

BIBLE READING FOR 2023

WEEK #31 GALATIANS, EPHESIANS, PHILLIPIANS & COLOSSIANS 07-30-23

Monday - Galatians 1-4

Wednesday - Ephesians 4-6

Friday - Colossians 1-4

Tuesday - Galatians 5-6 &
Ephesians 1-3

Thursday - Philippians 1-4

Galatians is thought by some to be Paul's earliest letter with authorship about A.D. 49, but others hold to a later date around A.D. 53-57. We are not positive when Paul wrote this epistle but he does identify himself as the author in 1:1 and again in 5:2. The primary theme of the book is salvation is by faith and not by works of the Law. Paul had established the churches of Galatia and then Jewish Christians came in among them teaching false doctrine. We refer to these men as Judaizing teachers and they claimed that works of the Law of Moses had to be practiced by Christians, in addition to obeying the gospel of Christ. As Paul wrote he emphasized his authority as an apostle and harshly condemned those that would pervert the gospel that he had preached. By taking what Paul wrote here, along with the rest of the New Testament's teaching on this subject, we find that we are saved by an obedient faith and not by any system that attempts to merit or earn salvation. The book could be outlined in the following way:

- 1.) Personal – Paul's defense of his apostleship 1-2
- 2.) Doctrinal – Salvation by faith and not by works of the Law 3-4
- 3.) Practical – Living by the Spirit 5-6

Ephesians is one of four books that we call the prison epistles. The other three would include Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. All of these were written by the apostle Paul while he was in prison in Rome for at least two years around A.D. 61-63. The letter to the Ephesians stresses the importance of the church in God's plan. The church is that group of people that God has called through the gospel and that make up the body of Christ. He is their head and therefore is guiding and directing them through His word. Since Christ will save His body, the church, it is essential that we become part of that group if we want to experience salvation. Below is an outline for Ephesians:

- 1.) The church – the fullness of Christ 1
- 2.) The church – the alive and reconciled in Christ 2
- 3.) The church – the wisdom of God 3
- 4.) The church – it's unity and growth 4
- 5.) The church – practical relationships 5
- 6.) The church – the army of God 6

Philippians was written to the church that Paul established in the city of Philippi on his second missionary journey. The book is sometimes called the book of joy because forms of the words joy or rejoice are found sixteen times in it. In addition to encouraging them Paul thanked the Philippian Christians for the much needed financial support they had provided him and warned them against false teachers. An outline for Philippians:

- 1.) Paul's personal condition 1
- 2.) Conduct of Christians and Paul's fellow workers 2
- 3.) Personal comments and thanksgiving 3-4

Colossians is a letter to the church in Colossae which was established by Epaphras a co-worker of Paul's (1:7). Paul had not been to this congregation (2:1), but his years of work in Ephesus had helped the gospel reach their city and other places in Asia that he had not personally visited. The primary theme of this book is the pre-eminence of Christ in God's will for saving man. While extolling the importance of Christ, Paul also denounces false doctrine being taught there that we call the Colossian heresy. This man made doctrine promoted salvation through human wisdom, asceticism and religious ritual. Paul reaffirms that our hope is only in Christ and in living our lives for Him. An outline for Colossians:

- 1.) Christ the Creator of all things 1
- 2.) Christ the Lawgiver 2
- 3.) Purity in Christ and personal exhortations 3-4

Questions for Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians:

- 1) Paul said that even Barnabas was caught up in what sin in Galatians 2:13?
- 2.) In Galatians 3:24, what had the Law become?
- 3.) What did Paul tell the Ephesians that they could understand when they read what he wrote in Ephesians 3:4?
- 4). According to Philippians 2:12, what should each Christian do?
- 5.) What does Paul warn against in Colossians 2:8?

Answers to questions for Week #30 – Psalms 101-150:

- 1.) Compassionate, gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.
- 2.) A priest according to the order of Melchizedek.
- 3.) The importance of the word of God.
- 4.) Everyone who fears the Lord and walks in his ways.
- 5.) His omniscience.