

## Ephesians thru II Thessalonians

### Ephesians 2:8

- Our study will take us on a brief journey through each of the books of the Bible.
- Our aim: To impart perspective and the key to each book.
- Our construction: Key word; key verse; Key to Christ.

### Ephesians

#### A. Means: To the church at Ephesus.

- a. Penned by Paul to Christians who while rich in Christ are poor at using this wealth. He calls upon them to “walk worthy of the calling with which you were called” (4:1).
- b. Written toward the end of Paul’s life (AD 60-61) the letter deals with a church in the midst of Greek idolatry (temple of Artemis or Diana) and the magic arts and silver images that Christianity is opposed to and obviously would cause uproar in opposition.
- c. Ephesians 2:8 is seized upon by Calvinists to promote their faith alone doctrine completely ignoring that one is justified through faith in Christ’s works that Paul says should “walk in them” Not works of merit but as James implies works of unmerited demonstration of faith, for “faith without works is dead” (James 2:24). So works do not justify but are essential something missing from the Ephesians’ Christian walk for even “faith” is a work according to Christ in John 6:29 “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

#### B. Keys to Ephesians:

- a. Key word: Building the body – edification..
- b. Key Verses: 2:8-9 “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
- c. Key Chapter: Chapter 4 there is one body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism and God (4:4-6).
- d. Key to Christ: Being “in Christ” and the comparison to being so is evident in chapter 5:1-33. Walk and talk as though Christ was the very essence of your being.

### Philippians

#### A. Means: To the Philippian church of Christ.

#### B. From Paul (AD 62) to the church that was very dear to him for they were partisan to him during his imprisonment by sending Epaphroditus and financial help in his hour of need (4:16). This letter accompanied Epaphroditus’ return to Philippi. Silas, Timothy, Luke and Paul came to this town of Macedonia in AD 51 and set up the congregation. The appeal is to have the mind of Christ, knowledge of Christ and peace of Christ.

#### C. Keys to Philippians:

- a. Key word: Living in Christ.
- b. Key verses: 1:21 “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me”.
- c. Key chapter: 2 the description of the suffering servant that eventually all would bow the knee to (2:12).
- d. Key to Christ: Christ is the fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophesy of the suffering servant in Isa.53 that all Christians are to emulate and “so stand fast in the Lord” (4:1).

### Colossians

#### A. Means: To the church at Colosse.

- a. Paul, once again writing from prison, to a church that was suffering heresy. The time is AD 60-61 and at the height of Judaism’s push to reclaim its status of God’s people plus an early form of Gnostics (“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” 2:8). The church is close by Ephesus and Laodicea (to which this epistle was to be shared with 4:16) of which is the region of the seven churches of Asia that are dealt with in Revelation 1-3.
- b. Chapter’s 1-2 point out the supremacy of Christ being the creator of all things and head of the church (1:16-18) also having nailed the old law to the cross at His death (2:14); His gospel is that which one finds out how to be “raised with Christ” (3:1ff) letting that wisdom dwell in the submissive Christian heart.

#### B. Keys to Colossians:

- a. Key word: Supremacy of Christ.
- b. Key verses: 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the Preeminence”; 3:2 “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth”; 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

- c. Key chapter: 3 “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (3:17).
- d. Key to Christ: “In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and un-blameable and un-reproveable in his sight” (1:22).

## I Thessalonians

- A. Means: First to the Thessalonians.
- B. Paul had many enemies whose method of operation was to malign his reputation (AD 51). To counter this, Paul would reiterate what he said and did and who gave him the reason and word for his mission to establish and nurture the church i.e. the Holy Spirit. Eg, “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake” (1:5). He motivates the congregation with words of encouragement in chapters 4-5 reminding them to observe his teachings regarding sexual and social matters and that the Lord will return and take the faithful to be with Him forever (4:1-18). Most importantly, remember, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (5:21).
- C. Keys to I Thessalonians:
  - a. Key word: Holiness.
  - b. Key verses: 5:12-22.
  - c. Key chapter: 4 directions for growth in the congregation both personal and evangelistic.
  - d. Key to Christ: He will return “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (4:16).

## II Thessalonians

- A. Means: Second letter to the Thessalonians.
- B. Written a few months after the first letter to encourage the church because it appears they were still undergoing persecution from false teachers that abounded in the first century especially the anti resurrectionists. They were discouraged to say the least hence the need to issue harsh words about the Lord’s vengeance upon naysayers. Eg, “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:7-8). Discipline is recommended against such who are members of the church to “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us” (3:6)
- C. Keys to II Thessalonians:
  - a. Key word: Discipline.
  - b. Key verses: 1:7-9 “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”
  - c. Key chapter: 3 How to deal with naysayers i.e. “withdraw”
  - d. Key to Christ: The day of judgement will be a terrifying day for naysayers as the word of Christ is judge (John 5:30) according to Hebrews 10:30-31 “For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”