

# INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

2023–2024

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**Course Introduction**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 1A – Part 1**

**I. Hello!**

- A. Introductions
- B. Purpose of the class: To know, love, and apply better the NT of the Bible.
- C. Tips for being successful in this class:
  - 1. Read everything (it's a lot of your grade!)
  - 2. Write with good grammar—complete sentences and solid paragraphs.
  - 3. Write with actual content—specific ideas, facts, Bible references, etc. So, think before you write. Jot down some notes, phrases, page numbers, verse references before you write.
  - 4. Buy the teacher lots of presents!!!! (Kidding)
- D. Roster...

**II. Class Overview**

- A. Title: An Introduction to the New Testament
- B. Grade: 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>
- C. Text: *Introducing the New Testament: A Short Guide to its History and Message* by Carson, Moo, Naselli (Zondervan, 2010)
- D. Credit: ½ credit for the normal class; 1 credit w/ additional work
- E. Schedule: 2/month from September to April (see below)

**III. Class Assignments – All are DUE on the dates given**

- A. Reading – Full and Half Credit Read the Same
  - 1. Read all of your New Testament (specific readings for each class)
  - 2. Read all of D.A. Carson's *Introducing the New Testament: A Short Guide to its History and Message*.
- B. Writing
  - 1. Half-credit (400 words total)
    - a. Give the Who, When, and Why for the book as given in Carson's *Introducing the New Testament*. Length: 200 words.
    - b. What does the book tell us about Jesus? Who is he, what did he do, how are we supposed to respond to him? 200 words.

2. Full-credit (800 words total)
  - a. Write **800 words** on the assigned NT book.
  - b. Name, date, assignment on top of 1<sup>st</sup> page.
  - c. Format: Use clear section titles and spacing so it's clear.
  - d. The Sections of the Paper
    - 1) 200 Words = Key Facts about the Book.  
  
From Carson's book, summarize the Who, When, and Why for the book.
    - 2) 200 Words = Jesus  
  
What is revealed about Jesus in this book? Who was he? What did he do? How are we supposed to respond to him? What are the names or titles used of him in the book?
    - 3) 200 Words = Old Testament  
  
How does this book connect with the **Old Testament**? Are there prophecies discussed, verses cited, themes or people or things from the OT that are mentioned? List a few of these and where it comes from in the OT.  
  
Use the cross-references in your Bible to find OT quotations if you're having trouble with this. In the margin of the ESV (and other Bibles) for NT texts it says, "Cited from" when it's an OT quotation. For example, margin of 1 Peter 1:16 says, "Cited from Lev. 11:44."
    - 4) 200 Words = Application  
  
What is said about us, the church? What does the book ask us to believe? To do? To think?
3. TIP: PRE-WRITING IS YOUR FRIEND
  - a. One of the secrets to good writing for this kind of assignment is PRE-WRITING.
    - 1) Get a sheet of paper and mark the three sections, "Jesus," "Old Testament," "Application." AS YOU READ the book of the Bible, jot down 5-6 facts for each section. Short bullet-points. Then you can go back and turn these into sentences.
    - 2) For the Carson paragraph, write out 3 things from his Who, When, and Why sections. Turn these 3 things into sentences. It should be close to the 200 words.

4. Also:
- a. Quotes: Don't use long quotes in these papers. A long quote is more than a sentence or more than one verse.
  - b. Sources: Tell me where in Carson/Moo you got your information. Or if it's another source, give me that author, title, and page. You can put either the authors or name of the book and then the page number in parenthesis:

D.A. Carson says that the gospel of John is written in AD 85 (*Introducing the New Testament*, 66).

If you use multiple sources, you'll probably need to use the title each time you cite a source. There are ways around this, but for our purposes, with multiple sources, use the title each time.

#### IV. Grading

- A. Reading the New Testament – 40%
- B. Reading *Introducing the New Testament* – 30%
- C. Written Assignments – 30%

#### V. Class Schedule

Class	Date	Class Topic	Carson/Moo Reading	New Testament Reading	Writing Assign.
1	Sep 7	Introduction	N/A		N/A
2	Sep 21	Luke 1:1-9:50	Preface, Chapters 1-2, 5	Luke 1:1-9:50	Luke 1:1-9:50
3	Oct 5	Luke 9:51-24:53	NA	Luke 9:51-24:53	Luke 9:51-24:53
4	Oct 19	Acts 1-12	Chapter 7	Acts 1-12	Acts 1-12
5	Nov 2	Acts 13-28	NA	Acts 13-28	Acts 13-28
6	Nov 16	Matthew	Chapter 3	Matthew 1-28	Matthew
7	Dec 7	Mark	Chapter 4	Mark 1-16	Mark
8	Jan 4	John	Chapter 6	John 1-21	John
9	Jan 18	The Apostle Paul	Chapters 8-12	Romans-Galatians	Galatians
10	Feb 1	Ephesians	Chapters 13-18	Ephesians	Ephesians
11	Feb 15	James	Chapters 19-20	Hebrews, James	James
12	Mar 7	1 Peter	Chapters 21-22	1-2 Peter	1 Peter
13	Apr 4	Revelation Part 1	Chapters 23-25	1-3 John, Jude, Revelation	NA
14	Apr 18	Revelation Part 2	NA	NA	Revelation

## Your New Testament

### Introduction to the New Testament

#### Class 1B

#### I. If you hold up your Bible and look at the spine, what is written?

- A. Some version of *The Holy Bible*.
- B. And that's appropriate. These 66 books that make up our Old Testament and New Testament are all part of one thing, one book. And that book we call *The Bible*.

#### II. Now open to the Table of Contents. (No, really!)

- A. You see two large divisions, "The Old Testament" and "The New Testament." Hmm. Why those labels?
- B. Testament is from a Latin word, *testamentum*, which means "covenant."
- C. The heart of each part of our Bibles is a covenant.
- D. One set of books is grouped around "the old covenant" and the second set of books is grouped around "the new covenant."
- E. The heart of the New Testament is **the new covenant**:

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make **a new covenant** with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 **not like the covenant** that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, **my covenant** that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For **this is the covenant that I will make** with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer 31:31-34)

The phrase "new covenant" is used by Jesus at the last supper (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25), and the whole Jeremiah quotation is used in Hebrews 8:8–13).

Our Bible has a Part 1 and a Part 2. What separates them is that most of Part 1 is concerned with what we call "the old covenant" (covenant with Moses), and Part 2 is concerned with what we call "the new covenant," the covenant that was inaugurated through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

#### III. The Layout of the New Testament

- A. Gospels – The four key witnesses to Christ and his work.

- B. Acts – the bridge to the rest of the NT. This provides the context for the people and churches mentioned in the rest of our NT.
- C. Paul’s Epistles (the Pauline epistles) – arranged from longest to shortest, first to groups and then to individuals.
- D. General Epistles – also arranged longest to shortest. Called “general” because they’re written to the church in “general” and not to a specific named church or person.
- E. Revelation – “Apocalyptic” literature.
- F. Even this arrangement has meaning:

The premier position of the Gospels in the New Testament underscores the foundational importance to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for all the writings of the New Testament (cf. 1 Cor 2:2; 3:11).

Andreas Köstenberger & Gregory Goswell<sup>1</sup>

The fourfold Gospel is placed first in the New Testament to underscore the importance of the story of Jesus’ earthly ministry as the subtext for all the writings that following in the New Testament.

Robert Wall<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. How we got our New Testament

- A. Step 1: Jesus: Jesus the Word (*Logos*) preaches and teaches (Heb 1:1–2, 4). The historical Jesus lives the life and says the words presented in the four gospels. From birth to death to resurrection to ascension, his life is filled with eyewitnesses who saw and heard what we have recorded in our New Testament.
- B. Step 2: Oral transmission: The divinely chosen and thus official “eyewitnesses” continue to preach his life and preserve his teachings (e.g., Acts 1:21–26; 2:22–38). These official “eyewitnesses” are called “the Twelve” (Luke 22:3, 47; Acts 6:2; 1 Cor 15:5). These are Jesus’ twelve “disciples” or “apostles” (Luke 6:13).

The Twelve are unique as “the Twelve”—not because it’s a nice round number! They’re unique for the reasons given in Acts 1:21–22, the scene where a new #12 is needed (to replace Judas the betrayer):

“So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” (Acts 1:21-22)

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<sup>1</sup> Andreas Köstenberger & Gregory Goswell, *Biblical Theology: A Canonical, Thematic, & Ethical Approach* (Crossway, 2023), 347.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Wall, “The Significance of a Canonical Perspective of the Church’s Scripture,” *The Canon Debate* (Hendrickson, 2002), 536).

Do you see that? To be a member of “The Twelve,” you need to be someone who was there when Jesus was *baptized*, when he was doing his earthly ministry, and when he was raised from the dead. And the purpose of this ministry is unique. It is to be “a witness to his resurrection” (v. 22). These “eyewitnesses” form a critical bridge from the documents of the New Testament to the man Jesus himself. Their oral testimony is the backbone of all that we read in the gospels. And, of course, these men are also behind many of the documents themselves: Matthew and John wrote gospels, Peter is behind Mark’s gospel and wrote two NT epistles, John wrote three epistles and Revelation.

- C. Step 3: Written Documents: The oral teachings captured in the gospels and Acts were written down—and soon. Some of these writings are extremely early.

For reference, Jesus’ birth was in 5 BC (dated by the death of Herod the Great) and his crucifixion/resurrection/Pentecost were in AD 33. The eyewitnesses (including his mother and two of his half-brothers James and Jude, also the Twelve) lived decades after this and were able to validate and reveal much about his life and teaching.

1. **James and Galatians** appear in the late AD 40s (James the first NT writing, then Galatians, then the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15).
2. **The Gospel of Mark**, perhaps in the AD 50s.
3. Many of Paul’s letters are written in the AD 50s during the ministry described in Acts 13–21 (**Romans, 1–2 Corinthians, 1–2 Thessalonians**).
4. **The Gospels of Matthew and Luke** follow Mark, appearing in the AD 60s. But **Luke-Acts** ends with Paul in Rome during his 2-year house arrest but before his death a few years later. Thus, Luke-Acts somewhere in AD 60–62 or so.
5. During Paul’s time in Roman house-arrest (Acts 28), he writes **Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon**. After his release, he writes **1 Timothy** and **Titus**. Arrested again and then **2 Timothy**.
6. The writings of John (**Gospel of John, 1–3 John, Revelation**) are likely the AD 60s but could be later (even as late as AD 90).
7. **1–2 Peter** written in the late 50s or 60s (he is killed in AD 64–67 by Nero in Rome).
8. **Jude** likely written early 60s also.
9. **Hebrews** sometime before the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in AD 70, so perhaps 60s also.

- D. Step 4: Recognition of Inspiration: Early on these writings were seen as markedly different from other church documents from the 1<sup>st</sup> century. You can see this even in the New Testament itself: “And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, 16 as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures” (2 Pet 3:15-16). Do you hear Peter there connect Paul’s letters with “the other Scriptures” of the Bible? Both are seen as equivalent.

The church demonstrated an intent to keep and use these inspired texts. Note: the Church’s role here was not to CREATE Scripture (which the Roman Catholics & Eastern Orthodox say) but to RECOGNIZE Scripture. An analogy: *The fact I “recognize” LeBron James as the greatest player of all time doesn’t mean that I made him the greatest player of all time.*

- E. Step 5: Collections of Books: These writings were often grouped into various collections: Gospels, Paul’s Letters, Gospels-Acts, General Epistles-Revelation. Decades before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century church fathers reveal knowledge of such collections. They are quoting from these Scriptures as *inspired Scripture*.
- F. Step 6: Most of the Canon: By the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century there was something akin to our New Testament (though a few books not always included: Hebrews, 1-2 Peter, James not part of this set).
- G. Step 7: Completed Canon: Charles E. Hill says, “By the 240s Origen (residing in Caesarea in Palestine) acknowledged all 27 of the NT books but reported that James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Jude were disputed.”<sup>3</sup> The first list that contains all 27 of our NT books is from bishop Athanasius in AD 367.

## V. How do we know this is the Word of God?

- A. God tells us that he inspired it: 2 Tim 3:16–17. It is “God-breathed.”
- B. The Holy Spirit who inspired it then reveals it to us: 1 Cor 2:6–16. He is the one who opens our eyes to see and believe. Otherwise, sin blinds us.
- C. But, within the New Testament we can also observe evidence that it is indeed inspired by God:
1. Unique revelation about Jesus Christ and the good news he brings (and why we need it!).
  2. A coherence and consistency despite the fact it is written by so many authors. It all fits together like a massive, glorious jigsaw puzzle—but not in a contrived, simplistic manner.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles E. Hill, “The Canon of Scripture,” *ESV Study Bible*.



3. A brilliance in its simplicity that encourages the simplest mind (“I am the Good Shepherd and I know my own and my own know me,” John 10:14) and yet depth that overwhelms the greatest minds this world has known (e.g., the discussions of Romans alone could fill a library).

## VI. Key Themes in the New Testament

- A. God’s revelation comes to us in words and deeds (see Vos, JI Packer). But God’s words typically *follow* God’s deeds. E.g., the Pentateuch is written *after* the Exodus. The histories and wisdom literature and prophets *follow* Israel becoming a monarchy. And in the NT, the documents *follow* the central event: The advent of the Lord Jesus Christ and the redemptive work he did in dying on the cross, being buried, being raised, ascending to the right hand of God, and then pouring out the Spirit. With these events, there follows an explosion of new revelation. That revelation is captured in the 27 books of the NT.
- B. The Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ – We can see from the very first verse of our New Testament who and what is the big deal: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt 1:1). John’s opening has a similar cannon blast telling us who and what is the big deal: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men” (John 1:1-4). Who Christ is, what he did, why it matters, and how we must live in light of it fill every page of the NT.
- C. But alongside a new revelation of the Son of God, we have to say we have a new revelation of God himself. He is a triune God of Father, Son, and Spirit (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14). Where there are hints of this in the OT, it becomes a full-blown revelation in the NT.
- D. The Gospel –Closely related to Christ himself is the good news about him, the gospel. It is “news” because it is announcing something new. And it is “good” because it brings the remedy to the great problem plaguing all humanity, *sin*. “The gospel” we can call God’s complete solution to the problem of sin. The OT promised salvation to those who hoped in God, but this salvation was anticipatory. It was a forward-looking faith that was trusting in a forgiveness yet to be revealed (see Jer 31:31–34). This “good news” is not a lifestyle or fad diet or prayer regimen. This good news is about a person and what he did. Listen to Paul’s definition: “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he

appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. (1 Cor 15:1-5). And also, 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” (Rom 1:16-17).

- E. Continual connections to the Old Testament. Throughout the NT we get a multitude of ways that the OT is fulfilled by the NT and where the NT is explained by the OT. There is no true understanding of the OT without the NT and no true understanding of the NT without the OT. A few examples:
1. Jesus is the Messiah! The One the Old Testament anticipates as far back as Genesis 3:15. He’s the One!
  2. Old Testament Prophecies fulfilled – Gen 22:17 / 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Matthew 1:1
  3. Jesus is the perfected version (antitype) of certain things (types) we see in the Old Testament – Passover Lamb in Exodus 12, Christ’s perfect sacrifice in Hebrews 10:11-14.
  4. Jesus answers the great need of the Old Testament: Atonement for sin – Genesis 6:5-8 and Romans 3:21-25
  5. The NT is the definitive guide for interpreting the OT – Jesus (e.g., Matt 5–7) and the NT authors (e.g., Heb 7–10) show us how the OT is to be read.
- F. The Church – Formally begins at Pentecost in Acts 2, though people of God date to Genesis 12:1-3. When Israel gathered in the OT it was called an “assembly” or “gathering,” and in Greek this is *ekklēsia*, the word translated “church” in the NT. The church is the gathering of the people of God. The church is also another name for the people of God (even when they’re not gathered in a single place). Throughout the NT we’re given teaching on who and what the church is and how we are to live in this fallen world as the church (1 Tim 3). We are a “holy nation,” and holy means “set apart” (1 Peter 2:9–10). In what ways are we to live as a “set apart” people? That’s what the NT teaches us (e.g., Rom 12:1–15:13).
- G. A New Covenant – What was promised in Jer 31:31–34 is fulfilled in the NT. There is a new covenant established with the redemptive work of Christ (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25; 2 Cor 3; Heb 8). This “new covenant” is the final of the divine covenants in the Bible (covenant of redemption; covenant of works; covenant of grace; covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, David). What is new and glorious in the new covenant is that *for all who are sharers in this covenant there is complete forgiveness of sin, a knowledge of God, and his word written on our hearts*. The old covenant (Moses) people were a mixture of those who knew God and those who didn’t. But the new covenant people are no mixture but include only those

who are forgiven and redeemed by Christ (Heb 8–10). *The visible church* is a mixture but not the new covenant people of God.

- H. Life in the Spirit – Intertwined with everything above is the idea that what is distinctly new about life with God is that it is a life in the Spirit. “The last days” began at Pentecost and these last days are marked by a new outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:17–21). The power of the Spirit is evident in the OT, but in the NT there is the promise that “all flesh” can walk in the power of the Spirit, prophesying and doing other works in the Spirit previously reserved for only a few. There is a dailyness and a normality to life in the Spirit: “If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit” (Gal 5:25).
- I. The New Heavens and New Earth – The OT and NT are thoroughly eschatological, looking forward to what God will do in the future. For the OT eschatology, much is fulfilled in the NT—*but not all of it!* The promise of final judgment and a coming “new heaven and new earth” marks the OT just like the NT (Ps 96:17; Isa 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 21:1). What is new in the NT is the clarity revealed. We saw ahead in ways not revealed in the OT. Revelation 21–22 opens up to us glorious new vistas. We cry even more, *marana tha*, “O Lord, come!” It’s entirely fitting, then, that our whole Bible would finish with these two verses:

He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. (Rev 22:20-21)

## VII. Finally, We Don’t Master It, It Masters Us.

A great encouragement from Carson, Moo, Naselli:

The New Testament is unique. You can study it your entire life and never master it; indeed, the aim for Christians is not so much to master it as to be mastered by it. The study of the New Testament is not an end in itself; rather, the end is to know the Lord Jesus, who is its center, and to be reconciled to the God who is its final author. The more you read it, hear it preached and taught, study it, memorize it, and meditate on it, the more you should delight in Jesus, the more your heart should be bowed in adoration, the more your will should be strengthened with resolve to obey with joy your maker and Redeemer....In the famous words of the eighteenth-century biblical scholar Johann Albrecht Bengel, ‘Apply yourself wholly to the text; apply the text wholly to yourself.’  
D.A. Carson, Doug Moo, Andrew Naselli<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Carson et al, *Introducing the New Testament*, 163.

## The Gospel of Luke Part 1 and Part 2

### Introduction to the New Testament

### Class 2–3

#### I. Why begin with Luke?

- A. Luke-Acts a single work in two parts
- B. Way that Luke understands the “history of redemption”
- C. Helpful to focus on one gospel and fit the others around what you know; helpful to focus on Acts and fit the epistles around what you know.
- D. If get Luke-Acts, you get a lot of the New Testament, since “of the 7,947 verses in the NT, Luke-Acts comprises 2,157 verses, or 27.1 percent. By comparison, the Pauline letters have 2,032 verses and the Johannine writings have 1,407.”<sup>5</sup>

#### II. What is a Gospel?

- A. Why use this title? Mark 1:1 helps give us a name for this type of work  
*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (Mark 1:1)*
- B. Gospel means “good news,” and each of the four authors tells the “good news” of Jesus in a slightly different manner.
- C. What are they?
  1. History – True accounts of things that actually happened
  2. Theology – Truth about God and what God asks of us
  3. Preaching – They are God preaching to us...individually!
- D. What is their goal? John 20:30-31

*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;<sup>31</sup> but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30-31)*

#### III. Why We Love Luke

- A. The birth narratives of John and Jesus (What’s often called “the Christmas Story” is in Luke 2:1–20)

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<sup>5</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts: God’s Promised Program, Realized for All Nations*, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 27.

- B. The Parables – the extended travel narrative includes parables like the Prodigal Son (Luke 15)
- C. His emphasis on the Holy Spirit, the poor, salvation available to all (Gentiles!)

#### IV. Luke the Author

- A. How do we know that Luke wrote *Luke*?
  - 1. Most books give the author's name in the opening verses (all the epistles with the exception of 1-3 John). With the gospels and Acts we have to determine it through other means.
  - 2. Evidence from the Bible (*Internal Evidence*)
    - a. Luke and Acts are written by the same author: Style and structure of both books too similar to be from different authors. One example of many is Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-2.
    - b. Author was with Paul in latter half of Acts: Clear from Acts 16:11; 20:13; 21:1; 27:1; 28:10 that author was with Paul at each of these moments. All use the pronoun "we."
    - c. Luke is named as one of these men: Colossians is written from Rome during Paul's house arrest there (Acts 28:10) and in Colossians 4:14 Paul writes, "Luke the beloved physicians greets you."
    - d. Thus, a likely candidate is Luke.
    - e. Since he wrote Luke and Acts and Acts ends with Paul in house-arrest in Rome in Acts 28, it seems likely that he wrote Luke-Acts at this point. He didn't write of Paul's death, because it hadn't happened yet. I think that's the most reasonable explanation. Thus, he wrote Luke-Acts in the early 60s AD.
  - 3. Evidence from church history (*External Evidence*) – sources that claim Luke as author:
    - a. Marcion – mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century (though his canon is suspect, it provides useful historical perspective)
    - b. Muratorian Canon (2<sup>nd</sup> century fragment with list of NT books)
    - c. Ireneus (130-202 A.D.) and Tertullian (160-220 A.D.) have no doubts about Luke
    - d. Oldest Luke manuscript (A.D. 175-225) includes "Luke" in the title.
    - e. No other name is ever given as the source.
- B. The man Luke

1. Physician: “Luke the beloved physician” (Colossians 4:14) – primitive medicine, but by this time a respected profession.
  2. Co-laborer with Paul (as missionary to the Gentiles)
    - a. With Paul for 2<sup>nd</sup> (e.g., Acts 16:10-17) missionary journey following Jerusalem council.
    - b. And 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey beginning Acts 18:23 (e.g., 20:13).
    - c. And final journey to Rome as a prisoner (e.g., 27:1; 28:10).
    - d. And then with Paul in the 2-year house arrest in Rome.
    - e. He’s also with Paul as the apostle writes 1 Timothy and certainly 2 Timothy, where he writes, “Luke alone is with me” (2 Tim 4:11).
- C. The author Luke
1. A Historian
    - a. Careful research of eyewitnesses, existing accounts (Luke 1:1-4)
    - b. Detailed historical references (Luke 2:1-3; 3:1-2)
    - c. Well-trained author (much attention paid in scholarly works to his excellent Greek and his command of literary techniques—e.g., Luke 1-3 presents John and Jesus in a back-and-forth manner that establishes John but elevates Jesus)
  2. An Evangelist
    - a. A burden for certainty in our faith (Luke 1:4)
    - b. A burden for his readers to see Christ as the promised good news for all people (Luke 2:10-11)
    - c. Sees Christ’s purpose as saving: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10)
  3. A Theologian
    - a. Traces Old Testament promises fulfilled (Luke 1:31-33 and Davidic king; 4:18-19 and Messiah from Isaiah 61:1-2)
    - b. Sees God’s unfolding plan of redemption (24:44-47; Acts 1:8; 2:17-21). A history controlled by God that sweeps up all his people in a grand storyline. In Luke’s writings it begins with Adam (Luke 3:38) and ends with final judgment at Christ’s return (Acts 2:21; 17:31). The big events in this unfolding plan of redemption:
      - **Adam** - the first man, the first sinner (esp. Gen. 1-3) – mentioned as “son of God” in 3:38.
      - **Abraham** - God made his promises about a nation, a land, and a blessing to him (esp. Gen. 12:1-3) –

mentioned extensively in prophecy by Zechariah (Luke 1:67-79)

- **Moses** - Israel became a nation with a divine law under Moses (esp. Exod. 1-24) – mentioned throughout Luke and Acts especially in connection to giving of the Law.
- **David** - The great king who has given a promise that he would have a son that would reign forever (2 Sam. 7) – Jesus prophesied by Gabriel, “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David” (Luke 1:32) – numerous other references.
- **Jesus** - God’s Son who is the fulfillment of the Old Testament hopes – Throughout Luke 1-2 Jesus is the fulfillment of OT prophecy and OT hopes; High point of Luke 1-9 is when Peter declares Jesus to be “the Christ of God” (9:20).
- **Pentecost** – The beginning of the church (Acts 2) – Luke sets up this events as prophetically, historically, and theologically important. The great new covenant era.
- **Return of Christ** – When Jesus comes back to judge and to begin the final stage in God’s plan (Rev. 19) – Christ’s return prominent in Luke 9:51ff. and in Acts (2:21; 17:31).
- **New Heavens and New Earth** – When God’s promises to his people are fulfilled and they know only sinlessness and joy forever in his presence (Rev. 21) – Hinted at in Luke-Acts, but rarely specific.

## V. “Most Excellent Theophilus” (1:3)

- A. In Luke’s prologue he identifies “most excellent Theophilus” as the one he’s writing for (1:3). He is simply “Theophilus” in Acts 1:1, also the intended reader.
- B. His name means “friend of God,” and so it could be symbolic.
- C. **However, David Garland makes a good case that this is unlikely.** His main clues are (1) there are others by the name of Theophilus in the papyri and so it was “a common name,” and (2) the addition of “most excellent” would be odd if the name was symbolic.<sup>6</sup> Thus, “In my view, Theophilus is the patron who provided funds to publish and distribute Luke-Acts. I assume, then, that he is a Christian, and the gospel and Acts will convince him (and others) of the reliability of what he has been taught and believed.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> David E. Garland, *Luke*, ECNT (Zondervan, 2011), 56.

<sup>7</sup> Garland, 56.

## VI. Luke a “Synoptic” Gospel

- A. “Synoptic” is from a Greek word means “seeing together.”<sup>8</sup>
- B. Refers to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, since they resemble each other so much.
  - 1. The organization of the material is geographical: Jesus begins in Galilee and then travels to Jerusalem for his crucifixion.
  - 2. John organizes his material more chronologically, with many visits to Jerusalem included.
  - 3. There is much overlap in the material included in the Synoptics: sending out of the Twelve, Olivet discourse, Last Supper. These are in the Synoptics but not John.
- C. The order of when the Gospels were written isn’t an easy question to answer.
  - 1. The basic consensus is that Mark was first.
  - 2. But then the question is whether Luke had Matthew’s gospel when he wrote his own.
  - 3. Carson and Moo think this is unlikely and that more likely is that Matthew and Luke had access to a source (“Q”?) or a collection of materials now lost to us.<sup>9</sup> This would explain the occasional places where Matthew and Luke line up but differ from Mark.

## VII. Outline of the Gospel of Luke

- A. (1:1-4) The Prologue
- B. (1:5-4:13) The Birth and Preparation of the Christ
- C. (4:14-9:50) The Galilean Ministry
- D. (9:51-19:27) The Journey to Jerusalem
- E. (19:28-21:38) The Jerusalem Ministry
- F. (22:1-24:53) The Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension

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## CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

### I. (1:1-4) The Prologue

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<sup>8</sup> Carson, Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 2005), 77.

<sup>9</sup> Carson, Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 2005), 213.



## II. (1:5-4:13) The Birth and Preparation of the Christ (Answers the question: *Who is Jesus?*)

- A. (1:5-2:52) The Births of John the Baptist and Jesus
1. (1:5-25) Annunciation of John
  2. (1:26-38) Annunciation of Jesus
  3. (1:39-56) Mary and Elizabeth (and *Magnificat* in 1:46-55 from Latin at v. 46, “magnifies” (*magnificat*))
  4. (1:57-80) Birth of John
  5. (2:1-20) Birth of Jesus – “Glory to God in the highest!”
  6. (2:21-40) Presentation of Jesus – “A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel” (2:32).
  7. (2:41-52) Jesus in his “Father’s house” at “twelve years old”

Question: *Luke fills the birth of Jesus with visits from angels (1:8-23; 26-38; 2:8-14), Old Testament prophecies (1:17; 31-33), spontaneous prophecies (1:46-55; 67-79; 2:29-32), vivid historical details (1:5-7; 2:1-7), and seven references to the Holy Spirit (1:15, 35, 41, 67, 80; 2:25-27). What are some things these elements tell us?*

- B. (3:1-4:13) The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus
1. (3:1-14) Ministry of John the Baptist (Fulfillment of Isa. 40:3-5)
  2. (3:15-22) Baptism of Jesus (a promised baptism for disciples in 3:16; the Trinity on display in 3:22)
  3. (3:23-38) Genealogy of Jesus—notice the order of generations and where Luke ends: “Adam, the son of God” (3:38).

On the difference between Matthew’s genealogy and Luke’s, Machen examines in detail the differences and major views. His conclusion is a helpful one. In summary, he thinks it most likely that Matthew is giving the kingly Davidic line while Luke is giving the family line of Joseph. Thus, he says Matthew is answering the question, “Who is the heir to David’s throne?”, where Luke is answering the question, “Who is Joseph’s father?”<sup>10</sup> Both questions are extremely relevant. He writes,

“We are not endeavoring to discuss the intricate question of the genealogies with even the slightest approach to completeness. But enough, we think, has been said to show that the differences between the two genealogies are not irreconcilable. Reconciliation might conceivably be effected in a number of

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<sup>10</sup> Gresham Machen, *The Virgin Birth of Christ: A Classic Defense of the Supernatural Birth of Our Lord* (orig. 1930; repr. Pelham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2011), 207.

different ways. But on the whole we are inclined to think that the true key to a solution of the problem (however the solution may run in detail) is to be found in the fact that Matthew, in an intentionally incomplete way, gives a list of incumbents (actual or potential) of the kingly Davidic throne, while Luke traces the descent of Joseph, back through Nathan to David. Thus the genealogies cannot properly be used to exhibit contradiction between the Matthæan and the Lucan accounts of the birth and infancy of our Lord. Here, as in the other features of the two accounts, there is complete independence, but no contradiction.”<sup>11</sup>

4. (4:1-13) Temptations of Jesus (“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit... led by the Spirit,” v. 1)

Question: *In his temptations, Jesus quotes three Old Testament Scriptures. Use your cross-references and find out where they are from. Why do you think it's important that all three quotations are from that particular book of the OT?*

**III. (4:14-9:50) The Galilean Ministry (Answers the question: *Who do the disciples think Jesus is?*)**

- A. (4:14-15) Return to Galilee *“in the power of the Spirit”*  
 B. (4:16-30) Initial ministry (Isaiah 61:1-2 prophecy in 4:18-19)

Question: *Look at Luke 3:16–22 and 4:18–19. What do we learn about Jesus’ ministry from Isaiah 61:1-2, which is quoted in 4:18–19?*

- C. (4:31-41) Demon cast out, healing Simon’s mother-in-law and many in Galilee  
 D. (4:42-44) Retreat to prayer, preaching to “other towns as well”

Question: *What should we learn from Luke 4:42-44 and 6:12?*

- E. (5:1-6:16) Calling disciples, miracles, Lord of the Sabbath  
 “The Twelve” are called in 6:13–16. They are specially commissioned as apostles” (6:13). Eleven of them will go on in Acts to serve as the definitive eyewitnesses to Jesus’ life, suffering, suffering, and ascension (see Acts 1:21–22). They are called simply “the Twelve” in Acts 6:2 and also Luke 8:1; 9:1; etc.
- F. (6:17-49) Sermon on the Plain  
 The “Sermon on the Plain” is so named because 6:17 says, “He came down with them and stood on a level place,” where Matthew 5 says, “He went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him” (5:1). The *ESV Study Bible* on Matt 5–7 says the prevailing theories

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<sup>11</sup> Machen, *The Virgin Birth*, 209.

on Sermon on the Plain vs. Mount are: (1) same sermon summarized differently by the two authors, (2) two different sermons on two different occasions, (3) both authors took excerpts of Jesus' teachings and assembled them in these 'sermons.' They say view 3 creates a problem because both authors present the sermon as a single historical event. Choosing between 1 and 2 they say is "difficult" since both are "possible."

Leon Morris: "The differences between the two [sermons] are such that it is not easy to regard them as variant accounts of the same sermon. It is better to think that Jesus used similar material on more than one occasion."<sup>12</sup>

- G. (7:1-17) Healing, resurrection
- H. (7:18-35) John the Baptist's question and ministry—note especially 7:22–23 and the myriad Old Testament passages implied there:

And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. 23 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me." (Luke 7:22-23)

Regarding 7:28 and 16:16, "These two texts are the most important passages when it comes to showing the structure of Luke's view of eschatology" (Bock, *Theology of Luke and Acts*, 390). John is the pinnacle of the old era, but "since then" (*ἀπὸ τότε*) a new era has dawned.

"I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (Luke 7:28)

"The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it." (Luke 16:16)

But the picture isn't complete until after Pentecost. That's where we get Peter's statement about "the beginning" of a new era: "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15).

"Through the lens of Luke's Christology, then, we can indeed identify (1) the old age; (2) the age of Jesus (which begins formally at his baptism); and (3) the age of the Spirit (which begins formally at Pentecost and continues until the Parousia)."<sup>13</sup>

- I. (7:36-50) Woman "who was a sinner" and loving much who is forgiven much

<sup>12</sup> Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 93.

<sup>13</sup> From my article on Acts 2 for *Pneuma*.

- J. (8:1-56) Women with him, parables, storm calmed, Gerasene demoniac, Jairus' daughter
- K. (9:1-6) The Twelve (6:13-16) sent out
- L. (9:7-9) Herod's puzzlement
- M. (9:10-17) Feeding of Five Thousand
- N. (9:18-27) "Who do you say that I am?" (Peter's confession, passion prediction, taking up our cross)

Question: *Luke 9:18–27: What is significant about Jesus' question and Peter's answer?*

In some ways this is the culmination of Luke 1:1–9:50. The answer in this last section was, "Who do the disciples think Jesus is?" Now we have a definitive—and right!—answer.

- O. (9:28-36) Transfiguration—not Moses, not Elijah, but Jesus is "my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!"

Question: *9:28–36. Note 9:31, "departure" is the Greek word "**exodus**": Why is that relevant here? Who are the two men talking with Jesus in v. 30? What is significant about God's word in v. 35 with these two men present?*

- P. (9:37-50) Healing, cross prediction #2, the greatest is the least

#### IV. (9:51-19:27) The Journey to Jerusalem (Answers the question: *What does it mean to follow Jesus?*)

- A. (9:51-62) Following Jesus to Jerusalem ("The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head")
- B. (10:1-24) Following Jesus in his ministry – Sending out the 72
- C. (10:25-42) Following Jesus means serving others (good Samaritan) and listening to him (Martha and Mary)
- D. (11:1-13) Following Jesus means persevering prayer
- E. (11:14-13:9) Following Jesus means responding to who he is
  1. (11:14-23) Jesus accused of being acting for Beelzebul
  2. (11:24-26) Teaching: Unclean spirit cast out, but seven more come
  3. (11:27-28) Teaching: Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it
  4. (11:29-32) Queen of the South, men of Nineveh will rebuke this generation
  5. (11:33-36) If body full of light, you will see clearly
  6. (11:37-12:3) Woes to Pharisees, leaven of the Pharisees
  7. (12:4-12) Acknowledge Christ without fear

- 8. (12:13-21) Be rich toward God, not yourself
- 9. (12:22-34) Do not be anxious
- 10. (12:35-13:5) Be ready for Christ's return
- 11. (13:6-9) Fruitless trees will be cut down
- F. (13:10-17) Healing: Following Jesus means loving others as we can—even on the Sabbath!
- G. (13:18-30) Following Jesus means life in the Kingdom of God (mustard seed, leaven, narrow door)
- H. (13:31-35) Lament over Jerusalem
- I. (14:1-6) Healing: Following Jesus means loving others as we can—even on the Sabbath!
- J. (14:7-35) Following Jesus means the lowest seat, inviting those cannot return the favor, being part of the great banquet, bearing our cross
- K. (15:1-32) Following Jesus means knowing that you are lost (lost sheep, lost coin, prodigal son)

Question: Read 15:1-32. How do these three parables reveal what God is like?

- L. (16:1-13) Following Jesus means serving God, not money
- M. (16:14-18) Following Jesus means using the Law and the Prophets rightly
- N. (16:19-31) Following Jesus means following reaping in the next life what we sow in this one
- O. (17:1-10) Following Jesus means not being a cause of the sin of others, having faith as a mustard seed, knowing that we are unworthy
- P. (17:11-19) Healing: Following Jesus means praising God for his goodness to us (ten lepers)
- Q. (17:20-37) Following Jesus means preparing for his return (kingdom of God is in your midst, rapture)
- R. (18:1-30) Following Jesus coming with faith, knowing that we are sinners, coming as children, giving him everything

Question: Read 18:9-14. How should we respond to this passage?

- S. (18:31-34) Following Jesus...to his cross (third passion prediction)
- T. (18:35-43) Healing: blind beggar healed for his faith
- U. (19:1-10) Following Jesus means repentance (Zacchaeus)
- V. (19:11-27) Following Jesus means using our talents as we can
- V. (19:28-21:38) The Jerusalem Ministry (Answers the question: *Why did the leaders want Jesus crucified?*)**
  - A. (19:28-40) Triumphant entry

Question: Read 19:37-40. What is wonderful and right about these verses? What is ironic about these verses?

- B. (19:41-48) The sinful city: weeping over Jerusalem, cleansing the temple
- C. (20:1-47) The sinful leaders (Pharisees, priests, scribes, Sadducees all challenge Jesus)
- D. (21:1-4) The contrast – widow giving all she has
- E. (21:5-38) The coming of the Son of Man

**VI. (22:1-24:53) The Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension (Answers the question: *Why must Jesus be crucified?*)**

- A. (22:1-38) Last Supper (note vv. 20, 37)
- B. (22:39-46) Prayer in Gethsemane
- C. (22:47-54) Arrest
- D. (22:54-62) Peter's denials
- E. (22:63-23:25) Trials: Jerusalem council to Pilate the governor in Judea to Herod the tetrarch of Galilee back to Pilate for condemnation
- F. (23:26-49) The Crucifixion

Question: Read 23:26-43. What is wonderful and sobering about these two thieves?

- G. (23:50-56) The Burial
- H. (24:1-12) The Empty Tomb (note vv. 5-7)
- I. (24:13-35) The two on the road to Emmaus (note vv. 25-27)
- J. (24:36-49) The disciples (note vv. 44-48)

Question: Read 22:37, 24:6-7, 24:25-27, and 24:44-47. What is Luke (Jesus!) trying to tell us?

- K. (24:50-53) The ascension

**The Book of Acts Part 1 and Part 2**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 4 & 5**

Your assignments: *What did you learn?*

**I. Why We Need Acts**

- A. Acts is a Bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles
  1. Takes us from the ministry of Jesus to the establishment of the church and its growth throughout the Mediterranean region.
  2. Without Acts, the epistles would be hard to understand. Who is Paul? To whom is he talking? What did his ministry look like?
- B. Acts Inspires us with a Vision for Church Life
  1. Acts gives us a picture of what a church filled with the Holy Spirit looks like.
  2. Acts challenges us with its vision of church commitment—loving and serving one another, sharing with one another what God has given to us.
  3. Acts reveals the true gospel and the power of the gospel when it is accurately preached by people filled with the Holy Spirit.
  4. Acts shows us a model for spreading the gospel beyond our church walls—church planting led by gifted men.
  5. Acts gives us direction in church structure—apostles, elders, deacons.

**II. Who and When?**

- A. How do we know that Luke wrote *Luke*?
  1. Most books give the author's name in the opening verses (all the epistles with the exception of 1-3 John). With the gospels and Acts we have to determine it through other means.
  2. (Internal) Evidence from the Bible
    - a. Introductions: Clear from Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-2 that the same man wrote both of these books.
    - b. The "We" passages: Clear from Acts 16:11; 20:13; 21:1; 27:1; 28:10 that author (Luke) was with Paul at each of these moments.

- c. Process of elimination: Col 4:14 shows Luke is with Paul in Rome during his Acts 28 house arrest. Col 4:14 is where Luke referred to as “Luke the beloved physician.”
  - 3. (External) Evidence from church history
    - a. Marcion – mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century
    - b. Muratorian Canon
    - c. Ireneus and Tertullian have no doubts about Luke
    - d. Oldest Luke manuscript (A.D. 175-225) includes “Luke” in the title, and no other name is ever given as its source.
- B. The author himself
  - 1. “Luke the beloved physician” (Colossians 4:14) – primitive medicine, but by this time a respected profession. Intelligent, inquisitive, part detective and part healer.
  - 2. Luke the historian (Luke 1:1-4 and similar Acts 1:1-5)
  - 3. Luke the theologian – Has a grasp on God’s work in history. See Acts 2:17-36; 7:1-68; 13:16-41; 17:22-31.
  - 4. Luke the evangelist – He wants a response from his readers and not simply their attentiveness for a few hours. Philippian jailer (16:31–35) and the Ephesian 12 (19:2–7) are meant to bring readers to salvation as well as give the history.
- C. When did Luke write the book? *Carson argues for A.D. 62<sup>14</sup> on the following grounds, and I don’t think I’ll disagree with him:*
  - 1. At time of writing Judaism is a sanctioned state religion, which ended in AD 66.
  - 2. No mention of Nero’s persecution after the fire of AD 64.
  - 3. Vivid description of the shipwreck sounds recent to time of writing.
  - 4. Ends abruptly with Paul in Rome in house arrest, likely AD 62-64. He would be released and write 1-2 Timothy and Titus, martyred in 67. Seems likely that Luke wrote before his release—not only possible scenario, just the likely one.
  - 5. Thus, date is likely early in Paul’s 2-year house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30-31).
  - 6. Carson also believes there is no evidence that Luke knew of Paul’s letters, but this feels overstated to me. Many, many ideas from Paul’s letters are found in Acts, and many of Paul’s letter make

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<sup>14</sup> *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 1992), 194.



better sense if Luke is a co-author with Paul (especially the Pastoral Epistles of 1–2 Timothy and Titus).

### III. Luke's Introduction

1 In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. (Acts 1:1-2)

- A. "First book"?
- B. To whom is it written?
- C. What does "began" tell us?
- D. How did Jesus minister?
- E. The title for "Acts"
  1. "The Acts of \_\_\_\_\_"
  2. "The Acts of \_\_\_\_\_"
  3. "The Acts of \_\_\_\_\_"

### IV. Outline of the Acts of the Apostles

KEY ORGANIZING TEXT: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8). It was common in ancient histories to use a sentence like this as a kind of table of contents for the whole work.

KEY ORGANIZING MARKERS IN BOOK: Luke uses repeating summary statements as section dividers. These are found in 2:47; 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; all-encompassing in 28:30-31. Here are the first two to see what to look for:

And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:47)

And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. (Acts 6:7)

With these markers and 1:8 as the organizing text, here is the outline of Acts:

- A. (1:1-12:24) Part One: *Witness from Jerusalem to Samaria (and Cornelius)*  
*Key figure in Part One is Peter*
  1. (1:1-2:47) The Prologue (Introduction, ascension, replacing Judas, Day of Pentecost)

2. (3:1-6:7) Gospel in Jerusalem (ministry of the apostles in Jerusalem)
  3. (6:8-9:31) Gospel in Samaria (Stephen killed, persecution in Jerusalem, Philip to Samaria, conversion of Paul)
  4. (9:32-12:24) Gospel to Gentiles (Cornelius, Antioch, James killed)
- B. (12:25-28:31) Part Two: *Witness to the Ends of the Earth*
- Key figure in Part Two is Paul*
1. (12:25-16:5) Paul and Barnabas (1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey) and the Jerusalem Council
  2. (16:6-19:20) 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey (Gospel to Macedonia)
  3. (19:21-28:31) 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey and Arrest of Paul (Gospel to Rome)

## THE CONTENTS OF ACTS IN DETAIL:

- I. (1:1-12:24) Part One: Witness from Jerusalem to Samaria (and Cornelius)
- A. (1:1-2:47) The Prologue
1. (1:1-5) Introduction
    - “In the first book...” (1:1)*
    - “...all that Jesus began to do and teach...” (1:1)*
    - “...he had given commands through the Holy Spirit...” (1:2)*
    - “...speaking about the kingdom of God” (1:3; cf. 28:31!)*
  2. (1:6-26) Ascension of Christ
    - **Theme of the Book:** *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)*
    - Jesus will return “in the same way as you saw him go into heaven” (1:11).
    - Matthias chosen as “a witness to his resurrection” (1:22–26). Note from 1:21–22 what qualifies him.
  3. (2:1-47) Pentecost
    - The Day of Pentecost in some ways is **the formal beginning of “the church.”** Of course, “the people of God” do not begin with

Acts 2 but date all the way back to Genesis 12:1–3 and the calling of Abraham. But something new happens at Pentecost. It is the era of the church, the people of God defined by the New Covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and inaugurated by the crucifixion of Jesus. There is also a newness in that the people of God are no longer organized as a nation with a priesthood. Now we are organized by the officers listed in Ephesians 4:11, “apostles...prophets...evangelists...shepherd-teachers.” Converted Israel and converted Gentiles come together in this new era as “one new man” (Eph 2:15).

- The Day of Pentecost (1:1) refers to a Jewish festival, one of the major events in the Jewish year:

*“You shall count seven weeks. Begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain.<sup>10</sup> Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you.<sup>11</sup> And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your towns, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are among you, at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there.<sup>12</sup> You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and you shall be careful to observe these statutes. (Deut. 16:9-12)*

***The name “Pentecost” is from the Greek Old Testament. It means “50,” and refers to the 7 sabbaths (49) + 1 day, so that the event HAPPENS ON A SUNDAY! Both the resurrection and the day of Pentecost happen on a Sunday!***

- A wind, tongues of fire, and speaking in “other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (2:1-13)
- **The theological explanation:** “In the last days...” (2:14-21) – The day of Pentecost is the first day of “the last days.”
- The complete gospel of Jesus Christ, “both Lord and Christ” (2:22-36)
- Responding to the gospel: Conversion (2:37-41)  
“Repent and be baptized...” (2:38)
- Responding to the gospel: The Church (2:42-47a)

*“Without the Holy Spirit, Christian discipleship would be inconceivable, even impossible. There can be no life without the*

*life-giver, no understanding without the Spirit of truth, no fellowship without the unity of the Spirit, no Christlikeness of character apart from his fruit, and no effective witness without his power. As a body without breath is a corpse, so the church without the Spirit is dead” (Stott, Acts, 60).*

Transitional Marker: And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:47a)

B. (3:1-6:7) Witnesses in Jerusalem

- Peter’s ministry in the Spirit – healing the lame man (3:1-10)
- Peter’s preaching - Times of refreshing (3:19-20)
- Peter’s boldness before the council (esp. 4:8-12, 19-20; 5:27-32)
- The introduction of deacons (6:1-6)

Transitional Marker: *“And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.” (Acts 6:7)*

C. (6:8-9:31) Witnesses in Samaria (Stephen killed, persecution, Philip to Samaria, conversion of Paul)

- Stephen’s ministry, speech, and martyrdom (6:8-7:60)
- Introduction of Paul (7:58-8:3)
- Philip in Samaria – believe, be baptized, be baptized in the Spirit (8:4-17)
- Conversion of Paul (Saul) (9:1-30)

Transitional Marker: *“So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.” (Acts 9:31)*

D. (9:32-12:24) Witnesses to Gentiles (Cornelius, Antioch, James killed)

- Peter raising Tabitha (9:36-43)
- Cornelius is saved (10:1-11:18)
  
- Barnabas the apostle goes to Antioch (11:19-30)

Transitional Marker: *“But the word of God increased and multiplied.”* (Acts 12:24)

## II. (12:25-28:31) Part Two: *Witness to the Ends of the Earth*

- A. (12:25-16:5) Paul and Barnabas (1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey) and the Jerusalem Council
- Barnabas and Paul sent out (13:1-3)
  - First missionary journey (13:4-14:28)
  - *Book of **Galatians** likely written in the “no little time” of 14:28—  
“Galatians” then refers to Pisidian Antioch/Lystra*
  - Jerusalem Council (15:1-32)
  - Second missionary journey begins—Paul and Silas (15:35)

Transitional Marker: *“So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.”* (Acts 16:5)

- B. (16:6-19:20) 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey (Gospel to Macedonia)
- Timothy joins Paul (16:1-2)
  - Macedonian call (16:6-10)
  - Fulfilled in Philippi (16:11-40)
  - Continues through Greece (Athens, cf. 17:22-31)
  - *Books of **1-2 Thessalonians** written during the “year and six months”  
(18:11) in Corinth, about 49-51 A.D.*
  - Returns to Antioch (19:22) and then leaves on 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey (19:23)
  - Ministry in Ephesus for two years (19:1-20)
  - *Book of **1 Corinthians** written during the “two years” (19:10) in  
Ephesus in A.D. 53-55*

Transitional Marker: *“So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.”* (Acts 19:20)

- C. (19:21-28:31) 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey and Arrest of Paul (Gospel to Rome)
- Ephesus ministry continued with riot and departure (19:21-41) – note the speech of the “town clerk” in vv. 35-40.
  - **2 Corinthians** written Macedonia after departing from Ephesus (20:1; approx. A.D. 55-56)
  - **Romans** written during the “three months” in Greece (20:3; approx. A.D. 57)
  - Paul speaking to Ephesian elders (20:17-35, note esp. vv. 24-31)
  - Paul’s arrest (21:27-36)
  - Paul’s speech to Jews in the temple, his complete conversion testimony (21:37-22:24)
  - Paul’s speech to the council (23:6)
  - Paul taken to Caesarea to Felix the governor (23:23-35) and speech to him, his conversion testimony (24:10-21). Stays in prison there two years (24:27).
  - Porcius Festus takes over for Felix and leaves Paul in prison (24:27)
  - Paul appeals to Caesar (25:11).
  - Before he departs, speaks to “Agrippa the king and Bernice” the queen, giving his complete conversion testimony (26:1-32).
  - Journey to Rome (27:1-28:14)
  - Ministry from house arrest in Rome (28:23-31)
  - **Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon** written from Rome under house arrest (A.D. 62)

Transitional Marker/Conclusion: *“He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him,<sup>31</sup> proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.”* (Acts 28:30-31)

- Paul will be released from prison, writing **1 Timothy** and **Titus** in these years (A.D. 62-64)
- Rearrested in Rome, writes **2 Timothy** and is killed between A.D. 64 and 67.

## The Gospel of Matthew

### Introduction to the New Testament

### Class 6

“Matthew leaves nothing to chance: he repeatedly erects highway signs in large letters to direct his readers, making it unmistakably explicit that Jesus is the fulfillment of Israel’s Scripture. Matthew has organized his material in a didactic, user-friendly fashion—a kind of ‘training manual for prophets.’ It is therefore not without reason that, when the fourfold Gospel canon was later assembled, Matthew was placed first. Nor was it without reason that Matthew became the Gospel most frequently cited by early Christian writers and that commentaries were written on it by Origen, Jerome, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Cyril of Alexandria, to mention just some of the patristic authors who focused on this Gospel. Matthew successfully organized the Jesus tradition in a form that made it clear, harmonious, and accessible.”

Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 106-107

#### I. Who and When?

A. How do we know that Matthew wrote *Matthew*?

1. Unanimous extra-biblical support: Quoted in 1<sup>st</sup> century writings (Polycarp, *Didache*) and 2<sup>nd</sup> century writings like Irenaeus call Matthew the author:

For, after our Lord rose from the dead, [the apostles] were invested with power from on high when the Holy Spirit came down [upon them], were filled from all [His gifts], and had perfect knowledge: they departed to the ends of the earth, preaching the glad tidings of the good things [sent] from God to us, and proclaiming the peace of heaven to men, who indeed do all equally and individually possess the Gospel of God. **Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church.** After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.

Irenaeus (ca. 130–202), *Against the Heresies*, 3.1

2. With all the NT manuscripts we have, his name is always attached to it: “The Gospel according to Matthew.”
3. This is the only gospel where Matthew/Levi is called “Matthew the tax collector” (10:3). Mark and Luke leave this description out when listing out the Twelve (Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:14–16).

B. The author himself

1. Converted when Jesus says, "Follow me," in 9:9.
  2. Famously holds a dinner for "many tax collectors and sinners" (9:10ff.).
  3. Matthew as an apostle (10:3 and Acts 1:13).
- C. When did Matthew write the book?
1. Carson says late 60s, but I think Quarles a better estimate.
  2. Charles Quarles<sup>15</sup> says early quotations by Polycarp and *Didache* mean it's early in 1<sup>st</sup> century. Matt 23:16–22 implies temple standing. Irenaeus' comment also lends support to a date in the early 60s.

## II. Outline of Matthew as one of the Synoptic Gospels

Matthew is a SYNOPTIC GOSPEL with Mark and Luke. Synoptic means "see together," as in *together they are seeing the same thing*. We have a high degree of confidence Mark is first, but harder to tell whether Matthew or Luke is second.

Matthew and Luke adopt Mark's basic outline. It's a geographic layout, where Jesus starts in Galilee and then travels to Jerusalem for the crucifixion.

The key structural marker is that after a big block of teaching there will be a statement that begins, "And when Jesus finished these sayings...." The only exceptions to this are in the Prologue (1:1-4:17) and in the final section that includes the cross, resurrection, and Great Commission (26-28).

1. (1:1-4:17) The Prologue
 

*From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17)*
2. (4:18-7:29) Galilee Part 1: The Gospel of the Kingdom (Sermon on the Mount)
 

Teaching block: Sermon on the Mount (5-7)

Transition: *And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching,<sup>29</sup> for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes. (Matt. 7:28-29)*
3. (8:1-11:1) Galilee Part 2: The Christ and his Apostles (Commission of the Twelve)

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<sup>15</sup> Quarles, Charles L., *A Theology of Matthew: Jesus Revealed as Deliverer, King, and Incarnate Creator*, Explorations in Biblical Theology (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 9.



Teaching Block: Instructions when he sends out the twelve apostles (10:5-42)

Transition: *When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities. (Matt. 11:1)*

4. (11:2-13:53) Galilee Part 3: The Christ and his Kingdom (Parables of the Kingdom)

Teaching Block: Parables about the Kingdom (13:1-52)

Transition: *And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there. (Matt 13:53)*

5. (13:54-19:2) Galilee Part 4: The Christ and our Response

Teaching Block: Sin and the people of God (18:1-35)

Transition: *Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. <sup>2</sup> And large crowds followed him, and he healed them there. (Matt. 19:1-2)*

6. (19:3-26:2) Galilee to Jerusalem: The Stone Rejected is the Cornerstone

Teaching Block: Extensive material on seven woes to the Pharisees (23), the end times (24), living with an awareness of Jesus' return (25).

Transition: *When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, <sup>2</sup> "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified." (Matt. 26:1-2)*

7. (26:3-28:20) The Crucifixion and Triumph of the King

Conclusion: *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> 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, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:18-20)*

### III. Why we need (and love) Matthew

#### A. The Kingdom of God

1. "Kingdom of God" (5 occurrences) and the "kingdom of heaven" (32 occurrences, all in Matthew) found extensively in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke).
2. Phrase means the rule of God, the kingship of God.

3. Sometimes the emphasis is on the King—what he is like, what he will do. Sometimes the emphasis is how we enter the kingdom. Sometimes on what it's like to be in this kingdom—awesome!
4. R.T. France: “the phrase ‘the kingdom of God’ in both its Hebrew and Greek forms denotes the dynamic concept of ‘God ruling’.... ‘The kingdom of heaven has arrived,’ might thus be paraphrased as ‘God’s promised reign is beginning’ or ‘God is now taking control’” (NICNT, 102). He adds, “Yahweh reigns’ embodies the universal Hebrew conviction, expressed in a rich variety of ways from Genesis to Malachi, that God, as creator of this world, is in control of it and of all who are in it. But alongside this unquestioned datum of the eternal sovereignty of God there developed a sense that all was not as God would have it in his world, and with this the hope of a time to come when God’s rule would be more fully and openly implemented and acknowledged among the people of earth: ‘The LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one, and his name one’ (Zech. 14:9)” (ibid., 102-103).
5. Some of the many references to the kingdom of heaven and God as the King:

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (1:1)

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (4:17)

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (5:3)

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (7:21)

“Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. 26 And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Matt 12:25-28)

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.<sup>45</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in

search of fine pearls,<sup>46</sup> who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (13:44-46)

“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.<sup>24</sup> When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. (18:23-24)

And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” (27:37)

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (28:18)

#### B. Matthew Highlights Prophecies Fulfilled

1. Virgin birth (Matt. 1:18-25 and Isa. 7:14)
2. Bethlehem birth (Matt. 2:5-6 and Micah 5:2)
3. Healing and teaching (Matt. 12:18-21 and Isa. 42:1-3)
4. Crucifixion (Matt. 26:31 and Zech. 13:7)

#### C. Matthew (Christ) Teaches Us How to Interpret the Old Testament Laws

1. The Old Testament is not abolished but fulfilled by Jesus (Matt. 5:17-21).
2. The Ten Commandments demand obedience from the heart and not mere external obedience (Matt. 5:17-48).
3. Some laws in the Old Testament are more important than others, like mercy being above sacrifice:

For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. (Hos 6:6)

Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” (Matt 9:13)

And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. (Matt 12:7)

4. Jesus organized OT moral laws according to two great commandments: Matthew 22:34–40.
  - a. Love God: Deuteronomy 6:5
  - b. Love your neighbor: Leviticus 19:18

#### D. Matthew Captures Critical Teaching on Discipleship

1. Large teaching blocks of Jesus are preserved in Matthew, and these highlight how disciples are to live and believe. They answer the question, “What does it mean to follow Christ?”
2. Example: The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7)

3. Example: Parables about the Kingdom (Matt 13)
- E. Matthew Presents Jesus as the Christ
1. Matthew 1 underscores in many ways that he is the Christ, the Son of David (1:1; genealogy; his birth as “Christ” and “Immanuel”).
  2. Son of David the Healer in 9:27; 20:30.
  3. “Hosanna to the Son of David!” in the Triumphal Entry (21:9)
  4. The Christ

Jesus is not merely the Jews’ Messiah, he is God’s Messiah; he is not only God’s anointed Savior to Israel (Rom. 11:26), but to the whole world besides (Rom. 15:19-20; 2 Cor. 1:19). He belongs not only to Israel, but to all who believe and who thereby become his people, his very own possession from his Father (Ps. 2:8; 110:3; Jn. 6:37-39; Heb. 2:13) Peter Lewis, *The Glory of Christ* (1992), 163

5. The Christ as God’s Ransom:

“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matt 20:28)

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” 27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” (Matt 26:26-29)

“The covenant” in v. 28 is Jeremiah’s “new covenant.” Note forgiveness of sins in v. 34:

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer 31:31-34)

Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'" (Matt 26:31) – Quoting Zech 13:7

#### **IV. The Bookends of Matthew – 1:1 and 28:19–20**

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (Matt 1:1)

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, to the end of the age." (Matt 28:19-20)

**The Gospel of Mark**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 7**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

A. The First Gospel

1. Matthew is first in the NT certainly because it was thought for some time to be the earliest gospel. Yet, NT scholarship today feels that the best explanation for the “synoptic gospels” (synoptic = “seeing together,” Carson) is that Mark wrote his work first, and then Matthew and Luke both refer to it. Whether there is another source (often called “Q”) is debatable, but it is used to explain the places where Matthew and Luke agree ‘against’ Mark (i.e., Matthew and Luke have material very similar that is not found in Mark).
2. Mark provides us with the *Galilee to Jerusalem* geographical flow, and the confession of Peter being the high-water mark that announces the turn toward to Jerusalem.

B. The Shortest and Sharpest Gospel

1. The word “immediately” (*euthus*) is famously abundant in Mark’s gospel (42 of its 59 total NT occurrences).
2. Comparing chapter 1 of each gospel reveals how different is Mark’s gospel, how determined he is to “get on with it.”
3. The overall impact of his brevity is to get us quickly to Christ’s saving work (through the prophecies of chapter 8, the importance of 10:45, the triumphal entry coming in chapter 11, the dominance of the suffering and death of Christ).
4. His skill as a storyteller can be seen in places like 16:8 where he leaves us in a lurch (seen as far too unfinished and so others came along and “finished” his work for him by adding 16:9-16). Or in details like when Jesus “looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart” (healing in 3:1-6).

C. Who and When?

1. The Author

- a. Unanimously the early church sees John Mark as the author. As just one example:

*The Elder [apostle John?] said this also: Mark, who became Peter's interpreter, wrote accurately, though not in order, all that he remembered of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had neither heard the Lord nor been one of his followers, but afterwards, as I said, he had followed Peter, who used to compose his discourses with a view to the needs of his hearers, but not as though he were drawing up a connected account of the Lord's sayings. So Mark made no mistake in thus recording some things just as he remembered them. For he was careful of this one thing, to omit none of the things he had heard and to make no untrue statements therein.*

Papias, bishop Hierapolis (ca. AD 140)<sup>16</sup>

- b. The man:
  - 1) The "John Mark" of the New Testament.
  - 2) First seen in Acts 12:12 when Peter goes to his house.
  - 3) Accompanies Paul and Barnabas, but then returns prematurely to Jerusalem (Acts 12:25; 15:37).
  - 4) Cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10).
  - 5) Co-worker of Paul and then Barnabas (Acts 12:25; 15:37, 39).
  - 6) Affirmed by Paul (Col. 4:10) and especially in 2 Tim. 4:11, "Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry."
  - 7) Peter calls him "my son" (1 Peter 5:13).

## 2. The Date

- a. Mid- to late-50s (though others date it into the 60s).
- b. Hans Bayer in the ESV Study Bible argues for such a date based on the writing of Acts in the early 60s. If Luke precedes Acts, and Luke borrows from Mark, then Mark must have been written early enough to enable all this to happen.<sup>17</sup>
- c. Carson says similarly (leaning toward late 50s because of assumptions about Luke-Acts) but acknowledges that 60s date (following Peter's death) is the majority view.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* citing Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, who wrote this in approx. AD 140. (cited in Walter Wessell, *Mark, EBC* [1984], 605).

<sup>17</sup> *ESV Study Bible* (Crossway), 1889.

<sup>18</sup> D.A. Carson, Douglas Moo, Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 1992), 99.

### 3. The Audience

- a. Often argued that Mark is writing for a Gentile audience because of comments like 7:3-4:

*(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands, holding to the tradition of the elders,<sup>4</sup> and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) (Mark 7:3-4)*

- b. Whether it is more specifically a Roman audience (“with the wild beasts” in 1:13 sounds like a gladiator battle) is probably less clear, but still plausible. *What is certain is that he is writing for a non-Christian audience in the hopes that they will become Christians.*

### D. Outline

1. (1:1-15) The Prologue
2. (1:16-8:26) Introduction to Jesus as the Christ (Galilean Ministry)
3. (8:27-10:52) Christ on the Road to Jerusalem
4. (11-13) The Stone the Builders Rejected (Triumphal Entry and Rejection in Jerusalem)
5. (14:1-16:8) The Son of Man Must Suffer and Rise from the Dead  
 \*\*\* (16:9-16) Appendix: Material Added to Mark’s Gospel at a Later Date *not by Mark* (though still early)

## II. The Cross in Mark

Mark’s entire Gospel becomes essentially a passion narrative with an extended introduction...Consequently, Jesus is set forth as the Son of God in the first half of Mark’s narrative (1:1–8:26) while he emerges as the suffering Servant in the second half (8:27–16:8).”

Andreas Köstenberger and Gregory Goswell<sup>19</sup>

- A. “Who do you say that I am?” and 3 Predictions
- B. Mark 10:45 – The cross as a “ransom”
- C. Mark 14:27 – The cross as the fulfillment of Scripture
- D. Mark 14:36 – The cross as the fulfillment of the Father’s will
- E. Mark 15:38 – The cross as the completion of our redemption
- F. Mark 15:38 and 16:1–8 – Two Signs that Everything Has Changed

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<sup>19</sup> Andreas Köstenberger and Gregory Goswell, *Biblical Theology* (Crossway, 2023) 433.



**The Gospel of John**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 8**

**I. Welcome back! Happy 2024!**

**II. Unique elements of John's gospel**

- A. Fewer, longer snapshots; extended discourses.
- B. Emphasis on our individual response to Jesus more than on the whole of the Christian life (e.g., words connected to *faith* & *believing* used 71x in John, 61x in synoptics *combined*).
- C. Simplest Greek—but some of the deepest thinking (e.g., “In the beginning was the Word,” 1:1).
- D. The “I am” statements → Memorize these!! Some of them:

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. (John 10:14-15)

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, (John 11:25)

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

- E. Growing sense that John's actually the most historically accurate

**III. Who and When?**

- A. Internal evidence that “the beloved disciple” is John
  - 1. Called the “beloved disciple” in several places in John:

*“One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved” (13:23);*

*“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved” (19:26);*

*“She ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved” (20:2);*

*“That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, ‘It is the Lord!’” (21:7);*

*“Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved” (21:20).*

These places are significant. They are times when the disciples are present and we would expect them to be named accordingly. Yet, in places like 21:2 John’s name is conspicuously absent. The thinking is that it’s more likely John would not name himself than another author would fail to name him.

2. Others are ruled out like Nathanael because the author is there before Nathanael (cp. 1:40 and 1:45); James is martyred too early to be the author of the book (Acts 12:2); others like Peter are named at times when John himself speaks of “one whom Jesus loved.”
  3. Revelation written in similar style and theological perspective. And it is explicitly written by “his servant John” (Rev 1:1).
  4. Therefore, the most reasonable conclusion is that the “Beloved Disciple” is the evangelist and the author and the apostle John.
- B. The early church agrees, and no other author ever put forward. E.g.,
1. Irenaeus knew Polycarp, who knew the apostle John and said, “John the disciple of the Lord, who leaned back on his breast, published the Gospel while he was resident at Ephesus in Asia” (cited in Carson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 139).
  2. Eusebius the historian quotes Clement of Alexandria, a 2<sup>nd</sup> century saint, “But that John, last of all, conscious that the outward facts had been set forth in the Gospels, was urged on by his disciples, and divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel” (cited in Carson, 140).
- C. FYI, John is the longest living apostle, dying in Ephesus at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, maybe even in the year A.D. 100. Thus, no older than 30 during Jesus’ ministry.
- D. Date of the Writing
1. He wrote the gospel *before* 1-3 John, letters which seem to respond to errors in interpreting his gospel.
  2. Carson (*The Gospel According to John*, Pillar) allows that the gospel *could have been* written **anywhere from 55 to 95 A.D.**, but

he argues for later date. Somewhere around A.D. 80 “more by way of default than anything else” (82). His reasons:

- a. Likely that he wrote later rather than earlier based on when he begins to be quoted by church authors;
  - b. Similarity of language between John and Ignatius pushes us toward the latter part of first-century;
  - c. Seems he wrote some time after destruction of the temple since there is no explicit reference to it;
  - d. Likely that 1 John is responding to issues raised potentially by his gospel and the different theological themes makes it likely they were not written close together, perhaps separated by a decade or so.
  - e. Thus, a date of 80-85 A.D. is reasonable (85).
- E. Place – D.A. Carson says that Ephesus is the most reasonable guess for the location: “What must be acknowledged is that no other location has the support of the church Fathers; rightly or wrongly, they point to Ephesus” (87).

#### IV. Why did John write his gospel?

He tells us!

*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;<sup>31</sup> but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30-31)*

#### V. Outline of John

##### A. (1:1-18) Prologue

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:1-5)

Exalted, developed Christology in John:

1:1-4, “The Word was God.”

The “word” has to do with:

- Christ revealing and fulfilling the “word of God,” the Old Testament.
- Christ’s ministry of speaking “truth” (1:18).
- Christ being the incarnate communication of God.

- Christ being God, for our words and ourselves are inseparable. Our words are our thoughts communicated, our thoughts are words waiting to be expressed. Our words are a kind of bodily display of our soul. So is Christ the revelation of the Father.

1:14, “The Word became flesh.”

## B. (1:19-12:50) The Book of Signs

This Book of Signs contains 7 signs.

“While John’s presentation of Jesus’s deity is arguably the grandest thematic contribution he makes to the Gospel canon, his emphasis on Jesus’s *signs* in support of his identity is a close second. These signs are: (1) changing water into wine (2:1–11); (2) clearing the temple (2:13–22); (3) healing an official’s son (the second sign in Cana; 4:46–54); (4) healing an invalid (5:1–15); (5) feeding the five thousand (6:1–15); (6) opening the eyes of a man born blind (ch. 9); and (7) raising Lazarus from the dead (ch. 11).”<sup>20</sup> Word “sign” (*sēmeion*, σημεῖον) used 2:11, 18, 23; 3:2; 4:48, 54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18, 37; AND THEN...20:30.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

“I AM” statements in these chapters:

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” (8:12)

Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” (8:58)

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,<sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. (10:14-15)

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.” (11:25)

## C. (13-20) The Book of Glory

Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane:

And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.....<sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, <sup>23</sup> I in

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<sup>20</sup> Andreas J. Köstenberger and Gregory Goswell, *Biblical Theology: A Canonical, Thematic and Ethical Approach* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2023), 463–464.

them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. (John 17:5, 22–24)

(Preparation for this is in 12:23-28)

(13-17) Farewell Discourse

“I AM” statements:

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (14:6)

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.... I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” (15:1, 5)

(18-20) Passion and Resurrection

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (19:30)

D. (21) Epilogue

23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?” 24 This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. 25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. (John 21:23-25)

**The Apostle Paul**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 9**

**I. Hello!**

**II. A Basic Snapshot**

- A. Brilliant, zealous Jewish Pharisee who hated Christians and was converted dramatically in Acts 9 and then became an “apostle to the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:13).
- B. Wrote 13 New Testament letters
  - 1. Romans
  - 2. 1–2 Corinthians
  - 3. Galatians
  - 4. Ephesians
  - 5. Philippians
  - 6. Colossians
  - 7. 1–2 Thessalonians
  - 8. 1–2 Timothy
  - 9. Titus
  - 10. Philemon
- C. One of the great theological minds ever in the church.
  - 1. The breadth of topics that he covers means that every theological discussion will have to go through Paul.
  - 2. He had a sweeping knowledge of the Old Testament and uses hundreds of OT references in his writing.
  - 3. His theological mind was never separated from his ministry to people and the church. It was in the context of pastoring and leading people and churches that he wrote all that he wrote.
- D. We know from 2 Timothy that he ended his life imprisoned in Rome. By his mood in 2 Timothy, it’s clear he was not expecting to be released (in contrast to Philippians). Tradition says that he was beheaded there, while Peter was crucified. Crucifixion was not practiced on Roman citizens.

### III. A Controversial Figure

- A. The Gospel: Roman Catholic vs. **Protestant**
1. Salvation by works or faith? (hint: I underlined and bolded the right answers!!)
  2. From Paul we learn that we are saved by grace through faith and not by works (Eph. 2:8–9; Rom. 3:21–4:8)
- B. God's Sovereignty: **Calvinism** vs. Arminianism
1. Is it God's choice who gets saved or ours?
  2. From Paul we learn that God sovereignly elects/chooses who is to be saved, but we are still called to evangelize and to respond in faith to the message of salvation in Christ (Romans 8:29–30; 9–10; Eph. 1:3–6).
- C. Gender Roles: Egalitarian vs. **Complementarian**
1. What is the place of women in the home, in the church?
  2. From Paul we learn that men are to be the head of the home and to serve as elders and deacons. Women are equal in importance and essentially glory and gifted in many ways (1 Tim. 2:11–15; Eph. 5:22–31).
- D. The Organization of the Church: Congregational or **Presbyterian** or Episcopal
1. Who has the authority? What are the offices in the church? (elders, deacons, apostles)
  2. In a "congregational" church, the congregation has final authority. In an "episcopal" church, the *episkopos* or "overseer" or "bishop" has final authority. In a "presbyterian" church, the *presbuteros* or "elder" has final authority.
  3. From Paul we learn that the authority to govern the church rests with the elders (and I believe apostles as well who are a kind of elder-for-the-elders) (Titus 1:5–9).
- E. Spiritual Gifts: Cessationism or **Continuationism/Charismatic**
1. Have the 'sign' gifts ceased (prophecy, tongues, healing, miracles)?
  2. Cessationists say these gifts have "ceased" since they were given as "signs" to prove the truthfulness of the apostolic gospel. Continuationists say all the NT gifts "continue" and are to be pursued.

3. From Paul we learn that the gifts were never to cease but are part of this age, ending only when they are no longer necessary at the return of Christ (1 Cor. 12–14; 1 Th. 5:19–21).
- F. Old Testament: How should Christians approach the Old Testament?
1. **Reformed Covenantal** vs. New Covenant vs. Dispensationist.
  2. For “New Covenant” and “Dispensational” Christians, the Old Testament does not have laws that are directly binding on us. Only the New Testament does. Reformed Covenantal Christians say some OT laws are binding on us (moral laws like love God and love your neighbor, honor your mother and father, you shall not commit adultery, etc.).
  3. From Paul we see that while the covenant with Moses is indeed ended because of the work of Christ, the moral commands of the OT continue to be binding for Christians (Rom. 13:8–10; Gal. 3–5).
- G. True that all topics will work with a variety of biblical authors, but Paul is a central point of all these discussions, no mere secondary or tertiary place.

*But who was this man?*

#### IV. Persecutor Made Minister of the Gospel

- A. His basic (auto)biography is given in **Acts 22:1–16** – Jew, born Tarsus and so Roman citizen, educated by Gamaliel the Pharisee, zealous Jew – in other words, the perfect background to become “an apostle to the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:13).
- B. We meet him first as a persecutor of the church in Acts 7:58–8:3.
- C. Meet him next at his conversion in Acts 9:1–18, the “Damascus Road” experience.

#### V. Paul’s Developing Ministry

- A. Remains in Damascus “for several days” (Acts 9:19; “three years,” Gal. 1:17–18), and “immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues” (Acts 9:20).
- B. Will minister in Jerusalem in Acts 9:26–30.
- C. Joins Barnabas in Antioch for a year of ministry (Acts 11:19–30).

#### VI. First Missionary Journey: From Antioch through Asia

- A. Recorded in Acts 13:1–14:28.
- B. Total may be 800 miles by land and sea (approx.)
- C. Ministers with Barnabas



- D. Major stops are in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe.
- E. Goal was preaching the gospel first in synagogues, then to the Gentiles, and with Barnabas “appointed elders for them in every church” (14:23).
- F. **Galatians (#1)** written – approx. AD 48 (= Acts 14:28)
- G. Sent by Antioch to Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1–35).

## VII. Second Missionary Journey: From Antioch through Macedonia

- A. Begins after Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 and recorded in 15:35–18:22.
- B. Division with Barnabas who wants to take his cousin John Mark. Paul doesn’t, so takes Silas (15:36–40). The two part.
- C. 2<sup>nd</sup> is maybe twice the mileage of 1<sup>st</sup> journey.
- D. Extends to Macedonia (Philippi, Ephesus, Corinth, Athens, Jerusalem).
- E. Timothy added in Lystra, early on journey (16:1–3).
- F. Philippi ministry in 16:14–40 (Lydia; jailer conversion, “What must I do to be saved?” v. 30).
- G. Preaching on Mars Hill in Athens (17:22–34).
- H. **1–2 Thessalonians (#2–3)** written from Corinth, approx. A.D. 49–51 (= Acts 18:11).
- I. Returns to Antioch in Acts 18:22 and “after spending some time there, he departed” to begin third missionary journey in Acts 18:23.

## VIII. Third Missionary Journey: From Antioch to Arrest in Jerusalem

- A. Recorded in Acts 18:23–21:16.
- B. Three years of ministry in Ephesus (19:1–20:12), “so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks” (19:10).
- C. **1 Corinthians (#4)** written from Ephesus approx AD 52–55 (= Acts 19:1).
- D. **2 Corinthians (#5)** in Macedonia after leaving Ephesus approx. AD 55–56 (= Acts 20:1).
- E. **Romans (#6)** approx. AD 57 (= Acts 20:2–3).
- F. Speech to Ephesian elders in Miletus (20:17–35), esp. 20:24.

## IX. Arrest in Jerusalem and Journey to Rome

- A. Arrested in Jerusalem while there for the Passover (21:15–23:11).
  - 1. First testimony to Jerusalem council (22:1–21).
  - 2. “I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead” (23:6).
- B. Jerusalem to Rome (23:12–28:31)
  - 1. Testimony before Felix in Caesarea (24:10–21). Paul at least two years in prison in Caesarea.
  - 2. Testimony before Agrippa (26:1–29).
  - 3. Journey to Rome (27:1–28:10).

4. House arrest in Rome for two years (28:11–31).
5. Under house arrest writes “the prison epistles” (**Ephesus, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon (#7–10)**) approx. A.D. 62–63; = Acts 28:30–31)

## X. After House-Arrest in Rome

- A. After release from Rome, writes **1 Timothy, Titus (#11–12)** (AD 62–67) and continues to minister.
- B. Re-arrested in Rome and writes **2 Timothy (#13)** approx. AD 67, dies as martyr in Rome.

## XI. What is an Epistle?

- A. Most of the New Testament (in number of books) is collection of epistles (of Paul, Peter, John, James, Jude, and the anonymous Hebrews).
- B. Some are personal from the author to specific church (Paul to Philippians), but some are called “the general epistles,” because they are written to a broad audience, sometimes not even identified in the letter.
- C. A letter written with conventions of the day, just as our letters (and emails!) have conventions as well.
  1. Paul adopts the conventions of his day for his own purposes – e.g., the greeting.
  2. Purpose of the letter would determine for Paul what shape, length, emotion it would take – e.g., Philippians (joy!) vs. Galatians (angry!).
- D. Parts of an Epistle
  1. Greeting (Author, “grace” from Greeks, “peace” from Jews)
  2. Thanksgiving
  3. Prayer
  4. Body
  5. Personal Greetings
  6. Conclusion
- E. Seen in Philemon
  1. Greeting (1:1–3)
  2. Thanksgiving (1:4–5)
  3. Prayer (1:6)
  4. Body of letter (1:7–22)—note his “signature” in 1:19.
  5. Personal greetings (1:23–24)
  6. Conclusion (1:25)

**The Epistle to the Ephesians**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 10**

**I. Hello!**

**II. Paul and Ephesus**

- A. Remember Paul's ministry in Ephesus described in Acts 19.

**III. Remember the Parts of an Epistle**

- A. Greeting (Author, "grace" from Greeks, "peace" from Jews)  
B. Thanksgiving  
C. Prayer  
D. Body  
E. Personal Greetings  
F. Conclusion

**IV. Authorship: Paul**

- A. The letter explicitly states it was written by Paul, which is affirmed by the early church.
- B. F.F. Bruce says, "If the Epistle to the Ephesians was not written directly by Paul, but by one of his disciples in the apostle's name, then its author was the greatest Paulinist of all time—a disciple who assimilated his master's thought more thoroughly than anyone else ever did....The author, if he was not Paul himself, has carried the apostle's thinking to its logical conclusion, beyond the point where the apostle stopped, and has placed the coping-stone on the massive structure of Paul's teaching. Of such a second Paul early Christian history has no knowledge."<sup>21</sup>
- C. Given that Paul wrote this during his 2-year house arrest in Rome when Luke was with him (Col 4:14) and unique elements of vocabulary and style in Ephesians, there is a case to be made for Luke being the amanuensis for this epistle.<sup>22</sup>

**V. Audience: Ephesus**

- A. While Pauline authorship is thoroughly embraced, the audience is a bit of a question. While we call it *Ephesians*, it was more likely a circular letter intended for that region. Since the region contains Ephesus, we are not wrong to attach it more to that city than any other. If it was a direct letter to

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<sup>21</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (Fleming H. Revell, 1961), 11, 12.

<sup>22</sup> For Luke as the amanuensis of Ephesians see Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 9–11; Richard N. Longenecker, "Ancient Amanuenses and the Pauline Epistles," in *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974), 294.

Ephesus, it becomes surprising that it lacks personal greetings, since he spent three years teaching night and day (Acts 20).<sup>23</sup>

- B. Carson & Moo note that “in Ephesus” in 1:1 is “absent...from some of the best manuscripts, in Basil and Origen, apparently also in Marcion, and in Tertullian.”<sup>24</sup> Yet, the title “To the Ephesians” is present in “almost all manuscripts and by all the ancient versions.”
- C. The early church, then, connected this epistle to Ephesus fairly emphatically. Still, the circular letter idea does seem to explain some of the details of the case. They feel “the best form” of the circular theory is that it was sent with Tychicus and the Colossians epistle, and Ephesians was “copied and circulated from Ephesus.”<sup>25</sup>

## VI. Date: Prison Epistle from AD 60–62

- A. It is one of the “prison epistles” which includes Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.
- B. These are later epistles, written during the early 60s while Paul was imprisoned in Rome in the Acts 28 house arrest.
- C. By this point he had written Galatians over ten years prior (48), 1-2 Thessalonians (49-51), 1-2 Corinthians (middle 50s), and Romans (57). Between the last epistles and the Roman imprisonment letters he had returned to Jerusalem and been arrested there. He had been imprisoned in Caesarea (Acts 24:27), and then traveled by ship to Rome as a prisoner.

## VII. A Mature Epistle

This means that we get the maturity of Paul’s thinking, combined with the ability to look back on a significant amount of ministry and life experience. Paul is no novice in these letters (though Galatians hardly feels immature in the least!). His gospel within Ephesians is as comprehensive as any of his letters, and perhaps more since it includes a cosmic dimension, and perhaps more on the devil’s handiwork than he typically includes.

## VIII. Outline

This is Paul’s famous organization of doctrine *and then* practice. Romans is similar: 1–11 is doctrine and then 12–15 is practice. Colossians 1–2 is more doctrinal and then 3–4 is more practical.

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<sup>23</sup> Best case for calling it “Ephesians” is by Hoehner, but I am more compelled by O’Brien who says it was a circular letter to Christians in that region.

<sup>24</sup> D.A Carson & Douglas Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 488.

<sup>25</sup> Carson & Moo, *An Introduction*, 488, 489.

Ephesians 1–3 is very doctrinal and then 4–6 is more practical. Our “calling” as Christians unites the two halves of Ephesians:

- A. (1:1-2) Greeting
- B. (1:3-3:22) Remember Your Calling
- C. (4:1-6:20) Walk Worthy of Your Calling
- D. (6:21-24) Closing

**IX. A Few Key Passages and Ideas in Ephesians**

- A. 1:3–14 – Election: You were chosen before the foundation of the world
- B. 2:1–10 – Spiritual Death to Spiritual Life...and Works
- C. 4:1 – “Therefore” – What’s that “Therefore” there for?
- D. 4:17–29 – Put Off and Put On – “Don’t think about a....”
- E. 5:18–21 – “Be Filled with the Spirit!”

**The Epistle of James**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 11**

**I. Good morning!**

**II. What are the General Epistles?**

- A. James is a “General Epistle,” but *what does this mean?*
- B. They are “general” epistles because their audience is “general.” Not specific, like Paul’s epistles to specific places (Rome, Corinth) or people (Timothy, Titus).
- C. Includes Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude
- D. Hebrews and 1-3 John are technically anonymous. Only guesses about Hebrews; 1-3 John by the apostle John.
- E. James, 1–2 Peter, Jude named for their authors who identify themselves in 1:1 of each book.

**III. Who and When and to Whom?**

- A. Four men named James in the NT: brother of Jesus, two of the Twelve apostles named James (brother of John, Son of Alphaeus), Father of Judas (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13).
- B. Three James’s of the New Testament do not seem to fit as author of the epistle for various reasons:
  - 1. James the son of Zebedee martyred in AD 44 (Acts 12:2), which seems too early for this epistle.
  - 2. Son of Alphaeus too obscure for a man to simply identify himself as “James.”
  - 3. Father of Judas (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13) is even more obscure.
- C. This leaves...James the brother of Jesus:

*“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. (Mark 6:3)*

*After they finished speaking, James replied, “Brothers, listen to me.” (Acts 15:13)—This is after the death of “James the brother of John” in 12:2.*

*\*\*Carson/Moo (An Introduction, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) note that the Greek of his speech in Acts 15:13–21 matches the epistle closely (p. 621).*

*But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord’s brother. (Gal. 1:19)*

## D. Note how James and Jude identify themselves:

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings. (James 1:1)

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: (Jude 1:1)

## E. Date of AD 46-48

1. Seems to be addressing those who misunderstood Paul's teaching on justification by faith alone.
2. Yet, he doesn't seem to have personal experience with Paul's teaching.
3. If Jerusalem council was in AD 48 or 49 (Acts 15)—where Paul was present in Jerusalem with James and there was much discussion on a salvation by grace through faith—then epistle before this, maybe AD 46-48 and possibly the earliest NT document. Certainly it's one of the earliest (Galatians written almost at this time; also possible the Gospel of Mark and even Matthew this early).

## F. To Whom is He Writing?

*James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings. (Jas 1:1)*

"The twelve tribes in the Dispersion" can refer to Jews and Gentiles in the true church (e.g., Gal 6:16). The *ESV Study Bible* takes this view.

But perhaps a better alternative is to see James the Jewish leader in Jerusalem writing to Christian Jews who had experienced what is described in Acts 8:2:

*And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. (Acts 8:2)*

This is the perspective of Carson/Moo in *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). They are persuaded by "the early date and Jewishness of James" and feel he's writing to "Jewish Christians" (628).

See also Peter Davids (NIGTC);

*"We conclude...that although the metaphorical sense is attractive, accepting as we do the Jewish Christian origin of this epistle, the most natural way of reading this phrase is as an address to the true Israel (i.e., Jewish Christians) outside of Palestine (i.e., probably in*

*Syria and Asia Minor)* (Peter Davids, *The Epistle of James, NIGTC [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982], 64*).

#### IV. Distinctive Style of James

- A. James lacks typical aspects of an epistle like we have in Paul's writings:
1. Greeting (Author, "grace" from Greeks, "peace" from Jews)
  2. Thanksgiving
  3. Prayer
  4. Body
  5. Personal Greetings
  6. Conclusion
- B. Sometimes James is compared to Proverbs and said to be "the Proverbs of the New Testament." This also has to do with his emphasis on "wisdom" (1:5; 3:13–15; 4:4).
- C. Yet... A better parallel, however, is not Proverbs, but the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7). That's because it does not contain couplets like Proverbs, but biting and distinct paragraphs like the Sermon on the Mount.
- D. Several passages in James are very close to what Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. Some examples:
1. Being "perfect" (Matt 5:48; James 1:4)

*You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matt 5:48)*

*And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:4)*

2. Be "doers" of the Law (Matt 7:24; James 1:22)

*24 "Everyone then who **hears** these words of mine and **does** them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who **hears** these words of mine and **does not do them** will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew*



*and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.” (Matt 7:24-27)*

*But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (James 1:22)*

3. Swearing and “Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes” (Matt 5:33–37; James 5:12)

*“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ 34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil. (Matt 5:33-37)*

*But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation. (James 5:12)*

## **V. Outline – Not your typical outline because not your typical book!**

- A. (1:1) Greeting
- B. (1:2-5:20) Faith that Works
  - 1. (1:2-18) Faith in Trials
  - 2. (1:19-27) Be Doers of the Word
  - 3. (2:1-13) Show No Partiality
  - 4. (2:14-26) Faith that Works
  - 5. (3:1-12) Taming the Tongue
  - 6. (3:13-18) Heavenly Wisdom
  - 7. (4:1-12) Grace for the Humble
  - 8. (4:13-17) If the Lord Wills
  - 9. (5:1-6) Rebuke for the Rich Oppressor
  - 10. (5:7-11) The Day of the Lord
  - 11. (5:12) Do Not Swear
  - 12. (5:13-18) Prayers of Faith and Promises of Healing and Forgiveness
  - 13. (5:19-20) Restore the Sinner

**VI. Some Key Passages**

- A. 1:2–4 on Suffering
- B. 1:13–15 on Sin and Temptation: Desire to Sin to Death
- C. 1:25; 2:8, 12 on “The Law”

The “law” in James is described in very positive ways:

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. (Jas 1:25)

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. (Jas 2:8)

So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. (Jas 2:12)

- D. 2:14–26 on True Faith

Paul is asking, “What saves you?” And his answer is, “Faith, not works” (Rom 1:16–17; Gal 2:16)

James is asking a different question, “What kind of faith saves you?” His answer is, “A living faith, not a dead faith.”

- E. 4:1–2 and Conflicts

There are “desires” that lie beneath all “quarrels” (4:2); or, *cravings underlie conflicts* (David Powlison).

**The Epistle of 1 Peter**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 12**

**I. Good morning!**

**II. Who and When?**

- A. How do we know that Peter wrote *1 Peter*?
1. Internal Evidence
    - a. Named in 1:1
    - b. Connection to 2 Peter, where “Simon Peter” is named as well (1:1), and he refers to being “eyewitnesses of His majesty” at the Transfiguration (1:16-18).
    - c. The refrain about Christ as “Shepherd” (1 Peter 1:25; 5:4) and elders called to “shepherd the flock” entrusted to them echoes Jesus’ triple exhortation to Peter at the end of John to “feed my sheep” (21:15, 16, 17).
  2. External Evidence
    - a. Donald Guthrie’s NT Introduction says there was no question of its authorship in the early church and its place in the canon was *never* a question until recent critical scholarship.
    - b. Early authors like Polycarp, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria in 1 Clement, Irenaeus quote from it—as if it is Scripture. See Keener for an extensive look at this evidence.<sup>26</sup>
    - c. Peter H. Davids, “More importantly, it is, along with 1 John, the only Catholic Epistle<sup>27</sup> that was, so far as we know, never doubted or rejected, which, given its widespread use, is not surprising.”<sup>28</sup>
  3. 1 Peter 5:12, “By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you.”
    - a. Some scholars think Peter’s Greek in 1 Peter is too good to be from a Galilean fisherman.
    - b. Especially since 2 Peter comes from the same author and its Greek is less ornate and polished than 1 Peter. *Remember,*

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<sup>26</sup> Craig S. Keener, *1 Peter: A Commentary* (Baker Academic, 2021), 17–25.

<sup>27</sup> Davids, NICNT. He means it was center to the *entire* (catholic) church, not that it’s a Roman Catholic document.

<sup>28</sup> A Theology of James, Peter, and Jude: Living in the Light of the Coming King, Biblical Theology of the New Testament (Zondervan, 2014), 185.

*though, simplicity of Greek does not at all mean simplicity of thought (cf. John's writings).*

- c. Likely is that 1 Peter written through the "amanuensis" (a secretary) Silvanus, as indicated in 5:12.
  - d. The thoughts, structure, and concerns are Peters, but the words are crafted by Silvanus.
4. Keener holds to a Silvanus amanuensis theory as well and concludes, "Ockham's razor, however, suggests that the simpler solution is more apt to be correct, and the simpler solution here is that Peter remained alive and composed or directed the letter with significant collaboration or assistance."<sup>29</sup> On pgs 393–402 he has an extensive look at Peter's phrase, "*through* Silvanus . . . I wrote to you briefly." He concludes:

A complete survey of the evidence, then, suggests that the expression "wrote through" was a loose one that could be used to encompass the entire epistolary (or other written) communication process or specify help at a particular stage. It could designate either composition (the usual sense of "writing") or, more loosely (yet quite commonly), delivery.<sup>30</sup>

- a. Clowney says Silas was certainly the letter-carrier and "so, too, he may have conferred with Peter in the preparation of the letter, or may have drafted it under Peter's direction."<sup>31</sup>
- b. Why an amanuensis? Because ancient writing was not just a matter of literacy (i.e., who could read and then understand how to write the proper letters and words). It was also a matter of the techniques of pens, ink, and paper. Written documents weren't as easy as going to Staples and buying your supplies. People were trained in language but also the creation and preservation of documents. Peter was plenty intelligent: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished" (Acts 4:13). But as a fisherman he wasn't likely skilled in creating documents. This is also true of Paul, who also used an amanuensis. Evident in places where he signs his name through a sentence like, "See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand" (Gal 6:11).

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<sup>29</sup> Craig S. Keener, *1 Peter*, 13.

<sup>30</sup> Craig S. Keener, *1 Peter*, 401.

<sup>31</sup> Edmund P. Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter*, BST (InterVarsity, 1988), 21.

- c. Note on “Silvanus”: This is an alternate spelling for “Silas,” the companion of Paul who co-wrote 1–2 Thessalonians and who was a co-laborer with Paul in various parts of his 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey. He is sent from the Jerusalem Council with Paul in Acts 15:22 and is last mentioned in Acts 18:5. He’s with Paul throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey and is mentioned singing hymns with him at midnight in Philippi.
- B. The author himself
  - 1. One of the first apostles called (Matt. 4:18).
  - 2. Outspoken: Matt. 14:28, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water”; but also Matt. 16:16, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”
  - 3. Part of Jesus’ inner circle of Peter, James, and John. These three are present with Jesus at the Transfiguration (Matt 17:1–8), which is significant because of 2 Peter 1:16–18:
 

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” 18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. (2 Pet 1:16-18)
  - 4. Denied Christ three times (Matt. 26:58ff.) but he was fully restored by Christ (esp. John 21:15-17), and after he was filled with the Spirit proved fearless to authorities (Acts 4:19; 5:29-32). *It makes a difference when you are saved and filled with the Spirit!!!*
  - 5. A leader in the early church: Acts 1:15, “Peter stood up and said...”; preaches the Pentecost sermon, Acts 2:17ff.; preaches the gospel to the first Gentile Cornelius in Acts 10-11.
  - 6. Peter was outspoken and brash, but we should definitely not see him as unintelligent. He was a skillful orator and thoroughly immersed in the OT. His sermons in Acts (Acts 2, 3, 4, 10) reflect the same theological mind as evidenced in 1–2 Peter. Remember Acts 4:13, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.”
  - 7. But...he was definitely NOT the first pope!!
- C. When did Peter write the book?

1. Dating depends on Nero's death (AD 68) and Peter's martyrdom during his reign (AD 67?).
2. Keener holds to the view that 1 Peter is written by Peter during Nero's reign but doesn't get more specific than that (*1 Peter*, 30).
3. If these are set then we need also to consider that Peter wrote two letters, ones which differ enough to think they weren't written close together.
4. Carson says AD 62–63 because not enough time to write 2 Peter if later than this (*Introduction to the New Testament*).
5. Doug Oss and Thomas Schreiner give a broader estimate of 64-67 (*ESV Study Bible*).
6. **Edmund Clowney** (BST) says that because Paul does not mention Peter in connection with Rome and neither does Peter mention Paul, "it would seem that Peter wrote from Rome after Paul left, released from his first imprisonment in AD 62....The date of AD 63, after Paul's departure and before Nero's persecution, has a high degree of probability" (*The Message of 1 Peter*, 23).
7. Mid 60s under Nero is the general era for both epistles.

### III. Key Elements in 1 Peter

- A. Perspective on this life
  1. Peter is honest about "suffering." The verb "suffer" (*paschō*) and noun "suffering" (*pathēma*) are used often in 1 Peter (1:11; 2:19, 20, 21, 23; 3:8, 14, 17; 4:1, 13, 15, 19; 5:1, 9, 10).
  2. Peter writes to us as "elect exiles of the Dispersion" (1:1), refers to this life as "your exile" (1:17), and he calls us "sojourners and exiles" (2:11). There is a practical side to this and a theological side.
  3. Peter helps us see in light of Christ's work.
 

"Live as if Christ died yesterday, he rose this morning, and he's coming back tomorrow" – would reflect Peter's attitude.
- B. A theme in Peter's writing is the way he calls us to obedience but then gives us weighty reasons to obey:
  1. Because we are called to this (1:2);
  2. Because we are commanded to in the Old Testament (e.g., 1:16) and in the New Testament (e.g., 2:17);

3. Because of who we are ("you call on him as Father," 1:17; "as sojourners and exiles," 2:11);
  4. Because of evangelism (2:12);
  5. Because of Christ's example (2:21-23);
  6. Because we have died to sin in order to live to righteousness (2:24);
  7. Because there is blessing in it (3:10-12);
  8. Because the time is short (4:7) and judgment is coming (4:5);
  9. Because of the glory of God (4:11).
- C. This times to another theme in 1 Peter and the New Testament: indicatives and imperatives.
1. Indicatives are statements (end with a period):
  2. Imperatives are commands (can end with an exclamation point).
  3. In the NT, indicatives are the basis of the imperatives, and the indicatives should always lead to imperatives.
  4. See this often in 1 Peter:

As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16)

Servants, **be subject** to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust...<sup>21</sup> **For** to this you have been called, **because Christ also suffered for you**, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.<sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (2:18, 21-22)

**Do not** repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, **that you may** obtain a blessing. (1 Pet 3:9)

#### IV. Basic Outline (building around his indicatives and imperatives)

- A. (1:1–2) Greeting
- B. (1:3–2:10) As those called to a living hope, as living stones, as a chosen race, live obediently (*emphasis on indicatives*)
 

1:3–9 is one of the great statements in the Bible about what Christ has done for us.
- C. (2:11–3:12) Live obediently in light of being "sojourners and exiles" (2:11) that they may "see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation" (2:12) (*emphasis on imperatives and the cross*)

11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 12 Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (1 Pet 2:11-12)

- D. (3:13–5:11) Live obediently in light of the shortness of the time (*emphasis on imperatives and coming judgment*)

The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. (1 Pet 4:7)

- E. (5:12–14) Greetings and Peace

## V. Detailed Outline of Peter

### I. (1:1-2) Greeting

### II. (1:3-2:10) As those called to a living hope, as living stones, as a chosen race, live obediently (*emphasis on indicatives, not imperatives*)

- A. (1:3-16) In light of being born again to a living hope, we are to be holy.
- B. (1:17-21) In light of calling God our Father and the imperishable blood that saved us, we are to walk in fear.
- C. (1:22-2:3) In light of the eternal word that regenerated us, we are to long for the pure milk of the word.
- D. (2:4-2:10) In light of being living stones in the spiritual house with Christ as the Cornerstone and who we've become, we are to "proclaim the excellencies of him who called you."

### III. (2:11–3:12) Live obediently in light of being “sojourners and exiles” (2:11) that they may “see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” (2:12) (*emphasis on imperatives and the cross*)

- A. (2:11-12) THESIS FOR THE SECTION: As sojourners and exiles, keep your behavior excellent so that Gentiles will glorify God.
- B. (2:13-25) Following Christ's own example, Suffer well.
- C. (3:1-7) Following Christ's example, wives ought to be submissive, fearless, gracious, and modest to win your husbands; husbands are to honor and understand your wives so prayers unhindered.
- D. (3:8-12) Because of our calling (v. 9), “bless” others, that you may obtain a blessing, to which we were called—cites Ps 34:12–16.

### IV. (3:13–5:11) Live obediently in light of the shortness of the time (*emphasis on imperatives and coming judgment*)

- A. (3:13-22) Because Christ died for our sins to bring us to God, we are to suffer well and give a defense (*apologia*) for the hope in us.



Christ after his resurrection (v. 18) “went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison” (v. 19) who were judged “in the days of Noah” (v. 20). Who are these “spirits in prison”?

4 views: (1) Christ went to hell (which we can reject, since he was with the Father upon death); (2) Christ was preaching *through* Noah (which we can reject, since Peter is speaking of something after the resurrection); (3) Christ was preaching to fallen angels imprisoned for their sins; (4) Christ was preaching to fallen angels *and* condemned people. Views 3 and 4 are possible, but view 3 seems best.

A good defender of this view is Thomas Schreiner who says: “The majority view among scholars today is that the text describes Christ’s proclamation of victory and judgment over the evil angels.”<sup>32</sup> His reasoning:

- (1) the verbs for “went” in v. 18 and “has gone” in v. 22 aren’t sufficiently captured by view #4 above;
- (2) “spirits” fits better with angels than disembodied souls (186);
- (3) “prison” fits better an angelic understanding, especially in light of Rev 20:7 adopting the same word. This occurs “after his death and resurrection” (188);
- (4) Gen 6:1–4 “may possibly provide the reason for the spirits’ punishment: their sexual relations with women;
- (5) “This interpretation was standard in Jewish literature in Peter’s day” and here he cites *1 Enoch, Jubilees*, some Targum (188). He acknowledges that “the greatest difficulty for such a view is the word ‘preached’” (189) and the way his view empties of a literal meaning.

- B. (4:1-6) Live for the will of God to follow Christ’s example (v. 1), and because of the coming judgment (vv. 5-6).
- C. (4:7-11) Pray, love, and serve others knowing the end is near (v. 7), and to glorify God through Christ (v. 11).
- D. (4:12-19) Suffer well, sharing Christ’s sufferings (v. 13) and knowing that this is normal until Christ returns (v. 12).
- E. (5:1-4) Elders shepherd faithfully, knowing the Chief Shepherd is coming to give an “unfading crown of glory.”
- F. (5:5-11) Be humble to receive grace and be exemplified; be alert because of the devil prowling; be firm in your faith for God will soon bless and perfect you in glory.

## V. (5:12-14) Greetings and Peace

- A. (5:12-14a) Greetings (epistle is “by Silvanus”; greetings from “she who is at Babylon,” and “Mark, my son”).

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, NAC (B&H, 2003), 185.

B. (5:14b) "Peace to all of you who are in Christ."

**The Revelation to John**  
**Introduction to the New Testament**  
**Class 13 & 14**

*“Can you understand the Book of Revelation? Yes, you can. You can summarize its message in one sentence: God rules history and will bring it to its consummation in Christ. Read it with this main point in mind, and you will understand. You will not necessarily understand every detail—neither do I. But it is not necessary to understand every detail in order to profit spiritually.... Revelation is about theophany, God appearing.”*  
*Vern Poythress, The Returning King: A Guide to the Book of Revelation<sup>33</sup>*

**I. Remember the Big Idea: *Jesus Wins!***

**II. Who, When, Why**

A. Who

1. Author is John the apostle
2. Internal evidence:
  - a. The book itself:

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant **John**, 2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. (Rev 1:1-2)

**John** to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, (Rev 1:4)

I, **John**, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (Rev 1:9)

- b. The author is one of the “Johns” of early church—John Mark (John 12:12), John the Baptist (Matt 3:1), or apostle John (Matt 4:21). John the Baptist did not write, John Mark has

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<sup>33</sup> Vern Poythress, *The Returning King* (P&R, 2000). Available at <https://frame-poythress.org/ebooks/the-returning-king/>.

never been connected to this work. The apostle makes sense as one who didn't need to elaborate on "Which John?"

- c. Greek is related to but slightly different style from his other writing (gospel, 3 epistles), but could be the subject matter, could be use of secretary in other writings.
3. External evidence consistent from the earliest quotations in ancient writers. Never another author posited as the author.

## B. When

1. In the 90's AD, *after* he wrote his gospel.
2. The dating is connected to the issue of which emperor was in power at the time. D.A. Carson and Greg Beale and many early church fathers say Domitian (reigned AD 81–96). Domitian matches the "emperor worship" practiced and rebuked in Revelation (references to not bowing to the beast); also 7 churches match later date better than early (Laodicea is wealthy in Revelation, but it was destroyed by earthquake in AD 60).<sup>34</sup>
3. Several early church fathers<sup>35</sup> affirm Revelation was written during the reign of Domitian:
  - a. Irenaeus (ca 130–200) says it was written "toward the end of the reign of Domitian" (*Adv. Haer.* 5.30.3)
  - b. Clement of Alexandria (150–215), *Quis div.* 42
  - c. Origen (185–253), *Matt.* 16.6
  - d. Victorinus (300s), *Apoc.* 10.11
  - e. Eusebius, *H.E.* 3.18 (published AD 313)
4. Hendriksen, *More than Conquerors*, argues for a date of AD 95/96 for similar reasons. The conditions during the reign of Domitian, toward the end of his reign, fit best (20–21). He cites Irenaeus, "For that (the apocalyptic vision) was seen not a very long time since, but almost in our own day, toward the end of Domitian's reign" (*ibid.*).
5. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, NIGTC, argues for a late date as well: "To sum up, the earlier date may be right, but the internal evidence is not sufficient to outweigh the firm tradition stemming from Irenaeus" (27).

## C. Why

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<sup>34</sup> Carson, Moo, Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (1992), 473–476.

<sup>35</sup> Cited Carson, 708.

1. Daniel Wallace argues that it was the increase of state persecution by Domitian.<sup>36</sup>
2. Clearly written to buoy Christians in times of tribulation.

### III. A unique kind of writing

- A. It is “apocalyptic” (from *apocalypse*, Greek word for “revelation” as in Rev. 1:1).
  1. Symbols, vivid pictures
    - a. “Show me, don’t tell me.”
    - b. Note the refrain of, “Then I saw...” (Rev 5:1; 7:2; 8:2; 10:1; 13:11; 14:6; 15:1; 19:11, 17; 20:1, 4, 11; 21:1).
    - c. It is theology through pictures. God is all-seeing, but this is conveyed by “the Lamb” having “seven eyes” (5:6), not by saying “Jesus sees all things.”
  2. Dramatic scenes of judgment: Blood, fire, death, war, famine
  3. Prophecy that is more future-oriented: Less about what’s happening *now*, more about what’s to come.
  4. Closest parallels are OT writing in several places:
    - a. Daniel (e.g., speaking of massive epochs of history with creatures and statues, esp. Daniel 7-12),
    - b. Ezekiel (e.g., Ezekiel 1 and the four living creatures, some filled with eyes and wheels spinning in multiple directions), and
    - c. Zechariah (e.g., different-colored horses in 6:1-8).
  5. Poythress makes a good point that we shouldn’t over-generalize about apocalyptic literature. Even though it has general tendencies, we need to also allow that *each apocalyptic work has to be read on its own terms and looking for the specific author’s intent.*

*“No specific prophesied historical events are discerned in the book, except for the final coming of Christ to deliver and judge and to establish the final form of the kingdom in a consummated new creation—though there are a few exceptions to this rule (e.g., 2:10, 22 and 3:9-10). The Apocalypse symbolically portrays events throughout history, which is understood to be under the sovereignty of the Lamb as a result of his death and resurrection. He will guide the events depicted until they finally issue in the last judgment and the definitive establishment of his kingdom. This means that specific events throughout the age extending from Christ’s first coming to his second may be identified with one narrative or symbol. We may call this age inaugurated by Christ’s first*

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

*coming and concluded by his final appearance “the church age,” “the interadventual age,” or “the latter days.” The majority of the symbols in the book of transtemporal in the sense that they are applicable to events throughout the “church age.”*

*“Therefore, the historicists may sometimes be right in their precise historical identifications, but wrong in limiting the identification only to one historical reality. The same verdict may be passed on the preterist school of thought, especially the Roman version. And certainly there are prophecies of the future in Revelation. The crucial yet problematic task of the interpreter is to identify through careful exegesis and against the original historical background those texts which pertain respectively to past, present, and future.”<sup>37</sup>*

- B. It is prophecy
  - 1. Forth-telling *and...*
  - 2. Fore-telling
- C. It is an epistle
  - 1. A letter from John.
  - 2. A letter to the churches of Asia Minor (7 cities listed, likely a circular letter to be sent to one, passed to another).
  - 3. I.e., it has a specific author and a specific audience—even though God is also the author and all people (especially the church) are the audience.
- D. Interpreting Revelation: The opening chapters (1–5) and closing chapters (21–22) are clearer, the middle ones can get fuzzy. When in doubt, remember the big ideas from the opening and closing chapters!

#### IV. Four Views on the History of the Events Described in Revelation

- A. Historicism – Written chronologically in order *from John’s day to eternal state*

“Historicism can plausibly claim to read Revelation quite straightforwardly as a series of sequential visions that symbolize, in order, the sequence of events that span the history of the church, from John’s day to the second coming, millennium, last judgment, and the eternal state.”<sup>38</sup>

- 1. This view holds that you can more-or-less read Revelation chronologically. It progresses from John’s day to the last day as its chapters unfold.

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<sup>37</sup> G.K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (NIGTC, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2013), 48-49.

<sup>38</sup> Dennis Johnson, *Triumph of the Lamb* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2001), 353.

2. Some of the Reformers were proponents of this view, which is one of the reasons why they so often identified the Antichrist with the pope(!).
3. Historicists of every generation simply re-interpret the dramatic signs described by John according to their own place in church history. Yet, there are too many signs given to us that John is not writing such “history in advance,” but is giving us different scenes of the present and future, only some of which are in chronological order.

B. Futurism – It’s future not just to John but to us

“Futurism, as the name indicates, views Revelation’s visions as concentrated on events still largely future not only to John’s first-century readers but also to us twenty-first-century readers—events that will immediately precede the second coming of Christ.”<sup>39</sup>

1. In other words, most of the book refers to the return of Christ and the years immediately preceding that.
2. This view dominates much of the conservative Christian landscape (Sam Storms). It has adherents among Charismatics who are post-millennial (we’ll get to the millennium in another post), Southern Baptists who are Dispensational, and scholars like Wayne Grudem (cf. his *Systematic Theology*), D.A. Carson, G.E. Ladd, and [Daniel Wallace](#). This is also the view of fictional works like the *Left Behind* series by Tim LaHaye.

C. Preterism – Much of it has already happened and concerns the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70

“Preterists may be either amillennial (Jay E. Adams) or postmillennial (David Chilton, Kenneth Gentry) in their interpretation of Revelation 20....The defining feature of preterism is not its understanding of the conditions on earth during the time period symbolized by the ‘thousand years’ of Revelation 20. Rather, preterists of all millennial viewpoints share a common agreement that a large proportion of Revelation’s visions were fulfilled in the early Christian centuries.”<sup>40</sup>

1. Preterists can hold to an earlier date and so believe that the book largely concerns the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in AD 70, or they can hold to a later date and see John’s contemporary situation in the AD 90’s as the fulfillment of the prophecies.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 355.

<sup>40</sup> Dennis Johnson, *Triumph.*, 358.

2. Keith Mathison of [Ligonier Ministries](#) affirms this position, and [Kenneth Gentry](#) has written and spoken extensively on it.
- D. Recapitulation (Idealism, Iterism, progressive parallelism) – John retells the history of the church with different emphases each time.

“Idealism is sometimes called iterism or recapitulationism because it interprets Revelation as a series of repeated symbolic pictures of the church’s struggle from John’s day until the second coming, the last judgment, and the eternal state. Thus Revelation offers multiple images that provide different perspectives on the same great warfare, sometimes in terms of its behind-the-scenes heavenly sources and at other times in terms of their visible, earthly outworking in the experience of churches, countries, and cultures.”<sup>41</sup>

1. The fourth view of the book is a bit of a hybrid of the other approaches in that it sees the book telling the story of the church from the time of John to the return of Christ (and then the new heavens and new earth, of course). So, for us, some of the book has already taken place and some has yet to occur.
2. Another distinctive of this approach is the emphasis it places on the seven divisions of the book (basically chapters 1-3, 4-7, 8-11, 12-14, 15-16, 17-19, 20-22). While this outline is not unique, commentators who hold this view see each of these seven sections as essentially telling the same story only with a slightly different emphasis (or very different at certain points). It’s been compared to watching the same play in football from several different camera angles. But regardless of the emphasis, each section is giving us the history from John’s day to the return of Christ (and into the new heavens and new earth). Sometimes the weight is much more toward the present situation (chapters 1-3), but even then there are glances at the end of all things (“Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him,” 1:7). Sometimes the weight is toward the latter times (chapters 20-22), but even then there are clear exhortations to Christians living now (22:7ff.).
3. An excellent, smallish commentary from this perspective is William Hendricksen’s *More than Conquerors*.
4. Dennis Johnson’s *The Triumph of the Lamb* comes from the same perspective in a more modern form. He is also the contributor to Revelation in the ESV Study Bible, so the notes in that Bible are his.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 360.



5. Other thinkers who adopt this approach are Anthony Hoekema (*The Bible and the Future*), B.B. Warfield, Herman Bavinck, [G.K. Beale](#) in his massive NIGTC commentary and shorter abridgement of it, [Vern Poythress](#), and Sam Storms (*Kingdom Come*).
6. More authors on recapitulation (Hoekema, Warfield)
  - a. Anthony Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979).

Lays out a view of Revelation called *progressive parallelism*, which he says is also defended by Hendricksen (*More than Conquerors*), Bavinck (*Reformed Dogmatics*, Vol 4), Kuyper, B.B. Warfield, “The Millennium and the Apocalypse.”

“According to this view, the book of Revelation consists of seven sections which run parallel to each other, each of which depicts the church and the world from the time of Christ’s first coming to the time of his second coming” (223).

“When one asks, How do we know when one of these seven parallel sections ends (except for the first one, which forms an obvious unit), the answer is that **each of the seven ends with an indication that the end-time has come.** This is the strongest clue for the recapitulation view. Such an indication may be given in terms of a reference to the final judgment at the end of history, or to the final blessedness of God’s people, or to both” (224, emphasis mine).

His outline:

**1-3** – Seven Churches (letters) - Christ and the letters to the seven churches. Letters remind us that the revelation is historically rooted in real events and people, but their contents also point to their relevance for the church throughout history.

**4-7** – Seven Seals – Final judgment in 6:15-17); final blessedness in 7:15-17

**8-11** – Seven Trumpets - Final judgment in 11:18

**12-14** – Woman giving birth, Beast from sea, Beast from earth – Final judgment in 14:14-15

**15-16** – Seven Bowls of Wrath – Final judgment in 16:17-20

**17-19** – Fall of Babylon and Beasts – Final Judgment in 19:11-20

**20-22 – Doom of Dragon, New Heaven and New Earth –  
Final blessedness in 21:1-22:5**

Hoekema says that “though these seven sections are parallel to each other **they also reveal a certain amount of eschatological progress**. The last section, for example, takes us further into the future than the other sections. Although the final judgment has already been briefly described in 6:12-17, it is not set forth in full detail until we come to 20:11-15. Though the final joy of the redeemed in the life to come has been hinted at in 7:15-17, it is not until we reach chapter 21 that we find a detailed and elaborate description of the blessedness of life on the new earth (21:1-22:5). Hence this method of interpretation is called *progressive parallelism*.” He continues, “There is eschatological progression in these sections not only regarding the individual sections but also regarding the book as a whole” (226).

Thus, first half of the book (1-11) sees “the struggle on earth, picturing the church as it is persecuted by the world.” The second half (12-22) “gives us the deeper spiritual background of this struggle, setting forth the persecution of the church by the dragon (Satan) and his helpers. In the light of this analysis, we see how the last section of the book (20-22) falls into place. This last section describes the judgment which falls on Satan, and his final doom. Since Satan is the supreme opponent of Christ, it stands to reason that his doom should be narrated last” (226).

- b. B.B. Warfield, “The Millennium and the Apocalypse” (obtained at <https://www.monergism.com/millennium-and-apocalypse>)

“These primary principles are, with the greatest possible brevity, the following: 1. The principle of recapitulation.<sup>7</sup> That is to say, the structure of the book is such that it returns at the opening of each of its seven sections to the first advent, and gives in the course of each section a picture of the whole interadventual period - each successive portraiture, however, rising above the previous one in the stress laid on the issue of the history being wrought out during its course. The present section, being the last, reaches, therefore, the climax, and all its emphasis is thrown upon the triumph of Christ’s kingdom. 2. The principle of successive visions. That is to say, the several visions following one another within the limits of each section, though bound to each other by innumerable links, yet are presented as separate visions,

and are to be interpreted, each, as a complete picture in itself. 3. The principle of symbolism. That is to say - as is implied, indeed, in the simple fact that we are brought face to face here with a series of visions significant of events - we are to bear continually in mind that the whole fabric of the book is compact of symbols. The descriptions are descriptions not of the real occurrences themselves, but of symbols of the real occurrences; and are to be read strictly as such. Even more than in the case of parables, we are to avoid pressing details in our interpretation of symbols: most of the details are details of the symbol, designed purely to bring the symbol sharply and strongly before the mind's eye, and are not to be transferred by any method of interpretation whatever directly to the thing symbolized. The symbol as a whole symbolizes the real event: and the details of the picture belong primarily only to the symbol. Of course, now and then a hint is thrown out which may seem more or less to traverse this general rule: but, as a general rule, it is not only sound but absolutely necessary for any sane interpretation of the book. 4. The principle of ethical purpose. That is to say, here as in all prophecy it is the spiritual and ethical impression that rules the presentation and not an annalistic or chronological intent. The purpose of the seer is to make known indeed - to make wise - but not for knowledge's own sake, but for a further end: to make known unto action, to make wise unto salvation. He contents himself, therefore, with what is efficacious for his spiritual end and never loses himself in details which can have no other object than the satisfaction of the curiosity of the mind for historical or other knowledge."

## V. Progressive Parallelism<sup>42</sup>

### A. The sections

1. Section 1 – chaps 1-3
  - a. Key events: Introduction to the book, Letters to the 7 churches
  - b. View of the End: More general references. Jesus is “coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him” (1:7), all the promises to those who “overcome” addressed to the churches speak of eschatological blessings (2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21).

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<sup>42</sup> Built on Hoekema and Hendriksen (19-22), though I have added more detail and proof-texting than their discussions.

2. Section 2 – chaps 4-7 (though technically 4:1–8:1)
  - a. Key events: Throne of God and the Lamb; 7 seals
  - b. Voice of the End: Rev 6:12–8:1. 144k and the saints sealed are before the throne celebrating the salvation of God (6<sup>th</sup> seal has final judgment in 6:12–17; Then 7:1-8:1 are final blessing for God’s people)
3. Section 3 – chaps 8-11 (though technically 8:2–11:19)
  - a. Key events: Seven Trumpets, Two Witnesses
  - b. View of the End: 11:15-19 is final judgment with the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet: notice it says, “the dead” are “judged” and “rewarding your servants” as well in v. 18)
4. Section 4 – chaps 12-14
  - a. Key events: Dragon/beast/2<sup>nd</sup> beast oppose woman and her child (Christ) and her children (the church), but the Lamb shall crush them (14:1-20).
  - b. View of the End: 14:14–20 is final judgment, where “one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand” (v. 14) I told “the hour to reap has come” (v. 15), and “the earth was reaped” (v. 16). This reaping results in “the great winepress of the wrath of God” (v. 19), where those judged by the Lord are crushed.
5. Section 5 – chaps 15-16
  - a. Key events: 7 bowls of wrath
  - b. View of the End: 7<sup>th</sup> bowl of wrath is salvation accomplished 16:17-21 is seventh bowl of wrath and “the cities of the nations fell” (v. 19), as well as Babylon (v. 19).
6. Section 6 – chaps 17-19
  - a. Key events: Babylon judged, Jesus’ return on white horse, final judgment.
  - b. View of the End: Jesus on his white horse will come and then war to truly end all wars sees utter devastation of devil. 19:11-21 is return of Christ, destruction of two beasts described as “the beast” and “false prophet” who are thrown into lake of fire, war also made with “the kings of the earth” and no provincial power like Rome or Jerusalem.
7. Section 7 – chaps 20-22
  - a. Key events: Millennium, devil and his army destroyed, white throne judgment, new heaven and new earth.
  - b. View of the End: After millennial imprisonment of devil, the war to end all wars and great white throne judgment (20:8-15); new heaven and new earth (21–22)

- B. Other Clues of the Similarities of the Section – I.e., they are *parallel*
1. 11:2 (**Section 3**) and 12:6 (**Section 4**) both have a *forty-two months* time stamp. That is a clue that these sections both take the same basic amount of time.
  2. The Battles
    - a. Culminating battle: The battle of Rev. 20:8-10 (**Section 7**) and 12:1ff. (**Section 4**) are the same battle. Both involve the devil and his powers of darkness. In the earlier battle, it is personified as the Woman against the Dragon/Beast, and in the latter battle, it is seen as the Devil/Beast against all the armies of God.
    - b. Rome/Beast: If the beast from the sea and the beast from the earth are both the devil's opposition to God and the saints, especially as that is expressed through worldly systems like Rome (Babylon), then the fall of Babylon becomes a parallel for the fall of the beast. This joins **Section 6** with its emphasis on the fall of Babylon/Rome (chaps. 17:1-19:10) to **Section 7** where the devil, the beast, and the false prophet are all thrown into the lake of fire to be tormented forever (20:10).
    - c. Final Battle: The battle when the demons and kings of the earth all gather to oppose God in 16:14 (**Section 5**) is paralleled by that same battle described in 19:19 as the beast and the kings of the earth against Christ (**Section 6**), and also by 20:8 where Satan gathers after his millennial imprisonment "for the war" (**Section 7**).
  3. The Trumpets/Bowls and then Seals
    - a. Trumpet (**Section 3**) and Bowl (**Section 5**) parallels
      - 1) 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet and 1<sup>st</sup> Bowl both impact the earth (third of the earth burned in 8:7; wrath on the earth becomes sores in 16:2).
      - 2) 2<sup>nd</sup> trumpet and 2<sup>nd</sup> Bowl both impact the sea (third of the sea turned to blood in 8:8; sea becomes blood in 16:2).
      - 3) 3<sup>rd</sup> trumpet and 3<sup>rd</sup> bowl both impact the rivers (star falls and waters made bitter in 8:10; waters turned to blood and undrinkable in 16:4).
      - 4) 4<sup>th</sup> trumpet/bowl impacts the sun (third of the sun stricken and third of the day is dark, 8:12; people scorched by sun in 16:8).

- 5) 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet/bowl describes the beast and his throne (“the bottomless pit<sup>43</sup>,” 9:1; “throne of the beast,” 16:10).
  - 6) 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet/bowl impacts the Euphrates (9:14; 16:12).
  - 7) 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet/bowl brings final judgment.
- b. What about the 7 seals (**Section 2**) and the trumpet/bowl parallels?<sup>44</sup>
- 1) 1<sup>st</sup> seal is the Conqueror and fits the 1<sup>st</sup> trum/bowl
  - 2) 2<sup>nd</sup> seal is Peace removed and could easily be the *result* of 2<sup>nd</sup> trum/bowl.
  - 3) 3<sup>rd</sup> seal is famine and easily *result* of 3<sup>rd</sup> trum/bowl
  - 4) 4<sup>th</sup> seal is death and easily fits any of first four trum/bowl
  - 5) 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> seals: 5<sup>th</sup> seal is, “How long till your wrath is poured?” and 6<sup>th</sup> seal is final judgment with 7<sup>th</sup> being a half-hour of silence. Easy to imagine these as a set that fits squarely after 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> trum/bowls and overlaps with 7<sup>th</sup> trum/bowl.
  - 6) In other words, the seals in no way contradict this schema and seem to fit almost as commentary to it. Again it is the same narrative approached from slightly different perspectives.

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<sup>43</sup> Notice how all of Satan kingdom is an *anti*- kingdom. Instead of the Holy Spirit he has a “false prophet.” Instead of a throne exalted in heaven, he has “the bottomless pit” and “the abyss” (11:7).

<sup>44</sup> These thoughts are my own observations.

<b>The Repeating Cycle of 7 Seals, Trumpets, Bowls of Wrath</b>			
Repetition with Growing Intensity: E.g., 3 <sup>rd</sup> trumpet has waters "embittered" but 2 <sup>nd</sup> bowl has everything in sea destroyed; 7 seals have no mention of Dragon but Anti-trinity features strongly in 6 <sup>th</sup> Bowl.			
The Series	7 Seals	7 Trumpets	7 Bowls of Wrath
1 <sup>st</sup>	6:1-2 – Living creature goes out to conquer	8:2-7 – 1/3 earth burned up	16:1-2 – Those with "mark of the beast" who worshiped his image punished
2 <sup>nd</sup>	6:3-4 – Living creature brings war	8:8-9 – 1/3 ships, sea creatures destroyed, 1/3 sea becomes blood	16:3 – Everything in sea destroyed
3 <sup>rd</sup>	6:5-6 – Living creature brings famine	8:10-11 – 1/3 waters embittered, many die	16:4-7 – Rivers/springs become blood, Lord worshiped as holy and righteous
4 <sup>th</sup>	6:7-8 – Living creature kills ¼ of the earth	8:12 – sun and moon struck and darkened, 1/3 stars fall	16:8-9 – Sun scorches people, but men do not repent
5 <sup>th</sup>	6:9-11 – Souls slain because of word of God given white robes	8:13-9:12 – Locusts destroying who rise up from "the bottomless pit" (v. 2), kill for 5 months	16:10-11 – Kingdom of beast darkened, but did not repent
6 <sup>th</sup>	6:12-17 – Sun became black, moon to blood, stars fell, every mountain and island removed, all powerful kings and leaders cry out to be saved from Lamb's wrath	9:13-21 – 4 angels kill 1/3 mankind, but rest of mankind did not repent (vv. 20-21)	16:12 – Euphrates dried up.
Interlude	Interlude – 7:1-17 – 144,000 sing of God's salvation, who survived the "tribulation"	Interlude – 10:1-11:14 – "Holy city" trampled for 42 months and two witnesses prophesy for 1,260 days (same as 42 months). **Beast (cf. 13:1ff.) kills them, but after 3 ½ days Witnesses resurrected.	16:13-16 – False prophet comes out of mouth of Dragon and mouth of the Beast (thus, False Prophet = Beast from the Sea = False religions); Assembled at Armageddon. (Note: 20:7-10 says devil, beast, false prophet thrown into lake of fire after 1,000 years ended)
7 <sup>th</sup>	8:1 – ½ hour silence in heaven	11:15-19 – Celebration that the kingdom of the world now the kingdom of God.	16:17-21 – Cry by "seventh angel" is, "It is done!" (v. 17). Earthquake, "great city" Babylon destroyed, hailstones destroying, people blaspheming and not repenting.

## VI. The Four Basic Views on the Millennium

We start with a look at Revelation 20 itself.

### A. Revelation 20:1–10<sup>45</sup>

1 **Then I saw** an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And **he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years**, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

4 **Then I saw** thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. **They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

7 **And when the thousand years are ended**, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, 10 and **the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur** where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

### B. Approaching the Millennium

1. One thing that will impact our approach to this passage is what the Old and New Testament have taught already. These passages are very clear and there are many of them. Here we are using the principle of **“the clearer passages help us interpret the less clear passages.”** The millennium is a less clear passage, so we use these clearer passages as the interpretive guides.

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<sup>45</sup> In my interpretation, I'll follow Hoekema's, "The Millennium of Revelation 20," chapter 26 of *The Bible and the Future*, 223–238.



- a. The Old and New Testaments essentially use a two-age model. There's "this age," and then there's "the age to come."

"And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." (Matt 12:32)

29 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30 who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life." (Mark 10:29-30)

...what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. (Eph 1:19–21)

- b. This fundamental two-age timeline makes a separate, literal, thousand year period between these two ages a strange thing.
  - c. Another theme in the New Testament is that of a single return of Christ: He is returning and *then* the judgment will follow. A view that sees multiple returns is a strange thing.
2. Also, remember the pattern that John has established so far with the *progressive parallelism* idea. The end of Revelation 19 took us to the return of Christ and "the beast" and "the false prophet" being thrown into the lake of fire (19:11–21). Revelation 20 is the beginning of the next section. It's a restart of the story, focusing now on Satan's influence during the church age.
  3. Symbolic numbers
    - a. Numbers are very significant in Revelation, especially the numbers 3, 7, 10, 12, and 1,000
    - b. 1,000 is symbolic and means "all of" something, a complete set.
    - c. 12 relates to the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles. When we find a 12, we usually find a reference to "all of Israel" or "all of the New Testament church." An example is

the New Jerusalem where you have the 12 gates named after the 12 tribes (21:12) and then “12 foundations” named after the “12 apostles of the Lamb” (21:14). This tells us the New Jerusalem includes all the saints from the Old and New Testaments.

- d. 1,000 appears in many places like the 144,000. This stands for “all God’s people.”  $12 \times 12 \times 1000$ . 12 tribes of Israel (OT), 12 apostles (NT), 1000 means all of them.
- e. 7 is a number of perfect. Jesus as “7 eyes” (5:6) because he has perfect omniscience.
- f. 10 means “a lot!” – Beasts with “ten horns” have “a lot of power!”
- g. All of these are clues that “a thousand years” doesn’t mean a literal thousand years on a calendar but instead “all of the age,” “the whole age.”
- h. Three-and-a-half is another significant number but more complicated. John uses “1,260 days” ( “42 months,” “three-and-a-half-years,” “time, times, and half a time.” All of these are the same three-and-a-half. This number comes from Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week in Daniel 9:27:

“And he [the promised “Prince”] shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.” (Daniel 9:27)

- 1) “Half of the week” is  $3 \frac{1}{2}$  days. Sacrifice ends spiritually with the rending of the veil at the crucifixion and physically with the destruction of the temple in AD 70. Either could be the reference point.
- 2) The second half of the week occurs after this event and extends until “the desolator” is destroyed. This could easily be the devil’s destruction.
- 3) Therefore, the  $3 \frac{1}{2}$  in Daniel 9:27 refers to the entire church age. This lines up well with the use of  $3 \frac{1}{2}$  in Revelation.
  - a) 11:2, holy city trampled for “forty-two months.”
  - b) 11:3, two witnesses prophesy for 1,260 days ( $1,260/30 \text{ days} = 42 \text{ months} = 3.5 \text{ years}$ ).
  - c) 11:9, 11, two witnesses dead for  $3 \frac{1}{2}$  days.

- d) 12:6, woman nourished by God in wilderness for 1,260 days.
  - e) 12:14, woman nourished in wilderness for “time, times, and half a time.”
  - f) 13:5, beast utters blasphemies and opposes people of God for “forty-two months.”
4. Note also the two “Then I saw” phrases. He’s giving us a slide show of what’s happening, not necessarily consecutive events. These two snapshots are really the view from below (20:1–3) and the view from above (20:4–6). 20:7–10 takes place after this thousand years.
  5. The basic picture is Satan being bound for a thousand years (v. 2) and martyred (not all) Christians reigning with Christ during that thousand years (v. 4). They “came to life” (v. 4) in the sense that their souls are living with Christ in heaven. 20:5 speaks of those who don’t come to life “until the thousand years were ended.” This is speaking of unbelievers. They are not “living” in the way believers are but are suffering in the torments of Hades. After the thousand years, however, they’ll be raised up bodily (“come to life”) and then begin to suffer in the fires of hell forever.
  6. After this thousand years, then Satan is released, there’s a sort of battle that Satan immediately loses, and then he’s thrown into the lake of fire (20:10).
  7. This is basic passage. It is highly metaphorical and not at all described as straight-forward historical narrative.
  8. But, with the passage in mind, what are the four main views about the millennium?
- C. Postmillennialism
1. Christ returns AFTER (post) the millennium.
  2. Basic picture: Church becomes increasingly victorious in world and experiences a future “golden age” (millennium). At the end of this, a brief period where things get bad again. THEN Jesus returns.
  3. Key Texts: Builds a lot on the kingdom parables of Jesus. The mustard seed starts small but eventually becomes a tree where birds nest in its branches (Matt 13:31–32). Leaven in the dough spreads throughout the dough (Matt 13:33). Post-mil has a strong confidence that the growth of the church will continue until the

presence of evil is hardly experienced. Things like abortion and murder will eventually be eradicated.

4. Advocates: R.C. Sproul, Greg Bahnsen, Loraine Boettner, many saints before 20<sup>th</sup> century and two world wars, overall not too many followers. Keith Mathison wrote a book on it but his view overlaps with the Amillennial position significantly.<sup>46</sup>

#### D. Classical/Historic Premillennialism

1. Christ returns BEFORE (pre) the millennium.
2. Basic Picture: Christ returns to establish his reign on earth with his people. This is the millennium. After this time of a glorious life on earth, the end comes and final judgment. Then "new heavens and new earth" of Revelation 21-22.
3. Key Texts: Builds its case basically by saying "we must take Revelation 20:1-6 literally." Also wants to say that certain OT prophecies require a millennium to be fulfilled (ironically, one of these is the "new heaven and new earth" passage in Isa 65:17, a passage that is obviously talking about the new heaven and new earth).
4. Advocates: G.E. Ladd, Wayne Grudem, DA Carson (kind of), goodly number of followers.

#### E. Dispensational Premillennialism

1. The view that makes for the best movies and books—*Left Behind* being the single largest franchise!
2. Basic Picture:
  - a. This view includes "the rapture." Christ returns part way (not actually touching earth) and raptures Christians.
  - b. Then follows a 7-year great tribulation.
  - c. After these 7 years, Christ returns and destroys his enemies (Armageddon), Satan is imprisoned.
  - d. Then follows his millennial reign, a thousand-year reign on the earth. The temple in Jerusalem is rebuilt and sacrifices are restored, but these aren't for sin. They are purely for worship and to honor Christ's own sacrifice.
  - e. After a thousand years Satan is released and joined by all the unbelievers alive at the time for a final battle. Christ wins,

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.keithmathison.org/post/post-postmillennialism>

- final judgment occurs, and then the eternal state begins (Rev 21–22).
3. The “Dispensational” name comes from the fact it divides history into 7 “dispensations.” Each has a specific test which humanity is to pass (like Adam and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), but in each salvation is through faith in Christ. 7<sup>th</sup> Dispensation is the millennium<sup>47</sup>:
    - a. Innocence (Gen 1:28-3:6) – man was sinless though able to sin.
    - b. Conscience (Gen 3:7-8:14) – no law is given here but man is to walk according to his conscience.
    - c. Human Govt (Gen 8:15-11:9) – Beginning with Noah and continuing with Babel. Man able to punish murderers, the beginning of basic civil govt.
    - d. Promise (Gen 11:10-Exod 18:27) – Promises to Abraham are fundamental. Response of man is to believe and obey God.
    - e. Law (Ex 19:1-Acts 1:26) – Keep the Mosaic law in order to walk with God.
    - f. Church (Acts 2:1-Rev 19:21) – Believe in Christ and follow Christ in order to be faithful.
    - g. Kingdom/Millennium (Rev 20:1-15) – Christ ruling on earth over all civil govts. Will culminate in the great white throne judgments.
  4. There is another off-shoot of this called *Progressive Dispensationalism*.<sup>48</sup> They have eliminated several of the traditional dispensations and added another at the end. Here are their four primary ones:
    - a. Patriarchal (up to Mt. Sinai)
    - b. Mosaic (Moses to Christ's Ascension)
    - c. Ecclesial (Ecclesial to Christ's Return)
    - d. Zionic (Millennium and then Eternal State)
  5. Basic Picture: Like Classic Pre-mill, sees Christ returning BEFORE (pre) the Millennium. Difference is the Tribulation and Rapture. There will be a 7-year period called "the Great Tribulation." Christians will be "raptured" somewhere around this. This means

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<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Dispensationalism* by Charles C. Ryrie, esp. pp. 51-68.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *Progressive Dispensationalism* by Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993).

they will be taken up to heaven and THEN RETURN TO EARTH AGAIN with Christ to establish the Millennium. AND THEN the final judgment and new heavens and new earth will come. Christians WILL NOT experience the end times tribulation because they will be raptured.

6. Key Texts: Builds on a "literal" understanding of Revelation 20:1-6 but adds a "literal" reading of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 and especially a very specific reading of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24-27.
7. Advocates: Scofield Study Bible, John Nelson Darby, John MacArthur, Shepherd's Church, *Left Behind* series, many Southern Baptists. "Progressive Dispensational" is upheld by Craig Blaising and Darrell Bock.

#### F. Amillennialism

1. "Amillennial" is not really the best name. Makes it sound like there is "no millennium." That's not accurate. View is that the Church Age, right now, is the millennium described in Rev 20:1-6. Hoekema calls it "**realized millennialism**" for that reason.<sup>49</sup> What makes it the "millennium" is that Christ is reigning now, saints who have died are with him now, the devil's influence is restrained as the gospel is advancing. When Christ returns those end-times final battles of Revelation will be fulfilled.
2. Key texts: The Bible speaks of only one return of Christ. Jesus in his teaching and the apostles emphasize a single return of Jesus and after this comes judgment. Not multiple returns like a "rapture" and then a final return. Further, "the age to come" is the "golden age," not an age which is neither this age or the age to come. Jesus and Paul speak of only two ages: "either in this age or the age to come" (Matt 12:32); "not only in this age but also in the one to come" (Eph 1:21). Passages that talk about tribulations and suffering assume Christians experience these. The final answer for the great evils of the world is the new heaven and new earth, not a time on earth where these great evils are marginalized. The human heart is more corrupt than this.

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<sup>49</sup> Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, 173.

3. Advocates: Dominant view among Reformed (esp. Presbyterian) Christians, Cornerstone elders, Dennis Johnson (who did notes in *ESV Study Bible* on Revelation and wrote *Triumph of the Lamb*), William Hendriksen (*More than Conquerors*), Herman Bavinck, Anthony Hoekema (*The Bible and the Future*).

*Of course, there are the "pan-millennialists," who believe it's all going to "pan" out in the mind, so why worry about it?*

## **VII. The New Heaven and New Earth**

- A. The Great Fulfillment of God's Plan!
  1. Revelation 21:1–7
  2. Revelation 22:1–5
- B. The Great Fulfillment of Our Desires

## **VIII. Therefore...**

Revelation 22:18-21:

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. 20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

## **IX. Thank you for a great year!!!**