

The Petrine Circle

Jewish Epistles, 2nd Generation Jewish Churches
and the Coming Fall of Jerusalem



Pauline Corpus and Corpus Apostolicum

Transition study

Pauline Corpus—2023, 2024 churches and small groups

Corpus Apostolicum—Sunday morning commitment

You need to know where we have come from and where we are going the next 2 years

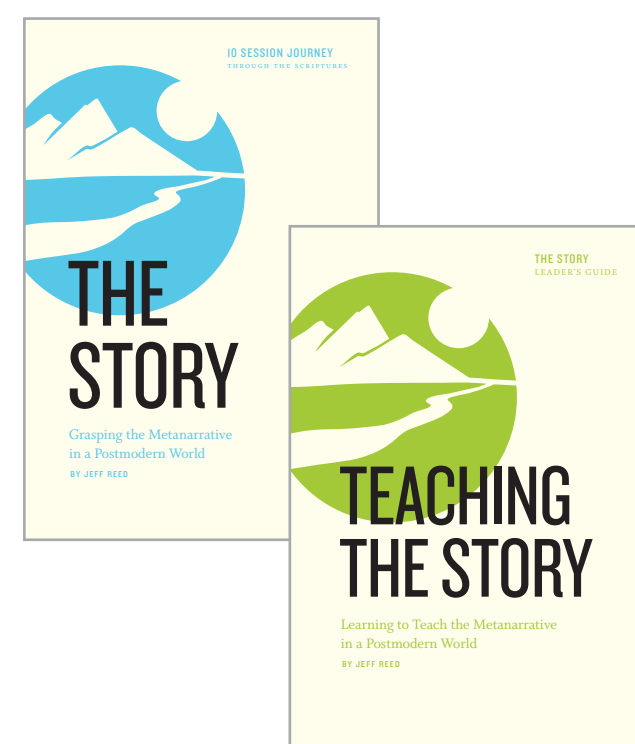
Pauline Corpus and Corpus Apostolicum

Issue: Process of mastering the Scriptures

Questions:

1. Is it arrogant to talk of mastering the Scriptures? Was Paul's challenge to master the Scriptures just for Timothy-types?
2. How is the process of moving from learning and practicing The First Principles Series to Mastering the Scriptures a biblical process?
3. How do The Petrine Circle and Johannine Literature contribute to the process of mastering the Scriptures? In what sense do they complete the picture?
4. How can we assure that doing Mastering the Scriptures is not just an academic exercise? Why is the entire process important, especially session six of every book?

The New Perspective on Paul



The New Perspective on Paul



Mastering the Scriptures

First Principles



New Insight on Pauline Corpus

The first two books came out in 2022, and the third, this April. (NT Wright was 2014, LTJ 2021)

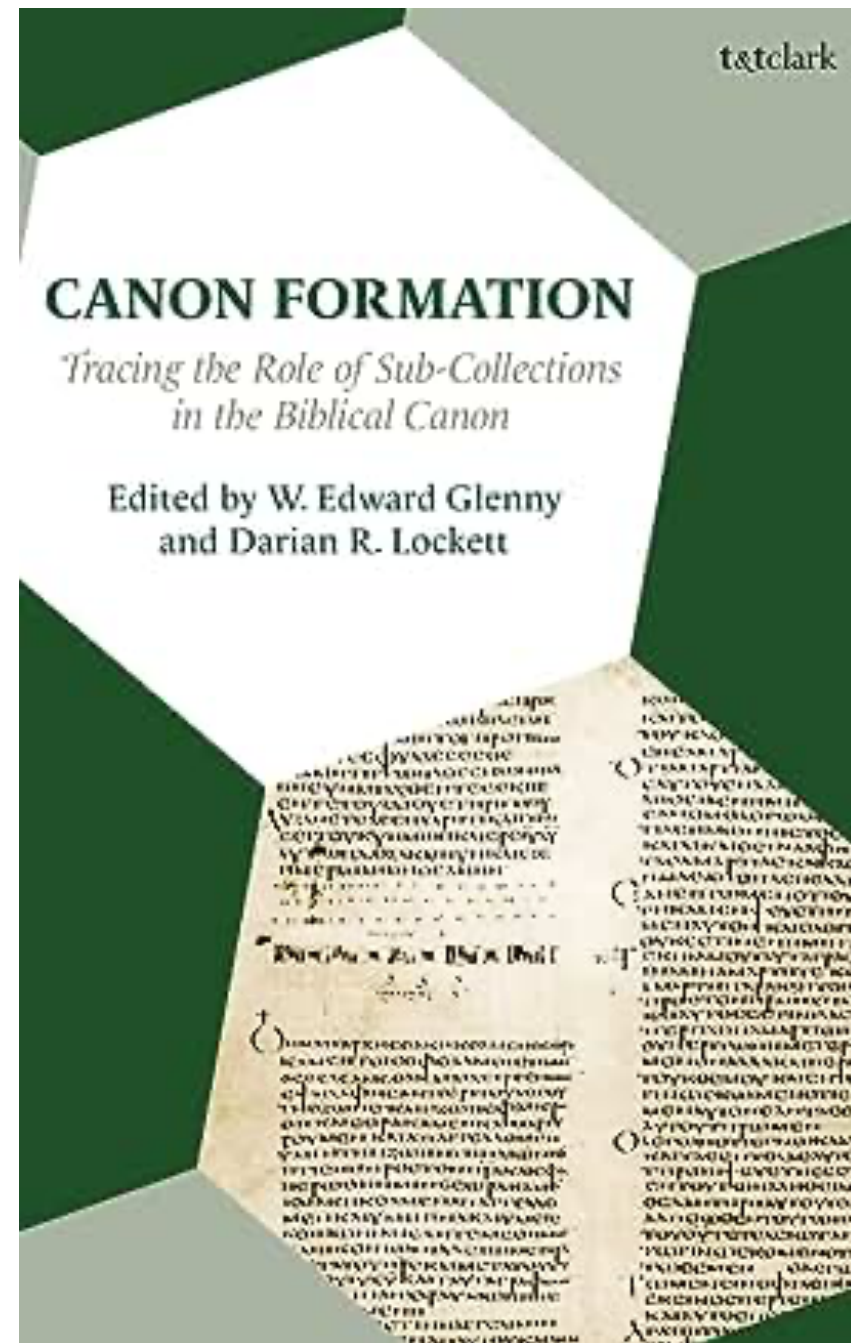
They confirm the primacy and early availability of the Pauline corpus, as I have written and taught, but give fresh insights.

In addition, we have to deal with the canonical shape of Peter's Letters and the Jewish Epistles and the Johannine Literature.

First I will deal with the Pauline Corpus and then the shape of what I am calling the Petrine Circle.



New Insight on Pauline Corpus



Remember Paul's final instructions to Timothy

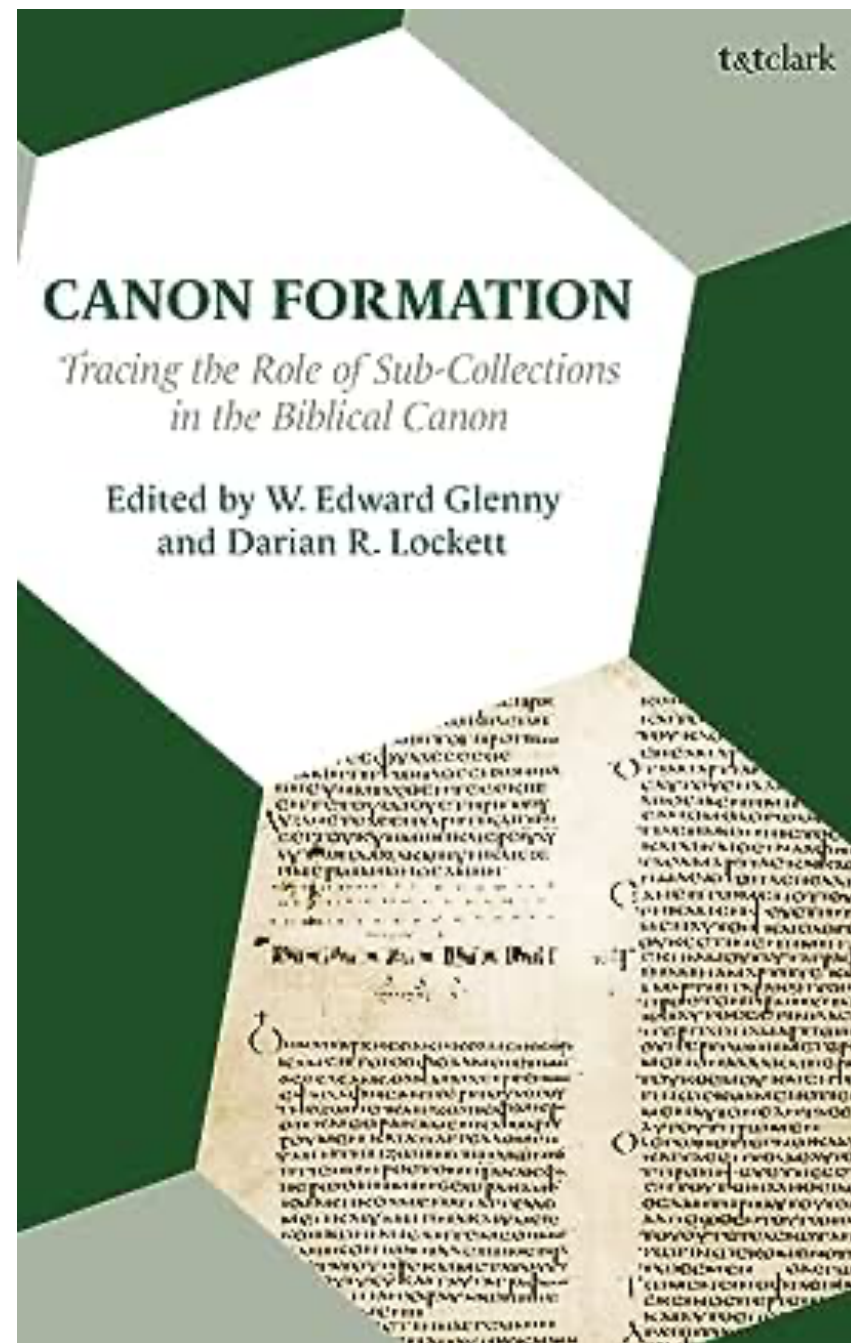
¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry. ¹² I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. ¹³ When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments (Greco–Roman “their own important letters”).

2 Timothy 4:11–13 NRSV

In chapter 14, “The Pauline Corpus,” look at this quote:

“Nonetheless, all manuscripts are letter collections with at least thirteen (arguably fourteen) letters. The evidence is thorough and quite early. There is no extant evidence for any singular letters of Paul circulating independently.”

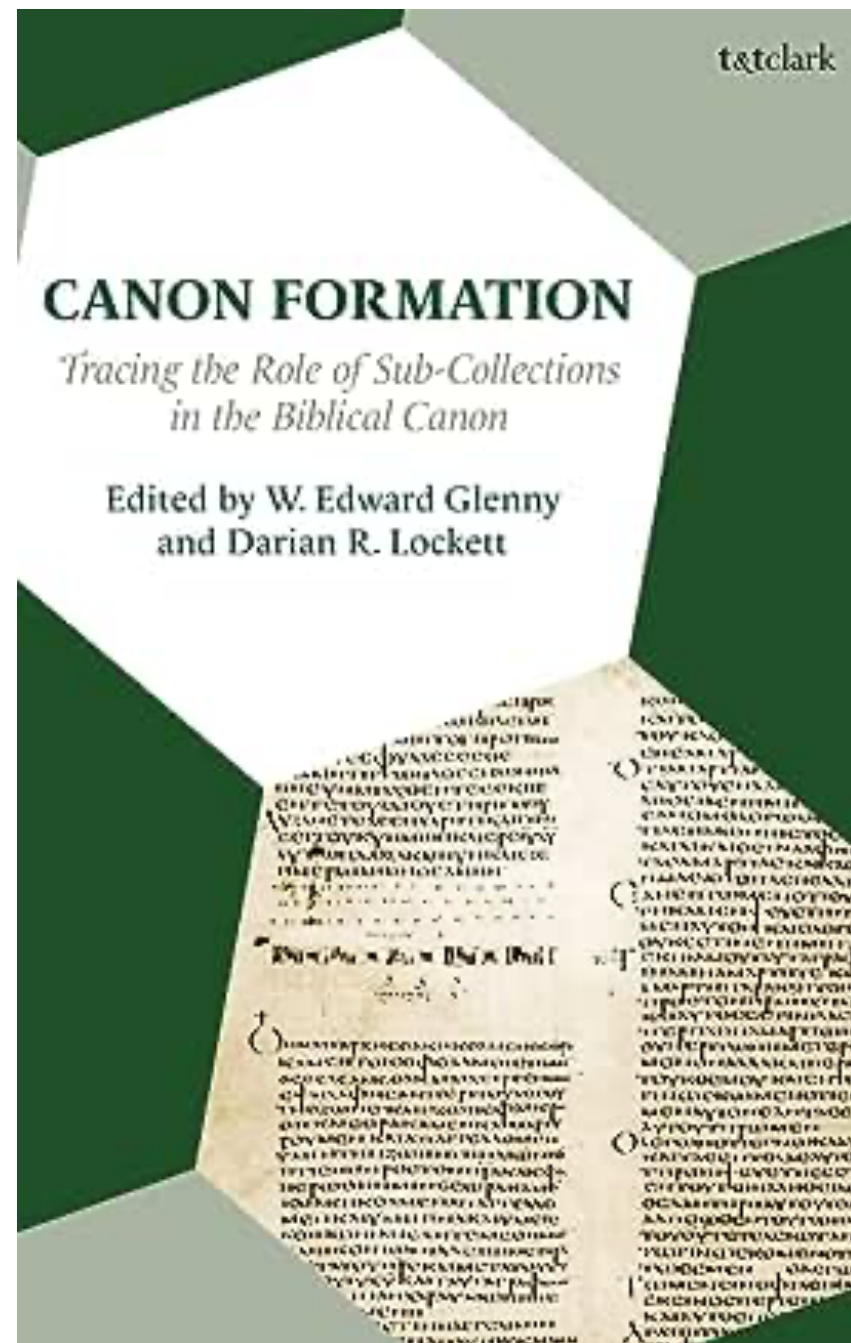
New Insight on Pauline Corpus



I cannot deal with it thoroughly here, but let me put together what I think happened.

1. Paul wants Timothy to bring Mark with him to join him and Luke. He especially wanted his books and parchments (important notebooks), most assuredly his letters.
2. Why would Paul want Mark, who is “useful to him” in his ministry, if he had just said his ministry was over.
3. I think he wanted to complete his collection, tie it in carefully with Luke’s Acts manuscripts, and give some coordination to Mark’s working with the Petrine circle of Jewish letters since Peter had just died 3–4 years earlier.
4. Though Paul probably did not write Hebrews, it appears in most of Paul’s early collections, meaning he must have at least had some shaping of it.

New Insight on Pauline Corpus

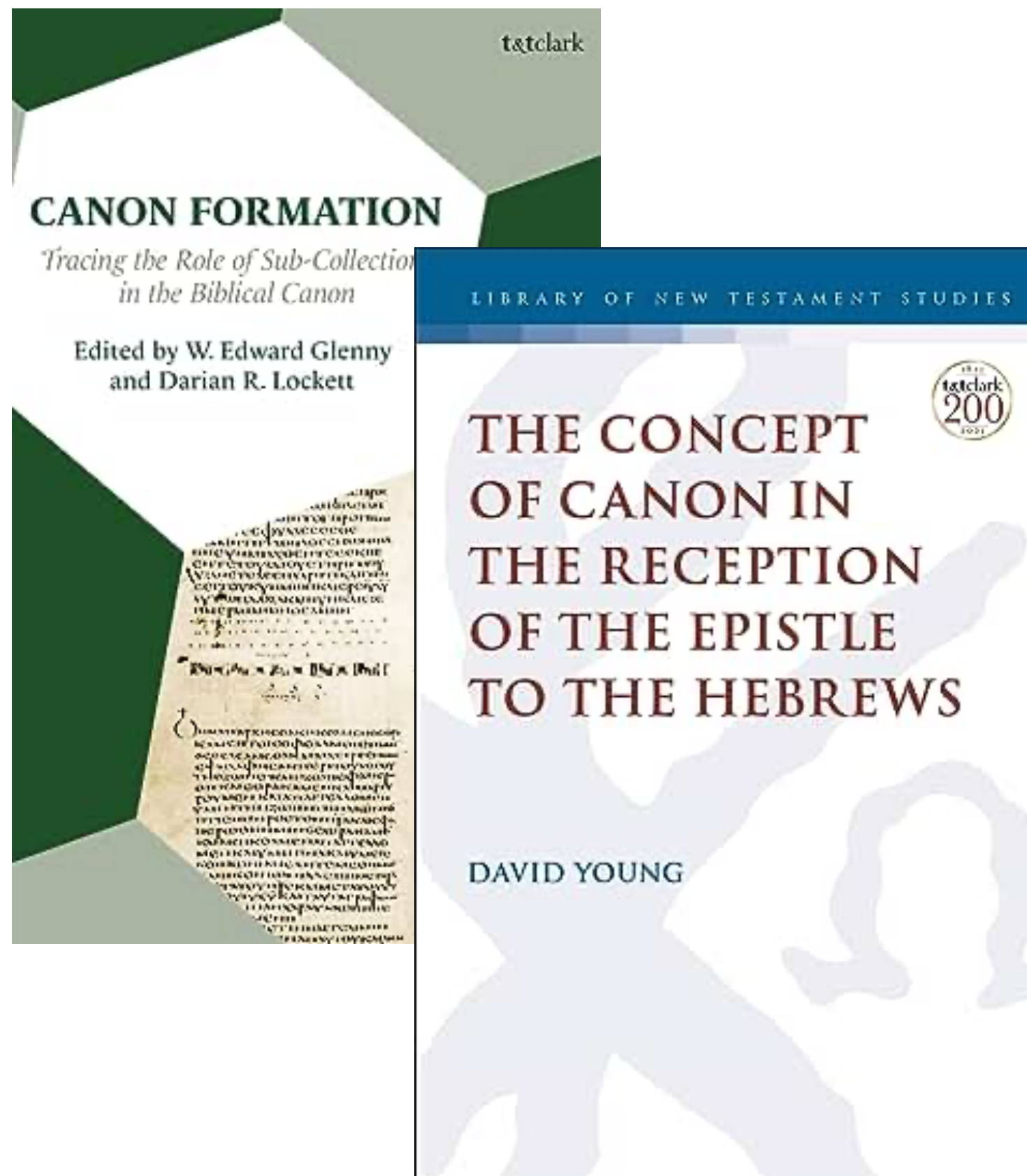


What I think happened. (cont.)

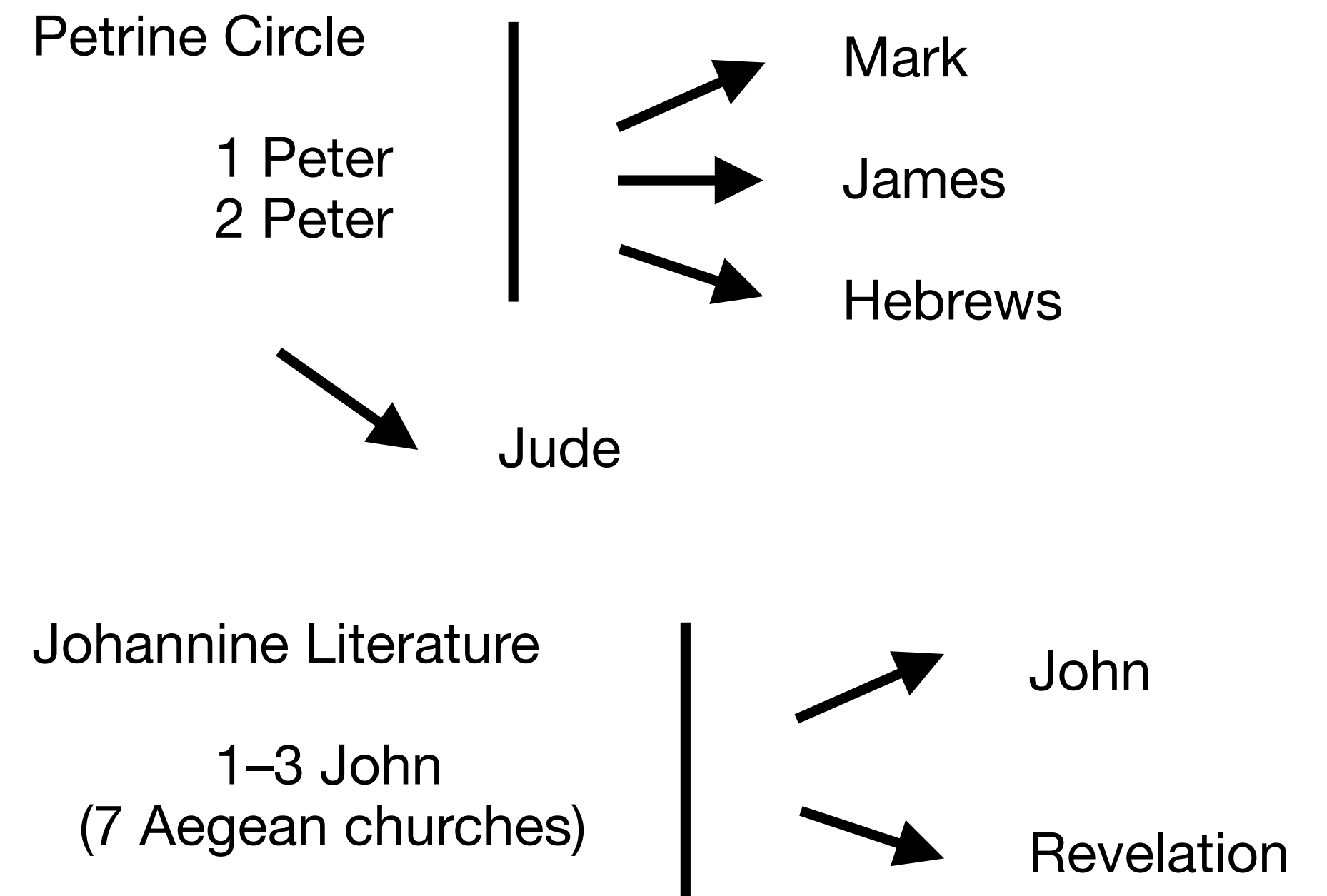
5. Remember, Paul told Timothy to guard the deposit of his teaching that he carefully entrusted to him, not Peter's or John's. He was preparing Timothy to do just that.
6. Peter was aware that Paul's collection was almost done before he died (2 Peter 3:16; "in all his letters").
7. So when Paul said to Timothy to "guard the teaching entrusted to him," he most likely was referring to his collection of 13 letters; and he was to see they were entrusted to Paul's churches.
8. That means, as we are focusing on fully understanding Paul's letters with church networks around the world, we are doing exactly what Paul asked; and Paul was carrying out Christ's teaching and design for His churches.

Corpus Apostolicum

Now as to Hebrews, we have a lot of work ahead of us. I think it will be full of understanding breakthroughs. Here is a glimpse.



Situating



Corpus Apostolicism

The Petrine Circle

Jewish Epistles, 2nd Generation Jewish Churches and the Coming Fall of Jerusalem

Johannine Literature

Future of 2nd Generation Gentile Aegean Churches and the Coming Global Battles



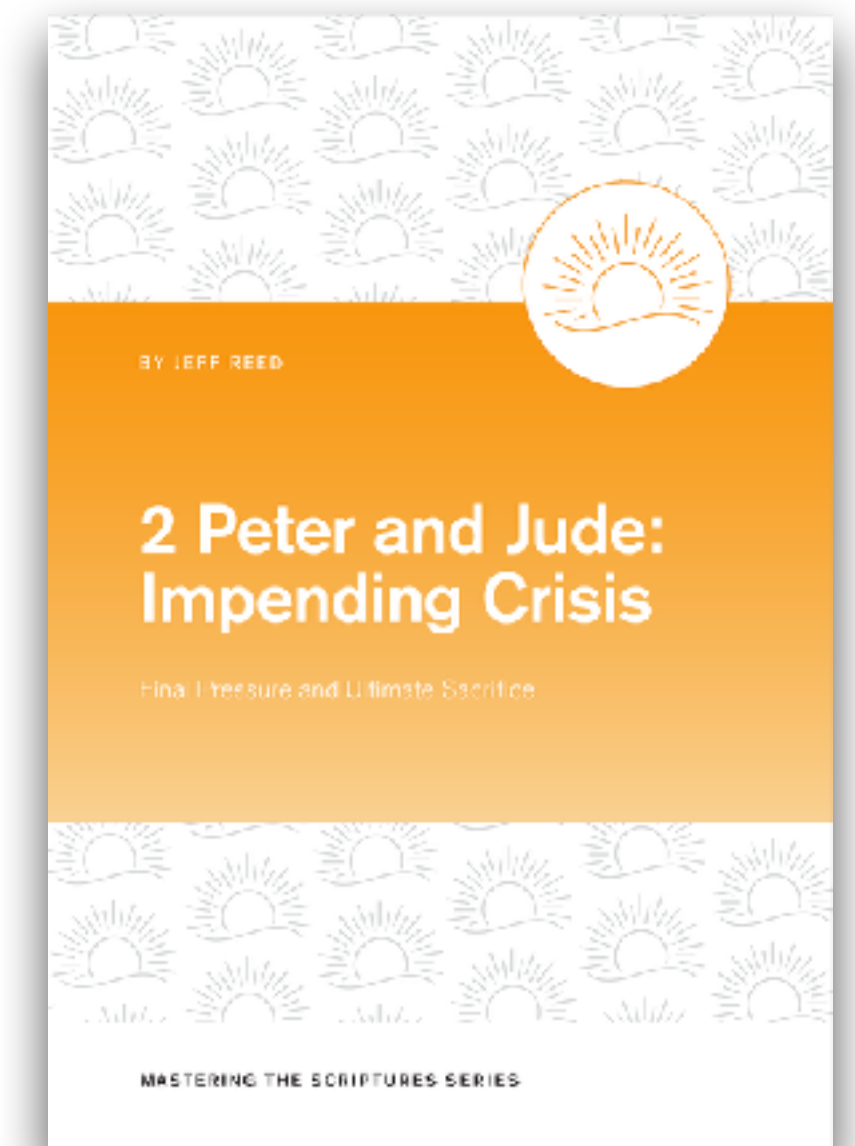
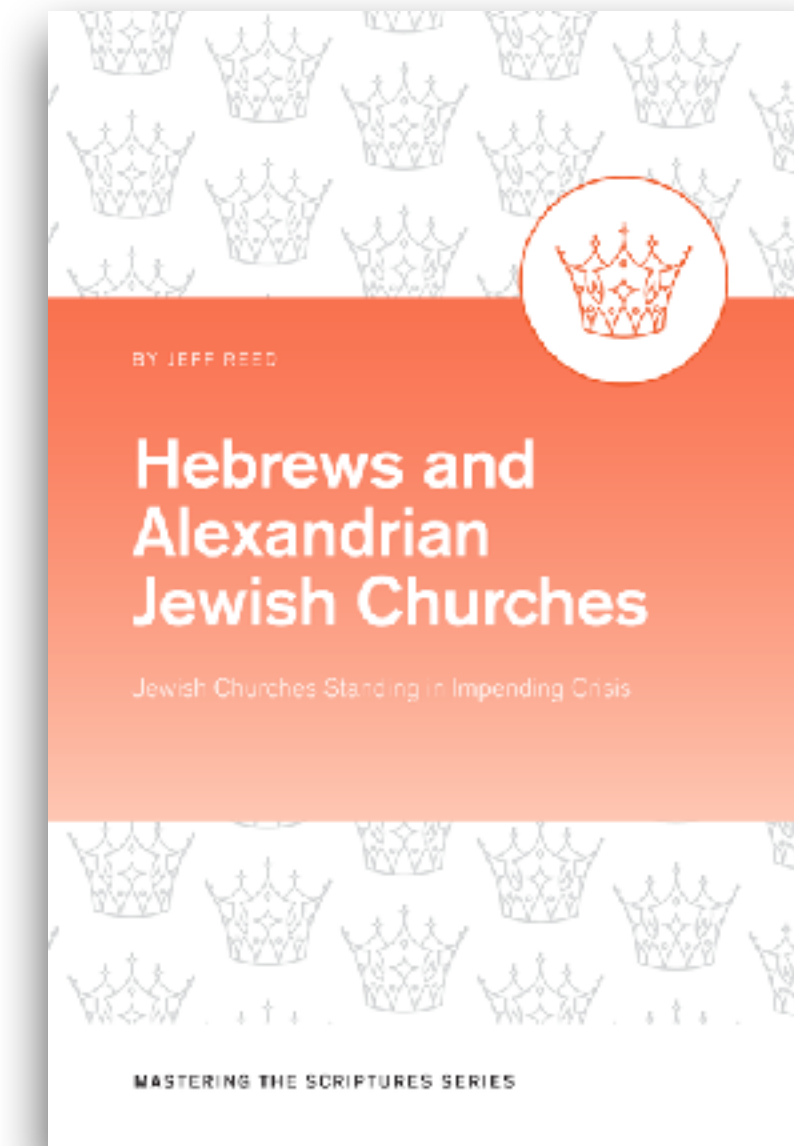
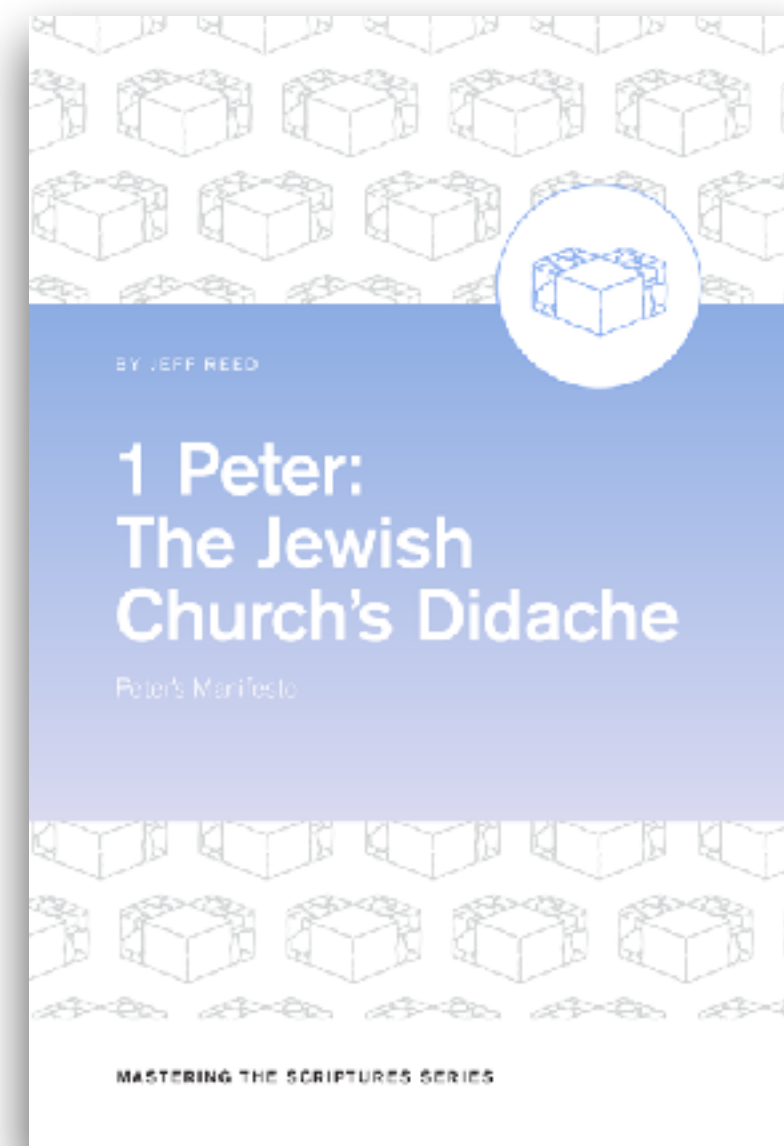
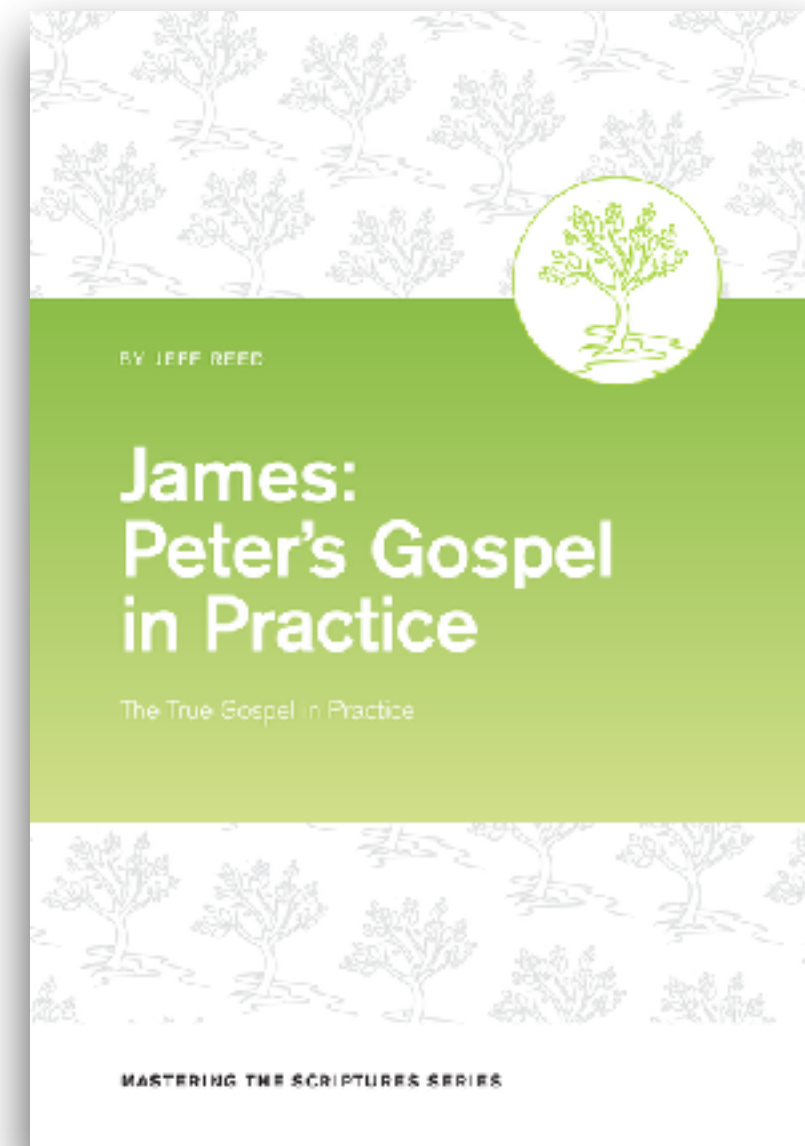
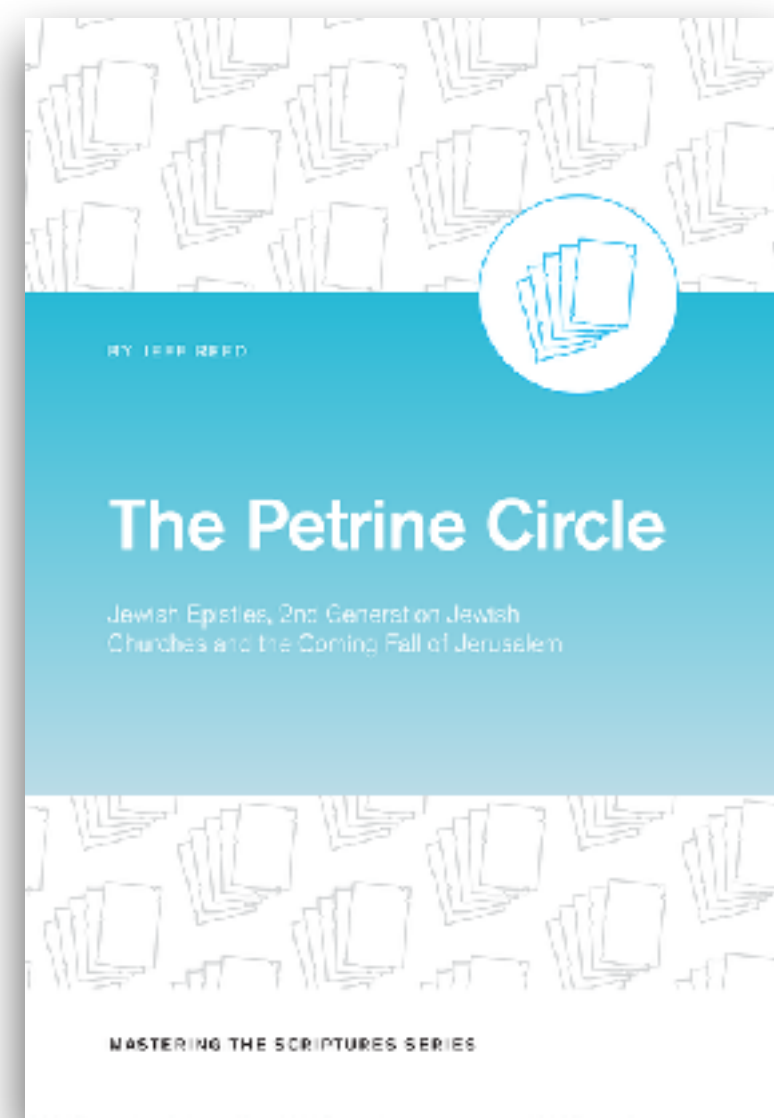
Corpus Apostolicism



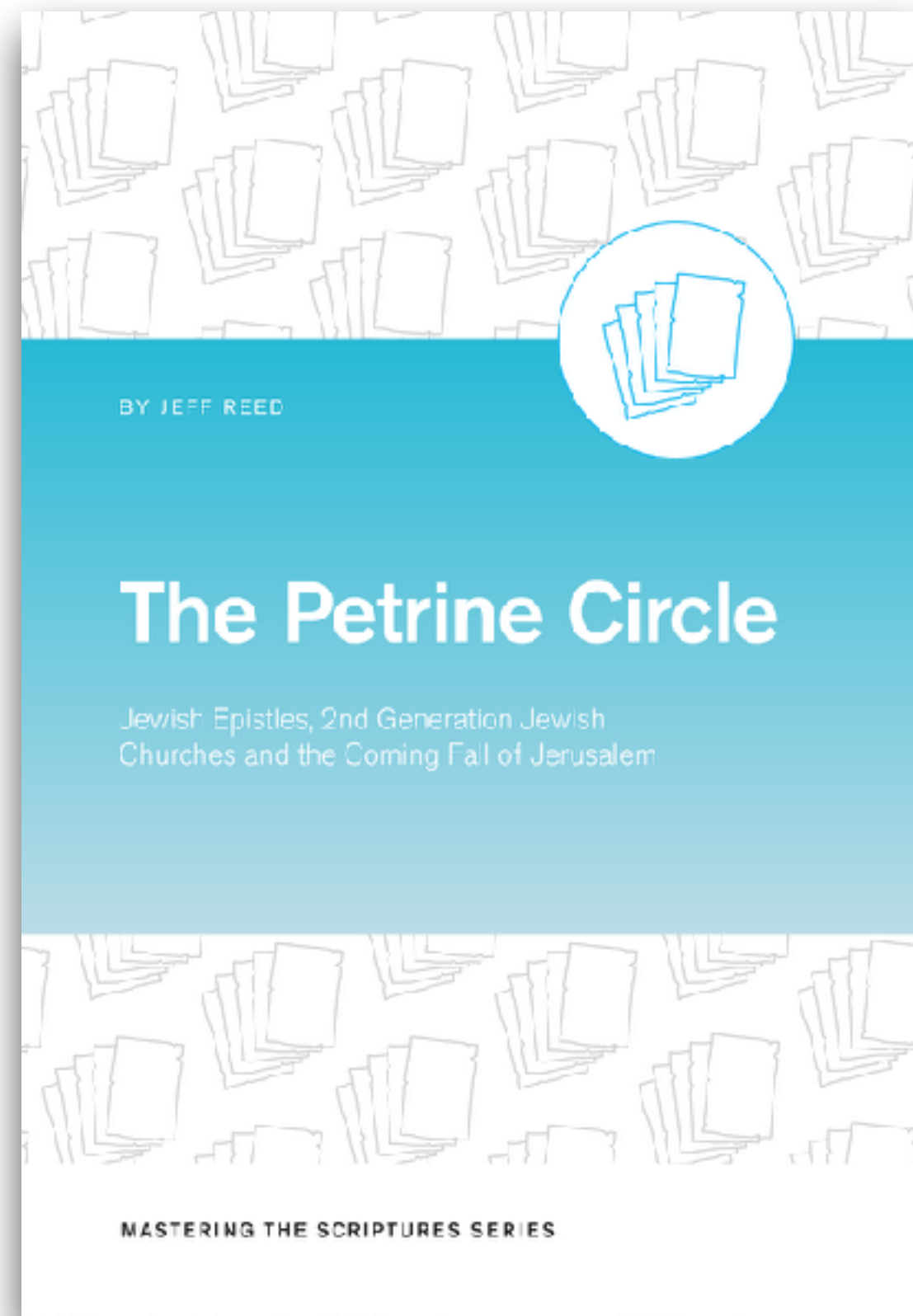
What will you learn?

- Israel—Are you following the news?
- Global situation today: Israel, Russia, China, etc.
- Wisdom (skill in living) and the gospel
- A nuanced look at the kerygma and didache
- Church and global wars, crises, and persecution
- Abiding in Christ in community resulting in true abundant life
- Jesus' assessment of keeping churches alive and living in true community
- Developing a balance of truth and love

Corpus Apostolicum: The Petrine Circle



Corpus Apostolicum: The Petrine Circle



Book 1: The Petrine Circle

Session 1: Mark and Peter's 5 Sermons: The Core Gospel

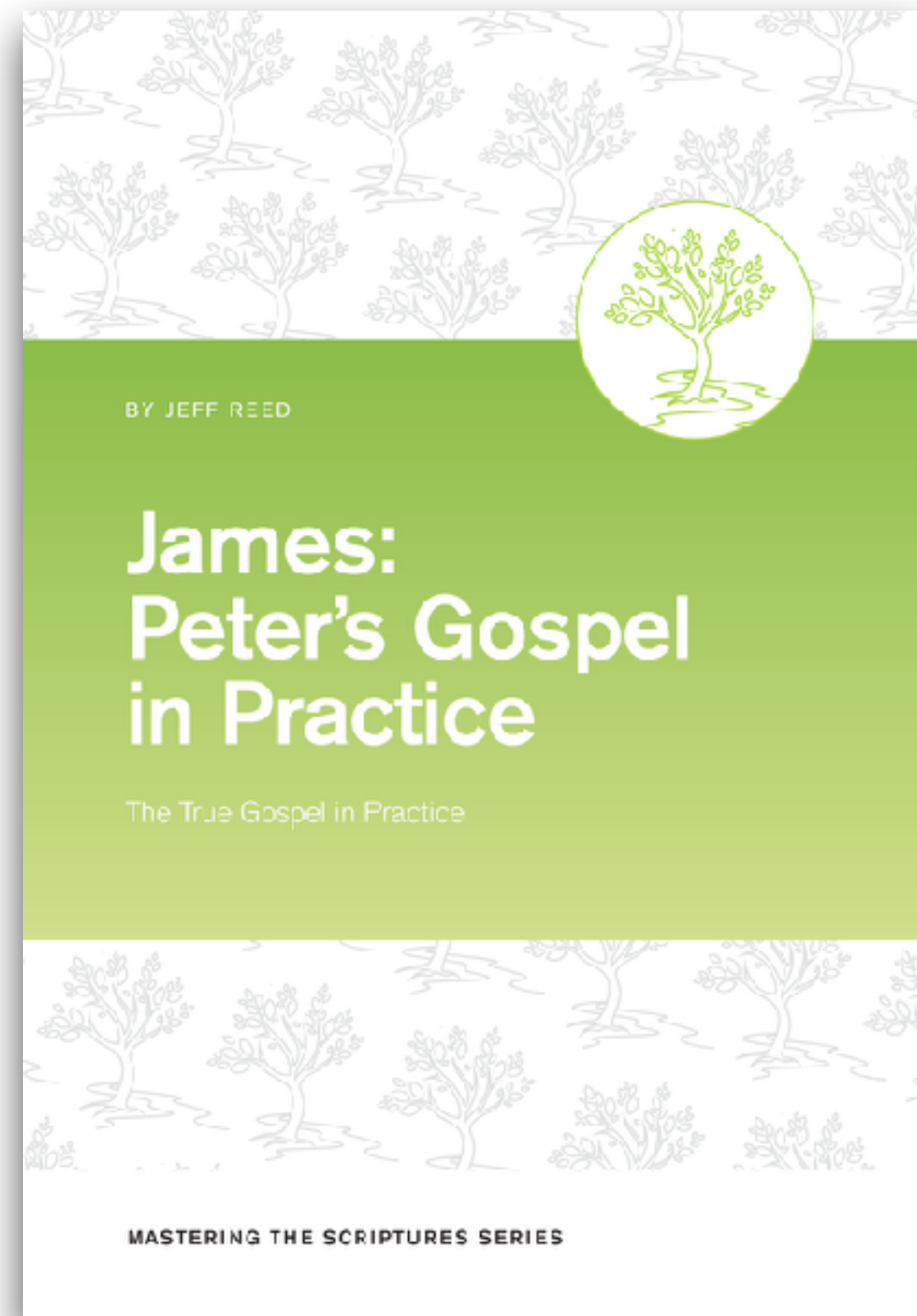
Session 2: James: Peter's Gospel in Practice

Session 3: 1 Peter: The Jewish Church's Didache

Session 4: Hebrews: Alexandrian Jewish Churches

Session 5: 2 Peter and Jude: Impending Crisis

Corpus Apostolicum: The Petrine Circle



Book 2: James: Peter's Gospel in Practice

Session 1: James: Putting Peter's Gospel into Practice

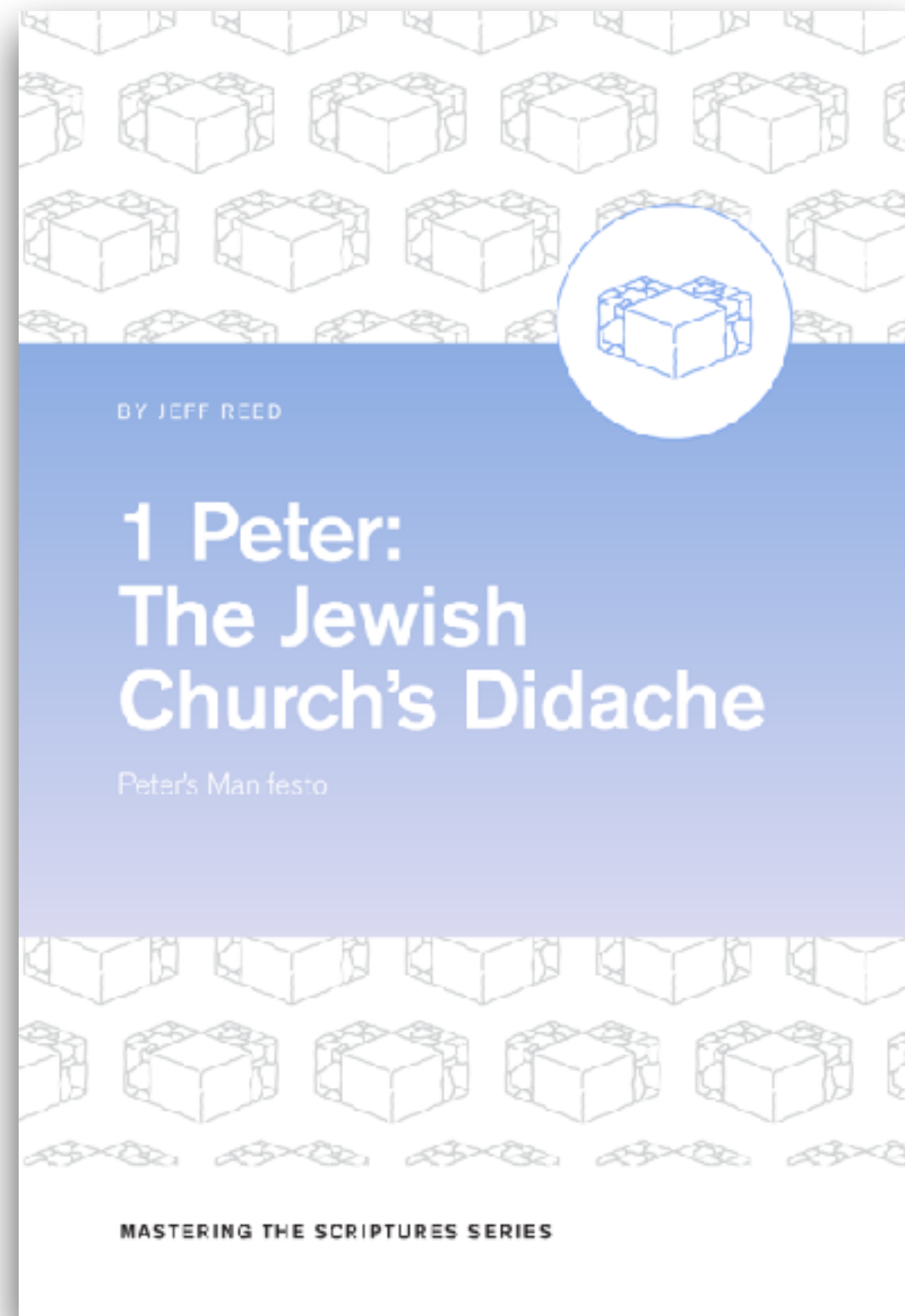
Session 2: Wisdom and Jesus' Teaching

Session 3: Wisdom, Faith, and Good Works: Testing and Action

Session 4: A Few of Wisdom's Gospel Tests: Speech, Rich and Poor

Session 5: Remaining in the True Faith

Corpus Apostolicum: The Petrine Circle



Book 3: 1 Peter: The Jewish Church's Didache,
Peter's Manifesto

Session 1: The Global Diaspora of Jewish Churches

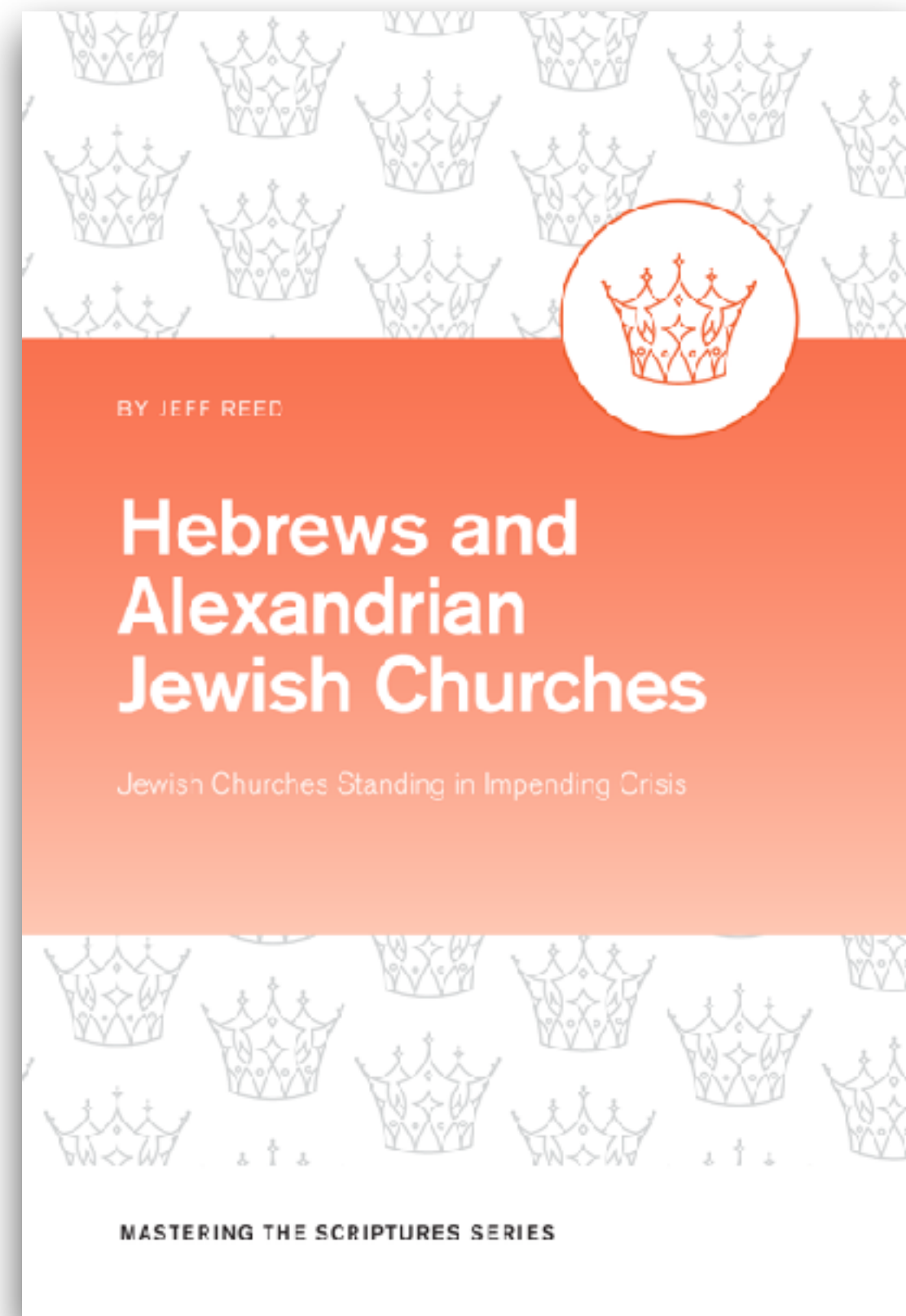
Session 2: Living as a New People

Session 3: Ordered Living Under Foreign Authorities

Session 4: Ordered Living in Households

Session 5: Ordered Living Under Community Eldership

Corpus Apostolicum: The Petrine Circle



Book 4: Hebrews and Alexandrian Jewish Churches,
Jewish Churches Standing in Impending Crisis

Session 1: Jewish Diaspora Churches at High Risk

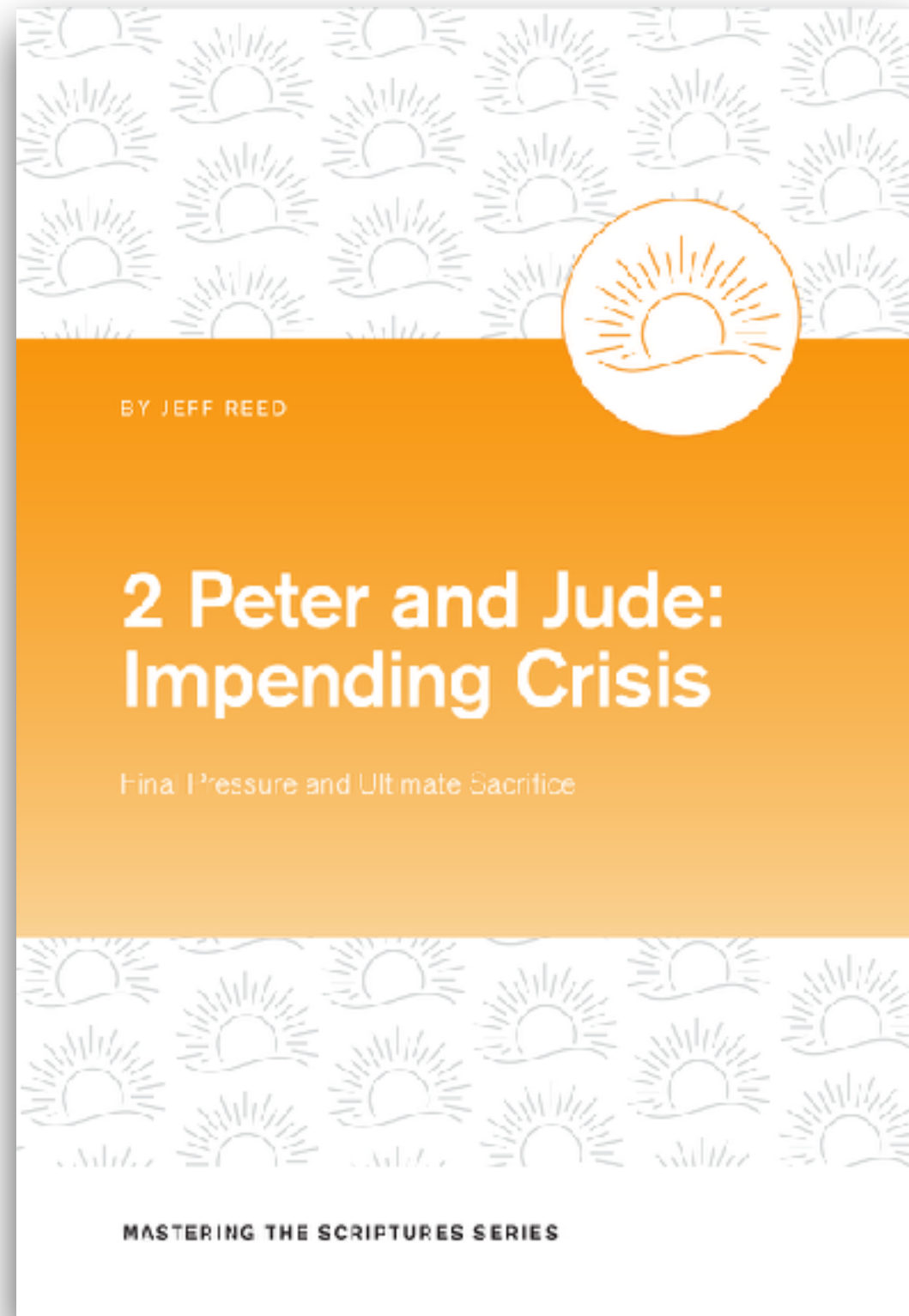
Session 2: Warning 1: 2:1–4

Session 3: Warning 2: 3:7–4:14

Session 4: Warning 3: 5:11–6:20

Session 5: Warning 4: 10:26–39

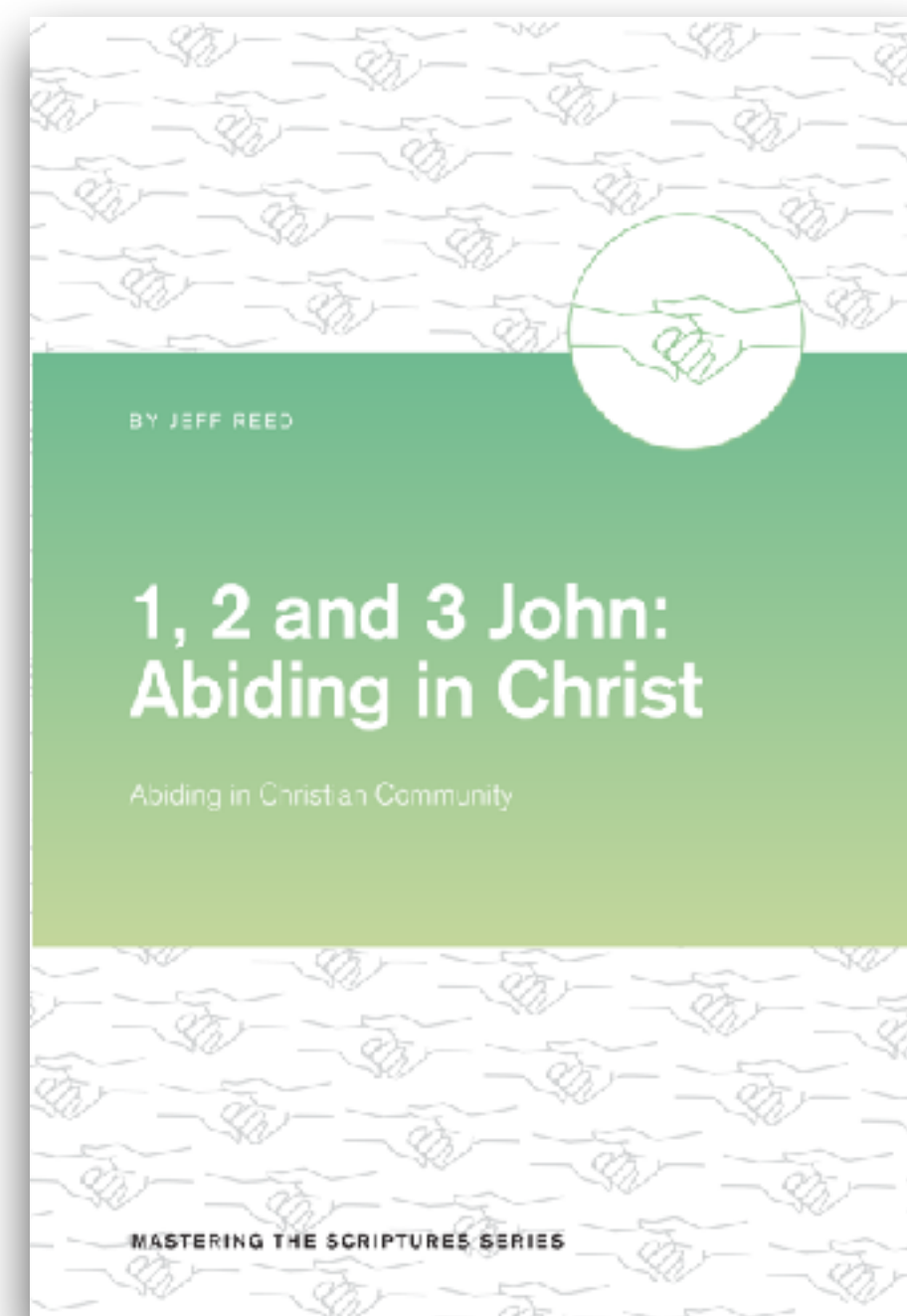
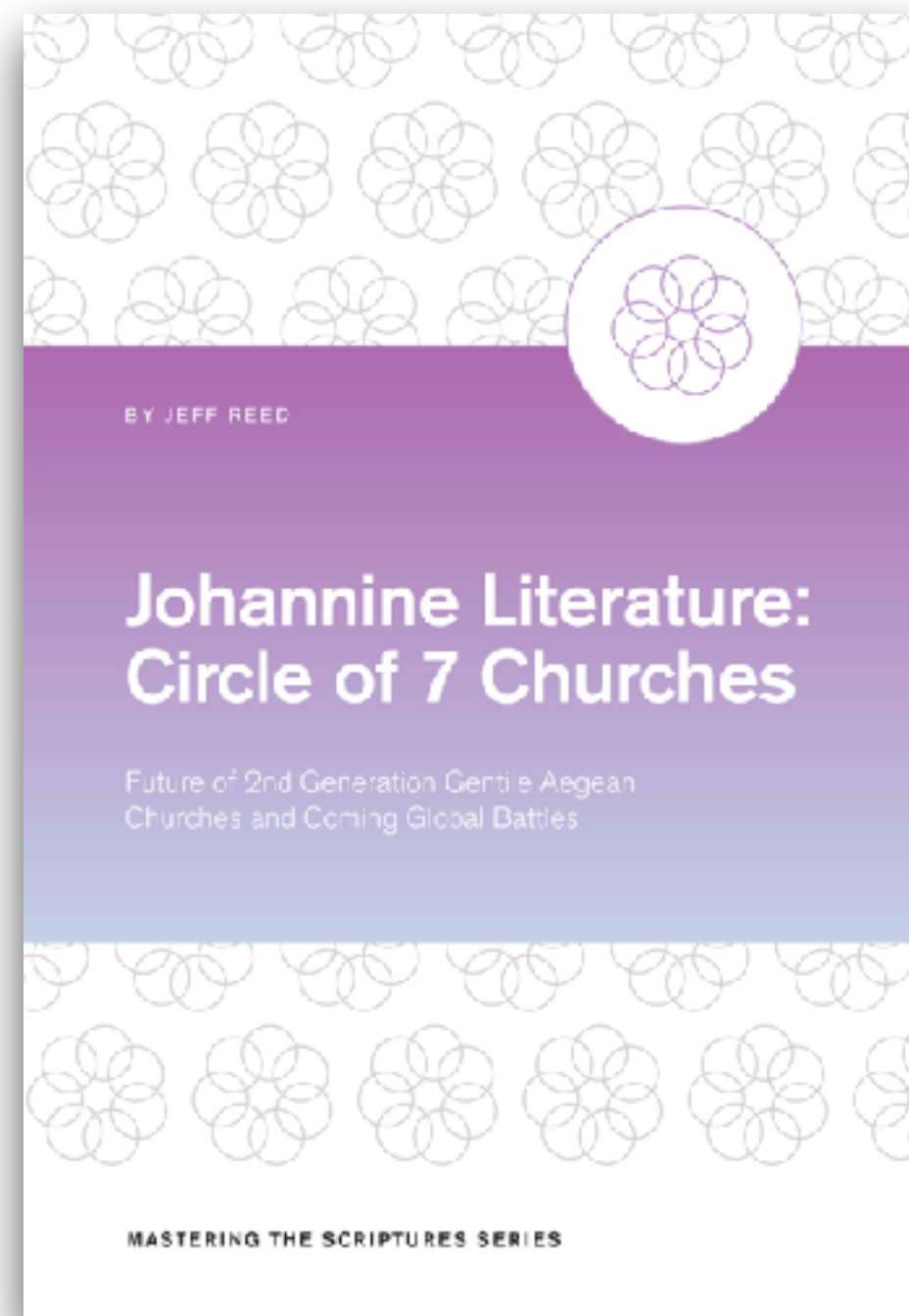
Corpus Apostolicum: The Petrine Circle



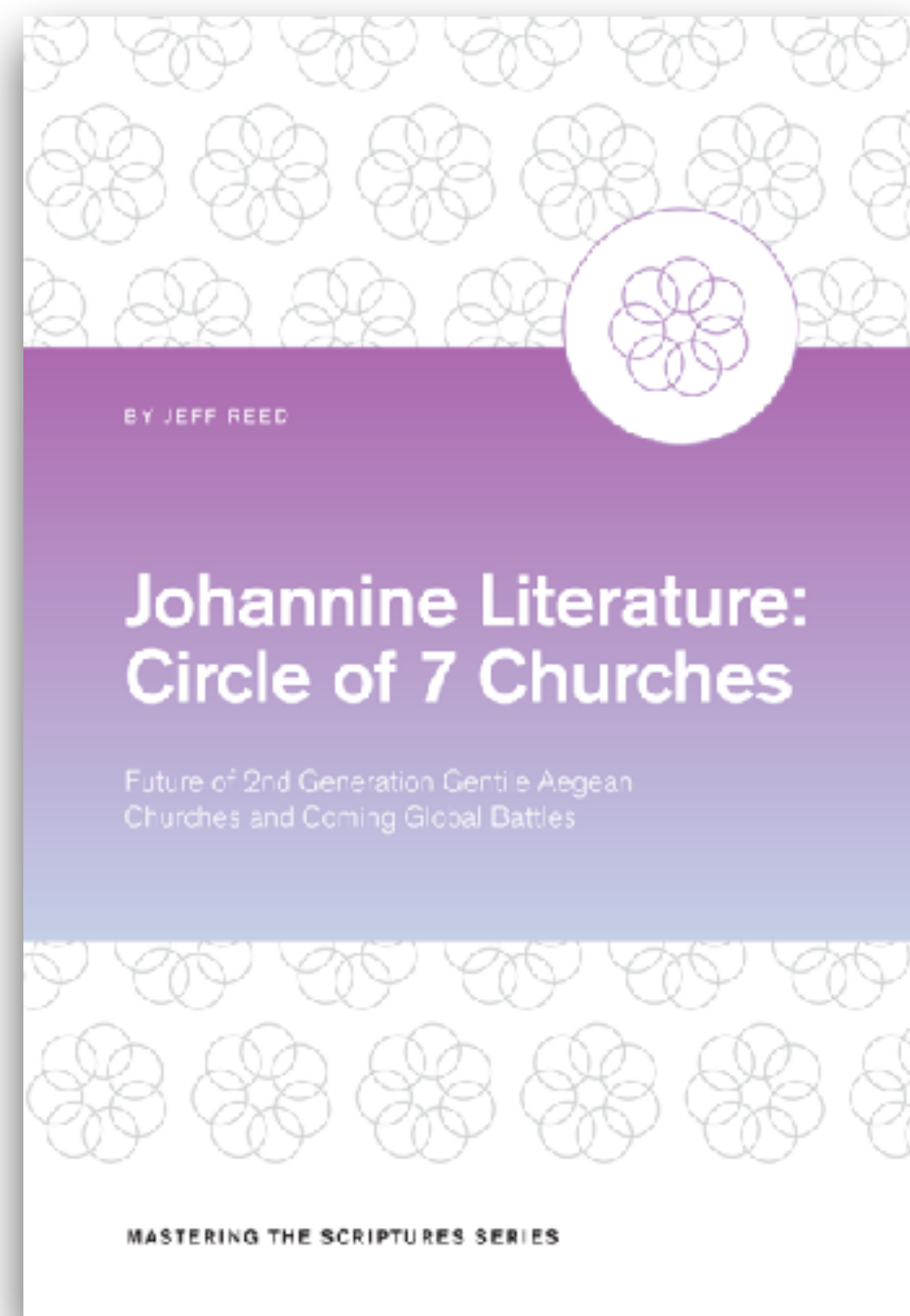
Book 5: 2 Peter and Jude: Impending Crisis
Final Pressure and Ultimate Sacrifice

- Session 1: Intense Warnings to Jewish Churches Before the Impending Crisis
- Session 2: Apostate Crisis in the Churches in Peter's and James' Spheres
- Session 3: 2 Peter: Avoid False Prophets, Hold to Apostolic Teaching
- Session 4: Jude: Harshly Judge First Generation Apostates
- Session 5: Impending Crises, False Apostles and Prophets, and the Next Generation

Corpus Apostolicum: Johannine Literature



Corpus Apostolicum: Johannine Literature



Book 1: Johannine Literature: Circle of 7 Churches, Future of 2nd Generation Gentile Aegean Churches and the Coming Global Battles

Session 1: Johannine Literature: Circle of 7 Churches

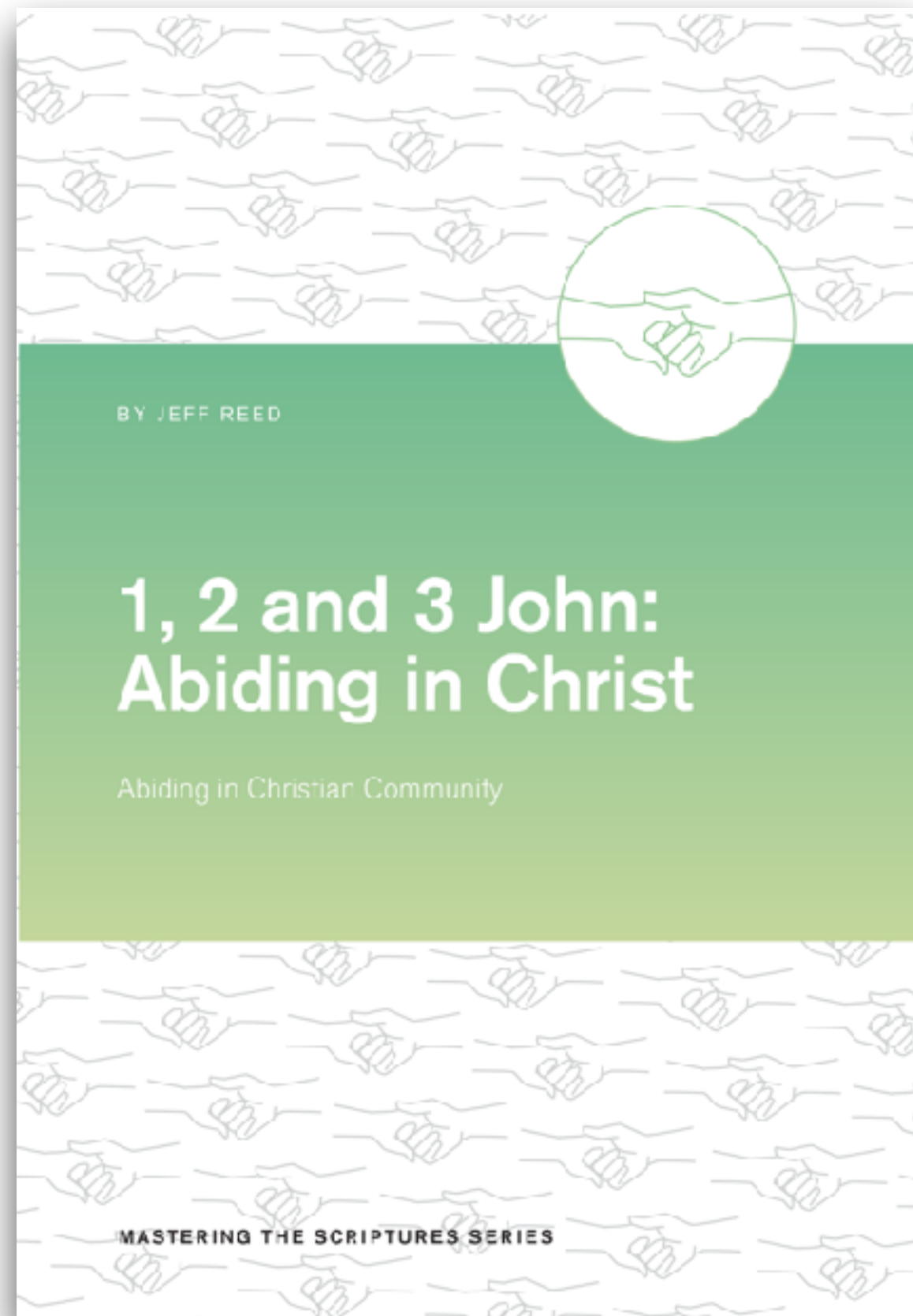
Session 2: John: Abundant Life in Christ

Session 3: 1, 2, 3 John: Abiding in Christ in Community

Session 4: Revelation: The Coming Global Battles

Session 5: Johannine Literature: Schema and Topoi

Corpus Apostolicum: Johannine Literature



Book 2: 1, 2, and 3 John: Abiding in Christ,
Abiding in Christian Community

Session 1: Abiding in Christ

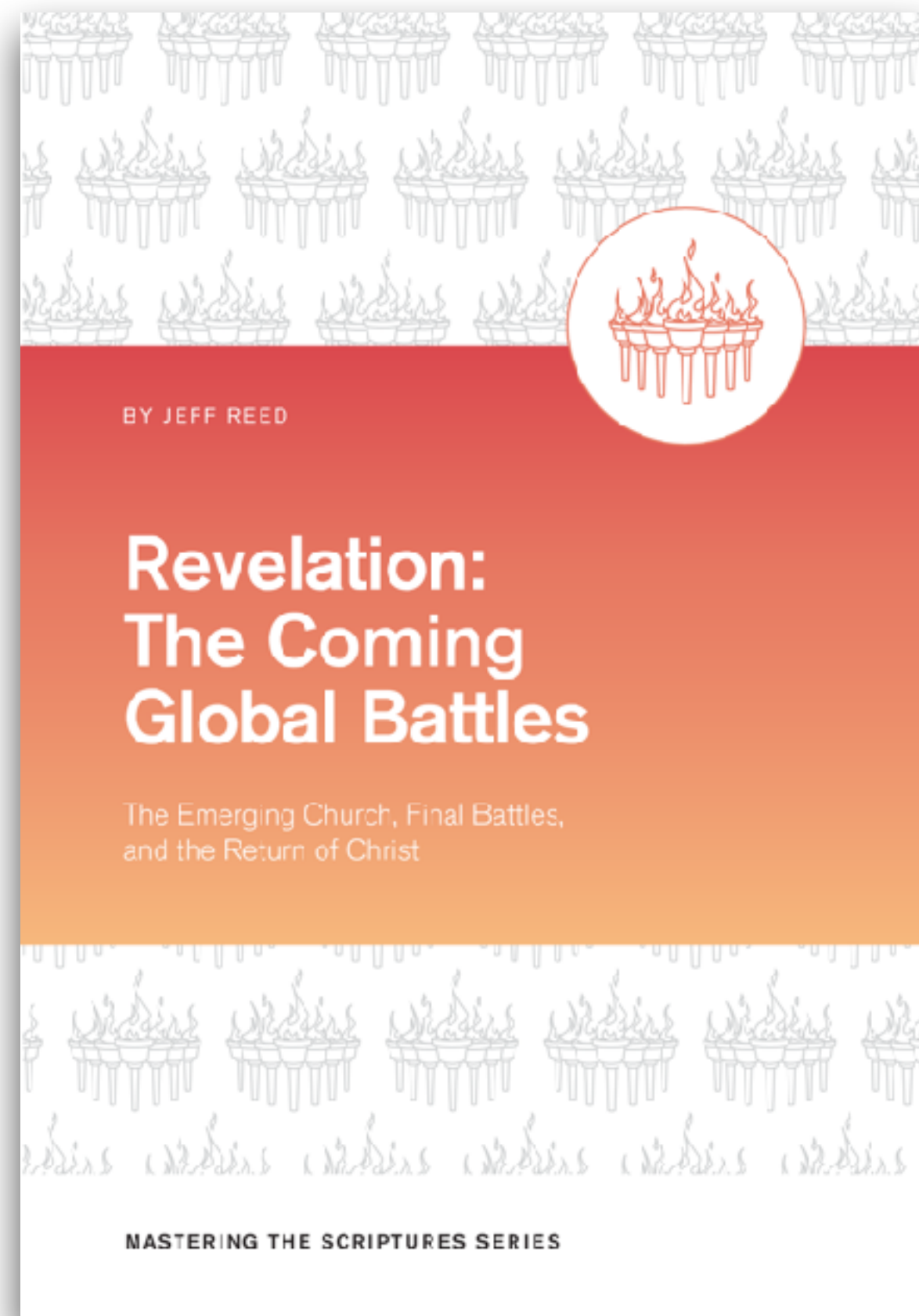
Session 2: Confidence of Eternal Life

Session 3: Abiding in Christ in Community in a Dark World

Session 4: Abiding in Christ as a Community Demands Truth and Love:
2 John

Session 5: Abiding in Christ as Leaders in Community: 3 John

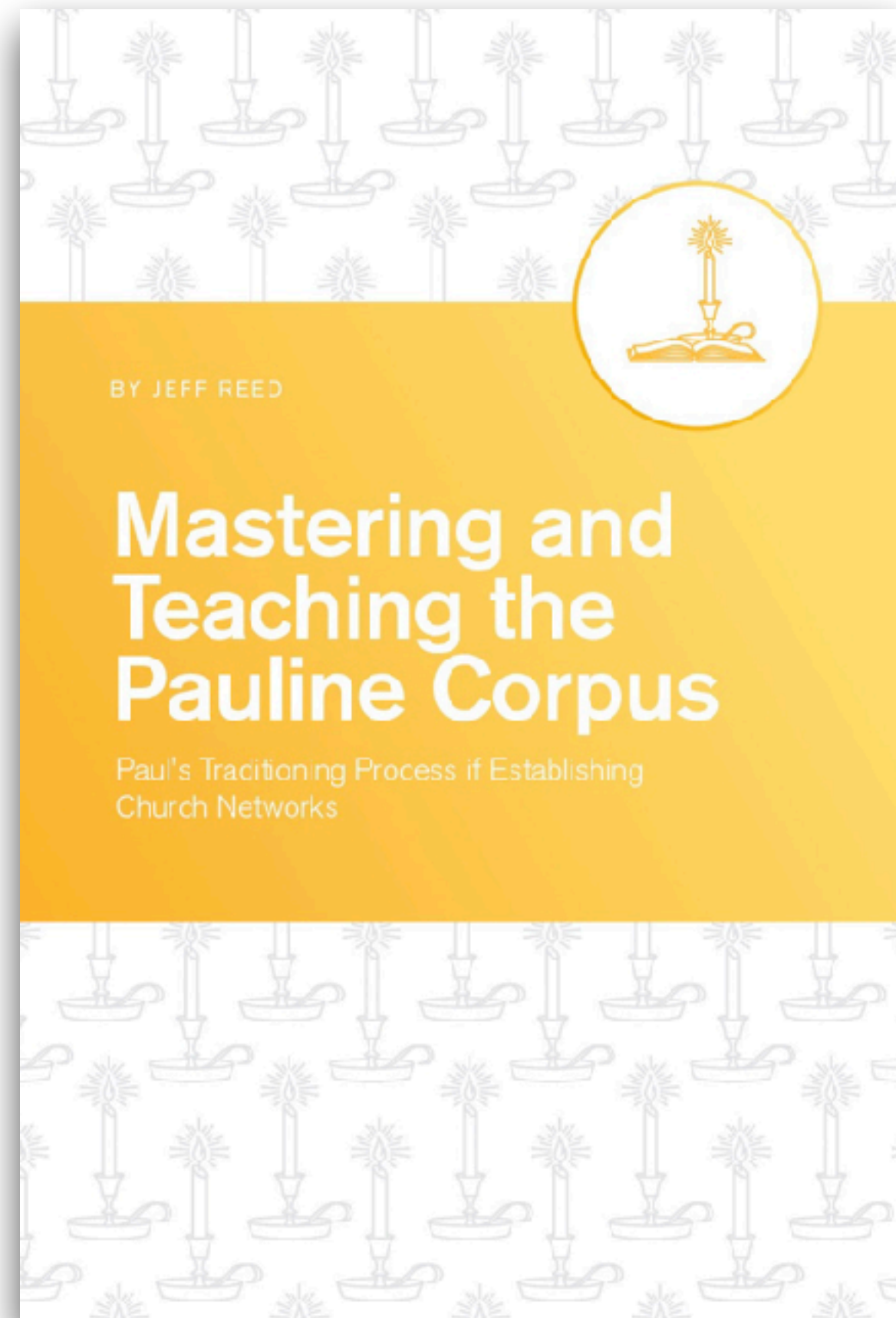
Corpus Apostolicum: Johannine Literature



Book 3: Revelation: The Coming Global Battles
The Emerging Church, Final Battles, and the Return of
Christ

- Session 1: Assessing the 7 Aegean Churches
- Session 2: The Final Global Battle
- Session 3: The Final Global Battle
- Session 4: The 1,000 Year Kingdom Realized
- Session 5: The New Heavens and the New Earth

Corpus Apostolicum: Johannine Literature



Teaching Mastering the Scriptures (Revised, 2024)

Session 7: New Perspective on Paul and the Corpus Apostolicum

The Pauline Corpus—Early Letters



The whole set will be in your hands by September 15.

We need a group to work through them in 2023–2024.

Great project for senior elders in Shepherding and Counseling training.

I need at least one “crowdsourcing group” for questions and clarity.

James—We need a place for questions, clarity, comments Nancy and I can get to.

The Pauline Corpus - Middle Letters



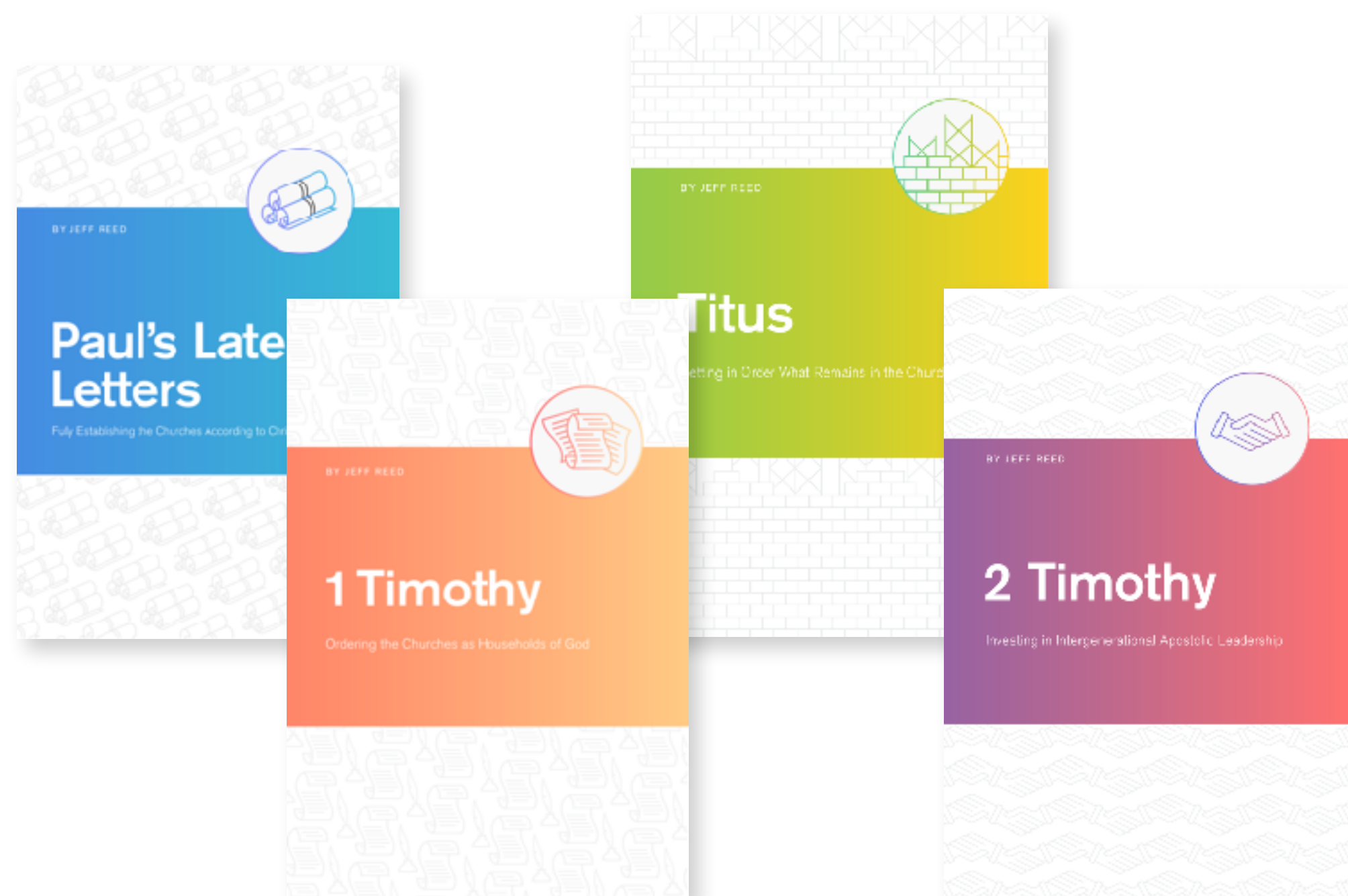
Don Johnson's church has just started through this set.

Bill Burns is leading it.

Talk to Don or Bill in how Bill leads it as part of their symposium time Sunday night in their church without it dominating the time.

They all do session 6 seriously.

The Pauline Corpus - Later Letters



They just completed this set; everyone did their session 6 project seriously, including 3 grandmothers.

Bill Burns led it.

Talk to Don or Bill about how Bill led it as part of their symposium time Sunday night in their church without dominating the time.

Bloom's Taxonomy

Session 6: Reshaping Our Lives

Committing Your Heart: Reflection,
Personal Journaling, and Prayer

Committing Your Mind: Forming Clear
Convictions and Memorizing Scripture

Committing Your Life: Decisions,
Personal Projects and Life Habits

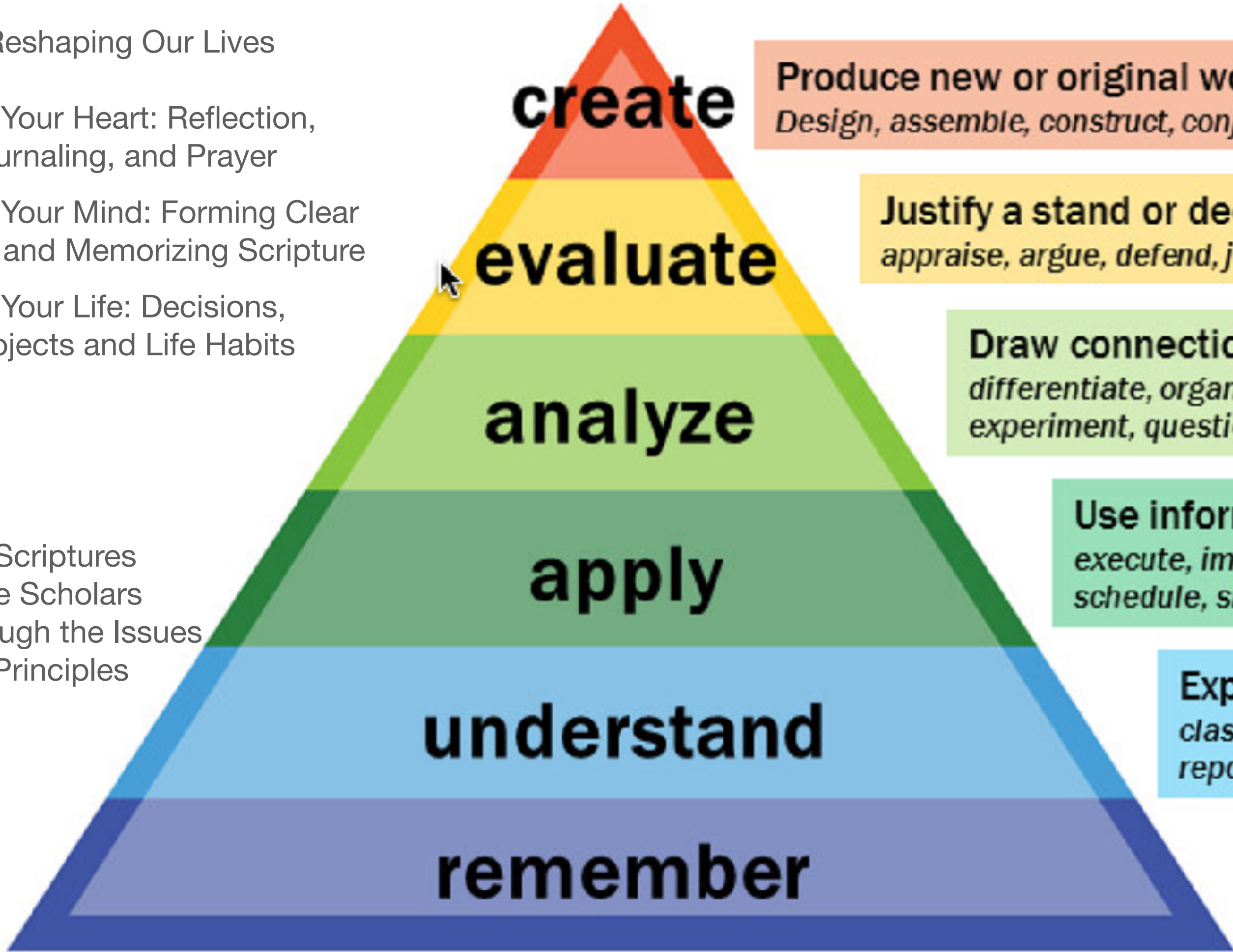
Sessions 1–5

Study the Scriptures

Consult the Scholars

Think Through the Issues

Apply the Principles



create

Produce new or original work

Design, assemble, construct, conjecture, develop, formulate, author, investigate

evaluate

Justify a stand or decision

appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, critique, weigh

analyze

Draw connections among ideas

differentiate, organize, relate, compare, contrast, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test

apply

Use information in new situations

execute, implement, solve, use, demonstrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch

understand

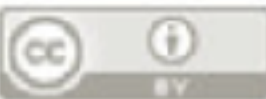
Explain ideas or concepts

classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate

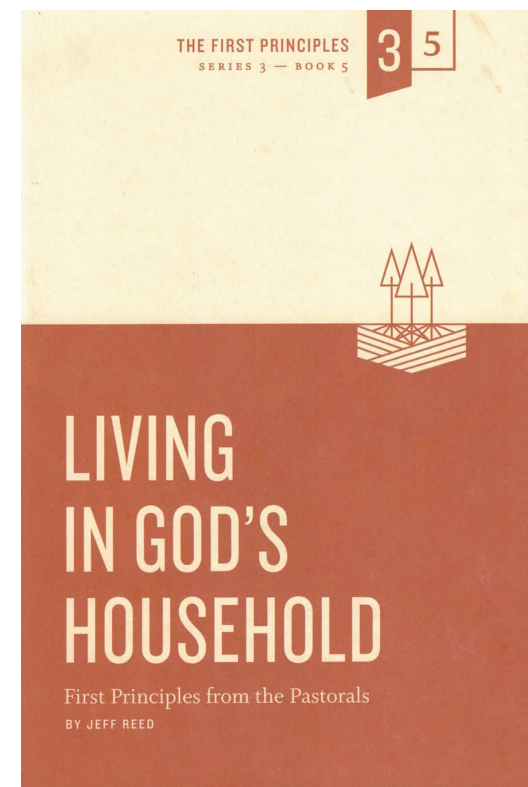
remember

Recall facts and basic concepts

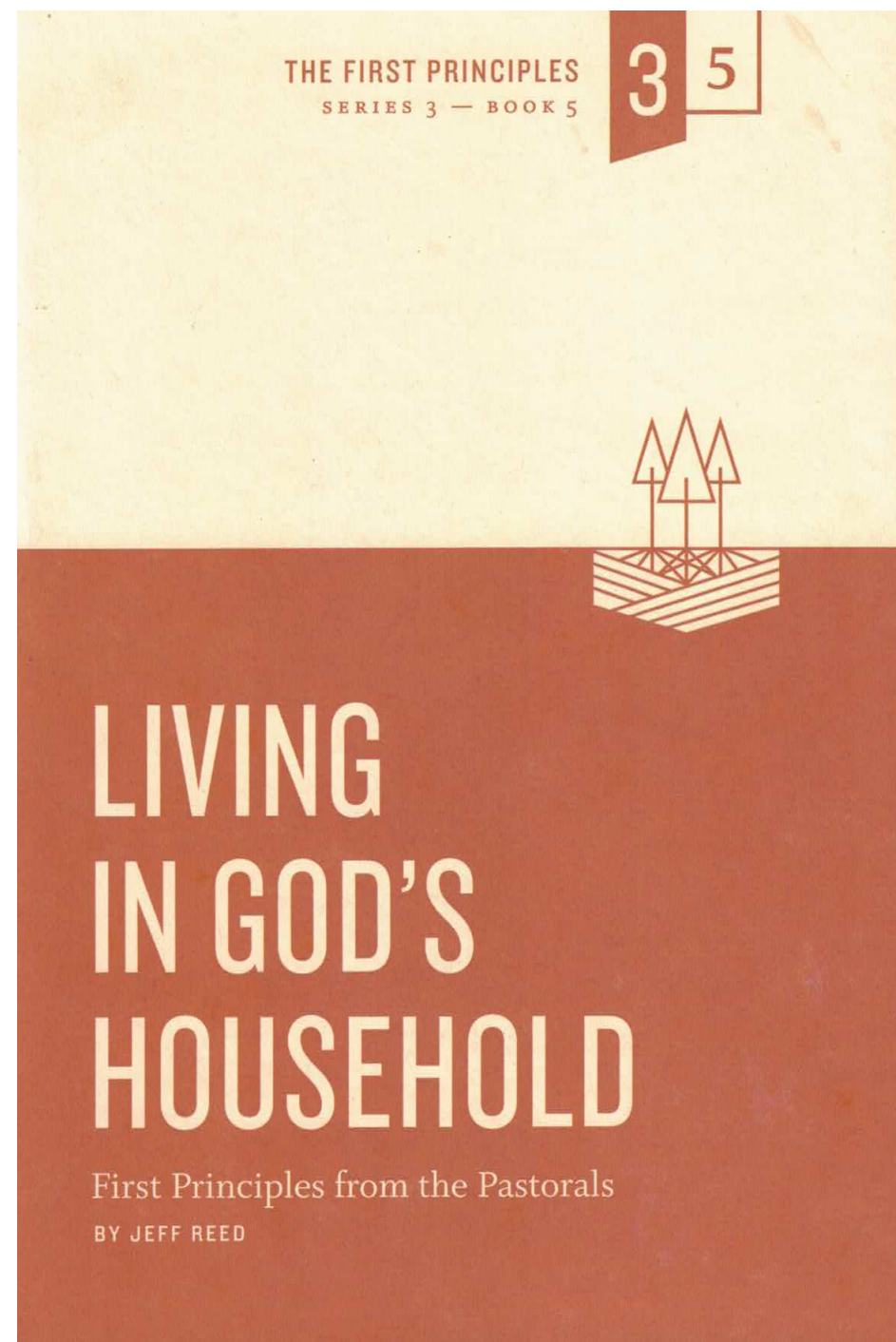
define, duplicate, list, memorize, repeat, state



The Pastoral Epistles



The Pastorals—The First Principles



2 Timothy: Living in God's Household

Session 1: The Intent of the Pastorals: Household Order

Session 2: The First Letter to Timothy: Household as Social Structure

Session 3: The Letter to Titus: Set in Order What Remains

Session 4: The Second Letter to Timothy: Passing On the Deposit

Session 5: Stewarding the Deposit: The Importance of Leadership

Process

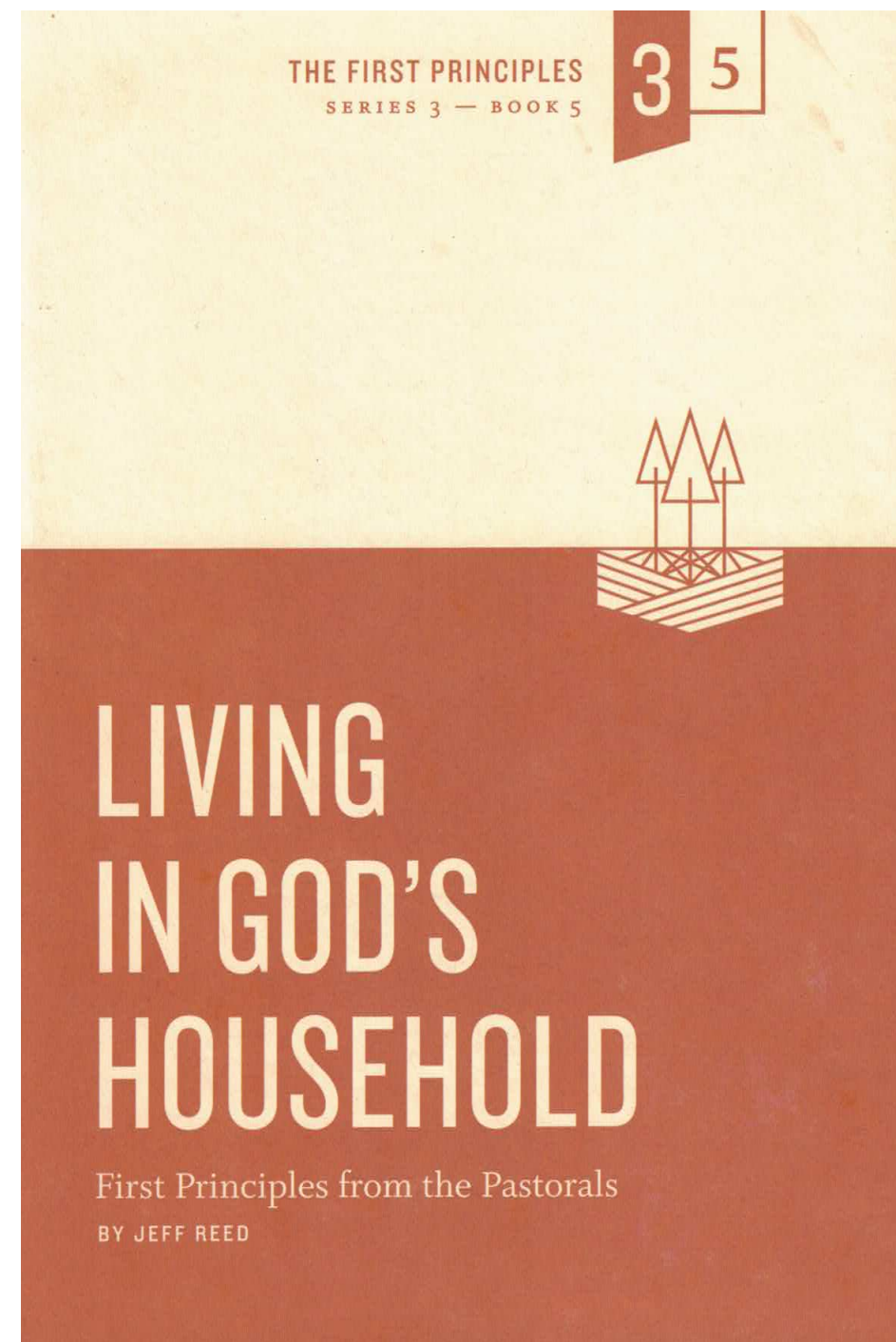
Study the Scriptures

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Think Through the Issues

Apply the Principles

The Pastorals—The First Principles



Living in God's Household

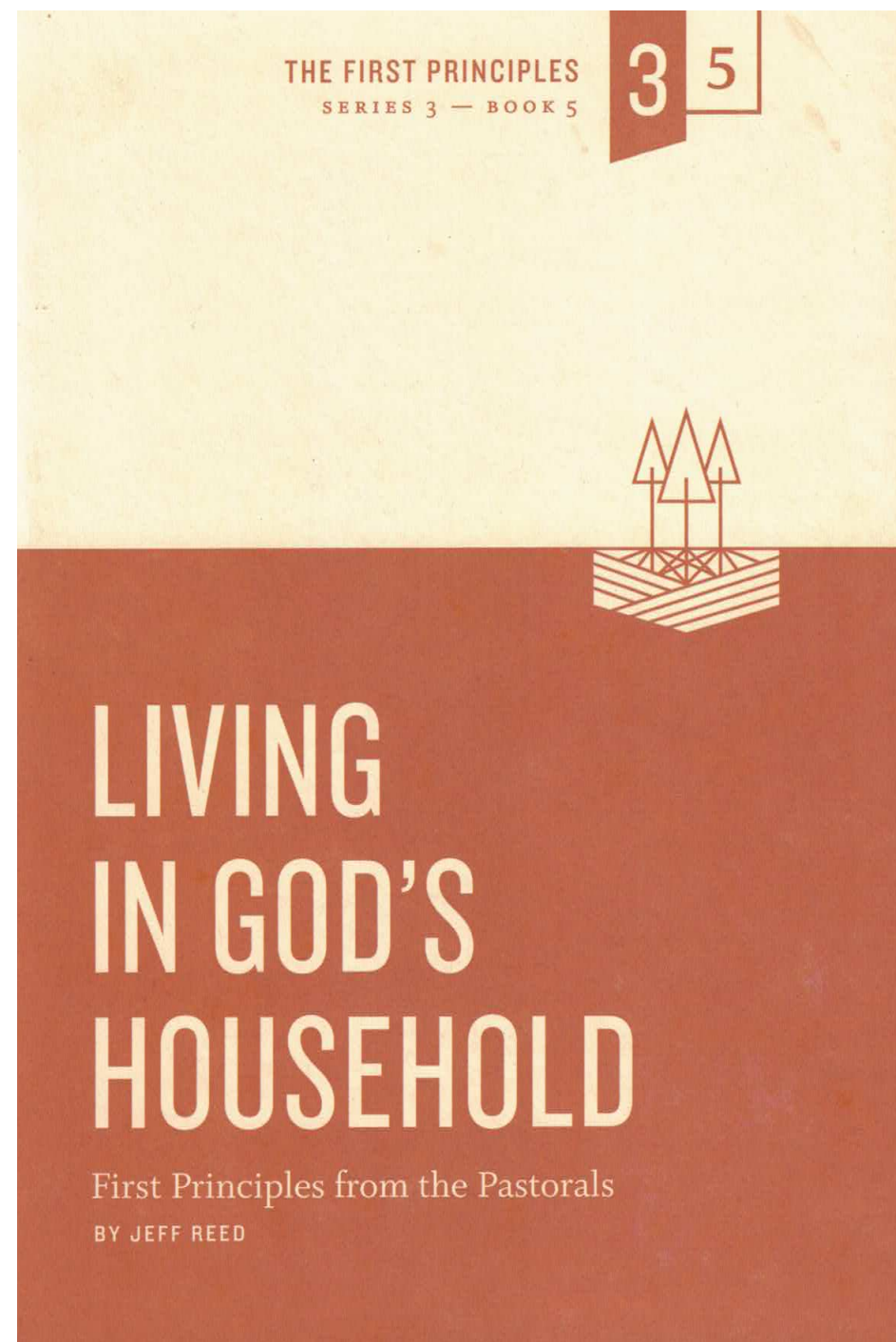
Session 6: Reshaping Our Lives

Committing Your Heart: Reflection, Personal Journaling, and Prayer

Committing Your Mind: Forming Clear Convictions and Memorizing Scripture

Committing Your Life: Decisions, Personal Projects, and Life Habits

The Pastorals—The First Principles

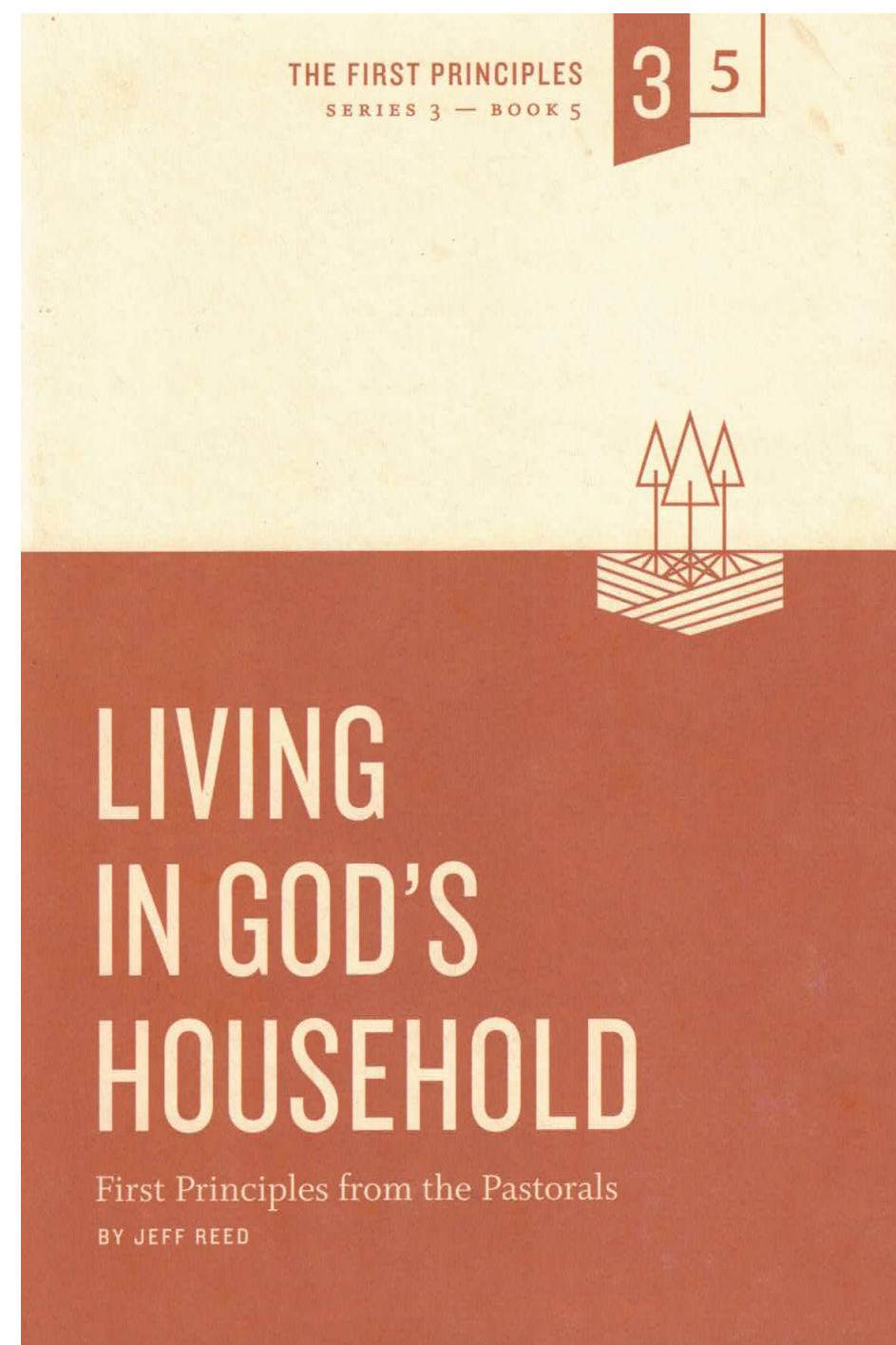


Committing Your Heart: Reflection, Personal Journaling, and Prayer

Reflection/Journaling:

While our churches are “well set in order,” we have never solved the huge problem in our culture of caring for widows. Our national system of “nursing homes” is terrible; it is often like throwing away the elderly, especially widows. We need to think this through very carefully, which may take a few years.

The Pastorals—The First Principles



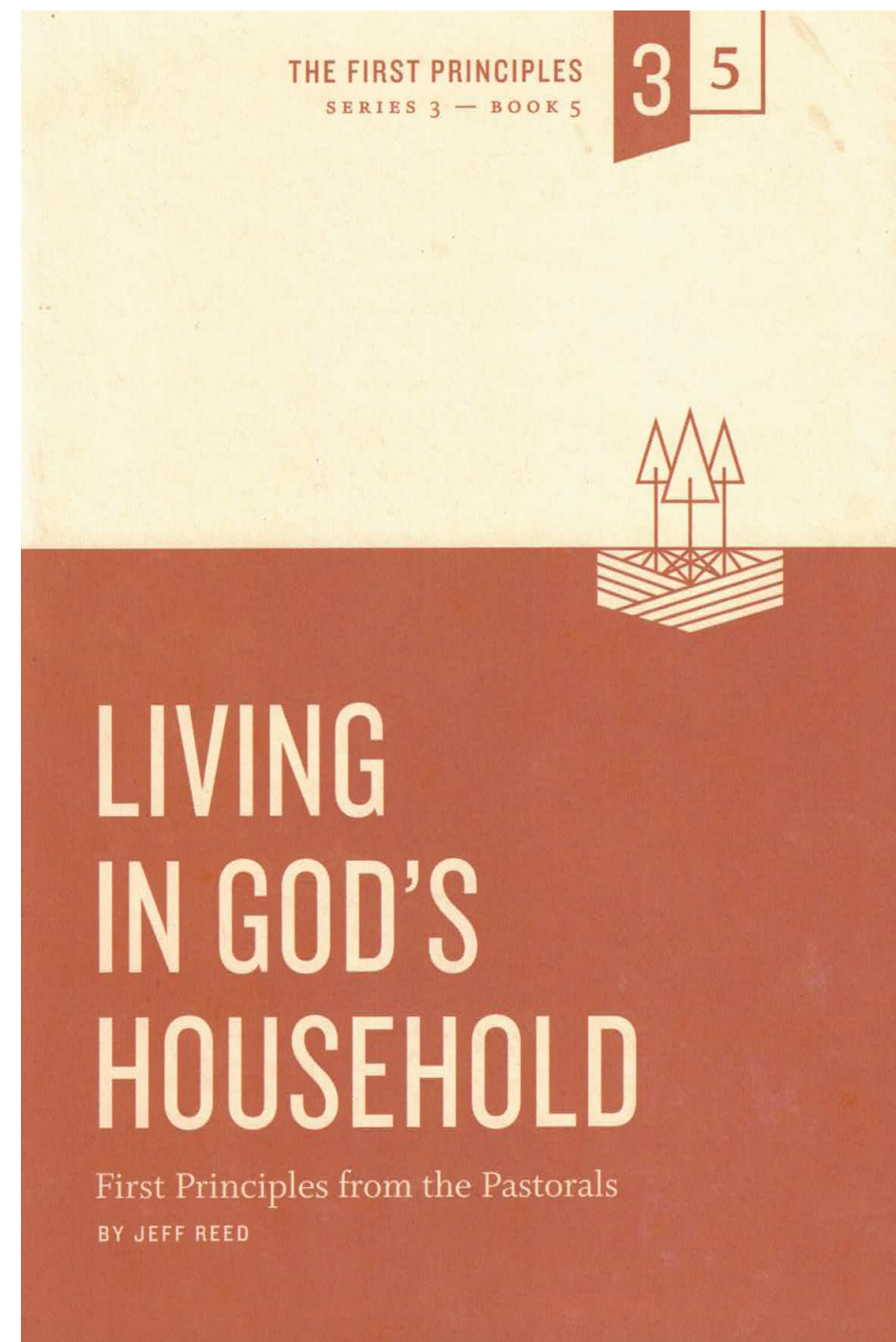
Committing Your Heart: Reflection, Personal Journaling, and Prayer

Prayer:

Over the next 2–5 years that we, as apostolic team and senior elders, will gain great insight into how to care for our elderly, especially older widows, and design a dynamic plan that works in our culture, replacing in our churches the “nursing home” mess.

The Pastorals—The First Principles

Committing Your Mind: Forming Clear Convictions and Memorizing Scripture



Mature, Well-Ordered Households and Leaders

Churches set in order (household topos)

1 Timothy 3:14–16

Solid senior eldership Titus 1:5–9
(elders, deacons, women: 1 Timothy 3)

Household texts (family of families):

1 Timothy 5:1–6:2

Titus 2:1–21

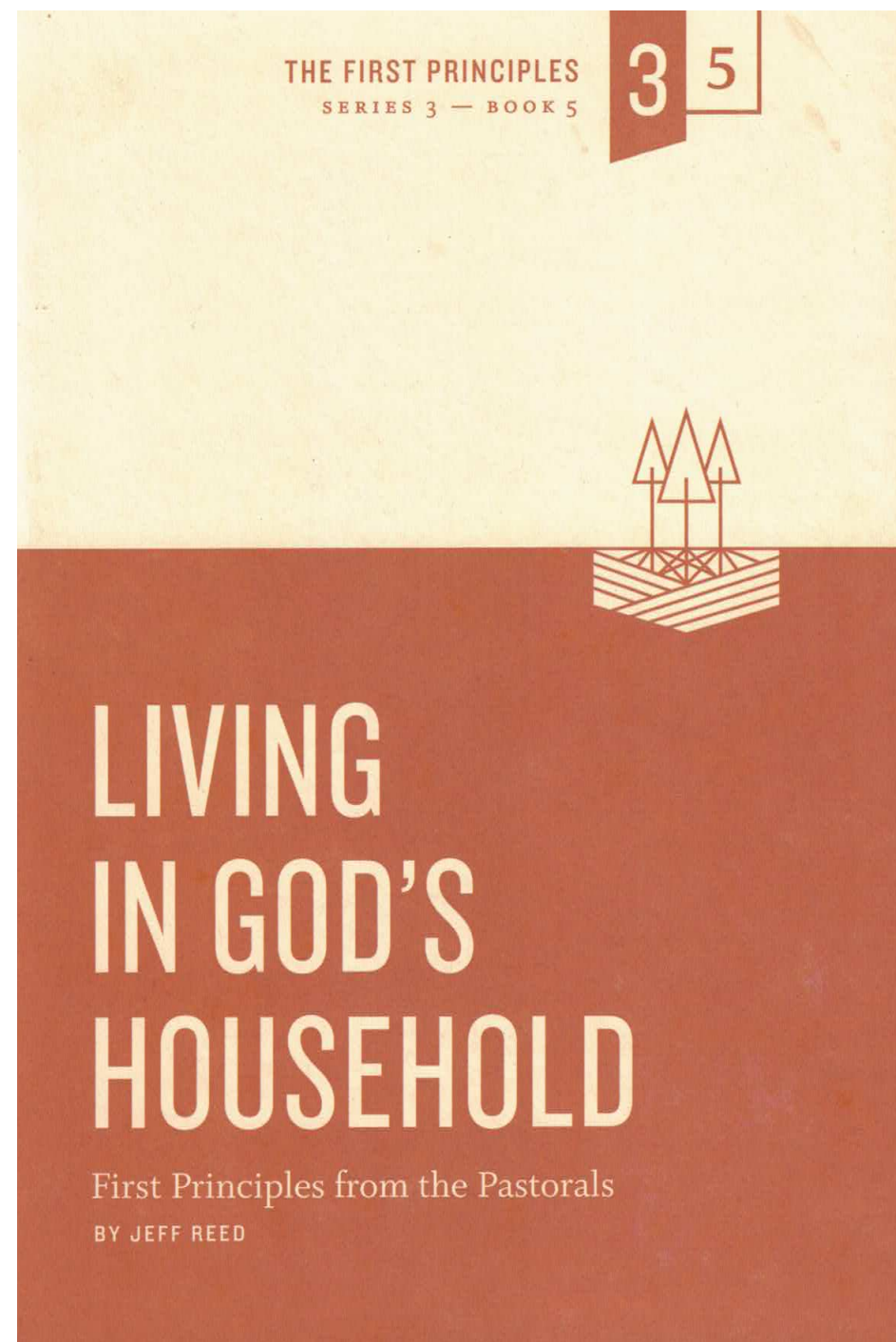
Key, intergenerational apostolic leaders and teams

Training process, stewardship responsibilities: 2 Timothy

Leadership virtue/vice cluster lists:

1 Timothy 3:2–4, 8–12; 6:3–5; Titus 1:6–9; 3:3; 2 Timothy 3:2–5

The Pastorals—The First Principles



Committing Your Mind: Forming Clear Convictions and Memorizing Scripture

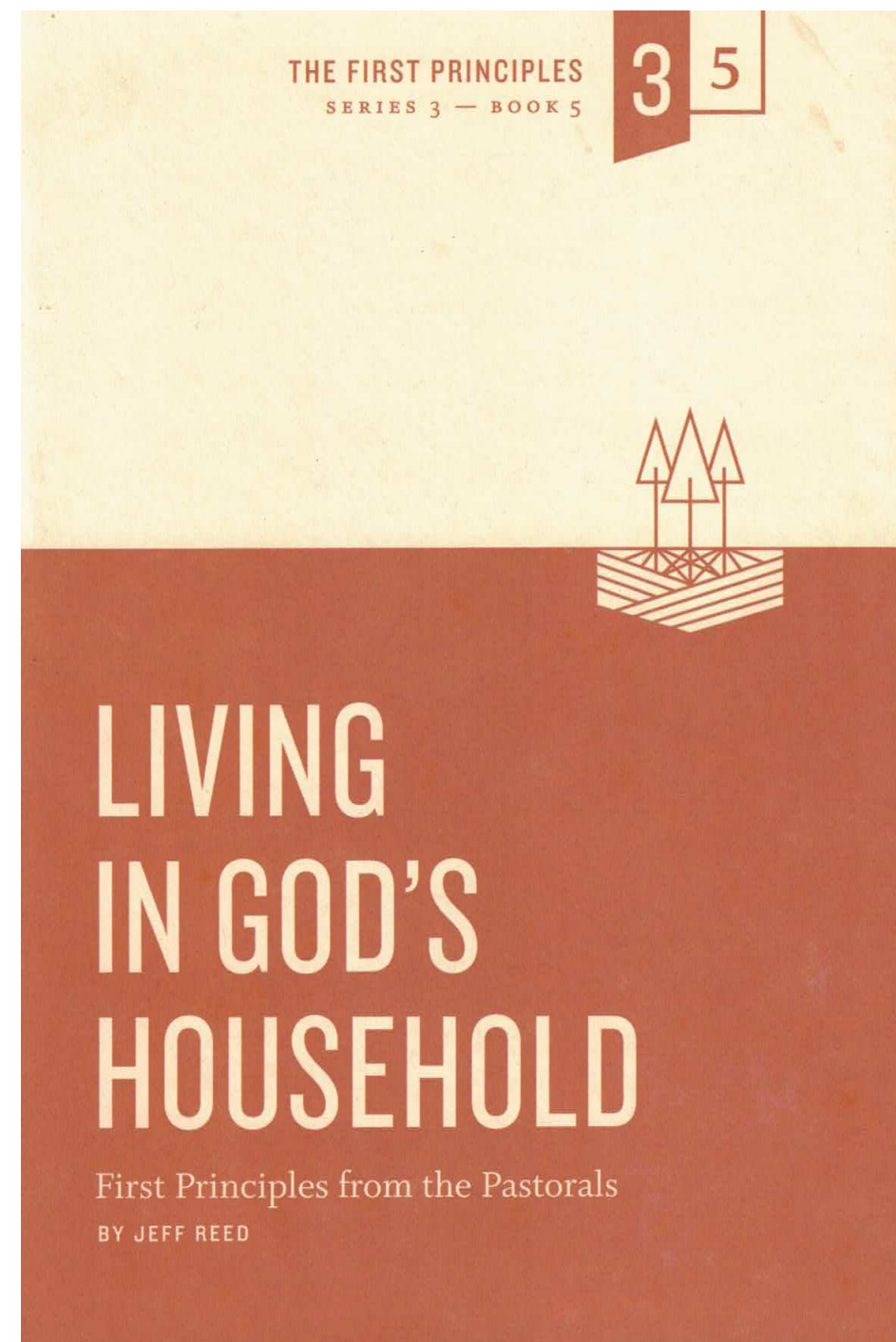
New insight: When Paul talks about the deposit (the faith, the sound doctrine) he entrusted to Timothy, he is referring to his letters as its essence, although he clearly saw all Scripture as “profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16).

Key breakthrough article: “The Pauline Corpus” by E. Randolph Richards, chapter 14 in *Canon Formation: Tracing the Role of Sub-Sections in the Biblical Canon*, edited by W. Edward Glenny and Darian R. Lockett (T&T Clark, 2023), \$150.

He proves that Paul’s entire 13 letters appeared as a complete 13-letter collection very early after Paul died; he ties it to bringing the parchments (notebooks) in 2 Timothy 4:13: “and above all the parchments.”

Memory Work: 2 Timothy 4:9–22

The Pastorals—The First Principles



Committing Your Life: Decisions, Personal Projects, and Life Habits

Research and design a “theology in culture” project of caring for our elderly and dealing with the issue of “putting older widows on the list,” including forming a cutting edge “cultural reader.”

The Process, Your Own Work, Skill Sets

Let me highlight several observations:

1. We must do our own work or we will not be effective in developing others; it will not come from our lives, just our heads.
2. We need to work on several skill sets: study skills, teaching/educational skills, shepherding/counseling skills.
3. We need to be part of a development process: Paul told Timothy that his progress should be evident to all.
4. We must do everything we can to help every believer, including our kids, to personally learn and practice the first principles, to develop their own capacity to think biblically.

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The Petrine Circle & Johannine Literature

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