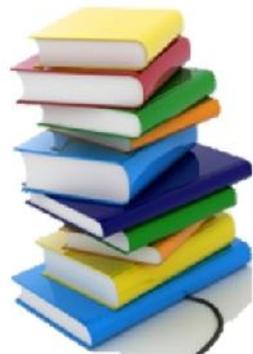


M	02/06	Acts 20
T		21
W		22
T		23
F		24
M	09/06	25
T		26
W		27
T		28
F		Romans 01
M	16/06	02
T		03
W		04
T		05
F		06
M	23/06	07
T		08
W		09
T		10
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M	30/06	12



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Contact details

Staff

Adam Broughton (Pastor)

adam@newcraigs.co.uk

☎ 01592 204405

Steve Crosthwaite (Associate Pastor)

steve@newcraigs.co.uk

☎ 01592 204405

Elders

Adam Broughton

Steve Crosthwaite

Gavin Struthers

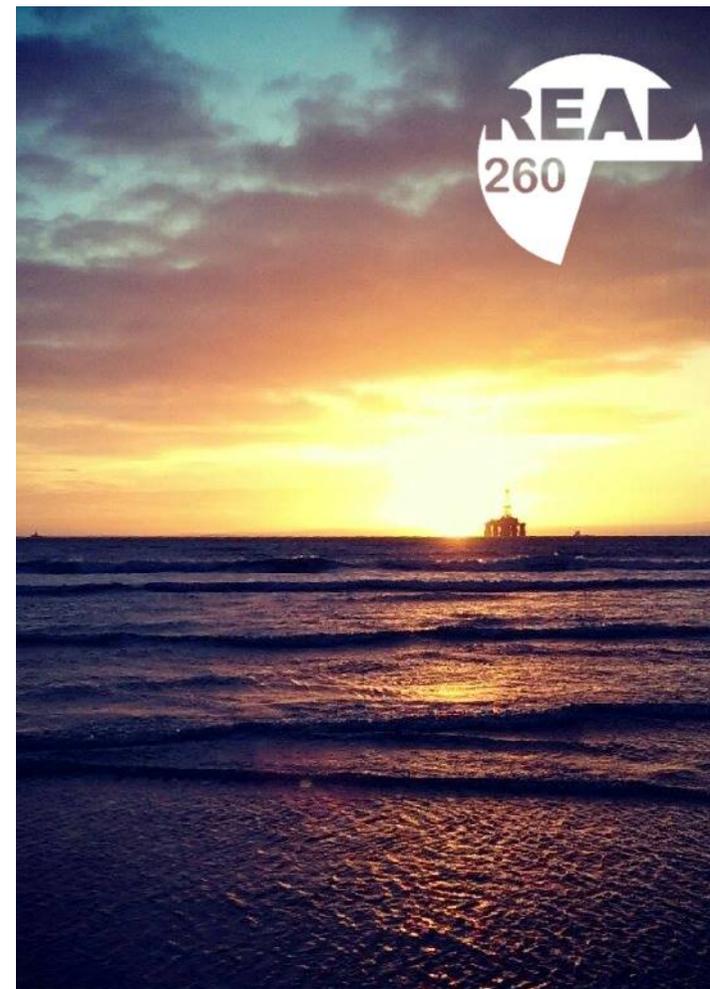
Rob Weir

Newcraigs Evangelical Church

Forres Drive

Kirkcaldy, Fife

KY2 6YL



**THE NEW TESTAMENT
IN ONE YEAR**

*June : Acts 20
- Romans 12*

Web: www.newcraigs.co.uk . Tel: 01592 204405



THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ONE YEAR

Did you know there are 260 chapters in the New Testament? Did you also know that there are 260 weekdays in a year? This seemed like an opportunity too good to miss, so here at Newcraigs we're reading the whole New Testament throughout 2014, from Matthew to Revelation.

How you take part is up to you; you might read a chapter each morning before you start the day or go to work, or read together with your family around the dinner table. You might meet up with a few friends, once a week, to read and discuss that week's chapters, or catch up online during your lunch break.

What really matters is that we're listening to God, as he speaks to us through his Word. We want this to be as flexible as it can be. We don't want to stress you out by giving you another thing you "have to do", or make you feel guilty if you miss a day, but we hope that you can carve out some time this year for READ260. The aim is simple; to listen to God, as we read his Word together, and let him transform us.



So we're six months into READ260. How are you doing? We've explored the life of Jesus from the perspectives of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and this month we'll come to the end of Acts, the story of the church's birth.

If you've managed to stick with us (and even if you've missed a few chapters) you must have noticed something in Jesus; he's profound, compassionate, bold, uncompromising, revolutionary, captivating; he's not what you'd expect. You can't miss it; he's God's plan for salvation. As we move on from the Gospels and Acts don't think that the focus is going to shift from Jesus.

The next part of the Bible is made up of letters written to churches and individuals. As they engage with the pressures of family life, work and citizenship, leading churches and making sense of doctrine, the authors of these letters are constantly drawing their readers back to Jesus, the one who makes sense of it all.

PAUL

The man responsible for more New Testament books than any other is Paul. His role in Acts grows from a walk-on part, in chapter 7, to taking center stage in the second half of the book. He is a transformed man. Once a religious extremist, set on the imprisonment and death of any who follow Christ, now a fearless witness for the gospel.

ROMANS

Paul's 13 letters make up a major part of the New Testament and have been hugely significant in the development of Christian Theology through the centuries, but we mustn't think of them as just "systematic" theology, in a vacuum. Each of his letters is written to real people, with a specific situation in mind. This is the case in Paul's most celebrated letter, Romans.

He writes to a church he hasn't yet visited, possibly founded by Jewish converts who heard Peter's preaching at Pentecost (Acts 2:10). In the letter he introduces himself to them, shares his longing to visit and unpacks his theology in great detail. He also seems to be addressing an issue that has arisen in the church. Since the church's expansion into the gentile world the demographic of congregations has begun to change; where they were once predominantly Jewish, the balance has shifted and many are now overwhelmingly gentile. This caused huge friction and became a major issue for the 1st century church.

Paul seems to open the book of Romans in response to this. After 3 chapters he concludes that "There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:22-24). Whatever their background, all of them are sinners saved by God's grace.

The heart of the book explores this good news further, coming to it's climax in chapter 8, with the assurance that "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1) and that there is nothing that can separate us from God's love that is ours in him.

In chapter 12 Paul changes gear again, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1). Real worship, Paul tells us, is a life lived in response to God's amazing mercy and grace.

10 of those.com There are a number of key resources and publications on the book of Romans available from our on-line bookstore. www.newcraigs.co.uk/online-bookstore