

## One Chapter Wonders: Review and Wrap Up

Introduction to this Bible study (Pathways course description):

*Singers or musical groups who have recorded only one recognizable song in their career are sometimes referred to as “one hit wonders.” In the Bible we might adjust and apply that phrase to those books of Scripture that consist of only a single chapter. There are five of them: Obadiah in the Old Testament, and Philemon, 2<sup>nd</sup> John, 3<sup>rd</sup> John, and Jude in the New Testament. While they may be short in length, like all of God’s Word, they are long in truth, and there is much we can learn from them. In this 6-week Bible study we will examine what God has to teach us through each of these “One Chapter Wonders.”*

*In this final lesson we will review and revisit the “Related Issues, Applications and Discussion Items” we did not have time to address in our study of each “One Chapter Wonder.”*

### OBADIAH

#### The doom of Edom and final deliverance of Israel foretold

#### *Take-aways:*

- Galatians 6:7-8 – Do not be deceived, God cannot be mocked
- Psalm 118:8-9 – Put not your trust in princes
- Romans 12:19 – Vengeance is God’s business, not ours
- Psalm 46:10 – Be still (and trust that God is God)
- Hebrews 13:5 – Never will God leave us or forsake us
- Be on guard against pride (first of 7 deadly sins); Edom’s sin can become our sin

1. *The subject of revenge. Can we pray for the destruction of and vengeance upon our enemies?*
2. *Related: How are we to understand Bible “imprecations” (e.g., the imprecatory Psalms)?*

## PHILEMON

**A private letter written by Paul to Philemon asking him to receive and forgive Onesimus, a runaway slave**

### *Take-aways:*

- The importance of concern and intercession for the unfortunate
  - The duty of obedience to the law by converts (Onesimus must return to his master)
  - Christian brotherhood/sisterhood obliterates all social and class distinctions
  - Open and honest dialog between Christians without fear of defensiveness or recrimination
  - The practice of forgiveness
1. *The general subjects of forgiveness, reconciliation, restoration, and how they all tie in with each other in the life of the Christian.*
  2. *Faith in Christ is the great “equalizer” that obliterates all social and class distinctions. How does that work in an employer-employee situation?*
  3. *Onesimus was a slave and Philemon was a slave owner. Cf Ephesians 6:5, Colossians 3:22; 4:1, 1 Peter 2:18, 1 Timothy 6:1, Titus 2:9. What position does the Bible take on the societal issue of slavery?*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> JOHN

**A brief message of John on divine truth and worldly error addressed to “the chosen lady and her children,” and a warning against heresy and false teachers**

### *Take-aways:*

- Heresy and false teaching *have* always existed and *will* always exist
- Personal responsibility to be able to discern truth from error
- The importance of personal spiritual maintenance
- Beware of giving a false impression of being “okay” with false teachings

1. *John mentions “truth” five times in the first four verses. With what does he associate truth later in this letter? Discuss the difference between the Christian’s and the unbelieving world’s view of truth, and how this can be a starting point in witnessing our faith.*
2. *The other word John mentions (four times) is “love.” Discuss the difference between the worldly concept of love and the Christian definition of love.*
3. *John uses the term “antichrist.” How does he define the term? Discuss this terminology in light of other Bible references and confessional Lutheran teaching.*
4. *What insight are we given on how we are to interact with those who embrace and promote non-Christian teachings?*
5. *Explain the difference between “heresy” and “heterodoxy.”*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> JOHN**

**An apostolic letter of commendation written to Gaius, containing character sketches of certain persons in the church**

#### ***Take-aways:***

- The importance of hospitality and support of missionaries (called workers)
- The sad fact that there will be strife within the church
- The sad fact that there can be Christian leaders who abuse their position and do not represent Jesus well
- The importance of representing Christ well
- The importance of regional supervision and accountability within the Christian church

1. *What picture of the early Christian church emerges from this little letter? What similarities or differences do you see in the church today?*
2. *What type of character sketch would you draw up for Gaius? Diotrephes? Demetrius?*

3. *What are the modern-day counterparts to the heresies and false teachings discussed earlier in this lesson (Judaizers, Gnosticism, Arianism)?*

## **JUDE**

### **Historical examples of apostasy and divine judgments on sinners, with warnings against immoral teachers**

#### *Take-aways:*

- False teachers are a constant threat – be discerning
- Wounded believers struggling with doubt need fellow Christians to encourage them
- The importance of personally “contending” for the faith, because it can be lost
- A beautiful closing doxology

1. *What does it mean for us personally as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christians to “contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people?”*
2. *Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-13. What commonality does this section of Scripture have with the letter of Jude? What relevance do they both have for us today?*
3. *What is our responsibility to those within our personal or Christian family who are weak, wounded or struggling with doubt? How do we carry this out?*
4. *Commentator: “The examples may change from Jude’s day, but the principle is exactly the same.” What principle? What are the modern-day counterparts to the issues and influences Jude warns against?*
5. *Commentator: “The pure church of one generation faces the very real danger of becoming the heretical church of the next.” React to this statement. How can this be prevented?*