

I. REVIEW: LOOKING BACK ON WHERE WE'VE BEEN

A. Revisiting Our "Map"

PAUL'S LIFE & LETTERS

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

NOTES

B. The One Story of the One God

1. Three Un-Truths to Un-Learn

a. **Untruth #1:** The Bible is God's _____ of the Jews in the Old Testament, Jesus in the Gospels, and the Church in the New Testament.

Truth #1: The Bible is the One _____ of the One God "to unite all things in heaven and on earth in Christ" (Eph 1:7-10).

The "Old" Testament is as much " _____ " scripture as the "New" Testament.

b. **Untruth #2:** The New Testament is a book containing God's _____ on how to become and live as a Christian.

Truth #2: The New Testament is the record of " _____ " of a Story *unfolding*, and what it means to be "in" it, and " _____ " of it.

c. **Untruth #3:** The Book of Acts is the story of the birth of " _____ ."

Truth #3: The Book of Acts is the full unveiling of God's "mystery hidden for ages" from prophets and angels—the promise to _____ is for the nations.

(1) This is the "_____" (*euaggelion*) that the apostles—especially Paul—lived, suffered, and died for.

"There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

Ephesians 4:4-6

"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

Galatians 3:8

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

1 Peter 2:9, 10

"and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

Exodus 19:6

"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

Deut 7:6

(2) We need to understand that the "new covenant" inaugurated by Jesus was the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, not its _____ - _____ !

(3) The _____ covenant (i.e. Law) was set aside, not the Abrahamic covenant (i.e. Gen 12, 15, 17).

2. One Large Truth to Embrace (1 Cor 4:1; 2 Cor 4:5; 5:17-20)

a. If we truly are God's people, then we are now:

(1) _____ The Story (Jn 17:16-23; Phil 3:30)

(2) _____ of The Story (1 Cor 4:1-2)

(3) _____ of the redemption offered by The Story (2 Cor 4:5)

C. Three Cultural "Roadblocks" to the Spread of the One Story

1. The value system of Rome: "*dignitas*" – _____, status, and association.

"You are _____ you know and who knows you."

2. The value system of Greece: "*anthropos*" – _____, myths, and the mind.

"You are what you _____ and what you don't have to do."

3. The value system of Judea: "*hagios*" – separation, tradition, and _____.

"You are what you _____ do and who you don't know."

NOTES

D. The First Four Threats to the One Story

1. Legalism (Galatians)

- a. The idea that the “Story” is about _____ rather than Him (tribalism, rules-keeping, merit vs. grace)
- b. God’s solution was Paul, the Apostle to the “_____ Jew.”
- c. **Letter of Galatians** – destroys the _____ between grace and deeds.

2. Autonomy (James)

- a. The idea that The Story has a “_____” in my life rather than vice versa.
- b. God’s solution was _____, the Apostle to the “Old Jew.”
- c. **Letter of James** – breaks the _____ between faith and deeds.

3. Confusion (Thesalonians)

- a. Losing track of The Story in the face of conflicting _____ (pain, persecution, pleasure and panic).
- b. God’s solution was the Thessalonian letters.
- c. Paul reminds them that “_____” depends upon perseverance, and right doctrine, because _____ is unrelenting in this life (1 Th 1:3; 4:13; 2 Th 1:5-7).
- d. Paul reminds them that God has given them the _____ of The Story so *that* they can live for Him in the meantime (2 Th 1:7-12).

4. Conformity (Corinthians)




- a. The idea that we can live in *two* “stories” at once: His Story and the story of my _____.
- b. God’s solution was the Corinthian letters.
- c. Paul reminds them that while they are “_____” the story around them, they are no longer a part of it:

“For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

“For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

II. REVISITING CORINTH

A. Three Vital Interpretive “Keys” For Paul’s Corinthian Letters

-  1. We must remind ourselves where the _____ of Scripture lies, and where it does *not*:
- It does *not* lie in the words on a page or the mind of the _____.
 - The meaning of Scripture lies in the mind of the _____.
 - Our “job”—to the best of our ability— is to “become” _____!
-  2. We must realize that Corinth was a _____ city, *not* a Greek one!
- Corinth was defeated, looted, and “_____” by Rome in 146 BC.
 - It lay desolate for _____ years, and was rebuilt as a Roman colony in 44 BC by Augustus.
 - Everything about Corinth was a reflection of “*Romanitas*,” (collective term used for the values and culture of Rome).
 - Inscriptions and coinage for the first 100 years were all in _____.
 - City _____ was based on the Roman “centuriation” system.
 - All the _____ was modern (i.e. Roman) rather than ancient (i.e. Greek).
 - Aphrodite, the patron goddess of Corinth was eclipsed by _____, the Mother Goddess of Rome, whose statue was in the center of Corinth.
 - Corinth in Paul’s day was a reflection of its age, *not* its _____.
 - _____ of the 17 names mentioned in the Corinthian letters are Roman, not Greek (Fortunatus, Gaius, Lucius, Priscilla, Aquila, Quartus, Titius Justus, Tertius).
-  3. “_____” (Gk *mathētēs*) was neither a Jewish *nor* a Christian invention. It was a term from the sophist movement, which was *flourishing* in Corinth in Paul’s day (our words, “sophisticated” is derived from this word).
- “Sophists” were virtuoso orators, characterized by:
 - They possessed a _____ following (and wanted one!)
 - They participated in the secular public assembly (*ekklesia*) of a city
 - Were official _____ on embassies sent to the governor or emperor.
 - Declaimed (argued passionately) on _____ topics publicly...for a fee
 - Owned and operated expensive _____ to train the children of the social elite how to argue in criminal and civil courts, and in public.
 - Students were called “_____” (Gk *mathētēs*), and their goal was “imitatio” (emulation) in dress, demeanor, and skill.
 - Paul spoke specifically of them: “...*where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?*” **1 Cor 1:20**

NOTES

NOTES

B. *"I Follow Apollos, I Follow Cephas, I Follow Paul..."*

1. Paul's Corinthian letters must be _____ and understood against the backdrop of *Romanitas* and Sophistry.
 - a. Paul continually admonishes them about issues that stem from the Roman value of "_____" (hierarchy of spiritual gifts, cult of celebrity, sophist approach to discipleship, etc.)
 - b. Paul deliberately uses _____-sophist language in his description of himself and his ministry:

"And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Sophists in Corinth	Paul in Corinth
Upon arriving in a city, he sent out invitations telling where and when he would present his credentials and declaim.	<i>"...when I came to you brothers..."</i>
At the appointed time, he would address the crowd while seated, using a sort of "liturgy": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •an <i>encomium</i> - praise of the city •a covert self-commendation •an invitation to the crowd to pick a topic for him to declaim •if he felt competent to declaim, he would rise but if not, he would return in 24 hours** ** (this was the "make" or "break" stage)	<i>"...I did not come proclaiming...with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified..."</i>
After declaiming, the audience (and city) either embraced or rejected his services for their city.	<i>"And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." 1 Cor 2:1-5</i>
If they embraced him: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •parents of elite children would enroll them in his school •city fathers would award him citizenship to the city (required to debate publicly) •citizens welcomed him as their spokesman for an embassy (if needed) 	<i>"For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Cor 4:5</i> <i>"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." 2 Cor 5:20</i>
Competition was stiff, often malicious, and permanence was never guaranteed and often challenged.	<i>"What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." 1 Cor 1:12</i> <i>"I have been a fool! You forced me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing." 2 Cor 12:11</i>

NOTES

Sophists in Corinth	Paul in Corinth
The teacher was the exclusive “paradigm” for the disciple. This was the nature of the teacher-disciple relationship.	<p><i>“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”</i> 1 Corinthians 11:1</p>
This was an opportunity for “big money” in an affluent city <i>driven</i> by “dignitas.”	<p><i>“What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.”</i> 1 Cor 9:18</p> <p><i>“Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God’s gospel to you free of charge?”</i> 2 Cor 11:7</p>

2. Paul’s Corinthian letters, especially 2 Corinthians may be the most _____ New Testament books for the 21st century. (Next session!)
3. In it we discover the story of the beneficiaries of the Abrahamic covenant trying to live in light of _____ instead of the one around them.