

## “ENCOUNTERING GOD Through The EPISTLES”

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Summer Bible Jam – Pt. 7

July 30, 2017

INTRO ... "Epistles"

- What is an epistle?

*As applied to the twenty-one letters, the word "epistle" has come to have chiefly a technical and exclusive meaning. It refers, in common usage, to the communications addressed by five (possibly six) New Testament writers to individual or collective churches, or to single persons or groups of Christian disciples. (From International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)*

**Epistles serve an 'occasional' function**—they are often written into an occasion. ...They are somewhat of a Q&A interaction. ...*Epistles often answer, clarify, instruct, and present doctrinal truths and principles and implications of truth into our beliefs and practices of life.*

*"In almost every instance, they are addressed to specific situations facing churches. It is clear in reading Galatians, Colossians, 2 Peter, and Jude that the letters were written because false teaching had infiltrated the churches. Upon reading 1–2 Corinthians, we realize that Paul wrote in response to various problems in the Corinthian church. The letters are crafted to speak to readers as they face everyday life." (ESV SB Notes)*

*"Reading the letters can be like listening to half of a telephone conversation: we hear only the writer's response to the situation in a particular church. Still, we trust that God in his goodness has given us all we need to know in order to interpret the Epistles adequately and to apply them faithfully." (ESV SB Notes)*

... **what 'chapter' of redemptive history am I reading from?**

*"In terms of redemptive history, they are written on the other side of the cross and resurrection, so that they typically reflect more deeply on the significance of Christ's death and resurrection than the Gospels do. The implications of the fulfillment of God's promises in Jesus Christ are explored and applied to the readers in the Epistles." (ESV SB Notes)*

## SEEING ...The Issues/Questions addressed in an Epistle

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**Q&A...** *What is the appropriate place of sin (it's activity, its influence, its control, etc.) in the life of a believer?*

- Do you expect to sin? Do you expect that sin will operate exactly as it always has in your life? Do you expect that at some point you will achieve sinlessness and will experience holiness at a level that is finally done with sin? Do you see yourself just like every other human being in the world when it comes to facing sin and temptation?

**Rom 6** ...a bit of a Q&A on the Christian's relationship with sin. ...Paul introduces this section with a question: "Shall we sin ...that grace may abound?"

*"we must remember again that Paul is not writing some sort of theological textbook, but is writing to ordinary men and women. Romans probably represents the customary content of the messages Paul gave whenever he arrived in a new city on his missionary journeys. Since he had never been to Rome, he was probably presenting to them, by way of this letter, the same material with which he began his ministry in each new location." Francis Schaeffer, "The Finished Work of Christ", p. 117*

**Rom 6:1-18** ...Reasons and Realities in Our Contention with Sin

**V. 1 ...Why this question?** ...Preceding CONTEXT

**V. 2 ... "How CAN we continue to live in sin?"**

- *Paul's GoTo in this moment is related to the "Nature of True Conversion" and the "Nature of the New Life" that all Christians Receive at New Birth!*

**V. 3 ... "Do you not know?"** ...Our Battle with Sin involves KNOWING Some Things!

2Pet 1:9 "For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins."

**(1) Do you not know that God mysteriously UNITED you with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection—so that we could walk in newness of life! ... v. 3-5**

- This is New ENABLEMENT! ...Conversion and New Spiritual Life has ENABLED us to live a new life!

*“What Paul wrote was this: ‘We – how shall we...?’ He starts with the word ‘We’, he puts emphasis on it. It is vital. Why? Because what he is really saying is this: ‘We – being what we are – how is it possible or conceivable that we should continue in sin that grace may abound?’ ... The whole emphasis is on our uniqueness, our special position, we ‘being what we are’. ... ‘We being what we are’ – not something we have done, but our being what we are; that is the vital thing. ... He is not talking about something we do, he is talking about something that has happened to us. He does not say here that we have renounced sin, he says that we died to sin.”* **Martyn Lloyd-Jones**, “Romans - Exposition of Chap. 6”, p. 14, 15, 17, 18

**1 Jn 3:9** “No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning because he has been born of God.” NIV

**(2) Do you not know that what Christ did Severed Sin's Rightful Authority to Operate in Your Life as Your Master (Lord)!! —v. 6-14**  
(v. 6 “...no longer enslaved [douleuo] to sin)

*Since the [word - doulos] group denotes restrictive service, it is the proper term for the relation of ruler and subjects, for it expresses both the power demanded on the one side and the subjection and bondage experienced on the other.*  
**(TDNT - Abridged)**

*Paul uses the language of ‘realm transfer’ to show how inconceivable is the suggestion that a believer should ‘remain in sin’ in order to accentuate grace. We Christians, Paul affirms, have ‘died to sin’; we have been taken out from under its tyranny in a transfer so radical and decisive that the language of death and new life can be used of it.”* **Douglas Moo**, “The Epistle to the Romans” [NICNT] p.354

(3) *Do you know that you Must "Reckon", "Consider", "Conclude", "Accept", "Agree with" what God has Declared True! —v. 11*

(4) *Do you know that you must exercise your will, your decision making, to resist sin and to deny giving sin what it wants in your life? —v.12*

*- Do you know that if you fail to do this, sin will continue to operate as your master? —v.15-16*

(5) *Do you know that you are always a slave/servant of something/someone? —v.17-18*

...the Bible depicts man as a CREATURE who has Design Elements in him—  
He is Created to SERVE!

.... *We learn this in the Garden .... We Learn this at Mt. Sinai*  
.... *We Learn this from Bob Dylan.*

*Jesus by his saving work rescues them from this douleía in a work of liberation (Gal. 3:13; 4:4-5). They thus achieve the freedom of sonship (Gal. 4:5ff.; Rom. 8:15, 23). But sonship does not mean autonomy; it means a new relationship with God. The result is a new service. With his work of redemption Christ has made believers his own possession and now gives them the goals that shape their lives. (TDNT - Abridged)*

*...Have we ever stopped to ponder that our own experience of bondage to sin is flowing out of a lack of transferring our serving to Christ???*

Cross-referencing and furthering the Bible's argument:

Eph 2:8-10

1 John 5:18-21

**SAVORING** – Tasting ...Personally Drawing Near ...Letting These Verses 'Read You'

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**ENCOUNTERING** – Receiving from & Responding to this passage as the Holy Spirit has led me to encounter it

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