

**The Village Church – Rancho Santa Fe**  
**Week # 15 – Adult Bible Study – 2026**

**Discovering the Bible**

**NOTES – The Good News**

**January 20 & 21**

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*Matthew 4:17-25, Jesus Preaches, Teaches, and Heals*

*Luke 9:1-6, The Twelve Preach the Gospel*

*Acts 8:26-39, Philip and the Ethiopian*

*Romans 1:1-7, Good News*

*Romans 15:14-21, Paul Writes Boldly*

*1 Corinthians 15:1-8, The Gospel*

*Ephesians 6:10-20, God's Armor*

*2 Timothy 1:3-14, Words of Encouragement*

*1 Peter 1:3-25, Living Hope*

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*“The New is in the Old Concealed; the Old is in the New revealed.”*

*St. Augustine of Hippo – A.D. 354-430*

1. According to St. Augustine, the Bible consists of: Promise and Fulfillment, Unveiling Mystery, and Gradual Revelation
2. The arrival of Jesus signaled the beginning of a new era. God entered history in a personal way
3. God's plan for our salvation was all presented and worked out in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
4. The early followers of Jesus told stories of Jesus and arranged his teachings in memorable form. They wrote letters. They sang songs. They prayed. And one of them wrote an extraordinary poem based on holy visions we call Revelation. There was no apparent organization to any of this. They shared these stories, and communities added details and focus that reflected what they were struggling with.
5. Over the course of about 75 years, these stories, accounts, and writings accumulated into what would be compiled in the 4<sup>th</sup> century by the Christian Councils as the “New Testament.

*The New Testament books were written by the end of the 1st century AD, but the collection wasn't formally compiled and recognized as the 27-book canon until the **late 4th century (around 393-397 AD)**, with councils like Hippo and Carthage confirming the list of books accepted as scripture. Before this, various lists and collections circulated, but a universal consensus on the exact 27 books solidified in the 4th century.*

6. Four kinds of writing are represented in the New Testament
  - Gospels, stories, and accounts about the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus
  - Acts (historical narrative) about the lives and events of the apostles after Jesus
  - Epistles (letters),
  - And a visionary poem (revelation)
  
7. The focus of this first New Testament session is on the gospel, The Good News of Jesus Christ, and the ways that transforming good news is communicated and shared.
  
8. **MATTHEW 4:17-25**, *Jesus Preaches, Teaches, and Heals (80 AD)* Summarizes the formal beginning of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee, characterized by His central message, the gathering of his first followers, and His initial works of healing.
  
9. **LUKE 9:1-6**, *The Twelve Preach the Gospel (110 AD)* Jesus commissions his twelve disciples for their first independent mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God and heal the sick.
  
10. **ACTS 8:26-39** *Philip and the Ethiopian (110 AD)* recounts the divine encounter between Philip the Evangelist and a high-ranking Ethiopian official who was also a Eunuch, illustrating the early expansion of the Christian message to include marginalized people and foreign nations
 

*\*The eunuchs of the Bible were usually castrated males or those incapable of reproduction due to a birth defect. In ancient times, rulers often castrated some of their servants and/or advisers to subdue and pacify them. It was especially common to castrate men who tended the royal harem. Queen Esther's eunuchs are mentioned in Esther 4:4*
  
11. **ROMANS 1:1-7** Good News (60 AD) serves as the formal introduction to the Apostle Paul's letter to the church in Rome, establishing his authority and providing a succinct summary of the Gospel.
  
12. **ROMANS 15:14-21**, *Paul Writes Boldly. (50's AD)* Summarizes Paul's ministry to the Gentiles. Its significance lies in
  - Affirming the Roman church's maturity,
  - Defining Paul's apostolic mission as planting new churches,
  - Showcases his humility and dependence on God's grace for his powerful ministry.
  - Paul's humble yet bold confidence in Christ working through him,
  - The importance of gentile inclusion in God's plan,
  - And the ongoing mission of spreading the gospel to unreached areas,
  - Demonstrating a mature, sacrificial Christian life focused on god's glory.

**13.1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8**, *The Gospel (50's AD)* is widely regarded as one of the most critical passages in the New Testament because it contains the earliest formal summary of the Christian gospel and provides a foundational defense for the physical resurrection of Jesus.

**14. THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN CREED (verses 3-5)**. Scholars typically date this creed to within **3 to 5 years** of Jesus' crucifixion, making it an extremely early record of what the first Christians believed.

*"For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures <sup>4</sup> and that he was buried and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve."*

**15. EPHESIANS 6:10-20**, *God's Armor (90's AD)* is the concluding section of a letter to the Ephesians, famous for its **Armor of God** metaphor. The passage reframes the Christian life as a spiritual battle.

**16.2 TIMOTHY 1:3-14**, *Words of Encouragement (110's)* This passage is a powerful exhortation to remain courageous in the face of impending persecution.

**17.1 PETER 1:3-25**, *Living Hope*. (110's A.D) is a message of resilience for the marginalized, viewing "holiness" as a radical commitment to love and justice rather than mere moral purity.

## REFLECTIONS

1. What does "repent" truly mean in Matthew 4, and how does it differ from just feeling sorry for sins?
2. Jesus gave his disciples a dual mission—preaching and healing. Why is it important to address both spiritual truths (the Kingdom) and physical needs (healing)?
3. How can you be better prepared (through Scripture, prayer, and service) to share Jesus in divine appointments, as Philip did with the eunuch?
4. How does the idea of being "set apart" for the gospel challenge or encourage you in your daily life and decisions?
5. What does Paul glory in (Romans 15 v. 17), and how does he avoid taking credit for the Gentiles' obedience?
6. What elements of the Gospel message in 1 Corinthians 15, verses 3-4, stand out most, and why is the resurrection crucial to it?
7. God commands us to "be holy, because I am holy" (1 Peter 1 v. 16). How would you define holiness in the context of modern daily life (work, relationships, social media)?

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*Primary Source: Discovering the Bible: A New Generation, published by The Kerygma Program, Pittsburgh, PA. Boyd Lien, author.*