

Historical Background

First Century Politics

1. Rulers:
Alexander, Ptolemys, Seleucids, Maccabean Revolt and Hasmonean Kings, Roman alliance, Rome,
2. Herods:
 - A. Herod “the great”
 - B. The Three Sons:
 - Archelaus (Judea Samaria and Edom) fired
 - Antipas (Galilee and just east of the Jordan)
 - Philip (Northeastern Palestine)
 - C. Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12)
 - D. Herod Agrippa II (Acts 25) X

First Century Judaism

1. Religious Groups:
Sadducees: Temple, Sanhedrin, priests, Torah only, no afterlife or angels.
Pharisees: Rabbis, synagogues, Sanhedrin, OT, oral tradition,
Scribes: Religious lawyers on the law
Herodians: Government officials
Essenes: communal, retreat from mainstream
Zealots: Messianic terrorists and extremists
2. Messiah and Apocalyptic movements
3. Diaspora Judaism: Synagogue and more Hellenistic, Septuagint LXX,
4. Temple Worship
5. The Law (613, purity, holiness, separation)
6. Honor, hospitality, land, family, X

Early Christianity

1. Passing of Apostles and Early Church leadership
2. Scripture formation
3. Apostolic Deposit of Faith – orthodoxy
4. Conflicts with Judaism (Jamnia after Temple) and early persecution
5. Later persecution: Nero (64-68) and Domitian (81-96)
6. Church formation from houses to established worship
7. Early Church worship: Word, Sacrament, and the “Lord’s Day”
8. Tension between Jewish and Gentile Christians (how much Law?)

Hellenistic Influences

1. Platonism and Neoplatonism: Plato (428-347 BC) Plotinus (204-270)
2. Stoicism: reason, passion and emotion, virtues, vices, “diatribe” speech
3. Mystery Cults: Myths, rituals, secret rites.
4. Gnosticism: God separate, material universe evil, “spark” of divine, knowledge X

Introduction to the Gospels:

1. Who Wrote the Gospels?
2. How do human authors relate to the Word of God?
3. Vatican II and the New Testament
3. Oral Tradition and stages of development
4. Christian History in the first century.
5. The Scriptures and the liturgy/Eucharistic celebration

6. Why were some books included and others excluded? Criteria?
 - a. Rooted in Apostolic Tradition
 - b. Conformed to the teaching passed down (Tradition)
 - c. Used in liturgy
7. What about the “other” gospels and works (like Tomas)?
 - a. 100 AD or later
 - b. Dependent on outside information
 - c. Conformed sayings and stories to other belief system (Gnostic)

8. What about other works that conformed to Christian tradition but didn’t make it?
E.g. 1 and 2 Clement / Didache, etc. Different genres than NT

9. Timeline of the forming of the New Testament
 - a. Fragments of first books 55 AD (Mark, Thessalonians)
 - b. Gospels and first Epistles 60 – 85 AD
 - c. Later Epistles and John’s works 100 AD
 - d. General agreement of Canon by 200 AD
 - e. First accurate lists of Canon formed (Hippo 393 / Carthage 397) X

Brief Overview of the Gospels:

1. The Four Animals from Revelation 4:7:

a. Man:	Matthew (Mark).	Humanity and reason
b. Lion:	Mark (Matthew)	Courage, strength, and power of the message
c. Ox:	Luke	Sacrifice, service, and strength
d. Eagle:	John	Soaring X

2. Dates:

- Mark:** 65 (55-70) AD
Luke: 70-80 AD
Matthew: 80-85 AD
John: 90-100 AD

3. Written for whom?:

- Mark:** Written in Rome to Gentiles (divorce 10:11-12) (jugs: Mk 7:4)
Luke: Written in Antioch primarily to Gentiles (Greeks)
Matthew: Written in Judea (if Aramaic) Southern Syria or Northern Israel to Jews
John: Written in Asia Minor (Ephesus) to a mix. X

4. Basic themes in each Gospel:

Matthew:

1. Jesus fulfillment of the Law (2:15) (13:34-5)
2. Discourse and Narrative (words and deeds) (5 discourse 7 narrative)
3. Emphasis on teaching
4. The mountains (temptation, sermon on mount, transfiguration, feedings, commission,)
5. Summary: (28: 18-20) X

Mark:

1. Jesus was very human
2. Jesus shuns praise and publicity and came to serve
3. Disciples were not too bright and often didn't understand basics (9:32).
4. Messianic Secret – a messiah that is rejected and misunderstood but yet messianic
5. Jesus was received well at first but was rejected at the end.
6. Jesus' "Messiahship" was misunderstood – "messianic secret" (1:34)
7. Details listed more often (6:39-40) X

Luke:

1. Journey from Galilee to Jerusalem (set his face 9:51)
2. Jesus prayed a lot (before decisions – disciples 6:12)
3. Well mannered (tithes 5:19) and sanitized (9:45)
4. Less graphic passion
5. Anawim theology - 6. Critical of money and power
7. Jesus loves to eat (meal moments) X

John:

1. Jesus was in control (Jesus picked up his own cross (19:17)
2. Divine Jesus and Human Jesus. (Divine 7 "I AM") (Tired at the well - 4:6)
3. Allegories rather than parables (Vine, Bread of Life, Sheep gate)
4. Sacramental Symbolic (bread of life, water and blood, born of water and spirit)
5. Book of Signs 7 signs (Cana, royal son [4:54], cripple pool, feeding 5000, walking on water, man born blind, Lazarus)
6. Book of Glory X

2. The **Synoptic** Gospels

Mark 661 verses.
Matthew 1,068 verses
Luke 1,149 verses

80 percent of Mark's verses in Matt / 65 percent in Luke

Triple Tradition = common to all three Synoptic Gospels

Matt 19:16-22 / Mark 10:17-22 / Luke 18:18-23 (Rich Young Man)

Mark considered primary source of Triple Tradition

“Q” Common to Luke and Matthew but not in Mark? “Q”

Matt 6:25-34 / Luke 12:22-32 (Do not be anxious)

Usually sayings more than narrative X

The Gospel of Matthew

Author and Date:

Unnamed in gospel but later attributed to “Matthew” in 100s (reference to him)

Authors' purpose was to show Jesus as fulfillment and Christians as good Jews

Local church, 85 A.D.

Related to Judaism after the fall of the temple

Jamnia

The true follower of the law is a follower of Christ

Place:

Syria or northern Israel

Writing Style:

Narrative and Discourse: (7 and 5)

Sources: Mark, Q, M

Themes:

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power (authority) in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

1. The **authority of Jesus**.

Form: "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*"

Discourses: 5-7 (5:17-48) (7:28-29)
10: (10:27, 31-33, 34-40)
13: (13:41)
18: (18:3, 10, 18)
23-25 (23:1-10, 30-31, 34-36) (24:30, 45-51) (25:31-33)

2. The **authority of the Apostles**.

Form: "*Go...*"

"All authority has been given to me. I say to you Go..." (see OT Prophets)

Discourses: 5-7 (5:13-19)
10: (10:1, 5, 16, 40)
13: (13:17, 52)
18: (18:18)
23-25 (23:8-12, 34)

3. The **church** mission of the Apostles

Form: "Make Disciples" Bringing people to do God's will

Discourses: 5-7 (5:19-20) (6:9-10)
10: (10:5-6)
13: (13:52)
18: (18:12-14)
23-25 (24:45-51) (25:14-30)

4. **Scope** of the apostolic mission

Form: "Make disciples of *all* nations"

Discourses: 5-7 (5:13-14)
10: (10:17-18, 27)
13: (32:38)
18: (18:18)
23-25 (24:14, 30) (25:32)

5. **Baptism** – Starting point for accomplishing the mission

Form: "baptizing them..."

Discourses: Explicit only in 3:8-12 and 28:19; implicit in 20:17-23 and the passion narrative.

6. **Teaching** – Second means for accomplishing the mission.

Form: "*Teaching them...*"

Discourses: 28:19. Why only once? (5:19) teaching as highest apostolic function

7. **Observe** – Do what Jesus demands (1st characteristic of discipleship)

Form: “to observe...”

Discourses: 5-7 (5:9-20) (6:1-34) (7:15-27)
10: (10:8, 42)
13: (13:8, 17, 23, 52)
18: (18:33)
23-25 (23:3) (All passion, esp. 25:31-46)

8. Observe “**all**” (2nd characteristic of discipleship)

Form: “teaching them to observe **all** I have commanded you.”

Discourses: 5-7 (5:17-48)
23-25 (23:23) (25:31-46)

9. **Assurance** of Jesus’ assistance in the in-between time.

Form: “I will be with you.”

Discourses: 10 (10:22, 40)
18 (18-20)

10. Then **end-time** judgment

Form: “till the end of time.”

Discourses: 5-7 (6:13) (7:21-27)
10: (10:22)
13: (13:30, 40-43, 49-50)
18: (18:35)
23-25 (24:14, 31, 44, 50, 51) (25:13, 14-30, 31-46)

Etc. Matthew’s 7’s:

Genealogy, 7 petitions in the Lord’s Prayer, seven evil spirits, seven vices, seven loaves, seven brothers, seven woes, seven references to “thirty pieces of silver”, forgiving one’s enemy 7 times 70 times, 7 discourses in the gospel. X

Structure of the Gospel:

a. Narrative / 5 major **discourses** (Two Minor: 3:8-12 / 28:18-20) (7 and 5)

Discourse		(f) ch 13 (f) (kingdom)	
Narrative	(e) ch 11-12		(e’) ch 14-17
Discourse	(d) ch 10	(discipleship)	(d’) ch 18
Narrative	(c) ch 8-9		(c’) ch 19-22
Discourse	(b) ch 5-7 (beatitudes)	(mission)	(b’) ch 23-25 (woes)
Narrative	(a) ch 1-4		(a’) ch 26-28

b. Transitions:

Matthew 7:28

When *Jesus finished these words*, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, Narratives introduce, prepare, and serve the discourses X

Authority passed from Jesus to Apostles:

Ch 1-9 The authority of Jesus is established:

- a. ch 1-4 Jesus is the messianic Son of David and 'like' Moses.
- b. ch 5-9 Jesus is greater than Moses
 - i. ch 5-7 Jesus has supreme authority "in word."
 - ii. ch 8-9 Jesus has supreme authority "in deed"

Ch 10-28 The Authority of the Apostles is established:

- a. ch 10 Jesus gives to his Apostles the authority to "preach" and "heal."
- b. ch 11-13 Jesus names the false Israel as those who do not accept him and the true Israel as his disciples who accept him.
- c. ch 14-25 Jesus promises the Apostles full authority (16:17-19; 18:18) and instructs them privately in his teaching about discipleship.
- d. ch 26-28 Through his passion, death, and resurrection, Jesus is constituted Son of Man with authority over all nations.
- e. ch 28:18 Given all authority, Jesus authorizes his Apostles to teach all nations what he has taught them.

Christology:

In Matthew Jesus is the Messiah, anointed one. He is the Son of God addressing an end time Israel in the Sermon. Jesus is presented as the fulfillment of the messianic prophecies of the OT. Jesus is a humble suffering servant. In addition, Matthew presents Jesus as the Son of God in the transcendent sense - he is "worshipped" and has divine authority with the Father and Spirit.

The Mountain:

Temptation, Sermon on the Mount, Multiplications, Transfiguration, Commission. New Moses proclaiming the new law. Also, Mt. Zion is the place where the messiah begins the prophesied restoration. Sinai and Moses included in the imagery but at the same time they are transcended and absorbed by the higher Son-Christology in the eschatological focus directed to the disciples and crowds as well.

The Beatitudes:

Beatitudes finds its origin in ancient literature. Divine blessings followed by a promise of present or future rewards. Wisdom and apocalyptic OT. Both affirm a blessed relationship with God in the present even though the fulfillment of the promise extends to different time periods.

Poor (in spirit) - Matthew / Luke comparison. Poor in what way? OT / NT. Anawim: Poor = absolute poverty. Isaiah basis of poor from 61 anawim. They are a continuation of the anawim and faithful remnant Israel that Jesus proclaims good tidings to. The poor refers to actual poverty, historically disadvantaged faithful followers of Yahweh. These poor have nothing and rely totally on the gifts of God for their very livelihood, both economically and spiritually. Matthew places the church as the new anawim who accept with a childlike faith the Kingdom. They receive the fruits of the Kingdom and dwell with God in the present and in the eschatological future as well.

Kingdom of “Heaven” (versus “God”):

The Kingdom of Heaven is cosmological and spiritual. Heaven and Earth are interconnected where God’s will is done. Kingdom of Heaven is similar to Kingdom of God but carries more of an eschatological, sovereign, and transcendent meaning. The backdrop for kingdom in Israel was historically a progression from the sole kingship of Yahweh, to the Davidic kingship where the earthly kings are God’s representatives on earth, to the messianic kingship. The redemptive work of Jesus inaugurates the messianic kingship which will come to its final eschatological realization at the heavenly banquet.

Chapter 13 parables:

An explanation of the Kingdom in a different genre:

The chapter 13 parables describe the kingdom in metaphorical terms. The kingdom has humble beginnings, comes about by the hand of God, expands greatly, and culminates in grandeur. The themes of discipleship are stressed in the parables that parallel the beatitudes. The single hearted joy in possession of the Kingdom is the same joy of the poor in spirit.

Contrast with the Woes:

The woes are what a disciple is called not to be. Read as a whole they form an antithesis of the beatitudes. The hypocrites represented by the Pharisees and scribes act against and resist the in-breaking of the Kingdom according to God’s plan in Jesus. Matthew’s community is challenged to not be like the Scribes and Pharisees but to be the interior “true Israel” given through the beatitudes.

The Woes – The Anti-Beatitudes

Poor in Spirit	(Relies on God vs. relies on self),
Mourn	(Have been wronged vs. wronged),
Meek	(Humble follower vs. proud leader),
Hunger / Thirst	(Just vs. oppressive),
Merciful	(Realizes mercy of God and imitates vs. shows no mercy),
Pure of Heart	(Genuine vs. hypocrite)
Peacemakers	(Eliminates obstacles vs. sets obstacles),
Persecuted	(Victim vs. victimizer),

I. Create obstacles to God:

23:13 But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go in.

II. Take from vulnerable and repay with pretense:

23:14 [Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense you make long prayers: therefore you will receive the greater condemnation.]

III. Convert at great energy others to Evil Ways:

23:15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

IV. Swear on the outside / externals:

23:16 Woe to you, blind guides, who say, If any one swears by the temple, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath. 23:17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? 23:18 And you say, If any one swears by the altar, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath. 23:19 You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 23:20 So he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; 23:21 and he who swears by the temple, swears by it and by him who dwells in it; 23:22 and he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.

V. Over-emphasize exterior following and neglect interior:

23:23 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. 23:24 You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

VI. Clean only externally:

23:25 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of extortion and rapacity. 23:26 You blind Pharisee! first cleanse the inside of the cup and of the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

VII. Outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are unclean:

23:27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 23:28 So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

VIII. Pretense to honor prophets but are in practice their murderers:

23:29 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 23:30 saying, If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets. 23:31 Thus you witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.

What is the “Kingdom of Heaven” for Matthew?

Based in Daniel 7:13

Psalm 2:7 (The baptism by John)

Psalm 89:26

Isaiah 9 (exile --> messiah), 35:5-x (eyes, ears, lame, dumb), 53 (Suffering Servant)

Genesis (new creation)

Jeremiah (the hope after exile)

A brief description:

The sovereignty of God over the chosen people, and through them over the world, is at the heart of Jesus' preaching. It implies a kingdom of “saints” where God will be truly King because they will acknowledge his royal rights by knowing and loving him. This sovereignty, jeopardized by rebellious sin, is to be reasserted by an act of supreme intervention on the part of God and of his Messiah (Dn). This is the intervention which Jesus, following John the Baptist, declares imminent (4:17, 23). It is to take the form not, as was commonly expected, of a successful nationalist rising but of a greater spiritual movement. The redemptive work of Jesus as “Son of man” and as “servant” (20:28) sets humanity free from Satan's rule which opposes God's rule (4:10, 12:25-29). Before it achieves its final eschatological (final, ending) realization when the elect will be with the Father in the joy of the heavenly banquet (8:11; 13:43; 26:29), the kingdom makes an unimpressive entrance (13:33). Its modest beginning is mysterious (13:11) and arouses opposition (13:24-30). It has come unnoticed (13:13). The development of the kingdom on earth is slow and is effected through the community founded by Jesus (16:18). By the judgment of God that falls on Jerusalem it is established with power as the kingdom of Christ (23:37) and is preached throughout the world by apostolic missionaries (10:7; 28:19). When the time comes for the final Judgment the return of Christ in glory (16:27; 25:31) will be the final act that establishes the kingdom which Christ will then present to the Father. Until that time the kingdom appears as a free gift of God (20:1-16) accepted by the humble (5:3; 18:3-4; 19:14) and the generous (18:21-35), refused by the proud and selfish (21:31-32; 23:13). There is no entering it without the wedding garment which is the new life (22:11-13) and not everyone is admitted (8:11-12). One must stay awake so as to be ready when it comes unexpectedly (25:1-13). X

The Gospel of Mark

Author and Date:

Traditionally “Mark the interpreter of Peter” (1 Pet 5:13) probably “John Mark” of Acts.

Written after Peter’s death in 64-67 AD

Some fragment evidence in mid 50s AD

Papias (early 100s AD) is the earliest to name “Mark” with the Gospel.

Place:

Rome

Tone of persecution and Roman cultural elements.

For example: *Jesus said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."* – Mark 10:11-12

Outline of Gospel:

The two stages from Galilee to Jerusalem

1. Prologue (1:1-15)
Who Jesus is.
2. Jesus’ Authority Revealed in Galilee (1:16 – 3:6)
Authority revealed in words and deeds.
3. Jesus is Rejected in Galilee (3:7 – 6:6)
Rejected by his own people
4. Jesus Misunderstood by Disciples in Galilee and Beyond (6:6 – 8:21)
Clueless disciples
5. Jesus Instructs Disciples on Way to Jerusalem (8:22 – 10:52)
Jesus clarifies authority and consequences for followers.
6. First part of Passion (11:1 – 13:37)
Resistance to his teaching
7. Jesus’ Death in Jerusalem (14:1 – 16:20)
Cruel and tragic death at those who reject his authority

Writing Style:

“Evangelion” An account of Jesus’ ministry. Sayings, parables, controversies, healings, miracles, passion where in some form available to him.

Mark gave them an order and created the “Gospel” genre.

Sources: Mark and Oral Tradition

Purpose:

Deepen the faith of members of his church. Show how traditions about Jesus relate to their belief in the cross and resurrection. Resist temptation and persevere in persecution. Give some reference for liturgies (baptism mirrored in 14:51) X

Theology:

1. Kingdom of God is at hand NOW!

In traditional Jewish understanding, the Kingdom of God was God's lordship at the end of history and acknowledgment by all creation. With Jesus it is present but hidden. Mark uses "immediately" 52 times. Matthew 35, Luke 15, John 4

2. Large number of healings and exorcisms.

3. Passion and Death are the climax and focus of Gospel

4. Titles: Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man, Lord, Son of David, Suffering Servant, Suffering Just One

5. Repent and believe.

6. Messianic Secret: Real Jesus is known after death and resurrection

7. Disciples Cluelessness:

Starts good. As examples to imitate.

Goes bad. Examples not to imitate. (Jesus is the example to imitate)

After the resurrection new beginning.

8. Humanity of Jesus X

Understanding Parables:**1. Background:**

A. 2 Sam. 12:1-7

B. Jews: Reach conclusions that *must* lead to action.

Greeks: Argument for the sake of argument.

C. We think visibly.

D. Parables are rooted in the Earth and explain a Heavenly reality.

(a God centered message)

E. World and heaven are not "evil" vs. "good". World should *lead* to God.

F. Story is based in a well acquainted situation.

Judgment is made on it.

Point is transferred to religious "Godly" significance.

G. The points are evident through the parable,

but often "blind" areas in the lives of the hearers.

H. Parables are meant to "stick to the ribs" like a thorn.

2. Parables are composed:

- A. On the spot.
- B. Not carefully constructed like allegories
 - Allegories of John.
 - Allegories of Alexandrian exegetes. Every symbol means something else.
- C. Often composed in conflict.
- D. Spoken.
- E. Present “one” specific point. X

3. What we need to know to understand parables:

- A. Literary Style
- B. Historical background and circumstances.
- C. Images and symbols
- D. Don't try to explain all of Christian doctrine from *a* parable.
- E. Often they are in a series and are read in reference to others. They help each other.
- F. Gospel differences – audience application. (We need to do the same). X

The Kingdom of God

- 1. God is King
- 2. Saul is King
- 3. David is King – symbol of *the* King of Israel
- 4. The Kingdom is split.
- 5. Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, (Medes), Greeks, Romans.
- 6. The “Day of the Lord.” ex. Amos 5:20 (Anawim)
- 7. Daniel and the “Son of Man” of intertestamental Literature. Dan 7:1-4
- 8. Jesus as the fulfillment: “something more than was expected.”
- 9. Kingdom of God as the person of Jesus.
- 10. Kingdom of God as the Church.
- 11. Kingdom of God as *all* the above: Past, Present, Future.
- 12. How is it explained in parables???

The Mustard Seed

Mark 4:30-34

Jesus said, "To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade."

X

What's the main point – Quick...

Ask the questions to fill in blanks: setting, location, history, images, in reference to...

A. Setting, location, images:

1. The proverbial “smallest seed” – a lesson in biblical inerrancy and interpretation.
2. Focusing too much on the detail loses the point – remember.
3. Bush isn't the biggest either, but big (up to 7-8 feet). Also small. Where was Jesus giving the parable?? Could there have been one nearby?
4. Birds nest in the branches. Birds eat and help plant??
5. Look for Obvious: Main theme “Little will grow big.”
6. Minor themes:
 - a. The bush is “living” (Jesus, Church)
 - b. It adjusts and changes yet is the same.
 - c. A selling point for gradual conversion (*life* in faith rather than moment)
 - d. Branches are extensions (people, areas, etc.) – (Ezekiel 17:22-23; 31:3)
 - connected in Christ
 - many branches binding in a “real” unity in Jesus, Church, Kingdom

B. History, debate, current topics,

1. Conquered, defeated Israel.
2. John the Baptist preached “big”
3. Jesus preached “big.”
4. Why weren't things happening?
5. Where's the Kingdom: Past, present, future?
6. Are people discouraged (during Jesus' time, during Gospel's time?)
7. The synoptic adaptation: Was Jesus' mission a failure?
 - Example: Acts 1:15: 120 total Christians.
8. Synoptic differences.

C. How does this fit *our* modern situation in the Kingdom of God (Heaven)?

D. Modern examples?:

1. A note, a tune played in your head, a song. X

The Gospel of Luke

Author and Date:

Luke from Antioch in Syria.

Mid 70s to 80. Some say before the fall of the temple

Place: Antioch in Syria

Outline:

1. Preface (1:1-4)
2. Beginning of God's Promises (1:5 – 2:52)
3. Preparation of Jesus' Ministry (3:1 – 4:13)
4. Jesus' Galilean Ministry (4:14-9:50)
5. Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem (9:51 – 19:27)
6. Rejection in Jerusalem (19:28 – 21:38)
7. Jesus' Death and Association with Sinners (22:1 – 23:56)
8. Resurrection (23:56-24:53)

Writing Style:

Original "Iconographer"

Most polished and educated Greek

Parallelism (birth of John and Jesus) (Zechariah and Mary)

Old Testament parallels in actions and words: (Mary ark and Hannah)

Adapts and builds on Marks "journey to Jerusalem" theme.

Links traditions and sources:

Eg. Simeon's 2:34 fulfilled throughout the Gospel and Acts.

Begins and ends at the temple

Jesus calls Jerusalem to repent before and after leaving the city

"Forgive them" prayer with Stephen of Acts

Galilee – Jerusalem – Ends of the Earth

Sources:

Mark, Q, L

Purpose:

Mostly Gentile audience with some well-off members (who may be rethinking their sacrifice)

Was God faithful to the Jews (temple) and will he be faithful to Christians?

How strict should entrance requirements be for Christians?

Gospel for the Gentiles. Didn't need to be Jewish to get it – but seeped in Jewish underlying theology and references. X

Theology:

God was faithful in unexpected ways. (Sarah / Elizabeth)

Anawim theology abundant

God includes Gentiles, unclean, poor, women, Samaritans, rich toll collectors, outcasts, elect chosen people – Theology of inclusion into the Kingdom

Jesus compassionate mission to restore sinners and outcasts (be compassionate...)

Parables include some like Prodigal Son

Many of his stories were told from the female perspective (Mary, Elizabeth, Woman cured of Hemorrhage, Mary Magdalene) (8:1-3 the female followers)

Money critical (Lazarus, 16:9-15)

Stories told with call to personal discipleship (beatitudes)

Reconstituted Israel (12 disciples, 72 [gentile nations])

Continuity of Old (Pharisaical) in the New (Church)

Jesus upholds the reality of the Law (16:17)

People accept Jesus more readily than Leaders and even repent (23:35)

Isaiah 61 – suffering servant (begins preaching 4:18 with Is)

If God was faithful to Jesus, he will be to Church.

Holy Spirit highlighted and prominent (filled with the HS...) (how much more II:13)

Details “nicer” (crucifixion crown and robe: 23:11 vs. Mk 15:16 [different])

(excuses for disciples 9:45)

(Mk 9:42 “millstone” vs. Luke 17:1)

Historian – careful detail (1:1) (Capernaum, a town in Galilee...)

Praise and Prayer (6:12 – pray before choosing the 12)

Feedings as high points – 7 feedings X

Understanding Passion Narratives

Threats and Premonitions:

1. Simeon

Luke 2:34-35

Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

2. Temptations:

"Satan departed from him for a time (kairos)". Tempting him away from cross – later he will have to tempt him *from* the cross.

3. **John the Baptists' death** – Jesus' "partner" shows what will ultimately happen to those who preach the gospel fearlessly.

Passion Preparation:

1. God would establish justice.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..." (2:18)

Jesus, *"I must preach the good news..."* (4:43)

Jesus' cures, meals, inclusions (women, tax, Gentiles, outcasts), exorcisms,
– provoke hostility w/ leaders.

2. The rejected prophet:

Luke 13:33-34 *"Yet I must continue on my way today, tomorrow, and the following day, for it is impossible that a prophet should die outside of Jerusalem."*

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how many times I yearned to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were unwilling!"

3. Jesus' journey home: (Journey motif – going home to the Father through Jerusalem)

Luke 9:51

When the days for his being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem,

Luke 18:31

Then he took the Twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem and everything written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled."

Passion Begins:

Betrayal:

1. **Judas:** Luke 22:1-3

Satan: After temptation he only lurked in the background. Now is the attack.

Now the feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was drawing near, and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking a way (opportunity – kairos) to put him to death, for they were afraid of the people. Then Satan entered into Judas, the one surnamed Iscariot, who was counted among the Twelve,

2. Passover:

Jesus' "exodus" – passing over to the Father – Passover – Eucharist.

Heavenly "sidetrack"?

Twice as long as MT, MK.

Luke 22:15-18 - Speaks of Victory.

*He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, [16] for, I tell you, I shall not eat it (again) until there is **fulfillment** in the kingdom of God." [17] Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; [18] for I tell you (that) from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the **kingdom of God comes**." Active "remembrance" continual "presence" of Jesus.*

3. Luke's "**crowds**" respond more favorable at first – even first part of passion.

Luke 22:2

for they were afraid of the people

Luke 23:18

But all together they shouted out, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us."

Herod and **Pilate** both find him innocent. Religious leaders judged more harshly by Luke.

Peter's Loyalty:

Satan seeks out Peter like Judas. Jesus warns Peter, Luke 22:31-32

*"Simon, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to sift **all of you** (plural - other disciples affected) like wheat, [32] but I have **prayed** that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers."*

Peter "turns" and strengthens others.

Suffering Servant fulfillment

Luke 22:37

For I tell you that this scripture must be fulfilled in me, namely, 'He was counted among the wicked'; and indeed what is written about me is coming to fulfillment."

Isaiah 53:12

Therefore I will give him his portion among the great, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty; Because he surrendered himself to death and was counted among the wicked;

And he shall take away the sins of many, and win pardon for their offenses.

Mount of Olives:

Prayer in Crisis.

Comforting Angel – strength.

"Stay awake"

The Arrest:

Kiss: Luke 22:47-48 – The kiss was sacred – betrayal by a kiss was cruel.

Sword: Luke 22:51 – negating Jesus' command to "Love your enemies".

Jesus said in reply, "Stop, no more of this!" Then he touched the servant's ear and healed him.

Disciples: Don't flee like Mk and Mt – only fear and distance – Jesus' prayer.

Peter's denial and repentance.

High Priest's House and Sanhedrin:

Charges are religious – “Son of God,” “Prophet”

“if you are...” Temptations of Satan return...

Luke 22:67

They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us," but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe,

Luke 23:35

The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, "He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Messiah of God."

Pilate – Herod - Pilate: - Charges are political.

Luke 23:2

They brought charges against him, saying, "We found this man misleading our people; he opposes the payment of taxes to Caesar and maintains that he is the Messiah, a king."

Herod – wanted to see him perform. Sent him back.

Luke 23:14-15 - Innocent

and said to them, "You brought this man to me and accused him of inciting the people to revolt. I have conducted my investigation in your presence and have not found this man guilty of the charges you have brought against him, [15] nor did Herod, for he sent him back to us. So no capital crime has been committed by him.

Isaiah 53:7 – Jesus is silent.

*Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth;
Like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers,
he was silent and opened not his mouth.*

Psalms 2:1-2 – Pilate and Herod become buddies.

*Why do the nations protest and the peoples grumble in vain?
[2] Kings on earth rise up and princes plot together against the LORD and his anointed:*

The Two Jesus'

One (Jesus Barabbas) is a political up-riser and he is set free. – Injustice.

Simon of Cyrene

Luke 23:26

As they led him away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus.

Luke 14:27

Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

The “Daughters of Jerusalem”

Luke 23:28 – Judgment of Jerusalem –

Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children,

Luke 13:35 - Repentance and God's eventual mercy

Behold, your house will be abandoned. (But) I tell you, you will not see me until (the time comes when) you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

The Cross:

Mockery:

Rulers, "*He saved others...*" (23:35)

Soldiers offer vinegar, "*if you are the King of the Jews...save yourself*"(23:36)

Thieves, Luke 23:39-40 – Steal salvation

Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." [40] The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation?"

Luke 17:3

Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

Save – New covenant saves.

Luke 23:34 – Forgiveness prayer.

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Death:

Dark - Joel 2:10 – The "Day of the Lord"

*Before them the earth trembles,
the heavens shake;*

*The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withhold their brightness.*

Veil tears – separation is gone.

Luke 23:46-49

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last.

Centurion:

[47] The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, "This man was innocent beyond doubt."

The End?

[48] When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts;

[49] but all his acquaintances stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events.

X

The Gospel of John:

Author and Date

The “beloved Disciple.” Traditionally John the Son of Zebedee.

Arguments have been made that he is unknown or even Lazarus.

Who is the “Other Disciple,” is he a bigwig, and how educated is he?

Dating is probably in the 90s.

Place

Northern Palestine to Ephesus.

Attention to Jewish details, Samaritans, and Hellenistic Jews.

Outline

1. Prologue (1:1-18)
2. Book of Signs (1:19 – 12)
 - A. Opening Scenes
 - B. “Signs” or Miracles (2 – 12)
3. Book of Glory (13 – 20)
 - A. Farewell Discourse (13 – 17)
 - B. Passion (18 – 19)
 - C. Resurrection (20) X

Writing Style

Easy Greek in a complex order and theology.

Repetition, Chiasm, and contrast. X

Flesh – Spirit, Light – Darkness, Truth – Lies, Knowledge – misunderstanding, life – death, etc.

Lightly edited.

Allegories

Narrowing in on characters

Sources

Much of John is unique.

Some similar parallels with Luke (more) and Matthew

Oral tradition, own source of sayings and miracles.

Exception is the Woman at the Well.

Purpose

Identity of the Christian Church among or against the Jewish opposition.

A counter to the beginning of Gnosticism using language they would understand.

Grounding Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus who was also very human.

(“was God”, “I AM”, totally in control)

(tired, thirsty, mudmaking, etc.)

Jesus revealed in incarnation and cross (saving revelation)

Salvation in belief in Jesus

Theology and Themes

1. Jesus as Divine:

“The Word was God” (1:1) “God the only Son” (1:18) “Making himself equal to the Father (5:18) “Before Abraham was, I AM” (7 I AMs) (8:58) “My Lord and my God” (20:28)

2. Jesus as the revelation of the Father. Life and light through revelation.

3. Crucifixion is the high point of saving revelation for those who see with faith.

4. Believing or rejecting and “realized eschatology”

5. Sacraments described by “signs” and “allegories”

6. Allegories

7. “High Christology” and “Low Christology” X

(GO TO Part II)

Acts of the Apostles

X

Author: Luke who is/isn't the Luke of tradition

Col 4:10-14 (Syrian Gentile physician and companion of Paul)

Philemon 24(stayed with Paul in his imprisonment)

Date: Ends with Paul's captivity (61-63AD) and doesn't mention 70AD destruction.

Possibly 80 because of theological development after Mark

Arguments before 70AD?

Purpose: Complete the first part of Gospel

Give the kerygma of the Apostles (triumph of resurrected Jesus)

Show the Holy Spirit and age of the Church

Give a history of events as the Church forms

Show development of Church practice people, and thought (Jew/Gentile)

Present "the Way": conversion, prayer, sharing, Scripture, Eucharist, organization,

Outline of Movement:

1. Jerusalem (1-8)

2. Judea and Samaria (8-13)

3. Paul and the "ends of the earth" (13-28)

X

1. The Beginnings of the Church (1-3)

a. Early Christian Ideal: 2:42-47 and 4:32-35

b. Why replace Judas with Matthias (poor Barsabbas)

c. Pentecost gives the courage and strength they need and reverses Babel.

d. Growth of Church (3,000 baptized in 2:41 / 5,000 total in 4:4)

d. Miracles in the style of Jesus and by Jesus (lame man of 3) (5:16)

e. Perseverance in persecution (5:30-33)

f. Choosing of the seven (Deacons)

g. Stephen's speech and death in style of Jesus (7:55-60)

2. Samaritans and Gentiles enter the picture: (8-13)

a. Samaritan Simon the magician's conversion and lesson to give up magic and simony)

b. Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch (beginning of Psalm 68:31, Zeph 3:10)

c. Paul's conversion an Ananias

d. Paul goes to Jerusalem

e. Peter and Cornelius. "What God has made clean" vision / household (11:14)

X

3. Paul's mission (13-28)

Who was Paul?

- a. He was born in **Tarsus** (22:3)
- b. Was a Pharisee taught by **Gamaliel** (the famous Rabbi of the day) (23:6)
- c. A Roman **Citizen** (remember, that's why he appealed to Rome in his trial) (16:37)
- d. Jewish name "Saul" – Roman name "Paul"
- e. He had a **conversion** and three missionary journeys.
- f. **Missionary** sent to the Gentiles.
- g. Jews first, but really opened the Church to the Gentiles.
- h. Wrote a bunch of **letters**.

Paul's Missionary Work:

- a. Jews first and the Gentiles
 - b. Paul's three missionary journeys and 5th to Rome
 - i. Cyprus and south-central Asia Minor
 - ii. Asia Minor and Greece
 - iii. Western Asia Minor and Greece
 - iv. Crete, Malta, Sicily, Italy, Rome
 - c. Council of Jerusalem
 - i. Jews and Gentiles and the covenant of Noah and sacrilegious sacrifice
 - d. Disagreements (15:36-40) contrast ideal
 - e. Paul in Athens: Inculturation
 - f. Apollos
 - g. How did Paul "found" churches in Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, etc.?
 - h. "We" passages. (16:10)
 - i. Eutychus of 20:9
 - j. Imprisonment and Journey (21-28)
 - k. James' question about Jews' observance of Law and Gentiles (21:21)
 - l. Paul's arrest and accusation (21:21-29) (bringing Gentiles into the temple – not)
 - m. Appearance before Sanhedrin
 - n. Appeal to Emperor, appearance before Agrippa
 - o. Shipwreck, Malta, Rome
- X

PAUL

Overview of St. Paul

I. Outline of St. Paul's life

What we know about St. Paul comes to us from what he has written and from what Luke in Acts of the Apostles has written about him. We know very little from outside sources. Luckily, he and Luke give us a lot of good information. According to Paul:

1. He persecuted the Church before his conversion.
2. He had a conversion where he saw the Lord (Jesus).
3. After his conversion he went to Arabia for about 3 years.
4. He visited Jerusalem and the Apostles for a short time.
5. He did three missionary journeys and finally was arrested and sent to Rome (where he was finally killed by beheading). X

Here is a bit of a timeline:

About 1 AD	Paul's birth in Tarsus (in present day Turkey)
32 (35?)	Paul's persecution of Christians (he had special permission)
32-35	Paul's conversion (no mention of falling off a horse by the way)
32-35	Paul in Arabia (also Transjordan and later Damascus)
35	Paul's first trip to Jerusalem (met with some of the "12" apostles)
35-38	Paul's time in Tarsus (or somewhere close) and Antioch
48	First missionary journey (Acts 13-14)
49	Second trip to Jerusalem (Gal 2:1; Acts 15)
50-52	Second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22)
51-52	Eighteen month stay at Corinth (Acts 18:11)
53	At Antioch for about a year (Acts 18:22-23)
53-57	Third missionary journey (Acts 18:23-21:17)
54-57	Three year stay at Ephesus (Acts 19:10)
58-60	Arrest and imprisonment in Caesarea (Acts 23:31-33) (jail was recently found)
60-62	Trip to Rome and imprisonment in Rome (Acts 27-28)
60-63 (67?)	Paul beheaded in Rome under the Caesar Nero X

II. Who was Paul?

"Paul was a *Pharisee* taught by *Gamaliel*."

There were two main classes of Jewish leaders in Jesus' day: **Sadducees** and **Pharisees**. The **Sadducees** worked in the temple, did many of the priestly functions such as the official temple sacrifices, were most often wealthy, had administrative roles, only took the first five books of the Old Testament as inspired scripture, didn't believe in the resurrection of the dead or angels, and were in cahoots with the Romans (and Herod) politically.

The **Pharisees** were the teachers. They were the “Rabbis” that you might think of. The Pharisee movement came in response against the Jews who were watering down their faith so they could be more “Greeklike” about 150 years before Jesus. The Greek culture dominated after Alexander the Great and Israel was controlled by the Greeks until the Maccabean (see Maccabees I and II) revolt and later the Roman occupation. Pharisee means “set apart” or “**separated**”. A good Pharisee is one who is “holy” and “separate” from those who don’t follow the Law (the rules and regulations given in the first five books of the Bible). They believed in the resurrection and angels. They also were more in line with Jesus’ theology, beliefs, and teachings.

Gamaleiel was a famous and respected Pharisee and perhaps the most famous of his day.

Acts of the Apostles describes St. Paul in these ways:

He was born in **Tarsus** (22:3)

Was a Pharisee taught by **Gamaliel** (the famous Rabbi of the day) (23:6)

A Roman **Citizen** (remember, that’s why he appealed to Rome in his trial) (16:37)

Jewish name “Saul” – Roman name “Paul”

He had a **conversion** and three missionary journeys.

Missionary sent to the Gentiles. Jews first, but really opened the Church to the Gentiles.

Wrote a bunch of **letters**.

Paul was a Jew that had Hellenistic knowledge.

There were Jews that lived in Israel and Jews that moved away and lived in areas strongly influenced by the Greek culture. They are called “Hellenized” Jews (influenced by Greek culture) or Diaspora Jews (away from Israel). Although St. Paul was influenced by the Greek culture, he would have been a rabbi in the Jewish sense. His education and style were definitely Jewish and rabbinic but he also used his familiarity with Greek ways to his advantage. One example of this is his speech in Athens when he quotes a Greek poet (Acts 17:22-34). He uses what he can, but is rooted in his Judaism more than Hellenism. His family came from some importance because he was a Roman Citizen. This “honor” gave him a legal avenue to appeal to Rome when he was on trial in Israel. X

III. Major factors that influenced Paul’s thought:

1. Paul had a **vision** of the risen Christ – this was the real beginning of his Christian faith.
2. He believed in the **imminent second coming** of Christ. Later “imminent” or “soon” got extended. He did what he could to “cool the jets” of the Church who often had “Second Coming Fever”. How did Jesus square with apocalyptic Old Testament works like Daniel and Joel?
3. Greeks didn’t believe in a **resurrection** of the body. Paul taught both body and soul would rise.
4. Paul **almost died** at Ephesus. He writes more after that point about patterning his life on the sufferings of Christ. Christian life is to share in His joy *and* suffering.
5. The false “**prophets**” and problems of Corinth inspire him to correct and define Church belief and practices more.
6. A **controversy** develops between Jewish Christians and Greek (Hellenistic) Christians. How Jewish do Greek converts need to be? This is a major element of his larger letters.
7. Since the Jews seem to be **rejecting the Gospel** and the Greeks seem to embrace it. How can this be part of the Father’s plan of salvation? Paul explores this – especially in Romans. X

IV. Literary Genre - "letters"

We may want St. Paul to write novels or systematic theological works, but what we have is what have. Paul wrote *letters*. The form is usually something like this:

- a. Address and greeting – “hi guys, it’s me Paul, I hope and pray all is well...”
- b. Thanksgiving – “I thank God for you all...”
- c. Message – “Shape up you stupid people, don’t you remember what I told you...”
- d. Conclusion – “God bless you, I’ll pray for you and I love you. By the way, could you bring me my hat? I left it in your house when I was there...”

Because he wrote **letters**, we need to ask a few questions.

1. **Who** was it addressed **to**?

Was it intended for a small group or a large group?

Is it a literary work or a personal letter (for example Romans is more of a literary work whereas Philemon was more of a personal letter)?

2. Because he wrote letters, remember that he **didn’t address everything** in every letter. Just as when we write letters we are writing about particular things within a particular culture to a particular issue. Much of the content is assumed by the reader. For example when Paul speaks of “shameful things” he is aware that the readers of his day knew what specifically he meant even if we might not.

3. Sometimes arguments need to be **refined** or nuanced later (such as Galatians gets nuanced in Romans). Letters are **spontaneous**, not usually revised or edited, brief, pointed, and often incomplete. Using one letter (such as Romans) to define all of Christian thought is a mistake. It is much better to allow them to **build** on each other including other books (such as the Gospels) and passed down understandings to get a clearer understanding of the whole. History is full of people who take a verse and make it say something against Christian understanding because they don’t keep the big picture in mind. X

V. Other Notes:

Rabbinical style (Gal. 3:16):

Interlocutor style from Stoics and Cynics. (Rom 6:15)

One Gospel – 1 Cor 11:23

Used cultural , but the gospel did not change

Avoided Rhetoric - 1 Cor 2:4

Run ons and sometimes unfinished 1 Cor 9:15

Most letters written a bit off the cuff .

Most respond to particular situations (1 Cor 11:17)

Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Hellenistic and Christian morals.

The cross is at the center of salvation (Gal 6:14) X

VI. Some Useful Books:

Some of you may want to read on your own. Here are some good books on Romans:

7 Pauline Letters – Peter Ellis

Romans – The good News According to Paul: Daniel Harrington

Reading Romans – A Literary and Theological Commentary: Luke Timothy Johnson

Sacra Pagina Series – Romans: Brendan Byrne, S.J. X

VII. Quotes:

If we rightly understand ourselves, our problems are the problems of Paul; and if we be enlightened by the brightness of his answers, those answers must be ours.” – Karl Barth
That means, there is a lot for us to learn from Paul. You know, those theologians have to make things sound good and fancy. X

VIII. Paul’s Theology:

1. There are sharp **oppositions** (good vs. evil, light vs. darkness, truth vs. falsehood, life vs. death). St. Paul’s letters are prompting the reader to choose Christ. In doing so there are many effects in the life of the believer. Decisions are made between things. There are contrasts between one way of living (in Christ) and the opposite way of living (in the world).
2. God is **all powerful** and, while there is an opposing power, He will overcome. You may have heard, “we all know who will win the war” referring to Jesus’ final victory. Paul wants the believer to know this and hold on to it.
3. The **righteous** will be **vindicated**.
Whether in this world or the next, God will always take care of his faithful. The resurrection of Jesus proves it.
4. In the resurrection of the dead, Jesus has already triumphed over sin, death, and Law. Also, those “in the Spirit” enjoy present **benefits** of God’s future kingdom: justification, peace with God, reconciliation, redemptions, and salvation.
The faith isn’t all about what lies ahead. The gifts of the promise are also available today.
The Cross is the center of salvation.
Grace, faith and justification X

Quick Dictionary of Paul’s Key Words:

Body: The whole person (usually in relation to God)

Death: a punishment for sin. The inherited state of humanity before Jesus’ victory.

Faith: Total trust in God working in a life of faithful action (love).

Flesh: An aspect of the person representing weakness and opposite to “spirit”. Try not to be too literal with his description. The body is still good (temple of the Holy Spirit). He is using the word a bit metaphorically. Many well intentioned people have erred in thinking that the body and its proper care are opposed to Christian spirituality.

Freedom: For Paul true freedom is the freedom to choose Christ and be freed from sin and death. Freedom is *not* the ability to do and say whatever one wants. “Choosing” sin is never freedom. He would cringe at terms such as “Pro-Choice” because choosing evil is never freedom. True freedom is found by faith and is often realized through real sacrifice.

Gentiles: The word literally means “nations”. In Paul’s case it usually refers to non Jews and sometimes Gentile Christians.

Gospel: Literally “Good News”. Jesus’ death and resurrection is the Gospel. What Jesus’ death and resurrection does for us is the application of the term for Paul.

Grace: God’s gift of himself working in us

Justification: Jesus’ action of acquitting us of guilt and making us righteous before God.

X

Law: Mosaic Law which cannot save points out sin and death and our need to be saved.

Life: Life in Christ

Righteousness: God’s justice making a new relationship between human beings and God

Salvation: Salvation from moral and physical evil.

Sin: Violation of God’s will but also a personification or power allied with death and the Law

Spirit: Humanly it is being open to God and life (living in the Spirit). The Holy Spirit is sometimes simply referred to as “Spirit”.

World: Can be neutral, but often symbolic of that which is under the domain or power of sin. It also is metaphorical. The earth is not bad; culture is not bad – only those things which are opposed to Christ and his reign. We are called to be *in* the world but not **of** the world. X

X

Letters:

1 Thessalonians – 50-51 AD

Philippians – 56-57 AD

1&2 Corinthians – 57 AD

Galatians & Romans – 57-58 AD

Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon – 61-63 AD

(2 Thessalonians – 51 or 80 AD)

(1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy – 65-80 AD)

(Hebrews – 70-80 AD)

Letters go from big to small.

X

Romans

Overview and Outline:

Mental argument (interlocutor)

Judiazers and Gentiles.

Salvation through Christ and not “works of the law” (3:28)

Circumcision cannot save (1:7)

At the same time, Christian freedom has responsibility (7:7)

What about the Jews? (11) (11:1)

Spiritual Exhortations (12 – 16)

An **Outline** of the Gospel:

1. Definition of the gospel (1)
2. The universal need for the Gospel (1-3)
3. The gospel and faith (3-4)
4. The Gospel and freedom (5-7)
5. The Gospel and life in the Spirit (8)
6. The Gospel and God’s plan (9-11)
7. The Gospel and Christian life (12-13)
8. The Gospel and Community conflict (14)
9. Promotion of the Gospel (15) X

Background:

Romans was written *before* he went to Rome (usually his letters were written after)

History of Roman Christians:

1. By **40s** a Christian **group** began to form
2. Jews and Jewish Christians **expelled** from Rome by Claudius in **49AD**
3. **Gentiles** begin to assume **leadership** in Jewish Christian absence after 49AD
4. **Jewish** Christians begin to **return** in 54 AD
 - a. Who is going to lead?
 - b. How Jewish do you need to be?

Paul wrote Romans from **Corinth** (16:21-23) in **57** or **58AD**

Purpose:

1. A more **systematic** explanation of the Gospel Paul was preaching
2. **Defend criticisms** and apprehensions of his teaching
3. **Clarify** Old and New **Law** in a Christian understanding
4. Help Roman Christians deal with conflict and **find unity** in Christ
5. Explain non-Jew **inclusion** as “chosen” people, status of **Law**, and Jewish **rejection** of Gospel

Chapter 1:

1. **Greeting:** Shalom (peace be with you) = right relationship
2. Summary of Gospel in 3-7
(predicted, based in death and resurrection, applied to life by obedience of faith)
3. Paul as “**Apostle**” (one sent). Sometimes apostle means “someone sent to preach” and sometimes Apostle means “witness of the risen Christ” like the 12. Paul is both.
4. **All** people **deserve** the Gospel (Greeks, barbarians, educated, ignorant, etc)
5. Jews are chosen and Gentiles recently chosen.
6. The “upright through faith” (Hab 2:4) will live.
7. 18-32 – Ignorance is not bliss.

List of these immoral behavior: (2000 years ago but still today)

1. Not **admitting** (even denying) the obvious: That there is One God and He deserves thanks and glory
2. Being **proud** – so proud that it leads to one becoming an idolater. (Exchanging truth about God for a lie) (worshipping the creation instead of the creator)
3. Impurity, lust, degradation of the body in all of its forms, homosexuality, sexually perverse actions, wickedness and evil (this covers a lot), greed, malice, envy, murder, rivalry, treachery, spite, gossip and lovers of scandal.
4. **Hating God** and being: insolent, haughty, boastful, ingenious in wickedness, rebellious toward parents, senseless, faithless, heartless, and ruthless
5. Even knowing in their hearts that a just punishment will be exacted by God, they **flaunt** their immorality and encourage others to do the same.

Moral: God is **self-evident** and requires **response** (Jews also require response)

Chapter 2:

Them = Gentiles

You = interlocutor (imaginary arguing partner) = Judiazer (beginning of Chapter 3)

All = Jews and Gentiles (all have fallen short...)

“Gentiles are messed up but so are you. Both need Jesus - Circumcision won’t save.

Chapter 3:

Question 1: What’s the advantage of being a Jew?:

1. Entrusted with revelation
2. Head start to be able to receive the Messiah
3. The remnant remains faithful and so does God

Question 2: If God’s grace is found in overcoming sin, is it better to sin more?

Main theological points in the early chapters

1. There is a relation between the Gospel and faith
2. No human can take credit for what God has done through Christ
3. The various prophets’ predictions of Messianic benefits are fulfilled in Jesus
4. Christ is the fulfillment of the Scriptures (Law)
5. We become part of Christ’s saving event by grace and “Faith”
6. “All have sinned” refers to more than personal sin, it is sin over humanity.

7. Jesus restores “all” through faith by what he has done in his death and resurrection.
8. Faith is how we enter into the “paschal mystery” or drama of the Gospel
9. Through Jesus’ death and resurrection, God’s righteousness is present now.
10. The righteousness of God is the basis for God declaring and making us righteous.

Do we annul the law by faith? No. Paul affirms the Law’s deeper sense.

Chapter 4: Abraham

Background: For a Jews, the “Law” was salvation and there was no separation between dietary, purifications, and moral law.

Abraham father of Jews (not really Muslims 630 AD)

1. Abraham was called justified (15) before circumcision (17) by faith
2. Abraham was before the “Law”

Abraham is an example for Jew and Gentile:

1. Abraham is Father of all believers
2. Abraham’s faith was a radical trust in God and living according to it.
3. Abraham’s faith was pure gift not wage.
4. Abraham was not yet circumcised. Therefore, blessings also apply to non-Jews.
5. Circumcision was a “sign” of the righteousness he received.
6. The circumcised Abraham also needed to follow the way of faith for its effect.
7. Christian faith is summarized in verse 25: Our faith is saving because we believe in Jesus who was handed over, raised from the dead, and raised to life for our justification.

Chapter 5:

Faith effects change in us and makes us in “peace”

We can persevere in faith in hardship.

Jesus died for the worst of us.

Jesus and Adam:

Adam sinned but Jesus was sinless

Adam brought death but Jesus brings life

Resurrection means that Jesus is more powerful than Adam

Law can’t conquer sin and death but Jesus’ resurrection does

Chapter 6

“What should we say then? Should we remain in sin so that grace may be given more fully?”

To get **more grace** is to **sin more** and not follow the law???

Is “faith” a license to sin abundantly?

NO. We are not **slaves** to **sin** but free to **choose good**.

Chapter 7

The old law gives way to the new.

The old law points out sin but can't conquer it.

The Spirit of Jesus leads us out of sin

Chapter 8

Life in the Spirit:

1. We are children of God and glory is our destination.
2. There is a cosmic dimension (New Heavens and New Earth)
3. Spirit aids us in our weakness and prayer

Chapter 9-11

Paul is not anti-Semitic (He is Jewish and is willing to sacrifice all for his brothers)

So why so many choose not to follow Jesus?

1. God kept his promise. The Jews are still the chosen people and it is irrevocable
2. Sometimes the elder serves the younger brother
3. This was predicted: God would use the Jews to reveal the Gentiles
4. There is still a plan for the Jews (and it is according to God's plan)
5. There is still a "remnant" as well
6. Gentiles, don't get cocky and show respect! You owe them for able to be "grafted" to the tree.
7. In the end, Paul leaves it to God's infinite plan.

Chapters 12-15:

Exhortation and teaching:

1. Let your lives reflect your reality
2. Humility and charity
3. Worship is spiritual and includes our entire selves

Practical considerations:

1. How do Christians relate to the Roman Empire? Be obedient to legitimate authority but don't deny your Christian principles.
2. The Law of Love. Properly understood, all of the Law is included in the command of Jesus to love.
3. Charity. Be helpful to those who are still trying to figure the Gospel out. Help them to come to a right balance. Be patient and loving in your teaching. Think of them first.
4. Paul's future plans are given. He hopes to get to Rome soon.
5. He says hi to friends and gives them a plug.
6. He gives a final warning against people who are divisive or destructive.
7. He ends the letter with a prayer.

X

1 and 2 Corinthians

Date: 57 AD

Corinth: Prosperous port on the west side of a near 3 mile neck.

Population: 500,000 – 750,000 people

Paul wrote Thessalonians from here.

Written: Around 57 AD while in Ephesus.

Main issues:

Gospel and culture

Divisions between leaders needed to be addressed

Combatting the notorious immorality of Corinth

Liturgical and Eucharistic issues

How to have mystical and charismatic gifts and some order

Practical concerns such as politics, lawsuits, and food sacrificed

Greeting: received much and blessed in gifts, but be united

Chapters 1-5:

The Gospel message vs. messenger and preacher. (1 Cor 1:12)

Is cultural snobbery getting in the way?

1:22-25: God's wisdom is higher (cross vs. miracles or wisdom)
so be humble!

Rhetoric vs. Apostolic preaching and unity

2:4-5: Paul didn't rely on wisdom but on the power of the Spirit
– but still, there is a divine wisdom

3:4: Paul fed them milk but they still didn't "mature" since they still fought over
Paul vs. Appolos

4:3: Paul doesn't worry about human judgment. Doesn't judge himself!

4:7: "Who made you so important! You think you already have everything."

4:14-15: But I write as a "father" because I "fathered" you.

Paul their "Father" (4:14-15)

Chapter 5-6:

1. Moral problems: incest, pagan courts, immorality

2. Roman law and OT (Lv 18:8) forbade marriage between a son and a stepmother.

Corinth was excepted from this Roman law.

3. "Handed over" to Satan – deprived of support from people and Church until
repentance. The point is salvation.

4. Can't you sort out your problems sensibly "in-house"?

5. The list (6:9-10) Temples of the HS – Freedom vs. absolute freedom (like Romans)

Chapters 7

Virginity and Marriage:

1. Married life includes giving “what he/she has a right to expect”
2. Deprive only mutual consent and for a time
3. Unmarried and widows may accept the gift of celibacy
It can help to keep someone focused on the Lord
4. If it is too hard, get married and don’t make promises
5. But remember that time is short.

Chapter 8-10

1. Food to idols that aren’t real – but to not scandalize...
2. Freedom and respecting others
3. Our actions should be guided by love
4. Race to win (9:24-27)

Chapter 11

Social respectfulness at public worship

Long hair, short hair / veil or no veil / - customs vs. unchanging Gospel truth?

Lord’s Supper

1. Factions, not sharing food, drunk
2. “Tradition I received, I hand on to you...”
3. Eating or drinking “unworthily”
4. Paul addresses a problem and therefore states a norm that could have been left out.

Chapter 12-14

1. Variety of gifts but unity (theme of unity applied to gifts)
2. The body metaphor
3. Gifts are great, but frame it in the highest gift – Christian love
4. Building up with gifts takes precedence over spectacular (14:23-25)
5. *Woman preaching in church (14:34 vs 11:5) cultural?*

Chapter 15

Resurrection (15:12-13)

2 Corinthians:

Chapters 1-7

1. Some crisis broke out and Paul made a second short trip to Corinth (2:1) but writes from Ephesus where he is suffering. He wants to come back for longer but doesn’t get the chance
2. Christian Paradox: (1:7) encouragement and suffering, death and life, poverty and riches, weakness and strength
3. He asks the people to forgive lighten up on the offender (2:6-7) (for his own good)

4. Persevere in suffering (4:8-12)
5. It's time to reconcile the community (5:20-21)

Chapter 8-9

The Second Collection (to Jerusalem) helps to unify the churches

Macedonia gives beyond their means (8:1) Corinth needs to "pony" up.

Chapter 10-13

1. Great on paper but can't speak well! (10:10)
 2. Sarcastic but to the point (11:5-6)
 3. His creds (11:22-29)
 4. Mystical experience and the thorn – God's grace is enough (12)
 5. Paul summarizes his intent. Authority is to build up (13:10) (even if harsh)
- X

Galatians

Galatia: Central Asia Minor (Hellenized)

Written (57?) from Ephesus (or Macedonia)

Similar to Romans but less developed

Chapter 1-2

1. Address:
 - a. Less friendly – no praise
 - b. Summarizes his theme: He is an Apostle, We are saved through faith in Jesus
2. There is one Gospel (and we must preserve its integrity)
3. Paul's personal witness:
 - a. I was more Jewish than you could ever think of being
 - b. I had a conversion, went to "Arabia" and Damascus, met with Peter, became the "apostle to the uncircumcised (Jews and Greeks in Greek lands) as Peter was to the Circumcised.
 - c. Paul tells off Peter for backing off eating with the Gentiles (2:14)
4. We are saved by grace and faith in Jesus and not by the Law (2:20-21)

Chapter 3-5

1. You stupid Galatians! (3:1) the Spirit didn't come because of the Law
2. Abraham was justified before the Law (and the promise remained even after)
3. The Law reveals sin and points us to Jesus – and Christ trumps the Law since the Jews and Gentiles are baptized and made one in Christ (regardless of the Law being observed)
4. Christ set us free so don't "yoke" yourselves unnecessarily to the Law.
5. Freedom = freedom and faith working in love (5:6)
6. "Why don't they go further and castrate themselves!" (let them follow their own logic)

Chapter 6:

1. Help one another spiritually and morally
2. Be humble and generous
3. It's me – notice the big letters?
3. 6:14-16 summary and end with blessing

X

Ephesians

Captivity Epistles: In prison in Rome in 61-63AD (Colossians and Philemon also)

(Some say prison in Ephesus or Caesarea)

Disputed authorship but Pauline in style.

More theological and universal than his earlier letters

Chapter 1:

1. God's plan of salvation through blessing (1:3-13) Prayer
 - a. God's call to his chosen ones to eternal happiness
 - b. Becoming holy through adopted "sonship" in Christ
 - c. Our redemption through the death of Jesus on the cross
 - d. God reveals the "mystery" (explain mystery)
 - e. The call of Israel to be God's own
 - f. The call of the Gentiles to be God's own
2. The power of God reaches beyond the earth to include all realms

Chapter 2:

1. Salvation is a free gift (2:5) that God initiates
2. Jesus brings together Gentiles and Jews (through his body and the Spirit)
3. We are built on the Church with Jesus founded (2:20-22)

Chapter 3:

1. Paul's prayer: Know Christ and his power (3:14-21)
2. In Christ we are unified and we all have a role (4:15-16)
3. Ignorance and close mindedness doom the "gentiles" and lead them to unholy existence. Take that new life and freedom in Christ and put it to good use.

Chapter 5:

1. "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (5:21)
2. Children be obedient – the first commandment with a blessing!
3. Spiritual warfare with armor of God (6:10-20)

Colossians

Colossae: Asia Minor and more inland. Paul never actually went there. Philemon did
Captivity Epistles: In prison in Rome in 61-63AD (Ephesians and Philemon also)

(Some say prison in Ephesus or Caesarea)

Traditionally by Paul but there is dispute about that.

Chapter 1:

1. Thanksgiving and prayer followed by the purpose of the letter (1:13-14)

2. Christ is above all: (1:15-20)

“Heavenly Powers”? – some believed that there were “powers” that controlled the heavens and therefore they threatened the supreme power of Jesus.

All things are “subordinate” to Jesus and Christians are set free from any principle or ineffective observances (superstition) that might come.

3. Suffering with Christ has purpose (1:24)

Chapter 2 -4:

1. Beware of false teachers:

a. Hold fast to what you have “received”.

b. Don’t fall for trendy “philosophical” or other lures

c. Jesus’ body and divinity is “fullness” or both realms

d. Even OT dietary law and festivals are subservient to Christ

e. Look beyond the earthly because Jesus is beyond anything else.

f. But –moral law is part of that freedom and act of putting all things under Christ

g. Persevere, plus some personal news...

X

Philippians

Philippi: Named after Phillip II. Fertile plane in the north between Greece and Asia Minor. The town was destroyed by Turks and is just ruins today.

Paul was particularly fond of Philippi. They sent him aid several times.

Friendly, appeals to unity, humility, and warnings against false teachers.

Captivity Epistles: traditionally Rome but more likely Ephesus in 56-57AD

(Caesarea)

Chapter 1:

1. Loving prayer and thanksgiving (you all have a place in my heart)

2. He writes from prison

3. He wants to be with Jesus but then again if he lives he can do more (1:23)

4. Hold fast to the battle and live the faith

Chapter 2

1. Christ's humility as model (Phil 2:6-11) (early Christian Hymn)
 - a. Self-emptying of Christ
 - b. Highest glorification
2. Work toward salvation with "fear and trembling" (keep at it)

Chapter 3

1. Beware of the dogs and self-mutilators (3:2) – circumcision is in the heart
2. (3:12-16) Race toward the finish line because the race is still in progress
3. Thanks and well wishes – "I can do all things in him who strengthens me (4:13)

Philemon

Captivity Epistles: In prison in Rome in 61-63AD (Ephesians and Colossians also)
(Some say prison in Ephesus or Caesarea)

1. Onesimus ran away and stole
2. Paul sends him back so Philemon can freely give back to Paul
3. "I could demand it, but I won't"

"I'm sending Onesimus back but I hope your charity sends him back to me."

Beginning of the end of slavery

X

1 Thessalonians

50-51 AD (winter) – The earliest NT work

Part of Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-10)

Written in Athens during 2nd missionary journey

Purpose:

The dead and the parousia (4:13-18)

Enjoy now? What about the dead? Why work?

Christ can bring to salvation to his followers whether alive or dead.

Descriptions traditional Jewish terms.

Military and traditional imagery 4:17

Implies immediacy but not necessarily 5:1-11 (2Th 2:1-12)

I. Thanksgiving for success of Gospel (1 – 2:16)

II. Personal news (2:17 – 3:13)

III. Instruction on Christian living (4:1-5:28)

1. Morals

a. Be holy – especially in your body

b. love another (philio)

c. attend your own business, earn a living to gain respect of outsiders, be self-sufficient.

2. Parousia
 - a. Have hope for those who have died before you (as believers should)
 - b. When Jesus comes, he will bring the saints with him.
 - c. At the voice of the Archangel (Michael) and trumpet
 - d. ALL will rise beginning with the dead, then us, and meet the Lord
 - e. Be awake!
 3. More teaching:
 - a. Be considerate to leaders
 - b. Be at peace, admonish, encourage, support, be patient, no evil for evil, seek what is best, be joyful, pray, give thanks, do not stifle the Spirit, test and hold on to good.
- X

2 Thessalonians

More likely a continuation and clarification of 1 Thessalonians

51 (few months later) or 80 AD

I. Opening: (1)

1. Brief description of judgment (1:8-10)

II. Instructions on the Day of the Lord and Prayer (2:2-14)

1. Revolt: a turning away and against God. (Seems apostasy rather than never believed)

2. The “wicked one, lost one, Enemy” – (Dn 11:36 image) = AntiChrist

3. Held back: by what? Church, Gospel, Roman Empire? Prevents manifestation of Enemy who must precede Jesus’ return.

4. Super-human skills vs. Spirit (deception vs. power of God)

III. Exhortations of Encouragement, request for prayer, dealing with lazy, and final admonitions. (2:15-3:16)

1. Persevere

2. Maintain “traditions” whether by word of mouth or by letter. (2:15)

3. Pray for Gospel’s success

4. Be disciplined and work (3:10-12)

IV. Conclusion

X

1-2 Timothy and Titus

Pastoral Epistles with Titus

Traditionally:

1 Timothy and Titus were loyal followers of Paul (Acts 16:1; 2 Cor 2:13)?

2 Tim Paul is presented as a prisoner in Rome before his martyrdom in 67AD?

Timothy: Written in Macedonia and Rome?

Titus: Written in Macedonia

There is little theological explanation like his earlier letters

Paul doesn’t argue against false teaching now, he just condemns it.

Does Paul give more latitude to his secretary?

Does Paul just write different at the end of his life?

Is a follower of Paul writing in his name?

1. It would give credibility to applying Pauline thought to the organization.
2. It could include fragments of prior Pauline letters that would need context.
3. It seems historically between the leaders of early Paul (50AD) and bishops of Ignatius of Antioch (early 100s).

Major themes:

1. The organization and governing of the Church in Paul's name. (Tit 1:5)
2. Pastoral advice ((1 Tim 5:3)
3. Warning and rejection of false teaching (Jewish legalism, Law disputes, and early Gnosticism) (1 Tim 3:15) and warning of false teachers.

Content:

1 Timothy:

1. "To Timothy, true child, my son"
2. Use the Law correctly, not for speculation or magic
3. Gospel message = Morals + belief
4. Paul greatest sinner – Jesus came for sinners
5. Pray for leaders (easy to label leaders but they need salvation too)
6. "lift up hands reverently in prayer"
- 7 Women modestly dressed with good works
 - "no permission to speak..." why here?
 - "child bearing" as vocation? Some taught marriage was wrong
8. Leaders need to be temperant and consistent
9. Church = pillar and foundation of truth
10. Last times (4) immorality and false teaching
11. Pastoral Practices: respect elderly and widows, respect elders, reprimand properly
12. "love of money is the root of all evil" – proverb

2 Timothy:

1. Fan into flame God's gift
2. Family education
3. Never be ashamed of witnessing or Paul's prison
4. Soldier, athlete, farmer parables
5. Godless philosophical discussion lead further from God – cause speculation and pride
6. Attitude of "irreligion" (2 Tim 3)
7. Be resolute in the faith

Titus:

1. Early Church governance: description of “elders” (diakonoi) (presbyteros) (episkopoi) as governing, preaching, and serving. More formalized by Ignatius of Antioch (d.107)
2. “Elders” should be: Solid to teaching and tradition and morally upright.
3. Oppose false teaching
4. Lead by example in behavior and moderate
5. “Great God and Savior, Jesus” – Divinity
6. Obedient to civil authority
7. We are kind and peaceable people because of the Spirit (not just our effort)

X

Hebrews

Date: (70-80)?

Author: Traditionally: Arguments for Paul and against Paul writing it (West)

Probably: Greek Diaspora (Alexandrian flavor) Jewish Convert

Written in: Italy? (13:24: “God’s holy people in Italy send greetings...”)

Time: after 63 (mentions Paul’s prison letters) before 70 (didn’t mention Temple destruction)

Audience: Jewish Christians and perhaps rabbis (having questions) (persecution)

Themes:

1. Jesus is higher than all creation, and thus divine
 2. Jesus is the new Moses leading his people
 3. Jesus’ sacrifice is sufficient
 4. Jesus is the new priesthood that is before and after Aaron
 5. The new worship reflects the new present reality
1. God speaks through his Son
 2. Jesus is almighty and on high: greater than angels
(angels minister to humans, Jesus is above all)
 3. If God demanded obedience to prophets, how much more Jesus (2:2)
 4. Because Jesus is human he saves humanity (2:14)
 5. Jesus is fully in glory but his victory on earth isn’t fully actualized
 6. Moses = servant / Jesus = Son: Jesus is higher than Moses
People entered into “rest” with Moses and all the more with Jesus
 7. Joshua led people to promised Land and Jesus all the more lead the new Israel
Since Jesus is the completed “Joshua” plus “high priest” hold fast to that hope
 8. A human priest repents and offers sacrifice for himself – therefore they are limited
Jesus is sinless and a “son” of man and a “Son” of God.
Jesus offers up “loud cries” (5:7) and obedience
Jesus is the priest like “Melchizedek”
 9. So be encouraged to persevere (like Abraham)

10. Jesus is higher than Levitical priesthood
 - a. No “father, mother, or ancestry” and remains a priest forever
 - b. Abraham offered tithes
 - c. Ps 110 speaks of a new priesthood to arise.
Therefore, the old Law is perfected in the New Law
 - d. Jesus’ priesthood is unchanging and he is the “High Priest” once and for all.
 11. New priesthood and sanctuary:
 - a. Christ is the mediator (8:6)
 - b. Christ enters the heavenly sanctuary (8:5) (9:8-11) which the old is just a shadow of.
 12. The Law is a “reflection “ of thing yet to come (10:1)
 - a. Repeated sacrifice that could not accomplish its goal vs. one sacrifice that suffices once and for all. (10)
 13. Therefore, we have entered into the sanctuary.
 - a. So stay firm and persevere
 - b. Don’t apostize
 - c. Don’t lose heart because a reward is near (10:35-36)
 - d. Remember our ancestors (heroes in faith) like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, etc. “by faith” (11:17-19)
 14. Finally look at Jesus’ example
 15. You don’t know when you are entertaining angels (13:2)
- X

James

Genre:

“Catholic” letters – universal – addressed to all churches (or more than one)

Who:

James, “brother of the Lord” (Mt 13:55) (Acts 12:17) Killed 62 AD (probably)
St. Paul saw him after Arabia - Gal. 1:19

Date:

Some say later – like 100 AD but most say before 62 (58?) by James
Some issues with James being universally accepted (lack of doctrinal content?)
Good Greek using “diatribe” style (not typically Galilean Jewish style)

Purpose:

Written for Jewish Christians throughout the Roman Empire
(but mostly to area around Palestine – Egypt, Syria)

Theology:

Assumes OT knowledge

Uses Jewish Wisdom Literature and applies Jesus

Jewish/Christian Christology makes it “appear” to be less developed

More James responding to Paul than Paul responding to James

It is more of a sermon – how to live out faith

The Sermon Content:

1. How to behave in trial (1:2) – leads to faith
2. Origin of temptation (1:13-15) not God but inner sin (allowed)
3. How to control the tongue (3:2-3) (3:9)

Overall Themes:

1. Treatment of the poor (2:1,5-9) and the corruption of riches (4:13 – 5:6)
 - Avoid class distinction (2:1)
 - Life is short (1:9)
 - Rich will glory in the exaltation of the poor if they are humble and just (Ps 72) (Lk 1:52)
2. Real faith does good deeds (1:22) (2:17) (2:26)
 - Satan and demons “believe” in God / Abraham “acted” in faith (2:21)
3. Pray with confidence (1:6)
4. Earthly wisdom (3:14) and True wisdom (3:17)
5. Disunity “because you use worldly means to try to “gain” (4:2)
6. Sin of omission (4:17)
7. Coming of the Lord (5:8)
8. Anointing of the sick (5:14)

Jude

Connection with Peter:

2 Peter 3:3 – First of all, do not forget that in the final days there will come sarcastic scoffers whose life is ruled by their passions.

Jude (18) – At the final point of time, they told you, ‘there will be mockers who follow nothing but their own godless desires.’

Servant of Jesus and brother of James (brother of Jesus)

Beware of false teachers

Be vigilant in the handed on faith (3)

Highest doxology at end (24-25)

Connection with “Enoch” in (14-15) a pseudopigrapha work (real before Noah)

“Enoch walked with God and then was gone, for God took him.” (Gen 5:24)

1-2 Peter

1 Peter:

Genre: “Catholic” letters

Who:

“Peter” apostle from “Babylon” with “son” Mark

Peter martyred in 64 or 67 AD

Date:

Soon before martyrdom

Pauline connections?

Some connection through Silvanus and Mark (Silvanus giving it final form?)

Probably just part of Apostolic Tradition

Purpose:

Keep the faith in trial

Preserving a proper understanding of Paul

Content:

1. Aliens – true home = heaven (1:1)
2. “Saints” are made holy by obedience and being sprinkled with blood (Moses) (1:2)
3. Promise is constant (1:4) so be ready and alert (13) and remember the price (1:18)
4. Rebirth by Sacrament and Word (1:3) (1:23) – baptism underlies message
5. Priesthood of all believers (2:9) (baptism) (Ex 19:5-6) (before Aaron and Levites)
6. Win others to Jesus by your example (2:12) (3:1-7) = wives and husbands)
7. Always be ready to give an answer (3:15)
8. Baptism (3:18-22)
9. Suffering connects to Jesus (4:1-2)
10. Elders (presbyters) and “younger” and shepherd image like Jesus

2 Peter:

Who:

Claims to be Peter (1:1) (1:14) (1:16-18)

Quotes Jude and seems to come later than Jude (later because apostles are past tense)

(2 Peter 2:4) and (Jude 1:6)

Purpose:

Warn against false teachers (2)

Reassure those waiting for parousia (2)

Content:

1. Sharers of the divine nature (1:4) and escape worldly passion
 2. Faith is supported by active Christian life (1:5-9)
 3. God does not change (2:9-10)
 4. If you find Jesus and backslide you are worse off than 1st time (house) (2:19-21)
 5. Some say “delay” is proof Jesus isn’t coming, but 1 day = 1,000 years (PS 90:4)
God is being patient and allowing repentance time
 6. We await “New Heavens and Earth” – so live in “heaven” (4:13)
 7. Paul can be difficult (4:16)
 8. Reading of scripture is done under guidance of HS and Apostolic Tradition – read by the context of the faith that it came from. (1:20-21)
- X

1-3 John

Letters are closely linked to Gospel of John in style and content

They follow a somewhat dualistic choice: light

Uses “light”, “uprightness”, “love”, “truth”, “spirit – world”

Uses repeated

1 John:

Longest of the three

Developed letter to churches in Asia threatened by sects and early heresies.

Repeats patterns according to chiasmic formula

Content:

1. “love, love, love...”
2. Walk in the light by:
 - a. Breaking with sin
 - b. Keeping commandments (love)
 - c. Detaching from the world
 - d. Being on guard (against “antichrists”)
3. Live as God’s children by:
 - a. Breaking with sin
 - b. Keeping commandments (love)
 - c. Being on guard
4. Jesus is the source of love and faith
 - a. It must transfer over to others (4:20)
5. Prayer and summary:

2-3 John:

1. To love is to live according to his commandments (2 John 6)
 2. John is an authentic teacher (3 John 9)
 3. Beware of false teachers and “love, love, love...”
- X

Revelation:

Written: 95 AD During time of Domitian (Some say after Nero between 68-70 AD)

Author: “John”: Many similarities to the Gospel but also differences

Style and Content:

1. Apocalyptic literature – not to be taken literally
 2. Symbolic and metaphorical language: translate the images back into their original meaning and then apply the message (like Daniel’s statue)
 3. “Apocalyptic” = revelation of hidden things breaking into our world
 4. Addresses real church problems – not speculative prophecy (persecution)
 5. Conforms to long standing prophetic themes: “Day of the Lord” (Am 5:18)
 - a. Just as in the past (Assyrians, Babylonians, etc.) God will liberate people
 - b. It is a battle between good and evil, played out Rome and Church
 6. The “Letters to the churches” (1:9 – 3:22) were added later
 7. Short summary: A story of hope, perseverance, faith, and victory – like an epic.
- X

Timeline: (Diagram in Pg. 12-13)

Chapters 1-3

The time of John and persecution. The Church grows and is purified.

Chapters 6-17

Tribulation and suffering of the Church. Martyrs, wars, and persecution.

The elect will suffer, but they also have protection from God.

Chapters 18-19

The fall of Babylon (Rome):

Chapter 20a

The Millennium (1000 years) – period of the Church

Chapter 20b

Persecution and final battle – it is in the future but parts exist in the present

Chapter 20c

The passing of the age and the final judgment

Chapter 21-22

New Heavens and the New Earth

Roman Emperors and Dates:

Augustus	27BC – 14AD
Tiberius	14AD – 37AD
Caligula	37AD – 41AD
Claudius	41AD – 54 AD
Nero	54AD – 68AD
Galba	68AD – 69AD

Otho	69AD
Vitellius	69 AD
Vespasian	69AD – 79AD
Titus	79AD – 81
Domitian	81AD – 96AD

History:

Temple and fall of Roman Empire

Worship is prominent in Revelation:

Jesus is the Lamb of God: Lamb is used 28 times

Altar (Rev 8:3)

Clergy in vestments (4:4)

Candles (1:12)

Incense (5:8)

Manna (2:17)

Chalices (16)

Sunday Worship “*Lord’s Day*” (1:10)

Mary and the Church (12:1-6)

Holy, Holy, Holy 4:8)

Gloria (15:3-4)

Sign of Cross (14:1)

Alleluia (19:1,3,6)

Scripture (2:3)

Lamb of God

Saints intercession (6:10-11)(14:3,6-7)

Baptism (7:14)

The REAL Moral of the Story:

Followers of Jesus: persist and persevere in Faith.

Even if you die, God will protect you.

Beware of seducing powers:

1. Governments over your faith
2. False or twisted religion

Learn the lessons of the past

1. Israel gave Jesus over to the state
2. The temple was crushed
3. The Roman Empire will also fall (as it did)
4. God always wins in the end.

Worship in Spirit and Truth

1. God is God and Jesus is divine
2. God on throne, lamb, church

Signs and Symbols in Revelation

Animals:

First Beast	Roman Empire and its evil power
Leopard	Persians (Roman Empire embodies
Bear	Medes all the evil of these former
Lion	Babylon empires listed earlier in Daniel)
Red Horse	War
Black horse	Famine
White Horse	Victory, conquest
Pale-Green horse	Plague, death
Horse	Power, speed
Dragon	Evil personified, Devil, Satan, Serpent, Accuser
Lion	Nobility (These four symbolize all
Bull-Ox	Strength of creation. They are also
Eagle	Swiftness used as symbols of the four
Man	Wisdom evangelists in later art.)
Lamb	Jesus Christ – slain and resurrected
Lion of Judah	Christ's kingly power
Beasts	Roman Emperors

People:

Angel	Messenger, one who explains
Bride	Church – faithful wed in new Jerusalem
Gog and Magog	Pagan nations leagued against Church
Harlot	City of Rome (after the goddess of Rome)
Jezebel	Symbol of seducer to emperor and pagan worship
Michael	Archangel, protector of Church and Israel.
Nicolatians	Heretical sect of early Christians (too pagan – unrestricted freedom)
Saints	Strong faithful to withstand persecution and martyrdom
Spirits	Servants and prophets
Ten Kings	Nations helping Rome persecute Christians
Two Witnesses	Moses and Elijah as figures of entire Church's witness of Christ
Woman in sun	The Church giving birth to new Israel, personified also in Mary.
Elders	The Church and its leadership
Servants	Prophets
God	Source of revelation

Colors:

White	Purity, joy, victory, holiness
Black	Evil, disaster, sorrow, famine, death,
Blood red	Martyrdom
Scarlet	Luxury, magnificence
Purple	Royalty, kingship, luxury
Green	Fertility

Places:

Abaddon, Apollyon	A place of destruction
Alpha	First, Christ as the beginning
Omega	Last, Christ as the end of all
Babylon	Symbolizes Rome
Hades, Sheol	Greek and Hebrew words for the “abyss” the abode of the dead.
Euphrates	Boundary between Parthians and Romans
New Jerusalem	Where the faithful dwell
The Sea	Domain of evil, death, insecurity
Sea of Glass	Sea above the dome where God dwells
Seven Hills	Rome
Synagogue of Satan	Jews helping Rome persecute Christians
Ten of Testimony	God’s promise to reward faithful
Desert	Safety in God’s protection (as in exile)
Armageddon	Jezreel Valley – symbolic battle site between good and evil.

Numbers:

1	Unity of Yahweh
3	Blessings, invocation, Trinity, (heaven, earth, abyss)
4	Visible word, four corners (S,N,E,W), totality.
6	Imperfection (one less than 7 – perfection)
7	Perfection, fullness, completeness
10	Fullness completeness
12	12 tribes, people having reached perfection, the Church
1,000	Symbolic of a great or large number
7,000	All of society
12,000	All refer to a short time of persecution before resurrection of martyrs.
42 months	“
1,260 days	“
3 ½ years	“
144,000	12x12x1000 – Perfection, and total completeness
1/3	The end has not completely arrived.
½ of an hour	A calm before the storm of the last plagues.

Things:

Book of Life	Where names of faithful are written
Little Scroll	Message telling Christians of future persecution
Mark of Beast	Those branded to participate in emperor worship.
Bow / Sword	Sign of war and conquering
Scales	Famine (food had to be weighed before distribution)
Eyes	Knowledge
Horns	Power
Satan	Source of evil
Large Scroll	Book of destinies or doom for those on earth.
Seal of God	Spirit of the Father in hearts of Christians
2 Olive Trees / 2 Lamps	The Church
First death	A person's earthly death
Second death	Damnation to the place of the condemned
Seals/Trumpets/Bowels	Contain calamities on earth before reward of faithful
Tree of Life	Eternal life
Lamp stands	Churches
Cloud	Place of manifestation of God
Wings	Mobility
Palms	Triumph
Right Hand	Signifies power
Key	Symbol of authority
Crown	Symbol of royalty, dominion, kingship
Harp	Heavenly music
Two-edged sword	Word of God that judges and punishes (cuts both ways)
Blessed	Authority
Witnessing	Persecution
Woman	People of city
Stars	Universal dominion and powers