LESSON #4-SAINT PAUL WRITNGS

Review last lesson's map and the chart

Lesson outline:

ST Paul's Writings

a) Saint Paul writings
b) Saint Paul writings and journeys
c) Saint Paul writing style

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, we pray that Your grace would work in us as abundantly as You allowed Him to work in the life of St. Paul. Give us wisdom as we try to live each epistle and understand the voice of Your Holy Spirit speaking through St. Paul to Your children.

Objective:

To be familiar with the fourteen epistles attributed to St. Paul in the New Testament
To understand the themes and the reasons for writing the different epistles.

Memory Verse:

"But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10).

References:

- The Bible. Book of Acts, the fourteen epistles of St. Paul: Romans; Corinthians First and Second; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; Thessalonians First and Second; Timothy First and second; Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews.
- Introducing the New Testament - Joe Blair.
- Different explanation books for the epistles - Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty. Video of gospel project and read scripture

Introduction:

St. Paul's epistles make up over 50% of all the books of the New Testament. In each of his fourteen epistles, St. Paul addressed different problems that the different Churches were going through. In some of his epistles, he was defending the Gospel of Christ as well as his authority as an apostle called by God. Each of the fourteen epistles had different themes.
The fourteen epistles of St. Paul are divided as follows along with their themes: to the servant: *added them on slides to present before each epistle*

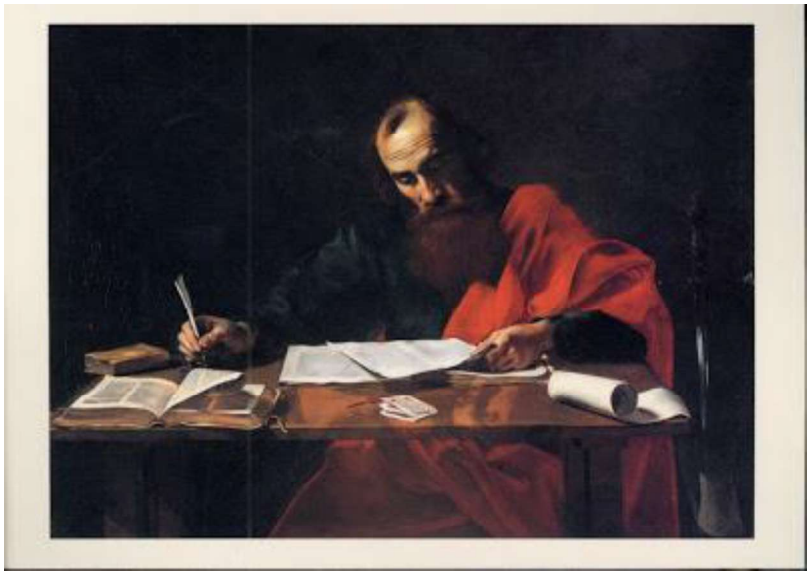
St. Paul was inspired to write those 14 letters in response to certain events, it was planned by God as they are full of teachings explaining a lot about our faith that is not written in the gospels.
The gospels told us all about Jesus and his teachings, but it did not tell us why, so St. Paul being the philosopher of Christianity explained to us what is behind incarnation, salvation and all what Jesus asked us to do.
Each of the 14 letters had a story that led to writing it.
There is scholar debate on the exact dates of journeys and writings, book of Hebrews is known to be written towards the end of his life

I. Saint Paul's Writings and Journeys

Servant preparation: Copy/paste the following to your power point presentation

	Epistle Name	Abbreviation	Journey	Place of writing	Time of writing	Main theme
1	Galatians	Gal	1st	Ephesus	49-50	Justification is by faith [against heresy]
2	1st Thessalonian	1Thess	2nd	Corinth	51	Encouraging the persecuted church
3	2nd Thessalonian	2Thess	2nd	Corinth	52-53	Second coming
4	1st Corinthians	1Cor	3rd	Ephesus	57	Solving problems
5	2nd Corinthians	2Cor	3rd	Ephesus	57	Defending his apostleship
6	Romans	Rom	3rd	Greece	58	Gift of righteousness
7	Ephesians	Eph	4th, Prison	Prison in Rome	61	Church is the body of Christ
8	Philippians	Phil	4th, Prison	Prison in Rome	61	Rejoice in the Lord and thanking them
9	Colossians	Col	4th, Prison	Prison in Rome	61	Christ is the head of the church
10	Philemon	Phlm	4th, Prison	Prison in Rome	61	Appeal for Onesimus-Redemption
11	Hebrews	Heb	**After release from Prison in Rome**		63-64	To all Jews telling them about Christ's heavenly priesthood
12	Titus	Ti		Ephesus	63-64	Church order
13	1st Timothy	1Tim		Macedonia	64-65	Pastoral duties
14	2nd Timothy	2Tim		Rome [2nd prison]	67	Farewell discourse

II. St. Paul's Writing Style



Assign an exercise asking the students to explain a teaching about God, Jesus or the Church (e.g., the Blessed Trinity, Incarnation, or that the Church is the Body of Christ) using the style of writing used by St. Paul in his Epistles. Their letters should include:

- **Opening**
  Thanksgiving/personal
- **The body:**

Doctrine: the body of the epistle, what to know
Application: what Christians should do with doctrine

- **Conclusion, specific instructions, and greetings, etc.**

Opening.

- WRITER
- READER
- OCCASION
- ISSUE

Since there were no envelopes in Paul's time, the name of the author and the person for whom the letter was intended were included in the letter itself. Paul also identifies any co-senders in the opening. These were usually fellow Christian missionaries. Paul greets his readers with "grace and peace," combining both the Greek ("grace") and Hebrew ("peace") forms. *Have the students read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3 and identify the parts of the opening that you identified.*

Thanksgiving/Personal

In Hellenistic-style letters, the opening was usually followed by a prayer. Paul follows this format, usually stating the main theme of the letter. He may pray for their well being for the future and praise them for their growth in faith since he last visited with them.

Have the students read Romans 1:8-15 as an example.

Paul does not include the thanksgiving in two of his letters, Galatians and Timothy. *Read Galatians 1:1-10. Then ask the students why they think that Paul skipped the thanksgiving in this letter.* The thanksgiving blessing was likely left out because Paul was upset with the Galatians who had been enticed by other missionaries to include observance of Jewish law in Christian living.

Body – the body of the epistle

The body, or main part of Paul's letters, is divided into two main sections.
The first covers the **doctrinal teachings** Paul wishes expressed.
In the second part, Paul offers application and **encouragement** for Christian living based on the teachings. The general principles in the Christian living sections are still used today as the basis for Christian morality.
Show places where there is a natural division between the two sections; for example, Romans 12:1 or Galatians 5.

Conclusion/ Personal

The final words in Paul's letters usually include some personal news about him or greetings to specific people in the community. Sometimes Paul includes a note that the conclusion was written "in my own hand," indicating that the rest of the letter was dictated to a scribe. He would write the conclusion in his own hand and sign his name to assure the letter's legitimacy.

Review the following chart so students can remember

III. Classification according to the content

A. Eschatological Epistles –"The Second Coming Epistles"

1. 1 Thessalonians: Life in the light of Christ's return.
2. 2 Thessalonians: Signs of Christ's return

B. Stereological (chief) Epistles "Salvation Epistles"

3. Romans: The righteousness of God through Christ for salvation
4. 1 Corinthians: The nature and unity of the Church in Christ
5. 2 Corinthians: Reconciliation through Christ
6. Galatians: Freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1)

C. Prison Letters

7. Ephesians: The universal Church: People of God in Christ
8. Philippians: Joy in Christ
9. Colossians: Sufficiency of Christ
10. Philemon: In God, redemption, in God we're all family

D. Pastoral Epistles

11. 1 Timothy: Affirmation of the truth in Christ
12. 2 Timothy: Faithfulness to Christ
13. Titus: Standards for serving Christ
14. Hebrews: Superiority of Christ over Judaism

IV. Classification according to the receiver

Epistles to 8 Churches (congregation) =10 epistles
Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossi, Thessalonica, Hebrews

Epistles to 3 People =4 epistles: Timothy (2), Titus, Philemon,

Activity, *print* each epistle's paragraph in a flash card and distribute to the students, let them quiz each other in teams or individually.

V. Epistles Summary and outline

1. Romans

Epistle Name	Place of writing	Time of writing	Main theme
Romans	**Greece**	**58 [3rd trip]**	**Gift of righteousness**

The Epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth around AD 55-57. It was not written to address specific problems within the Church there, but rather it was written as a thesis "defense brief".

A. The purpose for writing Romans

1. To guard the Church against the Judaism. The Judaism was a group of Jews who believed that
2. Jesus Christ was a mere addition to the Law of Moses, and not a fulfillment of the Old Testament and a beginning for the New Testament.
3. As a last will and testament.
4. To get the Romans to support his planned mission to Spain.
5. To replace a visit, he might never make. St. Paul writes the Epistle to the Romans in case he is martyred in Jerusalem when he goes and gives the leaders of the Church there the offering, which he has collected from the Gentiles.

B. The theme for the Epistle to the Romans

It is stated in Romans 1:16,17. The righteousness of God is for salvation to those who believe in Christ Jesus. We are not attached to God on the basis of our righteousness, but we live in His righteousness. There is no basis for legalism. St. Paul also questions the Romans: how can we continue to sin if we have already died to sin?

2. First Corinthians

Epistle Name	Place of writing	Time of writing	Main theme
1st Corinthians	Ephesus	57 [3rd trip]	Solving problems

The first Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus around AD 55-56. The epistle was written to address many problems in the Church such as: factions and divisions, wisdom movement, ethical conduct (the incestuous relationship in Church), eating food sacrificed to idols, marriage and celibacy, women's participation in worship, participating in the Lord's Supper properly, spiritual gifts, and the issue of resurrection.

3. Second Corinthians

Epistle Name	Place of writing	Time of writing	Main theme
2nd Corinthians	Ephesus	57 [3rd trip]	Defending his apostleship

The second recorded Epistle to the Corinthians was sent by Titus.

The problems that led to the writing of 2 Corinthians

1. Some outsiders entered the Church of Corinth and started preaching a kind of Judaism.
2. Certain believers called themselves super apostles and used Moses as their only example.
3. Super apostles turned the Corinthians against St. Paul saying that he was not impressive in
4. appearance, speech, or word.
5. St. Paul was accused of not having the Corinthians' credentials.
6. St. Paul was accused of being without depth in spiritual experience.

In 2 Corinthians, St. Paul emphasized three theological themes. First, humans do not possess the power of God to manipulate it according to their will. Second, super apostles are according to the flesh (2 Corinthians 5:17). They view Christ out of the present evil age. Third, St. Paul knows that the Christians at Corinth are a new creation, and that they should only live their lives in Christ and of Christ, and not of themselves.