up for your inability to serve me.

Beware of False Teachers and Their Impressive Credentials

- 3:1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same *things* to you *is* not troublesome to me, but *is* a safeguard for you.
2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the mutilation.
3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who worship by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and do not *put* confidence in the flesh,
4 although I *could* have confidence even in the flesh.
5 circumcised on the eighth day, from the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew *born* from Hebrews, according to the law a Pharisee,

6 according to zeal persecuting the church, according to the righteousness in the law being blameless.

Knowing Christ is the Ultimate Credential

7 But whatever *things* were gain to me, these *things* I have considered loss because of Christ.

8 More than that, *I* even consider all *things* to be loss because of the surpassing greatness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for the sake of whom I have suffered the loss of all *things*, and consider *them* dung, in order that I may gain Christ

9 and may be found in him, not having my righteousness *which is* from the law, but *which is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God on the basis of faith,

10 so that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death,

11 if somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Paul Makes No Claim of Resurrection Perfection

12 Not that I have already received *this*, or *have* already been made perfect, but I press on if indeed I may lay hold of *that* for which also I was laid hold of by Christ.

13 Brothers, I do not consider myself to have laid hold of *it*. But *I do one thing*, forgetting the things behind and straining toward the things ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Therefore as many as *are* perfect, let us hold this opinion, and if you think anything differently, God will reveal this also to you.

16 Only to what we have attained, to the same hold on.

A Call to Imitate Paul's Godly Example

17 Become fellow imitators of me, brothers, and observe those who walk in this way, just as you have us *as* an example.

18 For many live, of whom I spoke about to you many times, but now speak about even weeping, *as* the enemies of the cross of Christ,

19 whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is* the stomach, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, the ones who think on earthly things.

20 For our commonwealth exists in heaven, from which also we eagerly await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our humble body *to be* conformed to his glorious body, in accordance with the power that enables him even to subject all *things* to himself.

Closing Exhortations

4:1 So then, my beloved and greatly desired brothers, my joy and crown, thus stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.

2 I appeal to Euodia and I appeal to Syntyche to be in agreement in the Lord.

3 Yes, I ask also you, true yokefellow, help them, who struggled along with me in the gospel with both Clement and the rest of my fellow workers whose names *are* in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.

5 Let your gentleness be made known to all people. The Lord *is* near.

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

7 And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever *things* are true, whatever *things are* honorable, whatever *things are* right, whatever *things are* pure, whatever *things are* pleasing, whatever *things are* commendable, if *there is* any excellence of character and if anything praiseworthy, think about these *things*.

9 And *the things* which you have learned and received and heard about and seen in me, practice these *things*, and the God of peace will be with you.

Paul's Gratitude for the Philippians' Gift

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last you have renewed your concern for me, for whom also you were thinking, but you had no opportunity *to express it*.

11 Not that I speak from need, for I have learned to be content in whatever *circumstances* I am.

12 I know *how* both to make do with little and I know *how* to have an abundance. In everything and in all *things* I have learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to have an abundance and to go without.

13 I am able *to do* all *things* by the one who strengthens me.

14 Nevertheless you have done well by sharing with me in my affliction.

15 Now you also know, Philippians, that at the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone,

16 because even in Thessalonica on more than one occasion you sent for my need.

17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek for the profit that increases to your account.

18 But I have received everything *in full* and have an abundance; I am well supplied *because* I received from Epaphroditus what you had sent, a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

19 And my God will fulfill your every need according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

20 Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers with me greet you.

22 All the saints greet you, and especially those of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit.

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Chronological Notes

1) Date.¹

- A) "The date for Philippians depends on the place of writing. Although the issues are complex, the evidence for a Roman provenance is most persuasive. Philippians appears to have been written somewhat earlier than the other Prison Epistles. Paul appears to have written Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians at about the same time. Philemon implies that Paul's release from prison was imminent (Phlm 1:21). However, when Paul wrote Philippians, he seemed less certain about the outcome of his trial and was contemplating the possibility that he would be martyred (Phil 1:21–26). On the other hand, Paul's extensive outreach (Phil 1:12–14) and the widespread knowledge of Paul's circumstances suggest that he had been imprisoned in Rome for at least several months at the time that he wrote Philippians. These factors suggest that the composition of Philippians should be dated to around the midpoint of the Roman imprisonment in or around the year 59."

2) Provenance.²

- A) "The question of provenance is one of the most contested issues in Philippians. Paul clearly identified himself as a prisoner (1:7, 13, 17), but he did not explicitly state the location of this imprisonment. Presumably, the Philippians knew where Paul was imprisoned and thus did not need to be told. Three different answers commend themselves as worthy of consideration: (1) Rome; (2) Caesarea; and (3) Ephesus." See Kostenberger's extended discussion (pp. 563–565) for more details on each of the three possibilities. I will be following a Roman provenance for the Prison Epistles.

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 563.

² Kostenberger, pp. 563–565.

Paul's Letter to the Church in Ephesus – Part 1 (c. 60)

Ephesians 1–3

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus:
2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise to God for Our Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3 Blessed *is* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,
4 just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, *that* we should be holy and blameless before him in love,
5 having predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will,
6 to the praise of the glory of his grace that he bestowed on us in the beloved,
7 in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,
8 that he caused to abound to us in all wisdom and insight,
9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in him,
10 for the administration of the fullness of times, to bring together all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in him
11 in whom also we were chosen, having been predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all *things* according to the counsel of his will,
12 *that* we who hoped beforehand in Christ should be for the praise of his glory,
13 in whom also you, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also when you believed you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,
14 who is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

Thanksgiving for the Ephesians' Faith and Intercessory Prayer for Their Increase in Knowledge

15 Because of this I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,
16 do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers,
17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him
18 (the eyes of your hearts having been enlightened), so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what *are* the riches of the glory of his inheritance among the saints,
19 and what *is* the surpassing greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty strength
20 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*,
21 above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,
22 and he subjected all *things* under his feet [[Ps 8:6](#)] and gave him *as* head over all *things* to the church,
23 which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all *things* in every *way*.

New Life in Christ—Salvation By Grace Through Faith

2:1 And you, although you were dead in your trespasses and sins,
2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience,
3 among whom also we all formerly lived in the desires of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the mind, and we were children of wrath by nature, as also the rest of *them* were.
4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love *with* which he loved us,
5 and we being dead in trespasses, he made *us* alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved),
6 and raised *us* together and seated *us* together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,
7 in order that he might show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness upon us in Christ Jesus.

God's New Creation—A Call to Good Works

8 For by grace you are saved through faith, and this *is* not from yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;
9 *it is* not from works, so that no one can boast.
10 For we are his creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we may walk in them.

The Inclusion of the Gentiles in the Promised Blessing

11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in *the* flesh, the so-called uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision in *the* flesh, made by hands,
12 that you were at that time apart from Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, not having hope, and without God in the world.
13 But now in Christ Jesus you, the ones who once were far away, have become near by the blood of Christ.

14 For he himself is our peace, who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of the partition, the enmity, in his flesh,
 15 invalidating the law of commandments in ordinances, in order that he might create the two in himself into one new man, *thus* making peace,
 16 and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in himself.
 17 And coming, he proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to the ones who were near,
 18 because through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.
 19 Consequently, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God,
 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,
 21 in whom the whole building, joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,
 22 in whom you also are built up together into a dwelling place of God in *the* Spirit.

The Divine Mystery and Paul's Stewardship

3:1 On account of this I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles
 2 —if indeed you have heard *about* the stewardship of God's grace given to me for you.
 3 According to revelation the mystery was made known to me, just as I wrote beforehand in brief,
 4 so that you may be able when you read to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ
 5 (which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit):
 6 *that* the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and fellow sharers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,
 7 of which I became a servant, according to the gift of God's grace given to me, according to the working of his power.
 8 To me, the least of all the saints, was given this grace: to proclaim the good news of the fathomless riches of Christ to the Gentiles,
 9 and to enlighten everyone *as to* what *is* the administration of the mystery hidden from the ages by God, who created all *things*,
 10 in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places* through the church,
 11 according to the purpose of the ages which he carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,
 12 in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through faith in him.
 13 Therefore I ask *you* not to be discouraged at my afflictions on behalf of you, which are your glory.

Intercessory Prayer for Power, Love and Spiritual Maturity

14 On account of this, I bend my knees before the Father,
 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
 16 that he may grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person,
 17 *that* Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith (you having been firmly rooted and established in love),
 18 in order that you may be strong enough to grasp together with all the saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and height, and depth,
 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, in order that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.
 20 Now to the one who is able to do beyond all measure more than all that we ask or think, according to the power that is at work in us,
 21 to him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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Chronological Notes

1) Date.¹

- A) “The date for Ephesians depends on complex questions concerning authorship and provenance. If the letter was written during Paul's Roman imprisonment, then it dates to 58–60. Since Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon appear to have been written at approximately the same time and since Philemon belongs to the final phase of Paul's imprisonment (Phlm 1:22), a date of around the year 60 is reasonable.”

2) Provenance.²

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 585.

- A) See Kostenberger's extended discussion of the provenance of Philippians (pp. 563–565) for more details. I will be following a Roman provenance for the Prison Epistles.

² Kostenberger, pp. 563–565.

Paul's Letter to the Church in Ephesus – Part 2 (c. 60)

Ephesians 4–6

A Call for Unity

4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, exhort you to live in a manner worthy of the calling with which you were called:
 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, putting up with one another in love,
 3 being eager to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;
 4 one body and one Spirit (just as also you were called with one hope of your calling),
 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
 6 one God and Father of all, who *is* over all, and through all, and in all.

Diversity Within Unity Leads to Maturity

7 Now to each one of us was given this grace, according to the measure of Christ's gift.
 8 Therefore it says,

“Ascending on high he led captivity captive;
 he gave gifts to men.” [\[Ps 68:18\]](#)

9 Now “he ascended,” what is *it*, except that he also descended to the lower regions of the earth?
 10 The one who descended himself is also the one who ascended above all the heavens, in order that he might fill all *things*.
 11 And he himself gave some *as* apostles and some *as* prophets and some *as* evangelists and some *as* pastors and teachers
 12 for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
 13 until we all reach the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to a measure of the maturity of the fullness of Christ,
 14 so that we may no longer be infants, tossed about by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching, by the trickery of people, by craftiness with reference to the scheming of deceit.
 15 But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow into him *with reference to all things*, who is the head, Christ,
 16 from whom the whole body, joined together and held together by every supporting ligament, according to the working by measure of each single part, the growth of the body makes for the building up of itself in love.

Put Off the Old Man (living for sin and self) and Put On the New (living for Christ and holiness)

17 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, *that* you no longer walk as the Gentiles walk: in the futility of their mind,
 18 being darkened in understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance *that* is in them, because of the hardness of their heart,
 19 who, becoming callous, gave themselves over to licentiousness, for the pursuit of all uncleanness in greediness.
 20 But you did not learn Christ in this way,
 21 if indeed you have heard *about* him, and you were taught by him (just as truth is in Jesus),
 22 *that* you take off, according to your former way of life, the old man, who is being destroyed according to deceitful desires,
 23 be renewed in the spirit of your mind,
 24 and put on the new man (in accordance with God), who is created in righteousness and holiness from the truth.

Specific Examples of How to Put Off the Old Man and Put on the New

25 Therefore, putting aside the lie, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, [\[Zech 8:16\]](#) because we are members of one another.
 26 Be angry and do not sin; [\[Ps 4:4\]](#) do not let the sun set on your anger,
 27 nor give place to the devil.
 28 The one who steals must steal no longer, but instead must labor, working with his own hands *what is* good, so that he may have *something* to share with the one who has need.
 29 No rotten word must proceed from your mouth, but only something good for the building up of the need, in order that it may give grace to those who hear,
 30 and do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
 31 All bitterness, and rage, and wrath, and clamor, and abusive speech, must be removed from you, together with all wickedness.
 32 Become kind toward one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as also God in Christ has forgiven you.
 5:1 Therefore become imitators of God, as beloved children,
 2 and live in love, just as also Christ loved us, and gave himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God for a fragrant smell.

From Darkness to Light—Do What is Pleasing to God

3 But sexual immorality, and all uncleanness, or greediness, must not even be named among you (as is fitting for saints),
 4 and obscenity, and foolish talk, or coarse jesting (which *are* not proper), but rather thanksgiving.

5 For this you know for certain, that every sexually immoral *person*, or unclean *person*, or greedy *person* (who is an idolater), does not have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these *things* the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience.

7 Therefore do not be sharers with them,

8 for you were formerly darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Live like children of light

9 (for the fruit of the light *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

10 trying to learn what is well-pleasing to the Lord.

11 And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but rather even expose *them*.

12 For it is shameful even to speak *about* the things being *done* by them in secret,

13 but all *things* exposed by the light are made visible,

14 for everything made visible is light. Therefore it says,

Wake up, sleeper,
and rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you. [cf. [Isa 26:19](#); [60:1–2](#)]

Live Under the Influence of the Holy Spirit

15 Therefore, consider carefully how you live, not as unwise but as wise,

16 making the most of the time because the days are evil.

17 Because of this do not become foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord *is*.

18 And do not be drunk with wine (in which is dissipation), but be filled by the Spirit,

19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and singing praise in your heart to the Lord,

20 giving thanks always for all *things* in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to the God and Father,

21 being subject to one another out of reverence for Christ

Husbands and Wives—A Physical Illustration of the Union of Christ and the Church

22 —wives to their own husbands as to the Lord,

23 because *the* husband is *the* head of the wife, as also Christ *is the* head of the church (he himself *being the* Savior of the body).

24 But as the church is subject to Christ, thus also wives *should be subject* to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for her;

26 in order that he might sanctify her by cleansing *her* with the washing of water by the word;

27 in order that he might present to himself the church glorious, not having a spot or wrinkle or any such *thing*, but that she may be holy and blameless.

28 Thus also husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. The one who loves his own wife loves himself.

29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as also Christ *does* the church,

30 because we are members of his body.

31 “For this *reason* a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” [[Gen 2:24](#)]

32 (This mystery is great, but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.)

33 Only you also, each one *of you*, must thus love his own wife as himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Children and Parents—A Physical Illustration of our Relationship With God

6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

2 “Honor your father and mother” (which is the first commandment with a promise),

3 “in order that it may be well with you, and you may live a long time on the earth.” [[Exod 20:12](#)]

4 And fathers, do not make your children angry, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Masters and Slaves—Remember That Christ is Master of All

5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ,

6 not while being watched, as people pleasers, but as slaves of Christ doing the will of God from the heart,

7 serving with goodwill as to the Lord and not to people,

8 *because you* know that each one of you, whatever good he should do, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

9 And masters, do the same *things* to them, giving up threats, knowing that both their Lord and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him.

Spiritual Warfare and the Armor of God

10 Finally, become strong in the Lord and in the might of his strength.

11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

12 because our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

13 Because of this, take up the full armor of God, in order that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, girding your waist with truth, and putting on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 and binding *shoes* under your feet with the preparation of the good news of peace,

16 in everything taking up the shield of faith, with which you are able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one,

17 and receive the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

18 with all prayer and supplication praying at all times in the Spirit, and to this *end* being alert with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,

19 and for me, that a word may be given to me at the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,

20 for the sake of which I am an ambassador in chains, that in them I may speak freely, as it is necessary for me to speak.

Closing Remarks

21 Now, so that you also may know my circumstances, what I am doing, Tychicus, my dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will make known to you all *things*,

22 whom I have sent to you for this very *reason*, that you may know our circumstances, and he may encourage your hearts.

23 Peace to the brothers and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace *be* with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

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Paul's Letter to the Church in Colossae (c. 60)

Colossians 1–4

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
2 to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ in Colossae. Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Thanksgiving for the Colossians' Faith

3 We give thanks always to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ *when we pray for you,*
4 *since we* heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you have for all the saints,
5 because of the hope reserved for you in heaven, which you have heard about beforehand in the word of truth, the gospel,
6 that has come to you, just as also in all the world it is bearing fruit and increasing, just as also among you from the day you heard about and understood the grace of God in truth,
7 just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our dear fellow slave who is a faithful minister of Christ *on our behalf,*
8 *who* also made clear to us your love in the Spirit.

Prayer for Spiritual Growth

9 Because of this also we, from the day we heard about *it,* did not cease praying for you, and asking that you may be filled *with* the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual insight,
10 so that you may live in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good deed and increasing in the knowledge of God,
11 enabled with all power, according to his glorious might, for all steadfastness and patience with joy,
12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you for a share of the inheritance of the saints in light,
13 who has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred *us* to the kingdom of the Son he loves,
14 in whom we have the redemption, the forgiveness of sins,

The Heart of the Gospel—the Supremacy of Christ

15 who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation,
16 because all *things* in the heavens and on the earth were created by him, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers, all *things* were created through him and for him,
17 and he himself is before all *things*, and in him all *things* are held together,
18 and he himself is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he himself may become first in everything,
19 because he was well pleased *for* all the fullness to dwell in him,
20 and through him to reconcile all *things* to himself, *by* making peace through the blood of his cross, through him, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

You Have Been Reconciled—Stand Firm in the Faith

21 And although you were formerly alienated and enemies in attitude, because of your evil deeds,
22 but now you have been reconciled by his physical body through death, to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,
23 if indeed you remain in the faith, established and steadfast and not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Paul's Commitment to the Gospel

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings on behalf of you, and I fill up in my flesh what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ, on behalf of his body which is the church,
25 of which I became a minister, according to God's stewardship which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,
26 the mystery *which* has been hidden from the ages and from the generations, but has now been revealed to his saints,
27 to whom God wanted to make known what *is* the glorious wealth of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
28 whom we proclaim, *by* admonishing every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, in order that we may present every person mature in Christ,
29 for which *purpose* also I labor, striving according to his working which is at work powerfully in me.

Paul's Commitment to the Colossians and Laodiceans

2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on behalf of you, and those in Laodicea, and all those who have not seen my face in person,
2 so that their hearts may be encouraged, united in love and into all the wealth of the full assurance of insight into the knowledge of

the mystery of God, Christ,

3 in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

4 I say this in order that no one will deceive you with persuasive speech,

5 for even if I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and seeing your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

Remain Centered on Christ—All That You are Spiritually is Because of Your Union With Him

6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, live in him,

7 firmly rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding with thankfulness.

8 Beware lest anyone take you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world and not according to Christ,

9 because in him all the fullness of deity dwells bodily,

10 and you are filled in him, who is the head over every ruler and authority,

11 in whom also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made by hands, by the removal of the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with *him* through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

13 And although you were dead in the trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

14 having destroyed the certificate of indebtedness in ordinances against us, which was hostile to us, and removed it out of the way by nailing it to the cross.

15 *When he* had disarmed the rulers and the authorities, he made a display of *them* in public, triumphing over them by it.

Identify and Reject False Teaching

16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you with reference to eating or drinking or participation in a feast or a new moon or a Sabbath,

17 which are a shadow of what is to come, but the reality *is* Christ.

18 Let no one condemn you, taking pleasure in humility and the worship of angels, going into detail *about the things* which he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,

19 and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by the ligaments and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

20 If you have died with Christ to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you submit *to them* as if living in the world?

21 “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch,”

22 which *things* are all *meant* for destruction by consuming according to human commandments and teachings,

23 which *things* although they have, to be sure, an appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and humility and unsparing treatment of the body, do not have any value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Keep Your Mind Focused on Heavenly Things

3:1 Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

2 Set your mind on the things above, not *on* the things on earth.

3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, *who is* your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Put Off the Old Man (living for sin and self)

5 Therefore put to death what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, uncleanness, lustful passion, evil desire, and greediness, which is idolatry,

6 because of which the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

7 in which also you once lived, when you used to live in them.

8 But now you also lay aside all *these* things: anger, rage, wickedness, slander, abusive language from your mouth.

9 Do not lie to one another, *because you* have taken off the old man together with his deeds,

10 and have put on the new *man* that is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created him,

11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, *or* free, but Christ *is* all, and in all.

Put on the New Man (living for Christ and holiness)

12 Therefore, as *the* chosen of God, holy and *dearly* loved, put on affection, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience,

13 putting up with one another and forgiving one another. If anyone should have a complaint against anyone, just as also the Lord forgive you, thus also you *do the same*.

14 And to all these *things add* love, which is *the* bond of perfection.

15 And the peace of Christ must rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body, and be thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with all wisdom, with psalms, hymns, *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God,

17 and everything whatever you do in word or in deed, giving thanks *for* all *things* in the name of the Lord Jesus to God the Father through him.

Biblical Principles for Relationships and the Workplace

18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.

20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing in the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, so that they will not become discouraged.

22 Slaves, obey your human masters in everything, not while being watched, as people pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.

23 Whatever you do, accomplish *it* from the soul, as to the Lord, and not to people,

24 *because you* know that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. Serve the Lord Christ.

25 For the one who does wrong will receive back whatever wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

4:1 Masters, grant your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you also have a master in heaven.

Exhortation to Prayer and Christian Witness

2 Be devoted to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving,

3 praying at the same time for us also, that God may open for us a door of the message, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which also I am a prisoner,

4 so that I may reveal it, as it is necessary for me to speak.

5 Live with wisdom toward those outside, making the most of the time.

6 Let your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, so that *you* may know how it is necessary for you to answer each one.

Tychicus to Deliver the Letter

7 Tychicus, my dear brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in the Lord, will make known to you all my circumstances,

8 whom I have sent to you for this very *reason*, in order that you may know our circumstances and he may encourage your hearts,

9 together with Onesimus, my faithful and dear brother, who is *one* of you. They will make known to you all the circumstances here.

Closing Greetings

10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions—if he should come to you, welcome him),

11 and Jesus who is called Justus. These *are* the only ones who are fellow workers for the kingdom of God from the circumcision, who have been a comfort to me.

12 Epaphras, who is *one* of you, greets you, a slave of Christ always struggling on behalf of you in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

13 For I testify to him that he is working hard on behalf of you and those in Laodicea and those in Hierapolis.

14 Luke the physician, our dear friend, greets you, *as does* Demas.

15 Greet the brothers in Laodicea, and Nympha and the church in her house.

Final Instructions

16 And whenever this letter is read among you, see to it that it is read also among the Laodicean church, and that you also read the *letter* from Laodicea.

17 And tell Archippus, “Direct your attention to the ministry that you received in the Lord, in order that you may complete it.”

18 The greeting *is* by my hand, Paul’s. Remember my imprisonment. Grace *be* with you.

Chronological Notes1) Date.¹

- A) “If written by Paul from Rome, then one must place the composition of the letter around 58–60 according to the chronology of Paul suggested in this text.” As already mentioned, I follow Kostenberger’s chronology for Paul’s prison epistles and date Colossians to c. 60.

2) Provenance.²

- A) “The presence of Luke, Aristarchus, Timothy, and other coworkers with Paul at the time of writing are important clues for the provenance of Colossians. The presence of Luke appears to support a Roman provenance because Acts places Luke with Paul in Rome, while Paul’s Ephesian ministry is not one of the ‘we’ passages in Acts. Acts 27:2 also indicates that Aristarchus accompanied Paul to Italy and most likely all the way to Rome. Although Acts does not mention the presence of Timothy in Rome, the Acts narrative closes without identifying by name any persons who visited Paul in Rome during his house arrest. In light of the close relationship shared by Paul and Timothy, one would expect Timothy to visit Paul sometime during the two-year Roman imprisonment. Although good arguments can be made for Ephesus, the balance of the evidence favors a Roman provenance.”

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 604.

² Kostenberger, pp. 604–605.

Paul's Letter to Philemon (c. 60)

Philemon

Salutation

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon, our dear friend and fellow worker,
2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house.
3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving for Philemon's Faith and Prayer for the Knowledge of Every Good Thing

4 I thank my God, always making mention of you in my prayers,
5 *because I* hear about your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints.
6 *I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective in the knowledge *of every good thing that is* in us for Christ.
7 For I have great joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Paul's Appeal to Philemon to Accept Onesimus

8 Therefore, *although I* have great confidence in Christ to order you *to do what* is proper,
9 instead I appeal to *you* because of love, *since I* am such a one as Paul, now an old man and also a prisoner of Christ Jesus.
10 I am appealing to you concerning my child whom I became the father of during my imprisonment, Onesimus.
11 Once he *was* useless to you, but now *he is* useful to you and to me,
12 whom I have sent back to you himself, that is, my heart,
13 whom I wanted to keep with me, in order that he might serve me on behalf of you during my imprisonment for the gospel.
14 But apart from your consent, I wanted to do nothing, in order that your good *deed* might be not as according to necessity, but according to *your own* free will.
15 For perhaps because of this, he was separated *from you* for a time, in order that you might have him back forever,
16 no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.
17 If therefore you consider me a partner, receive him as *you would* me.
18 But if in anything he has caused you loss or owes *you anything*, charge this to my account.
19 I, Paul, write *this* with my *own* hand: I will pay it back, lest I mention to you that you owe me even your very self besides.
20 Yes, brother, I ought to have some benefit of you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.
21 Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you *because I* know that you will do even beyond what I say.
22 At the same time also, prepare a guest room for me, for I hope that through your prayers I will be restored to you.

Greetings and Benediction

23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,
24 *and so do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, *and* Luke, my fellow workers.
25 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit.

Jude's Letter to Those Who are Called (c. 61–62)

Jude

Salutation

1 Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to *those who are* called, loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.
2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

Contend Earnestly for the Faith—Reject Those Who Pervert the Grace of God

3 Dear friends, *although I* was making every effort to write to you concerning our common salvation, I considered *it* a necessity to write to you to encourage *you* to contend for the faith delivered once and for all to the saints.
4 For certain men have slipped in stealthily, who were designated long ago for this condemnation, ungodly ones, who change the grace of our God into licentiousness and who deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

Examples of God's Past Judgment

5 Now I want to remind you, *although* you know everything once and for all, that Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, the second time destroyed those who did not believe.
6 And *the* angels who did not keep to their own domain but deserted their proper dwelling place, he has kept in eternal bonds under deep gloom for the judgment of the great day,
7 as Sodom and Gomorrah and the towns around them indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire *in* the same way as these, are exhibited as an example *by* undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

The Sins of the Intruders

8 Despite that, in the same way also these *men, because of their* dreams, defile the flesh and reject authority and blaspheme majestic beings.

9 But Michael the archangel, when he argued with the devil, disputing concerning the body of Moses, did not dare to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”

10 But these persons blaspheme all that they do not understand, and all that they understand by instinct like the irrational animals, by these *things* they are being destroyed.

Woe Oracle Against the Intruders

11 Woe to them! For they have traveled in the way of Cain, and have given themselves up to the error of Balaam for gain, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12 These are the ones feasting together without reverence, hidden reefs at your love feasts, caring for themselves, waterless clouds carried away by winds, late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted,

13 wild waves of the sea foaming up their own shameful deeds, wandering stars, for whom the deep gloom of darkness has been reserved for eternity.

Enoch’s Prophecy of God’s Eschatological Judgment

14 And Enoch, the seventh from Adam, also prophesied about these *people*, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with tens of thousands of his holy ones

15 to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they have committed in an ungodly way, and concerning all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These *people* are grumblers, discontented, proceeding according to their desires, and their mouths speaking pompous *words*, showing partiality to gain an advantage.

Exhortation to Believers

17 But you, dear friends, remember the words proclaimed beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

18 for they said to you, “In the end time there will be scoffers following according to their own ungodly desires.”

19 These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly, not having the Spirit.

20 But you, dear friends, *by* building yourselves up in your most holy faith, *by* praying in the Holy Spirit,

21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

22 And have mercy on those who doubt,

23 and save others *by* snatching *them* from the fire, and have mercy on others with fear, hating even the tunic stained by the flesh.

Closing Doxology

24 Now to the one who is able to protect you from stumbling and make *you* to stand before his glory blameless with exultation,

25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time and now and for all eternity. Amen.

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Chronological Notes

1) Philemon.

- A) “The date for Philemon depends largely on the date assigned to Colossians. The evidence for the close relationship between the two letters is as follows: (1) Colossians refers to Onesimus (Col 4:9); (2) both letters have Timothy as the co-sender (Phlm 1:1; Col 1:1); (3) both letters refer to Epaphras (Phlm 1:23; Col 1:7) and Archippus (Phlm 1:2; Col 4:17); and (4) both letters include Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke among Paul’s companions (Phlm 1:24; Col 4:10, 14). Assuming the Roman provenance of Colossians, the letter should be dated to around the year 60.”¹ As already mentioned, I follow Kostenberger’s chronology for Paul’s prison epistles and date Philemon to c. 60.

2) Jude.

- A) “The date for Jude depends in part on its relationship with 1 and 2 Peter, particularly the latter. A comparison between

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 623.

Jude's letter and 2 Peter suggests that Jude's letter was written first and that Peter in his second letter adapted Jude for his own purposes and circumstances. In light of the considerable number of parallels between the letters, a literary relationship between the two is more likely than the independent use of a common source by both writers. The probability Jude's having been written prior to 2 Peter can be illustrated by the way in which these writings used Jewish apocryphal literature. Jude included three such quotations or allusions: (1) to The Assumption of Moses in verse 9; (2) to 1 Enoch in verses 14–15; and (3) to an otherwise unattested saying of the apostles in verse 18. All three quotations are lacking in 2 Peter. It seems more likely that Peter avoided reference to these apocryphal works rather than that Jude added these references on the assumption of Petrine priority. Another factor is the question of a possible literary dependence between Jude and 2 Peter. If 2 Peter postdates and is dependent on Jude (a view held by most, though not all, commentators today), and 2 Peter is authentic, the fact that Peter died a martyr's death in circa 65–66 requires the early 60s as the latest possible date for the book of Jude. Since there is no good reason to question the authenticity of 2 Peter, and since it is probable that 2 Peter is dependent on Jude rather than vice versa, 55–62 as a date of composition is most likely. But it must be noted that the lack of clear internal evidence regarding the date of composition renders this estimate tentative at best.² I have chosen to date Jude to c. 61–62 and group it with Philemon in today's reading.

² Kostenberger, pp. 766–767.

Paul's First Letter to Timothy (c. 61–62)

1 Timothy 1–6

Salutation

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,
2 to Timothy, *my* true child in the faith. Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Timothy's Task—Rebuke Those Who Spread False Teaching

3 Just as I urged you *when I* traveled to Macedonia, remain in Ephesus, so that you may instruct certain people not to teach other doctrine,

4 and not to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which cause useless speculations rather than God's plan *that is* by faith.

5 But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a faith without hypocrisy,

6 from which some have deviated, *and* have turned away into fruitless discussion,

7 wanting to be teachers of the law, *although they* do not understand either *the things* which they are saying or *the things* concerning which they are speaking confidently.

8 But we know that the law *is* good, if anyone makes use of it lawfully,

9 knowing this, that the law *is* not given for a righteous *person* but for the lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and totally worldly, for the one who kills his father and the one who kills his mother, for murderers,

10 sexually immoral people, homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is opposed to sound teaching,

11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God that I was entrusted with.

Timothy's Task—Follow Paul's Example

12 I give thanks to the one who strengthens me, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he considered me faithful, placing *me* into ministry,
13 *although I* was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, but I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief,

14 and the grace of our Lord abounded with the faith and love *that are* in Christ Jesus.

15 The saying *is* trustworthy and worthy of all acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

16 But because of this I was shown mercy, in order that in me foremost, Christ Jesus might demonstrate his total patience, for an example for those who are going to believe in him for eternal life.

17 Now to the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, to the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Timothy's Task—Hold Firmly to Faith and a Good Conscience

18 I am setting before you this instruction, Timothy *my* child, in accordance with the prophecies spoken long ago about you, in order that by them you may fight the good fight,

19 having faith and a good conscience, which some, *because they* have rejected *these*, have suffered shipwreck concerning their faith,

20 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, in order that they may be taught not to blaspheme.

Pattern for Public Prayer

2:1 Therefore, I urge first of all *that* petitions, prayers, requests, *and* thanksgiving be made on behalf of all people,

2 on behalf of kings and all those who are in authority, in order that we may live a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

3 This *is* good and acceptable before God our Savior,

4 who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

5 For *there is* one God and one mediator between God and human beings, the man Christ Jesus,

6 who gave himself a ransom for all, the testimony at the proper time,

7 for which I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am speaking the truth, *I am* not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

8 Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger and dispute.

Modesty and the Role of Women

9 Likewise also the women should adorn themselves in appropriate clothing, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold jewelry or pearls or expensive clothing,

10 but with good deeds which are fitting for women who profess godliness.

11 A woman must learn in quietness with all submission.

12 But I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.

13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve,

14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman, *because she* was deceived, came into transgression.
 15 But she will be saved through the bearing of children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness with self-control.

Qualifications of Overseers

3:1 The saying *is* trustworthy: if anyone aspires to supervision, he desires a good work.
 2 Therefore the overseer must be irreproachable, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching,
 3 not addicted to wine, not a violent person, but gentle, peaceable, not loving money,
 4 managing his own household well, having children in submission with all dignity
 5 (but if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?),
 6 not newly converted, lest he become conceited *and* fall into the condemnation of the devil.
 7 But *he* must also have a good testimony from those outside, in order that he may not fall into disgrace and the trap of the devil.

Qualifications of Deacons

8 Deacons likewise *must be* dignified, not insincere, not devoted to much wine, not fond of dishonest gain,
 9 holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience,
 10 and these also must be tested first; then let them serve *if they* are above reproach.
 11 The wives likewise *must be* dignified, not slanderous, temperate, faithful in all *things*.
 12 Deacons must be husbands of one wife, managing *their* children and their own households well.
 13 For those who have served well acquire a good standing for themselves, and great boldness in the faith *that is* in Christ Jesus.

Walk Worthy of the Gospel and the Church

14 I am writing these *things* to you, hoping to come to you in a short time.
 15 But if I am delayed, *I am writing* in order that you may know how one must conduct oneself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and mainstay of the truth.
 16 And most certainly, great is the mystery of godliness:

Who was revealed in the flesh,
 was vindicated by the Spirit,
 was seen by angels,
 was proclaimed among the Gentiles,
 was believed on in the world,
 was taken up in glory.

Apostasy and Heresy in Later Times

4:1 Now the Spirit explicitly says that in the last times some will depart from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,
 2 by the hypocrisy of liars, who are seared in their own conscience,
 3 who forbid marrying *and insist on* abstaining from foods that God created for sharing in with thankfulness by those who believe and who know the truth,
 4 because everything created by God *is* good and nothing *is to be* rejected *if it is* received with thankfulness,
 5 for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

Train Yourself for Godliness

6 *By* teaching these *things* to the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, trained in the words of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed faithfully.
 7 But reject those worthless myths told by elderly women, and train yourself for godliness.
 8 For the training of the body is somewhat profitable, but godliness is profitable for everything, *because it* holds promise for the present life and for the *life* to come.
 9 The statement *is* trustworthy and deserving of complete acceptance.
 10 For to this *end* we labor and suffer reproach, because we have put our hope in *the* living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of believers.

Exercise Your Spiritual Gift and Be an Example of Faithfulness

11 Command these *things* and teach *them*.
 12 Let no one look down on your youth, but be an example for the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.
 13 Until I come, pay attention to the *public* reading, to exhortation, to teaching.
 14 Do not neglect the gift *that is* in you, that was granted to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of

elders.

15 Practice these *things*. Be *diligent* in these *things*, in order that your progress may be evident to everyone.

16 Fix *your* attention on yourself and on your teaching. Continue in them, for *by* doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Proper Conduct With Different Age Groups

5:1 Do not rebuke an older man, but appeal to *him* as a father, younger men as brothers,

2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

Proper Treatment of Widows

3 Honor widows *who are* truly widows.

4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must learn to show profound respect for their own household first, and to pay back recompense to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God.

5 But the widow *who is one* truly, and is left alone, has put her hope in God and continues in her petitions and prayers night and day.

6 But the one who lives for sensual pleasure is dead *even though she* lives.

7 And command these *things*, in order that they may be irreproachable.

8 But if someone does not provide for his own *relatives*, and especially the members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

9 Let a widow be put on the list *if she* is not less than sixty years *old*, the wife of one husband,

10 being well-attested by good works, if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality, if she has washed the feet of the saints, if she has helped those who are oppressed, if she has devoted herself to every good work.

11 But refuse younger widows, for whenever their physical desires lead them away from Christ, they want to marry,

12 *thus* incurring condemnation because they have broken their former pledge.

13 And at the same time also, going around from house to house, they learn *to be* idle, and not only idle, but also gossipy and busybodies, saying the things *that are* not necessary.

14 Therefore I want younger *widows* to marry, to bear children, to manage a household, to give the adversary no opportunity for reproach.

15 For already some have turned away *and followed* after Satan.

16 If any believing woman has widows, she must help them, and the church must not be burdened, in order that it may help those *who are* truly widows.

Proper Recognition and Discipline of Elders

17 The elders who lead well must be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor by speaking and teaching.

18 For the scripture says, "You must not muzzle an ox *while it* is threshing," [[Deut 25:4](#)] and "The worker *is* worthy of his wages." [[Luke 10:7](#)]

19 Do not accept an accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

20 Reprove those who sin in the presence of all, in order that the rest also may experience fear.

21 I testify solemnly before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels that you observe these *things* without prejudice, doing nothing according to partiality.

22 Lay hands on no one hastily, and do not participate in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

23 (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach and your frequent illnesses.)

24 The sins of some people are evident, preceding *them* to judgment, but for some also they follow after *them*.

25 Likewise also good works *are* evident, and those considered otherwise are not able to be hidden.

Proper Conduct for Slaves

6:1 All those who are under the yoke as slaves must regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, lest the name of God and the teaching be slandered.

2 And those who have believing masters must not look down on *them* because they are brothers, but rather they must serve, because those who benefit by their service are believers and dearly loved.

An Indictment of the False Teachers

3 If anyone teaches other doctrine and does not devote himself to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching *that is* in accordance with godliness,

4 he is conceited, understanding nothing, but having a morbid interest concerning controversies and disputes about words, from which come envy, strife, slanders, evil suspicions,

5 constant wrangling by people of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who consider godliness to be a means of gain.

The Greed of the False Teachers

6 But godliness with contentment is a great means of gain.

7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so that neither can we bring anything out.

8 But *if we* have food and clothing, with these *things* we will be content.

9 But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge those people into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all evil, by which some, *because they desire it*, have gone astray from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.

What It Means to Be a Man of God

11 But you, O man of God, flee from these *things*, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patient endurance, gentleness.

12 Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

13 I command you, in the sight of God who gives life to all *things* and Christ Jesus who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate,

14 *that* you observe the commandment without fault, irreproachable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 which he will make known in his own time, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who reign as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords,

16 the *one who* alone possesses immortality, who lives *in* unapproachable light, whom no human being has seen nor is able to see, to whom *be* honor and eternal power. Amen.

A Word to the Wealthy

17 Command those *who are* rich in this present age not to be proud and not to put their hope in the uncertainty of riches, but in God, who provides us all *things* richly for enjoyment,

18 to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, sharing freely,

19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the future, in order that they may take hold of *what is* truly life.

Concluding Exhortation

20 O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted *to you*. Turn away from pointless empty talk and contradictions of *what is* falsely called knowledge,

21 which some, *by* professing *it*, have deviated concerning the faith. Grace *be* with you *all*.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) "It may be assumed that Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28) and that he engaged in a subsequent second Aegean ministry that provides the proper framework for 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. If so, Paul probably wrote his first letter to Timothy some time after the year 60 (the most likely date of Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment), but before 66, the likely date for Paul's second Roman imprisonment that was followed by his martyrdom under Nero, who died in AD 68. The most natural reading of 1 Timothy 1:3 is that Paul wrote from Macedonia. Timothy, who was at that time stationed in Ephesus, needed counsel on how to deal with the false teachers in the Ephesian church. To this end Paul interwove personal instructions with those on community life, so that Timothy received public apostolic support while it was acknowledged that he also had certain standards to meet. Paul probably wrote 2 Timothy from Rome in the year 66. Titus was likely written in the interim between 1 and 2 Timothy (or possibly prior to 1 Timothy) from an unknown location."¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 644.

Peter's First Letter to the Gentile Churches (c. 62–63)

1 Peter 1–5

Salutation

1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen who are residing temporarily in the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and *for* sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ. May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Born Again Into a Living Hope

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 into an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for you

5 who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,

Trials Test and Prove the Genuineness of Our Faith

6 in which you rejoice greatly, *although* now for a short time, if necessary, you are distressed by various trials,

7 so that the genuineness of your faith, more valuable than gold that is passing away, but is tested by fire, may be found to *result in* praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

8 whom, *although you* have not seen, you love; in whom now you believe, *although you* do not see *him*, and you rejoice greatly with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 obtaining the goal of your faith, the salvation of *your* souls.

The Privileged Status of Those Who Know and Believe the Gospel

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace meant for you sought and made careful inquiry,

11 investigating for what *person* or which time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating *when he* testified beforehand to the sufferings with reference to Christ and the glories after these *things*,

12 to whom it was revealed that they were serving not themselves but you with reference to the same *things* which now have been announced to you through those who proclaimed the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels desire to look.

A Call to Holiness—Remember That You Were Set Free from Sin

13 Therefore, when you have prepared your minds for action *by* being self-controlled, put your hope completely in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former desires *you used to conform to* in your ignorance,

15 but as the one who called you *is* holy, *you* yourselves be holy in all *your* conduct,

16 for it is written, “You will be holy, because I *am* holy.” [[Lev 19:2](#)]

A Call to Reverence—Remember That You Were Redeemed With Christ's Precious Blood

17 And if you call on *him as* Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, conduct yourselves with fear during the time of your temporary residence,

18 *because you* know that you were redeemed from your futile way of life inherited from your ancestors not with perishable things like silver or gold,

19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like *that of* an unblemished and spotless lamb

20 who was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has been revealed in these last times for you

21 who through him *are* believing in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

A Call to Love—Remember That You Were Born Again Through God's Enduring Word

22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for sincere brotherly love, love one another fervently from the heart,

23 *because you* have been born again, not from perishable seed but imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

24 For

“all flesh *is* like grass,

and all its glory like the flower of the grass.

The grass withers and the flower falls off,

25 but the word of the Lord endures forever.” [[Isa 40:6–8](#)]

And this is the word that has been proclaimed to you.

Put Aside All Evil and Crave Pure, Spiritual Milk

2:1 Therefore, ridding yourselves of all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,
 2 like newborn infants long for the unadulterated spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up to salvation,
 3 if you have tasted that the Lord *is* kind, [[Ps 34:8](#)]

Living Stones Built On Christ the Cornerstone

4 to whom you are drawing near, a living stone rejected by men but chosen *and* precious in the sight of God.
 5 And *you* yourselves, as living stones, are being built up *as* a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
 6 For it stands in scripture,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a chosen *and* precious cornerstone,
 and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame.” [[Isa 28:16](#)]

7 Therefore the honor *is* for you who believe, but for those who refuse to believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected,
 this one has become the cornerstone,” [[Ps 118:22](#)]

8 and

“A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense,” [[Isa 8:14](#)]

who stumble *because they* disobey the word to which also they were consigned.

9 But you *are* a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, [[Exod 19:6](#)] a people for *God's* possession, so that you may proclaim the virtues of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light,

10 who once *were* not a people, [[Hos 1:9](#)] but now *are* the people of God, the ones *who were* not shown mercy, [[Hos 1:6](#)] but now are shown mercy. [cf. [Hos 2:23](#)]

Lifestyle Evangelism

11 Dear friends, I urge *you* as foreigners and temporary residents to abstain from fleshly desires which wage war against your soul,
 12 maintaining your good conduct among the Gentiles, so that in *the things* in which they slander you as evildoers, by seeing your good deeds they may glorify God on the day of visitation.

Submit to the Governing Authorities

13 Subject yourselves to every human authority for the sake of the Lord, whether to a king as having supreme authority,
 14 or to governors as those sent out by him for the punishment of those who do evil and the praise of those who do good.
 15 For the will of God is as follows: *by* doing good to silence the ignorance of foolish people.
 16 *Live* as free *persons*, and not using your freedom as a covering for evil, but as slaves of God.
 17 Honor all *people*, love the community of believers, fear God, honor the king.

Slaves Submit to Your Masters—Christ Is Our Example of Suffering

18 Domestic slaves, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to those *who are* good and gentle, but also to those *who are* unjust.

19 For this *finds* favor, if because of consciousness of God someone endures sorrows *while* suffering unjustly.

20 For what credit *is it* if, *when you* sin and are beaten *for it*, you endure? But if you endure *when you* do good and suffer *for it*, this *finds* favor with God.

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his footsteps,

22 who did not commit sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth, [[Isa 53:9](#)]

23 who *when he* was reviled, did not revile in return; *when* suffering, he did not threaten, but entrusted *himself* to the one who judges justly,

24 who himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that *we* may die to sins *and* live to righteousness, by whose wounds you were healed. [[Isa 53:4–5](#)]

25 For you were going astray like sheep, [[Isa 53:6](#)] but you have turned back now to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Wives Submit to Your Husbands, Husbands Honor Your Wives

3:1 In the same way, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some are disobedient to the word, they may be won

over without a word by the conduct of their wives,
 2 *when they* see your respectful, pure conduct.
 3 Let your adornment not be the external *kind*, braiding hair and putting on gold jewelry or putting on *fine* clothing,
 4 but the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable *quality* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is highly valuable in the sight of God.
 5 For in the *same* way formerly the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves *by* being subject to their own husbands,
 6 like Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose children you have become *when you* do good and are not frightened with respect to any terror.
 7 Husbands, in the same way live with *your wives* knowledgeably, as with the weaker female vessel, showing *them* honor as fellow heirs also of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

Practical Christian Living

8 And finally, all *of you be* harmonious, sympathetic, showing mutual affection, compassionate, humble,
 9 not repaying evil for evil or insult for insult, but on the other hand blessing *others*, because for this *reason* you were called, so that you could inherit a blessing.
 10 For

“The one who wants to love life
 and see good days
 must keep his tongue from evil
 and *his* lips must not speak deceit.

11 And he must turn away from evil and do good;
 he must seek peace and pursue it.

12 For the eyes of the Lord *are* on the righteous,
 and his ears *are open* to their prayer.

But the face of the Lord *is* against those who do evil. [[Ps 34:12–16](#)]

You are Blessed If You Suffer for Doing Good

13 And who *is* the one who will harm you if you are a zealous adherent for what is good?
 14 But even if you might suffer for the sake of righteousness, *you are* blessed. And do not be afraid of their intimidation or be disturbed, [[Isa 8:12](#)]
 15 but set Christ apart *as* Lord in your hearts, always ready to *make* a defense to anyone who asks you *for* an accounting concerning the hope *that is* in you.
 16 But *do so* with courtesy and respect, having a good conscience, so that in *the things* in which you are slandered, the ones who malign your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame.
 17 For *it is* better to suffer for doing good, if God wills it, than for doing evil.

Christ Also Suffered for Doing Good—The Result Was Our Salvation

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, in order that he could bring you to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit,
 19 in which also he went *and* proclaimed to the spirits in prison,
 20 who were formerly disobedient, when the patience of God waited in the days of Noah, *while* an ark was being constructed, in which a few—that is, eight souls—were rescued through water.
 21 And also, corresponding to *this*, baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,
 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him.

Choosing a Life of Suffering Demonstrates That You Have Ceased From Sin

4:1 Therefore, *because* Christ suffered in the flesh, you also equip yourselves with the same way of thinking, because the one who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,
 2 in order to live the remaining time in the flesh no longer for human desires, but for the will of God.
 3 For the time that has passed *was* sufficient to do what the Gentiles desire to do, having lived in licentiousness, *evil* desires, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties, and wanton idolatries,
 4 with respect to which they are surprised *when* you do not run with *them* into the same flood of dissipation, *and so they* revile you.
 5 They will give an account to the one who is ready to judge the living and the dead.
 6 Because for this reason also the gospel was preached to those who are dead, so that they were judged by human standards in the flesh, but they may live in the spirit by God’s standards.

A Life of Love

7 Now the end of all *things* draws near. Therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for *your* prayers.

8 Above all, keep your love for one another constant, because love covers a large number of sins. [[Prov 10:12](#)]

9 *Be* hospitable to one another without complaining.

10 Just as each one has received a gift, *use* it for serving one another, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

11 If anyone speaks, *let it be* as the oracles of God; if anyone serves, *let it be* as by the strength that God provides, so that in all *things* God will be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

Rejoice That You Share in the Sufferings of Christ

12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, *when it* takes place to test you, as *if something* strange were happening to you.

13 But to the degree that you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that also at the revelation of his glory you may rejoice *and* be glad.

14 If you are reviled on account of the name of Christ, *you are* blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests [[Isa 11:2](#)] on you.

15 By all means do not let anyone of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.

16 But if *someone suffers* as a Christian, he must not be ashamed, but must glorify God with this name.

17 For *it is* the time for the judgment to begin out from the household of God. But if *it begins* out from us first, what will be the outcome for those who are disobedient to the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous are saved with difficulty, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner? [[Prov 11:31](#) (LXX)]

19 So then also those who suffer according to the will of God must entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing good.

Instructions for Elders

5:1 Therefore *I, your* fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, *and* also a sharer of the glory that is going to be revealed, exhort the elders among you:

2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion but willingly, in accordance with God, and not greedily but eagerly,

3 and not as lording it over those under your care, but being examples for the flock.

4 And *when* the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

The Need for Humility

5 In the same way, younger men, be subject to the elders, and all *of you* clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. [[Prov 3:34](#) (LXX)]

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you at the *right* time,

7 casting all your cares on him, because he cares for you.

Resist the Devil!

8 Be sober; be on the alert. Your adversary the devil walks around like a roaring lion, [[Ps 22:13](#)] looking for someone to devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in your faith, *because you* know the same *kinds* of sufferings are being accomplished by your community of believers in the world.

10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, *after you* have suffered for a short time, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, *and* establish *you*.

11 To him *be* the power forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Greeting

12 Through Silvanus, the faithful brother (as I consider *him*), I have written to you briefly to encourage *you* and to attest that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.

13 She *who is* in Babylon, chosen the same as *you*, greets you, and *so does* my son Mark.

14 Greet one another with a loving kiss. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) “The best indicator as to the date of the letter, given Peter’s authorship, is the reference to Rome at 1 Peter 5:13. Most agree that ‘Babylon’ refers to Rome. If so, Peter most likely was in Rome in the mid- to late 60s. The letter gives no hint that there is ongoing persecution, by the state or otherwise, in the environment of the author. This indicates a date prior to the persecution

of Nero, which began in approximately 64. Most likely, 1 Peter was written slightly before then, around 62–63, when the harbingers of this persecution were already on the horizon.”¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 736.

Paul's Letter to Titus (c. 63)

Titus 1–3

Salutation

1:1 Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of the chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth that *is* according to godliness,
2 in the hope of eternal life which God, who does not lie, promised before eternal ages,
3 but at the proper time has disclosed his message in the proclamation *with* which I was entrusted according to the command of God our Savior,
4 to Titus, *my* true child according to a common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Qualifications for Elders

5 On account of this, I left you behind in Crete, in order that what remains may be set in order and you may appoint elders in every town, as I ordered you.
6 If anyone is blameless, *the* husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of dissipation or rebellious.
7 For it is necessary *for* the overseer to be blameless as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not violent, not greedy for dishonest gain,
8 but hospitable, loving what is good, prudent, just, devout, self-controlled,
9 holding fast to the faithful message according to the teaching, in order that he may be able both to exhort with sound instruction and to reprove those who speak against *it*.

The Need for Qualified Church Leadership

10 For there are many rebellious *people*, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,
11 whom it is necessary to silence, whoever are ruining whole families *by* teaching *things* which must not be *taught* for the sake of dishonest gain.
12 A certain one of them, *one of* their own prophets, has said, "Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."
13 This testimony is true, for which reason reprove them severely, in order that they may be sound in the faith,
14 not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of people who turn away from the truth.
15 To the pure all *things are* pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing *is* pure, but both their mind and conscience are defiled.
16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny *him*, because they are detestable and disobedient, and unfit for every good deed.

Teaching Sound Doctrine

2:1 But you, speak *the things* which are fitting for sound instruction.
2 Older men are to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, *and* in endurance.
3 Older women likewise *are to be* reverent in *their* behavior, not slanderous, not enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,
4 in order that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands *and* to love their children,
5 *to be* self-controlled, pure, busy at home, good, being subject to their own husbands, in order that the word of God may not be slandered.
6 Likewise, exhort the young men to be self-controlled,
7 concerning everything showing yourself *to be* an example of good deeds, in your teaching *demonstrating* soundness, dignity,
8 *a* sound message beyond reproach, in order that an opponent may be put to shame, because *he* has nothing bad to say concerning us.
9 Slaves must be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not to talk back,
10 not stealing, but demonstrating all good faith, in order that they may do credit to the teaching of God our Savior in everything.

God's Grace Trains Us in Godly Behavior

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people,
12 training us in order that, denying impiety and worldly desires, we may live self-controlled and righteously and godly in the present age,
13 looking forward to the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
14 who gave himself for us, in order that he might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify for himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good deeds.
15 Speak these *things* and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Instructions for Living in State and Society

3:1 Remind them to be subject to the rulers *and* to the authorities, to obey, to be prepared for every good work,
2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all courtesy to all people.

3 For we also were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, enslaved to various desires and pleasures, spending our lives in wickedness and envy, despicable, hating one another.

4 But when the kindness and love for mankind of God our Savior appeared,

5 he saved us, not by deeds of righteousness that we have done, but because of his mercy, through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

6 whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we may become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 The saying *is* trustworthy, and I want you to insist concerning these *things*, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and beneficial for people.

Final Warning Against Error

9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and contentions and quarrels about the law, for they are useless and fruitless.

10 Reject a divisive person after a first and second admonition,

11 knowing that such a person is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

Closing Instructions and Greetings

12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make haste to come to me in Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

13 Diligently send on their way Zenas the lawyer and Apollos, so that they may lack nothing.

14 But also our *people* must learn to engage in good deeds for necessary needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.

15 All those with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace *be* with all of you.

Scripture quotations are from the [Lexham English Bible \(LEB\)](#). Copyright 2012 [Logos Bible Software](#). Lexham is a registered trademark of [Logos Bible Software](#).

Chronological Notes

- 1) “Paul’s letter to Titus was most likely written around the same time as 1 Timothy and for similar reasons. In Titus’s case, the occasion is stated in Titus 1:5 as follows: ‘The reason I left you in Crete was to set right what was left undone and, as I directed you, to appoint elders in every town.’ This is followed by a set of qualifications for elders in Titus 1:6–9. While initially given to provide guidance for Titus, this passage is hardly limited to the original occasion but continues to have relevance for the church today as it ensures that its leaders meet biblical requirements. Beyond this immediate purpose, Paul provided a variety of other instructions for Titus in overseeing the life of the church. He articulated a series of important and abiding Christian doctrinal truths, such as salvation not by works, the regeneration of believers by the Holy Spirit, justification by grace, and so on (see Titus 3:4–7).”¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), pp. 647–648.

Anonymous Letter to the Christian Community in Rome – Part 1 (c. 63–64)

Hebrews 1:1–4:13

God Has Spoken Through His Son

1:1 *Although* God spoke long ago in many parts and in many ways to the fathers by the prophets,
 2 in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all *things*, through whom also he made the world,
 3 who is the radiance of his glory and the representation of his essence, sustaining all *things* by the word of power. *When he* had made purification for sins through him, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, [cf. [Ps 110:1](#)]
 4 having become by so much better than the angels, by as much as he has inherited a more excellent name than theirs.

Superiority of the Son to the Angels

5 For to which of the angels did he ever say,

“You are my son,
 today I have begotten you,” [\[Ps 2:7\]](#)

and again,

“I will be his father,
 and he will be my son”? [\[2 Sam 7:14\]](#)

6 And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“And let all *the* angels of God worship him.” [\[Deut 32:43\]](#) (LXX)]

7 And concerning the angels he says,

“The one who makes his angels winds,
 and his servants a flame of fire,” [\[Ps 104:4\]](#) (LXX 103:4)]

8 but concerning the Son,

“Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever,
 and the scepter of righteous *is the* scepter of your kingdom.

9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;
 because of this God, your God, has anointed you
 with the olive oil of joy more than your companions. [\[Ps 45:6–7\]](#) (LXX 44:7–8)]

10 And,

“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning,
 and the heavens are the works of your hands;

11 they will perish, but you continue,
 and they will all become old like a garment,

12 and like a robe you will roll them up,
 and like a garment they will be changed;
 but you are the same, and your years will not run out.” [\[Ps 102:25–27\]](#)

13 But to which of the angels has he ever said,

“Sit down at my right hand,
 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” [\[Ps 110:1\]](#)

14 Are they not all spirits engaged in special service, sent on assignment for the sake of those who are going to inherit salvation?

First Warning—The Danger of Drifting

2:1 Because of this, *it is* all the more necessary *that* we pay attention to the *things* we have heard, lest we drift away.

2 For if the word spoken through angels was binding and every transgression and act of disobedience received a just penalty,

3 how will we escape *if we* neglect so great a salvation which had *its* beginning *when it* was spoken through the Lord *and* was

confirmed to us by those who heard,

4 *while* God was testifying at the same time by signs and wonders and various miracles and distributions of the Holy Spirit according to his will.

Superiority of Jesus to the Angels

5 For he did not subject to angels the world to come, about which we are speaking.

6 But someone testified somewhere, saying,

“What is man, that you remember him,
or the son of man, that you care for him?

7 You made him for a short *time* lower than the angels;
you crowned him with glory and honor;

8 you subjected all *things* under his feet. [[Ps 8:4–6](#)]

For in subjecting all *things*, he left nothing *that was* not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all *things* subjected to him,
9 but we see Jesus, for a short *time* made lower than the angels, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that apart from God he might taste death on behalf of everyone.

10 For it was fitting for him for whom *are* all *things* and through whom *are* all *things* in bringing many sons to glory to perfect the originator of their salvation through sufferings.

11 For both the one who sanctifies and the ones who are sanctified *are* all from one, for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brothers,

12 saying,

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the assembly I will sing in praise of you.” [[Ps 22:22](#) (LXX 21:23)]

13 And again,

“I will trust in him.” [[Isa 8:17b](#) (LXX)]

And again,

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.” [[Isa 8:18](#) (LXX)]

14 Therefore, since the children share in blood and flesh, he also in like manner shared in these *same things*, in order that through death he could destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

15 and could set free these who through fear of death were subject to slavery throughout all their lives.

16 For surely he is not concerned with angels, but he is concerned with the descendants of Abraham.

17 Therefore he was obligated to be made like his brothers in all *respects*, in order that he could become a merciful and faithful high priest in the things relating to God, in order to make atonement for the sins of the people.

18 For in that which he himself suffered *when he was* tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

Superiority of Jesus to Moses

3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, sharers in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,

2 who was faithful to the one who appointed him, as Moses also *was* in his household.

3 For this one is considered worthy of greater glory than Moses, inasmuch as the one who builds it has greater honor than the house.

4 For every house is built by someone, but the one who built all *things is* God.

5 And Moses *was* faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony to the things that would be spoken, [[Num 12:7b](#) (LXX)]

6 but Christ *was faithful* as a son over his house, whose house we are, if we hold fast to our confidence and the hope we can be proud of.

Second Warning—The Danger of Unbelief

7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says,

“Today, if you hear his voice,

8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
in the day of testing in the wilderness,

9 where your fathers tested *me* by trial
and saw my works 10 *for* forty years.
Therefore I was angry with this generation,
and I said, ‘They always go astray in their heart,
and they do not know my ways.’

11 As I swore in my anger,
‘They will never enter into my rest.’” [Ps 95:7b–11 (LXX 94:7b–11)]

12 Watch out, brothers, lest there be in some of you an evil, unbelieving heart, *with the result that you* fall away from the living God.
13 But encourage one another day by day, as long as it is called “today,” so that none of you become hardened by the deception of sin.

14 For we have become partners of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of *our* commitment steadfast until the end,
15 while it is said,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

16 For who, *when they* heard *it*, were disobedient? Surely *it was* not all who went out from Egypt through Moses?
17 And with whom was he angry *for* forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness?
18 And to whom did he swear *they would* not enter into his rest, except those who were disobedient?
19 And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

“Let us fear”—Unbelief Will Keep You From Entering God’s Rest

4:1 Therefore let us fear, *while there* remains a promise of entering into his rest, that none of you appear to fall short of *it*.
2 For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as those also *did*, but the message they heard did not benefit them, *because they* were not united with those who heard *it* in faith.
3 For we who have believed enter into rest, just as he has said,

“As I swore in my anger,
‘They will never enter into my rest.’”

And yet these works have been accomplished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh *day* in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works,” [Gen 2:3]

5 and in this *passage* again, ‘They will never enter into my rest.’”

6 Since therefore it remains *for* some to enter into it, and the ones to whom the good news was proclaimed previously did not enter because of disobedience,

7 again he ordains a certain day, today, speaking by David after so long a time, just as had been said before,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”

8 For if Joshua had caused them to rest, he would not have spoken about another day after these *things*.

9 Consequently a sabbath rest remains for the people of God.

10 For the one who has entered into his rest has also himself rested from his works, just as God *did* from his own *works*.

11 Therefore, let us make every effort to enter into that rest, in order that no one may fall in the same pattern of disobedience.

12 For the word of God *is* living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, both joints and marrow, and able to judge the reflections and thoughts of the heart.

13 And no creature is hidden in the sight of him, but all *things are* naked and laid bare to the eyes of him to whom we must give our account.

Chronological Notes

1) Dating Hebrews.

A) Internal Evidence.

- (1) The audience had come to faith indirectly through those who were eyewitnesses of Christ's ministry (2:3–4). The exhortation to remember those who first led them and "spoke the word of God" to them implies that some of their leaders had died (13:7). The expectation that "by this time [they] ought to be teachers" (5:12) indicates additional time had passed. The earliest date that could account for these factors would seem to be AD 60 (some 27 years after Christ's resurrection).¹
- (2) According to 10:32–34, the audience had persevered in a time of persecution in the past. They had not yet faced martyrdom (12:4), but a more severe time of trial was coming (11:35–12:3; 12:7; 13:3, 12–13) and some had begun to abandon group meetings (10:25). The situation indicated by the data above suggests a date in the mid-60s AD, just prior to the extreme persecution of the Roman church under Nero. At this point the Roman church had been in existence for about three decades. The expulsion of the Jews by Claudius (Acts 18:2) in AD 49 would account for the earlier time of testing experienced by this community. Also, Nero's rising threat to the church accounts for the fear of death and the warning of commitment indicated in Hebrews.²
- (3) The allusion to "Timothy" in Hebrews 13:23 leads to the assumption that this Timothy is the same person known to us through Paul's letters. Although the exact span of Timothy's life is not known (he joined Paul in ministry in the summer of AD 49; Acts 16:1–5), it could scarcely have outlasted the century. If Hebrews was written within Timothy's lifetime, it could not be dated later than AD 100.³
- (4) It has been argued that an upper limit of the date for Hebrews can be set confidently at AD 70, the year in which the temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. The basis for this confidence is that the writer of Hebrews refers to cultic⁴ activity in the present tense (e.g., 7:27–28; 8:3–5; 9:7–8, 25; 10:1–3, 8; 13:10–11), presumably reflecting contemporary cultic practice in Jerusalem.⁵ This argument, however, fails to consider four key observations:⁶
 - (a) The focus of the author's comparisons with the sacrificial work of Christ is not the Jewish temple but the Israelite tabernacle.
 - (b) Present tense indicative in the Greek does not necessarily refer to present time (recall the "historic present" in Greek).
 - (c) Skilled rhetoricians frequently use the present tense as a literary device designed to persuade their audiences by emphasizing the timeless nature of their subjects.
 - (d) Other authors, including Josephus and Clement of Rome, use the present tense to discuss the tabernacle long after the destruction of the temple.

B) External Evidence.

- (1) An upper limit in the range for a date is established by the fact that Hebrews was already being appropriated without

¹ Lane, 1:lxii.

² Guthrie, 22–23.

³ Merrill C. Tenney, "A New Approach to the Book of Hebrews," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 123:491 (Jul 66): 231.

⁴ The term "cult" stems from the Latin word *cultus*, which carried the meaning of worship or praise-adoration. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines it, among other ways, as "a system of religious worship especially as expressed in ceremonies; devotion to or homage to a person or thing." It is often used in theological and religious scholarship to refer to the sacrificial system and ceremonies that were part of the Mosaic Covenant.

⁵ Lane, 1:lxiii.

⁶ Griffith, 240.

explicit quotation in *1 Clement* (cf. *1 Clem* 17:1 with Heb 11:37; *1 Clem* 36:2–6 with Heb 1:3–5,7; *1 Clem* 36:3 with Heb 1:7). Although some argue that Hebrews and *1 Clement* simply share a common tradition, it is broadly recognized that Clement was, in fact, literarily dependent upon Hebrews. A conventional date of AD 95–96 has been assigned to *1 Clement*, but on insufficient grounds. Internal evidence and external attestation indicate *1 Clement* was composed at some point between AD 80 and 140.⁷

C) Summary.

- (1) Most contemporary scholars date Hebrews somewhere between AD 60 and 100, and are unwilling to try to pinpoint the date more precisely. I personally favor c. 63–64 AD.

⁷ Lane, 1:lxii.

Anonymous Letter to the Christian Community in Rome – Part 2 (c. 63–64)

Hebrews 4:14–10:18

Jesus is Our “Great High Priest”

4:14 Therefore, *because we* have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.

15 For we do not have a high priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses, but who has been tempted in all *things* in the same way, without sin.

16 Therefore let us approach with confidence to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of people in the things relating to God, in order that he can offer both gifts and sacrifices on behalf of sins,

2 being able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and led astray, since he himself also is surrounded by weakness,

3 and because of it he is obligated to offer *sacrifices* for sins for himself also, as well as for the people.

4 And someone does not take for himself the honor, but is called by God, just as Aaron also *was*.

5 Thus also Christ did not glorify himself to become high priest, but the one who said to him,

“You are my Son, today I have begotten you,” [\[Ps 2:7\]](#)

6 just as also in another *place* he says,

“You *are* a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek,” [\[Ps 110:4 \(LXX 109:4\)\]](#)

7 who in the days of his flesh offered up both prayers and supplications, with loud crying and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard as a result of his reverence.

8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered,

9 and being perfected, he became the source of eternal salvation to all those who obey him,

10 being designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Rebuke for Negligence in Obeying God’s Word

11 Concerning this we have much to say and it is difficult to explain, since you have become sluggish in hearing.

12 For indeed, *although you* ought to be teachers by this time, you have need of someone to teach you again the beginning elements of the oracles of God, and you have need of milk, not solid food.

13 For everyone who partakes of milk *is* unacquainted with the message of righteousness, because he is an infant.

14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have trained their faculties for the distinguishing of both good and evil.

Challenge—Allow the Spirit to Carry You Forward to Maturity!

6:1 Therefore, leaving behind the elementary message about Christ, let us move on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and faith in God,

2 teaching about baptisms and laying on of hands, and resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

3 And this we will do, if God permits.

Warning—You Are in Danger of Apostasy!

4 For *it is* impossible *concerning* those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and become sharers of the Holy Spirit,

5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the coming age,

6 and having fallen away, to renew *them* again to repentance, *because they* have crucified again for themselves the Son of God and held him up to contempt.

7 For ground that drinks the rain that comes often upon it, and brings forth vegetation usable to those *people* for whose sake *it is* also cultivated, shares a blessing from God.

8 But *if it* produces thorns and thistles, *it is* worthless and near to a curse, whose end *is* for burning.

God’s Promise and Oath are a Sure and Steadfast Hope

9 But even if we are speaking in this way, dear friends, we are convinced of better *things* concerning you, and belonging to salvation.

10 For God *is* not unjust, *so as* to forget your work and the love which you demonstrated for his name *by* having served the saints, and continuing to serve *them*.

11 And we desire each one of you to demonstrate the same diligence for the full assurance of *your* hope until the end,

12 in order that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who inherit the promises through faith and patience.

13 For *when* God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater to swear by, he swore by himself,

14 saying,

“Surely I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply you.” [\[Gen 22:17\]](#)

15 And so, *by* persevering, he obtained the promise.

16 For people swear by what is greater *than themselves*, and the oath for confirmation *is the* end of all dispute for them.

17 In the same way God, *because he* wanted to show even more to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of his resolve, guaranteed *it* with an oath,

18 in order that through two unchangeable things, in which *it is* impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge may have powerful encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before *us*,

19 which we have like an anchor of the soul, both firm and steadfast, and entering into the inside of the curtain,

20 where Jesus, the forerunner for us, entered, *because he* became a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. [\[Ps 110:4 \(LXX 109:4\)\]](#)

Melchizedekian Priesthood Superior to the Levitical Priesthood

7:1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham *as he* was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, [cf. [Gen 14:17–19 \(LXX\)](#)]

2 to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth of everything— [cf. [Gen 14:20 \(LXX\)](#)] in the first place, *his name* is translated “king of righteousness,” and then also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace”;

3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God—he remains a priest for all time.

4 But see how great this man *was*, to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth from the spoils!

5 And indeed those of the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood have a commandment to collect a tenth from the people according to the law, that is, from their brothers, although they are descended from Abraham.

6 But the one who did not trace *his* descent from them collected tithes from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises.

7 Now without any dispute the inferior is blessed by the more prominent.

8 And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case it is testified that he lives.

9 And, so to speak, even Levi, the one who receives tithes, has paid tithes through Abraham.

10 For he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Melchizedekian Priesthood Implies the Need for a Change of Law

11 Thus if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood, for on the basis of it the people received the law, what further need *is there* for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek and not said to be according to the order of Aaron?

12 For *when* the priesthood changes, of necessity there is a change of the law also.

13 For the one about whom these *things* are spoken belongs to another tribe from which no one has officiated at the altar.

14 For *it is* evident that our Lord is a descendant of Judah, a tribe *with reference* to which Moses said nothing concerning priests.

15 And it is still more clear, if another priest according to the likeness of Melchizedek arises,

16 who has become *a priest* not according to a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life.

17 For it is testified,

“You *are* a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” [\[Ps 110:4 \(LXX 109:4\)\]](#)

18 For on the one hand a preceding commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness

19 (for the law *made* nothing perfect), but on the other hand *there is* the introduction of a better hope through which we draw near to God.

Contrasts Between Jesus and the Levitical Priesthood

20 And by as much as *this was* not without an oath (for these on the one hand have become priests without an oath,

21 but he with an oath by the one who said to him,

“The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind,
“You *are* a priest forever”), [\[Ps 110:4 \(LXX 109:4\)\]](#)

22 by so much more Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

23 And indeed many have become priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing *in office*,

24 but he, because he continues forever, holds the priesthood permanently.

25 Therefore also he is able to save completely those who draw near to God through him, *because he* always lives in order to intercede on their behalf.

26 For a high priest such as this indeed is fitting for us, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and having become exalted *above* the heavens,

27 who does not need every day like the former high priests to offer up sacrifices for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people, because he did this once for all *when he* offered up himself.

28 For the law appoints men *as* high priests who have weakness, but the statement of the oath, after the law, *appoints* a Son, who is made perfect forever.

Christ's Ministry Superior to the Levitical Priest's Ministry

8:1 Now *this is* the main point in what has been said: we have a high priest such as this, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,

2 a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord set up, not man.

3 For every high priest is appointed in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices; therefore *it was necessary for* this one also to have something that he offers.

4 Now if he were on earth, he would not even be a priest, *because there* are those who offer the gifts according to the law,

5 who serve a sketch and shadow of the heavenly *things*, just as Moses was warned *when he* was about to complete the tabernacle, for he says, "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern which was shown to you on the mountain." [[Exod 25:40](#) (LXX)]

6a But now he has attained a more excellent ministry,

Christ's Covenant Superior to the First Covenant

6b by as much as he is also mediator of a better covenant which has been enacted upon better promises.

7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, occasion would not have been sought for a second.

8 For in finding fault with them he says,

"Behold, days are coming, says the Lord,
when I will complete a new covenant with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah,

9 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers
on the day I took hold of them by my hand
to lead them out of the land of Egypt,
because they did not continue in my covenant
and I disregarded them, says the Lord.

10 For this *is* the covenant that I will decree with the house of Israel
after those days, says the Lord:
I am putting my laws in their minds
and I will write them on their hearts,
and I will be their God
and they will be my people.

11 And they will not teach each one his fellow citizen
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,'
because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful toward their wrongdoings,
and I will not remember their sins *any* longer." [[Jer 31:31–34](#) (~LXX 38:31–34)]

13 In calling *it* new, he has declared the former *to be old*. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old *is* near to disappearing.

The Inadequacy of the First Covenant Cultic System

9:1 Now the first *covenant* had regulations for worship and the earthly sanctuary.

2 For a tent was prepared, the first *one*, in which *were* the lampstand and the table and the presentation of the loaves, which is called the holy place.

3 And after the second curtain *was* a tent called the holy of holies,

4 containing the golden incense altar and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which *were* a golden jar containing the manna and the rod of Aaron that budded and the tablets of the covenant.

5 And above it *were* the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, about which it is not now *possible* to speak in detail.

6 Now these things having been prepared in this way, the priests enter into the first tent continually *as they* accomplish their service,

7 but only the high priest *enters* into the second *tent* once a year, not without blood, which he offers on behalf of himself and the *sins* of the people committed in ignorance.

8 The Holy Spirit *was* making this clear, *that* the way *into* the holy place *was* not yet revealed, *while* the first tent *was* still in existence,
 9 which *was* a symbol for the present time, in which both the gifts and sacrifices which were offered were not able to perfect the worshiper with respect to the conscience,
 10 concerning *instead* only food and drink and different washings, regulations of outward things imposed until the time of setting *things* right.

Christ's Blood Superior to the Blood of Sacrificial Animals

11 But Christ has arrived *as* a high priest of the good *things* to come. Through the greater and more perfect tent not made by hands, that is, not of this creation,
 12 and not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered once for all into the *most* holy place, obtaining eternal redemption.
 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow sprinkled on those who are defiled sanctify *them* for the ritual purity of the flesh,
 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works to serve *the* living God?

Christ's Covenant Superior to the First Covenant

15 And because of this, he is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that, *because* a death has taken place for the redemption of transgressions *committed* during the first covenant, those who are the called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.
 16 For where *there is* a will, *it is* a necessity *for* the death of the one who made the will to be established.
 17 For a will *is* in force concerning those who are dead, since *it is* never in force when the one who made the will is alive.
 18 Therefore not even the first *covenant* was ratified without blood.
 19 For *when* every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the law, *he* took the blood of calves with water and scarlet wool and hyssop *and* sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people,
 20 saying,

“This *is* the blood of the covenant that God has commanded for you.” [\[Exod 24:8\]](#)

21 And likewise he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the utensils of service with the blood.
 22 Indeed, nearly everything is purified with blood according to the law, and apart from the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Christ's Sacrifice Superior to the High Priestly Sacrifice on the Day of Atonement

23 Therefore *it was* necessary *for* the sketches of the *things* in heaven to be purified with these *sacrifices*, but the heavenly *things* themselves *to be purified* with better sacrifices than these.
 24 For Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, a *mere* copy of the true *one*, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf,
 25 and not in order that he can offer himself many times, as the high priest enters into the sanctuary year by year with blood not his own, [cf. [Lev 16](#)]
 26 since it would have been necessary for him to suffer many times from the foundation of the world, but now he has appeared once at the end of the ages for the removal of sin by the sacrifice of himself.
 27 And just as it is destined for people to die once, and after this, judgment,
 28 thus also Christ, having been offered once in order to bear the sins of many, will appear for the second time without reference to sin to those who eagerly await him for salvation.

The Repetition of the Sacrifices Demonstrated Their Inability to Perfect the Worshipers

10:1 For the law, possessing a shadow of the good *things* that are about to come, not the form of things itself, *is* never able year by year by means of the same sacrifices which they offer without interruption to make perfect those who draw near.
 2 For otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the ones who worship, having been purified once and for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?
 3 But in them *there is* a reminder of sins year by year.
 4 For *it is* impossible *for* the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

God's Will Was to Sanctify Us Through the Offering of the Body of Jesus Christ

5 Therefore, *when he* came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifice and offering you did not want,

but a body you prepared for me;

6 you did not delight in whole burnt offerings and *offerings* for sins.

7 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—
in the roll of the book it is written about me—
to do your will, O God.’ [[Ps 40:6–8](#) (LXX 39:7–9)]

8 *When he says above,*

“Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and *offerings* for sin
you did not want, nor did you delight in,”

which are offered according to the law,

9 then he has said,

“Behold, I have come to do your will.”

He takes away the first in order to establish the second,

10 by which will we are made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Jesus’ Single Offering Perfected Us for All Time

11 And every priest stands every day serving and offering the same sacrifices many times, which are never able to take away sins.

12 But this one, *after he* had offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

13 from now on waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.

14 For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are made holy.

15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying,

16 “This *is* the covenant that I will decree for them

after those days, says the Lord:

I am putting my laws on their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds.”

17 *He also says,*

“Their sins and their lawless deeds I will never remember again.” [cf. [Jer 31:31–34](#) (~LXX 38:31–34)]

18 Now where *there is* forgiveness of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin.

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Anonymous Letter to the Christian Community in Rome – Part 3 (c. 63–64)

Hebrews 10:19–13:25

Hold Fast the Confession of Our Hope

10:19 Therefore, brothers, *since we* have confidence for the entrance into the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus,
 20 *by the* new and living way which he inaugurated for us through the curtain, that is, his flesh,
 21 and *since we have* a great priest over the house of God,
 22 let us approach with a true heart in the full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
 23 Let us hold fast to the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for the one who promised *is* faithful.
 24 And let us think about how to stir one another up to love and good works,
 25 not abandoning our meeting together, as *is* the habit of some, but encouraging *each other*, and by so much more as you see the day drawing near.

Fourth Warning—The Danger of Rejecting Christ’s Sacrifice

26 For *if* we keep on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,
 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and a fury of fire that is about to consume the adversaries.
 28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses dies without mercy on *the testimony of two or three witnesses*.
 29 How much worse punishment do you think the person will be considered worthy of who treats with disdain the Son of God and who considers ordinary the blood of the covenant by which he was made holy and who insults the Spirit of grace?
 30 For we know the one who said,

“Vengeance *is* mine, I will repay,” [\[Deut 32:35a\]](#)

and again,

“The Lord will judge his people.” [\[Deut 32:36a \(LXX\)\]](#); cf. [Ps 135:14 \(LXX 134:14\)](#)

31 *It is* a terrifying *thing* to fall into the hands of the living God.
 32 But remember the former days in which, *after you* were enlightened, you endured a great struggle with sufferings,
 33 sometimes being publicly exposed both to insults and to afflictions, and sometimes becoming sharers with those who were treated in this way.
 34 For you both sympathized with the prisoners and put up with the seizure of your belongings with joy *because you* knew that you yourselves had a better and permanent possession.
 35 Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has great reward.
 36 For you have need of endurance, in order that *after you* have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.
 37 For yet

“a very, very little *while*, [\[Isa 26:20 \(LXX\)\]](#)
and the one who is coming will come and will not delay.

38 But my righteous one will live by faith,
 and if he shrinks back, my soul is not well pleased with him.” [\[Hab 2:3–4\]](#)

39 But we are not among those who shrink back to destruction, but among those who have faith to the preservation of *our* souls.

Old Testament Examples of People Who Lived “By Faith”

11:1 Now faith is the realization of what is hoped for, the proof of things not seen.
 2 For by this the people of old were approved.
 3 By faith we understand the worlds were created by the word of God, in order that what is seen did not come into existence from what is visible.
 4 By faith Abel offered to God a greater sacrifice than Cain, by which he was approved that he was righteous, *because* God approved *him* for his gifts, and through it he still speaks, *although he* is dead.
 5 By faith Enoch was taken up, so that he did not experience death, and he was not found, because God took him up. For before his removal, he had been approved as having been pleasing to God.
 6 Now without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*, for the one who approaches God must believe that he exists and is a rewarder of those who seek him.
 7 By faith Noah, having been warned about things not yet seen, out of reverence constructed an ark for the deliverance of his family, by which he pronounced sentence on the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.
 8 By faith Abraham, *when he* was called, obeyed to go out to a place that he was going to receive for an inheritance, and he went

out, not knowing where he was going.

9 By faith he lived in the land of promise as a stranger, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the fellow heirs of the same promise.

10 For he was expecting the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder *is* God.

11 By faith also, with Sarah, he received the ability to procreate even past the normal age, because he regarded the one who had promised *to be* faithful.

12 And therefore these were fathered from one man, and *he* being as good as dead, as the stars of heaven in number and like the innumerable sand by the shore of the sea. [cf. [Gen 22:17](#) (LXX)]

13 These all died in faith without receiving the promises, but seeing them from a distance and welcoming *them*, and admitting that they were strangers and temporary residents on the earth.

14 For those who say such *things* make clear that they are seeking a homeland.

15 And if they remember that *land* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.

16 But now they aspire to a better *land*, that is, a heavenly *one*. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

17 By faith Abraham, *when he* was tested, offered Isaac, and the one who received the promises was ready to offer his one and only *son*,

18 with reference to whom it was said, “In Isaac your descendants will be named,” [[Gen 21:12](#) (LXX)]

19 having reasoned that God *was* able even to raise *him* from the dead, from which he received him back also as a symbol.

20 By faith also Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things that were going to happen.

21 By faith Jacob, *as he* was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff. [[Gen 47:31](#) (LXX)]

22 By faith Joseph, *as he* was dying, mentioned about the exodus of the sons of Israel and gave instructions about his bones.

23 By faith Moses, *when he* was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw the child *was* handsome, and they were not afraid of the edict of the king.

24 By faith Moses, *when he* was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,

25 choosing instead to be mistreated with the people of God *rather* than to experience the transitory enjoyment of sin,

26 considering reproach endured for the sake of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the anger of the king, for he persevered *as if he* saw the invisible one.

28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, in order that the one who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.

29 By faith they crossed the Red Sea as if on dry land; the Egyptians, when they made the attempt, were drowned.

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down *after they* had been marched around for seven days.

31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, *because she* welcomed the spies in peace.

32 And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, and Samuel and the prophets,

33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, accomplished justice, obtained what was promised, shut the mouths of lions,

34 extinguished the effectiveness of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong from weakness, became mighty in battle, put to flight enemy battle lines.

35 Women received back their dead by resurrection. But others were tortured, not accepting release, in order that they might gain a better resurrection.

36 And others experienced mocking and flogging, and in addition bonds and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned, they were sawed in two, they died by murder with a sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, in goatskins, impoverished, afflicted, mistreated,

38 of whom the world was not worthy, wandering about on deserts and mountains and in caves and in holes in the ground.

39 And *although they* all were approved through their faith, they did not receive what was promised,

40 *because* God had provided something better for us, so that they would not be made perfect without us.

Running to Win

12:1 Therefore, *since* we also have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, putting aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us, let us run with patient endurance the race that has been set before us,

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider the one who endured such hostility by sinners against himself, so that you will not grow weary in your souls *and* give up.

The Lord’s Discipline/Training

4 You have not yet resisted to the point of *shedding your* blood *as you* struggle against sin.

5 And have you completely forgotten the exhortation which instructs you as sons?

“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline,
or give up *when you* are corrected by him.

6 For the Lord disciplines the one whom he loves,
and punishes every son whom he accepts.” [[Prov 3:11–12](#) (LXX^A)]

7 Endure *it* for discipline. God is dealing with you as sons. For what son *is there* whom a father does not discipline?

8 But if you are without discipline, in which all *legitimate sons* have become participants, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had our earthly fathers who disciplined *us*, and we respected *them*. Will we not much rather subject ourselves to the Father of spirits and live?

10 For they disciplined *us* for a few days according to what seemed *appropriate* to them, but he *does so* for our benefit, in order that we can have a share in his holiness.

11 Now all discipline seems for the moment not to be joyful but painful, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness for those who are trained by it.

12 Therefore strengthen your slackened hands and your weakened knees, [[Isa 35:3](#)]

13 and make straight paths for your feet, [[Prov 4:26](#) (LXX)] so that what is lame will not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

Dos and Don’ts of the Race

14 Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.

15 Take care *that* no one falls short of the grace of God; *that* no one growing up *like* a root of bitterness causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;

16 *that* no one *be* a sexually immoral or totally worldly *person* like Esau, who for one meal traded his own birthright.

17 For you know that also afterwards, *when he* wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, because he did not find an occasion for repentance, although he sought it with tears.

Fifth Warning—Do Not Refuse God’s Son

18 For you have not come to something that can be touched, and to a burning fire, and to darkness, and to gloom, and to a whirlwind,

19 and to the noise of a trumpet, and to the sound of words which those who heard begged *that not another* word be spoken to them.

20 For they could not endure what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.” [[Exod 19:12–13](#)]

21 And the spectacle was so terrifying *that* Moses said, “I am terrified and trembling.” [cf. [Deut 9:19a](#) (LXX)]

22 But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to tens of thousands of angels, to the festal gathering

23 and assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous *people* made perfect,

24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel’s *does*.

25 Watch out that you do not refuse the one who is speaking! For if those did not escape *when they* refused the one who warned *them* on earth, much less *will we escape, if we* reject the *one who warns* from heaven,

26 whose voice shook the earth at that time, but now he has promised, saying,

“Yet once *more* I will shake not only the earth but also heaven.” [[Hag 2:6](#) (LXX)]

27 Now the *phrase* “yet once *more*” indicates the removal of what is shaken, namely, things that have been created, in order that the things that are not shaken may remain.

28 Therefore, *since we* are receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us be thankful, through which let us serve God acceptably, with awe and reverence.

29 For indeed our God *is* a consuming fire. [[Deut 9:3](#) (LXX)]

Well-pleasing Service to God

13:1 Brotherly love must continue.

2 Do not neglect hospitality, because through this some have received angels as guests without knowing *it*.

3 Remember the prisoners, as *though you were* fellow-prisoners; *remember* the mistreated, as *though you* yourselves also are being *mistreated* in the body.

4 Marriage *must be* held in honor by all, and the marriage bed *be* undefiled, because God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers.

5 Your lifestyle *must be* free from the love of money, being content with what you have. For he himself has said, “I will never desert you, and I will never abandon you.” [cf. [Gen 28:15](#); [Deut 31:6, 8](#); [Josh 1:5](#)]

6 So then, we can say with confidence,

“The Lord *is* my helper, I will not be afraid.
What will man do to me?” [[Ps 118:6](#) (LXX 117:6)]

Shepherds and Sheep

- 7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you; considering the outcome of their way of life, imitate their faith.
- 8 Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and forever.
- 9 Do not be carried away by various and strange teachings, for *it is good for* the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods by which those who participate have not benefited.
- 10 We have an altar from which those who serve in the tabernacle do not have the right to eat.
- 11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sins are burned up outside the camp.
- 12 Therefore Jesus also suffered outside the gate, in order that he might sanctify the people by his own blood.
- 13 So we must go out to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach.
- 14 For here we do not have a permanent city, but we seek the *city* that is to come.
- 15 Therefore through him let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name.
- 16 And do not neglect doing good and generosity, for God is pleased with such sacrifices.
- 17 Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account, so that they can do this with joy and not *with* groaning, for this *would be* unprofitable for you.

Closing

- 18 Pray for us, for we are convinced that we have a good conscience, *and* want to conduct ourselves commendably in every *way*.
- 19 And I especially urge *you* to do this, so that I may be restored to you more quickly.
- 20 Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,
- 21 equip you with every good *thing* to do his will, carrying out in us *what is* pleasing before him through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever. Amen.
- 22 Now I urge you, brothers, bear with my word of exhortation, for indeed I have written to you briefly.
- 23 Know *that* our brother Timothy has been released, with whom I will see you, if he comes quickly *enough*.
- 24 Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.
- 25 Grace *be* with all of you.

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Peter's Second Letter to the Gentile Churches (c. 65)

2 Peter 1–3

Salutation

1:1 Simeon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a faith equal in value to ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,

Be Diligent to Grow in Grace

3 because his divine power has bestowed on us all *things that are* necessary for life and godliness, through the knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence of character,

4 through which things he has bestowed on us his precious and very great promises, so that through these you may become sharers of the divine nature *after* escaping from the corruption *that is* in the world because of evil desire,

5 and *for* this same *reason*, and *by* applying all diligence, supply with your faith excellence of character, and with excellence of character, knowledge,

6 and with knowledge, self-control, and with self-control, patient endurance, and with patient endurance, godliness,

7 and with godliness, brotherly love, and with brotherly love, love.

8 For *if* these *things* are yours and are increasing, this does not make *you* useless or unproductive in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For *the one* for whom these *things are* not present is blind, being nearsighted, having forgotten the cleansing of his former sins.

10 Therefore, brothers, be zealous even more to make your calling and election secure, because *if you* do these *things*, you will never ever stumble.

11 For in this way entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied for you.

Peter's Determination to Leave a Legacy

12 Therefore I intend to remind you continually concerning these *things*, although *you* know *them* and are established in the truth that you have.

13 But I consider *it* right, for as long as I am in this habitation, to stir you up by a reminder,

14 *because I* know that the removal of my habitation is imminent, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.

15 And I will also make every effort *that* you are able at any time, after my departure, to recall these things to mind.

Peter Affirms That He Was an Eyewitness to Jesus' Ministry

16 For we did not make known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ *by* following ingeniously concocted myths, but *by* being eyewitnesses of that one's majesty.

17 For *he* received honor and glory from God the Father *when* a voice such as this was brought to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

18 And *we* ourselves heard this voice brought from heaven *when we* were with him on the holy mountain,

Classic Passage on the Inspiration of Scripture

19 and we possess *as* more reliable the prophetic word, to which you do well *if you* pay attention to *it* as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,

20 recognizing this above all, that every prophecy of scripture does not come about from one's own interpretation,

21 for no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Peter's Main Concern—False Teachers in the Flock

2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, as there will be false teachers among you also, who will bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, *thus* bringing on themselves swift destruction.

2 And many will follow their licentious ways, because of whom the way of truth will be reviled.

3a And in greediness they will exploit you with false words,

Be Sure of This—God Will Rescue the Godly and Punish the Wicked

3b whose condemnation *from* long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but held *them* captive in Tartarus with chains of darkness *and* handed *them* over to be kept for judgment,

5 and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a proclaimer of righteousness, and seven others *when he* brought a flood on the world of the ungodly,

6 and condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction, reducing them to ashes, having appointed *them as* an example for those who are going to be ungodly,

7 and rescued righteous Lot, worn down by the way of life of lawless persons in licentiousness

8 (for that righteous man, *as he* lived among them day after day, was tormenting *his* righteous soul by the lawless deeds *he* was seeing and hearing),

9 *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to reserve the unrighteous to be punished at the day of judgment, 10a and especially those who go after the flesh in defiling lust and who despise authority.

The Sinfulness of the False Teachers

10b Bold *and* arrogant, they do not tremble in awe *as they* blaspheme majestic beings,

11 whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, do not bring against them a demeaning judgment.

12 But these persons, like irrational animals born *only with* natural *instincts* for capture and killing, blaspheming about things they do not understand, in their destruction will also be destroyed,

13 being harmed *as the* wages of unrighteousness. Considering reveling in the daytime a pleasure, *they are* stains and blemishes, carousing in their deceitful pleasures *when they* feast together with you,

14 having eyes full of *desire for* an adulteress and unceasing from sin, enticing unstable persons, *and* having hearts trained for greediness. Accursed children!

15 *By* leaving the straight path, they have gone astray, *because they* followed the way of Balaam the *son of* Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness,

16 but received a rebuke for his own lawlessness: a speechless donkey, speaking with a human voice, restrained the prophet's madness.

The Terrible Truth—These False Teachers Once Knew the Way of Righteousness

17 These *people* are waterless springs and mists driven by a hurricane, for whom the gloom of darkness has been reserved.

18 For by speaking high-sounding but empty words, they entice with desires of the flesh *and* with licentiousness those who are scarcely escaping from those who live in error,

19 promising them freedom *although they* themselves are slaves of depravity. For to whatever someone succumbs, by this he is also enslaved.

20 For if, *after they* have escaped from the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and they are again entangled in these *things and* succumb to *them*, the last *state* has become worse for them than the first.

21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than having known *it*, to turn back from the holy commandment that had been delivered to them.

22 The *statement* of the true proverb has happened to them, "A dog returns to its own vomit," [cf. [Prov 26:11](#)] and "A sow, *after* washing herself, *returns* to wallowing in the mud."

Don't Listen to Those Who Deny the Coming of Christ

3:1 Dear friends, this *is* already the second letter I am writing to you, in *both of* which I am attempting to stir up your sincere mind by a reminder,

2 to remember the words proclaimed beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,

3 above all knowing this, that in the last days scoffers will come with scoffing, following according to their own desires

4 and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all *things* have continued just as they have been from the beginning of creation."

5 For *when* they maintain this, it escapes *their* notice that the heavens existed long ago and the earth held together out of water and through water by the word of God,

6 by means of which things the world that existed at that time was destroyed *by* being inundated with water.

7 But by the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people.

Don't Mistake God's Patience for Slowness—the "Day of the Lord" is Coming!

8 Now, dear friends, do not let this one thing escape your *notice*, that one day with the Lord *is* like a thousand years, and a thousand years *is* like one day.

9 The Lord is not delaying the promise, as some consider slowness, but is being patient toward you, *because he* does not want any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will disappear with a rushing noise, and the celestial bodies will be destroyed *by* being burned up, and the earth and the deeds *done* on it will be disclosed.

Live Your Life With the Coming Judgment in Mind

11 *Because* all these things are being destroyed in this way, what sort of *people* must you be in holy behavior and godliness,

12 *while* waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed *by* being burned up and the celestial bodies will melt *as they* are consumed by heat!

13 But according to his promise, we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness resides.

Peter's Call to Holiness / Peter Affirms Paul's Writings as Scripture

14 Therefore, dear friends, *because you* are waiting for these *things*, make every effort to be found at peace, spotless and unblemished in him.

15 And regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as also our dear brother Paul wrote to you, according to the wisdom that was given to him,

16 as *he does* also in all his letters, speaking in them about these *things*, in which there are some *things* hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable distort to their own destruction, as *they* also *do* the rest of the scriptures.

Final Warning and Exhortation

17 Therefore, dear friends, *because you* know *this* beforehand, guard yourselves so that you do not lose your own safe position *because you* have been led away by the error of lawless persons.

18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Scripture quotations are from the [Lexham English Bible](#) (LEB). Copyright 2012 [Logos Bible Software](#). Lexham is a registered trademark of [Logos Bible Software](#).

Chronological Notes

- 1) "Few books are attributed to such diverse dates as 2 Peter. Those who find the arguments for pseudepigraphy compelling place 2 Peter as late as the mid-second century. If 2 Peter is from the apostle, then it must have been written late in his life. Since 2 Peter probably comes from the pen of the apostle, and in light of the reference to his impending death in 2 Peter 1:14–15, it should be placed near the end of the apostle's life. Church tradition holds that Peter died during the Neronian persecution (64–66; see *1 Clem.* 5.4). The best date for Peter's death is 65 or 66. Thus the letter was most likely written just prior to Peter's martyrdom."¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 754–55.

Paul's Second Letter to Timothy (c. 66)

2 Timothy 1–4

Salutation

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, according to the promise of life which *is* in Christ Jesus,
2 to Timothy, *my* dear child. Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul's Gratitude for Timothy's Faith

3 I am thankful to God, whom I have served with a clear conscience as my ancestors did, when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day,
4 longing to see you *as* I remember your tears, so that I may be filled with joy,
5 remembering the sincere faith in you, which lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that *is* in you also,

Paul Urges Timothy to Rededicate Himself to the Ministry of the Gospel

6 for which reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is in you through the laying on of my hands.
7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and love and self-discipline.
8 Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor me his prisoner, but suffer along with *me* for the gospel, according to the power of God,
9 who saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace that was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,
10 but has now been disclosed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought to light life and immortality through the gospel,
11 for which I was appointed a proclaimer and an apostle and a teacher,
12 for which reason also I suffer these *things*. But *I am* not ashamed, because I know in whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard *what* I have entrusted until that day.
13 Hold fast to the pattern of sound words which you heard from me, in the faith and love *that are* in Christ Jesus.
14 Guard the good deposit through the Holy Spirit who lives in us.
15 You know this, that all those in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.
16 May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he refreshed me many times, and was not ashamed of my imprisonment,
17 but *when he* was in Rome, he diligently sought me and found *me*.
18 May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord in that day! And how much he served *me* in Ephesus you know very well.

Illustrations of Effective Service for God

2:1 You, therefore, my child, be strong in the grace *that is* in Christ Jesus,
2 and *the things* which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these *things* to faithful people who will be competent to teach others also.
3 Suffer together with *me* as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.
4 No one who serves as a soldier is entangled in the activities of *everyday* life, so that he may please the one who enlisted *him*.
5 And also if anyone competes he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.
6 The farmer who works hard must *be* the first to receive a share of the crops.
7 Consider what I am saying, for the Lord will grant you understanding in all *these things*.

Endure to the End for the Sake of the Gospel

8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David according to my gospel,
9 in connection with which I suffer misfortune to the point of imprisonment as a criminal, but the word of God is not bound.
10 Because of this, I endure all *things* for the sake of the chosen, in order that they also may obtain salvation *which is* in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.
11 The saying *is* trustworthy:

For if we died with *him*, we will also live with *him*;

12 if we endure, we will also reign with *him*;
if we deny *him*, he also will deny us;

13 if we are unfaithful, he remains faithful—he cannot deny himself.

Teach Sound Doctrine and Avoid Useless Quarrels

14 Remind *people* of these *things*, solemnly urging *them* before the Lord not to dispute about words. *This is* in no way beneficial *and leads* to the ruin of the hearers.

15 Make every effort to present yourself approved to God, a worker having no need to be ashamed, guiding the word of truth along a straight path.

16 But avoid pointless chatter, for it will progress to greater ungodliness,

17 and their message will spread like gangrene, among whom are Hymenaeus and Philetus,

18 who have deviated concerning the truth *by* saying the resurrection has already taken place, and they are upsetting the faith of some.

19 However, the solid foundation of God stands firm, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his,” [Num 16:5] and

“Everyone who names the name of the Lord must abstain from unrighteousness.” [cf. Ps 34:14; Prov 3:7]

20 Now in a great house *there* are not only gold and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthenware *ones*, some of which *are* for honorable use, and some of which *are* for ordinary use.

21 Therefore, if someone cleanses himself from these *things*, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

22 But flee from youthful desires, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, *and* peace, in company with those who call upon the Lord from a pure heart.

23 But avoid foolish and uninformed controversies, *because you* know that they produce quarrels.

24 And the slave of the Lord must not quarrel, but be kind toward everyone, skillful in teaching, tolerant,

25 correcting those who are opposed with gentleness, *seeing* whether perhaps God may grant them repentance to a knowledge of the truth,

26 and they will come to their senses again *and escape* from the trap of the devil, being held captive by him to *do* his will.

Difficult Times Will Come—With Them Will Come False Teachers

3:1 But know this, that in the last days difficult times will come,

2 for people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, slanderers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

3 hardhearted, irreconcilable, slanderous, without self-control, savage, with no interest for what is good,

4 traitors, reckless, conceited, loving pleasure rather than loving God,

5 maintaining a form of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid these *people*.

6 For from these are those who slip into houses and captivate foolish women loaded down with sins, led by various kinds of desires,

7 always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.

8 And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these oppose the truth, people corrupted in mind, disqualified concerning the faith.

9 But they will not progress to a greater extent, for their folly will be quite evident to everyone, as also the *folly* of those *two* was.

Paul’s Example of Perseverance in Persecution

10 But you have faithfully followed my teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance,

11 persecutions, *and* sufferings that happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, *and* in Lystra, what sort of persecutions I endured, and the Lord delivered me from all *of them*.

12 And indeed, all those who want to live in a godly manner in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

13 But evil people and imposters will progress to the worse, deceiving and being deceived.

The Vital Importance of God’s Word

14 But you continue in *the things* which you have learned and are convinced *of*, *because you* know from whom you learned *them*,

15 and that from childhood you have known the holy writings that are able *to make* you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

16 All scripture *is* inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness,

17 in order that the person of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Paul’s Charge to Preach the Gospel

4:1 I solemnly charge *you* before God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom,

2 preach the word, be ready in season *and* out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all patience and instruction.

3 For there will be a time when they will not put up with sound teaching, but in accordance with their own desires, they will accumulate for themselves teachers, because they have an insatiable curiosity,

4 and they will turn away from the hearing of the truth, but will turn to myths.

5 But you, be self-controlled in all *things*, bear hardship patiently, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Paul’s Testimony in the Face of Death

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is imminent.

7 I have fought the good fight, I have completed the race, I have kept the faith.

8 Finally, the crown of righteousness is reserved for me, that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Final Requests, Warnings and Greetings

9 Make haste to come to me quickly.

10 For Demas deserted me, *because he* loved the present age, and went to Thessalonica. Crescens *went* to Galatia; Titus *went* to Dalmatia.

11 Luke alone is with me. Take along Mark *and* bring *him* with you, because he is useful to me for ministry.

12 But I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

13 *When you* come, bring the cloak that I left behind in Troas with Carpus, and the scrolls, especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the metalworker did me much harm; may the Lord pay back to him according to his deeds, [cf. [Ps 28:4](#)]

15 against whom you also be on guard, because he vehemently opposed our words.

16 At my first defense, no one came to my *aid*, but *they* all deserted me; may it not be counted against them.

17 But the Lord helped me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fulfilled and all the Gentiles might hear, and he rescued *me* from the lion's mouth.

18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will save *me* for his heavenly kingdom, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

19 Greet Prisca and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus.

20 Erastus remained in Corinth, but Trophimus I left behind in Miletus *because he* was sick.

21 Make haste to come before winter. Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers greet you.

22 The Lord *be* with your spirit. Grace *be* with you.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) "It may be assumed that Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28) and that he engaged in a subsequent second Aegean ministry that provides the proper framework for 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. If so, Paul probably wrote his first letter to Timothy some time after the year 60 (the most likely date of Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment), but before 66, the likely date for Paul's second Roman imprisonment that was followed by his martyrdom under Nero, who died in AD 68. The most natural reading of 1 Timothy 1:3 is that Paul wrote from Macedonia. Timothy, who was at that time stationed in Ephesus, needed counsel on how to deal with the false teachers in the Ephesian church. To this end Paul interwove personal instructions with those on community life, so that Timothy received public apostolic support while it was acknowledged that he also had certain standards to meet. Paul probably wrote 2 Timothy from Rome in the year 66. Titus was likely written in the interim between 1 and 2 Timothy (or possibly prior to 1 Timothy) from an unknown location."¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 644.

John's Letter to the Beloved (c. 90–95)

1 John 1–5

Statement of Authority and Purpose

- 1:1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and our hands have touched, concerning the word of life—
 2 and the life was revealed, and we have seen and testify and announce to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was revealed to us—
 3 what we have seen and heard, we announce to you also, in order that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship *is* with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.
 4 And these *things* we write, in order that our joy may be complete.

God Is Light—Those Who Claim to Know Him Must Walk in the Light

- 5 And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce to you, that God is light and there *is* no darkness in him at all.
 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.
 7 But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
 8 If we say that we do not have sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, so that he will forgive us *our* sins and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Jesus Christ—Our Advocate and Propitiation

- 2:1 My little children, I am writing these *things* to you in order that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous *one*,
 2 and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

The Basis of Our Assurance of Salvation: Keeping His Commandments

- 3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.
 4 The one who says “I have come to know him,” and does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in this person.
 5 But whoever keeps his word, truly in this person the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in him.
 6 The one who says *that he* resides in him ought also to walk just as that one walked.

The Nature and Implications of the Author's Message

- 7 Dear friends, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the message which you have heard.
 8 Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light already is shining.
 9 The one who says *he* is in the light and hates his brother is in the darkness until now.
 10 The one who loves his brother resides in the light, and *there* is no cause for stumbling in him.
 11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness, and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

A Pastoral Appeal in View of the Author's Message

- 12 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you on account of his name.
 13 I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known the *One who is* from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have conquered the evil one.
 14 I have written to you, children, because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you have known the *One who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God resides in you, and you have conquered the evil one.
 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him,
 16 because everything *that is* in the world—the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the arrogance of material possessions—is not from the Father, but is from the world.
 17 And the world is passing away, and its desire, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.

The Appearance of Antichrists Demonstrates That it is the Last Hour

- 18 Children, it is the last hour, and just as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen, by which we know that it is the last hour.
 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us. But *they went out*,

in order that it might be shown that all of them are not of us.

20 And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because every lie is not of the truth.

The Definition of an Antichrist

22 Who is the liar except the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This person is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

23 Everyone who denies the Son does not have the Father *either*; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

24 *As for* you, what you have heard from the beginning must remain in you. If what you have heard from the beginning remains in you, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.

25 And this is the promise which he himself promised us: eternal life.

26 These *things* I have written to you concerning the ones who are trying to deceive you.

A Call to Abide in Christ

27 And *as for* you, the anointing which you received from him remains in you, and you do not have need that anyone teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all *things*, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you reside in him.

28 And now, little children, remain in him, so that whenever he is revealed we may have confidence and not be put to shame before him at his coming.

29 If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness has been fathered by him.

What it Means to Abide in Christ

3:1 See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called children of God, and we are! Because of this the world does not know us: because it did not know him.

2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is.

3 And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as that one is pure.

4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

5 And you know that that one was revealed in order that he might take away sins, and in him *there* is no sin.

6 Everyone who resides in him does not sin. Everyone who sins has neither seen him nor known him.

7 Little children, let no one deceive you: the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as that one is righteous.

8 The one who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this *reason* the Son of God was revealed: in order to destroy the works of the devil.

A Call to Love One Another

9 Everyone who is fathered by God does not practice sin, because his seed resides in him, and *he is* not able to sin, because he has been fathered by God.

10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are evident: everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, namely, the one who does not love his brother.

11 For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning: that we should love one another,

12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and violently murdered his brother. And for what reason did he violently murder him?

Because his deeds were evil and the *deeds* of his brother *were* righteous.

13 Do not marvel, brothers, if the world hates you.

14 We know that we have passed over from death to life because we love the brothers. The one who does not love remains in death.

15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that every murderer does not have eternal life residing in him.

16 We have come to know love by this: that he laid down his life on behalf of us, and we ought to lay down our lives on behalf of the brothers.

17 But whoever has the world's material possessions and observes his brother in need and shuts his heart against him, how does the love of God reside in him?

18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Loving Others Leads to Assurance of Heart and Mind

19 By this we know that we are of the truth and will convince our heart before him,

20 that if our heart condemns us, that God is greater than our heart and knows all *things*.

21 Dear friends, if our heart does not condemn *us*, we have confidence before God,

22 and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do *what is* pleasing in his sight.

23 And this is his commandment: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he commanded

us.

24 And the one who keeps his commandments resides in him, and he in him. And by this we know that he resides in us: by the Spirit whom he has given to us.

How to Distinguish Between the Spirit of God and a Spirit of the Antichrist

4:1 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits *to determine* if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God, and this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, *of* which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

4 You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one *who is* in you is greater than the one *who is* in the world.

5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world and the world listens to them.

6 We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit.

God Is Love—Those Who Claim to Know Him Must Walk in Love

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been fathered by God and knows God.

8 The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

9 By this the love of God is revealed in us: that God sent his one and only Son into the world in order that we may live through him.

10 In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins.

11 Dear friends, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another.

12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God resides in us and his love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we reside in him and he in us: that he has given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be the* Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God resides in him and he in God.

16 And we have come to know and have believed the love that God has in us. God is love, and the one who resides in love resides in God, and God resides in him.

17 By this love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, because just as that one is, *so* also are we in this world.

18 *There* is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear includes punishment, and the one who is afraid has not been perfected in love.

19 We love, because he first loved us.

20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar, for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen is not able to love God whom he has not seen.

21 And this *is* the commandment we have from him: that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

True Love Expresses Itself in Faith and Obedience

5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been fathered by God, and everyone who loves the father also loves the *child* fathered by him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God: whenever we love God and keep his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God: that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome,

4 because everyone who is fathered by God conquers the world.

5 Now who is the one who conquers the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

God's Testimony Concerning Jesus Christ, His Son

6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ, not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

7 For *there* are three that testify,

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood, and the three are in agreement.

9 If we receive the testimony of people, the testimony of God is greater, because this is the testimony of God that he has testified concerning his Son.

10 (The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. The one who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has testified concerning his Son.)

11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 The one who has the Son has the life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

The Confidence and Characteristics of the Child of God

13 These *things* I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

14 And this is the confidence that we have before him: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

15 And if we know that he hears us *in* whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked from him.

16 If anyone should see his brother sinning a sin not *leading* to death, he should ask, and he will grant life to him, to those who sin not *leading* to death. (*There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should ask about that.*)

17 All unrighteousness is sin, and *there* is a sin not *leading* to death.)

18 We know that everyone who is fathered by God does not sin, but the one fathered by God, he protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one.

20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, in order that we may know the one who is true, and we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life.

21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

John's Letter to a Sister Church and Its Members (c. 90–95)

2 John

Greeting

1 The elder, to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth—and not I alone, but also all those who know the truth—

2 because of the truth that resides in us and will be with us forever.

3 Grace, mercy, peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Son of the Father in truth and love.

A Call to Love One Another and to Walk in Obedience

4 I was very glad because I found *some* of your children walking in *the* truth, just as the Father commanded us.

5 And now I ask you, lady (not as *if I were* writing a new commandment to you, but *one* that we have had from the beginning), that we should love one another.

6 And this is love: that we walk according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

Warning Against False Teachers—The Mark of an Antichrist

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in *the* flesh. This person is the deceiver and the antichrist!

8 Watch yourselves that you do not lose what we have worked for, but receive a full reward.

Prohibition Against Aiding Heretics

9 Everyone who goes too far and does not remain in the teaching of Christ does not have God. The one who remains in the teaching—this person has both the Father and the Son.

10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house and do not speak a greeting to him,

11 because the one who speaks a greeting to him shares in his evil deeds.

Farewell

12 *Although* I have many *things* to write to you, I do not want *to do so* by means of paper and ink, but I hope to be with you and to speak face to face, so that your joy may be complete.

13 The children of your elect sister greet you.

John's Letter to Gaius (c. 90–95)

3 John

Greeting

1 The elder, to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in *the* truth.

2 Dear friend, I pray you may prosper concerning everything and be healthy, just as your soul prospers.

3 For I rejoiced exceedingly *when the* brothers came and testified *to* your truth, just as you are walking in *the* truth.

4 I have no greater joy than this: that I hear my children are walking in the truth.

Our Obligation to Support Those Who Spread the Gospel

5 Dear friend, you act faithfully *in* whatever you do for the brothers, even though they are strangers.

6 They have testified *to* your love before the church; you will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

7 For they have gone out on behalf of the name, accepting nothing from the pagans.

8 Therefore we ought to support such *people*, so that we become fellow workers with *the* truth.

Reject the Example of Diotrephes and Imitate the Example of Demetrius

9 I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who wants to be first *among* them, does not acknowledge us.

10 Therefore, if I come, I will call attention to the deeds he is doing, disparaging us with evil words. And not being content with these, he does not receive the brothers himself, and he hinders those wanting *to do so* and throws *them* out of the church.

11 Dear friend, do not imitate *what is evil*, but *what is good*. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.

12 Demetrius has been testified to by all, even by the truth itself. And we also testify *to him*, and you know that our testimony is true.

Farewell

13 I have many things to write to you, but I do not want to write to you by means of ink and pen.

14 But I hope to see you right away, and to speak face to face.

15 Peace *be* to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) “Reliable historical tradition strongly suggests that John spent his latter years in Asia Minor in and around Ephesus (see Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.1.2; Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 3.1.1). The apostle’s move from Palestine to Asia Minor reportedly took place sometime subsequent to the Jewish rebellion in the year 66. We concluded that John’s Gospel was most likely written in the early to mid-80s (see chap. 7). So the question concerning the date of John’s Letters is, Were they written prior or subsequent to John’s Gospel? On balance, the latter seems more likely. While it is possible that some of the connections with John’s Gospel in 1 John are based on a common tradition, in a few places the Gospel seems to be assumed. For example, 1 John 2:7–8 refers to and explicates the meaning of the new commandment of John 13:34–35 without naming it. In 1 John 5:6, reference is made to Jesus’ coming by “water and blood,” most likely referring to Jesus’ baptism and crucifixion, respectively (see the verbal parallel with John 19:34). Some, such as Carson and Moo, think the Johannine Letters were written to combat heretical misinterpretations of the Gospel, which would require a date for them after the Gospel. This seems entirely plausible. Yet even if the purpose for the Letters were construed differently, the conclusion that they postdate the Gospel would still appear to be the most probable in light of the parallels mentioned above. The best date, given the death of John at around the turn of the century and the dating of the Gospel in the early to mid-80s, is somewhere in the early to mid-90s.”¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 790–791.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Part 1 (c. 95–96)

Revelation 1–3

Foreword

1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his slaves *the things* which must take place in a short time, and communicated *it* by sending *it* through his angel to his slave John,
 2 who testified about the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, all that he saw.
 3 Blessed *is* the one who reads aloud and *blessed are* those who hear the words of the prophecy and observe the things written in it, because the time *is* near!

Greeting and Doxology

4 John, to the seven churches in Asia: grace to you and peace from the one who is and the one who was and the one who is coming, and from the seven spirits who *are* before his throne,
 5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and released us from our sins by his blood
 6 and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father—to him *be* the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

Summary Statement

7 Behold, he is coming with the clouds, [cf. [Dan 7:13](#)]
 and every eye will see him,
 even every one who pierced him,
 and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him. [cf. [Zech 12:10](#)]

Yes, amen.

8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, the one who is and the one who was and the one who is coming, the All-Powerful.

John's Vision of Jesus Christ

9 I, John, your brother and co-sharer in the affliction and kingdom and steadfastness in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus.
 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great sound like a trumpet
 11 saying, "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."
 12 And I turned to see the voice which was speaking with me, and *when I* turned, I saw seven gold lampstands,
 13 and in the midst of the lampstands *one* like a son of man, [cf. [Dan 7:13](#)] dressed in *a robe* reaching to the feet and girded around his chest *with* a golden belt,
 14 and his head and hair *were* white like wool, white as snow, and his eyes *were* like a fiery flame,
 15 and his feet *were* like fine bronze when it has been fired in a furnace, and his voice *was* like the sound of many waters,
 16 and *he* had in his right hand seven stars, and a sharp double-edged sword coming out of his mouth, and his face *was* like the sun shining in its strength.
 17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead person, and he placed his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last, [cf. [Isa 41:4; 44:6](#)]
 18 and the one who lives, and I was dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and of Hades.
 19 Therefore, write *the things* which you saw, and *the things* which are, and *the things* which are about to take place after these *things*.
 20 *As for* the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands—the seven stars are *the* angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are *the* seven churches.

Jesus' Message to the Church in Ephesus

2:1 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: "This is what the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand says, the one who walks in the midst of the seven gold lampstands:
 2 'I know your works, and your labor and patient endurance, and that you are not able to tolerate evil, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles and are not, and you found them *to be* false.
 3 And you have patient endurance, and have endured *many things* because of my name, and have not become weary.
 4 But I have *this* against you: that you have left your first love.
 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the works you did at first. But if you do not, I am coming to you, and I will remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.
 6 But you do have this: that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, *things* which I also hate.
 7 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will grant to him to eat from

the tree of life which is in the paradise of God.’

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Smyrna

8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: “This is what the first and the last says, who was dead and came to life:

9 ‘I know your affliction and poverty (but you are rich), and the slander of those who call themselves Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

10 Do not be afraid of *the things* which you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison so that you may be tested, and you will experience affliction ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

11 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will never be harmed by the second death.’

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Pergamum

12 “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: “This is what the one who has the sharp double-edged sword says:

13 ‘I know where you live, where the throne of Satan *is*. And you hold fast to my name and did not deny your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan lives.

14 But I have a few *things* against you: that you have there those who hold fast to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat food sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality.

15 So likewise you also have those who hold fast to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

16 Therefore repent! But if you do not, I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war with them with the sword from my mouth.

17 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give to him *some* of the hidden manna, and I will give to him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, that no one knows except the one who receives *it*.’

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Thyatira

18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: “This is what the Son of God says, the one who has his eyes like a fiery flame and his feet like fine bronze:

19 ‘I know your works, and your love, and faith, and service, and patient endurance—and your last works *are* greater than the first.

20 But I have against you that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, the one who calls herself a prophetess, and teaches and deceives my slaves to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.

21 And I have given her time in order to repent, and she did not want to repent from her sexual immorality.

22 Behold, I am throwing her into a sickbed and those who committed adultery with her into great affliction, unless they repent from her deeds.

23 And I will kill her children with deadly disease, and all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts, [cf. [Jer 17:10](#)] and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

24 But I say to you, to the rest *who are* in Thyatira, all those who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep *things* of Satan, as they say, I do not put upon you any other burden.

25 Nevertheless, hold fast to what you have until I come.

26 And the one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations,

27 and “he will shepherd them with an iron rod; he will break *them* in pieces like jars made of clay,” [[Ps 2:9](#)]

28 as I also have received from my Father, and I will give him the morning star.

29 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Sardis

3:1 “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: “This is what the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars says: ‘I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, and you are dead.

2 Be on the alert and strengthen the remaining *things* that are about to die, for I have not found your works completed before my God.

3 Therefore remember how you have received and heard, and observe *it*, and repent. If therefore you are not on the alert, I will come like a thief, and you will never know *at* what hour I will come against you.

4 But you have a few people in Sardis who have not defiled their clothing, and they will walk with me in white, because they are worthy.

5 The one who conquers in this way will be dressed in white clothing, and I will never erase his name from the book of life, and I will declare his name before my Father and before his angels.

6 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Philadelphia

7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: “This is what the holy one, the true one, the one who has the key of David, the one who opens and no one can shut, and who shuts and no one can open, says: [cf. [Isa 22:22](#)]

8 'I know your works (behold, I have put before you an opened door that no one is able to shut) that you have a little strength, and have kept my word, and did not deny my name.

9 Behold, I am causing *those* of the synagogue of Satan, the ones who call themselves Jews and are not, but are lying—behold, I will make them come and kneel down before your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.

10 Because you have kept the word of my patient endurance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing that is about to come upon the whole inhabited world, to put to the test those who live on the earth.

11 I am coming quickly! Hold fast to what you have, so that no one may take away your crown.

12 The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never go outside again, and I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven from my God, and my new name.

13 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Jesus' Message to the Church in Laodicea

14 "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: "This is what the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God's creation, says:

15 'I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot!

16 Thus, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am about to vomit you out of my mouth!

17 Because you are saying, "I am rich, and have become rich, and I have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and pitiable and poor and blind and naked,

18 I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire, in order that you may become rich, and white clothing, in order that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed, and eye salve to smear on your eyes, in order that you may see.

19 As many as I love, I reprove and discipline. Be zealous, therefore, and repent!

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, indeed I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me.

21 The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.

22 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Scripture quotations are from the [Lexham English Bible \(LEB\)](#). Copyright 2012 [Logos Bible Software](#). Lexham is a registered trademark of [Logos Bible Software](#).

Chronological Notes

- 1) "Scholarly opinion concerning the date of Revelation's composition is divided between an early date (64–69) and a late date (95–96). In addition, some opt for a middle ground, conjecturing that composition began in the 60s and was completed in the late 90s. Although certainty continues to be elusive, the late date, during the reign of Domitian, has considerably stronger support. On the whole the preponderance of the internal and external evidence suggests the mid-90s during the reign of Domitian as the most probable date of composition. The external testimony overwhelmingly favors the late date, which became the established tradition throughout church history. The internal testimony, while less than conclusive, also tends to support a later date. Although some passages may reflect historical circumstances prior to 70, most of the evidence seems to point to a later date. The book of Revelation was written around 95–96 by John in obedient submission to the vision he received while in exile on Patmos."¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 814–824.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Part 2 (c. 95–96)

Revelation 4:1–8:1

The Throne of God

4:1 After these *things* I looked, and behold, an open door in heaven, and the former voice that I had heard like a trumpet speaking with me was saying, “Come up here and I will show you *the things* which must take place after these *things*.”

2 Immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one was seated on the throne.

3 And the one seated was similar in appearance to jasper and carnelian stone, and a rainbow was around the throne similar in appearance to emerald.

4 And around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders dressed in white clothing, and on their heads were gold crowns.

5 And from the throne came out lightnings and sounds and thunders, and seven torches of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.

6a And before the throne was *something* like a sea of glass, like crystal,

The Four Living Creatures and the Twenty-four Elders Worship God

6b and in the midst of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

7 And the first living creature was similar to a lion, and the second living creature was similar to an ox, and the third living creature had a face like a man’s, and the fourth living creature was similar to an eagle flying.

8 And the four living creatures, each one of them, had six wings apiece, full of eyes around and inside, and they do not have rest day and night, saying,

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God All-Powerful, [cf. [Isa 6:3](#)]
the one who was and the one who is and the one who is coming!”

9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever,

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever, and put down their crowns before the throne, saying,

11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
because you have created all *things*,
and because of your will they existed and were created.”

The Scroll With Seven Seals

5:1 And I saw in the right hand of the one who is seated on the throne a scroll, written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals.

2 And I saw a powerful angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to break its seals?”

3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it.

4 And I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.

The Lamb of God—Worthy to Open the Scroll’s Seals

5 And one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.

6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as though slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth.

7 And he came and took *the scroll* from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne.

Songs of Worship for God and the Lamb

8 And when he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one of whom had a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

9 And they were singing a new song, saying,

“You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slaughtered,
and bought *people* for God by your blood
from every tribe and language and people and nation,

10 and made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they will reign on the earth.”

11 And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and of the living creatures and of the elders, and their number was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands times thousands,
12 saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered
to receive power and riches
and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise!”

13 And I heard every creature that *is* in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and in the sea and everything in them saying,

“To the one who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honor and glory and power
forever and ever.”

14 And the four living creatures were saying, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

The First Seal is Opened—A White Horse

6:1 And I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying like the sound of thunder, “Come!”

2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse, and the one seated on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and in order that he might conquer.

The Second Seal is Opened—A Fiery Red Horse

3 And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come!”

4 And another horse came out, fiery red, and it was granted to the one seated on it to take peace from the earth, and that they would slaughter one another, and a large sword was given to him.

The Third Seal is Opened—A Black Horse

5 And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, “Come!” And I looked, and behold, a black horse, and the one seated on it had a balance scale in his hand.

6 And I heard *something* like a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not damage the olive oil and the wine!”

The Fourth Seal is Opened—A Pale Green Horse

7 And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard a voice from the fourth living creature saying, “Come!”

8 And I looked, and behold, a pale green horse, and the one seated on it was named Death, and Hades followed after him. And authority was granted to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword and by famine and by pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

The Fifth Seal is Opened—The Martyred Saints

9 And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had,

10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, holy and true Lord, will you not judge and avenge our blood from those who live on the earth?”

11 And to each one of them a white robe was given, and it was said to them that they should rest yet a short time, until *the number* of their fellow slaves and their brothers who were about to be killed as they *had been* were completed also.

The Sixth Seal is Opened—The Great Earthquake

12 And I watched when he opened the sixth seal, and a great earthquake took place, and the sun became black like sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood,

13 and the stars of heaven fell to the earth like a fig tree throws down its unripe figs *when* shaken by a great wind.

14 And the sky was split apart like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved from their place.

15 And the kings of the earth, and the most important people, and the military leaders, and the rich, and the powerful, and every slave and free person hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,

16 And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,

17 because the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?” [cf. [Joel 2:11](#); [Mal 3:2](#)]

First Interlude—The Sealing of the Saints

7:1 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind could blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, holding the seal of the living God, and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels who were given permission to damage the earth and the sea,

3 saying, “Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the slaves of our God on their foreheads.”

4 And I heard the number of the ones who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

5 from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand sealed,

from the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand,

from the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand,

6 from the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand,

from the tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand,

from the tribe of Manasseh, twelve thousand,

7 from the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand,

from the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand,

from the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand,

8 from the tribe of Zebulun, twelve thousand,

from the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand,

from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.

A Great Multitude Worship God Around His Throne

9 After these *things* I looked, and behold, a great crowd that no one was able to number, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed *in* white robes and *with* palm branches in their hands.

10 And they were crying out with a loud voice, saying,

“Salvation to our God
who is seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb!”

11 And all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

12 saying,

“Amen! Praise and glory,
and wisdom and thanksgiving,
and honor and power and strength
be to our God forever and ever. Amen!”

An Elder Identifies Those in Long White Robes as Having Been Martyred in the Great Tribulation

13 And one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are dressed *in* the white robes—who are *they*, and from where have they come?”

14 And I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me,

“These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation,
and have washed their robes
and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Because of this, they are before the throne of God,

and they serve him day and night in his temple,
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

16 They will not be hungry *any* longer or be thirsty *any* longer,
nor will the sun ever beat down on them, nor any heat, [[Isa 49:10](#)]

17 because the Lamb *who is* in the midst of the throne will shepherd them
and will lead them to springs of living waters,

and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” [cf. [Isa 25:8](#)]

The Seventh Seal is Opened—Silence in Heaven

8:1 And when he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven *for* about half an hour.

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Part 3 (c. 95–96)

Revelation 8:2–13:18

The Seven Trumpets and the Golden Censer—God Answers the Prayers of the Saints

8:2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

3 And another angel who had a golden censer came and stood at the altar, and a large amount of incense was given to him, in order that he could offer the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that *is* before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense went up before God with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel.

5 And the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire from the altar and threw *it* to the earth, and there were thunders and sounds and lightnings and an earthquake.

6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves in order to blow them.

The First Trumpet is Sounded—Hail and Fire Mixed With Blood

7 And the first blew the trumpet, and there was hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was thrown to the earth, and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

The Second Trumpet is Sounded—A Mountain of Fire

8 And the second angel blew the trumpet, and *something* like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood,

9 and a third of the creatures in the sea—the ones which had life—died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

The Third Trumpet is Sounded—The Star Called Wormwood

10 And the third angel blew the trumpet, and a great star burning like a torch fell from heaven, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water.

11 And the name of the star was called Wormwood, and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the waters because they were made bitter.

The Fourth Trumpet is Sounded—The Heavens Darkened

12 And the fourth angel blew the trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened, and the day did not shine *with respect to* a third of it, and the night likewise.

13 And I looked, and I heard one eagle flying directly overhead, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to those who live on the earth, from the remaining sounds of the trumpets of the three angels who are about to blow the trumpet!”

The Fifth Trumpet (First Woe) is Sounded—Locusts from the Abyss

9:1 And the fifth angel blew the trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven to the earth, and the key of the shaft of the abyss was given to him.

2 And he opened the shaft of the abyss, and smoke went up from the shaft like smoke from a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the shaft.

3 And out of the smoke locusts came to the earth, and power was given to them like the scorpions of the earth have power.

4 And it was told to them that they should not damage the grass of the earth or any green *plant* or any tree, except those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

5 And it was granted to them that they should not kill them, but that they would be tormented five months, and their torment *is* like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a person.

6 And in those days people will seek death and will never find it, and they will long to die, and death will flee from them.

7 And the appearance of the locusts *was* like horses prepared for battle, and on their heads *were something* like crowns similar in appearance to gold, and their faces *were* like men’s faces,

8 and they had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like *the teeth* of lions,

9 and they had breastplates like iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings *was* like the sound of many horse-drawn chariots running into battle.

10 And they have tails similar in appearance to scorpions, and stings, and their power to injure people *for* five months *is* in their tails.

11 They have *as* king over them the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew *is* Abaddon, and in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

12 The first woe has passed. Behold, two woes are still coming after these *things*.

The Sixth Trumpet (Second Woe) is Sounded—The Four Angels Set Free / The Army of Two Hundred Million

13 And the sixth angel blew the trumpet, and I heard one voice from the horns of the golden altar *that is* before God

14 saying to the sixth angel, the one who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who have been bound at the great river Euphrates!”

15 And the four angels who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year were released, in order that they should kill a third of humanity.

16 And the number of the troops of the cavalry *was* two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

17 And in this way I saw the horses in the vision, and those seated on them, who had fiery *red* and hyacinth-colored and sulphurous *yellow* breastplates, and the heads of the horses *were* like the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire and smoke and sulphur.

18 By these three plagues a third of humanity was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the sulphur that came out of their mouths.

19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails *are* similar in appearance to snakes, having heads, and with them they cause injury.

20 And the rest of humanity who were not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands, in order not to worship the demons and the gold and silver and bronze and stone and wooden idols, which are able neither to see nor to hear nor to walk,

21 and they did not repent of their murders or of their magic spells or of their sexual immorality or of their thefts.

Second Interlude (Part 1): The Mighty Angel With the Little Scroll

10:1 And I saw another powerful angel descending from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, and a rainbow over his head, and his face *was* like the sun, and his feet *were* like pillars of fire,

2 and holding in his hand a little scroll that was opened. And he put his right foot on the sea and his left on the land.

3 And he cried out with a loud voice like a lion roars, and when he cried out, the seven thunders sounded their own voices.

4 And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write, and I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Seal up *the things* which the seven thunders spoke, and do not write them!”

5 And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven

6 and swore by the one who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the *things* in it, and the earth and the *things* in it, and the sea and the *things* in it, “There will be no more delay!

7 But in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, whenever he is about to blow the trumpet, then the mystery of God is completed, as he announced to his own slaves the prophets.”

8 And the voice that I had heard from heaven *was* speaking with me again and saying, “Go, take the opened scroll in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.”

9 And I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll, and he said to me, “Take and eat it up, and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.”

10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it up, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth, and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

11 And they said to me, “It is necessary for you to prophesy again about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.”

Second Interlude (Part 2): The Two Witnesses

11:1 And a measuring rod similar in appearance to a staff was given to me, saying, “Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in it.

2 And leave out the courtyard outside of the temple, and do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles, and they will trample the holy city *for* forty two months.

3 And I will grant *authority* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy *for* one thousand two hundred sixty days, dressed in sackcloth.”

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire comes out of their mouth and consumes their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, in this way he must be killed.

6 These have the authority to shut the sky, so that it does not rain during the days of their prophecy. And they have authority over the waters, to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with every plague as often as they wish.

7 And when they have completed their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will make war with them and will conquer them and will kill them.

8 And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which is called symbolically Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

9 And *those* from peoples and tribes and languages and nations will see their dead bodies three and a half days, and they will not allow their dead bodies to be placed in a tomb.

10 And those who live on the earth will rejoice over them, and will celebrate and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who live on the earth.

11 And after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.

12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here,” and they went up into heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them.

13 And at that hour a great earthquake took place, and a tenth of the city collapsed, and seven thousand people were killed by the earthquake, and the rest became terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe has passed. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly!

The Seventh Trumpet (Third Woe) is Sounded—Voices in Heaven

15 And the seventh angel blew the trumpet, and there was a loud voice in heaven saying,

“The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord
and of his Christ,
and he will reign forever and ever.”

16 And the twenty-four elders *who are* seated on their thrones before God fell down on their faces and worshiped God,
17 saying,

“We give thanks to you, Lord God All-Powerful,
the one who is and the one who was,
because you have taken your great power
and have begun to reign.

18 And the nations were angry,
and your wrath has come,
and the time for the dead to be judged,
and to give their reward to your slaves the prophets
and to the saints and to the ones who fear your name,
the small and the great,
and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”

19 And the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant appeared in his temple, and there were lightnings and sounds and thunders and an earthquake and large hail.

Two Great Signs—A Woman (Israel) and a Great Red Dragon (Satan)

12:1 And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun and *with* the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars,

2 and who was pregnant and was crying out *because she* was having birth pains, and was in torment to give birth.

3 And another sign appeared in heaven, and behold, a great fiery red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads *were* seven royal headbands.

4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars from heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, in order that whenever she gave birth to her child he could devour *it*.

5 And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*, who is going to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod, and her child was snatched away to God and to his throne.

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared there by God, so that they could feed her there *for one* thousand two hundred sixty days.

War in Heaven—Satan is Cast Down to Earth

7 And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

8 And they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them *any* longer in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying,

“Now the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Christ have come,
because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,
the one who accuses them before our God day and night.

11 And they conquered him by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
and they did not love their lives until death.

12 Because of this, rejoice, you heavens,
and those who live in them!
Woe *to* the earth and *to* the sea,
because the devil has come down to you,
having great anger,

because he knows that he has little time!”

Satan Attempts to Destroy Israel

13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male *child*.

14 And the two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she could fly into the wilderness, to her place where she is fed there *for* a time, and times, and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

15 And from his mouth the serpent spouted water like a river after the woman, in order that he could make her swept away by a river.

16 And the earth came to the aid of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the river that the dragon had spouted out of his mouth.

Unable to Destroy Israel, Satan Makes War on the Saints

17 And the dragon was angry at the woman, and went away to fight against the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of God and who hold to the testimony about Jesus.

18 And he stood on the sand of the sea.

Satan Gives Authority to the Beast with Seven Heads and Ten Horns (see Rev 17:7–14)

13:1 And I saw coming up out of the sea a beast that had ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns ten royal headbands, and on its heads a blasphemous name.

2 And the beast that I saw was similar to a leopard, and its feet *were* like a bear’s, and its mouth *was* like the mouth of a lion, and the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority.

3 And one of its heads *appeared* as though slaughtered to death, and its fatal wound had been healed. And the whole earth was astonished *and followed* after the beast.

4 And they worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who *is* like the beast, and who is able to make war with him?”

5 And a mouth was given to him speaking great *things* and blasphemies, and authority to act was given to him *for* forty-two months.

6 And he opened his mouth for blasphemies toward God, to blaspheme his name and his dwelling, those who live in heaven.

7 And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given to him over every tribe and people and language and nation.

8 And all those who live on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name is not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slaughtered.

9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear!

10 If anyone *is going* into captivity, into captivity he goes.

If anyone *is* to be killed by the sword, by the sword he *is* to be killed.

Here is the patient endurance and the faith of the saints.

The Second Beast—The False Prophet

11 And I saw another beast coming up from the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he was speaking like a dragon.

12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast on behalf of him, and he causes the earth and those who live in it to worship the first beast whose fatal wound had been healed.

13 And he performs great signs, so that he even causes fire from heaven to come down to the earth before people.

14 And he deceives those who live on the earth because of the signs that it has been granted to him to perform on behalf of the beast, telling those who live on the earth to make an image to the beast who has the wound of the sword and *yet* lived.

15 And it was given to him to put breath into the image of the beast, in order that the image of the beast both spoke and caused that all those, unless they worshiped the image of the beast, should be killed.

16 And he causes all *people*, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the slave, that they give them a mark on their right hand or on their forehead,

17 and that no one was able to buy or to sell except the one who had the mark—the name of the beast or the number of his name.

18 Here is wisdom: the one who has understanding, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man’s number, and his number *is* six hundred sixty-six.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Part 4 (c. 95–96)

Revelation 14–18

The Lamb and the 144,000 on Mount Zion

14:1 And I looked, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him one hundred forty-four thousand who had his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads.

2 And I heard a sound from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the sound that I heard *was* like harpists playing on their harps.

3 And they were singing *something* like a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders, and no one was able to learn the song except the one hundred forty-four thousand who had been bought from the earth.

4 These are those who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These *are* the ones who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were bought from humanity *as* first fruits to God and to the Lamb,

5 and in their mouth a lie was not found; they are blameless.

The Message of the Three Angels

6 And I saw another angel flying directly overhead, having an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who reside on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and language and people,

7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship the one who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and the springs of water!”

8 And another second angel followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen *is* Babylon the great, who caused all the nations to drink from the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.”

9 And another third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,

10 he himself also will drink of the wine of the anger of God that has been mixed full strength in the cup of his wrath, and will be tortured with fire and sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

11 And the smoke of their torture went up forever and ever, and those who worshiped the beast and his image did not have rest day and night, along with anyone who received the mark of his name.

12 Here is the patient endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith in Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write:

‘Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on!’”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “in order that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow after them.”

Jesus Comes to Harvest the Earth

14 And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud was seated *one* like a son of man, [cf. [Dan 7:13](#)] having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to the one seated on the cloud, “Send out your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe!”

16 And the one seated on the cloud swung his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 And another angel came out of the temple *that is* in heaven; he also had a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel who had authority over the fire *went out* from the altar, and he called out with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Send out your sharp sickle and harvest the clusters of grapes from the vine of the earth, because its grapes are at their prime!”

19 And the angel swung his sickle into the earth and harvested the vine of the earth, and threw *the grapes* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

20 And the winepress was stomped outside the city, and blood went out from the winepress up to the bridles of the horses, about one thousand six hundred stadia.

The Seven Bowls

15:1 And I saw another great and marvelous sign in heaven: seven angels having seven plagues *that are* the last *ones*, because with them the wrath of God is completed.

2 And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and his image and the number of his name were standing by the glassy sea, holding harps from God.

3 And they were singing the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:

“Great and marvelous *are* your works,
Lord God All-Powerful;
righteous and true *are* your ways,

King of the ages!

- 4 Who would never fear, Lord,
and glorify your name?
For only you *are* holy,
because all the nations will come
and worship before you,
because your righteous deeds have been revealed.”

- 5 And after these *things* I looked, and the temple, the tent of the testimony in heaven, was opened,
6 and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out from the temple, dressed *in* clean, bright linen garments, and girded with golden belts around their chests.
7 And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever,
8 and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

The First Bowl is Poured—Painful Sores

- 16:1 And I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.”
2 And the first went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and there was an evil and painful sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

The Second Bowl is Poured—the Sea Turns to Blood

- 3 And the second poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood, like *that* of a dead person, and every living thing *that was in* the sea died.

The Third Bowl is Poured—the Rivers Turn to Blood

- 4 And the third poured out his bowl on the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood.
5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying,

“You are righteous, the one who is and the one who was, the Holy One,
because you have judged these *things*,
6 because they have poured out the blood of the saints and prophets,
and you have given them blood to drink;
they are deserving!”

- 7 And I heard the altar saying,

“Yes, Lord God All-Powerful,
true and righteous *are* your judgments.”

The Fourth Bowl is Poured—A Scorching Sun

- 8 And the fourth poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was granted to it to burn up people with fire.
9 And people were burned up *by the* great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has the authority over these plagues, and they did not repent to give him glory.

The Fifth Bowl is Poured—Painful Darkness Covers the Beast’s Kingdom

- 10 And the fifth poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened, and they began chewing their tongues because of the pain.
11 And they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and because of their sores, and they did not repent of their deeds.

The Sixth Bowl is Poured—Three Unclean Spirits Gather the Nations to Armageddon

- 12 And the sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, in order that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east.
13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet three unclean spirits like frogs.
14 For they are the spirits of demons performing signs that go out to the kings of the whole inhabited world, to gather them for the battle of the great day of God the All-Powerful.

15 (Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed *is* the one who is on the alert and who keeps his clothing, so that he does not walk around naked and they see his shamefulness!)

16 And he gathered them to the place called in Hebrew Armageddon.

The Seventh Bowl is Poured—A Super-quake Destroys the Great City

17 And the seventh poured out his bowl on the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!”

18 And there were lightnings and sounds and thunders, and there was a great earthquake, as has not happened from the *time* humanity has been on the earth—so great in this way *was* the earthquake.

19 And the great city *was split* into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of his furious wrath.

20 And every island fled, and mountains were not found.

21 And large hailstones, weighing about a hundred pounds, came down from the sky upon people, and the people blasphemed God because of the plague of hail, because the plague of it was very great.

The Woman on the Beast—Babylon the Great, Mother of Prostitutes, the Great City Who Rules the World

17:1 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters,

2 with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality, and those who live on the earth became drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality.”

3 And he carried me away into the wilderness in the Spirit, and I saw a woman seated on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

4 And the woman was dressed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, holding a golden cup in her hand full of detestable things and the unclean things of her sexual immorality.

5 And on her forehead a name *was* written, a mystery: “Babylon the great, the mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth.”

6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses to Jesus. And I was greatly astonished when I saw her.

The Meaning of the Woman and the Beast (see Rev 13:1–10)

7 And the angel said to me, “Why are you astonished? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that has the seven heads and the ten horns that carries her.

8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is going to come up from the abyss, and he is going to destruction. And those who live on the earth, whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be astonished *when they* see the beast that was, and is not, and will be present.

9 Here *is* the mind that has wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits and they are seven kings.

10 Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and whenever he comes it is necessary *for* him to remain a short time.

11 And the beast that was, and is not, is also himself an eighth, and is of the seven, and he is going to destruction.

12 And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings *for* one hour with the beast.

13 These have one opinion, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him *are* called and chosen and faithful.”

15 And he said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and crowds and nations and languages.

16 And the ten horns that you saw and the beast, these will hate the prostitute and will make her desolate and naked, and they will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.

17 For God put into their hearts to carry out his purpose and to make a unanimous decision and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

18 And the woman that you saw is the great city that has sovereignty over the kings of the earth.

The Destruction of Babylon the Great

18:1 After these *things* I saw another angel descending from heaven, who had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor.

2 And he cried out with a powerful voice, saying,

“Fallen, fallen *is* Babylon the great,
and it has become a dwelling place of demons
and a haunt of every unclean spirit
and a haunt of every unclean bird

and a haunt of every unclean and detested animal.

- 3 For all the nations have drunk
from the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality,
and the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her,
and the merchants of the earth have become rich
from the power of her sensuality.”

4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying,

“Come out from her, my people,
so that you will not participate in her sins,
and so that you will not receive her plagues,
because her sins have reached up to heaven,
and God has remembered her crimes.

- 5
6 Pay back to her as she herself also paid out,
and pay back double according to her deeds;
in the cup that she mixed, mix double for her.
7 As much as she glorified herself and lived in luxury,
give to her so much torment and mourning,
because in her heart she said,
‘I sit as a queen, and am not a widow,
and I will never see mourning!’
8 Because of this her plagues will come in one day—
death and mourning and famine—
and she will be burned up with fire,
because the Lord God who passes judgment on her *is* powerful!”

9 And the kings of the earth will weep and mourn over her, those who committed sexual immorality and lived sensually with her,
when they see the smoke of her burning,
10 standing far off because of the fear of her torment, saying,

“Woe, woe, the great city,
Babylon the powerful city,
because in one hour your judgment has come!”

11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargo any more—
12 cargo of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple cloth and silk and scarlet cloth and all kinds of
scented wood and all kinds of ivory goods and all kinds of goods of precious wood and bronze and iron and marble
13 and cinnamon and amomum and incense and ointment and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine wheat flour and wheat
and domesticated animals and sheep and horses and carriages and slaves and human lives.

- 14 “And the fruit your soul desires has departed from you,
and all the luxury and the splendor has perished from you,
and they will never find them any more.”

15 The merchants of these *things*, who became rich from them, will stand far off, weeping and mourning because of the fear of her
torment,
16 saying,

“Woe, woe, the great city,
dressed in fine linen and purple cloth and scarlet cloth,
and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls,

- 17 because in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!”

And every shipmaster and every seafarer and sailors and all those who labor on the sea stood far off
18 and began to cry out *when they* saw the smoke of her burning, saying, “Who *is* like the great city?”
19 And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying,

“Woe, woe, the great city,
in which all those who had ships on the sea
became rich from her prosperity,
because in one hour she has been laid waste!”

20 Rejoice over her, heaven
and the saints and the apostles and the prophets,
because God has pronounced your judgment on her!”

21 And one powerful angel picked up a stone like a great millstone and threw *it* into the sea, saying,

“In this way Babylon the great city will be thrown down with violence,
and will never be found again!

22 And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute players and trumpeters
will never be heard in you again!
And every craftsman of every trade
will never be found in you again!
And the sound of a mill
will never be heard in you again!

23 And the light of a lamp
will never shine in you again!
And the sound of a bridegroom and bride
will never be heard in you again!
For your merchants were the most important people of the earth,
because with your sorcery they deceived all the nations.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints
and all those who had been slaughtered on the earth.

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Part 5 (c. 95–96)

Revelation 19–22

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

19:1 After these *things* I heard *something* like the loud sound of a great crowd in heaven saying,

“Hallelujah!

Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

- 2 because his judgments *are* true and righteous,
because he has passed judgment on the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality,
and has avenged the blood of his slaves shed by her hand!”

3 And a second time they said,

“Hallelujah!”

And her smoke goes up forever and ever.

4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying,

“Amen! Hallelujah!”

5 And a voice came out from the throne, saying,

“Praise our God
all his slaves,
and those who fear him,
the small and the great!”

6 And I heard *something* like the sound of a great crowd and *something* like the sound of many waters and *something* like the sound of powerful thunder, saying,

“Hallelujah!

For the Lord God, the All-Powerful, reigns!

- 7 Let us rejoice and be glad
and give him the glory,
because the wedding celebration of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has prepared herself.
- 8 And it has been granted to her that she be dressed in bright, clean fine linen
(for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints).

9 And he said to me, “Write: Blessed *are* those who are invited to the banquet of the wedding celebration of the Lamb!” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.”

10 And I fell down before his feet to worship him, and he said to me, “Do not do that! I am a fellow slave of you and of your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Jesus Rides to War

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and the one seated on it was called “Faithful” and “True,” and with justice he judges and makes war.

12 Now his eyes *were* a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many royal headbands having a name written that no one except he himself knows.

13 And *he was* dressed in an outer garment dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.

14 And the armies *that are* in heaven, dressed in clean, white fine linen, were following him on white horses.

15 And out of his mouth came a sharp sword, so that with it he could strike the nations. And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, [Ps 2:9] and he stomps the winepress of the wine of the furious wrath of God, the All-Powerful.

16 And he has a name written on his outer garment and on his thigh: “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

The Beast and the False Prophet Are Cast Into the Lake of Fire

17 And I saw one angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly directly overhead,

“Come! Assemble for the great banquet of God,
18 in order that you may eat the flesh of kings,
and the flesh of military tribunes,
and the flesh of the powerful,
and the flesh of horses and those seated on them,
and the flesh of all *people*,
both free and slave,
and small and great!”

19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war with the one who is seated on the horse and with his army.

20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs before him, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who had worshiped his image. The two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur.

21 And the rest were killed by the sword of the one who is seated on the horse—the *sword* that comes out of his mouth—and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Satan Is Bound for 1,000 Years

20:1 And I saw an angel descending from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he seized the dragon—the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan—and bound him *for* a thousand years,

3 and threw him into the abyss, and shut *it* and sealed *it* above him, in order that he could not deceive the nations again until the thousand years are completed. After these *things* it is necessary *for* him to be released *for* a short time.

The First Resurrection—Martyred Saints Rule With Christ in the Millennium

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat down on them, and authority to judge was granted to them. And *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and did not receive the mark on their forehead and on their hand, and they came to life and reigned with Christ *for* a thousand years.

5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.) This *is* the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy *is* the one who has a part in the first resurrection. Over this person the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him a thousand years.

Satan Defeated and Cast Into the Lake of Fire

7 And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison

8 and he will go out to deceive the nations *that are* at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to assemble them for battle, whose number *is* like the sand of the sea.

9 And they went up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the fortified camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and consumed them.

10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet also *are*, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The Great White Throne Judgment

11 And I saw a great white throne and the one who was seated on it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled, and a place was not found for them.

12 And I saw the dead—the great and the small—standing before the throne, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the *book* of life, and the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to their deeds.

13 And the sea gave up the dead *who were* in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead *who were* in them, and each one was judged according to their deeds.

14 And Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire.

15 And if anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The Eternal State—A New Heaven and a New Earth

21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea did not exist *any* longer. [cf. [Isa 65:17](#); [66:22](#); [2 Pet 3:13](#)]

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“Behold, the dwelling of God *is* with humanity,
and he will take up residence with them,
and they will be his people
and God himself will be with them.

- 4 And he will wipe away every tear from their eyes,
and death will not exist *any* longer,
and mourning or wailing or pain will not exist *any* longer.
The former *things* have passed away.”

5 And the one seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all *things* new!” And he said, “Write, because these words are faithful and true.”

6 And he said to me, “It is done! I *am* the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who is thirsty I will give *water* from the spring of the water of life freely.

7 The one who conquers will inherit these *things*, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

8 But *as* for the cowards and unbelievers and detestable persons and murderers and sexually immoral people and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their share *is* in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death.

The Heavenly City—The New Jerusalem

9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and lofty mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

11 that has the glory of God. Its radiance *is* like a precious stone, *something* like a jasper stone, shining like crystal.

12 It has a great and high wall that has twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written on *the gates* which are of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel—

13 on the east, three gates, and on the north, three gates, and on the south, three gates, and on the west, three gates.

14 And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them *are* twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And the one who spoke with me was holding a golden measuring rod in order that he could measure the city and its gates and its wall.

16 And the city is laid out as a square, and its length is the same as *its* width. And he measured the city with the measuring rod at twelve thousand stadia; the length and the width and the height of it are equal.

17 And he measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits according to human measure, which is the angel’s.

18 And the material of its wall *is* jasper, and the city *is* pure gold, similar in appearance to pure glass.

19 The foundations of the wall of the city are adorned with every kind of precious stone: the first foundation jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,

20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates *are* twelve pearls, each one of the gates was from a single pearl. And the street of the city *is* pure gold, like transparent glass.

22 And I did not see a temple in it, for the Lord God All-Powerful is its temple, and the Lamb.

23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon, that they shine on it, for the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp *is* the Lamb. [cf. [Isa 60:20–21](#)]

24 And the nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

25 And its gates will never be shut by day (for there will be no night there),

26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.

27 And every unclean thing and one who practices detestable things and falsehood will never enter into it, except those who are written in the book of life of the Lamb.

22:1 And he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming out from the throne of God and of the Lamb

2 in the middle of its street, and on both sides of the river *is* the tree of life, producing twelve fruits—yielding its fruit according to every month—and the leaves of the tree *are* for the healing of the nations.

3 And there will not be any curse *any* longer, and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his slaves will serve him,

4 and they will see his face, and his name *will be* on their foreheads.

5 And night will not exist *any* longer, and they will not have need of the light of a lamp and the light of the sun, because the Lord God will give light to them, and they will reign forever and ever.

The Certainty of the Blessed Hope

6 And he said to me, “These words *are* faithful and true, and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his slaves *the things* which must take place in a short time.”

7 “And behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

John Told to Worship God Alone

8 And I, John, *am* the one who heard and who saw these *things*. And when I heard and saw *them*, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed these *things* to me.

9 And he said to me, “Do not do that! I am your fellow slave, and of your brothers the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!”

Proclaim the Prophecy—Present Choices Determine a Permanent Outcome

10 And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near!

11 The one who does evil, let him do evil still, and the defiled, let him be defiled still, and the righteous, let him practice righteousness still, and the holy, let him be holy still.”

Invitation to Eternal Life

12 “Behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward *is* with me, to repay each one according to *what* his deeds are!

13 I *am* the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

14 Blessed *are* the ones who wash their robes, so that their authority will be over the tree of life and they may enter into the city through the gates.

15 Outside *are* the dogs and the sorcerers and the sexually immoral people and the murderers and the idolaters and everyone who loves and who practices falsehood.

16 “I, Jesus, sent my angel to testify to you about these *things* for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, [cf. [Isa 11:1](#)] the bright morning star.” [cf. [Num 24:17](#)]

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And the one who hears, let him say, “Come!” And the one who is thirsty, let him come. The one who wants, let him take the water of life freely.

The Final Testimony of Jesus Christ

18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues written in this book.

19 And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share of the tree of life and from the holy city that are written in this book.

20 The one who testifies about these *things* says, “Yes, I am coming quickly!” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

Benediction

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus *be* with all.

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