

Sabbath 7/7	Regular times and locations for all congregations.
Sabbath 7/14	Regular times and locations for all congregations. Mr. Moody will be in Corpus Christi. There will be a DVD in Victoria. Mr. Chapman will be in San Antonio. Mr. Watts will deliver the sermon in Harlingen.

Updates

Horchak Visit: On July 6th- 8th Arnold and Janie Mendez will be hosting Doug and Tanya Horchak for a Sabbath/Weekend visit. On Friday July 6th there will be a BBQ cookout at the Mendez Home at 6:30 PM, all are invited to attend and fellowship. On the Sabbath of July 7th the Horchaks will visit the Harlingen TX congregation. After Sabbath services we will have a catered Mexican Dinner at the home of Michael Watts, once again all are welcomed to attend.

Michael Watts and Cecilla Olavarria were united in marriage on Saturday evening June 30th in Lima, Peru.



	Victoria	Corpus Christi	Harlingen
Sunset Today in:	8:29pm	8:28pm	8:26pm
Sunset Friday 7-13	8:30pm	8:29pm	8:27pm



Victoria

Sermon: DVD

Corpus Christi

Sermonette: DVD

Sermon: DVD

Harlingen

Split Sermon: Arnold Mendez

Split Sermon: Doug Horchak

“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies, through His Spirit who [which] dwells in you.”

Romans 8:11

From the Pastor:

As we quoted last time from the JFB Commentary “In the oldest MSS [manuscripts] of the New Testament extant, they [the General Epistles] stand before the Epistles of Paul.”

If this is indeed the order of the books of the New Testament as God would have inspired John to order and preserve them, a very valid reason can be concluded for doing so.

Why would the General Epistles be placed before the Epistles of Paul?

First a point: These letters are called the General Epistles since they are not written to a specific congregation or person. The only clear exception is 3 John which is addressed to Gaius and the congregation he was in (we will cover more of that when we reach 3 John).

2 John is addressed to the “elect lady and her children.” This could be a specific individual or it could be a symbolic reference for the Church as a whole (a righteous woman used as a type of the true church and her children being its members). We cannot tell which is meant from the context. If 2 John is addressed to the entire church at large, then the only letter that was not specifically addressed to the God’s people in general was 3 John since it was addressed to Gaius.

A reason why John may have put the General Epistles before the Epistles of Paul is that the truths taught in them is very clear—without any ambiguity. For example, the writers of these letters clearly believed that the laws—commandments of God—were not in any way set aside. The Commandments of God were to be obeyed.

John wrote in 1 John 5:3, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” There was no doubt in the people’s minds as to which commandments were “God’s commandments.”

Martin Luther called the Epistle of James “an epistle of straw” because in it James wrote, “But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead... You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.” (James 2:20-24). Of course, this disagreed with Martin Luther’s idea that a “man should live by faith alone.”

Peter gives a clear warning in 2 Peter 2:21, “For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”

The truths explained in the General Epistles are very clear and unambiguous. They can’t be twisted easily. But, some of Paul’s words can be twisted. Peter recognized this. 2 Peter 3:16, “as also in all his [Paul’s] epistles speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.”

People use some of Paul’s writings to say the holy law of God—the 10 Commandments—were set aside. The General Epistles may have been put before Paul’s letters to lay the foundation that Christians are to live by God’s laws (in letter and spirit). Understanding this foundation first would enable the people to examine Paul’s writings in that light and thus see what he was actually saying.

Paul indeed explained that a body of law was no longer needed—the Levitical sacrificial law. He also explained that we must not live by God’s laws having the wrong approach of the Pharisees. But, he most assuredly did not teach that God’s holy laws were set aside. “Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.” (Romans 7:12)

We will begin James next time.