

A 15-WEEK SURVEY OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE SAVIOR • THE TRANSFORMATION • THE MISSION

TRACING THE UNIFIED STORY OF SCRIPTURE
FROM FULFILLMENT TO RESTORATION

COVERS ALL 27 BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
TEACHING NOTES • GUIDED WORKSHEETS • REFLECTIONS

WHAT IS THE NEW TESTAMENT REALLY ABOUT?

Many people see the New Testament as a collection of teachings, letters, and stories.

But the New Testament is one unified story.

It is the continuation—and the completion—of God's plan.

It reveals:

The arrival of the Savior

The reality of transformation

The mission that continues today

The promise of His return

The fulfillment of His eternal Kingdom

IN THIS 15-WEEK SURVEY, YOU WILL:



Understand the life and mission of Jesus and the power of the Gospel



See how the Gospel transforms hearts and communities



Learn how the early Church grew, struggled, and stayed faithful



Discover the life-changing truths found in every New Testament letter



Gain clarity on the fulfillment of God's promises and our part in His mission



Look forward with hope to the return of Christ and His eternal Kingdom

THE BIG IDEA:

*The New Testament reveals the Savior,
transforms the believer,
sends the Church to the world,
and culminates in the return
of Christ and the fulfillment
of God's Kingdom.*



DR. TIM W. GOULD

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THE NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

The Savior • The Transformation • The Mission

A 15 Week Survey of the New Testament

UNIT 1 — THE GOSPELS & THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Week 1 — Matthew

Jesus the Messiah and Promised King

Week 2 — Mark & Luke

The Servant King and the Perfect Son of Man

Week 3 — John

The Eternal Son of God

UNIT 2 — THE BIRTH & EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH

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The Coming of the Holy Spirit and the Growth of the Church

UNIT 3 — SALVATION, GRACE & CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

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Justification by Faith and Freedom in Christ

Week 6 — 1 & 2 Corinthians

Holiness, Unity, and Spiritual Maturity

Week 7 — Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians & Philemon

Identity in Christ and Living for the Glory of God

UNIT 4 — CHRISTIAN LIVING & CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Week 8 — 1 & 2 Thessalonians

Hope, Holiness, and the Return of Christ

Week 9 — 1 & 2 Timothy & Titus

Sound Doctrine, Godly Leadership, and Faithful Living

Week 10 — Hebrews

Jesus the Great High Priest and Perfect Sacrifice

UNIT 5 — FAITHFULNESS, TRUTH & PERSEVERANCE

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Faith in Action and Hope Through Suffering

Week 12 — 2 Peter, Jude & 1 John

Truth, Discernment, and Abiding in God

Week 13 — 2 John & 3 John

Walking in Truth and Faithfulness

UNIT 6 — THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Week 14 — Revelation Part 1

The Returning Messiah and the Fulfillment of Covenant Promises

Week 15 — Revelation Part 2

The Eternal Kingdom, New Creation, and Final Restoration

WEEK 1 — MATTHEW

The King and the Kingdom

Main Theme

Matthew presents Jesus as the promised **Messiah**, (The Lion – King)
the Son of **David**,
and the rightful King who fulfills Old Testament prophecy
and announces the arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Matthew opens the New Testament
by immediately connecting Jesus to the Old Testament story.

That matters because Christianity does not begin
as an entirely new religion
disconnected from Israel.

Instead, Matthew shows that Jesus fulfills the promises,
covenants, prophecies,
and expectations that had been building
throughout the Old Testament.

Matthew is deeply structured around fulfillment.

Repeatedly Matthew says: “so that it might be fulfilled...”

Matthew wants readers to understand:
Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah.

The Gospel of Matthew especially emphasizes Jesus as:

- King
- Teacher

- Messiah
- The fulfillment of prophecy

This is why Matthew begins with a genealogy.

Modern readers often skip genealogies.
But for ancient Jewish readers,
genealogies established legitimacy,
inheritance, covenant identity, and royal lineage.

Matthew immediately traces Jesus back to:

- Abraham
- David

That is incredibly important.

Because God promised:

- Abraham that all nations
would be blessed through his offspring
- David that an eternal King
would come from his line

Matthew declares:

Jesus fulfills both promises.

Then Matthew introduces the Kingdom of Heaven.

That phrase appears constantly throughout the Gospel.

But the Kingdom of God is not merely about political control.

It is about God's rule, reign, **authority**,
and redemption breaking into human history.

Jesus teaches:
the Kingdom has arrived,
but humanity must respond.

Matthew also contains
some of the most famous teachings in Scripture:

- The Sermon on the Mount
- The Beatitudes
- The Lord's Prayer
- Parables about the Kingdom
- The Great Commission

And throughout the Gospel,
Matthew continually forces readers to answer one question:

Who is Jesus?

Because ultimately,
everything depends upon that answer.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Matthew

Author

Traditionally attributed to Matthew, also known as Levi,
the tax collector and disciple of Jesus

Date Written

Approximately AD 55–65

Historical Context

Matthew was written primarily for a Jewish audience.
It's the most Jewish-focused book in the New Testament.

The Gospel emphasizes:

- Fulfilled prophecy
- Jewish expectation
- Messianic identity
- Covenant fulfillment

Matthew frequently references the Old Testament to demonstrate that Jesus fulfills prophetic promises. Over 60 times.

Jewish Messianic Expectation Was Extremely High

During this period, the Jewish people lived under Roman occupation.

Israel had endured centuries of:

- Foreign domination
- Oppression
- Political instability

The Jews longed for:

- Deliverance
- Restoration
- Freedom
- A coming King from David's line

Old Testament prophecies had created enormous Messianic expectation.

Key passages included:

- Isaiah 9
- Isaiah 11
- Jeremiah 23
- Daniel 7

- Micah 5
- Zechariah 9

Many Jews expected the Messiah to:

- Defeat Israel's enemies
- Restore the Kingdom
- Reign politically from Jerusalem

Matthew writes directly into this expectation.

He presents Jesus as:

- Son of David
- Son of Abraham
- King of the Jews
- Fulfillment of prophecy

Matthew 1:1 says: "This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham." — Matthew 1:1 (NIV)

That opening verse alone is loaded with Jewish covenant significance.

Rome Controlled Israel

By the time Matthew writes:

- Rome ruled Judea
- Heavy taxation burdened the people
- Roman soldiers occupied the land
- Political tension was constant

Many Jews deeply hated Roman rule.

This created revolutionary movements and Messianic hopes.

Groups arose such as:

- Zealots

- Revolutionary nationalists
- Apocalyptic movements

Some hoped the Messiah would overthrow Rome militarily.

But Matthew presents Jesus differently:

- A humble King
- A suffering Messiah
- A spiritual kingdom first

This explains why many Jews struggled to accept Jesus.

He did not fit their political expectations.

Purpose of the Book

Matthew was written to demonstrate that:

- Jesus is the promised Messiah
- Jesus is the true King
- Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy

Major Themes

- Kingdom of Heaven
- Fulfillment of prophecy
- Messiahship
- Discipleship
- Authority of Jesus
- Judgment and salvation

Key Events

- Genealogy and birth of Jesus
- Baptism and temptation
- Sermon on the Mount
- Miracles and parables
- Peter's confession
- Triumphal entry
- Crucifixion
- Resurrection
- Great Commission

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Matthew begins with a genealogy,
and that may seem strange to modern readers.

But Matthew intentionally opens
by proving Jesus' royal and covenant identity.

Matthew 1:1 says: "This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David,
the son of Abraham." — Matthew 1:1 (NIV)

That single sentence carries enormous theological weight.

Jesus is connected to:

- The Abrahamic Covenant
- The Davidic Covenant
- The entire story of Israel

Then Matthew records the birth of Jesus.

Unlike ordinary births,

Jesus' birth is presented as miraculous and prophetic.

Matthew quotes Isaiah: “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). — Matthew 1:23 (NIV)

Again Matthew emphasizes fulfillment.

Then Jesus is baptized.

And at His baptism, the Father declares: “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” — Matthew 3:17 (NIV)

That public declaration
reveals Jesus’ divine identity.

Immediately afterward,
Jesus enters the wilderness and faces temptation.

Where Israel failed in the wilderness,
Jesus remains faithful.

That contrast matters.

Jesus succeeds where humanity repeatedly failed.

Then Jesus begins preaching: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come **near.**”
— Matthew 4:17 (NIV)

Repentance becomes central to Jesus’ message.

Not merely feeling guilty,
but turning toward God’s authority and rule.

Then Matthew records the Sermon on the Mount.

This becomes one of *the most influential teachings*
in human history.

Jesus teaches:

- Humility
- Mercy
- Forgiveness
- Purity
- Love for enemies
- Prayer
- Generosity
- Trust in God

Truthfully, the Sermon on the Mount reveals how radically different God's Kingdom is from our worldly systems.

Human kingdoms often value:

- Power
- Status
- Wealth
- Dominance

But in contrary form,
Jesus blesses: (Matt. 5)

- The poor in spirit
- The meek
- The merciful
- The peacemakers

Matthew also records many miracles.

Jesus heals:

- The blind
- The sick

- The demon-possessed
- Even raises the dead

These miracles are not merely displays of power.

They reveal:

- Authority
- Compassion
- The arrival of God's Kingdom

Then Matthew records Peter's confession.

Jesus asks: "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" — Matthew 16:15 (NIV)

Peter answers: "Simon Peter answered, 'You are the **Messiah**, the Son of the living God.'" — Matthew 16:16 (NIV)

That confession becomes foundational
in the Christian faith even today..

Because Christianity ultimately centers
on the identity of Jesus.

Then Matthew moves toward Jerusalem.

Jesus enters riding on a donkey,
fulfilling prophecy about the coming King. (Zechariah 9:9)

But many people misunderstand
the kind of kingdom Jesus came to establish.

They expected political revolution.

Jesus came to address something even deeper:

- Sin
- Death
- Separation from **God**

Then Jesus is crucified.

Matthew makes clear:
the King is rejected by His own people.

But the crucifixion is not defeat.

It becomes the means of **redemption**.

Then Matthew ends with the resurrection.

Death itself is overcome.

And finally, Jesus gives the Great Commission: “Therefore go and make disciples of all **nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” — Matthew 28:19 (NIV)

The Gospel that began
focused heavily on Israel
now expands outward to the entire world.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Tax Collectors

Matthew himself was a tax collector.
Tax collectors were often despised
because they worked for Rome
and were associated with corruption.

Jesus calling Matthew demonstrates grace toward outsiders and sinners.

The Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew often uses “Kingdom of Heaven” instead of “Kingdom of God,” likely out of Jewish reverence for God’s name.

Both phrases refer to God’s reign and authority.

Rabbis and Teaching

Jewish rabbis gathered disciples who followed their teaching and lifestyle.

Jesus functioned as a rabbi, but with unique divine authority.

Crucifixion

Crucifixion was a brutal Roman execution method used for criminals and rebels.

It symbolized:

- Shame
- Suffering
- Public humiliation

It was known as the worst-of-the-worse. The lowest-of-the-low way to die.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Fulfillment

Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy and covenant promises.

Kingship

Jesus is presented as the true King.

Kingdom

The Kingdom of Heaven represents God's rule breaking into history.

Discipleship

Following Jesus requires obedience, transformation, and surrender.

Salvation

Jesus came to save humanity from sin.

Authority

Jesus demonstrates authority over:

- Nature
- Disease
- Demons
- Sin
- Death

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Matthew directly centers on Jesus as Messiah and King.

Son of David

Jesus fulfills God's covenant promise to David.

New Moses Imagery

Like Moses:

- Jesus teaches from a mountain
- Jesus delivers God's law
- Jesus leads His people

But Jesus is greater than Moses.

Fulfillment of Prophecy

Matthew repeatedly demonstrates that Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy.

Sacrificial Lamb

Jesus' death becomes the final sacrifice for sin.

Resurrected King

The resurrection establishes Jesus' victory over death and confirms His divine authority.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Matthew reminds modern readers that following Jesus is not merely intellectual belief.

It requires surrender.

The Kingdom of God challenges human pride, self-centeredness, and worldly definitions of success.

Today, modern culture still values:

- Status
- Power
- Wealth
- Influence

But Jesus continually emphasizes:

- Humility
- Mercy
- Faithfulness
- Obedience

Matthew also reminds us that people must personally answer the same question Jesus asked His disciples:

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” — Matthew 16:15 (NIV)

That question remains central today.

Because Christianity ultimately rises or falls on the identity of Jesus Christ.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY

WEEK 1 — MATTHEW The King and the Kingdom

- Matthew presents Jesus as the promised **Messiah**.
- Jesus is the Son of **David**.
- The Kingdom of God is about God's rule, reign, and **authority**.
- Jesus preached:
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come **near**.”
- Peter answered:
“You are the **Messiah**, the Son of the living God.”
- Jesus came to address:
 - Sin
 - Death
 - Separation from **God**
- The crucifixion became the means of **redemption**.
- Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples of all **nations**.

WEEK 2 — MARK & LUKE

The Servant King and the Perfect Son of Man

Main Theme

Mark presents Jesus as the suffering **Servant** (The OX – Servant) who came to act with *authority, power, and sacrifice*.

Luke presents Jesus as the perfect **Son of Man** who came to seek and save all humanity through *compassion, truth, and redemption*.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Matthew emphasized Jesus as the promised *Jewish Messiah and King*.

Now Mark and Luke present two additional perspectives on Jesus.

Mark moves quickly.

It is fast-paced, action-centered, and urgent.

It could be considered the “cliff-notes” of the Gospels.

Mark focuses less on long teaching sections and more on what Jesus did.

Repeatedly Mark uses words like:

- Immediately
- At once
- Quickly

The Gospel moves rapidly from event to event.

*Mark emphasizes Jesus as the suffering **Servant**. (The Man – Humanity)*

That was difficult for many people to accept.

Many Jews expected a conquering political Messiah.

But Jesus came first as a servant
willing to suffer for humanity's salvation.

Luke, meanwhile, gives the most detailed and orderly historical account
of Jesus' life.

Luke emphasizes the Son of Man coming for all humanity

Luke especially emphasizes:

- Compassion
- Prayer
- The Holy Spirit
- Salvation for all people
- The humanity of Jesus

Luke highlights people often overlooked by society:

- Women
- The poor
- Samaritans
- Gentiles
- Sinners
- Outcasts

And throughout Luke's Gospel,
Jesus consistently moves toward broken
and hurting people.

Together, Mark and Luke reveal both the power
and compassion of Christ.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Mark

Author

Traditionally attributed to John Mark, a companion of Peter

Date Written

Approximately AD 55–65

Historical Context

Mark was likely written for Roman believers experiencing persecution.

The Gospel focuses heavily on action, suffering, sacrifice, and endurance.

Christians Were Facing Persecution

One of the most important historical contexts for Mark is persecution.

Around AD 64, Rome experienced the Great Fire under Emperor Nero.

Ancient historians like Tacitus record that Nero blamed Christians for the disaster.

This launched severe persecution.

Christians faced:

- Arrest
- Torture
- Public execution
- Social rejection
- Martyrdom

Some believers were:

- Burned alive
- Crucified
- Killed in Roman arenas

Mark's Gospel speaks directly into suffering.

This helps explain why Mark focuses so heavily on:

- Sacrifice
- Perseverance
- Suffering
- Faithfulness under pressure

Mark presents Jesus as:
the suffering Servant.

Rome Valued Power, Strength, and Action

Roman culture admired:

- Military strength
- Leadership
- Action
- Authority
- Courage

Mark's Gospel moves rapidly and energetically.

Unlike Matthew's long teaching sections,

Mark emphasizes:

- Miracles
- Healings
- Deliverance
- Action

Mark repeatedly uses words like:

- “Immediately”
- “At once”

over 40 times.

The Gospel feels fast-paced and urgent.
This style fit Roman culture well.

The Jewish War Was Approaching

Tension between Jews and Rome was escalating.

Eventually this exploded into:
The Jewish Revolt (AD 66–70)
which led to:

- Massive destruction
- Death
- The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple

Mark reflects a growing atmosphere
of crisis and instability.

Jesus’ warnings about suffering and judgment
likely carried enormous weight for early readers.

Mark 13 especially addresses:

- Tribulation
- Deception
- Persecution
- Coming judgment

Mark Focuses More on the Cross Than the Birth

Mark contains:

- No genealogy
- No birth narrative
- No Christmas story

Why?

Because Mark's central emphasis is:
the mission and sacrifice of Jesus.

Nearly half of Mark focuses on:
Jesus' final week before the crucifixion.

The Gospel steadily moves toward:

- Rejection
- Suffering
- Death
- Resurrection

Mark 10:45 becomes the key verse: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." — Mark 10:45 (NIV)

This verse summarizes the entire Gospel.

Purpose of the Book

Mark was written to demonstrate that:

- Jesus is the suffering Servant
- Jesus possesses divine authority
- Jesus came to give His life as a sacrifice

Major Themes

- Service
- Sacrifice
- Authority
- Discipleship
- Suffering
- Faith

Key Events

- Baptism of Jesus
- Miracles and healings
- Casting out demons
- Feeding the multitudes
- Peter's confession
- Transfiguration
- Crucifixion
- Resurrection

Luke

Author

Traditionally attributed to Luke, the physician and companion of Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 60–70

Historical Context

Luke was written carefully and historically for both Jewish and Gentile audiences.

Luke emphasizes Jesus' ministry to all humanity.

The Roman World Provided Stability and Tension

Luke writes during:

Pax Romana

("Roman Peace")

Rome provided:

- Roads
- Shipping routes
- Common Greek language
- Relative stability

This helped Christianity spread rapidly.

But Rome also created:

- Heavy taxation
- Political oppression
- Emperor worship
- Military occupation

Luke carefully presents Christianity as:

- morally upright
- historically grounded
- not politically revolutionary

This may partly explain why Luke (and ACTS) often portrays Roman officials somewhat neutrally or positively compared to hostile religious leaders.

Examples:

- Pilate repeatedly saying Jesus was innocent
- Roman centurions shown positively
- Officials sometimes protecting Paul in Acts

Luke may have been showing Roman readers:
Christianity was not a dangerous political rebellion.

Christianity Was Expanding Beyond Judaism

One of Luke's major concerns is showing that:
The Gospel is for all people.

This was a massive issue
in the early Church.

Originally, Christianity began entirely within Judaism.

But by Luke's time:

- Gentiles were increasingly becoming Christians
- Churches were spreading throughout the Roman Empire
- Questions arose about:
 - Jewish law
 - circumcision
 - covenant identity
 - inclusion of non-Jews

Luke strongly emphasizes:
Jesus as Savior for all humanity.

This explains why Luke highlights:

- Gentiles
- Samaritans
- Women
- The poor
- Sinners
- Outsiders

Luke repeatedly shows Jesus moving
toward marginalized people.

Eyewitnesses Were Aging

Luke emphasizes careful investigation because:

- The eyewitness generation was aging
- Christianity was spreading rapidly
- Accurate preservation mattered deeply

Luke likely interviewed:

- Apostles
- Early disciples
- Possibly even Mary or those close to her

This may explain why Luke contains detailed birth narratives and personal details not found elsewhere.

Only Luke records:

- Gabriel appearing to Mary
- Elizabeth and Zechariah
- The shepherds
- Jesus at age 12 in the Temple

These details suggest access to unique eyewitness traditions.

Social Class Divisions Were Extreme

The Roman world had sharp divisions between:

- Rich and poor
- Slave and free
- Male and female
- Jew and Gentile

Luke repeatedly emphasizes reversal themes.

Examples:

- The humble are exalted
- The rich are warned
- The poor are blessed
- Outcasts are welcomed

Luke 4:18 says: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor...” — Luke 4:18 (NIV)

Luke especially highlights:

- mercy
- compassion
- inclusion
- justice

Women Receive Extraordinary Attention

This was highly unusual in ancient literature.

Luke gives significant attention to:

- Mary
- Elizabeth
- Anna
- Martha and Mary
- Women supporting Jesus’ ministry

Luke portrays women as:

- faithful disciples
- witnesses
- spiritually significant participants

This challenged many cultural assumptions of the ancient world.

Purpose of the Book

Luke was written to demonstrate that:

- Jesus is the Savior of the world
- Salvation is available to all people
- Jesus fulfills God's redemptive plan

Major Themes

- Salvation
- Compassion
- Prayer
- The Holy Spirit
- Joy
- Mercy

Key Events

- Birth narratives
- Shepherds and angels
- Jesus in the Temple – (The only gospel mentioning Jesus as a child)
- Parables unique to Luke
- The Good Samaritan
- The Prodigal Son
- Zacchaeus
- Crucifixion
- Resurrection

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Mark begins abruptly.

Unlike Matthew and Luke,
Mark does not include a birth narrative.

Instead, Mark immediately introduces John the Baptist and the ministry of Jesus.

Mark 1:1 says: “The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God.” — Mark 1:1 (NIV)

Right away Mark establishes Jesus’ divine identity.

Then Jesus begins healing, teaching, and casting out demons.

Mark repeatedly emphasizes Jesus’ **authority**. (3)

Jesus demonstrates authority over:

- Disease
- Nature
- Demons
- Sin
- Death

People are continually amazed.

Mark 1:27 says: “The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, ‘What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.’” — Mark 1:27 (NIV)

But despite the miracles, many people still misunderstand Jesus.

Even the disciples struggle to fully understand Him.

Then Mark reaches a major turning point.

Jesus asks His disciples: “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”
— Mark 8:29 (NIV)

Peter answers:

“Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah.’” — Mark 8:29 (NIV)

But immediately afterward,
Jesus begins teaching about His coming suffering and death.
Frankly, this confuses the disciples.

Because they expected victory without suffering.

Yet Jesus teaches that sacrifice comes before glory.

Mark 10:45 becomes one of the central verses of the Gospel: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, **but to serve**, (4) and to give his life as a ransom for many.” — Mark 10:45 (NIV)

Jesus is the suffering Servant.

Then Luke opens very differently.

Luke carefully explains
that he investigated everything thoroughly.

Luke 1:3 says: “With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you...” — Luke 1:3 (NIV)

Luke gives detailed birth narratives
for both John the Baptist and Jesus.

The announcement to the shepherds
becomes one of the most famous scenes in Scripture.

Luke 2:10–11 says: “But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.’” — Luke 2:10–11 (NIV)

Luke continually emphasizes salvation for **all people**.(5)

Jesus consistently reaches toward outsiders.

One of Luke’s most famous parables is the Good Samaritan.

And this would have shocked many Jewish listeners. Because Samaritans were often despised.

Yet Jesus presents the Samaritan as the true neighbor.

Luke also records the parable of the Prodigal Son.

This story powerfully reveals:

- Grace
- Forgiveness
- Repentance
- The Father’s **compassion** (6)

Then Luke records Jesus meeting Zacchaeus, a hated tax collector.

Instead of rejecting him, Jesus offers salvation.

Luke 19:10 says: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save **the lost**.”(7) — Luke 19:10 (NIV)

That verse summarizes much of Luke’s Gospel.

Jesus continually seeks the lost,
broken, rejected, and sinful.

Both Mark and Luke move toward the cross.

In Mark, the suffering Servant gives His life.

In Luke, the compassionate Savior offers forgiveness
even while dying.

Luke 23:34 says: “Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what
they are doing.’” — Luke 23:34 (NIV)

Even on the **cross**, (8) Jesus demonstrates mercy.

Then both Gospels end with the resurrection.
Death is defeated.

And the message of salvation
begins spreading into the world.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Roman Influence in Mark

Mark’s Gospel likely reflects Roman culture
through its fast pace
and emphasis on action and strength.

Roman audiences valued power, authority
endurance, and decisive leadership.

Samaritans

Jews and Samaritans often had deep hostility toward one another.

Jesus' use of a Samaritan as the hero of a parable challenged cultural prejudice.

Tax Collectors

Tax collectors were associated with corruption and betrayal.

Yet, Jesus repeatedly showed grace toward them.

Crucifixion

Crucifixion was designed to publicly shame and terrorize criminals and rebels.

It symbolized suffering, humiliation, and rejection.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Service

Jesus came as a suffering **Servant**.

Compassion

Jesus consistently moved toward hurting and broken people.

Salvation

Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

Authority

Jesus demonstrates authority over all creation.

Sacrifice

The cross becomes the ultimate act of redemption.

Discipleship

Following Jesus requires surrender,
humility, and faith.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Mark and Luke both reveal essential aspects of Jesus' identity.

Suffering Servant

Jesus fulfills prophecies about the suffering servant
found in Isaiah.

Perfect Humanity

Luke emphasizes Jesus as the *perfect Son of Man*.

Compassionate Savior

Jesus welcomes sinners, outsiders,
and the broken.

Sacrificial Redeemer

Jesus gives His life as the payment for sin.

Risen Lord

The resurrection confirms Jesus' victory

over **death** (9) and sin.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Mark and Luke remind modern readers
that Jesus is both powerful and compassionate.

Many people want a Savior without surrender.

Others want truth without sacrifice.

But Jesus calls people to both
faith and discipleship.

These Gospels also challenge modern pride and prejudice.

Jesus consistently moved toward people
society ignored or rejected.

Even today, modern culture still struggles with:

- Pride
- Division
- Self-centeredness
- Status
- Power

But Jesus demonstrates:

- Humility
- Compassion
- Mercy
- Sacrifice

Luke especially reminds us
that no person is beyond
the reach of God's grace

And Mark reminds us that true greatness
is found through service, not power.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 2 — MARK & LUKE
The Servant King and the Perfect Son of Man

- Mark presents Jesus as the suffering **Servant**.
- Luke presents Jesus as the perfect Son of **Man**.
- Mark repeatedly emphasizes Jesus' **authority**.
- Jesus said:
“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to **serve**.”
- Luke emphasizes salvation for all **people**.
- The parable of the Prodigal Son reveals grace, forgiveness, repentance, and the Father's **compassion**.
- Jesus said:
“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the **lost**.”
- Jesus demonstrated mercy even while on the **cross**.
- The resurrection confirms Jesus' victory over sin and **death**.

WEEK 3 — JOHN

The Eternal Son of God

Main Theme

John presents Jesus as the eternal **Son of God** (The Eagle – Divinity) who came to reveal the Father, offer eternal life, and bring humanity into true relationship with God through faith.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Matthew emphasized Jesus as King.

Mark emphasized Jesus as Servant.

Luke emphasized Jesus as the compassionate Son of Man.

But John writes with a very different focus.

John emphasizes the divine identity of Jesus more directly and deeply than the other Gospels.

This makes the book of John highly theological.

While the other Gospels often focus more heavily on events and chronology, John focuses on meaning.

John repeatedly answers one major question:
Who is Jesus?

And John's answer is unmistakable:

Jesus is God in human flesh.

John also structures his Gospel around:

- Signs
- Conversations
- “I Am” statements
- Belief and unbelief
- Eternal life

Throughout the Gospel,
people continually respond to Jesus in one of two ways:

- Faith
- Rejection

John presents miracles
not merely as displays of power,
but as “signs” pointing toward Jesus’ divine identity.

John also contains some of the most beloved passages in Scripture:

- John 3:16
- The raising of Lazarus (John 11:43-44)
- The woman at the well (John 4:1-42)
- The Upper Room discourse (John 13 -17)
- Jesus washing the disciples’ feet (John 13:4-5)

And throughout the Gospel,
John continually emphasizes one central truth:

eternal life is found only through Jesus Christ.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

John

Author

Traditionally attributed to John the apostle,
one of Jesus' closest disciples

Date Written

Approximately AD 85–95

Historical Context

John was written later than the other Gospels.

The Gospel was written during a time
when the early church faced growing opposition,
false teaching,
and confusion about Jesus' identity.

The Fall of Jerusalem had occurred around 15 years earlier

This created enormous spiritual and cultural upheaval.

John writes into that environment presenting Jesus as:

- The true Temple
- The fulfillment of sacrifice
- The eternal presence of God

John 2:19 says: “Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.’” — John 2:19 (NIV)

John explains Jesus was speaking about His body.

Christianity Was Separating from Mainstream Judaism

Earlier Christians were often viewed as a Jewish sect.

But by the time John writes:

- Synagogues increasingly rejected Christians
- Jewish leaders opposed belief in Jesus as Messiah
- Christians were being expelled from synagogues

John reflects this tension repeatedly.

Examples:

- John 9:22
- John 12:42
- John 16:2

John 16:2 says: “They will put you out of the synagogue...” — John 16:2 (NIV)

This helps explain why John strongly emphasizes belief in Jesus as the true Messiah and Son of God.

False Teachings About Jesus Were Emerging

One of the biggest reasons John emphasizes Jesus’ divinity and humanity is because false teachings were spreading.

A major early heresy was developing called:

Proto-Gnosticism

Some false teachers claimed:

- Jesus was not truly human
- The physical world was evil
- Christ only appeared human
- Spiritual “secret knowledge” saved people

John strongly fights against this.

That is why John repeatedly emphasizes:

- Jesus came “in the flesh”
- Jesus physically lived among humanity
- Jesus truly died and rose again

John 1:14 says: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...” — John 1:14 (NIV)

And later, 1 John 4:2 says: “Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.” — 1 John 4:2 (NIV)

John is defending both:

- The divinity of Christ
- The humanity of Christ

Emperor Worship Was Increasing

Roman emperors increasingly demanded loyalty and worship.

Domitian (Emperor AD 81–96), during the likely time of John’s writing, strongly promoted emperor worship.

Christians refusing emperor worship faced:

- Persecution
- Economic pressure
- Social rejection
- Imprisonment

John’s Gospel repeatedly presents Jesus as the true Lord and Son of God — titles the emperors often claimed for themselves.

This becomes even more important in the book of Revelation

Purpose of the Book

John was written to demonstrate that:

- Jesus is the Son of God
- Jesus is the source of eternal life
- Salvation comes through believing in Him

John 20:31 states the purpose clearly: “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” — John 20:31 (NIV)

Major Themes

- Belief
- Eternal life
- Light and darkness
- Truth
- Love
- The deity of Christ

Key Events

- The Word becoming flesh
- Water into wine
- Nicodemus
- Woman at the well
- Feeding the 5,000
- Raising Lazarus
- The “I Am” statements
- Crucifixion
- Resurrection

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

John opens differently than the other Gospels.

Instead of beginning with Jesus' birth,
John begins before creation itself.

John 1:1 says: "In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." — John 1:1 (NIV)

That statement is enormous.

John identifies Jesus as eternal.

Jesus did not merely begin at Bethlehem.
He existed before creation.

Then John 1:14 says: "The Word became **flesh** and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." — John 1:14 (NIV)

This becomes one of Christianity's central truths:
God became human.

John then introduces John the Baptist,
who prepares the way for Jesus.

When John sees Jesus, he declares:
"Look, the **Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world!" — John 1:29 (NIV)

That title matters deeply.

Jesus becomes *the sacrificial Lamb* who removes sin. (Gen.22:8, Exo. 12-13, Isa.53:7)

Then John records Jesus' first miracle at Cana.
Jesus turns water into wine.

John calls this miracle a "sign."

Because the miracle points beyond itself
toward Jesus' divine identity.

Then John records Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.

Nicodemus was a religious leader, yet he struggled to understand spiritual rebirth.

Jesus explains: "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are **born again**." — John 3:3 (NIV)

Then comes perhaps the most famous verse in Scripture.

John 3:16 says: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal **life**." — John 3:16 (NIV)

That verse summarizes the Gospel message:

- God's love
- Christ's sacrifice
- Human belief
- Eternal life

Then John records Jesus meeting
the Samaritan woman at the well.

Honestly, this interaction breaks multiple cultural barriers.

Jesus speaks to:

- A Samaritan
- A woman
- A social outcast

Yet Jesus offers her “**living water**.”

John continually shows that Jesus offers salvation to all people.

Then Jesus performs more signs.

He heals the blind.

Feeds the multitudes.

Walks on water.

Raises Lazarus from the dead.

Each sign reveals more about His identity.

Then John records the famous “I Am” statements.

Jesus declares:

- “I am the bread of life.” (Jn 6:35)
- “I am the light of the world.” (Jn 8:12)
- “I am the door.” (Jn 10:7)
- “I am the good shepherd.” (Jn 10:11,14)
- “I am the resurrection and the life.” (Jn 11:25-26)
- “I am the way and the truth and the **life**.” (Jn 14:6)
- “I am the true vine.” (Jn 15:5)

These statements connect Jesus directly to the divine name revealed in the Old Testament.

“I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” — Exodus 3:14 (NIV)

BTW- How many “I am” statements are listed in John? Seven.
Well, isn’t that interesting....

Then John moves toward the cross.

Before His arrest,
Jesus washes the disciples’ feet.

This act shocks them.

Because the King acts like a servant.

John 13:14 says: “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.” — John 13:14 (NIV)

Jesus demonstrates humility, love,
and servant leadership.

Then Jesus is crucified.

But even in suffering,
John presents Jesus as fully sovereign
and in control.

Then comes the resurrection.

The empty tomb changes everything.

And Thomas finally declares:

“My Lord and my **God!**” — John 20:28 (NIV)

That confession captures
the central message of John’s Gospel.

Jesus is the Son of God.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

The Word (“Logos”)

John’s use of “Word” carried deep meaning for both Jewish and Greek audiences.

It communicated:

- Divine reason
- Revelation
- Creative power
- Eternal truth

Samaritans

Jews often avoided Samaritans due to centuries of hostility.

Jesus speaking with the Samaritan woman challenged social and religious prejudice.

Foot Washing

Foot washing was normally performed by servants.

Jesus washing the disciples’ feet demonstrated radical humility.

The Passover Lamb

John closely connects Jesus to Passover imagery.

Jesus becomes the ultimate sacrificial Lamb.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Belief

Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

Eternal Life

Jesus offers eternal life to those who believe.

Light and Darkness

Jesus is the light shining into spiritual darkness.

Love

God's love becomes fully revealed through Christ.

Deity of Christ

Jesus is fully God.

Truth

Jesus reveals ultimate truth about God and humanity.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

John directly emphasizes Jesus' divine identity.

The Eternal Word

Jesus existed before creation.

The Lamb of God

Jesus becomes the final sacrifice for sin.

The Great "I Am"

Jesus identifies Himself with the divine name

revealed to Moses.

The Resurrection and the Life

Jesus holds authority over death itself.

The Only Way

Jesus declares: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” — John 14:6 (NIV)

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

John reminds modern readers that Jesus
is not merely a teacher, prophet, or moral example.

He is the Son of God.

Modern culture today,
often wants spirituality without surrender.

But John continually calls people
toward **belief** and commitment.

John also reminds us that eternal life
is not merely future.

It begins *now* through *relationship with Jesus*.

People today still struggle with:

- Spiritual confusion
- Darkness
- Fear
- Isolation
- Unbelief

But John continually points toward Jesus as:

- Light
- Truth
- Life
- Hope

John's Gospel ultimately asks every reader the same question:

Do you believe?

Now..... About those Symbols Associated with the Gospels

Irenaeus in AD 180 pointed out an interesting connection with these four gospels.

These symbols become especially important
because they closely parallel
the four living creatures described in:

Ezekiel 1:10 “Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a human being, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle.” — Ezekiel 1:10 (NIV)

And again in:

Revelation 4:7 “The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.” — Revelation 4:7 (NIV)

And then we look at Jewish tradition –
disconnected from the church completely...

Numbers 2

This chapter describes how the twelve tribes of Israel
camped around the Tabernacle

under their individual “standard” or banner.

“The Israelites are to camp around the tent of meeting some distance from it, each of them under their standard and holding the banners of their family.” — Numbers 2:2 (NIV)

The Bible itself does not directly describe the images or symbols on each tribal banner.

However, Jewish tradition — especially from rabbinic writings and later Midrash traditions — associates four primary tribal banners surrounding the Tabernacle with symbolic images.

These four major tribal standards were:

East — Judah Symbol: Lion (sunrise - light)

South — Reuben Symbol: Man or Human Face (the feet of Jesus where the blood flowed toward mankind)

West — Ephraim Symbol: Ox or Calf (sunset – darkness)

North — Dan Symbol: Eagle (The head of Jesus on the Cross)

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 3 — JOHN
The Eternal Son of God

- John presents Jesus as the eternal Son of **God**.
- John 1:1 says:
“In the beginning was the **Word**.”
- “The Word became **flesh** and made his dwelling among us.”
- John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb of **God**.
- Jesus told Nicodemus that people must be born **again**.
- John 3:16 teaches that whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal **life**.
- Jesus offered the Samaritan woman “living **water**.”
- Jesus said:
“I am the way and the truth and the **life**.”
- Thomas declared:
“My Lord and my **God**!”
- John continually calls people toward **belief** in Jesus Christ.

WEEK 4 — ACTS

The Birth and Expansion of the Church

Main Theme

Acts records the coming of the Holy Spirit,
the birth of the Church,
and the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth
through the power of God.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

The Gospel accounts end with the resurrection of Jesus.

But Acts shows what happened next.

Acts now becomes the bridge
between the life of Christ
and the growth of Christianity throughout the world.

Acts begins the Church Age
The Age we are currently continuing today

Luke wrote both the Gospel of Luke and Acts.

If Luke tells the story of Jesus' earthly ministry,
Acts tells the story
of Jesus continuing His work through the Church.

Acts begins with Jesus' final instructions
to His disciples before His ascension into heaven.

Jesus promises the coming of the Holy Spirit.

That promise changed everything.

Because from this point forward,
the disciples are no longer operating
merely in human strength.

God empowers them/us supernaturally.

Acts records:

- The birth of the Church
- The coming of the Holy Spirit
- Preaching and persecution
- Miracles and boldness
- Missionary journeys
- The spread of the Gospel
- The conversion of Paul

Acts repeatedly demonstrates that Christianity
was never intended to remain isolated
in one city or one ethnic group.

The Gospel continually moves outward.

From:

- Jerusalem
- Judea
- Samaria
- The Gentile world

Acts also reveals that the early Church
faced tremendous opposition.

Yet persecution often caused the Gospel
to spread even further.

Again and again,
Acts demonstrates that God's mission
continues despite resistance.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Acts

Author

Traditionally attributed to Luke, the physician and companion of Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 62–70

Historical Context

Acts records the expansion of Christianity
after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

The Roman Empire controlled
much of the known world during this time.

The early Church often faced:

- Persecution
- Imprisonment
- Opposition from religious leaders
- Cultural resistance

Jesus Had Recently Ascended

Acts begins immediately after:

- Jesus' resurrection
- His 40 days with the disciples
- His ascension into heaven

The disciples were now responsible

for continuing Christ's mission.

But they were:

- afraid
- uncertain
- politically vulnerable

Everything changes at Pentecost
when the Holy Spirit comes.

Pentecost Was a Major Jewish Festival

Acts 2 occurs during:

Pentecost (meaning 50) (Hebrew: Shavuot) – “Feast of Weeks” (Lev. 23:15-16)

This was one of Israel's major pilgrimage feasts.

Jews from across the Roman Empire had gathered in Jerusalem.

Acts 2:5 says: “Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.” — Acts 2:5 (NIV)

This is historically important because:

the Gospel spreads internationally immediately.

The miracle of languages at Pentecost symbolized:

- reversal of Babel
- global mission
- covenant expansion to all nations

Jewish pilgrims would carry the Gospel
back home throughout the empire.

Judaism Was Diverse and Politically Tense

Several Jewish groups existed during this time:

- Pharisees
- Sadducees
- Zealots
- Essenes
- Herodians

Each had different beliefs about:

- Rome
- the Messiah
- resurrection
- the Law

The Sadducees controlled much Temple leadership and strongly opposed the apostles.

The Temple Was Still Standing

During most events in Acts:
the Jerusalem Temple still existed.

Jewish believers initially continued:

- Temple worship
- synagogue attendance
- Jewish customs

Christianity originally appeared
as a Jewish movement centered on the Messiah.

But Acts records a major transition:
from Jewish-centered faith
to a global Church including Gentiles.

This created enormous controversy.

Persecution Intensified

Acts records increasing persecution.

Examples:

- Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7)
- James executed (Acts 12)
- Peter imprisoned
- Paul beaten and arrested repeatedly

This fulfilled Jesus' warnings that believers would suffer for His name.

Yet persecution often caused the Gospel to spread further.

Acts 8:4 says: "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went." — Acts 8:4 (NIV)

Purpose of the Book

Acts was written to demonstrate:

- The spread of the Gospel
- The work of the Holy Spirit
- The growth of the early Church
- God's mission to all nations

Major Themes

- The Holy Spirit
- Evangelism
- Salvation
- Mission
- Unity

- Persecution
- Boldness

Key Events

- Ascension of Jesus
- Pentecost
- Peter's preaching
- Healing miracles
- Stephen's martyrdom
- Conversion of Saul
- Missionary journeys of Paul
- Jerusalem Council
- Paul's imprisonment

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Acts begins with Jesus appearing to His disciples after the resurrection.

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus gives a mission to the Church.

Acts 1:8 says: “But you will **receive power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” — Acts 1:8 (NIV)

That verse becomes the outline for the entire book of Acts.

The Gospel begins in Jerusalem and steadily spreads outward.

Then Jesus ascends into heaven.

And the disciples wait for the promised Holy Spirit.

In Acts 2, Pentecost arrives.
Suddenly the Holy Spirit fills the believers.

Acts 2:4 says: “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” — Acts 2:4 (NIV)

This moment marks the birth of the **Church**.

Peter then boldly preaches the Gospel.
And the transformation is remarkable.

Earlier Peter denied Jesus out of fear.
Now Peter boldly proclaims Christ publicly.

Thousands believe.

Acts 2:41 says: “Those who accepted his message were **baptized**, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” — Acts 2:41 (NIV)

The Church begins growing rapidly.

The early believers devoted themselves to:

- Teaching
- Fellowship
- **Prayer**
- Worship

Acts 2:42 says: “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” — Acts 2:42 (NIV)

But opposition quickly begins.

Religious leaders become threatened
by the spread of Christianity.

Peter and John are arrested.
Believers face persecution.

Yet the disciples continue preaching boldly.

Acts repeatedly shows that persecution
often strengthened the Church instead of destroying it.

Then Acts introduces Stephen.

Stephen boldly proclaims Christ
and becomes the first Christian martyr.

As he dies, Stephen forgives those attacking him.
There, his death deeply impacts a young man named Saul.

Saul initially persecutes Christians violently.
But then everything changes on the road to Damascus.

Acts 9:3–5 says: “As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ ‘Who are you, Lord?’ Saul asked. ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ he replied.” — Acts 9:3–5 (NIV)

Saul becomes Paul.

And Paul eventually becomes
one of Christianity’s greatest missionaries.

Paul begins traveling throughout the Roman world
preaching the Gospel.

Acts records multiple missionary journeys.
As churches are planted across many regions.

And importantly, the Gospel
increasingly spreads to Gentiles.

This creates major tension
within the early Church.

Some believers wondered if Gentiles
first needed to become Jewish
before following Christ.

Acts 15 records the Jerusalem Council addressing this issue.

The Church ultimately recognizes that salvation
comes through grace, not through the Jewish law.

Acts 15:11 says: “No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we
are saved, just as they are.” — Acts 15:11 (NIV)

That decision
becomes one of the most important moments
in Church history.

Then Acts follows Paul through:

- Preaching
- Imprisonment
- Shipwrecks
- Trials
- Persecution

Yet Paul continually remains faithful.

Acts ends with Paul imprisoned in Rome.

But even there, the Gospel continues spreading.

Then... Acts ends somewhat openly.

Because the mission of the Church
continues beyond the pages of the book itself.

It continues even today.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Pentecost

Pentecost was a Jewish festival
celebrated fifty days after Passover.

Large crowds gathered in Jerusalem
from many nations.

This created the perfect setting
for the Gospel to spread widely.

Roman Roads

The Roman Empire developed extensive road systems
that helped missionaries travel quickly across vast regions.

Synagogues

Paul often began preaching in Jewish synagogues
before sharing the Gospel more broadly with Gentiles.

Citizenship

Paul's Roman citizenship
provided certain legal protections
and opportunities for travel and appeal.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit empowers believers for ministry and witness.

Mission

The Gospel is intended for all nations.

Salvation by Grace

Salvation comes through faith
and grace, not human effort.

Boldness

The early Church proclaimed Christ despite persecution.

Unity

Jewish and Gentile believers become united in Christ.

Perseverance

Believers remain faithful
despite suffering and opposition.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Acts continually points back
to Jesus as the risen and reigning Lord.

Ascended King

Jesus reigns from heaven
and continues directing His Church.

The Giver of the Spirit

Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to empower believers.

The Center of the Gospel

Every sermon in Acts
points toward Christ's death and resurrection.

Salvation Through Christ

Acts repeatedly teaches that
salvation comes only through **Jesus**.

Acts 4:12 says: "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under
heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." — Acts 4:12 (NIV)

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Acts reminds modern believers
that Christianity was never intended
to remain passive or private.

The Church was called
to carry the **Gospel** into the world.

But, modern believers still face many challenges:

- Fear
- Opposition
- Cultural pressure
- Division
- Distraction

Yet Acts repeatedly demonstrates
that God empowers ordinary people
to accomplish extraordinary things
through the Holy Spirit.

Acts also reminds us
that the Gospel is for all people.

The early Church had to learn to overcome prejudice,
division, and cultural barriers.

Modern believers still face those same struggles today.

But Acts continually calls the Church toward:

- Boldness
- Unity
- Faithfulness
- Mission
- Dependence upon the Holy Spirit

Why Acts Matters So Much

Acts explains:

- how Christianity spread
- how the Church began
- how the Gospel moved from Jerusalem to the nations

It also bridges:

- the Gospels and
- the Epistles

Acts shows that the resurrection of Jesus
was not the end of the story.

It was the beginning of
the global mission of the Church
empowered by the Holy Spirit.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 4 — ACTS
The Birth and Expansion of the Church

- Acts records the coming of the Holy **Spirit**.
- Jesus told the disciples:
“You will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”
- Pentecost marked the birth of the **Church**.
- Peter boldly preached and about three thousand people were **baptized**.
- The early believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, worship, and **prayer**.
- Stephen became the first Christian **martyr**.
- Saul encountered Jesus on the road to **Damascus**.
- Salvation comes through the **grace** of the Lord Jesus.
- Acts teaches that salvation is found in no one else except **Jesus**.
- The Church is called to carry the **Gospel** into the world.

WEEK 5 — ROMANS & GALATIANS

Justification by Faith and Freedom in Christ

Main Theme

Romans and Galatians teach that salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not through human **works** or religious law, and that believers are justified by God's grace alone.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

The Gospels introduced the life and ministry of Jesus.

Acts recorded the birth and spread of the Church.

Now the New Testament letters begin explaining the *meaning* of the Gospel in *greater depth*.

Romans and Galatians become *foundational* for understanding Christian theology.

These letters especially address one major question:
How is a person *made right* with God?

Paul's answer is direct and consistent:
not through human effort,
not through religious performance,
not through the law,
but through faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans is Paul's most systematic explanation of the Gospel.
(Some refer to it the "Gospel of Paul")

It explains:

- Sin
- Grace
- Salvation
- Faith
- Justification
- Sanctification
- God's sovereignty

Galatians, meanwhile,
addresses a growing crisis in the early Church.

Some teachers claimed Gentile believers
needed to follow Jewish law
in order to truly belong to God.

Paul responds strongly.

Because adding human works to salvation
distorts the Gospel itself.

And frankly, this issue still resonates deeply today.

Human beings naturally *try to earn* acceptance.

But Christianity teaches that salvation
is a gift of God's grace.

Both Romans and Galatians repeatedly emphasize
that believers are saved
through faith in Christ alone.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Romans

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 57

Historical Context

Romans was written to believers in Rome, the center of the Roman Empire.

The church included both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Tension sometimes existed between these groups regarding the Jewish law and covenant identity.

Writing to Christians there carried enormous significance.

Paul hoped Rome would become:

- a strong missionary base
- a center for Gospel expansion

Especially for future mission work toward Spain

Romans 15:24 says: “I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.” — Romans 15:24 (NIV)

Jews Had Recently Been Expelled from Rome

One of the most important historical events behind Romans

was the expulsion of Jews from Rome
under Emperor Claudius.

Around AD 49, Claudius expelled many Jews
because of disturbances connected to: “Chrestus”
(probably disputes about Christ)

Roman historian Suetonius records this event.

Acts 18:2 also mentions it: “Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome.” —
Acts 18:2 (NIV)

This affected Christians deeply
because early Christianity
was still strongly connected to Judaism.

What happened afterward?

- Jewish Christians left Rome
- Gentile Christians became more dominant
in the Roman churches

Then later, after Claudius died (AD 54),
many Jewish believers returned.

This created major tension inside the church.

Questions arose like:

- Should Gentiles follow Jewish law?
- What role does Israel still have?
- Are Jews and Gentiles equal in Christ?
- What about circumcision?
- What about the Law?

Romans directly addresses these tensions.

Emperor Nero Was Rising

When Romans was written:

Nero was emperor.

At first, Nero's reign was relatively stable.

But eventually Nero became infamous for:

- persecution
- brutality
- corruption

A few years after Romans was written,

Nero launched severe persecution
against Christians
after the Great Fire of Rome in AD 64.

Paul likely wrote Romans shortly *before* this darker period began.

Roman Culture Was Morally Corrupt

Rome was known for:

- idolatry
- immorality
- emperor worship
- social inequality
- slavery
- violence

Romans 1 describes humanity's rebellion against God
in ways that reflected the pagan Roman world.

Romans 1:25 says: “They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator...” — Romans 1:25 (NIV)

Paul presents the Gospel as God’s answer to humanity’s corruption.

Purpose of the Book

Romans was written to explain:

- The Gospel
- Human sinfulness
- Salvation through faith
- God’s righteousness
- The transformed Christian life

Major Themes

- Justification by faith
- Grace
- Sin
- Salvation
- Sanctification
- God’s sovereignty

Key Events & Passages

- Universal sinfulness
- Abraham justified by faith
- Life through the Spirit
- Struggle with sin
- God’s mercy
- Christian living

Galatians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 48–55

Historical Context

False teachers were pressuring Gentile believers to adopt Jewish law and circumcision.

Paul writes urgently to defend the true Gospel.

The Early Church Was Facing a Massive Identity Crisis

One of the biggest issues in the early Church was:

How do Gentiles become part of God's covenant people?

This was not a small disagreement.

It threatened the unity and future of Christianity itself.

Many Jewish believers believed Gentiles needed to:

- follow the Law of Moses
 - be circumcised
 - adopt Jewish customs
- in order to truly belong to God's people.

A group often called the Judaizers began influencing the Galatian churches.

They taught:
faith in Jesus alone was not enough.

They argued Gentile believers also needed:

- circumcision
- Torah observance
- Jewish covenant markers

Paul responds very strongly against this teaching.

Circumcision Was a Huge Covenant Symbol

To understand Galatians,
you must understand the importance of circumcision
in Jewish history.

Circumcision went back to Abraham

Genesis 17:10–11 says: “This is my covenant with you... Every male among you shall be circumcised.” — Genesis 17:10–11 (NIV)

For centuries circumcision symbolized:

- covenant identity
- belonging to Israel
- separation from Gentiles

So when Paul argued:
Gentiles are fully accepted without circumcision,
this was revolutionary.

The Roman World Was Deeply Divided

The ancient world was sharply divided by:

- ethnicity
- religion

- class
- nationality

Jews and Gentiles often viewed each other with suspicion and hostility.

But Paul proclaims something radical:
In Jesus,
a new covenant family has formed.

Galatians 3:28 says: “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” — Galatians 3:28 (NIV)

This was revolutionary in the ancient world.

Purpose of the Book

Galatians was written to demonstrate:

- Salvation comes through faith
- The law cannot save
- Believers are free in Christ
- Christians should walk by the Spirit

Major Themes

- Grace
- Freedom
- Faith
- The Holy Spirit
- Christian liberty
- Justification

Key Events & Passages

- Paul's defense of the Gospel
- Confrontation with Peter
- Justification by faith
- Abraham and faith
- Fruit of the Spirit
- Freedom in Christ

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Romans begins by explaining humanity's spiritual condition.

Paul writes that sin affects all people.

Romans 3:23 says: "For all have **sinned** and fall short of the glory of God." — Romans 3:23 (NIV)

That verse removes all human boasting.

No person is spiritually perfect before God.

Paul explains that both Jews and Gentiles stand guilty before God because of sin.

But then Paul introduces the heart of the Gospel.

Romans 5:8 says: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." — Romans 5:8 (NIV)

That truth changes everything.

Salvation is rooted in God's love and **grace**, not human achievement.

Paul explains that people are justified through **faith** in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:28 says: “For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.” — Romans 3:28 (NIV)

The word “justified” means being declared righteous before God.

This becomes one of Christianity’s defining teachings.

Human effort cannot remove sin.
Only Jesus can.

Paul then discusses Abraham.

Even Abraham, the great patriarch of Israel, was justified through faith.

Romans 4:3 says: “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” — Romans 4:3 (NIV)

Then Romans explains the ongoing struggle believers experience with sin.

Paul honestly describes the conflict between spiritual desire and human weakness.

Romans 7:19 says: “For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.” — Romans 7:19 (NIV)

Even today, many believers deeply relate to that struggle.

But Romans also offers hope.

Romans 8 emphasizes life through the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:1 says: “Therefore, there is now no **condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.” — Romans 8:1 (NIV)

That becomes one of the most comforting promises in Scripture.

Then Galatians addresses false teaching directly.

Paul is shocked that some believers
are abandoning the true Gospel.

Galatians 1:6 says: “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ...” — Galatians 1:6 (NIV)

Paul strongly opposes the idea that human works
can earn salvation.

Galatians 2:16 says: “Know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ...” — Galatians 2:16 (NIV)

Paul explains that the law may reveal sins,
but the law cannot save.

Then Galatians emphasizes Christian freedom.

Galatians 5:1 says: “It is for freedom that **Christ** has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” — Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

But freedom in Christ
does not mean selfish living.

Believers are called to walk by the **Spirit**.

Galatians 5 also contrasts:

- The acts of the flesh
- The fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22–23 says: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and **self-control**.” — Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV)

These qualities reflect spiritual transformation.

Both Romans and Galatians
repeatedly teach that salvation
comes through faith
and results in a transformed life
empowered by the Holy Spirit.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Rome

Rome was the political center
of the ancient world.

The Roman church included believers
from many different backgrounds and cultures.

Jewish Law

The Jewish law included:

- Circumcision
- Dietary laws
- Ceremonial practices
- Covenant regulations

Some early believers struggled
with whether Gentiles needed to follow these laws.

Justification

In legal language, justification referred to
being declared righteous, acquitted,
or found “not guilty”

Paul uses this concept spiritually regarding salvation.

The Judaizers

These were teachers insisting Gentile Christians
must follow Jewish law
to be fully accepted by God.

Paul strongly opposed this teaching.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Grace

Salvation is a gift of God’s grace.

Faith

People are justified through faith in Christ.

Sin

All humanity is affected by sin.

Freedom

Believers are free from dependence
upon the law for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

The Spirit empowers believers for holy living.

Transformation

The Gospel changes both identity and behavior.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Romans and Galatians both center completely on Jesus Christ.

Perfect Sacrifice

Jesus' death provides forgiveness for sin.

Justifier

Jesus makes believers righteous before God.

Second Adam

Paul compares Jesus to Adam,
showing that Christ reverses the curse of sin.

Source of Freedom

Jesus frees believers from *slavery/bondage* of sin and legalism.

Giver of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit transforms believers into Christlike people.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Romans and Galatians remind modern believers
that salvation cannot be earned.

Many people today still live
as though acceptance must be achieved
through performance.

Modern culture often teaches:

- Earn your value
- Prove your worth
- Achieve acceptance

But the Gospel teaches that salvation is received by grace through faith.

These letters also remind believers that freedom in Christ is not permission for selfishness.

True freedom leads toward:

- Obedience
- Love
- Holiness
- Spiritual transformation

And honestly, modern Christians still struggle with many of the same issues addressed in these letters:

- Pride
- Legalism
- Shame
- Fear
- Spiritual failure

But Romans and Galatians continually point believers back toward:

- Grace
- Faith
- The Holy Spirit
- The finished work of **Christ**

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 5 — ROMANS & GALATIANS
Justification by Faith and Freedom in Christ

- Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not through human **works**.
- Romans 3:23 says:
“For all have **sinned** and fall short of the glory of God.”
- Salvation is rooted in God’s love and **grace**.
- A person is justified by **faith** apart from the works of the law.
- Romans 8:1 says:
“There is now no **condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
- Galatians teaches that believers are free in **Christ**.
- Believers are called to walk by the **Spirit**.
- The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, and **self-control**.
- The Gospel changes both identity and **behavior**.
- Romans and Galatians continually point believers toward grace, faith, and the finished work of **Christ**.

WEEK 6 — 1 & 2 CORINTHIANS

Holiness, Unity, and the Wisdom of God

Main Theme

1 and 2 Corinthians teach that the Church is called to live in holiness, unity, love, and spiritual **maturity** while remaining *faithful* to Jesus in a broken and sinful world.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

The church in Corinth was deeply gifted, but also deeply troubled.

Reviewing Corinth, the city may feel surprisingly modern to many readers.

The city was wealthy, influential, immoral, divided, and spiritually confused.

The Corinthian believers struggled with:

- Division
- Pride
- Sexual immorality
- Lawsuits
- False teaching
- Misuse of spiritual gifts
- Confusion about resurrection
- Worldliness

Paul writes these letters to correct, encourage, and restore the church.

1 Corinthians especially focuses on church problems and practical Christian living.

2 Corinthians becomes much more personal.

Paul defends his ministry,
speaks openly about suffering,
and explains the nature of true spiritual leadership.

Together these letters reveal that
Christianity is not merely about belief.

It is about transformation.

Paul repeatedly calls believers
toward spiritual **maturity** and faithfulness.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

1 Corinthians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 53–55

Historical Context

Corinth was a wealthy and morally corrupt city
located connecting Northern and Southern Greece.

The city had a reputation throughout the Roman world
for corruption and immorality.

In fact, in ancient slang: “*To Corinthianize*” meant: to live immorally.

The church struggled to separate itself from the sinful culture surrounding it.

Corinth Was Full of Pagan Worship

Corinth contained many temples dedicated to Greek and Roman gods.

One of the most famous was:
the Temple of Aphrodite
the goddess of love and sexuality.

Religious worship in Corinth often included:

- ritual prostitution
- drunkenness
- idol feasts
- sexual immorality

Many new believers came out of these pagan backgrounds.

This explains why Paul repeatedly addresses:

- sexual sin
- idolatry
- impurity
- misuse of freedom

The Church Was Deeply Divided

One of the biggest problems in Corinth was:
division.

Believers were forming rival groups

around different leaders.

1 Corinthians 1:12 says: “One of you says, ‘I follow Paul’; another, ‘I follow Apollos’; another, ‘I follow Cephas’...” — 1 Corinthians 1:12 (NIV)

The Corinthians were bringing worldly pride and status competition into the Church.

Corinthian culture highly valued:

- rhetoric
- philosophy
- social status
- public honor

This influenced the church negatively.

Paul responds by emphasizing:

- humility
- unity
- the cross of Christ

Greek Philosophy Strongly Influenced Corinth

Corinth was heavily influenced by Greek intellectual culture.

Public speakers and philosophers were admired celebrities.

This explains why some Corinthians judged leaders based on:

- eloquence
- wisdom
- speaking ability

Paul intentionally rejected worldly showmanship.

1 Corinthians 2:1–2 says: “I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom... For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” — 1 Corinthians 2:1–2 (NIV)

Paul contrasts human wisdom with
God’s wisdom revealed through the cross.

Sexual Immorality Was Rampant

Corinthian culture normalized sexual immorality.

This became one of the church’s
greatest struggles.

A shocking case appears in:

1 Corinthians 5
where a man was involved in sexual sin
with his stepmother.

Paul rebukes the church because they tolerated it.

1 Corinthians 6:18 says: “Flee from sexual immorality...” — 1 Corinthians 6:18 (NIV)

Christians Were Suing Each Other

Corinthian believers were taking one another
to secular courts.

1 Corinthians 6:6 says: “Brother takes brother to court...” — 1 Corinthians 6:6 (NIV)

This reflected:

- pride
- selfishness
- public shame
- lack of Christian maturity

Paul emphasizes reconciliation and humility.

Questions About Marriage and Singleness

The Corinthians had written Paul asking questions about:

- marriage
- divorce
- celibacy
- sexuality

1 Corinthians 7 responds extensively to these issues.

Corinth had opposite extremes:

- sexual immorality
- unhealthy religious strictness

Worship Services Had Become Disorderly

The Corinthian church experienced problems involving:

- pride
- competition
- chaos during worship

This especially involved:

- spiritual gifts
- speaking in tongues
- prophecy

Some believers used gifts

to elevate themselves rather than serve others.

Purpose of the Book

1 Corinthians was written to address:

- Church division
- Moral failure
- Misuse of spiritual gifts
- Questions about doctrine
- Christian conduct

Major Themes

- Unity
- Holiness
- Love
- Resurrection
- Spiritual gifts
- Wisdom

Key Events & Passages

- Divisions in the church
- Discipline and immorality
- Marriage questions
- The Lord's Supper
- Spiritual gifts
- Love chapter
- Resurrection chapter

2 Corinthians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 55–57

Historical Context

Paul faced criticism and opposition from false teachers attacking his authority and ministry.

False Apostles Had Entered Corinth

One of the biggest historical issues in 2 Corinthians was the rise of false apostles

These teachers opposed Paul and questioned:

- his authority
- his speaking ability
- his suffering
- his appearance
- his credentials

They promoted:

- worldly strength
- eloquence
- status
- power

Paul sarcastically calls them “super-apostles”

2 Corinthians 11:5 says: “I do not think I am in the least inferior to those ‘super-apostles.’” — 2 Corinthians 11:5 (NIV)

These men likely blended:

- rhetoric
- Jewish legalism
- self-promotion
- spiritual pride

They measured leadership by:

- charisma
- public appearance
- eloquence
- worldly success

But Paul presents a radically different model of leadership.

Purpose of the Book

2 Corinthians was written to:

- Defend Paul’s apostleship
- Encourage reconciliation
- Explain Christian suffering
- Teach generosity and faithfulness

Major Themes

- Comfort
- Weakness and strength
- Reconciliation
- Generosity

- Perseverance
- Ministry

Key Events & Passages

- God's comfort in suffering
- Ministry of reconciliation
- Treasure in jars of clay
- Paul's hardships
- Thorn in the flesh
- Generous giving

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Paul begins 1 Corinthians by addressing **division** within the church.

Different groups were arguing over which leader they followed.

Paul rebukes this spirit of division.

1 Corinthians 1:10 says: "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought." — 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NIV)

Paul reminds them that the Church belongs to Jesus, not human leaders.

Then Paul contrasts human **wisdom** with God's wisdom.

1 Corinthians 1:25 says: "For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength." — 1 Corinthians 1:25 (NIV)

The Gospel often appears foolish to the world.

Yet God's wisdom surpasses human understanding.

Paul then addresses serious moral problems within the church.

Some believers were tolerating open sin.

Paul explains that Christians are called to holiness.

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 says: “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with **your bodies**.” — 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NIV)

Paul also addresses questions regarding:

- Marriage
- Singleness
- Christian freedom
- Worship
- Communion

Then Paul discusses spiritual gifts.

The Corinthians valued dramatic gifts but lacked spiritual maturity and love.

So Paul explains that love must guide all spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 13:4–7 says: “4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil

but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails....” — 1 Corinthians 13:4–7 (NIV)

This becomes one of the most beloved passages in Scripture.

Paul explains that without **love**, spiritual gifts become empty and meaningless.

Then Paul addresses the resurrection.

Some believers questioned whether resurrection was real.

Paul responds clearly.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 says: “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the **third day** according to the Scriptures.” — 1 Corinthians 15:3–4 (NIV)

The resurrection becomes central to Christianity itself.
Without the resurrection,
there is no Christian hope.

Then 2 Corinthians becomes much more personal.

Paul openly discusses suffering,
weakness, and hardship.

2 Corinthians 1:3–4 says: “3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” — 2 Corinthians 1:3–4 (NIV)

Paul explains that suffering
can deepen dependence upon God.

Then Paul describes believers as fragile but valuable.

2 Corinthians 4:7 says: “But we have this treasure in **jars of clay** to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” — 2 Corinthians 4:7 (NIV)

That imagery matters deeply.

Human weakness does not prevent God
from working powerfully.

Then Paul explains the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says: “17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new **creation** has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:”
—2 Corinthians 5:17-18 (NIV)

Believers are called not only to receive reconciliation,
but also to share it with others.

Then Paul discusses his “thorn in the flesh.”

Though Scripture never fully explains what it was,
But, Paul prayed repeatedly for its removal.

But God answered differently.

2 Corinthians 12:9 says: “My grace is **sufficient** for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” — 2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV)

This becomes one of the central lessons of 2 Corinthians.

God often works most powerfully
through human **weakness**.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Corinth

Corinth was known for wealth, trade, immorality, and pagan worship.

The city's culture heavily influenced the church's struggles.

Greek Philosophy

Greek culture highly valued wisdom, rhetoric, and public speaking.

Paul intentionally emphasized Jesus rather than human eloquence.

Temple Worship

Pagan temples and immoral religious practices were common throughout Corinth.

This created constant spiritual pressure for believers.

Letters and Apostleship

False teachers often challenged Paul's authority and attempted to discredit his ministry.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Unity

The Church must remain united in Christ.

Holiness

Believers are called to live differently from the world.

Love

Love becomes the highest expression of Christian maturity.

Resurrection

The resurrection is foundational to the Christian faith.

Weakness and Strength

God's power is revealed through human **weakness**.

Reconciliation

Christ restores people to relationship with God.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

1 and 2 Corinthians continually point toward Jesus Christ.

Crucified Savior

Christ's death becomes the center of the Gospel.

Risen Lord

The resurrection confirms Christ's victory over death.

Source of Unity

Believers are united through Christ alone.

Perfect Love

Jesus perfectly demonstrates the love described in 1 Corinthians 13.

Reconciler

Jesus restores humanity's relationship with God.

Strength in Weakness

Christ's power sustains believers in suffering.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Corinth honestly feels very similar to modern culture.

Modern society today still struggles with:

- Pride
- Division
- Sexual immorality
- Materialism
- Self-centeredness
- Spiritual confusion

And modern churches still wrestle
with many of the same issues found in Corinth.

These letters remind believers
that spiritual gifts and knowledge
do not automatically produce spiritual maturity.

Love, humility, holiness, and obedience matter deeply.

2 Corinthians also reminds believers

that suffering does not mean
God has abandoned them.

Often God works most powerfully
through weakness and dependence.

In all sincerity, many people today
desperately need the hope
found in these letters, like:

- God comforts the broken
- Grace is sufficient
- Weakness is not failure
- The resurrection gives hope
- Christ reconciles sinners to God

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 6 — 1 & 2 CORINTHIANS
Holiness, Unity, and the Wisdom of God

- The Church is called to live in holiness, unity, love, and spiritual **maturity**.
- Paul warned the Corinthians against church **division**.
- God's wisdom is greater than human **wisdom**.
- Believers are called to honor God with their **bodies**.
- Without **love**, spiritual gifts become empty and meaningless.
- Christ died for our sins and was raised on the third **day**.
- Believers are described as "jars of **clay**."
- In Christ, believers become a new **creation**.
- God told Paul:
"My grace is **sufficient** for you."
- God often works most powerfully through human **weakness**.

WEEK 7 — EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS & PHILEMON

Identity in Christ and Living for the Glory of God

Main Theme

These letters teach that believers are united in Christ, called to spiritual maturity, filled with joy and humility, and transformed through the power and supremacy of Jesus.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Paul's prison letters were written during periods of imprisonment and hardship.

And clearly, that makes their tone even more remarkable.

Because despite suffering, these letters repeatedly emphasize:

- Joy
- Hope
- Unity
- Spiritual growth
- Jesus-centered living

Ephesians focuses heavily on the identity of the Church and the believer's position in Christ.

Philippians emphasizes joy, humility, and perseverance.

Colossians strongly defends the supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus Christ.

Philemon demonstrates forgiveness, reconciliation,
and Christian brotherhood
in a deeply personal situation.

Together these letters remind believers
that Christianity is not merely external religion.

It is transformation through union with Christ.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Ephesians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 60–62

Historical Context

Ephesus was an important city known for pagan worship
and spiritual practices.

The church faced pressure from both idolatry
and spiritual opposition.

Many scholars believe Ephesians
may also have functioned as a circular letter
shared among several churches
throughout Asia Minor.

The Temple of Artemis Dominated Ephesus

Ephesus was famous for
the Temple of Artemis (Diana in Roman culture)

This was one of the
Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Artemis was considered:

- goddess of fertility
- protection
- nature
- prosperity

The temple drew:

- pilgrims
- tourism
- wealth

Acts 19 shows how deeply Artemis worship shaped the city.

Acts 19:27 says: “There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited; and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty.” — Acts 19:27 (NIV)

When many Ephesians became Christians,
it threatened the city’s economy
and religious identity.

Ephesus Was Deeply Involved in Magic and Occult Practices

Ephesus was known throughout the ancient world for:

- sorcery

- magical arts
- spells
- spiritual practices

People even used: “Ephesian letters”
(magical formulas or charms)

Acts 19:19 says: “A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly.” — Acts 19:19 (NIV)

This background is incredibly important
for understanding Ephesians
because the letter strongly emphasizes:

- spiritual warfare
- powers and authorities
- victory in Christ

The Ephesian believers came out of a culture obsessed with
spiritual powers and fear of unseen forces.

Spiritual Warfare Was a Real Cultural Concern

Because Ephesus was heavily associated with occult practices,
Paul strongly emphasizes
Jesus’s authority over all spiritual powers.

Ephesians 1:19–21 says: “19 ... That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he (God) exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.” — Ephesians 1:20–21 (NIV)

And most famously:

Ephesians 6:12 says: “12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.— Ephesians 6:12 (NIV)

The armor of God imagery would have deeply resonated in a city fearful of spiritual forces and magic.

Paul teaches believers do not need magical protection.
Jesus has ultimate authority.

Jew and Gentile Tension Was Still Significant

One of the biggest themes in Ephesians is unity.

The early Church struggled with divisions between:

- Jews
- Gentiles

Historically these groups had centuries of separation involving

- covenant identity
- dietary laws
- circumcision
- purity rules

Paul explains Jesus has united both groups into one new humanity.

Ephesians 2:14 says: “14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,” — Ephesians 2:14 (NIV)

This was revolutionary.

The Church was becoming:
a completely new covenant community.

Roman Society Was Highly Structured

Roman culture emphasized:

- hierarchy
- status
- patriarchy
- slavery
- household order

Ephesians addresses many of these relationships:

- husbands and wives
- parents and children
- masters and servants

But Paul reframes them through:
Christlike love and mutual submission.

Ephesians 5:25 says: “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” — Ephesians 5:25 (NIV)

This radically elevated
sacrificial love over domination.

Purpose of the Book

Ephesians was written to teach:

- The believer’s identity in Christ
- Unity within the Church

- Spiritual warfare
- Christian living

Major Themes

- Unity
- Grace
- Salvation
- Spiritual warfare
- The Church
- Identity in Christ

Key Events & Passages

- Saved by grace through faith
- Unity of the Church
- Spiritual gifts
- Christian relationships
- Armor of God

Philippians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 60–62

Historical Context

Paul wrote Philippians while imprisoned.

Despite hardship, the letter overflows
with joy and encouragement.

The letter was written to the church at Philippi

located in Macedonia (modern northern Greece).

Philippi holds a special place in Christian history because it was the first church Paul established in Europe.

The story is recorded in: Acts 16

Rather than being famous for commerce or philosophy, Philippi was known for its loyalty to Rome.

It was strongly patriotic, predominantly Gentile, and affluent.

To people who treasured their Roman citizenship, Paul reminds them that their highest allegiance belongs to Christ.

Paul completely reverses these values. Paul presents humility—not status—as the mark of true greatness.

From its very beginning, the Philippian church learned that following Christ often involved suffering.

When Paul cast a demon out of a slave girl. Her owners lost their income and had Paul and Silas arrested.

One of the most remarkable facts about Philippians is this: Paul repeatedly speaks about joy... while sitting in prison.

Although Philippians is overwhelmingly positive, Paul still warns against legalistic teachers who insisted that Gentile believers must adopt Jewish practices.

So, Paul again emphasizes righteousness comes through faith,.....not through works of the Law

Purpose of the Book

Philippians was written to encourage:

- Joy in Christ
- Humility
- Faithfulness
- Perseverance

Major Themes

- Joy
- Humility
- Contentment
- Unity
- Christ-centered living

Key Events & Passages

- Partnership in the Gospel
- Christ's humility
- Rejoicing in suffering
- Pressing toward the goal
- Learning contentment

Colossians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 60–62

Historical Context

False teachers were diminishing the supremacy of Christ

by mixing human philosophy and religious traditions with the Gospel.

Colossae was a smaller town but remained culturally diverse.
This mixture created a unique religious environment
where many different beliefs blended together.

The primary reason Paul wrote Colossians
was false teaching.

Unlike Galatians, where legalism was the primary problem,
Colossians addresses a mixture of ideas
that scholars often call “the Colossian Heresy”.

Although we cannot identify every detail,
it appears to have included:

Jewish legalism	Greek philosophy
Mysticism	Asceticism (harsh self-denial)
Angel worship	Secret spiritual knowledge

Instead of trusting completely in Christ,
these teachers claimed believers needed
additional spiritual experiences - special knowledge
strict religious rules - mystical practices

Paul responds by declaring:
Jesus is completely sufficient and nothing needs to be added to Him.

It is the great book to which all counterfeits’ beliefs
may be compared to reveal their flaws.

Purpose of the Book

Colossians was written to demonstrate:

- The supremacy of Christ
- The sufficiency of Christ
- Spiritual transformation

Major Themes

- Supremacy of Christ
- Spiritual growth
- Truth
- New life
- Freedom from false teaching

Key Events & Passages

- Christ as Creator
- Christ above all things
- New life in Christ
- Putting off the old self

Philemon

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 60–62

Historical Context

Philemon addresses a runaway slave named Onesimus who became a Christian after meeting Paul.

Somehow Onesimus left Philemon's household—whether he ran away, was sent away, or left under disputed circumstances is not explicitly stated.

During his time away he encountered Paul,
became a believer in Jesus Christ,
and was transformed by the Gospel.

Paul now sends Onesimus back carrying this very letter.

The name Onesimus means
"Useful" or "Profitable."

Paul makes a wordplay using his name. Philemon 11 says:

"Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me." — Philemon 11 (NIV)

The Gospel had transformed Onesimus
into exactly what his name meant.

Purpose of the Book

Philemon was written to encourage:

- Forgiveness
- Reconciliation
- Christian brotherhood

Major Themes

- Grace
- Reconciliation
- Forgiveness
- Christian unity

Key Events & Passages

- Paul's appeal for Onesimus
- Christian equality in Christ

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Ephesians begins by emphasizing the believer's spiritual blessings in Christ.

Ephesians 1:3 says: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

— Ephesians 1:3 (NIV)

Paul repeatedly emphasizes the phrase "in Christ."
That identity changes everything.

Believers are:

- Chosen
- Redeemed
- Forgiven
- Adopted
- Sealed by the Holy Spirit

Then Ephesians clearly explains salvation.

Ephesians 2:8–9 says: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through **faith**... not by works, so that no one can boast." — Ephesians 2:8–9 (NIV)

Salvation is a gift of God's grace.

Paul also explains that Jews and Gentiles
are united together in Christ.

The Church becomes one body.

Then Ephesians discusses spiritual warfare.

Ephesians 6:11 says: “Put on the full armor of **God**, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.” — Ephesians 6:11 (NIV)

Paul describes:

- The belt of truth
- Breastplate of righteousness
- Shield of faith
- Helmet of salvation
- Sword of the Spirit

Believers are called to stand firm spiritually.

Then Philippians emphasizes joy even during suffering.

Paul writes from **prison**,
yet continually encourages believers to rejoice.

Philippians 4:4 says: “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”
— Philippians 4:4 (NIV)

And that perspective challenges modern thinking.

True joy is rooted in **Christ**, not circumstances.

Philippians also contains
one of the clearest descriptions of Christ’s humility.

Philippians 2:5–8 says: “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus...” — Philippians 2:5–8 (NIV)

Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient
even to **death** on a cross.

Then Paul discusses contentment.

Philippians 4:13 says: “I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” — Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

Paul explains that true strength comes from Christ.

Then Colossians strongly emphasizes the supremacy of Jesus.

Colossians 1:16 says: “For in him all things were created...” — Colossians 1:16 (NIV)

Jesus is presented as:

- Creator
- Sustainer
- Head of the Church
- Supreme over all **creation**

Paul warns believers against false teaching and spiritual deception.

Instead of following human philosophy, believers are called to remain rooted in Christ.

Colossians 2:9 says: “For in Christ all the fullness of the **Deity** lives in bodily form.” — Colossians 2:9 (NIV)

Then Paul describes the transformed Christian life.

Believers are called to put off sinful behavior and put on Christlike character.

Finally, Philemon gives a personal example of the Gospel in action.

Paul appeals for Philemon to forgive Onesimus.

This small letter powerfully demonstrates forgiveness and **reconciliation**.

Paul explains that in Jesus, relationships are transformed.

Philemon 1:16 says: “No longer as a slave... but better than a slave, as a dear brother.” — Philemon 1:16 (NIV)

The Gospel changes how people relate to one another.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Prison Letters

Paul wrote these letters while imprisoned under Roman authority. Despite hardship, the letters remain filled with hope and encouragement.

Ephesus

Ephesus was known for idol worship, magic practices, and the Temple of Artemis.

Roman Imprisonment

Prisoners often depended upon outside support from friends and churches.

Slavery in the Roman World

Slavery was widespread throughout the Roman Empire. It reached all professions

Philemon demonstrates how Christianity challenged social relationships through the principle

of spiritual equality.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Identity in Christ

Believers receive a new identity through union with Christ.

Grace

Salvation comes through grace, not works.

Unity

The Church is united through Christ.

Joy

True joy is rooted in Christ rather than circumstances.

Spiritual Warfare

Believers must stand firm against spiritual opposition.

Supremacy of Christ

Jesus is above all creation and authority.

Reconciliation

The Gospel restores broken relationships.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

These letters repeatedly center on Jesus Christ.

Source of Salvation

Jesus provides grace and redemption.

Head of the Church

Christ unites believers together.

Supreme Lord

Jesus rules over all creation.

Perfect Example of Humility

Jesus demonstrates perfect obedience and selflessness.

Strength for Believers

Christ strengthens believers during hardship.

Reconciler

Jesus restores people to God and to one another.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These letters remind believers that identity should not be rooted in success, status, achievement, or culture.

Identity and purpose are found in Christ.

Today, modern people constantly search for meaning and worth through:

- Success
- Relationships
- Wealth
- Popularity
- Achievement

But these letters repeatedly point believers back toward Jesus as the true source of identity and purpose.

Philippians especially challenges modern obsession with circumstances and comfort.

Paul demonstrates that joy can exist even during suffering.

Colossians reminds believers to reject false teaching and remain rooted in truth.

And Philemon reminds believers that the Gospel should transform relationships through:

- Forgiveness
- Grace
- Reconciliation
- Brotherhood

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY

WEEK 7 — EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS & PHILEMON Identity in Christ and Living for the Glory of God

- Believers are united in **Christ**.
- Salvation comes by grace through **faith**.
- Believers are called to put on the full armor of **God**.
- Paul wrote Philippians while in **prison**.
- True joy is rooted in **Christ**, not circumstances.
- Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient even to **death** on a cross.
- Colossians teaches that Jesus is supreme over all **creation**.
- In Christ all the fullness of the **Deity** lives in bodily form.
- Philemon demonstrates forgiveness and **reconciliation**.
- Identity and purpose are ultimately found in **Christ**.

WEEK 8 — 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

Hope, Holiness, and the Return of Christ

Main Theme

1 and 2 Thessalonians teach believers to live with holiness, perseverance, and hopeful expectation as they await the return of Christ.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

The believers in Thessalonica faced intense persecution and uncertainty.

They had many questions about suffering, the future, and the return of Jesus.

Paul writes these letters to encourage and strengthen them.

1 Thessalonians especially emphasizes hope and faithful Christian living.

2 Thessalonians addresses confusion regarding the Day of the Lord and corrects false teachings about Christ's return.

Together these letters remind believers that Christianity is not merely about surviving the present world.

It is about living faithfully while anticipating the future return of Christ.

These letters especially emphasize:

- Hope
- Perseverance
- Holiness

- Encouragement
- Readiness for Christ's return

The *return of Jesus* becomes one of the central hopes of the Christian faith.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

1 Thessalonians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 50–51 – roughly 20 years after Jesus' resurrection.

Historical Context

The Thessalonian church faced persecution shortly after its formation.

Believers were concerned about suffering and the return of Christ.

Thessalonica was one of the largest and most influential cities in Greece.

It sat on the famous *Via Egnatia*,
the major Roman highway connecting Rome with the eastern provinces.

This strategic location allowed the Gospel
to spread rapidly throughout the region.

Thessalonian church consisted primarily of former pagans.

Purpose of the Book

1 Thessalonians was written to encourage believers in:

- Faithfulness
- Holiness
- Hope
- Readiness for Christ's return

Major Themes

- The return of Christ
- Holiness
- Encouragement
- Faithfulness
- Christian hope

Key Events & Passages

- Faith during persecution
- Holy living
- The coming of the Lord
- Encouraging one another

2 Thessalonians

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 51–52 – only a few months after the 1st letter.

Historical Context

False teaching had created confusion regarding the timing of Christ's return.

Some believers had become fearful or spiritually idle.

One reason Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians was because someone had apparently circulated a false letter claiming to be from Paul, teaching that "the Day of the Lord" had already come.

Because false letters were circulating, Paul began personally signing his letters as proof of authenticity

If 1 Thessalonians teaches believers to anticipate Christ's return, then 2 Thessalonians teaches them how to live faithfully while waiting.

Purpose of the Book

2 Thessalonians was written to:

- Correct false teaching
- Encourage perseverance
- Clarify future events
- Promote responsible living

Major Themes

- Perseverance
- Judgment
- Christ's return
- Faithfulness
- Discipline

Key Events & Passages

- The Day of the Lord
- The man of lawlessness
- Perseverance through suffering
- Warning against idleness

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Paul begins 1 Thessalonians by encouraging believers who remained faithful during persecution.

1 Thessalonians 1:6 says: “You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.” — 1 Thessalonians 1:6 (NIV)

Honestly, that combination seems unusual.

Joy in the middle of suffering?

Yet Paul repeatedly teaches that Christian hope goes beyond present circumstances.

Paul also emphasizes holy living.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 says: “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified...” — 1 Thessalonians 4:3 (NIV)

The word “sanctified” refers to being set apart for God.

Believers are called to live differently from the surrounding culture.

Paul encourages believers toward:

- Purity
- Self-control
- Love
- Faithfulness

Then Paul addresses one of the Thessalonians’ greatest concerns.

Some believers feared that Christians

who had already died
would miss Christ's return.

Paul responds with hope and assurance.

1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 says: “For the Lord himself will come down from heaven... and the dead in **Christ** will rise first. After that, we who are still alive... will be caught up together with them...” — 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 (NIV)

Paul reminds believers that death is not the end.

Because of Jesus' resurrection,
believers have eternal hope.

Then Paul says: “Therefore encourage one another with these words.” — 1 Thessalonians 4:18 (NIV)

The return of Jesus is meant
to produce encouragement and **hope**.

Then Paul reminds believers to remain spiritually alert.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 says: “For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the **night**.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:2 (NIV)

Believers should live prepared and faithful.

Then 2 Thessalonians addresses confusion
regarding the Day of the Lord.

Some false teachers claimed Christ had already returned.

Others stopped working and became idle.

Paul corrects these misunderstandings.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 says: “Don’t let anyone **deceive** you in any way...” — 2 Thessalonians 2:3 (NIV)

Paul warns believers against deception and fear.

He encourages perseverance during hardship.

2 Thessalonians 3:13 says: “And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what **is good**.” — 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (NIV)

And that encouragement still matters deeply today.

Because believers often grow weary
during difficulty, opposition, or waiting.

Paul reminds Christians to remain faithful
while waiting for the return of Jesus.

The Christian life involves both:

- Hope for the future
- Faithfulness in the **present**

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Thessalonica

Thessalonica was a major city in Macedonia
located along important Roman trade routes.

The city contained strong Roman influence and pagan worship.

Persecution

Early Christians often faced rejection,

imprisonment, and violence
for refusing to worship Roman gods and emperors.

“The Day of the Lord”

This phrase referred to God’s future intervention,
judgment, and ultimate victory.

Greek Culture

Many Gentile believers came from pagan backgrounds
that conflicted with Christian morality and holiness.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Hope

Believers live with confident hope in Christ’s return.

Holiness

Christians are called to live sanctified lives.

Perseverance

Believers remain faithful during suffering and opposition.

The Return of Jesus

Jesus will return personally and visibly.

Encouragement

Christians should strengthen and encourage one another.

Faithfulness

Believers are called to continue doing good
while waiting for Christ’s return.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

1 and 2 Thessalonians continually point toward Jesus Christ.

Returning King

Jesus will return in power and glory.

Resurrected Lord

Christ's resurrection guarantees
future resurrection for believers.

Source of Hope

Believers find hope through Jesus.

Judge and Savior

Jesus will ultimately bring justice and salvation.

Sanctifier

Christ transforms believers into holy people.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These letters remind believers that hope should shape daily living.

Today, modern culture often focuses only on the present moment.

But Scripture continually points believers toward eternity.

Modern believers still struggle with:

- Fear
- Discouragement
- Confusion
- Spiritual exhaustion
- Anxiety about the future

Yet Paul repeatedly calls believers toward:

- Hope
- Faithfulness
- Holiness
- Perseverance

These letters also warn against unhealthy extremes.

Some people become obsessed
with predicting future events.

Others ignore Christ's return entirely.

But Paul teaches believers
to live responsibly, faithfully, and expectantly.

The return of Jesus remains one of Christianity's greatest sources of **hope**.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 8 — 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS
Hope, Holiness, and the Return of Christ

- Believers are called to live with hopeful expectation as they await the return of **Christ**.
- The Thessalonian believers experienced severe **suffering**.
- God's will is for believers to be **sanctified**.
- The return of Christ is meant to produce encouragement and **hope**.
- Paul taught that the dead in **Christ** will rise first.
- The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the **night**.
- Paul warned believers not to be spiritually **deceived**.
- Christians are called to continue doing what is **good**.
- Believers live with hope for the future and faithfulness in the **present**.
- The return of Christ remains one of Christianity's greatest sources of **hope**.

WEEK 9 — 1 & 2 TIMOTHY & TITUS

Sound Doctrine, Godly Leadership, and Faithful Living

Main Theme

1 and 2 Timothy and Titus teach the importance of sound **doctrine**, godly leadership, spiritual perseverance, and faithful Christian living within the Church.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

These letters are often called the “Pastoral Epistles.”

Paul writes them to young church leaders who were responsible for guiding and protecting believers.

These letters feel incredibly practical.

Paul addresses:

- Church leadership
- False **teaching**
- Spiritual discipline
- Christian character
- Sound doctrine
- Perseverance
- Faithful ministry

Timothy was a younger pastor serving in Ephesus.

Titus was leading churches on the island of Crete.

Both faced difficult cultural and spiritual challenges.

Paul repeatedly reminds them that leadership

is not merely about authority.

It is about faithfulness, integrity, humility, and truth.

These letters also warn
about false teaching and spiritual deception.
Because healthy churches require healthy doctrine.

Paul continually emphasizes
that believers must remain grounded
in the truth of God's Word.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

1 Timothy

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 62–64

Historical Context

Timothy served as a leader in Ephesus, where false teachers were creating confusion within the church.

Although we often picture Timothy as a very young man,
However, he was likely in his 30s when Paul wrote 1 Timothy.

When Paul writes, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young..."
— 1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)

the Greek word *neos* ("young") could refer to someone
up to about 40 years old in the ancient world.

Timothy wasn't a teenager
he was simply younger than many of the elders he was leading.

Timothy wasn't serving in an easy church.
He was leading one in one of the most
spiritually challenging cities in the empire.

Timothy had a Jewish mother and a Greek father

Because of this mixed heritage,
Timothy could relate to both Jewish and Gentile believers,
making him an ideal leader for the early Church.

Purpose of the Book

1 Timothy was written to teach:

- Church organization
- Leadership qualifications
- Sound doctrine
- Godly living

Major Themes

- Sound doctrine
- Leadership
- Prayer
- Godliness
- Church order

Key Events & Passages

- Warning against false teachers
- Qualifications for elders and deacons
- Instructions about worship
- Pursuing godliness

2 Timothy

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 66–67

Historical Context

Paul wrote 2 Timothy during his final imprisonment before execution.

The letter carries urgency, encouragement, and personal reflection.

As it was probably the last letter Paul ever wrote.

Where 1 Timothy is about building and organizing the Church.

2 Timothy is about preserving the Church after the apostles are gone.

Purpose of the Book

2 Timothy was written to encourage:

- Perseverance
- Courage
- Faithfulness
- Endurance in ministry

Major Themes

- Endurance
- Scripture

- Faithfulness
- Suffering
- Finishing well

Key Events & Passages

- Fan into flame your gift
- Endure hardship
- All Scripture is God-breathed
- Fight the good fight

Titus

Author

The apostle Paul

Date Written

Approximately AD 62–64

Historical Context

Titus served churches in Crete,
a region known for immorality and corruption.

Titus was completely Gentile, unlike Timothy

Paul intentionally refused to have Titus circumcised.

Whenever a church faced a difficult situation,
Paul often sent Titus – Thus Titus was sent to Crete.

He trusted Titus to handle:

- conflict
- false teachers
- difficult leadership situations

- troubled churches

Paul called him: "My true son in our common faith." — Titus 1:4 (NIV)

If Timothy was Paul's pastor and disciple,
Titus was often his troubleshooter.

In the ancient world the Greek verb: kretizein
literally meant: "to act like a Cretan." (a person from Crete)

It became synonymous with:

- lying
- cheating
- deception

Whether the stereotype was completely fair is another matter,
but it was widely recognized in the Roman world.

This helps explain why Paul emphasized:
good character, self-control,
and integrity, throughout the letter.

Purpose of the Book

Titus was written to teach:

- Godly leadership
- Christian conduct
- Sound doctrine
- Good works

Major Themes

- Leadership
- Good works
- Grace

- Sound teaching
- Christian example

Key Events & Passages

- Qualifications for leaders
- Teaching sound doctrine
- Living godly lives
- Saved by grace

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Paul begins 1 Timothy by warning against false teaching.

1 Timothy 1:3 says: “Stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer.” — 1 Timothy 1:3 (NIV)

Paul understood that false teaching damages the Church.
Sound **doctrine** matters deeply.

Paul then explains the importance of prayer
and worship within the church.

1 Timothy 2:1 says: “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people.” — 1 Timothy 2:1 (NIV)

Then Paul outlines qualifications for church leaders.

Leadership requires more than charisma or talent.

Paul emphasizes:

- Character
- Integrity
- Self-control

- Faithfulness
- Spiritual **maturity**

1 Timothy 3:2 says: “Now the overseer is to be above reproach...” — 1 Timothy 3:2 (NIV)

Paul also encourages Timothy personally.
Because Timothy struggled with fear and insecurity.

1 Timothy 4:12 says: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but **set an example** for the believers...” — 1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)

Frankly, that encouragement still speaks powerfully today.

God often uses people who feel weak,
young, or inadequate.

Then Paul discusses spiritual discipline.

1 Timothy 4:7 says: “Train yourself **to be godly**.” — 1 Timothy 4:7 (NIV)

Spiritual growth requires
intentional pursuit of godliness.

2 Timothy becomes much more emotional and personal.

Paul knows his life is nearing its end.

Yet he continues encouraging Timothy
toward courage and perseverance.

2 Timothy 1:7 says: “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and **self-discipline**.” — 2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

Paul reminds Timothy

not to fear suffering or opposition.

Then Paul emphasizes the authority of Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16 says: “All Scripture is **God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.” — 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

That verse becomes foundational
for understanding the authority of God’s Word.

Paul then urges Timothy to continue preaching faithfully.

2 Timothy 4:2 says: “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season...”
— 2 Timothy 4:2 (NIV)

Finally, Paul reflects on his own life and ministry.

2 Timothy 4:7 says: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the **race**, I have kept the faith.” — 2 Timothy 4:7 (NIV)

Those words reflect a life of faithfulness
and endurance.

Then Titus focuses heavily
on Christian conduct and leadership.

Paul explains that church leaders must model godly living.

Titus 1:7 says: “Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless...” — Titus 1:7 (NIV)

Paul also emphasizes that believers
should be known for **good works**.

Titus 2:7 says: “In everything set them an example by doing what is good.” — Titus 2:7 (NIV)

But Paul makes clear that salvation is not earned through works.

Titus 3:5 says: “He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy...” — Titus 3:5 (NIV)

Grace remains central throughout these letters.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Ephesus

Ephesus was influenced by pagan worship, false spirituality, and competing philosophies.

Crete

Crete had a reputation for moral corruption and dishonesty.

Church Leadership

Early churches depended heavily upon faithful local leadership to preserve sound teaching and spiritual health.

False Teachers

False teachers often mixed Christianity with myths, legalism, speculation, or personal ambition.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Sound Doctrine

Truth must remain central within the Church.

Leadership

Church leaders are called to godly character and faithfulness.

Perseverance

Believers must remain faithful despite hardship.

Scripture

God's Word is authoritative and foundational.

Godliness

Christian belief should produce transformed living.

Grace

Salvation comes through God's mercy and grace.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

These letters continually point believers toward Jesus Christ.

Head of the Church

Jesus remains the ultimate authority over the Church.

Source of Truth

Jesus is the foundation of sound doctrine.

Perfect Shepherd

Jesus models faithful leadership.

Savior by Grace

Salvation comes through Jesus' mercy, not human effort.

Faithful King

Jesus strengthens believers to persevere faithfully.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These letters feel especially relevant in modern culture.

Today, modern believers still face many of the same struggles:

- False teaching
- Spiritual confusion
- Moral compromise
- Fear
- Discouragement
- Cultural pressure

Paul repeatedly reminds believers that truth matters.

Character matters.

Faithfulness matters.

These letters also challenge modern ideas about leadership.

Biblical leadership is not centered on fame, power, or personality.

It is centered on:

- Integrity
- Humility
- Truth
- Service
- Faithfulness

2 Timothy especially reminds believers to remain faithful even during hardship and opposition.

Paul's final words continue encouraging Christians today to finish the race faithfully.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 9 — 1 & 2 TIMOTHY & TITUS
Sound Doctrine, Godly Leadership, and Faithful Living

- These letters emphasize sound **doctrine** and faithful living.
- Paul warned Timothy against false **teaching**.
- Church leadership requires character, integrity, and spiritual **maturity**.
- Timothy was told to set an **example** for the believers.
- Paul said:
“Train yourself to be **godly**.”
- God has given believers power, love, and self-**discipline**.
- All Scripture is God-**breathed**.
- Paul declared:
“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the **race**.”
- Titus teaches that believers should be known for good **works**.
- Salvation comes through God’s mercy and **grace**.

WEEK 10 — HEBREWS

Jesus the Great High Priest and Perfect Sacrifice

Main Theme

Hebrews teaches that Jesus is the perfect and eternal High **Priest**, superior to the old covenant, and the complete sacrifice for sin once and for all.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Hebrews is one of the deepest and most theologically rich books in the New Testament.

The author assumes readers understand much of the Old Testament system:

- Priests
- Sacrifices
- Covenants
- The Temple
- Moses
- The Law

The book repeatedly explains that all of these things ultimately pointed toward Jesus Christ.

Hebrews was written to believers who were facing hardship, persecution, and pressure to abandon Christianity.

Some were tempted to return fully to the old Jewish system.

But Hebrews argues powerfully that Jesus is greater than everything that came before.

Throughout the book, the author repeatedly demonstrates that Jesus is superior to:

- Angels
- Moses
- Joshua
- The priesthood
- The sacrifices
- The old **covenant**

The message of Hebrews is clear:

Do not turn away from Christ.

Because Jesus is the final and complete revelation of God.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Hebrews

Author

Unknown

For the first few centuries of Christianity, believers accepted Hebrews as inspired Scripture, but they did not all agree on who wrote it.

Some believed:

- Paul

Others suggested:

- Barnabas
- Luke
- Apollos
- Clement of Rome
- Priscilla

One of the early church fathers, Origen (AD 185–253), famously concluded: *"Who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, God only knows."*

That remains one of the most quoted statements about Hebrews.

Date Written

Approximately AD 60–70

Historical Context

Jewish Christians faced persecution and pressure to return to traditional Judaism.

The recipients were facing:

- persecution
- discouragement
- spiritual fatigue

Some were apparently considering returning to traditional Judaism.

The Temple system and sacrificial practices were still highly influential.

Many scholars believe Hebrews is not a typical letter. Instead, it may actually be a written sermon.

Hebrews 13:22 says: "Bear with my word of exhortation..." — Hebrews 13:22 (NIV)

The phrase "*word of exhortation*" was used in the first century for a synagogue sermon (compare Acts 13:15).

This helps explain why Hebrews reads differently than Paul's letters.

It unfolds like a carefully crafted sermon, moving between deep theological exposition and practical encouragement.

Purpose of the Book

Hebrews was written to demonstrate:

- The supremacy of Christ
- The superiority of the new covenant
- The fulfillment of the Old Testament system in Jesus
- The importance of perseverance in faith

Major Themes

- Supremacy of Christ
- Faith
- Perseverance
- Priesthood
- Sacrifice
- Covenant

Key Events & Passages

- Jesus greater than angels
- Jesus greater than Moses
- The new covenant
- Christ the High Priest
- Hall of faith
- Running the race with endurance

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Hebrews begins by declaring that God has fully revealed Himself through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 1:1–2 says: “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets... but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...” — Hebrews 1:1–2 (NIV)

Jesus becomes the complete revelation of God.

Then Hebrews immediately emphasizes Christ's supremacy.

Hebrews 1:3 says: "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..." — Hebrews 1:3 (NIV)

That statement is incredibly important.

Jesus is not merely another prophet or teacher.

He perfectly reveals God Himself.

Then Hebrews explains that Jesus is greater than the angels.

Though angels were highly respected in Jewish thought, Christ possesses far greater authority.

Then the author compares Jesus to Moses.
Moses was one of Israel's greatest leaders.

Yet Hebrews explains that Jesus is greater.

Hebrews 3:3 says: "Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses..." — Hebrews 3:3 (NIV)

Then Hebrews introduces one of its central themes:

Jesus as the eternal High Priest.

Under the old covenant,
priests offered sacrifices **continually** for sin.

But those sacrifices were temporary and incomplete.

Hebrews explains that Jesus fulfills and surpasses that entire system.

Hebrews 4:14 says: “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.” — Hebrews 4:14 (NIV)

Unlike earthly priests,
Jesus is perfect and sinless.

Hebrews 4:15 says: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses...” — Hebrews 4:15 (NIV)

Jesus understands human suffering and temptation,
yet remained without sin.

Then Hebrews explains the superiority of Christ’s sacrifice.

Under the old system,
sacrifices had to be repeated continually.

But Jesus offered Himself once **for all**.

Hebrews 9:12 says: “He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own **blood**, thus obtaining eternal redemption.” — Hebrews 9:12 (NIV)

That changes everything.

Jesus becomes both:

- The perfect Priest
- The perfect sacrifice

Then Hebrews explains the new covenant.

Hebrews 8:6 says: “But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one...” — Hebrews 8:6 (NIV)

The old covenant pointed forward
to something greater that was fulfilled in Jesus.

Then Hebrews 11 becomes one of the most famous chapters in Scripture.

Often called the “**Hall of Faith**,”
it lists examples of faithful believers from the Old Testament.

Hebrews 11:1 says: “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” — Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)

The chapter highlights:

- Abel
- Noah
- Abraham
- Moses
- Rahab
- David
- Many others

These were individuals that trusted God
despite uncertainty and hardship.

Then Hebrews encourages believers to persevere faithfully.

Hebrews 12:1–2 says: “Let us run with **perseverance** the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus...” — Hebrews 12:1–2 (NIV)

This becomes one of the central applications of the book.

Believers must continue faithfully following Jesus

despite suffering, pressure, or difficulty.

Hebrews repeatedly warns against drifting spiritually.

Yet it also continually points believers
toward confidence, hope,
and endurance through Jesus Christ.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

The Temple System

The Jewish Temple centered around sacrifices,
priests, worship, and covenant rituals.

Hebrews explains how Jesus fulfills these symbols completely.

High Priests

The high priest entered the Most Holy Place once each year
on the Day of Atonement to offer sacrifices for sin.

Sacrificial Offerings

Animal sacrifices symbolized atonement
but could never permanently remove sin.

Jewish Persecution

Early Jewish Christians often faced rejection
from both Jewish communities and Roman authorities.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Supremacy of Christ

Jesus is greater than all previous revelation and systems.

Priesthood

Jesus serves as the eternal High Priest.

Perfect Sacrifice

Christ's sacrifice fully accomplishes redemption.

Faith

Believers trust God even during uncertainty.

Perseverance

Christians are called to endure faithfully.

New Covenant

Jesus fulfills and surpasses the old covenant.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Hebrews centers completely upon Jesus Christ.

Perfect Revelation

Jesus perfectly reveals God.

Great High Priest

Jesus intercedes for believers eternally.

Perfect Sacrifice

Christ's death fully removes sin.

Mediator of the New Covenant

Jesus establishes a better covenant.

Author and Perfecter of Faith

Believers fix their eyes on **Jesus**.

Hebrews 12:2 says: “Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith...” — Hebrews 12:2 (NIV)

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Hebrews reminds modern believers
not to drift spiritually.

Today, modern culture constantly pulls people toward distraction,
compromise, and discouragement.

Many people still struggle with:

- Doubt
- Fear
- Spiritual weariness
- Pressure
- Temptation to compromise

Hebrews repeatedly calls believers
toward perseverance and faithfulness.

The book also reminds believers
that Jesus fully understands human weakness
and suffering.

Believers do not approach a distant Savior.

They approach a compassionate High Priest
who understands human struggle.

Hebrews continually points believers toward confidence

and hope because of Jesus' finished work.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 10 — HEBREWS
Jesus the Great High Priest and Perfect Sacrifice

- Hebrews teaches that Jesus is the eternal High **Priest**.
- Jesus is greater than angels, Moses, and the old **covenant**.
- Jesus perfectly reveals **God**.
- Under the old covenant, sacrifices were repeated **continually**.
- Jesus offered Himself once for **all**.
- Jesus entered the Most Holy Place by His own **blood**.
- Hebrews 11 is often called the Hall of **Faith**.
- Believers are called to run with **perseverance**.
- Jesus is the mediator of a better **covenant**.
- Believers are told to fix their eyes on **Jesus**.

WEEK 11 — JAMES & 1 PETER

Faith in Action and Hope Through Suffering

Main Theme

James and 1 Peter teach that genuine faith produces spiritual **action**, perseverance, holiness, and hope even during suffering and persecution.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

James and 1 Peter are deeply practical books.

Both letters focus heavily on how believers live out their faith in everyday life.

James emphasizes that true faith must produce visible action and spiritual transformation.

1 Peter focuses on how believers should endure suffering faithfully while maintaining hope in Christ.

Together these books remind believers that Christianity is not merely about words or beliefs.

It is about faithful living.

James especially challenges empty religion and spiritual inconsistency.

Peter encourages persecuted believers to remain faithful despite hardship.

Both letters emphasize:

- Holiness
- Endurance
- Humility
- Obedience
- Spiritual maturity
- Faith demonstrated through action

Honestly, these books feel incredibly relevant for modern believers trying to live faithfully within a difficult world.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

James

Author

James, the brother of Jesus
and leader in the Jerusalem church

Also named later, “James the Just”, and “Camel Knees”

Date Written

Approximately AD 45–50
(One of the earliest books written in the New Testament,
only 10 to 15 years after the resurrection)

Historical Context

Jewish Christians were scattered and facing trials,
poverty, and spiritual inconsistency.

The early churches included wealthy landowners,
poor laborers, widows, day workers

James strongly condemns favoritism toward the rich.

He also rebukes wealthy landowners
who exploited workers.

This reflects real economic injustice in first-century Judea.

James 2:2 literally refers to believers gathering in a synagogue
(many English translations render it "meeting").

This suggests many Jewish Christians
were still meeting in settings closely connected to Jewish worship.

It reminds us how closely the earliest Christians
remained connected to Judaism.

Purpose of the Book

James was written to encourage:

- Mature Christian living
- Active faith
- Wisdom
- Endurance during trials

Major Themes

- Faith and works
- Wisdom
- Endurance
- Speech and the tongue
- Humility
- Prayer

Key Events & Passages

- Trials and perseverance
- Asking for wisdom
- Faith without works
- Taming the tongue
- Warning against pride
- Power of prayer

1 Peter

Author

The apostle Peter

Date Written

Approximately AD 62–64

(likely from Rome, which he refers to as Babylon in verse 5:13)

Historical Context

Christians were experiencing persecution
and social rejection throughout the Roman Empire.

These Christians were scattered across hundreds of miles,
many living as small minorities surrounded by pagan culture.

Many had not been physically exiled,
but spiritually they were citizens of Heaven
living in a world that no longer felt like home.

Peter likely wrote during the reign of Emperor Nero

At first Nero's reign appeared promising.
But in AD 64, the Great Fire of Rome changed everything.

Nero blamed Christians for the fire,

launching one of history's first major imperial persecutions.

Many scholars believe Peter wrote shortly before—or during—the beginning of these events.

Because Christians refused to worship Roman gods, many people misunderstood them.

Some accused Christians of:

- atheism (because they rejected the Roman gods)
- disloyalty to Caesar
- secret criminal meetings
- hatred of society

Peter repeatedly tells believers:

Live such honorable lives that these accusations will prove false.

Purpose of the Book

1 Peter was written to encourage believers to:

- Persevere during suffering
- Live holy lives
- Maintain hope in Christ
- Remain faithful under persecution

Major Themes

- Hope
- Holiness
- Suffering
- Perseverance
- Identity in Christ
- Humility

Key Events & Passages

- Living hope
- Chosen people
- Suffering for Christ
- Christ our example
- Casting anxiety on God

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

James begins immediately by addressing suffering and trials.

James 1:2–3 says: “Consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces **perseverance**.” — James 1:2–3 (NIV)

Truthfully, that instruction feels difficult.

Most people naturally avoid suffering.

But James explains that trials can produce spiritual growth and perseverance.

James encourages believers to seek wisdom from God.

James 1:5 says: “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God...” — James 1:5 (NIV)

James repeatedly emphasizes practical obedience.

He warns believers not merely to hear God’s Word but to **do** it.

James 1:22 says: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” — James 1:22 (NIV)

That becomes one of the central themes of the book.

James teaches that faith without **action** is dead.

Then James addresses favoritism and injustice within the church. He warns believers not to value wealthy people above the poor.

James continually emphasizes humility and compassion.

Then James discusses one of humanity's greatest struggles: the tongue.

James 3:5 says:

“The tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts...” — James 3:5 (NIV)

Words carry tremendous power.

James warns that careless speech can cause great destruction.

Then James addresses the relationship between faith and works.

James 2:17 says: “Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” — James 2:17 (NIV)

James is not teaching salvation by works.

Instead, he explains that genuine faith naturally produces transformed living.

Then James emphasizes prayer.

James 5:16 says: “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and **effective**.” — James 5:16 (NIV)

Then 1 Peter addresses believers suffering persecution.

Peter reminds Christians that their ultimate hope is found in Jesus.

1 Peter 1:3 says: “In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” — 1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

That phrase “*living hope*” becomes central throughout the letter.

Peter reminds believers that suffering is temporary, but eternal hope remains secure.

Peter also emphasizes holiness.

1 Peter 1:15 says: “But just as he who called you is holy, so **be holy** in all you do.” — 1 Peter 1:15 (NIV)

Believers are called to reflect God’s character.

Peter also reminds Christians of their spiritual identity.

1 Peter 2:9 says: “But you are a chosen people, a royal **priesthood**, a holy nation...” — 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

That identity gives believers purpose and hope even during suffering.

Peter then points believers toward Jesus as an example.

Jesus suffered faithfully and without sin.

1 Peter 2:21 says: “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example...” — 1 Peter 2:21 (NIV)

Then Peter encourages humility and trust in God.

1 Peter 5:7 says: “Cast all your **anxiety** on him because he cares for you.” — 1 Peter 5:7 (NIV)

That verse continues bringing comfort to believers today.

Both James and Peter call believers toward enduring faithfulness despite suffering, temptation, and difficulty.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Scattered Believers

Many Jewish Christians were dispersed due to persecution and instability.

Roman Persecution

Christians increasingly faced suspicion, rejection, and persecution under Roman rule.

Honor and Status

Ancient cultures often valued wealth and social status heavily. James challenged that favoritism and class division.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Faith in Action

Genuine faith produces spiritual action.

Perseverance

Trials strengthen spiritual endurance.

Wisdom

Believers should seek wisdom from God.

Holiness

Christians are called to reflect God's character.

Hope

Believers possess living hope through Christ.

Humility

God calls believers toward humility and dependence upon Him.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

James and 1 Peter continually point toward Jesus Christ.

Perfect Example

Jesus perfectly modeled obedience and faithfulness.

Suffering Savior

Christ endured suffering faithfully.

Source of Wisdom

Jesus reveals God's wisdom.

Living Hope

The resurrection provides eternal hope.

Holy Savior

Jesus calls believers toward holiness.

Compassionate Shepherd

Christ cares for His people
during suffering and difficulty.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

James and 1 Peter feel incredibly practical for modern life.

Today, modern believers still struggle with:

- Trials
- Temptation
- Pride
- Anxiety
- Careless speech
- Spiritual inconsistency

James reminds believers that faith
should affect everyday behavior.

Christianity is not merely intellectual agreement.

Faith should transform:

- Speech
- Actions
- Relationships
- Priorities

1 Peter reminds believers that suffering
and hardship do not mean God has abandoned them.

Instead, believers continue living with:

- Hope
- Holiness
- Faithfulness
- Perseverance

Both books continually call believers toward mature and authentic **Christian living**.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 11 — JAMES & 1 PETER
Faith in Action and Hope Through Suffering

- Genuine faith produces spiritual **action**.
- The testing of faith produces **perseverance**.
- Believers should not only hear God's Word but also **do** it.
- James teaches that faith without **action** is dead.
- The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and **effective**.
- Peter says believers have a living **hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Christians are called to be **holy** in all they do.
- Believers are described as a chosen people and a royal **priesthood**.
- Peter says:
"Cast all your **anxiety** on him because he cares for you."
- Both books call believers toward faithful Christian **living**.

WEEK 12 — 2 PETER, JUDE & 1 JOHN

Truth, Discernment, and Abiding in God

Main Theme

2 Peter, Jude, and 1 John teach believers
to remain grounded in truth,
reject false teaching, walk in love,
and remain faithful to Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

As the early Church continued growing,
false teachers and spiritual deception became increasing dangers.

These books address problems that still exist today.

Believers faced:

- False doctrine
- Spiritual compromise
- Moral corruption
- Deception
- Division
- Confusion about truth

2 Peter and Jude strongly warn against false teachers
who distort God's truth
for personal gain and sinful living.

1 John focuses heavily on assurance of salvation,
love, obedience, and abiding in Christ.

Together these books remind believers
that truth matters deeply.

Christianity is not based
on personal opinion or cultural trends.

It is rooted in the truth
revealed through Jesus Christ.

These letters repeatedly emphasize:

- Truth
- Discernment
- Holiness
- Obedience
- Love
- Faithfulness

These themes remain incredibly important
in today's modern culture
where truth is often questioned or redefined.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

2 Peter

Author

The apostle Peter

Date Written

Approximately AD 64–68

Historical Context

This is likely the last letter from Peter prior to his death.

Unlike 1 Peter,
where the threat came from Roman persecution,

2 Peter warns about:
false teachers already inside Christian congregations.

False teachers were spreading destructive teachings
and encouraging immoral behavior within the Church.

This marks an important transition in Church history.
The greatest danger was becoming
internal corruption.

Purpose of the Book

2 Peter was written to encourage believers to:

- Grow spiritually
- Reject false teaching
- Remember Christ's return
- Remain faithful to truth

Major Themes

- False teachers
- Spiritual growth
- Knowledge of Christ
- Judgment
- The Day of the Lord

Key Events & Passages

- Adding to faith
- Warning against false teachers
- God's patience
- The coming Day of the Lord

Jude

Author

Jude, the brother of James and half-brother of Jesus

Like James, Jude does not call himself Jesus' brother. Instead, he humbly identifies himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ."

Date Written

Approximately AD 65–80

Historical Context

Jude records a remarkable event:
Michael the archangel disputing with Satan over the body of Moses.

Jude 9 says: "But even the archangel Michael... disputed with the devil about the body of Moses..." — **Jude 9 (NIV)**

This story is not found in the Old Testament.

It appears to come from an ancient Jewish work known as:
The Assumption (or Testament) of Moses.

The book itself has not survived in its complete original form, but early Christian writers knew of it.

No New Testament book speaks more aggressively against false teachers than Jude.

False teachers had secretly entered the Church and were corrupting Christian truth and morality.

Purpose of the Book

Jude was written to urge believers to:

- Defend the faith
- Resist false teaching
- Remain faithful to God

Major Themes

- Apostasy
- Judgment
- False teachers
- Perseverance
- Defending the faith

Key Events & Passages

- Contend for the faith
- Examples of judgment
- Warnings about corrupt leaders
- God's sustaining power

1 John

Author

The apostle John

John was likely in his 80's or 90's when this was written.

He was likely also the last surviving eyewitness of Jesus' ministry

Date Written

Approximately AD 85–95

Historical Context

False teachings denied key truths about Jesus and created confusion among believers.

The danger was no longer simply persecution. It was deception.

Many scholars believe John was confronting an early form of Gnosticism

Gnostics believed:

- physical matter was evil
- spirit alone was good
- Jesus only appeared to have a physical body

Some taught that Jesus never truly became human.

John strongly rejects this.

1 John 4:2 says: "Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God." — 1 John 4:2 (NIV)

This became one of Christianity's earliest defenses of the true humanity of Christ.

Purpose of the Book

1 John was written to provide:

- Assurance of salvation
- Confidence in Christ
- Encouragement toward love and obedience

Major Themes

- Love (No New Testament book speaks more about Love than 1 John. (more than 40 times))
- Truth
- Fellowship with God
- Obedience
- Eternal life
- Assurance

Key Events & Passages

- God is light
- Walking in truth
- God is love
- Testing the spirits
- Confidence in salvation

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

2 Peter begins by encouraging believers to continue growing spiritually.

2 Peter 1:5–7 says: “Make every effort to add to your faith goodness... knowledge... self-control... perseverance... godliness... mutual affection... and love.” — 2 Peter 1:5–7 (NIV)

Spiritual growth should continue throughout the Christian life.

Peter warns believers against becoming spiritually stagnant.

Then Peter strongly warns about **false teachers**.

2 Peter 2:1 says: “But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you...” — 2 Peter 2:1 (NIV)

These false teachers distorted truth
and encouraged sinful living.

Truthfully, Peter’s warning still feels incredibly relevant today.

Not every spiritual message reflects God’s truth.

Believers need discernment.

Peter also reminds believers that Christ will return.

Some people mocked the promise of Christ’s return.
But Peter explains that God’s timing
is different from human timing.

2 Peter 3:9 says: “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise... Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to **perish**...” — 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

God’s patience provides opportunity for repentance.

Then Jude urgently warns believers
to defend the faith.

Jude 1:3 says: “Contend for the **faith** that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people.” — Jude 1:3 (NIV)

Jude explains that false teachers
had secretly entered the Church.

These individuals distorted grace
and rejected God’s authority.

Jude repeatedly warns that rebellion against God leads toward judgment and destruction.

Yet Jude also encourages believers to remain faithful.

Jude 1:24 says: “To him who is able to keep you from **stumbling**...” — Jude 1:24 (NIV)

God remains faithful and able to sustain His people.

Then 1 John focuses heavily on truth, obedience, and love.

John emphasizes that genuine faith produces transformed living.

1 John 1:5 says: “God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.” — 1 John 1:5 (NIV)

Believers are called to walk in truth and holiness.

John also emphasizes confession and forgiveness.

1 John 1:9 says: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins...” — 1 John 1:9 (NIV)

Then John repeatedly emphasizes love.

1 John 4:7 says: “Dear friends, let us love one **another**, (7) for love comes from God.” — 1 John 4:7 (NIV)

And 1 John 4:8 says: “Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is **love**.” (6) — 1 John 4:8 (NIV)

Love becomes evidence
of genuine relationship with God.

John also warns believers
to test spiritual teachings carefully.

1 John 4:1 says: “Do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God...” — 1 John 4:1 (NIV)

Discernment matters deeply.

Then John explains the purpose of his letter.

1 John 5:13 says: “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have **eternal life**.” — 1 John 5:13 (NIV)

Believers can possess confidence
and assurance through Christ.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

False Teachers

False teachers often blended Christianity with immoral behavior, human philosophy, or distorted doctrine.

Greek Philosophies

Some false teachings denied Jesus’ true humanity or minimized sin and holiness.

Apostasy

Apostasy refers to abandoning or rejecting true faith.

Early Church Challenges

The growing Church constantly faced spiritual deception and doctrinal confusion.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Truth

Believers must remain grounded in God's truth.

Discernment

Christians should test teachings carefully.

Love

God calls believers to walk in love.

Obedience

Faith produces faithful living.

Perseverance

Believers remain faithful despite deception and opposition.

Assurance

Christians can possess confidence in salvation through Christ.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

These letters continually center on Jesus Christ.

Source of Truth

Jesus reveals ultimate truth.

Holy Savior

Christ calls believers toward holiness.

Returning Judge

Jesus will ultimately judge evil and falsehood.

Perfect Love

God's love is fully revealed through Christ.

Faithful Protector

Jesus keeps believers secure in Him.

Giver of Eternal Life

Eternal life comes only through Christ.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These letters feel especially relevant today.

Even today, modern cultures are filled with spiritual confusion and competing truth claims.

Believers still face:

- False teaching
- Moral compromise
- Spiritual deception
- Division
- Confusion about truth

These books remind believers that truth still matters deeply.

Not every message labeled spiritual or Christian reflects God's truth.

1 John especially reminds believers that genuine Christianity produces:

- Love
- Obedience
- Holiness
- **Faithfulness**

These books also provide comfort and assurance.

Believers can confidently know they belong to Christ.

God remains faithful to sustain His people even during confusion and opposition.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 12 — 2 PETER, JUDE & 1 JOHN
Truth, Discernment, and Abiding in God

- Believers are called to walk in **love**.
- Peter warned against false **teachers**.
- God is patient, not wanting anyone to **perish**.
- Jude urged believers to contend for the **faith**.
- God is able to keep believers from **stumbling**.
- 1 John says:
“God is **love**.”
- Believers are called to love one **another**.
- Christians should test the **spirits** carefully.
- 1 John was written so believers may know they have eternal **life**.
- Genuine Christianity produces love, obedience, holiness, and **faithfulness**.

WEEK 13 — 2 JOHN & 3 JOHN

Walking in Truth and Faithfulness

Main Theme

2 John and 3 John teach believers to walk in truth,
show discernment regarding false teaching,
and remain faithful in Christian love,
hospitality, and obedience.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

2 John and 3 John are the shortest books in the New Testament.

Yet despite their size,
both letters contain important instructions for the Church.

John emphasizes the connection between:

- Truth
- Love
- Obedience
- Faithfulness

These letters address practical challenges
within the early Christian community.

Believers needed wisdom regarding:

- False teachers
- Christian hospitality
- Church leadership
- Faithful living

2 John especially warns against supporting
false teachers who denied the truth about Jesus Christ.

3 John highlights both good and bad examples of leadership within the Church.

Together these letters remind believers that truth and love must remain connected.

Christian love does not ignore truth.

And truth should always produce Christlike love and faithful living.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

2 John

Author

The apostle John

Date Written

Approximately AD 85–95

Historical Context

False teachers were traveling among churches spreading deceptive teachings about Jesus.

Purpose of the Book

2 John was written to encourage believers to:

- Walk in truth
- Love one another
- Reject false teaching
- Remain obedient to Christ

Major Themes

- Truth
- Love
- Obedience
- Discernment
- Faithfulness

Key Events & Passages

- Walking in truth
- Loving one another
- Warning against deceivers

3 John

Author

The apostle John

Date Written

Approximately AD 85–95

Historical Context

Churches depended heavily upon hospitality and support for traveling Christian teachers and missionaries.

Purpose of the Book

3 John was written to encourage:

- Hospitality
- Faithfulness
- Support for Christian workers
- Godly leadership

Major Themes

- Faithfulness
- Hospitality
- Truth
- Leadership
- Christian support

Key Events & Passages

- Commendation of Gaius
- Warning about Diotrephes
- Example of Demetrius

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

2 John begins with encouragement
to walk faithfully in **truth**.

2 John 1:4 says: “It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking
in the truth...” — 2 John 1:4 (NIV)

John repeatedly emphasizes
that Christian truth should shape everyday living.

Then John reminds believers
of Christ’s command to love one another.

2 John 1:6 says: “And this is love: that we walk in **obedience** to his commands.”
— 2 John 1:6 (NIV)

Biblical love is connected to obedience
and faithfulness.

John then warns believers
about deceivers and false **teachers**.

2 John 1:7 says: “I say this because many deceivers... do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the **flesh**.” — 2 John 1:7 (NIV)

These false teachers denied essential truths about Jesus.

John warns believers to remain spiritually discerning.

2 John 1:10 says: “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or welcome them.” — 2 John 1:10 (NIV)

John is not teaching hatred or cruelty.

Instead, he warns believers
not to support teaching that distorts the Gospel.

Then 3 John shifts toward personal encouragement
and church relationships.

John commends a believer named Gaius
for his faithfulness and **hospitality**.

3 John 1:5 says: “Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters...” — 3 John 1:5 (NIV)

Hospitality played an important role
within the early Church.

Traveling Christian teachers depended upon support
from local believers.

John celebrates Gaius for serving faithfully.

Then John addresses a negative example.

A man named Diotrephes
desired power and rejected proper spiritual authority.

3 John 1:9 says: “Diotrephes, who loves to be **first**, will not welcome us.” — 3 John 1:9 (NIV)

John warns against prideful
and self-centered leadership.

John then points believers toward a positive example
named Demetrius.

3 John 1:11 says: “Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is **good**.” — 3 John 1:11 (NIV)

Both letters emphasize the importance
of faithful Christian living
rooted in truth and love.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Traveling Teachers

Early Christian teachers often traveled
between churches to preach,
teach, and encourage believers.

Hospitality

Hospitality was essential role within the early **Church**
because inns were limited and often unsafe.

False Doctrine

Some false teachers denied the humanity of Jesus Christ and distorted apostolic teaching.

House Churches

Many early churches met within private homes rather than dedicated church buildings.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Truth

Believers are called to walk in truth.

Love

Christian love should reflect obedience to God.

Discernment

Believers must recognize and reject false teaching.

Faithfulness

Christians are called to remain faithful in daily living.

Hospitality

Supporting faithful ministry matters deeply.

Leadership

Godly leadership requires humility and integrity.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

2 John and 3 John continually point believers toward Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the Source of Truth

Jesus reveals God's truth fully.

Perfect Example of Love

Christ demonstrates true sacrificial love.

Incarnate Savior

Jesus came in the flesh as fully God and fully man.

Faithful Shepherd

Jesus models faithful leadership and care.

Lord of the Church

Christ remains the ultimate authority over His people.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These letters remain highly relevant today.

Modern believers still need wisdom regarding:

- False teaching
- Spiritual discernment
- Christian leadership
- Hospitality
- Faithful **living**

2 John reminds believers that love should never abandon truth.

Modern culture often separates the two.

But biblical Christianity holds both together.

3 John also challenges believers regarding pride and leadership.

Leadership should reflect humility,
service, and faithfulness
rather than personal ambition.

These letters encourage believers to:

- Walk in truth
- Support faithful ministry
- Practice discernment
- Love faithfully
- Reject spiritual deception

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 13 — 2 JOHN & 3 JOHN
Walking in Truth and Faithfulness

- Believers are called to walk in **truth**.
- Christian love is connected to **obedience**.
- John warned believers about false **teachers**.
- False teachers denied that Jesus Christ came in the **flesh**.
- Gaius was commended for his faithfulness and **hospitality**.
- Diotrephes loved to be **first**.
- Believers should imitate what is **good**.
- Hospitality played an important role within the early **Church**.
- Jesus is the source of **truth**.
- Christians are called to practice discernment and faithful **living**.

WEEK 14 — REVELATION PART 1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ and the Promise of His Return

Main Theme

Revelation reveals Jesus Christ as the victorious Messiah,
the fulfillment of God's covenant promises,
the coming King,
and the One who will ultimately establish His eternal kingdom.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Revelation is one of the most misunderstood books in the Bible.

Many people approach it focused entirely on:

- Symbols
- Disasters
- Timelines
- Speculation
- Fear

But Revelation is ultimately about Jesus Christ.

The very first verse says: “The revelation from Jesus Christ...” — Revelation 1:1 (NIV)

This book reveals the final fulfillment
of God's redemptive plan.

And understanding Revelation
requires understanding the Old Testament.

Revelation constantly draws from:

- Daniel
- Ezekiel

- Isaiah
- Zechariah
- Exodus
- Psalms

The imagery, symbols, judgments, kingship themes, Temple imagery, covenant language, and Messianic promises all flow directly from the **Old Testament**.

Revelation is deeply connected to God's covenant promises to Israel.

Throughout the Old Testament, God promised Israel:

- A **coming Messiah**
- A coming Kingdom
- Final justice
- Restoration
- Victory over evil
- God dwelling with His people

Revelation presents the fulfillment of those promises through Jesus Christ.

This is the final revelation of the Jewish Messiah who was promised throughout the Old Testament.

The same Messiah promised to:

- Abraham
- Moses
- David
- Isaiah
- Daniel
- Zechariah

is now revealed as the victorious King

who will return and reign forever.

Revelation was written
during a time of severe persecution.

Believers were suffering under Roman oppression.

The Church needed hope, endurance,
and confidence that God remained sovereign.

And Revelation repeatedly declares:
Jesus wins.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Revelation

Author

The apostle John

Date Written

Approximately AD 90–95

Historical Context

John received the Revelation
while exiled on the island of Patmos
during **Roman persecution.** (4)

Patmos was not simply a vacation island.
It was used by Rome as a place of exile,
forced labor and political imprisonment

John wasn't hiding there.
He had been banished because of his preaching.

This makes Revelation literally
a prison letter.

Christians faced pressure to worship the emperor
and compromise their faith.

One of the greatest historical keys to Revelation is
Emperor worship.

Under Emperor Domitian,
citizens were increasingly expected to recognize him as
"Lord and God."

Many cities required citizens to
burn incense before Caesar,
declare loyalty to the emperor,
and participate in emperor worship festivals

Christians refused.
Instead they confessed "Jesus is Lord."

That refusal often cost them jobs,
Businesses, freedom and even their lives

Much of Revelation encourages believers
to remain faithful under this pressure.

Purpose of the Book

Revelation was written to:

- Reveal Jesus Christ
- Encourage persecuted believers
- Warn against compromise
- Demonstrate God's final victory
- Fulfill covenant promises

Major Themes

- The return of Christ
- Judgment
- Worship
- Covenant fulfillment
- Spiritual warfare
- The Kingdom of God
- Victory of the Messiah

Key Events & Passages

- Vision of Christ
- Letters to the churches
- Throne room of heaven
- The Lamb and the scroll
- Judgments and trumpets
- Spiritual warfare
- The rise of evil kingdoms

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Revelation begins with John receiving a vision from Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:7 says: “Look, he is coming with the clouds... and all peoples on earth will mourn because of him.” — Revelation 1:7 (NIV)

That imagery comes directly from Daniel 7 and Old Testament Messianic prophecy.

Jesus is revealed as the returning Messiah and eternal King.

Then John sees Christ standing among seven lampstands

representing seven churches.

Jesus addresses each church individually.

Some churches remained faithful.

Others drifted into compromise, pride, fear,
or spiritual deadness.

Repeatedly Jesus says: “Whoever has ears, let them hear...” — Revelation 2–3
(NIV)

The churches are called toward:

- Faithfulness
- Repentance
- Endurance
- Holiness

Then Revelation shifts into heaven itself.

John sees God seated upon the throne.

Revelation continually emphasizes God’s sovereignty. (8)

No matter how chaotic the world appears,
God still reigns.

Then Revelation introduces one of its central images:
the Lamb.

Revelation 5:5–6 says: “See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed... Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain...” — Revelation 5:5–6 (NIV)

That imagery is deeply Jewish and deeply Messianic.

Jesus is both:

- The Lion of Judah
- The Root of David
- The sacrificial **Lamb**

These titles directly connect Jesus to Old Testament covenant promises.

The Messiah conquers not merely through military power, but through sacrificial redemption.

Then the Lamb alone is worthy to open the scroll.

Revelation 5:9 says: “You are worthy... because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.” — Revelation 5:9 (NIV)

The Messiah’s kingdom extends to all nations.

Then Revelation describes judgments unfolding upon the earth.

These include:

- Seals
- Trumpets
- Bowls

The imagery reflects Old Testament judgment language, especially from:

- Exodus
- Ezekiel
- Daniel
- Zechariah

Revelation also describes spiritual warfare between the kingdom of God and the forces of evil.

The dragon, beasts, and Babylon
symbolize rebellion against God
and the corrupt worldly systems that oppose to His rule.

Yet throughout the book, Christ remains victorious.

Revelation repeatedly reminds believers
not to fear earthly kingdoms.

Because the Kingdom of God will ultimately prevail.

Then Revelation presents worship
surrounding God's throne.

Revelation 7:9 says: "After this I looked, and there before me was a great
multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and
language..." — Revelation 7:9 (NIV)

God's covenant promises
are now extending globally through the Messiah.

Believers from all nations worship together before the throne.

Revelation continually emphasizes endurance.

Believers are called to remain faithful
even during suffering and persecution.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Apocalyptic Literature

Revelation uses symbolic imagery
common within Jewish apocalyptic writings.

This style emphasized spiritual realities,
judgment, and future hope.

Of the New Testament's 404 verses,
hundreds echo or allude to the Old Testament:
especially Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zechariah, Exodus, and the Psalms.

Rather than introducing a new story,
Revelation brings God's redemptive plan to its climax,
fulfilling the promises made throughout the Old Testament

and revealing Jesus as the promised Messiah
who establishes God's eternal kingdom.

Roman Persecution

Christians faced severe pressure to worship the emperor
and participate in pagan religious systems.

Jewish Messianic Expectation

The Old Testament repeatedly promised
a coming King from David's line
who would establish God's eternal kingdom.

Temple Imagery

Revelation contains constant references to:

- The Temple
- Priests
- Altars
- Incense
- Sacrifice
- Covenant worship

These themes connect directly to Old Testament worship systems.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

The Return of Christ

Jesus will return as victorious Messiah and King.

Covenant Fulfillment

God fulfills His promises given throughout the Old Testament.

Judgment

God will ultimately judge evil and rebellion.

Worship

All creation belongs to God and worships Him.

Perseverance

Believers are called to remain faithful.

Victory

Christ ultimately triumphs over evil. (10)

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Revelation fully centers on Jesus Christ.

Promised Messiah

Jesus fulfills the Messianic promises of the Old Testament.

Lion of Judah

Christ fulfills the royal promises given to David's line.

Sacrificial Lamb

Jesus redeems humanity through His blood.

Returning King

Christ will visibly return in glory and power.

Ruler of Nations

Jesus establishes God's eternal kingdom.

Faithful Witness

Christ remains faithful even through suffering and death.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Revelation reminds believers
that history is *moving toward God's final purposes*.

Modern culture often produces:

- Fear
- Confusion
- Anxiety
- Spiritual compromise
- Political obsession

But Revelation repeatedly calls believers toward:

- **Worship** (9)
- Faithfulness
- Endurance
- Hope
- Confidence in Christ

**** *An interesting Observation* ****

Beginning in Revelation 4, something noticeable happens.

The word "church" (ekklesia)
which appears repeatedly in Chapters 1–3,

is never used again for believers on earth throughout the visions of judgment (chapters 4–18).

Instead, Revelation speaks about saints, servants, those who keep God's commandments and those who have the testimony of Jesus

but not "the church" in the same way it did in Chapters 2–3. This observation has become one of the key arguments used by pre-tribulation interpreters, who believe the Church has been caught up to be with Christ before the Tribulation begins.

This structure also fits remarkably well with the Jewish emphasis found throughout Revelation.

After Chapters 2–3, the focus shifts heavily toward themes rooted in God's dealings with Israel and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy:

For this reason, many scholars describe Revelation this way:

- Chapters 1–3: Christ and His Church
- Chapters 4–18: God's judgment on the world and the fulfillment of Israel's prophetic promises
- Chapters 19–22: The return of Christ, His kingdom, final judgment, and the New Creation

But, ultimately the book also reminds believers not to become consumed with speculation while missing the central message.

The central focus of Revelation is Jesus Christ.

And Revelation strongly connects the New Testament

to the Old Testament promises
regarding the coming Messiah and eternal kingdom.

The promises made throughout Jewish Scripture
find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 14 — REVELATION PART 1
The Revelation of Jesus Christ and the Promise of His Return

- Revelation reveals Jesus Christ as the victorious **Messiah**.
- Revelation constantly draws imagery from the Old **Testament**.
- God promised Israel a coming **Messiah** and eternal kingdom.
- Revelation was written during Roman **persecution**.
- Jesus addressed seven **churches**.
- Jesus is called the Lion of the tribe of **Judah**.
- Jesus is also revealed as the sacrificial **Lamb**.
- Revelation emphasizes God's complete **sovereignty**.
- Believers are called toward endurance, faithfulness, and **worship**.
- Revelation teaches that Christ will ultimately triumph over **evil**.

WEEK 15 — REVELATION PART 2

The New Creation and the Eternal Kingdom

Main Theme

Revelation concludes with the final defeat of evil, the full establishment of God's eternal **Kingdom**, and the complete fulfillment of His covenant promises through Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

The final chapters of Revelation bring the Bible's story to completion.

Everything that began in Genesis now finds fulfillment.

In Genesis:

- Sin entered the world
- Death entered humanity
- Creation was cursed
- Humanity was separated from God

But Revelation reveals the final restoration of all things through Jesus Christ.

This is the fulfillment of God's covenant plan promised throughout Scripture.

The promises made to:

- Abraham
- Israel
- David
- The prophets

all move toward this final reality:

God dwelling forever with His people
in His eternal Kingdom.

Revelation Part 2 especially emphasizes:

- Final judgment
- Christ's victory
- The defeat of Satan
- The New Heaven and New Earth
- The New Jerusalem
- Eternal worship
- God's eternal presence

The story of Scripture ends not with destruction,
but with restoration.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Revelation Part 2

Primary Focus

The final chapters of Revelation emphasize:

- Christ's ultimate victory
- Final judgment
- Restoration of creation
- Eternal life
- Fulfillment of God's covenant promises

Major Themes

- Eternal Kingdom
- Judgment
- Restoration
- Eternal life

- God dwelling with humanity
- Victory over evil

Key Events & Passages

- Fall of Babylon
- Return of Christ
- Final judgment
- Defeat of Satan
- New Heaven and New Earth
- New Jerusalem
- River of life
- Final invitation

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Revelation continues by describing the fall of Babylon.

Babylon symbolizes corrupt worldly **systems** (2) opposed to God.

Revelation 18:2 says: “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!” — Revelation 18:2 (NIV)

The kingdoms of the world ultimately collapse before God’s authority.

Then Revelation describes the return of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 19:11 says: “I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True.” — Revelation 19:11 (NIV)

Jesus returns not as the suffering servant, but as the victorious **King and Judge**.(3)

Revelation 19:16 says: “On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” — Revelation 19:16 (NIV)

This fulfills Old Testament expectations regarding the victorious Messianic King.

Then Satan is ultimately **defeated** completely.

Revelation 20:10 says: “And the devil... was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur...” — Revelation 20:10 (NIV)

Evil does not endure forever.
God’s justice ultimately prevails.

Then Revelation describes the final judgment.

Revelation 20:12 says: “And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened...” — Revelation 20:12 (NIV)

Every person ultimately stands before God.

Then Revelation shifts dramatically toward restoration and hope.

Revelation 21:1 says: “Then I saw ‘a new heaven and a **new earth**,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...” — Revelation 21:1 (NIV)

This becomes the fulfillment of God’s redemptive plan.

Creation itself is renewed.

Then John sees the New Jerusalem descending from heaven.

This imagery is deeply connected to Old Testament covenant **promises** regarding:

- Zion
- Jerusalem
- God dwelling with His people
- The Messianic Kingdom

Revelation 21:3 says: “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the **people**, and he will dwell with them.” — Revelation 21:3 (NIV)

This fulfills one of the Bible’s greatest themes:

God dwelling with humanity.

From:

- The Garden of Eden
- The Tabernacle
- The Temple
- Christ dwelling among humanity

Now comes the final eternal fulfillment.

Then Revelation 21:4 says: “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or **pain**...” — Revelation 21:4 (NIV)

Sin, suffering, death,
and sorrow are finally removed.

Then Revelation describes the river of life
and the tree of life.

The imagery intentionally connects back to Genesis.

What humanity lost through sin
is now restored through Christ.

Revelation 22:13 says: “I am the Alpha and the **Omega**, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” — Revelation 22:13 (NIV)

Jesus stands sovereign over all history.

Then Revelation closes with an invitation.

Revelation 22:17 says: “Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.” — Revelation 22:17 (NIV)

Finally, Scripture ends with the promise of Christ’s **return**.

Revelation 22:20 says: “Yes, I am coming soon.” — Revelation 22:20 (NIV)
The Bible closes with hope
centered on Jesus Christ.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Babylon

Babylon symbolized rebellion
against God throughout Scripture.

In Revelation, Babylon also reflects
The corrupt worldly power systems.

New Jerusalem

The New Jerusalem reflects Old Testament promises
regarding God’s eternal kingdom
and restored covenant relationship.

Temple Imagery

Revelation describes God dwelling directly with humanity,

removing the need for a physical Temple.

Revelation 21:22 says: “I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.” — Revelation 21:22 (NIV)

Genesis Connections

The river of life and tree of life
intentionally connect Revelation
back to Eden in Genesis.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

The Eternal Kingdom

God’s eternal **Kingdom** is fully established.

Final Judgment

God ultimately judges evil and rebellion.

Restoration

Creation is renewed and restored.

God Dwelling with Humanity

God lives eternally among His people.

Victory of Christ

Jesus fully conquers sin, death, and evil.

Eternal Hope

Believers possess eternal life and everlasting hope.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Revelation Part 2 fully centers on Jesus Christ.

Victorious King

Jesus returns in glory and power.

Messianic Fulfillment

Christ fulfills Old Testament promises regarding the coming King and eternal kingdom.

Judge of Humanity

Jesus brings final justice.

Lamb of God

The Lamb who was slain reigns forever.

Restorer of Creation

Jesus restores what sin destroyed.

Alpha and Omega

Christ rules over all history from beginning to end.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Revelation reminds believers that history is ultimately moving toward God's purposes.

Modern culture today often produces:

- Fear
- Despair
- Confusion
- Uncertainty
- Hopelessness

But Revelation repeatedly points believers toward eternal hope.

The final message of Scripture is not defeat.

It is victory through Jesus Christ.

Revelation also reminds believers that earthly kingdoms are temporary.

God's eternal Kingdom alone will endure forever.

And the final chapters of Revelation remind believers that the promises of the Old Testament find their fulfillment in Jesus as Messiah.

The covenant story that began with Abraham reaches completion through Jesus' eternal reign.

COMPLETION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT COURSE

Throughout this 15-week journey, the New Testament has revealed:

- Jesus as the promised Messiah
- The fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy
- Salvation through grace and faith
- The birth and growth of the Church
- Christian discipleship and holy living
- Perseverance during suffering
- The supremacy of Christ
- The promise of His return
- God's eternal Kingdom

The New Testament ultimately points toward one central truth:
Jesus Christ is Lord.

From the Gospels to Revelation, Scripture consistently reveals:

- The life of Christ
- The death of Christ
- The resurrection of Christ
- The return of Christ

And the entire biblical story moves
toward the final restoration of all things
through Him.

INSTRUCTOR ANSWER KEY
WEEK 15 — REVELATION PART 2
The New Creation and the Eternal Kingdom

- Revelation concludes with the establishment of God's eternal **Kingdom**.
- Babylon symbolizes corrupt worldly **systems**.
- Jesus returns as victorious King and **Judge**.
- Satan is ultimately **defeated**.
- Revelation describes a new heaven and new **earth**.
- The New Jerusalem fulfills God's covenant **promises**.
- God's dwelling place will be among the **people**.
- There will be no more death, mourning, crying, or **pain**.
- Jesus declared:
"I am the Alpha and the **Omega**."
- The Bible closes with the promise of Christ's **return**.

WEEK 1 — MATTHEW

The King and the Kingdom

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Matthew presents Jesus as the promised _____.
- Jesus is the Son of _____.
- The Kingdom of God is about God's rule, reign, and _____.
- Jesus preached:
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come _____.”
- Peter answered:
“You are the _____, the Son of the living God.”
- Jesus came to address:
 - Sin
 - Death
 - Separation from _____
 - The crucifixion became the means of _____.

- Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples of all _____.

Notes:

WEEK 2 — MARK & LUKE
The Servant King and the Perfect Son of Man

MARK

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

LUKE

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Mark presents Jesus as the suffering _____.
- Luke presents Jesus as the perfect Son of _____.
- Mark repeatedly emphasizes Jesus' _____.
- Jesus said:

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to _____.”

- Luke emphasizes salvation for all _____.
- The parable of the Prodigal Son reveals grace, forgiveness, repentance, and the Father's _____.
- Jesus said:
“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the _____.”
- Jesus demonstrated mercy even while on the _____.
- The resurrection confirms Jesus’ victory over sin and _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 3 — JOHN

The Eternal Son of God

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- John presents Jesus as the eternal Son of _____.
- John 1:1 says:
“In the beginning was the _____.”
- “The Word became _____ and made his dwelling among us.”
- John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb of _____.
- Jesus told Nicodemus that people must be born _____.
- John 3:16 teaches that whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal _____.
- Jesus offered the Samaritan woman “living _____.”
- Jesus said:
“I am the way and the truth and the _____.”
- Thomas declared:
“My Lord and my _____!”

- John continually calls people toward _____ in Jesus Christ.

NOTES:

WEEK 4 — ACTS

The Birth and Expansion of the Church

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Acts records the coming of the Holy _____.
- Jesus told the disciples:
“You will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”
- Pentecost marked the birth of the _____.
- Peter boldly preached and about three thousand people were _____.
- The early believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, worship, and _____.
- Stephen became the first Christian _____.
- Saul encountered Jesus on the road to _____.
- Salvation comes through the _____ of the Lord Jesus.
- Acts teaches that salvation is found in no one else except _____.
- The Church is called to carry the _____ into the world.

WEEK 5 — ROMANS & GALATIANS
Justification by Faith and Freedom in Christ

ROMANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

GALATIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not through human _____.
- Romans 3:23 says:
“For all have _____ and fall short of the glory of God.”
- Salvation is rooted in God’s love and _____.
- A person is justified by _____ apart from the works of the law.

- Romans 8:1 says:

“There is now no _____ for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

- Galatians teaches that believers are free in _____.
- Believers are called to walk by the _____.
- The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, and _____.
- The Gospel changes both identity and _____.
- Romans and Galatians continually point believers toward grace, faith, and the finished work of _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 6 — 1 & 2 CORINTHIANS
Holiness, Unity, and the Wisdom of God

1 CORINTHIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

2 CORINTHIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- The Church is called to live in holiness, unity, love, and spiritual _____.
- Paul warned the Corinthians against church _____.
- God's wisdom is greater than human _____.
- Believers are called to honor God with their _____.
- Without _____, spiritual gifts become empty and meaningless.

- Christ died for our sins and was raised on the third _____.
- Believers are described as “jars of _____.”
- In Christ, believers become a new _____.
- God told Paul:
“My grace is _____ for you.”
- God often works most powerfully through human _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 7 — EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS & PHILEMON
Identity in Christ and Living for the Glory of God

EPHESIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

PHILIPPIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

COLOSSIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

PHILEMON

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Believers are united in _____.
- Salvation comes by grace through _____.
- Believers are called to put on the full armor of _____.
- Paul wrote Philippians while in _____.
- True joy is rooted in _____, not circumstances.
- Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient even to _____ on a cross.
- Colossians teaches that Jesus is supreme over all _____.
- In Christ all the fullness of the _____ lives in bodily form.
- Philemon demonstrates forgiveness and _____.
- Identity and purpose are ultimately found in _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 8 — 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS
Hope, Holiness, and the Return of Christ

1 THESSALONIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

2 THESSALONIANS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Believers are called to live with hopeful expectation as they await the return of _____.
- The Thessalonian believers experienced severe _____.
- God's will is for believers to be _____.
- The return of Christ is meant to produce encouragement and _____.

- Paul taught that the dead in _____ will rise first.
- The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the _____.
- Paul warned believers not to be spiritually _____.
- Christians are called to continue doing what is _____.
- Believers live with hope for the future and faithfulness in the _____.
- The return of Christ remains one of Christianity's greatest sources of _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 9 — 1 & 2 TIMOTHY & TITUS
Sound Doctrine, Godly Leadership, and Faithful Living

1 TIMOTHY

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

2 TIMOTHY

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

TITUS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- These letters emphasize sound _____ and faithful living.
- Paul warned Timothy against false _____.
- Church leadership requires character, integrity, and spiritual _____.
- Timothy was told to set an _____ for the believers.
- Paul said:
“Train yourself to be _____.”
- God has given believers power, love, and self-_____.
- All Scripture is God-_____.
- Paul declared:
“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the _____.”
- Titus teaches that believers should be known for good _____.
- Salvation comes through God’s mercy and _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 10 — HEBREWS
Jesus the Great High Priest and Perfect Sacrifice

1 TIMOTHY

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Hebrews teaches that Jesus is the eternal High _____.
- Jesus is greater than angels, Moses, and the old _____.
- Jesus perfectly reveals _____.
- Under the old covenant, sacrifices were repeated _____.
- Jesus offered Himself once for _____.
- Jesus entered the Most Holy Place by His own _____.
- Hebrews 11 is often called the Hall of _____.
- Believers are called to run with _____.
- Jesus is the mediator of a better _____.
- Believers are told to fix their eyes on _____.

WEEK 11 — JAMES & 1 PETER
Faith in Action and Hope Through Suffering

JAMES

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

1 PETER

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Genuine faith produces spiritual _____.
- The testing of faith produces _____.
- Believers should not only hear God's Word but also _____ it.
- James teaches that faith without _____ is dead.
- The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and _____.

- Peter says believers have a living _____ through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Christians are called to be _____ in all they do.

- Believers are described as a chosen people and a royal _____.

- Peter says:

“Cast all your _____ on him because he cares for you.”

- Both books call believers toward faithful Christian _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 12 — 2 PETER, JUDE & 1 JOHN
Truth, Discernment, and Abiding in God

2 PETER

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

JUDE

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

1 JOHN

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Believers are called to walk in _____.
- Peter warned against false _____.
- God is patient, not wanting anyone to _____.
- Jude urged believers to contend for the _____.
- God is able to keep believers from _____.
- 1 John says:
“God is _____.”
- Believers are called to love one _____.
- Christians should test the _____ carefully.
- 1 John was written so believers may know they have eternal _____.
- Genuine Christianity produces love, obedience, holiness, and _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 13 — 2 JOHN & 3 JOHN
Walking in Truth and Faithfulness

2 JOHN

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

3 JOHN

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Believers are called to walk in _____.
- Christian love is connected to _____.
- John warned believers about false _____.
- False teachers denied that Jesus Christ came in the _____.
- Gaius was commended for his faithfulness and _____.

- Diotrephes loved to be _____.
- Believers should imitate what is _____.
- Hospitality played an important role within the early _____.
- Jesus is the source of _____.
- Christians are called to practice discernment and faithful _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 14 — REVELATION PART 1
The Revelation of Jesus Christ and the Promise of His Return

REVELATION

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Revelation reveals Jesus Christ as the victorious _____.
- Revelation constantly draws imagery from the Old _____.
- God promised Israel a coming _____ and eternal kingdom.
- Revelation was written during Roman _____.
- Jesus addressed seven _____.
- Jesus is called the Lion of the tribe of _____.
- Jesus is also revealed as the sacrificial _____.
- Revelation emphasizes God's complete _____.
- Believers are called toward endurance, faithfulness, and _____.
- Revelation teaches that Christ will ultimately triumph over _____.

WEEK 15 — REVELATION PART 2

The New Creation and the Eternal Kingdom

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Revelation concludes with the establishment of God's eternal _____.
- Babylon symbolizes corrupt worldly _____.
- Jesus returns as victorious King and _____.
- Satan is ultimately _____.
- Revelation describes a new heaven and new _____.
- The New Jerusalem fulfills God's covenant _____.
- God's dwelling place will be among the _____.
- There will be no more death, mourning, crying, or _____.
- Jesus declared:
"I am the Alpha and the _____."
- The Bible closes with the promise of Christ's _____.

NOTES: