

KNOW THE BIBLE



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The Epistles #1

Pauline Letters

The Epistles or Letters are directed to a person or a group of people. The letters attributed to Paul as the writer are called the Pauline Letters. There are a total number of 13 Pauline Letters broken into two sections. One section is generally referred to as the Pauline Epistles while the second section is called the Pastoral Epistles.

The first group of Pauline Letters includes 10 books. They are as follows:

- ***Romans***
- ***1 Corinthians***
- ***2 Corinthians***
- ***Galatians***
- ***Ephesians***
- ***Philippians***
- ***Colossians***
- ***1 Thessalonians***
- ***2 Thessalonians***
- ***Philemon***

How to remember this section:

The first group of letters is from Paul who was a Roman citizen. Thus it starts with **Romans** followed by the double C's **1 & 2 Corinthians** (the big worded C's). After the first double bookend comes the GEPC ("gypsy" or "gep -c") **Galatians**, **Ephesians**, **Philippians**, and **Colossians**. The GEPC is bookended by another double; double T's, **1 & 2 Thessalonians** (the big worded T's). The last book of this section is the book of **Philemon** (Phil----eeeeeee----man; reggae sounding). So..... R----C-C-----G-E-P-C-----T-T----P.

- **Romans** – *this book written by Paul to the church in Rome has a primary theme of **God's plan of salvation and righteousness for ALL mankind**. The need for salvation for both Jew and Gentile are stated by Paul and can only be achieved through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ and can only be received by faith. This principle of faith is shown previously through Abraham being granted righteousness through his faith in the Lord. Paul moves on to show how a believer is freed from sin, law, and death.*
- **1 Corinthians** – *concerns about immoral practices were at the heart of letters to the church in Corinth and are very relevant to the church especially today. **Pursuit of sanctification and holiness of character** are paramount to Paul in this letter. It is both instructional and inspirational in battling the immaturity, divisions, jealousy, envy, marital difficulties, sexual immorality, and misuse of spiritual gifts. Very relevant to the church even today.*

- **2 Corinthians** – *more autobiographical material from Paul than any other writing. His personal feelings and character are on full display in this book. To **strive for holiness and reach for the perfection of Christ in our own lives (sincerity of character)** is of utmost importance. Integrity, a giving heart, discipline, forgiveness, and the power that comes from weakness are at the heart of the 2nd letter to the Corinthians. The reaffirmation of Paul as an apostle of Christ is given here.*
- **Galatians** – *Martin Luther relied on this book most often when battling against the prevailing theology of his day. The basic message of Galatians brought about the Reformation. The important NT truth that **man is justified by faith alone in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, not by legalistic works or deeds.** We are not bound by the legalistic or pharisaical teachings that attempt to put Christians into bondage once again. Faith in Christ brings about freedom of the Spirit, and obedience is a result of that faith manifested in the Spirit.*
- **Ephesians** – *Paul wrote to the Ephesians with the intent to expand on the understanding of what a Christian is, what God's grand design is for the Believers in His Son, Jesus Christ, whom he predetermined to save and whom He would damn, and how He would disperse His gifts to the elect through the Holy Spirit. **Emphasis on how we as reconciled individuals should live out our lives in a practical manner fulfilling God's purposes** is a central theme. The ultimate goal of the church is to minister to one another promoting unity and maturity and reaching the lost. We are to display God's glory and infinite wisdom through our lives.*

- **Philippians** – *It is evident that Paul wrote this book to the Philippians from confinement in prison. The primary theme is to report on his circumstances and **encourage other Christians to stand firm to their beliefs in the face of persecution and not waver regardless of circumstances.** To recognize those that try to bind believers to legalistic theology, is again warned of here in the Book of Philippians. This book is also known for its lack of quotes from the OT.*
- **Colossians** – *One of the many letters penned by Paul, the apostle, while imprisoned. List includes five: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, 2 Timothy, and Philemon. The main purpose of Colossians was to **refute the heresy that was gaining a foothold in the church. The legalistic and Pharisaical teachings** that brought about strict laws, angel worship, secret knowledge that only an elect can understand, and reliance on human wisdom and traditions. The complete work of Jesus Christ is all that is needed for salvation is trumpeted here. Christ is the **ONLY WAY!***
- **1 Thessalonians** – *the letters to the Thessalonians are often **designated as the eschatological (doctrine of “Last Things”)** letters of Paul. The Second Coming permeates throughout the letter, and in this 1st letter each chapter is unique in that it is concluded with a reference to the Second Coming. Standing firm to their beliefs, living out a holy life, and making clear the understanding of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is what is at the heart of the first letter to the Thessalonians.*

- **2 Thessalonians** – like its predecessor, this 2nd letter is extensively about eschatological events, or end time events. Not written long after the previous letter, it expounds on much of the same topics. Christians are to stand firm amid persecution and are to be useful being a person of integrity working hard for a living and for God. **Clarifying misunderstandings about the Lord's return** are very much a theme in this letter.
- **Philemon** – this letter is placed after the Pastoral Letters in the NT. It seems to have been written about the same time as the letter to the Colossians. It is addressed to Philemon, a wealthy slave owner and fellow believer in Christ, living in Colosse. It is written on behalf of a new convert, Onesimus, a runaway slave of Philemon. A person's witness is a testimony to their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is seen by others even when it is not acknowledged immediately. **Your status in heaven is not influenced by your status here on earth.** Very short one chapter book.

The timeframe of these letters being penned is during the life of Paul, after his conversion to a believer in Christ described in the Book of Acts, chapter 22. These were written within a few years of Christ's death and resurrection, not centuries after. Paul being a contemporary of the apostles themselves was accepted as one himself by Jesus Christ's Apostles. His conversion is a testimony, itself.

This is the 2nd section of books in the New Testament. There are 10 books in this group totaling 54 books to this point. This is the largest group in the NT: (**remember: The apostle, Paul, is responsible for 2 of the 5 sections in the NT. This is the 1st of those groups. Learn the acronym! Note as well, that the Book of Philemon is after the Pastoral Letters written by Paul.)**

(Write the books in the spaces below; for permanent memory)

M _____

M _____

L _____

J _____

A _____

R _____

1 C _____

2 C _____

G _____

E _____

P _____

C _____

1 T _____

2 T _____

P _____

Now you know the first 15 books of the New Testament in order, the flow of the books, and what they are about.

Below are 10 Bible verses from the 1 group of Pauline Epistles. Correctly identify the Bible verse with the corresponding book. The idea is to become familiar with where topics and names are found in the Word of God.

1. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

2. "And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,"

3. "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin."

4. "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God;"

5. "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?"

6. "The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."

7. "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ."

8. "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

9. "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

10. "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you."

___ Romans 3:20

___ 2 Corinthians 13:5

___ Ephesians 2:8

___ Colossians 1:10

___ 2 Thessalonians 1:6

___ 1 Corinthians 10:13

___ Galatians 3:8

___ Philippians 4:8

___ 1 Thessalonians 4:3

___ Philemon 1:6

The following pages have 10 Bible verses from the 1st group of Pauline Epistles in the New Testament. They are broken up into 5 groups of 2 bible verses. Correctly identify the Bible verse with the corresponding book. In order to become familiar with where topics and names are found in the Word of God, they have been placed in sequential order based on their placement in the Holy Bible.

“For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

1. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

“And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.”

2. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

Romans 1:20

1 Corinthians 12:28

“Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.”

1. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”

2. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

2 Corinthians 12:28

Galatians 6:15

“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.”

1. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

“I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.”

2. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

Ephesians 1:4

Philippians 3:9

“For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.”

1. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.”

2. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

Colossians 2:8

1 Thessalonians 5:2

“They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.”

1. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

“Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good— no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.”

2. Which book of the Pauline Epistles? _____

2 Thessalonians 2:11

Philemon 1:15

After identifying the previous Bible verses, take the time to find a Bible verse on your own that really identifies with that particular book. Just the act of searching and writing it down gives you a better sense and greater familiarity with the Word of God. You are actively participating in studying the Holy Bible.

Romans _____

1st Corinthians _____

2nd Corinthians _____

Galatians _____

Ephesians _____

Philippians _____

Colossians _____

1st Thessalonians _____

2nd Thessalonians _____

Philemon _____

Notes

Describe a topic in this section to remember.
(Example: *The Armor of God is explained to combat the evil schemes set against you in this world. Ephesians 6)*
