

Week 11: CASKET EMPTY Handout

Teaching - Our topic of study and thought for the week ahead and for discussion next week

Overview: The “Teaching” period is represented by the letters to the people of God that were written after Pentecost. The Church was/is a new iteration of the people of God. This time is marked by these people teaching the good news to the nations. The call of discipleship is to make disciples, by baptizing and teaching. We are to become disciples and then make disciples.

Timeline: AD 33 -c. 95

Biblical books: Romans through Jude (21 in all)

Characters: James, Paul, Peter, John, and Jude.

Roman emperors: Claudius (AD 41-54), Nero (AD 54-68), Vespasian (AD 69-79), and Titus (AD 79-81)

Discussion

Watch the video - New Testament Letters: Historical Context [BP] <https://youtu.be/GZuceW7eh5M>

The video described three levels of historical context to keep in mind when reading these letters.

1. How they fit into the larger biblical storyline (0:50 - 1:53)
What contribution was made by 1) Adam & Eve, 2) Abraham, 3) Jesus?
How might you see yourself as a “herald” of this good news story to people around you today?
(In what way do your gifts allow you to direct people to the truth?)
2. How they relate to the culture of the Roman empire in the 1st century (1:54 - 3:07)
What would you say are some broadly typical cultural norms in our society, that matter to you, which the Bible might speak to?
3. How they relate to the situational context of the particular letter (3:08 - 4:14)
i.e. Romans and the bickering among Roman and Jewish believers.
What are some situational circumstances that you see where biblical teaching could be applied to help the situation?

Following is a list of some NT letters and a phrase that describes each. Choose one and watch the Bible Project video. Write down some insights you gained to share with us.

Romans - “The righteousness of God in Christ”

1-2 Thessalonians - “Live for Christ’s return”

Philippians - “Joy in Christ”

1-3 John - “Love one another”

1-2 Peter - “Shepherd the flock of Christ”

Ephesians - “Unity in Christ”

Galatians - “No other gospel than Christ”

James - “Put faith in Christ into action”

Philemon - “Welcome your brother in Christ”

Further Studies on “Teaching”

Casket Empty: New Testament Study Guide - Chapter 6, 7, & 8 Teaching

Watch:

New Testament Letters: Historical Context [Bible Project] <https://youtu.be/GZuceW7eh5M>

Public reading of scripture [Bible Project] <https://youtu.be/BO1Y9XyWKTw>

Think back to the call of God’s people in the earlier periods of time. Creation (Gen 1:28), Abraham (Gen 12:2-3), Sinai (Ex 19:3-6). How do you see the work in those days as similar and different to the call of the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20)?

Pray for clarity and consider the societal problems that affect you the most. Make a list and begin to see how the New Testament letters address some of those problems. God has called us to bear witness / shine the light of good news into each of these situations.

Notes: