

## What's the Bible All About?

# 6 - The Clearest Explanation

*Epistles (Romans – Colossians)*  
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*The Bible has one primary purpose, as it lifts up one big theme, surrounding one glorious main character – Jesus Christ – as it answers one big question: **How can sinners be right with God forever?***

### Explanation / Epistles – 21 Letters to the churches

These letters are the best EXPLANATION of what God has done for us and how redemption should impact every aspect of our lives.

The epistles give us greater explanation about our salvation and answer a lot of questions about marriage, money, parenting, church leadership, work, death, sexual immorality, spiritual gifts and more.

### Romans – Christian Faith in a Nutshell

Romans is the crown jewel of the Bible. More than any other book in the Bible, it gives us the best explanation about our salvation.

**Romans 1:16-17** "I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"

### 1 & 2 Corinthians – Grow Up! Letters to Immature Believers

Paul's writing to the church in Corinth and answering questions they've been asking him – as well as addressing some concerns that he's heard about them since he's been gone.

Paul's bottom line response in both of these letters is to bring them back to the Gospel. He points them back to a crucified and risen Christ as the very heart of the Gospel and Christian living.

Even though they have all kinds of problems in all kinds of areas of their life, Paul brings them back to the foot of the cross. Just to revel in the cross before diving into answering any specific problems.

**1 Cor. 1:17-18** "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

**v. 23-24** "But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Gentiles..."

**2:1-2** "And I, brethren, when I came to you... for I determined not to know anything except Christ crucified..."

**1 Cor. 15:3-4** "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures..."

**v. 20** "But now Christ is risen from the dead..."

**v. 57-58** "But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul bookends this letter with two great theological realities – the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ! Every other issue in this letter has to be understood in light of these two great realities.

### **Galatians – The Knife of Grace in the Neck of Legalism**

In the book of Galatians, the very Gospel is at stake! God’s promise to redeem us through His Son by grace and not works is being attacked, so Paul grabs his quill and cranks out one of the hottest epistles in the Bible!

**Galatians 1:6, 8** “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel... but even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”

**Galatians 3:1-3** “O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?” Greek: *‘cast a spell over you’*

**Galatians 2:16, 21** “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified... I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

Paul says, “You started with grace – stick with grace – don’t go back to the law!”

### **Ephesians – The Christian’s New Resumé**

More than 35x the phrase “in Christ” is used in the book of Ephesians to describe your riches in Christ!

Paul radically updates your spiritual resumé. So many times you just don’t know who you are in Christ... you’re thinking old thoughts and stuck in old ways.

**Ephesians 1-2**

### **Philippians – Choosing Joy No Matter What**

Philippians is an extended ‘Thank You’ letter that mentions ‘joy’ or ‘rejoicing’ 16x but was written by Paul while he was wearing chains and sitting in a Roman jail. It teaches us to live joyfully in the midst of trials, and shows us how to choose joy.

**Phil. 1:3, 7** “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you... because I have you in my heart...”

**Phil. 1:21-25** “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.... ”

Paul had joy and contentment that wasn’t rooted in his circumstances.

**Phil. 1:11-13** “Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

### **Colossians – The Supremacy of Christ over All Things**

Colossians shows the absolute supremacy and all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ to save us from sin, and to rescue us from religious ‘rules and regulations’ that can do absolutely nothing to make us more like Christ.

**Col. 2:6-10** “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are **complete in Him**, who is the head of all principality and power.”

**The Message** “Watch out for people who try to dazzle you with big words and intellectual double-talk. They want to drag you off into endless arguments that never amount to anything. They spread their ideas through the empty traditions of human beings and the empty superstitions of spirit beings. But that’s not the way of Christ. Everything of God gets expressed in Him, so you can see and hear Him clearly. You don’t need a telescope, a microscope, or a horoscope to realize the fullness of Christ, and the emptiness of the universe without Him.”

Be wary of any religious group that gives more emphasis to someone or something else than it does the Lord Jesus Christ!

**John 7:38** “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”