



PREFACE

This is the third volume of the *Made Simple* series. It has been my concern in this series to make basic information about the Bible as simple as it can be made. I intend this material for those who are Sunday School “dropouts,” or those who never had the advantage of attending a congregation that stressed knowing God’s Word.

In *Bible History Made Simple* I surveyed seventeen time zones of biblical history. Familiarity with the biblical timeline is the place to start in order to gain a mastery of the Bible. In volume two of this series we looked at the Old Testament library. We assessed the role of each book of that collection in the sacred symphony that is God’s Word.

Now we undertake a similar investigation of the New Testament library. As in *Old Testament Books Made Simple* for each book I have followed an outline based on the boy Samuel’s reply to God’s voice: *Speak, for your servant hears* (1 Samuel 3:10). The letters of SPEAK will be an acronym to outline introductory material: S = situation; P = plan, i.e., how the book is structured; E = eternal purpose; A = acclaim for Jesus; K = keys. Under the heading HEAR outstanding chapters and verses in each book are suggested.

I have organized the study of the New Testament books into fourteen chapters. Chapter one is an overview of the entire content of the New Testament library. In the other thirteen chapters I

have grouped the New Testament books. For the most part I have followed the order of the books as they appear in the English New Testament. I have departed from that order at two points. I deal with Romans and Galatians in one chapter. These two books belong together for both chronological and content reasons. For similar reasons I have placed the little book of Jude out of order with the two letters of Peter.

I do not intend for a class to cover an entire chapter of this guide in one week's lesson. My own teaching style puts emphasis on a Bible book each week. Certainly that seems appropriate for the larger New Testament books. Teachers may elect to combine some of the smaller books for a week's study.

Reading study guides is no substitute for getting into the Word itself. Students who are serious about this course will have as their goal reading through the books of the New Testament, keeping pace with the week-by-week class schedule. If time does not permit such an ambitious goal, at least read through the chapters suggested under the HEAR section of the larger books.

Christians believe that the New Testament is God's final revelation to the people of this world. It contains commands to obey, promises to believe, warnings to heed, and encouragement to uplift. From these pages we learn how "to do" church, evangelize the lost, and build up the body of Christ.

As you undertake this study, you may rest assured that my prayers are with you. May the Holy Spirit use these simple pages to guide you into a greater appreciation of this precious gift that we call the New Testament.

Pronouncing guide for some of the more difficult names has been adapted from Holman Bible Dictionary.

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