

EXPLORING GOD'S WORD

LESSON 6

We have concluded a survey of the Old Testament and learned that God created mankind for relationship. Sin entered the world severing that relationship, but God had a plan to bring salvation through the nation of Israel. Much of the Old Testament is about God working with this one particular nation through who He will bring the Messiah to the world.

I. THE NEW TESTAMENT: 27 BOOKS

We are to rightly divide the Word of God. Understanding how the New Testament works is essential.

1. The Gospels:

These are the biographies of Jesus Christ.

- a. The Gospel of Matthew: He was a disciple of Jesus Christ – a tax collector. This Gospel is written to the Jewish people to prove that Jesus is their Messiah. Matthew traces Jesus' lineage back to Abraham and there is a great deal of emphasis placed on fulfilled prophecy in His life and ministry.
- b. The Gospel of Mark: He was a protégé of Barnabas & Peter. This Gospel focuses extensively on the miracles of Christ.
- c. The Gospel of Luke: He was a physician and traveling companion of the Apostle Paul. Luke's gospel is written with a Gentile reader in mind. Jesus is presented as the savior of the world and his lineage is traced back to Adam.
- d. The Gospel of John: He was a disciple of Jesus Christ – a fisherman. John writes to show that Jesus is God manifest in the flesh (See John 1:1, John 1:14, John 10:30, John 14:7-9)

Collectively, the books cover His birth, life, ministry, death, burial, and resurrection.

The Gospels tell us what God did for us and how He made salvation possible for all mankind.

2. Church History – The Book of Acts:

The Book of Acts picks up where the Gospels leave off and provides great detail about the birth of the church and the growth and development of Christianity in the First Century.

It is the only book in the Bible where we can read actual accounts of people being saved under the New Testament and according to the Apostles Doctrine.

This book is central to understanding and interpreting the New Testament.

- a. The Book of Acts is where we see the commandments of Jesus Christ carried out by His disciples. Their actions are the lens through which we understand the Gospels.

- b. The Book of Acts is also the context in which we should read the letters of the Apostles.
3. The Epistles (Letters of the Apostles):
- a. Pauline Epistles: Letters written by the Apostle Paul to a specific person or group of people.

Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews.

- b. General Epistles: Letters written by other Apostles to a general audience.

James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude.

These letters were written to the church instructing them in matters of Christian living, doctrine and church order.

4. Prophecy – The Book of Revelation

Written by the Apostle John when he was in exile on the isle of Patmos. The central theme is one of the end time, final judgement, and the restoration of all things.