

NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

LESSON SERIES

UNIT VI – GENERAL EPISTLES

**THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER
THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER
THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN
THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN
THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN
THE EPISTLE OF JUDE**

for

**CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
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**UNIT VI - NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY
GENERAL EPISTLES****A. THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER**

WRITER: Simon Peter (1:1)

Peter has been called the ignorant fisherman. but no man who had spent three years in the school of Jesus could be called ignorant. and the Epistles of Peter confirm this.

A great change is seen in the life of Peter from these epistles. He had been impetuous, but now he is patient. The transforming power of the Gospel had wrought this change in his life.

DATE: 64-67.

Peter wrote his two epistles and was put to death sometime during this period First Peter was written, evidently, around 64 A.D. and 2 Peter a short time later.

PLACE: Babylon

Although the place from which it was written has been the preeminent problem of this epistle, it is given as Babylon (5:13). Many treat this in a metaphorical sense as meaning Rome. However, the legend that Peter was in Rome for 25 years preceding his martyrdom is grounded in the apocryphal writings of the heretical Ebionites.

The list of countries in 1 Peter 1:1 is from east to west, which suggests that the writer was in the east at the time of writing. Furthermore, Babylon is directly mentioned as the origin, and this epistle was written before Rome was called Babylon in a symbolic way in the Book of Revelation. Also, the direct manner of Peter's writing to the extent of bluntness, contradicts the theory that he used Babylon in a symbolic way. If Peter had meant Rome, the chances are that he would have said Rome. There was at this time a large colony of Jews in ancient Babylon who had fled Rome due to severe persecution under Claudius, and at the time of writing bloody Nero was on the throne. This is in harmony with the theme of the epistle. In spite of the fact that Papias mentions the death of Peter as occurring in Rome, there is no substantial historical basis for this supposition.

THEME: Christian hope in the time of trial

Peter deals with doctrine and handles weighty subjects. This is seen in his treatment of the great words of the Gospel. many of which are gathered together at the outset (1:2) - elect, foreknowledge, sanctification, obedience, blood and the Trinity. He used some of these words several times. Added to these are: salvation (used 3 times), revelation (with cognate words, used 5 times), glory (with cognate words, used 16 times), faith (5 times), and hope (4 times).

Peter has been called he *apostle of hope*; Paul, the *apostle of faith*; John, the *apostle of love*.

The word that conveys the theme, however, is *suffering* (which, with cognate words, occurs 16 times). The word hope is tied to it - the Christian hope in the time of trial.

OUTLINE:**I. SUFFERING and the SECURITY of Believers, 1:1-9**

Produces Joy

II. SUFFERING and the SCRIPTURES, 1:10-25

Produces Holiness

III. SUFFERING and the SUFFERING of CHRIST, Chapters 2-4

1. Produces Separation, Chapter 2
2. Produces Christian Conduct, Chapter 3
3.
 1. Conduct in the Home, 3:1-7
 2. Conduct in the Church, 3:8-17
 3. Christ's Suffering Preached by the Spirit in Noah's Day. 3:18-22
4. Produces obedience to the Will of God. Chapter 4

IV. SUFFERING and the SECOND COMING of CHRIST, Chapter 5

1. Produces Service and Hope, 5:14
2. Produces Humility and Patience, 5:5-14

EXPANDED OUTLINE**I. SUFFERING and the SECURITY of Believers, 1:1-9**

v.1 "Peter" - his name was Simon, but the Lord gave him a new name. It is appropriate that he use it (Also Saul of Tarsus became Paul.)

"Strangers scattered" is properly *elect who are sojourners*. This epistle is *directed to Jews out of Palestine, located in Asia Minor*

v.2 "Elect - John 6:37 is the test of your election.

"Foreknowledge" is God's side of salvation. Here we have the work of the Trinity in salvation:

(1) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God" - God the Father;

(2) "Sanctification of the Spirit" ("practical sanctification) - God the Holy Spirit;

(3) "Blood of Jesus Christ" ("proof of election) "obedience" - God the Son.

"Sprinkling" is a picture of Passover when blood was sprinkled on doorposts.

"Grace and peace" - same formula as used by Paul.

v.3 Looks to past.

"Blessed" - paean of praise. Only believers have a songbook.

"Begotten" refers to the new birth (see v. 23).

"Living hope" - Jesus Christ is alive because He rose from the dead. Peter was sure of resurrection (Luke 24:34).

v.4 Looks to the future.

Israel was journeying to the promised land. The church is journeying to the New Jerusalem. Each believer has an inheritance.

"Incorruptible" in *non-destructible*-no germ, rust, moth or enemy can destroy it.

"Unfiled" is not *stained* or *not defiled*. Our inheritance is not received illegally.

"Fadeth not away" is *not withered*. The loveliness of our inheritance is not withered; no season, change of weather, nor drought affects it; it is in perpetual spring.

"Reserved" in heaven is *guarded* [John 17:11,12].

v.5 Looks to present

"Kept"- A Scotsman who was economical had this one word placed on his tombstone. It was enough.

"By the power of God" (see John 10:27,28).

v.6 This is the key verse of the epistle.

"Temptations" is *testings* or *trials*. Rejoicing in trials and suffering is a strange combination. Testing produces joy - it is the end result (Heb. 12:11). *Suffering occurs 16 times* in this epistle.

v.7 "Precious" occurs 7 times, the big fisherman uses this word

As metal is subjected to the furnace in order to draw off the dross and refine it, the child of God is permitted to suffer for the purpose of refinement.

vv. 8,9 Simon Peter had seen Christ personally, but most of the believers had not. The Holy Spirit had made Him real to them, and they loved Him. Think what it will be when we do see Him!

II. SUFFERING and the SCRIPTURES, 1:10-25

- v.10 Salvation was a subject of prophecy. Prophets and apostles bore witness "in the mouth of two witnesses...."
- v.11 Prophets did not distinguish between the first and second comings of Christ
- v.10 Grace suffering (Isa. 53; Psa. 22)
- v.11 Glory-sovereignty (Isa. 11; Psa. 45)
- v.12 The apostles delivered the Gospel. Although angels desired to, they were not permitted to preach the Gospel.
- v.13 "Hope"-Peter is the apostle of hope. The Scriptures give hope.
- v.14 The Scriptures also lead to obedience (see v.2).
- v.15 Holiness is to the spiritual life what health is to the body. Be mature. Grow up.
- v.16 The only holiness we have is in Christ. God wants us to grow that we may be like Him. This is the ideal.
- v.17 The second reason to be holy is that the Lord Jesus Christ is also the Judge.
- vv.18,19 Is the life I am living worth the price He paid for my redemption?
- v.20 "Foreordained" is *foreknown*.
- v.21 "Hope - the resurrection of Christ is the basis of hope.
- v.22 Transforming hope leads to obedience of the Scriptures and love of the brethren.
- v.23 "Being born again" is *having been begotten again*. The Word of God is the instrument of God for producing *the* new birth. The Word of God is not sterile; it is living and powerful.
- vv.24,25 Man's feebleness and frailty is compared to the grass in contrast to the Word of God that is life-giving and eternal (Psa119:89).

III. SUFFERING and the SUFFERING of CHRIST, Chapters 2-4

1. Produces Separation, Chapter 2

- v.1 "Malice" is *congealed anger* It is an unforgiving spirit.
- "Guile" is the spirit of using cleverness to get even. Real separation is from the works of the flesh.
- v.2 "Sincere milk" is *spiritual milk*. Just as a hungry baby reaches for the bottle, a believer *is* to desire the Word.
- v.3 At the moment of salvation a person is born with an appetite for the Word.

v.4 The living stone is Christ (Matt 21:42,44). Peter identifies the stone as Christ

This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner [Acts 4:11].

v.5 Believers are living stones that are built on Christ (Eph. 2:19,20; 1 Cor. 3:11). They constitute a living temple in which spiritual sacrifices of praise, possessions, and one's person are presented.

v.6 This is a quotation from Isa. 28:16 (see also Rom. 9:33).

v.7 A better translation is *For you therefore which believe is the precious-'Less.*

"Disallowed" is *rejected*. It refers to a tradition at the time of building Solomon's temple (see Psa 118:22; Matt 21:42; Ex. 17:6).

v.8 Christ is either a stepping stone or a stumbling stone. Christ in the Word of God is a stumbling stone to many.

v.9 A Christian is to live a life commensurate with his position in Christ This is normal Christian living.

(a) "Chosen generation"- these are believers who belong to a chosen generation because of the new birth. If you want to know if you belong to the elect, the real test is: Have you come? (John 6:37).

(b) "Royal priesthood - believers are priests. Israel had a priesthood; the church *is* a priesthood.

(c) "Holy nation"- believers are *holy* because of their position in Christ. They are *a nation* because they are a new entity in the world (1 Cor. 10:32).

(d) "Peculiar people" - not oddballs or weird. It literally means *a people for acquisition*, a people for God's own possession.

"Show forth the praises" is *publish or tell abroad His virtues*.

v.10 The same statement is made concerning the Gentiles in Eph. 2:11, 12.

v.11 Christians are to publish His praises by not manifesting the works of the flesh.

v.12 Believers who are in business show forth His praises by honesty.

vv. 13-15 Believers who submit to governments and those in authority reveal the praise of God.

vv. 16, 17 A believer's relationship to others speaks louder than the pulpit. We are to treat all men equally.

vv. 18-20 Christians in labor relationships also reveal the praise of God when their attitudes and actions are mild and far.

vv. 21-23 The suffering of Christ is the theme of the remainder of this chapter. Christ suffered vicariously to set us an example as well as for our sins,

v.24 Christ suffered a vicarious, substitutionary death for our sins.

"By whose stripes ye were healed" is a quotation from Isa. 53. Healing at CALVARY!!

v.25 Humanity (both lost and saved) is called sheep.

2. Produces Christian Conduct, Chapter 3

(1) Conduct in the Home, 3:1-7

v.1 "Likewise" is in *like manner*

"Be in subjection" is *submitting yourselves*. This is a voluntary step, not a command. Obviously *this* refers to an unsaved husband who will not *hear* the Word of God, but who might be won by the conduct of the wife. This is real personal evangelism.

v.2 "Conversation" is *behavior*:

v.3 This is a reference to Roman styles of arranging the hair and wearing of jewelry. which is very similar to modern styles. A Christian woman may win a husband by sex appeal, but she can never win him to the Lord by sex appeal.

v.4 Inward, not outward. adornment wins the lost husband.

vv. 5,6 Sarah and the other wives of the patriarchs did not hold their husbands by sex appeal.

v. 7 Christian husbands are to love and honor their wives because of their intelligent understanding of the marriage relationship. The apostle indicates that the prayers of a family are not answered when the marriage relationship is not right.

(2) Conduct in the Church, 3:8-17

v.8 Believers are to be *like-minded, sympathetic, tenderhearted, and courteous* (which means *humble minded*).

v.9 this is turning the other cheek.

vv. 10-11 For the one who loves life and really wants to live, here is the key.

v.12 God has not guaranteed to hear the prayers of those who do evil. but He has guaranteed to hear the prayers of His own (see Psa 34:15,16).

v. 14 Suffering for the right should bring joy to the child of God.

- v.15 By our lives and lips we can sanctify God in our hearts. Our lives should bring glory to God. Also, the believer should be able to explain his position in Christ
- v.16 Be sure that those who speak evil of you are in error.
- v.17 Be sure our suffering comes to us because of doing good, not evil.
- (3) Christ's Suffering Preached by the Spirit in Noah's Day, 3:18-22
- v.18 Again, Christ's suffering for our sins is cited as the hope in our suffering.
- v.19 when did Christ preach to the spirits in prison? In His day or in Noah's day? The next verse answers it.
- v.20 "When" is the key word. It was in the days of Noah. Noah preached the Gospel in his day. In Christ's day, the spirits of those men to whom Noah had preached were in prison, for they had rejected the message of Noah.
- v.21 "Baptism" is *identification*.
- "In Christ" is salvation - a believer *is* identified with Him.
- v.22 We are seated in Christ in heaven.
- 1. Produces Obedience to the Will of God, Chapter 4**
- v.1 God permits us to suffer sometimes to keep us from going into sin. A child of God with anew nature longs to please Christ in all things.
- v.2 The child of God can no longer be satisfied to live in the flesh.
- v.3 This is the life of the unbeliever.
- v.4 The unbeliever cannot understand what has happened to a sinner when he is saved.
- v.5 The believer knows that he must come before the judgment seat of Christ
- v. 6 These were dead in trespasses and sins (see John 5:24; Eph. 2:1).
- v.7 The coming of the Lord is an incentive to living in obedience to Christ.
- v.8 See Prov.10:12.
- v.10 Every believer has a gift.
- v.11 Gifts are to be administered in the power of the Spirit.
- v.12 "To try." is literally *trying*; "happened" is *were happening*. These believers were already being tested by suffering. Suffering is not accidental, but it is normal Christian experience.

"Fiery trial" is literally *smelled in a furnace*.

v.13 The believer *is partaking* of Christ's sufferings *in* his own suffering (see Rom. 8:17).

v.14 The believer is to rejoice *if* he is reprov'd for Christ's sake.

v.15 The believer should not *stiffer as a sinner*.

v.16 He is to suffer as a Christian.

v.17 Believers are to appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10).

v.18 The righteous are saved only by their *faith* in Christ.

v.19 This is the comfort of a suffering saint.

IV. SUFFERING and the SECOND COMING of Christ, Chapter 5

1. Produces Service and Hope, 5:1-4

v.1 Peter calls himself a *fellow elder*. He never claimed a superior place above his brethren.

v.2 The business of the elder or minister is to feed the flock of God. He is to do this willingly and not for money. The test of any cult or Christian organization is how much money it is spending on itself. Is it a religious racket?

v.3 The leader is an example.

v.4 The chief Shepherd will reward His own for service.

2. Produces Humility and Patience, 5:5-14

vv.5.6 In view of the coming of Christ, humility should be the attitude of the child of God. Christ will establish justice and make things right when He comes.

v.7 "Care" *is anxiety* (see Matt 6:25).

v.8 "Be sober" *is be intelligent*. The believer is in an evil and dangerous world.

v.9 See *Jas. 4:7*.

v.10 Suffering is on God's agenda for the believer.

v.11 this is a benediction.

v.12 This is a personal P.S.

v.13 "Babylon" thought by some to be a figurative name, is, in our judgment, literal Babylon.

v.14 This is the final benediction.

B. THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

WRITER: Simon Peter

The Petrine authorship has been challenged more than the authorship of any other book in the New Testament. Dr Moorehead said, "The Second Epistle of Peter comes to us with less historical support of its genuineness than any other book of the New Testament." However, this has caused conservative scholars to give adequate attention to this epistle so that today it is well established that Peter wrote this letter. The autobiographical sections afford internal evidence of the Petrine authorship (see 2 Pet. 1:13,14; 1:16-18; 3:1).

DATE: About A. D. 66

This second epistle was written shortly after his first epistle (3:1) and a short while before his martyrdom (1:18,14).
(See 1 Peter)

THEME

This is the "swan song" of Peter, as 2 Timothy is the "swan song" of Paul. There is a striking similarity. Both epistles put up a warning sign along the pilgrim pathway the church is traveling to identify the awful apostasy that was on the way at that time and now in our time has arrived. What was then like a cloud the size of a man's hand today envelops the sky and produces a storm of hurricane proportions. Peter warns of heresy among teachers, as Paul warns of heresy among the laity. Both Peter and Paul speak in a joyful manner of their approaching death (2 Pet. 1:13,14; 2 Tim. 4:6-8). Both apostles anchor the church on the Scriptures as the only defense against the coming storm.

The similarity of 2 Peter to Paul's last epistle, 2 Timothy explains the sharp contrast between Peter's first and second letters. The subject has changed, and the difference is as great as that which exists between Paul's letters to the Romans and to Timothy.

Nevertheless, the theme is explained on the basis of the words which Peter uses here as contrasted to his first epistle. The words are different, with the exception of the word *precious*, which occurs in this epistle twice in the first chapter likewise, the word *faith* occurs twice in the first chapter.

The characteristic word is *knowledge* (occurring 16 times with cognate words). The epitome of the epistle is expressed in the injunction contained in the final verse:

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen [2 Pet. 3:18].

True gnosticism is not some esoteric information concerning a form or formula, a rite or ritual, nor is it some secret order or password. It is to know Jesus Christ as He is revealed to man in the Word of God. This is the secret of life and of Christian living (see John 17:3).

OUTLINE:

I. ADDITION of Christian Graces Gives Assurance, 1:1-14

"The full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" is the foundation on which Christian character is built

II. AUTHORITY of the Scriptures Attested by Fulfilled Prophecy, 1:15-21

Scriptures give light for obedience in dark days.

III. APOSTASY Brought In by False Teachers, Chapter 2

Church should beware of false teachers and not false prophets.

IV. ATTITUDE Toward Return of the Lord, a Test of Apostates, 3:14**V. AGENDA of God for the World, 3:5-13**

1. Past World, 3:5,6
2. Present World, 3:7-12
3. Future World, 3:13

VI. ADMONITION to Believers, 3:14-18

Knowledge of God's program is an incentive to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

EXPANDED OUTLINE**I. ADDITION of Christian Graces Gives Assurance, 1:1-14**

v.1 "Simon Peter" - the name *Simon* appears here, but it does not in 1 Pet. 1:1. *Christ* never stands alone in this epistle; *Jesus* is added here, elsewhere *Savior* and *Lord* are also added.

v.2 "Knowledge" occurs 9 times (with cognates) in this chapter:

v.3 His blessings come through the "knowledge of Him."

"Virtue" is *excellence*.

v.4 "Precious promises" come through the *knowledge of Him*. "Partakers of the divine nature" come through the *knowledge of Him* (John 17:3).

v.5-7 These graces are not given in the order of their priority One does not depend upon the other, but they are placed in orderly sequence.

"And beside this" is *for this very cause*. "Add" is *supply* - have all the graces. "Virtue" is *excellence with energy* "Temperance" is *self-control*. "Brotherly kindness" is *love of the brethren*. This is enthusiasm for the knowledge of Christ,

v.8 "Barren" is *idle*. Paul's great desire was to know Christ (Phil. 3:10~).

v.9 Sterility and lack of enthusiasm may lead to the place where the believer will forget he has been saved.

v.10 Make your calling and election *more* sure. It is possible to believe in the security of the believer but lack the assurance of salvation.

- Security of the believer is objective,
- Assurance of salvation is subjective.

vv.11-13 Peter felt called to stir up these saints to grow in grace lest spiritual senility set in.

v.14 Tradition tells us that Peter was crucified with his head down because he was not worthy to die as Christ did (John 21:18,19).

II. AUTHORITY of Scriptures Attested by Fulfilled Prophecy, 1:15-21

v.15 "Decease" is *exodus*. In light of his approaching death. Peter calls attention to that which should be remembered.

v.16 "Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses" - when did this take place? The next verse explains.

vv.17,18 This is a reference to the Transfiguration and offers the explanation for Matthew's strange statement (see Matt. 16:28). Matthew follows this with an account of the Transfiguration.

v.19 Something more reliable and trustworthy than being an eye witness to the Transfiguration is "a more sure word of prophecy." Scripture is a light that is focused on the appearing of the "day star."

v.20 No prophecy of the Scripture is to be interpreted apart from other references to the same subject.

v.21 "Holy men" were men set apart for the task of writing Scripture. They were carried along by the Holy Spirit like a sailboat is carried by the wind.

III. APOSTASY Brought in by False Teachers, Chapter 2

v.1 "False prophets" brought in heresy to the nation Israel.

"False teachers" are the bearers of heresy and apostasy into the church. One of the marks of identification is that they deny Christ's work of redemption for them.

v.2 False followers will go after false teachers. God's elect cannot be permanently deceived. 1 Cor. 11:19 explains the reasons why God permits cults.

v.3 "Covetousness" is another mark of a false teacher. The apostle gives a list of 3 types of apostates in the past who will appear in the future.

v.4 (1) "Angels that sinned" - even some angels rebelled against God. Rebellion against God will appear in the last days (see Psa. 2:1-3).

v.5 (2) The ungodly of Noah's day left God out of their lives. even in eating and drinking and in marriage (Matt. 24:37-39).

v.6 (3) Gross immorality characterized Sodom and Gomorrah (see Rom. 1:24-32).

vv. 7,8 This is enlightening. The record in Genesis does not make it clear that Lot was a righteous man; in fact, it implies the opposite.

v.9 God can and will do 2 things, of which Lot's experience is an illustration:

(1) "Deliver the godly out of temptation,"

(2) "Keep the unjust for judgment."

v.10 These are total apostates, hopeless.

v.11 Angels would not presume to do such things.

v.12 These apostates are like animals.

vv.14-22 This is a striking, frightful, and bold description of apostates.

v.15 "Following the way of Balaam" is being covetous, willing to sell his gift for money

v.20 These apostates have a head knowledge. They know the truth but have not received a love of the truth.

v.22 This is a frightful and awful description of an apostate. This is Peter's parable of the prodigal pig - "the sow that was washed." The pig professed to like the father's house, but he returned to the pigpen of his old man. (See Jude for a more complete description of apostates.)

IV. ATTITUDE Toward Return of the Lord, a Test of Apostates, 3:1-4

v.1 This indicates that Peter wrote this second letter "Pure minds" are *sincere minds*.

v.2 "Holy prophets" refer to the Old Testament prophets. "Apostles" are New Testament apostles.

v.3 Both prophets and apostles have warned that scoffers will come in mockery

v.4 They ridicule the coming of Christ on the false premise that there has been no great cataclysm since the creation.

V. AGENDA of God for the World, 3:5-13

vv.5,6 (1) *The world that was* - from creation to Noah. The pre-flood world was destroyed by water.

v.7 (2) *The world that is* - from Noah to the new heaven and new earth. The present world will be destroyed by fire.

vv. 8,9 The seeming delay does not mean that the Lord is not coming or that He has had to change or postpone His coming.

v.10 "Noise" (Greek *rhoiredon*) is the word used for the swish of an arrow, the rush of wings, the splash of water the hiss of a serpent.

"Melt" is *dissolve*.

"Elements" refer to basic material, atoms, the building blocks of the universe.

"Fervent heat" is energy. These descriptive words make us think of an atomic explosion.

v.11 In view of these inevitable facts of the future, the lives of believers now should become serious and important.

v.12 This is another description of the destruction of the present world that sounds like an atomic explosion.

v.13 (3) *The world that shall be* - the new heaven and the new earth, which will never be destroyed.

VI. ADMONITION to Believers, 3:14-18

v.14 This leads to holy living.

v.15 Patient waiting is mental adjustment to the present world situation. Paul also wrote of these things.

v.16 Peter admits that Paul wrote of truth in depth - but so did Peter.

v.17 The coming of Christ should make for a stable and steadfast life.

v.18 This is the all-important program for the child of God now. Paul said, "Study" Peter said, "Grow." Both refer believers to the Bible and the study of it.

C. THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

WRITER: John the Apostle

DATE: A.D. 90-100

John evidently wrote his Gospel first, then his Epistles, and finally the Book of Revelation before his death about A.D. 100

PURPOSE:

John expressed the purpose for his writing in each of the 3 types of revelation:

His *Gospel* in John 20:30,31:

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

His first *Epistle* in 1 John 5:13:

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

His *Revelation* in Rev. 1:19:

Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter

Actually there is a fivefold purpose expressed in 1 John:

1. 1:3 "That ye may have fellowship with us [other believers] and with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ."
2. 1:4 "That your joy may be full."
3. 2:1 "That ye sin not."
4. 5:13 "That ye may know that ye have eternal life."
5. 5:13 "That ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

THE FAMILY OF GOD:

This epistle has been called the *sanctum sanctorum* of the New Testament. It takes the child of God across the threshold into the fellowship of the Father's home. It is the *family* epistle; John is writing here to the family of God. *Father* is used 13 times, and *little children* 11 times. Paul wrote to the church; John wrote to the family. The church is a body of believers in the position where we are blessed "with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ." We are given that position when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. In the family we have a relationship which can be broken, but it is restored when "we confess our sins." Then "he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

The body of believers are in the family of God, the family is larger than the body of believers. The body of believers and the family are both in the kingdom of God, but they are not synonymous terms.

KEY WORDS:

Light (used 6 times); love (used 33 times); life (used 15 times; fellowship (used 4 times); know (used 38 times - John wrote to meet the first heresy which entered the church. It was Gnosticism, which boasted super knowledge. It accepted the deity of Jesus. but it denied His humanity. John gives us the true gnosticism - knowledge.

OUTLINE:**I. God is LIGHT (1:5), 1:1-2:2**

1. Prologue. 1:1,2
2. How the Little Children May Have Fellowship with God. 1:3-2:2
 - (1) By Walking in Light, 1:3-7
 - (2) By Confessing Sin, 1:8-10
 - (3) By Advocacy of Christ. 2:1.2

II. God is LOVE (4:8), 2:3-4:21

1. How the Dear Children May Have Fellowship with Each Other. 2:3-14
(*By Walking in Love*)
2. The Dear Children Must not Love the World, 2:15-28
3. How the Dear Children May Know Each Other and Live Together, 2:29-4:21
 - (1) The Father's Love for His Children, 2:29-3:3
 - (2) The Saint and sin, 3:4-24
 - (3) Warning Against False Teachers, 4:1-6
 - (4) God is Love: Little Children Will Love Each Other, 4:7-21

III. God is LIFE (5:12), Chapters 5

1. Victory Over the World, 5:1-5
2. Assurance of Salvation, 5:6-21

EXPANDED OUTLINE**I. God is LIGHT (1:5), 1:1-2:2****1. Prologue, 1:1,2**

The prologue

v.1 "From the beginning is not the beginning of John 1:1 (beyond time in eternity past) nor the beginning in Gen. 1:1 (beginning of creation). This beginning goes back to the incarnation and the earthly life of Jesus.

Gnosticism, the *first heresy*, denied the reality of the humanity of Jesus. Some said that the Spirit came upon Him at His baptism and left Him at the cross.

John asserts the reality of the total personality of Jesus:

(1) "We have heard" (ear gate) - apostles heard His voice;

(2) "We have seen" (eye gate) - apostles saw Him;

(3) "Looked upon" is literally *gazed upon*; we get our word *theater* from the original word. To look saves; to gaze sanctifies. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up (John 8:14,15).

(4) "Handled"

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" [Lk. 24:39].

John reclined upon the bosom of Jesus in the upper room. He heard the heartbeat of God!

"Word of life" (see John 1:1).

v.2 The apostles saw eternal life, Jesus Christ, and they witness to it.

2. How the Little Children May Have Fellowship with God, 1:3 - 2:2

(1) By Walking in Light,

v.3 "Fellowship" is *koinonia* and means *having in common* or *sharing with*.

Christian fellowship means sharing the things of Christ. Paul used *koinonia* when speaking of praying, teaching the Word of God, the Lord's Supper, and giving.

v.4 Joy for the believer is one of the purposes of this epistle.

v.5 "God is light" - not a light or the light. *Light*, as used here, is moral character. It means the holiness of God that searches out and penetrates the darkness of sin and evil. Sin cannot exist in His presence as darkness cannot exist in the presence of physical light. Light is life giving (John 1:4). Light speaks of the glory; radiance, beauty; purity; and stainless holiness of God.

v.6 "Darkness" is more than the opposite of light. It is hostile to God, It is evil and denotes chaos. This refers to an attempt to bring God down to the level of man. A gnostic sect in that day believed that they were no longer under the moral law of God. This is the same as the s&c called "new morality" Napoleon said that laws were made for ordinary people; he was above them.

v. 7 Any believer who walks in the light of the Word of God discovers sin in his life. As a believer, he knows that the blood of Christ can cleanse him from sin, as it did when he first came to Christ for salvation.

(2) By Confessing Sin, 1:8-10

v.8 While some try to bring God down to man's low level, others attempt the opposite. They attempt to lift themselves to God's level.

They say that they have no sin. They claim sinless perfection and total sanctification. These actually deceive themselves. They are guilty of self-deception and lying.

v.9 Since God cannot be brought down to man's low level and man cannot attain to God's exalted level, man finds himself on the horns of a dilemma. What can he do? Note the Bible solution: "Confess" (*homotogomen*) means to say the same thing that God says. God says they are acts of sin. "Tell it to God as it is - the sin should be spelled out.

"He is faithful" - we might deceive ourselves.

"He is just" (righteous) - "The blood of Jesus Christ. . . cleanseth us from all sin." He forgives and cleanses.

v.10 We make God a liar when we say we do not sin. He says we do.

(3) By the Advocacy of Christ, 2:1,2

v.1 This is the third factor in having fellowship with God and Christ. God's arrangement for a believer not to sin is perfect, but our entrance into it is imperfect. An advocate is an attorney called to the side of a client in trouble. He is a comforter. The Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven to defend the slinking believer from the charge of the accuser of the brethren.

v.2 Without His defense, the sinning saint would be in deep trouble. He is the sacrifice that makes the throne of God a mercy seat. We need mercy - He is "rich in mercy.

"Propitiation" is *expiation*, the basis on which God extends mercy; mercy seat.

II. God is LOVE (4:8), 2:3-4:21

1. How the Dear Children May Have Fellowship with Each Other, 2:3-14

v.3 Obedience to Christ is the basis of assurance.

"We do know" is *we know by experience*, in contrast to the esoteric knowledge of the Gnostics.

v.4 Disobedience to Christ is a proof that we do not know Him. This is plain and direct language. Disobedience to Christ on the part of a professing Christian is tantamount to being a liar. The life is a lie.

v.5 "Keeping his word" includes not only His specific commandments but whatever pleases Him (John 14:15-23).

v.6 Christ is manifest in the believer when he keeps the word of Christ. Full commitment is to love Christ. The question is not, "Are you committed" but, "Do you love Christ?"

v.7 "Old commandment . . . from the beginning" is the commandment that the Lord Jesus gave to His apostles when He was with them on earth - which He repeated many times (see John 13:34,35; 14:21,23,24; 15:10,12).

v.8 It is a new commandment to believers today who are regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Believers are to do the will of God.

"The darkness is past" - rather, *is passing*. Look around you, it has not yet passed. The fog of ignorance of God's Word is still much in evidence.

The law says: "If a man do, he shall live."

Grace says: "If a man live, he shall do."

vv. 9,10 Loving a fellow believer is the test of genuine faith. Hatred of a fellow believer is evidence that a person is not in the light.

v.11 Hating a brother is dwelling in darkness; Loving a brother is dwelling in light (see Jer 13:16).

v 12 "Little children" (*teknia*) is *dear children*, meaning all believers, regardless of age, whose sins are forgiven on the basis of the shed blood of Christ.

v.13 "Fathers" are mature saints who have walked with God for years. David wrote Psalm 23 when he was an old man.

"Young men" are not as mature as the fathers but have learned the secret of overcoming the enemy by the blood of Christ (Rev. 12:11).

"Little children" (*paidia*) are those who know they are the sons of God, but that is all they know.

v. 14 The fathers have reached spiritual maturity over a long period of time. The young men are strong because they know the Word of God and are able to overcome the wicked one - they can handle the sword of the Spirit.

2. The Dear Children Must Not Love the World, 2:15-28

v.15 "World" (*kosmos*) means *creation, - order; system*. It could have one of three meanings:

(1) material creation; earth (Eph. 1:4);

(2) humanity; mankind (John 8:16);

(3) world system - satanic (John 14:80; 16:11; 12:81; Eph. 2:2 -*greed, ambition, pleasure; deceit*). John is speaking here of the last meaning, i.e., 2 world systems: God's and Satan's. Man is subject to one or the other (Gal. 6:14; 2 Pet. 2:20).

v.16 "Lust of the flesh" - Eve saw that the tree was good for food.

"Lust of the eyes" - Eve saw that the tree was good to look at.

"Pride of life" - Eve saw that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.

v.17 This world system is passing away

v.18 There is coming a man who will head up the antichrist system. He is Antichrist.

"Antichrist" is *against Christ* (denial) or *imitation of Christ* (pretense). Antichrist is both. Many have appeared *in* the history of the world.

v.19 Pseudo-Christians will not stay under the preaching of the Word of God. Their departure is their identification.

v.20 The Holy Spirit is the teacher of the believer (John 16:12-15).

v.21 John's purpose is not to give them something new. They know the gospel.

v.22 This is the mark of Antichrist. He denies both God and Christ.

v.23 You cannot deny one without denying the other.

v.24 If the Word does not abide in a professing Christian, he will eventually drift from the truth.

vv.25,26 This is a warning against false teachers.

v.27 (See v.20). The Holy Spirit is the final authority;

v.28 It is possible for a believer to be ashamed at the Rapture of the church. Obedience and assurance make the coming of Christ a joyful anticipation.

3. How the Dear Children May Know Each Other and Live Together;

2:294:21

(1) The Father's Love for His Children, 2:29-3:3

v.29 It is one thing to testify that we know Christ and are in Him; it is quite another to have a life that reveals that He is our righteousness. We recognize other believers by their lives, not their lips. Righteousness is a family characteristic of the Father and His children.

Chapter 3

v.1 This is my own literal translation: "Behold ye, of what sort of love the Father hath bestowed upon (given to) us, that we should be named children of God, and we are: and because of this the world does not know (begin to understand) us, because it did not know (begin to understand) Him."

We do not *expect* to be the sons of God - WE ARE! This is a thrilling fact for which every believer can exult, rejoice and constantly thank Him.

v.2 This is not all. We should be like Christ - not identical, but like Him. We do not know how wonderful that is, for we have not seen Him as He is. God sees us as we shall be someday

v.3 This is an incentive for holy living now.

(2) The Saint and Sin, 3:4-24

v.4 "Everyone that doeth sin, doeth also lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." Sin is basically that which is contrary to the will of God -insubordination to the will of God.

v.5 In John's Gospel Jesus came to take away the sin of the world; He bore the penalty of sin. Here in John's Epistle He takes away the practice of sin in the life of a believer. He is without sin, as was the sin offering. He removes the guilt of sin and also provides the power to deliver from the habit of sinning.

v.6 The believer who abides in Christ does not practice sin. He cannot live a sinful life. Only pigs live in pigpens - sons go home eventually. To continue in sin means the person was never saved in the first place.

v.7 The one practicing righteousness is a child of God.

v.8 "Committeth sin" is *practices sin*. The prodigal son may get in the pigpen. but he *will* not live there. The devil sinned from the beginning. and he continues to sin. His is a career of nothing but sin. The Son of God was revealed to destroy (lit. To dissolve) the works of the devil. Christ came to make it possible for a believer not to live in sin.

v.9 A believer gets a new nature at conversion. The new nature never sins because it is born of God.

v.10 Christ said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The one who practices righteousness produces the fruit of the Spirit. Augustine said, "The devil made no one, be begat no one, he created no one, but whosoever imitates the devil is, as it were, a child of the devil, through imitating, not being from him."

v.11 See 2:7.

v.12 Cain's offering was evil, as evidenced from his conduct. He was envious of his brother, and he slew him. Pride was in the heart of Cain (see Gen. 4:1-25).

v.13 See John 15:18,19.

v.14 Love of the brethren is proof of salvation.

v.15 See Matt.5:21,22.

v.16 This is proof that God loves us.

v.17 Love is not a sentiment; love goes into action.

v.18 In domestic relations, love is not made in the parlor, but in the kitchen. The wife cooks for her husband, and the husband goes out to work for his wife - this is love in action.

v.19 When we demonstrate our love in this way, we have a confidence in prayer.

v.20 If we do not have this assurance, God is greater than our hearts - He still hears our prayer.

vv.21,22 Love in action gives assurance in prayer.

v.23 This is the Christian life in a nutshell.

v.24 The Holy Spirit verifies these things to our hearts if we have not grieved Him.

(3) Warning Against False Teachers, 4:1-6

vv.1-8 "Try the spirits" *is prove the spirits*. Love can become rather mushy and sentimental. Paul prayed that "love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment" (Phil. 1:9). The so called "love" of liberals slops over on all sides. There are many false teachers that the child of God should avoid as he does a rattlesnake. These false teachers are inspired by evil spirits that deny the incarnation of Christ and all His work of redemption that flows from it. The evil spirit denies the person of Christ and His work. This is the final test. The evil spirit resists and opposes Christ. This is the spirit of Antichrist (see 2:22).

v.4 The Holy Spirit indwells every believer (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19).

v.5 This explains the appeal that many ministers have in the world and their popularity with the unsaved.

v.6 The supreme encouragement of the ministry is to know that God's children will hear you.

(4) God is Love - Little Children Will Love Each Other, 4:7-21

v.7 Having given a warning against false teachers who are not to be loved, he returns to the theme of this section: Believers are to love one another. This is not sentimental, sexual, or social.

v. 8 The norm is the love of God. Love works for the best interests of the beloved. God is light; God is love.

v.9 This is the historical evidence that God loved us. We were dead; Christ brought us to life through His death. He gave His life that we might live.

v.10 God loved us before there was any response on our part. He gave the Son to make expiation for our sins. He turned the throne of God into a mercy seat.

v.11 The giving of Christ to die for us is the norm of love. He is the motivation for our love.

v.12 God, who is unseen, is revealed today in the lives of believers. He longs to pour out His love through us.

v.13 The Holy Spirit indwells every believer (see v.4).

v.14 This is the gospel witness.

v.15 No believer can deny the deity of Christ. He is the only meeting place between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5).

v.16 Love is the supreme test. Do you believe that God loves you? Then confess Him before men wherever your lot in life is cast.

Again John gives us this definition, "God is love."

v.17 ". . . as he (Jesus) is so are we in this world" - this is our identification now in this world.

v.18 This removes *fear* from the saint's heart. He is "Perfect Love-" His love for us should give us the feeling of belonging to the family of God.

v.19 The best texts omit *him*. Correctly; *We love, because he first loved us*. "This widens the meaning. Some saints say they love Him but do not love "His." Our love for Christ is in the same ratio that it is for other believers.

v.20 This is direct and pointed and must be taken at face value. This is the test of v.19.

v.21 This is a commandment of Christ. There are no options.

III. God is LIFE (5:12), Chapter 5

1. Victory Over the World, 5:1-5

v.1 Faith produces the new birth. The one who is born again will love others who are born again. These cannot be confined to a certain denomination, church, race, clique or group.

v.2 When we love God and keep His commandments, we love other believers because that is one of His commandments. These commandments do not refer here to the Old Testament law but to the commandments of Christ.

v.3 "Grievous" is literally *heavy; burdensome* It does not mean that they are difficult to keep, but rather that they do not impose a burden when they are kept. "In keeping of them there is great reward" (Psa. 19:11). Jesus said, "My yoke is easy; and my burden is light" (Matt.11:80) -The breaking of them brings misery and heavy burdens. A mother works long hours in taking care of her baby; but it is not burdensome; it is a joy;

v.4 "Victory" - this is the only time the Greek word *nike* occurs in the New Testament. The battle of Jericho is the familiar example. Joshua got the victory over Jericho, not by fighting, but by believing God. The victory was God's. We cannot overcome the world by fighting it. Conquest depends upon faith (Heb. 11:30).

v.5 Faith in Christ for salvation in the future;

Faith in Christ for salvation here and now from the world.

2. Assurance of Salvation, 5:6-21

v.6 There are 3 that bear witness to the truth of salvation by faith in Christ:

- (1) Water - the Word of God (see John 19:34,35);
- (2) Blood - the death of Christ for our sins, resulting in forgiveness (see Eph. 1:7);
- (3) Spirit - truth (Acts 1:4,8).

v.7 This verse is not in some manuscripts. It is however included in the majority text and rightly so.

v.8 Three fold witness - three fold baptism:

- (1) The Blood witness to God the Father - New Birth baptism into the Body by the Spirit.
- (2) The Water witness to the World - Water baptism
- (3) The Spirit witness is for the Believer (Rom. 8:16) - Baptism with the Holy Spirit

v.9 We accept the statement of others. The most erratic rumor spreads like wildfire. Someone has said, "You cannot believe all you hear, but you can repeat it." Newspapers are the Bible for some. If man can be believed, surely the witness of God must be greater.

v.10 Th refuse to believe God is tantamount to making Him a liar. What is the record? Note the next verse.

v.11 This is God's *carte blanche* statement. Either it is true or it is not true. The One who said it validates the statement.

v.12 Either we have Christ by faith or we do not have Him. There is no middle ground. Do you have Christ by faith? Will you believe God?

v.13 This is the key verse of the epistle. John wrote this epistle that you may believe on Christ and be saved and, having taken this step, that you might know you have eternal life. Do you believe God? It all rests upon whether or not you believe God. This is your surety Paul said:

For which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day [2 Tim. 1:12].

v.14 This promise hinges on the phrase "according to his will" - then we can have boldness, which is better than assurance. How can we know when prayer is in accordance with the will of God? It must be according to the Word of God. Beyond that, we let God make the judgment.

v.15 Final proof is whether or not we have our petitions answered.

v.16 This refers to physical death. Believers can commit a sin for which the Heavenly Father will call them home. It may be a different sin for each of His children. Ananias and Sapphira committed the sin unto death (Acts 5:1-11). In Corinth there were some (1 Cor. 11:30). Absalom did (2 Sam. 15-18). Moses and Aaron did (Nu. 20:12).

v.17 Everything that is not right is sin - but not every sin is unto death.

v.18 The new nature never sins. Believers living in the flesh sin.

v.19 "The whole world lieth in wickedness" is *the whole world lieth asleep in the arms of their evil one*. The devil has put the baby asleep.

v.20 The Spirit of God is our Teacher to lead us into all truth.

v 21 God's first statement to us is: "In the beginning God created", among His last words to us are these, "Keep yourselves from idols." Anything that stands between Christ and the believer is an idol.

D. SECOND JOHN

WRITER: John the Apostle

DATE: A.D. 90-100

PERSONAL LETTER:

This epistle is like Philemon in that it is a personal letter written by John to "the elect lady". Is the Greek word *electa* a title, or does it refer to a Christian lady in the early church by the name of Electa? It would seem that it was addressed to some lady in the church or to a local church which was extending hospitality to all those who claimed to be Christian, though some were heretics. John warns against entertaining such.

THEME: "For truth's sake"

Truth is worth contending for, and it is wrong to receive false teachers.

OUTLINE:**I. Love Expressed in the Boundary of Truth, Verses 1-6**

"Love in truth"

II. Life is an Expression of the Doctrine of Christ, Verses 7-11

(False doctrine leads to evil deeds.)

III. Personal Greeting, Verses 12,13

(False teachers are not to be received by the Christian, but true teachers are to be received with joy)

EXPANDED OUTLINE:**I. Love Expressed in the Boundary of Truth, 1-6**

v.1 "The elder" (*presbuteros*) is *presbyter* It has a twofold meaning.

1. Seniority (referring to age), a senior citizen;
2. Title (referring to office), minister or teacher. This is an obvious reference to John the apostle. Perhaps John's life was in jeopardy due to rising persecution so that he with-held his name. John was in his 90s.

"Elect lady" (*electa kyrta*), to whom this letter is addressed, could refer to a prominent lady in the church. However, I have come to the opinion that a local church was in view. One cannot be insistent upon either view.

"Truth" (*the* should be omitted) is the theme of this epistle. It means *truly* or *sincerely* In these Second and Third Epistles we see the teaching of 1 John *in* action.

"The truth" is the body of doctrine of the apostles.

v.2 "The truth's sake" is defense of the truth.

"Dwelleth" is *abides* "To know Him, to be in Him, to abide in Him means knowledge, fellowship, and constancy" (Bengel).

The truth in v.7 is Jesus Christ;

The truth in v.9 is doctrine.

v.3 "Grace.. . mercy, peace" - *mercy* has been added.

"In truth and love" - is the polarity of the Christian life. We oscillate back and forth between these two. It is difficult to maintain a balance. Extremes are fighting fundamentalists on one hand and the liberals on the other (see Eph. 4:15).

v.4 Evidently this is an answer to a letter he had received.

"Walking in truth" refers to the manner of life, meaning walking in obedience to commandments from the Father.

v.5 See notes on 1 John 2:7.

v.6 John's teaching in his First Epistle walked in shoe leather in the first century of the Roman Empire.

II. Life is an Expression of the Doctrine of Christ, 7-11

v.7 Gnosticism denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh; it denied the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Corinthian Gnosticism taught that Jesus was a man on whom the Spirit came at His baptism and left at His crucifixion. Docetic Gnosticism denied the reality of the manhood of Jesus. It taught that He was just a phantom, a figment of the imagination.

"An antichrist" should *be the* antichrist.

v.8 He warns against the danger of missing a reward, not against losing their salvation.

v.9 Here he has in mind those who are not real believers. To reject the doctrine of Christ means that they were not believers. Doctrine is also a proof of life.

v.10 A better translation would be: *If anyone cometh unto you and brings not His teaching (doctrine), receive him not into your house and give him no greeting*
There were no lovely motels in that day so that itinerant teachers were entertained in homes. Believers were not to support these teachers in any way

v.11 One who supports a false teacher is a partner in his error. Should not you and I be more careful today?

III. Personal Greeting, 12,13

v.12 John anticipated visiting this person or church to whom he had written.

v.13 The greetings are from another person or church.

These simple verses are eloquent testimony from the early church.

E. THIRD JOHN

WRITER: John the Apostle

DATE: A.D. 90-100

PERSONALITIES:

This is a letter similar to John's Second Epistle in that it is personal in character and carries the same theme of *Truth*. However, this letter deals with personalities, which will be noted in the outline. In his Second Epistle, John says that *truth* is worth standing for; in the Third Epistle that *Truth* is worth working for.

OUTLINE:

I. GAIUS, Beloved Brother in the Early Church, Verses 1-8

(Gaius, the one to whom the letter is addressed, is urged to extend hospitality to true teachers of the Word)

II. DIOTREPHESES, "who loves to have the preeminence," Verses 9-11

(Evil deeds are an expression of false doctrine)

III. DEMETRIUS "hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself," Verses 12-14

(A good life is an expression of true doctrine)

EXPANDED OUTLINE:

I. GAIUS, Beloved Brother in the Early Church, 1-8

v.1 "Elder" (see 2 John 1).

"Gaius the beloved" is the better form of address. John calls turn. "the beloved" 4 times (vv. 1,2,5,11).

"In truth" (omit the article) means *genuinely*.

v.2 John prayed for his physical and material welfare.

v.3 The first "the truth" is the *doctrine* and *teaching* of the apostles. Omit the article for the second "truth," which means *conduct*.

v.4 "My children" - perhaps Gaius was a convert of John's.

"Walk in truth" - conduct conforms to doctrine.

vv. 5-8 He commends Gaius for having received *and* entertained the true teachers of the Word. In 2 John the apostle warns against receiving false teachers. In 3 John he encourages the believers to receive the true brethren.

II. DIOTREPHESES, "who loves to have the preeminence, 9-11

vv. 9-11 The missionaries of the early church were itinerants. They went from place to place. Since the local inn was a "wretched and dirty place and there were

no Holiday Inns or Howard Johnson Motels, these missionaries were entertained in the homes of believers. Gaius opened his home, for which John congratulates him. Diotrephes opposed this practice, and John censures him for it. His "hang-up" was that he loved to have recognition, attention, and be the center of attraction. He had to rule or run. There is generally one like him in every church who wants to control the church and the preacher He was guilty on 5 charges:

- (1) must occupy the leading place;
- (2) actually refused to receive John;
- (3) made malicious statements against the apostles;
- (4) refused to entertain the missionaries (apparently he wanted to do the teaching);
- (5) excommunicated those who did entertain the missionaries (he tried to be the first Pope). He was Diotrephes, the dictator.

III. DEMIETRIUS "hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself," 12-14'

v.12 While there is only one verse about Demetrius, it gives us an insight into the Christian character of this noble saint of God. We cannot identify him with any other of the same name. His name means *belonging to Demeter* (Ceres, god of agriculture), which identifies him as a convert from paganism. He adorned the doctrine of Christ. Others testified to his character. He was true to the doctrine.

SUMMARY

Three men pass before us in this little epistle. Christianity was on trial in the first century Two were genuine, one was a phony. The gospel walked in shoe leather in pagan Rome.

vv. 13,14 John would have written a longer letter, but he was coming to visit his friend Gaius.

F. THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

WRITER: Judas, Jude, the English form of the name Judas, was the brother of James (See notes on Epistle of James) and was also a half brother of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 13:55; Acts 1:14).

DATE: A.D. 66-69

THEME: Assurance in days of apostasy a
The word for *keep* occurs 4 times (see vv. 1,6,21,24).

REMARKS:

Jude was intending to write an epistle regarding our "common salvation" when the Spirit detoured him to write concerning the apostasy. It is a graphic and striking description of the apostasy. What was a little cloud the size of a man's hand in Jude's day is, in our day a storm of hurricane proportions - because we are in the apostasy of which he foretold. It is a question now of how much worse it can become before the Rapture.

Jude gives the only record in the Scriptures of the contention over the body of Moses. Also, only Jude gives the prophecy of Enoch.

Jude affords a fitting introduction to the Book of Revelation.

OUTLINE:

I. OCCASION of the Epistle, Verses 1-3

1. Assurance for Believers, Verses 1,2
(*Sanctified, kept, called*)
2. Change of Theme to Apostasy Verse 3

II. OCCURRENCES of Apostasy, Verses 4-16

1. Inception of Apostasy Verse 4
2. Israel in Wilderness in Unbelief Destroyed, Verse 5
3. Angels Rebelled; Kept in Chains, Verse 6.
4. Sodom and Gomorrah Sinned in Sensuality; Destroyed by Fire, Verse 7
5. Modern Apostate teachers Identified, Verses 8-10
(Despise authority)
6. Cain, Balaam, Korah Examples of Apostates, Verse 11
7. Modern Apostate teachers Defined & Described, Verses 12-16

III. OCCUPATION of Believers in Days of Apostasy, Verses 17-25

1. Believers Warned by Apostles That These Apostates Would Come, Verses 17-19
2. What Believers Must Do in Days of Apostasy, Verses 20-25
 - (1) Build Up
 - (2) Pray In
 - (3) Keep Themselves
 - (4) Look For
 - (5) Have Compassion
 - (6) Save Others
 - (7) Hate Even

EXPANDED OUTLINE:**I. OCCASION of the Epistle, Verses 1-3****1. Assurance for Believers, Verses 1,2**

v.1 Jude identifies himself as a servant (bond slave) of Jesus Christ. He was a half brother of our Lord, according to the flesh, and the brother of James (see notes on Jas. 1:1; also Matt, 13:55, Acts 1:14). A servant of Jesus Christ is a higher position and relationship than being a half brother.

"Sanctified by God the Father" should read *beloved of God the Father* (see John 17:22.23).

"Preserved" is translated elsewhere *kept* (see John 17:11.12). Two ways of preserving *are* by vinegar and by sugar *There are* saints today who seem to *be* preserved *in* both elements. However, the perseverance of the saints is by His grace, which preserves or keeps them. "They over-..... by the blood of the Lamb."

"Called" - God does not call us because of ability effort, talent, or character. Whom He calls He keeps (see John 15:16).

v.2 "Mercy proceeds from His grace.

"Peace" is the result of experiencing the grace and mercy of God.
"Love" is the motivation for all God does.

2. Change of Theme to Apostasy, Verse 3

v.3 The Holy Spirit detoured Jude from writing on some theme of the faith in order that he 'night sound a warning of the impending apostasy. Apostasy is a departure from "the faith," the apostle's doctrine (Acts 2:42). What was a cloud the size of a man's hand in Jude's day is now a storm of hurricane force that fills the land.

II. OCCURRENCES of Apostasy, Verses 4-16**1. Inception of Apostasy, Verse 4**

v.4 Jude sounds a warning that already apostates had entered the fold of the church (Acts 20:29-31; 2 Timothy 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:1; Gal. 2:4).
"Ordained" is *written beforehand*.

Note the 3 marks of apostates:

- (1) "Ungodly men" are unconverted/backslidden; leaving God out.
- (2) "Turning the grace of God into lasciviousness" which is *blatant immorality; shameless sin*. They arrogantly and proudly flout sin publicly. In Jude's day Gnosticism taught that the body was essentially evil, that all matter was evil, and the spirit alone was good. As a result, it did not matter what a man did with his body; he was free to satisfy the lusts of the body. It was a perversion of grace. (See Gal 5:13; Rom 6:2; Acts 20:29; 1 Pet. 2:16).
- (3) "Denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (see 1 John 4:8; 2 John 7).

2. Israel in Wilderness in Unbelief Destroyed, Verse 5

v.5 Israel at Kadesh-barnea refused to enter the Promised Land. God judges men and nations for their sins (see Jer 82:19). Unbelief is sin (see Rom. 14:23).

3. Angels Rebelled and are Kept in Chains, Verse 6

v.6 this judgment of angels is to be identify with the "sons of God" mentioned in Genesis 6, who sinned. (see 2 Pet. 2:4).

4. Sodom and Gomorrah Sinned in Sensuality; Destroyed by Fire, Verse 7

v.7 Defiled flesh, perversion, sodomy, and gross immorality ("new morality") have been judged in the past as a warning to modern man.

5. Modern Apostate Teachers Identified, Verses 8-10

v.8 Jude identifies apostate teachers:

- (1) "Dreamers" (omit *filthy*) indicates that they live in an unreal world, probably having dope-inspired dreams - trips on LSD or pot.
- (2) "Defile the flesh" connotes base and abnormal immorality.
- (3) "Despise dominion" is to reject authority.
- (4) "Disrespect dignities" is protest against rules and those in authority (e.g.. revile police).

v.9 This is a most remarkable verse. Satan is a fallen creature and an avowed enemy of God, yet Michael, when contending about the body of Moses, would not bring a sentence that would impugn the dignity of Satan. Michael even respected the position of Satan. Clement quotes from an apocryphal writing dealing with the funeral of Moses. When Michael was commissioned to bury Moses, Satan opposed it on the grounds that, since he was the master of the material and matter; the body belonged to him. Michael's only answer was, "The Lord [the Creator] rebuke thee." Satan also brought the charge of murder against Moses. Also it is suggested that Satan wanted to hinder the later appearance of Moses at the Mount of Transfiguration.

v.10 Two different words are translated "know" here. The thought is that the apostates protest against that about which they do not have absolute mental comprehension; but they follow what they know by instinct, like an animal.

6. Cain, Balaam, and Komh Examples of Apostates, Verse 11

v.11 "Woe is *ovai*, a wail of sorrow or denunciation.

"Way of Cain" characterizes an apostate who is religious but who denies he is a sinner - yet who could only be redeemed by the sacrifice of life and shedding of blood.

"Error of Balaam" was in that he thought a holy God must punish Israel.

"Gainsaying of Core [Korah]" was in that he contradicted the authority of Moses and intruded into the office of priest - and died. He was a rebellious man.

7. Modern Apostate Teachers Defined & Described, Verses 12-16

This is a vivid, graphic, dramatic, frightening description of apostates of the last days.

"Spots" are *hidden rocks* that wreck a ship - make shipwreck of faith, (1 Tim 1:18,19)

"Feeding themselves" is *shepherds that feed themselves* - a true shepherd feeds the sheep. Milton aptly described this situation, "The hungry sheep look up and are not fed".

"Clouds without water" means that they look as if they are filled with the Word of God, but they are empty and dry.

"Trees without fruit" - Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them"

v.13 "Raging waves" are *wild waves* - unashamed

"Wandering stars" means *lawless*, following no course.

vv. 14,15 There is no record in the Old Testament of this prophecy by Enoch. This is for the church. Spiritual believers will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thes. 4:18-17). The apostate church will go into the Great Tribulation. At the Rapture the spiritual believers leave, the carnal/apostate believers remain.

V.16 Apostates are:

- (1) "Murmurers" - they mutter their complaints.
- (2) "Complainers" is literally *blamers of their lot; discontented*
- (3) "Walking after their own lusts" means they live *to* satisfy their craving and overweening desires.
- (4) "Speak great swelling words" is addiction to flowery extravagant, and exaggerated language.
- (5) "Having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" means that they do not look to God but to men for help and advancement (see Jas. 2:1-4).

III. Occupation of Believers in Days of Apostasy, Verses 17-25

1. Believers Warned by Apostles that These Apostates Would Come, Verses 17-19

vv. 17,18 "Beloved" means *loved* of God

"Remember" - believers are constantly urged to remember. Believers should know the Word of God.

"Mockers" live to satisfy their own passionate desires. They cause divisions, live for self, and do not have the Holy Spirit (see Rom. 8:9).

2. What Believers Must Do in Days of Apostasy, Verses 20-25

v.20 (1) "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith" means to study the Word of God. Both Paul and Peter urged this for the last days (study - 2 Tim. 2:15; know the holy Scriptures - 2 Tim 3:15; preach the Word - 2 Tim. 4:2-11; take heed - 2 Pet. 1:19).

(2) "Praying in the Holy Spirit" (see Eph. 6:18; Rom. 8:26,27).

v.21 (3) "Keep yourselves in the love of God" - God loves the believer with an everlasting love, but the believer can get out of fellowship with the Lord by living in sin. We cannot prevent the sun from shining, but we can put up a parasol to keep the sun from shining on us.

(4) "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ" means that every believer will Raptured (some before the tribulation, some during the tribulation but before the Day of God's Wrath, Rev. 6:17; 7:14) because of the mercy of God and not the merit of the believer.

v.22 (5) "Of some have compassion.- making a difference" means to have compassion on some who are in doubt. Some folk are honest doubters and need help and counsel in these days.

v.23 (6) "Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire" (compare Zech. 8:2). We can only glean in days of apostasy. There is no wholesale turning to God that we can see. A revival is possible, but only the Holy Spirit can bring it.

(7) "Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" means that while we are pulling some brands out of the fire, we do not adopt their methods or drop down to the level of those who satisfy the flesh.

vv. 24,25 This is one of the great benedictions of Scripture. A literal translation would be: Now unto him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you (make you stand) before the presence of his glory blameless with great rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory; majesty; might, and authority before all time, both now and forever. Amen.

END of Lesson

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