

Introduction to the New Testament

The New Testament consists of 27 books written in the first century (45-98 AD) by the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ. These 27 books are generally attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude. No one knows for sure who wrote the book of Hebrews, though many attribute the book to Paul.

The New Testament was originally written in Koine Greek, while the Old Testament was mostly in Hebrew. The New Testament contains a vocabulary of approximately 5,450 words. The Greek New Testament contains a total of 130,000 words, which translated grows to 169,000 English words.

The New Testament originally appeared with neither chapters nor verses. It had its first chapter divisions in the 4th Century AD with the Codex Vaticanus. Verse divisions first appear in 1551 in the 4th edition of the Greek New Testament printed by Stephanus (Robert Estienne). The New Testament has 260 chapters and 7,957 verses. At normal reading speed it takes about thirteen hours to read through the New Testament. Reading three chapters per day, one can read through the New Testament four times each year.

Each book of the New Testament stands on its own as an inspired and authoritative work. The New Testament is a written revelation fulfilling the promise Jesus made to the apostles to bring to their remembrance all the things that He taught them and further to guide them into all the truth (John 14:26; 16:12-15).

The New Testament may be divided into five categories: (1) The four gospel accounts of Jesus and His teachings, (2) the history of the beginning of the church, (3) the epistles of the apostle Paul, (4) the general epistles, and (5) a book of prophecy. Some Orthodox editions of the New Testament arrange the books so that the general epistles precede the epistles of Paul.

Gospels	History	Paul's epistles	General epistles	Prophecy
Matthew Mark Luke John	Acts	Romans 1 & 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 & 2 Thessalonians 1 & 2 Timothy Titus Philemon ? Hebrews	? Hebrews James 1 & 2 Peter 1, 2, & 3 John Jude	Revelation

Before the end of the first century, the church began to recognize the books of the New Testament as inspired and authoritative. Like the 39 books of the Old Testament, Christians recognized the apostolic books as a "canon," a measuring rod for that which is the divine rule of faith. Early Christians did not determine the canon; they only recognized it. Although not all of the books were known in one place, Christians somewhere accepted all New Testament books as divine and authoritative. No writing known as apostolic was rejected anywhere. Within one generation after John completed his writings, some church leaders cited all twenty-seven books of the New Testament as Scripture. Within two centuries all the New Testament but a handful of verses were quoted by the early church in three to four thousand citations, which are now preserved. Other Christian writings were preserved and even read in the churches, but they did not receive the authoritative approval of the apostolic writings making up our New Testament.

The early church recognized which books belonged in the canon of the New Testament based on their apostolicity, contents, universality, and inspiration. They only recognized those books written by an apostle or by an inspired person closely related to an apostle. F.F. Bruce said, "One thing must be emphatically stated. The New Testament books did not become authoritative for the Church because they were formally included in a canonical list; on the contrary, the Church included them in her canon

because she already regarded them as divinely inspired, recognizing their innate worth and generally apostolic authority, direct or indirect" (*The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* 27).

The New Testament recognizes its own inspiration. Paul admitted that the things which he writes are the commandment of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37). Paul said about the things which he speaks, "we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches" (1 Cor. 2:13). Paul in 1 Tim. 5:18 quotes "Scripture" from two sources, Deut. 25:4 and Luke 10:7. This shows that Paul recognized the writings of the New Testament as equally inspired and authoritative as the Old Testament. Peter places Paul's writings in a category with the "rest of the Scriptures" (2 Pet. 3:16). Jude 17,18 cites 2 Pet. 3:2,3 as coming from the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ and needing to be remembered. Peter notes that whatever has come from the prophets came not by the will of men but "holy men of God spoke as *they were* moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:20,21). As Scripture, the New Testament "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

The New Testament is the best-attested ancient book in existence. There are more manuscripts of the New Testament than any other ancient book, and the manuscripts available are much closer in age to the originals than any other book. The oldest manuscript of the New Testament in existence is p⁵², a papyrus among the John Rylands Library and dating ca. 125 AD, only a generation after John wrote it. It contains John 18:31-33, 37-38. At this time there are nearly 5500 manuscripts of the Greek New Testament. Of these there are more than a hundred papyri, which date up to the fourth century AD.

The New Testament in whole or in part has been translated into more than 2200 languages and is available to more than 90% of the world's population. No book has ever been so closely studied or so translated as has the New Testament, which contains the words of Life for all mankind.

The word "testament" is used 13 times in the King James Version to translate the word *διαθήκη*. Other versions usually translate this word "covenant." Our English word "testament" usually refers to a document describing the testator's will and controlling the dispensing of his estate at death. In a sense the New Testament reveals the everlasting will of our Lord for His disciples, but the New Testament is more than merely a will. As a *διαθήκη* (covenant), it reveals God's plan for His relationship with all mankind. The blood of Jesus was a basis for that new covenant.

Hebrews 8:6-13 reveals that it was God's plan to establish with His people a new covenant built upon better promises. Quoting Jeremiah 31:31-34, the writer of the book of Hebrews showed that the old covenant was to become obsolete or vanish away and to be replaced by the new covenant. Roughly speaking, the Old Testament reveals the plan and will of God for Israel, while the New Testament or new covenant reveals the plan and will of God for both Jews and Gentiles for all time (Eph. 2:11-19). The Law as part of that covenant was a schoolmaster or tutor to lead us to Christ. Once faith had come, the people of God were no longer to be under the Law given at Sinai (Gal. 3:19-25). Paul notes that Christ is the end of the Law (Rom. 10:4).

Paul makes a number of contrasts between the old and new covenants in 2 Corinthians 3, showing that the new covenant is now the basis of our relationship with God. Covenants are agreements made between two parties that legally bind them in an enduring relationship. Covenants are made with self-imposed promises and demands on each party to fulfill responsibilities detailed within the covenant. The New Testament, though not written in legal form, reveals not only the promises and will of God but also the laws and commandments that He expects His people to keep.

Unlike the first covenant, the new covenant is able to free people from sin in a way that the Law of Moses could never accomplish (Acts 13:39). Those who entered the new covenant would enter by choice and with knowledge rather than by birth and heritage (Heb. 8:10-12). People enter the new covenant by being taught and coming to Jesus (John 6:44,45).

What Are the Four Gospels?

The four gospel accounts are not merely a portrait or biographies of the life of Jesus

Christ. Someone has said that in all the episodes in the four gospels, we only have pictures of 45 days of the life of Jesus. This is far too little to be called a biography.

While the gospel accounts are historical and accurate, they are not designed to be a comprehensive history. The literature is made up of narratives and the teachings of Jesus. They contain His actions, his sermons and his prayers. They reveal the opposition of the Pharisees, scribes and priests.

The Evangelists do not offer opinions about Him or even describe His physical appearance. Instead, what they set forth are reasons to believe in and to follow Him. They let His words and His actions speak for themselves in describing who He is and why we should believe on Him.

The gospels, according to Jack Lewis, were written through the eye of faith. They were written by believers to increase faith (John 20:30,31; Luke 1:1-4). Their purpose was to be persuasive as a theological tract or treatise.

Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the "Synoptic" Gospels, because they noticeably "see together" on a great deal of their material. These three agree extensively in language, in the material they include, and in the order in which events and sayings are recorded. A comparison shows that 91 percent of Mark is found in Matthew and 53 percent in Luke. Less than 40 verses are actually unique to Mark.

John's gospel account, which was possibly written much later than the first three, supplements their material. John said, "And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written" (21:25).

Introduction to Matthew

From the earliest of times Matthew has been regarded as the first of the four accounts of the gospel. Some scholars regard this book as the link between the Old and New Testaments. Matthew's gospel account provides us with the story and the teachings of the Messiah, for whom the Jews had long been waiting.

Tradition claims that Matthew wrote for the Jews, Mark for the Romans, Luke for the Greeks and John for the church. Whether this is true or not, Matthew is certainly the most Jewish of the four accounts. He quotes or alludes to the Old Testament 310 times. According to Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*

(352 AD) Papias, bishop of Hierapolis of Phrygia (ca. 130 AD) said, "Matthew collected the oracles in the Hebrew language and each interpreted them as best he could." While some have taken this to mean the book was first written in Hebrew, Jack P. Lewis insists that Matthew was first written in Greek, since no citations from or manuscripts of an early Aramaic gospel survive.

While the author's name is not given anywhere in the text itself, the earliest manuscripts and citations universally attribute the work to the apostle Matthew, who had been a tax collector. There is no evidence of any early manuscript of this book without the title "According to Matthew." Of the four gospel accounts, the early Christian writers made reference to Matthew the most. References can be clearly seen in the *Teaching of the Twelve* (90 AD), Barnabas (130 AD), and Justin Martyr (150 AD). Matthew is more frequently quoted in the early church fathers than the other three gospel accounts.

Matthew, the tax collector turned apostle, is first mentioned in this book bearing his name in 9:9-13 at Capernaum. Jesus urged Matthew to "Follow Me," and "Matthew arose and followed Him." Luke reveals that Matthew immediately gave a banquet for Jesus in his house (Luke 5:27-29). Mark calls Matthew "Levi, son of Alphaeus" (Mark 2:14); and Luke refers to him as Levi, the tax-gatherer (Luke 5:27-29). Matthew means "gift of God" and seems to be his preferred name. All four lists number Matthew among the apostles (Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:14-19; Luke 6:13-16 and Acts 1:13).

Eusebius, quoting Irenaeus, suggests that Matthew wrote his gospel account while Peter and Paul were in Rome (not later than 64 AD) and that he wrote when he left Palestine to go elsewhere. Scholars suggest that he likely went to Syria and that the book was destined for Jewish Christians there.

No one knows the precise date when Matthew wrote. J.W. McGarvey argues that the phrase "to this day," referring to the buying of Potter's field and the false report of Jesus' body being stolen (27:8; 28:15), means that the book was written some years after the death of Jesus. The prophecy of the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem (24:1-3) without a mention of its fulfillment might imply that the book was written prior to fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Matthew was likely written between 60-65 AD about the same time as Luke's gospel. Since Matthew and Luke show

no knowledge of each other's accounts, many scholars believe they were written at about the same time.

Matthew points to Jesus as the promised King, the Messiah, and His kingdom. The word "kingdom" is used one hundred times within the book. Matthew is the "Gospel of the King." Jesus is the "Son of David" (21:1-10), born in Bethlehem, the city of King David (2:5). Wise men traveled from the East to worship and present gifts to the "King of the Jews" (2:2). Riding on the colt of a donkey, Jesus was lauded with "Hosanna to the Son of David" (21:9). Over His cross was the inscription, "The King of the Jews" (27:29-42).

Matthew recalls the identity of Jesus as the "Son of God." He shows that Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt did I call my Son" (2:12-23). God from heaven proclaims Jesus to be His beloved Son both at his baptism (3:17) and at his transfiguration (17:5). Peter confessed Jesus, saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (16:16). Jesus as the "Son of God" is to be regarded as Deity and is identified with the Father and the Holy Spirit (28:19).

Jesus often refers to Himself as the "Son of Man" and is so called thirty-one times in Matthew. The "Son of Man" had no place to lay his head (8:20) yet could heal the sick and forgive sins (9:1-6). The "Son of Man" was to be betrayed, to suffer, to be crucified, and to be raised on the third day" (17:22-23). It is the "Son of Man" who will return at an unknown day and will sit on His throne to judge all the nations (24:35-44; 25:30-31). Jesus as both Son of God and Son of Man was both divine and human. He came from heaven (John 3:13) yet suffered death as a man. Jesus is also called "the Lord" (22:43,44) and "the Teacher" (26:18).

Matthew frequently uses such phrases as, "that what was spoken of the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled" (2:15). He is concerned with showing that Jesus is the Messiah who has fulfilled in detail what the prophets predicted.

Matthew uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven" thirty-two times. This phrase is often "kingdom of God" in parallel passages in Mark and Luke.

Of the four gospel accounts only Matthew records the genealogy from Abraham, the announcement to Joseph, the visit of the wise men, the slaughter of the infants, the flight to and return from Egypt (chapters 1-2). Only

Matthew records the conversation with John at Jesus' baptism, the Sermon on the Mount, the healing of two blind men, the limited Commission to the twelve, Peter's walking on the water, the coin in the fish's mouth, the exception clause for divorce, the details of Judas' betrayal of Jesus and his death, the dream of Pilate's wife, the setting of the guard, the tearing of the veil of the temple, the opening of the tombs when Jesus died, and the bribing of the soldiers.

Matthew alone reveals eleven of Jesus' parables: the tares, the hidden treasure, the pearl, the dragnet, the unmerciful servant, the laborers in the vineyard, the two sons, the king's marriage feast, the ten virgins, the talents, and the judgment throne.

Matthew presents his material like bouquets of roses, each one pointing to the unique place of the Messiah King. Though we know little of Matthew himself, we can be grateful the Holy Spirit inspired him to write this gospel account. We could never know Jesus fully were it not for the gospel according to Matthew.

Outline of Matthew

A. Lineage, Birth and Early Years

1:1-4:11

1. Genealogy 1:1-17
2. Birth 1:18-25
3. Visit of Magi 2:1-12
4. Flight to Egypt and Return 2:13-23
5. Preaching of John the Baptist 3:1-12
6. Baptism of Jesus 3:13-17
7. Temptation of Jesus 4:1-11

B. Ministry of Jesus in Galilee

4:12-18:35

1. Jesus' Preaching 4:12-17
2. First Disciples 4:18-22
3. Jesus Teaching and Healing 4:23-25
4. Sermon on the Mount 5:1-7:29
5. Miracles of Jesus 8:1-9:38
6. Limited Commission 10:1-42
7. Preaching and Teaching 11:1-12:50
8. Seven Parables about the Kingdom 13:1-58
9. Death of John 14:1-21
10. Walking on the Water 14:22-36
11. Jesus on Clean and Unclean 15:1-20
12. Canaanite Woman 15:21-28
13. Feeding of the Five Thousand 15:29-39
14. Pharisees and Sadducees 16:1-12
15. Peter's Confession 16:13-20

16. Jesus Predicts Death 16:21-28
17. The Transfiguration 17:1-13
18. Healing of Epileptic Boy 17:14-23
19. Tax in Fish's Mouth 17:24-27
20. Greatest in Kingdom 18:1-9
21. Parable of Lost Sheep 18:10-14
22. Forgiveness 18:15-35

C. Ministry of Jesus in Perea and Judea 19:1-20:34

1. Divorce and Celibacy 19:1-12
2. Jesus and Little Children 19:13-15
3. Rich Young Man 19:16-30
4. Parable of the Laborers 20:1-16
5. Jesus Predicts Death 20:17-19
6. Serving and Greatness 20:20-28
7. Jesus Heals the Blind Man 20:29-34

D. Ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem 21:1-25:46

1. Jesus Triumphant Entry 21:1-11
2. Deeds, Parables, and Questions 21:12-22:46
3. Scribes and Pharisees Denounced 23:1-36
4. Jesus' Lamentation over Jerusalem 23:37-39
5. Jesus' Discourse about the Temple and the End of Time 24:1-25:46

E. Betrayal and Trial of Jesus 26:1-27:32

1. Jesus Predicts Death at Passover 26:1-2
2. Priests and Elders plot Death 26:3-5
3. Jesus Anointed 26:6-13
4. Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus 26:14-16
5. Passover and Lord's Supper 26:17-30
6. Peter's Denial Predicted 26:31-35
7. Jesus Prays at Gethsemane 26:36-46
8. Betrayal and Arrest 26:47-56
9. Trial before Caiaphas 26:57-68
10. Peter's Denial 26:69-75
11. Jesus returned to Pilate 27:1,2
12. Judas Returns Money and Commits Suicide 27:3-10
13. Jesus before Pilate 27:11-26
14. Mocked and Led Away 27:27-32

F. Crucifixion and Burial of Jesus 27:33-66

1. Golgotha 27:33,34
23. Nailed to Cross with Robbers 27:35-49
24. Death of Jesus 27:50-56
25. Request of Joseph of Arimathea for Body of Jesus 27:57-61
26. Making the Tomb Secure 27:62-66

G. Resurrection of Jesus 28:1-15

1. Early Visitors and the Angel 28:1-7
2. Women's Report 28:8-10
3. Soldiers' Lie that Body was Stolen 28:11-15

H. Last Words and Great Commission 28:16-20

Introduction to Mark

Although the book of Mark does not bear his name, the early church unanimously regarded John Mark as the author of this gospel account. Papias (140 AD) quoted an earlier source as saying Mark was a close associate of Peter, from whom he received the tradition of the things Jesus did. The material for the book came from the preaching of Peter, and Mark was careful not to omit anything. It is thought that Mark preserved the words of Peter shortly before his death in Rome. This would place the date of Mark's account of the gospel at 62-68 AD. Others who hold that Mark was a source of information for Matthew and Luke date Mark from the early 50s to the early 60s.

The thrust of Mark's gospel is to move men to faith in the Son of God. This faith finds its highlight in 15:39 when the centurion proclaimed, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

John Mark was the son of Mary, a Jewish Christian, in whose home the church gathered to pray for Peter (Acts 12:12). John Mark was either the nephew or the cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10). He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first evangelistic journey but departed from them at Pamphylia, returning to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). His early departure from the mission led to a sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas wished to take John Mark with them on their second journey, but Paul disagreed. Consequently, Barnabas separated from Paul and took John Mark to Cyprus, while Paul took Silas and went to Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:36-40).

In later years Paul took a different view of John Mark. Mark sent greetings with Paul to Philemon (Philemon 24). Paul urged the Colossians to receive Mark if he came to them (Col. 4:10). Paul in his last letter to Timothy sought for Mark, who would be "useful to me

for ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11). Peter referred to Mark as "my son" (1 Pet. 5:13).

Mark is often called the "gospel of action," since he speaks more of what Jesus did than what He said. Mark pictures Jesus as a man of action, using the term "immediately" 45 times. Mark stresses the authority in Jesus' word (1:22) and in his deeds (1:27).

Mark's language is simple, direct and common. He describes events with vivid images. Mark speaks not only of the words of Jesus but also of his gestures, attitudes and emotions (3:5; 6:34; 7:34; 8:12; 11:16). Mark is the briefest gospel account as a whole, but in some episodes is fuller than the other accounts. For instance, Mark tells us more than Matthew about the death of John the Baptist, the conflict with the Pharisees, the healing of the demon-possessed boy, and the discussion about the greatest commandment.

Only two parables are unique to Mark, the parable of the seed growing secretly (4:26-29) and the parable of the fig tree (13:28).

Mark writes to Romans, who would not understand many of the Jewish words and customs. For example, Mark translates Boanerges as "sons of Thunder" (3:17); "Talitha kum" as "Little girl, I say to you, arise" (5:41); "Ephphatha" as "Be opened" (7:34); and "Abba" as "Father" (14:36).

If the "Rufus" mentioned by Mark in 15:21 is the same one greeted by Paul in Romans 16:13, this suggests a direct connection of this Gospel with Rome.

Mark presents Jesus as the "Servant of God," who suffers in behalf of the people. The shadow of the cross seems to cover the book as Jesus predicts his death in Jerusalem (8:31; 9:31; 10:33). Jesus describes himself as the "Son of Man" frequently in Mark, emphasizing his humanity (Cf. 3:5; 6:6, 31, 34; 8:12, 33; 10:14; 11:12). In spite of this, Mark never neglects to point out the deity of Jesus (cf. 1:1, 11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 12:1-11; 13:32; 15:39).

On several occasions in Mark, Jesus warns His disciples and others to keep silent about who He is or what He has done (cf. 1:34, 44; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36-37; 8:26, 30; 9:9). Jesus does not want everyone to know that He is indeed the Messiah until He has risen from the dead.

Early writers say Christians were blamed by Nero for the fire of 64 AD, which destroyed the city and led to a persecution. If Mark was written at the time of Peter's death and Nero's persecution in Rome, this would explain Mark's emphasis on the cross and the suffering, which

disciples are called to bear. Mark often refers to suffering the cost of discipleship and may be preparing his readers for the problems they were to face (Cf. 1:12-13; 3:22, 30; 8:34-38; 10:30, 33-34, 45; 13:8, 11-13).

Outline of Mark

I. God Gives His Servant 1:1-2:12

1. Forerunner of the Servant 1:1-8
2. Baptism of Servant 1:9-11
3. Temptation of Servant 1:12-13
4. Mission of the Servant 1:14-2:12

II. Opposition to the Servant

2:13-8:26

1. Beginnings of Opposition 2:13-3:35
2. Parables of the Servant 4:1-34
3. Miracles of the Servant 4:35-5:43
4. Growing Opposition 6:1-8:26

III. Instruction by the Servant

8:27-10:52

1. Peter's Confession of Christ 8:27-33
2. Cost of Discipleship 8:34-9:1
3. Transfiguration 9:2-13
4. Demon-Possessed Son is Healed 9:14-29
5. Jesus Predicts Death 9:30-32
6. Jesus Prepares His Disciples 9:33-10:45
7. Bartimaeus is Healed 10:46-52

IV. The Rejection of the Servant 11:1-15:47

1. Triumphal Entry 11:1-19
2. Instruction on Prayer 11:20-26
3. Jesus' Authority Questioned 11:27-33
4. Parable of Vinedressers 12:1-12
5. Debates with Pharisees and Sadducees 12:13-44
6. Predicting destruction of Jerusalem and the End of Time 13:1-37
7. The Suffering and Death of the Servant 14:1-15:47

V. The Resurrection of the Servant 16:1-20

1. Resurrection of Jesus 16:1-8
2. Appearances of Jesus 16:9-18
3. Ascension of Jesus 16:19-20

Introduction to Luke

The book of Luke, like Matthew and Mark, is unnamed but universally attributed to Luke. It was the custom in ancient Greek libraries to catalog books by using the name of the author for its entry. The title "According to Luke" appears on all the most ancient manuscripts of this gospel account. Church fathers of the second century are unanimous in attributing authorship to Luke for both the gospel account and the book of Acts.

In 1 Tim. 5:18 Paul cites Luke 10:7 along with Deut. 25:4 and calls both passages "Scripture." Because of Luke's close association with Paul and because Luke himself is considered a prophet, Luke and Acts were regarded as canonical from the earliest times.

Luke is the only known Gentile to author any book of the New Testament. Luke cites the Septuagint when he quotes the Old Testament and avoids Hebrew expressions. As a Greek he uses Greek expressions in their place.

Because both books are addressed to "Theophilus" (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1), Luke and Acts are recognized as coming from the same author. The use of the phrase "most excellent" in Acts 1:1 suggests that Theophilus was a high government official (Acts 1:1; 23:26; 24:3; 26:25).

The vocabulary and style of the books also link them to one author. Together Luke and Acts comprise 28 percent of the New Testament, the largest amount written by one author (unless Paul is the author of Hebrews).

The author of Acts identifies himself as an associate of Paul in the famous "we" passages (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16). While this does not prove Luke is the author, it does agree with other evidence pointing in the same direction. Paul mentioned Luke as his companion in Col. 4:14, Philemon 24, and 2 Tim. 4:11.

Luke is called the "beloved physician" in Col. 4:14. The vivid descriptions of medical matters, such as a "high fever" (4:38) or "full of leprosy" (5:12), suggests the author could have been a physician.

Luke describes his work as an account of the things (Jesus) accomplished (Luke 1:1-4). Luke apparently had access to eyewitness testimony and the traditions handed down. Luke said he had a perfect understanding of everything from the first and wrote out an

orderly his account "so that you might know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed." While Theophilus was the primary reader, it is likely that Luke sought to establish faith in prospective and newly converted Christians by this gospel account.

Luke likely wrote this gospel account between 59 and 62 AD. Since Acts is the sequel to Luke and ends with Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, this book could not be dated later than 62 AD. Further, since Luke does not show an awareness of Matthew, it is likely that the two books were written about the same time. If 1 Tim. 5:18 quotes Luke (10:7) as "Scripture," then Luke must have circulated prior to Paul's letter to Timothy (ca. 65 AD).

The book of Luke emphasizes the individual and has a universal appeal. Luke recognizes Samaritans, Gentiles, sinners, the poor, outcasts, women, and children. Luke reveals that a number of women ministered to Jesus out of their private means (8:2,3).

More than any other gospel writer, Luke shows the connection Jesus makes with world history and especially Roman history. Luke reveals that Jesus was born in the days of Caesar Augustus, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. In 3:1 Luke mentions five government officials who ruled when John the Baptist began to preach. Unlike Matthew, Luke takes the genealogy of Jesus all the way back to Adam (3:23-38), thereby connecting Jesus to the entire human race. Luke alone tells the story of the Good Samaritan,

Luke pays special attention to the prayer life of Jesus. Jesus was praying at His baptism (3:21), often slipping away to pray (5:15,16), and praying all night before selecting the apostles (6:12). Jesus was praying when He asked the disciples who men say He was (9:18). Jesus was praying when He was being transfigured (9:29). Luke tells of Jesus' agony while praying in the Garden of Gethsemane (22:39-46) and of His prayers on the cross (23:34,46). Jesus tells the parables on prayer of the unjust judge (18:1-8) and the Pharisee and publican (18:9-14).

Luke emphasizes salvation throughout his gospel account. A key verse is 19:10, "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke alone reveals how Jesus saved the sinful woman at Simon the Pharisee's house (7:36-50). Luke alone tells the three parables, the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the Prodigal Son (chapter 15) in response to those who grumbled at His eating

with tax collectors and sinners. Luke alone tells of the conversion of the tax collector Zacchaeus (19:1-10) and the pardon of the thief on the cross (23:39-43).

Luke records Jesus' warnings to the rich and his compassion for the poor (1:53; 4:18; 6:20-25; 12:13-21; 14:13; 16:19-31; 19:1-10).

Only Luke reveals the graphic picture of life after death (16:19-31), of the place of comfort and the place of torment.

Outline of Luke

I. Prologue 1:1-4

II. Birth and Infancy Narratives 1:5-2:52

1. Annunciations (1:5-56)
2. Birth of John (1:57-80)
3. Birth and childhood of Jesus (2:1-52)

III. Preparation for the Ministry 3:1-4:13

1. John as Forerunner (3:1-20)
2. Jesus' baptism (3:21-22)
3. Jesus' genealogy (3:23-38)
4. Temptation of Jesus (4:1-13)

IV. Galilean Ministry 4:14-9:50

1. Beginning of ministry (4:14-41)
2. First Tour of Galilee (4:42-5:39)
3. Sabbath Controversy (6:1-11)
4. Choosing the Twelve (6:12-16)
5. Sermon on a level place (6:17-49)
6. Miracles at Capernaum and Nain (7:1-18)
7. Inquiry of John the Baptist (7:19-20)
8. Jesus and the Pharisees (7:30-50)
9. Second Tour of Galilee (8:1-3)
10. Parables of the Kingdom (8:4-21)
11. Crossing the Sea of Galilee (8:22-25)
12. Healing of Legion (8:26-39)
13. Healing of Jairus' daughter and Woman (8:40-56)
14. Sending out of Twelve (9:1-6)
15. Herod's Desire to see Jesus (9:7-9)
16. Feeding of the Five Thousand (9:10-16)
17. Peter's Confession of Jesus and the Prediction of Jesus death (9:18-22)
18. Challenge to Take up a Cross (9:23-26)
19. Jesus Transfigured (9:27-36)
20. Demon-possessed boy healed (9:37-42)
21. Second prediction of death (9:43-45)
22. Dispute about the greatest (9:46-48)

23. Recognition of other servants (9:49-50)

V. The Road to Jerusalem 9:51-19:27

1. Jesus sets his face (9:51)
2. Jesus rejected in Samaria (9:52-56)
3. Cost of Discipleship (9:57-62)
4. Parable of Lost Sheep, Lost Coin and Prodigal Son (15:1-32)
5. Parable of Shrewd Steward (16:1-18)
6. Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31)
7. Offenses, Faith and Forgiveness (17:1-10)
8. Ten Lepers Healed (17:11-19)
9. Coming of the Kingdom (17:20-37)
10. Parable of Persistent Widow (18:1-8)
11. Pharisee and Tax Collector (18:9-14)
12. Jesus and Children (18:15-17)
13. Rich Young Ruler (18:18-30)
14. Jesus Again Predicts Death (18:31-34)
15. Blind Beggar Healed (18:35-43)
16. Jesus and Zacchaeus (19:1-10)
17. Parable of Ten Minas (19:11-27)

VI. Last Days, Death and Resurrection 19:28-24:53

1. Triumphal Entry (19:28-44)
2. Cleansing of the Temple (19:45-48)
3. Controversies with Jewish leaders (20:1-47)
4. Widow's Mites (21:1-4)
5. Destruction of Jerusalem and End Time Predictions (21:5-38)
6. Plot to Kill Jesus (22:1-6)
7. Passover and Last Supper (22:7-23)
8. Discipleship and Greatness (22:24-30)
9. Peter's Denial Foretold (22:31-34)
10. Preparation for Service (22:35-38)
11. Jesus at Gethsemane (22:39-46)
12. Arrest of Jesus (22:47-65)
13. Jesus on Trial (22:66-23:25)
14. Crucifixion (23:26-56)
15. Resurrection (24:1-12)
16. Appearances after Resurrection (24:13-49)
17. Ascension (24:50-53)

Introduction to John

As with the other three gospel accounts, every ancient manuscript that bears a title attributes this book to John. The book itself claims the author is the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20, 24). While the apostle John was prominent in the early church, his name fails to appear anywhere in

this book. In contrast, John's name appears twenty times in the synoptic gospels. This absence would be natural if he wrote it but hard to explain otherwise.

Early writers such as Irenaeus, Theophilus of Antioch, and Tertullian say that John wrote this gospel, and there is no reason to consider any other author. It is obvious that the author is a Palestinian Jew due to his extensive knowledge of the Old Testament and his precision with geographical details. Further, the author was an eyewitness due to the specifics he uses to describe persons, places and times.

John, the son of Zebedee, was among the first of the apostles chosen by Jesus (Matt. 4:18-22). John was close to Jesus in that he accompanied him to the Mount of Transfiguration and to Gethsemane. John leaned on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper (13:25), took Mary into his home at the Cross (19:26), ran to the tomb after the resurrection (20:10), and saw the resurrected Lord (21:1-25).

John wrote four books of the New Testament in addition to the Gospel: 1, 2, 3 John and Revelation. John lived in Ephesus after the fall of Jerusalem and was exiled to the Isle of Patmos during the reign of Domitian (81-96 AD). He was allowed to return from the exile by the next emperor Nerva and died in the days of Trajan.

John's gospel account is remarkably unique. More than 90% of its contents have no parallel in the other gospel accounts. Clement of Alexandria called it the "spiritual gospel" in 170 AD. John is written in very simple but profound language and contains several lengthy discourses of Jesus. Interestingly, John has no parables.

John states his purpose for writing explicitly in 20:30-31, "truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. This passage contains three dominant themes that run throughout the book: signs, belief, and life. Other key themes are love, kingdom and truth.

John tells of seven signs Jesus performed that demonstrate he was indeed the Son of God. Each sign shows his power over this world.

1. Changing water to wine at the wedding in Cana (2:1-11). Power over substance.
2. Healing the royal official's son (4:43-54). Power over distance.
3. Healing a lame man at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-15). Power over time.
4. Feeding of the five thousand (6:1-15). Power over quantity.
5. Walking on the water (6:16-24). Power over natural law.
6. Healing of a blind man (9:13-16). Power over disease.
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead (10:40-11:44). Power over death.

John conveys the identity and nature of Jesus in seven discourses beginning with the words "I am" (6:35; 8:12; [9:5]; 10:7; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:11).

The credibility of Jesus is supported by seven witnesses: John the Baptist, 1:28-30; the works of Jesus, 5:36; the Father, 5:37-38; the Scriptures, 5:39-47; Jesus Himself, 8:13-14; the Holy Spirit, 15:26; and the apostles, 15:27; 19:35; 21:24.

There are two views regarding the dating of John's book. The traditional view argues that John wrote this book toward the end of the first century (85 AD or later). This view finds support from Clement of Alexandria (170 AD), who said that John wrote his gospel to supplement the accounts found in the first three (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.14.7). This means that John must have written later than Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Some scholars have recently suggested that John wrote as early as the 50s and no later than 70 AD, because of his statement in 5:2. John says there "is" a pool by the sheep gate rather than "was" such a gate, demanding a date earlier than 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed. Since John elsewhere has used the present tense when speaking of the past, this argument is not altogether convincing.

John wrote to evangelize, to strengthen new converts, and to combat the growing heretical teaching. He wrote to supplement the other gospel accounts, realizing that at his advanced age he would not long be able to encourage the brethren personally.

The earliest fragment of any New Testament passage is P⁵², a papyrus containing John 18:31-33 and 37-38. It is dated (100-125 AD). The Papyrus Egerton 2, which is dated about the same time, also contains passages from John and the synoptic gospels.

From the number of quotations in the early church writings, it is clear that John was used widely soon after its composition.

The Deity of Jesus is emphasized in a number of passages: "the Word was God," 1:1; cf. 5:17-18; "before Abraham was born, I am," 8:58; "I and the Father are one," 10:30,33; "he who has seen Me has seen the Father," 14:9; and "my Lord and my God," 20:28.

At the same time the humanity of Jesus is also emphasized: "and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," 1:14; attended a wedding, 2:1-11; "knew what was in man," 2:25; was weary and thirsty, 4:6-7; 19:28; was sympathetic, 11:35; was troubled, 12:27; was loving, 13:1; died and was buried, 19:30, 40-42.

In the book Jesus is called Word, 1:1,14; God, 1:1; only begotten (unique, only or beloved), 3:16; Jesus Christ, 1:17; Christ, 1:20; prophet, 1:21, 25; prophet, 1:21; Lord, 1:23; Lamb of God, 1:29; Son of God, 1:34, 49; Messiah, 1:41; "Him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote," 1:45; King of Israel, 1:49; Son of Man, 1:51; Jesus, 2:1; Son, 3:35; Savior of the world, 4:42; Holy One of God, 6:69; shepherd, 10:16; He who comes into the world, 11:27; Jesus the Nazarene, 18:5; man, 18:29-30; the King of the Jews, 18:34; my Lord and my God, 20:28.

It is interesting to note things important in the life of Jesus but not mentioned in John. The list includes his birth stories, exorcism of demons, publicans, the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Supper, prayer at Gethsemane, his trial before Caiphas, and his ascension from Mt. Olivet. Jesus never uses the words Gentile or grace.

Outline of John

I. Prologue 1:1-18

II. Beginning of Ministry of Jesus

1:19-51

1. Ministry of John the Baptist (1:19-34)
2. Jesus meets some early disciples (1:35-51)

III. Jesus' Signs and Discourses 2:1-11:57

1. Water changed to wine (2:1-11)
2. Cleansing the Temple (2:12-25)
3. Discourse with Nicodemus (3:1-21)
4. John's Testimony of the Son (3:22-4:3)
5. The Woman at the Well (4:4-42)
6. Healing of the Official's son (4:43-54)
7. The Healing at Bethesda (5:1-17)

8. Jesus' Equality with God (5:18-24)
9. The Resurrection (5:25-29)
10. Witnesses of Jesus (5:30-47)
11. Feeding of the Five Thousand (6:1-14)
12. Jesus Walks on Water (6:15-25)
13. Discourse on the Bread of Life (6:26-71)
14. Jesus' Teaching at the Feast of Booths (7:1-53)
15. The Adulterous Woman (8:1-11)
16. Discourse on Light of the World (8:12-30)
17. Discourse to Believing Jews (8:31-59)
18. Healing of Man Born Blind (9:1-41)
19. Discourse on the Good Shepherd (10:1-21)
20. Jesus Asserts His Deity as Feast of Dedication (10:22-42)
21. The Raising of Lazarus (11:1-57)

IV. The Final Week and Crucifixion

12:1-19:42

1. Mary Anoints Jesus (12:1-11)
2. The Triumphal Entry (12:12-19)
3. Greeks Seek Jesus (12:20-26)
4. The Jews Fail to Believe (12:27-50)
5. Discourse at the Last Supper (13:1-14:31)
6. Discourse on the way to Gethsemane (15:1-16:33)
7. Jesus' Prayer (17:1-26)
8. Judas' Betrayal and the Arrest (18:1-12)
9. The Trials of Jesus (18:13-19:15)
10. The Crucifixion and Burial (19:16-42)

V. The Resurrection 20:1-29

1. Peter and John visit the empty tomb (20:1-10)
2. Mary Magdalene sees the Risen Jesus (20:11-18)
3. Appearances to the apostles (20:19-29)

VI. John's Purpose for Writing 20:30-31

VII. Epilogue 21:1-25

1. The appearance at Galilee (21:1-14)
2. The challenge to Peter (21:15-17)
3. The future of Peter and John (21:18-23)
4. The testimony of John (21:24,25)

Introduction to Acts of the Apostles

Some scholars think that Acts of the Apostles might have been better named "Some of the Acts of Some of the Apostles." While Acts does list all the names of the apostles (1:13), the book mostly deals with the ministries of Peter and Paul.

Acts of the Apostles is the second treatise written to Theophilus and is a sequel to the Gospel account to Luke. Although the author does not name himself in this book, the evidence both inside and outside of the book point to Luke. The Muratorian Canon (c. 170 AD), Irenaeus, Clement, Eusebius (325 AD), and early Greek manuscripts list Luke as the author of both his gospel account and Acts.

Luke was a companion of Paul (Col. 4:14), and various "we" passages describe the author as being an eyewitness of the events he describes (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16). Luke was a careful historian, and his carefulness shows in his use of "we" in some places and "they" in others. From the books of Philemon and Colossians we learn Luke was with Paul during his first imprisonment in Rome, when the book of Acts was written (Cf. Col. 4:14; Philemon 23-24; Acts 27:1-28:16).

The language of Acts also points to Luke, "the beloved physician" (Col. 4:14). The language of the book is the kind of language a person trained in medicine would likely use. While this does not prove Luke wrote the book, it does strongly suggest the authorship of Luke.

Luke ends his gospel account with the ascension of Jesus, and Acts takes up the story from the last appearance and ascension of Jesus to Paul's imprisonment at Rome (62-63 AD).

While Luke tells of the disciples' preparation to fulfill the Great Commission, Acts records their preaching and ministry. In fulfillment of Acts 1:8, this book tells how the apostles were to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and witnesses, "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts records the history of the earliest days of the church. Without this book, we would know little about how the messages were proclaimed, how they obeyed the gospel, or how the church spread in the first century. The historical accuracy of the book of Acts has

been critically examined and verified by the research of Sir William Ramsay. Acts is filled with many precise details, covering a period of 30 years.

The book of Acts provides an important bridge between the life and teachings of Christ in the gospel accounts and the epistles. The historical background in Acts provides a helpful foundation for the epistles.

Acts was likely written about 63 AD, since the last events recorded in the book occurred about that time. Though some scholars date the book at 70 AD or later, they cannot explain why Luke does not record the outcome of Paul's first trial before Caesar, the burning of Rome and persecution of Christians (64 AD), the martyrdom of Peter and Paul (67-68 A.D.), and the destruction of Jerusalem (70 AD).

Luke records the summary of a number of speeches or sermons in the book of Acts:

1. Peter's speech at the selection of Matthias (1:16-22).
2. Peter's sermon at Pentecost (2:14-36).
3. Peter's sermon at Solomon's Porch (3:12-26).
4. Peter's speech before the council (4:8-12).
5. Gamaliel's speech before the council (5:35-39).
6. Stephen's sermon before the council (7:2-53).
7. Peter's sermon at Cornelius' house (10:34-43).
8. Peter's recall of Cornelius' conversion to the church in Jerusalem (11:4-17).
9. Paul's sermon at Antioch of Pisidia (13:16-41).
10. Paul and Barnabas at Lystra (14:15-17).
11. Peter's speech at the Jerusalem council (15:7-11).
12. James' speech at the Jerusalem council (15:13-21).
13. Paul's sermon on Mars' Hill (17:22-31).
14. Demetrius' speech in the Ephesian theater (19:25-27).
15. Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders (20:18-35).
16. Paul's defense before the mob in Jerusalem (22:1-21).
17. Paul's defense before the council (23:1-6).
18. Paul's defense before Felix (24:10-21).
19. Paul's defense before Festus (25:8, 10-11).

20. Paul's defense before Agrippa (26:1-23).

21. Paul's speech on the ship (27:21-26).

22. Paul's sermon to the Jews in Rome (28:17-20, 25-28).

The main purposes of Acts are (1) to present a history of the beginning of the church and the spread of the gospel; (2) to give a defense for Christianity to both Jews and Gentiles; (3) to provide the apostolic patterns for the growth and practices of the church; and (4) to reveal God's power in the face of challenge and persecution.

The vocabulary of Acts consists of nearly two thousand words, 450 of which are unique to Luke. Luke carefully employs the language appropriate to the time and place to describe the events taking place both in Palestine and on Paul's journeys. Luke's use of details brings the action to life. Luke's account of the shipwreck in Acts 27 with its nautical details is superior to any such account in all of ancient literature.

One attribute distinguishing Luke's ability as an historian is his objective handling of the events. Luke records the failures of the early church as well as its successes. He reveals the lie of Ananias and Sapphira, the complaint of the Grecian widows, and the sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas.

Because of its emphasis on the Holy Spirit, some have thought to name it the Acts of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit enabled the apostles and others to do that which they could not otherwise do and to speak what they otherwise did not know.

Outline of Acts

I. The Beginnings of the Church 1:1-7:60

1. The promise of the Holy Spirit and selection of Matthias (1:1-16)
2. The Day of Pentecost (2:1-13)
3. Peter's sermon at Pentecost (2:14-36)
4. The beginning of the church (2:37-47)
5. First persecution of apostles (3:1-4:31)
6. Sharing of possessions (4:32-5:11)
7. Second persecution of apostles (5:12-42)

8. Ministry to Grecian widows (6:1-7)

9. Stephen's sermon and stoning (6:8-7:60)

II. Growth of the Church into Judea, Galilee and Samaria 8:1-9:31

1. Saul's persecution and the church scattered (8:1-4)
2. Philip's ministry (8:4-40)
3. Saul's conversion at Damascus (9:1-31)

III. Growth of the Church into Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch 9:32-12:25

1. Peter's ministry in Lydda and Joppa (9:32-43)
2. The conversion of Cornelius' household (10:1-11:18)
3. Gentiles converted at Antioch (11:19-30)
4. Death of James (12:1-2)
5. Arrest and Deliverance of Peter (11:3-19)
6. Death of Herod (11:20-25)

IV. Growth of the Church through Paul from Antioch to Rome 13:1-28:31

1. Paul's First Evangelistic journey (13:1-14:28)
2. Controversial meeting in Jerusalem (15:1-35)
3. Paul's Second Evangelistic journey (15:36-18:22)
4. Paul's Third Evangelistic journey (18:23-21:16)
5. Paul's arrest and trial in Jerusalem (21:17-23:11)
6. Paul's transfer to Caesarea (23:12-35)
7. Paul's trial before Felix (24:1-27)
8. Paul's trial before Festus (25:1-12)
9. Paul before Festus and Agrippa (25:13-26:32)
10. Paul's journey to Rome (27:1-28:15)
11. Paul's ministry at Rome (28:16-31)

Paul's First Evangelistic Journey (Acts 13:1-14:28)
47-49 AD
Paul and Barnabas

Cyprus	13:1-12	The Lord blinds Elymas, a false prophet and Sergius Paulus believes.
Perga in Pamphylia	13:13	John Mark returns home.
Antioch of Pisidia	13:14-52	Paul and Barnabas preach Jesus as Savior in the synagogue. Gentiles wish to hear. Jews oppose Paul, so they turn to the Gentiles. Jews cause Paul and Barnabas to be expelled from the region.
Iconium	14:1-5	Many believe, but Jews and unbelieving Gentiles poison the minds against Paul and Barnabas. They flee to avoid stoning.
Lystra	14:6-20	Barnabas called Zeus and Paul Hermes after the healing of a crippled man. Paul stoned and dragged out of the city, left for dead. Paul arose and went into the city for the day.
Derbe	14:20-21	Paul preached and made many disciples.
Lystra Iconium Antioch of Pisidia	14:21-23	Strengthened the souls of the disciples and appointed elders in every church.
Pamphylia Perga Attalia	14:24-25	
Antioch	14:26-28	Paul and Barnabas reported to the church all that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

Paul's Second Evangelistic Journey (Acts 15:36-18:23)
49-52 AD
Paul and Silas

Antioch	15:36-40	Paul and Barnabas have a sharp contention over John Mark and decide to divide. Barnabas takes John Mark to Cyprus.
Syria and Cilicia	15:41	Paul chose Silas and departs to Syria and Cilicia.
Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium	16:1-5	Timothy joins Paul in the ministry and is circumcised.
Phrygia, Galatia and Troas	16:6-9	Paul receives the Macedonian call at Troas, having been forbidden to preach the Word in Asia.
Philippi	16:10-40	Lydia and her household converted. Paul and Silas imprisoned for healing a demon-possessed slave girl. Jailer and his household baptized after an earthquake.
Thessalonica	17:1-9	Paul preached in the synagogue. Jews, Greeks and many leading women believe. Unbelieving Jews attack the house of Jason with a mob.
Berea	17:10-15	Noble-minded Bereans with readiness of mind searched the Scriptures, and many believed. Jews from Thessalonica stirred up the people.
Athens	17:16-34	Paul preaches about the Unknown God in the Areopagus. Some believed and others mocked.
Corinth	18:1-17	Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla, converts Crispus and his household. Paul stays there a year and six months. The Jews bring Paul before Gallio, but Gallio ignored the matter. The Greeks

		beat Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue.
Ephesus, Cenchrea, Caesarea, and Antioch	18:18-23	Paul takes vow and cuts hair at Cenchrea.

Paul's Third Evangelistic Journey (Acts 18:23-21:26)
52-56 AD

Antioch, Galatia and Phrygia	18:23	Paul went all over the region of Galatia and Phrygia successively, strengthening all the disciples.
Ephesus	18:24- 19:41	Aquila and Priscilla teach Apollos, who preaches vigorously. Paul baptizes twelve disciples of John in the name of the Lord Jesus at Ephesus. When he laid hands on them, they spoke in tongues. Paul taught two years in the school of Tyrannus. Paul worked miracles and cast out evil spirits. Many believers burned their books about magic. Demetrius the silversmith causes a riot.
Macedonia and Greece	20:1-6	Jews plot against Paul as he was to sail to Syria.
Troas	20:7-12	Paul meets with the church on the first day of the week to bread bread and preaches all night. Eutychus is raised up, after he fell to his death from a third story window.
Miletus	20:13-38	Paul plans a hurried trip to Jerusalem and calls for the Ephesian elders to come to him at Miletus. He says farewell to them.
Tyre and Caesarea	21:1-14	Warnings at both Tyre and Caesarea that Paul should not go to Jerusalem. Agabus warns him with bound hands and feet. Paul stays at the house of Philip, the evangelist.
Jerusalem	21:17-26	Paul meets with James and the elders, who counsel him to make an offering at the Temple. Paul enters the Temple to make an offering and is arrested.

Understanding and Interpreting Epistles

Paul's Epistles and the General Epistles make up 21 of the 27 books of the New Testament. Each book has its own background, reason for existence, and message. It is important to understand that each of the letters was a document arising out of a set of circumstances from a specific occasion, i.e., they were *occasional documents*.

At times we hear these 21 books called letters, and at other times they are called epistles. These words are not interchangeable but refer to two distinct forms of literature. A letter was a more personal message and not meant for the public and posterity; it was meant for the person or persons to whom it was written. An epistle, on the other hand, is much like a tract or a theological treatise. Epistles are a literary production that looked somewhat like letters but were meant for universal publication and wide readership. Realistically, each of the 21 contains some elements of both kinds of literature.

Ancient letter usually followed a standard form. Thousands of letters have survived from ancient times, and most of them follow a form exactly like those found in the New Testament. A good example of an ancient letter might be found in Acts 15:23-29. The form consists of six parts:

1. name of the writer
2. name of the recipient(s)
3. greeting
4. prayer wish or thanksgiving
5. body of the letter
6. final greeting and farewell

Paul's letters and the general letters show great variety. One group of scholars has classified ancient letters into ten categories. The New Testament documents have elements of letters and elements of epistles within each of them. Sometimes the prayer wish or thanksgiving is missing, as it is in Galatians; or the thanksgiving becomes a doxology (an expression of praise to God), as it does in 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, 1 Peter, and Revelation. Though Paul wrote letters to Colossae and Ephesus, he meant for them to be passed on to other churches (Col. 4:16). These are cyclical epistles, written for public reading in the churches. While many of the books have personal messages as a letter,

they also contain commandments and exhortations, as an epistle. Consequently, it is hard to describe the 21 books as either purely letters or purely epistles.

Since these documents are occasional, we often have a problem interpreting them. In each of the 21 books we have what the author says, but we do not always know what situation is that he is addressing. We have the answers but not always the questions. One challenge all Bible students face is to try to understand what circumstances call for the writing of the letter. These letters contain theology, but it is *task theology*. It is truth about God and His will for the specific circumstances within the document.¹

Students do well to take note of the important facts in each letter they undertake to understand. First, they need to ask who the recipients are and what is really important about them. Are they Jew or Gentile? Are they slave or free? What problems do they have? What attitudes do they possess? Second, they need to look at the attitude of the author. What relationship does he have with the recipients? What is the general tone of the letter? Third, take note of any specific things or events mentioned which lead to the writing of the letter. Fourth, students should pay close attention to the natural, logical divisions of the book. Paragraph divisions often help students to divide the book logically.

Ancient writers commonly used "*amanuenses*," i.e., trained scribes who did the actual writing as the author dictated. Rom. 16:22 speaks of Tertius as the one who writes "this letter." Paul was the author, but Tertius was the scribe who actually wrote down the words Paul dictated. Peter mentions writing his first epistle through Silvanus (1 Pet. 5:12). In order to authenticate the letter, authors often added a final greeting in their own hands; certainly Paul did (Gal. 6:11; 2 Thess. 3:17). While we know that some letters were dictated, we cannot be sure that all of them were.

¹ We should realize that the full truth on a subject is often found by studying many passages. The Scriptures as a whole are truly all-sufficient and present to us the whole truth, just as Jesus promised (John 16:12-13). Task theology as presented in one book should always be interpreted in the light of other passages on the same subject. To interpret a passage in such a way that it contradicts or ignores the fuller truth in other plain passages will surely lead to error.

Ancient letter could not be mailed as we do today. Although the imperial government has its own postal system, the general public could not use it. Friends, acquaintances, merchants, slaves, employees, soldiers, and passing travelers carried letters from city to city. People used whoever was willing and heading in the right direction to deliver messages from place to place. Phoebe may have been the letter carrier to the Romans (Rom. 16:1-2). Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus likely delivered 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:15-18). Titus brought 2 Corinthians (2 Cor. 8:16-24), Tychicus brought Ephesians and Colossians (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7-9), Epaphroditus brought the letter to the Philippians (Phil. 2:25), Zenas and Apollos brought Titus his letter (Tit. 3:13), and Onesimus brought Paul's letter to Philemon (Philemon 10-13; cf. Col. 4:7-9). Demetrius likely brought John's third letter to Gaius.

Introduction to Romans

Although at one time scholars debated who the author of the Epistle of Romans was, no one today questions whether Paul wrote the book. The early Christian writers commonly included Romans in their lists of authentic documents and attributed this book to Paul. Tertius mentions in 16:22 that he wrote the book. He is speaking here as Paul's secretary or *amenuensis*, who did the actual writing to Paul's dictation, a practice common in ancient times.

Most scholars date Romans between 56 and 57 AD. Paul said in Rom. 15:26-28 that he had finished his fund raising for the poor saints in Jerusalem on his visit to Macedonia and Achaia. This statement corresponds to the events in Acts 20:1-2. Paul likely wrote the book the year after he left Ephesus on his third evangelistic journey. He was in Greece and most likely in Corinth.

Paul commends Phoebe, who lived in Cenchrea (on the eastern harbor of Corinth), and likely carried the letter to the church at Rome (16:1-2). In the letter Paul also mentions Gaius, who is host both to Paul and the whole church in Corinth (16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14). For these reasons Paul most likely wrote from Corinth to the church at Rome. Erastus, the city treasurer who sends his greetings (16:23),

is likely the Erastus who stayed in Corinth (Acts 19:22; 2 Tim. 4:20).

Paul identifies the recipients of his letter as "the beloved of God in Rome, called as saints" (1:7). At this time, the Christians in Rome were mostly Gentiles rather than Jews. Emperor Claudius had expelled all the Jews from Rome in 49 AD because of the unrest "at the instigation of Chrestus [Christ]" (see Seutonius *Claudius* 25.4; Acts 18:2). This ban continued until his death in 54 AD. With the return of the Jews to Rome, the Gentile Christians found a challenge to their place of leadership. Some think Paul wrote the book to help unite the two groups. Whether the disturbances among the Jews in 49 AD were simply between Jews who either accepted or rejected Jesus as the Messiah or whether it was between Jews who either welcomed Gentiles or did not, we do not know.

The Jewish community was both influential and deeply despised by the most powerful and intelligent people in Rome. Perhaps this is because of their size in Rome or their preferential treatment by Julius Caesar and Augustus.

Since a number of the names listed in chapter 16 were names common to slaves, they may have been descendents of Jews brought to Rome by Pompey in 62 BC. As many as 50,000 Jews came to live in Rome in the first century. It is to the Jew first that Paul writes, and then to the Gentile.

We do not know how Christianity came to Rome, but we know that both Jews and proselytes from Rome were present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10).

Paul wrote to the Romans with the idea of stopping by on his way to Spain, so that he could visit with them and find some help from them for the journey (15:22-25). In addition to this, Paul felt the need to explain and to defend himself in the gospel he preached. This weighed heavily on his mind, since he at that time was on his way to Jerusalem to suffer for his faith (15:30-33). He desired their prayers.

Paul also sought to heal either real or potential divisions among brethren at Rome (14:1-15:6). Paul addresses both Jew and Gentile, both strong and weak, in the hope that they can work out their differences in daily life. Paul urges them, "Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God" (15:7).

Salvation is the basic theme of Romans (1:16-17). This salvation comes by faith and

results in life. He notes that all men are sinners and stand in need of God's grace through faith in Christ. Paul is interested in bringing people to the obedience of faith, to heeding or obeying the glad tidings, the gospel (Rom. 1:5; 10:16; 16:26). Paul shows how the second Adam, Christ, could bring life to overcome the death brought by the first Adam (5:12-19).

Romans 6 provides a great understanding of the place of baptism and service in the life of a Christian. Paul notes that Christians were not saved to be enslaved to sin. Baptism into the death of Christ was the time when the old man of sin died to sin and a new person was united with Christ in his resurrection to new life (6:3-7). Since we are in Christ, we must never be enslaved again to the old, shameful practice of sin (6:12-23). Those who choose to serve sin will surely die (6:13, 16, 23).

Though Romans does not give extensive teachings on the Trinity, it does show the respective responsibilities of each member of the Godhead. The gospel is called "the gospel of God" (1:1) and the "gospel of His Son" (1:9). God demonstrates His love through the offering of the Son (5:6-10). The Spirit assures our sonship (8:16), releases us from the bondage of sin (8:2-4), intercedes for us in prayer (8:26-27), and brings us "righteousness and peace and joy" (14:17).

In Romans Paul points to the glorification of the saints (8:17) and the love of God by which saints overwhelmingly conquer (8:37-39). Chapters 12-15 provide the practical teaching of Paul's letter.

Chapter 16 provides a most interesting list of early Christians and Paul's greetings. Paul does not forget the personal nature of our faith.

Outline of Romans

I. Introduction 1:1-17

1. Greeting and credentials of Paul (1:1-7).
2. Thanksgiving for Romans (1:8-15).
3. The central theme (1:16-17).

II. The Universality of Sin and Condemnation 1:18-3:20

1. Gentiles are guilty of sin (1:18-32).
2. Jews are guilty of sin (2:1-29).
3. The faithfulness of God (3:1-8).
4. All are guilty of sin (3:9-20).

III. The Righteousness of God 3:21-4:25

1. Righteousness is through faith in Christ (3:21-31).
2. The example of Abraham (4:1-25).
3. The results of our justification (5:1-11).

IV. The Gift and Reign of Righteousness 5:12-8:39

1. Adam and Christ (5:12-21).
2. Uniting with Christ in His death and resurrection through baptism (6:1-7).
3. Serving righteousness (6:8-23).
4. Dying to the Law and through the Law (7:1-11).
5. The war with sin (7:12-25).
6. Freedom from the power of sin (8:1-13).
7. Life in the Spirit (8:13-17).
8. Our present sufferings (8:18-30).
9. God's reassurance (8:31-39).

V. God's Righteousness and Israel 9:1-11:36

1. Israel's unbelief and rejection of the gospel (9:1-5).
2. God's righteousness in rejecting Israel (9:6-29).
3. The righteousness which comes by faith (9:30-10:21).
4. God's temporary dealings with Israel on the basis of faith (11:1-32).
5. Doxology praising the wisdom of God (11:33-36).

VI. Practical Teaching for the Christian Life 12:1-15:13

1. Sacrificial living (12:1-2).
2. Using gifts and talents (12:3-8).
3. Genuine love (12:9-21).
4. Christian responsibility to Governments (13:1-7).
5. Putting on Christian behavior (13:8-14).
6. Living and dealing with the spiritually weak and strong (14:1-15:6).
7. The example of Jesus Christ (15:7-13).

VII. Conclusion 15:8-16:27

1. Paul's reason for writing and ministry among the Gentiles (15:14-21).
2. Paul's plan to visit Rome (15:22-33).
3. Greetings to Christians in Rome (16:1-16).
4. Warnings about the Divisive (16:17-20).
5. Final greetings and doxology (16:21-27).

Introduction to First Corinthians

Like Romans, there is no doubt that Paul wrote this first letter to the Corinthians. Paul acknowledges his own authorship (1 Cor. 1:1-2; 16:21), and the early church fathers with one voice point to Paul as the author. Clement of Rome, as early as the latter part of the first century (95 AD), explicitly says that Paul wrote this book. 1 Corinthians has the distinction of being the earliest New Testament book to which an extra-biblical writer attaches a name.

Paul visited Corinth and established the church on his second evangelistic journey after his visit to Athens (50-51 AD). Paul enjoyed a stay of eighteen months at Corinth (Acts 18:10-11). He worked with Aquila and Priscilla, Roman Jews, during his stay in Corinth. Paul likely left Corinth in the fall of 51 AD and after concluding his second journey returned to Antioch.

On his third evangelistic journey, Paul (fall, 52 AD) settled in Ephesus, where he labored for three years (Acts 19:10; 20:31). While he was in Ephesus, there must have been some correspondence with Corinth. Apparently, the Corinthians had misunderstood his "previous letter" mentioned in 1 Cor. 5:9. We do not now possess this "previous letter." Paul is writing what we call 1 Corinthians to correct that misunderstanding and to address other problems.

There can be no doubt that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:8, 9, 19) while on his third evangelistic journey (54-55 AD). The letter was written after Apollos had ministered there (Acts 18:26-27; 1 Cor. 1:12) and after Timothy had been sent there (Acts 19:22; 1 Cor. 4:17). Apparently this letter is written looking toward spring, since Paul plans to stay in Ephesus until Pentecost (1 Cor. 16:8).

Paul's letter was apparently written to a congregation filled with relatively new and immature Christians (3:1-3). While both Jews and Gentiles were part of the Corinthian congregation, Paul had to turn to the Gentiles for his ministry there (Acts 18:6; cf. 13:46).

Three things caused Paul to write this letter: (1) Paul needed to clear up his instruction in the previous letter (5:9) concerning not associating with immoral persons (5:10-13). (2) Paul needed to respond to the reports from Chloe's house (1:11) about

the divisions and problems at Corinth. (3) Paul needed to answer the issues raised by a letter brought by a delegation from Corinth (7:1; 16:17). Paul responds to their questions by repeating the phrase, "Now concerning..." found in 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 15:1 and 16:1.

In the days of Paul Corinth had a population of 250,000 free men and possibly 400,000 slaves. The Roman capitol of Achaia and a city of vast commerce, Corinth could be considered the chief city in Greece. Julius Caesar reestablished Corinth as a colony in 44 BC after it had been burned to the ground in 146 BC by Roman legions.

Located on the narrow isthmus between the Aegean and Adriatic Seas, Corinth saw goods passed from each sea by the Diolkos Road. Small ships would actually be hauled across the isthmus on this seven-mile road. In other cases the cargoes of larger ships were transported by wagons between the two harbors, Cenchrea to the east and Lechion to the west. Land traffic from north to south also had to pass through the city.

Corinth was a city of wealth, luxury and immorality. To "corinthianize" was to corrupt one sexually. The temple to Aphrodite, the goddess of love, contained more than a thousand priestesses, who worshipped with immorality. The Isthmian games, held every two years, made Corinth a center for Hellenistic life.

Paul dealt with a number of special problems in 1 Corinthians and experienced opposition from a variety of groups. In the book Paul dealt with several factions, some of whom had a favored preacher. Corinth as a crossroad was constantly being threatened by an influx of new ideas. Paul met problems from Jews, libertines, ascetics, and perhaps incipient Gnostics. Paul had to correct the misunderstandings about the resurrection and instruct the church on the proper use of gifts.

The climax of the book comes when Paul points to the "more excellent way" of love. His instruction helped them to worship in decency and order and to examine themselves in the taking of the Lord's Supper. It also helped them to consider others who are weaker rather than demanding their freedom.

1 Corinthians is a marvelous blend of both theological and practical teaching. It points the immature to maturity and the proud to humility. Many of the problems and questions Paul answered for Corinth are still quite relevant to our society today.

Outline of 1 Corinthians

- I. Introduction with Greeting and Thanksgiving 1:1-9**
- II. The Problem of a Sectarian spirit 1:10-4:21**
 1. Preacheritis (1:10-17).
 2. The Foolishness of the Cross (1:18-31).
 3. The Wisdom of the Cross (2:1-16).
 4. The role of religious leaders (3:1-4:5).
 5. A rebuke of Corinth's pride (4:6-21).
- III. The Problem of Incest and Tolerance 5:1-13**
 1. The Case of Incest (5:1-6).
 2. Avoid Brothers who Sin (5:9-13).
- IV. The Problem of Brother Taking Brother to Court before Unbelievers. 6:1-11**
- V. The Problem of Fornication 6:12-20**
- VI. The Problems of Marriage and Divorce 7:1-40**
- VII. The Problems of Freedom and Idolatry 8:1-11:1**
 1. Walking in love with the weak (8:1-13).
 2. Paul's freedom and responsibility as an apostle and evangelist (9:1-27).
 3. Lessons from Israel's past (10:1-13).
 4. The Need for a pure conscience (10:14-33).
- VIII. The Problem of Head Coverings 11:1-16**
- IX. The Problem of Impropriety in taking the Lord's Supper 11:17-34**
- X. The Problem of Pride and Jealousy in the use of Spiritual Gifts 12:1-14:40**
 1. General information about gifts (12:1-30)
 2. The supremacy of love and the ceasing of the gifts (12:31-13:13).
 3. The use of gifts in the church (14:1-40).
- XI. The Problem of the Denial of the Resurrection 15:1-58**
- XII. Concluding Remarks 16:1-24**

1. Concerning the collection for the needy saints in Jerusalem (16:1-4).
2. Paul's future plans (16:5-12).
3. Final Greetings and Admonitions (16:13-24).

Introduction to Second Corinthians

Paul's second known letter to the Corinthians follows the first, written in response to Titus' report. Paul had written a sorrowful letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 2:4; 7:8-10). He had written them with much anguish and tears and had even regretted at one point that he had sent such a letter (7:8). However, hearing the report of Titus at the repentance of Corinth and the changed attitude, Paul opens his heart to this young church.

The second Corinthian letter reveals more about the life and heart of the apostle Paul than any of his other writings. One can almost feel his heart beat as one reads his words of love and concern.

In writing this epistle Paul was concerned not only with the individual who needed discipline (2:5-11) but also with the "false apostles" who were opposing him (11:1-15). These false teachers were Judaizers and legalists who continued to cause division at Corinth (10:10-12; 11:22). Paul throughout the book feels the need to defend himself as an "apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God" (1:1).

After Paul sent the first epistle to Corinth, he sent Titus (2 Cor. 12:18). Shortly thereafter, Paul's work at Ephesus was disrupted (1:8-11; Acts 19:23-20:1). He went north to Troas, where he worked while waiting for Titus. When Titus did not come, Paul crossed over to Macedonia, where he collected funds for Jerusalem (8:1-5; 9:2-4). When Titus met him in Macedonia, his report was mostly favorable. The Corinthians had responded to Paul's admonition.

Paul wrote this book with "Timothy our brother" (1:1) from Macedonia where he encountered Titus (2:13; cf. Acts 20:1,2). Hearing the report of their response to the "sorrowful letter," he wanted to encourage the Corinthians concerning his genuine love for them (7:3-16). He wanted Corinth to "make room for us in your hearts" (7:2).

Paul sought to avoid a painful and humiliating confrontation with the Corinthians. If he came on a third visit, he would not spare anyone who sinned (13:1,2). He urged the Corinthians to examine and test themselves to see if Christ was in them (13:5).

In addition to this Paul wanted the Corinthians to “complete” the gracious work of contributing to the needy saints in Jerusalem (8:6). He recounts to them the sacrifices in Macedonia and the value of their contribution (2 Corinthians 8,9).

It is generally agreed that Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, and the external evidence supports this. Clement of Rome, Polycarp, The Shepherd of Hermas, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, among many others point to Paul as the author. The biographical portions of the book as in chapters 11 and 12 also point to Paul.

Since Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in 54 or 55, it is likely that he wrote this second epistle about a year later (1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 8:10; 9:2). Some date it as early as six months, some as late as eighteen months. Likely then, the letter was written in 55 or 56 AD. Paul took time during this interval to evangelize along the Egnation Way and possibly in Illyricum (2 Cor. 2:12; Rom. 15:19).

Scholars show a great deal of uncertainty as to all the events between 1 and 2 Corinthians. Some have suggested that the “sorrowful” letter was another lost letter or that it appears as an addition in chapters 10-13. We, however, have no external evidence that there ever was a letter from Paul to the Corinthians dated between the two known epistles. Furthermore, there is no evidence that 2 Corinthians ever existed in any form except that which we know it today.

Some separate the “sorrowful” letter from 1 Corinthians by showing that the offender of 1 Corinthians 5 sinned against the church (5:5), while the offender of the “sorrowful” letter sinned against Paul (2 Cor. 2:5,10). This argument, however, overstates the case. Considering all the problems Corinth faced in the first Corinthian letter, this letter could very well have been written in tears.

2 Corinthians contains a list of the challenges and difficulties Paul faced in his ministry (11:23-31). Paul boasts not in himself but in his weaknesses and in the power of God to help him through the struggles (11:30; 12:7-10). Paul learned to look to the eternal rather than the temporal for his strength (4:16-18).

While the epistle was written in the midst of suffering, opposition, and distress, Paul sees his ministry as one of comfort (1:3-7). Paul uses the term “comfort” twenty times in this letter. He sees the ability to comfort as a product of God’s comfort in the midst of suffering.

Paul realizes his ability to minister did not arise from his own sufficiency but from the sufficiency of God (3:5; cf. 4:5).

In chapter 3 Paul masterfully compares the old covenant with the new. The old letter kills, but the new covenant gives life. If the old had glory in Moses, the new has a surpassing glory in Christ.

Outline of 2 Corinthians

I. Paul’s Greeting 1:1-2

II. Paul’s Explanation of Circumstances 1:3-2:13

1. Comfort for the afflicted (1:3-11).
2. Reason for the Postponed visit (1:12-2:4).
3. Forgiveness for the Disciplined man (2:5-11).
4. Paul’s anguish over not Finding Titus (2:12-13).

III. Paul Explains His Ministry 2:14-6:10

1. God leads in triumph (2:14-17).
2. New covenant ministry more glorious than Moses’ ministry (3:1-18).
3. Treasure in earthen vessels (4:1-18).
4. Promise of the eternal house (5:1-10).
5. The ministry of reconciliation (5:11-6:10).

IV. Paul Pleads for Acceptance 6:11-7:4

1. The need for purity (2 Cor. 6:11-7:1).
2. Paul’s desire to be in their hearts (7:2-4).

V. Paul’s Comfort and Joy in Titus 7:5-16

VI. Paul’s Plea for the Poor 8:1-9:15

1. The sacrificing Macedonians (8:1-5).
2. Titus and others to take the Grace of Corinth to Jerusalem (8:6-24).
3. The value of giving (9:1-15).

VII. Paul’s Defense of Himself 10:1-12:18

1. Paul’s authority in the face of opposition (10:1-11).
2. Paul’s boast in God alone (10:12-18).

3. Paul's exposure of false apostles (11:1-15).
4. Paul's boasting in his weaknesses and difficulties (11:16-12:12).
5. Paul explains his giving of himself (12:13-18).

VIII. Paul's Plans for a Third Visit 12:19-13:14

1. Paul's defense to build up Corinth and find them righteous (12:19-21).
2. Paul's warning of discipline (13:1-10).
3. Final instructions and greeting (13:11-14).

Introduction to Galatians

There is little doubt Paul wrote this epistle to the churches of Galatia. He mentions his own name in 1:1 and in 5:2. Second century writers with one voice attest to Paul as the author of Galatians.

Galatia in New Testament times was a geographical territory in north-central Asia Minor; it was also a Roman (political) province in central Asia Minor (1 Cor 16:1; Gal 1:2; 2 Tim 4:10; 1 Peter 1:1). Through the years there has been quite a dispute concerning whether Paul wrote to the northern Galatians or to the southern Galatians. Most scholars today favor the latter view, since it seems to fit the circumstances.

Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe were in the province of Galatia. Both Peter (1 Peter 1:1) and Paul (Gal 1:1; 1 Cor 16:1) seem to use the term to refer to the province as a whole. Paul twice passed through the Galatian region in his evangelistic journeys (Acts 16:6; 18:23).

Paul notes that the churches of Galatia participated in the contributions given to the needy saints in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1,2). Very likely these were congregations where Paul had visited in the southern portion of Galatia; and there is no hard evidence Paul ever visited the northern regions of Galatia. The mention of Barnabas to the Galatians (2:1,9, 13) also indicates they were familiar with him. Of course Barnabas only traveled with Paul on the first journey. These facts support the view that Paul wrote to churches in the province of Galatia and not geographical Galatia.

Paul planted the seeds of the gospel in Galatia on each of his three evangelistic

journeys. As was true to Paul's form, he visited the Jews first. Since the Jews gave him much resistance, Paul reached out to the Gentiles (13:46).

Jewish Christians, zealous for the Law, sought to bind circumcision and the Law on the Gentile converts (2:14-21). The apostles called a church conference in Acts 15 to deal with this very problem. Apparently, some were teaching, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved" (15:1-5). Paul considered this teaching a perversion of the gospel (1:6-9; 5:1-4) and would cause them to be severed from Christ.

It is likely Paul wrote this letter just prior to the conference in Jerusalem to deal with the Pharisee Christians who were trying to bind circumcision and the Law on Gentile Christians. If this is the case, the book should be dated in 48 or 49 AD and is Paul's earliest writing.

Paul finds it necessary to defend himself to the Galatians and give his credentials as an apostle not from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead (Gal. 1:1). He assures his readers that what he teaches came through a revelation of Jesus Christ (1:11-12). The fact that Paul could rebuke one of the chief apostles shows his approval by God (2:11-21).

The key verse of this book is 2:16: "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified." Faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to the gospel are sufficient for salvation (3:26,27). Paul would not nullify grace by binding the Law and making the death of Christ needless (2:21).

In Galatians Paul is dealing with a group of Pharisees who were destroying the liberty of the Gentile Christians. He ends the book by contrasting the showy and fleshly motives of the Judaizers who do not wish to be persecuted (6:11-13) with his righteous boast in the cross (6:14-18).

Outline of Galatians

I. Paul's salutation 1:1-5

1. His claim as an apostle (1:1).
2. Greeting and doxology (1:2-5).

Introduction to Ephesians

II. Paul's Personal Statement

1:6-2:21

1. Paul's reason for writing is their desertion from the true gospel (1:6-10).
2. Paul's call as an apostle and preacher came from God (1:11-17).
3. He received his teaching independent from those in Judea (1:18-24).
4. His recognition by those in Jerusalem (2:1-10).
5. His rebuke of the hypocrisy at Antioch (2:11-18).
6. His crucifixion with Christ (2:19-21).

III. Paul's Doctrinal Statement

3:1-4:31

1. The Galatians experienced salvation by faith not by the works of the Law (3:1-5).
2. Abraham's faith an example for believers (3:6-9).
3. The promise that comes by faith and not the Law (3:10-14).
4. The priority of Abraham's promise (3:15-22).
5. The superiority of mature faith to the bondage of the Law (3:23-4:7).
6. The Galatians weakness of turning back to the Law (4:8-11).
7. The contrast of motives (4:12-20).
8. The allegory of the bond woman and the free woman (4:21-31).

IV. Paul's Practical Statement

5:1-6:10

1. Paul calls the Galatians to hold fast to the freedom in Christ and not be enslaved by the Law (5:1-12).
2. The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit (5:13-26).
3. The need to bear the burdens of others (6:1-5).
4. The law of sowing and reaping (6:6-10).

V. Paul's Concluding Statement 6:11-18

1. Written with his own hand (6:11).
2. Contrast of Judaizers with Paul in motive (6:12-17).
3. Final greeting (6:18).

Ephesians marks the first of four letters regarded as the "Prison Epistles," which Paul wrote during his first imprisonment in Rome (59-61 AD). It is obvious that Paul wrote this letter while a prisoner (Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20). Paul wrote Colossians, Philemon and Ephesians early in his imprisonment and Philippians at a later time. Ephesians and Colossians are actually twin letters (Eph. 6:20-21; Col. 4:7-8), delivered by Tychicus.

In this epistle Paul emphasizes the relationship Jesus Christ has with His body, the church. He explains that God's plan from the beginning was now revealed in the church. Paul describes those who are "in Christ" as saved by grace through faith according to God's purpose. Jesus is the head of His church and the Savior of His body (5:23).

This relationship with Christ described in the first three chapters should lead members to live lives worthy of their calling (4:1). In the latter three chapters Paul describes how Christians are to live among themselves and among other people.

Some modern critics have suggested that a student of Paul wrote this letter early in the second century. They say that the use of the phrase "holy apostles" in 3:5 suggests a more developed theology than appeared in the first century. Such arguments, however, are quite subjective and dismiss the strong and early evidence that Paul wrote this book.

In his usual fashion Paul claims to be the author and describes himself as "an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God" (1:1; cf. 3:1). Paul sent this letter along with Colossians and Philemon to its destination by Tychicus (Col. 4:7-8; Philemon 9, 13, 17; Eph. 6:21-22). It is likely that this epistle, like Colossians is a circular letter (Col. 4:16), meant to be circulated among the churches of the area.

If this is a circular letter, this would explain why Paul does not greet specific brethren at Ephesus, even though he spent three years there (Acts 20:31).

The words "at Ephesus" (1:1) is not found in three of the earliest copies of this book, which has led some to think that perhaps this epistle was written to the Laodiceans. Every ancient manuscript, however, contains "To the Ephesians" in its title; and the early ecclesiastical tradition uniformly agrees with this.

Ephesus was a leading political center in the Asian province of the Roman Empire. Ephesus was a Roman “free city,” which meant that the city was self-governing and had no occupation troops.

Paul had spent a short time in Ephesus on his way back to Antioch from his second evangelistic journey (Acts 18:19-22). On his third journey he stayed at Ephesus three years (Acts 20:31), which is longer than any other place. Acts 19 details several remarkable events during his ministry there.

Ephesus was the home of the Great Temple to the Greek goddess Artemis, who was also known to the Romans as Diana. The Temple to Diana was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. This temple created for Ephesus great religious importance and a significant silver trade. Inside the temple was an image of the goddess said to have fallen from heaven.

People all over Asia described the Ephesians as fickle, immoral, and superstitious. The practice of occultism was deeply rooted among them (Acts 19:18-20). Heraclitus described the morals of the temple as beneath those of beasts. He said Ephesians were fit only to be drowned. Paul addressed their need for pure lives in Ephesians 5.

When Paul went to Jerusalem, he summoned the elders of the church at Ephesus to warn them of false teachers and to encourage them (Acts 20:17-38). After Paul's release from prison in Rome, he returned to Ephesus to oppose false teaching done by Hymenaeus, Alexander, Philetus and others (1 Tim. 1:3-7, 18-20).

It is possible that Timothy was in Ephesus when Paul wrote 2 Timothy. Many years later the Lord Jesus through John addressed part of the book of Revelation to the church at Ephesus, whose love had grown cold (Rev. 2:1-7).

The epistle of Ephesians falls easily into two parts. The first three chapters are doctrinal, while the last three are practical.

Outline of Ephesians

I. God's Plan for the Church

1:1-3:21

1. Planned from eternity (1:1-14).
2. Paul's prayer for God to grant them wisdom (1:15-21).
3. Christ and His body (1:22,23).

4. From death in sin to creation in Christ for good works (2:1-10).
5. Gentiles from strangers to members of God's household (2:11-22).
6. Paul's stewardship to preach the grace of God to the Gentiles (3:1-13).
7. Paul's prayer for strength and the knowledge of the love of Christ (3:14-19).
8. Paul's doxology that God would be glorified in the church (3:20-21).

II. God's Plan for Church Life

3:1-6:21

1. The Unity of the Spirit in God's plan (4:1-6).
2. The purpose of God's gifts (4:7-16).
3. The life of a new person in Christ (4:17-32).
4. Imitating God (5:1-21).
5. God's plan for life in the household (5:22-6:9).
6. God's Provision of Armor for the Christian life (6:10-20).
7. Final greetings (6:21-24).

Introduction to Philippians

The early church with one voice proclaimed that Paul wrote this letter to the Philippians. Paul makes reference throughout the book to himself, and the details fit what we know of Paul in other books of the New Testament. Paul wrote Philippians in 61 AD while under arrest in his rented house in Rome (Acts 28:16,30-31). References to the Praetorian Guard (Phil. 1:13) and Caesar's household (4:22) point to the Roman imprisonment rather than imprisonment at Caesarea or Ephesus.

Since Paul expresses confidence in either his soon death or his release (Phil. 1:21-25; 2:24), Philippians was likely written later in Paul's imprisonment at Rome rather than earlier, suggesting a date of 61 AD.

Paul wrote this letter in response to the gift Epaphroditus brought to him from the Philippian church (2:25; 4:18). He wanted to thank the church and to report on his own circumstances (1:12-26; 4:10-19). Paul also wanted to commend Timothy and Epaphroditus to them (2:19-30). The Philippian church had a unique partnership with Paul in the matter of giving and receiving money on his behalf (4:15). He also writes of his plans to send Timothy soon (2:19-24), and why he

considered it necessary to send Epaphroditus back to them (2:25-30). Paul also deals with the apparent conflict between Euodia and Syntyche (4:2-3).

The recipients of this epistle were the saints in Christ who are in Philippi with the bishops and deacons (1:1-2). This greeting shows that congregations quite early had both overseers and deacons (cf. Acts 14:23; 20:17,28).

Philippi was a Roman colony and is best known for Octavius and Marc Antony's battle with Brutus and Cassius in 42 AD. The residents of Philippi were Roman citizens, many of them Roman military veterans. Philippi is named for King Philip II of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great. Philippi was the chief city of that part of Macedonia (Acts 16:12).

Philippi was the first place in Europe where Paul preached the gospel (Acts 16:11-40). Paul planted this congregation in response to the "Macedonian call" in Troas (Acts 16:9-11). With the teaching and immersions of the households of Lydia and the Jailer, the church began.

Paul wanted to lead the Philippians to greater maturity and emphasizes five themes in his letter: joy in the midst of trials (1:18; 2:17-18; 27-3:1; 4:2-4); contentment (4:11-13); peace (4:6-7); consecration (1:20-21; 3:7-14); and unity (2:1-11). Paul is especially fond of the word "joy" in this epistle and uses some form of the word sixteen times.

Paul deals much with the heart in this letter and encourages the Philippians: (1) to humble themselves (2:1-4); (2) to press for the prize of the upward call (3:7-14); (3) to overcome worry and find peace by giving their requests to God (4:4-9); and (4) to find the ability to do all things through Christ who strengthens (4:11-13).

Philippians 2:5-11 contains one of the most important passages about Christ in the New Testament. Some scholars believe this passage may have originally been a song.

Outline of Philippians

- I. Introduction** **1:1-11**
 - 1. Greeting (1:1-2).
 - 2. Thanksgiving for the Philippians' fellowship in the gospel (1:3-8).
 - 3. Prayer for love to abound in knowledge (1:9-11).

II. Paul's Report on His Circumstances **1:12-26**

- 1. Paul's ministry in spite of prison and critics (1:12-18).
- 2. Paul's determination to live for Christ (1:19-26).

III. Paul's exhortation to the Philippians **1:27-2:18**

- 1. Live with one mind boldly for the faith (1:27-30).
- 2. Live humbly as Christ did (2:1-11).
- 3. Live obediently (2:12-18).

IV. Paul's commendations **2:19-30**

- 1. Timothy (2:19-24).
- 2. Epaphroditus (2:25-30).

V. Paul's Warnings **3:1-4:1**

- 1. Against the Judaizers or Legalists (3:1-16).
- 2. Against the lawless and indulgent (3:17-4:1).

VI. Paul's Exhortations and Thanksgiving **4:2-23**

- 1. The need for Euodia and Syntyche to live in harmony (4:2-3).
- 2. The way to peace (4:4-9).
- 3. The way to contentment (4:10-13).
- 4. Paul's repeated thanks for the Philippians (4:14-20).
- 5. Final greetings (4:21-23).

Introduction to Colossians

Paul joined with Timothy to write the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, who are at Colossae. This letter was written about the same time as Ephesians and Philemon, while Paul was confined to his rented house in Rome (59-61AD). Paul mentions several people both in Colossians and in Philemon: Philemon, Onesimus, Archippus, Epaphras, Aristarchus, Mark, Luke and Demas.

Paul sent this letter by Tychicus (Col. 4:7-8; cf. Eph. 6:21). Paul had not likely visited Colossae himself (2:1) but had come to know and love the brethren through Epaphras and Timothy (1:1,7-8). Epaphras may have heard Paul, when he was in Ephesus teaching in the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9-10). Epaphras likely planted the congregation in Colossae (Col. 1:7-8). The church in Colossae

apparently met in the house of Philemon (Philemon 2).

Colossae was located about 100 miles east of Ephesus in the Lycus valley not far from Hierapolis and Laodicea (Col. 4:13,16). Colossae was a pagan city with a strong community of Jews. While Hierapolis was known for health and pleasure and Laodicea was known for its commercial trade and politics, Colossae was simply a small city on the great highway between Ephesus and the Euphrates Valley.

Paul's primary purpose for writing this book is to deal with the Colossian heresy. This heresy was comprised of a blend of Christianity, occultism, pagan philosophy, some seeds of what was later Gnosticism, and Jewish legalism. Paul described this heresy as "philosophy and empty conceit, according to the tradition of men" (2:8). This heresy emphasized:

1. Abstinence from certain foods and drink (2:16, 21).
2. Observance of Jewish feasts and sabbaths (2:16).
3. Delighting in self-abasement and visions (2:18,23).
4. The worship of angels (2:18).
5. "Self-made" religion or worship (2:23).
6. Secret Knowledge (2:18; cf. 2:2-3).

This heresy actually sought to remove Christ from His supreme place (1:13-20; 2:9-10). It claimed to promote a higher spirituality, not realizing that Christians are complete in Christ (2:10). Colossians sets forth the Deity, the absolute Lordship, and the sufficiency of Christ (1:15-20). The Colossians did not need to look elsewhere to be "complete" (2:8-10). Paul shows the utter folly of pluralism and syncretism.

Colossians warns that the rules and regulations of men fail to help in the overcoming of sin and fleshly indulgence (2:23). The heresy may have required circumcision (2:11; cf. 3:11).

In response Paul emphasizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as a basis for our new life. Paul shows how through the working of God in baptism one dies with Christ and is made alive by being raised with Christ. In being made alive with Christ, one receives forgiveness for all his trespasses (2:12-13).

Since one is raised with Christ, one should set his mind on the things above where Christ is (3:1-4). Since the old man has died and one

has a new man, the Christian must consider his members dead to sin and alive to love (3:5-17). Paul warned the Colossians not to fall back into the pagan vices so prevalent in the city. As in Ephesians, Paul gives practical instruction on family and household matters (3:18-4:1).

Outline of Colossians

- I. Introduction 1:1-14**
 1. Greeting (1:1-2).
 2. Thanksgiving (1:3-8).
 3. Prayer (1:9-14).
- II. Christ's Supremacy Declared 1:15-2:7**
 1. Over creation (1:15-17).
 2. Over the church (1:18).
 3. In reconciling all things to Himself (1:19-23).
 4. In the ministry and preaching of Paul (1:24-2:7).
- III. Christ's Supremacy Defended 2:8-23**
 1. Christ is sufficient over philosophy (2:8-10).
 2. God made us alive and forgave us in baptism (2:11-15).
 3. Christ is superior to legalism, asceticism, and angel worship (2:16-23).
- IV. Christ's Supremacy Demanded in Life 3:1-4:6**
 1. Set your mind on things above (3:1-4).
 2. Die to immorality and live to Christ (3:5-11).
 3. Put on a Christian heart (3:12-17).
 4. Instructions to families (3:18-21).
 5. Instructions to slaves and masters (3:22-4:1).
 6. Behavior toward outsiders (4:2-6).
- V. Conclusion 4:7-18**
 1. Concerning Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9).
 2. Greetings (4:10-15).
 3. Instructions on reading the letter (4:16).
 4. Admonition to Archippus (4:17)
 5. Final greeting (4:18).

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

The two epistles to the Thessalonians are among the first books of the New Testament to be written; only James and Galatians could have appeared earlier. These books were quite well known, and are included as approved books in both Marcion's canon (140 AD) and the Muratorian Canon (170 AD). Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian quote this book and attribute it to Paul by name. Only liberal scholars in the nineteenth century have ever questioned Paul's authorship. Paul writes this book accompanied by Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy.

Paul first came to Thessalonica after the magistrates of Philippi begged him to leave the city (Acts 16:38-39). Passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, Paul came to Thessalonica and for three Sabbaths reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue (Acts 17:1-2). Paul preached Jesus as the Christ in Thessalonica and persuaded Jews, God-fearing Greeks, and a number of the leading women (17:3-4). This preaching angered the jealous Jews so that they formed a mob with wicked men from the marketplace and set the city in an uproar. Accusing Paul of saying that there is another king, Jesus, the Jews stirred up the crowd and the city magistrates. Jason and others had to post bail in order for Paul to be released (Acts 17:9). Paul left for Berea immediately.

The city of Thessalonica was originally called "Therma," since there are a number of hot springs nearby this seaport on the Egnation Way. In 315 BC Cassander, who married the daughter of Philip of Macedon and the half-sister of Alexander the great, renamed the city "Thessalonica" in honor of his wife. Antony and Octavius captured the city in 42 BC and made it the capitol of the Roman province of Macedonia. They made it a "free city," ruling its own affairs and having no Roman guard there (Acts 17:7).

The city had a population estimated at 200,000 in the first century. Most were Greek, but many were Roman or Jewish. Since the city was on the Egnation Way and a seaport, it was wealthy and supported a lot of commerce. Like most Greek cities idolatry and immorality greatly influenced the culture.

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians from Corinth in the spring of 50 AD, in response to a report

from Timothy (1 Thess. 3:1-3). Paul was concerned for this young church, when he had to leave so quickly due to the persecution. He sent Timothy from Athens to strengthen and encourage them in their affliction.

Paul wrote this letter to the Thessalonians

- (1) to give thanks for their work of faith, their labor of love, and their patience of hope (1:3-10);
- (2) to defend his ministry against those who were slandering him (2:1-12);
- (3) to encourage them to stand fast and to excel still more in their love and faith in spite of the persecution they faced (3:1-4:12);
- (4) to correct a doctrinal misunderstanding about those who have died in Christ (4:13-18);
- (5) to answer questions about the "Day of the Lord" (5:1-11); and
- (6) to respect their leaders and live in peace (5:12-22).

The return of the Lord Jesus is a theme mentioned at the close of each chapter. Paul emphasizes a confident expectation for the Lord's return (1:10; 2:19-20; 4:13-18; 5:23-24). This expected coming should cause Christians to grow in their love and to live holy lives (3:11-13; 5:1-11).

Outline of 1 Thessalonians

- I. Paul's greeting to the church of the Thessalonians 1:1-2**
- II. Paul's giving of thanks for the faith, love and hope of the Thessalonians 1:3-10.**
- III. Paul's defense of his ministry 2:1-20**
 1. Paul's parental concern for Thessalonica (2:1-12).
 2. Paul's use of the word of God in his preaching (2:13).
 3. Paul's reminder of the Jewish persecution (2:14-16).
 4. Paul's desire to visit and Satan's hindrance (2:17-20).
- IV. The Encouragement of Timothy's Visit 3:1-13**
 1. Timothy's encouraging report (3:1-10).
 2. Paul's prayer and praise (3:11-13).

V. Paul's Exhortation to Excel Still More**4:1-12**

1. Paul's encouragement to sanctification (4:1-8).
2. Paul's encouragement to love and a quiet life (4:9-12).

VI. Paul's Teaching on those who have Died in Christ**4:13-18****VII. Paul's Teaching on the "Day of the Lord" 5:1-11**

1. The need to awake to the Lord's coming (5:1-6).
2. The need for sober living (5:7-11).

VIII. Paul's teaching on Christian Conduct 5:12-22

1. The need to appreciate leaders (5:12-13).
2. The need to help others (5:14-15).
3. The need to rejoice and pray (5:16-18).
4. The need to respond to the Spirit (5:19-20).
5. The need to examine, to hold fast to the good, and to abstain from evil (5:21-22).

IX. Paul's Farewell Blessing and Greetings 5:23-28**Introduction to 2 Thessalonians**

Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians appeared less than a year after the first one and was written from Corinth in 50-51 AD. Justin Martyr (ca. 150 AD) quoted from 2 Thessalonians, and Irenaeus (ca. 180 AD) referred to it by name. The Muratorian Canon, Clement of Alexandria, and the Marcion Canon also knew of this letter.

Twice Paul refers to himself in this letter (1:1; 3:17), and again he is accompanied by Silas and Timothy in writing to them. Paul likely wrote this letter after receiving Timothy's report of how the church reacted to the first letter. Paul's language and style in this second letter agree well with what is found in the first.

Paul encourages the Thessalonians with his joy and thankfulness over their perseverance in the midst of their persecutions (1:3-4; cf. 3:1-5). Paul notes that their persecution is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment. God will repay the

affliction that unbelievers had given to the church at Thessalonica. Jesus will come again in flaming fire with His mighty angels to take vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord (1:7-9). Paul also reveals that their faithfulness will bring about their glorification at the coming of the Lord (1:10-12).

Paul specifically deals with two problems at Thessalonica, which seem to have worsened. Brethren at Thessalonica had actually become more confused over the second coming after the first letter than they were before. Paul assures them that the coming of the Lord will not take place until there is first a falling away and the man of sin is revealed (2:1-4). The mystery of lawlessness was already at work, and some would be deluded into believing the false wonders. Paul cautioned them to have a love for the truth so as to be saved and not believe what is false (2:3-12).

Paul also had to deal with the undisciplined brethren who neglected to work and became busybodies. So serious was this problem, Paul had to "command" the brethren to "keep aloof" or withdraw fellowship from every brother who leads such a life (3:6).

Paul twice refers to the necessity of holding to the "traditions" he had taught them, "whether by word of mouth or by letter" (2:15; 3:6). While some traditions are man-made, these traditions are regarded as divine and require the withdrawal of fellowship if not followed. If anyone did not obey his instruction in this letter, the church was to take special note of this man and not to associate with him (3:14-15).

Outline of 2 Thessalonians**I. Introduction****1:1-12**

1. Opening greeting (1:1-2).
2. Paul's thankfulness for their faithfulness (1:3-4).
3. God's judgment on the persecutors (1:5-10).
4. Paul's prayer (1:11-12).

II. Instruction on the Coming of the Lord 2:1-17

1. Correction as to the time of His coming (2:1-2).
2. The revelation of the man of sin (2:3-12).

3. The need to stand firm and hold to the traditions (3:13-15).

4. Doxology (2:16-17).

III. Paul's Instruction on Godly Discipline 3:1-18

1. Paul's prayer for their love and obedience (3:1-5).

2. Paul's instructions to keep aloof from the undisciplined (3:6).

3. The need to work and lead a quiet life (3:7-15).

4. Final prayer and greetings (3:16-18).

Introduction to 1 Timothy

Paul was released from Roman imprisonment in 61 AD. We do not know whether Paul visited Spain (Rom. 15:24,28) or whether he visited Philemon (Philemon 22). It is certain, however, that Paul returned to prison in Rome, where he lost his life (65-67 AD). At the writing of 1 Timothy Paul is still free, since he hopes to visit Timothy shortly (1 Tim. 3:14; 4:13) in Ephesus, where Timothy is to remain (1:3). Paul may have been in Macedonia (Phil. 1:27) or Nicopolis at this writing (Tit. 3:12).

Early church history supports Paul's authorship (1 Tim. 1:1). Tertullian, Eusebius, Origin, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenaeus all attribute the book to Paul. Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Clement of Rome and Theophilus of Antioch all refer to this book.

Paul's three letters to Timothy and Titus are often referred to as "pastoral" epistles, but neither the word "pastor" nor shepherd can be found in them. Timothy, however, is to preach, to do the work of an evangelist, and to fulfill his ministry (2 Tim. 4:5). Paul refers to Timothy as a servant (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:24). Paul gives the qualifications of overseers, elders, or pastors to both Timothy (1 Timothy 3:1-7) and Titus (Tit. 1:5-9); but gives no suggestion that either Timothy or Titus are elders. The terms elder, overseer and shepherd (pastor) are used interchangeably in Acts 20:17,28 and 1 Pet. 5:1-4. These three books instruct preachers or ministers in their work.

Timothy was born in Lystra of a Greek father and a Jewish mother named Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5). Fortunately the faith of his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice lived in Timothy as well (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). Paul found Timothy at Lystra (Acts 16:1-3). Later

Timothy joined Paul on his second missionary journey and shared in his labors throughout the rest of his life. Timothy was Paul's "true child in the faith" (1 Tim. 1:2), and Paul had no one like him who would truly care for the souls of others (Phil. 2:19-24). Timothy traveled with Paul (Acts 17:13-14), was occasionally left behind to work (1 Thess. 3:1-3), and served as Paul's emissary (1 Cor. 16:10-11; Phil. 2:19-24).

Paul circumcised Timothy early in his ministry because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek (Acts 16:3). Timothy was with Paul in Rome during his first imprisonment (Col. 1:1; Phil. 1:1). Even though Paul refers to Timothy's youth (1 Tim. 4:12), Timothy was at least 30 years old when he received this epistle. The word for youth (*neotetos*) is a military term referring to anyone up to the age of forty.

Paul is writing to Timothy "so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Paul warns Timothy to take heed to himself and to the doctrine (4:16) and to charge some that they "teach no other doctrine nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies" (1:3-4). Such things caused division and idle talk. The purpose of the commandment was "love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith" (1:5). Paul wanted Timothy to wage the good warfare (1:18), since Hymenaeus and Alexander had rejected the faith and were delivered to Satan (1:19-20).

Paul describes himself as one thankful to be enabled to serve, since he had been the chief of sinners in persecuting the church (1:12-16).

Paul gives five faithful sayings in the three books to Timothy and Titus (1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Tit. 3:8).

Paul is concerned with the worship and the organization of the church and instructs Timothy on prayer (2:1-8), on the role of women (2:9-15), on the qualifications of bishops and deacons (3:1-13), on enrolled widows (5:3-16), and on the treatment of elders (5:17-25). Timothy is to withdraw himself from those who teach a different doctrine than comes from the words of our Lord Jesus (6:3-5). Some apparently were seeking to make a profit through a pretended godliness, and others were caught up in greediness (6:6-10).

Paul urged Timothy to “flee from these things,” and to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. He is to fight the good fight of faith and to guard what was committed to his truth (6:11-12,20). Timothy must avoid the idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

Outline of 1 Timothy

I. Greeting (1:1-2).

II. The Nature of the Ministry (1:3-20)

1. Avoiding speculations (1:3-11).
2. Paul's message of salvation (1:12-17).
3. Paul's charge to Timothy (1:18-20).

III. The Worship and Organization of the Church (2:1-3:16).

1. Prayer (2:1-7).
2. Role of Men and Women in the Church (2:8-15).
3. The qualifications of bishops (3:1-7).
4. The qualifications of deacons (3:8-13).
5. The conduct and place of the church (3:14-16).

IV. Instructions for Ministry (4:1-16)

1. The coming apostasy (4:1-5).
2. Good ministry with godliness (4:6-11).
3. Various exhortations to ministry (4:12-16).

V. Ministry and Relationships (5:1-6:21).

1. To various groups (5:1).
2. To widows (5:3-16).
3. To elders (5:17-25).
4. To slaves (6:1-2).
5. To false teachers (6:3-10).
6. To his spiritual life (6:11-16).
7. To the rich (6:17-19).

VI. Final Admonition and Greeting (6:20-1).

Introduction to 2 Timothy

Paul intended to visit Timothy in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:2; 3:14; 4:13) but probably never reached Timothy. After his release from his first imprisonment in Rome (61 AD), Paul reportedly took an evangelistic journey as far as Spain (Clement of Rome, Eusebius; cf. Rom. 15:14,18). Spending a few years there, Paul planned to return to Timothy.

Paul's cloak and books were with Carpus in Troas (2 Timothy 4:13), perhaps left in haste when Paul was arrested. Nero had begun his persecution of Christians in 64 AD; and Alexander the coppersmith, who did Paul much harm (2 Tim. 4:14), may have prompted his arrest. Soldiers took Paul to Rome for his second imprisonment (65-67 AD), and according to tradition Paul was beheaded outside of Rome on the Ostian Way. Romans usually did not execute high profile prisoners in Rome itself but took them outside the city to avoid a disturbance.

As Paul writes Timothy in his last letter, he is imprisoned in a cold dungeon and nearing death (4:6). He is lonely. All those in Asia had turned away from him, among whom are Hermogenes, Phygellus, and Onesiphorus (1:15). Paul had sent Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, and Tychicus to Ephesus. Erastus was left in Corinth and Trophimus was sick in Miletus (4:20). Demas, however, had forsaken Paul for worldly Thessalonica (4:10-12). Only Luke remained with Paul, so the apostle asked Timothy to come quickly and bring useful Mark. Paul longed for Timothy (1:4).

Looking toward his own departure (4:6), Paul felt great concern for the future of the churches. He predicts perilous times will come, and people will grow more and more corrupt (3:1-9). He realizes that false teachers will oppose the truth and seduce gullible women. Paul said that people will not endure sound teaching but will heap to themselves teachers to meet their own desires and will turn away from the truth (4:3-4).

Paul urged Timothy to entrust faithful men with the teaching he had received (2:2) so they may teach others. Paul admonished Timothy to guard what had been entrusted to him (1:14), to continue in the teachings (3:14), to preach the word (4:2) and to be ready to suffer for the gospel (1:8; 2:3; 3:12). Paul also reminds Timothy to stir up the gift that is within him through the laying on of hands (1:6). Paul fears that Timothy has become fearful or ashamed (1:7,8).

Paul regards all Scripture as inspired and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction. The Scriptures are able to equip completely the man of God for every good work (3:16-17).

Outline of 2 Timothy

- I. **Personal greeting (1:1-2).**
- II. **Paul's admonition to faithfulness (1:3-18).**
 1. Paul thankfulness for Timothy (1:3-5).
 2. Paul's reminder to Timothy to act (1:6-7).
 3. Paul's admonition not to be ashamed (1:8-12).
 4. Paul's admonition to stay faithful to the sound words (1:13-18).
- III. **Paul's admonition to diligence (2:1-26)**
 1. Endure hardship as a good soldier (2:1-7).
 2. The faithfulness of Jesus (2:8-13).
 3. Present yourself an unashamed worker (2:14-18).
 4. Flee youthful lusts (2:19-22).
 5. The servant of the Lord (2:23-26).
- IV. **Paul's admonition to continue in the Word (3:1-4:5).**
 1. The coming perilous times (3:1-9).
 2. Carefully follow the doctrine (3:10-17).
 3. Preach the Word (4:1-5).
- V. **Paul's admonition to come (4:6-22).**
 1. Paul's departure is at hand (4:6-8).
 2. Paul had been abandoned (4:9-16).
 3. The Lord's stand with Paul (4:17-18).
 4. Final greetings and plea (4:19-22).

Introduction to Titus

Paul acknowledges from the beginning that he is the author of this book (Tit. 1:1), and early church history overwhelmingly supports this. Titus accompanied Paul to Crete after his release from his first imprisonment in Rome (61 AD). Apparently Paul left Titus at Crete (1:5), and went to Ephesus where he left Timothy on his way to Macedonia (1 Tim. 1:3). Sometime later (ca. 64 AD), probably from Philippi (Phil. 1:27), Paul wrote to Titus; Paul had not yet reached Nicopolis for the winter (Tit. 3:12).

We know very little about Titus, the one to whom this book is written and whose name is in its title. Since Paul calls Titus a "true son in the common faith" (Tit. 1:4), Paul likely converted Titus. Titus is Greek but Paul would

not circumcise him as he did Timothy (Gal. 2:3; Acts 16:3). Titus is not mentioned in Acts, but Paul counted him a trusted companion and coworker. Paul sent Titus to Corinth to help with the collection for the needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:16). Titus helped Paul greatly by helping to bring peace in a tense situation between Paul and the Corinthians (2 Cor. 7:6-15). Paul calls Titus his "partner" and "fellow worker" (8:23). Our last Biblical word on Titus is that Paul sent him to Dalmatia, which today is Yugoslavia (2 Tim. 4:10). Eusebius records the tradition that Titus returned to Crete and served as a bishop there until his old age (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.4.6).

Paul left Titus in Crete, "that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you" (1:5). Titus had the responsibility of caring for several young churches, and this letter gives the details of his duties and the need to appoint elders in every city. Paul supports Titus, saying, "Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you" (2:15).

Crete was the fourth largest island in the Mediterranean Sea and lies south of the Aegean Sea. Paul's earlier experiences sailing past Crete are recorded in Acts 27:7-21). During the days of the New Testament Crete had sunk to such low moral levels that even one of their own poets (Epimenides, a well-known sixth-century BC poet) declared, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons" (Tit. 1:12).

Paul emphasizes to Titus the need for these new Christians coming out of an immoral lifestyle to practice "good" works (cf. 1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1,8,14). Paul provides a classic statement of how grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and to live righteously in the present age (2:11-14). He also notes how the mercy and grace of God saves us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, a reference to baptism (Titus 3:3-7; cf. John 3:5; Rom. 6:3-7).

Outline of Titus

- I. **Greeting (1:1-4).**
- II. **Instructions to Titus (1:5-3:14).**
 1. Commandment to set things in order and appoint elders (1:5).
 2. Instructions about elders (1:6-9).

3. Instructions about deceivers and Jews (1:10-16).
4. Sound teaching for Christians (2:1-10).
5. What grace teaches Christians (2:11-15).
6. Instructions on conduct to outsiders (3:1-2).
7. How God saved us (3:3-7).
8. Instruction to maintain good works (3:8).
9. Instruction to avoid disputes (3:9-11).
10. Final instructions (3:12-14).

III. Final greetings (3:15).

Introduction to Hebrews

Of the book of Hebrews Origen (185-254 AD) said, "But who wrote the epistle God only knows certainly." Through the years some have suggested that Paul, Luke, Barnabas, Apollos, or Clement of Rome wrote this anonymous epistle. Origin was right; only God knows who wrote it.

The churches in the East argue strongly for Paul, and the Chester Beatty papyrus of Paul's writings (p⁴⁶), dating 200 AD, places Hebrews right after Romans. Clement of Rome, Dionysius of Alexandria and Eusebius support Pauline authorship. The churches of the West were skeptical, however, and claimed uncertainty. Origin, although uncertain, recognized the Pauline flavor to the book, since Paul's style and wording is similar to that found in Hebrews.

Tertullian said Barnabas wrote the book, since he was a Levite and the book is a "word of exhortation" (parakleseos, Heb. 13:22) from the "son of Encouragement" (parakleseos, Acts 4:36). But this is uncertain. While the author is intimately acquainted with the sacrificial system of Israel, he quotes extensively from the Septuagint rather than from the Hebrew text.

Though the author does not state his name, he assumes his readers know him (Heb. 13:19,22,23). The author describes Timothy as "our brother" (13:23). While Paul sometimes refers to Timothy as his "true child" (1 Tim. 1:2), he calls him "our brother" four times (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 3:2; and Philemon 1:1). Timothy had apparently been imprisoned in Rome (Heb. 13:23-24) when this book was written, but Paul's final book has Timothy free (2 Tim. 4:13,21). Since we have no details as to when Timothy was imprisoned, we cannot

date the book with certainty. It is possible that Timothy was imprisoned after the death of Paul. In that case this book might date 66-68 AD. This book is silent on the destruction of Jerusalem and suggests the Temple is functioning (cf. 8:4; 10:11), which suggests a date earlier than 70 AD. Clement of Rome (96 AD) cited this book quite early, but he does not tell us who the author is.

The Hebrews to whom this "word of exhortation" is written had become spiritually weak. The author describes them as drifting (2:1), neglectful (2:3), dull of hearing (5:11), immature (5:12-13), sluggish (6:12), forsaking the assembling (10:25), in danger of unbelief (3:12), and in need of first principles (5:12). They were hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (3:12), casting away their confidence (10:35), being led astray by false teaching (13:9), falling back to the Jewish sacrificial system (10:26-31), and coming short of the grace of God (12:15). The writer warns that they might miss the eternal rest (4:1-3) and some were beyond renewing to repentance (6:4-8).

A key term in Hebrews to describe Jesus is that he is "better." He is better than the angels (1:4), better than Moses (3:1-4:13), having a better hope (7:19) and a better covenant (8:6-13). His is a better sacrifice (9:23), and heaven is a better country (11:16). The major theme of Hebrews is the supremacy of Jesus Christ, a supremacy that exhorts Christians to remain faithful to Him (Heb. 10:35-39). The Hebrew writer exhorted his hearers with the phrase "let us" thirteen times (4:1,11,14,16; 6:1; 10:22,23,24; 12:1 [twice],28; 13:13,15).

Hebrews 11 contains the great Hall of Fame of the faithful, showing that faith demonstrates itself through obedience and loyalty. Sometime earlier the recipients of this epistle had endured persecution joyfully (10:32-34), but this time they needed endurance. The Hebrew writer feared they would throw away their confidence.

Hebrews contains five warnings: (1) beware of drifting (2:1-4); (2) beware of hardening your heart and unbelief (3:7-4:13); (3) beware of becoming dull of hearing and falling away (5:11-6:8); (4) beware of shrinking back from the Lord (10:25-39); and (5) beware of refusing Him who speaks (12:18-29).

Outline of Hebrews

- I. **Christ is Better than the Prophets (1:1-3).**
- II. **Christ is Better than the Angels (1:4-2:18).**
- III. **Christ is Better than Moses (3:1-19).**
- IV. **Christ's Rest is Better than Joshua's Rest (4:1-13).**
- V. **Christ's Priesthood is Better than Aaron (4:14-5:10).**
- VI. **Admonitions against Immaturity and Apostasy (5:11-6:20).**
 1. Rebuke for immaturity (5:11-14).
 2. Encouragement to grow (6:1-3).
 3. The danger of falling away (6:4-9).
 4. Exhortation to diligence and faithfulness (6:9-20).
- VII. **Melchizedek's Priesthood is Better than the Levitical (7:1-8:5).**
- VIII. **Christ's Covenant is Better than the Mosaic Covenant (8:6-13).**
- IX. **The Sacrifice of Christ is Better than Bulls and Goats (9:1-10:18).**
- X. **Exhortation to Endure Faithful (10:19-39).**
- XI. **The Definition and Character of Faith (11:1-40).**
- XII. **The Christian Life is Better (12:1-13:25).**
 1. Focus on Jesus (12:1-4).
 2. The value of discipline (12:5-11).
 3. Strengthen your faith (12:12-17).
 4. Heavenly Jerusalem is better than Sinai (12:18-29).
 5. Varied responsibilities (13:1-17).
 6. Final requests, praise, and greetings (13:18-25).

Introduction to James

The epistle of James to the twelve tribes dispersed abroad is probably the earliest written of all the books of the New Testament.

The author describes himself as James, "a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (James 1:1). It is the first of the general epistles, which were not written to a particular church or individual.

Some controversy surrounds identifying the James who wrote this epistle. Scholars have suggested three possibilities: (1) James the son of Zebedee, (2) James, the son of Alphaeus, and (3) James, the brother of the Lord. Since James, the brother of John and son of Zebedee, was beheaded by Herod Agrippa quite early in 44 AD (Acts 12:1,2), it is not likely that he was the author. We know very little about James, the son of Alphaeus. He is listed with the apostles (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13) and is called "James the Less" (Mark 15:40). He is obscure, and for this reason most scholars do not regard him as the author of the epistle of James.

The traditional view associates the author with James, the brother of the Lord and a leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:28; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 2:9,12). The circular letter in Acts 15 and the epistle of James show striking similarity in the salutation (Acts 15:23; James 1:1) and language, a fact which strongly supports this James as the author. Even though the brothers of the Lord were not believers before the resurrection (John 7:5), they are numbered with the believers at Pentecost (Acts 1:14; cf. 1 Cor. 15:7). When Paul describes the three "pillars" of the church in Jerusalem, James is mentioned first (Gal. 2:9). Josephus said that Ananus, the high priest when Albinus was the procurator, stoned James, the brother of the Lord (*Antiquities* 20.9.1), accusing him of breaking the Law. If the Lord's brother did write this epistle, it would be quite becoming for him to refer to himself as a servant rather than as the Lord's brother.

If James penned this book, he did so before 62 AD, the date of his death. Most scholars suggest a date prior to 50 AD. There is no mention of the Jerusalem council or of Gentiles (Acts 15). Since the book uses the word "synagogue" in reference to the church (James 2:2), this book was likely written quite early in the history of Christianity (44-45 AD).

James is writing strictly to Jewish Christians, Jews in the twelve tribes of the dispersion and who follow Christ (1:1). These Jewish believers scattered in areas within and surrounding Palestine. The reason for this scattering was likely the persecution of Saul in

34 AD (Acts 8:1-4) and the persecution of Herod in 44 AD (Acts 12). James perhaps knew many of these brethren who had left Jerusalem and wanted to encourage them in the trials they were facing. He wanted to help them in daily living.

The Jewish Christians James addresses were familiar with Jewish background. They understood the references to autumn and spring rains (James 5:7), a phenomenon limited to the eastern Mediterranean coastal plains and lowlands. They were impoverished (2:1-13). James refers to farmers (5:1-6) and merchants (4:13-17). They lacked maturity and needed to practice what they believed (1:22-27). They showed partiality (2:1-26), failed to control their tongues (1:26; 3:1-12), and put more confidence in themselves than in God (4:13-17).

Outline of James

- I. Opening greeting (1:1).**
- II. Christian Living and Trials (1:2-18).**
 1. Outward trials (1:2-12).
 2. Inward temptations (1:13-18).
- III. Christian Living and God's Word (1:19-27).**
- IV. Christian Living and Relationships (2:1-26).**
 1. Do not show partiality (2:1-13).
 2. Show compassion (2:14-26).
- V. Christian Living and Speech (3:1-18).**
- VI. Christian Living and the World (4:1-12).**
- VII. Christian Living and Money (4:13-5:6).**
- VIII. Final exhortations (5:7-20).**
 1. Be patient (5:7-11).
 2. Speak honestly (5:12).
 3. Pray, sing and confess (5:13-18).
 4. Turn sinners back (5:19-20).

Introduction to 1 Peter

Peter identifies himself as "an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:1), and the external evidence of the second century supports this. Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria,

and many others cite Peter as the author. There is no evidence that this fact was ever disputed in early church history. Eusebius lists 1 Peter as one of the undisputed books. 2 Peter 3:1 is the earliest reference to this epistle.

Some scholars object that Peter could not be the author of both 1 and 2 Peter, because the quality of the Greek is quite different. 1 Peter contains some of the best Greek in the New Testament, while 2 Peter contains a quite poor quality of Greek. A likely solution to this difficulty is that Peter used an amanuensis for his first epistle (Silvanus, 5:12; see Acts 15:22; 1 Thess. 1:1), while he wrote the second epistle himself. Since Silvanus or Silas is likely the disciple who traveled with Paul on his second evangelistic journey, one can understand why 1 Peter has many phrases similar to those found in the writings of Paul.

Peter writes to the elect "pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1:2), which are provinces of Asia Minor. Peter's epistle is cyclical, and this may explain why there are no personal greetings. The "Dispersion" usually refers to Jews scattered outside Judea, but the use of the word "elect" indicates Peter was referring to Christians, both Jew and Gentile. For Christians, our citizenship is in heaven; we are merely pilgrims on this earth.

Peter notes several things about his readers: (1) their former lusts in ignorance (1:14); (2) their aimless conduct learned from their fathers (1:18); (3) their identification as "not a people" called from darkness (2:9-10); and (4) their walking in the way of the Gentiles (4:3-4). The book of 1 Peter usually quotes the Old Testament from the Septuagint (LXX). The epistle addresses both freemen (2:11-17) and slaves (2:18-25). Those addressed had not physically seen Jesus (1:8) and were likely new converts (1:22; 2:2; 4:3-4).

Peter is writing from "Babylon" (5:13), and there is much controversy over which Babylon is intended. While some suggest Mesopotamian Babylon, others regard this as Rome. While Peter is often associated with Rome, there is no evidence he was ever associated with Mesopotamian Babylon. Early traditions indicate Peter went to Rome. The presence of "my son" John Mark, who was summoned by Paul to Rome (2 Tim. 4:11), seems to place Peter. The use of "Babylon" to refer to Rome was probably symbolic and cryptic in order to provide security for the

Christians from the authorities. It must be acknowledged, in spite of all, that the context of 5:13 is neither figurative nor symbolic.

1 Peter must have been written prior to Peter's death in 67/68 AD, since Peter fell to martyrdom during the reign of Nero. Nero burned Rome on July 19, 64 AD and blamed the fire on the Christians, which began a persecution. Peter in writing clearly provides comfort and guidance to young Christians in a period of persecution.

Although 1 Peter is an epistle, the tone of the letter reminds one of a sermon. Peter uses theological points to support the ethical exhortations. He wishes them to live a holy life (1:15-16), to walk worthy of their calling by maintaining honorable conduct (2:12), and to follow the example of Christ (2:21ff.). In a time of hostility, Peter knew they would need to love each other and help each other (4:7-18; 5:1-2).

Outline of 1 Peter

I. Greetings (1:1-2).

II. Blessings Christians Receive (1:3-2:10).

1. The great salvation (1:3-12).
2. The holy life (1:13-2:3).
3. Being God's people (2:4-10).

III. Christian Duties (2:11-4:11).

1. Submit to rulers (2:11-17).
2. Submit to masters (2:18-20).
3. The example of Jesus (2:21-25).
4. Wives submit to husbands (3:1-6).
5. Husbands duty to wives (3:7).
6. General duties (3:8-17).
7. The example of Jesus (3:18-4:6).
8. Love and service (4:7-11).

IV. Trials Christians Face (4:12-5:11).

1. Rejoice in your sufferings (4:12-19).
2. Relationships among the younger and older (5:1-11)

V. Final greetings (5:12-14).

Introduction to 2 Peter

2 Peter seems peculiar to have the double form of the name, Simon Peter. This appears only twice elsewhere (Matt. 16:16; Luke 5:18). Some have suggested for this and other reasons that 2 Peter is pseudonymous. There are some difficulties to this view, however. If it

were the following allusions must be explained:

- (1) It claims to be the second letter of Peter (3:1).
- (2) The author witnessed the transfiguration (1:18).
- (3) The author had a close relationship with Paul (3:15).
- (4) Jesus predicted the author would die (1:14; cf. John 21:18,19).
- (5) The allusion to Noah (2:5) seems to tie the author up with 1 Peter 3:18.

Scholars have questioned Petrine authorship. They say the allusion to Paul's letters in 2 Pet. 3:16 is a major objection. How early were the letters collected together and when considered "Scripture." *grafa* can either mean writings or Scripture. (There is little reason to think it means anything but Scripture.) This allusion attaches authority to Paul's letters. However, Paul speaks of an exchange of letters between churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; 2 Thess. 3:14). By the time of 1 Clement (88-97 AD), a collection of Paul's letters is being used. (Cf. 1 Clement 5:4-7).

The relationship between 2 Peter 2 and Jude causes questions. These closely overlap. Some have suggested Jude was written first, and others believe Peter was written first. Would an apostle of the stature of Peter make use of material by one who was not an apostle? If Jude, like James were the brother of Jesus, it is very likely Peter could have used such material.

The style and vocabulary of 2 Peter brings another objection. Since the time of Jerome, Bible students have noticed stylistic differences between 1 and 2 Peter. There are 699 Greek words in 1 and 2 Peter. 366 are unique to 1 Peter, while 230 are unique to 2 Peter. One hundred words are common to both epistles. This is not a heavy overlap. Some 56 terms are unique to NT literature, and 333 are not found anywhere else in the Greek Bible (these are called *hapax*: a[pa<c]).

Some have suggested that Peter had two different secretaries, which explains the difference in style. Others suggest 1 Peter used Sylvanus or Silas (5:12; Cf. Acts 15:22 and 1 Thess. 1:1), but 2 Peter used no secretary (*amanuensis*) at all.

The apparent allusion to John 21:18f. suggests that 2 Peter was written after John's gospel. But this is not necessarily the case, since Peter was himself a witness of his conversation with Jesus on the matter. He is not dependent on John for this information.

From 2 Peter 3:15,16 it is clear that 2 Peter could not have been written until a good

number of the Pauline Epistles had been written. Paul's letters date from (51-67 A.D.). The earliest possible date would be about 60 AD. 2 Pet. 3:1 refers to a second letter, which makes the earliest date of this second letter 63-64 AD. Since this letter was written shortly before Peter's death (1:14), this book is best dated 67-68 AD.

2 Peter was likely written from Rome, but we are not certain. The letter is addressed "to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (1:1). The occasion of this letter was that Peter's time was short and the church was facing many dangers (1:13-14; 2:1-3). Peter wanted to ground Christians in their faith in Jesus as the Messiah (1:16) and to confirm that this fact is based on a sure revelation from God (1:16-21). Christians must beware of false teachers (2:1-22), realize the return of the Lord (3:3-14) and grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord (3:17-18).

Outline of 2 Peter

- I. Salutation and Blessing (1:1-4)**
- II. The Essential Christian Virtues (1:5-15)**
 - 1. The efforts for Christian fruitfulness (1:5-9)
 - 2. The confirmation of election (1:10-11)
 - 3. The need for reminders (1:12-15)
- III. Christ's Divine Majesty (1:16-21)**
 - 1. Attested by apostolic eyewitnesses (1:16-18)
 - 2. Attested by Divinely originated prophecy (1:19-21)
- IV. False Prophets and Teachers (2:1-22)**
 - 1. Warning against false teachers (2:1-3)
 - 2. Three examples of Previous Judgments (2:4-10a)
 - 3. The insolence and wantonness of the false teachers (2:10b-16)
 - 4. The impotence of their teaching (2:17-22)
- V. The Promise of the Lord's Coming (3:1-18)**
 - 1. The certainty of the Day of the Lord (3:1-10)
 - 2. The ethical implications of the Day of the Lord (3:11-16)
 - 3. The need to guard against error and to grow in Grace and Knowledge (3:17-18)

Introduction to 1 John

1 John contains no formal greeting, no specific clues as to its destination, and no specific mention of its author. Because no specific congregations or individuals are mentioned, this letter is likely circular. John spent his last years near Ephesus, and these churches probably were the first readers of this epistle.

From the earliest period following the apostolic age, writers have attributed this book to the apostle John. The form, style, and language show great similarity to the Gospel of John. Polycarp, Hermas, and Tertullian cite or allude to the book, while Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Eusebius name it as authentic. The writer of this book says he heard, saw and touched Christ (1:1-5). He assumes a role of authority in addressing the recipients as "little children," expecting to be obeyed (2:1; 4:6).

The epistle of 1 John refers to an early heresy, which would develop in the second century into what is called "Gnosticism." This heresy was a combination of Greek and Jewish thought, a dualism regarding everything physical or fleshly as bad and everything spiritual as good. They denied that Jesus Christ came in the flesh (4:2-3). If they were Docetic Gnostics, they held that Jesus Christ was only a phantom playing a human role. The Christ only appeared to have real humanity. If they were Cerinthian Gnostics, they believed Jesus was merely a human and that a Divine power came upon Him at baptism and left him at the crucifixion. Even if we do not know the exact heresy, we know they were at that time teaching error (4:1-3). Some believed that since the inner spirit was good and unaffected by the body, they had no sin (1:8,10; see 2:4,6,15-17; 3:3-10; 5:18). This was built upon a false confidence rather than knowledge of Jesus Christ. John refers to the heretics as antichrists (2:18,22; 4:3), liars (2:22), deceivers (2:26; 3:7), and false prophets (4:1). They had once been within the church but had now gone out from it (2:19) and into the world (4:1).

1 John is a letter of redemptive assurance. The author lists some specific reasons for his writing: (1) so that your joy may be made complete (1:4); (2) so that you may not sin (2:1); (3) concerning those who are trying to deceive you (2:26); and (4) that you may know that you have eternal life (5:13). John wants them to have joy in their salvation, to avoid sin,

to protect themselves from false teachers, and to have confidence in their salvation. John wanted them to have confidence and not shame when Jesus Christ returns (3:21024).

“Know” is a keyword throughout the book. The two words for “know” are used about forty times in the 105 verses of this epistle. It is used particularly in 2:5-6, 29; 3:14; 4:13; 5:18. The word “gnostic” comes from the Greek word *gnosis*, meaning “knowledge.” Gnostics felt they knew more and were morally better than those who were mere Christians. John is seeking to contrast the difference between true and false knowledge.

No one can determine the exact time of John’s writing. At times 1 John takes the form of fatherly teaching and admonition from an older leader. John seems to be addressing mature, second-generation Christians. Tradition dates the book in the last decade of the first century (90-95 AD). The false teaching seems to fit this period of time. Since trials and persecution are not addressed in this book, John likely wrote prior to the outbreak of persecution under the Roman emperor Domitian.

Fellowship with God demands walking in the light and keeping the commandments of God (1:6-7; 2:3-5). The one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous (3:7). Those who are born of God cannot practice sin (3:9). This is not a contradiction of 1:8,10 but describes habits or a manner of life. Sin is not the manner of life for the Christian; but if he does sin, he has Jesus as his advocate with the Father (2:1-2).

Outline of 1 John

I. Introduction (1:1-10).

1. Jesus Christ became flesh (1:1-4).
2. Walk in God’s light (1:5-10).

II. The Christian Life (2:1-17)

1. Walk as Jesus walked (2:1-6).
2. The new commandment (2:7-11).
3. Little children, young men, and fathers (2:12-14).
4. Do not love the world (2:15-17).

III. Deceptions and the Truth (2:18-27)

1. The deceivers (2:18-23).
2. Abide in the teaching (2:24-27).

IV. The Child of God (2:28-3:23)

1. God’s child and righteousness (2:28-3:3).
2. God’s child and sin (3:4-9).
3. God’s child and love (3:10-23).

V. The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error (3:24-4:6).

VI. Love One Another (4:7-5:5).

VII. The Testimony is true (5:6-10).

VIII. Knowledge of Eternal Life (5:11-17).

IX. We Belong to God (5:18-21).

Introduction to 2 John

The elder is writing to the elect lady and her children to make known his joy and appreciation at their loyalty to the truth. Scholars have suggested a variety of views as to who the “elder” is and as to who the “elect lady” is. While some have suggested a man known as John The Elder wrote the book, the evidence favors John, the apostle.

While John is not specifically named in this letter, many phrases found in 2 and 3 John are similar to those found in 1 John. All three letters share common characteristics with the Gospel of John. Compare the following:

2 John 5	1 John 2:7	John 13:34-35
2 John 6	1 John 2:4-6; 5:3	John 14:23; 15:9-10
2 John 7	1 John 4:2-3	
2 John 12	1 John 1:4	John 15:11; 16:24

The second letter of John was cited by Polycarp (110-150 AD) and Irenaeus. Cyril of Jerusalem, Jerome and Augustine named it as authentic. Most scholars date this book about the same time as 1 John (85-95 AD).

Jerome argued that John was referring not to an individual lady but figuratively to the whole church. Others have suggest that the elect lady was an individual congregation. Still others think that the Greek terms *electa* or *kyria* were proper names. If the elect lady were a local congregation, then her children would be the members of that congregation. The children of the elect sister could be members

of a sister congregation (2 John 13). This seems to be the most likely view.

These letters appear to be more of a personal correspondence than an epistle. With only thirteen verses, 2 John has the fewest verses of any book of the Bible. Interestingly, 3 John actually has about a dozen fewer words in its fourteen verses. Each book, then, has a claim to the shortest book of the Bible.

John is writing again to combat incipient Gnosticism (vs. 7). This passage may be compared to 1 John 2:18-27; 4:1-6. John is seeking to warn of deceiving antichrists, which would lead them astray from the truth. John urges them not to greet or to receive them into their houses. John makes it clear that doctrinal purity and walking according to the commandments are means by which we show love and maintain our relationship with God.

Outline of 2 John

- I. Greeting (1-3).
- II. Rejoicing at their walk in truth (4).
- III. Exhortation to love and keep the commandments (5-6).
- IV. The Deceiving Antichrist (7-11)
- V. Final greeting (12-13).

Introduction to 3 John

If one counts the number of words, 3 John is the shortest book of the Bible. Like 2 John, this book comes from "the Elder." While Jerome attributes this book to John the Elder rather than the apostle John, most scholars attribute this book to the apostle because the style is similar to 1 and 2 John. 2 and 3 John has numerous similarities and usually stand or fall together. Phrases such as "love in truth" and "walk in truth" identify 2 and 3 John as coming from the same author. Very likely this book was written about the same time as 2 John (85-95 AD).

This book mentions three individuals: Gaius, Diotrephes, and Demetrius. Since Gaius was a common name in the Roman world (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 1 Cor. 1:14), we do not know who this Gaius is. John desires that he prosper physically as well as his soul

prosper. John delights that Gaius is walking in truth. While nothing associates this Gaius with others, he was likely a leader in a congregation in Asia.

Diotrephes refused to receive the apostle John or his letter. Longing to have the preeminence in the church, he was refusing to receive brethren and casting out of the church those who did receive brethren. Diotrephes was also guilty of prating against John with malicious words. John promises to discipline him when he comes.

On the other hand, Demetrius is one who has a good testimony from the truth and all who know him. In light of the contrast between Diotrephes and Demetrius, John's instruction to Gaius becomes significant: "Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God" (vs. 11).

Outline of 3 John

- I. Greeting (1-4).
- II. Instructions about traveling preachers (5-8).
- III. The Problem of Diotrephes (9-10).
- IV. Imitate what is good (11).
- V. Testimony about Demetrius (12)
- VI. Final Greetings (13-14).

Introduction to Jude

Jude describes himself as "a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (Jude 1). While there are six men who have the name Jude (*Ioudas*, Judas) mentioned in the New Testament, only three could be the author of this letter. It could be "Judas son of James," one of the twelve apostles (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13); "Judas, also called Barsabbas," a prophet (Acts 15:22, 27, 32); or a brother of Jesus named "Judas" (Mark 6:3). Since we know that Jude, the brother of Jesus, also had a brother named James (Gal. 1:19; Mark 6:3), he is almost certainly the author.

If this Jude is the brother of Jesus, why does he not identify himself so? Clement of Alexandria thought he may have deliberately avoided the title “brother of the Lord,” for what he thought pointed to one of greater significance “servant of the Lord.” James also avoids this title. Whether because of modesty or because of their late conversion (compare John 7:5 and Acts 1:14), these brothers looked to their spiritual relationship with Jesus rather than their fleshly one (cf. Mark 3:31-35). Paul mentions brothers of the Lord who led about wives in 1 Cor. 9:5, and Jude could have been one.

Though this book is brief, Jude is attested in the Muratorian Canon, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian. Clement of Rome, the Shepherd of Hermas, Barnabas, and Didache allude to Jude. Eusebius classified it as one of the “*antilegomena*,” or disputed books. Most scholars accept Jude, the brother of Jesus, as the author and the book as authentic.

Jude likely was writing to a Jewish-Christian community living in a Gentile society. Jude’s reference to 1 Enoch suggests that his audience was familiar with Jewish literature. Gentiles likely influenced the false teachers Jude exposes, however. We simply do not know to which community or congregation Jude wrote this letter. Paul’s reference to the Lord’s brothers leading about a wife (1 Cor. 9:5) suggests Jude may have traveled widely. Eusebius wrote of two of Jude’s grandsons, who were interrogated by Roman Emperor Domitian around 95 AD to see if they were a threat to Rome. Since the grandsons pointed

to a heavenly kingdom, Domitian let them go (*Ecclesiastical History*, 3:20:1-6).

Jude and 2 Peter contain numerous parallels. If Jude quoted from 2 Peter, then Jude could not have been written prior to 67-68 AD. Jude 17-18 alludes to 2 Pet. 3:3 and the apostles; this allusion suggests the death of those apostles whom Jude knew. Jude 3 speaks of “the faith, which was once for all delivered to the saints”; this suggests that there was at that time a fixed body of knowledge known to the church. Most scholars date Jude from 65-80 AD.

We do not know where Jude wrote this book, but most suggest Palestine and likely Jerusalem (which means Jude wrote before 70 AD). Jude wrote to condemn a heresy and to warn of ungodly false teachers, who were corrupting their love feasts and leading members astray.

Outline of Jude

- I. Greeting (1-2).
- II. Contend for the Faith (3-4).
- III. Condemnation of False Teachers (5-16).
 1. False teachers will be condemned (5-10).
 2. False teachers are greedy, rebellious and shameful (11-13).
 3. False teachers live ungodly lives (14-16).
- IV. Build yourselves up on your most holy faith (17-23).
- V. Closing doxology (24-25).

Parallels in 2 Peter and Jude

Jude		2 Peter
4	The false teachers “condemned” from the past	2:3
4	They deny the “Sovereign [and] Lord	2:1
6	Angels confined for judgment—“gloomy” (2 Peter) and “darkness” (Jude) translate the same Greek word (<i>zophos</i>)	2:4
7	Sodom and Gomorrah as examples of judgment of gross evil	2:6
8	They “reject” or “despise” authority and “slander celestial beings”	2:10
9	Angels do not bring “slandorous accusations”	2:11
12	False teachers are “blemishes”	2:13
12	Jude: “clouds without rain, blown along by the wind” Peter: “springs without water and mists driven by a storm”	2:17
18	“scoffers” following “their own evil [Peter]/ungodly desires [Jude]”	3:3

How do we explain this startling similarity?

1. Peter could have borrowed from the letter of Jude.
2. Jude could have borrowed from the second letter of Peter.

3. Both Peter and Jude could have used another document that we no longer have.
4. The same author had a hand in writing both letters. Jude may have served as a scribe or secretary (*amanuensis*) for Peter when he was writing his letter. Later Jude then added his own note to Peter's warnings.
5. Both men were inspired of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit may have wanted similar messages to go to two different audiences.

Jude 17-18 appears to be a quotation of 2 Peter 3:3. Peter, having written a letter castigating false teachers in a specific community, shared its contents with Jude. Jude then borrowed freely those portions of 2 Peter that were relevant to a similar false teaching he was dealing with in his community.

Introduction to Revelation

Revelation introduces itself as the "Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants" (1:1). While some think of it as the Revelation of John, it is actually the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The English title comes from the Latin *revelatio*, which in its verb form means "to reveal or unveil what was previously hidden." The Greek title "*Apokaluyi*" is taken from the first word in the text.

Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Origen, and Irenaeus point to John the apostle as the author. The writer calls himself John four times (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). John speaks with authority as a prophet (1:3; 22:6-10, 18-19). Many similarities exist between Revelation (the Apocalypse) and other writings of John. Both use the term "logos" or Word (John 1:1; Rev. 19:13), "the Lamb," "the water of life," "he that overcomes," and "keeping the commandments." John wrote from the Isle of Patmos, an island off the coast of Asia Minor to the seven churches of Asia (1:4,9).

No book of the New Testament is more variously interpreted, abused, and misunderstood than Revelation. Scholars understand Revelation to be "apocalyptic" literature. Apocalyptic literature was popular among the Jews from 200 BC to 200 AD. Writers used scenes from the Old Testament and reapplied them to present circumstances. Of the 404 verses in the book, 278 are references to the Old Testament, but none are exact quotations. They are reapplications of the Old Testament events.

Apocalyptic literature usually tells how things go from bad to worse, until God intervenes and delivers His people (17:14); they are tracts for hard times. Apocalyptic literature is characterized by symbols, which Jesus "signified" (communicated by signs or symbols) by His angel to His servant John (1:1). John used symbols as a code by which

he could communicate to the seven churches of Asia things the general public would not understand.

Since the book of Revelation was written to the seven churches of Asia in the first century, we must regard the book as meaning something to them, even if it is hard to understand today. The major problem of the church in their day was Emperor worship, which demanded universal allegiance (cf. 13:4, 15f.; 14:9-11; 15:2; 16:2, 19:20; 20:4). John was exiled to Patmos (1:9), Antipas had been killed (2:13), Smyrna was warned of imprisonment (2:10), Philadelphia would see an hour of trial (3:10); and others had suffered martyrdom (6:9). The great harlot was drunk with the blood of the saints (17:6; 18:24; 19:2). John is writing to point to Lord "Jesus," who is greater than Lord Caesar.

Though some have dated this book during the reign of Nero (65-68 AD), the ancient testimony points to the reign and persecution of Domitian (81-96 AD). Irenaeus first reported Revelation was written during the latter part of Domitian's reign (95-96 AD), and this view was widespread in the first three hundred years. This date fits the evidence of churches with a history (2:4; 3:1). The persecution under Domitian was more widespread than that under Nero. If Revelation 17:8,11 has the *Nero redivivus* (the reviving of Nero) myth in mind, then the book could not have been written before 80 AD.

A dominant feature within Revelation is the use of the number seven. There are seven beatitudes (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14), seven seals, seven trumpets, seven thunders, and seven bowls.

There are several different methods of interpreting Revelation:

1. *Preterist*: this method sees the book as having already been fulfilled by 312 AD with the conversion of Constantine.
2. *Continuous Historical*: this method sees the book as a "panorama of the history of the

church from the days of John to the end of the age.”

3. *Idealist*: this method sees the book as a conflict of the principles of good and evil, which take place in every age.
4. *Futurist*: this method sees the book from chapters four on as proclaiming prophecies yet to be fulfilled, even in the 21st century.

Evaluation of these methods:

1. The Futurist method fails to realize that the events predicted “must shortly take place” (1:1, 3; 3:10, 11; 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20). John was not to seal up the words of this book for some distant generation (22:10; cf. Daniel 12:4). Not understanding that the kingdom is the church, the futurist view mistakenly holds that the kingdom is yet to be (cf. 1:4-6; 5:9-10; Acts 20:28). Every occurrence of the word “kingdom” in Revelation, which refers to the kingdom of God, speaks of it as a present reality (1:4-6 NASB, 9; 5:9-10 NASB; cf. Col. 1:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:9). The Futurist method would have much of the book having little to do with the persecuted Christians of the seven churches.
2. The weakness of the Preterist method is that it leaves no message for the church today but only addresses the church in the past. Some passages unmistakably point to the future (20:7-22; 21:1-27). The strength of this view is that it is true to the historical background of the book and speaks to the seven churches. This view is also consistent with the teaching of the New Testament. Past event also have universal application to all generations (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).
3. The Continual Historical view is out of touch with the seven churches of Asia; it would give little comfort to them. This method gives undue importance to the apostate Roman church. It often stoops to absurd details in interpreting the book.
4. The Idealist method has much to commend it, but it removes the book from the situation for which it was written—the persecution of the seven churches. It tends to ignore the specific fulfillment of Rome’s fall through natural causes and outside invasion. Its strength is that it recognizes God’s hand in history and that Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Symbols in Numbers in Jewish thought:

- one (1) means unity or independent existence (Deut. 6:4)
- two (2) means strength, energy, courage (Eccl. 9:4)
- three (3) refers to Deity, divinity, heaven, God
- four (4) the world (four corners, four winds, four angels, four horsemen)
- five (5) the perfect, well-rounded man with all members intact
- ten (10) the number of completeness, ten commandments
- seven (7) [3 + 4 = 7] suggests heaven and earth and means completeness
- twelve (12) [3 x 4 = 12] organized completeness, 12 tribes and 12 apostles.
- 3 ½ or ½ of 7 refers to the incomplete, imperfect [3½ years, 42 months, 1260 days] restless longings
- six (6) evil, a sinister number; since it is short of seven, not great enough. (Somewhat like 13 would be to us today)
- 1000 is a great number, unlimited
- Multiples indicate intensive characteristics.
 - 666 is ultimate evil
 - 144,000 (12 x 12 x 1000) refers to all the people of God

Outline of Revelation

- I. **Introduction and Greeting (1:1-8).**
- II. **Jesus in the Midst of the Seven Churches (1:9-20)**
- III. **Letters to the Seven Churches (2:1-3:22).**
 1. Ephesus (2:1-7)
 2. Smyrna (2:8-11)
 3. Pergamum (2:12-17)
 4. Thyatira (2:18-29)
 5. Sardis (3:1-6)
 6. Philadelphia (3:7-13)
 7. Laodicea (3:14-22)
- IV. **God’s Majesty in Heaven (4:1-11).**
- V. **The Worthy Lamb (5:1-14).**
- VI. **The Seven Seals (6:1-8:1).**
 1. The first seal: a white horse (6:1-2).
 2. The second seal: a red horse (6:3-4).
 3. The third seal: the black horse (6:5-6).
 4. The fourth seal: the pale horse (6:7-8).
 5. The fifth seal: souls under the altar (6:9-11).
 6. The sixth seal: the earthquake (6:12-17).

7. God's seal on His people, keeping them from hard (7:1-8).
8. The washed multitude before the throne (7:9-17).
9. The seventh seal: silence in heaven (8:1)

VII. The Seven Trumpets (8:2-11:19).

1. The seven angels and the prayer (8:2-5).
2. The first trumpet: hail and fire (8:6-7).
3. The second trumpet: burning mountain thrown into the sea (8:8-9).
4. The third trumpet: The star Wormwood in the water (8:10-11).
5. The fourth trumpet: sun, moon and stars struck (8:12-13).
6. The fifth trumpet: locusts (9:1-12).
7. The sixth trumpet: the horsemen (9:13-21).
8. The little book and prophecy (10:1-11).
9. The two witnesses (11:1-14).
10. The seventh trumpet: triumph of God's kingdom (11:15-19).

VIII. Events Leading to Persecution (12:1-13:18).

1. The birth of Jesus (12:1-6).
2. The war in heaven (12:7-10).
3. Persecution of the church (12:11-17).
4. The two beasts (13:1-18).

IX. Blessing for those who follow the Lamb and Judgment for those who follow the Beast (14:1-20).

X. The Seven Bowls of Wrath (15:1-16:21).

1. The song of Moses and the Lamb (15:1-8).
2. The first bowl: foul sores (16:1-2).
3. The second bowl: sea turned to blood (16:3-4).
4. The third bowl: rivers and springs become blood (16:4-7).
5. The fourth bowl: the sun scorches men with fire (16:8-9).
6. The fifth bowl: darkness and pain (16:10-11).
7. The sixth bowl: kings from the east and Armageddon (16:12-16).
8. The seventh bowl: earthquake (16:17-21).

X. Babylon, the Great Harlot (17:1-18).

XI. Rejoicing over the Downfall of the Harlot (18:1-19:5).

XII. The Marriage of the Lamb (19:6-10).

XIII. The Victory of the King of kings (19:7-21).

XIV. The Binding of Satan (20:1-3).

XV. The First Resurrection (20:4-6).

XVI. The Loosing and Final Assault of Satan (20:7-10).

XVII. The Final Judgment (20:11-15).

XVIII. The Adorned Bride in Heaven (21:1-22:5).

XIX. Final Warning and Encouragement (22:6-21).

Some Defined Symbols in Revelation

1:20	Seven stars	Angels
4:5	Lamps	Seven spirits of God
5:6	Eyes	Seven spirits of God
5:8	Bowls	Prayers (incense)
12:9	Red Dragon	Satan
17:9	Heads	Mountains
17:12	Ten Horns	Ten Kings
17:15	Waters	People
17:18	Woman	Great City
19:14	Fine Linen	Righteous Deeds
20:14	Lake of Fire	Second Death

Dating the Books of the New Testament

Gospels and Acts	Paul's Epistles	General Epistles and Revelation
<p>Matthew (60 AD) Mark (60 AD) Luke (60 AD) Acts (61 AD)</p> <p>John (85-95 AD)</p>	<p>Galatians (48 AD)</p> <p>1 Thessalonians (50 AD) 2 Thessalonians (50-51 AD)</p> <p>1 Corinthians (54-55 AD) 2 Corinthians (55-56 AD) Romans (56-57 AD) Ephesians (59 AD) Colossians (59 AD) Philemon (59 AD)</p> <p>Philippians (61 AD)</p> <p>1 Timothy (66 AD) Titus (66 AD) 2 Timothy (67 AD)</p>	<p>James (45 AD)</p> <p>1 Peter (65-66 AD) Hebrews (66-68 AD) 2 Peter (67-68 AD) Jude (65-80 AD)</p> <p>1 John (90-95 AD) 2 John (90-95 AD) 3 John (90-95 AD) Revelation (96 AD)</p>