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How to Read and Study the Bible
Lesson Five– Part 1: How We Got the New Testament
Introduction and Background

Lesson Four Topics

- Reflection Questions
- Key Terms
- Important Emphasis
- Introduction
- Background
- Check Your Progress Questions

Reflection Questions

A. What part of the worship service motivates you the most to live out and share your Christian faith during the week.

B. According to 1 Peter 3:15, what are we to do when faced with challenges to our Christian faith?

Key Terms

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Africa | Conversion | Radical Religious Cult |
| Aramaic | Eastern Europe | Religious Fanatic |
| Asia Minor | Exposition | Rome |
| Authenticity | Gentile Believers | Sacred (Writings/Word of God) |
| Authoritative | Greek Culture | Septuagint |
| Blasphemy | Historicity of the Canon | Shema |
| Canonicity | Missionary | Synagogue |
| Christian Liturgy | Persecution | Tradition |
| Christian Martyr | Perversion | Worship Services |

Important Emphasis:

Christ – Jesus is the Messiah the anointed of God. We can't understand the essence of the New Testament without tracing the thread of Old Testament Prophecy and New Testament revelation.

Church- The church is an organism. The church is the bride of Christ. The church is the people of the way or the path. Our Fellowship should in principle reflect the established church in the first century. The practices for us today should be influenced by the principles of the former.

Channel- We as believers must seriously consider and or reflect over our purpose in this grand plan of salvation in the book *Shape by the Word* Mulholland challenges us by informing us that we are a part of this marvelous story in scripture in this current day.

Champion the Cause - What we have read, it should affect us to the extent that we take massive action toward our mindset of ministry. It should ignite a desire to perfect our faith, perfect our fellowship, perfect our fundamentals.

Introduction

Review:

What have we learned so far about the New Testament –

1. It is important to the Christian church
2. It is comprised of twenty-seven separate books and epistles.
3. It is the primary source for the study of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.
4. We also learned that the Old Testament books were the primary Scriptures used and quoted by Jesus, the early church, and the apostle Paul.

What we are going to learn about the New Testament –

1. How it was handed down to us.
2. The various stages it went through in its canonical development.
3. How it was finally accepted by the Christian church as the authoritative and sacred Word of God.

New Testament Background

It is almost two millennia since the earliest texts incorporated into the New Testament were composed.

The Christian church began as a part of the _____ religious faith. However, in its earliest days, the Jewish religious leaders viewed this new faith as a _____
_____ lead by a _____ who was rightly arrested, tried, crucified, and buried. The followers of this new faith were _____ and run out of Jerusalem (Acts 8:1-4).

The Jewish religious leaders viewed this new faith as a _____ of the fundamental teachings and tenets (doctrines/beliefs) of the Jewish faith. Further, they viewed its leader and later his disciples as _____ of the Jewish worshippers—even blasphemous [profane, sacrilegious, or ungodly] (Acts 4:1-3, 13-22; 9:1-2).

Thus, understanding the diverse Jewish populations of the early Roman Empire- their habits, their conventions, their religious practices- is as crucial to understanding their religious practices- is as crucial to understanding the New Testament writings as is general familiarity with the Roman world. *New Testament in Antiquity*

Prior to his _____, Saul was a zealous opponent of the new faith and singlehandedly tried to stamp it out (Philippians 3:6)

The first Christian disciples stayed connected to their Jewish heritage. They continued daily temple (synagogue) worship and prayer. The _____ was the center of local Jewish worship. Initially, there were few differences in worship practices between the Christian and Jewish faiths in the early days of the church-- singing, praying, and recitation of the _____.

The ***Shema***, (Hebrew: “hear”), the Jewish confession of faith made up of three scriptural texts (Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21; Numbers 15:37–41), which, together with appropriate prayers, forms an integral part of the evening and morning worship services. Jesus and the Shema (Mark 12:28-31). The apostle John and the Shema (John 14:21).

The Jewish synagogue influenced Christian _____ (worship) in the early church. This is evidenced by the church’s commitment to prayer and instruction in the Scriptures by means of reading and _____ (Acts 2:42).

Many First Century Christians were influenced by Greek culture and spoke the Greek language. They used the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament—the

_____. The *Septuagint* is usually denoted by the letters LXX because it was translated by 70 Hebrew scholars sometime around 200 BC.

One of the most important things to happen during the First Century of the church's existence was the _____ and _____ of Gentile believers (Acts 10:1-11:1-4; 19-26; 14:1). It was primarily through the _____ activity of Paul and his companions that Gentiles were reached with the Gospel. Their influence helped spread the good news throughout Asia Minor, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Rome.

New Testament Key Points and Final Reflections

Meaning can be missed not only by our ignorance of things presupposed by the New Testament's original audience but also by the cultural framework we ourselves bring to the task of study. When we read about the "church" of Corinth, our own images of "church" leap quickly to mind. When Jesus refers to a sower our western notions of farming and seed distribution fill in the picture. The meaning of the word itself is not "determined" without a context. It must fit its range of meanings, its semantic range.

Knowing the Land

Such a knowledge of geography- landscape, geology, climate, water resources, roads, settlement patterns, and political boundaries – is common among all societies.

Knowing the History

Every culture likewise knows its history, so that allusions to people and events can happen in the most subtle manner. The New Testament period also had a history that everyone knew. The coming of Hellenistic culture behind the armies of Alexander the Great impacted Jewish life far more than we could imagine. Knowing the history this builds the context in which present events can be understood.

Knowing the Culture

Every society orchestrates its life with predictable reflexes and rituals. Social habits, religious traditions, political interests, even music and art contribute to values shared by generations. Rarely do they need to be defined overtly since we inherit them. They may think they know, but they gradually sense they are missing a great deal. Humor, irony,

and sarcasm. Presuppose much that is unsaid; what may be funny to one person may mean nothing to another.

Check Your Progress Questions

1. What were some of the concerns that Jewish religious leaders had regarding Jesus?

2. What was the Septuagint and why was it important?

3. What was one of the most important things to happen during the first century of the church's existence?

4. In what areas of the known world during the first century was the influence of the disciples and Christianity felt.
