

New Testament Overview Spring 2022

Session 3: Paul's Letters: *Living under the New Covenant*

Psalm 24

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein,
for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, O gates!

And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!

Lift up your heads, O gates!

And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Chronology (with thanks to F.F Bruce)

c. 33	Conversion of Paul (Acts 9)
c. 35	1 st Post-conversion visit to Jerusalem
35-46	Paul in Cilicia and Syria
46	2 nd Jerusalem visit
47-48	Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus and Galatia
? 48	<i>Galatians</i>
49	Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15)
49-50	Paul and Silas travel to Macedonia / Achaia
50	<i>1 + 2 Thessalonians</i>
50-52	Paul in Corinth
Summer 52	3 rd Jerusalem visit
52-55	Paul in Ephesus
53-56	<i>1+2 Corinthians</i>
55-57	Paul in Macedonia, Illyricum, Achaia
Early 57	<i>Romans</i>
May 57	4 th visit to Jerusalem
57-59	Imprisonment in Caesarea (Acts 23-26)
Sept 59	Paul's voyage to Rome begins
Feb 60	Paul arrives in Rome
60-62	Paul under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28)
? 60-62	<i>Colossians, Philippians, Ephesians, Philemon</i>
? 65	Paul visits Spain
?	<i>1+2 Timothy, Titus</i>
? 65	Death of Paul under Nero

3.3 Paul's earliest letters

Galatians: a defence of the gospel of grace

Galatians 1-2	Paul's apostolic ministry
Galatians 3-4	Freedom in Christ vs. bondage to the law
Galatians 5-6	What freedom in Christ looks like

1+2 Thessalonians: instructions for young churches

1 Thessalonians 1	The good example of the Thessalonians
1 Thessalonians 2-3	Paul's good example of apostolic concern
1 Thessalonians 4:1-12	Holiness and brotherly Love
1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11	The Day of the Lord
1 Thessalonians 5:12-28	Final Instructions
1 Thessalonians 1-2	Further instructions about Christ's coming: stand firm
1 Thessalonians 3	What to do now – avoid idleness

3.4 Longer letters to challenging churches

1 Corinthians: advice and instruction for a church in cultural compromise: you are not the only pebble on the beach.

1 Corinthians 1-4	Responding to reports about unity: Christ, The Spirit and Christ's ministers
1 Corinthians 5-7	Responding to reports and questions about sex and marriage
1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1	An answer about food offered to idols: being other-centred
1 Corinthians 11:2-14:40	An answer about how to behave in church: love and order
1 Corinthians 15	a reminder of the good news: The Resurrection
1 Corinthians 16	The collection, travel plans and greetings

2 Corinthians: further advice for a further compromised church

2 Corinthians 1:1-2:11	Opening greetings, plans, and unfinished business – forgive the sinner
2 Corinthians 2:12-6:10	New Covenant ministry
2 Corinthians 6:11-7:16	a call for holiness, repentance and obedience
2 Corinthians 8-9	Giving Generously
2 Corinthians 10-13	Paul's defence against false/ super apostles

Romans: a letter of introduction to a church Paul didn't found with some unity issues

Romans 1-4	Righteousness by faith not works of the law
Romans 5-8	The results of righteousness by faith now and in the future
Romans 9-11	What about Israel?
Romans 12-16	Responding to the gospel: living sacrifices

3.5 The Prison Letters

Colossians: the supremacy of Christ and how to live for him

Colossians 1-2	The pre-eminence of Christ means we have everything we need in him...
Colossians 3-4	... so put on the new self and live for Christ

Philippians: understanding heavenly citizenship and Christ's sacrifice

Philippians 1:1-2:11	Living after the example of Christ
Philippians 2:12-4:4:23	Working out your salvation in practice

Ephesians: God's cosmic purposes for unity – and putting it in for practice

Ephesians 1-3	Our spiritual blessings in Christ
Ephesians 4-6	Walk worthy of your calling

Philemon: free your slave and brother in Christ

3.6 The pastoral Epistles

1 and 2 Timothy, Titus: How to set up and lead churches (once I'm gone)

1 Timothy 1	False teaching and the good news
1 Timothy 2	Instructions on prayer
1 Timothy 3	Overseers and Deacons
1 Timothy 4	The reality of apostasy
1 Timothy 5-6	Instructions for the church facing threats from outside and within
Titus 1	Elders
Titus 2-3	Sound doctrine for all
2 Timothy 1-2	Words to Timothy on guarding the faith
2 Timothy 3-4	Preach the word in godless days

3.7 Reading Paul

Particular:

Persuasive:

Personal:

3.8 Group Work: Reading Paul's letters

What is Context?

1. *The part of a text or statement that surrounds a particular word or passage and determines its meaning.*
2. *The circumstances in which an event occurs; a setting.*

Historical Context: *The Bible and the Book*

Where in God's plan?

Who, When and Where?

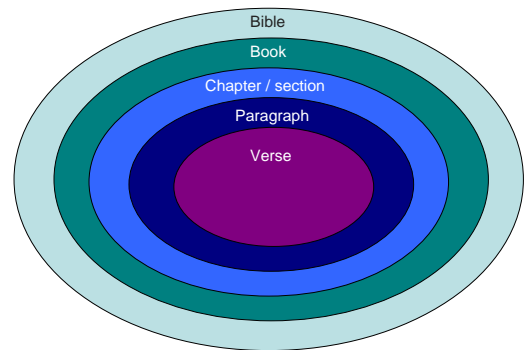
Characters?

Author?

Date?

Literary Context: *The Book and the Section*

What kind of writing is this? (Genre) – a letter = an occasional document from a to b



The Immediate Context

The Verse:

Any difficult words?

Is this a quotation?

Can I understand what it means?

The Paragraph:

What does the author say here? Can I summarise it in a sentence?

How does the paragraph help me understand the verses?

The Section:

Does what I think the paragraph says fit with what the section says?

*Q: How does understanding the **setting** of the letters help us interpret the following passages?*

Galatians 3:1-3 (see also Galatians 1:8)

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

2 Corinthians 13:1-4

Romans 12:1-2

Ephesians 4:1-6

1 Timothy 6:6-10

Titus 1:5