

## Major Points in the Epistles

Read the point assigned to your group, and look for a passage where the point is made in the suggested Epistle.

### Faith versus Works

- **Issue:** Jewish Christians think that they have to follow the Mosaic Law perfectly to reach Heaven, even though they are no longer Jewish. This is a reasonable misconception because no laws at this point in time explain how to live as a Christian.
- **Resolution:** Saint Paul teaches that it is not necessary to follow the Mosaic Law perfectly any longer. Although good works and a just life are necessary for pleasing God, it is the saving acts of Jesus that make us righteous.
- **Point:** Faith in Christ justifies us, not keeping laws.

See chapter 3 of Galatians and chapter 3 of Romans.

### Unity

- **Issue:** Christians are divided because they hold different opinions and because they have been evangelized by different disciples.
- **Resolution:** Saint Paul teaches that every person has gifts that complement the gifts of others. All are needed in the Church. He warns that no rivalry or dissension should occur among the followers of Jesus. They are to love one another.
- **Point:** Christians are to fulfill the prayer of Jesus: “That they may be one” (John 17:11).

See 1 Corinthians 1:10–17 and chapters 12, 13, and 14.

### Gentile Christians

- **Issue:** There is confusion as to whether Gentile Christians need to live according to Jewish Law.
- **Resolution:** Saint Paul points out that the Council of Jerusalem already decided that Gentile Christians do not have to follow Jewish Law because they were never Jewish.
- **Point:** Christianity is something brand new and independent from Judaism.

See chapter 2 of Galatians.



## Pre-eminence of Christ

- **Issue:** Some Christians believe that Yahweh is the supreme God and that Jesus is the Savior of the world, but they are lured by false teachers to worship lesser gods such as angels.
- **Resolution:** Saint Paul states that all false gods need to be rejected. Christians are to worship Yahweh alone, who will take care of all their needs.
- **Point:** Yahweh is supreme. Christ dominates all other supposed gods.

See chapters 1 and 2 of Colossians and chapter 10 of 1 Corinthians.

## Christian Living

- **Issue:** Christians are not clear about how to live according to a Christian standard.
- **Resolution:** Look to Jesus' example to know how to live your life. Saint Paul exhorts, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1)
- **Point:** Do what Jesus would do.

See chapters 5 and 6 of Ephesians.

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