

# HIGHER GROUND CALVARY CHAPEL SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

## New Testament Survey

### Lesson 3

#### 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Ephesians — Colossians

##### 1 & 2 Thessalonians

1. Dates: A. D. 51-52 (Acts 18:5)
  - a. 1 Thessalonians the second of Paul's letters
  - b. 2 Thessalonians written within a few weeks or months of the first
  - c. From Corinth
2. Author(s): Paul, Silas, Timothy (1 Thess. 1:1, 2 Thess. 1:1)
3. Audience: (Acts 17:1-10, 1 Thess. 1-3)

#### I. 1 Thessalonians

##### A. Occasion & Purposes (1 Thess. 3:1-10)

1. Occasion (1Thess 3:6):Paul anxious about new church's condition/progress, so sends Timothy. His letter a response to Timothy's good report.

##### 2. Purposes:

- Appreciation for their growth,
- Encourage them during their season of persecution,
- Exhort them to live holy lives,
- Defend his ministry in light of the slanders brought against him by the Jews,
- Correct some errors in their eschatology.

##### B. Subject & Theme: The 2nd Coming of Christ; Holy living in light of that appearing.

##### C. Structure & Outline

###### I. Paul's Personal Thoughts (1-3)

- A. His appreciation for the church (1)
- B. His ministry to the church (2:1-16)
- C. His concerns for the church (2:17—3:13)

###### II. Paul's Practical Instructions (4-5)

- A. Moral Purity (4:1-8)
- B. Disciplined Living (4:9-12)
- C. Death of the Believer and the Rapture of the Church [The Coming of the Lord] (4:13-18)
- D. The Day of the Lord (5:1-11)
- E. Relationships within the church (5:12-15)
- F. The Basics of Christian Living (5:15-28)

#### II. 2 Thessalonians

#### A. Occasion & Purposes

1. Occasion: False teaching, immorality, as well as discouragement over increased persecution had crept into the church in the months separating the writing of the first letter and its delivery.
2. Purposes
  - a. Comfort persecuted believers (1:3-12)
  - b. Correct false teaching (2:1-15)
  - c. Confront the disobedient (3:6-15)

#### B. Subject & Theme: The Day of the Lord

#### C. Structure & Outline

- I. Comfort in Persecution (1)
- II. Correction Concerning the Day of the Lord (2)
- III. Confronting the Disobedient (3)

### III. Ephesians

A. Dates: A.D. 60-62 (as for all of the Prison Epistles: Ephesians-Philemon)

B. Audience: (Acts 18:19-21, 19:1—20:1, 17-38).

- Most important commercial hub in Asia Minor.
- Center of the Artemis cult and occult practices.
- One brief visit on his 2nd Journey, after which he leaves Aquila and Priscilla in the city to establish the church.
- A 2-3 year stay later on his 3rd Journey when he uses the city as his base of operations to reach all of Asia, teaching in the School of Tyranus.
- Church is a mixed Jewish/gentile congregation. As usual, Paul has to leave the city because of a riot.
- Timothy would later become a pastor of this church and would have to deal with false teachers and false aestheticism (1 Timothy chs. 1 & 4)

C. Occasion & Purpose:

- Similarities to Colossians.
- May have been an encyclical (as is Colossians) and is perhaps Paul's "letter from Laodicea" (Col. 4:16).
- Carried into province of Asia by Tychicus (6:21-22) to inform them about his present circumstances so that they might be comforted.
- A letter of encouragement and admonition, instructing them in their riches in Christ.

D. Subject & Theme (Eph. 3:4-6, 4:4): The mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ; Spiritual Warfare

E. Structure & Outline:

I. The Christian's Spiritual Wealth: God's Purpose for the Church (1-3)

- The Work of the Father: Election (1:3-6)
- The Work of the Son: Redemption (1:7-12)
- The Work of the Spirit: Protection (1:13-14)
- The Mystery of Christ: His Body (3:1-7)

II. The Christian's Spirit-filled Walk (4:1—6:9)

III. The Christian's Spiritual Warfare (6:10-24)

#### IV. Colossians

A. Audience: 100 miles E. of Ephesus, had been a thriving commercial center in 5th c. BC when invaded by Persian King Xerxes (cf: Esther), but the trade road had been rerouted by Paul's day in favor of neighboring Laodecia and the city now in decline. A mixed Jewish/gentile congregation. Not founded by Paul (2:1), but Epaphras (1:3-8) during Paul's long stay in that city.

B. Occasion & Purpose:

1. Occasion: Tychicus to deliver this letter, along with a letter to Philemon, to the church (4:7-9). Philemon a member of the church. Onesimus to accompany him.
2. Purpose: Warn against the heresy they faced—a blend of Jewish legalism and Greek platonism (gnosticism), and antinomianism (2:8-3:7)

C. Subject & Theme: The supremacy of Christ, the Head of the Church (1:18)

D. Structure & Outline

I. The Supremacy of Christ (1:1—2:3)

II. Our Freedom in Christ (2:4-23)

III. The Church's Submission to Christ (3-4)

#### V. Philippians

A. Audience: The first church in Europe, founded by P on his 2nd Journey (Acts 16:12-40). Lydia & Philippian jailer were his first converts. Very small Jewish population because no synagogue; 10 heads of households needed to establish one. Paul visited the church twice during his 3rd journey—once at beginning (2 Cor, 8:1-5), another at the end (Acts 20:6). Paul casts a demon out of a girl, her masters get Paul thrown into prison and beaten without due process, earthquake and deliverance, frightened magistrates escort them out of the city.

This church liberal in giving monies to help the Jerusalem church and to support Paul's ministry.

B. Occasion: While he was in prison, Paul had been visited by a delegation that had brought him an offering through one of their members, Epaphroditus (4:10, 18), who nearly died of an illness while attending to Paul's need. Paul sending him back with this letter to the church (2:25-30). An unresolved personal issue between two ladies was causing unrest in the church (4:2-3)

C. Purposes:

1. Thank the church for their gift (4:10-18).
2. Explain why Epaphroditus was returning (2:25-26).
3. Inform them about how he was faring in prison (1:12-14).
4. Request that they pray for his deliverance (1:19).
5. Warn them about false teachers (3:1-4:1).
6. Encourage them to live in peace with one another (4:1-3).
7. Alert them about Timothy's & Paul's proposed future visits (2:19-24)

D. Subject & Theme (2:5-8): Unity and Joy through Humble Obedience.

E. Structure & Outline:

- I. The Importance of Joy (1)
- II. The Importance of Humility (2)
- III. The Dangers of Legalism (3)
- IV. The Need for peace (4)