
Examination Handbook for Candidates, Teaching Elders and Commissioned Pastors

A Manual for Preparing to Enter the EPC

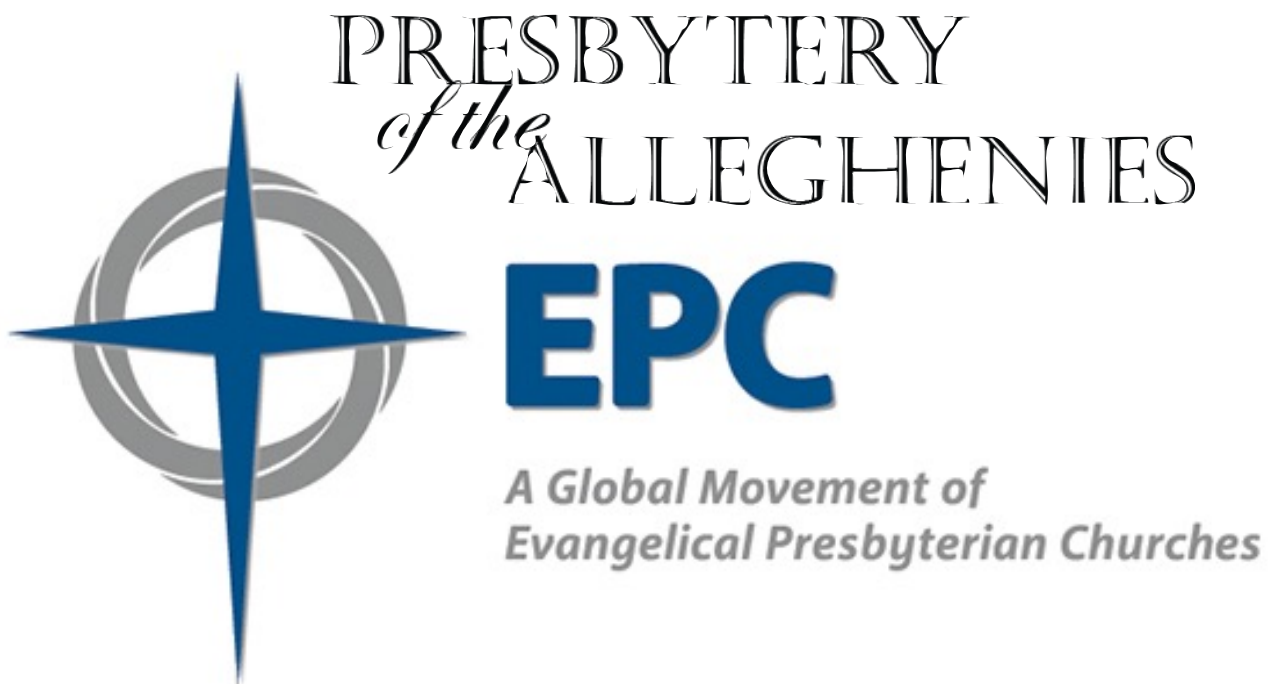


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How Do I Get Ready For Entering the POA?



Preparing to Enter the EPC

PROCESS

Process for Candidacy

The Ministerial Committee is responsible for guiding applicants through all the steps necessary under the Book of Government to become Candidates under care of the Presbytery and ordained as Teaching Elders in the EPC.

To become a Candidate, a person must:

1. Be a member of an EPC congregation for at least six months.

2. Receive the endorsement of the Session.
3. Successfully complete the application process established by the Presbytery. The application process should include the following items:
 - a. Information as to the time requirements before Presbytery can act on the application
 - b. Application forms:
 - i. Session Endorsement Form
 - ii. Application to Come under Care
 - iii. Transcripts from all educational institutions attended after high school
 - iv. Preliminary Questionnaire
 - v. Statement in writing of applicant's personal Christian experience and the events which had led to a sense of God's call to the ministry.
 - vi. Candidate's Statement of Faith
 - vii. Results of any assessments of physical examinations, psychological evaluations and any assessments of emotional, intellectual, and vocational aptitudes for ministry that Presbytery may require.
 - c. Reference check
 - d. Background Check
 - e. Medical and psychological evaluations
 - f. Ethical affirmations
 - i. Before a candidate is ordained, the candidate must agree to and sign the "Ethical Affirmations for EPC Ministers"
 - g. Personal Interview with the Ministerial Committee that:
 - i. Explores the applicant's calling to ministry:
 - ii. Explores the applicant's gifts and talents:

- iii. Explores vocational options:
- iv. Explains the candidacy process:

Requirements for Candidates seeking Ordination as a Teaching Elder

The Candidate shall present evidence of competency in the original languages of Scripture, including transcripts of coursework taken, along with the required exegesis.

The Candidate shall be examined in Christian experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and progress in spiritual growth.

The Candidate shall be examined in writing and orally in the following areas: Theology and Sacraments, English Bible, the Book of Order, the History of the Church and the Reformed tradition, and the nature of the office of Teaching Elder.

The Candidate shall preach a sermon to the Presbytery to demonstrate the ability to expound the Word of God effectively.

Presbyters Seeking Transfer

In addition to examining Candidates for ordination, the POA also have the responsibility to examine ordained ministers who are seeking to transfer their ordination and receive a call whether from another EPC presbytery or from outside the EPC.

For those who are in the beginning stage of considering transferring to the EPC as a denominational home, the very first step is to go to www.epc.org to explore and read the material under the link titled “Joining the EPC.”

For those who have explored the EPC online and are interested in denominational affiliation through examination, the process begins with contacting the Presbytery of the Alleghenies.

Getting Ready for Examinations

Applicants who have been accepted into candidacy should prepare for written examination in the area of Theology and Sacraments, English Bible, the Book of Order, the history of the Church and the Reformed tradition, and the nature of the office of Teaching Elder.

Candidates who have successfully passed the written ordination exams and want to proceed to the oral examination on knowledge or those seeking transfer who want to proceed to an oral examination on views should contact the Chair of the Ministerial Committee so that an oral exam can be scheduled.

Study

This manual was developed as a guide for candidates and pastors in transition. The material enclosed is not meant to supplant existing or developed materials or to create something significantly new. The purpose of the manual is to help prepare for examinations. It offers examples, resources, identification, and patterns others have found helpful and meaningful.

All materials for examination preparation are available in full document formats from the Presbytery office or Ministerial Committee chair.

Candidates preparing to take written exams should take advantage of the Study Guides for Theology, Sacraments, Reformed Tradition and English Bible found in the Appendices.

The expectation of those conducting the oral examinations is that the candidate or presbyter in transition has prepared. At the time of the examination, candidates and presbyters should expect a gracious yet thorough examination that reveals maturity of faith and familiarity with the materials. A detailed examination on doctrine is required of candidates for ordination and of ministers seeking transfer from non-Reformed ecclesial tradition. TE's transferring in from another reformed body will be examined on views. Those seeking to transfer in as or to be authorized by the Presbytery as Commissioned Pastors will be examined on essential views.

To this end the examinee must:

- Know the Essentials of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and affirm without exception.
 - ★ The Statement of Essentials are on page 39-40 of this manual or can be downloaded for free at: (www.epc.org/about-the-epc/beliefs/essentials-of-our-faith/)
- Share your personal testimony and sense of call to the ministry
- Have read and studied this handbook
- Have read the Book of Order and Evangelical Presbyterian Church Polity

- ★ The Book of Order of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church is available from the office of the General Assembly or can be found at: www.epc.org under “resources.”
- Have read the Westminster Confession of Faith in a fashion as to be able to respond to Ordination Questions
 - ★ Write out any exception(s) to the Westminster standards with reasons for the exception(s)
 - ★ The Westminster Confession of Faith can be found at (www.epc.org/about-the-epc/beliefs/westminster-confession/)
- Know the distinctives of Reformed Theology
- Have read the articles from the *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* entitled “Biblical Theology,” “Scripture” and “Jesus Christ,” as well as the article on Covenant Theology. Copies of these articles are available through the Ministerial Committee.

The Written Exam

Content Areas

Content areas required by Book of Government 13-2 are covered in three written ordination exams:

1. English Bible (2 hours maximum; no books, Bibles, or notes of any kind allowed)
2. Theology, Sacraments, and Reformed Tradition (3 hours maximum; Bible text allowed – no books, study Bibles, Bibles with cross references, or personal notes)
3. Polity (1 ½ hours maximum; no books, Bibles, or notes of any kind allowed)

Exam Arrangements

The three exams must be taken within a time frame of three weeks. Any exceptions for the time limits of each exam (e.g., for those whose first language is not English) must have an advance agreement with both the Presbytery and General Assembly.

After receiving approval from the presbytery’s Candidates or Ministerial Committee, the examinee is responsible to secure an approved proctor and arrange a time and place for the exam.

The proctor is typically a pastor or church staff member. Others may be approved by the presbytery chairman requesting the exams. Family members will normally not be approved as proctors. Exam arrangements, including the name and mailing address of the proctor, must be communicated to the presbytery chairman requesting the exam.

The presbytery Ministerial or Candidates Committee Chairman submits a Request for Ordination Exam Form by email, mail or fax to the Office of the General Assembly. The examinee's current Personal Information Form (PIF) must accompany the exam request.

Requests must be received at least 2 weeks prior to the proposed exam dates in the event there are any problems to be resolved and to avoid unnecessary mailing expenses. Exams and an instruction sheet will be mailed to the proctor no more than 30 days from the projected exam date.

Exam Grading and Results

The proctor mails completed exams to the Office of the General Assembly by a means requiring a signature (e.g., registered mail, Fed Ex envelope). Exams are then forwarded to a grader. Results are typically received from the grader within 10 days. Grading times may be longer over holidays and in the summer.

Scores are communicated from the General Assembly Office to the Presbytery chairman requesting the exam and the presbytery Stated Clerk. The presbytery chairman, in turn, notifies the examinee. A passing score is 75%. If a passing score is not achieved, in any of these sections, the examinee is eligible to take a different version of the exam section 30 days following the date of the original exam.

The Oral Examination

The examination by the Ministerial Committee can last between 45 minutes to 2 hours depending on who is being examined, a candidate or presbyter seeking transfer. Normally examination by the Ministerial Committee is conducted at least two weeks prior the the Presbytery meeting where the examinee is examined on the floor. The agreed upon time and date for the exam should be set so as to allow maximum preparation for the examinee and participation by the MC. The examination shall begin with introductions and prayer.

The examination of a Candidate for ordination as a Teaching Elder

The Candidate shall be examined orally on their *knowledge* of the following areas: Theology, Sacraments, English Bible, the Book of Order, the history of the Church, the Reformed tradition, and the nature of the office of Teaching Elder.

Examination of a Presbyter Seeking Transfer

- Examination of an EPC Teaching Elder seeking to transfer into the POA
 - ★ EPC Teaching Elders shall be examined on their *views* of Theology, Sacraments, English Bible, the Book of Order, the history of the Church, the Reformed tradition, and the nature of the office of Teaching Elder and they shall relate their experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and progress in spiritual growth.
- Examination of non-EPC ordained Ministers
 - ★ Examination of an ordained Minister from another Reformed denomination:

A Minister seeking to become a Teaching Elder in a the POA who comes from another denomination from within the Reformed family shall present credentials of education required by those seeking ordination in the EPC. The Minister shall be examined on *views* and beliefs and may be examined on *knowledge*.

- Examination of Ministers from non-Reformed Traditions:
 - ★ A minister presenting current and valid ordination credentials from any other ecclesiastical tradition shall be examined in the same manner as a candidate for ordination.

At the close of the meeting the MC will deliberate and discuss whether or not the examination is sustained and if the examinee should be recommended to the floor of the Presbytery. If an examination is not sustained then the MC will make appropriate recommendations regarding further preparation or remediation.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARATION

Source Material

It is important that those preparing for examination read and familiarize themselves with the primary source materials, which include:

1. This Examination Handbook
2. The Westminster Confession of Faith
3. The EPC Book of Order
4. The Study Guide for Written Exams
5. The articles listed on page 7 above

At the time of the examination, the examiners will expect that the examinee will have read and studied this material prior to the examination.

Additional Resource Material

Many of the resources for examinations can be found in this manual, on the EPC website (www.epc.org) or ordered through the office of the General Assembly. Additional resources that are recommended but not required include:

- Bartholomew, Craig G., and Michael W. Goheen. 2014. *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*. Baker Academic.
- Chapell, Bryan; Meek, Jim. 1992. *Preparing for Licensure and Ordination Exams*. Christian Education & Publications.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. 2002. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible*. InterVarsity Press.
- Murray, David. 2013. *Jesus on Every Page: 10 Simple Ways to Seek and Find Christ in the Old Testament*. Thomas Nelson
- Murray, John. 1955. *Redemption, Accomplished and Applied*. W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.

What Is the Gospel?



Understanding the Good News of Jesus Christ

GOSPEL MINISTRY

We are followers of Jesus and leaders of Christ's church because we have encountered and been transformed by the Gospel. The Gospel is central: it is central to our identity as Christians; it is central to our leadership as Teaching Elders; it is central to the mission of the EPC, and to the Church of Jesus Christ world-wide. As part of the examination we would like you to be prepared to share with us the message of the Gospel, as you have encountered it in your personal life and as it is articulated in the scriptures.

Personal Testimonies

During the course of the examination, examinee will have the opportunity to share their personal testimony and faith journey with the Ministerial Committee. Take some time during your time of

preparation to reflect on how Christ was introduced to you and how the Gospel of grace changed your life so that you can share that story.

Centering on the Gospel

Below is a summary of the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You might find this summary helpful as an aid for internalizing and articulating the key elements of the Gospel.

The Apostle Paul told the church in Ephesus that he had been entrusted with the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, a ministry in which the church continues to this day (Ephesians 3:7-13). Another term for “gospel” is “good news.” The first verse of the Gospel of Mark says, “This is the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.” The business of the church of Jesus Christ is sharing the gospel of the good news with the world that desperately needs to hear and receive it.

It requires the whole of the Old and New Testament to tell the gospel story. There is however a core of truths that comprise the essence of the good news, a core of realities which, when embraced personally and intentionally by faith, serve as the pathway to a rightly restored relationship with God. That restored relationship is the heart of the gospel.

These core realities include:

All men and women are imperfect human beings.

We are flawed by our inability to live holy lives. In other words, all human beings are sinners. The Bible says, “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). That is, we all “miss the mark” or cannot rise to the standards for living in relationship with the holy Giver of Life, God Himself.

The Bible is full of stories that underscore the sin of human beings since the beginning of time. Our own lives are a testimony to this biblical truth that we are far from perfect individuals.

Sinful people cannot live in intimate relationship with a holy God.

The prophet Isaiah said it best when, in speaking with the voice of God he said, “But your sin has made a separation between you and your God” (Isaiah 59:2). Sin causes a gulf between people and God. In fact, separation from God due to the real moral guilt of a person’s sin is God’s punishment for sin. This is vividly portrayed in the Bible in the account of Adam and Eve being

driven out of the garden, out from the presence of God. Adam and Eve were told that if they disobeyed God, thereby living lives of unholiness, they would surely die (Genesis 2:1). They disobeyed, lived lives of unholiness, and they died. In short, the Bible says, “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

There is an antidote to death and hope in the midst of despair.

Though the gospel story begins with bad news, it is preeminently a story of good news. The good news is that God loves his creation so much that he has provided a way by which the just consequences of our sin can be overturned by his mercy and grace. The Bible says that God “showed his love toward us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

The death of Jesus Christ saves us from the penalty of separation from God (death) both in this life and in the life to come, because in his ultimate act of love, Jesus died in our place. He took upon himself, the punishment that was meant for us. His death on the cross was in our place. It was an “atoning” sacrifice, a sacrifice of himself to secure forgiveness for us and to make us “at one” with God. That is what the Bible means when it says, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not counting their sins against them” (2 Corinthians 5:19).

This is the good news! This is the gospel! This is the greatest story the world has ever known and the greatest reality that a person can possess.

New life is offered by God but must be received by us.

The Bible says “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). However, a gift does not become a personal possession until it is intentionally received. God offers us this wonderful salvation that includes the forgiveness of sins, restoration to an intimate relationship with himself and real life both now and for eternity. But it does not become ours until we receive it.

And the way we receive the gift of salvation is by receiving the One who made salvation possible, Jesus Christ the Savior. The Bible says “to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God” (John 1:12).

And in that best-known verse of the Bible the sum of the gospel message is expressed when it says “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

We accept God's gift of salvation through the act of believing faith in Jesus Christ as our own Lord and Savior.

A person becomes a Christian, receives God's gift of salvation and possesses real hope by simply asking Jesus Christ to be his Savior and Lord. That request takes many forms, but at the very least it would include a number of statements, made to God in prayer by faith, like:

Heavenly Father, I know that you are holy and I am not. I know that I am a sinner and cannot live in close relationship to you. I know that because of my sin, I deserve to live apart from you now and for eternity. I know that I deserve death because of my sin.

Heavenly Father, I believe that Jesus has died so that I could be forgiven. I believe that He died for me on the cross of Calvary. I accept your gift of forgiveness and life even as I accept Jesus as my Savior and Lord. Please come into my heart and into my life. Live in me so that I know that I belong to you and our separation is over for good.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for saving me. I thank you for giving me life. I thank you for making me a person of hope. I thank you that even though I may die physically, I will live with you in heaven forever.

Heavenly Father, in gratitude for all that you have done for me, I will dedicate my life to loving you and serving you and obeying you so that you will receive from me the praise that you rightly deserve. Amen.

Becoming a Christian happens immediately but growing as a Christian takes a lifetime.

The moment we receive Jesus into our lives as Savior and Lord, God the Holy Spirit enters our hearts as the sign, seal and guarantee that we no longer live estranged from God, but have been reconciled to Him (Ephesians 1:13,14).

However, this isn't the end of the story but just the beginning. The Holy Spirit begins to change us – to change us in how we think and how we act and what we desire and do in life. Because we are now God's son or daughter by faith we are being changed into the image of Jesus, God's eternal Son (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Additionally, as the children of God we are called by God to dedicate ourselves to living lives that please Him and bring Him honor and praise. We try to live the Christian life, not because we have to in order to be accepted by God – that’s already been accomplished through our faith in Jesus. We live the Christian life in gratitude for all that God has done for us already, in Jesus.

This Christian walk is a lifelong walk. It is not always easy; sometimes meets with defeat, and from time-to-time it’s just plain difficult. But at the same time, it is a joy to know that God is pleased by our obedience. It is a joy to serve God who served us so wonderfully in Jesus Christ. And it is a joy to know that someday we’ll live with God in heaven, where there will be no end to our fellowship with God, no end to the treasures of heaven given to us, and no end to this glorious life.

Pastoral Leadership



Understanding Our Role in God's Mission within the EPC

YOUR JOURNEY

In preparing to join the EPC you have either come under the care of the Presbytery or if transferring, you have likely researched and examined the denomination, contacted and spoken with members of the Presbytery or counseled with friends and colleagues within the denomination in order to better know who the EPC is and where they have come from. The Ministerial Committee would also like an opportunity to get to know you better as well. At the time of your exam the MC will ask you to share a little about your understanding of the role of Teaching Elder and, if seeking transfer, your role in the church you serve and the ministry God has given you.

Mission and Vision

Every church has been given a mission and vision because God has a mission and vision. God's mission is redemption in the world through his Son. God's vision is to see all things subject to the authority of his Son Jesus Christ. God partners with the local church order to accomplish his mission and realize his vision. The mission and vision of God will look and be expressed slightly differently with each Teaching Elder in partnership with a local congregation. During your preparation, take some time to reflect on the mission and vision that God has or is giving you. Ask the question, "Why does the church exist?" As you answer that question you will begin to articulate your mission. Ask the question, "What is the future state of the ministry that I will work toward realizing?" As you answer that question you will begin to articulate your vision.

Practices of Pastoral Care

There are certain practices that every pastor should engage in order to be ready to provide care for the congregation. Please be ready to share with the Ministerial Committee what your views are in the areas of:

- Prayer
- Sabbath
- Pastoral care
- Solitude
- Visitation
- Counseling

Practices of Pastoral Leadership

Likewise there are certain practices that every pastor should engage in order to be ready to provide care leadership. Please be ready to share with the Ministerial Committee what your views are in the areas of:

- Administration
- Ecclesiology
- Evangelism
- Discipleship
- Christian Weddings
- Christian Funerals
- Conflict Management
- Teamwork

Your Reasons for Wanting to Join the EPC

We know that there are a number of other Reformed bodies with which you could join or realign. The Presbytery of the Alleghenies and the Ministerial Committee are interested in knowing your reasons for wanting to join the EPC. Take some time to think through those reasons and be prepared to share them during your examination.

What Does it Mean to Be Reformed?



Understanding the Reformed Tradition

REFORMED CATEGORIES

The EPC is a Reformed body which means that it affirms and adheres to the essentials of the Reformed tradition. The Reformed tradition is a broad category but for the purposes of this examination the tradition can be encapsulated under the categories of Reformation History, Reformed Theology and Reformed Worship. These categories are examined below.

Reformation History

Traditionally, we trace the inauguration of reformed history to October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk, nailed his famous Ninety-five Theses on the door of the church in

Wittenberg (Germany). This was a call for debate, protesting what Luther saw as a degeneration of orthodox Christian theology in the late medieval church. So this was a protest that called for reform: hence the appellation “Protestant Reformation.” There were both earlier and later rumblings of the same themes in Jan Hus, William Farel, and John Calvin—a Frenchman who eventually landed in Geneva, Switzerland.

Originally, the Reformers were really about reform, not schism, but given the extremity of their stance in opposition to the prevailing theology of the Roman Catholic Church this ultimately issued in new branches of the church. So out of the Reformation arose the Lutheran churches (shepherded especially by Luther’s successor, Philipp Melancthon), and then churches whose origins were closer to Calvin and usually referred to as “reformed” churches. Some elements of the Reformation also took hold in England, leading to the emergence of Anglicanism.

Calvin’s vision for Reformed Christianity especially took root in the Netherlands and Scotland, resulting in two distinct but related streams of Reformed theology and practice. Arising out of the Netherlands came a strain of theology most generally described as “Dutch Reformed.” This was also the faith of some of the earliest American settlers who founded New Amsterdam (later to be renamed New York), which is why the Reformed Church in America is the oldest denomination with a continuous ministry in this country.

It is this side of the Reformed tradition that gives us some of the most significant Reformed creeds and confessions including the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort. Today this side of the tradition would be linked to institutions such as Calvin College and Seminary and, to a lesser extent, the Free University of Amsterdam. And it is this tradition that informs denominations such as the Christian Reformed Church, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Reformed Church, a recent offshoot of the Christian Reformed Church

Through the influence of John Knox, Scotland gave birth to another stream of Reformed theology, crystallized by the Westminster divines in the Westminster Confession and the Larger and Shorter Westminster Catechisms. It is this Anglo-Scottish stream that would give rise to Puritans like John Owen, Richard Baxter, and, later in the colonies, Jonathan Edwards. This strain of Reformed theology would eventually be articulated in America in Old Princeton (Theological Seminary), and would be associated with figures such as Charles Hodge, B. B. Warfield, and A. A. Hodge. Today it would be associated with Westminster Theological

Seminary (founded by some who left Old Princeton in 1929), Reformed Theological Seminary, and Covenant Seminary. Denominational expressions of this stream would include the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), as well as the “mainline” denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Reformed Theology

Reformed theology is first and foremost theology. It is the study of God, and all else that reformed theology address, proceeds from the centrality of God. All of reality begins and must be understood with a view from above, with God first versus a view from below with man first. It is therefore theocentric rather than anthropocentric.

Reformed theology, which begins with a view from above, with God, is informed by our study of scripture, our study of history (historical theology which focuses on theologians and theological traditions) and our study of the natural world (natural or general revelation).

Reformed theology is systematic. It provides a coherent and unified understanding of who God is, what He has done and what he requires of us. It is not a system imposed onto the Scriptures but an interrelatedness of teachings intrinsic to the Scriptures.

Reformed theology is catholic. It has much in common with other communions that are a part of historic Christianity. Reformed Theology must never be held up as the only rule of faith, practice and truth. “Being reformed” does not trump being a loving, loyal and committed follower of Jesus Christ.

Reformed theology is evangelical. Historically, the term evangelical is a broad term applied to many groups that, though different in their denominational affiliation, agree on the historic doctrines of sola scriptura and sola fide.

Reformed theology is covenantal. It sees the primary structure of biblical revelation and the entire history of redemption as that of covenant. Though there are numerous covenants in which God relates to man, the two primary covenants associated with man’s redemption are the covenant of works and the covenant of grace.

Reformed theology is characterized by, but by no means limited to, its embrace of the Five Solas of the Protestant Reformation and by the well-known acrostic TULIP.

Five Solas¹

Sola Scriptura

Scripture alone. When the Reformers used the words Sola Scriptura they were expressing their concern for the Bible's authority, and what they meant is that the Bible alone is our ultimate authority; not the pope, not the church, not the traditions of the church or church councils, still less personal intimations or subjective feelings, but Scripture only. Other sources of authority may have an important role to play. Some are even established by God such as the authority of church elders, the authority of the state, or the authority of parents over children. But Scripture alone is truly ultimate. Therefore, if any of these other authorities depart from Bible teaching, they are to be judged by the Bible and rejected.

Solus Christus

Christ alone. The church of the Middle Ages spoke about Christ. A church that failed to do that could hardly claim to be Christian. But the medieval church had added many human achievements to Christ's work, so that it was no longer possible to say that salvation was entirely by Christ and his atonement. This was the most basic of all heresies, as the Reformers rightly perceived. It was the work of God plus our own righteousness. The Reformation motto Solus Christus was formed to repudiate this error. It affirmed that salvation has been accomplished once for all by the mediatorial work of the historical Jesus Christ alone. His sinless life and substitutionary atonement alone are sufficient for our justification, and any "gospel" that fails to acknowledge that or denies it is a false gospel that will save no one.

Sola Gratia

Grace alone. The words Sola Gratia mean that human beings have no claim upon God. That is, God owes us nothing except just punishment for our many and very willful sins. Therefore, if he does save sinners, which he does in the case of some but not all, it is only because it pleases Him to do it. Indeed, apart from this grace and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit that flows from it, no one would be saved, since in our lost condition, human beings are not capable of winning, seeking out, or even cooperating with God's grace. By insisting on "grace alone" the Reformers were denying that human methods, techniques, or strategies in themselves could ever bring anyone to faith. It is grace alone expressed through the supernatural work of the Holy

¹ Taken from James Montgomery Boice's *Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Grace?*

Spirit that brings us to Christ, releasing us from our bondage to sin and raising us from death to spiritual life.

Sola Fide

Faith alone. The Reformers never tired of saying that “justification is by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone.” When put into theological shorthand the doctrine was expressed as “justification by faith alone,” the article by which the church stands or falls, according to Martin Luther. The Reformers called justification by faith Christianity’s “material principle,” because it involves the very matter or substance of what a person must understand and believe to be saved. Justification is a declaration of God based on the work of Christ. It flows from God’s grace and it comes to the individual not by anything he or she might do but by “faith alone” (Sola Fide). We may state the full doctrine as: Justification is the act of God by which he declares sinners to be righteous because of Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone.

Soli Deo Gloria

Glory to God alone. Each of the great solas is summed up in the fifth Reformation motto: Soli Deo Gloria, meaning “to God alone be the glory.” It is what the apostle Paul expressed in Romans 11:36 when he wrote, “to Him be the glory forever! Amen.” These words follow naturally from the preceding words, “For from him and through him and to him are all things” (v. 36), since it is because all things really are from God, and to God, that we say, “to God alone be the glory.”

TULIP

Reformed theology is famous for a simple acrostic that has often been dubbed as the Five Points of Calvinism (although these are not Calvin’s words they seek to summarize some of his thinking in a memorable way). It spells TULIP.

T – Total Depravity (sin affects every part of who we are)

U – Unconditional Election (God’s choice of his people is not based on what we do).

L – Limited Atonement (Christ died for all who are his, not all meaning “everyone”)

I – Irresistible Grace (God’s saving grace always achieves its end)

P – Perseverance of the Saints (God perseveres on behalf of his elect to assure one’s salvation)

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

Other names: Total Inability or Humanity's Radical Corruption

Scriptures: Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9; Mk 10:18; Rom 3:10-11; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:1-3

What it does mean: there is no part of us that has not been affected in some way by the Fall (Adam and Eve's sin). Sin affects my will, my heart, my mind, and my body. Because of this I am unable to seek God on my own. The scripture describes us as dead in our sins (Eph. 2:1-3 and Col. 2:13) – think how responsive a corpse is. Apart from the work of God in our lives the scripture describes us as unable to understand the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14). Standing in great contrast to those who think people are basically good – scripture teaches us that no one is righteous and no one seeks God (Romans 3:10-11 or Mark 10:18).

What this does not mean: that I am as bad as I could be (only that every part of me apart from the work of Christ is affected by sin).

Practically this doctrine serves to magnify God's grace. "If we do not know the seriousness of the diagnosis, we can't appreciate the cure" (Horton). It is also this doctrine that I will refer you to when you object: "that's not fair" – fair is judgment.

See WCF Chapter 9, "Free Will"

9.3 Man fell into a state of sin by his disobedience and so completely lost his ability to will any spiritual good involving salvation. Consequently fallen man is by nature completely opposed to spiritual good, is dead in sin, and is unable by his own strength either to convert himself or to prepare himself for conversion.

See WCF Chapter 6, "The Fall of Man, Sin, and the Punishment for Sin"

6.2 By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and fellowship with God, and so became dead in sin and completely polluted in all their faculties and parts of body and soul.

6.3 Since Adam and Eve are the root of all mankind, the guilt for this sin has been imputed to all human beings, who are their natural descendants and have inherited the same death in sin and the same corrupt nature.

6.4 This original corrupt on completely disinclines, incapacitates, and turns us away from every good, while it completely inclines us to every evil. From it proceed all actualized sins.

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

Other names: Sovereign Election or God's Sovereign Choice

Scriptures: John 6:37, 39; 10:11, 15; 15:16; Acts 13:48; Rom 9:9-13; 1 Cor 1:27-29; Eph 1:4, 11; Phil 1:29; Tit 3:5

What it does mean: Before the foundation of the earth God chose some to be objects of His undeserved favor. His choice of particular sinners for salvation was not based upon any foreseen act or response on the part of those selected – that is it was not conditioned on anything that we do.

What it does not mean: It does not mean God is arbitrary (i.e. to do something for no reason). It is not by chance but is rather “according to the good pleasure of His will” (Ephesians 1:5). This is in no way “fate” for fate is impersonal – election is the loving and free choice of a personal God.

Practically this doctrine rescues us from subtle but real pride. The one who denies unconditional election is hard pressed to answer the question: “Why were you saved and not another person?” without eventually having to say that they were more sensitive to the work of God, chose better, was not as foolish or resistant to God... But there can be no pride in the one who embraces this biblical truth.

The scripture often speaks about God's choosing (or election, or predestination of his people) Ephesian 1:4 (before the foundation of the world), 1 Cor. 1:27-29, John 15:16. And that belief itself is a gift of God not some foreseen condition (Acts 13:48, Phil. 1:29).

See WCF Chapter 3, “God's Eternal Decrees”

3.5 Before the creation of the world, according to his eternal, unchangeable plan and the hidden purpose and good pleasure of his will, God has chosen in Christ those of mankind who are predestined to life and to everlasting glory. He has done this solely out of his own mercy and love and completely to the praise of his wonderful grace. This choice was completely independent of his foreknowledge of how his created beings would be or act. Neither their faith nor good works nor perseverance had any part in influencing his selection.

LIMITED ATONEMENT

Other names: Definite Atonement or Particular Redemption

Scriptures: Mt 1:21; John 6:37, 44; 10:11, 14-16; Acts 20:28; Rom 8:29-30, 32-35; 1 Tim 1:15

What it does mean: It means that Christ's death is sufficient for the whole world but it is only effective (efficacious) for the elect. Part of the issue is whether Christ's death on the cross accomplished something or not – if it did then the sins of all those for whom Christ died are atoned for (so if he died for everyone then everyone would be saved – which we know is not true). The scripture teaches that Christ actually saves (not that he potentially saves) – Matthew 1:21, 1 Tim. 1:15. In John 10:11, 15 Christ died for his sheep; Acts 20:28 for his church; Romans 8:32-35 the elect.

What it does not mean: It does not mean that the value of his death on the cross is limited. Christ's death is of infinite value (it could have been sufficient to save everyone) but it was designed to save those who are His.

Problems: this more than any other point is where people feel the most uncomfortable (causing some to call themselves “4 point Calvinists.” Keep in mind that texts that describe Christ's saving work in general terms using the words “world” or “all” – they are to show that Christ died not just for the Jews but all people without distinction (Jew and Gentile alike) not all people without exception (not saving everyone).

Practical Value: It leads to our assurance of salvation – to know that his death actually accomplishes something not just potentially so.

See WCF Chapter 3, “God's Eternal Decrees”

3.6 Just as God has determined that the elect shall be glorified, so, too, in the eternal and completely free purpose of his will he has foreordained all the means by which that election is accomplished. And so, those who are chosen, having fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ. They are effectually called to faith in Christ by his Spirit working in them at the right me, and they are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Only the elect, and no others, are redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved.

3.7 According to the hidden purpose of his own will, by which he offers or withholds mercy at his pleasure, and for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, it pleased God not to call the rest of mankind.

See WCF Chapter 8, “Christ the Mediator”

8.5 By his perfect obedience and sacrifice, offered up to God once and for all through the eternal Spirit, the Lord Jesus has completely satisfied the justice of his Father and purchased not only reconciliation but also an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for everyone whom the Father has given to him.

IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

Other names: Effectual Grace, Efficacious Call of the Spirit

Scriptures: Ezk 36:26-27; John 6:37, 44-45, 64-65; 10:16; Acts 11:18; 13:48; 16:14; Phil 2:11-13

What it means: God effectively calls His elect unto salvation. “He effectually persuades us and, in changing our will, gives us the desire for him that is entirely contrary to our sinful nature... He overwhelms us with his love and grace, liberating us to freely embrace what he had before just as freely rejected.” (Horton)

What it does not mean: It does not mean that people cannot resist the grace of God. Rather irresistible grace is to say that God’s saving grace achieves its purpose. Nor does this mean that God brings people into His Kingdom kicking and screaming and excludes those who desperately want to enter. What this means is that we will never want to enter into his kingdom without the prior work of God – his inward call on our lives – and his grace to save us always is effective.

Scripture to consider: John 6:37, 44-45, 64-65 – no one can come to Christ unless the Father (through his Spirit) draws them/ Acts 16:14 This is how Lydia was saved (the Lord opened her heart)/ Romans 8:30 everyone who God predestines God calls and everyone who he calls he justifies (so obviously this is not a call that can be resisted).

Practical Value: We are called to proclaim the gospel and be fishers of men – but this gives us a sense of confidence – it is not up to us but God’s inward call – we need to be obedient and faithful but we cannot change hearts – that is God’s work.

See WCF Chapter 10, “Effectual Calling”

10.1 At the right me, appointed by him, God effectually calls all those and only those whom he has predestined to life. He calls them by his word and Spirit out of their natural state of sin and death into grace and salvation through Jesus Christ. He en- lightens their minds spiritually with a

saving understanding of the things of God. He takes away their heart of stone and gives them a heart of flesh. He renews their wills and by his almighty power leads them to what is good. And so he effectually draws them to Jesus Christ. But they come to Jesus voluntarily, having been made willing by God's grace.

10.2 This effectual call is freely made by God and is entirely an act of his special grace. It does not depend on anything God foreknew or foresaw about the person called, who is completely passive. God himself gives life and renewal by the Holy Spirit. He thereby enables each person to answer his call and to accept the grace he offers and actually gives.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Scriptures: John 6:44; 10:27-30; Rom 8:29-30, 35-39; Phil 1:6

Other names: Security of Believers, God's Preservation of the Saints

What it means: the popular phrase is accurate: "once saved always saved" – the elect are eternally secure in Christ indeed. As Rom. 8:35-39 says, forcefully, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. A beautiful picture of this is found in John 10:27-30 in which Jesus refers to his people as his sheep and makes the promise that they will "never perish" because they are in Christ's hand as well as the Father's hand.

What it does not mean: this is not based upon our efforts. Paul's confident statement concerning the Philippian believers (see Phil.1:6) being brought to completion until the day of Christ Jesus was not founded in their efforts but rather that God finishes what he begins.

Practical Value: This brings a great sense of security that leads to peace in Christ (not laziness as some would claim) and keeps us from constantly striving to win God's favor in fear of losing our salvation.

See WCF Chapter 17, "The Perseverance of the Saints"

17.1 Those whom God has accepted in his Son and has effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit can never completely or finally fall out of their state of grace. Rather, they shall definitely continue in that state to the end and are eternally saved.1

Reformed Worship

For the believer, indeed, for every creature, worship is job Number One. We have no greater command, no greater responsibility and no greater privilege than to worship God. Worship is what we do and say when we stand before the living God, realizing and extolling the character and actions of the Creator of the universe, and glorifying Him as our Redeemer in Jesus Christ.

Worship and the One Who is Worshipped

The ordering of worship should be congruent with the realities of Who is being worshipped and those who are worshipping Him. Worship is about glorifying God for who He is and what He has done and continues to do. Glorifying God is about identifying and declaring the weight of His character and His actions and giving praise and thanksgiving to Him. It is, therefore, more about Who God is than what the worshipper thinks or how the worshipper feels about Him. He who is worshipped is glorious in all He is, all He does, all He says.

Worship and the Worshiper

The worshipper, for his/her part, is a sinner who has fallen short of the glory of the God who is worshipped. Therefore, a sober humility rightly characterizes the attitude of him who approaches the presence of God, solely by the divine grace which has called him to worship and provides the redemptive basis upon which such approach to God is possible.

The posture and attitude of the worshipper, therefore, is one of awe, dependence, gratitude, adoration and praise for all that the Creator-God has done in giving life and all that the Redeemer-God has done in giving new life by the Spirit through Jesus Christ.

Worship and Liturgy

Some in the reformed tradition speak of the “regulative principle in worship” by which is meant that only those things specifically prescribed in scripture are allowable. Hence, for some, the use of musical instruments is eliminated as an association with the temple cultus and not prescribed for New Testament public worship. This view is contrasted with the “normative principle in worship” by which all that is not specifically prohibited in scripture is allowable in worship.

The practice of corporate worship in the EPC reflects a variety of styles which include so-called traditional, contemporary and blended services, and each congregation is free to plan and execute worship in a style that best serves its members in coming into the presence of almighty God. Be that as it may, it should be remembered by churches that self-identify as “reformed” that both shape and content play an important role in the ordering and leadership of corporate worship in our reformed tradition.

Worship, therefore, should be carefully and prayerfully ordered to include opportunities through song, prayer, the reading of scripture and other experiences of congregational participation, to give praise to God, confess sin, hear of Christ’s provision for our forgiveness and to confess the faith upon which alone we stand.

Worship and Preaching

Prominent in reformed worship is the place held by the preaching of the Word of God. Through preaching, the Gospel of the living God is declared, explained and applied to the lives of those who have gathered to worship. Preaching is at the heart of worship; it is not distinct or separate from it. God is glorified when His people sit under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word by which faith is invoked, informed, explained and assured. Through preaching the reformed doctrine of sola scriptura is put into the practice by which lives are transformed by the truth which comes from God alone.

Preaching in worship is a means of God’s grace. It is the unmerited favor of God whereby, through no goodness or desert, one is addressed by the living God. The Creator and Redeemer of the universe takes the initiative to speak His truth into the life and experience of a lost and sinful creature whom He loves and thereby, points the one who would hear to the risen and loving Christ through whom alone one finds life.

Worship and the Sacraments

Preaching in worship is also an instrument of God’s grace when it sets the table for the celebration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Numerous reformed confessions and catechisms refer to baptism and the Lord’s Supper as both signs and seals of God’s covenant of grace with us. They are signs in that they are vivid pictures of the redemption Christ has wrought for us – redemption through going under the water in death with Christ and

redemption through the broken body and shed blood of Christ on the cross. And they are seals by which the Holy Spirit marks us as God's own through His unmerited favor realized in us by believing faith.

By sign and seal the sacraments give vivid testimony to the finished work of Jesus Christ for man's redemption and provide opportunity for communion with the living God which can be enjoyed in no other way. When the sacraments are rightly understood through biblical exposition and regularly ordered in worship the people of God are afforded times of fellowship with God whereby they both give of themselves in praise and adoration, and receive from the Lord that which is needed to grow and serve Him and the advancement of His kingdom.

What is the Role of the Westminster Confession?



Understanding the Confession of Our Faith

WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH

The Westminster Confession of Faith is a confessional statement of orthodox Presbyterianism. The Westminster Confession of Faith is our standard of doctrine as found in Scripture. It is a positive statement of the Reformed Faith. The Westminster Confession of Faith constitutes a system of biblical truth that an officer of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church is required to believe; acknowledging that each individual court has the freedom to allow exceptions which do not infringe upon the system of the doctrine in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Have You Read the Confession?

As a Teaching Elder in the EPC, the Book of Order requires you to adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith as the sole confessional document that contains and describes the system of doctrine found in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, at your examination you will be asked if you have read the Westminster Confession of Faith and to interact with some of its major themes. Please make every effort to read through the document. Copies of the confession can be found on the EPC website or ordered through the General Assembly office.

Sole Subordinate Standard of the Faith

Within the EPC, the Westminster Confession is understood to be the sole, subordinate standard of the faith, but what exactly does this phrase mean? Let's break it down:

Sole

In modern Presbyterianism some churches, such as the PC(USA), affirm a plurality of confessions and creeds (compiled in the *Book of Confessions*) rather than affirming a sole confession of faith. This is problematic, on one level, because not all confessions are the same (or equal) and affirming multiple confessions can result in affirming contradictory statements of belief. Another concern is that a plurality of confessions suggests that truth is pluralistic (*many truths*) rather than unique or particular. In order to avoid this confusion, the EPC affirms the Westminster Confession as its sole confession of faith that adequately represents both historic Reformed doctrine and the truth of Scripture.

Subordinate

The Westminster Confession of Faith is a subordinate document, which means that the authority of the confession is subordinate to the authority of Holy Scripture. The Reformed tradition affirms that Scripture is Inspired (specially revealed by the Triune God), Inerrant (without error and creating no error) and Infallible (unable to fail in accomplishing God's purposes). The Westminster Confession is an excellent document that summarizes the doctrine of Scripture, but the confession is neither inspired, inerrant nor infallible and therefore not equivalent to Scripture. As a result the Westminster Confession of Faith must always be subordinate to Scripture "the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks."

Standard

The Westminster Confession of Faith is not an alternative or competitive statement of truth that is in tension with Scripture. Rather, it is complementary to Scripture and an important document to the EPC because it outlines and describes in a systematic way the doctrines contained in Scripture. It also helps to preserve our commitment to the historic orthodoxy of the Reformed Faith. As a result, the Westminster Confession of Faith becomes a standard by which the EPC can examine doctrinal positions and the denomination's fidelity to historic Presbyterianism and the Reformed tradition.

Key Elements

There are several theological themes and subjects described and explored within the Westminster Confession of Faith. However, there are two themes which are predominate throughout the confession which help to summarize the document: the **Sovereignty of God** and the **Authority of Scripture**. Below are some other important elements to the confession: a brief history of the confession, the structure of the confession and a biblical theology of the confession.

A Brief History of the Westminster Confession

The Westminster Assembly first met in July of 1643 and was composed of 121 Puritan Ministers, 30 lay members of the English Parliament and eight Scottish advisors. Parliament envisioned a national church with a simple liturgy, presbyteries rather than bishops and a Reformed creed.

The first task given to the Assembly by Parliament was to revise the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church. It was during this revision when the Civil War broke out. During the civil war Parliament needed the support of Scotland against King Charles I. The price for Scottish help was that every member of Parliament had to sign the "Solemn League and Covenant." This document bound England and Scotland together in a unified Presbyterian form of government for the national church.

Oliver Cromwell, a member of the House of Lords and a strong supporter of religious tolerance and congregational independence, objected to the Covenant. Cromwell began to amass a

formidable cavalry called the New Model Army and he emerged as the leader of a new political power that sought to right England's wrongs.

In 1646 Parliament tried without success to dissolve the army. The work of the Westminster Assembly was completed in November of 1648. During their five years they had produced the Westminster Confession as well as the Westminster Longer and Shorter Catechism. In 1648 The House of Commons finally accepted the confession, an affirmation which the House of Lords had previously done.

But in December 1648 Oliver Cromwell and the New Model Army seized control of Parliament and in 1649 he had King Charles I beheaded. Though the work of the Assembly had been accepted, there was no longer any political force left in the Parliament to cause it to be implemented.

After Charles' death, Oliver Cromwell ruled England as "Lord Protector" and had hopes of establishing a republic which championed religious toleration. Cromwell was able to keep order but he was not able to enact reform. After his death in 1658, Cromwell's son Richard was named his successor. Richard lacked his father's ability and quickly resigned his post.

The failure of the Protectorate left one alternative for England, the monarchy. A restored Parliament recalled Charles II to his father's throne. Charles II had hoped to find a place for Presbyterians in the national church, but the post-war Parliament preferred the traditional episcopacy and the Book of Common Prayer. Thus England remained Anglican.

Structure of the Westminster Confession

The Westminster Confession is composed in 35 chapters:

- Chapter 1 begins with Scripture, the source from which all other truths are derived.
- Chapters 2 - 5 declare the sovereignty of God. It speaks of God's decrees, plans and purposes displayed in the creation of the world and in God's providential care of his people.
- Chapters 6-20 generally address the working out of God's purposes in history.
- Chapters 6-7 specifically describe the fall of humanity into sin and God's covenant to redeem them.

- In chapter 8 Jesus Christ the mediator of God's covenant is presented as the pinnacle of God's purposeful work on behalf of humanity.
- Chapters 9 and 10 deal with the Holy Spirit and the Gospel.
- Chapters 11 – 20 describe the way of salvation in Christ and how it becomes effective in the lives of believers.
- Chapters 21 – 26 deal with ethical dimensions of the Christian life and treats topics such as the law of God, liberty of conscience, church and state, and marriage and divorce.
- Chapters 27 – 35 deal with the church, the sacraments and the last things.

Biblical Theology of the Westminster Confession²

Scripture: The infallible and inerrant Word of God, the 66 books of the Old and the New Testaments, is the complete and unified witness to God's redemptive acts culminating in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The Bible, uniquely and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks, and requires our unreserved submission in all areas of life.

God: There is one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God works everything to the purpose of His will, for His glory.

Jesus Christ: Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, God's own Son became flesh. Jesus Christ is perfect man and perfect God, united in one person forever. For those whom God has chosen, Jesus died on the cross, offering the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead and ascended into heaven, where He sits at the right hand of the Father.

The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Jesus Christ. He convicts us of sin, draws us to the Savior, and applies the saving work of Jesus Christ to our lives. Dwelling within us, the Spirit empowers us to grow in holiness, grace and love, instructs and guides us in all truth, equips us for His service, and seals us for the day of redemption.

² Taken from *A Brief Outline of Biblical (Reformed, Calvinist) Theology* by Dr. Jeff Jeremiah, Stated Clerk of the EPC.

Man: Having rebelled against God and been condemned for our sinfulness, our salvation is entirely dependent upon the exercise of God’s free grace and choice. God justifies (credits His righteousness to) those who, by the power of the Holy Spirit, put their faith solely in Jesus Christ for their salvation.

The Church: The true Church is composed of all persons who, through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible expression in local congregations where the Word of God is proclaimed in its purity and truth, the sacraments are properly administered, spiritual discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is encouraged. Elders (pastors and ruling elders) oversee the spiritual life of the local congregation.

Sacraments: There are two sacraments: Baptism, which is available to adult believers and their children, and the Lord’s Supper, which is for believers in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is spiritually present and offers spiritual nourishment to those who participate in the Supper.

Second Coming of Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ will come again to the earth, personally, visibly, and bodily. The dead shall be bodily raised. He will judge the living and the dead, and consummate history and the eternal plan of God.

Great Commission: The Lord Jesus commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations.

Preparing Exceptions

The Westminster Confession of Faith constitutes a system of biblical truth that an officer of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church is required to believe. As part of your examination you will be asked if “you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?”

The EPC acknowledges that each individual court has the freedom to allow exceptions which do not infringe upon the system of doctrine in the Westminster Confession of Faith. One of the most common exceptions cited is WCF 21.8. When you are examined, please prepare to share reasons for any exceptions that you may have to the Westminster Confession of Faith.

What Does it Mean to be a Teaching Elder in the EPC?



Understanding My Role as a Teaching Elder in the EPC

UNDERSTANDING MY ROLE AS A TEACHING ELDER

To be an elder in the EPC is a high calling. In the EPC the distinction is made between Teaching Elders (pastors, preachers, ministers) and Ruling Elders, those who, with the Teaching Elders are responsible for the congregation. In higher courts, Teaching and Ruling Elders are also known as Presbyters or Commissioners and share in the governing of the Church. These offices are not indications of special pre-eminence by those who hold them, but rather indicate a call to service, to ministry, to special discipleship and the evidencing of the fruit of the Spirit in every part of life.

Those that fill these officer should be mature in the faith, should be people of wisdom and discretion, and should have adequate training to equip them for their calling. Elders, especially those called to the office of Teaching Elder, should have an aptitude for teaching.

Pastors have been given authority and responsibilities to preach and expound the Word, to be God's prophet to the people and to be the people's priest before God. Pastors shall lead the people in worship, celebrate the sacraments, and oversee the education, nurture, and mission of the church. The Pastors with the Ruling Elders shall exercise joint ministry to the needs of the flock and to all those who have need of a Pastor's care, love, and compassion. With the active Ruling Elders, the Pastor and Associate Pastor(s) shall exercise the joint responsibility of jurisdiction. Teaching Elders shall be diligent to serve actively in the courts of which they are members.

EPC Essentials

The *Essentials of Our Faith* is an irenic statement of historic evangelicalism. Its intent is to define core beliefs of the Christian Faith and must be affirmed by all Teaching Elders without exception. The *Essentials of Our Faith* express historic Christian beliefs common to all true believers and churches throughout the world. It is not intended to be the exclusive test of orthodoxy for ordination. It is not intended to be used as an explicit standard for minimal core beliefs for candidates, ordination or ministerial examinations. It is not to be construed as a substitute for the Westminster Confession of Faith.

1. We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever!
2. Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.
3. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our hearts, He gives new

life to us, empowering and imparting gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption.

4. Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, thereby justifying them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
5. The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in their integrity; where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, she awaits the return of her Lord.
6. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth – personally, visibly, and bodily – to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” (Rev. 22:20)
7. The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to “Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.” He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10)

Ordination and/or Installation Questions and Vows

The Ordination and Installation of Teaching Elders: The following questions shall be proposed to one being ordained and installed and to one who has been ordained previously in some other denomination and is being installed:

1. Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior?

2. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
3. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?
4. Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church you will on your own initiative make known to your Church Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
5. Do you affirm and adopt the *Essentials of Our Faith* without exception?
6. Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?
7. Do you promise subjection to your fellow presbyters in the Lord?
8. Have you been induced, as far as you know in your own heart, to accept the office of Ruling Elder from love of God and sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son?
9. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise to you on that account?
10. Will you seek to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as Ruling Elder, whether personal or relative, private or public; and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before this congregation of which God will make you an officer?
11. Are you now willing to take responsibility in the life of this congregation as a Ruling Elder and will you seek to discharge your duties, relying upon the Grace of God, in such a way that the entire Church of Jesus Christ will be blessed?

Essential Polity

An elder in the EPC must be familiar with the Governing Documents of the EPC consisting of the Constitution: Volume 1 of “The Book of Order – EPC.” This includes the Books of Government, Discipline, and Worship. That does not mean that an Elder must know from memory all the details in these three books, but must have read them, know, in general, what is included in each, and what they mean in governing the church. It would be improper for an Elder to be ignorant of these books since they give specific substance to what the church is, how it is to be governed, how discipline is to be administered, and how the church worships God. An Elder is to manage God’s household (Titus 1:7) and this cannot be done in ignorance of the polity of the church.

Book of Government

The EPC Book of Government, as an overview, defines the church, its government and power, church membership, the authority of session, the calling, preparation, and definition of the officers of the church, as well as setting forth how officers are to be examined and ordained, and the organizational structure of the church. Clearly, an elder should be knowledgeable in these matters. If all the elders know and understand the Book of Government, they will have a good idea of what the church is and their role in its management.

While the principles in the Book of Government are important and do spell out necessary duties of elders, they do not encompass the totality of what an elder is to do. Proper governance must also include developing a vision for a particular church, giving leadership so that the church is vital and healthy. This is an ongoing process, much like sanctification for an individual.

Book of Discipline

The EPC Book of Discipline defines what discipline means from its Scriptural basis and how discipline is to be conducted in EPC churches. Many sessions of churches coming into the EPC have a weak understanding of church discipline since discipline has, most likely, not been practiced as it should have been in their previous denominations. A general guideline for church discipline is to examine what is required of persons to join a particular church and, if those requirements are not being met by a current church member, church discipline should be considered. It is certainly incorrect to think of discipline in a harsh way, such as, needing to

decide right away if a member should be excommunicated from the church. Much of church discipline involves pastoral care and the expression of love and concern toward individual church members. The well-known advice for Christians given in Matthew 18 is to first approach an individual personally to discuss a perceived sin in his/her life and then to go back to the individual with one or two others to discuss the matter. This indicates a process of interaction with the individual, which would lead to a correct understanding of that individual's basis of his/her actions and establish the truth of the matter. If these two steps still lead to unresolved conflict, then the church is to be engaged in the matter, meaning the church session.

The Book of Discipline may seem somewhat sparse on this attitude of reconciliation since it primarily defines the procedures, which must be carefully followed in the exercise of proper official church discipline.

Book of Worship

The EPC Book of Worship orderly describes how Scripture indicates we are to fulfill one of humanity's highest callings, the worship of God. Since man's chief and highest end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever, it is important for elders to understand how public worship of God should be performed in their churches. As people who hold to a Biblical reformed worldview, we know that the worship of God is certainly not limited to public worship of a particular church at a specific worship time, and that every aspect of our lives, even including our bodies, is to be offered as a spiritual sacrifice to God. This is stated in the Book of Worship but most of the content is on how to conduct proper Christian worship of God. The book describes public worship and what elements are rightly included in such worship. These include the use of the Word of God, sound preaching of the Word, music, prayer, and offerings. In this book, the proper administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are described. It also describes the worship of God at other times, Christian marriage, the burial of the dead, and service to God.

Elders in the EPC should be knowledgeable of the contents of the Book of Worship since it is they who are responsible for how worship takes place in the churches. When they make policies regarding worship, the principles and contents of the Book of Worship should inform them.

Appendices



Additional Resources

STUDY GUIDE FOR WRITTEN EXAMS

Study Guide for EPC Ordination Exam on English Bible

Bible Book Timeline				
Event	Date (BC)	Books of the Bible		
		Law/History	Poetry	Prophets
Patriarchs	2100	Genesis	Job	
Exodus/Wanderings/Conquest	1450	Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth		
Monarchy - Saul, David, Solomon	1550	1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Chronicles	Psalms Proverbs Song of Songs	
Divided Monarchy	930	1 Kings 2 Kings 1-17 2 Chronicles	Ecclesiastes	Hosea (Israel) Amos (Israel) Micah (Judah) Isaiah (Judah) Jonah (Israel)
Fall of Sumeria to Assyria	722	2 Kings 18-25	Lamentations	Zephaniah (Judah) Nahum (Judah) Jeremiah (Judah) Habakkuk (Judah) Joel (Judah) Obadiah (Judah)
Fall of Jerusalem to Babylon (the Exile Begins)	586	2 Chronicles		Ezekiel (Judah) Daniel (Judah)
Decree of Cyrus—Zerubbabel and Joshua return with people	539	Ezra 1-6 Esther		
Ezra returns to build the temple		Ezra 7-9		Haggai (post-exilic) Zechariah (post-exilic) Malachi (post-exilic)
Nehemiah returns to build the wall	445	Nehemiah		

Bible BOOK OVERVIEW

Old Testament

Genesis: Beginnings of the universe, human beings, sin, God's covenant people. Genesis 1-11 is primordial history. God creates the world, which is good, but sin enters the world through human disobedience. Adam and Eve eat fruit that was forbidden to them, and Cain murders his brother Abel. God commands Noah to build an ark in which pairs of all living things are preserved from the great flood that God sends to purge the earth. Afterward, people begin building a tower that would reach to heaven in order to make a name for themselves, but God confuses their speech and scatters them. Genesis 12-25 tells of Abraham and his family. God promises that Abraham will receive a land and many descendants, and that through him all the families of the earth will be blessed. Abraham's wife Sarah is barren, so he fathers a son Ishmael through Sarah's servant Hagar. Messengers repeat God's promise, and in advanced old age, Sarah gives birth to Isaac. God tests Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac, but before Abraham completes the sacrifice God intervenes and preserves the boy. Isaac marries Rebekah, who bears Jacob and Esau.

Genesis 26-36 centers on Jacob. Jacob barter for his brother's birthright and tricks his father Isaac into blessing him, then flees to his uncle Laban. On the way he dreams of a ladder stretching to heaven, and God promises him land and descendants. Jacob marries Laban's daughters Rachel and Leah, becomes rich, and has twelve sons. Upon his return to Canaan, Jacob wrestles with an angel and is named "Israel." Genesis 37-50 is the story of Joseph and his brothers. Joseph was Jacob's favorite son. His brothers become jealous and sell him as a slave into Egypt. There Joseph is imprisoned on false charges, but after successfully interpreting Pharaoh's dreams, he is given responsibility over Egypt's food stores. During a famine, Joseph's brothers come to Egypt for food. At first Joseph hides his identity, but later reveals that he is their brother and brings the family to Egypt.

Basic Outline

1:-2 Creation

3-11 Before the Patriarchs: Need for Covenant People

12-50 Patriarchs in Palestine & Egypt: Establishment of Covenant People

Major Texts

Gen 1-2 Creation story

Gen 1:26-27 Cultural mandate

Gen 3 The Fall

Gen 12:1-3 Abrahamic covenant

Gen 17 Circumcision

Gen 50:20 you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good. . .

Exodus: Deliverance of God's covenant people and establishment of the Mosaic covenant. Exod 1-6 recounts the early life and call of Moses. The descendants of Joseph who had migrated to Egypt are enslaved by the Egyptians. It is decreed that their male children should be killed, but Moses is placed in a basket in the Nile River. Pharaoh's daughter finds him and raises him in the royal house (Exod 1-2). Later Moses flees after slaying an Egyptian, but God sends him to demand that Pharaoh let the people go (Exod 3-6). Exod 7-15 narrates Israel's exodus from Egypt. When Pharaoh refuses to release Israel, God sends ten plagues upon the Egyptians. First, Moses turns the Nile to blood, but Pharaoh's magicians did the same. Other plagues follow. For the last plague, the firstborn in every Egyptian home perished, although the Israelites who put lamb's blood around their doors were spared. Finally, Pharaoh lets the people go and God's presence goes before them in a pillar of cloud and fire. Suddenly, Pharaoh changes his mind and sends his army in pursuit. As the Israelites come to the sea, God parts the waters and allows them to escape, but the waters surge back over Pharaoh's chariots and the people are saved. Exod 16-40 takes Israel to Mount Sinai. After the exodus, the Israelites travel through a desert, complaining for lack of food. God gives them manna to eat each day--although when some try to hoard the manna it spoils. The people complain about thirst, and God provides water from a rock. At Mount Sinai, God gives them the Law and covenant. Moses establishes the covenant by spattering sacrificial blood on the people and the altar. When Moses returns to the mountain, the people make a golden calf to worship. God is angry and Moses shatters the tablets on which the Laws are written. Then Moses intercedes and God renews the covenant (Exod 25-34). Afterward, a sanctuary -- known as the Tent of Meeting or Tabernacle -- is built so that the people can worship rightly (Exod 35-40).

Basic Outline

1:1-13:16 Israel in Egypt [slavery, call of Moses, plagues & Passover]

13:17-18:1 Exodus & Wilderness Trek

19-40 Israel at Sinai [Decalogue, Covenant Code, Tabernacle]

Major Texts

Exo 6:2-4 I am the LORD. . . I also established my covenant with them . . .

Exo 7-11, 12 Ten plagues

Exo 12 Passover

Exo 15:1 [Song of Moses]. . . the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. . .

Exo 20 Decalogue

Exo 31:13-17 . . . you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you. . .

Exo 33:19-22 . . . while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock. . .

Exo 34:12 Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants . . .

Leviticus: Instructions to priests and people concerning sacrifices, offerings and worship; God is holy. Lev 1-16 is the priestly code. Leviticus is named for the tribe of Levi, which was a priestly tribe. Priestly actions are central in the first part of the book. Specific sections include laws for sacrifices (Lev 1-7), the ordination of priests (Lev 8-10), regulations concerning impurities (Lev 11-15), and rites for making atonement (Lev 16). Lev 17-27 is the holiness code. The responsibility of the whole community receives greater attention in the second part of Leviticus. The central idea is that the people of God must be holy since God is holy. Laws are given concerning sexual relations, loving one's neighbor (19:18), festivals, and redemption of property.

Basic Outline

1-10 Holy worship [sacrifice & priests]

11-25 Holy living [ritual & civic]

26 Covenant blessings & curses

27 Appendix [vows]

Major Texts

Lev 11:45 You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy

Lev 17:11 the life of the flesh is in the blood. . . it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.

Lev 6:11-12 And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.

Numbers: Israel's wanderings from Sinai to Promised Land due to refusal to take possession of the land. Numbers is named for the census of the Exodus generation taken at Mount Sinai (Num 1) and for the census of the generation born in the wilderness taken on the plains of Moab (Num 26). The first generation proves faithless and dies in the wilderness, but the second generation comes to the promised land. Num 1-10 continues the story of Israel at Mount Sinai. Laws are given concerning the Levites, procedures for prosecuting an adulteress, and other matters. At the end of this section the people depart from Sinai. Num 11-21 traces Israel's journey through the wilderness. The people encamp at an oasis known as Kadesh-barnea. They complain about food and Moses' leadership. Spies enter Canaan and bring back a large cluster of grapes to show the bounty of the land, but the Israelites are afraid of the people of Canaan and refuse to enter the land. God assents to their wish – God will let them die in the desert (Num 14). Korah tries to seize the prerogatives of priesthood and is destroyed. God shows his own choice for the priesthood by making Aaron's rod bud and bear almonds. The people continue to complain and God afflicts them with serpents so that they repent. They are healed when they look at a bronze serpent that Moses makes. As they make their way through Transjordan, they win victories over King Sihon and King Og. Numbers 22-36 brings Israel to the plains of Moab near the promised land. Fearful of Israel's advance, the Moabite king Balak summons a diviner named Balaam to curse them. God uses Balaam to bless Israel instead. Israel commits apostasy by worshiping the Baal of Peor; Phineas the priest slew the idolaters. Israel eventually conquers the region.

Basic Outline

1-10 Preparation to go to Canaan [census]

11-25 Failure to enter Canaan

26-36 New preparation to inherit the land

Major Texts

Num 6:24f [Aaron's blessing] "The LORD bless you . . . make his face to shine upon you . . .

Deuteronomy: Re-telling of teachings of Exodus, Leviticus & Numbers. A call to obey the one true God. Deuteronomy is set at the end of Israel's wandering through the desert. As the Israelites encamp east of the Jordan River, Moses gives them instructions concerning life in the land that they are about to enter. Deut 1-4 recalls the wilderness period. Moses remembers how the generation that came out of Egypt died in the wilderness because of their disobedience, but how God faithfully brought the new generation to the edge of Canaan, the promised land. Deut 5-28 recalls the Law. Moses repeats the Ten Commandments that had been given at Mount Sinai, emphasizing that God chose Israel because he loved them and that they are to love God with all their heart, soul, and might. Moses stresses the importance of worshiping God alone and the need for a single center for worship. The name "deuteronomy" means "second law" and reflects this repetition of the Law. A ritual for reaffirming the covenant concludes this section. Deut 29-34 prepares for entry into the land. Joshua is commissioned to lead the people and Moses teaches them a song to remind them of God's faithfulness and the dangers of disobedience. Then Moses blesses the tribes and looks into the promised land from Mount Nebo. He dies and is buried in an unknown location.

Basic Outline

1:1-4:43 Moses' first address

4:44-28:1 Moses' second address

29-30 Moses' third address

31-34 Transition to Joshua

Major Texts

Dt 4:5-10 Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. . .

Dt 5 Decalogue

Dt 6:3-10 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. . . .

Dt 18:18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. . . .

Dt 29:29 The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever. . . .

Joshua: Israel's conquest of Canaan under Joshua's leadership. Josh 1-11 recounts Israel's occupation of Canaan. God promises that he will never fail or forsake Joshua and commands that Joshua be obedient. When the Israelites arrive at the Jordan River on the eastern border of the land, the waters part, allowing them to cross. They capture Jericho after they march around the city and blow trumpets, causing the walls to fall down. An initial attempt to capture Ai fails because one of the Israelites keeps booty for himself, but after the people deal with the culprit they are able to take the city. Joshua is tricked into making a covenant with the people from Gibeon in central Canaan, but captures the southern part of the country by defeating a coalition of its kings. Josh 12-24 tells how territory was assigned to the tribes. After Joshua describes the boundaries of tribal territory, he calls Israel to renew the covenant with God. He reminds them of God's faithfulness and says "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The people too promise to be faithful to God. Joshua set up a stone monument at Shechem to remind Israel of this covenant.

Basic Outline

1 Prologue

2-5 Entering the Promised Land

6-12 Taking the Promised Land

13-21 Allotting the Land

22-24 Retaining the Land

Major Texts

Jos 1:8 This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth . . .

Jos 24:15 . . . choose this day whom you will serve. . . . But as for me and my house. . . .

Judges: Deuteronomic cycle in Israel; recurring patterns of obedience and disobedience. Judg 1-2 shows that Israel's relation to God followed a cyclical pattern: (a) the people worship the gods of other nations, (b) God allows other nations to oppress Israel, (c) the people turn to God for help, (d) God raises up a leader to deliver them. Judg 3-16 recalls the exploits of Israel's "judges." Deborah organizes the Israelites to fight against the Canaanites who have invaded from the north. A sudden rainstorm leaves the Canaanite chariots stuck in the mud, so that the Israelites prevail. Gideon mounts a surprise attack against the Midianites who have invaded from the east. By blowing trumpets, smashing jars, and waving torches, Gideon's men rout the enemy. Jephthah was an outcast who led the Israelites to victory over the Ammonites from the east, but a rash vow bound him to sacrifice his own daughter. Samson was a strong man who led raids against the Philistines to the south. He also loved Philistine women, one of whom betrayed him. Judg 17-21 recounts a civil war in Israel. The Israelites turn from battling other nations to fighting each other. An incident of rape and murder lead to a civil war that nearly destroys the tribe of Benjamin. When "every man does what is right in his own eyes," the result is violence (21:25).

Basic Outline

1:1-3:6 Military and religious decline

3:7-16:1 Deuteronomic cycle: Major judges (incl Deborah, Gideon, & Samson)

17-21 Total depravity

Major Texts

Jdg 17:6, 21:25 every man did what was right in his own eyes

Ruth: Marriage of Ruth (Moabite widow, daughter-in-law of Naomi) and Boaz (wealthy Israelite). An Israelite woman named Naomi moves from Bethlehem to Moab east of the Jordan to escape a famine. There her two sons marry Moabite women. When Naomi's husband and sons die she decides to return to Bethlehem. One of her daughters-in-law remains in Moab, but the other, whose name is Ruth, insists on staying with Naomi. The women arrive in Bethlehem during the grain harvest. Ruth works in the fields of a man named Boaz, who is a distant relative of Naomi. Boaz instructs his workers to treat Ruth kindly and Naomi has Ruth meet Boaz at the threshing floor one night. Boaz arranges to marry Ruth. Their great-grandson is David, king of Israel.

Basic Outline

- 1 Tragedy & return to Bethlehem
- 2 Ruth meets Boaz
- 3 Naomi's plan
- 4 Marriage & its outcome

Major Texts

Rut 1:16-17 . . . Where you go, I will go. . .

Rut 3: 9 Spread your garment over me because you are my kinsman-redeemer. . .

1 Samuel: Establishment of Israel's monarchy through anointing of Saul and then David. 1 Sam 1-7 focuses on Samuel. This book relates that when Israel's leaders were unfaithful God raised up new leaders for the people. A priest named Eli had faithless and immoral sons. Samuel was born to a woman named Hannah, who had long been childless, and Samuel became Eli's assistant. One night God told Samuel that Eli's family would be condemned because of their corruption. Eli's sons were killed in battle and Eli himself fell and died when he heard of the defeat. When Samuel grew older, he rallied the Israelites for victory against the Philistines. 1 Sam 8-15 centers on Saul. When Samuel's own sons proved faithless, the people wanted a king to rule them. Samuel anointed Saul to be the first king over Israel. Saul led Israel to victory in battle, but he wrongly offered sacrifices and violated God's command by keeping booty from battle. Therefore, Samuel warned that the kingdom would be taken away from Saul. 1 Sam 16-31 describes David's relations with Saul. After Saul proved to be unfaithful, Samuel anointed the young David to be king. David won renown by defeating the Philistine giant, Goliath. When Saul became jealous and tried to kill him David fled. David lived as an outlaw but refused to kill Saul. In the end, Saul tried to consult the ghost of Samuel, and after being mortally wounded in battle, Saul fell on his own sword and died.

Basic Outline

- 1-3 Samuel & Shiloh traditions
- 4-6 The Ark

7-12 Monarchy instituted

13-15 Saul's reign

16-31 David's rise

Major Texts

1 Sam 3:8-9 [call of Samuel] "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears."

1 Sam 13:14 The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart . . . commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."

1 Sam 16:7 For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.

1 Sam 17 David and Goliath

2 Samuel: David's reign in Israel. 2 Sam 1-7 recounts David's rise to power. After Saul's death there is civil war. The followers of David are based in the south and the followers of Saul's son Ishbosheth are based in the north. David eventually prevails, establishing a new capital at Jerusalem, which is centrally located. He also makes Jerusalem a center for worship. David's reign began in 1000 BC. 2 Sam 8-12 tells how David expands his boundaries. David enlarges his political boundaries by conquest, and he violates moral boundaries by committing adultery with Bathsheba and having her husband killed. The prophet Nathan rebukes David. The king repents, but the child he has fathered dies. 2 Sam 13-20 is the story of Absalom. David's son Absalom has followers proclaim him king, then he drives David from Jerusalem. In battle, Absalom gets caught in a tree and is slain by David's men. David weeps at his son's death. 2 Sam 21-24 reports various crises from David's reign. The last of these is a plague that breaks out after David takes a census. In response, David purchases a piece of land on which to build an altar. This will be the place where David's son Solomon will build the Temple.

Basic Outline

1-5:11 David's early kingship

5:11-9 David's successes as king

10-24 David's failures as king [Bathsheba, Absalom]

Major Texts

2 Sam 7:16-17 [Davidic Covenant] Your throne shall be established forever.

2 Sam 12 Nathan's rebuke of David because of Bathsheba

1 Kings: Solomon's reign, divided monarchy through reigns of Jehoshaphat (Judah) and Ahaziah (Israel). 1 Kings 1-11 tells of the united kingdom under King Solomon. Near the end of David's life, Solomon becomes king through the intrigue of Bathsheba and other supporters. After David's death, Solomon arrests or kills his opponents. Solomon prays for wisdom to rule the people and builds a palace and Temple in Jerusalem. To secure political alliances, however, Solomon takes foreign wives, who bring the worship of foreign deities to Jerusalem. 1 Kings 12-16 recounts the division of the kingdom into north and south. Solomon's son Rehoboam vows to rule harshly, and the northern tribes secede, forming the kingdom of Israel. Jeroboam, the king of the north, placed golden calves in the sanctuaries of the northern kingdom. David's descendants continue to rule only the southern kingdom, which is known as Judah. 1 Kings 17-22 centers on Elijah the prophet. Elijah works miracles and opposes the idolatrous worship promoted by King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. He flees to Mount Sinai after calling down fire from heaven and slaying the priests of the god Baal. There God tells him to anoint three people to foment rebellion in Israel. In response, Elijah anoints Elisha to be a prophet. He also denounces Ahab and Jezebel for arranging the death of a man named Naboth in order to seize his vineyard.

Basic Outline

1-11 Solomon

12-16 Divided kingdom: Israel & Judah 931-853 BC

17-22 Elijah the prophet

Major Texts

1 Kgs 2:2-4 [David's charge to Solomon] "Be strong, and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways. . .

1 Kgs 3 Solomon's prayer for wisdom

1 Kgs 5-8 Building of temple; 8:22ff – prayer of dedication)

1 Kgs 18 Elijah and priests of Baal

2 Kings: Divided monarchy until fall of Jerusalem. 2 Kings 1-13 centers on the prophet Elisha. Elisha accompanies Elijah to the Jordan River, where Elijah is swept into heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha works miracles and anoints new leaders Hazael and Jehu over Syria and Israel. These leaders defeat the ruling house of Ahab and Jezebel, which had promoted foreign worship in Israel. The section concludes with Elisha's death. 2 Kings 14-17 chronicles Israel's history until the fall of Samaria. After several more kings reign in Israel and Judah, the Assyrians conquer Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, in 722 BC. Many Israelites go into exile and the Assyrians settle colonists from other nations in central Palestine. This region becomes known as Samaria. 2 Kings 18-25 continues the story of the southern kingdom until the fall of Jerusalem. King Hezekiah reforms Israel's worship and is delivered from a siege by the Assyrians, but several of his successors revert to idolatry. King Josiah also undertakes reforms, but is killed in battle. Within a generation the Babylonians capture Jerusalem and destroy the Temple.

Basic Outline

1-8:15 Elijah and Elisha

8-17 Divided kingdom: Israel & Judah 852-722 BC (fall of Israel)

18-24 Judah to 729 BC, beginning with Hezekiah

25 Fall of Jerusalem

Major Texts

2 Kgs 2 Elijah taken to heaven

2 Kgs 17 Fall of Israel

2 Kgs 19:14f Hezekiah's prayer for deliverance from Sennacherib

2 Kgs 22-23 Hilkiah finds Book of the Law, kicks off Josiah's reforms

2 Kgs 25 Fall of Jerusalem

1 Chronicles: Interpretive history of Judah through David. 1 Chron 1-9 consists of genealogies. These lists trace the history of Israel from Adam to the community that returns to Jerusalem after the Babylonian Exile. 1 Chron 10-29 recounts the reign of David. David's reign is marked by his military exploits, bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, and organizing the personnel who will serve in the Temple. Although David does not build the Temple before his death, he gives the plans for the Temple to his son Solomon.

Basic Outline

1-9 Genealogies

10-29 Reign of David

Major Texts

1 Chron 17 Davidic Covenant

1 Chron 28:9 the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. . .

1 Chron 29:14f [David's prayer over offerings for temple]

2 Chronicles: Interpretive history of Judah from Solomon to Fall of Jerusalem, then decree of Cyrus. 2 Chron 1-9 describes the reign of Solomon. After praying for wisdom, Solomon builds and dedicates the Temple. His wealth and grandeur impress even the Queen of Sheba. 2 Chron 10-29 traces the Davidic monarchy until the Babylonian exile. God blesses righteous kings with many children, victories, and prosperity. God also punishes wicked kings with defeats and disease. Unfaithfulness finally leads to the fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile. The book ends on a hopeful note with Cyrus' decree that the exiles can return and rebuild the Temple.

Basic Outline

1-9 Reign of Solomon

10-29 History of Judah

Major Texts

2 Chron 7 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray . . . then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

2 Chron 20 Jehosphat's prayer

Ezra: Return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel. Ezra 1-6 recounts the return of the exiles and the rebuilding of the Temple. An edict of king Cyrus of Persia allows Jews to return to Jerusalem, where they rebuild the altar. Despite resistance from local officials and neighboring peoples, they construct a Temple. Ezra 7-10 tells how Ezra institutes patterns of Jewish life. Ezra, a scribe knowledgeable in the Law of Moses, denounces mixed marriages, and as a result many Jews divorce their non-Jewish wives.

Basic Outline

1-6 Sheshbazzar & Zerubbabel

7-10 Ezra's memoirs

Major Texts

Ezra 1:2-3 Decree of Cyrus

Ezra 6:21 [Passover] was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

Nehemiah: Rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls. Neh 1-7 deals with rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. Nehemiah gains permission from the Persians to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. Nehemiah's efforts meet opposition from local Persian officials, so that some workers stand guard while others complete the construction. Neh 8-13 relates how Ezra and Nehemiah shape the Jewish way of life. Ezra publicly reads the Law to the people, who join in a national confession of sin and make a covenant to obey the Law, to refuse marriages with non-Jews, to observe the sabbath, and to support the Temple. Nehemiah serves as governor and includes these commitments in his administrative practices.

Basic Outline

1-7 Nehemiah's memoirs – rebuilding of walls

8-10 Ezra's memoirs – reading of the Law

11-13 Nehemiah's memoirs – dedication and reforms

Major Texts

Neh 1:5-6 [Nehemiah's prayer] I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel

Neh 6:15-16 the wall was finished. . .when all our enemies heard of it. . .they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God

Esther: God's preserving of Jews remaining in exile. King Ahasuerus of Persia hosts a great festival, but when queen Vashti refuses to obey him, the king seeks a new wife. His new queen is Esther, a beautiful Jewish woman. A wicked royal official named Haman is offended when Esther's foster father Mordecai refuses to bow down to him. Haman plans a massive persecution of the Jews and devises to have Mordecai hanged. Mordecai, however, is honored by the king for reporting a plot against the king's life and the wicked Haman is executed instead. Esther then intercedes on behalf of the Jewish people. The king gives the Jews the right of self-defense. When the persecution begins, the Jews defeat their enemies. The festival of Purim commemorates this victory.

Basic Outline

1-2 Esther's rise to power

3-6 Mordecai's resistance and plot against the Jews

7-8 Haman hanged & Esther saves Jews

9-10 Purim & Mordecai's success

Major Texts

Esth 4:14 And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

Job: Job's sufferings and the lessons he learns about God's sovereignty. Job 1-2 tells of Job's affliction. God allows Satan to test Job, a righteous man. Through no fault of his own Job loses his family, wealth, and his health. Job 3-37 consists of three cycles of dialogues concerning divine justice. Job has three friends who come to comfort him. They argue that people suffer because of wrongdoing. Therefore, Job must be afflicted because of what he or his children have done. Job rejects this idea and insists that his suffering is undeserved and therefore unjust. A fourth friend

concludes the cycles by arguing that God uses pain to bring repentance. Job 38-41 relates God's response. God shows Job the wonders of creation. While Job is preoccupied with his own suffering, God cares for the whole created order in ways that Job cannot fathom. Job 42 tells of Job's repentance and restoration. Job turns from his accusations against God and prays that God will be merciful to his friends. In the end, Job is blessed with a new family, wealth, and long life.

Basic Outline

1-2 Prologue – Job's test

3-31 False comfort of his three friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, & Zophar)

32-37 Elihu's speeches

38-42 God's discourses & Job's restoration

Major Texts

Job 1:6-12 Satan allowed to test Job

Job 38:4-5 Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?

Job 42:2-3 I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me . . .

Psalms: Poetry and songs for worship. Psalms is the Bible's hymnbook. It contains 150 poetic compositions or "Psalms" that vary widely in content and tone. The Psalms are arranged in five large sections (Psalms 1-41, 42-72, 73-89, 90-106, 107-150). Each section includes several different types of Psalms.

Prayers for Help. Many Psalms are prayers that God will help an individual or the community. Situations which evoke these prayers include sickness, betrayal, slander, abandonment, sin and guilt. These Psalms give voice to deep human suffering while expressing confidence in God's power to help. Written in deep anguish, Ps 130 says, "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord, Lord hear my voice."

Songs of Praise. A number of Psalms give thanks to God. Sometimes the reason is that God has helped the person or community in a time of distress. Other reasons for praise include God's work of creation and his faithfulness to Israel. In tone, Psalm 121 confidently says, "I lift up my eyes to the hills--where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord who made

heaven and earth." Psalm 23 expresses quiet trust by saying, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." More exuberant is Psalm 150, which closes the book by saying "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!"

Instruction for Life. A few Psalms offer instruction in the godly life. Psalm 1, for example, says "Blessed are those who do not follow the counsel of the wicked," but who "delight in the law of the Lord." In contrast, the path of wickedness brings destruction. Psalm 119 is the longest Psalm calls God's word "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Basic Outline

1-41 Book I (David's conflict with Saul)

42-72 Book II (David's kingship)

73-89 Book III (8th-century Assyrian crisis)

90-106 Book IV (destruction of temple & exile)

107-150 Book V (return from exile)

Major Themes

Royal—celebrate David kingship & anticipate Christ as king / ex: 2, 18, 20, 21, 45

Penitential—contrition for sin / ex: 25, 32, 51, 102, 130

Messianic—preview person and work of coming Messiah / ex: 2, 16, 22, 45, 69, 132

Praise/hymn—call for praise of God's majesty / ex: 8, 104, 145-147

Imprecatory—implore God's vindication / ex: 52, 58, 69, 109, 140

Lament—prayer for help in suffering / ex: 42-43, 79, 88

Ascent—Recited during pilgrimage to Jerusalem / ex: 120-134

Proverbs: Wisdom. Prov 1-9 consists of poems that commend the study of wisdom. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (1:7). Sometimes personified, wisdom calls people to come and learn. Pursuit of wisdom brings happiness and prosperity, while the path of folly leads to destruction. Prov 10-31 contains short proverbial sayings. Topics include child rearing, honesty

in commerce, prudence in speech, sobriety, the importance of a good reputation, and the value of a good wife. The collections of Proverbs are ascribed to Solomon (10:1; 25:1), to "the wise" (22:17), and to figures named Agur (30:1) and Lemuel (31:1).

Basic Outline

1 Prologue and reflections about wisdom

10:1-22:16 Proverbs of Solomon

22-24 Words of the wise (anonymous)

25-29 More proverbs of Solomon

30 Proverbs of Agur

31:1-9 Proverbs of Lemuel

31:10-31 Ideal wife

Ecclesiastes: Demonstration of emptiness without God. Ecclesiastes is an address by someone known as "the Preacher" or "Teacher" (1:1). The writer emphasizes that life is meaningless, full of vanity, and chasing after wind (1:14). Human labor, wisdom, and joy are judged to be of fleeting value since death overtakes everyone. Birth and death, weeping and laughter, gain and loss, war and peace each have their season (3:1-8). The meaning of life is ultimately a mystery. Nevertheless, people are still to obey God (5:7, 7:18, 12:13) and can find some measure of enjoyment in their work (9:7-10).

Basic Outline

1:1-11 No satisfaction in the world

1:12-12:8 Satisfaction sought in the world

12:9-14 Satisfaction found in God

Major Texts

Ecc 12:13-14 Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

Song of Songs: Love story. The Song of Solomon expresses the mutual love of a man and a woman. Traditionally this book has been understood to convey the love of God and his people. The song tells how the woman yearns for her lover, and how the lovers praise each other's beauty. The woman remembers her lover's springtime visit, tells how she sought him in the night, and envisions the wedding of Solomon. The woman asks that her lover would set her as a seal upon his heart, for love is as strong as death and passion fierce as the grave (8:6).

Basic Outline

1:1-3:5 Shulammitte maiden muses in palace

3:6-5:1 Shulammitte maiden accepts Solomon's invitation

5:2-6:3 Shulammitte maiden dreams of separation from Solomon

6:4-8:14 Shulammitte maiden & Solomon express love for each other

Isaiah: Prophecy to Judah; destruction because of sin (people become like their idols – blind and deaf), salvation through Israel and Judah to the world. Two kings Ahaz (unfaithful) & Hezekiah (faithful). Throughout Isaiah there is always hope for the remnant & for deliverance of the enslaved – a new exodus. Full of messianic (who will unblind and undeaf the people) and eschatological overtones. Isa 1-39 contains oracles by Isaiah and narratives about his life. Isaiah lived in and around Jerusalem during the late seventh century BC, when the Assyrians were conquering the northern part of the country. The first part of the book summarizes the prophet's message (Isa 1-5). He condemns Israel's injustice and misguided trust in ritual, and calls the people to repent. He compares the sins of Judah to fine vineyard producing only wild grapes. Isaiah is called by God through a vision of the heavenly throne room. He tells King Ahaz not to fear pressure from Israel and Syria for they will fall to the Assyrians (Isa 6-8). Isaiah promises that God will raise up a righteous king and judge the nations that oppose Israel (Isa 9-35). God delivers Jerusalem from the Assyrians and heals King Hezekiah of an illness, although Hezekiah's naive trust in the Babylonians portended the future fall of Jerusalem. Isaiah 40-66 offers encouragement to those living at the end of the exile. Those who have gone into exile can take comfort (40:1) for their time of servitude will end when the Persian king Cyrus conquers the nations (45:1). God is Lord over all.

Basic Outline

1-35 Prophetic condemnation concerning Israel/ Judah & nations

36-39 Invasions of Assyria and Babylon

40-66 Messianic Deliverance

Major Texts

Isa 1:18 though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. . .

Isa 6:3-5 [Isaiah's call]: . . . "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts . . ."

Isa 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given. . .

Isa 40:3-5 In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert. . .

Isa 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Isa 40:30-31 they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles. . .

Isa 42:1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

Isa 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news. . .

Isa 53:3-6 He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows. . . Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. . . he was wounded for our transgressions. . . All we like sheep have gone astray. . . the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Jeremiah: Prophecy to Judah about the reasons for the inevitable Babylonian Captivity.

Jeremiah is set apart as a prophet to the nations announcing both judgment and hope. During Jeremiah's time Josiah eradicates idolatry, finds book of the law. Confines exile to 70 years, promises Davidic king, new covenant. Jer 1-25 recounts Jeremiah's prophetic words and actions. Jeremiah prophesied in and around Jerusalem before the city fell in 587 BC. While he is still a young man, God calls Jeremiah to prophesy. Jeremiah condemns those who trust the Temple to deliver them from judgment against their sins (7:1-15). Jeremiah compares God's dealings with his people to a potter molding the clay. After smashing a jar to portend destruction, he is arrested (18:1-20:6). Poignant laments appear in this section (e.g., 20:7-12). Jer 26-45 contain memoirs

of Jeremiah's life. The scribe Baruch reads Jeremiah's prophecies in the Temple, but the king burns the scroll. Later Jeremiah wears a yoke on his neck to show people they should submit to Babylon. Eventually he is arrested. When the Babylonians capture Jerusalem, Jeremiah remains in Judah for a time before being taken to Egypt. Jer 46-51 concludes with oracles against foreign nations and another account of the fall of Jerusalem.

Basic Outline

1-45 Oracles against Judah and Jerusalem (w/biographical interludes)

46-51 Oracles against the nations

52 Fall of Jerusalem

Major Texts

Jer 9:23-24 Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom. . . but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD

Jer 24:7 I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.

Jer 25 Seventy years of captivity

Jer 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for wholeness and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope

Jer 31:31-34 [New covenant]. . . I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. . .

Lamentations: Jeremiah's lament during destruction of Jerusalem. Lamentations is a collection of 5 poems that mourn the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC. The poems lament the desolation of the city, express anger at the horrors of the siege, and question whether God has forgotten his people. In the middle of the book, however, the poet confesses that God's steadfast love never ceases (3:22-24). Most of the poems have 22 lines, one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The first line begins with "a," the second line with "b," etc. Chapter 3 has 66 lines, three for each letter of the alphabet.

Basic Outline

1-2 Lament for Jerusalem & Zion

3 Jeremiah's grief and hope

4-5 Horror of the siege & petition

Major Texts

Lam 3:22-23 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Ezekiel: Not just prophet but a priest as well. Prophecy about reasons for Babylonian Captivity; God's redemption; Son of Man as human figure. Ezek 1-32 contains warnings of judgment. Ezekiel is a priest who is among those taken into exile in 597 BC, a decade before the Babylonians destroy Jerusalem. His prophecies are given from Babylonia. The first part of the book contains oracles and actions of Ezekiel from his call in 593 BC until the fall of Jerusalem in 587. Ezekiel begins to prophesy after a vision in which he saw God's throne chariot and was given a scroll to eat (Ezek 1-3). He has visions of idolatrous worship in the Temple and of God's glory departing from Jerusalem (Ezek 8-11). He calls people to turn from sin. When his wife dies he bears it silently, as the people will have to bear the loss of Jerusalem. Ezek 33-45 contains promises of restoration. After the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC, the prophet promises that God will shepherd his people (Ezek 34) and restore them, like dry bones coming back to life (Ezek 37). A vision of a restored city and sanctuary concludes the book.

Basic Outline

1-3 Ezekiel's call

4-24 Prophecies against Jerusalem (idolatry)

25-32 Prophecies against the nations

33-48 Prophecies of a restored Israel

Major Texts

Eze 1:4-6 four living creatures. . . each had four faces, and each of them had four wings.

Eze 2:3-8 [call of Ezekiel] Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels . . . open your mouth and eat what I give you."

Eze 2:9-3:1 a scroll of a book was in it. . . Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.

Ezek 11:19 I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh. . .

Eze 36:26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Eze 37:4-6 Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

Daniel: Daniel's life during Babylonian captivity; prophecies about nations; Son of Man as messianic figure. Dan 1-6 includes stories about Daniel and his companions. When the king of Babylon decrees that everyone is to worship an idol, Daniel's three companions refuse. They are thrown into a fiery furnace, but are not harmed. Another king holds a feast using vessels taken from the Jerusalem Temple, but a hand writes on the wall words of warning which Daniel interprets. Daniel himself is thrown into the lions' den when he refuses to pray to the king, but God preserves him. Dan 7-12 consists of visions of the coming reign of God. Daniel sees a vision of four beasts, which represent four empires. But one who is ancient of days appears for judgment, and one who is like a son of man comes on the clouds to receive dominion over all (Dan 7). Succeeding visions repeat the theme of the fall of human kingdoms and the arrival of the kingdom of God at the end of time.

Basic Outline

1-6 Career of Daniel (Belteshazzar) in Babylon: Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus

7-12 Daniel's prophetic visions

- vision of four beasts & Ancient of Days
- vision of ram and goat, Gabriel's answer & seventy weeks
- vision of man

Dan 2 Nebuchadnezzar's dreams

Major Texts

Dan 3:16-18 our God is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not . . . we will not serve your gods. . .

Dan 5 handwriting on the wall

Dan 6 Daniel and the lions den

Dan 7:9-10 [Dream of Ancient of Days] And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him . . .

Hosea: Hosea's commitment to his unfaithful wife Gomer to illustrate His faithfulness as Israel committed idolatry. 3 sons "Jezreel" (a place associated with bloody events), "No-compassion" & "Not my people". Then responds with "You are the sons of the living God [Romans 9] (grace). Hosea prophesied in the northern kingdom of Israel in the eight century BC. He was a contemporary of Amos. God tells Hosea to marry a prostitute to dramatize how Israel has become faithless by worshipping other gods. Their children are named "Jezreel" (which was a battlefield), "Not Pitied," and "Not my people" to show how God will judge Israel. Yet there is hope that God will restore the people, so that "Jezreel" will become a sown field and the other children will be called "Pitied" and "My People" (Hos 1-3). Oracles of judgment and hope appear throughout the remainder of the book.

Basic Outline

1-3 Hosea's marriage to Gomer the prostitute

4-10 Israel's unfaithfulness & judgment

11-14 God's faithfulness (11-14)

Major Texts

Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge . . .

Hos 6:1-2 Come, let us return to the LORD. . . on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence.

Hos 14:9 Who is wise? . . . Who is discerning? He will understand them. The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them.

Joel: After a vision of a locust plague in Judah (Babylonians from the North), Joel urged the people to repent; foretelling of God's spirit poured out. Joel summons the people to repentance and prayer. In the face of a locust plague that threatens destruction, the prophet warns that the day of the Lord approaches, but offers hope of God's future blessing. In that day God will pour out his spirit upon all flesh so that their sons and daughters will prophesy, and the young and old will have visions and dreams.

Basic Outline

- 1 Invasion of locusts & Call to repentance
- 2 Day of the Lord / Spirit poured out
- 3 Judgment of the nations

Major Texts

Joel 2:13-14 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. . .

Joel 2:25-27 I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten. . . .

Joel 2:28-31 And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams (Acts 2:17)

Joel 2: 32 And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. . .

Amos: During prosperity, judgment on the rich leaders of Israel, their indulgent living, and their oppression of the poor. Also addresses the issue of Israel's worship – worshipping both God and worshipping golden calves at Dan and Bethel. Judgment and hope in remnant/freedom from captivity (grace). Amos was from Judah in the south, but he prophesied in the northern kingdom of Israel during the eighth century BC. He was a contemporary of Hosea. The prophet first speaks of God's judgment upon the greed and brutality of Israel's enemies, then declares that God will also judge the sins of Israel and Judah. Oppression of the poor by the wealthy is a particular problem. Sacrifices do not mask injustice, for God wants justice to roll down like

waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream. In a confrontation with a priest at Bethel, Amos declares that he formerly tended herds and pruned sycamore trees, but God called him to prophesy in Israel. He recounts visions of locusts and fire to warn of the threat against Israel. He declares that God has measured them with a plumb line and has seen their idolatry. A vision of fruit in the late summer shows that the end is near. Nevertheless, a promise restoration concludes the book, giving hope to readers.

Basic Outline

1-2 Oracles against the nations

3-6 Oracles against Israel

7-9 Vision of judgment

Major Texts

Amos 5:24 But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!

Amos 7:7-8 Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel. . .

Amos 9:13-15 The days are coming . . . when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. . .

Obadiah: After Jerusalem fell to Babylon in 586 BC, predicts the fall of Edom. Obadiah warns about the coming destruction of Edom. The first half of the book denounces the way the people of Edom gloat over the ruin of Judah, apparently at the time that the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 587 BC. The Edomites engage in looting and hand over the fugitives. The second half of the book announces the coming day when God will judge Judah's enemies and restore the kingdom.

Basic Outline

1:1-14 Judgment against Edom

1:15-21 Day of the Lord

Major Text

Obd 1:15-17 The day of the LORD is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head. . . .

Jonah: Jonah did not want to preach to the Ninevites; but with the message, they repented. God used the worm to reveal to Jonah his heart. The Assyrians repent at Jonah's words, Israel, with many prophets, does not. Jonah refuses to go to Nineveh, although God tells him to warn Nineveh of God's anger. Instead, Jonah goes to sea and when a storm arises, Jonah is thrown overboard. God sends a fish to save Jonah, and Jonah responds with a psalm of thanks that God had delivered him (Jonah 1-2). Reluctantly, Jonah goes to Nineveh and warns the people of coming destruction. All the people promptly repent in the hope that God will spare the city. God decides to save the city and Jonah is angry (despite the fact that earlier God had saved Jonah). Jonah shows more concern for a plant that shades him than he does for the inhabitants of Nineveh (Jonah 3-4).

Basic Outline

1:1-16 God's first call to Jonah and his flee from the Lord

1:17-2:10 God's rescue of Jonah and his grateful response

3:1-9 God's second call to Jonah and Nineveh's response

3:10-4:5 God's rescue of Nineveh and Jonah's bitter response

4:6-11 The object lesson: God's right to compassion

Major Texts

Jonah 2:2 In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry

Jonah 3:10 When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened

Jonah 4:2 I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

Micah: Prophecy against the rich leaders who were oppressing the poor – some prophecy directed at Samaria, but primarily directed at Jerusalem; Foretelling of a savior. Two repeated –

Judgment & Hope. Micah prophesied in the southern kingdom of Judah. He lived in the late eighth century BC when the Assyrians were conquering the northern kingdom. He was a contemporary of Isaiah. Micah declares that God will judge Samaria and Jerusalem because of unjust social practices, false teachers, and corrupt leaders. Yet he also offers hope that God will preserve a remnant of the people. Like Isaiah, Micah envisioned a time when people would beat their swords into plowshares. In the new era of peace, people would be able to sit under their own vines and fig trees without fear. One oracle promises that from Bethlehem will come a future ruler of Israel. The prophet denounces dishonesty and violence. God does not seek burnt offerings for sins, but that people do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (6:6-8). Micah concludes with a vision of restoration.

Basic Outline

1-2 Destruction & exile of the people & remnant restored

3-5 Destruction of rulers/prophets & restored people with Messiah King

6-7 Israel breaks the covenant & God keeps His covenant

Major Texts

Micah 5:2 Bethlehem Ephrathah. . .out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God

Nahum: Nahum foretold God's judgment on Nineveh because of their cruelty. Nahum prophesied in Judah in the late seventh century. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. Nahum proclaims that God is slow to anger but great in power, and he will take vengeance upon his adversaries (Nah 1). The Assyrians, whose capital was Nineveh, expand their borders through violence and conquest, threatening Israel. Therefore, God will justly bring about Assyria's downfall (Nah 2-3).

Basic Outline

1:1-8 Introductory Psalm about God's character

1:9-2:2 Doom of Nineveh and deliverance of Judah

2:3-3:19 Siege of Nineveh

Major Texts

Nahum 1:3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power. . . His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet.

Nahum 3:5 I am against you. . . I will lift your skirts over your face. I will show the nations your nakedness and the kingdoms your shame.

Habakkuk: Questions God about the injustice that he sees. God's answer – The Babylons would be used to punish Judah. Habakkuk not happy with the answer – says the Babylonians are more wicked than Judah. God says “Righteous to live by faith.” Habakkuk prophesied in Judah about 605-597 BC. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Nahum, and Zephaniah. The Babylonians were threatening to conquer Judah. The prophet complains that God does not hear the cries of his people while the Babylonians advance. God replies that the Babylonians are God's own instrument. The prophet asks how God can let the wicked Babylonians conquer those who are more righteous. God replies that the righteous must live by faith (2:4). Five woes are directed against the invaders who plunder the nations and practice violence and idolatry. Habakkuk prays in the confidence that God will save his people. Faith flourishes despite adversity.

Basic Outline

1:1-11 Judah's sin & oracle of judgment against Judah

1:12-2:20 God's justice & oracle against Babylon

3 Request for mercy

Major Texts

Hab 2:4 but the righteous will live by his faith

Hab 2:18:20 Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? . . . But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.”

Hab 3:19 he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights . . .

Zephaniah: Prophecy against wickedness; day of the Lord - historical and final judgment and restoration: hope for the remnant. (grace) Zephaniah prophesied in Judah in the late seventh century. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah and Nahum. The prophet first denounces Judah's sins of idolatry, violence, and fraud. The coming "day" of the Lord threatens sinners. Next the prophet declares that Philistia, Moab, Ethiopia, and Assyria will be made desolate for their arrogance. Nevertheless, Zephaniah holds out the hope that all people will be moved to call upon God in the day that God takes away his judgment against Jerusalem.

Basic Outline

1:1-3:8 Judgment against Judah & the nations

3:9-20 Restoration

Major Texts

Zeph 1:14-15 The great day of the LORD is near-- That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom. . .

Zeph 3:13 The remnant of Israel will do no wrong; they will speak no lies, nor will deceit be found in their mouths. They will eat and lie down and no one will make them afraid."

Haggai: After exile, reminder to give God priority and rebuild the Temple. Haggai prophesied in Jerusalem about 520-515 BC, not long after some Jews had returned from exile in Babylon. He was a contemporary of Zechariah. Haggai chides the people for allowing the Temple to remain in ruins while they themselves live in paneled houses. He warns that prosperity will not return until the Temple has been rebuilt (Hag 1). Urging the governor and high priest to pursue the work, Haggai declares that God will shake the heavens and earth, bringing the wealth of the nations to Jerusalem. The new Temple will be more splendid than the old one.

Basic Outline

1 Call to covenant renewal & rebuilding of temple

2:1-9 Promise of restoration

2:10-19 Call for holiness

2:20-23 Zerubbabel the Lord's Signet Ring

Major Texts

Hag 2:6-7 In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth. . .and I will fill this house with glory

Hag 2:23 I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' declares the LORD, 'and I will make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you,' declares the LORD Almighty.

Zechariah: Urging to renew the covenant with God, reassurance of God's continued care & coming kingdom. Zechariah prophesied in Jerusalem about 520-518 BC, not long after some Jews had returned from exile in Babylon. He was a contemporary of Haggai. Zech 1-8 consists of visions of Jerusalem's restoration. A vision of a divine horseman announces that God will unsettle the nations and restore Jerusalem. Another vision first depicted Joshua the high priest dressed in filthy clothing, which represented Israel's guilt. But Joshua was then given fine clothing, symbolizing restoration. According to Zechariah, God would send a Davidic servant known as the "Branch," who would usher peace and prosperity so that people would invite each other to sit under their vines and fig trees. The visions depicted the community's leaders, Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the governor, as olive trees, since they were the anointed of the Lord. Zech 9-14 contains oracles about the coming day of the Lord's victory. These oracles differ in tone and content from the visions. They announce the coming of God the warrior and a king who will bring peace. Faithless leaders among the people are rebuked. The book culminates with an oracle concerning the day when the Lord will triumph over Israel's adversaries, and all who remain will worship God in Jerusalem.

Basic Outline

1:1-6 Call to repentance

1:7-6:15 Zechariah's visions

7-8 Zechariah's message of God's justice & mercy

9-14 Zechariah's oracles of a messiah King & Day of the Lord

Major Texts

Zech 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey. . .

Malachi: After exile, reminder of covenant; warning of complacency in worship, marriage and in giving. Malachi prophesied in Jerusalem, probably in the fifth century BC. Malachi first tells of God's love for Israel, then condemns the priests who have been unfaithful in their service and the people who have been unfaithful in marriage (Mal 1-2). The prophet announces that God will send a messenger to purify the people. God promises to receive those who repent and to spare those who serve him. Elijah is the one whom God will send to reconcile parents and children before the day of the Lord (4:5-6). The New Testament applies this promise to John the Baptist (Luke 1:17).

Basic Outline

1:2-5 How has God loved His covenant people?

1:6-2:16 How have God's covenant people shown contempt for His name?

1:17-3:12 How have God's covenant people robbed Him?

3:13-4:3 What have God's covenant people said against Him?

Major Texts

Mal 2:16 I hate divorce. . .

Mal 3:8 Will a man rob God? . . . How do we rob you?' In tithes and offerings

Mal 4:1-2 Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire

Mal 4:5 Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet

New Testament

Matthew: Person and work of Jesus Christ to a primarily Jewish audience, He is the messiah. Matt 1-2 tells of Jesus' birth and childhood. Matthew begins with a genealogy that roots the story of Jesus in Israel's history by tracing his ancestry back to David and Abraham. Joseph, a descendant of king David, is engaged to Mary, whom he discovers is pregnant. When Joseph decides not to marry her, an angel tells him that the child was conceived by the Holy Spirit to

fulfill the prophecy that a virgin would conceive and bear a son. Jesus is born in Bethlehem and visited by wise men who were foreigners from the east. When King Herod learned of the Messiah's birth, he slaughtered the children in and around Bethlehem, but Joseph fled with Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Matt 3-25 recounts Jesus' public ministry. Jesus is baptized by John and the Spirit descends on him in the form of a dove. Then Jesus fasts in the desert, where the devil tempts him to turn stones into bread, hurl himself from the Temple, and worship him. In Matt 5-7 he gives the Sermon on the Mount, which includes the Lord's Prayer and sayings like "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." After healing the sick and stilling a storm, Jesus sends the disciples on a mission to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt 10). Afterward, John the Baptist's followers asked whether Jesus was the one who is to come. Jesus engages in controversies concerning Sabbath laws and tells parables about the Kingdom of God (Matt 11-13). When Jesus asks who people say that he is, Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus says, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." Jesus then appears in glory in the scene known as the "transfiguration." A discourse on community discipline follows (Matt 14-18). Jesus travels to Jerusalem and rides into the city on a donkey. He drives the merchants out of the Temple, engages in controversies with Jewish leaders. He taught that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all your heart, then to love your neighbor as yourself. He told parables about a vineyard owner who paid all workers the same wage, and about the future judgment (Matt 19-25). Matt 26-28 recounts Jesus' passion and resurrection. A woman anoints Jesus with expensive ointment, and when the disciples object he explains that it prepared him for burial. Jesus eats the Passover meal with his disciples and goes to a garden, where he prays, "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me." Jesus is arrested, tried by the Jewish authorities, and condemned to death by Pilate, the Roman governor, who washed his hands to absolve himself from guilt. The crucifixion culminates in Jesus' words "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" and in the centurion's confession that Jesus is the Son of God. The Jewish authorities place a guard beside the tomb to prevent the disciples from stealing the body. On Easter an angel opens the tomb and announces that Jesus will meet his followers in Galilee. Jesus appears to several women in Jerusalem, then to his disciples in Galilee, commanding them to make disciples of all nations.

Basic Outline

1-4:11 Introducing Jesus

4:12-18:35 Ministry in and around Galilee

19-25 Ministry in Judea

26-28 Death and Resurrection

Major Texts

Matt 4:19 Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

Matt 5:1-12 Beatitudes

Matt 7:12 Golden Rule "do to others what you would have them do to you"

Matt 16:18-19 . . .on this rock I will build my church. . . the keys of the kingdom of heaven

Matt 23 Seven Woes to Scribes and Pharisees

Matt 24 Jesus' teaching on Second Coming

Matt 26:26-29 Institution of Lord's Supper

Matt 28:18-20 Great Commission

Mark: Person and work of Jesus Christ, Jesus as the Son of God & servant, Kingdom of God.

Mark 1:1-8:26 recounts the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Mark is the shortest gospel. It begins with John the Baptist's preaching and Jesus' baptism. Jesus performs miracles of healing. When a paralytic is lowered through the roof, Jesus forgives his sins and heals him. When asked why he ate with sinners he replied that is those who are sick who need a physician. Jesus casts out demons, and when some declare that he does so by the power of Satan, Jesus warns that those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit do not have forgiveness. Jesus tells a parable about a sower scattering seed on different types of soil to show how different types of people respond to God's word. At Jesus' command, demons leave a possessed man and enter a herd of pigs, who plunge into the sea. Pharisees complain that Jesus' disciples do not follow traditional rites for purification, and Jesus responds that people are not defiled what comes from outside, but by the sins that come from within a person. Mark 8:27-16:8 completes Jesus' ministry and passion. Jesus asks who people say that he is, and Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus begins teaching them that he must suffer many things. Jesus appears in glory, along with Moses and Elijah, at his "Transfiguration," but he continues speaking of his death. A rich young ruler asks

about the way to eternal life, and Jesus tells him to give away his possessions and follow. The crowds praise him when he rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. He teaches in the Temple and eats the Passover with his disciples. He prays in the garden of Gethsemane and is arrested. His trial and crucifixion culminate with the words, " My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" and in the centurion's confession that Jesus is the Son of God. On the third day several women find that Jesus' tomb is empty. An angelic messenger declares that Jesus is risen and will meet the disciples in Galilee. The women flee the tomb in terror.

Basic Outline

1-8:26 Preaching the kingdom of God

8:27-10 Cost of the kingdom of God

11-16 Bringing in the Kingdom of God

Major Texts

Mark 2:1-12 Healing of paralytic

Mark 2:17 Those who are well do not need a physician

Mark 5:29 Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you. . .

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. . .

Luke: Person and work of Jesus Christ as a historical narrative to a primarily Gentile audience. Luke 1-2 recounts the births of Jesus and John the Baptist. John is born to the priest Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth in their old age. An angel announces that John is to be the forerunner of the Messiah. Jesus is born to Mary, who is a virgin engaged to Joseph. The birth takes place in a stable in Bethlehem and angels tell shepherds the news. When Jesus is twelve his parents find him in the Temple, which he calls his father's house. Luke 3:1-9:50 relates his ministry in Galilee. Jesus is baptized then tempted by the devil in the wilderness. In Nazareth he proclaims that God's Spirit is upon him, but the crowds become angry and seek to throw him off a cliff. Jesus performs miracles and engages in controversy over sabbath laws. After Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus foretells his death and resurrection, and briefly appears in glory in an event known as the "Transfiguration." Luke 9:51-19:28 traces Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. The journey comprises the central part of the gospel. Jesus performs healings and tells parables about

the Good Samaritan who helped a man in need; the Prodigal Son whose father welcomed him back; the Rich Man who went to Hades and Lazarus who went to be with Abraham. At Jericho, he befriended a tax collector named Zaccheus, who had climbed a tree to see him. Luke 19:29--24:53 recounts his passion and resurrection. Crowds praise Jesus when he enters Jerusalem on a donkey. He drives merchants out of the Temple and teaches there. He eats the Passover meal with his disciples and is betrayed by Judas. After his arrest, Jesus appears before Herod Antipas, who hopes that he will do a miracle, and before Pilate, who pronounces Jesus' innocent. Jesus is crucified along with two criminals. One criminal asks Jesus to remember him, and Jesus replies that "Today you will be with me in paradise." The crucifixion culminates in Jesus' words "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" and the centurion's confession that Jesus was righteous. On Easter, the risen Jesus appears to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They did not recognize him until he broke bread with them, but later said that their hearts burned within them when he opened the meaning of the Scriptures to them. Jesus also appeared to disciples in Jerusalem, where he ate bread to show that he was not a ghost. From Bethany, a place near Jerusalem, he ascended into heaven and the disciples returned to the city blessing God.

Basic Outline

1-2 Birth & childhood of Jesus

3-4:13 Jesus & John the Baptist

4:14-9 Jesus' ministry in Galilee

10-19 Journey to Jerusalem

20-21 Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem

22-24 Death and Resurrection

Major Texts

Luk 10:25-38 Parable of Good Samaritan (only in Luke)

Luk 10:41 . . . but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better. . .

Luk 15:11-31 Parable of Prodigal Son (only in Luke)

Luk 24 Resurrection appearances on Emmaus Road & dinner with disciples

John: Person and work of Jesus Christ, persuading people, stressing His divinity. John 1-12 recounts Jesus' public ministry. The gospel begins with a prologue introducing Jesus as the Word of God in the flesh. John the Baptist announces that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. At Cana, Jesus turns water into wine to reveal his glory. A man named Nicodemus is confused when Jesus tells him about being born anew. A Samaritan woman hears Jesus' promise of "living water." Feeding the 5000 shows that Jesus is the Bread of Life. Healing a blind man reveals that Jesus is the Light of the World. Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep. Raising Lazarus from the dead shows that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life. Although the crowds welcome Jesus to Jerusalem with palms, they misunderstand him, and he hides himself from them. John 13-21 tells of Jesus' passion and resurrection. At his last supper with the disciples on the night before his death, Jesus washes his disciples' feet as an act of loving service. He gives them a new commandment to love one another as he has loved them. Following his arrest Jesus is taken to the high priest and then to Pilate. When Pilate asks if Jesus is a king, Jesus replies that his kingdom is not of this world. The crucifixion culminates in Jesus' words "It is accomplished" (19:30). The final chapters include resurrection appearances to Mary Magdalene, the disciples, and Thomas, who confesses that Jesus is both Lord and God. At the Sea of Galilee, Jesus directs his disciples to a great catch of fish, foreshadowing Christian mission, and he prepares breakfast for them.

Basic Outline

1:1-18 Prologue

1:19-4:54 Early ministry in Galilee, Jerusalem & Samaria

5-5 Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem (5) and in Galilee (6)

7-12 Jesus' further ministry in Jerusalem

13-17 Jesus' ministry with his disciples

18-21 Death and Resurrection

Major Texts

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal . . . I have come that they may have life . . .

John 13:34 A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you . . .

John 14:16 . . . he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of Truth

John 15:5 I am the vine and you are the branches

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

John 17 High Priestly prayer

John 20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs . . . which are not recorded in this book.

Acts: History of the Church as gospel is spread, through power of the Spirit, across the Roman empire. Acts was written by the author of Luke's gospel. The outline is indicated by Jesus' command that his disciples bear witness to him in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (1:8). Acts 1-12 recounts the disciples' witness in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. After Jesus' ascension, the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples at Pentecost. They are able to speak in other languages, although some bystanders think they are "filled with new wine." Peter heals a lame man at the Beautiful Gate in the Temple, but he is arrested for proclaiming salvation in Jesus Christ. Opposition increases and Stephen becomes the first Christian martyr. After this the gospel moves outward when Philip bears witness in Samaria to the north and to an Ethiopian heading south. Paul's encounter with the risen Christ and Peter's vision signal the beginning of mission to the Gentile world. Acts 13-28 recounts Paul's missionary journeys. Paul embarks on several missionary journeys. The first is from Antioch to Cyprus and parts of Asia Minor, where Paul and Barnabas establish Christian congregations despite opposition. At Lystra Paul heals a lame man and people think that he is a god. A conference in Jerusalem determines that Gentile converts to Christianity do not need to follow the Jewish practice of circumcision. Paul continues founding congregations in Asia Minor and Greece. In Philippi he is briefly imprisoned after casting out a demon from a slave girl. In Athens he sees an altar "to an unknown God," and proclaims that God is made known through Christ. Upon returning to Jerusalem, Paul is arrested, imprisoned at Caesarea, and appeals his case to the emperor. Although shipwrecked on the voyage, he arrives in Rome and continues teaching and preaching while awaiting his hearing.

Basic Outline

1:1-11 Commission by Jesus

1:12-8:3 To Jerusalem (Pentecost, Peter, John & Stephen)

8:4-12:25 To Judea & Samaria (Philip, Peter, & Antioch)

13-14 To ends of earth: Paul's first missionary journey

15 Jerusalem Council

16-18:22 To ends of earth: Paul's second missionary journey

19-20 To ends of earth: Paul's third missionary journey

21-28 To ends of earth: Paul journey to Jerusalem & Rome

Major Texts

Acts 2 Peter's sermon

Acts 2:42-47 and they devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching . . .

Acts 6 Stephen's sermon

Acts 9 Paul's conversion

Acts 15 Jerusalem Council

Acts 16:33 [Philippian jailer] he and all his family were baptized

Acts 17 Paul's sermon on Mars Hill

Acts 20:7-16 Eutychus raised from the dead

Acts 22 Paul's testimony, given to crowd at temple

Acts 26 Paul's testimony, given to Herod Agrippa

Romans: God's power for salvation for Jew and Gentile because our righteousness comes from God. Romans is a letter Paul sent to the Christians at Rome. Paul had neither founded nor visited this congregation, but sent the letter to present them with his gospel in the hope that he would one day visit them before embarking on a mission to Spain. The theme of Romans is that the gospel is the power of God for salvation for both Jews and gentiles (1:16-17). Paul shows that sin is a universal human condition (1-3) and that people must live by faith, as Abraham had done.

Although God's people suffer in this world, Paul assures them that the Spirit intercedes for them with sighs too deep for words (8:26). Paul recognizes that many Jews did not come to faith in Christ, but he argues that their unbelief has served to bring the gospel to gentiles, and he has hope that God will one day have mercy upon all (9-11). The final section of the letter exhorts Christians to present their bodies as living sacrifices, remaining obedient to the governing authorities and bearing with weaker members of their community (12-16).

Basic Outline

1:1-17 Greeting

1:18-4 Gospel & Righteousness of God by faith

5-8 Gospel & Power of God for salvation

9-11 Gospel & Israel

12-15 Gospel & Transformation of life

16 Closing

Major Texts

Rom 1:17 The righteous will live by faith

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities . . . have been clearly seen

Rom 2:28-29 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward

Rom 3:10 There is no one righteous, not even one. . .

Rom 5:12-15 . . . sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin .

Rom 6:6 so that the body of sin might be done away with . . . no longer be slaves to sin . . .

Rom 7:19-25 For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do . . .

Rom 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Rom 10:9 if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart . . .

Rom 10:14 . . . how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Rom 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

Rom 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies . . .

Rom 13:1 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities . . .

1 Corinthians: Practical problems that divide the church – spiritual gifts, marriage, food offered to idols. 1 Corinthians is one of a number of letters Paul sent to the Christians at Corinth. In this letter Paul takes up a series of issues confronting the congregation. Factions in the congregation exhibited arrogance and misplaced confidence, but Paul declares that the message of the cross makes foolish the wisdom of the world. He calls the cross a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, yet through it God's power is revealed. Some issues addressed have to do with sexual morality, marriage and divorce. Paul urges them to recall that their bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, so that they should glorify God in their bodies (6:19-20). Some thought it was acceptable to eat meat offered to idols, whereas others were troubled by this practice (8-10). The Lord's Supper reflected divisions between the richer and poorer members of the community, and Paul urges the Corinthians to examine themselves before partaking (11). Spiritual gifts like speaking in tongues had a divisive effect on the community, but Paul describes the church as one body with many members. Because of confusion about the resurrection of the body, Paul reminds them that when Christ returns the dead will be raised and death itself will be destroyed (15).

Basic Outline

1:1-9 Greeting

1:10-4:21 Problem of divided church

5-6 Problem of immorality

7 Questions about marriage

8-10 Problem of Christian liberty

11-14 Problem of disorder & spiritual gifts

15 Resurrection

16 Closing

Major Texts

1 Cor 1:27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. . .

1 Cor 2:1 . . . I resolved to know nothing . . . except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

1 Cor 3:7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God . . .

1 Cor 6 lawsuits among believers

1 Cor 7 Marriage

1 Cor 9:14 those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. . .

1 Cor 11 the Lord's Supper

1 Cor 12-14 Spiritual gifts

1 Cor 13 Love chapter

1 Cor 15:51 We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed. . .

1 Cor 15:55f Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?

1 Cor 15:58 Give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord. . . your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

2 Corinthians: Paul's authority as an apostle and collects contribution for Christians in Jerusalem. 2 Corinthians was sent by Paul to the congregation at Corinth sometime after 1 Corinthians. During the interval between the letters, Paul had paid a painful visit to Corinth where he was deeply offended by someone. 2 Corinthians is a letter in which Paul fosters reconciliation. Recognizing that people are fallible, Paul compares those who have the gospel to clay jars that hold a treasure and depicts his ministry as one of reconciliation (4-5). He asks them to contribute to the collection for the poor in Jerusalem (8-9), and he defends the integrity of his ministry against the claims of other apostles by boasting of his weaknesses and what he has suffered (10-13).

Basic Outline

1:1-2:13 Personal Testimony

2:14-7:16 Christian Ministry

8-9 Giving

10-13 Christian Ministry defended

Major Texts

2 Cor 1:4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those. . .

2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ. . .

2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord. . .

2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay. . .

2 Cor 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. . .

2 Cor 6:14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.

2 Cor 7:10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret. . .

2 Cor 8:9 though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor. . .

2 Cor 9:6-8 Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. . . for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Cor 12:10 [Paul's thorn in flesh] For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves

Galatians: Counters those who taught that Christians must keep the Old Testament law to be saved. Galatians was written by Paul to congregations he had founded in the region of Galatia in central Asia Minor. After Paul had left the area, some Jewish Christian evangelists appeared and insisted that gentile Christians needed to become circumcised according to the Jewish law. Paul opposed this, recalling how in his own life he moved from zeal for the Torah to zeal for Christ, and reminding them of a conference in Jerusalem at which the apostles agreed that circumcision was not necessary for gentile converts (1-2). Paul insisted that since people are justified by faith in

Christ rather than by the Torah, they live by faith in Christ rather than the Torah (2:15-21). In chaps. 3-4 he argues that Christ rather than the Torah is the means by which people become heirs of God's promises. In chaps. 5-6 he insists that life in Christ is expressed by faith working through love. Christian life is marked not by the sinful works of the flesh, but by the fruit of the Spirit that includes love, joy, peace, and patience.

Basic Outline

1:1-10 Greeting

1:11-2:21 Paul's apostleship

3-4 Justification

5-6 Sanctification

Major Texts

Gal 2:16 know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ

Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. . .

Gal 3:2 Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?

Gal 3:19 purpose of the law? . . . added because of transgressions

Gal 3:24-25 So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 5:19-23 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious. . . But the fruit of the Spirit

Gal 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently.

Gal 6:7-8 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows

Gal 6:9-10 Let us not become weary in doing good. . .

Ephesians: Outlines the grace of God in Jesus Christ, for the individual and for the Church.

Ephesians is one of the Pauline Epistles that is associated with the church at Ephesus. The first half of the book celebrates the lordship of Christ, which has broken down the wall that formerly divided Jews and gentiles (1-3). The last half of the book urges that readers renounce the ways of

gentiles, that members of households be subject to one another, and that Christians put on the whole armor of God to withstand the wiles of the devil (4-6).

Basic Outline

1-3 Our position in Christ (as God's child, a member of Christ's body, as God's building)

4-6 Our practice in Christ (worthy walk and a continual conflict)

Major Texts

Eph 1:1 we were also chosen, having been predestined . . . marked with a seal, the Holy Spirit

Eph 2:1-9 You were dead in your transgressions. . . For it is by grace you have been saved

Eph 2:20 Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets . . .

Eph 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit. . . - one Lord, one faith, one baptism . . .

Eph 4:11-13 It was he who gave some to be apostles . . . so that the body of Christ may be built up

Eph 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths . . .

Eph 5:22-6:9 Instructions to husbands and wives, parents & children, slaves and masters

Eph 6:10-18 Armor of God

Philippians: Paul's contentment and joy in any situation. Paul wrote to the Christians at Philippi while he was in prison. The book gives thanks that despite his imprisonment the gospel is being proclaimed (1) and asks that the Philippians look to the example of Christ, who emptied himself and took the form of a slave (2). The last half of the book both warns against seeking assurance in observance of the Torah and against laxity. Paul exhorts Christians to press on in hope of the resurrection (3-4).

Basic Outline

1 Joy of Christ our life

2 Joy of Christ our example

3 Joy of Christ our goal

4 Joy of Christ our sufficiency

Major Texts

Phil 1:6 he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Phil 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Phil 2:3-4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves

Phil 2:5-11 Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped. . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. . .

Phil 3:7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

Phil 3:12-14 Not that I have already obtained all this. . . I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Phil 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God . . .

Phil 4:12 I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation

Colossians: Counteracts false teaching (asceticism and mysticism) by expressing the superiority of Christ. Colossians is a Pauline letter to the church at Colossae in Asia Minor. The letter speaks of Christ as the image of the invisible God and the one in whom all things hold together (1). It warns against falling prey to false teachings concerning Jewish festivals, angel worship, and consumption of certain foods (2) and urges the people to resist sin and clothe themselves with love (3-4).

Basic Outline

1:1-14 Greeting

1:15-29 Christ's person & work

2 Christ as answer to doctrinal errors

3-4 Union with Christ as basis for Christian living

Major Texts

Col 1:15-18 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation . . .

Col 2:6-7 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith . . .

Col 2:20 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules:

Col 3:2-3 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Col 3:15-16 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. . .

Col 3:18-25 Instruction to husbands & wives, parents & children, slaves & masters

1 Thessalonians: Encourages new believers and instruct on the coming of the Lord. 1

Thessalonians was written by Paul for the church in Thessalonica. The first part of the letter gives thanks for the way the Thessalonians turned from idols to God when Paul had preached the gospel and recalls how Paul labored blamelessly among them (1-3). In the second part of the letter (4-5) Paul urges them to holy living and assures them that those who die in Christ have the hope of being raised again when Christ returns. Paul concludes by exhorting them to watch for the Day of the Lord, which will come like a thief in the night, and to abstain from evil.

Basic Outline

1 An exemplary church

2 A model minister

3:1-4:12 A holy life

4:13-5:28 Coming of the Lord

Major Texts

1 Thess 2:4 We speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. . . we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed— God is our witness.

1 Thess 2:13 when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God

1 Thess 4:16-17 . . . the dead in Christ will rise first. . . we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds

1 Thess 5:16-18 Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances . . .

2 Thessalonians: Instructs on the coming of the Lord. 2 Thessalonians is a Pauline letter that warns people not to be alarmed by reports that the day of the Lord has come. The end will not come until the "man of lawlessness" has been revealed. Since the end has not yet arrived, the congregation is to refrain from idleness and not to become weary in doing what is right.

Basic Outline

1 Coming of the Lord & Comfort

2 Coming of the Lord & Day of the Lord

3 Coming of the Lord and practical Christian living

Major Texts

2 Thess 2:1-2 Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy,

2 Thess 2:3-10 man of lawlessness displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil

2 Thess 3:10 If a man will not work, he shall not eat

1 Timothy: Encourages Timothy as a pastor, stressing church order, soundness of faith and discipline. 1 Timothy is one of the Pauline Epistles that is closely associated with 2 Timothy and Titus. These letters are often called the "pastoral epistles" because they give instruction concerning pastoral issues in congregations. The letter is addressed to Paul's companion Timothy. The first chapter recalls that Paul was the foremost of sinners for persecuting the

church, but affirms that Christ came to save sinners. The body of the letter deals with questions of order in the church. The author lists the qualities of good bishops (or "elders") and deacons, deals with the position of widows. The church is called the household of God and bulwark of truth. The letter concludes by calling upon Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith" considering the example of Jesus who remained firm even in the presence of Pilate.

Basic Outline

- 1 Sound doctrine
- 2 Prayer & public worship
- 3 Church government
- 4-6 Discipline of the local pastor

Major Texts

1 Tim 1:8-9 We know that the law is good . . .made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers.

1 Tim 2:1-2 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority. . .

1 Tim 3 Qualifications of elders & deacons

1 Tim 4:13-14 devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. . .

1 Tim 6:6-10 But godliness with contentment is great gain. . . For the love of money. . .

2 Timothy: Encourages Timothy as a pastor to be bold and endure during time of opposition. The letter is addressed to his companion Timothy. It recalls the faith that was evident in Timothy's grandmother Lois and mother Eunice, urging that the same love and self-discipline may be evident in Timothy. Timothy is to persevere in the manner of a good soldier, athlete, or farmer. After warning about the false teachers who will appear in the final days, the author says of himself, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (4:7).

Basic Outline

- 1 Apostasy and pastoral fidelity

- 2 Apostasy and spiritual conflict
- 3 Apostasy and the Word of God
- 4 Apostasy and a faithful Lord

Major Texts

- 2 Tim 2:2 the things you have heard. . . entrust to reliable men who . . . teach others.
- 2 Tim 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman. . .
- 2 Tim 2:20. articles not only of gold and silver. . . some are for noble purposes / some for ignoble
- 2 Tim 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful. . . so that the man of God. . .
- 2 Tim 4:2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season. . .
- 2 Tim 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. . .

Titus: Encourages Titus as a pastor during time of opposition. The letter is addressed to Titus, a gentile convert who sometimes accompanied Paul. Summarizing the qualities of good elders or bishops, the letter exhorts Christians to show reverence and self-control. People are to resist sin because they have been washed by the mercy of God "through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" so that they have hope of eternal life (3:6).

Basic Outline

- 1 Church organization
- 2 Pastoral ministry to specific groups of people
- 3 Pastoral ministry

Major Texts

- Tit 1 Qualifications of elders
- Tit 2 Training older & younger men/women
- Tit 2:11 For the grace of God teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions. . .

Tit 3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. .

Tit 3:9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law

Philemon: Encourages Philemon to accept his slave Onesimus back and as a brother in Christ. Philemon is a letter that Paul wrote to a friend named Philemon who apparently lived in Colossae. Paul was in prison at the time. There he met Onesimus, a slave who had run away from Philemon. Onesimus had come to faith in Christ, and Paul urges Philemon to receive him back not as a slave but as his own brother (v. 16).

Basic Outline

1:1-7 Greeting

1:8-21 Plea for Onesimus

1:22-25 Closing

Major Themes

Philem 1:6 I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith . . .

Philem 1:15-16 the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good-- no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother

Hebrews: Encourages Jewish Christians during time of trial; supremacy and sufficiency of Christ. Hebrews is an early Christian sermon. The author is unknown, although the book has traditionally been associated with Paul because Timothy is mentioned in 13:23. The sermon was sent to a group of people who had come to faith in Christ (2:3-4), suffered persecution (10:32-34), and were becoming listless (5:11; 6:12). The author seeks to motivate them by reminding them that Christ suffered faithfully but is now seated at the right hand of God (1-6). Christ is the high priest after the order of Melchizedek. Hebrews compares Christ's death to the sacrifice offered by the high priest on the Day of Atonement, and announces that Christ has instituted the new covenant promised by Jeremiah. Through his death and exaltation, Christ opened the way into the presence of God in the heavenly sanctuary (7-10). Recalling the faith of people like Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the martyrs, the final section inspires the readers to run with perseverance the race that is set before them (11-13).

Basic Outline

1-2 Superiority of Christ to prophets and angels

3-4 Superiority of Christ to Moses & Joshua

5-8:5 Superiority of Christ's priesthood

8:6-10:39 Superiority of New Covenant to Old Covenant

11-13 Superiority of faith

Major Texts

Heb 1:1-3 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets. . . in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son. . . is the radiance of God's glory. . .

Heb 2:18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help . . .

Heb 4:9-10 a Sabbath-rest for the people of God. . . make every effort to enter that rest

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword. . .

Heb 4:15 a high priest. . . who has been tempted . . . yet was without sin.

Heb 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence . .

Heb 5:12 by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!

Heb 7 Melchizedik

Heb 9:15 Christ is the mediator of a new covenant . . now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Heb 9:27-28 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once . . . and he will appear a second time. . . to bring salvation . .

Heb 10:1 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming-- not the realities themselves . . it can never . . make perfect those who draw near to worship.

Heb 10:12-14 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins . . . because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

Heb 10: 25 Let us not give up meeting together. . . but let us encourage one another . . .

Heb 11:1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Heb 12:3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart

Heb 12:10 Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.

Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Heb 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account

James: Practically Christian living. The book of James presents a series of teachings that urge Christians to "be doers of the word, and not merely hearers" (1:22). True religion entails the care of orphans and widows, and keeping oneself unstained from the world (1:27). Faith by itself, without works, is dead (2:17). The last half of the book warns against sins of speech and greed (3-5). The author is traditionally associated with James, the brother of the Lord who was a leader in the early church (cf. Mark 6:3; Acts 15:13-21).

Basic Outline

- 1 Faith tested by trials
- 2 Faith proved by works
- 3-4 Faith evidenced by conduct
- 5 Faith exercised by persecution

Major Texts

Jas 1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds

Jas 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God. . .

Jas 1:13-15 God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed . . .

Jas 2:17-18 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. . . . I will show you my faith by what I do.

Jas 2:26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

Jas 3 Taming the tongue

Jas 4:1-2 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it.

Jas 4:13-14 . . . Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? . . .

Jas 5:14 Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.

Jas 5:16 The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

1 Peter: Encouragement to persecuted Christians, reminding them of Christ's example and their hope. 1 Peter is a letter ascribed to Peter and sent to Christians living in Asia Minor. The letter rejoices that Christians have received an imperishable inheritance in heaven, although they have to suffer for a while on earth (1). The author calls Christians to be holy as God is holy, for they are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people (2). Christians have an example of suffering for what is right in Jesus, and they are called to "follow in his steps" (2:21). Christians must not be surprised at the fiery ordeal they face, but should resist the devil and cast their cares upon God (4-5).

Basic Outline

1 Present suffering & future inheritance

2-4:6 Our suffering in view of Christ's suffering

4:7-5:14 Our suffering in view of Christ's advent

Major Texts

1 Pet 1:6-7 though now for a little while you may have had to suffer. . . These have come so that your faith . . . may be proved genuine and may result in praise

1 Pet 2:2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk. . .

1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God. . . once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Pet 2:13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority,

1 Pet 3:1-7 Husbands & wives

1 Pet 3:15 Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you . . .

1 Pet 4:12 do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering . . .

1 Pet 5:2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be. . .

2 Peter: Encouragement to persecuted Christians, correcting error and reminding them of Christ's triumph. 2 Peter is a letter ascribed to the apostle Peter. The author recalls how he heard the voice of God when Jesus was transfigured on the mountain, and he warns against false prophets who lead people astray; such prophets will be punished by God. Although some scoff at the idea that the Lord will return, the author says that with God "a thousand years are like one day" (3:8). The Lord will keep his promise, coming like a thief in the night. His delay in returning allows people time to repent.

Basic Outline

1 Christian growth

2 Antidote to error

3 Certainty of the future

Major Texts

2 Pet 1:4 he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world.

2 Pet 1:20 no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.

2 Pet 2:22 A dog returns to its vomit," / "A sow goes back to her wallowing in the mud.

2 Pet 3:9 The Lord . . . is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish. . .

1 John: Work of Jesus Christ, emphasizing the believer's assurance of salvation. 1 John is a treatise that was written by an unknown author in language similar to that used in John's gospel. The Christian community had suffered a schism (2:19). The author seeks to restore fellowship by reminding readers that all have sinned. Those who say they are in the light but continue to hate their brothers and sisters in the faith remain in darkness. The author warns against those who deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh (4:1-3) repeating that those who love God must love other Christians (4:21).

Basic Outline

1-3 Fellowship and the Father

4-5 Fellowship and the Father

Major Texts

1 John 1:8 -9 If we claim to be without sin . . he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins

1 John 2:9 Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness.

1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world or anything in the world. . . For everything in the world— the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting. . .

1 John 3:2-3 But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.

1 John 4:4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

John 4:8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life. . . I write these things. . . so that you may know that you have eternal life.

1 John 5:14 if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us-- whatever we ask-- we know that we have what we asked of him.

2 John: Encourages lady to provide hospitality, except to those teaching false doctrine. 2 John is a short letter written by an elder or presbyter to a congregation. The language is similar to that found in 1 John. The author reminds the readers about the command to love one another. He also warns them not to receive into their community those who deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

Basic Outline

1:1-3 Greeting

1:4-11 Truth & love

1:12-13 Closing

Major Texts

2 John 1:10-11 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

3 John: Encourages Gaius to show hospitality to genuine missionaries. 3 John is a short letter written by an elder or presbyter to another Christian leader named Gaius. The letter reflects a situation in which missionaries were given hospitality by Christians along the way. One member of the community refused to offer assistance to such missionaries and even prevented others from offering help. The author of the letter requests that support be given to the travelers.

Basic Outline

1:1-4 Greeting

1:5-12 Support & opposition

1:13-15 Closing

Major Texts

3 John 1:5-6 Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God

Jude: Warns of doctrinal error and false teaching and calls Christians to persevere. Jude is a brief letter that warns against false teachers who have turned the Christian message into licentiousness (v. 4). The author recounts how judgment was meted out upon the unbelievers in the wilderness generation and Sodom and Gomorrah. False teachers will go the way of Cain, Balaam, and Korah, but the readers are to pray in the Holy Spirit and keep themselves in the love of God. The author is traditionally associated with Jude, the brother of the Lord (Mark 6:3).

Basic Outline

1:1-2 Greeting

1:5-16 Judgment on false teaching

1:17-23 Perseverance

1:24-25 Doxology

Major Texts

Jude 1:9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses

Jude 1:24 [Doxology] To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy. . .

Revelation: Encouragement, in symbolic language Christ's ultimate victory. The book of Revelation is actually a letter. Written by a Christian leader named John who had been exiled to the island of Patmos, it was sent to seven congregations in Asia Minor (1). The book begins by describing conditions in each of the seven churches. Some were challenged by persecution,

others by complacency, and still others by teachings that approved of eating meat offered to idols and practicing immorality. Then presents readers with a scene in which the heavenly hosts worship God on the throne and Christ the Lamb who was slain (4-5). The book does not provide a linear description of the end times, but presents several cycles of visions that warn about coming tribulations. The adversaries of God's people are depicted as a Beast and a Harlot, who are finally destroyed. At the end of each cycle the readers return to the heavenly throne room (7:9-17; 11:15-19; 15:2-4; 19:1-8). The final chapters culminate in the new Jerusalem, the city of God (21:1-22:5). Through its warnings and promises the book seeks to bring readers to renewed faith in God and the Lamb, who are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end (1:8; 22:13).

Basic Outline

1 Prologue

2-3 Letters to Seven Churches

4 Vision of heaven

5-8:5 Seven seals

8:6-11:19 Seven trumpets

12-14 Seven sign

15-16 Seven bowls

17-20 Reign and Ruin of Antichrist

21:1-22:5 City of God

22:6-21 Epilogue

Major Texts

Rev 1:17-18 Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

Rev 5:9-10 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Rev 20 thousand year reign.

Rev 20:12-15 books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. . . . If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Rev 21:1- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband

Rev 22:12-13 Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Bible Content Questions

Whole Bible

1. How many books are in the Bible? How many in the Old Testament? In the New Testament?
 - a. 66 total / 39 Old Testament / 27 New Testament
2. Where in the Old Testament would you find the Ten Commandments (two references)?
 - a. Exo 20:1-17; Deut 5:6-21
3. Where in the New Testament would you find the law summarized?
 - a. Mat 22:36-40; Mrk 12:29-31
4. Locate two passages about the revelation of God in nature.
 - a. Psa 19:1-14, Rom 1:18-20

Old Testament

i. Old Testament: General

- a. Name the general divisions of the Old Testament and the books in each.
 - i. Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
 - ii. History: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
 - iii. Poetry: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs
 - iv. Prophecy:
 1. Major prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel
 2. Minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi
- b. Give a general outline of Old Testament history, including key dates.
 - i. Creation
 - ii. Fall
 - iii. Noah & Flood (c. 2000 BC)
 - iv. Call of Abraham (c. 2100 BC)
 - v. Israel moves to Egypt/400 years of slavery (c. 1850 BC)
 - vi. Exodus (c. 1450 BC)
 - vii. Conquest of Canann (1400 BC)
 - viii. Period of Judges (1400-1000 BC)
 - ix. United Monarchy – Saul, David & Solomon (1000-950 BC)
 - x. Divided monarchy (950 BC)
 - xi. Fall of Israel (722 BC)

- xii. Fall of Jerusalem (586 BC)
- xiii. First Jews return from exile (538 BC)
- c. Give a general outline of Old Testament history from the perspective of the covenant.
 - i. Adamic (Covenant of Works)
 - 1. Gen 2:15-17
 - ii. Noahic
 - 1. Gen 9:8-17
 - iii. Abrahamic
 - 1. Gen 12:1-3, 15:1-21, 17:1-14 (circumcision)
 - iv. Mosaic
 - 1. Exod 20 (Decalogue) & entire Pentateuch
 - v. Davidic
 - 1. 2 Sam 7:1-17
 - vi. New covenant
 - vii. Jer 31:31-34
- d. Identify the components of the tabernacle
 - i. Outer Court
 - 1. Laver
 - 2. Priest wash hands & feet
 - 3. Altar
 - 4. Animals sacrificed
 - ii. Inner court / holy place

1. Lampstand
 2. Atar
 3. Altar of incense
 4. Reminder of presence of God
 5. Table
 6. Bread of presence
- iii. Holy of Holies
1. Ark of Covenant
 2. Lid – Mercy Seat (symbolizes God’s throne)
 3. Contents – tablets, manna, Aaron’s rod
- e. Identify the various Old Testament sacrifices.
- i. Burnt offering
 1. male animal without blemish
 2. all burnt
 3. for general sin
 - ii. Meal offering
 1. unleavened salted cakes
 2. token portion burnt, rest eaten by priest
 3. for thankfulness
 - iii. Peace offering
 1. male or female animal w/out blemish
 2. fat portions burnt, rest eaten in fellowship meal

3. for fellowship
- iv. Sin offering
 1. bull (priest)
 2. he-goat (king)
 3. she-goat (individual)
 4. fat portions burnt, rest eaten by priest
 5. for particular sin
- v. Guilt offering
 1. ram without blemish
 2. fat portions burnt, rest eaten by priest
 3. for desecration of something holy
- f. Identify the various Jewish festivals. Give the scriptural reference
 - i. Passover
 1. Exod 12
 2. Deliverance from Egypt
 - ii. Pentecost
 1. Lev 23 / Deut 16
 2. Celebration of harvest
 - iii. Day of Atonement
 1. Lev 16
 2. Sacrifices for sins of the nation
 - iv. Feast of Tabernacles

1. Lev 23
2. Wanderings in wilderness
- v. Purim
 1. Esth 9
 2. Failure of plot against Jews
- vi. Dedication (Hanukah)
 1. John 10:22
 2. Restoration of temple (164 BC)
- vii. 9th of Ab
 1. None
 2. Destruction of temple (586 BC)
2. Old Testament: Key People
 - a. Discuss briefly the life and significance of the following, include book(s) and chapter(s).
 - i. Adam: first human & made in image of God (Gen 1). God made covenant of works requiring the perfect obedience, but promise eternal life (Gen 2); He failed and received penalty of death (Gen 3), which was imputed to all people (Rom 5:12).
 - ii. Abraham: first great patriarch of Israel. God made a covenant of grace with him and promised the land of Canaan and many offspring who would bless the world (Gen 12, 15). Covenant sign of circumcision given to him (Gen 17). His son Isaac was a child of promise, given in his old age and his wife Sarah's barrenness (Gen 21). Required to show faithfulness through willingness to offer Isaac as sacrifice (Gen 22).
 - iii. Joseph: great-grandson of Abraham, sold into slavery in Egypt, but rose to position of prime minister. Brought Jacob and his sons to Egypt by providing relief to his family during a drought (Gen 37-47).

- iv. The Twelve tribes (name them): Clans of Israel to which the Promised land was given. Named after the sons of Jacob (Levi, not included; Joseph represented by his two sons).

Reuben	Gad
Simeon	Asher
Judah	Naphtali
Zebulun	Benjamin
Issachar	Ephraim (son of Joseph)
Dan	Manasseh (son of Joseph)

- v. Moses: leader of Israelites who led them out of Egypt. God revealed Himself to Moses as Yahweh and called him to speak to pharaoh (Ex 3-4), Moses oversaw institution of Passover (Ex 12-13), led Israel through Red Sea (Ex 14) and through Sinai wanderings and received the Law (Ex 20-22), including instructions about the Tabernacle (Ex 26-30), which he built. He was a prototype of Christ (Deut 18).
- vi. Joshua: successor of Moses who led Israel across the Jordan and initiated the conquest of Canaan (Josh 3).
- vii. Deborah: a judge in Israel who instructed Barak to battle Canaanite general Sisera, whom she later killed. Song of Deborah & Barak celebrates the victory (Jdg 4-5).
- viii. Gideon: a judge in Israel who destroyed Baal altars and defeated Midianites (Jdg 6-8).
- ix. Ruth: poor widow from Moab comes to Israel with her mother-in-law Naomi (Ruth 1). She marries her late husband's relative Boaz (Ruth 4). Boaz and Ruth are great-grandparents of David.
- x. Samuel: prophet and last judge of Israel, raised by high priest Eli (1 Sam 2-3). He anointed both Saul (1 Sam 10) and David (1 Sam 16) as kings of Israel.

- xi. David: second and greatest king of Israel. Defeated Goliath as a youth (1 Sam 17), harassed by Saul (1 Sam 19-31). After Saul's death, he assumed kingship, consolidated kingdom and brought the ark to Jerusalem and made it his capital (2 Sam 5, 1 Chron 15). Committed adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11). God made a covenant promising that his throne would last forever, a promise of Christ's reign (2 Sam 7, 1 Chron 17). Wrote many psalms.
- xii. Solomon: third king of Israel, renowned for the wisdom he received from God (1 Kgs 3). He built the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 6, 2 Chron 3-4)
- xiii. Rehoboam: Solomon's son who succeeded him as king (1 Kgs 12). A wicked king, he followed bad advice and oppressed his people, resulting in a rebellion and divided kingdom (1 Kgs 12, 2 Chron 10-11).
- xiv. Jeroboam son of Nebat: first king of northern kingdom. Led rebellion against Rehoboam (1 Kgs 11-12). A wicked king who set up new centers of worship to rival Jerusalem (1 Kgs 12)
- xv. Elijah: pre-classical prophet in Israel during reign of Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kgs 17). Raised widow's son from death (1 Kgs 17), confronted priests of Baal at Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18), harassed by Jezebel (1 Kgs 19) and ascends to heaven in fiery chariot (2 Kgs 2). Symbolically, the forerunner to Christ (Mal 4), actually in John the Baptist (Matt 11).
- xvi. Elisha: successor to Elijah, who received Elijah's mantle as symbol of authority (2 Kgs 2)
- xvii. The good kings of Judah (name them): There were 8 good kings, though Amaziah was "somewhat good."
 - 1. Asa (1 Kgs 15, 2 Chron 14)
 - 2. Jehosaphat (1 Kgs 22, 2 Chron 17-20)
 - 3. Joash (2 Kgs 11, 2 Chron 22-23)
 - 4. Amaziah (2 Kgs 14, 2 Chron 25)

5. Uzziah (2 Kgs 15, 2 Chron 26)
6. Jotham (2 Kgs 15, 2 Chron 27)
7. Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18-20, 2 Chron 29-32)
8. Josiah (2 Kgs 21-23, 2 Chron 35)

xviii. Hezekiah: king of Judah at the time Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC (2 Kgs 18).

He was a good king who destroyed idols (2 Kgs 18) and restores temple worship and the Passover (2 Chron 29-30). Defeated Assyrian king Sennacherib, which was prophesied by Isaiah (1 Kgs 19). When critically ill, he prayed and was restored to health (1 Kgs 20)

xix. Josiah: a good king of Judah who made reforms in Judah. High priest Hilkiah found Book of the Law (2 Kgs 22) which kicked off Josiah's reforms and reinstatement of Passover (2 Kgs 23).

xx. Isaiah; a major prophet in Judah during reign of Uzziah through Hezekiah. He warned of God's judgment and predicted Christ (Isa 9) who would be a suffering servant (Isa 42) who would be wounded for our transgressions and accomplish our salvation (Isa 52-53). In a vision, he saw the holiness of God (Isa 6).

xxi. Jeremiah: a major prophet in Judah who confronted God's people of their sin during reign of Josiah in 627 BC to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. Prophesied in Jerusalem (Jer 2) until driven from there by Jews (Jer 11), imprisoned and cast into a cistern (Jer 37-38), taken to Egypt after Jerusalem's fall (Jer 43) Predicted seventy years of captivity in Babylon (Jer 25) and the new covenant in Christ (Jer 31).

xxii. Ezekiel: a major prophet to Jews during exile in Babylon who explained reasons for Babylonian exile (their sin, not God's abandonment). He foretold God's redemptive purposes in fantastic word pictures, such as whirlwind (Ezek 1), scroll (Ezek 2), or dry bones (Ezek 37)

xxiii. Daniel: an Israelite taken captive to Babylon before fall of Jerusalem. He served as an official during reign of Babylonian kings Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1), Belshazzar (Dan 5), and Darius, king of Medes (Dan 6). He interpreted dreams of

Nebuchadnezzar, which predicted political powers that would succeed Babylon (Dan 2), handwriting on the wall for Belshazzar (Dan 5) and had vision of prophecies of Christ's advent (Dan 7-12).

xxiv. Nehemiah: political leader in Jerusalem after the exile who led people to rebuild the city wall (Neh 6) and with Ezra, oversaw a renewed worship of God (Neh 8f)

xxv. Malachi: last Old Testament prophet, who prophesied about 100 years after temple was rebuilt. Rebuked people for their sin and predicted John the Baptist (Mal 3).

3. Old Testament: Key Passages

- a. Locate the following passages book(s) and chapter(s).
- b. Passover: Exo 12, Deut 16, 1 Cor 5:7
- c. Ten Commandments: Exo 20:1-17; Deut 5:6-21
- d. Day of Atonement: Lev 16, 23. Num 29
- e. Shema and reiteration of the Law: Deut 6, Mark 12:9
- f. Watchman: Isa 21, Eze 33
- g. New Covenant: Jer 31, Heb 8
- h. "I will pour out my spirit": Joel 2, Acts 2
- i. "The just shall live by faith": Hab 2:4
- j. "I am going to send my messenger": Mal 3:1
- k. Messianic Psalms: Ps 2, 8, 21, 40, 41, 68, 91, 109, 110, 118, 132

4. Old Testament: Key Events—Locate the following passages book(s) and chapter(s), and date where asterisked (*).

- a. Creation: Gen 1-2
- b. Fall: Gen 3
- c. Flood: Gen 6-9

- d. Babel: Gen 11
- e. Promise to Abraham: Gen 12, 15, 17
- f. Sign of Abrahamic covenant: Gen 17
- g. Jacob wrestling with the angel: Gen 32
- h. The Exodus*: Exo 13-15 / 1450 BC
- i. Fall of Jericho: Josh 6
- j. The anointing of David: 1 Sam 16
- k. Davidic covenant: 2 Sam 7
- l. Dedication of the temple*: 1 Kings 8 / 960 BC
- m. Division of the kingdom*: 1 Kings 12 / 930 BC
- n. The Exile*: 2 Kings 25 / 586 BC (Fall of Jerusalem)
- o. The return from exile*: 2 Chron 36 & Ezra 2 / 538 BC

New Testament

New Testament: General

1. Name the general divisions of the New Testament and the books in each.
 - a. Gospel: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
 - b. History: Acts
 - c. Epistles: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude
 - d. Prophecy: Revelation
2. Which are the Prison Epistles?

- a. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon
3. Which are the Pastoral Epistles?
 - a. 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus
4. Which are the Catholic (or General) Epistles?
 - a. James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude
5. What are the distinctive features of each of the four gospels?
 - a. Matthew is a synoptic gospel, written by one of the apostles, for Jews. It is rooted in Old Testament prophecy relating to the coming of the Messiah and his kingdom. Includes both Judean and Galilean ministry.
 - b. Mark is a synoptic gospel written by a disciple of Peter, for the Roman world and shows more of Jesus' actions than his teachings. It is fast-paced and shows Jesus as powerful in the natural world. Includes both Judean and Galilean ministry.
 - c. Luke is a synoptic gospel, written by a disciple of Paul, for a Gentile audience (specifically Theophilus) as an account of Jesus' life and ministry. Includes both Judean and Galilean ministry.
 - d. John, written by one of the apostles, supplements the synoptic gospels with an emphasis on Jesus' Judean ministry (omitting most parables and theme of God's kingdom). It contains extended discourses of Jesus.
6. Outline the life of Christ.
 - a. Birth & early journeys
 - i. Birth of Christ in Bethlehem
 - ii. Escape to Egypt, then to Nazareth
 - iii. Baptism in Jordan River
 - iv. Wandering in wilderness of Judah, followed by temptation from Satan
 - v. First miracle at wedding in Cana

- vi. Move to Capernaum (Galilee) to teach and heal
 - vii. Visit to Jerusalem: temple cleansing & Nicodemus
 - viii. Conversation with woman at the well in Samaria on return to Galilee
 - ix. Rejected by townspeople in Nazareth, headquarters at Capernaum
- b. Galilean ministry
- i. Teaching & healing in eastern Galilee, return to Capernaum
 - ii. Visit to Jerusalem: cripple at pool of Bethesda
 - iii. Sermon on the Mount
 - iv. Teaching & healing in southern Galilee: widow's son at Nain
 - v. Rejection again at Nazareth; sending of 12
 - vi. Withdrawal near Bethsaida, Feeding of 5,000 & 4,000
- c. Later ministry
- i. Withdrawal in Phoenicia, sermon on bread of life
 - ii. Visit to Decapolis
 - iii. Visit to Caesarea Philippi, Peter says Jesus is the Christ
 - iv. Transfiguration (possibly Mount Hermon)
 - v. Leaves Galilee for Jerusalem
 - vi. Visit to Samaria: heals 10 lepers
 - vii. Visit to Judea, at Bethany with Martha & Mary
 - viii. Visit across Jordan, return to Bethany to raise Lazarus
 - ix. Reaction of Pharisees, escape to Ephraim
- d. Passion week & Resurrection

- i. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem
 - ii. Teaching in Jerusalem
 - iii. Passover and institution of Lord's Supper
 - iv. Gethsemane, arrest, trial and crucifixion
 - v. Resurrection
 - vi. Ascension on Mount of Olives
7. Name and locate Jesus' parables.
- a. Sower & types of soil
 - i. Luk 12:13-21
 - i. Matt 13:1-23 / Mrk 4:1-9 / Luk 8:4-6
 - i. Prodigal son
 - i. Luk 15:11-32
 - b. Pearl of great price
 - i. Matt 13:45-46
 - j. Barren fig tree
 - i. Luk 13:6-9
 - c. Lost sheep
 - i. Matt 18:12-14 / Luk 15:3-8
 - k. Blind man
 - i. Luk 6:39-42
 - d. Unforgiving servant
 - i. Matt 18:21-35
 - l. Dishonest manager
 - i. Luk 16:1-13
 - e. Obedient & disobedient sons
 - i. Matt 21:28-32
 - m. Hidden treasure
 - i. Matt 13:44
 - f. Talents (Ten Minas)
 - i. Matt 25:14-30 / Luke 19:11-27
 - n. Laborers in vineyard
 - i. Matt 20:1-16
 - g. Good Samaritan
 - i. Luk 10:25-37
 - o. Leaven
 - i. Matt 13:33 / Luk 13:20-21
 - h. Rich fool

- p. Lost coin
 - i. Luk 15:8-10
- q. Men waiting for wedding feast
 - i. Luk 12:35-40
- r. Mustard seed
 - i. Matt 13:31 / Mrk 4:30-32 / Luk 13:18-19
- s. Net
 - i. Matt 13:47-50
- t. Patch on new garment
 - i. Luk 5:36-38
- u. Persistent Widow
 - i. Luk 18:1-8
- v. Ten virgins
 - i. Matt 25:1-11
- w. Tenants
 - i. Matt 21:33-41
- x. Wedding feast when no one comes
 - i. Matt 22:1-14 / Mrk 12:1-12 / Luk 14:16-24
- y. Weeds
 - i. Matt 13:24-30

8. Name and locate several of Jesus' miracles.

- a. Turning water into wine
 - i. John 2:1-11
- b. Lame man is healed
 - i. John 5:1-16
- c. Calming the storm on Sea of Galilee
 - i. Matt 8:23-28 / Mark 4:35-41 / Luk 8:22-25
- d. Gaderene demoniac
 - i. Matt 8:23-28 / Mark 5:1-20 / Luk 8:26-39
- e. Jairus' daughter raised from the dead
 - i. Mark 5:21-43, 35-43 / Luk 8:40-42, 49-56

- f. Paralytic
 - i. Matt 9:1-8 / Mark 2:1-12 / Luk 5:17-26
- g. Feeding of 4000
 - i. Matt 15:32-38 / Mark 8:1-10
- h. Feeding of 5000
 - i. Mark 6:35-44 / Luk 9:10-17 / John 6:1-15
- i. Walking on water
 - i. Matt 14:22-33 / Mark 6:45-52 / John 6:16-21
- j. Lazarus raised from dead
 - i. John 11:1-45
- k. Blind man receives sight
 - i. Mark 10:46-52
- l. Miraculous catch of fish
 - i. John 21:1-14
- m. Widow of Nain's son raised from dead
 - i. Luk 7:11-17
- n. Pool of Bethesda
 - i. John 5:1-17
- o. Blind Bartimaeus
 - i. Mark 10:46-52 / Luk 18:35-43
- p. Centurion's servant healed
 - i. Matt 8:5-13 / Luk 7:1-11

- q. Cleansing a leper
 - i. Matt 8:1-4 / Luk 5:12-17
- r. Demon possessed boy (disciples not heal)
 - i. Matt 17:17-21 / Mark 9:14-29 / Luk 9:37-43
- s. Man born blind
 - i. John 9:1-41
- t. Man with withered hand
 - i. Matt 12:9-14 / Mark 3:1-6 / Luk 6:6-11
- u. Official's son
 - i. John 4:46-54
- v. Ten lepers
 - i. Luk 17:11-19
- w. Woman with discharge of blood
 - i. Mark 5:25-34 / Luk 8:43-48
- 9. List Jesus' "I am" statements in the Gospel of John
 - a. John 6:35 "I am the bread of life."
 - b. John 8:12 "I am the light of the world." (also John 9:5)
 - c. John 8:58 "before Abraham was born, I am!"
 - d. John 10:9 "I am the door"
 - e. John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd.
 - f. John 11:25 "I am the resurrection and the life."
 - g. John 14:6 "I am the way and the truth and the life."

- h. John 15:1 “I am the true vine.”
- 10. Relate the writing of the Pauline epistles to the life of Paul.
 - a. 34 AD Paul’s conversion, preaching in Damascus
 - b. 47AD First Missionary journey
 - i. Antioch (Syria)
 - ii. Cyprus
 - iii. Pamphylia – Perga
 - iv. Galatia (Antioch Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra)
 - c. 49AD Jerusalem Council
 - i. Epistle: Galatians
 - d. 50AD Second Missionary Journey
 - i. Antioch (Syria)
 - ii. Galatia (Antioch Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra)
 - iii. Troas
 - iv. Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea)
 - v. Greece (Athens, Corinth)
 - 1. Epistle: 1 & 2 Thessalonians
 - vi. Ephesus
 - vii. Caesarea, Jerusalem, Antioch (Syria)
 - e. 55AD Third Missionary Journey
 - i. Antioch (Syria)
 - ii. Galatia and Phrygia

- iii. Ephesus
 - i. Epistle: 1 Corinthians
- iv. Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea)
 - i. Epistle: 2 Corinthians
- v. Greece (Athens, Corinth)
 - i. Epistle: Romans
- vi. Macedonia
- vii. Troas and Miletus
- f. 57AD Jerusalem and arrest
- g. 60AD Journey to Rome
 - i. Caesarea
 - ii. Malta
 - iii. Rome
 - i. Epistles: Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians
- h. 63AD Rome (re-imprisonment & martyrdom)
 - i. Epistles: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus
- ii. Locate two passages that deal with law and grace.
 - a. Romans 4 (esp 4:15-16) & Galatians 3 (esp 3:23-26)

New Testament: Key People

- i. Discuss briefly the life and significance of the following, include book(s) and chapter(s).
 - a. Herod the Great: king of Palestine at Christ's birth. After visit of wise men, became jealous of another king. Ordered death of infant boys in Bethlehem; because of this

- danger, an angel warned prompted Joseph to escape to Egypt. Built third temple in Jerusalem.
- b. Herod Antipas: son of Herod the great. Ruler of Galilee who participated in trial of Jesus. Responsible for beheading John the Baptist.
 - c. Herod Agrippa: grandson of Herod the Great. Ruler of Palestine. Responsible for death of James, imprisoned Peter and died suddenly after people said he was a god.
 - d. Herod Agrippa II: son of Herod Agrippa. Ruler of northern and eastern Palestine. Interrogated Paul after Paul appealed to Caesar.
 - e. John the Baptist: Announced the coming of Christ (as predicted by Isaiah). Baptized Jesus.
 - f. Pharisees: A ruling party in Judaism during New Testament era. Experts in Mosaic law and rabbinic law. Jesus called them hypocrites. Nicodemus and Paul were Pharisees.
 - g. Sadducees: An influential party in Judaism during New Testament era. Accepted only Pentateuch as Scripture. Did not believe in supernatural or resurrection from the dead.
2. The Apostles (name them):
- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| a. Simon Peter | g. John |
| b. Thomas | h. Thaddaeus |
| c. Andrew | i. Philip |
| d. Matthew | j. Simon the Zealot |
| e. James, son of Zebedee | k. Bartholomew |
| f. James, son of Alphaeus | l. Judas Iscariot |
3. John: One of Jesus' closest disciples. Refers to himself as the disciple who Jesus loved. Saw Jesus at Transfiguration. Wrote gospel, 3 epistles, received revelation at Patmos and wrote Revelation.

4. Peter: One of Jesus' closest disciples. First disciple to recognize that Jesus was the Christ. Saw Jesus at Transfiguration. Denied Jesus three times. Had revelation that Old Testament dietary restrictions had been suspended. Wrote two epistles.
5. Cornelius: Roman centurion who sent for Peter, believed and was baptized. His conversion caused a dispute among church leaders as to whether Gentile converts had to also convert to Judaism.
6. Barnabas: Paul's associate on first missionary journey. When Paul was converted, he came to Paul's defense. Broke off with Paul over taking Mark as colleague.
7. Stephen: One of the first group of deacons and the first Christian martyr. He gave a length sermon to Sanhedrin demonstrating that Christ was the Messiah of the Old Testament.
8. Paul: Missionary to the Gentiles and theologian of early church. A Pharisee who persecuted the early church, he was converted on the road to Damascus. He was beaten, stoned, flogged, arrested, imprisoned and martyred because of his faith. Wrote 13 epistles.
9. Timothy: Associate of Paul during second and third missionary journeys. Pastor of Ephesus when he received letters from Paul.
10. James (son of Zebedee): One of Jesus' closest disciples. Saw Jesus at Transfiguration. First disciple to be martyred.
11. James (Brother of Jesus): Became believer after resurrection and a leader in church of Jerusalem. Probably wrote epistle.
12. Name the Seven Churches in Revelation
 - a. Ephesus – abandoned first love
 - b. Smyrna - about to suffer
 - c. Pergamum – you did not deny my name, but tolerated false teachers
 - d. Thyatira - tolerated false teacher (Jezebel)
 - e. Sardis – reputation of being alive, but actually dead
 - f. Philadelphia – kept my word

g. Laodecia – neither cold nor hot

New Testament: Key Passages

Locate the following passages book(s) and chapter(s).

1. Birth of Jesus (shepherds): Luke 2
2. Birth of Jesus (wise men): Matthew 2
Baptism of Jesus: Matthew 3, Mark 1, John 1
3. Temptation of Jesus: Matthew 4, Mark 1, Luke 4
4. Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5-7
5. The Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6, Luke 11
6. "Take my yoke": Matthew 11
7. Parables of the kingdom: Matthew 13
8. Prodigal son: Luke 15
9. Caesarea Philippi: Matthew 16, Mark 8
10. "I will build my church": Matthew 16
11. Transfiguration: Matthew 17, Mark 9, Luke 9
12. Mary and Martha: Luke 10 / John 11 (raising of Lazarus)
13. Correcting a brother: Matthew 18, Galatians 6
14. Keys to the kingdom: Matthew 16
15. Two Great Commands: Matthew 22, Mark 12
16. The Comforter: John 14
17. "You must be born again": John 3
18. Woman at the well: John 4
19. Way, truth, and life: John 14

20. Feeding of the 5.00: Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6
21. The Vine: John 15
22. Good Shepherd: John 10
23. High priestly prayer: John 17
24. Triumphal entry to Jerusalem: Matthew 12, Mark 11, John 12
25. Last Supper: Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22
26. Death of Christ (event): Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19
27. Resurrection of Christ (event) : Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20
28. Ascension of Christ: Mark 16, Luke 24, Acts 1
29. Great Commission: Matthew 28, Mark 16
30. The sermons of Acts:
 - i. Peter (Pentecost): Acts 2
 - ii. Paul (synagogue in Antioch Pisidia): Acts 13
 - iii. Peter (Solomon's Portico): Acts
 - iv. Paul (Areopagus): Acts 17
 - v. Stephen (before Sanhedrin): Acts
31. Pentecost: Acts 2
32. Conversion of Paul: Acts 9
33. Apollos: Acts 18-19
34. Jerusalem Council: Acts 15
35. Missionary journeys: 1st: Acts 13-14; 2nd: Acts 15-18; 3rd: Acts 19-21; Rome: Acts 22-28
36. Philippian jailer: Acts 16
37. Bereans (noble): Acts 17
38. Body as temple of Holy Spirit: 1 Corinthians 6
39. Love chapter: 1 Corinthians 13

40. Law as schoolmaster: Galatians 3
41. Fruit of the Spirit: Galatians 5
42. Armor of God: Ephesians 6
43. The mind of Christ: 1 Corinthians 2
44. Pressing toward the mark: Philippians 3
45. Not grieving as those without hope: Ephesians 2
46. “Man of Lawlessness”: 2 Thessalonians 2
47. Fought the good fight: 1 Timothy 4
48. The washings of the new covenant: Hebrews 8-9
49. Melchizedek: Hebrews 6-7
50. Not forsaking the assembly of ourselves: Hebrews 10
51. The chastening of those he loves: Hebrews 12
52. Problems with unanswered prayer: 1 John 5
53. Problems with the tongue: James 3
54. Living stones: 1 Peter 2
55. That we may know: 1 John 5
56. The elect lady: 2 John 1
57. The great white throne of judgment: Revelation 20
58. The millennium: Revelation 20
59. The Good Samaritan: Luke 10

Bible Passages for Theology

1. Bible: Authority of Scripture
 - a. 1Th 2:13,

- b. 2Ti 3:16,
 - c. 2Pt 1:21
2. Bible: Canon
 - a. Deut 18:14-22,
 - b. Mk 3:14,
 - c. Jn 14:26,
 - d. Eph 2:20,
 - e. 2Pt 3:15-16
 3. Bible: General revelation
 - a. Psa 19:1-14,
 - b. Rom 1:18-20
 4. Bible: Inspiration
 - a. Rom 10:14-17.
 - b. Col 4:16,
 - c. 2Ti 3:16,
 - d. 2Pt 3:15-16
 5. Bible: Perspicuity of Scripture
 - a. Deut 6:4-9,
 - b. Psa 119:105, 130
 6. Bible: Sufficiency of Scripture
 - a. 1Pt 1:3,
 - b. 2Ti 3:16-17,
 - c. Eph 2:20
 7. Covenant of grace
 - a. Gen 12:1-3,
 - b. Rom 3:20-22,
 - c. 2Ti 1:9,
 - d. Gal 3:7-9
 8. Covenant of works
 - a. Gen 2:16-17,
 - b. Hos 6:7,
 - c. Luk 10:25-28,
 - d. Rom 5:12-14
 9. God: Eternalness
 - a. Psa 90:2,
 - b. 1Ti 1:17
 10. God: Faithfulness
 - a. Psa 89:1-2,
 - b. Lam 3:22-23
 11. God: Goodness
 - a. Lam 3:25,
 - b. Jas 1:17
 12. God: Grace and mercy
 - a. Eph 2:4-5,

- b. Tit 3:5
- 13. God: Holiness
 - a. Isa 6:3,
 - b. 1Pt 1:15
- 14. God: Immutability
 - a. Num 23:19,
 - b. Heb 6:17, 13:8
- 15. God: Love
 - a. Rom 5:8,
 - b. 1Jn 4:10)
- 16. God: Omnipotence
 - a. Gen 18:14,
 - b. Mrk 10:27
- 17. God: Omnipresence
 - a. 1Kg 8:27,
 - b. Psa 139:7-10
- 18. God: Omniscience
 - a. Psa 139:1-4,
 - b. Rom 11:33
- 19. God: Patience
 - a. Rom 9:22,
 - b. 2Pt 3:9
- 20. God: Providence
 - a. Job 38-41,
 - b. Prov 21:1,
 - c. Mat 10:29-30,
 - d. Eph 1:11,
 - e. Heb 1:3
- 21. God: Righteousness and justice
 - a. Acts 17:31,
 - b. Rom 3:25-26
- 22. God: Self-existence
 - a. Job 38:4-6, 1
 - b. sa 44:24
- 23. God: Simplicity
 - a. Deut 6:4
- 24. God: Truthfulness
 - a. Psa 119:151, 160,
 - b. Rom 3:3-4
- 25. God: Wisdom
 - a. Rom 11:33
- 26. God: Trinity
 - a. Mat 28:19,
 - b. 2Cor 13:14,

- c. 1Pt 1:1-2
27. Christ: Deity
- a. Isa 9:6
 - b. Jn 1:1,
 - c. Phil 2:5-6,
 - d. Col 1:16-17,
 - e. Heb 1:1-4
28. Christ: Humanity of Christ
- a. Jn 1:14,
 - b. Phil 2:6,
 - c. Heb 2:14,
 - d. Mat 4:2,
 - e. Mrk 2:16
29. Christ: King
- a. 1Cor 15:25
30. Christ: Priest
- a. Heb 9:14,
 - b. Rom 3:26
31. Christ: Prophet
- a. Jon 1:18
32. Christ: Resurrection
- a. Luk 24,
- b. 1Cor 15:3-6
33. Christ: Significance of death
- a. Phil 3:6-11,
 - b. Col 1:19-20
34. Christ: Sinlessness
- a. Heb 4:15
35. Redemption: Adoption
- a. Jon 1:12, Rom 8:15-17
36. Redemption: Atonement
- a. Isa 53:4-6, Mrk 10:45,
 - b. Rom 3:25,
 - c. 1Jon 2:2
37. Redemption: Effectual calling
- a. Jon 6:44-45, 16:8,
 - b. Acts 28:18,
 - c. Eph 1:18-20
38. Redemption: Justification
- a. Rom 3:24-25, 4:4-8, 5:17-18
39. Redemption: Predestination
- a. Deut 7:6,
 - b. Jon 6:37,
 - c. Rom 8:29,

- d. Eph 1:4
40. Redemption: Repentance
- a. Joel 2:12-13,
 - b. Acts 2:28,
 - c. 1Jon 1:9
41. Redemption: Sanctification
- a. Rom 6:4-6, 8:1-4,
 - b. Eph 4:15-16,
 - c. Gal 5:16-18
42. Sin: Consequences
- a. Gen 3:8,
 - b. Eph 2:4, 4:18,
 - c. Rom 6:23,
 - d. Heb 9:27,
 - e. Rev 20:15
43. Sin: Satan
- a. Job 1:6-12,
 - b. Mat 4:1-11,
 - c. Luk 22:31,
 - d. 2Cor 11:14,
 - e. 1Pt 5:8
44. Sin: Sin Defined
- a. 1Jn 3:4,
 - b. Gal 3:10-12,
 - c. Jas 4:17,
 - d. Rom 3:23
45. TULIP: Irresistible grace
- a. Jon 1:12-13,
 - b. 6:44;
 - c. Rom 8:30;
 - d. Eph 2:8-9
46. TULIP: Limited atonement
- a. Jon 10:11, 24-29;
 - b. Rom 3:24-25, 5:8-9
47. TULIP: Perseverance of saints
- a. Jon 3:16, 10:27-30;
 - b. Rom 8:30;
 - c. 1Jon 5:11-13
48. TULIP: Total Depravity
- a. Jer 17:9,
 - b. Rom 3:10-18, 5: 12;
 - c. Eph 2:1-3
49. TULIP: Unconditional election
- a. Deut 7:6-7,

- b. Mat 22:14,
 - c. Rom 8:28, 9:16,
 - d. Eph 1:4
50. Christian life: Christian liberty
- a. Rom 14:1-3,
 - b. 1Cor 8:7-13
51. Christian life: Civil government
- a. Rom 13:1-4,
 - b. 1Pt 2:12-13
52. Christian life: Divorce
- a. Mal 2:16,
 - b. Mat 5:31-32,
 - c. Mat 19:3-9,
 - d. Rom 7:1-3
53. Christian life: Homosexuality
- a. Gen 19:4-5, 24-25,
 - b. Lev 18:22,
 - c. Rom 1:26-27
54. Christian life: Marriage
- a. Gen 1:24-25,
 - b. Eph 5:23-25,
 - c. Col 3:18-19,
 - d. 1Pet 3:1-7
55. Christian life: Marriage unbelievers
- a. Deut 7:3-4,
 - b. Mal 2:11-12,
 - c. 2 Cor 6:14-16
56. Christian life: Money
- a. Matt 6:24,
 - b. Luk 6:13,
 - c. 1Ti 6:10,
 - d. Heb 13:5
57. Christian life: Parenting
- a. Deut 6:6-7,
 - b. Psa 127:3-4,
 - c. Prov 22:6, 15, 22:13,
 - d. Eph 6:1-4
58. Christian life: Suffering
- a. Psa 119:71-72,
 - b. Rom 5:3,
 - c. Jas 1:2-4,
 - d. 1Pt 1:7-8
59. Christian life: Work
- a. Gen 2:15,

- b. Eph 6:5-9,
 - c. Col 3:23,
 - d. 1Th 4:11,
 - e. 2Th 3:10-12
60. Church: Biblical discipline
- a. Mat 18:15-18,
 - b. Gal 6:1
61. Church: Christian Sabbath
- a. Gen 2:2-3,
 - b. Mrk 2:27,
 - c. Acts 20:7,
 - d. Col 2:6,
 - e. Heb 4:9
62. Church: church officers
- a. 1Ti 3:1-13,
 - b. Tit 1:6-9
63. Church: Giving
- a. Prov 3:9-10,
 - b. Mal 3:8-10,
 - c. 2 Cor 9:6-7,
 - d. Gal 6:9-10
64. Church: Infant baptism
- a. Gen 17:7-10,
 - b. Mrk 10:13-16,
 - c. Acts 2:38-39, 16:14-15, 33
65. Church: last supper
- a. Matt 26:26-27,
 - b. 1Cor 10:16; 11:23-26
66. Church: Order of worship
- a. Deut 12:32,
 - b. Lev 10:1-2,
 - c. Mat 15:9,
 - d. Jon 4:22-24
67. Church: Reconciliation
- a. Mat 18:21-22,
 - b. Luk 12:3-4,
 - c. 1Pt 4:8
68. Church: Speaking in tongues
- a. Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6,
 - b. 1Cor 12-14
69. Church: Spiritual gifts
- a. Exo 31:2-5,
 - b. Rom 12,
 - c. Eph 4,

- d. 1Cor 12-14
70. Church: The Church
- a. Mat 16:18,
- b. Eph 2:19-20, 5:23-32,
- c. 1Pt 2:4-5
71. Church: The ministry
- a. Eph 4:11-13,
- b. 1Th 5:12-13,
- c. 2Ti 4:2,
72. Church: Unity
- a. Rom 12:4-5,
- b. Gal 3:26-28,
- c. Eph 4:5-6
73. Church: Women
- a. 1Cor 14:34,
- b. 1Ti 2:11-12,
- c. Tit 2:3-4
74. Last things: Heaven and Hell
- a. Mat 13:49-50,
- b. Luk 16:22-26,
- c. Jon 14:2-3,
- d. Rev 21:8
75. Last things: Resurrection
- a. Rom 6:5,
- b. 1Cor 15:20-23, 51-52
76. Last things: Return of Christ
- a. Mat 24:42-44,
- b. Acts 1:10-11,
- c. 2Ti 4:8

Theology, Sacraments, and Reformed Tradition Exam

Scope:

- Theology: Covers all the traditional heads of Systematic Theology with an emphasis on Reformed Theology
- Sacraments: Covers the major viewpoints on the Sacraments with an emphasis on the Reformed/Presbyterian view

- **Reformed Tradition:** Covers major people and events of church history with a focus on those with major contributions to the Reformed tradition, particularly American Presbyterianism

Types of Questions

The exam utilizes a range of questions from true/false, multiple choice and matching to short answer and short essay.

Suggested Books and Resources for Study and Review

As the exam covers the broad sweep of Systematic Theology and the Reformed Tradition, a thorough review of notes from seminary classes is a must. Of the many books that cover the material in the exam (see the EPC's "Reformed Reading List," pages 6-9), those listed below have been selected as the best in bringing a good deal of material together in one place for the purpose of reviewing for the exam. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are essential to digest.

General

Evangelical Presbyterian Church. 2007. Leadership Training Guide. Livonia, Michigan: Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Theology

(Note: Many of the resources listed below also have material related to the Sacraments)

Berkhof, Louis. 1938. Summary of Christian Doctrine. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Evangelical Presbyterian Church. 2004. Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms in Modern English. Livonia, Michigan: Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

Murray, John. 1955. Redemption Accomplished and Applied. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Packer, J.I. 1961. Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

Robertson, O. Palmer. 1985. Christ of the Covenants. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

Sacraments

Evangelical Presbyterian Church. 2008. The Book of Order. Livonia, Michigan: Evangelical Presbyterian Church. (See “Book of Worship,” chapter 3)

Glodo, Michael J. “Covenant Sign and Seal.” http://thirdmill.org/newfiles/mik_glodo/TH.Glodo.Signs.1.html, http://thirdmill.org/newfiles/mik_glodo/TH.Glodo.Signs.2.html

Strawbridge, Gregg, ed. 2003. The Case for Covenantal Infant Baptism. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

Reformed Tradition

Lucas, Sean Michael. On Being Presbyterian. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing. Smylie, James H. 2006. A Brief History of the Presbyterians. Atlanta: Westminster John Knox Press.

Wells, David, ed. 1985. Reformed Theology in America. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. (Sections published separately as Dutch Reformed Theology, The Princeton Theology, and Southern Reformed Theology.)

Topics for Review

Theology

(Note: Be able to identify the position of the Westminster Confession of Faith when it addresses these topics)

- Definitions and biblical support for the doctrines of revelation and inspiration identified with various systems of theology and theologians
- Formation of the canon
- Definition and biblical support for the nature and attributes of God, both communicable and incommunicable
- Major approaches to theodicy
- Major views and biblical theology of the providence of God
- Classic arguments for the existence of God
- Definition and biblical support for the doctrine of the Trinity

- Definition and Biblical support for the humanity and Deity of Christ
- Major Christological and Trinitarian heresies and the people associated with them
- Major conclusions and circumstances surrounding the ecumenical councils and creeds
- The “cultural mandate” as viewed in the Reformed tradition
- Biblical theology of angels and demons
- Biblical theology of the nature of human beings
- Covenants of God with humanity
- Covenant theology as expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith
- Significance of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ
- Definition of, people associated with, and biblical support for the major theories of the atonement
- Definition and biblical support for the ordo salutis as a whole and in each of its parts
- Definition and biblical support for the “five points of Calvinism” in contrast with Arminianism
- Relationship of law and grace in the Reformed tradition
- Biblical theology for the assurance of salvation
- Biblical theology of person and work of the Holy Spirit
- Definition and biblical theology behind major schools of thought regarding eschatology

Sacraments

(Note: give emphasis to the Reformed/Presbyterian view of the Sacraments)

- Views of major theological traditions and their biblical support for:
 - ★ the nature of sacraments in general
 - ★ baptism

★ the Lord's Supper

Reformed Tradition

- Identify and explain the significant events of the Reformation in Europe and Great Britain
- Identify and explain the significant theological issues surrounding the Reformation in Europe and Great Britain
- Identify the significant events and theological issues in the history of American Presbyterianism
- Identify the events and/or writings associated with and the contributions of the following people (positively or negatively) to our faith:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| • Alexander, Archibald | • Briggs, Charles A. | • St. Francis |
| • Anselm | • Bryan, William Jennings | • Gregory the Great |
| • Athanasius | • Bucer, Martin | • Hodge, Charles |
| • Aquinas, Thomas | • Calvin, John | • Hus, John |
| • Arius | • Cartwright, Thomas | • Irenaeus |
| • Arminius, Jacob | • Constantine | • Jackson, Sheldon |
| • Augustine | • Cranmer, Thomas | • Jerome |
| • Barker, Frank S. | • Dabney, Robert L. | • Jumper, Andrew A. |
| • Barnes, Albert | • Davies, Samuel | • Knox, John |
| • Bede | • Dickinson, Jonathan | • Loyola, Ignatius |
| • Beecher, Lyman | • Erasmus | • Luther, Martin |
| • Bell, L. Nelson | • Charles Finney | • Makemie, Francis |
| • Bernard of Clairveaux | • Fosdick, Harry Emerson | • Machen, J. Gresham |

- Martyr, Justin
- McGready, James
- Melancthon, Philip
- Miller, Samuel
- Olevianus
- St. Patrick
- Pelagius
- Sattler, Michael
- Servetus, Michael
- Simonton, Ashbel
- Simmons, Menno
- Smith, Henry B.
- Sunday, Billy
- Tennent, Gilbert
- Tertullian
- Thomson, John
- Thornwell, James H.
- Tyndal, Willam
- Ursinius
- Warfield, B.B.
- Wesley, John
- Wesley, Charles
- Witherspoon, John
- Whitefield, George
- Wilson, Woodrow
- Wycliffe, John
- Xavier, Francis
- Zwingli, Ulrich

REFORMED READING LIST

(revised 2008)

THEOLOGY

Berkhof, Louis. *Systematic Theology (Fourth Edition)*. 1941. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

Berkhof, Louis. *Summary of Christian Doctrine*. 1938. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. John T. McNeill, Ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.

Clowney, Edmund P. 1995 *The Church*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

Edgar, William. 2004. *Truth in All Its Glory: Commending the Reformed Faith*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

Ferguson, Sinclair. 1997. *The Holy Spirit*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

Frame, John. 2002. *The Doctrine of God (A Theology of Lordship)*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

Hoekema, Anthony. 1995. *The Bible and the Future*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Murray, John. 1955. *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Packer, J.I. 1961. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

----- . “Introductory Essay to the Death of Death in the Death of Christ” in John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*. *Banner of Truth*, 1967. “Introduction” available separately as pamphlet from The Chapel Library at http://www.mountzion.org/catalog/lit_contents.html.

Reymond, Robert L. 1998. *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Warfield, Benjamin Breckenridge. 2006. *The Plan of Salvation*. Kessinger Publishing. [Reprint of 1942 Revised edition, Eerdmans].

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Ridderbos, Herman. 1980. *The Coming of the Kingdom*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing..

Robertson, O. Palmer. 1985. *Christ of the Covenants*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

Williams, Michael D. 2005. *Far as the Curse Is Found: The Covenant Story of Redemption*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

SACRAMENTS

Bromily, Geoffrey W. 1979. *Children of Promise*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. EPC 2009 7

Clodo, Michael J. “Covenant Sign and Seal.” Available widely on various internet sites including www.thirdmill.org.

Marcel, Gabriel, trans. Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. 2000. *The Biblical Doctrine of Infant Baptism*, Westminster Publishing House. [orig. 1951]

Murray, John. 1985. *Christian Baptism*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing. Pratt, Richard L. n.d *Why Do We Baptize Our Children?* Casselberry, FL: Third

Millenium Ministries. Videotape available at www.thirdmill.org.

Sartelle, John P. 1985. *What Christian Parents Want to Know About Infant Baptism*. Philipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

Schaeffer, Francis. 1976. *Baptism*. Wilmington, Delaware: Trimark Publishing. Strawbridge, Gregg, ed. 2003. *The Case for Covenantal Infant Baptism*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing.

Wallace, Ronald S. 1997. *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers.

REFORMED TRADITION

de Witt, John R. 1981. *What is the Reformed Faith?* Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1981.

Gerstner, John H, Douglas F. Kelly, and Phillip Rollinson. 1992. *A Guide to the Westminster Confession of Faith: Commentary*. Signal Mountain, Tennessee: Summertown Texts.

Hall, David W. and Joseph H. Hall, eds. 1994. *Paradigms in Polity: Classic Readings in Reformed and Presbyterian Church Government*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans.

Horton, Michael. 2002. *Putting Amazing Back into Grace: Embracing the Heart of the Gospel*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker.

Leith, John H. 1977. *An Introduction to the Reformed Tradition*. Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox Press.

Lucas, Sean Michael. *On Being Presbyterian: Our Beliefs, Practices, and Stories*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

McNeill, John T. 1954. *The History and Character of Calvinism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rian, Edmund H. 1992. *The Presbyterian Conflict*. Committee for the History of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Smallman, Stephen. 2003. *What is a Reformed Church?* Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishers.

Smylie, James H. 1996. *A Brief History of the Presbyterians.* Atlanta, Georgia: Westminster John Knox.

Wells, David, ed. 1985. *Reformed Theology in America.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985. Chapters also published separately under Dutch Reformed Theology, The Princeton Theology, and Southern Reformed Theology.

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

Baxter, Richard. 1979. *The Reformed Pastor.* Edinburgh: Banner of Truth.

Bridges, Charles. 1976. *The Christian Ministry.* Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1976.

Dabney, Robert L. 1979. *On Preaching.* Edinburgh: Banner of Truth.

Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. 1972. *Preachers and Preaching.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972.

Taylor, L. Roy. 2004. "Presbyterianism" in *Who Runs the Church? Four Views on Church Government.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.

Witherow, Thomas. 1983. *The Apostolic Church: Which Is It?* Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Publications.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR THE ORAL EXAM

The examiner shall commence the meeting with introductions and prayer. Having appointed a recording secretary from the Committee, noting the time, place, and persons present, the moderator shall proceed to the examination. Below are the categories that the examiner will be working from along with some sample questions

I. Examiner to All (General Questions from Examiners)

1. Please give us your personal testimony.
2. Share your sense of call to be an Teaching Elder.

II. The Essentials

1. Do you accept them without exception?

III. On the Westminster Confession

1. Do you have any questions or objections to the document?
2. Do you understand that you are seeking admission into a denomination that takes this confessional standard seriously?

IV. Reformed Theology

1. What is the role of God's Sovereignty in the process of salvation?
2. What are the five Solas and TULIP?
3. Explain the Sacraments.

Polity

1. Describe the differences or similarities in the EPC polity from your former church.
2. Describe the difference of Ruling Elder and Teaching Elder.

EPC BOOK OF ORDER IN COMPARISON WITH THE PC(USA)

There are many similarities between the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Book of Order (EPC) and the Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order (PCUSA). After all, they both came from the same roots in the Reformation at Geneva, Switzerland of the 16th century that was founded by John Calvin and then spread to Scotland and Northern Ireland through one of Calvin's disciples, John Knox.

Nevertheless, in the last several years, especially, the EPC and PC(USA) Books of Order have some differences that are reflections of the different paths they have chosen to take as organizations and fellowships of faith. The differences might be categorized briefly as: 1) Terminology, 2) Emphasis and 3) Procedure.

TERMINOLOGY

Terminology may seem to some a minor matter: A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. . . However, what we name something does have an effect on how we view it. The EPC draws heavily on Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) terminology throughout, beginning with Chapter One of the Book of Government, when it talks of the visible and invisible churches. Unlike the PCUSA, which intimates that every person in the church who professes faith in the Lord Jesus is a believer (G-4. 0100), the EPC is much more realistic about the human heart and people's motives for being in the church.

Some are true believers and some are there for other reasons, and it uses WCF to say so. The PCUSA begins by lifting up the Reformed Confessions it holds as part of its constitution, and then largely ignores them throughout the rest of the document.

The EPC also uses the terms Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder throughout. Like the PCUSA, it also uses Ministers and Pastors to refer to clergy, but the PCUSA only refers to those terms once in a parenthetical statement and uses instead Minister of the Word and Elder. The EPC seems to want to emphasize the similarities in office and responsibility and joint duties of both rather than their differences and the authority of the one over the other. The same can be said of the use of the term "court of the church" for Session, Presbytery and General Assembly. Again, the PCUSA refers to the term once, opting for governing body as its usual term, while the EPC uses "court" constantly, reminding the reader of the duties of the governing body to deliberate decisions.

EMPHASIS

As to emphasis: It is clear from early on in the EPC, that the primary task of the church, after worshipping God regularly, is evangelism. It is said in BOG Chapters 4-3 (duties of a particular church), 16-10.B (duties of a Session), 16-16.F (duties of a Presbytery), 16-22.F (duties of a General Assembly) of the Book of Government, Chapter 2-1 of the Book of Discipline(!!!) and Chapter 7-2 of the Book of Worship. The PCUSA enumerates it as one of the duties of Session in Chapter 10 (G-10.0102a) of its Book of Government, and in its list of services in Chapter 7 (W-7.2000) of the Directory for Worship.

As the above use of terminology suggests, there is a greater emphasis on Ruling Elders' participation in the life of the church in the EPC than the PCUSA. Ruling Elders are to be involved in a two-to-one ratio to Teaching Elders in governing bodies in EPC, rather than one-to-one in PCUSA.

The terminology "court" reminds those who read the EPC, that the Ruling and Teaching Elders are to exercise discipline for the good of the church and the glory of God. Both BOO's have a Book of Discipline, but the PCUSA is a much more technical document, seemingly written by lawyers, for lawyers, with an eye toward protecting governing bodies against civil lawsuits, while the EPC understands it is a moral and spiritual court. The PCUSA speaks of two types of judicial cases: remedial and discipline. The EPC makes those distinctions as well, but enumerates the three types of disciplinary cases, Heresy, Immorality and Contempt for the Court, while the PCUSA is more vague, leaving the charge in the hands of "the harmed."

PROCEDURE

This is where Terminology and Emphasis "grow legs." The terminology of the WCF, Visible and Invisible Church, Teaching and Ruling Elders and Court, the emphasis on Evangelism, Scriptural Discipline and the Integrity of the office of Ruling Elder lead to certain actions being laid out for EPC churches.

First is the matter of the relationship of the denomination to its particular churches in issues of conscience, property and finances. Both the EPC and PCUSA would argue for "review and control" responsibilities of higher governing bodies or courts to lower ones. The PCUSA claims from WCF the "God alone is Lord of the conscience," in GJ.030J but would bind that conscience in electing officers according to quotas in secular "Equal Employment Opportunity" guidelines that put another layer of expectations over and above seeking and doing the Lord's will in calling and/or hiring officers in the Church. The "hook" that can enforce this extra burden on courts of the church is in the "Trustee Clause" (G-B.020J) which says all property held by churches and courts of the church "are held in trust... for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (USA)." This same item makes it increasingly harder for particular churches and their Sessions to give to expenses and benevolences they deem important without increasing "oversight" from the PC(USA).

The EPC, by contrast, has placed in its Book of Government of the Book of Order "Limitations in Perpetuity" (BOG 17-5) which makes it clear that the Church may make no laws that bind the conscience with respect to interpretation of Scripture, or reject persons for membership or ordination unless what they believe has been declared a heresy by the Church or obstructs constitutional governance of the Church. The Church may not infringe upon particular churches right to elect their own officers, own and control their own property or determine their own budget and benevolences as long as it does not violate the constitution of the Church. None of these limits may be overturned.

Second is the regular oversight of the church rolls. Rather than a mild admonition to review the rolls annually in the PCUSA (G-5.0502), the EPC charges churches to review them annually, especially early in the year (February) as in BOG 9-8. It also charges the churches with being very intentional about finding out why people are not attending worship and placing people on the appropriate rolls accordingly.

Third is Baptism. Both the EPC and PCUSA have guidelines for who may be baptized, which are remarkably similar. The difference may be that where the PCUSA comes extremely close to baptismal regeneration (W-2.3001- 007), EPC makes clear "God's grace and salvation are not inseparably connected to this sacrament. Some who are baptized will be lost and some not baptized will be saved. Nevertheless, it is a great sin to make light of or to neglect this sacrament." (BOW 3-2. C.) Both would encourage children of believers to be baptized, but EPC would emphasize evangelizing baptized children in a way that PCUSA does not.

Fourth is Lord's Supper. Both EPC and PCUSA invite baptized believers to come to the Table of the Lord and be in communion with him and with each other. Both invite baptized children of believers who are receiving instruction to come to the Table as well.

The PCUSA is much more vague about the mechanism for doing this, allowing that children's "understanding of participation will vary according to maturity, " (W2.401b) and instructing Session to "take note of this and provide an occasion for recognition and welcome. " (W-4.2002) The EPC is much more directive: "Baptized children may be admitted to the Lord's table provided they have appeared before the Church Session and professed their faith in a manner acceptable to the Church Session. At its discretion, the Church Session may admit such persons to full membership." (BOW 3-3.1)

Fifth is the authority of the Pastor in governing and worship. It is clear from much of the EPC material in contrast to the PCUSA, the Ruling Elder is to have at least an equal footing in governance with the Pastor in Session and high courts. The PCUSA would say this is true for its governance as well, but the ratio of Ruling Elder to Teaching Elder is much more favorable to the Ruling Elder in EPC versus PCUSA courts.

However, in matters of worship, the EPC Pastor has a little more authority. In EPC, the Pastor (although encouraged to consult with Session) "has the duty and responsibility to determine order, sequence, elements and proportion of the service that each shall have in public worship." (BOW 2-4.A) In PCUSA, Session has clear oversight of order, sequence and elements, except the Pastor is responsible for Scripture read, sermon preached, prayers, music to be sung, use of drama and other art forms. (W-4.1005)

There are undoubtedly more differences, but these are ones that come to the forefront immediately in terms of affecting terminology, emphasis and, by extension, procedure.