

DOCTRINAL EMPHASES IN PAUL'S LETTERS

PAUL'S LETTERS	PURPOSE	MAJOR DOCTRINE(S)	KEY PASSAGE
Romans	To express the nature of the gospel, its relation to the Old Testament and Jewish law, and its transforming power	Salvation	<i>Romans 3:21-26</i>
1 Corinthians	To respond to questions about marriage, idol food, public worship, to discourage factions, to instruct on resurrection	The Church, the Resurrection	<i>1 Corinthians 12:12-31; 15:1-11</i>
2 Corinthians	To prepare readers for Paul's third visit and to defend Paul and the gospel he taught against false teachers	The Church, Jesus Christ, Salvation	<i>2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2</i>
Galatians	To stress freedom in Christ against Jewish legalism while avoiding moral license	Salvation	<i>Galatians 2:15-21</i>
Ephesians	To explain God's eternal purpose, grace, and the goals God has for the church	Salvation, the Church	<i>Ephesians 2:1-22</i>
Philippians	To commend Epaphroditus; to affirm generosity; to encourage unity, humility, and faithfulness even to death	Christian Unity, Joy in Salvation	<i>Philippians 1:3-11</i>
Colossians	To oppose false teachings related to a matter and spirit dualism and to stress the complete adequacy of Christ	Jesus Christ	<i>Colossians 1:15-23</i>
1 Thessalonians	To encourage new converts during persecution; to instruct them in Christian living and to assure them concerning the second coming	Last Things	<i>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18</i>
2 Thessalonians	To encourage new converts in persecution and to correct misunderstandings about the Lord's return	Last Things	<i>2 Thessalonians 1:3-12</i>
1 Timothy	To encourage Timothy as minister, to refute false doctrine, and to instruct about church organization and leadership	Church Leaders	<i>1 Timothy 3:1-15</i>
2 Timothy	To encourage Christians in the face of persecution and false doctrine	Education	<i>2 Timothy 2:14-19</i>
Titus	To instruct church leaders, to advise about groups in the church, and to teach Christian ethics	Salvation	<i>Titus 2:11-14</i>
Philemon	To effect reconciliation between a runaway slave and his Christian master	Christian Ethics	<i>Philemon 8-16</i>

Item 10

Handout: Doctrinal Emphases in Paul's Letters

Explore the Bible Adult Leader Pack, Spring 2020

Suggested Use: Sessions 1, 4, 9

© Copyright 2019 LifeWay Christian Resources

Adapted from *Holman Bible Handbook*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1992), 674-5.