

GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
 ROMANS: CORNERSTONE OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH
 A SURVEY OF ROMANS



The Heart of the Matter

This letter, possibly more than any other book of the Bible, is the instrument God has used to save the souls and shape the minds of Christianity's "giants," such as Chrysostom, Luther, and Barnhouse. This treatise on Christianity has influenced theologians and laypeople alike.

As we explore the deep, rich mine of God's truth in Romans, we do so with great gratitude to Him who led Paul to write these words. Like no other book of the Bible, Romans forms the doctrinal cornerstone of Christianity. Because it touches on every major belief of Christianity, it is foundational to our faith.



Discovering the Way

1. General Information about the New Testament Letters

The New Testament letters were written by six different people.

	Paul	James	Peter	John	Jude	Anonymous
Number of Books						
Number of Chapters						

2. Specific Explanation about the Letter to the Romans (Romans 1:18–32; 3:9–18; 5:1–2; 8:31–39; 11:33–34; 12:1–2; 15:4–7)

Before we dig into Romans, let's clarify some key information: the writer of the letter and when he wrote it, the theme and purpose of Romans, and why Christians need to study this letter.

3. Several Applications of Romans for Today

If you need reality, read Romans 1. If you need a standard, read Romans 2–5. If you need understanding, read Romans 6–8. If you need clarification, read Romans 9–11. If you need love and encouragement, read Romans 12–16.

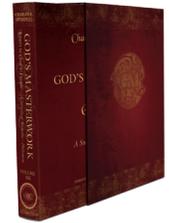


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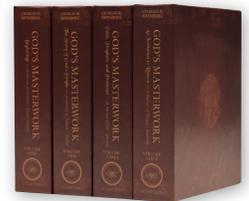
Romans explains the fundamental role of faith in the believer's life. Abraham believed God's promise, and God considered Abraham righteous. Through faith in Jesus Christ, believers receive justification—a "not guilty" verdict by God. Do you believe this? If so, thank God for His grace.



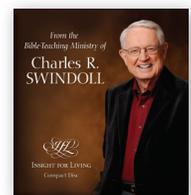
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ROMANS

THE GOSPEL

<i>Introduction—Personal (1:1–17)</i>	<p>Saving the Sinner</p> <p><u>Depravity of humanity</u></p> <p><u>Grace of God</u></p> <p><u>Justification by faith</u></p> <p><u>Sanctification through the Spirit</u></p> <p><u>Security of the saint</u></p> <p><i>CHAPTERS</i> 1:18–8:39</p>	<p>Concerning Israel</p> <p><u>Divine sovereignty and human will</u></p> <p><u>Past, present, and future of the nation</u></p> <p><i>CHAPTERS</i> 9–11</p>	<i>Conclusion—Relational (15:14–16:27)</i>
Emphasis	Doctrinal	National	Practical
Response	Faith	Hope	Love
Doctrine of God	Wrath	Righteousness	Grace
Doctrine of Humanity	Fallen	Dead	Struggling
Doctrine of Sin	Exposed	Conquered	Forgiven
Scope	Dead in sin	Dead to sin	Love for others
Theme	God's righteousness is given to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.		
Key Verses	1:16–17		
Christ in Romans	Jesus is the focus of the gospel and the means of salvation by God's grace apart from works (1:1–4, 16–17).		

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
1 CORINTHIANS: CONFLICTS AT CHURCH
A SURVEY OF 1 CORINTHIANS



The Heart of the Matter

Corinth. Color her purple . . . gaudy . . . fast and vile, yet rich and influential. A city of about two hundred thousand free citizens plus half a million slaves, busy Corinth represented a lifestyle of loose living. Epicureanism mixed with prosperity, beauty, the arts, and sensual idolatry was the norm. *Korinthiazomai*, a Greek term coined by Aristophanes, describes a person who lives an immoral life.

Into the fast lane of this wicked city came Paul, who lived and worked among the Corinthians, ultimately establishing a local church. No ministry ever faced a greater challenge to survive . . . and few churches ever experienced greater conflicts. As we shall discover, this sixteen-chapter letter is comprised mainly of troubleshooting, confronting, exhorting, and correcting. No other New Testament letter gives the pastor of a church in conflict a broader base of preaching material as he leads his flock out of carnal dangers and into new territory of purity and unity.



Discovering the Way

1. The City: Background and Setting

Turn to the maps in the back of your Bible, find Corinth, and note its strategic location. Prosperous Corinth had everything important to the world—money, slaves, idolatry, and immorality—but not a church.

2. The Writer: Journey, Arrival, and Stay (Acts 16:7–12; 17:32–18:20)

Follow the apostle Paul from Troas to Corinth, from evangelist to tentmaker, and from synagogue to house church.

3. The Letter: Purpose, Style, and Content (1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 5:1–3; 6:1–11)

Explore why Paul wrote this letter, how he addressed the issues, and what he chose to include.

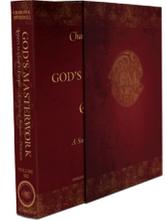


Starting Your Journey

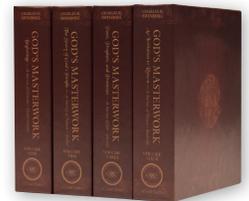
Do you solve conflicts or let them linger and fester? Do you resist “man-worship” or yield to it? Are you pure with the opposite sex or compromising? Are you a giver or a taker?



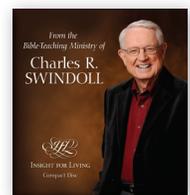
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1 CORINTHIANS: CONFLICTS AT CHURCH
A SURVEY OF 1 CORINTHIANS



FIRST CORINTHIANS

	Rebuke for Sinful Conditions	Reply to Specific Questions
Introduction (1:1–9)	<p>Divisions in the Church</p> <p>Exposition (1:10–17) Explanation (1:18–4:5) Exhortation (4:6–21)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>CHAPTERS</i> 1:10–4:21</p>	<p>Disorders in the Church</p> <p>Moral disorder (5:1–13) Legal disorder (6:1–11) Carnal disorder (6:12–20)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>CHAPTERS</i> 5–6</p>
		<p>Difficulties in the Church</p> <p>Domestic difficulty—marriage and divorce (7:1–40) Social difficulty—liberty and license (8:1–11:1) Ecclesiastical difficulty—women and worship (11:2–34) Practical difficulty—gifts and body (12:1–14:40) Doctrinal difficulty—death and resurrection (15:1–58) Financial difficulty—gifts and body (16:1–9)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>CHAPTERS</i> 7:1–16:9</p>
	Conclusion (16:10–24)	
Key	“I exhort you.” (1:10)	“Now concerning the thing about which you wrote.” (7:1)
Need	Unity among the Corinthian Christians	Clarity regarding six areas of concern
Theme	Christian conduct in the local church	
Key Verses	6:9–11; 13:1–38	
Christ in 1 Corinthians	Jesus is the source of unity among believers who are baptized into the body of Christ and the basis of their ultimate resurrection and glorification (12:12–13; 15:1–58).	

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
2 CORINTHIANS: A MAN AND HIS MINISTRY
A SURVEY OF 2 CORINTHIANS



The Heart of the Matter

Someone has called the writer of 2 Corinthians “The Transparent Apostle,” for here, as in no other letter Paul wrote, the man bared his soul. Clearly the most autobiographical of all Paul’s correspondence, this letter allows us to see the man and his ministry in true, unveiled terms. The letter was written from a defensive posture because Paul’s apostleship was being questioned. But behind the strong words and forceful style is a heart tender toward God and committed to ministry—a beautiful, rare blend of strength and compassion.

In this letter, the afflicted apostle modeled how Christians should respond to suffering. He highlighted God’s role as the perfect comforter. Paul also showed believers the connection between inadequacy in ministry and experiencing God’s strength.



Discovering the Way

1. Some Helpful Background Information (2 Corinthians 7:5–7)

Let’s examine the purpose for this letter, its style, and the circumstances in which Paul wrote it.

2. An Analysis of the Letter (2 Corinthians 1:1–11; 2:1–16; 3:1–6; 4:1–10; 8:1–2; 9:7–8; 10:10–11)

Review the outline of 2 Corinthians on the next page, and examine the underlying themes of suffering, forgiveness, grace, and giving.

3. Second Corinthians for Today

Remember: it’s brokenness that gives wholeness to a ministry; it’s meekness that communicates strength in life; it’s loneliness that makes us value companionship; and it’s weakness that puts God’s power on display.

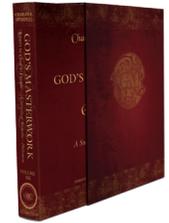


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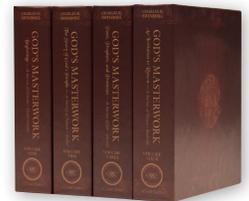
Read 2 Corinthians and reflect on a time of suffering when God comforted you. Thank Him for His grace and share it with someone else this week.



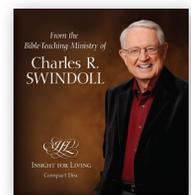
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2 CORINTHIANS: A MAN AND HIS MINISTRY
A SURVEY OF 2 CORINTHIANS



SECOND CORINTHIANS

Introduction — Greeting (1:1–2)	<p>Crucial Concerns</p> <p>Suffering and God's comfort</p> <hr/> <p>New covenant ministry</p> <hr/> <p>Persevering in godliness</p> <hr/> <p><i>CHAPTERS</i> 1:3–7:16</p>	<p>Grace Giving</p> <p>Example of Macedonians</p> <hr/> <p>Command to Corinthians</p> <hr/> <p><i>CHAPTERS</i> 8–9</p>	Conclusion — Farewell (13:11–14)
Scope	Past	Present	Future
Issue	Misunderstandings, concerns, explanations	Financial project	Vindication of Paul's ministry
Tone	Forgiving, grateful, bold	Confident	Defensive and strong
Theme	Paul's defense of his apostleship and message		
Key Verses	4:5	9:7	10:8
Christ in 2 Corinthians	Jesus is the One who comforts us in our suffering, reconciles us to God, and gives strength in our weaknesses (1:5; 5:17–21; 12:9).		

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
GALATIANS: LETTER OF LIBERATION
A SURVEY OF GALATIANS



The Heart of the Matter

This little six-chapter letter holds high the banner of grace. Though small, it packs a dynamic punch! Galatians liberates. It assaults the bondage of legalism more directly than any other Bible book and, except for the book of Romans, most thoroughly develops the answer to the question: are we saved by believing or by achieving? The clear announcement of this letter to Christians could be put into three words: *You are free*. Because Christ has done it all, there remains nothing left for us to do except believe—freely and fully—in His finished work for our eternal salvation.



Discovering the Way

1. The Letter: Several Introductory Matters (Galatians 2:4–11; 5:5–7)

Galatians is a strong affirmation of liberty based on grace, a bold attack on legalism based on works, and a needed encouragement for those caught in between.

2. Its Value: Why Galatians Is Significant (Galatians 1:6–9; 2:16; 3:23–26; 5:13–16)

This letter includes a strong warning, a confident affirmation, a simple statement, and a needed balance.

3. An Analysis: What It Includes

The purpose of Galatians is clear—it offers a forthright defense of the true gospel.

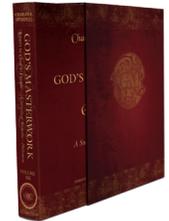


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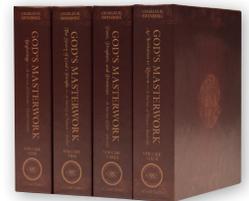
No one is immune to the temptation to drift from the true message and the true Master. Try reading Galatians daily for one week and allow the gospel to penetrate your heart and life.



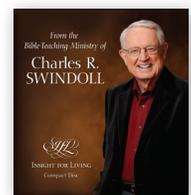
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GALATIANS: LETTER OF LIBERATION
A SURVEY OF GALATIANS



GALATIANS

	Personal Words from Paul Defense of the True Gospel For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (1:11–12)	Doctrinal Teaching Freedom from Legalism Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (3:24–25)	Practical Exhortations Freedom to Love and to Serve For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (5:13)
	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 1–2	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 3–4	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 5–6
Style	Vigorous, blunt, direct, and brief		
Theme	Justification comes by faith in Christ Jesus, not by works of the Law.		
Key Verse	2:16		
Christ in Galatians	Jesus is the source and power of the believer's new life and the heir of the promises to Abraham's seed (2:20; 3:1–16).		

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EPHESIANS: TRUE PORTRAIT OF THE CHURCH
A SURVEY OF EPHESIANS



The Heart of the Matter

Although brief, Paul's letter to the Ephesians contains a wealth of profound information about the Lord and His church. It is, in fact, foundational to the doctrine of the universal church, the earthly body of Christ. It is also here that we learn of spiritual gifts and their purpose in the church, the proper relationships between family members at home, and the armor of God for His people. No serious student of Scripture remains ignorant of Ephesians. Its insights, principles, and practical admonitions are essential to our growth toward Christian maturity.



Discovering the Way

1. Introduction Information (Acts 18:18–19; 28:30–31; Ephesians 1:1; 3:1; 4:1)

Learn about the writer and date of this letter, the recipients and where they lived, and the theme and purpose of Ephesians.

2. The Letter at a Glance (Ephesians 1:3–11; 2:11–15; 4:17–31; 6:10–18)

See the attached outline, which divides Ephesians into two sections: doctrine (chapters 1–3) and practice (chapters 4–6).

3. Several Major Truths (Ephesians 1:4; 2:13–15; 3:6–8; 4:11–16)

Ephesians teaches that God chose us before creation, that Christ brings us to God by His blood, that Gentiles and Jews have been given equal status in the church, and that the church is a body comprised of various parts.

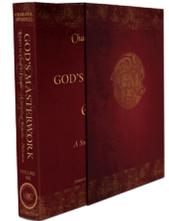


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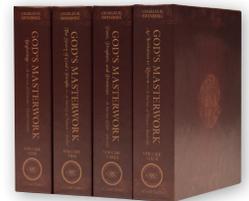
Paul's letter to the Ephesians reminds us that Christians: (1) operate under the headship of Christ; (2) belong to a body; and (3) can stand firm against the Enemy.



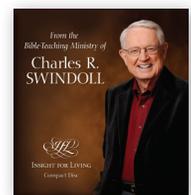
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EPHESIANS

<i>Introduction (1:1–2)</i>	<p>Our Position in Christ</p> <p>Section 1: What God has done for us (1) Emphasis: sovereignty</p> <p>Section 2: What Christ has done in us (2:1–10) Emphasis: grace</p> <p>Section 3: What Christ has done between us (2:11–3:21) Emphasis: reconciliation</p> <p><i>CHAPTERS</i> 1–3</p>	<p>Our Practice on Earth</p> <p>Section 1: Our new unity (4:1–16)</p> <p>Section 2: Our new walk (4:17–6:9)</p> <p>Section 3: Our new strength (6:10–20)</p> <p><i>CHAPTERS</i> 4–6</p>	<i>Conclusion (6:21–24)</i>
Emphasis	Doctrinal: vertical relationship with God	Practical: horizontal relationship with others	
Core Phrase	“He chose us in Him.” (1:4)	“Walk in a manner worthy of the calling.” (4:1)	
Subjects	Declarations of heavenly truths (God’s accomplishments)	Exhortations for earthly living (Christians’ assignments)	
Prayers	Paul’s prayer for Ephesians (1:15–23)	Paul’s prayer for the whole church (3:14–21)	Christians’ prayers for one another (6:18–20)
Theme	The holy community God is creating and how it is to live out its calling		
Key Verses	1:9–10; 4:1–3		
Christ in Ephesians	Jesus is the source of spiritual blessing, the Cornerstone of the church, and the goal of spiritual maturity (1:3; 2:20; 4:11–16).		

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
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PHILIPPIANS: JOY IN ABUNDANCE
A SURVEY OF PHILIPPIANS



The Heart of the Matter

If you need warm encouragement, a cheery boost of joy, a happy and hopeful word to lift your spirit, you've come to the right place. Philippians has it all . . . *and more*. Free from complicated and knotty problems, these 104 verses offer authentic reasons to be thankful, joyful, and contented. And to think they were written by a man who was living under house arrest, bound by chains to a Roman guard all day long! How could Paul be so joyful? How could his charisma be so magnetic? It is because his focus was on his Savior (whom he mentions more than forty times in this letter) rather than on his situation. Let's learn a few vital lessons from Paul—a model of the message his letter contains.



Discovering the Way

1. The Message of Philippians (Philippians 1:3–4, 25; 2:1–2)

In a word, the message is *joy!*

2. Some Helpful Information to Remember (Philippians 1:12–14, 19–21; 3:2; 4:13–16)

Who wrote it? Who received it? Why was it written?

3. A Survey of the Letter (Philippians 1:6–7; 2:3–11; 3:3–14; 4:2–13)

Chapter 1 describes joy in living; chapter 2 encourages joy in serving; chapter 3 illustrates joy in sharing; and chapter 4 portrays joy in resting. (See the chart on the next page.)

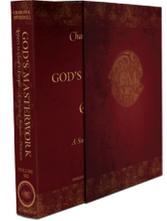


Starting Your Journey

For living with joy, we need the right model (Philippians 1:21). For serving with joy, we need the right attitude (2:5). For sharing our joy, we need the right goal (3:14). For resting with joy, we need the right release (4:6–7).



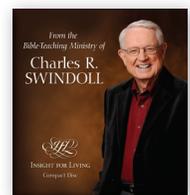
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 A SURVEY OF PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPIANS

	Joy in Living for Christ Even when we don't get what we want <u>In spite of circumstances</u> Even with conflicts CHAPTER 1	Joy in Serving Christ in Unity Starts with right attitude <u>Maintained through right theology</u> Encouraged by right models CHAPTER 2	Joy in Knowing Christ A warning <u>A testimony</u> A goal <u>A command</u> CHAPTER 3	Joy in Resting in Christ <u>Unity</u> <u>Peace</u> Final predictions CHAPTER 4
Christ	. . . my Life	. . . my Model	. . . my Goal	. . . my Contentment
Spirit	His provision (1:19)	His fellowship (2:1)	His worship (3:3)	His peace (4:7)
Positive Reaction	To difficulty: "Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel." (1:12)	To others: "Do all things without grumbling or disputing." (2:14)	To the past: "Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize." (3:13–14)	To the "unchangeables": "Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." (4:11)
Tone	Warm, encouraging, affirming			
Key Words	"Rejoice," "Christ," "Mind," "Act"			
Uniqueness	No major problem passages. "Joy" is found in each chapter. Not one quotation from the Old Testament. Christ mentioned over forty times. Most positive of all Paul's letters, yet written while he was chained to a Roman guard.			
Theme	By centering our lives around Christ, we can experience true joy.			
Key Verse	1:21			
Christ in Philippians	Jesus is the Son of God from heaven, who humbled Himself by becoming human, who suffered for us, and who was exalted to heaven (2:5–11).			

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
COLOSSIANS: CHRIST, OUR ALL IN ALL
A SURVEY OF COLOSSIANS



The Heart of the Matter

Colossians is the chart and compass which will enable us to sail a straight course between the dangers of viewing Christianity as merely a philosophy and of making it a lifestyle of rigidity. How we need this little yet potent letter! Beset by gnostic heresy and harassed by Greek philosophy, the saints at Colossae were in danger of losing their way. Paul wrote to help them get back on course, and in doing so, he helps all who take their eyes off Christ. Few Bible books focus such intense attention upon Jesus as Lord and as the ultimate solution to our problem of separation from God. In these chapters, we see Jesus clearly as our all in all.



Discovering the Way

1. Background and Setting (Colossians 1:15–20; 2:8–10, 20–23; 3:1–10; 4:12–13)

Discover the theological, philosophical, historical, and personal background of the book of Colossians.

2. Value of the Colossian Letter

Learn about the doctrinal and practical value of Paul's letter to the Colossians.

3. An Overview of Colossians (Colossians 1:1–14, 28–29; 2:1–7, 16–18; 3:12–17; 4:5–6)

Review the chart of Colossians on the next page, which shows us that Christ is our Lord, Christ is our life, and Christ is our love.

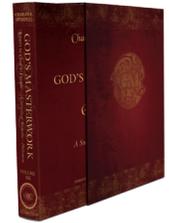


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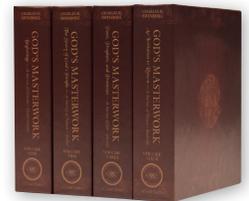
Remember: Christ is the only Lord, not one among many. Heresy is subtle, not bold and offensive. Work is important, not irrelevant. People are names and eternal souls, not anonymous faces.



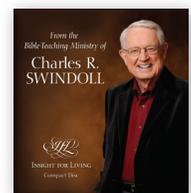
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LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
COLOSSIANS: CHRIST, OUR ALL IN ALL
A SURVEY OF COLOSSIANS



COLOSSIANS

	Christ Is Our Lord		. . . Our Life		. . . Our Love
	Lord of creation <hr/> Lord of the church <hr/> Lord of ministry <hr/> <i>CHAPTER</i> <i>1</i>	Lord of our walk <hr/> Lord of our salvation <hr/> Lord of our growth <hr/> <i>CHAPTER</i> <i>2</i>	Our mind <hr/> Our body <hr/> Our attitude <hr/> Our actions <hr/> <i>CHAPTER</i> <i>3</i>	Love for "outsiders" <hr/> Love for believers <hr/> <i>CHAPTER</i> <i>4</i>	
Subject	Instruction	Warnings	Exhortations	Reminders	
Christ	His person and work		His peace and presence		
Emphasis	Doctrinal and corrective		Practical and reassuring		
Theme	Christ is our supreme Lord and sufficient Savior.				
Key Verses	2:9–10				
Christ in Colossians	Jesus is the supreme Lord of the church and the world, the all-sufficient Savior in whom the fullness of Deity dwells (1:13–20; 2:9).				

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
1 THESSALONIANS: A HEART-TO-HEART TALK
A SURVEY OF 1 THESSALONIANS



The Heart of the Matter

Being one of Paul's earliest letters to find its way into the canon of Scripture, 1 Thessalonians includes a number of personal insights into his early life in ministry. We see and feel Paul's "heart" on several occasions. Although brief (fewer than ninety verses), this letter also outlines such practical matters as a church model worth emulating, a philosophy toward ministry worth following, a commitment to purity worth remembering, a hope of Christ's coming worth anticipating, and a love for fellow Christians worth duplicating. Let's pay close attention. This letter is an extremely helpful resource to turn to when any of these areas need to be strengthened.



Discovering the Way

1. Why Was the Letter Written? (1 Thessalonians 2:1–2, 17–18; 3:1–8; 4:1–12; 2 Thessalonians 3:6–10)

In the midst of suffering and opposition, Paul wanted to share the gospel with the Thessalonians.

2. Who Received It . . . and When? (1 Thessalonians 1:6–10)

Paul wrote to the saints who comprised the faithful church in Thessalonica.

3. What Does It Include? (1 Thessalonians 1:2–5; 2:1–7, 13–16; 3:11–13; 4:1–8, 13–18; 5:6–13)

Review the chart of 1 Thessalonians on the next page: chapters 1–3 of the book reflect on Paul's time with the Thessalonians, and chapters 4–5 exhort and encourage the Thessalonians to continue imitating Christ.

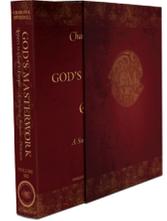


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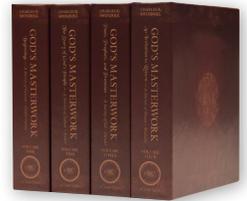
We have been reached, so are we reaching others? We have been fed, so are we feeding others? We have received instruction, so are we instructing others? We have been encouraged, so are we encouraging others?



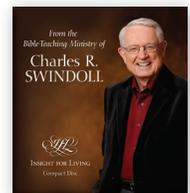
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LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
1 THESSALONIANS: A HEART-TO-HEART TALK
A SURVEY OF 1 THESSALONIANS

FIRST THESSALONIANS

	The Pastor's Heart			The Pastor's Burden	
	<u>Thanksgiving</u> <u>Remembering</u> <u>Affirming</u> <u>Reporting</u>	<u>The pastor among the flock</u> <u>The flock's response to the pastor</u>	<u>Personal concern</u> <u>Comfort and relief</u>	<u>Sexual purity</u> <u>Prophetic urgency</u>	<u>Stay alert!</u> <u>Encourage one another!</u> <u>Live in peace!</u>
	CHAPTER 1	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTER 3	CHAPTER 4	CHAPTER 5
Perspective	Looking back			Looking ahead	
Subject	The church itself	The apostle himself	The report	The concern	The balance
Especially Appropriate for . . .	new converts	young pastors	suffering Christians	tempted and uninformed Christians	"sleepy" Christians
Theme	The hope of Christ's return comforts us and motivates us to godly living.				
Key Verses	1:8–10; 4:1, 13–18				
Christ in 1 Thessalonians	Jesus is our source of hope and comfort, the One who rescues believers from the coming wrath (1:10; 4:13–5:11).				

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX

LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON

2 THESSALONIANS: CHRIST'S COMING . . . MY RESPONSE

A SURVEY OF 2 THESSALONIANS



The Heart of the Matter

This little letter may be small in size and may appear to be rather innocuous, but it is both concentrated and potent. Written to correct a misunderstanding regarding the Lord's return, it not only clarifies some issues regarding prophecy but it also deals with several current matters of great practical value. Within these forty-seven verses, we find such helpful insights as the purpose of persecution as well as the importance of diligence, Bible study, personal discipline, minding our own business, and choosing the right companions. As we explore this letter, let's be sensitive to what God is saying to us—as it relates both to His prophetic plan and to His practical advice. Both are of equal importance.



Discovering the Way

1. A Brief Bit of Background (2 Thessalonians 2:1–2; 3:6–15)

Learn about the writer of 2 Thessalonians, about his reason for writing, and about the letter's recipients.

2. An Overview of the Letter (2 Thessalonians 1:3–4, 11–12; 2:1–17; 3:1–5, 10–13)

Paul wrote about pain and affliction in chapter 1. He taught about prophecy and corrected errors in chapter 2. And he encouraged perseverance in chapter 3.

3. A Few Enduring Truths

Persevering through affliction develops maturity. Trusting amidst confusion reveals stability. Waiting with discipline cultivates responsibility.

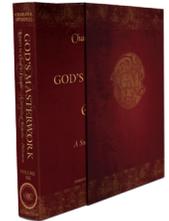


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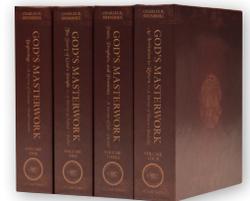
Read through 2 Thessalonians and examine your response to suffering, your faith in the midst of trials, and your personal obedience as you look for Jesus Christ's return.



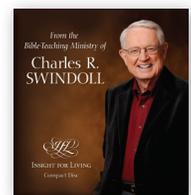
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2 THESSALONIANS: CHRIST'S COMING . . . MY RESPONSE
A SURVEY OF 2 THESSALONIANS

SECOND THESSALONIANS

	Affirmation amidst Affliction	Explanation of Prophecy	Clarification regarding Response
	“We ought always to give thanks to God for you.” (1:3) “We . . . speak proudly of you . . . for your perseverance and faith.” (1:4) “We pray for you always.” (1:11) CHAPTER 1	“Let no one in any way deceive you.” (2:3) Secret power of lawlessness Restraint removed Man of lawlessness “So then . . . stand firm.” (2:15) CHAPTER 2	“We command you.” (3:6) “If anyone does not obey” (3:14) “May the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace.” (3:16) CHAPTER 3
Question	Why are we suffering?	What will occur?	How do I respond?
Contrasts	Peace amidst pain	Lawlessness versus restraint	Work while waiting
Statement	The Lord knows!	The “day of the Lord” has not yet come!	“Do not grow weary of doing good.” (3:13)
Emphasis	Commendation	Correction	Clarification
Theme	The hope of Christ's return encourages us in our suffering and motivates us to live responsibly for Him.		
Key Verses	1:11–12; 2:13–15		
Christ in 2 Thessalonians	Jesus is the coming Judge who will reward the righteous and destroy the wicked, including the coming man of lawlessness in the end times (1:6–2:12).		

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX

LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON

1 TIMOTHY: WISE COUNSEL FOR SHEPHERDS
A SURVEY OF 1 TIMOTHY



The Heart of the Matter

Within the writings of Paul in the New Testament, we have three letters of special interest to local churches and their pastors. These are commonly called “pastoral epistles,” referring to the books of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. These three letters remain to this day as the most accurate and very best counsel a shepherd (and his flock) can receive. Written to men who were shepherds in the first century, these three letters have a relevant ring to them to this very day. This message looks into the first and the longest of these three letters, which contains the most thorough treatment of the subject. First Timothy addresses the role of the shepherd and his responsibility for the life of the flock. The shepherd must know and teach sound doctrine, live a godly life, and maintain order in the church. This letter highlights the importance of choosing godly leaders according to God’s design. So many churches have drifted from God’s design, but this letter guides the church back to Christ’s original blueprint.



Discovering the Way

1. The Major Personalities (1 Timothy 1:1–5; 3:14–15)

Learn about Paul and Timothy—the writer and recipient of this letter.

2. Reasons the Letter Was Written (1 Timothy 1:3–7; 3:14–15; 4:6–16; 6:3–5)

Paul wrote to warn Timothy about false teachers, to instruct him about how to lead the church, and to encourage him to educate his flock.

3. An Overview of 1 Timothy (1 Timothy 1:1–16; 3:2–7; 4:1–16; 5:1–25; 6:1–19)

Review the chart on the next page and discover that chapters 1–3 discuss the work of ministry and chapters 4–6 teach about the role of the minister.

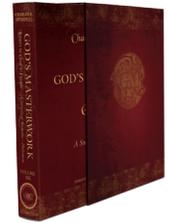


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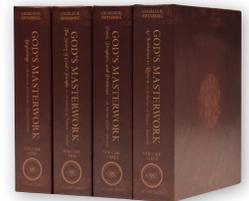
Shepherding is more practical than theoretical. Leadership is less glamorous than demanding. Ministry is to be balanced between commitment and contentment.



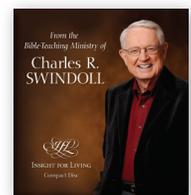
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1 TIMOTHY: WISE COUNSEL FOR SHEPHERDS
A SURVEY OF 1 TIMOTHY

FIRST TIMOTHY

<i>Greeting (1:1-2)</i>	<p>Personal Encouragement and Exhortation</p> <p><u>Timothy's task</u> <u>Paul's testimony</u> <u>Gospel's trustworthiness</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>CHAPTER</i> 1</p>	<p>The Ministry</p> <p>Men and women (2) (Prayer and submission)</p> <p>Elders and deacons (3) (Qualifications for leadership)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>CHAPTERS</i> 2-3</p>	<p>The Minister</p> <p>Seeing the importance of (4): <u>Faithful teaching</u> <u>True godliness</u> <u>Sound doctrine</u> <u>Perseverance</u></p> <p>Paying attention to (5): <u>Various age groups</u> <u>Elders</u> <u>Widows</u> <u>Wisdom</u></p> <p>Developing a new perspective toward (6): <u>Masters and slaves</u> <u>Internals and externals</u> <u>Rich and poor</u> <u>Eternal vs. temporal</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>CHAPTERS</i> 4-6</p>	<i>Conclusion (6:21)</i>
Emphasis	The work of ministry		The one who ministers	
Command	Be true!	Be wise!	Be strong and faithful!	
Theme	Leadership of the church, the household of God			
Key Verses	3:14-15			
Christ in 1 Timothy	Jesus is the Mediator between God and people, the ransom for all, who came in the flesh and was taken up in glory (2:5-6; 3:16).			

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX

LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON

2 TIMOTHY: PAUL'S SWAN SONG
A SURVEY OF 2 TIMOTHY



The Heart of the Matter

It's doubtful that we could find a more nostalgic, emotional letter written by the apostle Paul. Facing death alone in a dungeon, surrounded by memories and exposed to the elements, this grand old man wrote by candlelight a letter to his dear friend, Timothy. Paul had no assurance it would ever reach the young man but, nevertheless, he wrote it . . . and we are so grateful he did! For obvious reasons it is a letter of sharp contrasts—in some places it contains strong and passionate warnings laced with insightful wisdom and firm resolve, yet in other places it contains wearisome feelings, quiet and honest reflections, and even a few unguarded admissions of decisions made in years gone by. Here is a letter for the ages written by a rugged and tired warrior, an essential piece of biblical literature we need in order to construct an accurate and complete mental portrait of Paul and a spiritual understanding of our times.



Discovering the Way

1. Introductory Matters of Interest (2 Timothy 1:1; 4:6–13)

Discover the man who penned this letter, the place from which he wrote, and his reasons for writing.

2. General Overview of the Letter (2 Timothy 1:1–18; 2:1–3; 3:1–14; 4:1–5; 4:9–22)

Review the chart on the next page to determine the style, structure, and uniqueness of this letter.

3. Personal and Lasting Messages for Today

Being different is not only helpful, it is essential for survival. Godly models fill a variety of roles. Younger Christians are motivated by older Christians who finish well.

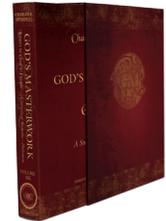


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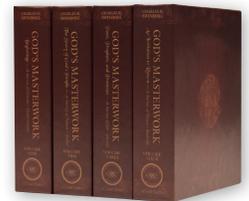
Reflect on godly models in your life and thank God for them. Commit to modeling the character of Christ to a younger Christian.



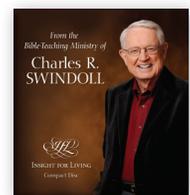
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2 TIMOTHY: PAUL'S SWAN SONG
A SURVEY OF 2 TIMOTHY

SECOND TIMOTHY

	Guard the Treasure!	Suffer Hardship!	Continue!	Preach the Word!
	<u>Paul's greeting</u> <u>Timothy's life</u> <u>God's treasure</u> <u>Our responsibility</u>	<u>Passing on the truth</u> Illustrations of the truth (soldier, athlete, farmer, workman, vessel, servant) <u>Suffering for the truth</u>	<u>Last days</u> <u>Evil people</u> <u>Standing firm</u> <u>Biblical basis</u> <u>Spiritual examples</u>	<u>A solemn charge</u> <u>Reason for the charge</u> <u>Personal conclusion</u>
	<i>CHAPTER</i> 1	<i>CHAPTER</i> 2	<i>CHAPTER</i> 3	<i>CHAPTER</i> 4
Perspective	The past	The present	The future	
Tone	Gratitude	Compassion	Warning	Command
Theme	Paul's passing of the ministry torch to Timothy and encouraging him to stay faithful in the midst of hardship			
Key Verses	1:14	2:3	3:14	4:2
Christ in 2 Timothy	Jesus is the Judge of the living and the dead, who strengthens us in times of weakness and rescues us in times of danger (3:11; 4:1, 17).			

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
TITUS: PLAIN TALK FOR PASTORS
A SURVEY OF TITUS



The Heart of the Matter

Several books in the Bible don't get the publicity they deserve. Titus is a good example. Overshadowed by the far more popular letters of 1 and 2 Timothy, this pastoral epistle seems obscure and unimportant to some. Too bad. Equally essential and inspired by God, the letter to Titus brings a needed balance to the subject of guidance to pastors. First Timothy emphasizes doctrine. Second Timothy provides a charge, a strong emotional appeal to the pastor. But Titus brings a word of *caution*, a reminder that good works must accompany our proclamation of the truth and our defense of the gospel. The two letters to Timothy encourage him to protect and to preach, while the letter to Titus tells him to *practice* those things. While good works in no way lead to salvation, they are the irrefutable evidence of true salvation. Preachers need that reminder as much as anybody . . . sometimes more.



Discovering the Way

1. The Man Who Received the Letter (Titus 1:1–5)

Learn about the background, location, and needs of the church that Titus pastored.

2. Overview of the Letter (Titus 1:5–16; 2:2–5, 9–14; 3:1–11)

Discover the conduct of the leaders in the assembly, the needs of the members of the church, and the appropriate conduct for all.

3. The Christian and Good Works (Titus 1:16; 2:11–12; 3:8)

The book of Titus shows us several important truths: deeds defend or deny our doctrine; grace elevates godliness, never cheapens it; and behavior verifies belief.

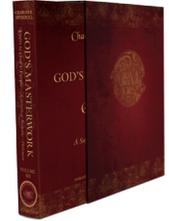


Starting Your Journey

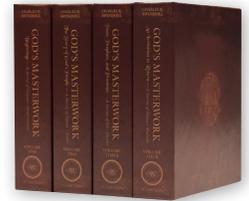
Think about your conduct at work, school, or in relationships. Do your actions defend or deny your doctrine (your beliefs about God)? Explain.



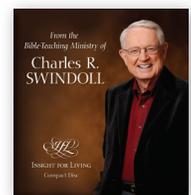
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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX
LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON
 TITUS: PLAIN TALK FOR PASTORS
 A SURVEY OF TITUS



TITUS

	Taking Charge Elders <u>Rebellious people</u>	Giving Advice <u>Older men and women</u> <u>Young women and men</u> Titus and all leaders <u>Slaves and masters</u>	Doing Right <u>What to do</u> <u>What not to do</u>
Introduction (1:1-4)	CHAPTER 1	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTER 3
People	Elders Enemies	Specific groups	Christians in general
Issue	Setting up the right leadership	Instruction for particular people	Attitude and conduct toward good and bad
A Church	... in good order (1:5)	... with good doctrine (2:1)	... of good deeds (3:1)
Theme	Titus's role in encouraging right living through sound doctrine		
Key Verses	1:5; 2:10; 3:8		
Christ in Titus	Jesus is our great God and Savior, who redeems and purifies His people (2:13-14).		

Conclusion (3:12-15)

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GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SIX

LETTERS TO GOD'S PEOPLE—A SURVEY OF ROMANS—PHILEMON

PHILEMON: AN APPEAL FOR GRACE AND FORGIVENESS

A SURVEY OF PHILEMON



The Heart of the Matter

About six years before his execution, Paul wrote a “postcard” to his longtime friend, Philemon, a citizen of Colossae. This, the shortest of the apostle’s writings, is one of the grandest illustrations of grace and forgiveness in all of Scripture. It is a warm, passionate appeal to a slave owner to accept back, forgive, and reinstate his runaway slave named Onesimus. Because of the obvious analogy with our being accepted by God and forgiven through His grace, this little letter has become one of the most treasured in the New Testament. See if you don’t agree as we work our way through these twenty-five verses.



Discovering the Way

1. First-Century Slavery: The Roman World

Learn about the role of slavery in the Roman culture and how Paul taught Christians to respond.

2. A Survey of the Philemon “Postcard” (Philemon 1–3, 4–17, 18–25)

This short letter includes a greeting and salutation, a commendation and a request, and a promise and a conclusion.

3. Some Pertinent Analogies for Today

Discover how the book of Philemon applies to your life as a Christian in a free society.

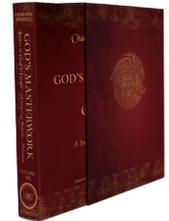


Starting Your Journey

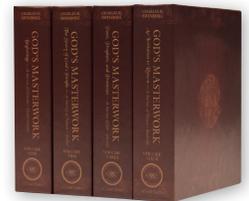
Reflect on your life. Have you ever tried to flee God’s presence? Thank God that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ He has dealt with your enslavement to sin!



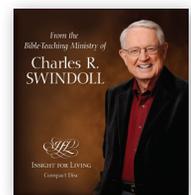
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A SURVEY OF PHILEMON



PHILEMON

	Paul's Commendation	Paul's Request	Paul's Promise
<i>Greeting (1:1–3)</i>		On the basis of the slave's conversion <u>(1:8–11)</u> On the basis of the slave owner's friendship <u>(1:12–17)</u>	
	<i>VERSES 4–7</i>	<i>VERSES 8–17</i>	<i>VERSES 18–21</i>
Tone	Praise	Plea	Promise
Direction	Looking back	Looking within	Looking beyond
Central Statement	"I thank my God always." (1:4)	"I appeal to you." (1:10)	"I will repay it." (1:19)
Theme	Forgiving and accepting one another as brothers and sisters in Christ		
Key Verses	1:10–11, 15–18		
Christ in Philemon	Jesus is the Master, in whom believers are brothers and sisters in Christ (1:9, 15–16).		

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