

# NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY

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## I. Facts about the New Testament

- 27 Books
- First 4 books are called the Gospels
- The books of Acts covers the history of the early church
- Most of the books in the New Testament are epistles or letters written by Paul
- Last book (Revelation) is the only prophetic book of the NT
- Fulfillment of OT prophecies in Christ
- Fulfillment of God's new covenant with all people (Jew and Gentile)
- Largest source for teachings on salvation/forgiveness, heaven and hell, and Christian conduct
- Written in Greek

## II. New Testament Timeline

- 4 BC – Birth of Christ (King Herod ruling)
- 30 AD – Christ Crucified
- 30–66 AD – Apostolic Ministry
- 55–65 AD – Nero is Roman Emperor
- 70 AD – Jewish revolt; destruction of Jerusalem; temple destroyed
- 95 AD – John (the last apostle) banished to island of Patmos

Chronological order of Paul's letters are: Galatians; 1 & 2 Thessalonians; 1 & 2 Corinthians; Romans; Colossians, Philippians, Ephesians; 1 Timothy; Titus; 2 Timothy

## III. New Testament Survey

### Matthew, Mark, Luke, John (the gospels)

- First 3 are the “synoptic” gospels (synoptic means “seeing together”).
- Contents: Historical accounts of Jesus
- Events: Birth of Christ; John the Baptist; Christ's temptations; Calling the twelve disciples; The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1–7:29); The Olivet Discourse (Matt 24–25); Christ's miracles; Christ's parables; Lazarus raised from the dead; Christ's arrest, trial, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection.

### Acts (the Acts of the Apostles)

- Author: Luke (second part to his gospel)
- Contents: The history of the apostles and early church after Christ's ascension. Focuses on Peter and Paul.

- Events: Ascension of Christ; Pentecost (50 days after Passover); Paul's conversion and missionary journeys.

## **Romans**

- Author: Paul (56 AD from Corinth)
- Contents: Paul was planning to visit Rome and he wanted their assistance in his missionary trip to Spain (15:24). Because of past battles with false teachers Paul wants to unify the Romans around the gospel to support his work in Spain. The letter describes the Christian faith, from the start to end. Explains how we are saved, what Christ has done, and the Jew and Gentile place in the plan of salvation.

## **1, 2 Corinthians**

- Author: Paul (1 Corinthians in 55 AD from Ephesus; 2 Corinthians in 56 AD from Macedonia/Philippi)
- Contents: 1 Corinthians — Instructions to restore the church in its areas of weakness, correcting erroneous practices such as divisions (1:10–4:21), immorality (5:1–13, 6:12–20), litigation in pagan courts (6:1–8), and abuse of the Lord's Supper (11:17–34). Correction on false teaching concerning the resurrection (ch. 15).
- Contents: 2 Corinthians — An encouraging report prompted Paul to reestablish better relations with the church and regain their confidence by demonstrating the validity of his ministry. Paul defended his apostleship against false teachers that had come into the church (ch. 10–13).

## **Galatians**

- Author: Paul (49 AD)
- Events: Earliest of all Paul's letters. Written from Antioch right after his first missionary journey to the churches in the region of Galatia.
- Contents: Warning the churches in Galatia not to accept a doctrine of justification on the basis of personal merit. We are saved by grace through faith, not by keeping the Jewish law. Paul writes to combat the false teaching of the Judaizers (teachers from Jerusalem). He spends a good deal of time defending his apostleship because the Judaizers tried to discredit Paul's message by discrediting Paul himself.

## **Ephesians**

- Author: Paul (61 AD from prison in Rome)
- Contents: General letter on church order and Christian conduct that applies to any apostolic church. First three chapters are doctrinal (teachings on what God has done), and the last three chapters are instructional (commands on how Christians should behave in light of what God has done).

## **Philippians**

- Author: Paul (62 AD from prison in Rome)
- Contents: Paul thanks the Philippians for their generous gift to him. He brings the Philippians up to date on his situation. He warns them about false teachers (ch. 3). He desires them to stand firm and be united (1:27–28; 4:2–5).

## **Colossians**

- Author: Paul (61 AD from prison in Rome)
- Contents: He wrote to refute the Colossian heresy, which is a mixture of Jewish and proto-Gnostic ideas. The refutation includes teachings on key theological concepts (deity of Christ, reconciliation, redemption, election, forgiveness, and the church).

## **1, 2 Thessalonians**

- Author: Paul (51 AD)
- Events: Paul wrote from the church in Corinth while on his second missionary journey.
- Contents: 1 Thessalonians — Paul wrote in response to a report he received from Timothy (1 Thess 3:6). His purpose was to thank God for the church (1:2–10), to answer the false insinuations against himself and his associates (2:1–3:13), and to encourage proper Christian conduct (4:1–5:24).
- Contents: 2 Thessalonians — After writing the first letter, Paul received more information about the condition of the church. Apparently persecution had grown worse, and they were being convinced that the end time was already present. Paul wrote to encourage them in the midst of their persecution (1:3–10), to clarify events surrounding the Day of the Lord (2:1–17), and to encourage proper Christian conduct (3:1–18).

## **1, 2 Timothy**

- Author: Paul (~64 AD)
- Contents: Pastoral letters to Timothy (the pastor of the church in Ephesus). 1 Timothy gives advice for dealing with false teachers that were causing problems. Paul counters their teaching by focusing on the fact that true Christianity is evidenced by a life shaped by the gospel. It is a call to live by the implications of the gospel. 2 Timothy is a call for perseverance through suffering. Paul calls on Timothy to continue the fight of faith. Paul writes these letters as he approaches the end of his life.

## **Titus**

- Author: Paul (~64 AD)
- Events: Paul has recently been to Crete where new churches were started. Titus was left there to oversee the work.

- Contents: Pastoral letter to Titus in Crete. Paul writes on the inseparable link between faith and practice, belief and behavior. It gives instructions for Christian living and qualifications for church leaders.

### **Philemon**

- Author: Paul (61 AD from prison in Rome)
- Contents: Onesimus was a slave of Philemon in Colosse, who had not only run away from his master (vv. 15–16) but had also left with some of Philemon’s money or possessions (vv. 18–19). He traveled secretly to Rome, where somehow he met the imprisoned Paul. Paul led Onesimus to faith in Christ (v. 10) and soon discovered him to be an able and willing helper as well as a Christian companion (vv. 11–13, 16–17). Paul apparently would have liked to have kept Onesimus at his side (v. 13) but, of course, felt compelled to send him back to his owner. Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon with this letter (v. 12) along with Colossians (Col 4:7–9) and Ephesians (Eph 6:21–22).

### **Hebrews**

- Author: Unknown
- Contents: An exhortation to perseverance and Christian maturity and to warn the readers of the consequences of falling away from the faith to re-embrace Judaism. Discusses the fulfillment of the law and priesthood in Christ, and Christ is greater than Old Testament sacrificial system, angels, and the priesthood.

### **James**

- Author: James (49 AD)
- Contents: Letter of practical instruction to the Jewish Christians. Be doers and not hearers only (Jas 1:22), in other words, demonstrate the reality of your faith by conforming to the biblical pattern of godliness in various areas of your life. These instructions can be seen as tests of a living faith.

### **1, 2 Peter**

- Author: Peter (1 Peter 64 AD; 2 Peter 65–66 AD)
- Contents: 1 Peter — “I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.” Peter writes to encourage and exhort his readers to faithfulness in the midst of suffering.
- Contents: 2 Peter — Peter writes to remind them to stay away from false doctrine and to grow in personal sanctification. He exhorts them to perseverance in the face of greater persecutions and the even graver danger of false teachers in the church.

### **1, 2, 3 John**

- Author: John (85–95 AD)
- Contents: 1 John — A refutation of false teachers and explains the true tests for eternal life. False teachers have left the church and John writes to assure the believers remaining that they are true believers.
- Contents: 2, 3 John — Commendations and warnings against false teachers.

### **Jude**

- Author: Jude (67–68 AD)
- Contents: Urging Christians to contend for the faith as it was originally given.

### **Revelation (revelation of Jesus Christ)**

- Author: John (85–95 AD)
- Contents: Prophecy concerning Jesus' second coming
- Events: Judgment, final defeat of Satan and setting up the new heaven and new earth