

Knowing Christ

Studies in the Later Epistles:
Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians
Philemon, 1 & 2 Peter

*That I may know him,
and the power of his resurrection,
and the fellowship of his sufferings,
being made conformable unto his death.
Philippians 3:10*

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Introduction

In the early days after Christ's ascension to the Father's right hand, the young Church expected it would be a short time until Christ returned to establish His kingdom on earth. While they never lost that sense of hope of the Lord's return, it became increasingly clear that the purpose of God was more complex and more wonderful than they had imagined. Their duty was not just to evangelize as much of the world as possible before the Lord returned; their duty was to grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was preparing a place for them, but God was also at work in them preparing them for that place. As Paul told the churches on his first missionary journey, "*we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*" (Acts 4:22). The tribulations did not prepare them for the kingdom, but the lessons learned in these tribulations were lessons in which their faith in Christ was tested and strengthened. This occurred because they were beginning to learn the "many things" that Jesus had told the disciples in the upper room before His death that they had yet to learn (John 15:12-15). This was one of the important reasons that Jesus had sent His Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Apostles first taught and then later recorded these "many things" in a collection of writings that soon would make up our New Testament. Many were in the form of letters written to the New Testament churches. It is to six of these epistles, four by Paul and two by Peter, that we turn in the study directed by this booklet.

All of the writings of the New Testament are equally valuable to us. However, it is of particular interest for us in this study to hear what the Holy Spirit had to teach late in the development of the New Testament era. All of these epistles were written late in the New Testament era. The Church had been established for many years. There was much growth in extent and numbers, but Christ had not returned. Rather, they were facing many tribulations. Paul was in prison. Many of the

believers were suffering in a variety of ways. The Word of God was under attack by false teachers. In a sense, it seemed that all was for nought. The six epistles in our study are each unique but have a common purpose to help the early believers understand what they must know to endure to the glory of God. They wanted to teach the maturing Church that this was not mere delay, but a time in which the "manifold wisdom of God" was being displayed in heavenly places by the Church. It was a time in which Christ was being magnified in the lives of His faithful servants. It was a time in which the preeminence of Christ would be seen as His saints devoted themselves to pleasing Him in all aspects of daily living.

Perhaps the best summary of these two apostles' words to a maturing Church is expressed by Paul: *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory* (Colossians 3:1-4).

We are partakers of the life of Christ. It will be a great blessing to see Him and be with Him in His glory. It is also a great blessing to live as His people in a world of tribulation. A people whose affection is set upon Christ will be diligent to please Him in daily living. They will desire to know Him more as He is revealed in the written Word of God. They will oppose false teachers who would deprive them of this knowledge. They will see life as a spiritual warfare in which they can honor Christ by standing against the wiles of the devil. They rejoice in tribulation as an opportunity to prove the genuineness of their faith in Christ. Paul and Peter, in these late epistles, want to focus the eyes of the Church in all generations upon the majesty and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. We too will seek this high goal in our study of these old but timeless epistles.



Schedule

January 6, 2008	Lesson 1: The Church and the Trinity Ephesians 1
January 13, 2008	Lesson 2: The Church and the Sinner Ephesians 2
January 20, 2008	Lesson 3: The Church and the Eternal Purpose of God Ephesians 3
January 27, 2008	Lesson 4: The Duty of the Church: Unity and Holiness Ephesians 4
February 3, 2008	Lesson 5: The Duty of the Church: Love and Wisdom Ephesians 5:1-6:9
February 10, 2008	Lesson 6: The Defense of the Church Ephesians 6:10-24
February 17, 2008	Lesson 7: Christ Magnified in Me Philippians 1
February 24, 2008	Lesson 8: Christ's Mind in Me Philippians 2
March 2, 2008	Lesson 9: Christ's Righteousness in Me Philippians 3
March 9, 2008	Lesson 10: Christ, Sufficient for Me Philippians 4
March 16, 2008	Lesson 11: The Pre-eminence of Christ Colossians 1
March 23, 2008	Lesson 12: Distractions from Christ Colossians 2
March 30, 2008	Lesson 13: Life in Christ Colossians 3:1-17
April 6, 2008	Lesson 14: A Community in Christ Colossians 3:18-4:18
April 13, 2008	Lesson 15: An Intercessory Epistle Philemon
April 20, 2008	Lesson 16: A Living Hope 1 Peter 1:1-2:12
April 27, 2008	Lesson 17: Submitting in Hope 1 Peter 2:13-3:12
May 4, 2008	Lesson 18: Suffering in Hope 1 Peter 3:13-4:19
May 11, 2008	Lesson 19: Serving in Hope 1 Peter 5
May 18, 2008	Lesson 20: Knowing God 2 Peter 1
May 25, 2008	Lesson 21: The Word of God Under Attack 2 Peter 2-3

Scripture Memory

Philippians 2:5-11

5. Let this mind be in you,
which was also in Christ Jesus:

6. Who, being in the form of God,
thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7. But made himself of no reputation,
and took upon him the form of a servant,
and was made in the likeness of men:

8. And being found in fashion as a man,
he humbled himself,
and became obedient unto death,
even the death of the cross.

9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him,
and given him a name
which is above every name:

10. That at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
of things in heaven,
and things in earth,
and things under the earth;

11. And that every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Scripture Memory (continued)

1 Peter 1:3-9

3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
which according to his abundant mercy
hath begotten us again
unto a lively hope
by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4. To an inheritance
incorruptible, and undefiled,
and that fadeth not away,
reserved in heaven for you,

5. Who are kept by the power of God
through faith unto salvation
ready to be revealed in the last time.

6. Wherein ye greatly rejoice,
though now for a season,
if need be,
ye are in heaviness
through manifold temptations:

7. That the trial of your faith,
being much more precious
than of gold that perisheth,
though it be tried with fire,
might be found unto praise and honour and glory
at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8. Whom having not seen, ye love;
in whom, though now ye see him not,
yet believing,
ye rejoice with joy unspeakable
and full of glory:

9. Receiving the end of your faith,
even the salvation of your souls.

May the Mind of Christ, My Savior

Kate B. Wilkinson

Cyril Barham-Gould



1. May the mind of Christ, my Sav-ior, Live in me from day to day,
2. May the Word of God dwell rich-ly In my heart from hour to hour,
3. May the peace of God, my Fa-ther, Rule my life in ev-ery-thing,
4. May the love of Je - sus fill me, As the wa - ters fill the sea;
5. May I run the race be - fore me, Strong and brave to face the foe,
6. May His beau - ty rest up - on me As I seek the lost to win,



By His love and pow'r con-trol-ling All I do and say.
So that all may see I tri-umph On - ly through His pow'r.
That I may be calm to com-fort Sick and sor - row - ing.
Him ex - alt - ing, self a - bas - ing, This is vic - to - ry.
Look - ing on - ly un - to Je - sus As I on - ward go.
And may they for - get the chan-nel, See - ing on - ly Him.



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Outline of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

I. Paul's Salutation (Ephesians 1:1-2).

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH (Ephesians 1:3-3:21)

II. Paul's Doxology and his first prayer (Ephesians 1:3-23).

A. The Doxology (1:3-14).

1. The emphasis is upon the work of the Father (1:3-6).

2. The emphasis is upon the work of Christ (1:7-12).

3. The emphasis is upon the work of the Holy Spirit (1:13-14).

B. The first prayer (1:15-23).

III. Two descriptions of the Gentiles' past and present (Ephesians 2:1-22).

A. The first description (2:1-10).

1. The past (2:1-3).

2. The present (2:4-10).

B. The second description (2:11-22).

1. The past (2:11-12).

2. The present (2:13-22).

IV. The Apostle Paul's Ministry – to the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:1-21).

A. God's Revelation to Paul of the Mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ (3:1-13).

B. Paul's second prayer for Gentile believers (3:14-19).

C. Paul's Benediction for the Ephesians (3:20-21).

THE PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH (Ephesians 4:1-6:20)

V. The Christian's Walk (Ephesians 4:1-6:9).

A. Personal instructions for all believers (4:1-5:21).

1. Walk worthy of their calling (4:1-17).

2. Walk not as unbelieving Gentiles walk (4:17-19).

3. Put off the old man, put on the new man (4:20-32).

4. Walk in love (5:1-6).

5. Walk as children of light (5:7-14).

6. Walk circumspectly (5:15-21).

B. Specific instructions for the family (5:22-6:4).

1. Wives (5:22-24).

2. Husbands (5:25-33).

3. Children (6:1-3).

4. Fathers (6:4).

C. Special instructions for the workplace (6:5-9).

1. Servants (6:5-8).

2. Masters (6:9).

VI. The Christian's Warfare (Ephesians 6:10-20).

A. The strength required (6:10-11).

B. The enemies (6:12).

C. The armor (6:13-17).

D. Prayer (6:18-20).

VII. Paul's Conclusion (Ephesians 6:21-24).

Lesson 1: The Church and the Trinity Ephesians 1

Memory: Philippians 2:5

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. Why did Paul bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?
2. What do we have in Christ Jesus?
3. What is the "mystery" of God's will?
4. How do we obtain an inheritance in Christ Jesus?
5. What part does the Holy Spirit have in our salvation?
6. Why did Paul give thanks to God for the Ephesians?
7. What requests did Paul make for the Ephesians in his prayers for them?
8. How did God display "the greatness of His power?"
9. What is the Church?

Lesson 2: The Church and the Sinner Ephesians 2

Memory: Philippians 2:5-6

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. How is the believer's former condition described?
2. What attributes of God are seen in the work of salvation?
3. How are we saved?
4. Why are we saved?
5. Why did we need to be "brought near" by the blood of Christ?
6. What peace did Christ make on the cross?
7. How did Paul describe our current condition?
8. What is the foundation of the building Paul described?
9. What is the place of Jesus Christ in this building?

Lesson 4: The Duty of the Church: Unity and Holiness Ephesians 4

Memory: Philippians 2:5-8

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. What characteristics will be seen when we walk worthy of our calling?
2. List all the unities (the things that are "one") that set a pattern for the unity of believers.
3. What gifts did God give to His people?
4. What is the purpose of these gifts?
5. How do the Gentiles walk?
6. What are the two men that Paul spoke of, and what are we to do about them?
7. What instructions did Paul give concerning each of the following?
 - your neighbor:
 - your wrath (anger):
 - the devil:
 - your work:
 - your speech:
 - the Holy Spirit:
 - one another:

Lesson 6: The Defense of the Church Ephesians 6:10-24

Memory: Philippians 2:5-10

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. Why must we put on the whole armor of God?

2. What enemy are we fighting?

3. What does each piece of armor represent?

girdle:

breastplate:

shoes:

shield:

helmet:

sword:

4. What did Paul say about prayer?

5. What prayer request did Paul ask for himself?

6. Why did Paul send Tychicus to Ephesus?

Outline of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians

- I. Paul's Greeting (Philippians 1:1-2).
- II. Paul's Delight in the Philippian believers (Philippians 1:3-11).
 - A. His thanksgiving to God for them (1:3-8).
 - B. His prayer for them (1:9-11).
- III. Paul's Report to the church about his imprisonment (Philippians 1:12-26).
- IV. Paul's Exhortations to the Church (Philippians 1:27-2:18).
 - A. To be likeminded and humble (1:27-2:4).
 - B. To have the mind of Christ (2:5-11).
 - C. To work out their own salvation (2:12-18).
- V. Paul's Beloved Co-workers (Philippians 2:19-30).
 - A. Timothy (2:19-24).
 - B. Epaphroditus (2:25-30).
- VI. **THE PRE-EMINENT THEME OF THE EPISTLE** (Philippians 3:1-4:9).
 - A. "Rejoice in the Lord" (3:1-3).
 - B. Paul's testimony of his joy in the Lord (3:4-14).
 - C. Paul, the example to follow (3:15-4:9).
Note especially 3:17 and 4:9.
- VII. Paul's "thank you" for the church's gift (Philippians 4:10-19).
- VIII. Paul's Conclusion (Philippians 4:20-23).

Lesson 7: Christ Magnified in Me Philippians 1

Memory: Philippians 2:5-11

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. Why was Paul thankful and confident as he thought of the Philippian saints?
2. How did the Philippians share the grace of God with Paul?
3. What prayer requests did Paul make for the Philippians?
4. What good came from Paul's imprisonment?
5. Why did Paul rejoice?
6. What was Paul's earnest expectation and hope?
7. What was Paul's view of life and death?
8. What did Paul mean when he exhorted the Philippians to demonstrate a worthy conduct?
9. What two things are granted to us on the behalf of Christ?

Lesson 8: Christ's Mind in Me Philippians 2

Memory: 1 Peter 1:3

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. What was the basis for Paul's appeal for unity?
2. What did Paul say about how we should look at ourselves and others?
3. What was the mind of Christ Jesus that we are to seek?
4. What was the result of the humiliation of Jesus Christ?
5. What did Paul say about working out our own salvation?
6. What will cause Paul to rejoice in the day of Christ?
7. How did Timothy demonstrate the mind of Christ?
8. How did Epaphroditus demonstrate the mind of Christ?
9. How could the Philippian church demonstrate the mind of Christ?

Lesson 9: Christ's Righteousness in Me Philippians 3

Memory: 1 Peter 1:3-4

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. Why did Paul write the same things to them again?
2. Why did Paul warn them to beware of dogs?
3. What reasons did Paul have for confidence in the flesh?
4. Why did Paul count all these things as rubbish ("dung" in the KJV)?
5. How was Christ important to Paul?
6. What was Paul's goal in life?
7. How did Paul want the Philippian believers to walk?
8. What did Paul say about the enemies of the cross of Christ?
9. What was Paul eagerly awaiting?

Lesson 10: Christ, Sufficient for Me Philippians 4

Memory: 1 Peter 1:3-5

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. What did Paul think about the Philippians, and what did he want them to do?
2. What did Paul say about Euodias and Syntyche?
3. How can we get the peace of God?
4. What did Paul say about the peace of God?
5. What should we be thinking about or meditating upon?
6. What made Paul rejoice?
7. What had Paul learned through his experiences?
8. What did Paul say about the generosity of the Philippians?
9. What did Paul tell the Philippians about their own needs?

Outline of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians

- I. The Introduction (Colossians 1:1-14).
 - A. Salutation (1:1-2).
 - B. Thanksgiving (1:3-8).
 - C. Intercession (1:9-14).

- II. The Apostle's Message – The Glory of Christ (Colossians 1:15-23).

- III. The Apostle's Mission (Colossians 1:24-2:23).
 - A. His deep concern and his objectives (1:24-2:5).
 - B. His first exhortation (2:6-7).
 - C. His warnings and his rebukes (2:8-23).

- IV. The Apostle's Application of the Truth (Colossians 3:1-4:6).
 - A. For heavenly mindedness (3:1-4).
 - B. To mortify sin (3:5-11).
 - C. To cultivate holiness (3:12-17).
 - D. For special groups (3:18-4:1).
 - 1. Wives and husbands (3:18-19).
 - 2. Children and fathers (3:20-21).
 - 3. Servants and masters (3:22-4:1).
 - E. Concluding exhortations (4:2-6)

- V. The Conclusion (Colossians 4:7-18).
 - A. Tychicus and Onesimus, the letter carriers (4:7-9)
 - B. Salutations (4:10-15).
 - C. Paul's parting words (4:16-18).

Lesson 11: The Pre-eminence of Christ Colossians 1

Memory: 1 Peter 1:3-6

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. What did Paul and Timothy do when they heard of the faith and love of the Colossians?
2. What did Paul say about the Gospel?
3. What prayer requests did Paul bring to God on behalf of the Colossians?
4. Why did Paul give thanks to the Father?
5. How did Paul express the pre-eminence of Christ?
6. What did it please the Father to do in Jesus Christ?
7. What does it mean to be reconciled?
8. What is the mystery?
9. What did Paul say about his work?

Lesson 12: Distractions from Christ Colossians 2

Memory: 1 Peter 1:3-7

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. What was Paul's earnest desire for the Colossian church?
2. What did Paul rejoice to see in the Colossians?
3. What did Paul warn them about?
4. What did Paul teach about the deity of Christ?
5. How are we complete in Christ?
6. What did Christ do about sin?
7. What did Paul say about "a shadow"?
8. How can we be beguiled (cheated or defrauded) of our reward?
9. What did Paul say would have an appearance of wisdom, but not be able to control the flesh?

Lesson 14: A Community in Christ
Colossians 3:18-4:18

Memory: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Hymn: "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

1. What instructions did Paul give to each of the following?

Wives:

Husbands:

Children:

Fathers:

Servants:

Masters:

2. What did Paul say about prayer?

3. What did Paul say about our walk and our speech?

4. What did Paul say about each of the following individuals?

Tychicus:

Onesimus:

Aristarchus:

Mark:

Jesus or Justus:

Epaphras:

Luke:

Demas:

5. What final instructions did Paul give about the church at Laodicea and Archippus?

Outline of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Philemon

- I. Greeting (vv. 1-3).
- II. Prayer (vv. 4-7).
 - A. Thanksgiving for their love and faith (vv. 4-5).
 - B. Prayer for productive faith (vv. 6-7).
- III. Request (vv. 8-17).
 - A. To Philemon for Onesimus, who was once unprofitable (vv. 8-11).
 - B. To receive Onesimus as a brother, even as Paul himself (vv. 12-17).
- IV. Promise (vv. 18-21).
 - A. Paul's word that he would accept responsibility for any debts owed by Onesimus (vv. 18-19).
 - B. Paul's confidence that Philemon would do as he requested (vv. 20-21).
- V. Closing (vv. 22-25).

Lesson 15: An Intercessory Epistle Philemon

Memory: Review

Hymn: “May the Mind of Christ, My Savior”

1. To whom is this epistle addressed?
2. For what was Paul thankful?
3. What prayer request did Paul make for them?
4. What could Paul do to get them to do what was “convenient” (fitting or proper), and what did he do?
5. Who was Onesimus?
6. What request did Paul make concerning Onesimus?
7. What reason did Paul suggest for Onesimus’ departure from Philemon?
8. How did Paul propose to deal with any debts Philemon might have incurred because of Onesimus?
9. What hopes did Paul have about Philemon’s response to his request?

Outline of the First Epistle of Peter

- I. Introduction (1 Peter 1:1-12).
 - A. The Writer and the Recipients (1:1-2).
 - B. Praise to God for Salvation – the doctrinal section (1:3-12).
 1. The Nature of Salvation (1:3-5).
 2. Their joy in salvation while suffering (1:6-9).
 3. Salvation and the Old Testament Prophets (1:10-12).
- II. The Exhortations (1 Peter 1:13-5:9).
 - A. To Be Holy (1 Peter 1:13-3:12)
 1. Concerning the needs of individual believers (1:13-2:10).
 - a. To have hope and to be holy (1:13-25).
 - b. To grow spiritually (2:1-10).
 2. Concerning sin and the people of the world (2:11-17).

Note that Peter makes a distinction between sin and the people in this sinful world.
 3. Concerning special groups among believers (2:18-3:12).
 - a. Servants (2:18-25).
 - b. Wives (3:1-6).
 - c. Husbands (3:7).
 - d. All believers – love within; restraint without (3:8-12).

Note that Peter supported his exhortations by Scripture: verses 10-12 are a quotation from Psalm 34:12-16a.
 - B. To Suffer Only For Righteousness' Sake (1 Peter 3:13-5:11).
 1. Some of the benefits of suffering as Christians (3:13-4:19).
 - a. It gives opportunities to witness to the world (3:13-17).
 - b. This is confirmed and illustrated by the benefits of Christ's suffering (3:18-22).
 - c. It produces greater godliness in our lives (4:1-19).
 - 1) To do God's will (4:1-6).
 - 2) To prepare for His coming (4:7).
 - 3) To pray (4:7).
 - 4) To love each other (4:8-10).
 - 5) To minister the Word, depending upon God, for His glory (4:11).
 - 6) Not to think it strange that we suffer, but to rejoice that we are partakers of Christ's sufferings (4:12-14).
 - 7) To keep us from sin (4:15).
 - 8) To trust God to take care of us (4:16-19).
 2. More Special Instructions (5:1-11).
 - a. For elders (5:1-4).
 - b. For the young (5:5a).
 - c. For all of the Lord's people (5:5b-11).
- III. Conclusion (1 Peter 5:12-14).

In verse 13 Paul states how he would describe this epistle: *"I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand."*

Outline of the Second Epistle of Peter

- I. Introduction: The Apostle's Greeting (2 Peter 1:1-4).
The emphasis is upon *what we all have in Christ*. This is the beginning of what the Apostle Peter would say especially about THE PRESENT.
- II. Their Present Need (2 Peter 1:5-21).
While there was no difference between the believers, then or now, as to what we have in Christ, yet as far as our growth in the Lord is concerned, there are always great differences. But God's ultimate purpose for us all is the same. We are saved to be made like our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - A. Their need to add to their faith (1:5-11).
Note Peter's emphasis on "these things" in verses 8, 9, 10, 12, and 15. He was emphasizing their need for spiritual growth.
 - B. The Apostle Peter's great concern for them (1:12-21).
His concern went beyond his own lifetime, and that is one reason he was writing to them.
- III. Warnings from THE PAST (2 Peter 2:1-22).
This basically has to do with false teachers, false teaching, and sinful living. This chapter illustrates why it is so important for us to read the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. We need to know about God's judgment of angels, His judgment on the whole world in the days of Noah, Sodom and Gomorrah, and even Balaam. False teachers will lead us into sin. The Bible teaches us that God is not only a God of love, but that he is righteous, and that He judges sin.
- IV. Assurance regarding THE FUTURE (2 Peter 3:1-16).
Peter began the epistle by speaking about the promises of God; he concludes his epistle on the same note. See verses 4, 9, 13. God's promises are all sure and certain. Therefore, our hope in the promises should affect the way we live.
- V. Conclusion (2 Peter 3:17-18).
In verse 17 we have a warning; in verse 18 a command to continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of "our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." To be growing spiritually is our greatest safeguard against sin and false teaching.

The Development of the New Testament

Key Verse: Acts 1:8

