

## **BIB 271 Church Epistles**

### **Lesson 1 - Introduction to the Epistles**

Intro. We are still maintaining the synthetic approach in studying the NT. We have finished Act II Scene I which was the gospels. Act II Scene 2 is found in the Epistles. The breakdown of these epistles is revealed in their placement into the scriptures according to who they were written to.

1. Church Epistles - written to Christian churches (Gentile)
2. Pastoral Epistles - written to Christian ministers
3. General Epistles - written to Christian people - (also called Hebrew epistles not because they were written solely to Jews but they certainly have a Jewish perspective, which are better understood by understanding the OT.)

This class is focused upon the church epistles: they are Romans - II Thessalonians. These can be broken down in two separate ways, though one is used exclusively in the Scriptures.

#### Order of Writing

I Thessalonians  
II Thessalonians  
I Corinthians  
II Corinthians  
Galatians  
Romans  
Ephesians  
Colossians  
Philippians

#### Order of Reading

Romans  
I Corinthians  
II Corinthians  
Galatians  
Ephesians  
Philippians  
Colossians  
I Thessalonians  
II Thessalonians

Note: Because of the content of the letters, it is likely that Galatians and Romans were written about the same time and that Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

Though the epistles contain teaching upon a variety of subjects, it is helpful to break them down according to the primary teaching of the letter. Here is a general breakdown of the content of the letters.

1. Group I - Soteriological - The Cross
  - A. Romans
    1. Key Word: Righteousness
    2. Key Subject: Justification by faith
  - B. Galatians
    1. Key Word: faith
    2. Key Subject: law and salvation
2. Group II - Ecclesiological - The Church
  - A. I Corinthians
    1. Key Word: wisdom
    2. Key Subject: sanctification
  - B. II Corinthians

1. Key Word: comfort
  2. Key Subject: consolation in Christ
3. Group III - Christological - The Christ
- A. Ephesians
    1. Key Word: in Christ - Christ used 43 times, “in Christ” approximately 26 of them
    2. Key Subject: God’s eternal purpose (The Church of Christ)
  - B. Philippians
    1. Key Word: mind
    2. Key Subject: The Joy of having the Mind of Christ
  - C. Colossians
    1. Key Word: preeminence
    2. Key Subject: Complete in Christ (The Christ of the Church)
4. Group IV - Eschatological - The Coming
- A. I Thessalonians
    1. Key Word: working
    2. Key Subject: Holiness in preparation for His return
  - B. II Thessalonians
    1. Key Word: waiting
    2. Key Subject: antichrist withholding Christ’s return

#### Conclusion

What a complete revelation contained in the scriptures and how orderly.

This is an important concept in knowing where specific doctrines and subjects are found in the scriptures. You don’t have to know every reference but it is a great advantage to know particular books and even chapters that deal with a particular subject.

Note: As we go through these books if you can pick out the key verse of the book that best summarizes the theme of the book I will give one extra credit point for each one you have the same as mine.