I. The New Testament – An Overview

a. What is the “New Testament?”

b. What is so “old” about the Old Testament and “new” about the New Testament?

c. The New Testament is arranged ______________________, not ______________________.
   i. The Gospels
   ii. Acts
   iii. Pauline Epistles
   iv. General Epistles
   v. Revelation

II. The World of the New Testament
a. The political climate

   i. A great general

ii. A grand empire

iii. A struggle for power

   The Seleucids and Ptolemies

   The crisis under Antiochus Epiphanes (175-63 BC)

   The Maccabees

iv. An emerging world rule – the Romans

v. A cruel king

vi. A critical period of time
b. Religion anyone? Take your pick!

i. Greco-Roman religions

Plato

Stoicism

Cynicism

Magic

Pagan religions

Gnosticism

Emperor worship

ii. Jewish religions
Let’s study the Torah

Let’s separate

Let’s accommodate

Let’s withdraw

Let’s fight

iii. The literature of Judaism
   Halakah and haggadah

   The Mishnah

   The Talmud

   The Midrashim
The Targums

Dead Sea Scrolls

c.  What was it like to live in the 1st Century A.D.?

   i.  Avoid shame at all costs

   ii. No person is an island

   iii. Patrons and their clients

   iv.  Social classes in the first century

       Wealthy

       Poor

       Slaves

Examples:
Luke 10.25-37 –
d. Should we interpret the NT critically?

What do we mean by criticism?

What does it mean to approach the NT critically?

e. Can we interpret the NT objectively?

The Christmas story retold:

---

III. How Did We Get Our New Testament?

a. A brief introduction to the “canon” of the New Testament

What is meant by canon?

What role did the OT play in the formation of the NT canon?
b. Where did our New Testament come from?
   i. 2 Peter 3.15-16
   
   ii. Marcion
   
   iii. Athanasius (A.D. 367)
   
   iv. Council of Carthage (A.D. 397)

   Despite the uncertainties and ambiguities, there was still a sense that the church knew where to turn to find authoritative witness to Christ.

c. So who decides?
   i. Conformity
   
   ii. Universal acceptance
   
   iii. Apostolic authority

IV. One Book or Many Books?

a. What is a “genre?”
b. The diversity of literary genres in the NT

V. The Gospels

a. Can we trust our Gospels?

i. Who was Jesus?

Reconstructing Church History:

Bart Ehrman – Lost Christianities

Evaluation

1.

2.

3.

ii. We can trust our gospels!

b. Who’s Using Who? The “Synoptic Problem” (Source Criticism)

   i. The Gospels are independent of one another

   ii. St. Augustine believed that ________________ was written first.

   iii. Mark wrote first

   Mark

   Q

   Matthew          Luke

   iv. Reasons for seeing Mark as the first Gospel

   1. Mark

   2. Most of Mark ____________________________.

   3. The differences between Mt, Mk, and Lk
c. The Gospel of a Tax Collector

i. Who was the author?

ii. A key structural feature

iii. Key features

1.1

Those dry genealogies

Gentile Ephasis

Chapter 2

The Magi

OT background

The function of this section

A sermon worth listening to (Chaps. 5-7)
The context of the sermon

Jesus fulfills the law (5.17)

Grace or law?

Chapter 24-25

Purpose of this section

The “abomination of desolation”

“signs of the times”

The “Great Commission” (28.18-20)

iv. The purpose of Matthew

v. Other important themes in Matthew
   Christ
What does Matt tell us about Jesus’ fulfillment of the OT?

Kingdom of God/Heaven

So you want to be a disciple!

**Excursus:** The Kingdom of God in the Bible

What is the “kingdom of God?”

The OT background to the kingdom of God
Adam in the garden of Eden (Gen. 1.26-28)

The flood

King David (2 Sam 7; Psalm 89)
The exile

The New Testament

Fulfillment in Christ

Matt 1-2; 12.28 -

The eschatological structure of the NT – “already but not yet”

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d. Gospel #2

i. Who was the author?

ii. Papias’ Testimony

iii. What was the purpose?
iv. The plan

1.1-13

1.14-8.30

8.31-16.8

v. The “new exodus” in Mark

vi. Key verse

vii. What is unique about Mark?
    Balance between Jesus’ deity and humanity

    1.11; 2.5

The “Secret Messiah”

Discipleship
Good News!

Where does Mark end (16.9-20)?

e. The Gospel of a Physician

i. Volume 1

ii. What does Luke 1.1-4 tell us about this book?

iii. Who was the author? With whom was he associated?

v. Key passages

Luke 2

The central section:


1a “Peace to this house” 9.51-10.24

2a “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” 10.25-42

3a What to pray for and how 11.1-13

4a Neither signs nor status: Hear the Word and do it! 11.14-43

5a Look inside yourself and Do the Word 11.33-12.12

6a Relinquish possessions 12.13-34

7a Relinquish privileges: Use for God’s purposes 12.35-38

8a Relinquish family and religious rules 12.49-13.17

9a Kingdom 13.18-19
   -Strive to Enter 13.23-30
9b Jerusalem 13.31-35

8b Relinquish family and religious rules 14.1-35

7b Relinquish privileges: Use for God’s purposes 15.1-32

6b Relinquish possessions 16.1-31

5b Look inside yourself and Do the Word 17.1-19

4b Neither signs nor status: Hear the Word and do it! 17.20-37

3b What to pray for and how 18.1-14

2b “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” 18.15-34

1b “The things that make for peace” 18.35-19.44
Key parables

Chap. 10

Chap. 15

vi. What is unique about Luke’s Gospel?
   The humanity of Christ and compassion for outcasts

Jesus as Savior of the world

Jesus fulfills the OT
Stewardship and material possessions

Prayer and praise

f. The Gospel of the “disciple whom Jesus loved”
   i. How does John relate to the synoptic Gospels?
   
   ii. Who was the author?

   iii. What was the purpose?

   iv. Don’t overlook the introduction (1.1-18)

       The word/Logos
Reveals God

Bridge between God and humanity

v. Key passages in John

Chap. 3

Chap. 4

Chap. 6

Chaps. 14-17

Chap. 21

The “I Am” sayings
vi. What is unique about John?
   Deity of Christ

   Word/Logos

   Lamb

   Salvation as eternal life

   The Holy Spirit

   Dualism

vii. Why is John so different from the other Gospels?
For more details see Craig Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John’s Gospel* (IVP, 2002)

g. Stories with a meaning – the Parables

   i. Allegory vs. non-allegory

   ii. The consensus – stories with one point

   iii. A recent approach

   iv. An example: Luke 15.11-31

       Father

       Younger son

       Older son

h. Why four Gospels? Isn’t one enough?

   Tatian’s attempt
i. A portrait of Jesus from the Gospels
   i. Humanity

ii. Compassion for outcasts

iii. Concern for stewardship

iv. Concern for community

VI. The Story of the Early Church – Acts

a. What is Acts doing here?

b. What is Acts’ relationship with Luke?

c. The plan of Acts – Acts 1.8
“when the Holy Spirit comes upon you”  Isa 32.15
“you will be my witnesses”  Isa 43.10, 12
“until the ends of the earth”  Isa 49.6

“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

1.1-6.7:  The church in Jerusalem

6.8-9.31:  The church/Gospel in Judea, Samaria and Galilee

12.25-28.31:  The church/Gospel spread to the ends of the earth

d. Important passages in Acts

Chap. 2

Chap. 10

Chap. 15
Christianity’s first missionary

The three “journeys” of Paul

The role of the Holy Spirit in Acts

e. What is so important about the book of Acts?

“signs and wonders”

Normative or descriptive?

VII. Reading the Early Church’s Mail

a. The occasional nature of Paul’s letters

b. A brief history of Paul
   i. A citizen of two worlds

   Paul the Jew
Paul the Roman

ii. Paul’s conversion (see Acts 9; Galatians 1)

Traditional view

What happened to Paul on the Damascus road?

c. A Letter to the church in Rome (Romans)

i. Importance

Martin Luther

Karl Barth

ii. Paul wrote Romans. Or did he? (16.22)

iii. The purpose

Mission

Apologetic
Pastoral

iv. The “New Look” on Paul!

Luther

Sanders

Dunn

A solution?

v. Diagnosis and Prognosis

vi. The importance of 3.21-26

The Heart of the Gospel

Righteousness apart from the law

Propitiation

The justification of God
vii. Justification by Faith

The background for justification

The meaning of justification

**Excurses:** An Introduction to Paul’s Thought

The eschatological tension in Paul

What does it mean to be “in Christ?”

The “old self” and the “new self”

The “indicative” and the “imperative”

d. Letter #1 to the Church in Corinth

i. Background: Acts 18 – Paul in Corinth for 1 ½ years

ii. The city of Corinth
    Location
iii. How many letters did Paul write to Corinth?

iv. The plan of the letter
   Chaps. 1-6
   Chaps. 7-16

   Arranged according to typical Gentile Sins
   Warning against immorality and Greed (4-7)
   Warning against idolatry (8-14)
   The Hope of the Resurrection (15)

v. Why did Paul have to write 1 Corinthians?

   After Paul left Corinth:
   Crisis in leadership
Sexual immorality

vi. Important passages in 1 Corinthians
    Chaps. 1-3

    Chap. 5

    Chap. 7

    Chap. 11

    Chaps. 12-14

    Chap. 15
vii. What is the theme of 1 Corinthians?

e. Letter #2 to the Corinthians

   i. Why another letter to the Corinthians?

   ii. The purpose of 2 Corinthians

   iii. Harsh or gentle?
       Chaps. 1-9

       Chaps. 10-13

   iv. One or two letters?
v. Chaps 8-9

vi. Paul the suffering apostle

vii. The theme of 2 Corinthians

f. The letter to the Church in Galatia
   i. When was Galatians written?
      Late
      Early

   The importance of Acts 15

   ii. Getting the correct address – where would you deliver this letter?
      North Galatia
South Galatia

iii. Who were Paul’s opponents?

iv. Paul’s tone

1.6

6.11

v. What is going on in chaps. 1-2?

Chap. 1.1-4

Paul’s life within Judaism

The function of this section:

vi. What did Paul think of the law?

Traditionally
The “New Look”

Why noone can be justified by works of the law

vii. The importance of Chap. 3-4

Argument from experience (3.1-5)

Argument from the OT (3.7-20)

Argument from culture (3.22-25)

viii. Works of the flesh vs. fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5)

Excursus: Who are the true people of God?
The OT background:

Adam in the Garden

Gen 12.1-3 and Abraham

The nation of Israel as God’s people

NT fulfillment

Christ – the true Israel

Christians – Gal 3.29

The criteria for membership in the people of God

g. Letter to the Church in Ephesus

i. Along with __________________, ____________________, and ____________________, Ephesians belongs to a group of letters known as the __________________ epistles.
ii. The theme of the letter

iii. The plan of the letter
    Chaps. 1-3

    Chaps. 4-6

iv. The purpose of Ephesians
    Generally

    Is there a specific purpose?

    Notice the “power language” that is scattered throughout the book.

    1.19 –
    1.21 –
    3.7 –
    3.10 –
    3.20 –
    6.10-22 –
The proposal of Clinton Arnold

A likely scenario

Lack of specific occasion

A suggestion:

v. Cosmic Reconciliation

1.9

1.19-21

2.11-22

3.10

vi. Spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6

Background of the imagery

Roman soldier?

OT

Relationship to the rest of the book
h. Letter to the Church in Philippi

i. What do we know about the city of Philippi?

ii. The purpose(s)?

iii. Is there a main theme in Philippians?

   Proposals

   A suggestion

iv. Philippians 2.6-11

   Structure

   Paul’s Christology
i. Letter to the Church in Colossae
   i. What do we know about Colossae?

ii. Haven’t we heard this before?

   Ephesians       Colossians
   2.1-4           2.13-15
   5.22-6.10       3.18-4.1

How do we explain this?

iii. Who were Paul’s opponents?

   Festivals, new moons, Sabbaths
Worship of angels

Suggestion:

iv. The purpose of Colossians

v. What is the theme?

1.15-20 –

vi. Chap. 2

vii. Chaps. 3-4
viii. What is the “big idea” of Colossians?

j. Letter to a slave owner (Philemon)

i. Relationship to Colossians

ii. The occasion for the letter

iii. What kind of letter is Philemon?

iv. The importance of the letter for Christians

1.

2.
v. Why does Paul not condemn slavery?

k. Letter #1 to the Church in Thessalonika

i. What circumstances led to the writing of this letter?

ii. The purpose and plan of 1 Thessalonians

Why did Paul write?

Chaps. 1-3

Chaps. 4-5

1.

2.
iii. When is Christ coming back?

Pre-tribulational:

Mid-tribulational:

Post-tribulational:

1 Thessalonians 4-5 and Matthew 24

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<td>24.30</td>
<td>Coming of Christ 4.15</td>
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<td>24.30</td>
<td>Clouds 4.17</td>
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<td>24.31</td>
<td>Trumpet 4.16</td>
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<td>24.31</td>
<td>Angels 4.16</td>
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<td>24.31</td>
<td>Gathering of believers 4.16</td>
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<td>24.36, 42, 44</td>
<td>Unexpected 5.1-4</td>
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<td>24.42; 25.13</td>
<td>Keep watch 5.6</td>
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</table>

v. What problem was Paul addressing?

1. Letter #2 to the Church in Thessalonika

   i. Why another letter to the Thessalonians?
ii. Paul’s response

iii. Signs of the coming of Christ (2.2-12)
    The rebellion

    The man of lawlessness

    The restrainer

iv. Comparing the eschatologies of 1 and 2 Thessalonians
    1 Thessalonians

    2 Thessalonians

m. Two letters to Timothy, and a letter to Titus
i. These three letters are commonly referred to as the __________________ epistles

ii. Which one came first?

iii. Who wrote 1 and 2 Timothy?
Arguments against Paul as the author

a. 

b. 

c. 

Response:

a. 

b. 

c. 

iv. The purpose of 1 Timothy
Commonly held view:

A proposal:

How to combat false teaching in the church….

Chap. 1:

Chap. 2:

Chap. 3:

Chap. 4:

Chap. 5:

Important verse: 3.15

v. Chap. 2

The setting

The role of women in the church

Background
Universal or cultural?

vi. Chap. 3

Elders and deacons

Function of this section

vii. Conclusion:

viii. 2 Timothy

The background

Occasion for writing

Paul’s last will and testament (4.6-8)

A theme?
ix. Titus
   What is Titus’ main function in the church on Crete?

   The island of Crete

   Paul’s subversive letter

n. What do we learn from Paul?
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
0. Letter to the “Hebrews”
   
   i. Hebrews belongs with a group of NT writings (James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude) often labeled the ________________ epistles.

   ii. Who wrote Hebrews?
       Suggestions:

       Origin was probably correct!

   iii. The purpose
       Clues in the text

       Conclusion:

       “The addressees appear, then, to have been a group of Jewish Christians who had never seen or heard Jesus in person, but learned of him from some who had themselves listened to him. Since their conversion they had been exposed to persecution… but while they had to endure public abuse, imprisonment and the looting of their property, they had not yet been called upon to die for their faith. They had given practical evidence of their faith by serving their fellow Christians and especially by caring for those of their number who suffered most in the time of persecution. Yet their Christian development had been arrested; instead of pressing ahead they were inclined to come to a full stop in their spiritual progress, in not indeed slip back to a stage they had left. Very probably they were reluctant to sever their last ties with a religion which enjoyed
protection of Roman law [Judaism] and face the risks of irrevocable commitment to the Christian way. The writer, who has known them, or known about them, for a considerable time, and feels a pastoral concern for their welfare, warns them against falling back, for this may result in falling away from their Christian faith altogether; he encourages them with the assurance that they have everything to lose if they fall back, but everything to gain if they press on” (F. F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964] p. xxx.)

iv. A sermon in writing (Hebrews 13.22)

importance –

v. Who were the readers?

vi. Two blueprints of Hebrews

Structural – alternation between exposition and exhortation

1.5-14: Exposition
2.1-4: Exhortation
2.5-18: Exposition
3.1-6: Exposition
3.7-4.13: Exhortation
4.14-16: Exhortation
5.1-10: Exposition
5.11-6.12: Exhortation
6.13-10.18: Exposition
10.19-39: Exhortation
11.1-40: Exposition
12.1-29: Exhortation
Threefold division

1.1-4.16: Jesus as God’s true messenger
4.11-10.25: Jesus as our high priest
10.19-13.25: Our partnership with Jesus

vii. What’s wrong with the Old Covenant?

Avoiding misunderstanding

The shortcoming of the Old Covenant

viii. The wilderness generation and the church

Chaps. 3-4

ix. Those dreaded warning passages

Hypothetical

Loss of Reward

Arminian
Calvinism

What sin are they in danger of committing?

Who are the readers?

What are they in danger of losing?

Hebrews 6.4-6

The problem

OT background

**Excursus:** The New Covenant in the Bible
The OT background

The importance of covenant in the Bible

Abraham

Mosaic

Davidic
Jer 31 (Ezek 36-37)

What is “new” about the New Covenant?

NT Fulfillment

Hebrews 8

Rev 21.3

p. Letter to the scattered Jews (James)

i. What should we do with James?

Luther’s attitude toward the book of James

Today

ii. The importance of the author

iii. Who were his readers?
iv. What kind of letter is James? (1.1)

v. James has many parallel with _________________________.

vi. The purpose

vii. The plan
    Testing and endurance
    Poverty and generosity
    Wisdom and speech

viii. Parallels to the sayings of Jesus (see Powerpoint)
ix. Important themes
   Faith and works

Paul and James on faith and works

<table>
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<th>Paul</th>
<th>James</th>
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Problem:

Faith:

Works:

Justify

q. Letter #1 from Peter to Rome

i. Circumstances of writing
ii. The readers

iii. The purpose:

Suffering

iv. The plan

Chaps. 1-3

Chaps. 4-5

v. What the church is all about (Chap. 2)

OT background

Function:

vi. A difficult passage: 1 Peter 3.18-20

When?
Where?

Who?

What?

Why?

vii. Stranger and aliens

r. Letter #2 from Peter, and a letter from Jude, Jesus’ brother
   i. The genre of 2 Peter (1.12-15)
   ii. The background
iii. The purpose

iv. Challenges to the Second Coming of Christ
   Objection #1 (1.16-19)

   Reply

   Objection #2 (1.20-21)

   Reply

   Objection #3 (2.1-22)

   Reply

   Objection #4 (3.1-10)
Reply

Implications for holy living

v. Why do some deny that Peter wrote this?

Early Catholicism in the NT

1.

2.

3.

vi. Jude and 2 Peter – why do they look so alike?

Options

Solution
vii. Why Jude?

Purpose

v. 3

Where did Jude get all those strange stories?

The angels who did not keep their positions (v. 6)

The dispute between Michael and Satan over Moses’ body (v. 9)

Function of these references:

v. 24

s. Three letters from John

i. Author?

ii. The Johannine community

iii. Background and purpose

The secessionists
1 John 5.13

iv. The plan of 1 John
   Love

Obedience

Christological confession

v. Is there a contradiction in 1 John?
   a.

   b.

vi. 2 John
   Background:
vii. 3 John

Background:

Message:

t. The Revelation that John had
   i. What do we do with the book of Revelation: two responses
      a. 
      b. 
   ii. Author and Date
iii. The most characteristic feature of Revelation is its

iv. Why was Revelation written?
   Roman domination and emperor worship
   Persecution?

The cities of Asia Minor

The plight of Christians
   a.
   b.

v. What is the main theme of Revelation?

vi. What kind of book is Revelation
   Apocalypse
   Prophesy
vii. How should I interpret the book of Revelation?
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 

viii. Pick an approach
      Preterist
      Historical
      Idealist
      Futurist
Do we have to choose?

ix. Revelation – a modern day parallel

x. A sampling of the visions in Revelation
   The lamb on the throne (chaps. 4-5)

   The seals, trumpets and bowls

   OT background

   Relationship

Model #1

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 2nd coming

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Model #2

2nd coming

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Model #3

2\textsuperscript{nd} coming

666 (and other numbers in Revelation)

7

3 1/2

12

Who is like the beast (chaps. 12-13)

The OT background

Function of this section
The two witnesses (chap. 11)

Background

Identity

The millennium (chap. 20)

Premillennial

1.

2.

Postmillennial

Amillennial-

A proposal:

A tale of two cities (chaps. 17-18, 21-22)

The identity of Babylon (chaps. 17-18)

The New Jerusalem (chaps. 21-22)
Background

Identification

Function

*Excurus:* The New Creation in the Bible
The Old Testament background

The Garden of Eden

The promised land

Prophetic Expectations

Isa 65.17-20

The New Testament

Jesus inaugurates a New Creation (2 Cor 5.17)

Revelation 21-22

xi. The message of Revelation – more than just eschatology
Conclusion

Can we find the main theme of the entire New Testament, or even the Bible?

Proposals:

Salvation

Kingdom of God

New Creation

God

Multiplex

A Suggestion:
## Key New Testament Dates

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<td>Paul’s Second Missionary Journey</td>
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<td>Paul’s Third Missionary Journey</td>
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<td>Paul’s First Roman Imprisonment</td>
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<td>Death of Paul</td>
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<td>Destruction of Jerusalem</td>
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# Roman Emperors of the First Century

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<td>Vitellius</td>
<td>A.D. 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vespasian</td>
<td>A.D. 69-79</td>
</tr>
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<td>Domitian</td>
<td>A.D. 81-96</td>
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<td>A.D. 96-98</td>
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<td>Trajan</td>
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