



“On the very first occasion when someone stood up in public to tell people about Jesus,” writes N.T. Wright, “he made it very clear: this message is for *everyone*. A new age had begun in which the living God was going to do new things in the world. Within a relatively short time this came true to such an extent that the young movement spread throughout much of the known world. And one way in which the *everyone* promise worked out was through the writings of the early Christian leaders. These short works – mostly letters and stories about Jesus – were widely circulated and eagerly read. They were never intended for either a religious or intellectual elite. From the very beginning, they were meant for everyone.” - N.T. Wright

Our earliest bits of Christian literature are from a zealous convert to the way of Jesus who was absolutely passionate about this ‘*everyone* promise.’ The apostle Paul’s letters are filled with heartfelt love – sometimes they’re confrontational, sometimes intimate, sometimes caustic. Comprising more than one-fourth of the entire New Testament, Paul’s writings have had an indelible impact on Christianity. Over the two decades in which he wrote – the time after Jesus (whom Paul never knew) and before Paul’s execution, the time before which gospel stories were written -- Paul travelled extensively and helped build and nurture Christian communities. Mostly he was concerned that they ‘practice what they preach’ and that they preach the truth (according to his understanding!), specifically how Christian communities get formed and live out their common witness to Christ. It’s probably not overstated to say that Christianity wouldn’t have become what it is today without Paul.

Needed for this series is a New Testament. Recommended translations are the NRSV (*New Revised Standard Version*) or the NIV (*New International Version*). A secondary resource is bishop and New Testament scholar, N.T. Wright’s *For Everyone* series. They are listed in the order in which we’ll read Paul:

- N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: Galatians and Thessalonians* Westminster John Knox Press
- N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: 1 Corinthians* Westminster John Knox Press
- N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: 2 Corinthians* Westminster John Knox Press
- N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon)* Westminster John Knox Press
- N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Pastoral Letters (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus)* Westminster John Knox Press
- N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: Romans (v.1 chapters 1-8; v.2 chapters 9-16)* Westminster John Knox Press

**Thursdays, 10am at Church of the Ascension  
Son Room (upstairs)**

**Introduction**

- Jan. 11 - Introduction to Paul & his writings

**Galatians**

- Jan. 18 - Galatians 1:1-17; Wright pp.3-9
- Jan. 25 - Galatians 1:18 - 2:14; Wright pp.9-23
- Feb. 1 - Galatians 2:15 - 3:9; Wright pp.23-31
- Feb. 8 - Galatians 3:10-29; Wright pp.31-43
- Feb. 15 - Galatians 4:1-11; Wright pp.43-51
- Feb. 22 - Galatians 4:12-31; Wright pp.51-60
- March 1 - Galatians 5:1-12; Wright pp.60-67
- March 8 - Galatians 5:13-26; Wright pp.67-74
- March 15 - Galatians 6:1-18; Wright pp.74-83

**1 Thessalonians**

- March 22 - 1 Thessalonians 1:1 - 2:12; Wright pp.
- March 29 - 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20; Wright pp.
- April 5 - *Easter Week, no session*
- April 12 - 1 Thessalonians 3:1-10; Wright pp.
- April 19 - 1 Thessalonians 3:11 - 4:12; Wright pp.
- April 26 - 1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:28; Wright pp.

**2 Thessalonians**

- May 3
- May 10
- May 17
- May 24
- May 31