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Seeing Christ From Acts to Thessalonians



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Walk through the New Testament A Jet Tour Overview Part Two Acts to I Thessalonians

As we begin our overview of the New Testament tonight let's first step back and see the big picture. Someone has written an:

AN ARCHITECTS VIEW OF THE SCRIPTURES

The Bible is like a majestic palace constructed with precious oriental stone comprising 66 stately chambers, each an individual room, yet a part of the whole ediface: incomprehensible, majestic, glorious and sublime.

As we go into the vestibule, the book of Genesis, and find recorded the mighty works of God in creation this vestibule, has access to the law courts. Which, when passing thru come to the picture gallery of the historical books in which hung wall scenes, battles, portraits of men of valor. Battles and valiant heros line the walls.

On to the philosophers chamber Job. Then into the music room (Psalms) where we linger to hear the grandest harmonies ever that fell on human ears. Pressing on into the business office of Proverbs where very center hangs the motto "Righteousness exalts a nation", sin reproach any people. Then, the research department Ecclesiastes, into the conservatory of Song of Solomon where the fragrant aroma of the sweetest fruits and flowers and sweetest songs of birds greet us.

On to the observatory where we find prophets busy with strong telescopes looking for the appearing of the bright and morning star, the Son of Righteousness.

Walking across we enter the audience chamber of the King, the Gospels, where hang four lifelike portraits of the King himself in the perfections of His Beauty.

On to the workroom of the Holy Spirit - Acts, then into the correspondence room where we find Peter, James, John, Paul and Jude bending busy over their writing tables under the supervision of Holy Spirit of truth.

Finally into the throne room where echo the grandest praise and honor to the King enthroned fills vast chambers with portraits of solemn scenes of doom on walls but all associated with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

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Part: 1	Christ - the Key to Scripture

From creation to culmination. THE NEW TESTAMENT begins and ends with Christ. It opens with His arrival, moves to His ministry of three years, His death, His glorious resurrection, His ministering for 40 days. (We know this because it says in Acts that he remained alive after His passion for 40 days). His ascension, and then ten days the apostles were left along, fearful, waiting for the promise that Christ gave; that promise does come in the day of Pentecost, which "pentecost" means 50 days -- after 50 days Christ sent His Spirit as he promised. Just as He promised, the Spirit came and poured out His Spirit on the fiftieth day. After the day of Pentecost was fully come, the birth of the church. Acts - 1-8 deals primarily with Peter. Then starting in Acts 9 Saul comes on the scene. Paul is the focal point as God moves his redemptive program out to the Gentile world in particular. Then after letters (Epistles) of comfort and instruction, Jesus closes the book of history as He takes back His wayward creation in the Revelation.

THE GOSPELS The four Gospels record the eternal being, human ancestry, birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus the Christ, Son of God, and Son of Man. They record also a selection from the incidents of His life, and from His words and works. Taken together, they set forth, not a biography but a Personality.

Let's survey the next nine New Testament Books by noting a key verse for each book!

- I. ACTS "Christ our Mission" (1:8)
 - Acts 1:8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (NKJV)
 - This book is the bridge taking Christ to the whole world. In it we see the lessons Christ taught His disciples in secret now proclaimed in Holy Spirit empowered boldness. The key verse outlines the book:
 - witnesses in Jerusalem (1-8:3);
 - Judea and Samaria (8:4-12:25);
 - and to the ends of the earth (13-28). Within Acts we find the background introductions to epistles of I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon (prison epistles);
- II. ROMANS "Christ our Righteousness" (1:16-17)
 - Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (NKJV)
 - From about AD 57-58 written looking out the window at Corinth on Paul's 3rd journey. Paul's letter to Rome is better known in the church than any other, and is probably the singly most important book in the N.T. because it lays down the great doctrines of justification by faith alone. The key verse outlines the message of the entire book as:
 - the person of the gospel is Christ;
 - the power is God;
 - the purpose is salvation;
 - the people are all;
 - the plan is belief and the result is living by faith!
 - Paul uses the expression "in Christ" to describe the new life of a believer. This term is found no less than 164 times, as justified in Christ " (Gal. 2:17), " God's righteousness in him " (2 Cor 5: 21). This blessed, life-penetrating secret is central to all his letters. Thus:
 - in Romans -justification in Christ;
 - in Corinthians -sanctification in Christ;
 - in Galatians -freedom in Christ;
 - in Ephesians-oneness in Christ;
 - in Philippians-joy in Christ;
 - in Colossians-fulness in Christ;
 - in Thessalonians - glorification in Christ.
- III. I CORINTHIANS "Christ our Solution to Spiritual Problems" (2:6-8)

- [1 Corinthians 2:6-7](#) However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.
- 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden [wisdom] which God ordained before the ages for our glory, (NKJV).
- This letter comes about AD 57 from Ephesus on Paul's 3rd journey. At Corinth, Paul spent one-and-one-half years developing the church. His longest letters and most impassioned correspondence were to those trouble believers. Their affluent and fast-growing port town brought them an inordinate amount of contact with immorality, pagan religion, and philosophy. Their problems with arrogance, leader-worshiping cliques, immorality, divorce, and misunderstandings of spiritual gifts are systematically addressed in response to their questions.
- IV. II CORINTHIANS "Christ our sufficiency" (3:5)
 - [2 Corinthians 3:5](#) Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as [being] from ourselves, but our sufficiency [is] from God, (NKJV)
 - In AD 57 Paul writes again to his beloved Corinthian church from Macedonia just after leaving Philippi.
- V. GALATIANS "Christ our liberty" (5:1)
 - [Galatians 5:1](#) Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. (NKJV)
 - About AD 45 from Jerusalem Council. Galatians was written to counter false teaching about Christianity and the law and the relationship between faith and works. When the grace of God through His Spirit is rooted in our lives we find His fruit. This fruit reaches into:
 - our walk with God (love, joy and peace),
 - our walk with others (gentleness, goodness and patience), and finally into
 - our personal walk (faith, meekness and self-control).
- VI. EPHESIANS "Christ our source of all" (3:20-21)
 - [Ephesians 3:20-21](#) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him [be] glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (NKJV)
 - Shortly after Paul returned to Jerusalem from his third missionary journey (A.D. 57), he was arrested in the Temple courtyard, imprisoned in Caesarea for two years, and tried by Felix and Festus. He then appealed to Agrippa to be sent to Rome for trial before Caesar. Though Agrippa comments to Festus that Paul might have been freed except for that appeal ([Acts 26:32](#)), Scripture indicates it was clearly in God's plan to send him to the empire's capital, as yet untouched by the apostles. While under house arrest in rented quarters in Rome (about A.D. 59 to 61 or 62), Paul wrote four letters known as the prison epistles. Of those, Ephesians is the best known for its tremendous theological content, which seems to drift in long, flowing statements of praise for God's work in Christ.
- VII. PHILIPPIANS "Christ our Source of Joy" (1:6)
 - [Philippians 1:6](#) being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete [it] until the day of Jesus Christ; (NKJV)
 - Paul and Silas visited Philippi, their first Macedonian contact, on their second missionary journey in A.D. 52. To the saints and leadership of the church, Paul writes of joyful submission to the will of God, regardless of the circumstances, and uses the aweinspiring example of Christ Jesus as the model of humility and mutual submission within the church.
- VIII. COLOSSIANS "Christ our life" (2:10)
 - [Colossians 2:10](#) and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. (NKJV)
 - Paul never ministered in nor even visited Colossae as he had Ephesus, though one of his converts, Epaphras, had planted the church (1:7-8). Unique to Colossians, is Paul's attack against a local heresy that depreciated the person of Christ and promoted ritualism, asceticism, and

special, hidden knowledge. To counter that, Paul praises Jesus as the center and substance of the universe. He presents:

- the "deeper" life (1: 22-23),
- the "higher" life (2: 6-7),
- the "inner" life (3: 12,16) and
- the "outward" life (4: 5).

IX. I THESSALONIANS "Christ our Hope" (3: 13)

- [1 Thessalonians 3: 13](#) so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. (NKJV)
- Addressed to one of Paul's first churches in Greece, 1 Thessalonians encourage the young believers to endure persecution, resist false teaching, and live full and productive lives as they await Christ's certain return.
- In fact, each of 1 Thessalonians' five chapters ends with encouragement based on the Rapture. Through Christ's Promised Coming We Have:
 - 1: 10 = Present Hope Of Salvation
 - 2: 19 = Future Joy Of Homegoing
 - 3: 13 = Constant Cause For Holy Living
 - 4: 17, 18 = Constant Source Of Comfort

X. 5: 23 = Promise Of Completed Salvation

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