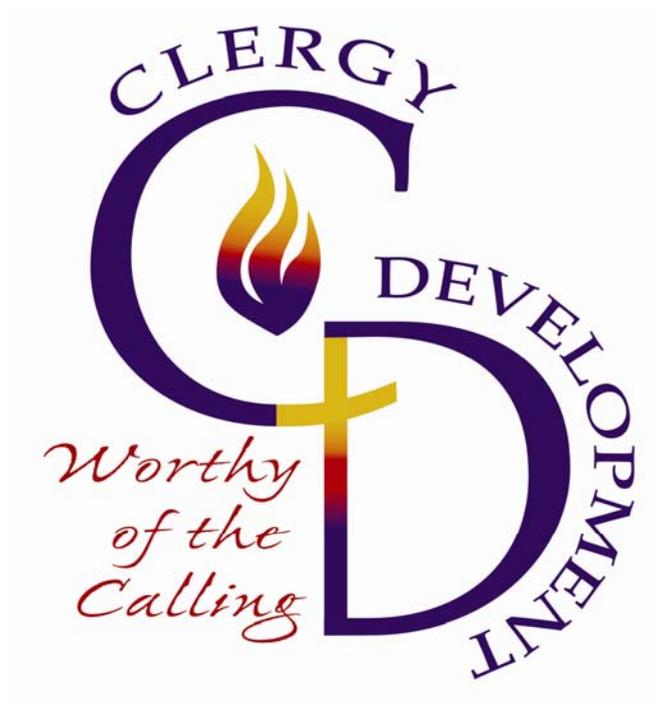

Student Guide

Telling the New Testament Story of God



Clergy Development
Church of the Nazarene
Kansas City, Missouri
816-333-7000 ext. 2468; 800-306-7651 (USA)
2005

Copyright ©2002, 2004, 2005 Nazarene Publishing House, Kansas City, MO USA. Created by Church of the Nazarene Clergy Development, Kansas City, MO USA. All rights reserved.

All scripture quotations except where otherwise noted are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version* (NIV). Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

NASB: From the American Standard Bible (NASB), copyright the Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1977, 1995. Used by permission.

NRSV: From the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Notice to educational providers:

This is a contract. By using these materials you accept all the terms and conditions of this Agreement. This Agreement covers all Faculty Guides, Student Guides, and instructional resources included in this Module.

Upon your acceptance of this Agreement, Clergy Development grants to you a nonexclusive license to use these curricular materials provided that you agree to the following:

1. Use of the Modules.
 - You may distribute this Module in electronic form to students or other educational providers.
 - You may make and distribute electronic or paper copies to students for the purpose of instruction, as long as each copy contains this Agreement and the same copyright and other proprietary notices pertaining to the Module. If you download the Module from the Internet or similar online source, you must include the Clergy Development copyright notice for the Module with any online distribution and on any media you distribute that includes the Module.
 - You may translate, adapt, and/or modify the examples and instructional resources for the purpose of making the instruction culturally relevant to your students. However, you must agree that you will not sell these modified materials without express, written permission from Clergy Development.
2. Copyright. The Module is owned by Clergy Development and is protected by United States Copyright Law and International Treaty provisions. Except as stated above, this Agreement does not grant you any intellectual property rights in the Module.
3. Restrictions.
 - You may not sell copies of this Module in any form except to recover the minimum reproduction cost of electronic media or photocopy expense.
 - You may not modify the wording or original intent of the Module for commercial use.
4. Unpublished rights reserved under the copyright laws of the United States.

Clergy Development
Church of the Nazarene
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131
USA

The **Modular Course of Study** is an outcome-based curriculum designed to implement the educational paradigm defined by the Breckenridge Consultations. Clergy Development is responsible for maintaining and distributing the Modular Course of Study for the Church of the Nazarene.

Members of the development committee for the Modular Course of Study were

Michael W. Vail, Ph.D., Series Curriculum Editor
Ron Blake, Director, Clergy Development
Jerry D. Lambert, Commissioner, International Board of Education
Al Truesdale, Ph.D., Nazarene Theological Seminary (retired)
Robert L. Woodruff, Ph.D., World Mission Educational Coordinator
David Busic, Pastor, Central Church of the Nazarene, Lenexa, KS
Michael W. Stipp, Clergy Development

Series Foreword written by Al Truesdale

Journaling Essay written by Rick Ryding

Principal contributors for each module are listed in specific Faculty Guides.

Series Foreword

A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, all of the creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people: the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, community life, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people, in a form referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe God calls and persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry should continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, "preparation" never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1:7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the "mystery of God," which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to "make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (Eph 6:19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach "the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3:8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1:5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are

stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one's charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward's principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a "job." It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ's Church. The person who embraces God's call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister's stewardship must be, should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to "shun" the love of money. Instead, the minister must "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness." He or she must "fight the good fight of the faith" and "take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called" (1 Tim 6: 11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes "the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence, earnestness; 'in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left' (2 Cor 6: 6-7)" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ "must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ⁸but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ⁹holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching . . . able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1: 7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God's Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ's Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21: 33-44; 25: 14-30; Mk 13: 34-37; Lk 12: 35-40; 19: 11-27; 20: 9-18).

Preparation for ministry in Christ's Church—one's education in all its dimensions—should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect those

standards to be observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12: 1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules comprising the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

Acknowledgments

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is no different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to represent accurately the original intent of the principal contributors.

Principal Contributor

The principal contributor for this module is C. Jeanne Serrao. Dr. Serrao holds a Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate University. She is currently associate professor of religion at Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Mount Vernon, OH, USA.

Previously, Dr. Serrao has taught at Azusa-Pacific University, Trevecca Nazarene University, European Nazarene College, and for the Methodist Course of Study on New Testament, Claremont, California. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Dr. Serrao has been actively involved in Christian ministry serving as an associate pastor, youth pastor, children's pastor, and a Christian school administrator.

Responder

Each module was reviewed by at least one content specialist to ensure that the content did not represent a single, narrow view or opinion. The responder provided suggestions the principal contributor could integrate into this module.

Dr. Roger Hahn was the responder for this module. Dr. Hahn is currently serving as the academic dean of Nazarene Theological Seminary. He is a noted teacher, writer, and pastor.

Dr. Hahn is the editor for the Nazarene Centennial Initiatives, a project to create and publish religious textbooks with a Wesleyan-Holiness perspective.

Contents

	Page
Series Foreword.....	3
Acknowledgments	6
Syllabus	8
Lesson 1: Why Study the New Testament?	18
Lesson 2: Historical, Social, and Religious Settings of the World of Jesus.....	26
Lesson 3: The Life of Jesus.....	36
Lesson 4: The Teaching of Jesus	40
Lesson 5: Introduction to the Gospels	45
Lesson 6: The Gospels of Matthew and Mark	53
Lesson 7: The Gospels of Luke and John.....	59
Lesson 8: A History of the Study of the Gospels	63
Lesson 9: Historical, Social, and Religious Setting of the 1st-Century, Greco-Roman World	74
Lesson 10: The Life of Paul.....	82
Lesson 11: The Teachings of Paul.....	89
Lesson 12: Acts: The Gospel to the Nations	93
Lesson 13: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians	98
Lesson 14: Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians.....	101
Lesson 15: Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians	105
Lesson 16: Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus	110
Lesson 17: Hebrews and James	113
Lesson 18: 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude	116
Lesson 19: 1, 2, and 3 John	119
Lesson 20: Revelation.....	124

Syllabus

Telling the New Testament Story of God

Educational Institution, Setting or Educational Provider:

Location of the Course:

Course Dates:

Name of the Instructor:

Instructor's Address, Telephone, and E-mail Address:

Module Vision Statement:

Telling the New Testament Story of God is a foundational module for understanding the setting and message of the New Testament. This module will introduce the student to the New Testament biblical literature, Bible study methods, and the environment of the Early Church. Special attention will be given to the political, cultural, religious, and geographical setting, the literary genre, and the meaning of the text in its original cultural, historical, and literary context for the purpose of discovering the principles of truth to be applied to our contemporary setting. It provides the basic groundwork for understanding future Course of Study modules in biblical studies, Church history, Christian theology and practices.

Educational Assumptions

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to any process of Christian education at any level. We will consistently request and expect the Spirit's presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community (people being and working together). Community is the gift of the Spirit but may be enhanced or hindered by human effort. Communities have common values, stories, practices, and goals. Explicit effort will be invested to enhance community within the class. Group work will take place in every lesson.
3. Every adult student has knowledge and experiences to contribute to the class. We learn not only from the instructor and the reading assignments, but also from each other. Each student is valued not only as a learner but also as a teacher. That is one reason so many exercises in this course are cooperative and collaborative in nature.
4. Journaling is an ideal way to bring theory and practice together as students synthesize the principles and content of the lessons with their own experiences, preferences, and ideas.

Outcome Statements

This module contributes to the development of the following abilities as defined in the *U.S. Sourcebook for Ministerial Development*.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- CN8 Ability to identify the literary structure of the New Testament
- CN9 Ability to identify the genre and basic thrust of each New Testament book
- CN10 Ability to summarize the significant events of Jesus and Paul
- CN11 Ability to identify the significant elements of the message of Jesus and Paul

- CN12 Ability to describe the impact of the historical background of the New Testament on the message of Jesus and Paul
- CN13 Ability to chronologically order the significant events and persons of the New Testament
- CN14 Ability to identify and describe the major theological concepts of the New Testament
- CN15 Ability to describe how the Bible came into being up to contemporary translations
- CN16 Ability to identify the steps of historical, literary, and theological analysis used in exegesis

Recommended Reading

During this module each student should read through the complete New Testament.

Students should obtain a copy of a good study Bible. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (with Apocrypha) is suggested. This Bible is a *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) with extensive historical, cultural, and geographical notes as well as very adequate maps. Also consider the *Reflecting God Study Bible, a New International Version* (NIV) with commentary and resources.

Each module within the Modular Course of Study is intended to be textbook independent. This does not imply the modules are textbook irrelevant or the module content cannot be enriched by selecting and requiring that students study a textbook along with the lessons provided.

The following textbook is recommended and optional reading assignments from this text have been included in the homework assignments for each lesson. Your instructor will inform you if he or she requires the textbook.

Varughese, Alex, ed. *Discovering the New Testament: Community and Faith*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2005.

Course Requirements

- 1. Class attendance, attention, and participation** are especially important. Students are responsible for **all** assignments and in-class work. Much of the work in this course is small-group work. Cooperative, small-group work cannot be made up. That makes attendance imperative. Even if one does extra reading or writing, the values of discussion, dialogue, and learning from each other are thwarted. If

one lesson is missed, the instructor will require extra work before completion can be acknowledged. If two or more classes are missed, the student will be required to repeat the whole module.

Small-Group Work. Nothing is more important in this course than small-group work. The class members will be assigned to groups of two to four students each. The group members will serve as study partners for explorations and discussion.

2. Assignments

Journaling: The only ongoing assignment for this module is your journal. It is to be used regularly, if not daily. On at least one occasion during the term, the instructor will check the journals. In each lesson a journal assignment is included.

The journal should become the student’s friend and treasury of insights, devotions, and ideas. Here the integration of theory and practice occurs. The spiritual life nature of the journal helps guard against the course of study being merely academic as you are repeatedly called upon to apply the principles studied to your own heart and your own ministry situation.

This journal is not a diary, not a catchall. It is, rather, a guided journal or a focused journal in which the educational experience and its implications are selected for reflection and writing.

The framers of this curriculum are concerned about the way that students fall into learning “about” the Bible, or “about” the spiritual life rather than learning—that is coming to know and internalize the Bible and spiritual principles. The journaling experience ensures that the “Be” component of “Be, Know, and Do” is present in the course of study. Be faithful with all journaling assignments.

Daily Work: This module has regular homework assignments. It is called daily work because even though the class may only meet once a week, the student should be working on the module on a “daily” basis. Sometimes the homework assignments are quite heavy. The assignments are important. Even if homework is not discussed in class every session, the work is to be handed in. This gives the instructor regular information about the student’s progress in the course. The normal time for homework to be handed in is at the beginning of each class session. **All** assignments are to be completed.

Course Outline and Schedule

The class will meet for 30 hours according to the following schedule:

Lesson Date	Lesson Time	
		Lesson 1: Why Study the New Testament?
		Lesson 2: Historical, Social, and Religious Settings of the World of Jesus
		Lesson 3: The Life of Jesus
		Lesson 4: The Teachings of Jesus

		Lesson 5: Introduction to the Gospels
		Lesson 6: The Gospels of Matthew and Mark
		Lesson 7: The Gospels of Luke and John
		Lesson 8: A History of the Study of the Gospels
		Lesson 9: Historical, Social, and Religious Setting of the 1st-Century, Greco-Roman World
		Lesson 10: The Life of Paul
		Lesson 11: The Teachings of Paul
		Lesson 12: Acts: The Gospel to the Nations
		Lesson 13: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians
		Lesson 14: Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians
		Lesson 15: Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians
		Lesson 16: Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus
		Lesson 17: Hebrews and James
		Lesson 18: 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude
		Lesson 19: 1, 2, and 3 John
		Lesson 20: Revelation

Course Evaluation

The instructor, the course itself, and the student's progress will be evaluated. These evaluations will be made in several ways.

The progress of students will be evaluated with an eye for enhancing the learning experience by:

1. Carefully observing the small-group work, noting the competence of reports, the balance of discussion, the quality of the relationships, the cooperation level, and the achievement of assigned tasks
2. Careful reading of homework assignments
3. Completion of all homework assignments
4. Journal checks

The course materials and the teacher will be evaluated by frequently asking and discussing the effectiveness and relevance of a certain method, experience, story, lecture, or other activity.

Some evaluation cannot be made during the class itself. Some objectives will not be measurable for years to come. If students encounter the transforming power of God at deeper levels than ever before, learn devotional skills and practice them with

discipline, and incorporate the best of this course into their own ministries, the fruit of this educational endeavor could go on for a long time. In truth, that is what we expect.

Additional Information

A reasonable effort to assist every student will be made. Any student who has handicaps, learning disabilities, or other conditions that make the achievement of the class requirements exceedingly difficult should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to see what special arrangements can be made. Any student who is having trouble understanding the assignments, lectures, or other learning activities should talk to the instructor to see what can be done to help.

Instructor's Availability

Good faith efforts to serve the students both in and beyond the classroom will be made.

Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read books and articles, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head through your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work faithfully to spend daily time in your journal. Many people confess this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an 'ah-ha' that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, and aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

Bibliography

Videos:

That the World May Know, a videotape series produced by Zondervan Publishing House in cooperation with Focus on the Family and also available from Christian Book Distributors (CBD).

Where Jesus Walked, a videotape, is available through Gateway Films, Vision Video (1-800-523-0226 or online at www.visionvideo.com). It is item number 99381 and sells for \$12.99 at this writing.

Commentary Series:

Critical Commentaries on the Greek Text (For those who read Greek)

- *The Expositor's Greek Testament*
- *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*

Commentaries on the New Testament with Greek References (Those who read English only can use these with no problem.)

- *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*
- *Word Biblical Commentary*
- *The Anchor Bible*
- *Sacra Pagina Series*
- *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*
- *Beacon Bible Commentary*
- *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*
- *Interpreter's Bible Commentary*
- *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*

Word Studies: For anyone

- *Word Studies on the Greek New Testament*, Wuest
- *Word Studies on the New Testament*, Vincent
- *Word Meaning in the New Testament*, Earle

New Testament Introductions:

Drane, John. *Introducing the New Testament*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, San Francisco, 1986.

Elwell, Walter A., and Robert W. Yarbrough. *Encountering the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

Gundry, Robert H. *A Survey of the New Testament*. Third edition, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994.

Harris, Stephen L. *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction*. Fourth edition, New York: McGraw Hill, 2002.

Harrison, Everett F. *Introduction to the New Testament*. New revised edition, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964.

Perkins, Pheme. *Reading the New Testament*. Second edition, New York: Paulist Press, 1988.

Tenney, Merrill C. *New Testament Survey*. Revised by Walter M. Dunnnett. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992.

Varughese, Alexander, ed. *Discovering the New Testament: Community and Faith*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2005.

Other Resources:

- Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Second edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- Blomberg, Craig L. *Jesus and the Gospels: Introduction and Survey*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1997.
- Bruce, F. F. *New Testament History*. Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1980.
- _____. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977
- Calvert, D. G. A. "An Examination of the Criteria for Distinguishing the Authentic Words of Jesus." *New Testament Studies* 18 (1971): 209-18.
- Collins, Adela Yarbro. *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1984.
- De Waard, Jan, and Eugene Nida. *From One Language to Another*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986.
- Eller, Vernard. *The Most Revealing Book of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974.
- Everts, Janet Meyer. "The CH Timeline." *Christian History Magazine* 14 (1995): 30-31.
- Griswold, Wendy. *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1994.
- Gundry, Patricia. *Woman Be Free*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest for the Historical Jesus and the Truth of the Traditional Gospels*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Kee, Howard Clark. *Understanding the New Testament*. Fifth edition, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993.
- Lefkowitz, Mary R., and Maureen B. Fant, eds. *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A source book in translation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.
- Maier, Paul. *First Christmas*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971.
- Metzger, Bruce. *Breaking the Code*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999 (Paperback).
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture*. New York: Harper and Row, 1985.
- Serrao, C. Jeanne. *Holiness and Sexual Ethics in Paul*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Service, 1996.

Stein, Robert H. "The Criteria for Authenticity." In *Gospel Perspectives: Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels*. Edited by R. T. France and David Wenham. Sheffield: JSOT, 1980-86.

Stowers, Stanley. *Letter-Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986.

_____. *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1994.

Trimorphic Protennoia, XIII, 35. In *The Nag Hammadi Library*. Translated by John D. Turner, edited by James M. Robinson. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.

Varughese, Alexander. *Beyond Eden: An Outline of the Story and Faith of the Biblical Communities*. Mount Vernon, OH: Mount Vernon Nazarene College, 2000.

Wesley, John. *The Works of John Wesley*, 14 vols. Third edition, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991 (1872).

Websites:

All-in-One Biblical Resources Search

<http://www.bham.ac.uk/theology/goodacre/multibib.htm>

Archaeology <http://trfn.clpgh.org/Education/academic/archae.html>

Archnet <http://archnet.asu.edu/archnet/archnet.html>

Associates for Biblical Research <http://christiananswers.net/abr/abrhome.html>

Biblical Archaeology Society <http://www.bib-arch.org/>

Biblical Studies Foundation <http://www.netbible.com/>

Blue Letter Bible <http://www.blueletterbible.org/>

Center for Electronic Resources in Theology and Religion <http://rosetta.atla-cetr.org/CERTR/CERTR.html>

Crosswalk.com Bible Study Tools <http://bible.crosswalk.com/>

Oriental Institute Research Archives <http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/ABZU.HTML>

The Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature <http://orion.msc.huji.ac.il/pictures/title.jpg>

Society of Biblical Literature <http://www.sbl-site.org/>

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion <http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/>

Wesley Center Holiness Classics Library, A website of the Wesley Center for Applied
Theology at Northwest Nazarene University. <http://wesley.nnu.edu/>

Lesson 1: Why Study the New Testament?

Due This Lesson

Read the syllabus

Read chapter 1 in *Discovering the New Testament*

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- know the difference between the Old Testament, Apocrypha, and New Testament
- classify and list the books of the New Testament
- understand basic terms used in New Testament study
- explain why the New Testament canon is trustworthy
- give an overview of how the Bible was originally written and how the English Bible developed

Homework Assignments

Read the introductory sections to the Bible and New Testament found in any good study Bible. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (with Apocrypha) is suggested. It is a *New Revised Standard Version* with extensive historical, cultural, and geographical notes as well as very adequate maps. Also consider the *Reflecting God Study Bible*, which is a *New International Version* with commentary and resources.

Look up the Council of Jamnia (AD 90) and Council of Carthage (AD 397) in an encyclopedia or on the Internet to learn about the background, sponsorship, and decisions of these councils. Write a one-page paper.

Memorize and spell the Books of the New Testament in the correct order.

Read chapters 2 and 3 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections on why you want to study the New Testament and a discussion on the following questions:

- How would you explain to a layperson how a certain book got into the New Testament?
- Do you think the Church would ever "open" the canon again to include another letter by the Apostle Paul which may be found in the future by archeologists? Why or why not?

Why Study the Bible

The Bible: A Big Investment

People have died for the Bible.

More copies of the Bible have been printed than any other single book.

The Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testament, has deeply affected the world we live in.

The Old Testament is the Scripture God gave to the Israelites.

The Old Testament Apocrypha is a collection of books written from about 200 BC to AD 100 that contains valuable historical and religious information.

The New Testament

The New Testament is a testimony of God's reconciliation through Jesus Christ and the creation of His reconciling community, the Church.

The Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

History: Acts

Letters:

Pauline: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon

Johannine: 1, 2, and 3 John

General (catholic): Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude (1, 2, and 3 John are also usually considered General Epistles.)

Apocalyptic or Book of Hope: Revelation

Why Study the New Testament?

1. It mediates God's presence and God's truth.

2. It is of ultimate personal significance.

3. It is foundational to Western cultural literacy.
 - Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure of the history of Western culture for almost 20 centuries

 - Jesus and the New Testament have engaged the minds of many of the Western world's great thinkers.

 - New Testament teaching influences us today.

Definitions

Revelation:

By revelation we mean God's self-disclosure to humanity through His words and actions. This revelation is recorded in the Bible and is based on historical events. Biblical history is best described as a theological understanding of historical events that happened to or around God's people.

Inspiration:

When the term "inspiration" is used it means the involvement of God in the process of communicating His revelation (self-disclosure) and usually refers to its written form. Inspired, or "God-breathed," means the Holy Spirit worked in and through the minds and hearts of His people to produce a trustworthy account of God's truth.

Dictation (Verbal Inspiration)

Guidance of the Holy Spirit (Dynamic Inspiration)

Influence of Tradition, Religious Practices, and Biases

Authority of Scripture:

Protestant tradition regards Scripture as the only source of the Church's beliefs and practices. This *sola scriptura* principle was adopted by Martin Luther in the Reformation. Our own Wesleyan tradition is based on this, but also recognizes that historic Church tradition, human reason, and human experience are very important to the interpretation of Scripture. We recognize the Bible has authority because God is the "author." The Bible is the record of His self-disclosure.

Hermeneutics:

This is the art of biblical interpretation. The technical study of hermeneutics covers the rules and principles used in the practice of biblical interpretation. The goals of hermeneutics are: (1) to discover the historical context and meaning of the passage for the original audience and (2) to translate the content of that original meaning for the contemporary audiences.

Exegesis:

This is the process of bringing the meaning "out of" the biblical text by the modern reader. Exegesis is part of the hermeneutical process.

Canon:

The word "canon" comes from the Greek term *kanon* which originally meant a "reed" used for measuring. Eventually it came to mean "a standard," and in literature, it described a list of works that could be attributed to a certain author. The canon of the New Testament is an authoritative collection of books recognized by the Church as the standard for belief and practice.

How Can Inspiration Be Demonstrated?

The only true criterion for inclusion of a book in the New Testament canon is "inspiration." Tenney suggests three ways inspiration can be demonstrated.

1. Intrinsic Context: The central subject is Jesus Christ.
2. Moral Effect: Reading and following the principles of these books will effect transformation in a person's life.
3. Historic Testimony of the Church: This indicates the value the community of faith has placed on these books down through the centuries.

Authority of the New Testament Message

Internal Testimony

The New Testament itself testifies to the authority of the message.

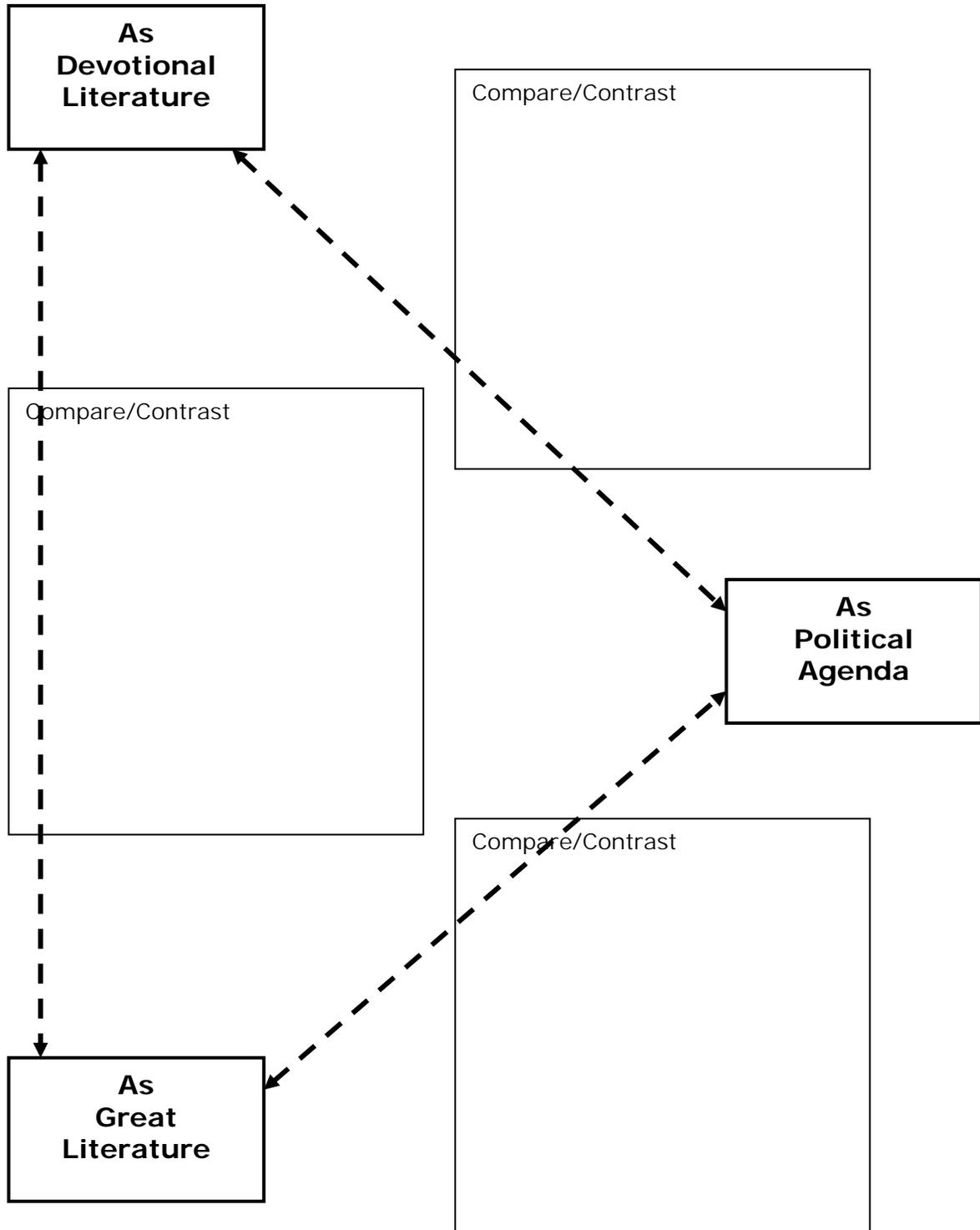
- References indicating the Old Testament is the word of God: 2 Tim 3:15-17, 2 Pet 1:20-21, Heb 8:8, Acts 28:25.
- References which talk about the teachings of Jesus as “a word of the Lord”: 1 Cor 9:9, 13-14, 1 Thess 4:15, 1 Cor 7:10, 25.
- References to the fact that certain information was received directly from God, by divine revelation: Gal 1:1, 12, 1 Thess 2:13.
- References that acknowledge Paul’s letters as authoritative: 2 Pet 3:15-16.

External Testimony

The Early Church fathers and leaders recognized the canonicity of the New Testament books.

- Informal Witnesses: By informal we mean the casual use of the books of the New Testament by Early Church fathers. These quotations testify to the existence and authority of the books at the time of the writing by the Early Church fathers.
 1. The earliest document to quote any of the books of the New Testament was 1 Clement, written from Rome to the church in Corinth and usually dated about AD 95. It contains allusions to Hebrews, 1 Corinthians, Romans, and the Gospel of Matthew.
 2. Ignatius of Antioch in Syria (AD 116) knew all of Paul’s letters, quoted Matthew and possibly John.
 3. Polycarp of Smyrna (AD 150) knew Paul’s letters, Matthew, and quotes from 1 Peter and 1 John and alludes possibly to Acts.
 4. The *Didache* (AD 100-150) used Matthew, Luke, and many other New Testament books in its attempt at a catechism or discipleship course.
 5. By Irenaeus’ time (AD 170) there was no question the books of the New Testament were authoritative. The growth of Gnosticism and other heresies forced a flood of apologetic literature that continued until the time of Origen (AD 250). This literature carefully outlined which books were orthodox and which were not.
- Formal Lists: These are the official lists of New Testament books accepted by groups of Christians or Church councils. Examples include:
 1. Canon of Marcion (AD 140)
 2. Muratorian Canon
- The Councils: The earliest council listing the present 27 books of the New Testament was the Third Council of Carthage in AD 397. The Council of Hippo in AD 419 gave the same list.

Interpreting the New Testament



Lesson 2: Historical, Social, and Religious Settings of the World of Jesus

Due This Lesson

Introductory reading of the Bible and New Testament
Reading on the Councils of Jamnia and Carthage/One-page paper
Memorization of the New Testament books
Read chapters 2 and 3 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

- At the end of this lesson, participants will
- understand the historical events that led up to the Jewish messianic expectations in the first century.
 - understand the setting for the “hellenization” of the Jews, especially Diaspora Jews (Jews outside of Palestine)
 - understand some of the customs and practices of first-century Jews
 - understand the religious setting of first-century Jews and be able to identify the differences among the major Jewish religious groups of the first century
 - be able to use this historical, social, and religious data as a basis for interpreting the New Testament

Homework Assignments

Make a timeline for the Intertestamental History of Palestine (540-4 BC).

Read the Gospels of Luke and John. Sketch out a chronology of Jesus’ life for each of these. Compare the two, looking for similarities and differences.

Read chapter 5 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. What difference will it make in your ministry and preaching to know the cultural and historical events related to the Bible?

Historical Setting

539 BC—Persian Empire

Cyrus, the Persian king, proclaimed freedom to the Jews in Babylon and allowed them to return to Palestine.

The return of the Jews to their homeland took place in stages.

- The first group of homecoming Jews was led by Shezbazzar in 538 BC and they began the rebuilding of the Temple.
- A second group, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, continued the rebuilding program.

The arrival of Haggai and Zechariah from Babylon brought new energy to the Jews living in Jerusalem. The Temple was completed and dedicated in 515 BC.

The arrival of Ezra and Nehemiah between 500 and 450 BC, brought reformation to the religious and civil life of the people.

334-332 BC—Greek Empire

Alexander of Macedonia (the Great) began his conquest of the Persian Empire in 334 BC and completed it in 332 BC.

The Ptolemies captured Jerusalem in 320 BC.

The Greek General Seleucus conquered Palestine and chased the Ptolemies back to Egypt.

“Hellenization”—the imposition of Greek culture and language on the east.

198 BC—Seleucid (Syrian) Empire

The desire on the part of the rich to be “Greek” was very strong. The poor opposed hellenization.

The term “poor” also carried the meaning of pious or holy people by the first century AD.

Jewish Religious Crises

- Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) promoted Greek culture and customs throughout the empire.
- In 168 BC, Antiochus ordered the desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Maccabean Period and the Hasmonean Dynasty

167 BC—Maccabean Period

Judas the Maccabee led the revolt and conducted guerrilla warfare against hellenized Jews and Syrians.

Festival of the Dedication (Hanukkah) celebrates the Liberation of Jerusalem in 164 BC.

134-63 BC—Hasmonean Dynasty

Jewish kingdom that developed after the revolt was the Hasmonean Dynasty.

- Jerusalem was the capital city.
- Pharisee and Sadducee sects developed.
- Powerful Hasmonean king, John Hyrcanus, expanded the borders and destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerazim.
- In 63 BC, internal struggle for power within the Hasmonean family led to the occupation of Palestine by the Roman Empire.

Roman Rule of Palestine

63 BC—Pompey captures Jerusalem

Antipater, the Hasmonean king's minister and power behind the throne (Herod the Great's father), was given a political position with the Roman government because of his help to the Romans.

Pompey added the Decapolis (which means "10 cities") on the eastern frontier of Palestine as a buffer between the Roman Empire and the Arabian steppe.

Republic fell apart and Caesar became emperor

Government

Road System

Language

- Latin

- Greek

Ethnic Languages

- Aramaic

- Hebrew

63-4 BC—Herodian Period

Herod the Great

- ruled Judea, Idumea, Perea, Galilee
- was part Jew, part Idumean and more Hellenistic than most Jews
- was a regional king or "puppet" king for Rome
- was a passionate builder, he began the rebuilding of the Temple (20 BC-AD 63)
- died around 4 BC and his kingdom was divided among his three sons

Jewish Life: Social and Religious Setting

597/587-539/8 BC—Babylonian Exile

Significant Changes in Jewish Lifestyle

Identified themselves as members of tribe of Judah (Yehudites or Jews) rather than one of the 12 tribes.

Adopted the language of Babylon, Aramaic, as the official language of Judaism for the next 600 hundred years.

Preserved the sacred writings and canonized the Old Testament scriptures completed in AD 90 at the Council of Jamnia.

Adopted a commercial way of life, i.e., merchants and bankers, in contrast to the agricultural way of life.

Organized small-group assemblies to read and study the Law and pray. This was the beginning of the Synagogue as a religious institution.

Jerusalem became a pilgrimage city.

The Temple

The Jerusalem Temple remained the religious center of Judaism until AD 70.

- The Temple area including the large Court of the Gentiles was 26 acres (108,000 sq. m. or 10.5 hectares).
- “Court of the Gentiles”—the outside court where money was exchanged, sacrificial animals were bought and sold, the only place converted Gentiles could pray to Yahweh.
- The women’s court—alms boxes, storage rooms for wine, oil, and wood, consulting rooms.
- Great Gate or Nicanor’s Gate—ritually pure Jewish men entered the Court of the Israelites, brought sacrificial animals and food to the priests for sacrifices in the Court of the Priests.
- The Court of the Priests—altar for sacrifice, the laver for water purification and slaughtering rooms.
- The holy place and the holy of holies—a tall cubical building at the back of the Court of the Priests. In the holy place were the altar of incense, the menorah (lampstand), and the table of showbread. Behind a curtain was the holy of holies.
- The Temple layout not only reveals the zones of holiness or purity but also indicates the hierarchy for the Jewish society.

The Synagogue Service Order

Singing a Psalm

Reciting the Shema and Blessings (Dt 6: 4-9)

Reading from the Law

Reading from the Prophets

Sermon

Blessing by the president of the Synagogue

Priestly Blessing (Num 6: 24-27)

Religious Practices and Beliefs

Annual Feasts/Festivals

New Year festival, Rosh Hashanah (Feast of Trumpets)

Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur

Feast of Tabernacles or Booths

Hanukkah

Purim

Passover

Pentecost

Important First-Century Jewish Beliefs

The Law was a framework for Jewish life and was the legal basis for regulation of activities in Palestine.

The Jews believed keeping the Law (God's revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai) was the basis for receiving God's covenant blessings.

Jews believed God will create a new order of things and deliver His people.

Political and Social Conditions

The high priests and the wealthy of Jerusalem lived in luxurious palaces and villas.

The common people lived in lower Jerusalem or towns.

Rome protected Jewish privileges.

Jews could pay Temple tax in lieu of public works taxes

Protected the Torah scrolls

Allowed to observe the Jewish Sabbath

Exempt from military service

Religious Roles, Parties, and Sects

Religious Roles

High priestly families were collaborators with the Romans because their positions were political appointments.

The Levites were the priests for Temple service.

The Scribes were lay teachers and interpreters of the Law.

Parties

The Pharisees included both priests and laypeople. Developed the oral law, believed in angels, spirits, and bodily resurrection.

The Sadducees came mostly from priestly families and the wealthy. They opposed the oral law of the Pharisees and their belief in angels, spirits, and resurrection. Only accepted the Pentateuch as authoritative.

Sects

The Essenes withdrew physically or socially to maintain their pure religion. The Qumran community which existed during the time of Jesus was Essene.

The Zealots were so called because of their zeal for the Law. They advocated rebellion against non-Jewish rulers as a sign of loyalty to Yahweh.

Lesson 3: The Life of Jesus

Due This Lesson

Timeline
Comparison of Luke and John
Read chapter 5 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- know the chronology of Jesus' life
- understand Jesus' life and ministry in its original setting
- use this historical data as a basis for interpreting Jesus' teachings

Homework Assignments

Read the Gospels of Mark and Matthew. Make note of where they are similar and different. *What is the nature of the sections that are similar? What is the nature of the sections that are different?*

Using your notes from Luke and John write out the similarities between all four Gospels, the similarities between Matthew, Mark, and Luke (Synoptics), the differences between the Synoptics and John and the differences between all four Gospels.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections and insights from this lesson and from your reading and study.

Who Is Jesus?

The Gospel Material Was Preserved Through
Oral Tradition

Written Tradition

Roles of Jesus Found in the New Testament
Teacher

Healer

Lord

Miracle worker (*dunamis*, power; *semeia*, sign; *tepas*, wonders)
Provision

Healing

Destruction

Authority over the physical

Authority over the spiritual world

New creation miracles of exorcism and resurrection

Messiah and Savior

When Did Jesus Live?

Born before Herod the Great died in 4 BC

Quirinius was made governor of Syria in AD 6-7

Possible explanations for the Christmas star

7-6 BC—A conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn

5 BC—Comet (Williams No. 52)

4 BC—Nova or Comet (Williams No. 53)

Jesus baptized in the 15th year of Emperor Tiberius' reign

Conclusion

Where Jesus Walked

Video Study Guide

As you watch this video, look for locations and significant geographical and historical issues related to events in Jesus' life.

A. Announcement of His birth

B. Birth

C. Flight/Exile

D. Childhood

E. Baptism

F. Temptation

G. Ministry

H. Death and Resurrection

Lesson 4: The Teaching of Jesus

Due This Lesson

Comparison of Mark and Matthew
Comparison of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
Journaling

Learner Objectives

- At the end of this lesson, participants will
- understand the authority with which Jesus taught
 - understand Jesus' teaching in its original setting
 - know the theme and methods of Jesus' teaching

Homework Assignments

Read the introductory material to the Gospels, which you can find in any study Bible. Write down what you find out about the content of the gospel, the form of the Gospel, the trustworthiness of the Gospel accounts, and why the Gospels were written.

Read chapter 4 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. What title of Jesus speaks to you? Why?

Harmony of the Gospels

Topic/Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Preexistence of Jesus				1:1-5
Birth and Childhood	1-2		1-2	
John the Baptist	3:1-12	1:1-18	3:1-20	1:6-42
Temptation	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	
First Miracle/Cana				2:1-11
Early Judean Ministry				2:13-4:3
Samaria				4:4-42
Galilean Ministry	4:12-19:1	1:14-10:1	4:14-9:51	4:43-54 and 6:1-7:1
Jerusalem				5:1-47
Perea and Judea (4 months)	19-20	10	9:51-19:28	7:2-11:57
Last Week	21-27	11-15	19:29-24:1	12-19
Post-Resurrection	28	16	24	20-21

Notes:

The Teaching of Jesus

Jesus Had Authority

The Scriptures say Jesus had *exousia*, a Greek word meaning:

- Freedom of choice or right to act
- The ability, capability, or power to do something
- The authority, absolute power, warrant to do something

Jesus did not have role authority, *huperokee*, which is a place of earthly superiority or prominence.

Jesus' authority according to Luke

- He speaks with authority (power): 4: 32
- He acts with authority: 4: 36
- He forgives sins with authority: 5: 24
- He gives His disciples authority: 9: 1-2

Kingdom of God Is the Central Theme: Mark 1:15

Mark and Luke use the phrase "kingdom of God," which probably reflects a primarily Hellenistic audience. Matthew uses primarily "kingdom of the heavens," with "heavens" being an alternative term for "God." This reflects the Jewish practice of avoiding using the name of God.

By the "kingdom of God" Jesus meant the "kingship of God." Therefore, kingdom of God means God's reign or rule. The kingdom of God is both future and present.

- Future: Mark 14: 25
- Present: Luke 17: 21-21
- Wherever the presence of Jesus is present: Luke 11: 20

What Did Jesus Teach through His Life/Roles?

Compassionate and justice issues

- As a *miracle worker* He demonstrated not only His ability to heal, but also His compassion for the masses.
- He is talked about as a revolutionary deliverer, champion of the peasants, spokesperson for the poor.
- Jesus is also portrayed as a *prophet* to judge unrighteousness.

Jesus is the Savior

- The Apostle Paul tells us the Resurrection is God's definitive word on who Jesus is.

Theological Issues: Jesus' Roles in Salvation and God's Agent of Salvation

New Testament Words that Define Jesus' Roles in Salvation

Messiah (Lk 24:26)

Son of Man (Mt 25:31-32, Lk 9:22)

Son of God (Mk 1:11, 9:7, Jn 1:14)

Lord (Phil 2:6-11, 1 Cor 16:22, 1 Cor 8:6)

How Did Jesus Teach?

Instructions: In a discussion group

1. Tell what the passage is talking about.
2. Identify the main points or principles being taught.
3. Suggest a modern application of these principles.

Parables are the language of faith

- Mark 4: 11—They reveal the mystery of the Kingdom.
- Matthew 13—The parables of the Kingdom (Luke 4: 1-33).
- Luke 15—The parable of the lost sheep, coin, son.
- Luke 10: 25-37—The Good Samaritan (love your neighbor).
- John 15—Vine and branches (abiding in Christ).

1.

2.

3.

Wisdom in the sayings of Jesus

- Matthew 13: 52—Things old and new.
- Matthew 25: 1-13—The wise and the foolish.
- Matthew 5: 17-48—The old and new covenant, Sermon on the Mount, fulfilling the Law, murder, adultery, divorce, oaths, eye for an eye, love for enemies.

1.

2.

3.

Lesson 5: Introduction to the Gospels

Due This Lesson

Introductory material to the Gospels
Read chapter 4 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

- At the end of this lesson, participants will
- understand the genre and purpose of the Gospels
 - appreciate the trustworthiness of the Gospels
 - discover the core content of the Gospels

Homework Assignments

Read Matthew and Mark in two different translations. Fill in the outline from Resource 5-6 and Resource 5-7 on Matthew and Mark. Consult study Bibles and commentaries for information. Use the most current information available.

Read chapters 6 and 7 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your Journal. What is your favorite Gospel? Why?

The Content of the Gospels

The content of the preaching message about Jesus as our Savior is referred to as the *kerygma*.

Find "factual information" from these passages. Select one person to report your finding to the class. You have 10 minutes to work together.

- Acts 10: 34-43
- Acts 2: 22-28
- Acts 2: 29-36
- Acts 3: 17-26
- Acts 4: 8-12
- Acts 5: 29-32
- Acts 7: 44-53
- Acts 13: 21-31
- Acts 13: 32-41
- 1 Corinthians 15: 3-7

The Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed is an example of how the Church eventually summarized the *Kerygma*. Ewell and Yarbrough summarize the *kerygma* as God's offer of salvation; the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; the call to faith in light of the coming judgment.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of Heaven and Earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into Heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

The General Nature of the Gospels

Modern biographies usually begin with an account of the subject's childhood years, and progress consecutively through adolescence and adulthood. The Gospels are very different from this.

New Testament "genre"—We need some other term than history or biography to characterize the Gospels.

- "Aretalogies"—Greco-Roman accounts of the life of a Greek hero.
- The language of theater and refer to Gospels as dramas, "comedies," or "tragedies."
- Characterize the Gospels as "*midrash*" or commentaries on the Old Testament.

There are unique features of the Gospels, to be sure, generally related to the unique events they narrate and the distinctive nature of the person of Jesus of Nazareth. But this makes them no less historical or biographical by the convention of their day. Perhaps it is best, then to refer to the Gospels as *theological biographies*.

The four Gospels are primarily witnesses to Jesus. Their main emphasis is the last week of Jesus' life.

Why the Gospels Were Written

Selective accounts

Incidents in Jesus' life are used as appropriate illustrations to explain theological points.

Details appropriate to "winning other people to faith in their Lord."

Each story told for a reason

To understand a story it must be related to the purpose of the author or to the theology of the author.

How do the writers themselves describe what they are doing?

Mark 1:1:

Gospel—*euangelion*—Good News

Beginning

Luke 1:3-4

John 20:31-31

Matthew

The Trustworthiness of the Gospels

Eyewitness accounts

Old Testament Texts—*testimonia*

Words of Jesus—*logia*

Collections of sayings of Jesus

The Gospel of Thomas

Papias' *Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord*

Matthew and Luke have large sections of the teachings of Jesus which are absent in Mark.

Logia, Q, from the German word, *Quelle*

Hermeneutical Questions

Matthew

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

Mark

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 6: The Gospels of Matthew and Mark

Due This Lesson

Reading of Matthew and Mark
Resources 5-6 and 5-7
Read chapters 6 and 7 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain a basic understanding of the elements of exegesis
- understand the genres, purpose, and content of Matthew
- understand the genres, purpose, and content of Mark

Homework Assignments

Read Luke and John in two different translations. Fill in the outline from Resource 6-4 and 6-5 on Luke and John. Consult study Bibles and commentaries for information. Use the most current information available.

Write in your journal. Reflect on a verse in both Matthew and Mark that stood out to you during the study of the two books.

Read chapters 8 and 9 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Journal Check: Be prepared to show your journal to the instructor during the next session. The instructor will not read it in detail nor will it be handed in. Your journal will be briefly inspected to note regularity and quality of organization and entries.

Exegesis: Learning to Ask the Right Questions

Who?

This question reminds us we need to identify both the person(s) speaking and the listener(s).

The speaker/author's point of view

The listener/reader's point of view, the audience

Cultural considerations

What?

Make a simple outline of the text

Identify the form and style of the writing/speaking

Pick out two to three key words

Where?

What is the geographical setting of the text?

When?

Not so much a date but the historical setting and what came before and after

Why?

Why did the speaker say what he or she did?

Why did the author include this section?

Why is it important for us today?

Follow These Principles

1. Always interpret a verse in agreement with its context.
2. Consider the customs and events when the verse was written.
3. Interpret a passage in the light of all other Scripture.
4. Interpret a passage according to the best use of the original language.
5. If there is a principle set forth in the passage, do not interpret or apply the passage in such a manner as to deny or reverse the principle.

Unique and Special Passages in Matthew and Mark

Briefly answer the five hermeneutical questions for the following passages. What is the most important application of this passage for our contemporary society/church?

- Matthew 1:18-25: The angel announces Jesus' birth to Joseph.

- Matthew 2:1-12: The wise men from the east.

- Matthew 5:3-12: The Beatitudes.

- Matthew 6:9-13: The Lord's Prayer.

- Matthew 28:18-20: The Great Commission.

- Mark 13:1-37: Signs of the End of the Age or "The Little Apocalypse."

- Mark 16:15-18: The Great Commission. (Note: 16:9-20 is not included in some early manuscripts. What does this suggest about how to treat this passage?)

Hermeneutical Questions

Luke

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

John

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 7: The Gospels of Luke and John

Due This Lesson

Reading of Luke and John
Resources 6-4 and 6-5
Read chapters 8 and 9 *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling
Journal check

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- understand the genres, purpose, and content of Luke
- understand the genres, purpose, and content of John
- understand the major comparisons between the Gospels

Homework Assignments

Look up Gospel, Synoptic Gospels, Synoptic Problem, Gospel of Matthew, Gospel of Mark, Gospel of Luke, and Gospel of John in an encyclopedia or Bible handbook. Write down what you find out about the theories for the development of the written Gospels. Which Gospel was written first? How do the Gospels relate to each other? Which Gospel was written last?

Write in your journal. Reflect on which of the Gospel writers you most identify with.

Unique and Special Passages in Luke and John

Briefly answer the five hermeneutical questions for the following passages. What is the most important application of this passage for our contemporary society/church?

- Luke 1:5-25: The announcement of John's birth to Zechariah
- Luke 1:26-56: The announcement of Jesus' birth to Mary (includes Magnificat of Mary)
- Luke 1:57-80: Birth of John the Baptist (includes the Benedictus of Zechariah)
- Luke 2:1-20: Birth of Jesus and the adoration by the shepherds
- Luke 2:21-38: Circumcision and presentation of Jesus in the Temple (includes the Nunc Dimittis of Simeon)
- Luke 10:25-37: The parable of the Good Samaritan
- Luke 15:1-32: The parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and Lost Son.
- Luke 24:13-25: Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.
- John 1:1-18: John's prologue (In the beginning was the Word...)
- John 3:1-21: Jesus and Nicodemus: the new birth (includes John 3:16)
- John 4:4-42: The Samaritan woman at the well
- John 11:1-46: The raising of Lazarus from the dead
- John 13:1-20: Jesus washes the disciples' feet
- John 14:16-17 and 16:12-15: The promise of the Holy Spirit
- John 17:1-26: Jesus' high priestly prayer
- The "I Am" Passages found in various places in John:
 - 6:35ff Bread of Life
 - 8:12 Light of the World
 - 10:7-9 Door (Sheep gate)
 - 11:25 Resurrection and the Life
 - 14:6 The Way, the truth, and the Life
 - 15:1-15 The Vine

Four Gospels Compared

	Mark	Matthew	Luke	John
Date of Writing	50s-early 60s	60-70	Late 50s-early 60s	80-90
Place of Writing	Rome	Antioch in Syria	Rome, etc.	Ephesus
First Readers	Christian Gentiles/Jews in Rome	Jews in Syria	Gentile Christians	Christians in Asia Minor
Theme	Jesus the Supernatural, Suffering Servant and Conqueror	Jesus the Messiah, the fulfillment of prophecy	Son of Man—the Universal Savior	Son of God—God Incarnated
Characteristics	Messianic secret; realism; action; Peter's influence; historical mode; vivid detail; little of Jesus' teachings; no genealogy or infancy stories	Jewish-Christian; systematic arrangement; gospel of the Kingdom; church gospel; Hebrew poetic form, parallelism; use of OT quotations	Social concern; individuals and women highlighted; childhood of Jesus; medical and technical terms; prayer; poetry; two-volume work with Acts	Theological gospel; the human Jesus; preexistence of Jesus; contrasts of: light and darkness, life and death, belief and unbelief; the "Jews"; the "world"

Holy Week

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Lesson 8: A History of the Study of the Gospels

Due This Lesson

Gospel questions
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain a perspective on how Western scholars and the Church have understood the development of the Gospels
- understand the historical problems in getting a historical view of the earthly Jesus
- trace the issues and conclusions on these problems suggested by Western biblical scholars

Homework Assignments

Make a timeline of the life of Jesus and the Early Church from 4 BC to AD 100. Consult study Bibles, Bible dictionaries and handbooks, or the suggested Internet websites (see Bibliography) for information.

Read an encyclopedia article on the myths of the Greeks and Romans. Identify the major Greco-Roman gods and goddesses and what areas of life they were responsible for. Look up mystery religions of the Greeks and Romans and identify the most popular ones. What kinds of things were people looking for in these mystery religions? Write a two-page report.

Write in your journal. Reflect on who Jesus is to you. What is important to document? What should be accepted by faith?

Ancient and Medieval View of the Gospels

Augustine in *The Harmony of the Gospels* concluded that:

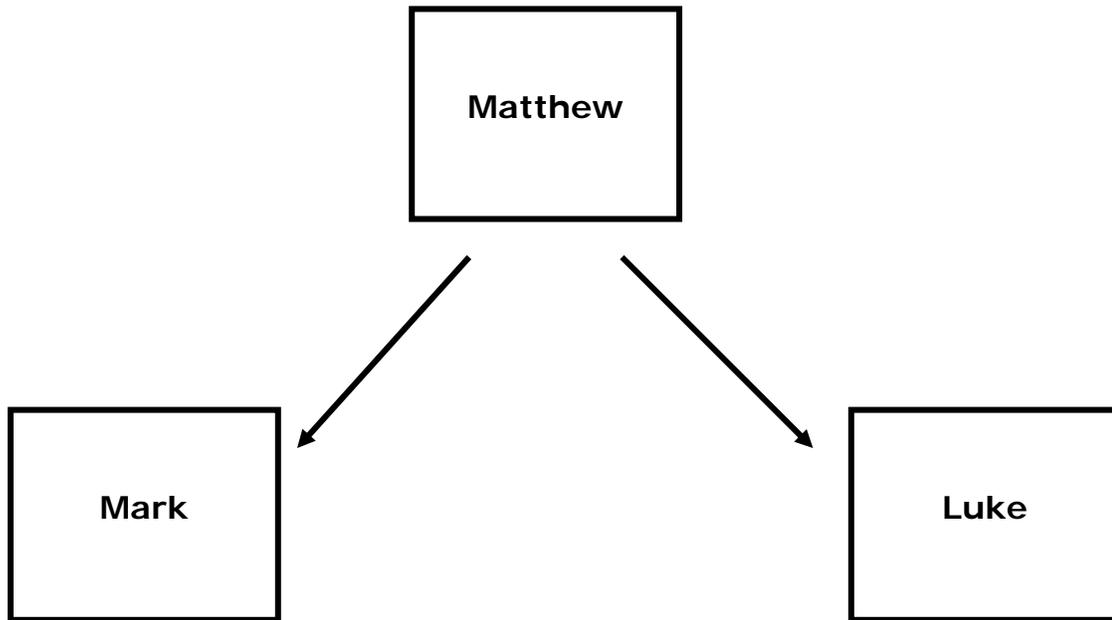
Matthew was the first Gospel written and Matthew the apostle wrote it.

John Mark had the apostles Peter and Matthew as his sources and abbreviated Matthew's Gospel.

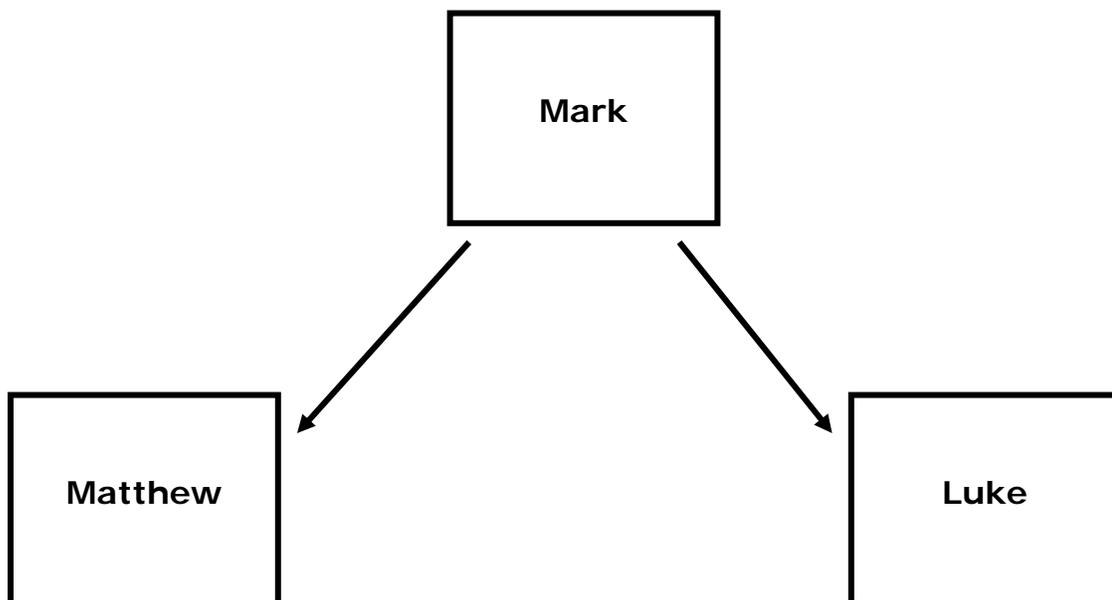
Luke and John were written independently or perhaps with some knowledge of Matthew and Mark.

Source Criticism

J. J. Griesbach wrote *Synopsis of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke* and began talking about the "Synoptic Gospel."

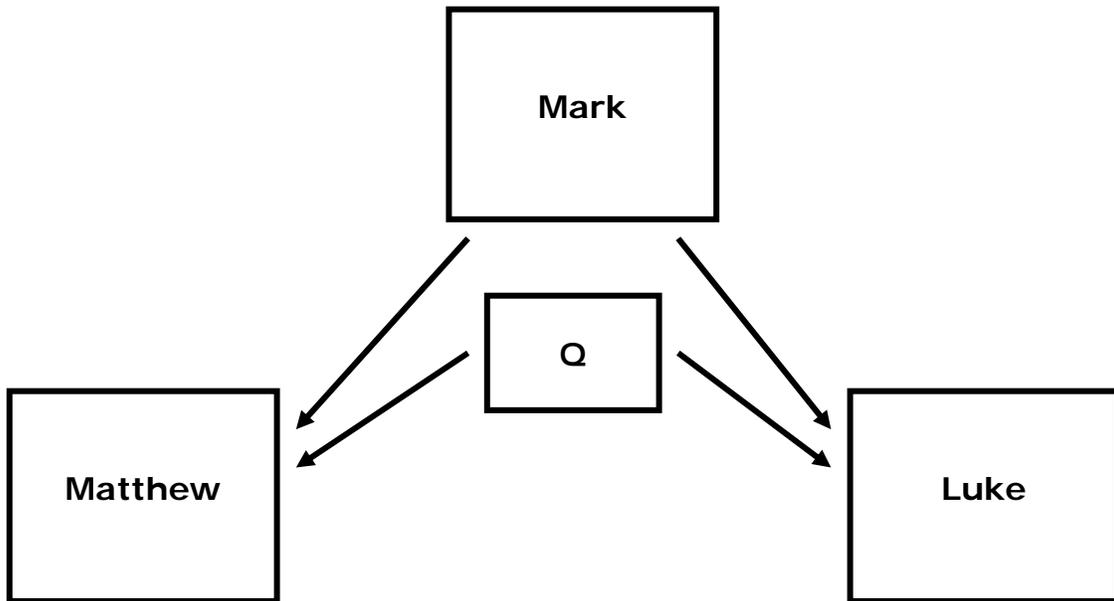


"Marcan Hypothesis" or the "Priority of Mark"



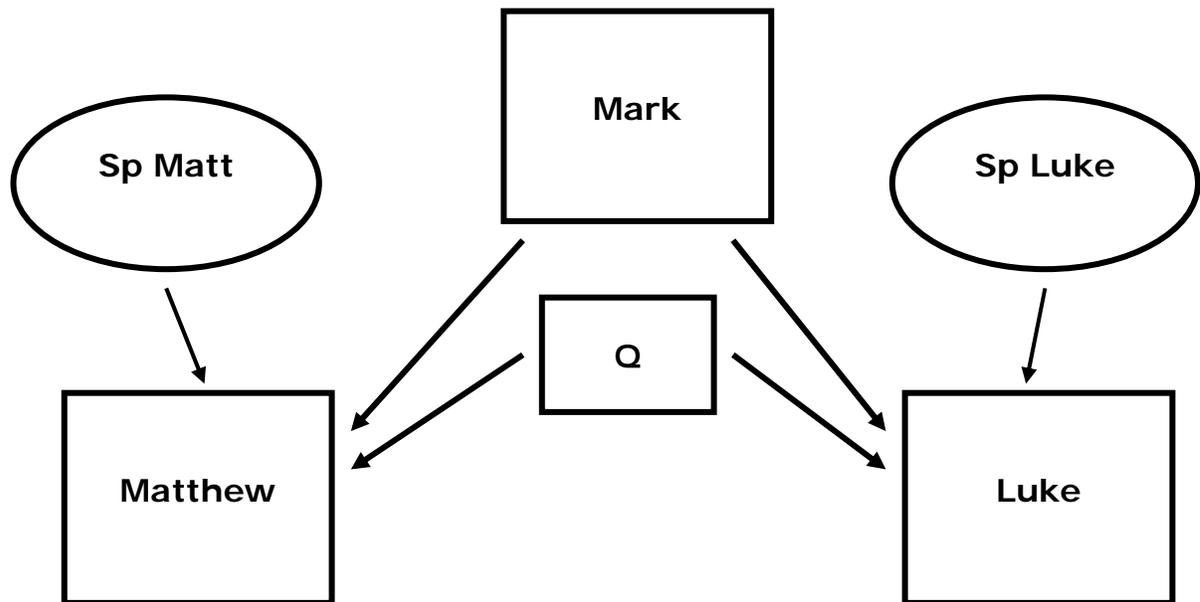
Two Source Hypothesis

H. J. Holtzmann added another source which was eventually called "Q."



Four Document Theory

In 1924 B. H. Streeter wrote *The Four Gospels: A Study in Origins*.



Form and Redaction Criticism

Form criticism: This is a study of the small units of text such as proverbs, parables, and miracles stories gathered together to form the documents or oral tradition.

Formgeschichte (German=form history) or form criticism: An attempt to discover the forms of the small units of the text "gathered together" in the development of the Gospel texts as we know them today.

Pericope: An isolated, independent unit of text studied by Form Criticism.

Sitz im Leben (from German, translated "Situation in Life") or original life setting. The fundamental presupposition of this perspective was that the Gospel writers were compilers of the stories, sayings, and events of Jesus' life, not authors with a purpose in mind.

Redaction criticism: A redactor is an editor or author who puts together a story for a purpose.

Redaktionsgeschichte (German=history of editing) or redaction criticism is the study of the redactors (compilers, writers, editor) of the Gospels.

Redaction criticism contrasts with form criticism in several different areas:

- Form criticism viewed the Gospel writers as simply compilers of tradition; while redaction critics recognized the Gospel writers were authors with their own agendas and theology.
- Form criticism was concerned with small units of tradition; while redaction criticism was concerned with large units of tradition.
- Form criticism did not develop adequate theological intent for the writers; while redaction critics point out the theological intent of the individual authors.
- Form criticism was concerned with one *Sitz im Leben*: the Early Church. Redaction criticism was concerned with three different settings: Jesus' life, oral period of the Early Church, the Gospel writer and his circumstances.

21st-Century Scholarship

Some of the current theories include:

- **Structuralism:** Underlying all expression and narrative is a structure that is common to all human minds. When we understand this “deep structure” we can understand the “real” meaning of a story. This has become such a complicated and esoteric method that it has had very little appeal.
- **Narrative Criticism:** This method sees the Bible as a literary production, not just a collection of folk tradition. It focuses on literary techniques, plot, structure, ordering of events, dramatic tension, and intended impact on the reader.
- **Reader-Response Theories:** These theories say the meaning of the text does not lie in its words or in the historical setting of its words, but in its relevance to contemporary cultural circumstances. The setting or culture of the reader provides the context of meaning for the reader.
- **Rhetorical Criticism:** This method identifies the techniques of discourse or argumentation (rhetoric) used by the author or speaker in the text to communicate to his or her readers.
- **Deconstructionism:** This method says a text has no objective meaning and becomes whatever the individual reader takes it to mean. The reader provides the context. Very close to the reader-response theories.
- **Sociological Criticism** is a new field of study, which has only been delineated in the 1990s although it has been used in different ways since the 1970s. It includes those who study the social backgrounds of the Bible times through archeology and texts, as well as those who attempt to use sociological and cultural anthropological “field” methods and models to understand the ancient cultures.

Viewpoints during the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment brought a rationalistic spirit to scholars in European universities. They took the following viewpoints.

- The Gospels were not the story OF Jesus, but stories ABOUT Jesus, written by people who did not know Him. Some Gospels written about 100 years after Jesus died.
- The real, historical Jesus was “buried” in a mass of myths, legends, and edited accounts and therefore had to be rediscovered.
- The Gospels were not “divinely” inspired. Because everything had to be “proven” true on rational “scientific” grounds to be accepted.
- “Historical” was defined as excluding the supernatural. So the Virgin Birth, Resurrection, divine healings, exorcisms, and predictive prophecy were not to be considered in an “historical” investigation.

Quest for the Historical Jesus

These “historical” Jesus critics wanted to write a life of Jesus as He really was, not as someone people wished He had been (like the Christ of faith).

In 1906 Albert Schweitzer, concluded none of the 200 “lives of Jesus” in *The Quest for the Historical Jesus* had found the historical Jesus, but their work was only a reflection of their own preconceived ideas.

Rudolph Bultmann called the historical Jesus a “presupposition” of New Testament theology. He said the important thing was THAT Jesus was and not WHAT Jesus was.

Bultmann’s students ushered in the Post-Bultmannian Era and set out on a new quest for the historical Jesus, again using “scientific” tools.

During the last 20 years of the 20th Century, scholars developed many more theories about the historical Jesus.

- These views of Jesus include Jesus as a political change agent, a Greek preacher, a zealot, a magician, a moralistic prophet, a confused Galilean peasant, a Marxist atheist, a Greek hero, and a Hellenistic sage.
- A third quest for the historical Jesus developed in the 1980s and 1990s with E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (1985); James Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism* (1988); N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (1996); and Ben Witherington, III, *The Christology of Jesus* (1990). It emphasizes that Jesus was a Jew, and we can best understand Him and His teaching in the light of first-century Judaism.

Real Words of Jesus

In the 1950s came a renewed attempt to find what Jesus really said. Over the years 25 criteria were developed to decide what Jesus really said. Example criteria include:

1. Multiple Source Attestation: A saying found in more than one place in the Gospels is said to be authentic.
2. Palestinian Environment: A saying that fit first-century Palestine is said to be authentic.
3. Aramaic Language: A saying that is awkward in Greek and makes better sense in Aramaic is said to be authentic.
4. Dissimilarity: A saying which is different from the beliefs of first-century Judaism or early Christianity is said to be authentic.
5. Embarrassment: A saying which would be an embarrassment to the Early Church is said to be authentic, since they would not have made it up.
6. Consensus of Scholars: A saying is said to be authentic if most scholars agree.
7. Multiple Forms of Statement: A saying is authentic if it is found in more than one form in the Gospels.

Jesus Seminar

In 1986, over 70 scholars banded together with the intention to answer the question: What did Jesus really say? The outcome indicated they thought only 18% of the words ascribed to Jesus were actually spoken by Him.

Criticisms of the Jesus Seminar

Luke Timothy Johnson criticized the Jesus Seminar as a group of people "self-elected on the basis of a prior agreement concerning the appropriate goals and methods for studying the gospels and the figure of Jesus." Johnson did not believe the group was representative of New Testament scholars. Johnson's specific criticism

- Lack of "discernable demonstration or even argument."
- Does not consistently follow the criteria it established.
- Uses cut-and-paste method of choosing what to consider and what not to consider.
- "Shares the same literalism and historical positivism that characterize fundamentalism."

Constructive Evangelical Presuppositions

1. Accept the Bible as reliable and trustworthy.
2. Begin with the presupposition that the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith is the same person.
3. Acknowledge that historical research does not need to dismiss the supernatural to be accurate.

Lesson 9: Historical, Social, and Religious Setting of the 1st-Century, Greco-Roman World

Due This Lesson

Timeline for first-century Palestine
Identification of the Greco-Roman Gods and religions/Two-page report
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- understand the historical events and public social climate of the first century and their impact on the spread of Christianity
- understand the social and religious settings of the first century and their impact on the spread of Christianity
- understand the setting for the development of the Early Church
- use this historical, social, and religious data as a basis for interpreting the New Testament

Homework Assignments

Read:

- Acts 9:1-31, 11:19-30, 13:1-28:31
- Galatians 1:11-2:21
- Romans 15:22-29
- 1 Corinthians 16:1-9

Construct a chronology of Paul's life from these scriptures.

Read chapter 12 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. Reflect on the questions discussed in this lesson.

Herod the Great

Augustus Caesar said of him: "It is better to be Herod's pig (*hus*) than his son (*huios*)."

Herod ruled under Octavian or Augustus Caesar (31 BC-AD 14).

Herod's kingdom was divided between three sons after his death.

Archelaus ruled Judea, Idumea, and Samaria from 4 BC to AD 6.

Antipas ruled Galilee and Perea from 4 BC to AD 39. After Archelaus' exile he also ruled Judea, Idumea, and Samaria.

Philip ruled a small area west of the Upper Jordan and a larger area east of the Jordan from 4 BC to AD 34.

Agrippa I (AD 37-44) became king of all Palestine under Emperors Caligula and Claudius.

Agrippa II (AD 44-66) shared power over Palestine with the Roman Governor Felix and later Porcius Festus. Agrippa II appointed the high priest.

First Jewish Revolt and Destruction of Jerusalem

Nero blamed the fire in Rome (AD 64) on Christians and started the first organized persecution of Christians.

Vespasian was emperor from AD 68 to 79. He was in power when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed.

Emperor Domitian ruled from AD 81-96 and decreed the first official persecution of the Christians.

Council of Jamnia in AD 90

Emperors **Nerva** and **Trajan** continued the persecution.

Emperor Hadrian (AD 117-138) crushed the second Jewish war and renamed Judea and Jerusalem.

Public Social Climate of the 1st Century

Social Classes

Sharp contrast between the rich and the poor

Roman classes: aristocrats, freedmen, and slaves

Jewish classes: upper—chief priests and rabbis, middle—farmers, artisans, and small business owners

Am ha-Aretz (people of the land)

Christians Were Both Jewish and Gentile

Craftspeople, traders, merchants seem predominate

Both slaves and masters

Wealthy Christians and poor

Public officials

Women were actively involved

Entertainment

Gladiator shows

Sports heroes

Theater shows

Music and literature were highly honored

Business and Labor

Trade guilds

Industry was limited to small, local shops and home industry.

Overland caravans, shipping

Agricultural practices were highly developed.

Banking services were available.

Science and Medicine

Jews were not interested in science.

Greco-Roman medicine, surgery, and dentistry were widely practiced.

Greco-Roman mathematics and astronomy were highly developed.

Everyday Life Issues

Meals

Romans ate four meals a day.

Jews ate two meals a day.

Main meal for both groups was at night.

Common people ate largely a vegetarian diet.

Meat for the common people was associated with religious feast days.

Clothing and Styles

Men wore tunics to the knee, a warm cloak. Only Roman citizens could wear togas.

Women wore short under-tunic and a colored outer tunic to the feet. Married women covered their heads in public.

Non-Jewish males were shaved with short hair. Jewish men grew beards and had longer hair. Women's hair was generally kept long.

Everyday Life Issues

The Family

Caesar Augustus was somewhat of a moral reformer. The Augustan Social Laws: sumptuary laws, laws against adultery, and laws which encouraged marriage and having children.

The extended family was the basic unit in the Jewish population.

Female babies were unwanted.

No family surnames.

Average marriageable age for Roman women was 12, Roman men 30 to 50.

Average marriageable age for Jewish women was 13-14, Jewish men 25 to 50.

Morals

Greco-Roman gods were guilty of every type of immorality.

Jews demanded a very high level of morality.

Competing Religions

Greek and Roman Mythology

Emperor Worship

Mystery Religions

Superstitions

Competing Philosophical Schools

Neo-Platonism

Mind over body

Body not important

Epicurean School

Withdraw from society

Stoic School

“Que sera, sera”—what will be, will be!

To be happy, do your duty.

Cynicism

Anti-social behavior

Skepticism

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Lesson 10: The Life of Paul

Due This Lesson

Chronology of Paul's Life

Read chapter 12 in *Discovering the New Testament*

Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- develop a chronology for Paul's life
- understand the historical, geographical, social, and literary setting for Paul's life and ministry

Homework Assignments

Read and record what is said about:

God: Rom 11:33-36, 16:26-27; 2 Cor 1:3-22, 5:18-6:4; Acts 14:15; 1 Tim 1:17, 6:15-16

Evil: Rom 16:20; 1 Cor 7:5; 2 Cor 11:12-15, 12:7; Eph 2:2, 6:10-16; 1 Tim 3:7, 15; 2 Tim 2:26, 4:18

Human Condition: Rom 2:15, 3:1-20, 23-28, 12:2; 1 Cor 9:27, 15:35-46; 2 Cor 4:16, 5:8; Gal 4:1-9; Eph 2:1-5, 4:17-18; 2 Tim 2:24-26, 3:13-17; Acts 17:28-29

The Law/law: Rom 3:10-11, 21-31, 7:12, 14; Gal 2:16, 3:24, 5:13-14, 6:2; Eph 2:15; Col 1:13-14

People of God: Acts 13:17; Rom 8:16-21, 9:4-8, 11:12; 2 Cor 11:22; Gal 3:8-9, 4:4-5; Phil 2:15

Revelation/Scripture: Eph 3:4-9; Rom 15:15-16, 16:25-26; 1 Cor 3:10; Gal 2:6-9; Acts 24:14; 2 Tim 2:10, 3:16-17

Messiah/Christ: Phil 2:6-11; Col 1:15-20; 1 Tim 3:16

Redemption: Rom 3:24-25, 5:7-8, 8:23; Eph 1:1-14; 1 Tim 2:6

Cross: 1 Cor 1:18-23; 2 Cor 13:4; Gal 3:13-14, 5:24, 6:14; Eph 2:16; Col 1:20, 2:14

Resurrection: 1 Cor 15:14; Acts 13:34-37, 24:15-21; Rom 4:24-25, 8:11; 2 Tim 2:8

Church: Eph 1:22-23, 2:11-16, 4:15, 5:22-23; Rom 12:3-5; 1 Cor 12:1-31; 2 Cor 11:2

Ethics: Eph 1:4, 4:1, 5:1; 1 Cor 3:17, 13:13; Phil 2:5-11; 1 Thess 4:11-12; Titus 2:7-14, 3:1-14

Last Things: Rom 2:1-11, 8:15-23, 13:11-14; Phil 3:17-4:1; 2 Thess 1:5-10

Read chapter 10 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. Imagine Paul has just written you a letter concerning your ministry. What would it say? How would you react?

Major Cities in Paul's Life

Tarsus, Cilicia

A busy commercial city on the southeast coast of Asia Minor

A regional Roman capital

On a major road

A world-class university

Greek language and culture predominate

Antioch, Syria

Cultural area

Major trade route

Church community first consisted of Jews

Disciples were first called "Christians"

Antioch church sent Paul and Barnabas as missionaries

Church was growing fast in urban areas using communication networks

Chronology of Paul's Life

6 BC	Paul's birth
28-30	Public ministry of Jesus
33	Paul's conversion
33-36	Paul in Arabia (being taught by revelation of Jesus Christ)
35 or 36	Paul's first postconversion visit to Jerusalem
35-44	Paul preaches in Cilicia
44-46	Paul invited to Antioch, Syria, by Barnabas (famine in Palestine)
46	Paul's second visit to Jerusalem
47-48	First missionary journey with Barnabas to Cyprus and Galatia
49	Jerusalem Council
49	Jews expelled from Rome by Claudius because of the "Chrestus" riot
49-52	Second missionary journey with Silas through Asia Minor and Greece
52	Third visit to Jerusalem and a visit to Antioch
52-55	Third missionary journey—Ephesus
55-57	Third missionary journey—Macedonia, Illyricum, and Achaia
57-59	Fourth visit to Jerusalem, arrested and imprisoned at Caesarea under Felix
59-60	Appears before Festus and King Agrippa; appeals to Caesar; voyage to Rome
60-62	Under house arrest at Rome
62-64 (65)	Released, journeys to Spain (?)
64	Fire in Rome
64 (67)	Paul returns to Rome and is martyred under Emperor Nero

Debate in Dating Paul's Life

Acts records five trips to Jerusalem

9:26, right after his conversion

11:29-30, to bring money for famine relief

15:2-4, to attend the Jerusalem Council

18:22, after his second missionary journey

21:17, final visit when he is arrested

Which visit is mentioned in Galatians 2:1-10?

One side assumes Paul is referring to the Acts 15 Council in Jerusalem

The other side believes it refers to the famine relief visit

Four Types of Jewish/Gentile Christians

<p>Gentiles must become Jews after becoming Christians.</p>	<p>Gentile Christians are Gentiles living within Israel who must compromise so as not to offend Jews.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eat no meat offered to idols. 2. Keep from sexual immorality 3. Avoid eating blood and meat from animals with blood inside of them 	<p>Gentile Christians are not under the dietary laws and practices of Jews.</p>	<p>Jesus has replaced Judaism.</p>
<p>Judaizers</p>	<p>James (Peter)</p>	<p>Paul</p>	<p>John, Author to Hebrews</p>



Models for Paul's Letters

Book:	Book:
Salutation	Salutation
Prayer or Expression of Thanks to God	Prayer or Expression of Thanks to God
Body	Body
Advice or Exhortation	Advice or Exhortation
Closing Farewell	Closing Farewell

Types of Letters

Letter of Friendship

Letter of Praise and Blame

Letter of Exhortation and Advice

1. *Paraenetic* Letters (Exhortation and Dissuasion)
2. Letters of Advice
3. *Protreptic* Letters
4. Letters of Admonition
5. Letters of Rebuke
6. Letters of Reproach
7. Letters of Consolation

Letters of Mediation

Accusing, Apologetic and Accounting Letters

Lesson 11: The Teachings of Paul

Due This Lesson

Reading and record of topics
Read chapter 10 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

- At the end of this lesson, participants will
- identify the major points of Paul's theology
 - understand the questions Paul was facing in his ministry

Homework Assignments

Read Acts in two different translations and look for answers to the five hermeneutical questions in Resource 11-3.

Read chapter 11 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. If you could sit down and talk to Paul, what topic would you want to discuss? Why?

Which Letters Did Paul Write?

Agreement on Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon

Less agreement on Ephesians, Colossians, and 2 Thessalonians

Many scholars do not think the Pastoral Epistles of 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus were written by Paul.

Paul's Gospel and Jesus' Gospel

Rationalistic Viewpoint

Jesus taught a simple ethical spirituality or called for political or social revolution.

Paul transformed the simple, gentle Jesus into an idealized diving man.

Rationalistic view does not acknowledge Jesus as the divine Christ.

Orthodox Christianity Viewpoint

Acknowledges there are differences between Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God and Paul's of the risen Christ.

Paul and Jesus are not identical in their message, but they are complementary.

Hermeneutical Questions

Acts

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 12: Acts: The Gospel to the Nations

Due This Lesson

Resource 11-3 for Acts

Read chapter 11 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the author, audience, date, and place for Acts
- see how Luke constructed his history of the Church by looking at the main sections and paralleling the lives of Peter and Paul
- gain an appreciation of why Acts was written

Homework Assignments

Read Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians in two different translations. Fill in the outlines as found in Resources 12-4 and 12-5.

Read chapter 13, and chapter 14 pages 231-244.

Write in your journal. Reflect on insights you have gained about the Early Church.

Peter and Paul: Parallel Stories

Structure of Apostle's Mission	Peter	Paul
	Acts 1-12	Acts 13-28
Witness to risen Christ	1:21-22	23:1; 26:16
Spirit initiates	2:1-40	13:1-40
Heals lame and speech	3:12-26	14:8-17
Persecution (stoning) leads to wider mission	6:8-8:4 (Stephen)	14:19-23
Defends Gentile mission in Jerusalem	Ch. 11	Ch. 21
Imprisoned at Jewish feast	12:4-7	21:16-28
Conclusion: Success of Word of God	12:24	28:30-31
 Deeds of the Apostle		
Encounters a magician	8:9-24	13:6-12
Gentiles try to worship him	10:25-26	14:13-15
Raises the dead	9:36-43	20:9-12
Delivered from prison	12:6-11	16:24-26
Laying on hands gives Spirit	8:14-17	19:1-6
Appoints leader with prayer/laying on hands	6:1-16	14:23
Defended by Pharisees in Sanhedrin	5:34-39	23:9
Accused of acting against Moses	6:13-14 (Stephen)	21:20-21; 25:8

Why Was Acts Written?

The purpose of Acts

How the Story of Acts Develops

Peter dominates chapters 1-12

Paul dominates chapters 13-28

Hermeneutical Questions

Romans

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

1 and 2 Corinthians

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 13: Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians

Due This Lesson

Outlines of Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians
Read chapter 13, and chapter 14 pages 231-244
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the types of letters written in the first century
- know the purpose and main content for Paul's letters to the Romans and Corinthians

Homework Assignments

Read Galatians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians in two different translations. Fill in the outline for each as found in Resources 13-1 and 13-2.

Read chapter 14 pages 244-247, and chapter 16 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. Reflect on issues contemporary churches have today that are similar to Corinth and how Paul might address them.

Hermeneutical Questions

Galatians

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

1 and 2 Thessalonians

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 14: Galatians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians

Due This Lesson

Outlines for Galatians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians
Read chapter 14 pages 244-247, and chapter 16
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the purposes and uses of letters in the first century
- know the purpose and main content for Paul's letters to the Galatians and Thessalonians

Homework Assignments

Read Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians in two different translations. Fill in the outlines found in Resources 14-1, 14-2, and 14-3.

Read chapter 15 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. Which one of these three books—Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians—speaks to issues you are facing in your spiritual walk?

Hermeneutical Questions

Ephesians

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

Philippians

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

Colossians

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 15: Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

Due This Lesson

Outlines of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians
Read chapter 15 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

- At the end of this lesson, participants will
- gain an understanding of the types of letters written in the first century
 - know the purpose and main content for Paul's letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

Homework Assignments

Read Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus in two different translations. Fill in the outlines found in Resources 15-2, 15-3, and 15-4.

Read chapter 17 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. Reflect on what it would mean to your church to have a general superintendent write a personal letter to them. What kind of a letter would it be?

Ephesians and Colossians Parallel Construction

Ephesians

1:1-2

1:15-17

2:5-6

3:1-13

4:17-32

5:19-20

5:22-6:9

6:18-20

6:21-22

Colossians

1:1-2

1:3-4, 9-10

2:12-13

1:24-2:5

3:5-14

3:16-17

3:18-4:1

4:2-4

4:7-8

Hermeneutical Questions

Philemon

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

1 and 2 Timothy

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

Titus

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 16: Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus

Due This Lesson

Outlines of Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus
Read chapter 17 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the types of letters written in the first century
- know the purpose and main content for Paul's letters to Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus

Homework Assignments

Read Hebrews and James in two different translations. Fill out the outlines found in Resources 16-1 and 16-2.

Read chapter 18, and chapter 19 pages 312-315.

Write in your journal. Imagine Paul was your mentor. What are the things for which you would like him to give you advice? What do you think he might say?

Hermeneutical Questions

Hebrews

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

James

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 17: Hebrews and James

Due This Lesson

Outlines of Hebrews and James

Read chapter 18, and chapter 19 pages 312-315.

Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the types of letters written in the first century
- know the purpose and main content for the General Letters, Hebrews and James

Homework Assignments

Read 1 and 2 Peter and Jude in two different translations. Fill out the outlines found in Resource 17-1 and 17-2.

Read chapter 19 pages 315-323.

Write in your journal. How significant would it be to know the authorship of the Book of Hebrews? Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

1 and 2 Peter

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Hermeneutical Questions

Jude

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 18: 1 and 2 Peter and Jude

Due This Lesson

Outlines of 1 and 2 Peter and Jude
Read chapter 19 pages 315-323
Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the types of letters written in the first century
- know the purpose and main content for the General Letters, 1 and 2 Peter and Jude

Homework Assignments

Read 1, 2, and 3 John in two different translations. Fill out the outline found in Resource 18-2.

Read chapter 20 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. Reflect on the characteristic of the "Life of the Pilgrim" you would most want people to see in you. Which is the most difficult?

Journal Check: Be prepared to show your journal to the instructor during the next session. The instructor will not read it in detail nor will it be handed in. Your journal will be briefly inspected to note regularity and quality of organization and entries.

1 Peter

The Life of the Pilgrim

Be obedient to God (1: 14, 22)
Be holy (1: 15)
Live as servants (2: 16, 4: 11)
Be prayerful (3: 7, 4: 7)
Live openly, transparently (2: 16, 3: 16)
Do what is good (2: 15, 3: 16-17)
Be gentle and respectful (3: 15)
Love one another deeply (1: 22, 4: 8)
Exercise self-control (1: 13, 4: 7, 5: 8)
Live humbly (5: 6)
Reject evil (2: 11)
Accept human rule (2: 13, 17)
Control sinful desires (2: 1, 11)
Do God's will (4: 2)
Share with other (4: 9)
Use our gifts for others (4: 10-11)

The Life of the World

Rebellion against God
Unholiness
Live selfishly
Reject God
Live deceitfully
Do what is wrong
Live harshly and insolently
Hate one another
Live excessively, wildly
Be proud and arrogant
Embrace evil
Reject human rule
Give desires free rein
Reject God's will
Hoard one's possessions
Refuse to share

Hermeneutical Questions

1, 2, and 3 John

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 19: 1, 2, and 3 John

Due This Lesson

Outline of 1, 2, and 3 John
Read chapter 20 in *Discovering the New Testament*
Journaling
Journal check

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the types of letters written in the first century
- know the purpose and main content for the Johannine Letters, 1, 2, and 3 John

Homework Assignments

Read Revelation in two different translations. Fill out the outline found in Resource 19-4.

Read chapter 21 in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Write in your journal. What thoughts or arguments have you gained from John that will be helpful to counter the false teachings you encounter?

Gnosticism vs. Christianity

In 1 John, John contrasts the false teachings of Gnosticism with the true Christian belief.

Gnosticism

Wrong Belief

1:6: Believes a lie

4:6: Spirit of falsehood

2:22-4:3: Denies Jesus

1:10: Denies sin

Excuses Sin: A Sinning Religion

1:6: Walks in darkness

2:19: Division comes from the spirit of the anti-Christ

2:4: Disobeys Christ

3:8: Sins continually

5:19: Under the control of the devil

Christianity

Right Belief

2:20-23: Believes the truth

4:6: Spirit of truth

4:2: Confesses Jesus

1:9-2:1: Accepts forgiveness

Victorious Christian Living

1:7: Walks in the light

1:9: Has fellowship with God and others

2:3, 17: Obeys Christ and does God's will

3:4-6: Freedom from sinning

3:9-10, 4:4, 5:4-5 Has God's victory by faith

False Teachings

Gnosticism

The Church Fathers compared Gnostic teaching to the many-headed hydra of Greek legend.

There was no Gnostic church or normative theology.

Gnostic systems attached themselves to "host" religions.

Essential features of Gnosticism

Gnosis is Greek for knowledge. Claimed a special knowledge.

In each person there is a divine "spark" which comes from the divine.

Believed in dualism on the cosmological and anthropological levels.

Angels and other heavenly beings played an important role.

Soteriology: Those with special knowledge know how to get the god and his helpers to "reveal the things that are difficult to interpret."

Eschatology: Deliverance of the heavenly soul has cosmic significance.

Docetism

The belief that Jesus was not truly human, but He just *seemed* to be human.

Facing False Teaching

Select a recorder/reporter.

Read and discuss how John deals with Gnosticism and Docetism in the following passages:

1 John 2:22-23

1 John 4:1-3, 15

1 John 5:1-5, 10-12

What do John's concerns tell us about the churches in Asia Minor at the end of the first century?

What similarities do they have with the 21st-century churches?

What differences?

Hermeneutical Questions

Revelation

Type

Who?

Author:

Audience:

Where?

Author:

Audience:

When?

What?

Why?

Lesson 20: Revelation and Course Evaluation

Due This Lesson

Outline of Revelation

Read chapter 21 in *Discovering the New Testament*

Journaling

Learner Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will

- gain an understanding of the Jewish apocalyptic literature
- know the purpose and main content for Revelation

Homework Assignments

Read the Epilogue in *Discovering the New Testament*.

Revelation

What?

“Apocalypsis Jesu Christus”—A Revelation of Jesus Christ. This is the first line of Revelation and Vernard Eller, *The Most Revealing Book of the Bible: Making Sense Out of Revelation*, says, “In his title John also has given us the primary principle for interpreting his book . . . his desire to proclaim and expound the person of Jesus Christ . . . John has given us a revelation of Jesus Christ which is to be harmonized with the larger revelation of Christ which is the New Testament itself—this, RATHER THAN as a revelation of future history to be correlated, now, with ‘signs,’ i.e., whatever can be observed in today’s world and in the political events of the twentieth century.”

“Apocalypsis” is a Greek work which means to uncover or unveil something that is hidden. It is a highly symbolic book which uses the language of Jewish apocalypticism to express its message.

It is also a book of “apocalyptic” prophecy.

Revelation

Why?

Classical theories of interpretation

Idealism

Preterism

Historicism

Futurism

Some views

Premillennial View

Amillennial View

Postmillennial View

Dispensational Premillennial View

Modern Approaches

Modern Historical Critical Approach

The Sociological Approaches
Elements of Social Crisis

Experience of Trauma

A Call for Social Radicalism

Jewish Apocalyptic Symbolism

Similarities between Revelation and Jewish Apocalypticism

Use of images

Expansion of evil toward the end

Division of time into periods

Differences with Jewish Apocalypticism

No attempt at pseudonymity

Not as intense a pessimism

The prophesied event is not from the vantage point of the seer (John), but from the viewpoint of the exalted Christ.

Theology of Revelation

God

Exists

Created the universe

Guides the course of history

Has overcome evil

Will bring a triumphal end in "His own good time"

Son of God

Jesus is to return as "King of kings" and "Lord of lords."

Jesus is the Divine Being with the same divine qualities as God, the Father.

Jesus is the "Lamb" who was slain and is the Savior of the World.

People of God

Individual churches have their strengths and weaknesses.

As a whole they are victorious over the beast, his image, and his followers.

They are referred to as: servants of God, a kingdom, priests, saints, the blameless, the called and chosen, the bride of the Lamb, the redeemed.

Their job is to keep believing in the testimony of Jesus and the Word of God. They do this by being alert, keeping God's commands, being pure, and doing the work God has asked them to do.

Eschatology

Personal eschatology (what happens at the end of our lives)

Certainty of life after death

Comfort of the believer in the presence of God and Christ

Resurrection and reward of the saints

Cosmic eschatology (what happens at the end of the world)

Second coming of Christ

Assignment of all to eternal reward or punishment

Creation of a new heaven and a new earth