

AIM INSTITUTE | General Epistles
Course Syllabus
2024 | February Term

COURSE: General Epistles

Course Term: Twelve weeks beginning Thursday, February 1, 7:00 PM (US Eastern Standard Time) except February 29.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

General Epistles is an exegetical and thematic study into the eight epistles. A concise background study is given to establish the historical setting of these texts. This grammatical and historical background is believed to help the student to draw practical lessons for daily practice. The books which will be overviewed are Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, I II and III John, and Jude. Lessons will be developed for their devotional, theological, and missiological significance.

INTRODUCTION VIDEO: [CLICK HERE](#)

OBJECTIVES

1. **Doctrinal Understanding:** The general epistles, including letters such as James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, and Jude, offer significant insights into key Christian doctrines. These letters address theological concepts such as faith, grace, salvation, and the nature of God. Studying these epistles can help believers develop a solid understanding of foundational Christian teachings.
2. **Ethical Guidance:** The general epistles contain practical instructions for Christian living and ethical conduct. James, for example, emphasizes the importance of faith accompanied by good works, and 1 Peter provides guidance on how Christians should respond to suffering and persecution. These letters offer valuable moral and ethical principles that believers can apply in their daily lives.
3. **Community and Fellowship:** Many of the general epistles address issues related to Christian community and fellowship. They provide guidance on how believers should interact with one another, resolve conflicts, and support each other in their faith journeys. Studying these letters can contribute to the development of a strong and supportive Christian community.

4. Apologetics and Defense of the Faith: Some of the general epistles, such as Jude, address the importance of defending the Christian faith against false teachings and challenges. Studying these letters can equip believers with the knowledge and understanding needed to defend their faith and engage in apologetics.

5. Practical Wisdom:

The general epistles contain practical wisdom for everyday life. In fact, the General epistles have been compared to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament; namely, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. James, for instance, provides insights on the power of the tongue, the nature of true wisdom, and the importance of humility. These letters offer practical advice that can help believers navigate various aspects of life with a Christ-centered perspective.

In summary, studying the general epistles can contribute to a well-rounded understanding of Christian theology, ethics, and practical Christian living. These letters offer a rich source of wisdom, guidance, and doctrinal insights that can benefit individuals and Christian communities.

INSTRUCTOR: Lovemore Manaka

Lovemore Manaka and his wife, Kere are the founders and co-pastors of Victory Tabernacle in White River, South Africa. Victory Tabernacle has since expanded to have branches in Nelspruit, Manyeveni and Hectorspruit. He is also the former Rector of Phumelela Bible College. He left this post to give more attention to the growing demands of Victory Tabernacle. They are founders of the Apostolic Partners Network. This is a forum where ministers of the 5-fold ministry connect with each other for strategic partnerships. They are cofounders of College of Christian Leadership that exists to sharpen leadership skills. To positively influence the next generation, the two started Bunnies Preschool. Dr Manaka is an author of several books. He is the founder of Increase Thru Influence that hosts pastors and leaders' seminars annually.

Rev. L. Manaka is a graduate of Pentecostal Bible College, Zimbabwe, Global University (formerly called International Correspondence Institute), the University of the Western Cape, the North West University and Grace Bible College & Seminary, USA. His thesis was on HIV/AIDS and the Koinonia of the church, a theological and comparative study.

COURSE FORMAT

This directed study format enables you to receive college level instruction while studying at home. (Note, AIM Institute does not offer accredited college credits.) Course elements include:

- Weekly video assignments.
- Required textbook reading assignments.
- Contact time with the instructor and classmates by means of a weekly Zoom debrief classroom.
- Study questions for your personal benefit as well as preparation for the weekly debrief.
- The course will be graded as pass or fail based debrief attendance and participation and a multiple choice final test. Bear in mind your weekly preparation will have a direct bearing on how much you gain from the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

- The first of twelve weeks beginning Thursday, February 1 at 7:00 PM (US Eastern Standard Time) except October 29.
- You will receive a Zoom invite by email for each debrief.
- Preparation, including watching the lecture videos, can be done at any time before the debrief.
- To maximize the use of your time, we will not repeat information from the videos in the debrief unless there are questions.
- Completion of the course requires the student to summarize each epistle following a course template that is provided.
- A Study Guide with the schedule of weekly assignments and the course project will be sent to you after you are registered.

REQUIREMENTS

- This is an intensive course; students should plan to participate in all class sessions.
- Complete all course reading, watch videos, and writing assignments.
- At the end of week 12 you would have completed your own summaries of each epistle as instructed. This process ensures a good balance between the exegesis and the hermeneutics of general epistles.

TEXT

- *“Encountering the New Testament (3rd Edition),”* by Walter A. Elwell and Robert W. Yarbrough (available on Amazon.com, be sure to order the correct edition)
 - Publisher: Baker Academic (2013) ISBN: 978-0-8010-3964-5
 - Hardcover: 430 pages, this textbook will be used for other AIM New Testament survey courses.
 - Pages in the weekly assignments match this edition.

TEXTS

- A specific text is not required for this course. There will be recommended readings from the following books:
 - Holy Bible (Translation of your choice)
 - Build your own bibliography showing a good choice of a Bible Concordance, Bible Dictionary, Study Bible.
 - Rima, Samuel D. Leading from the Inside Out. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000
- A bibliography with additional books will be provided in the Study Guide.

Online registration form is available at

- Complete the registration form: [CLICK HERE](#)
- For more information, contact Lovemore Manaka, email lovemoremanaka@gmail.com