

MAB061 PAULINE THEOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This course is intended to explain Paul's theological grid; to show students Paul's methods so they can better understand his teaching when reading his letters. It will simplify the process of reading and understanding Paul to be able to preach and teach Paul to others. The course will also prepare students to be able to write a commentary on Paul's letters for a thesis.

This course is divided into eight lessons. Another course follows this, MAB062, Pauline Theology II, covering the second half of this course content. In Pauline Theology I, the two opening lessons provide a macro framework for understanding Paul's thinking, particularly Paul's two creation, two-Adam theology. Lessons three through seven trace the nature of the old creation. Lessons eight discuss the nature and implications of the new creation. Due to the length of the material, not covered is Paul's doctrine of the church, the sacrament or eschatology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To study Paul
- To acquire a detailed knowledge of Pauline theology:
- To develop a deeper understanding of Paul's method and letters.
- To master Pauline Theology to use it in preaching, teaching and pastoral counseling.

Paul is the great missionary theologian of the New Testament. Writing at the time of the fulfillment of the Old Testament, his letters interpret and explain the theological and practical significance of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Paul makes a vital contribution to understanding the gospel.

Paul can be difficult to understand. The apostle Peter states, *...just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, (16) as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand* (2 Pet. 3:15b,16).

A reason for the struggle is that the apostle Paul wrote thirteen letters and yet he never offers us a systematic analysis of his thinking or his structures. In each of Paul's letters, he is addressing a specific issue, and he selects his material accordingly. He writes to the church at Thessalonica to discuss the issue of the second coming. He writes to the church in Galatia to refute Jewish Christians who demanded that new Gentile converts be circumcised and keep the Law in order to follow Christ.

Since Paul writes with specific needs and concerns in mind, he never develops his theological structure in a general non-specific manner. In his letters, Paul's framework remains implicit, hidden, and yet it controls his thoughts without ever becoming explicit. Add to this the size and complexity of Paul's writings and it is easy to become confused about Paul's thinking, which leads to Paul's being often misunderstood and misinterpreted.

This book will seek to find and examine Paul's underlying structure, thus enabling the reader to clarify his understanding of the apostle's theology and become a better interpreter of his letters. In the first two lessons, I introduce the reader to Paul's fundamental concepts. The two lessons must be read together. The principles expressed there are developed in detail in later lessons in the book.

In the first lesson, we will consider 1) that Paul argues from history (section 2), and within the progression of revelation there are distinct periods, 2) that Paul defines each historical period by a clutch of concepts that distinguishes that particular period from the others, and 3) that the two most fundamental periods Paul develops are the old creation which follows Adam, and the new creation, which begins with the resurrection of Christ.

Once we have proved that there are distinct periods (Lesson One), we will go on to show how each of these periods functions together. The identification of the distinct periods and their relationship to one another represents Paul's underlying structure.

Learn more by purchasing the entire course that covers the following topics:

- Lesson 1. Paul's Method: Historical Theology
- Lesson 2. Paul's Method: Two Creations
- Lesson 3. Christ in the Old Creation
- Lesson 4. The Entrance of Sin and Death into Creation
- Lesson 5. The Old Creation, Flesh, World, God's Wrath, and Hostile Spiritual Powers
- Lesson 6. The Promise to Abraham
- Lesson 7. Moses, Israel, and the Law
- Lesson 8. The Second Man, the Last Adam