

Paul left Titus as Bishop of Crete and gives him advice just as he did to Timothy in Ephesus.

- **Appointing of priests [1]**
- **False teachers [1]**
- **Christian moral life [2]**
- **Advise to Titus [3]**

Philemon [c AD 61-63]

It is the shortest of Paul's letters. Onesimus is a run-away slave who became a Christian. Paul writes on his behalf to his master Philemon asking for clemency. It is believed that Onesimus later became Bishop of Ephesus.



Hebrews [c AD67]

Most theologians now believe that Paul was not the author of this letter. This said, it is an important Scriptural document. It was written to prevent apostasy and dissuade non-Jewish Christians from feeling a need to convert to Judaism beforehand.

- **Christ's Redemption [21]**
- **Higher than Moses [3]**
- **Jesus, high priest [5-7]**
- **Melchizedek [7]**
- **Superior worship [8,9]**
- **Christ's sacrifice [10]**
- **Saved only by faith [11]**
- **Spiritual fathers [13]**

James [c AD 50-58]

We are not exactly sure which James this is. It may be a relative of Jesus or James the Apostle. James (or Jacob in Hebrew) is a common name at the time. Nevertheless, it has a powerful message.

- **Temptation & truth [1]**
- **Faith & good deeds [2]**
- **Uncontrollable language [3]**
- **Disunity of Christians [4]**
- **Warning to the rich [4,5]**

I Peter [c AD 60]

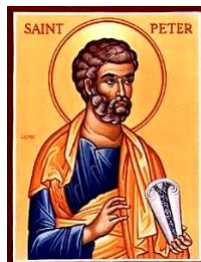
This is a letter from the apostle Peter. It is sent to the churches persecuted in Asia Minor. Note that the word 'Babylon' is a euphemism for 'Rome'.

- **Salvation faith & Hope[1]**
- **Integrity & obligations [2]**
- **Marriage rules [3]**
- **Ministers, be shepherds [5]**

II Peter [c AD 60-80]

This is a letter not thought to be by St Peter but written in Peter's honour (as was the tradition). It was probably after Peter had died but with his teachings in mind.

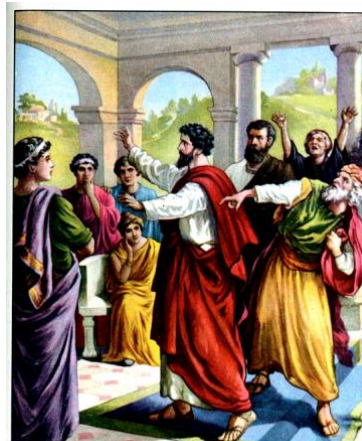
- **False teachers [2]**
- **The day of the Lord [3]**



The Holy Bible (The Letters, Part1)

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Week4



PAUL STIRS UP ANTIOCH

Acts of the Apostles

This letter was written by St Luke in about AD63. It gives us an account of the very early Church and is in some respects a continuation of Luke's Gospel. Both were written to the same high official, Theophilus [see their opening words]. Acts covers Jesus' Resurrection, his Ascension, the Day of Pentecost. It shows the beginning of the ministry of the 12 Apostles' especially St Peter. It details the conversion of St Paul (Saul of Tarsus). The later chapters discuss Paul's return to Jerusalem, his apostolic commission, his arrest and his journey to Rome.

- **Pentecost [Chapter 2]**
- **Peter's leadership [3,4]**
- **Stephen's trial [6,7,8]**
- **Paul's Conversion [9]**

- **Peter's ministry [9-12]**
- **Paul & Barnabas [13-15]**
- **Timothy recruited [16]**
- **Paul in Athens [17]**
- **Corinth church founded [18]**
- **Ephesus Church [19-20]**
- **Paul arrested [21]**
- **Appeals to Caesar [25]**
- **Malta [27]**
- **Rome [28]**

The Pauline Epistles

The Letters of St Paul make up most of the New Testament. They are some of the earliest Christian documents providing insight into the beliefs and controversies of early Christianity. Paul's work is the foundation of today's Christian theology and ethics.

Romans [c AD57-58]

This letter of Paul deals with the understanding of justification and salvation by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ alone. This letter is Paul's theological masterpiece and an intellectual challenge of great substance, clearly offering a breath-taking theological and spiritual vision.

- **Abraham's justification [4]**
- **Salvation by Justification [5]**
- **Baptism of believers [6]**
- **Holy Spirit [8]**
- **Liberty & responsibility [14]**

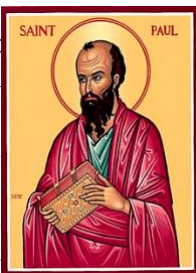
I Corinthians [c AD54]

Paul founded the church in Corinth. His letter to them contains some of the best-known phrases in the New Testament, including 'all things to all men' (9:22), 'without love, I am nothing but a noisy gong' (13:1), 'through a glass dimly' (13:12), and "when I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child" (13:11).

- **Division & Scandal [1-3]**
- **Incest in Corinth [5]**
- **Marriage & Sex [7]**
- **Women's' dress [8]**
- **The Lord's Supper [11]**
- **Spiritual Gifts [12-14]**
- **Love is the greatest gift [13]**
- **Resurrection [15]**

II Corinthians [c AD56]

II Corinthians is probably the most intense. This harsh letter is because he loves them like a father and cares about their spiritual wellbeing. Paul felt the situation in Corinth complicated and felt personally hurt and attacked as some had challenged his authority as an Apostle. He is criticized for the way he speaks and so writes and defends himself with some of his most important teachings. He states the importance of forgiving others, of being a person of Christ



and generously giving to God's people in Jerusalem, who were in great need. We believe two other letters to Corinth have been lost.

- **Corinthians in Crisis [1,2]**
- **Apostolic actions [4]**
- **Christians, be generous [8]**
- **Paul answers critics [10-12]**
- **Boasting for Christ [12]**
- **Paul warns sinners [13]**

Galatians [c AD57-58]

This letter of Paul to the Christians in Galatia in central Anatolia [modern day Turkey], is mainly concerned with the controversy surrounding Gentile (non-Jewish) Christians. This, and his letter to the Romans, is of great significance theologically.

- **Paul's reprimand [1]**
- **His apostolic credentials [2]**
- **Freedom in Christ [5-6]**

Ephesians [c AD61-63]

This is the "Queen of the Epistles", and one of Paul's letters written while he was in prison in Rome. Paul addressed issues about a community with diverse cultural backgrounds. Very topical today.

- **God's salvation plan [1]**
- **Salvation is free [2]**
- **The Sword of the Spirit [3]**
- **Call to unity [4]**
- **Husbands and wives [5]**
- **Children, be obedient [6]**

Philippians [c AD56-61]

This letter is written to the church at Philippi, one of the earliest churches to be founded in Europe.

- **Humility [2]**
- **The True way [3]**
- **Last advice [4]**

Colossians [c AD61-63]

Members of this congregation had incorporated pagan elements into their practice, including worship of dead spirits. Paul declared Christ's supremacy over the entire created universe and urged Christians to lead godly lives. He again rebuffs any division between Jewish and non-Jewish Christians.

- **Christ is the head of all [1]**
- **Against false teachings [2]**
- **Husbands and wives [3]**

I Thessalonians [AD50]

This is possibly the oldest existing Christian document. In these two letters, Paul reminds the Christians of Thessaloniki of his life with them and answers some concerns which have arisen in the church. He corrects some spurious notions about the fate of those who die, explaining that the dead will be resurrected, and dealt with prior to those still living.

- **Thanksgiving [1]**
- **Timothy's ministry [3]**
- **Live in holiness & love [4]**
- **Respect for ministers [4]**
- **How Christians should be [4]**

II Thessalonians [AD51]

- **Last judgment [1]**
- **Christ's return [2]**
- **Idleness & disunity [3]**

I Timothy [c AD65]

This, letter with II Timothy and Titus, is one of the three 'Pastoral letters'. Timothy in time becomes the Bishop of Ephesus and this letter gives him directives on the forms of worship, the organization of the Church, and the bishop's (*Episcopus*) responsibilities and that of deacons (*Diaconi*). Paul also has worries about false teachers.



In this letter we read about: -

- **Troubles in Ephesus [1]**
- **Women in church [2]**
- **Who can be a Bishop [3]**
- **Who can be a Deacon [3]**
- **Rejecting false Teachers [4]**
- **The Corinthian Crisis [1,2]**
- **Pastoral practice [5]**
- **Elders (priests) [5]**
- **Wrong teachings again [6]**
- **Rich Christians [6]**

II Timothy [c AD65]

- **False teachers again [2]**
- **The last days [3]**

Titus [c AD65]

This letter to Titus, is the last of the three pastoral letters. (PTO)

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I John [c AD 100-110]

This is the fourth 'catholic' or 'general' epistle and attributed to John the Evangelist the author of the Gospel of John and the other two epistles of John. It's not actually a letter, but more a sermon, written to counter heresies that Jesus did not come "in the flesh," but only as a spirit. It also defines how Christians are to discern true teachers: by their ethics, and their declaration of God's love.

- **God is light [chapter 1]**
- **The Commandments [2]**
- **Against Christ's enemies [2]**
- **God's children [3]**
- **Love and Faith [4,5]**

II John

The epistle is the shortest book in the Bible, comprising a mere thirteen verses and speaks of Love and Christ's enemies.

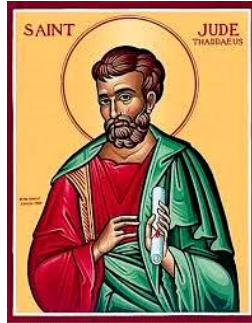
III John

This letter is to encourage and strengthen Caius, and to warn him against the party headed by Diotrefes, who refuses to cooperate. The letter is signed by one who calls himself the *presbyteros* [the priest].

Jude [c AD 70-80]

This letter warns Christians about the doctrine of certain errant teachers to which they were exposed. It's about: -

- **False teachers again!**
- **Violent language**
- **Vicious behaviour**



Revelation [Apocalypse]

The last book of the Christian Bible is a coded letter to the churches of Asia minor warning them of danger. John uses the code '666' for the Emperor and when speaking of Rome, he uses the word 'Babylon' which was the Jew's eternal archenemy. By using codes, John protects the reader from possible arrest. It's the only biblical book wholly composed of apocalyptic literature. It is one of the most controversial books of the Bible. Although it's now known as the 'Book of Revelation', the earliest manuscripts give it the title: "The Apocalypse of John".

The main aspects of Revelation: -

- **John's vision [1]**
- **The 7 Churches of Asia [2-3]**
- **Jesus- the Lamb of God [4]**
- **God in his Heaven [5]**
- **The Seven Seals [6]**
- **The Great Day comes [8]**
- **The Angels [8]**
- **Punishment [10]**
- **The Woman & a dragon [12]**
- **The beast [13]**
- **Bowls of plagues [15-16]**
- **Punishment of 'Babylon' [17]**
- **The Fall of 'Babylon' [18]**
- **Last Judgment [20]**
- **Heavenly Jerusalem [21]**
- **The Epilogue [22]**

Summary

This Bible overview is produced to teach in an uncomplicated way, the make-up of the Bible and show where some of the main stories are situated. It is written to encourage others to read the scriptures with

excitement and to show that the Bible is not a 'boring old book'. Properly read it shows the wisdom of our ancestors and how they lived. It is written by people who did not have 21st Century scientific wisdom and understanding. It often uses 'poetic', 'conventional' and 'mythological' truths to convey what are very difficult concepts to a people with limited educational development.

The Bible is full of picture language especially in the Old Testament where truth is often found below the surface of the words. I pray that you have deepened your knowledge of Holy Scripture and of Jesus Christ our Lord this Lent.

Fr Brian

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