

Hello. /We will begin the 13th lecture on “An Introduction to the New Testament.” /We will study the Pauline epistles, continuing from where we left off last time. /Because the New Testament epistles are in the order of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians, it is good for us to stick to this order when studying the books.

/However, because we are studying Paul’s lifetime as well as the Pauline epistles in this course, it will be helpful for us to follow the order in which the epistles were written during Paul’s lifetime.

/That is why we studied Galatians first, and now, we will study 1 and 2 Thessalonians. /Paul recorded Galatians after his first missionary journey, and during his second missionary journey, he visited Thessalonica.

/Paul visited Thessalonica after visiting Philippi. /Thessalonica is a major city in region of Macedonia. It was the most populous industrial city in the Mediterranean region.

/However, the people living there received Paul’s gospel mission and abandoned their idols. Many people returned to God. /Most of the people were Gentiles. And the church here was a threat to the Jewish community living there.

/We’ll take an example to see how the church threatened the Jewish community. /Acts 17 is about Paul preaching the gospel in Thessalonica.

/17:2 says, “And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures.” /Where there was a synagogue, the first thing Paul did was enter the place and evangelize them by reasoning with them from the word of God.

/Paul explained to them the meaning of the Bible, proved that Christ was afflicted and rose again from the dead. In this way, he bore witness to the fact that Jesus is Christ.

/If we look in verses 4 and 5, it says, “And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. But the Jews were jealous.”

/To better understand why the Jews were jealous, we must pay attention to the words “devout Greeks.” /Although these people were Greeks, they were God-fearers who attended the Jewish synagogue and learned the Old Testament. Therefore, they were actually members of the Jewish community.

/Because these important people were evangelized by Paul and came to follow Paul and Silas, the Jews became jealous of them. /For this reason, the Jews living there strongly rejected the gospel of Christ preached by Paul.

/That is why Paul could only stay in Thessalonica for three weeks. /The Christians there, fearing for Paul’s safety, snuck Paul and Silas out in the night and sent them to Berea.

/Later on, Paul on several occasions desired to visit the church of Thessalonica, but Satan stopped him. 1 Thessalonians 2:17-19. /Consequently, Paul, instead of visiting Thessalonica himself, sent his partner Timothy.

/After visiting Thessalonica, Timothy met Paul in Corinth and reported to Paul the state of the church of Thessalonica. /1 Thessalonians 3:6-7 says, “But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you—for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith.”

/Paul, hearing Timothy’s report, stayed in Corinth and recorded 1 Thessalonians. /1 and 2 Thessalonians were written at around 50-51 AD.

/For information on when the Pauline epistles were written, please refer to the chronology of Paul.

/In 1 Thessalonians 1:1-3, Paul, Silas, and Timothy, as the senders of the letter, give their greeting. In verses 4-10, they give thanks for the faith of the believers in Thessalonica.

/Paul in his writing compliments the church of Thessalonica for being an example to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

/In chapter 2, Paul reminisces about his ministry in Thessalonica. For example, 2:7 says, “But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.”

/Paul reminds the readers that the Thessalonian believers did not accept it as the word of men but as the word of God when he preached the gospel to them. He also tells them about how they shared in suffering from the Jews. /1 Thessalonians 2:13-16.

/Chapter 2 teaches gospel workers what they should do when preaching the gospel, and it also teaches those who receive the word the way in which they should receive it.

/For example, verses 4-5 say, “But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness.”

/Verse 6 says, “Nor did we seek glory from people.” /Verse 7 says, “Like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.” /Verses 7-8 say, “We were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves.”

/Verse 9 says, “For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil.” / “We worked night and day... while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.” /Verse 10 says, “How holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers.”

/Verse 11 says, “Like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you.” /Using these various expressions, the word teaches us the attitude we must have when we proclaim the gospel.

/In 2:17 – 3:13, Paul, who suddenly had to leave Thessalonica because of the persecution, delivers his love to the church that faces hardship after his departure.

/Paul, in his time anxiously waiting, gives thanks after hearing that the church of Thessalonica, which had for a short period of time learned the gospel through Timothy, had remained faithful.

/For example, 3:10 says, “As we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?” /Because Paul had spent a short time with them, he wanted to see their faces again and teach them the gospel in full.

/The following section, 4:1-12, teaches us how we are to live as Christians. /Because the Greeks and Romans do not acknowledge the serious sin of fornication, Paul warns the newly converted Thessalonian believers about falling into this immoral sin.

/That is why 1 Thessalonians 4:3 says, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification.” It continues to teach us to love one another, work with one’s own hands, and be kind to outsiders.

/4:13 – 5:11 are about the believer’s death and Jesus’ second coming. It also teaches us to have a proper belief about the end of days. /Teachings about Christ’s second coming and the end of days are best revealed in these aspects of Thessalonians.

/We can call it New Testament eschatology. Teachings about New Testament eschatology are seen in Jesus’ teaching about the end of days on the Mount of Olives, and they are also found in Revelation and 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

/In the New Testament, we learn valuable lessons about the end of days through Jesus, the Apostle John, and the Apostle Paul. /There are eschatological lessons in different places of the New Testament. However, these three parts teach intensively about the end of days.

/In 1 Thessalonians 4:13 – 5:11, we learn about Christ bringing with him when he returns those who are dead in Jesus Christ. /Their bodies will change into glorious, spiritual, eternal bodies of the resurrection.

/Also, those who are alive to see Christ’s return will be carried into the clouds and will meet the Lord in their transformed spiritual bodies.

/Verses 16-17 say, “For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught

up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”

/Chapter 5 continues to talk about the same subject. The word encourages us, saying that we do not need to have anything written to us concerning the times and the seasons, but that we must be awake and sober, living in faith, love, and hope, for the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

/Therefore, we must be awake and sober. /Those who are well prepared for Jesus’ return possess this attitude. /From 5:12 to the last verse are words of admonishment, prayer and greetings. This is how the letter ends.

/2 Thessalonians was written not long after 1 Thessalonians was written. This letter emphasizes God’s judgment that is to come in the future. It also corrects the misconceptions about Jesus’ second coming.

/In 2 Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul first talks about the judgment that will happen at Christ’s return. /He says that the Lord’s day is near, and he rebukes the people of lawlessness for their attitude and laziness.

/These improper attitudes may have come from misunderstandings about Paul’s eschatological writings in 1 Thessalonians. /Paul recorded 2 Thessalonians to correct these misconceptions and have the people live orderly lives of faith.

/In modern times, there are many misconceptions about Jesus’ second coming, but even the early church had its misconceptions about Christ’s return.

/We have studied the content of 1 and 2 Thessalonians. We will now study **1 and 2 Corinthians**. /Paul, during his second missionary journey, focused his missions on Corinth. /Corinth was the core mission field of Paul’s second missionary journey.

/It was a large city. /The city was plagued by corruption, immorality, and humanism. /The church of Corinth had this problem of secular culture.

/Paul stayed there for one year and a half as he ministered and preached the gospel, but he heard disappointing news after he left the church of Corinth and was on his third missionary journey.

/While on his third missionary journey, Paul remained in Ephesus and taught the word daily at the school of Tyrannus. Because the place of Paul’s dwelling was in close proximity to Corinth, it appears as though Paul frequently kept in contact with the church of Corinth.

/We think that he sent letters to and received letters from the church of Corinth. /For example, 1 Corinthians 5:9 says, “I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people...” This proves that Paul had written to them before.

/It appears as though Paul wrote 1 Corinthians as he drew near to the end of his ministry in Ephesus. /1 Corinthians 16:5-6 says, “I will visit you after passing through Macedonia, for I intend to pass through Macedonia, and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may help me on my journey, wherever I go.” Seeing Paul say these things, it seems as though he wrote the letter when he was about to leave Ephesus.

/We think that the church of Corinth frequently kept in touch with the Apostle Paul, asking for his guidance concerning the problems the church faced.

/7:1 says “Now concerning the matters about which you wrote,” 7:25 says, “Now concerning the betrothed,” and 8:1 says “Now concerning food offered to idols.” We can see that Paul uses the phrase “Now concerning...” The Apostle Paul writes a large part of 1 Corinthians in the form of answers.

/Even if he was not asked a question, he heard through another source about the church of Corinth and taught the church what it needed to hear.

/1 Corinthians includes teachings about disputes between church sects, incest, lawsuits, marriage, food, order in worship, the use of gifts, communion, resurrection, and collections.

/Out of the epistles, 1 Corinthians deals with the problems within the church in the most realistic way. /Paul probably wrote this letter to Timothy.

/We say this because 1 Corinthians 16:10 says, “When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am.”

/1 Corinthians ends with this. Believers! I hope that you read 1 Corinthians more carefully and get to know the content of the book.

/After sending 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote **2 Corinthians** during his third missionary journey, after he left Ephesus and was staying in Macedonia.

/It seems as though there was about a one-year gap between the writing of 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. We say this because 2 Corinthians 8:10 talks about offerings. It says, “This benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it.”

/The church of Corinth was a church of many problems. /Unsolved problems remained even after Paul wrote 1 Corinthians. /That is why before Paul writes 2 Corinthians, he writes a letter of tears to the Corinthians.

/During his stay in Macedonia, Paul learned through Titus that the church of Corinth was repenting in many ways and had become new. Prior to this happening, Paul had written to them with a troubled heart, but now, he writes to them in peace.

/Recording 2 Corinthians with a heart of joy, Paul writes about the glory of the gospel ministry. He defends his apostleship and talks about his authority as an apostle and the persecution he experienced for the gospel. He concludes the letter with love towards the church of Corinth and words of admonishment.

/The greeting at the end of 2 Corinthians is one of the most complete forms of the benediction. 2 Corinthians 13:14 reads, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

/Today’s churches that have many problems need epistles like 2 Corinthians, which is a letter from God.

/The last of Paul’s doctrinal epistles is **Romans**. /It is Paul’s letter to the church of Rome. Romans 1:1,5. /Romans is also the longest of the Pauline epistles. /Paul had Tertius write Romans for him. Romans 16:22.

/Paul typically did not hold a pen and write his own letters, but he had someone write down what he was saying.

/After Paul spoke, he checked the content of the letter, personally writing the final greeting to prove that it was his letter. This was a normal practice of the time.

/Because the Holy Spirit was watching over the entire writing process, the word, which is God’s word, has life. /The recipients of Romans are God’s beloved believers of Rome, those who are called by him.

/Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire, was the biggest city of the time. /We do not know exactly how the gospel was preached there. /But Acts 2:10 says that when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, “visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,” were present.

/We believe the people who came from Rome heard the gospel at Pentecost, were baptized, returned to Rome and preached the gospel, and built churches. /Paul had not gone to Rome prior to writing Romans.

/In other words, Paul was sending a letter to a church that he had never visited nor planted himself. /Paul had affection and concern for the Roman church.

/The reason is this church was Christ’s church, and it was a church that was located in the capital of the Roman Empire. It was a church that could have explosive influence on future foreign missions.

/However, because the leaders of the church were Gentiles who had just been introduced to the gospel, the church of Rome faced the danger of losing its grasp on the true nature of the gospel and have it changed. Paul was greatly concerned about this and could not help but pay attention to this matter.

/That is why Paul writes in the beginning of Romans, “So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.” Romans 1:15. /Multiple times, he wanted to visit Rome, but he was prevented from doing so. Romans 1:8-17.

/As Paul was writing the letter, he was planning to make his final visit to Jerusalem. /If we look at Romans 15, we learn about a collection made for the Jerusalem church. The collection was ready for delivery. Paul was staying at the house of Gaius, a Corinthian. Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14.

/Paul commends Phoebe and sends Romans with her. That is how we know that Romans was written in Corinth.

/Paul, going up to Jerusalem, did not know the events that he would encounter on his way there. /Acts 20:23 says that afflictions and imprisonment await Paul in Jerusalem. It was a tense situation in which Paul could be martyred.

/In Romans 15:22-33, we find details about Paul, who is in this pressing situation, asking the Roman believers to pray for him. /He makes three prayer requests to them.

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/First, he says that he writes Romans to teach them the core of the gospel in detail. Romans 1:16-17. /These real, admonishing words of Romans explain in detail about mankind’s sin and misery, man’s way to righteousness, sanctification, and Israel’s unbelief and salvation.

/Second, Paul asks them to pray for his safe travel in Jerusalem. /He asks them to pray that the collection of offerings given by believers of foreign churches, with the church of Macedonia playing the leading role, would be delivered to the Jerusalem church without any problems.

/Third, Paul asks them to pray that he would safely arrive in Rome and even go to Spain to preach the gospel. /Paul always wished to preach the gospel in Rome.

/Romans 1:15 says, “So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.” /We observe Paul’s passion to preach the joyful news of salvation to the entire world.

/Paul takes it one step further by asking the Roman church to join him in preaching the gospel in Spain, to support his missions. /From the books of the Bible, this book of Romans had the greatest influence on people like Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley.

/Tyndale, who is regarded as a rising figure of the religious reformation, wrote in the prologue of his commentary on Romans that Romans is a core book of the New Testament that is the light and way unto the whole Bible.

/Luther called Romans the “clearest gospel of all.” /Calvin said that if a man understands Romans, he has a sure road open to help him understand the entire Bible.

/I hope that you experience God’s amazing grace through Romans. I hope that you adopt the Apostle Paul’s passion.

/Like Paul, we must have a passion that always seeks to preach the gospel to those who do not know the gospel too well.

/This concludes the 13th lecture on “An Introduction to the New Testament.” /Thank you.