

Pauline Epistles 1

Nature and Purpose of the Course

This is a day of biblical illiteracy even among believers, and few master the contents of a biblical book, too often content to familiarize themselves with a few isolated verses or ideas. This kind of study is rich, because it brings one not only into intimate contact with the thought of a human author, but in the case of Scripture, the thought also of the divine Author. We expose ourselves to the thoughts of God which are far above our thoughts (Isa. 55:8) and enable God to transform our minds and thus know His will (Rom. 12:1-2). In the process of this study we will be using the commentaries of two respected biblical scholars. In addition to this, I will be making additional comments drawn from my own study as well as other scholarly sources. You will discover that intelligent, godly people occasionally disagree on the interpretation of particular passages and words. Do not let this disturb you if for the first time you are discovering that such disagreements occur. Bear in mind that the best human minds are limited in capability, and that the Word of God, because it is from the infinite mind of God, can tax to the limit the capabilities of finite minds. Bear also in mind that sin affects us all and that the most godly of believers do not always approach the Bible free of prejudice and perversity. When various believers disagree, it therefore can be the result of this. Scripture only means one thing; the original authors as well as the divine author only intended to say one thing, but disagreements among interpreters simply attest to the fact that some or all of the interpreters are wrong. There is another possibility in cases of different interpretations: the interpretations may not really be contradictory, but merely parts of the true interpretation which must be blended together to get the whole meaning. In putting together this course, I have tried to keep these things in mind. I have indicated the difficult passages and offered alternative viewpoints as to their interpretation while suggesting my own preference. I have avoided dogmatism in an effort to encourage you to think and weigh the options for yourself. One final word. Most of the contents of the two books we are going to study are crystal clear, and the vast majority of true Bible-believing people agree as to what they mean; this is especially true of the contents which are most important. The difficult passages are in the minority. God easily communicates to all of our minds what he wants us to know and how he wants us to live. The difficulties in Scripture do not constitute a major barrier to our living and service to God. Therefore, as you learn you become accountable.

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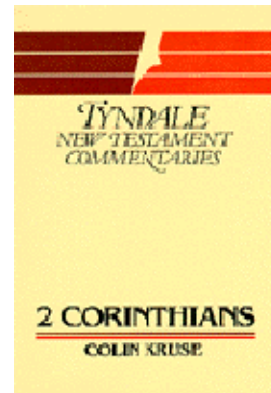
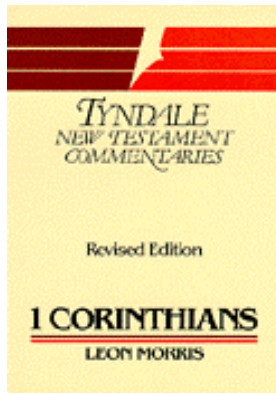
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The Text Book



The following is the required textbook for this course. You should be able to purchase this book from a local bookstore, an online book store such as [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [Christian Book Distributors](https://www.christianbook.com)

- Leon Morris. *1 Corinthians* rev. ed. (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985). ISBN # 0-8028-0064-5
- Colin Kruse. *2 Corinthians* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). ISBN # 0-8028-0318-0

Specific assignments related to the reading from these textbooks are found in the Introduction to each lesson. In order to gain the most benefit from this course, you should read the assignment in the textbook first, then read through the Supplement for that lesson.

Course Requirements

For this course, you must successfully complete the assigned **reading**, one **paper**, three **exams**, **memory work**; **study questions** assignment and participate in the **weekly threaded discussions**.

The Project

Title: Discipline in the Church

A crucial problem in the church today is discipline, a subject that occupies portions of the Corinthian letters.

Procedure:

Imagine you are writing a section of your church constitution, which sets forth a step-by-step procedure for dealing with sins that require some kind of church discipline. Include the following items:

- 1. A description of the biblical procedure for dealing with sins or offenses from the one-on-one phase to exclusion (Luke 17:3-4; Matt. 18).
- 2. Correlate the material in 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Corinthians 2:1-11 with other passages like Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1-2; Ephesians 5:5-13; James 4:11-12; 5:19-20; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:14, 23-26; and Titus 3:9-11.
- 3. Organize this into a logical step-by-step procedure.
- 4. Near the beginning include a statement about the purpose of discipline and attitudes on the part of those who exercise discipline.
- 5. Explain when a sin might require disfellowship by the church.
- 6. Include a statement on when and how to receive a person back into fellowship (2 Cor. 2:1-11).

Length:

The length should be about **three to five pages**. Length is not a criterion; rather, the skill in which you express your ideas will be the basis for the grade.

Reading

You will be required to read the study guide as well as the textbooks. Your comprehension of this material will be reflected by the exams. The Self-Check Tests and Review Questions will refer to material in both the study guide and textbook, and thus help prepare you for the exams.

You will be required to submit a Reading Report , stating that you have completed reading of the textbook, and the lesson supplements.

Threaded Discussions

The Threaded Discussion portion of this course will enable you to interact and dialogue in a collaborative setting with the instructor and your classmates. Each week your instructor will post a discussion topic or question. Usually these topics or questions will be taken directly from the Review or Study questions in the lesson. You will be required to post a response by the given deadline. Your responses will be evaluated based on the specifications your instructor posts with each new question. Some responses will be evaluated based on their length, others on the number of resources referred to and others on the quality of their content. Each response should be well thought out and contain no spelling or grammatical errors. You will also be required to read the responses of your "classmates" and respond.

Study Questions

At the beginning and end of each lesson, you will find Review and Study Questions, which are designed to guide you in your understanding of the Supplement. You must select 20 of these questions (from a variety of lessons), write a response/answer and send them to your instructor via the Drop Box.