

Christian Life Foundation Course

Sessions 8-9 – New Testament Overview

Appropriate to finish our Christian Life Foundation Course with a New Testament Overview

belief in the inerrancy of Scripture forms the foundation for all of our other fundamental beliefs

In turn, all of Scripture given by God to proclaim His plan of salvation

It is said, - in the Old Testament we find Christ concealed, while in the New Testament we find Christ revealed.

I sharply disagree with the idea Christ is concealed in the Old Testament (c.f. Genesis 14:18-20 and Joshua 5:13-15)

New Testament fleshes out (nyuk, nyuk, nyuk) God's redemptive plan

We will consider the New Testament in four sections:

1. The four gospel accounts – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
Jesus' incarnation, ministries, sacrificial death, and resurrection
2. The history of the early church – Acts
3. The epistles giving doctrinal instruction to the early churches and individual Christians
 - a. Paul's – Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews

NOTE – For most of the history of the church, Hebrews was assumed to be written by Paul. I will make the same assumption for the purposes of this lesson.

- b. James'
 - c. Peter's
 - d. John's
 - e. Jude's
4. The prophecy of Jesus return in the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John

As with the Old Testament, New Testament books often ordered by author and size rather than chronologically.

Helpful to have some frameworks for our study:

1. A Harmony of the Gospels
2. Gospel timeline
3. A New Testament timeline
4. A timeline of the life of Paul

NOTE – Regarding dates

All hinge on unknown birthdate of Jesus

Very specific dates for holy week in the Harmony of the Gospels based on Daniel 9:25

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The Gospels

Why four?

Witness testimony notoriously unreliable.

Four audiences and focuses

Answers argument that some single person just made it all up

Remember all four written under guidance of God's Spirit

We have four because God wanted us to have four

Two eyewitness accounts – Matthew & John

Two “hearsay” from eyewitness apostles and Paul

Mark may have been present for some of Jesus' ministry

Mark's identity is subject to debate

Paul in-turn heard from the “eleven” (and the seventy)

The Harmony of the Gospels document

Created for Cali study in Luke – <https://www.huppobrian.us/category/all/notes/luke/>

Note that Luke is the only gospel with reference for every line

Gospel timeline document

Also created for Cali study in Luke

Attempts (unsuccessfully) to reconcile some of Luke's historical markers (e.g. Quirinius)

John – theological underpinnings of the Gospel. Emphasizes the deity of Christ (one of our fundamental beliefs) – the Word of God. Best starter book for new believers.

1 – Jesus – The Word of God – became flesh – John 1:1-4. The testimony of John the Baptist. Calling of Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, and Nathanael.

2 – Jesus turns water to wine at Cana. Cleansing of the temple.

3 – Nicodemus visits Jesus by night – John 3:3 & 16-18. Testimony of John the Baptist.

4 – Jesus & a Samaritan woman meet at Jacob's well. Jesus heals an official's son.

5 – Jesus heals a lame man at the pool of Bethesda on the sabbath. Jesus defends His authority from the Father.

6 – Feeding of the 5,000. Jesus walks on water. “I am the Bread of Life.” – John 6:48. Many depart over call to eat Jesus' body – John 6:67-68.

7 – Jesus ministers in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles. John 7:38

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- 8 – Jesus’ mercy on a woman caught in adultery. “I am the Light of the World.” – John 8:12
Jesus contends with the Jews claiming Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus’ day. “Before Abraham was, I AM.” – John 8:58
- 9 – Jesus heals a blind man by putting mud on his eyes and telling him to wash in the pool of Siloam.
- 10 – “I am the door of the sheep” – John 10:7 “I am the Good Shepherd” – John 10:11.
Jesus claims equality with God – John 10:27-30
- 11 – Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead – “I am the resurrection and the life.” – John 11:25
- 12 – Lazarus’ sister Mary anoints Jesus’ feet and wipes them with her hair. The triumphal entry. Jesus says He must be lifted up. Jesus cries out for unbelievers.
- 13 – Jesus washes the disciples’ feet. Jesus gives the disciples a new commandment to love one another – John 13:34-35. Jesus predicts Peter’s denial.
- 14 – Jesus claims be the only way of salvation “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life” – John 14:6. Jesus promises the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- 15 – Jesus encourages His disciples to abide in Him. “I am the true vine,…” - John 15:1
- 16 – Jesus elaborates on the work of the Holy Spirit. – John 16:12-13. Jesus promises the disciples sorrow will turn to joy. – John 16:33
- 17 – Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane.
- 18 – Jesus’ arrest and trial before the high priest. Peter denies knowing Jesus. Jesus’ trial before Pilate. – John 18:36-37.
- 19 – Jesus’ crucifixion, death, and burial.
- 20 – The resurrection. Jesus appears to Mary at the tomb. Jesus appears to the ten, and breathes the Holy Spirit into them. Jesus appears to them and Thomas the following week – John 20:29
- 21 – Jesus appears to the fishermen in Galilee, and restores Peter.

Synoptic Gospels – Matthew, Mark, and Luke

So called because they give very similar accounts of the life of Jesus.

Not all in the same order and contexts.

Sermon on the Mount teachings gathered in one place only in Matthew 5-7

Matthew – written for Hebrew audience showing Jesus fulfilled Messianic prophecy

- 1 – Genealogy of Jesus (actually Joseph). Birth of Jesus.
- 2 – Visit of the wise men. Flight to Egypt. Killing of the Bethlehem infants. Return from Egypt (reference to Herod Archelaus – Matthew 2:22).
- 3 – Ministry of John the Baptist. Baptism of Jesus.

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- 4 – Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness. Jesus begins His ministry. Calling of Peter and Andrew.
- 5-7 – The Sermon on the Mount
- 8 – Jesus cleanses a leper. Jesus heals a centurion’s servant. Jesus calms a storm. Jesus casts demons into a herd of pigs.
- 9 – Healing of a paralytic and forgives his sins. Calling of Matthew. Raising of a young girl from the dead. Healing of a woman with a discharge. Healing of two blind men, and a mute man. Jesus declares that the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.
- 10 – Jesus sends out the twelve apostles. Jesus foretells persecution, but encourages no fear of them. Jesus declares He brings not peace but a sword.
- 11 – Jesus answers messengers from John the Baptist and offers rest – Matthew 11:28-30.
- 12 – Healing of man with withered hand on the Sabbath. Jesus claims to fulfill Isaiah’s prophecy about God’s Servant. Teaching about a house divided – Matthew 12:31. Jesus refuses to give a sign except for the sign of Jonah. – Matthew 12:40.
- 13 – Parables of the Sower, weeds (tares), mustard seed, leaven, hidden treasure, pearl of great price, net, and new and old treasures. Jesus is rejected at Nazareth.
- 14 – Death of John the Baptist. Feeding of the 5000. Jesus walks on the water.
- 15 – Jesus opposes the Pharisees’ traditions. Teaching about what defiles a person – not what goes in, but what comes out. Jesus heals a Canaanite woman’s daughter. Feeding of the 4000.
- 16 – Teachings against the Pharisees. Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ – Matthew 16:13-17. Jesus foretells His death and tells disciples take up our crosses and follow Him.
- 17 – Jesus’ transfiguration. Temple tax from the fish’s mouth.
- 18 – Teaching about coming to Him as a child. Warning about the millstone. Parable of the lost sheep. Teaching about church discipline (Matthew 18:15-17). Parable of the unforgiving servant.
- 19 – Teaching about divorce. Allow the children to come to Me. Story of rich young man.
- 20 – Parable of the workers in the vineyard. Rebuke of John and James for asking to sit at Jesus’ right and left in Heaven.
- 21 – The triumphal entry. Cleansing of the temple. Parables of the two sons, and tenants.
- 22 – Parable of the wedding feast. Advice to render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s and unto the LORD that which is His. Answer to the Sadducees trick question about the resurrection. Teaching about the two great commandments – Matthew 22:34-40.
- 23 – Jesus pronounces seven woes upon the scribes and pharisees. Jesus laments over Jerusalem.

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- 24 – Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple and the signs of the coming of the end of the age – Matthew 24:36.
- 25 – The parables of the ten virgins and the talents. Jesus describes the last judgements (sheep and goats).
- 26 – Judas agrees to betray Jesus. A woman anoints Jesus' head with expensive oil. The last supper. Jesus institutes the LORD's supper. Jesus foretells Peter's denial. Jesus' prayer at Gethsemane. Jesus' arrest. Jesus' trial before the council and high priest. Peter denies knowing Jesus.
- 27 – Judas hangs himself. Jesus' trial by Pilate. The crucifixion. Jesus' death and burial.
- 28 – Jesus' resurrection. The Great Commission – Matthew 28:18-20.

Mark – Emphasizes the humanity of Jesus – the Son of Man

- 1 – Ministry of John the Baptist. Baptism of Jesus. Temptation in the wilderness. Calling of the four fishermen. Healings of a demon possessed man and a leper.
- 2 – Jesus heals a paralytic lowered through the roof, and forgives his sins. Calling of Matthew (Levi). Jesus proclaims He is LORD of the sabbath.
- 3 – Jesus heals a man with a withered hand on the sabbath (continuation from 2). Listing of the twelve apostles. Warning against blaspheming the Holy Spirit.
- 4 – Parables of the Sower, the lamp under a basket, the seed growing, and the mustard seed. Jesus calms the storm.
- 5 – Casting of the Legion of demons into a herd of pigs. Healing of a woman with a discharge. Raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead.
- 6 – Jesus' rejection at Nazareth. Jesus sends out the twelve. Death of John the Baptist. Feeding of the 5000. Jesus walks on the water.
- 7 – Teaching against the traditions of the Pharisees. Teaching about what defiles a man (what comes out, not what goes in). Healing of a Syrophonecian (Lebanese) woman's daughter.
- 8 – Feeding of the 4000. Refusal to give a sign. Warning about the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod. Jesus heals a blind man of Bethsaida. Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ at Caesarea Philippi. Jesus foretells His death and resurrection. Mark 8:35-38.
- 9 – The transfiguration. Healing of boy with unclean spirit that made him mute. Rebuke of disciples' pride. Warning about millstone for causing a child to sin.
- 10 – Teaching about divorce. Suffer the children to come to me – Mark 10:14-15. Story of the rich young man. Rebuke of James' and John's request to sit on His right and left. Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus.
- 11 – The triumphal entry. Cleansing of the temple. Challenge to Jesus' teaching authority.

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- 12 – Parable of the tenants. Teaching about paying of taxes to Caesar. Answer to Sadducees' trick question about the resurrection. The greatest commandments – quoting Deuteronomy 6:4. Offering of the poor widow.
- 13 – Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple, and tells His disciples about the signs of the coming of the end of the age and of His return.
- 14 – The plot to kill Jesus. Jesus is anointed at Bethany. The last supper. Jesus institutes the LORD's supper. Jesus foretells Peter's denial. Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane. Jesus' arrest. Jesus' trial before the council. Peter denies Jesus.
- 15 – Jesus' trial by Pilate. The crucifixion. Jesus' death and burial.
- 16 – The resurrection – Mark 16:7. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene. The Great Commission. The ascension.

Luke – Written as an orderly historical narrative. Companion to the book of Acts.

Luke was a Christian Gentile – only non-Jewish New Testament author

- 1 – Foretelling by Gabriel of John the Baptist's and Jesus' births. The Magnificat. Birth of John the Baptist.
- 2 – Birth of Jesus. Dedication of Jesus. Simeon & Anna. Jesus the boy teaching in the temple.
- 3 – Ministry of John the Baptist. Baptism of Jesus. Genealogy of Jesus (actually Joseph).
- 4 – Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. Beginning of Jesus' ministry. Rejection at Nazareth. First miracles in Capernaum.
- 5 – Calling of the four fishermen. Jesus cleanses a leper. Healing of paralytic lowered through the roof. Calling of Matthew (Levi).
- 6 – Healings on the sabbath. Listing of "the twelve." Teachings about loving enemies, judging others, knowing a tree by its fruit, and building on the Rock.
- 7 – Healing of a centurion's servant, raising a widow's son from the dead, and answers to questions brought by John the Baptist's envoys. Mary – sister of Lazarus – washes Jesus' feet with her hair.
- 8 – Parable of the Sower. Teaching about hiding a lamp. Jesus calms a storm. Jesus casts Legion of demons into a herd of pigs. Healing of woman with a discharge. Raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead.
- 9 – Sending out of "the twelve." Feeding of the 5,000. Peter confesses Christ at Caesarea Philippi. Jesus foretells His death. Teaching to take up crosses daily. Transfiguration of Jesus. Rebuke of John and James for pridefulness.
- 10 – Sending out the 72. Parable of the good Samaritan. Jesus visits Mary and Martha.
- 11 – The LORD's prayer. Teaching about a house divided. Jesus refuses to give any sign but the sign of Jonah. Teaching about hiding a light. Woe to Pharisees and scribes.

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- 12 – Teaching to beware the leaven of the Pharisees. Teaching not to fear those who kill the body. Acknowledge Christ before men and He will acknowledge you before God. Parable of the rich fool. Teaching against anxiety. Encouragement to always be ready for the Master's return. Jesus says He doesn't bring peace, but division.
- 13 – Parable of the fig tree. Parables of the mustard seed and the leaven. Enter by the narrow door. Jesus' lament for Jerusalem.
- 14 – Healing on the sabbath. Parables of the wedding feast and great banquet. Teaching to renounce things of the world and follow Jesus. Teaching about salt losing its flavor.
- 15 – Parables of the lost sheep, lost coin, and prodigal son.
- 16 – Parable of the dishonest manager. Parable of the rich man and Lazarus.
- 17 – Teaching about the millstone around the neck of those through whom temptation to sin comes. Jesus heals ten lepers. Teaching about the coming of the Kingdom.
- 18 – Parable of the persistent widow. Teaching about two men praying at the temple. Suffer the little children to come to Me. Story of the rich ruler. Healing of a blind beggar.
- 19 – Jesus dines with Zacchaeus the tax collector. Parable of the ten minas. Triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Cleansing of the temple.
- 20 – Jesus' authority challenged. Parable of the wicked tenants. Teaching to give the Caesar that which is Caesar's and to the LORD that which is the LORD's. Answer to the Sadducees trick question about the resurrection.
- 21 – Teaching about the widow offering all she had – a single mite. Jesus foretells coming catastrophes and persecution, and the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus teaches about His return in the end time, and warns to always be ready.
- 22 – Judas arranges to betray Jesus. The last Passover meal. Institution of the LORD's Supper. Jesus prays on the Mount of Olives. Betrayal and arrest. Peter denies Jesus. Trial before the council.
- 23 – Trials before Pilate and Herod. The crucifixion. Jesus' death and burial.
- 24 – The Resurrection. Jesus appears on the road to Emmaus. Jesus appears to His disciples. The Ascension.

Acts – Luke's history of the early Church. Companion book to Luke's Gospel.

Take a look at the Chronology of Acts and the Epistles document.

- 1 – Jesus directs the apostles to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. The Ascension. Acts 1:11 Matthias is chosen to replace Judas Iscariot.
- 2 – The coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles on Pentecost. Peter's Pentecost sermon. Manifestation of the gift of tongues. The fellowship of the Church sharing all things together.
- 3 – Healing of a lame beggar at the Beautiful Gate. Peter testifies in the temple.

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- 4 – Peter and John brought before the council. – Acts 4:11-12
- 5 – Ananias and Sapphira die after trying to deceive the brethren about the sale of a piece of property. The apostles are arrested again. Saul’s teacher Gamaliel advises the council not to harm them.
- 6 – Seven deacons are chosen to relieve the apostles from the burden of serving. One of them – Stephen – is arrested.
- 7 – Stephen gives his testimony, and is stoned to death with Saul as a witness – Acts 7:55-56.
- 8 – Saul persecutes the church. Philip the evangelist preaches in Samaria and casts out evil spirits. Simon the magician seeks to buy the power of the Holy Spirit and then is saved. Philip evangelizes and baptizes an Ethiopian eunuch.
- 9 – Saul (Paul) encounters Jesus on the Damascus Road. Paul preaches the gospel in Damascus. The Jews seek to arrest Paul, but he escapes Damascus by being lowered in a basket. Paul goes to Jerusalem, and flees to Tarsus when the Jews seek to kill him. Peter raises Tabitha from the dead in Joppa.
- 10 – Peter has a vision of clean and unclean animals – Acts 10:13 – “Rise, Peter. Kill and eat.” Peter witnesses to Gentiles of Centurion Cornelius’ household. They receive the Holy Spirit (gift of speaking in tongues). Peter baptizes them.
- 11 – Peter reports the Holy Spirit being given to Cornelius’ household to elders in Jerusalem. Barnabas travels to Tarsus seeking Paul.
- 12 – Herod kills James Zebedee and imprisons Peter intending to kill him after Passover. An angel rescues Peter from the prison. Barnabas and Paul return to Jerusalem.
- 13 – Paul and Barnabas set out on Paul’s first missionary journey in Asia Minor.
- 14 – Paul is stoned and left for dead at Lystra. Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch.
- 15 – Council in Jerusalem to determine Church response to Judaizers who claimed following the Law is required for salvation. Paul and Barnabas set out with a letter detailing the Church’s position. Paul and Barnabas have a dispute over John Mark and separate. Paul continues on the second missionary journey with Silas.
- 16 – Timothy joins Paul and Silas on the missionary journey. Paul has a vision of a man from Macedonia. They sail to Greece, and preach the Gospel for the first time in Europe. Paul and Silas are imprisoned at Philippi but a great earthquake opens the jail doors. The Philippian jailer and his household are saved. – Acts 16:29-31.
- 17 – Paul and Silas preach throughout Macedonia.
- 18 – Paul preaches the Gospel and works in Corinth as a tent maker for 18 months. Paul returns from Greece to Asia Minor.
- 19 – Paul preaches in Ephesus. The Ephesians receive the Holy Spirit. Ephesian idol makers start a riot in the city.

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20 – Paul returns to Philippi. A young man who fell from a window and died while Paul was preaching is raised from the dead. Paul returns to Asian Minor and bids the Ephesian elders a final farewell.

21-23 – Paul returns to Jerusalem, visits James the half-brother of Jesus, and is arrested in the temple. Paul is tried before the Jewish council. When a plot to kill Paul is discovered, the Roman authorities send Paul to Felix the Roman governor in Caesarea.

24 – Paul is kept in jail at Caesarea for two years by Felix and his successor Festus.

25-26 – As a Roman citizen by birth, Paul appeals his case to Caesar. Paul is tried by Herod Agrippa. Paul is sent to Rome.

27-28 – Paul's journey to Rome. Shipwrecked on Malta for 3 months. Paul finally arrives in Rome. Paul lives for two years in Rome in a rented house.

NOTE – Acts contains no details of Paul's trial(s) in Rome or his eventual martyrdom.

The Epistles – Doctrinal teaching letters from the apostles to the ancient Church and to individual believers.

NOTE – Sometimes the reason for writing was simply the availability of a courier.

Pauline Epistles – Paul wrote roughly a third of the New Testament in the form of his letters. Much of what we now consider orthodox Christian theology has its basis in Paul's letters.

NOTE – Throughout most of Church history, the book of Hebrews was assumed to be written by Paul. For the purposes of this study, we will continue in that assumption despite the book's lack of internal attribution to Paul or anyone else.

1 Thessalonians – Thessalonica was the capital of ancient Macedonia. The church at Thessalonica was established during Paul's second missionary journey.

Purpose – Paul wrote to encourage the church following a good report from Timothy about their faith.

1 – Greeting and praise for their faith.

2 – Reminder of Paul's ministries to the church, and longing to see them again.

3 – Paul's joy at Timothy's report on the Thessalonian's progress.

4 – Encouragement to walk in purity and holiness before the LORD. Paul's description of the coming of the LORD. – 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

5 – Warning reminder of the coming Day of the LORD. – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-21

2 Thessalonians

Purpose – Some Thessalonians had come to believe that the LORD had already returned. Others were convinced His return was imminent, and had stopped working. Paul wrote them to correct these errors.

1 – Praise and thanksgiving for Thessalonians' steadfastness in the face of persecution. Promise of God's coming judgement on those who were afflicting them.

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- 2 – Prophetic description of the coming of the antichrist and the great apostasy which will precede the coming of the LORD. Denial that the LORD has already come again. Encouragement to stand firm in their faith.
- 3 – Admonition against idleness while awaiting the return of the LORD.

1 Corinthians – Corinth lies on a narrow isthmus between Macedonia and the Peloponnesian peninsula of Greece. Today, there is a canal cut through the isthmus. In Paul's time cargo would be trans-shipped by cart across the isthmus. In ancient times Corinth was located along a major trade route, and was therefore subject to great corruption and immorality. Paul established the church at Corinth during his second missionary journey.

Purpose – News had come to Paul about problems of sexual immorality, idolatry, and divisions within the Corinthian church. Paul wrote to address these issues and to answer questions from the Corinthians.

- 1-3 – Greetings and admonition against reported divisions within the church – particularly concerning various versions of the Gospel preached by various Church leaders. – 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
- 4 – Apostles should be regarded as servants of the Gospel – not as celebrities.
- 5 – Chastisement of Corinthians for tolerance of sexual immorality amongst them.
- 6 – Chastisement of Corinthians for airing grievances with each other in the civil courts – 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Encouragement to flee from sexual immorality – 1 Corinthians 6:12.
- 7 – Instructions for married couples. Direction to live as we were called, and not try to change our earthly station. Encouragement to remain unmarried if single or widowed.
- 8 – Answer to Corinthians' questions regarding food offered to idols. – 1 Corinthians 8:13
- 9 – Paul asserts his rights as a minister of the Gospel, but surrenders them willingly.
- 10 – Admonition against idolatry. Encouragement to exercise our freedom in Christ to the glory of the LORD.
- 11 – Answers to Corinthians' questions regarding head coverings and hair length. Formal instructions for the LORD's supper.
- 12 – Answers to Corinthians' questions regarding spiritual gifts. Comparison of the members of a church congregation with the members of a physical body – all with individual essential functions.
- 13 – Treatise on love. All spiritual gifts are to be exercised in love – 1 Corinthians 13:13.
- 14 – Detailed instructions regarding the spiritual gifts of tongues and prophecy.
- 15 – Treatise on the resurrection – of Jesus, and of the dead in Christ – 1 Corinthians 15:20-21.

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16 – Instructions regarding donation for the church in Jerusalem. Details of Paul's future travel plans.

Galatians – Galatia is a region of north central Asia Minor (Anatolia) in what is now Turkey. The Galatian churches were established during Paul's first missionary journey.

Purpose – The Galatian churches had fallen under the influence of the Judaizers who insisted that Christians must follow the Jewish Law in order to be saved – most importantly, circumcision and the dietary restrictions. Paul wrote this letter to refute that idea.

1-2 – Greeting and admonition against following a different Gospel than the one Paul gave. Paul's claim of apostolic authority.

3-5 – Paul's argument for justification by faith alone, not by works. Paul asserts that circumcision commits the follower to obey the entire law. Lists of the fruits of the flesh and of the Spirit – Galatians 5:19-23

6 – Encouragement to bear one another's burdens.

2 Corinthians

Purpose – A letter of reconciliation. Paul was concerned that the harshness of his first letter might have discouraged the Corinthians. Paul also refutes those who had been slandering his ministry as strong in writing but weak in presence.

1 – Greeting and praise for the God of all comfort.

2 – Paul's decision not to visit in sorrow over the pain caused by his previous letter. Encouragement to forgive and restore the sinner about whom Paul previously wrote.

3 – Paul's ministry – the Corinthians as his letter of recommendation.

4 – The light of the Gospel. Treasure in earthen vessels – 2 Corinthians 4:7-9 & 17-18 [KJV]

5-6 – This earthly dwelling (body) is not our home. The judgement seat of Christ – 2 Corinthians 5:10. Paul's ministry of reconciliation. Encouragement to remain separate from unbelievers (do not be unequally yoked).

7 – Paul's rejoicing in the Corinthians – his spiritual children. Praise for their repentance.

8-9 – Encouragement to give generously to aid the churches not so blessed as Corinth – particularly in Jerusalem.

10-11 – Paul commends his own ministry, but cautions that any boasting may be in the LORD alone. Argument against those who had questioned Paul's authority. Paul details his afflictions for preaching the Gospel.

12 – Paul's (presumably) vision of the third heaven. The thorn in Paul's flesh given to keep him humble – 2 Corinthians 12:9.

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13 – Admonishment to self-examination by the Corinthians. Paul's warning of harshness if needed when he visits them again.

Romans – Paul's magnum opus. Theological instruction to the church he had never yet visited. Applicable to us today as much as to them then.

Purpose – Paul lays the groundwork for a planned future visit, but in the meantime wanted to establish the Roman church on sound theological footing.

1-2 – Greeting and desire to visit Rome. Call to righteousness – Romans 1:16, 20, 32 & 2:21-24.

3-4 – Justification by faith in Jesus, not by the works of the Law. Abraham as an example – Romans 3:23.

5 – Reconciliation with God through faith – Romans 5:8. Adam brought death through sin. Jesus brought life.

6 – Call to repentance and holiness – Romans 6:23.

7 – Struggle of God's indwelling Spirit against the sinful nature of the flesh.

8 – Encouragement of new life in Christ – Romans 8:1, 15, 28-30 & 38-39.

9 – Paul's lament over lost Israel. Reminder that Israel is chosen of God.

10 – Salvation in Christ is offered to all without prejudice – Romans 10:8-13.

11 – The coming salvation of the remnant of Israel – Romans 11:25-27.

12 – Advice concerning Christian living – Romans 12:2.

13 – Direction to submit to God's appointed earthly authorities. Fulfill the Law by loving one another.

14 – Do not judge another's worship, but have courage of your own convictions. Nevertheless, do nothing to stumble a brother – Romans 14:19-22.

15 – Reminder that salvation in Christ is offered for all – Jew and Gentile. Paul expresses the desire to visit Rome after returning to Jerusalem first.

16 – Commendations of brothers and sisters by name to the Roman church. Final greetings. Doxology – Romans 16:25-27.

Ephesians – Paul established the church at Ephesus in western Asia Minor during his second missionary journey. Paul returned to Ephesus on his third missionary journey and stayed for the 3 years. Returning from that journey, Paul was aware of what awaited him when he arrived in Jerusalem, and bid the Ephesian elders a final farewell. The letter to the Ephesians was written by Paul from prison in Rome. It was this letter (specifically Ephesians 2:8-9) which convinced Martin Luther that salvation is by grace alone, not by the works of the ceremonial trappings of the Roman Catholic church.

Purpose – By the latter half of the 1st century, divisions were being manifested in the churches. Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians to reinforce the Gospel he had

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originally preached to them – that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus alone, and to encourage unity in Christ among all believers.

- 1 – Greetings and blessings.
- 2-3 – Salvation through grace by faith alone – Ephesians 2:8-10. Jews and Gentile are one body in Christ.
- 4 – Call for unity in Christ and to put off the old self for the new Spiritual creation.
- 5 – Call to live in love empowered by God’s Spirit. Instructions for husbands and wives.
- 6 – Children to submit to parents and slaves to masters. Parents and masters to submit to God. Put on the full armor of God for effective spiritual warfare – Ephesians 6:13-17.

Philippians – The church at Philippi in Macedonia was established by Paul during his second missionary journey.

Purpose – This is a personal letter of thanks for the gift of support Paul had received from the Philippians while he was imprisoned in Rome. Despite his circumstances, Paul writes to the Philippians about joy in Christ.

- 1 – Greeting and thankfulness for the Philippians faith and service. Description of the evangelistic opportunities Paul had in Rome – Philippians 1:21.
- 2 – The humility of Jesus – Philippians 2:5-11. Encouragement for Philippians to show similar humility in service and faith. News of their envoy Epaphroditus’ recovery from serious illness.
- 3 – Paul counts all his earthly gains as garbage unworthy of comparison to knowing Jesus. – Philippians 3:12-14.
- 4 – Encouragement to rejoice in the LORD always. Paul’s contentment despite his circumstances. Thanks for the gift received from them. – Philippians 4:8.

Colossians – Colossae was an influential city in western Asia Minor a short distance from Ephesus. The church at Colossae was established early in the 1st century before Paul’s first missionary journey.

Purpose – As a thriving commercial city, Colossae was subject to the same earthly temptations that Corinth had. Like the churches in Galatia, it had come to Paul’s attention that the church at Colossae was being influenced by the Judaizers, who told them that salvation in Christ was also dependent upon following Jewish Law and traditions. Paul wrote to the church to argue against these false teachings and temptations.

- 1 – Greetings and encouragement. Admonition to put Christ at the center of our lives.
- 2 – Encouragement to remain steadfast in faith and Christian practice – Colossians 2:8-9. Warning about teachers who were promoting salvation through works.

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3 – Encouragement to put away the old self with its earthly lusts, and replace them with the law of love in Christ. Paul also gives specific directions for relationships within households – Colossians 3:18-23.

4 – Final greetings, commendations by name, and instructions.

Philemon – Personal letter to Paul’s friend regarding a run-away slave.

Purpose – Paul writes his friend Philemon to encourage him to welcome back his run-away slave, Onesimus, as a brother in Christ rather than a slave.

1 – Greetings. Commendation of Philemon. Plea for Onesimus.

Hebrews – The specific Messianic Hebrew congregation(s) to whom this epistle was written is unknown. Paul’s authorship was assumed for much of Church history. Lack of internal attribution makes the authorship of the letter subject to debate. Hebrews was written for Jewish readers. Consequently, it contains many Old Testament quotations.

Purpose – Hebrews is an apologetic for Hebrew believers depicting Jesus as the fulfillment of Messianic prophecy, and His salvation in terms of His high priesthood after the order of Melchizedek – a King and a Priest. It is also a letter of encouragement for Hebrew believers to remain steadfast in their faith in the midst of persecution. Recall that Hebrew believers had been put out of their synagogues, and were suffering economic privation for their profession of faith in Christ.

1 – Jesus – God’s Son – who has come in these latter days to speak with mankind.

2 – Warning not to neglect salvation witnessed by signs Jesus performed. The incarnation of Jesus for the purpose of defeating death.

3-4 – Jesus our great High Priest gives rest for His people Israel making Him superior to Moses who led Israel in their wandering – Hebrews 4:15-16.

5-7 – Jesus the High Priest of the order of Melchizedek. Like Melchizedek Jesus is both Priest and King – descended from Judah not Levi.

7-10 – Jesus’ priesthood superior to the Levitical priests who had to continually cleanse themselves and make offerings for the people. Jesus sacrificed Himself once for all – Hebrews 9:13-14 & 27-28 & 10:11-12. Encouragement to remain faithful – Hebrews 10:23-25.

11 – The so-called Great Hall of Faith – the heroes of the faith in Israelite history – Hebrews 11:1.

12 – Encouragement to remain faithful and not grow weary despite persecution given the great examples of faith in the previous chapter and the promise of the immovable Kingdom of God which is to come – Hebrews 12:1-2.

13 – Encouragement to Christian love, hospitality, and good works – Hebrews 13:2.

1 Timothy – Timothy was a half-Jewish/half-Greek believer from Lystra in eastern Asia Minor who became Paul’s protégé. He accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey,

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frequently acted as Paul's emissary, and attended Paul during his Roman imprisonment. Timothy went on to serve as the pastor of the church at Ephesus.

Purpose – Paul wrote to Timothy from his Roman imprisonment after Timothy had departed to pastor the church at Ephesus. At the time, there was a great deal of false teaching being spread throughout the churches in Asia and Greece. Furthermore, Timothy's authority was being challenged due to his youth. Paul's letter is a warning about the false teachings and an encouragement to Timothy to stand firmly in pastoral leadership.

- 1 – Greeting and warning about false teachers seeking to distract from salvation by faith alone.
- 2 – Paul urges Timothy to pray and serve all people without partiality. Paul specifically forbids women to be teachers.
- 3 – Qualifications for church elders and deacons.
- 4 – Paul warns that some will depart from the faith. Paul encourages Timothy not to tolerate those who denigrated Timothy for his youth, but instead to fully exercise the gifts he had been given to teach God's Word and pastor his flock.
- 5 – Specific practical instructions for the life of the church.
- 6 – Further warning against false teachers. Encouragement to contentment in the LORD – 1 Timothy 6:6-8. Final encouragement to remain steadfast in faith.

Titus – Titus was a Gentile protégé of Paul's. He is not mentioned in Acts, but Paul commends him in 2 Corinthians and in Galatians. Titus attended Paul during his Roman imprisonment, but then departed for Dalamatia (modern Croatia).

Purpose – Paul had left Titus in Crete to restore order in the churches there. Paul's letter was written to give Titus practical instructions in that task. It is also apparent that the Cretans had fallen under the influence of the Judaizers. Paul wrote to give Titus warning, and encouragement to stand firm in sound doctrine against their false teaching.

- 1 – Qualifications for the selection of church elders.
- 2 – Encouragement to teach the sound doctrine Paul had given Titus and to enlist the help of older men and women to so instruct the younger members of the congregations.
- 3 – Encouragement to good works – Titus 3:9-10.

2 Timothy

Purpose – Paul wrote this letter to Timothy as his final farewell. Paul encourages Timothy to remain strong, and gives one final warning about apostasy within the church.

- 1 – Admonition for Timothy to strengthen and protect the mission that had been entrusted to him.

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- 2 – Paul compares pastoral ministry to military service, and athletic competition urging Timothy to give it his entire devotion – 2 Timothy 2:22.
- 3 – Warning about the apostasy of the last days – 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Testimony about the inerrancy of scripture – 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
- 4 – Further warning about false teaching, and a charge to Timothy to preach sound doctrine – 2 Timothy 4:1-8.

James' Epistle

James – James was the half-brother of Jesus. Although he wasn't a disciple of Jesus until after His ascension, James went on to become one of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem.

Purpose – James wrote his epistle to give practical application for the teaching of Paul regarding salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone. James was written to Jewish believers who had been cast out of their synagogues and dispersed to Gentile nations.

- 1 – Encouragement to remain steadfast in the faith despite persecution, and to be not only hearers of the Word, but to also be obedient to its directions – James 1:27.
- 2 – Direction against partiality in ministry. Contention that faith without accompanying good works is of no practical use – James 2:14-18.
- 3 – Exposition of the power of words and the need to bring our tongues into submission to Christ.
- 4 – Caution to avoid worldliness – James 4:4. Admonition against boasting about the future.
- 5 – Encouragement to be patient in suffering. Discussion of prayer in faith – James 5:13-16 [KJV].

Peter's Epistles – Peter is probably the apostle with whom people most closely identify. His weaknesses and failures are on full display throughout the New Testament, along with his genuine devotion and faith. Following Jesus' ascension, Peter went on to become a great leader in the church just as Jesus had foretold at Caesarea Philippi.

1 Peter

Purpose – Peter wrote to offer encouragement to the Jewish believers in exile who were suffering under persecution for their faith, and were beginning to lose confidence in the hope of their redemption.

- 1 – The living hope of redemption from death – 1 Peter 1:8. Call to be holy.
- 2 – Comparison of Christ and His followers to living stones (Peter, nyuk, nyuk, nyuk). Command to submit to authority.
- 3 – Do not repay evil for evil – 1 Peter 3:14-16.

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- 4 – Being witnesses of God’s grace through our conduct in adversity. Ensure that our suffering is for the sake of the Gospel, not because we deserve it – 1 Peter 4:12-13.
- 5 – Admonishment for leaders to shepherd their flocks faithfully in humility.

2 Peter – Peter wrote this epistle shortly before his own martyrdom to the believers dispersed around the Mediterranean basin.

Purpose – Peter gives a final warning concerning those who denied the truth of Gospel.

- 1 – Confirm your calling by living righteously. Confirmation of Jesus’ fulfillment of Messianic prophecy.
- 2 – Warning about false prophets and teachers and the dangers of falling back into old ways.
- 3 – Reminder of the coming Day of the LORD – 2 Peter 3:8-9.

John’s Epistles – John the son of Zebedee who along with his brother James were called the Sons of Thunder by Jesus. John called himself the disciple whom Jesus loved. James Zebedee was martyred in the latter years of the first half of the 1st century. John survived for almost the entire century – long enough to lead the church at Ephesus for a time before being exiled to Patmos.

1 John

Purpose – This is a letter of encouragement to the believers in Asia Minor, and a warning against false teachings that were pervading the church – particularly denial of the truth of Jesus Gospel.

- 1 – John reminds his readers of his personal witness of Jesus’ ministry and resurrection. John encourages his readers to walk in the light as He is in the light – 1 John 1:9-10.
- 2 – Jesus our advocate before the Father against our accuser. Call to love one another but not to love the things of the world. Warning about the antichrists who have come into the world (those who deny the Gospel).
- 3 – The love of the Father manifest in His calling us His children – 1 John 3:9. Commandment to love one another.
- 4 – Call to test the spirits – 1 John 4:2-3. Treatise on God’s love reflected in us.
- 5 – Those who love God will overcome the world. Testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel.

2 John

Purpose – Written to “the elect lady” possibly a specific congregation or a specific congregant. Written as a warning about false teachers who abuse Christian hospitality to gain a foothold for teaching their heresies.

3 John

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Purpose – Written to praise those who show true Christian hospitality, and to condemn false teaching and divisions within the Church.

Jude's Epistle – Jude was the half-brother of the LORD Jesus. He did not become a Christian until after Jesus' ascension.

Jude

Purpose – Jude is an apocalyptic prophecy concerning the end times giving warnings of false teachings and apostasy within the Church.

1 – Warning about apostasy and false teachers who have crept into the Church using Old Testament examples – Jude 1:4. Call to remain steadfast in the faith, and to endeavor to rescue unbelievers. Blessing – Jude 1:24-25.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Revelation is unique in God's Word. It is almost entirely devoted to prophecy of the end times, God's wrath and judgement on creation, the final defeat of satan and of sin, and the recreation of the Heaven and the Earth in its original perfection under the rule and reign of Jesus.

John wrote about the vision he saw of this apocalypse as an old man exiled on the island of Patmos.

- 1-3 – John's vision of the Son of Man – Revelation 1:8. Jesus' messages to the seven churches in Asia Minor and symbolically to seven characteristics of all the churches in history.
- 4 – Vision of the Heavenly throne and the worship in Heaven.
- 5 – Vision of the scroll with seven seals and the Lamb who appeared as if He had been slain.
- 6 – Opening of the first six seals along with their associated catastrophes.
- 7 – Sealing of 144,000 servants – 12,000 from each tribe of Israel – before the opening of the seventh seal. Vision of a great multitude of worshipers from every nation, tribe, and tongue.
- 8-9 – Opening of the seventh seal. Vision of seven angels with seven trumpets. Sounding of the first six trumpets.
- 10 – John eats the little scroll given him by the angel before the sounding of the seventh trumpet.
- 11 – Ministry of the two witnesses. Death and resurrection of the two witnesses. Sounding of the seventh trumpet.
- 12 – Vision of the woman and the dragon. War in heaven – satan defeated and cast down to Earth.
- 13 – Vision of the first beast rising from the sea and the second beast rising from the Earth. Sealing of those who worshipped the image of the first beast with his mark, and killing of all who refused to worship his image.
- 14 – Vision of the Lamb and the 144,000. Final harvest of the Earth.
- 15 – Vision of seven angels with seven plagues to complete the outpouring of God's wrath.

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16 – Pouring out of the seven bowls of God’s final wrath. God proclaims “It is done.”

17-18 – Final defeat of Babylon the harlot who caused the world to sin.

19 – Rejoicing in Heaven over the defeat of Babylon. The marriage supper of the Lamb. The return of Jesus on a white horse along with His saints. The beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire.

20 – The thousand-year reign of Christ on the Earth. Satan bound for 1,000 years. After 1,000 years satan’s final defeat. Then the Great White Throne Judgement – Revelation 20:11-15.

21 – Creation of the new Heaven and new Earth. Descent of the new Jerusalem from Heaven – Revelation 21:3-5.

22 – Throne of God and the Lamb established in the New Jerusalem.