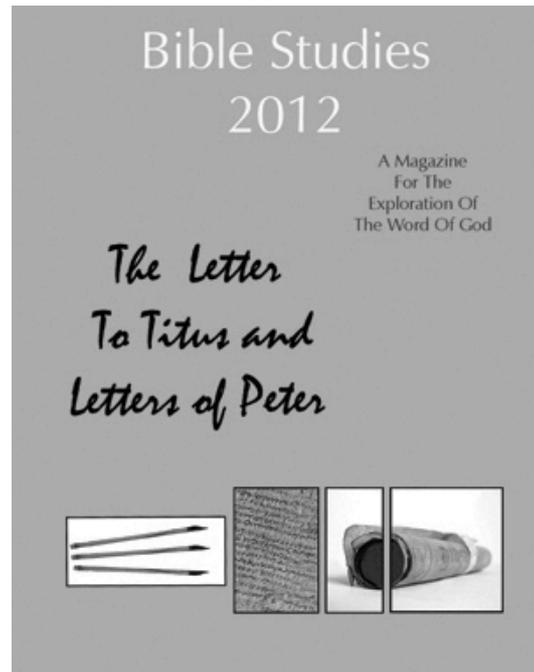


Bible Studies

SYLLABUS 2012

THE LETTER TO TITUS AND LETTERS OF PETER

Survival for the Christian in the last times



The problems Titus faced when teaching the new disciples in Crete, and those described in Peter's second Letter sound very like our situation today. The study of the advice and instruction of Paul and Peter must be a valuable guide for churches of God in the 21st Century. The concern of our magazine, while primarily examining what the text says, and what it means, must increasingly be with its practical application in the time we have before our Lord shall return.

We ask contributors to select only one or two of the topics suggested, including the monthly headings, since we have to avoid overlap from paper to paper. Thoughts on other points in the chapter for the month not listed overleaf will of course be welcome.

Please take advantage of our 'Question & Answer' service, and feel free to follow up a debatable point *via* our 'Mail-box' section.

'How blessed is the man [whose] delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in his law he meditates day and night.' (Psalm 1:1-2 NAS)

January **Titus the man (Tit. 1:1-4; 3:12-13; 2 Cor. 2:13, 7:6-14, 8:6,16-17,23; Gal. 2:1-3; 2 Tim. 4:10)**

- What is meant by ‘my true child in a common faith’ (Tit. 1:4 NAS)?
- What forms of faith are referred to in Titus 1:1-4?
- Trace the travels of Titus with Paul or on assignment at his request.
- Sketch the background to Paul’s letter.
- What can we learn about the character of Titus from the above references, and from the task facing him in Crete?

February **The demands of pastoral work in Crete (Titus 1)**

- Comment on the qualities required in an overseer, and their relevance in Crete.
- Verses 12-16 use very strong language. Explain why a Christian apostle might do so.
- What is the point of the reference to Jewish myths (v.14)?

March **Teaching the Christian way of life (Titus 2 and 3:14)**

- Comment on the problems of older men and women in Christian living.
- Comment on making the teaching of our Lord and Saviour attractive (2:10).
- How does grace teach us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions?

April **Rebirth and sustaining new life (Titus 3)**

- How can we reconcile 3:1 with the last sentence of Chapter 2?
- Is there a difference between the washing of rebirth and the renewal by the Holy Spirit (v.5)? Do they happen at different stages?
- What is ‘the *hope* of eternal life’ (v.7) if we receive that same life from the point of new birth?
- What are the implications of ‘have nothing to do with’ a person twice warned?

May **The purposes of Peter’s First Letter (1 Peter 1)**

- What is known of the background to this Letter and its approximate date?
- What is ‘the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time’ (v.5)?
- In what way(s) is the believer receiving the salvation of our souls at present
- Suggest practical ways to achieve the aims set out in verses 13-15,22.
- How can we live as strangers here, yet also win a hearing for the gospel?

June **The united service of priests (1 Peter 2)**

- How should we come to the Lord so as to be built up?
- What difference does the spiritual house make to the activities of the believer, whether in worship, in witness, or in service to one another?
- Expound the concept of ‘a holy nation.’ What features of nationhood should the people of God express today?
- What is meant by living ‘as free men’ (v.16)?

July **Marriage in the Lord and suffering for the gospel of Christ (1 Peter 3)**

- Suggest how the gentleness and submission Peter commends actually works.
- Suggest strategies and tactics that help in controlling the tongue, noting the drastic language of James 3.
- Explain verse 14: ‘Do not fear what they fear ...’
- When did the Lord preach to ‘the spirits in prison’ (v.19)?
- Show how context makes clear that the baptism of verses 20-21 is related to salvation of the life of service to God.

September **Pure, loving service to the faithful Creator (1 Peter 4)**

- What suffering is referred to in verse 1?
- When was the gospel preached ‘to those who are now dead’ (v.6 NIV)?
- Who are aware that ‘the Spirit of glory’ rests on those who suffer (v.14)?
- What is the judgement of v.17, and what is it for?

October **God’s care for elders and for all the flock (1 Peter 5)**

- Comment on the attitude required of the overseers in a church of God.
- Is the self-control of verse 8 the same as the self-control that is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22)?
- What is the grace described in verse 12, and how should we ‘stand fast in it’?
- What verses 12-13 suggest about the background to the Letter.

November **The promises of God and the threat of false teachers (2 Peter 1 and 2)**

- Show that the sequence given in verses 5-7 is important for acquiring these virtues.
- What is meant by making ‘your calling and election sure’ (1:10)?
- Is the welcome or entrance to the eternal kingdom (1:11) present or future?
- Explain ‘by the prophet’s own interpretation’ (1:20 NIV).

December **Preparing for the day of the Lord (2 Peter 3)**

- Why should the formation of the earth matter to those who cast doubt on the Lord’s return (vv.4-5)?
- Why does Peter appear to pass over the Lord’s return to the air for His own, and focus on the final destruction of the old heavens and earth?
- Comment on Peter’s relationship with Paul, and his view of Paul’s Letters (vv. 15-16).