

# Overview of the New Testament

## 4 GOSPELS (“Good News”) or LIFE STORIES OF JESUS CHRIST

- Matthew** Attributed to the disciple, Matthew. Jesus portrayed as KING and MESSIAH. Written to the Jews. Jesus, the PROMISED Savior. Keys: “kingdom” used 55 times; “kingdom of heaven” used 35 times (unique to Matthew); 29 OT references and 13 additional “this was written that it might be fulfilled . . .”
- Mark** Attributed to John Mark, the young friend of Paul. Jesus portrayed as SERVANT. Written to the the Romans. Jesus, the POWERFUL Savior. Keys: “and” is used 1375 times; “immediately” used 40 times - a continual drama of action
- Luke** Attributed to the Gentile Doctor Luke. Jesus portrayed as SON OF MAN. Written to the Greeks. Jesus the PERFECT Savior. Keys: unique details of humanity: - birth, boyhood, praying, weeping, bleeding; stories of humanity: prodigal, Samaritan, publican, Zacchaeus, thief; poetic book: songs, prayers
- John** Attributed to the disciple, John. Jesus portrayed as SON OF GOD. Written to all who will believe. Jesus, the PERSONAL Savior. Keys: deity of Jesus; “believe” 98 times, “my Father” 35 times; ministry in Judea; omissions: no genealogy, birth, temptation, transfiguration, parables, ascension, commission

## 1 BOOK of HISTORY or “2 LUKE”

- Acts** Attributed to the Gentile Doctor Luke. The acts of the HOLY SPIRIT. Key event: PENTECOST. Key person: the APOSTLE PAUL. Key theme: WITNESSING in Jerusalem (1-7), Judea and Samaria (8-12), uttermost part of the earth (13-28). Only unfinished book (we continue the story!).

## 13 LETTERS WRITTEN BY PAUL or “PAULINE EPISTLES”

- Romans** Theme: The RIGHTEOUSNESS of God (1:16, 17) Arguably, the most important book of the Bible. Doctrinal / Practical Pivot: Chapter 12:1, 2  
Outline: Chapters 1 – 3:20 Who We Are By Nature [Doctrinal]  
Chapters 3:21 – 5 How to Become a Christian  
Chapters 6 – 8 How to Live the Christian Life  
Chapters 9 – 11 Why Israel Is Set Aside [Dispensational]  
Chapters 12 – 16 How To Serve God [Practical]
- 1 Corinthians** Theme: The LORDSHIP of Jesus Christ (1:31)  
Outline: Chapters 1 –11 Corrections in Christian Conduct  
Chapters 12 – 16 Instructions in Christian Conduct  
(12 – Gifts, 13 – Love, 14 – Tongues, 15 – Resurrection)
- 2 Corinthians** Theme: Jesus, our SUFFICIENCY (12:9) [also Comfort (1:3; 13:11)]  
Important chapter: Chapter 5 (Present & Future bodies; Reconciliation)  
Outline: Chapters 1 – 7 Paul’s Ministry (he defends his credentials)  
Chapters 8 – 9 Liberal Giving  
Chapters 10 – 13 Paul’s Apostleship (he defends his courage)

- Galatians** Theme: FREEDOM in Christ (5:1). Doctrinal / Practical Pivot: Chapter 5:1  
The Christian “Declaration of Independence.” Walk by the SPIRIT (5:16).  
Outline: Chapters 1-2 Personal (Paul defends his life of grace)  
Chapters 3-4 Doctrinal (Freedom from the law)  
Chapters 5-6 Practical (Walking in the Spirit)
- Ephesians** Theme: The BODY OF CHRIST. Doctrinal / Practical Pivot: Chapter 4:1  
Important chapter: Chapter 6 (armor of God in our battle with evil)  
Outline: Chapters 1-4 The Believer’s CALL  
Chapters 5-6 The Believer’s WALK
- Philippians** Theme: Jesus, Our JOY (“joy” 16 times) Doctrinal / Practical Pivot: 4:4  
Outline: Chapter 1 Joy in Purposeful Living (1:21)  
Chapter 2 Joy in Humble Attitude (2:5)  
Chapter 3 Joy in Proper Goal (3:14)  
Chapter 4 Joy in Dependence on Christ (4:13)
- Colossians** Theme: EXALTED in Christ – Christ the head of the body, our LIFE (hope of glory, complete in Him, fullness of deity) Doctrinal / Practical Pivot: 3:1.  
Outline: Chapter 1 The Deeper Life - rooted in His person (1:23)  
Chapter 2 The Higher Life - built up in Him (2:7)  
Chapter 3 The Inner Life - Christ richly within you (3:16)  
Chapter 4 The Outer Life - wisdom toward outsiders(4:5)
- 1 Thessalonians** Theme: JESUS’ SOON RETURN Emphasis on His coming in the clouds.  
Doctrinal / Practical Pivot: 4:1 Ch. 4:“Rapture”; Chap. 5:“Day of the Lord”  
Outline: Chapter 1 – 3 Looking back: How they were saved  
Chapter 4 – 5 Looking forward: How they should live
- 2 Thessalonians** Theme: JESUS COMING TO REIGN Emphasis on His coming to earth.  
Doctrinal / Practical Pivot: 3:1 Ch. 2 – Tribulation: Apostasy & Antichrist  
Outline: Chapter 1 Comfort – from the hope of Christ’s return  
Chapter 2 Caution – on the time of Christ’s return  
Chapter 3 Command – in the light of Christ’s return
- 1 Timothy** Theme: SOUND DOCTRINE Pastoral: Lessons in Leadership  
Outline: Chapter 1 The GOAL and ATTITUDE of leadership  
Chapter 2 The PRIORITY and AUTHORITY of leadership  
Chapter 3 The QUALIFICATIONS of leadership  
Chapter 4 The DISCIPLINE of leadership  
Chapter 5 The WAGES of leadership  
Chapter 6 The RESPONSIBILITY of leadership
- 2 Timothy** Theme: HANG IN THERE Pastoral: Paul’s farewell letter (4:7)  
Outline: Chapter 1 “Kindle afresh” your gift (1:6)  
Chapter 2 “Be strong” in the grace of Jesus (2:1)  
Chapter 3: “Difficult times will come” (3:1)  
Chapter 4 “Preach the Word” (4:1)
- Titus** Theme: SOUND BEHAVIOR Pastoral: Godliness or Good Deeds  
Outline: Chapter 1 Godliness in the church  
Chapter 2 Godliness in the home  
Chapter 3 Godliness in the world

**Philemon** Theme: FORGIVENESS Personal: defending a believing, runaway slave

## **8 LETTERS WRITTEN BY OTHER AUTHORS or “GENERAL EPISTLES”**

**Hebrews** Theme: A BETTER WAY Probably not written by Paul. (Apollos?)  
An important NT book linking the OT with the NT Chapter 11: FAITH  
Outline: Chapters 1 - 4:13 The Superiority of the Person of Christ  
Chapters 4:13 – 10:18 The Superiority of the Priesthood of Christ  
Chapters 10:19 – 13 The Superiority of the Life in Christ

**James** Theme: PRACTICAL WISDOM Our behavior must match our belief  
Written by James, the earthly brother of Jesus. A series of 54 commands.  
Outline: Chapter 1 Testings and Temptations  
Chapter 2 Faith without Works is Dead (2:17)  
Chapter 3 Control of the Tongue  
Chapter 4 The Source of Lust  
Chapter 5 Reacting to the Rich

**1 Peter** Theme: HOPE IN SUFFERING Written by Peter, the disciple.  
Outline: Chapter 1 Hope & Holy (our living hope and be holy)  
Chapter 2 Grow & Government (grow in the Word; respect  
government)  
Chapter 3 Wives & Witness (wives be submissive;  
be ready to witness)  
Chapter 4 Stewards & Suffering (be a steward of  
your gift; suffer rightly)  
Chapter 5 Leaders & Lions (leader principles; Satan is like a lion)

**2 Peter** Theme: TRUTH IN FALSEHOOD Written by Peter, the disciple.  
Outline: Chapter 1 True Knowledge & Inspiration of Scripture (1:20, 21)  
Chapter 2 Prophets & Peril (false prophets and peril to believers)  
Chapter 3 Mockers & Melting (scoffers and earth destroyed by fire)

**1 John** Theme: THAT YOU MAY KNOW (5:13) Written by John, the disciple.  
Outline: Chapters 1 – 2 God is LIGHT - 7 Action Tests of our  
Faith  
Chapter 3 Practicing Righteousness - Blending of  
our actions and belief  
Chapters 4 – 5 God is LOVE – 4 Belief Tests of our Faith

**2 John** Theme: EMBRACE TRUTH Personal: Written by John to “a chosen lady”

**3 John** Theme: HOSPITALITY Personal: Written by disciple John to Gaius

**Jude** Theme: CONTEND FOR THE FAITH Written by Jude – earthly brother of  
Jesus  
Michael the archangel; details on Enoch, the 7<sup>th</sup> from Adam

## **1 PROPHETIC BOOK or APOCALYPTIC BOOK**

**Revelation** Theme: UNVEILING OF THE END TIMES  
Outline: Chapters 1 – 5 The Risen Christ Enthroned  
Chapters 6 – 19 The Great Tribulation and the Wrath of God  
Chapters 20 The Millennium and Final Judgment

## APPROXIMATE CHRONOLOGY OF THE WRITING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

<b>Book</b>	<b>Date (A.D. )</b>	<b>When Paul Wrote</b>
James	45-49	
Galatians	49	written on mission
1 & 2 Thessalonians	51	written on mission
<b>Mark</b>	50s or 60s	
<b>Matthew</b>	50s or 60s	
1 Corinthians	55	written on mission
2 Corinthians	56	written on mission
Romans	57-58	written on mission
<b>Luke</b>	60	
<b>Acts</b>	61	
Colossians, Ephesians	61	written in prison
Philippians, Philemon	63	written in prison
1 Peter	63-64	
1 Timothy	63-66	written post prison
Titus	63-66	written post prison
Hebrews	64-68	
2 Peter	66	
2 Timothy	67	written in prison (2x)
Jude	68-80	
<b>John</b>	85-90	
1, 2, 3 John	85-90	
Revelation	90-95	