

NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS AND PASTORS

JONATHAN EDWARD TETTEH
KUWORNU-ADJAOTTOR

Foreword By
Prince Sorie Conteh



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PRINCE SORIE CONTEH



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Jonathan Edward Tetteh Kuwornu-Adjaottor

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all the students I taught New Testament Theology at the Department of Religious Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi - Ghana, from 2009 to 2020. Secondly, I dedicate this book to the Christ Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, where I teach New Testament texts any time I am given the opportunity to preach.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge all the sources I consulted in writing this book, especially, Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, from which I drew extensively.



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FOREWORD

Over the centuries, New Testament Theology has best been thought of as a subset of Biblical theology and has been restricted to movements that adopt that label. New Testament Theology was categorized under the following stickers: Biblical Theology and New Testament Theology; Historical Criticism and New Testament theology; Some Responses to the Historicist Impulse; Recent Visions of the nature of New Testament theology; Roman Catholic Contributions; New Testament Theology: 1985-95; Other Influences that Shape New Testament Theology; Controlling or Defining Elements of New Testament Theology; Focal Issues (Carson 1997, 796-814). These movements, however, could not solve the problem of what constituted New Testament theology and what its nature should be.

Recently, some scholars have grappled with these questions with the aim of settling on what the center of New Testament theology should be. Is there an entity as ‘New Testament theology’? If so, how does it differ from the study of the thought of early Christianity? What is/should be included in a New Testament theology (anything in the New Testament? Or only particular elements, e.g. ‘highlights’ such as Paul and John)? Does the teaching of the historical Jesus belong within a New Testament theology? Is a New Testament theology a theology of texts or of historical authors? Is ‘the’ theology of the New Testament a single entity, or a collection of different theologies? Is the search of a unity in possible diversity desirable and/or justifiable? Is New Testament theology an attempt to systematize what the text meant or an attempt to illuminate faith and practice in the contemporary world? (Rowland and Tuckett 2008, xi). The debate is ongoing.

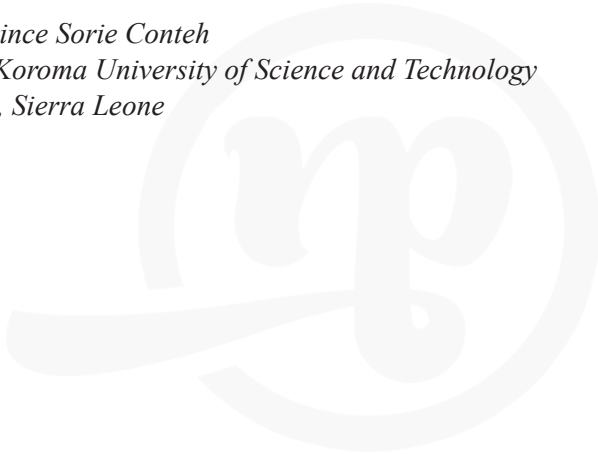
New Testament Theology for College Students and Pastors builds on the works of earlier scholars in the discipline. Rev Prof Jonathan Edward Tetteh Kuwornu-Adjaottor as a New Testament and Biblical Studies scholar examines the history and methodology of New Testament Theology; and the major theological themes of the New Testament - God, Man, Jesus Christ, Salvation, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the Christian Life, Death, Afterlife

and Judgment - as presented by the individual writers. He has adopted this approach in teaching the course from the letters of John and the book of Revelation. John's contribution to New Testament theology is found in topics that are scattered in his writings: Revelation, the World, the Incarnation, Atonement, the Holy Spirit, and Last Things. This is the focus of chapter eight.

So New Testament Theology is a discussion of the major theological topics gleaned from the writings of the books of the New Testament. Chapter nine has some questions to test students' understanding of the book. The book can be used as a textbook at the college level, to help the student understand what the New Testament teaches. The chapters constitute a course outline. Some of the chapters are quite long; they can be treated in two or three lectures. It is hoped that both lecturers and students will find this book useful.

Rev Prof Prince Sorie Conteh

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INTRODUCTION

New Testament Theology for College Students presents the subject in its simplest form to give readers a basic understanding. Chapter one gives a definition of New Testament (NT) theology to guide the reader to focus on what each writer of a NT book says about major theological themes. A brief history of how NT theology evolved is discussed in the chapter, followed by a methodology for studying NT theology.

Chapter two discusses the Synoptic problem and the solutions scholars have proposed in solving it. Why is a greater portion of Mark found in Matthew and Luke? How do we account for the portions of Matthew and Luke that are not in Mark; and the portions of Luke that are not in Matthew and Mark? Granted that the three gospels were written from the same perspective as scholars say, what do they teach about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and Last Things? Theology of the Acts is the subject that chapter three discusses. It focuses on what Luke, the writer teaches about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Salvation, and the Church. Acts provide considerable material for understanding the birth and growth of the Church. What theological topics does James teach? Chapter four answers this question. The Scriptures, God, Man, Sin, and Salvation are the contributions of James to the theological discussion of the New Testament.

Since Paul's letters constitute almost half of the New Testament, chapter five discusses the theological themes that run through his letters. The theology of Paul focuses on God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Sin, Salvation, Church and Last Things. Theology of the book of Hebrews is the subject of chapter six. In this chapter, we find what the author says about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and Salvation.

The theologies of Peter and Jude are discussed in chapter seven. These books are put together in this chapter because they have fewer chapters but gives insight to major theological topics such as Christ, Salvation, the Scriptures, the Christian Life, the Church, and Last Things.

You might be wondering why John is not mentioned when we

discussed the theology of the Synoptic gospels. The reason is that John is written from a different perspective. As such his theology is gleaned not from the gospel of John alone, but also from the letters of John and the book of Revelation. John's contribution to New Testament theology is found in topics that are scattered in his writings: Revelation, the World, the Incarnation, Atonement, the Holy Spirit, and Last Things. This is the focus of chapter eight.

So New Testament theology is a discussion of the major theological topics gleaned from the writings of the books of the New Testament. Chapter nine has some questions to test students' understanding of the book. The book can be used as a textbook at the college level, to help student understand what the New Testament teaches. The chapters constitute a course outline. Some of the chapters are quite long; they can be treated in two or three lectures. It is hoped that both lecturers and students will find this book useful.



DEFINITION, HISTORY AND METHODOLOGY OF NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

Definition

New Testament (NT) Theology is the study of the progressive revelation that God gave through the New Testament writers. Progressive revelation means that, God did not reveal all truth about Himself at once but revealed Himself “piecemeal,” portion by portion to different people throughout history (cf. Heb. 1:1). NT theology traces themes through the authors of the NT and then amalgamates those individual motifs into a single comprehensive whole. NT theology specifically concerns itself with the viewpoints of the NT authors. It centers upon meaning rather than application; that is, on the message of the authors rather than application. Thus, NT is studied according to Pauline theology, Petrine theology, Johannine theology, Synoptic theology, and so forth. What this means is that when we take a major theme in the NT, we want to study it according to what the Synoptic Gospels, Johannine Literature, the Epistles of Paul, the Epistles of Peter, and the rest of the NT say about the theme.

History

A discussion of NT Theology would not be complete without referring to “Biblical Theology,” a term which was first used by W. J. Christmann in 1607 in his book *Teutsche biblisch Theologie*, in which he used proof- texts drawn from the Bible to support Protestant Systematic Theology. Thus, some scholars have suggested that NT Theology should be called “Biblical Theology of the New Testament.’ As a result, NT Theology is best thought

of as a subset of Biblical Theology and restricted to movements (schools of thought) that adopted the label. NT theology is a recent development of the last two centuries. It came to the scene when in an address in 1787 when J.P. Gabler leveled an attack against the methodology of dogmatic theology, which was so philosophical in its approach. Gabler's criticism paved the way for a rationalistic approach to understanding the New Testament. The Bible was to be viewed as a human book in understanding how it was written and what the individual writers emphasized.

F.C. Baur of Tubingen (1792-1860) was a leader in the rationalistic approach. He employed Hegel's philosophy of thesis-antithesis-synthesis to the New Testament writings. Thus, Baur saw no contradiction between the Jewish emphasis of Peter's writings and the Gentile emphasis of Paul's writings. H.J. Holtzmann (1832-1910) furthered this thought, denying any idea of divine revelation and espousing the theory of conflicting theologies in the New Testament.

Wilhelm Wrede (1859-1906) influenced NT Theology considerably in emphasizing the history-of-religions approach. Wrede denied that the NT was a document of theology; rather it was to be viewed as history of first century religion. Theology in fact was not to be considered the correct term; religion was a better term in identifying the NT writings because it expressed the writer's believing, hoping, loving rather than being a record of abstract theological reflections.

Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976) emphasized the form critical approach to the NT in which he sought to uncover its underlying material. Bultmann taught that the NT had been enshrouded with the opinions and interpretations of the writers. To Bultmann, the NT must be demythologized to strip away the writer's embellishments and arrive at the true words of Jesus. Bultmann saw no connection between the historical Jesus and the Christ represented in the NT.

Oscar Cullmann (1902) emphasized God's acts in history in accomplishing man's salvation. This was termed 'Salvation History'. Cullmann rejected many of the radical features of form criticism, advocating instead the exegesis (explanation and interpretation) of the New Testament, with emphasis on history. Like others of this persuasion, Cullmann emphasized the Christology of the NT.

Alan Richardson's book 'An introduction to the Theology of the New

Testament' (1958) assumed that the NT thought forms a unity, and this led him to adopt a thematic approach. His work paid no attention to the historical background and so have been criticized for failing to distinguish between the theologies of the different NT authors.

The first part of J. Jeremias' New Testament Theology (Eng. translation 1971), which deals with the teachings of Jesus, attaches much more importance to their teaching than Bultmann, and is less influenced by dogmatic considerations that devotes little attention in this work in discussing methodology of New Testament theology.

W. G. Kummel is another German Theologian who has produced a work in this field. In his book 'The Theology of the New Testament According to its Major Witness', Kummel concentrates on Jesus, Paul and John and in so doing has exposed himself to the criticism that he has been too much influenced by the theory of dominating personalities.

In his 'Theology of the New Testament' (1997), G.E. Ladd claims to have adopted a historical approach, because he believes that the NT Theology has a descriptive function. According to him, the task of the NT Theologian is to bring out the rich variety of NT thought, although he sees NT Theology as laying the foundation for the systematic theologian.

It will be seen from the brief survey that there is no common agreement on what a NT Theology should aim to achieve. Most have preferred an approach which presents the evidence as a collection of different theologies and the thematic approach has been mainly out of favour, for fear it would detract from the inner cohesion of the individual thinkers whose literary works make up the NT.

Methodology

Since all the books of the NT were written within fifty years of each other, NT Theology does not concern itself with periods of revelation as does Old Testament theology. New Testament systematizes the truth as it was progressively revealed through the various writers of the NT. Thus, NT Theology examines the theologies of the various NT writers. In establishing a New Testament Theology, some follow the general outline of systematic theology, however, that methodology would not sufficiently reveal the emphasis of the individual writers. It seems best to set forth a New Testament Theology by analyzing the writings of the individual New Testament writers

that will reflect what the individual writer says about a subject.

R. B. Graffin Jnr in his article “New Testament Theology” (1988) says several factors should be considered in the development of a methodology.

1. Revelation is progressive, culminating in the revelation concerning Christ.
2. New Testament Theology should seek to delineate (outline) the culminating doctrines concerning Christ and redemption. The emphasis of the New Testament climaxes in the belief in the death and resurrection of Christ and the hope of his return. New Testament Theology should focus on these doctrines from the various statements of the New Testament writers.
3. New Testament Theology should recognize that the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of the New Testament writers are a unity and are complementary.
4. The diversity of the New Testament writings does not suggest contradiction but stems from the divine origin of the New Testament.
5. New Testament Theology should employ the analytic (but not to the exclusion of the Thematic method) because that method adequately reflects the diversity of the New Testament.

THEOLOGY OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

INTRODUCTION

In developing the theology of the Synoptic Gospels, it is important to understand the viewpoint of the writer. To whom did Matthew, Mark, and Luke write? Why did they write? What is the emphasis of each writer? What themes do they stress? These are important questions in biblical theology that determine what theological emphases and concerns were developed by the individual writers. The nature of biblical theology rests particularly with the concerns of the human writer (without neglecting or ignoring the fact of divine inspiration).

Introductory matters of authorship, date, audience, and purpose are included to establish the particular emphasis of the individual writers. The term synoptic comes from the Greek word *synoptikos*, “to see things together,” and characterizes the three gospels Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They are studied together because their view of the life of Christ is considered sufficiently similar.

The Synoptic Problem

A problem in studying the Synoptic Gospels is the relationship of the three to one another. Did the gospels make any use of one another’s writings? Did they have a common source (called “Q” for the German word *quelle*, meaning “source”) that they all drew on? There is considerable agreement among the three gospels, particularly with reference to Mark. B. F Westcott has noted the percentages of differences and similarities in the gospels as the following table illustrates.

COMPARING THE GOSPELS: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Gospel	% Peculiarities	% Coincidences
Mark	7	93
Matthew	42	58
Luke	59	41
John	92	8

The chart reveals that 93 percent of Mark is found in the other three gospels; in other words, there is little that is unique to Mark. Excluding the questionable ending of 16:9-20, there are about thirty verses that are unique to Mark.

There are both agreements and dissimilarities. There are agreements among the three gospels in the way they record their events (cf. Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:10-11; Luke 5:24). They also reveal a common use of rare words. But they also record dissimilarities; for example, the birth narratives and the genealogies are different in Matthew and Luke. Even parallel accounts are different, such as the order of the temptations (Matt. 4: 1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4: 1-13). What then is the relationship of the three gospels to one another? Several theories have been suggested, these include:

Oral Tradition Theory

It was believed that the preaching of the early church provided fixed forms to the life and ministry of Jesus, but there were no written forms behind the Synoptic Gospels.

Interdependence Theory

In 1789 Griesbach taught that the first writer drew upon oral tradition, the second writer used the material from the first writer, while the third writer drew upon the other two.

Primitive Gospel Theory

In 1778 Lessing taught that the gospel writers borrowed from a primitive source called *Urevangelium*, which no longer exists.

Fragmentary Theory

In 1817 Schleiermacher taught that the gospel writers compiled their accounts from many fragmentary writings about the life of Christ.

Two-Document Theory

A more recent development, this theory suggests that since Matthew and Luke are usually found in agreement with Mark, and since so much material of Mark is found in Matthew and Luke, Mark must have been written first and used by Matthew and Luke. But since Matthew and Luke have considerable material in common not found in Mark, they must have drawn from a second common source, called “Q.”

Four-Document Theory

Streeter suggested four original, independent sources behind the final written form of the gospels: Mark in Rome about A.D. 60, “Q” in Antioch about A.D. 50, “M” (private “saying” source of Matthew) in Jerusalem about A.D. 65, and “L” (private source of Luke) in Caesarea about A.D. 60.

Modern Developments

Modern critical theories have arisen in which attempt is made to explain the human origin and production of the gospel writings. While this methodology can have some validity and some conservative scholars employ these critical studies to understand the biblical records, there are inherent dangers. The explanations given below are a general explanation; they can be given a more liberal or a more conservative slant, depending on the reader.

Historical criticism

When the text is obscure, scholars attempt to discover “what actually happened” to help clarify the narrative. This is done by noting discrepancies in parallel accounts, examining secular history material, noting whether some events happened, recognizing supernatural occurrences (attempt is made to find a natural explanation), “invented” stories by the church, and other methods. A basic problem in historical criticism is that it approaches the Bible like any other book and acknowledges the possibility of error; in this sense it is incompatible with the doctrine of biblical inspiration.

Source criticism

Source criticism attempts to identify the sources used in writing the Synoptic Gospels and identify their relationship to the gospels. For example, where there are duplicate accounts of a story, an attempt is made to explain a literary connection or an underlying source. Mark 4:10-13 is cited in suggesting

Mark used another source in which vv. 11-12 were not present. Agreement in wording also suggests there is a common underlying source. Advocates of source criticism suggest the writers used a common source to which they adhered but felt the freedom to add detail and were not worried about precision in historical details. The problem with source criticism is twofold: it tends to ignore the divine element in inspiration and acknowledge error; it is built on conjecture without any demonstrable proof of underlying sources.

Form criticism

Rudolf Bultmann was one of the pioneers of form criticism that regarded the Synoptic Gospels as “folk literature.” The gospel writers, according to Bultmann, collected and edited material and wrote the way the church traditionally understood the events rather than writing historically accurate events. Form criticism thus builds on source criticism and attempts to explain how Mark and Q arose. Mark is a product of the early church, which embellished the life of Christ. Matthew and Luke used Mark with additional embellishments to form their gospels (they were not historical Matthew and Luke, but second-century writers). Therefore, most of the gospels do not contain historical data but are embellishments of the early church. The embellishments occurred to encourage suffering Christians. These “inventions” became indistinguishable historic fact.

Redaction criticism

Redaction criticism is a method of biblical criticism which seeks to determine the evangelist’s point of view by ascertaining the creative editorial work carried out by him on his sources. The writer is not merely a historian, but he becomes a theologian in the modification, composition and creation of tradition. The writer may be creative, altering or embellishing the historical tradition, or even departing from historical events. An example of this is Gundry’s approach to interpreting Matthew in which he suggests that the visit of the magi was not a historical event but based on the shepherd story that he changed to suit his theological purpose. Redaction criticism seeks to distinguish between the writer’s theological viewpoint and his source materials.

A major problem, obviously, in attempting to solve the manner in which the gospels were written is that the above-mentioned theories are

mainly conjecture. There is, for example, no evidence of a Q source. Also, the more recent theories generally build on a thesis that Mark was written first - which is a serious problem because it militates against eighteen centuries of tradition and the comments of the church fathers. It does not militate against inspiration to suggest Mark was written first and Matthew and Luke borrowed from Mark; however, it appears highly unlikely.

Several factors need to be considered in a solution:

The above theories stress the human aspect in the writing of the gospels, which is a legitimate consideration, but it sometimes neglects the divine element. In John 14:26 Jesus promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit would “bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” This is an important statement suggesting a supernatural element in the writing of Scripture. How could the gospel writers remember the details of the life of Christ? Or the conversations? Supernaturally it was promised by the Lord in the upper room. This aspect ought not to be neglected in considering a solution. This is a divine element in the writing of Scripture.

The writers wrote from firsthand knowledge and frequently as eyewitnesses. Matthew and John were eyewitnesses who wrote what they had observed and experienced; Mark wrote through information from Peter; Luke probably gained his knowledge from Paul and others as well as through his own research (Luke 1: 3).

There were other eyewitnesses who saw and heard the Lord and who could provide information (Luke 1:2-3). Although it is generally suggested that Luke drew on written sources (and that is certainly possible), Luke 1:2-3 seems to suggest he investigated eyewitnesses and servants of the Lord who handed the information down to him.

They wrote through divine revelation and inspiration. Some elements simply cannot be explained on human terms. Paul, for instance, wrote and taught as a result of divine revelation; he stresses that he did not receive his gospel from any man - not even the apostles. God revealed His truth to Paul directly (Gal. 1: 11-12; Eph. 3:3).

INTRODUCTION TO SYNOPTIC THEOLOGY

Matthew

Author: There is early support suggesting that Matthew, the tax collector,

originally wrote in Aramaic, an important testimony for the priority of Matthew. Approximately A.D. 150, Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, testified: “So then Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as he could.” Origen (c. 185-254) stated that Matthew was prepared for the “convert of Judaism and published in the Hebrew language.” Irenaeus stated that Matthew wrote while Peter and Paul were still alive; Mark wrote after they had died.

Date: Recognizing that Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience, an early date for Matthew can be argued from the standpoint of need. It is reasonable to suggest that there were 20,000 Jews in Jerusalem who believed in Christ. These believers would need an explanation concerning the Messiahship of Jesus, encouraging their faith from a Jewish standpoint and confuting their opponents. The rapid growth of the number of Jewish believers constituted a primary and immediate need for a gospel written distinctively to Jewish believers. The view of the early church was that Matthew wrote his Gospel before the other Evangelists composed theirs. This testimony is so persistent and unanimous that it ought to have some weight in deciding this question. Matthew was likely written about A.D. 50.

Audience: The audience of Matthew’s gospel is linked to the nature and growth of the early church. Because it had not separated from Judaism, it is obvious the early church was predominantly Jewish: shortly after Pentecost, 5,000 Jewish men believed. There would have been an early need to explain why, if Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the kingdom had not come. Matthew wrote to explain this to his Jewish audience.

Theological Purpose: Matthew captures the messianic hope and expectation of the Jews. He instructs his readers that the true Messiah, the Son of David, has indeed come. While the other gospel writers recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah, it is Matthew who presents Him as uniquely for the Jews. The purposes of Matthew’s gospel are twofold. The first is to prove Jesus is the Messiah. Messiah is a Jewish title for Israel’s king who will bring salvation to Israel at the end of the age. Matthew presents Jesus as Israel’s Messiah (Anointed One) who fulfills the function of prophet, priest, and king in one person. The second purpose is to present the kingdom program of God.

Since Jesus is Israel's Messiah and since the nation rejected the Messiah, Matthew explains that while the kingdom has been offered to the Jews, it has been postponed because of Israel's rejection. Messiah's earthly kingdom will be established at His second advent.

Mark

Author: The early church gave strong witness to John Mark's authorship of the second gospel. Papias, writing at about A.D. 150, stated: "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered." Irenaeus, writing about A.D. 185, stated: "Now after their decease (Peter and Paul) Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also handed down to us in writing what Peter had preached."

Date: Because Irenaeus testified that Mark wrote after the death of Peter and Paul, and because Paul probably died in the summer or fall of A.D. 66, Mark likely wrote his gospel in A.D. 66 or 67. Because the destruction of Jerusalem is not mentioned, it is certain that Mark wrote before A.D. 70.

Audience: Writing about A.D. 195, Clement of Alexandria states that Roman people asked Peter to write an account of the life of Christ for them. It is likely that Mark helped Peter fulfill that request from the Romans. Internal evidence, through a translation of Aramaic terms, also indicates a non-Jewish audience. Theological Purpose: Because the Romans were a people of action rather than thought, Mark presents Christ as "the mighty Worker rather than the profound Thinker, the Man who conquers by doing. Mark's style, as well as his content, reflects that theological purpose. Because Mark presents Christ as a man of action, he omits the genealogy and birth narratives and begins with the baptism of Christ, moving swiftly into the public ministry of Christ. The capstone of Mark's emphasis of Jesus is his portrayal of Christ as the Servant who came to minister and give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Mark's goal was to present his Roman readers with the dynamic of the Son of Man as Servant, thereby eliciting faith in Him.

Luke

Author: External evidence is strong in affirming Luke the physician as the author of the third gospel. The Muratorian Canon (A.D. 160-200) reports that

Luke, a physician and traveling companion of Paul, traced the matters and compiled a gospel of Christ's life. Irenaeus (c. A.D. 185) also testified: "Then Luke, the follower of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel as it was preached by him. Clement of Alexandria and Origen also ascribe authorship to Luke.

Date: The date of the writing of Luke is intertwined with the writing of Acts. Acts was probably written in A.D. 63 because the book closes abruptly, describing Paul's imprisonment, whereas his release, which occurred in A.D. 63, is not mentioned. The statement of Acts 1:1 indicates that the gospel of Luke was written before Acts. Luke probably wrote near the end of his time in Palestine, perhaps between A.D. 58 and 60.

Audience: Although Luke addressed his gospel to Theophilus, this was probably a dedication; a Gentile audience is undoubtedly in view as Luke's audience. Because of Paul's three missionary journeys there was a great need for a gospel distinct from the others, aimed particularly for the Greek mind. There is considerable evidence for a Greek audience. The genealogy of Jesus is traced to Adam, the father of the entire human race, rather than to a Jewish patriarch. Fulfilled prophecies occur in the sayings of Christ addressed to the Jews, not as narrative apologetics as in Matthew. Jewish terminology, such as "rabbi," is avoided. Greek names are substituted for Hebrew names (cf. Luke 6: 16; 23:33).

Theological Purpose: Luke has a cosmopolitan emphasis, stressing the universality of the gospel and that Jesus is the redeemer of the world. This is emphasized through linking the genealogy of Jesus with Adam, the common ancestor of all mankind. This emphasis is particularly seen in Luke's use of parables. Admission to the Kingdom is open to Samaritans (9:51-6, 10:30-7, 17:11-19) and pagans (2:32, 3:6, 38, 4:25-7, 7:9, 10:1, 24:47) as well as to Jews (1 :33, 2: 10); to publicans, sinners and outcasts (3: 12, 5:27-32, 7:37-50, 19:2-10, 23:43) as well as to respectable people (7:36, 11:37, 14: 1); to the poor (1 :53, 2:7, 6:20, 7:22) as well as to the rich (19:2, 23:50); and to women as well as to men. This stresses the purpose for Luke's writing: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19: 10).

DISCUSSION OF SYNOPTIC THEOLOGY

Doctrine of God

It is necessary to study systematic theology to arrive at a biblically comprehensive picture of the nature and attributes of God. (Even then the infinite God remains incomprehensible.) However, while the Synoptic Gospels provide just one portion in the study of God, the writers of the NT all share the view of God which is seen in the OT. Many of God's attributes are portrayed in the Synoptic gospels, as the following list makes clear.

The providence of God is seen in His provision for the birds (Matt. 6:26; 10:29). The fatherhood of God emphasizes His provision for His children (Matt. 6:32). The grace of God is given to believers and unbelievers alike (Matt. 5:45). The kingship of God is stressed: He has a throne (Matt. 5:34; 23, 22); He is Lord (Matt. 4:7, 10; Luke 4:8, 12). The judgment of God is equitable to all (Matt. 3:7; 7:1, 2; Luke 3:7); greater privileges will call for greater judgment (Matt. 11:22-24); He will avenge His own (Luke 18:7). The glory of God was revealed to the three on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17: 1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36). The goodness of God is incomparable (Matt. 19:17; Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18-19). The power of God is exhibited in His ability to raise the dead (Mark 12:24-27); with Him all things are possible (Mark 10:27; Luke 1:37; 18:27). The Trinity of God is revealed at the baptism of Christ (Mark 1:9-11) and at the commissioning of the apostles (Matt. 28: 19).

Doctrine of Christ

Virgin Birth: Matthew and Luke both emphasize that the Holy Spirit generated the humanity of Christ (Matt. 1: 18; Luke 1:35). Matthew takes great pains to emphasize Mary was not involved with a man prior to the birth of Jesus (Matt. 1: 18-25). Mark, too, emphasizes that Jesus is "the son of Mary" rather than the son of Joseph (Jewish custom usually used the father's name).

Humanity: All three gospels emphasize the humanity of Jesus. Matthew emphasizes His human genealogy (1:1-17), His human birth (1:25), and His infancy (2: 1-23). Luke similarly emphasizes his birth and lowly estate (2:1-20), His conformity to Jewish custom (2:21-24), and His growth as a young boy (2:41-52). Mark emphasizes the humanity of Jesus more than Matthew and Luke through his emphasis on the work, life, and activities of Jesus. All

three stress His humanity in the temptations (Matt. 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12-13; Luke 4: 1-13). Things like maneuvering fishing boats, paying taxes, talking with different people, sweating blood, and crying because of abandonment on the cross all reflect the humanity of Jesus. Yet He was not an ordinary man; He forgives sin, has authority over nature, reveals the Shekinah of God - these things place him in a class of his own.

Sinlessness: Although the Synoptic Gospels present Jesus as a man, they also indicate He is not an ordinary man - He is virgin born and sinless. Because He was virgin born, He did not have the sin nature nor the inclination to sin (note James 1: 14-15). Jesus called men to repentance, but there is no record that He ever confessed sin or repented. His baptism was “to fulfill all righteousness” (Matt. 3: 15), not for confession (Matt. 3:6). The temptations also emphasize that while He was tested in all areas that we are, yet He was sinless (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). In His rebuke of Peter, He revealed His complete disassociation from sin (Matt. 16:23).

Deity: Matthew stresses Jesus as the Son of David (Matt. 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30, 31; 21:9,15; 22:42). In Matthew 9:27 it is clear that the blind men understood the Son of David to be the Messiah who could do the work of Messiah - such as open the eyes of the blind (Isa. 35: 5), which is a work of God (Ps. 146:8). The use of the name in Matthew 21:9 reveals its significance as the coming Redeemer who would bring salvation to the nation and rescue her, bringing in a time of blessing (Ps. 118:25-26). Matthew continually presents Jesus as the Messiah inasmuch as He fulfils the Old Testament predictions concerning Messiah (1:22-23; 2:5-6; 4:14-16; 8:16-17; 11:5; 12:17-21; 13:34-35; 21:4-6, 9, 16,42;23:39; 24:30; 26:31, 64). In Matthew 16:16 Jesus readily accepts Peter’s confession of Him as the Christ, the Anointed One. In Mark 14:61-62 Jesus answered the high priest’s question as to whether He is the Messiah by the affirmative “I am.” The origin of the term Son of Man is Daniel 7:13 where He is pictured as triumphantly delivering the kingdom to the Father. The position of the Son of Man at the right hand of the Father relates it to Psalm 110:1 and the One who is Lord. Matthew 26:63-64 indicates the term is basically synonymous with Son of God. The term emphasizes various themes: authority (Mark 2:10); glorification (Matt. 25:31); humiliation (Matt. 8:20); suffering and death (Mark 10:45); relationship with the Holy Spirit

(Matt. 12:32); salvation (Luke 19: 10). Jesus thought of himself in terms of a heavenly Messiah fulfilling on earth a ministry on men's behalf which would culminate in scenes of final glory.

Jesus was the Son of God in a unique sense. Jesus spoke of God as 'the Father, 'my Father,' 'my heavenly Father,' and 'your heavenly Father' - fifty-one times in all. Jesus indicated His awareness of the unique relationship (Matt. 11:27), as did the Father (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11). A son is of the same nature and essence as a father; in affirming Jesus as His Son, God the Father was saying that Jesus, His Son, is a deity because He is of the same essence as the Father.

Atoning Work: Following His rejection by the nation Israel, Christ fore-told His sufferings in Jerusalem (Matt. 16:21; 17:22; 20:18-29; 26:1-5; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34; Luke 9:22,44; 18:31-33). In these passages Jesus foretold who would initiate His death, who would kill Him, how He would be killed, that He would suffer additional things but that He would be raised after three days. Christ taught the disciples that His death would be a substitutionary atonement (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). The statement that He would give His life as a ransom for many implies substitution. In this statement Jesus also used the word ransom (Gk. *lutron*), which meant the ransom money paid to free a slave; Christ paid the price - His death - to free many from the bondage of sin. At the institution of the Lord's Supper, Christ indicated that the bread and cup depicted the body and blood of Christ; the blood would shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22: 15-20). The price of redemption is described as His blood the scope of redemption is many; the result of redemption is forgiveness. Through His death Christ effected a new covenant providing forgiveness that the old covenant (the Mosaic law) could not achieve.

Resurrection: Christ predicted His resurrection on several occasions (Matt. 16:21; 17:22-23; 20: 19; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 18:33). Moreover, He specified that He would rise on the third day (a clear example of His omniscience). All the gospels stress the physical resurrection of Christ (Matt. 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20).

There were numerous witnesses of His resurrection: Mary Magdalene and the other women (Mark 16:2-8; John 20: 1); Peter and John (John 20:2-

10); Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18); the other women (Matt. 28:9-10); two disciples traveling to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32); the ten disciples gathered in the upper room (John 20: 19-25); the eleven disciples gathered a week later (John 20:26-31); the disciples fishing at Galilee (John 21: 1-25); the eleven in Galilee (Matt. 28: 16-20); the disciples in Jerusalem (Luke 24:44-49). John describes the facecloth still “rolled up” (John 20:7), retaining the circular shape as though the head were still in it but lying “in a place by itself.” It is detached from the rest of the wrappings, but the shape of the headpiece and the wrappings tell John what has happened. The body of the Lord Jesus Christ has passed through the wrappings - He is risen.

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Concerning the virgin birth of Christ: Matthew and Luke both relate the conception of Jesus in Mary’s womb to the Holy Spirit coming upon her (Matt. 1: 18; Luke 1:35).

Concerning the baptism of Christ: At Jesus’ baptism the Holy Spirit came upon Him to endue Him with power for His public ministry. The Holy Spirit also revealed the origin of Christ’s ministry (the Father) and Jesus’ unity with the triune God. Jesus did not work independent of the Father.

Concerning the temptation of Christ: Mark 1:12 emphasizes that it was the Spirit who drove Christ into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. The confrontation would prove the impeccability of the Son.

Concerning the ministry of Christ: Matthew 12:28 reveals that the ministry of Christ was done through the Holy Spirit - a public witness to all that His power came from heaven (Luke 4:18-19).

Concerning the inspiration of Scripture: In citing Psalm 110: 1, Mark 12:36 states, “David himself said in the Holy Spirit,” implying that the Holy Spirit guided David to pen the correct words as he wrote Psalm 110. This example indicates the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture.

Doctrine of the Church

There is no developed doctrine of the church in the Synoptic Gospels. The

word church (Gk. *ekklesia*) is used only three times in Matthew and not at all in Mark and Luke. Probably the only occurrence in Matthew where it is used in a technical sense is 16:18 where it is seen as still future.

Doctrine of Last Things

The Synoptic Gospels provide extensive material concerning last things. The word kingdom (Gk. *basileia*) is predominant in the Synoptic Gospels, occurring fifty-six times in Matthew, twenty-one times in Mark, forty-six times in Luke (only five times in John). Matthew also uses the term king more times (twenty-three) than any other New Testament book. The Synoptic Gospels stress that Jesus came to establish the millennial kingdom. The first occurrence of the term is in Matthew 3:2 where John the Baptist preached “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Jesus preached the same message (Matt. 4: 17), exhorting the people to repent in anticipation of Messiah’s kingdom. He revealed His credentials through His words (Matt. 5-7) and through His works (Matt. 8-10). In the light of this evidence, the nation’s leaders gave their evaluation: “This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons” (Matt. 12:24). The King had been rejected by His subjects. As a result, the kingdom would be held in abeyance. Jesus described the interim period between the rejection of Messiah at His first advent and His reception at His second advent in the parables of Matthew 13. Prior to the King’s return to establish the millennial kingdom, Jesus revealed the calamities that would befall Israel and the world. The tribulation will occur (Matt. 24:4-28; Mark 13:5-23; Luke 21:8-23), followed by the second advent of Christ (Matt. 24:29-51; Mark 13:24-37; Luke 21:24-36); Israel will be held accountable for the privileges and knowledge the nation has had (Matt. 25: 1-30); the Gentiles will also be judged according to their response to the message in the tribulation (Matt. 25:31-46).

THEOLOGY OF THE ACTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEOLOGY OF ACTS

Author

The authorship of Acts is closely tied to the authorship of Luke. Both Luke and Acts are addressed to Theophilus (Luke 1:3; Acts 1: 1); the authorship of one necessitates the same authorship for the other. See discussion under Luke in the Theology of the Synoptic gospels.

Date

There is strong evidence to suggest a date of A.D. 63 for the authorship of Acts. (1) It best explains the abrupt ending of Acts. Paul was brought to Rome in A.D. 61 where he remained in custody until A.D. 63. The book ends abruptly and optimistically, expecting Paul's release. (2) Following the burning of Rome in A.D. 64, Nero initiated a fierce persecution of the Christians in Rome. Had the book been written after A.D. 64, it is inconceivable that the book would have closed on an optimistic note. (3) Had Paul already been executed (which occurred about A.D. 67), some mention of it would undoubtedly have been made. (4) The impact of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was felt throughout the Roman world, yet no mention is made of that event, indicating it had not yet taken place.

Purposes

Luke purposed to provide an account of the origin and development of church under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit; that theme is carried forward in Acts 1:8 and throughout the book. Luke's account of the movement of Christianity can also be seen as an apologetic for Christianity. The apologetic thrust seems to look in two directions, to meet the charges of the Jews against

Christianity and to present Christianity in a favorable light to the Roman world. Christianity had been maligned by both Romans and Jews. Luke shows that Christianity follows in the historic pattern and upon the foundation of Judaism. In this sense the book can also be a polemic toward the Jews who accused Christianity as a subversive movement (Acts 18: 14-15). Acts also reveals that Paul's apostolic authority and power is equivalent to Peter's authority and power. For example, Paul duplicates the miracles of Peter.

SIMILAR APOSTOLIC MIRACLES

MIRACLES	PETER	PAUL
Healed the lame	3:2	14:8
Shadow brought healing	5:15	19:12
Exorcism	5:16	16:18
Confronted sorcerer	8:18-20	13:6-10
Raised the dead	9:36-40	20:9-10

Luke also traces the continued rejection of Messiah by the Jewish nation, begun in the gospels and continuing in the book of Acts. The Sanhedrin arrested and jailed Peter and John (Acts 4: 1-22) and prohibited them from preaching in Christ's name (Acts 4: 17). The Sanhedrin arrested and jailed the apostles (Acts 5:17-18) and incited the people to stone Stephen (Acts 6: 12-7:60). The unbelieving Jews persecuted Paul at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:45, 50) and later stoned him, leaving him for dead (Acts 14: 19). The Jews still rejected Paul's message at the conclusion of Acts (Acts 28:17-28).

DISCUSSION OF THEOLOGY OF ACTS

God

Sovereignty of God.

Luke explains Christ's death resulting from the decree (Gk. *boulē*) and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23). The decree of God means His counsel is predetermined and inflexible. Both phrases emphasize the resolute and inviolable determinateness of the decree. Amid persecution the apostles encouraged themselves in the sovereignty of God (Acts 4:24-31). God is referred to as Lord (Gk. *despota*), from which the English word despot is derived (Acts 4:24). God had previously decreed (*boulē*) the events of the cross, having marked them out beforehand (Gk. *proōrisen*).

God's sovereignty is also seen in election (Acts 13:48). The precise number that had been appointed to eternal life, believed. In Acts 13:48, the word "appointed" is *tetagmenoi* in Greek. It is a perfect passive participle that describes action antecedent to the main verb "believe" (aorist participle). The grammatical inference is that the appointing by the Lord came first; believe by the number that had been appointed to eternal life followed.

God's existence and common grace.

At Lystra Paul declared the "living God" to his hearers, reminding them that He is Creator and has given them rain and fruitful seasons (Acts 14: 15-18). Paul also reminded the Athenians that God had given them life and breath and had also marked out the times and boundaries (Acts 17:22-31).

Christ

Luke's emphasis concerning Christ is twofold in Acts: he stresses His crucifixion and death, and His resurrection.

Crucifixion and death of Christ

Many of the statements regarding the death of Christ reflect the apostles' indictment of the Jews in the crucifixion of Christ. Christ was nailed to a cross by godless men (Acts 2:23); Christ shamefully put to death - by crucifixion (Acts 3:15; 5:30; 10:39; 13:28-29). The Righteous One was murdered (Acts 7:52).

Resurrection of Christ

Several themes regarding the resurrection are emphasized (1) Christ's resurrection was predicted in Psalm 16:8-11 and fulfilled in Psalm 2:7 (Acts 2:22-32; 13:33-37); (2) Christ's resurrection proclaimed was with great power (Acts 4:2,10,33); (3) God not only raised but also exalted Him to a position of authority (Acts 5:31); (4) Christ's resurrection was attended by witnesses (Acts 10:40-41); (5) resurrection is a harbinger of future judgment (Acts 17: 31); (6) Christ's resurrection was to be proclaimed to Jews and Gentiles in fulfillment of prophecy (Acts 26:23).

Return of Christ

At the ascension of Christ, the angels promised the gazing disciples that Christ

would return “in just the same way” as they had seen Him go into heaven - visible, physical, and personal (Acts 1: 9-11). Peter announced millennial age when he spoke of the “period of restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21). It is significant that the death and particularly the resurrection were central in the preaching of the New Testament church as recorded in Acts.

Holy Spirit

His deity : Acts 5:3-5 records a principal statement concerning the deity of the Holy Spirit. In confronting Ananias, Peter reminded him that he had lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3), while in a parallel statement Peter exclaimed, “You have not lied to men but to God” (Acts 5:4), thereby equating the Holy Spirit with God.

His work: By His work of baptizing believers into the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit is building the church (Acts 1:5; 11:15-16). The Spirit is also active in filling believers for witness (Acts 1:8; 2:4; 4:31; 5:32; 9: 17) and in leading them in ministry (Acts 8:26-30; 10: 19; 11: 19; 16:7; 20:23; 21:4,11).

Salvation: Salvation is through faith in Christ. Faith is stressed in Acts 10:43. Gentiles do not need to first become Jews; they receive forgiveness and salvation simply through believing (Acts 11:21; 14:23; 16:31).

Believing involves repentance

On numerous occasions the gospel heralds exhorted the people to believe in Christ; on other occasions they urged people to repent (cf. Acts 2:38; 3: 19; 5:31; 8:22; 11: 18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20) This indicates the terms should be understood synonymously. Paul’s statement, “repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21), suggests repentance is bound up in faith. To have faith is to repent; without repentance faith is not possible.

Salvation is through the grace of God: When Paul came to Achaia, he helped those who had believed “through grace” (Acts 18:27). In this way God in time manifested His grace to Lydia (Acts 16: 14) and to others (Acts 13:48) what had been resolved before time began.

Salvation is apart from any works: The Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 resolved

that Gentiles did not need to be circumcised nor observe the law of Moses to be saved. They were saved by faith alone.

Church

As might be expected, Acts provides considerable material on the doctrine of the church because the book records the birth and growth of the church.

Formation of the church

The church is formed through the baptizing work of the Spirit, which introduces believers into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). In Acts 1:5 the baptizing work is still future, indicating the church has not yet been born. In Acts 11: 15-16 Peter rehearsed that the Spirit fell on the Gentiles just as He had upon them “at the beginning.” The beginning - Acts 2 - marks the beginning of the church and the Holy Spirit’s activity of baptizing believers into the body of Christ. This unique work of the Holy Spirit included not only Jews, but also Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17) and Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48; 19:6).

Organization of the church

The apostles were the foundation of the church (Acts 2:42), but elders were appointed to lead the local churches (Acts 14:23; 15:4). The term elder (Gk. presbuteros) suggests the maturity and dignity of the office. Elders were a plurality in a local church (Acts 14:23; 15:2,4) and were responsible for spiritual leadership in the assembly (Acts 11:30; 14:23). Deacons (although not specifically named in Acts) are probably referred to in Acts 6.

Functions of the church

Acts provides valuable insight concerning the New Testament functioning of the church. (1) Instruction was important in the early church (Acts 2:42; 4:2; 11:26; 12:24; 13:46; 15:35; 17: 11; 18:5; 19:8, 10,20; 20:2, 7, 17-35) and involved teaching propositional truth, such as the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42), the resurrection (4:2, 33; 24:15, 21; 26:8), and facts about Christ (5:20, 25, 28,42; 7:52; 8:5; 9:20-22; 10:36; 11:20; 13:16-41; 28:23). It also included debate and arguing (9:29; 17:2-3, 17; 18:28; 19:8). (2) Fellowship included material things (4:32-35; 6:1-3; 16:15,34), the Lord’s Supper (2:42; 20:7), prayer (2:42; 4:24-31; 12:5, 12; 13:3; 20:36; 21:5), and suffering (4:1-21; 5:17-42; 7:1-60; 8:1; 9:1-2; 11:19; 12:1-19), and was in Christ (13:52;

16:5,25,34,40; 19:17). (3) Worship was reflected in the reverence the believers had for the Lord (2:46-47; 4:23-31; 5:11; 9:31). (4) Service most notably involved evangelism (4:33; 5:14, 42; 8:4, 12, 13, 26-40; 9:42; 10:34; 11:24; 13:12, 48; 14:21; 16:5, 14,31; 17:2-3, 17,34; 22; 26; 28:23-31)



THEOLOGY OF JAMES

INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY OF JAMES

Author

James, the half-brother of the Lord, is the best suggestion for the authorship because: (1) There is a similarity of language in the epistle and James's speech in Acts 15. (2) There is a similarity between the epistle and the teaching of Jesus (James 1:22 and Matt. 7:20, 24; James 3: 12 Matt. 7:16; James 2:5 and Matt. 5:3).

Date and Place of Writing

Recognition of James, the Lord's half-brother, as the author points to Jerusalem as the locality for the writing. Mention of the "early and latter (5: 7), the effect of the hot winds on vegetation (1: 11), the existence salt and bitter springs (3: 11), the cultivation of figs and olives (3: 12), the familiar imagery of the sea as nearby (1:6; 3:4) all are reminiscent of conditions in Palestine." The date of the epistle must be prior to A.D. 63 because, according to Josephus, James was martyred at that time.

Destination

The epistle is addressed to "the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad" (1:1), suggesting Jewish believers. The phrase "who are dispersed abroad" the Greek word diaspora, normally used to denote the Jews scattered among the nations (cf. Deut. 28:25 in Septuagint). Additionally, they were meeting in a synagogue (2:2), were monotheistic (2:19), and were familiar with the Jewish formulae of oaths.

Theological Purpose

The Hebrew believers were encountering trials, undoubtedly persecution

from unbelieving Jews. Since the believers did not know how to understand or cope with the persecution, James wrote to give them insight. Within the assembly carnality prevailed. With the emphasis of James on the problems of the rich, there were undoubtedly divisions between rich and poor in the assembly. James, as Amos in the Old Testament, wrote to condemn wrong attitudes in the matter of money and oppression of the poor. James's purpose in writing was to give the corrective to the carnal spirit that prevailed, showing faith as the antidote to the problems.

DISCUSSION OF THEOLOGY OF JAMES

Scriptures

There is a strong emphasis on the Old Testament (OT) in the book of James: In his five chapters James refers or alludes to twenty-two books of the Old Testament. By doing this James obviates the need for any formal statement of inspiration; he merely assumes it. This reflects that James was steeped in the Old Testament and was writing to a Jewish audience equally familiar with the Old Testament. But since the epistle had a wide audience, it also suggests the importance of the Old Testament for the church.

The use of the OT in the Epistle of James is characterized by several features. First, in almost all quotations from the OT, the text quoted is the LXX. This is particularly noticeable in 2:23 (quoting Gen. 15:6), where the passive *elogisthē* ("it was reckoned") follows the LXX, while the Hebrew deploys a verb in the active voice; and in 4:6 (quoting Prov. 3:34), where the LXX differs significantly from the Hebrew. Almost all the allusions to the OT (1:10-11); 3:9; 5:4, 7) also seem to align with the LXX. Second, James' handling of themes has resonance with the Wisdom literature of the OT, not least the straightforward counsel on how to live, cast in polarities: better this than that; live like this, not like that. James shares vocabulary and concepts with early Jewish literature of the Second Temple period, not least Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, but also Sirach, Philo, and Wisdom of Solomon. Third, while wisdom themes percolate steadily through this literature, they also surface repeatedly in the teaching of Jesus, not least in the Sermon on the Mount, with which James has many resonances. Yet the popularity of such instruction is what makes determination of direct dependent particularly difficult: One suspects that sometimes James is using biblical categories that have been filtered through the common heritage of the early church's teaching and preaching.

There is an emphasis on the teaching of Jesus

James contains some fifteen allusions to the Sermon on the Mount (3:6 with Matt. 5:22; 3:12 with Matt. 7:16; 4:11 with Matt. 7:1). Since James was unconverted during the life of Christ, he must have gathered information about Jesus' teaching from those who heard Him.

There is an emphasis on the authority of Scripture

James refers to the "word of truth" that has power to save people (1:18). He refers to the "Scripture" (2:8, 23; 4:5-6) as the final point of appeal; Scripture is the final authority. James rebukes the quarreling of his addressees and bases the rebuke on the authority of Scripture (4:5-6).

There is an emphasis on the work of Scripture

The Scripture has power to save a soul (1:21); the Scripture reveals man's sin (1:23-25); the Scripture judges in the present and in the Last Day (2: 12).

God

James's view of God reflects concepts from Israel's conditional relationship with God under the Mosaic law: obedience brings blessing; disobedience brings chastisement (Deut.28). Thus, James presents the sinner as an enemy of God: friendship with the world makes one an enemy of God (4:4-5). When the rich oppress the poor, they can only expect misery and judgment (5: 1-8)-this also is a common theme of the Old Testament prophets (cf. Amos 2:6-8). Conversely, the obedient can expect blessing. The one who asks in faith receives wisdom (1:5); the one who has persevered under trial will appreciate "every perfect gift ..." coming down from the Father of lights (1: 17).

Man and Sin

James connects the doctrines and the applications when he exhorts his hearers to control the tongue because man's tongue is leveled against his fellow man who is "made in the likeness of God" (3:9). With this statement James affirms the creation account of Genesis 1:26-27. Although man is made in the likeness of God, through the fall man is constituted a sinner, possessing the sin nature, which James describes as lust (1:14). It is this lust that is the inner response to the outer solicitation that results in sin (1:15). James's discussion on this issue is important inasmuch as it provides a clearer understanding of how sin takes place than perhaps any other passage of Scripture.

James refers to sin (Gk. *hamartia*, “to miss the mark”) six times: sin has its derivation in lust within a person (1:15); sin results in spiritual eternal death (1:15); sin is showing partiality and failing to love (2:8-9); sin is failure to do good (4:17); sin can be forgiven (5:15,20). James also refers to sin (Gk. *parabates*) as a transgression of God’s standard (2:9, 11).

Salvation

Although Luther understood James as a “straw epistle” because he saw it in contrast to Paul’s emphasis on justification by faith alone, James has a great deal to say about faith. Faith is the way man must approach God (1:6; 5: 15); faith must be in Jesus Christ (2:1); and works will demonstrate the reality of the faith (2:18). The difference between James and Paul is not that of faith versus works, but a difference of relationship. James emphasizes the work of the believer in relation to faith and Paul the work of Christ in relation to faith.



THEOLOGY OF PAUL

Paul: Background and Training

Paul was born about A.D. 3 to a prestigious family whose members Roman citizens (Acts 22:28) living in the city of Tarsus. Paul was raised in a strict Jewish home, circumcised the eighth day, and was of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil. 3:5). Paul was later trained in Jerusalem under Gamaliel, a Pharisee and respected member of the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:34). Gamaliel was only one of seven scholars in his nation's history to receive the title "*Rabban*" (our master). Gamaliel was a grandson of Hillel, founder of the school of interpretation bearing his name. Hillel was less strict than the school of Shammai. Paul himself became a Pharisee, adhering strictly to Jewish law and customs (Phil. 3:5). It was this intense loyalty to Judaism and the traditions of the elders that caused him to persecute Christians (Acts 9: 1-2; Phil. 3:6). He did this with a pure conscience at first (Acts 23: 1; 2 Tim. 1:3). Later, he interpreted his action as blasphemy (1 Tim. 1:13).

Outline of Travels and Ministry

Following his conversion in late A.D. 33 or early 34, Paul spent several months in Damascus (Acts 9:23; Gal. 1: 17); when his opponents sought his death, he returned to Jerusalem (Acts 9:26). Shortly thereafter, he departed for his hometown of Tarsus (Acts 9:30). He spent three years in Arabia. (A.D. 34-36), probably in some form of ministry in as much as he claims to serve immediately after his conversion. After the three years he returned to Jerusalem (Gal. 1: 18) and then departed for Syria and Cilicia Gal. 1:21). About A.D. 46 Paul again visited Jerusalem (Acts 11:30; 12:25; Gal 2: 1-21). It was at Antioch that the church set Paul and Barnabas apart from the first missionary journey (A.D. 46-48; Acts 13: 1-4:28). During that journey the duo evangelized Asia Minor and the island of Cyprus. It was Asia Minor

that Paul began a ministry to Gentiles when the Jews repudiated the gospel (Acts 13:46). Paul's typical pattern was established: "an initial proclamation to Jews and Gentile adherents to Judaism, whether full proselytes or more loosely associated, and then, being refused further audience in the synagogue, a direct ministry among Gentiles."

CHRONOLOGY OF PAUL'S LIFE

Date: A.D.	Event
3(?) (the date is not certain)	Paul's birth
18-30	Training in Jerusalem
33/34	Conversion
34-36	In Arabia
46	In Jerusalem
46-48	First Missionary Journey: Asia Minor
48-49	Jerusalem Council
49-52	Second Missionary Journey: Asia Minor & Europe
53-57	Third Missionary Journey: Asia Minor & Europe
58-60	Imprisonment in Caesarea
60-61	Journey to Rome
61-63	Imprisonment in Rome
63-66	Ministry as far as Spain
66-67	Imprisonment in Rome and execution

The Jerusalem Council took place in A.D. 49 (Acts 15) and resolved an important issue: it enabled Paul (and others) to keep preaching the gospel to Gentiles without Jewish encumbrances; Gentiles were not required to be circumcised. The decision was important in maintaining the purity of the gospel and separating law from grace. The second missionary journey (A.D. 49-52; Acts 15:36-18:22) took Paul and Silas across Asia Minor, where they revisited the churches, and on to Europe (Acts 16: 11 ff.). The third missionary journey (A.D. 53-57; Acts 18:23-21:16) took Paul to Ephesus, where he spent nearly three years, and on to Macedonia and Achaia. He was arrested in Jerusalem upon his return and imprisoned in Caesarea (A.D.:58-60; Acts 24:1-26:32). Paul appealed to Caesar and eventually spent two years

in prison in Rome (A.D. 61-63; Acts 28:30-31). Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment, spent A.D. 63-66 in ministry, probably traveling as far as Spain, and was again arrested and executed in Rome in A.D. 67 (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

DISCUSSION OF PAULINE THEOLOGY

God

Revelation

Paul's theology represents a high watermark in terms of a theology of God. Paul portrays God as sovereign, revealing Himself in grace through Jesus Christ (Rom 1: 16-17; 3:21; 1 Cor. 2: 10; 2 Cor. 12.:7). That which God purposed from all eternity has now been revealed in time.

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL

Class	Name	Date: A.D.	Origin	Theology
General	Galatians	48	Antioch in	Soteriology and Eschatology
	1 Thessalonians	50	Syria	
	2 Thessalonians	50	Corinth	
	1 Corinthians	55	Corinth	
	2 Corinthians	55	Ephesus	
	Romans	57	Macedonia Corinth	
Prison	Ephesians	62	Rome	Christology
	Philippians	63	Rome	
	Colossians	62	Rome	
	Philemon	62	Rome	
Pastoral	1 Timothy	63	Macedonia	Ecclesiology
	Titus	63	Corinth	
	2 Timothy	67	Rome	

That revelation is a manifestation of “our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel”(2 Tim.1:10; 1 Tim. 3: 16). The gospel that Paul preached was not of human origin, but Paul received it directly from the Lord (Gal.1: 12; 2:2). Through the death of Christ, God remains just but is free to justify one who believes in Jesus.

God has revealed Himself in judgment to unbelievers (Rom. 1: 18; 2:5; 2 Thess. 1: 7). Wrath (*orge*) expresses “the deep-seated anger of God against sin. This anger arises from His holiness and righteousness.” Because of His holiness God cannot overlook sin. God will reveal Himself in glorious blessing to believers (Rom. 8:18-19; 1 Cor. 1:7; 3: 13; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5: 10). “Glory” suggests the glorious radiance at the triumphant return of Jesus Christ, with all the attendant blessings for believers (Rom. 8:18). God has revealed His program for the church which was previously a mystery (Rom. 16:25; Gal. 3:23; Eph. 3:3, 5). Satan attempts to hinder the revelation of God (2 Cor. 4:4) and the work of the church by blinding unbelievers so that the gospel cannot enlighten them.

Sovereignty

The concept of God’s sovereignty dominates the writings of Paul. He employs a number of terms to emphasize this concept.

Predestine (Gk. *proorizo*) means “to mark out with a boundary before-hand (Eph. 1:5, 11; Rom. 8:29,30; 1 Cor. 2:7). Predestine is only used six times in the entire New Testament, and five occurrences are found in Paul’s epistles.

1. **Foreknow** (Gk. *proginosko*) means “to know beforehand, to take note of, to fix the regard upon” (Rom. 8:29; 11:2). Foreknow “emphasizes not mere foresight but an active relationship between the one who foreknows and those who are foreknown.”
2. **Elect or choose** (Gk. *eklegomai*) means “to call out” (Eph. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:4). The blessings of Ephesians 1:3 are realized by the believer because God chose the believer in eternity past (Eph. 1:4). God’s choice emphasizes He chose the believers for Himself.
3. **Adoption** (Gk. *huiiothesia*) means “to place as a son” (Eph. 1:5) and emphasizes the Roman ceremony of adoption of one’s own son into the status of adulthood with all its privileges. Adoption was the result of God’s predestination of believers in eternity past.
4. **Called** (Gk. *kletos*) refers to God’s effectual call to salvation (Rom. 1:1,7; 8:28). It is the call of God that enables a person to believe. This term is related to unconditional election (God chose us without any merit on our part) and irresistible grace (the one called does not resist the call).
5. **Purpose** (Gk. *protithemi*) means “to place before” and suggests God purposes in Himself to sum up all things in Christ (Eph. 1:9-10).

6. **Will** (Gk. *boule*) refers to the sovereign counsel of God in which He acts. Ephesians 1:11 is a general summary; not only does God act sovereignly with regards to securing the believer's salvation, but God works all things—all history is consummated according to the sovereign will of God.

Paul indicates the believer's salvation is rooted in eternity past with the predestination work of God. An important conclusion concerning Paul's teaching on sovereignty ought to be observed: "The ultimate source of predestination is the absolute sovereignty of God. The purpose of predestination is salvation, and the issue of it is service. Predestination does not override human responsibility.

Christ

Humanity

While Paul provides some of the strongest statements of the deity of Christ, he also emphasizes the humanity of Christ. Christ was born of a woman (Gal. 4:4).⁷ He was no phantom; He had His humanity from His earthly mother. Christ was a physical descendant of David (Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8). Christ committed no sin (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ "knew no sin" refers to knowledge of sin gained by experience; He did not experience sin in His life because He had no sin nature. Christ came in the "likeness of sinful flesh"—He came as a man but without the sinful nature (Rom. 8:3). He did not come in the mere likeness of flesh—then He would not have been truly human; He did not come in the likeness of sin—then He would have had indwelling sin. God's grace came through the last Adam, to redeem what the first Adam lost (d. Rom. 5:15; 1 Cor. 15:21,45,47).

Deity

A fully developed theology of the deity of Christ can be found in Paul's writings. Christ is the sphere in which all things have been created; moreover, "All the laws and purposes which guide the creation and government of the Universe reside in Him." Paul's emphasis that Christ "from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47; 2 Cor. 8:9) suggests His preexistence eternality.

Paul states that the fullness of deity dwells in Christ (Col. 2:9). Deity (*theotes*) "emphasizes divine nature or essence He was and is absolute and perfect God. "10 Interestingly, Paul emphasizes that the deity was "bodily form," suggesting the full humanity of Jesus. This verse is a strong Pauline

affirmation of the God-man Jesus.

Christ exists in the form of God (Phil. 2:6). The word form (Gk. *morphe*) suggests the inherent character or essential substance of the person. Christ in His essential nature exists as deity. Paul addresses Christ as God on several occasions. He is called “God blessed,” a reference to deity (Rom 9:5) A better rendering of this verse would be “Christ, who is God over all blessed forever. In Titus 2:13 Paul refers to “our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus.” Greek grammar demands that the two nouns, God and Saviour, refer to the same person - Jesus Christ. This is a clear Pauline statement of Christ’s deity.

Lordship: Jesus’ designation as Lord is an important study in as much as, the “title Lord occurs at least 144 times plus 95 more times in connection with the proper name Jesus Christ.

Lord designates His deity (Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:9). The name Lord was frequently used as a translation of the Hebrew name Adonai in the Septuagint; the divine character of God would be applied to Jesus through the title Lord. The name of God Himself is applied to Jesus.

Lord designates power (Phil. 2:9). The lordship bestowed on Christ, ‘who is now equal with God, manifests itself especially in the fact that also all the invisible powers of creation are subjected to him. “

Lord denotes divine sovereignty. To preach Jesus as Lord is to pro- claim His sovereignty (2 Cor. 4:5); to bow before Jesus is to worship Him and thereby acknowledge Him as sovereign God. Christ’s sovereignty over all Christians is especially emphasized in Romans 14:5-9 and in titles like “Our Lord Jesus Christ,” “Our Lord Jesus,” and “Jesus Christ Our Lord.”

Lord denotes Jesus’ kingship and rule. Lord should also be understood as a variant of “king”; the two titles are interchangeable. In this sense, Lord emphasizes Jesus’ kingship over Israel and the church as well as His lordship over the whole world (d. 1 Tim. 6: 15; 1 Cor. 15:25).

Holy Spirit

Pauline theology provides an extensive discussion of both the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

His person

Paul’s letters describe the following attributes of the Holy Spirit person: Intellect. The Holy Spirit investigates the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2:10)

and then teaches them to believers (1 Cor. 2:13)

Will

The Holy Spirit has a will in that He distributes gifts “just as He wills” (1 Cor. 12: 11). The Holy Spirit gives “not according to the merits or wishes of men, but according to his own will.”

Emotion

The Holy Spirit can be grieved (Eph. 4:30).

Deity

The deity of the Holy Spirit is evidenced in that He is an intercessor like Christ (d. Rom. 8:26-27, 34) and He indwells the believer along with the Father and Son (Rom. 8:9-11). The benediction equates all three members of the godhead as equal (2 Cor. 13:14).

His works

Paul’s writings also affirm the many important works the Holy Spirit performs as a member of the Trinity

He regenerates. The Holy Spirit brings new life to believers (Titus 3:5).

He baptizes. The Holy Spirit joins believers and their Lord by placing them into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12: 13).

He indwells. The Holy Spirit lives in each believer; those that are not in dwelt are not believers (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:7).

He seals. The Holy Spirit puts God’s mark of identity and ownership on believers; He is Himself the seal, thus verifying their salvation (Eph. 1: 13; 4:30).

He gives gifts. The Holy Spirit sovereignty dispenses spiritual abilities to believers (1 Cor. 12:4, 7, 11).

He fills. The Holy Spirit controls believers when conditions are met (Eph. 5: 18).

He empowers. The Holy Spirit enables believers to live by His power (Gal. 5: 16).

Sin

Definition

Paul uses several different Greek words to describe the nature of sin. Hamartia

is a general word used to describe sinful acts (Rom. 4:7; 11:27). Hamartia links Christ's death with man's sin (1 Cor. 15:3). In the plural form it denotes the accumulation of sins (Gal. 1:4), whereas in the singular it denotes the state of sinfulness (Rom. 3:9, 20; 5:20; 6: 16, 23). *Paraptoma* denotes a false step in contrast to a true one (Rom. 4:25; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 2:1). Parabasis means stepping aside, a deviation from a true faith (Rom. 2:23; 4: 15; Gal. 3: 19). Anomia means lawlessness or iniquity (2 Cor. 6: 14; 2 Thess. 2:3).

Explanation

Sin is a debt, suggesting man's obligation and inability to meet the debt (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1: 14). It is deviation from a straight path; the Mosaic law had established God's standard, but the people fell short of His standard (Rom. 2: 14, 15, 23; 4: 15).

Sin is lawlessness and becomes rebellion (Rom. 11:30; Eph. 2:2; 5:6; Col. 3:6), involving both external acts and internal attitudes. Romans 1:29-31 combines both acts and attitudes; acts are murder, immorality, drunkenness, and homosexuality while attitudes are envy, foolishness, and faithlessness. Paul also characterizes sin as a taskmaster, making slaves of unbelievers (Rom. 6: 16-17), and a falsehood that suppresses the truth (Rom. 1:18) and exchanges it for a lie (Rom. 1:25).

Salvation

Paul brings some of the great soteriological themes to their fullest development. Paul's doctrine of soteriology was centered in the grace of God; it is God who initiated salvation purely out of His grace, which satisfied His divine justice and brought release from sin's bondage and a legal declaration of righteousness to the believer.

Forgiveness

When God forgave us our trespasses, He did so out of His grace (Col. 2:13). Forgiven (Gk. *charizomai*) means "to grant as a favor, to graciously, to forgive out of grace."²² The word is closely linked with word for grace, emphasizing that forgiveness is rooted in God's grace; human merit is involved. Thus, it also has the connotation of pardon, cancelling a debt, or releasing a prisoner. Another Pauline word forgiveness (Gk. *aphesis*) has a basic meaning of "release" or "send away" theologically means "to pardon" or "cancel an obligation or punishment" (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). The grace of God reaches

a zenith in Paul's theology as he extols its grandeur - God has graciously canceled the debt sin that man could not pay

Redemption

The word redemption (Gk. *apolutrosis*) is particularly a Pauline term; it is used ten times in the New Testament, seven of them in Pauline writings. Redemption means to set free by the payment of a price. The background of the term relates to the Roman slave markets where a slave was put up for sale and the purchaser paid the necessary price to set the slave free. Paul employs the term to describe the believer's release from bondage and enslavement to sin. But Paul also establishes the payment for redemption-the blood of Christ. His death was necessary to accomplish deliverance from sin. Romans 3:24 emphasizes that Christ's death satisfied and turned aside the wrath of God, making redemption possible. The passage also links justification with redemption; because redemption was accomplished man can be declared righteous (Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 1:30; Gal. 3: 13; Eph. 1:7, 14; 4:30; Col. 1:14).

Propitiation

The noun propitiation occurs only four times in the New Testament, in Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; and 1 John 2:2; 4:10. This word (from Gk. *hilasmos and hilasterion*) means "to expiate, to appease, or atone for." It indicates that Christ fully met and satisfied the demands of a righteous and holy God. Through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, God's holiness has been satisfied and His wrath averted. Romans 3:26 explains that through the death of Jesus Christ, God can be just (His integrity is maintained) and yet He may still declare the believer in Christ righteous. God does not overlook sin, however. The death of Christ was sufficient in providing atonement for sin so that God's holiness and justice are fully satisfied. Propitiation, therefore, is important in showing how a sinful man might be reconciled to a holy God-it is through the atonement of Christ. God is propitiated (satisfied) with the death of Christ as making full payment for sin.

Justification

Justification is a peculiarly Pauline term. The verb is used forty times in the New Testament, but Paul uses the word twenty-nine times. Justification is a legal act whereby God declares the believing sinner righteous based on the blood of Christ. The basic meaning of justification is "to declare righteous."

Several other things can be learned about Paul's usage of justification: justification is a gift of God's grace (Rom. 3:24); it is appropriated through faith (Rom. 5: 1; Gal. 3: 24); it is possible through the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9); and it is apart from the law (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2: 16; 3:11). This last point is a major emphasis of Paul and undoubtedly the thesis of the book of Galatians-man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ.

Church

The word church (Gk. *ekklesia*) simply means "a called-out group." It is most often used in a technical sense of believers whom God has called out of the world as a special group of His own. It is, however, occasionally used in a nontechnical sense to refer, for example, to a mob (translated "assembly"), as in Acts 19:32. Church is used in two primary ways in the New Testament-the "universal" church and the local church. Paul uses the term to refer to the wide company of believers transcending a single congregation (Gal. 1:13; Eph. 3:10, 21; 5:23-25, 27, 29, 32). When the term is referring to the body of Christ the universal sense is intended (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18, 24). Church refers to the local church when a particular assembly of believers in a given location at a given time is intended. Thus Paul refers to the individual churches at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:2; 4:17; 7:17; 2 Cor. 1:1; 8:1), Galatia (Gal. 1:2,22), Philippi (Phil. 4:15), Colossae (Col. 4:15, 16), and Thessalonica (2 Thess. 1:1).

The church as a union of Jews and Gentiles on equal footing as fellow heirs in Christ (Eph. 3:6) is a distinctly New Testament entity. The church was unknown in the Old Testament (Eph. 3:5); the knowledge about the church was given to Paul through revelation (Eph. 3:3).

Explanation

Paul depicts the church as an organism making up the "complex structure of the Body of Christ which carries on living activities by meanings of the individual believers, who are distinct in function but mutually dependent on and governed by their relation to Christ, the Head." Entrance into the church is through the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit who places believers into union with Christ and with other believers (1 Cor. 12: 13). The baptizing work of the Spirit occurs simultaneously with saving faith, is non-experiential, and includes all believers, regardless of class or social position. As a head gives

direction to human body, so Christ, as head of the church, gives direction to the church, having authority over it (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 2: 10). It is through union with Christ that the church grows to maturity (Col. 2:19) as it subjects itself to the authority of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23).

Paul teaches that God has given spiritual gifts for the building up of body of Christ (Eph. 4: 11-13). The doctrine of spiritual gifts is almost exclusively Pauline; the only reference apart from Paul is a brief statement Peter 4: 10. Spiritual gifts are the translation of one Greek word *charisma*, literally, “grace gift” A concise definition is “a God-given ability for service.” It describes the gifts in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. “Gifts of the Holy Spirit.”

Organization

While the church is a living organism, it is also an organization, involving offices and function. There are two designated offices in the New Testament church. The office of elder (Gk. *presbuteros*) emphasizes maturity and dignity and normally denotes an older person. Elders were appointed as leaders in the local churches (1 Tim. 5: 17; Titus 1: 5). The term bishop or overseer (Gk. *episkopos*) denotes the work of shepherding by the elder (1 Tim. 3: 1). The terms are basically synonymous, although elder signifies the office whereas overseer emphasizes function. The work the elders involved teaching (1 Tim. 5: 17), ruling (1 Tim. 5: 17), shepherding, nurturing, and caring for the flock (1 Tim. 3:1). Their qualifications are listed in 1 Timothy 3: 1-7.

The other church office is that of deacon (Gk. *diakonos*), meaning “servant.” From the qualifications cited in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 it is evident the deacons were also involved in spiritual ministry, albeit as subordinate to the elders. Along with the elders they had an authoritative position in the local church (d. Phil. 1:1).

It is not entirely clear whether Paul was advocating a separate office of deaconess (1 Tim. 3: 11). The word *gunaikas*, translated “women,” may refer to the wives of the deacons or to a separate class of deaconesses.

Ordinances

Although the subject of baptism is prominent in the New Testament, it is not a major emphasis in Pauline theology. The verb *baptizo* is used eighty times in the New Testament, but Paul uses it only sixteen times, and only eleven of

those refer to water baptism (three of them in Acts). Furthermore, he uses the verb six times in his explanation that Christ did not send him to baptize (1 Cor. 1: 13-17); thus, apart from that reference, Paul refers to water baptism only twice in the epistles (1 Cor. 15:29). In his explanation to the Corinthians Paul makes it clear that baptism is not a part of the gospel (1 Cor. 1:17-18). Paul seems to emphasize the baptism of the Spirit more than water baptism (Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor.10:2; 12: 13; Gal. 3:27).

Paul provides a detailed explanation of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-34), which he received through direct revelation from the Lord (1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1: 12). Paul presents the Lord's Supper as a memorial (1 Cor. 11:25) and admonishes the Corinthians not to partake in a casual manner; in so doing they would drink judgment to themselves. Paul's further rebuke relates to an accompanying meal, sometimes referred to as the agape, in which some would gorge themselves while others would have little to eat. It disrupted fellowship and resulted in eating and drinking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner; they were "eating without recognizing the symbolism which reminds of the Lord's body, without seeing Christ and His death in it all."

Last Things

Regarding the church

Since Paul has provided significant new teaching concerning the nature of the church, it is appropriate that Paul should bring that teaching to a consummation, describing the future of the church. Paul refers to the translation of the church in which some living believers will not die but will be transformed more quickly than an eye can cast a glance (1 Cor. 15:51-57). At that time, departed church-age believers will rise to receive resurrection bodies (1 Thess. 4: 16) and the living, transformed believers will be suddenly snatched up to be with Christ (1 Thess. 4: 13-18).

Paul emphasizes the practical nature of this doctrine: "comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4: 18). Following the rapture of the church, believers will stand before the bema, the judgment seat of Christ, to be recompensed for deeds done in the body, whether good or worthless. Salvation is not the issue; rather, it is the works of the believer. One whose works were done in the flesh will be burned up; there will be no reward, but the believer will be saved-with no works to show for it (1 Cor. 3: 15). One whose works are acceptable by the Lord will be rewarded-not in terms of

salvation, for that has been established. Rewards are spoken of in terms of crowns (1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8).

Regarding Israel

Paul deals with Israel's election in Romans 9-11, lamenting Israel's rejection of Messiah (Rom. 9: 1-3; 10: 1-5). Israel had great privileges but scorned them (Rom. 9:4-5), yet since God has sovereignly elected Israel, He will not fail in His purpose for the nation. The fact that God has not abandoned His people (Rom. 11: 1) is evident by the fact that there is a remnant of believing Jews, of which Paul was one (Rom. 11: 1, 5).

However, while Israel has been blinded, it is temporary, and Paul envisions a future day when Israel's blindness will be lifted and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26). There will be a future national turning to Christ in faith. Paul relates that event to the return of Messiah: "The Deliverer will come from Zion. He will remove ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:26).

Regarding the world

While Paul has referred to future hope for the church and the future conversion of Israel he deals extensively with the future judgment of God upon an unbelieving world. Paul uses the term wrath (Gk. *orgi*) to describe the judgment of God that will descend upon the world. This term is decidedly a Pauline term, being used twenty-one times in his writings while only fifteen times in the remainder of the New Testament. Paul frequently uses *orgi* to describe a future "day of wrath" (Rom. 2:5) that the stubborn and unrepentant people will face. Paul warns that the wrath of God will come upon those who are morally impure (Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6). Paul, however, takes great pains to show that believers will endure the wrath of God. They will be saved from that day (Rom. 5:9; Thess. 1: 10; 5:9).

Paul also identifies the period as a time the "man of lawlessness," also called the "son of destruction" (2 Thess. 2:3), will appear and exalt himself as God (2 Thess. 2:4). He is unable to exalt himself in this present age because of a restrainer (2 Thess. 2:6)-whom many identify as the Holy Spirit in this church age. When the restrainer is removed, the "lawless one will be revealed" (2 Thess. 2:8), deceiving the people through his Satan-inspired miracles. But at the second advent of Christ, the lawless one (popularly known as the Antichrist) will be destroyed (2 Thess. 2:8).

THEOLOGY OF HEBREWS

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS

The introductory questions concerning the addresses and purpose for writing are particularly important in discussing theology of Hebrews. The view that is taken concerning these issues will determine the interpretation of the theology of Hebrews.

Authorship

The authorship of Hebrews has posed a problem throughout the history of the Christian church and has been vigorously debated without resolve. The author nowhere identifies himself in the book, yet it seems he known to the readers (5:11-12; 10:32-34; 12:4; 13:9, 18-19,23). He understood their circumstances and wrote about them.

Date and Place of Writing

The book was written early; Clement of Rome quoted from it in A.D. 96. The present tense regarding the sacrifices (7:8; 8:4, 13; 9: 1-10) suggest the temple was still standing; therefore, it was written prior to A.D. 70. Although the believers in the book were undergoing persecution, they had not experienced martyrdom (12:4). Because the fierce persecution began with the burning of Rome in A.D. 64, it is likely the book was written before that time. The place of writing is difficult to determine. The reference “those from Italy greet you” (13:24) could refer to Italy as a place of writing.

Destination

The title “To the Hebrews” is a second-century addition to the manuscript that may merely reflect the second-century opinion concerning the destination. The intrinsic evidence points to an assembly of Hebrew believers as the

destination.

1. The book follows an argument from a Jewish standpoint through comparing Christ to the Levitical system.
2. The book uses Old Testament quotations.
3. The book has extensive mention of the Levitical priesthood.
4. Terminology occurs that is exclusively Jewish: miracles, high priest, Moses, Aaron, law, covenant, tabernacle, holy places, sacrifices, and blood.
5. It contains an elaborate resume of Hebrew history.
6. There is a detailed discussion of the tabernacle.

The location of the readers is difficult to determine. Although it is not without problems, the suggestion that Jerusalem is the destination seems most reasonable. The present tense concerning offering gifts in 8:4 suggests conditions under which the offerings were being carried out.

Theological Purpose

The purpose of the book is to demonstrate the superiority of Christ and Christianity over Judaism. The addressees were Hebrew Christians, they are termed “holy brethren” (3: 1), “partakers of a heavenly calling” (3: 1), and “partakers of Christ” (3: 14). Although their present condition was dangerous, the writer nonetheless considered them saved (6:9) but in need of maturity (6: 1) and progress in their walk with Christ. They were in danger of lapsing back into Judaism (5: 11-6:3; 10: 19-25).

These Hebrew Christians were suffering persecution and had become discouraged (10:32-34; 12:4). They had lost their property and had suffered public ridicule and ostracism for their faith in Christ. The writer addresses these circumstances, exhorting them to go on to maturity (4: 14; 6:11 ff.; 10:23,36; 12: 1). He also warns them about the seriousness of apostasy (6:4-8; 10:26-31; 12: 14-29).

THEOLOGY OF HEBREWS

God

The writer of Hebrews emphasizes both the person of the majestic God and the way He has revealed Himself to His people. His person. The writer pictures the Father as exalted in the heavens, enthroned on high (1:3). The

phrase is a title of God referring to Psalm 110: 1. A similar picture is given in 8:1 where the term “Majesty” is again used. Since the book is written to a Jewish audience, this undoubtedly refers to “the Glory which rested on the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies.”

The writer also discusses the approach to God by referring to His throne. Since Christ is the believer’s intercessor, they may draw near to God (7:25; 10:22; d. 9:24) and do so with confidence (12:22-24). Jesus has assumed an authoritative position at the right hand of the Father (12:2).

The Jewish believers are reminded that their God was living, in contrast to the idols that are dead (d. Ps. 115:3-8; Isa. 46:6-7; Jer. 10:5-10). The writer exhorts them not to return to a dead system but to serve the living God (Heb. 9: 14; 10:31; 12:22).

The use of fire as a figure of God symbolizes the judgment of God (12:29). This relates to the theme of Hebrews in warning them of forsaking the living God. They will experience the disciplinary judgment of God should they return to Judaism.

The hook concludes with a mention of God as peace (13:20). He is able to give peace to the Jewish believers amid their persecution.

His revelation

The apex of God’s revelation was through His Son (1:1-2). In the Old Testament God spoke piecemeal and, in many ways, but the climax of His revelation was in the Person of His Son. The statement suggests there is no need for any further revelation. What greater revelation about God can be given than that which has come through Christ?

As a witness to the revelation in Christ, God performed miracles through the hands of His witnesses, the apostles, testifying to the great salvation in Christ (2:4). It is noteworthy that the writer of Hebrews places himself outside the age of miracles, indicating it was the previous generation that witnessed the miracles.

The magnitude of God’s grace is seen because through it Christ suffered death on behalf of all people. Hence, it is important that they appropriate this grace of God that has been manifested through Christ (12:15).

The theme of judgment is stressed in Hebrews because of the danger of the Hebrew Christians reverting to Judaism. Hence, they are reminded not to trample underfoot the Son of God through whom they were sanctified, for God will judge them for so repudiating the blood of Christ (10:30). However,

should God judge them, it is a disciplinary action—an Indication that He is dealing with them in a Father-child relationship (12:5-13). Since God will ultimately judge everyone (12:23), the Hebrew believers should not refuse the warnings (12:25). Those who have been faithful will be rewarded (6: 10).

Christ

Christology is clearly the major theological emphasis of Hebrews. In the development of the book, the author shows the superiority of Christ to prophets (1: 1-3), to angels (1:4-2: 18), to Moses (3: 1-4: 13), and to Aaron (4: 14-10:39). Christ is at the heart of the doctrinal section of the book (chaps. 1-10). The Christological emphasis is necessary when considering the addressees. The Hebrew Christians were being persecuted for their faith and were contemplating reverting to Judaism. The writer of Hebrews shows them the folly of this by reminding them that in so doing they would be reverting to an inferior system when, in fact, they had been given a superior revelation in Christ. The author of Hebrews shows differing facets of Christ to demonstrate His superiority.

Titles

The designation Christ (the Anointed One) is used throughout the epistle (3:6,14; 5:5; 6:1; 9:11,14,24,28; 11:26). It is a reminder that Anointed One, the kingly Messiah, has come. In the chapter dealing with the better sanctuary (chap. 9), the author employs the name four times. Messiah as High Priest has entered heaven, not simply an earthly sanctuary that is a mere copy of the true one in heaven (9:11,24). Messiah has offered His own blood to provide complete cleansing (9: 14). Messiah bore the sins once but will appear a second time for salvation (9:28).

The human name. Jesus emphasizes that in His humanity as a human high priest He has achieved what the Levitical high priest failed to do (2:9; 3:1; 6:20; 7:22; 10:19; 12:2,24; 13:12). Jesus took on humanity and suffered death on behalf of everyone (2:9). Jesus is the Apostle and High Priest who supplanted the Levitical priesthood (3: 1). Jesus has entered heaven's Holy of Holies and remains forever our High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek (6:20). He has also guaranteed and mediated a better covenant (7:22; 12:24), provided His blood whereby believers may enter the Holy of Holies (9: 19), brought completion to faith (12:2), and fulfilled the Old Testament types in

securing salvation 03: 12).

The term Son is used to emphasize the greater relationship that Jesus has with the Father (1:2,5,8; 3:6; 5:5, 8; 7:28). The Son is greater than angels by being the heir, creator, sustainer, and exact representation of the Father (1:3). The Son has a privileged relationship with the Father and will consummate the age as ruler (1:5,8; 5:5). The Son is greater than Moses, has authority over God's people (3:6), and is greater than the law, not having the weakness of Levitical priests (7:28).

Christ is also designated a permanent High Priest, who has made propitiation for sins (2:17). As High Priest He identifies with the people, yet is sinless (4:15); is in the presence of the Father (4:14); endures forever (6:20); is holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners, and exalted to heaven (7:26; 9: 11); and finally, as High Priest He has finished His work (8:1).

Deity

Jesus' deity is affirmed through the names ascribed to Him. In Hebrews 1:8-10 the author quotes from Psalm 45:6-8 and 102:25, but in the preface to the quotation he states: "But of the Son He says." The quotations that follow have reference to the Son. Thus, the Son is referred to as "God" (1:8, 9) and "Lord"(1:10). In 1:3 the deity of Jesus is seen through His intrinsic nature and being.

He is the "radiance of His glory." "As the rays of light are related to the sun, and neither exists without the other, so Christ is the effulgence of the divine glory. They are essentially one; that is, both are God." Jesus is the "exact representation" (Gk. *charakter*) of God's nature (1:3). The word means an engraving or mark left by an engraving tool; as a coin reflects the mint from which it came, so Jesus reflects the Father.

The author also depicts Jesus as deity through His works. He is the creator of the world and the ages (Gk. *aion*), "the sum of the periods of time" (1:2). He is the sustainer (Gk. *pheron*) who "carries all things forward on their appointed course."

Sinless humanity

The author of Hebrews stresses the true, unblemished humanity of Jesus that was brought about so He could make a full provision for sin. As a man Jesus partook of "flesh and blood" to show His true humanity (2:14). As a man Jesus was subject to the same temptations as all humanity (2: 18; 4: 15). As

a man He experienced suffering amid “loud crying and tears” in anticipation of the cross (5:7). As a man He submitted to the Father (2:13; 5:7). But while Jesus was fully and genuinely a man, He was without sin, that is, He was impeccable (4:15; 7:26).

Priesthood

Christ is superior because He is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, not according to the Aaronic priesthood. The Melchizedekian priesthood of Christ is superior because; (1) Christ’s priesthood is new and better (7:15; 7:7, 19,22; 8:6); (2) Christ’s priesthood is permanent (7:16,24); (3) Christ’s priesthood is based on a better covenant (8:6; 6: 13). Even though the writer of Hebrews deals with other doctrines, the focus of His theology is Christological.

Holy Spirit

Although the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not discussed extensively, several things are noted in Hebrews.

1. The sign gifts were displayed through the sovereign will of the Holy Spirit (2:4).
2. The Holy Spirit is the author of Scripture (3:7; 9:8; 10: 15).
3. Salvation involves becoming a partaker of the Holy Spirit (6:4).
4. Repudiating salvation through Christ is insulting to the Holy Spirit (10:29).

The doctrine of sin in Hebrews is fundamental to its theme of warning Hebrew Christians from lapsing into Judaism and thereby sinning against Christ. Thus in 6:4-6 a stern warning tells the Hebrew Christians that if they have once been enlightened and have become partakers of salvation and then fall away, it will be impossible for them to ever repent and be restored. Rather, God indicates He will confirm them in spiritual atrophy or babyhood if they return to Judaism; there will be no restoration for them. The same stern warning is given in 10:26-30. There is no further sacrifice than that of Christ; if they go on sinning willfully by returning to Judaism, they will find no sacrifice for their sins in the Levitical system. All they can expect is the severe judgment of God. Thus, the writer warns the Hebrews against hardening their hearts (3:7-11) and exhorts them to pursue sanctification and not come short of the grace of God (12: 14-15). He reminds them of Moses who rejected the temporary

pleasures of sin and sought instead to endure suffering and hardship (11:25). The Hebrew Christians needed similarly to reject the sin of regression and pursue sanctification, even if that would mean suffering. The sin of unbelief (lack of faith) was at the root of their problem; the writer challenges them to lay aside the sin of unbelief that entangled them and look instead to Jesus, the pioneer of their faith, who finished the course that was set before Him (12:1-2).

Salvation

In contrasting Christ to angels, the writer explains that a function of angels is to render aid to those who inherit salvation (1: 14). More to the theme of Hebrews, however, is the exhortation in 2:3, “How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” This statement implies Christ to be superior to the Old Testament sacrifices in that He provided a complete salvation through His atonement. The Hebrew Christians’ intended regression to Judaism is the target of the warning. “So great” emphasizes the once-for- all death of Christ that secured salvation-something that was unattainable through the blood of bulls and goats (10:4).

Jesus’ superior provision in salvation is seen in that He experienced death for everyone (2:9), and through that death He brought “many sons to glory” (2: 10). The fact that Jesus’ salvation can bring many sons to glory emphasizes the finality and security of it. The Hebrew Christians had no such security under the old covenant. The writer further emphasizes Christ’s complete submission and obedience to the will of the Father; through His perfect obedience Christ became “the source of eternal salvation” (5:9). The Hebrew believers needed to know these significant truths, but they were dull and needed to be taught the elementary doctrines of the faith.

THEOLOGIES OF PETER AND JUDE

INTRODUCTION TO PETER'S THEOLOGY

This study of Biblical theology will focus on the doctrinal teachings by Peter from his two epistles and his preaching in Acts.

The Epistles

The first epistle

This received early authentication by Eusebius, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and other church fathers. The internal evidence also suggests the apostle Peter as the author: he is so named (1:1), and there is considerable agreement between 1 Peter and Peter's speeches in Acts. The book was probably written prior to A.D. 64 and addressed to Hebrew believers living among the Gentiles (1:1). Peter's purpose in writing is to encourage the believers who were suffering persecution. He describes them being "distressed by various trials" (1:6). Charged with disloyalty to the state (2:13-15), they were being slandered, ridiculed, and maligned for failing to indulge in heathen practices (3:13-17; 4:4-5). Peter termed their suffering a "fiery ordeal" (4:12). The thesis of Peter's first epistle is hortatory and stated in 5:12—the believers were to stand firm in God's grace amid their suffering.

The second epistle

This has probably the weakest evidence of any New Testament book; it was, however, never rejected or regarded as a spurious book. Origen (c. A.D. 240) was the first to attribute the book to Peter. The internal evidence points to the apostle Peter as the author. He is so named (1:1) and indicates he was an eyewitness of the Lord (1:16), suggesting he was one of the three. There is also a similarity to Peter's speeches in Acts. The letter was written about A.D.

65, probably to a broad readership. Peter's purpose in writing this letter can be stated twofold.

1. Negatively, he was warning the believers concerning the outbreak of antinomianism (flagrant disregard for God's commands) and heretical teachers who were infiltrating the assemblies.
2. Positively, Peter exhorted the believers to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (3: 18).

The Author

The apostle Peter was the son of Jonah (Matt. 16:17) or John (John 1:42) and was a brother of Andrew (John 1:40). He was originally from Bethsaida (John 1:44) but later moved to Capernaum (Mark 1:21,29). Peter was a fisherman by trade (Luke 5: 1-11).

At the beginning of His public ministry Jesus called Peter to salvation (John 1:42), and about a year later He called him as an apostle (Matt. 10: 1-2). As one of the Twelve, Peter was given apostolic authority to perform miraculous signs, which vindicated the messianic message (Matt. 10: 1-15), and frequently he spoke for the group (Matt. 15: 15; 16: 16; 18:21; 19:27). Peter was also one of the select three, along with James and John. In that company he witnessed the transfiguration of Christ (Matt. 17: 1), which he later wrote about (2 Peter 1: 16). As one of the three Peter was a "pillar of the church" (Gal. 2:9) and later became a leader in the church. He was a spokesman in selecting a successor to Judas (Acts 1:15-22), a spokesman at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36), and at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:7-11). Peter was the apostle to the Jews, which is also reflected in his speeches and in his first epistle (1 Peter 1:1). One line of tradition suggests Peter ultimately went to Rome, but it is not certain.

Discussion of Peter's Theology

Peter's theology is clearly Christ-centered and in that emphasis expounds on the important doctrines related to Christ's person. He recounts Christ's sinlessness, His substitutionary atonement, His resurrection, and His glorification. Peter dwells considerably on the sufferings, humiliation, and rejection of Christ.

Christ

A study of Peter's use of the names of Christ is illuminating. In His sermons

in Acts, Peter refers to Jesus or Jesus of Nazareth. In Acts 2:22 Peter identifies Him as ‘Jesus the Nazarene,’ perhaps to remind His hearers of Jesus as the rejected one, because the term Nazarene would have had a negative connotation. In Acts 2:36 he refers to Him as “Jesus” but reminds the people He is no mere man, for “God has made Him both Lord and Christ.” Peter lays stress on this fact with his words “know for certain.” In Acts 3: 13 Peter refers to the glorification of Jesus, linking it with the title’s “servant” (3: 13), “Holy,” “Righteous One” (3: 14), and “Prince of life” (3: 15). Therefore, while Peter again mentions Jesus in 3: 16, he also emphasizes the authority and power connected with the name.

Peter preferred the designation Christ in his epistles, most often using the title Messiah to describe His sufferings. Peter writes that Christ shed His precious blood (1 Peter 1:19), suffered as a substitute- (1 Peter 2:21), suffered in the flesh (1 Peter 4: 1), suffered in front of witnesses (1 Peter 5: 1), and died for sin once (emphatic) for all (1 Peter 3: 18). In the light of this, Peter encourages the believers to set apart Christ as Lord in their hearts (1 Peter 3: 15), to keep a good conscience amid suffering for Christ (1 Peter 3:16), to rejoice amid sufferings for Christ (1 Peter 4:13-14), because in the end God will call them to eternal glory through their union with Christ (1 Peter 5: 10).

Peter also uses the compound name of Christ, but in so doing he emphasizes not the suffering of Christ, but the resurrection, glorification, and second coming. Through the Lord Jesus Christ believers have been born again to a living hope (1 Peter 1:3), having been saved through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:21), presently being built up as a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5), glorifying Jesus Christ through the exercise of spiritual gifts (1 Peter 4:11), and growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:8; 3: 18). Therefore, they can anticipate the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1: 13; 2 Peter 1: 16) when their trials will glorify Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:7).

Salvation

As has been noted in the preceding discussion, Peter emphasizes Christ in His work of salvation: He was a perfect sacrifice, like a spotless, un-blemished lamb (1 Peter 1:19); He committed no acts of sin (1 Peter 2:22); He died as a substitute once for all, the innocent for the guilty (1 Peter 1:18). Peter emphasizes the act - He was killed for us.

The pronouns emphasize that Christ died in the place of sinners (1 Peter 2:24). He ransomed.’ them from slavery to sin (1 Peter 1: 18). Christ’s

salvation was planned in eternity past (1 Peter 1:20) but revealed in history. He completed salvation through His resurrection, giving believers a living hope (1 Peter 1:3).

The Scriptures

Aside from Paul, Peter may well provide the most extensive discussion concerning the doctrine of Scripture. Peter provides significant insight concerning the Holy Spirit's ministry in inspiration as well as affirming the inspiration of Paul's writings. He provides one of the most complete studies of the Scriptures: they are the product of the Holy Spirit; they produce regeneration and spiritual growth.

The following may be noted from Peter's doctrine of the Scriptures:

1. The Scriptures are termed "the prophetic word" (2 Peter 1: 19), denoting the entire Old Testament. Peter indicates the Old Testament Scriptures are made certain through the appearing of Jesus Christ.
2. The Scriptures are living and remain forever (1 Peter 1:23). In contrast to corruptible human seed, God's Word is incorruptible.
3. The Scriptures are uncontaminated and nourishing, enabling the believer to grow spiritually (1 Peter 2:2).
4. The Scriptures are not of a purely human origin (2 Peter 1:20)
5. The Scriptures are the product of men who spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit, ensuring the accuracy of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21).
6. The New Testament Scriptures are equally inspired with the Old Testament Scriptures (2 Peter 3:16). Peter places the letters of Paul on par with the "rest of the Scriptures."
7. The Scriptures are the basis of theological truth (1 Peter 2:6). Peter makes a theological point and bases it on a quotation from Isaiah 28:16.

Christian Life

While Peter has remarks about other aspects of the Christian life, the major focus of his writing pertains to suffering. He was addressing Hebrew Christians who were suffering for their faith (1 Peter 1: 1). Peter wrote to encourage them and explain how believers ought to react to suffering, especially when the sufferings were undeserved (1 Peter 1:6).

Peter wrote words of caution and encouragement regarding suffering.

First, believers should expect trials and suffering and prepare their minds for it since Christ also suffered (1 Peter 1: 11; 4: 12; 5:9). Second, believers should rejoice amid suffering because of the anticipation of Christ's return (1 Peter 3: 14; 4: 13). Third, believers may suffer unjustly (1 Peter 2: 19, 20, 21, 23; 3: 17). There is no credit if a Christian suffers for wrong-doing, but it is admirable before God if a believer bears up when suffering unjustly Christ suffered and gave believers a pattern for following His example (1 Peter 2:21-23; 3:17-18; 4:1). Finally, believers may suffer according to the will of God (1 Peter 3:17; 4:19), but they will be strengthened by Him amid suffering (1 Peter 5: 10).

Church

Although the word church does not appear in Peter's writings, he does discuss the doctrine of the church to some extent.

The universal church: Peter recognizes the unity of Jew and Gentile in one body (Acts 10:34-43). In a momentous declaration Peter announced that Gentiles were welcomed by God without first becoming Jewish proselytes through ritual (Acts 10:35).⁶ Prior to that time Gentiles would first have to be baptized into Judaism, offer a sacrifice, and receive circumcision. This ritual would now be bypassed. Peter confirmed this truth in Acts 15:71.

The local church: In 1 Peter 5: 1-4 Peter refers to the responsibilities of the elders in the local church. Their responsibility is to shepherd the flock of God. The task of shepherding would denote feeding (teaching), protecting, nurturing, and caring for the flock. This was not to be done in a domineering manner or for love of money; but with eagerness and as examples in godliness. Peter also mentions baptism, using the analogy between baptism and Noah. As the waters of Noah symbolized the break with the old life, so water baptism symbolizes the break from the old sinful life (1 Peter 3: 21).

Last Things

The conditions: In 2 Peter, the apostle refers to the conditions that will preface the Lord's return; there will be false teachers who will enter the assembly. They will be known by their false teaching by which they deny Master who bought them (2 Peter 2: 1). False teachers will also be characterized by their

immorality (2 Peter 2: 14). They lead the unsuspecting astray but will be judged by Christ at His return (2 Peter 2:9).

The Coming of Christ: In his two epistles, Peter seems to distinguish between the rapture of the church and the second coming to judge the wicked. The coming for believers at the rapture will be deliverance and blessing; hence, Peter indicates the present suffering of believers will culminate in praise and honor at the revelation of Christ (1 Peter 1:7). Therefore, Peter encourages the believers to fix their hope at the revelation of Christ (the rapture would be implied) (1 Peter 1:13). In 2 Peter, the apostle refers to Christ's coming in judgment upon those who mock His return (2 Peter 3:1-7). This coming will be a "day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (v. 7).

Eternal state: Peter describes the suddenness of the coming of the day of the Lord (2 Peter 3: 10). The day of the Lord is used in several ways in scripture, but as a general term it views the entire period beginning with the rapture and terminating at the end of the millennium; thus, the day of the Lord involves judgment upon unbelievers but blessing for believers. From 2 Peter 3:10b-12 Peter describes the eternal state. At the end of the millennium the heavens will pass away with a great noise and the earth will be burned up. This is the sphere where sin took place; it is renovated in anticipation of eternity. Peter concludes his study on last things with practical exhortation (2 Peter 3: 11).

INTRODUCTION TO JUDE'S THEOLOGY

The author of the small epistle of Jude is simply identified as the brother of James (v. 1). The identification with James suggests it was James, the head of the Jerusalem church. The author of Jude would then also be a half-brother of the Lord (Matt. 13:55). Jude was likely writing to an audience in or near Israel; the book suggests a Jewish audience. The occasion for writing this epistle is similar to 2 Peter—the presence of false teachers. The purpose for writing is stated in verse 3: "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints." Jude recognized the great need of warning the Christians concerning the libertines who would destroy their faith. In the light of this, the Christians were to stand firm in the faith and heed the words of the apostles.

DISCUSSION OF JUDE'S THEOLOGY

Christ

In a theme similar to 2 Peter, Jude warns against false teachers who deny “our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (v. 4). The titles Master and Lord both refer to Christ. This is a great Christological statement. Master (Gk. *despoten*) means Christ is “absolute ruler” (2 Peter 2: 1); the English word despot is derived from this Greek word. Jude also refers to Jesus as Lord, which is a title of deity (cf. v. 25). Lord is the New Testament equivalent of Yahweh (*Jehovah*) and is a clear statement of deity; Jude equates Jesus with Yahweh of the Old Testament (cf. v. 5). Jude further calls Jesus “Messiah,” the Anointed One (cf. v. 25), who was the anticipated Redeemer and Ruler in the Old Testament. Although Jude is brief, he nonetheless gives a magnificent statement extolling the grandeur of Christ.

Salvation

Jude addresses his letter “to those who are the called.” In this statement Jude refers to the doctrine of election. The “called” are those who have been effectually called to salvation by God’s efficacious grace. It is that grace of God which man does not resist. Jude further emphasizes the security of salvation in affirming that God will enable the believer to stand before His glorious presence (v. 24). To stand before God means to be able to maintain oneself, that is, to be accepted (contrast Ps. 1:5). Jude has affirmed the believer’s security in salvation because of his election in the past and God’s ability to keep the believer for future glorification.

Angels

Jude refers to angels who “abandoned their proper abode” (v. 6), probably a reference to Lucifer’s fall from his exalted position wherein he took a host of angels with him (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28: 12-19). Apparently, some of those who fell were kept in bondage while others remained free and became demons. Jude also recognizes the hierarchy of angels in mentioning Michael, the archangel (v. 9), who was the defender of Israel.

THEOLOGIES OF JOHN

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN'S THEOLOGY

Apostle John

John, who was a brother of James and a son of Zebedee, was a fisherman in Galilee (Mark 1: 19-20). He must have had a profitable venture, for he had hired servants in the fishing business (Mark 1:20). His mother, Salome, was a sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus, making John a cousin of Jesus (d. John 19:25 with Matt. 27:56, 61; Mark 15:40, 47). His mother was one of those who followed Jesus and contributed to His support (d. Luke 8:3; Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41). John was undoubtedly one of the two disciples who followed Jesus at the beginning of His ministry (John 1:35-37). About a year later, John was named one of the twelve apostles (Matt. 10:2). John, along with Peter and James, was one of the inner three who witnessed the transfiguration (Matt. 17: 1-8), the raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:37-43), and the Lord's agonizing in prayer at Gethsemane (Matt. 26:37-38). At the Last Supper, John, who was known as the disciple "whom Jesus loved," had a favored position beside Jesus (John 13:23). Jesus also committed Mary into John's care at His crucifixion (John 19:26-27). John saw the resurrected Lord at least twice before the ascension (in the upper room [John 20:19-29] and in Galilee [John 21:2]) and at least three times after (as Lord of the churches [Rev. 1:12-18], Judge of sinners [Rev. 5:4-7], and King of Kings [Rev. 19:11-16]). In the book of Acts John appears in a position of prominence along with Peter (Acts 3:1; 4:13; 8:14-17). John was known as one of the pillars of the church (Gal. 2:9). According to Irenaeus, John eventually moved to Ephesus and lived to be an old man, living into the reign of Trajan (A.D. 98-117).

John's Theology

The sources for the study of Johannine theology are the gospel of John, the

three epistles of John, and the book of Revelation. Although there are alternate approaches to the study of Johannine theology, this study will incorporate the teaching of Jesus as recorded in John's gospel as well as the specific writings of John himself. It is assumed that the Lord's teaching as recorded by John would also be considered John's theology simply because John recorded the statements of Jesus, suggesting they were part of an important emphasis of John.

The theology of John centers on the Person of Christ and the revelation that God brought through the advent of Jesus Christ. The One who was God and was with God in eternity past now became flesh, and John beheld His glory. It is this revelation of light that John describes in his gospel, epistles, and Revelation. John provides a digest of his theology in the prologue of his gospel (John 1:1-18), wherein he describes the revelation of life and light through the Son but also describes a sin-darkened world rejecting that light.

Gospel of John

External evidence, through the testimony of Ignatius, Polycarp, Tatian, Theophilus, and others, attests to John's authorship of the gospel. The internal evidence is that he was a Palestinian Jew who was a witness of the events narrated. The evidence for John as the author is clear. Traditionally, the gospel of John has been dated late; Eusebius, for example, stated that John wrote "last of all;" hence, the gospel of John has traditionally been dated A.D. 80-95. The liberal writer John A. T. Robinson, however, suggests a final composition date of about A.D. 65 for the gospel. It is generally agreed, however, that John wrote his gospel last and, therefore, probably wrote to supplement the other gospels. For that reason, John probably had in view the church and world in general as his audience. In contrast to the synoptic gospels, John wrote to a general audience. His gospel's uniqueness is seen in that 92 percent of it is not found in the Synoptics. John includes the great discourses and events of the life of Christ not found elsewhere (6:22-71; 7:11-52; 8:21-59; 9:1-41; 10:1-21; 11:1-44; 12:20-50; 13:1-20; 14:1-16:33; 17:1-26). John employs certain words more than other writers: light (21 times), life (35 times), love (31 times), as well as others such as Son of God, believe, world, witness, and truth. John's purpose in writing is stated in John 20:30-31-to incite belief in Jesus as the Christ. John therefore selected certain signs to demonstrate Jesus' authority over a particular realm. By John's careful selection of signs,

he presented the authority of Jesus as the Messiah, encouraging faith in Him (20:30-31).

Epistles of John

1 John: First John has strong external evidence concerning John's authorship. Polycarp and Papias gave strong evidence of his authorship. Internally, the author is seen to be an eyewitness (1:1-4), with connections to the gospel of John (cf. 1:6 with 3:21, 3:8 with 8:44, 2:16 with 8:23, etc.). First John was probably written from Ephesus in A.D. 80, probably to the churches in the area surrounding Ephesus. There were two factors in the writing of 1 John: John wrote concerning the presence of false teachers and the spiritual laxity of believers. He warned against the antichrists who denied the true humanity of Jesus. 2 John also wrote concerning the spiritual condition of the believers. Some were careless in their walk, involved with the world (2:15-17). John wrote to explain true fellowship with the Son.

2 John: There is not much external attestation to 2 John; internal evidence suggests a similarity of structure, style, and language with John's gospel. Second John has terminology that identifies it with 1 John: "truth," "walk" "new commandment," "love," and others. 2 John was probably written about A.D. 80 from Ephesus. The destination of 2 John is "the chosen lady and her children."

This could refer to:

1. the universal church;
2. local church;
3. an actual lady.

By normal language usage, John was probably writing to a lady whom he knew but who is unknown to scholars today. John wrote to warn the lady (and the church that was probably meeting in her house) against the inroads of false teachers. The lady was hospitable, and John saw the distinct danger of the lady inviting the itinerant false teachers into her home, John warned her against showing hospitality to those false teachers (2 John 10).

3 John: The close association of 2 and 3 John relates both epistles to the first epistle and demands a common authorship. Third John was likely written from Ephesus about A.D. 80. Third John is addressed to "the beloved Gaius," unknown apart from this statement. John wrote to instruct Gaius concerning

Diotrephes, an influential person in the church who desired to be in the prominent position. John wrote to encourage Gaius concerning the problem of Diotrephes and to denounce the sin of Diotrephes.

Book of Revelation

There is considerable external evidence for John's authorship of Revelation from such early writers as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. Internally the author reveals himself as John (1:1,49; 22:8). The Revelation also indicates a similarity with the gospel of John, employing words that are common to both: Logos, Lamb, Jesus, witness, true, overcome, dwell, fountain of living waters, and others." Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort suggest a date of A.D. 68 or 69, while traditionally a date of about A.D. 95 has been mentioned for the writing of Revelation. John addressed the Revelation to the seven churches of Asia (1:4). John wrote for several reasons: to encourage Christians amid persecution under Domitian (ascended A.D. 81) and remind them of the final triumph of Jesus Christ; to bring the old Testament prophetic truths to their final consummation; and to provide a picture of the triumphant Christ in His judgments and in His millennial reign.

DISCUSSION OF JOHN'S THEOLOGY

Revelation

John describes revelation in two ways: it is through the Scripture" and through the

Son.

The Scriptures: Jesus reminded the unbelieving Jews that the Scriptures bore witness of Him (John 5:39). Jesus was affirming that the Scriptures are propositional truth, revealing the light of God through Him. The present tense indicates the revelation in Scripture continues. Jesus further reminded His audience that Moses wrote of Him and they ought to have believed Moses' writings about Christ (John 5:45-47). Still later, Jesus declared that the "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). These statements are important to note. In His debate with unbelievers Jesus was resting His case upon the integrity and authority of the written revelation-the Scriptures.

The Son: In the prologue to his gospel, John declares that the revelation of God was manifest through the Son. The One who had been with the Father

in all eternity (John 1: 1) now tabernacle with humanity, and John exulted in seeing His glory. John no doubt refers to the transfiguration of Christ (Matt. 17: 1-8) as well as the miracles of Christ (John 2: 11). The revelation of Jesus was also a revelation of grace (John 1:16-17).

John sets the revelation through Christ apart from the revelation through Moses; the law came through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John's intention is to emphasize the greater revelation that came through Christ. John concludes the prologue by stating the dilemma ("no man has seen God at any time") and the solution ("the only begotten God.. He has explained Him"). John refers to Jesus as God in saying Christ has explained the Father. The word explained (Gk. *exegesato*) compares to the English verb *exegetes* in suggesting Jesus has explained the Father.

The World

John used the word world a great deal; while it is only used fifteen times in the synoptic gospels, John used it seventy-eight times in his gospel and twenty-seven additional times in his other writings. John used the word world to describe the world in sin and darkness as well as under the domination of Satan.

The world in darkness: John depicts the world in darkness and in opposition to Christ; the world is hostile to Christ and all that He stands for, but this is because the world is blind. The world did not recognize Messiah when He came into the world." John describes two classes of people: those who come to the light and those who hate the light (John 1: 12; 3: 19-21). Persons of the world hate the light because the light exposes their sin Jesus said that this was the reason the world hated Him (John 7:7). The world system leads people to sin even as Eve was first tempted in the garden: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life (1 John 2:16). The basic issue of sin is the refusal to believe that Jesus is the light (John 3:19-20); the Holy Spirit continues to convict men concerning the same sin-refusal to believe in Christ (John 16:8-9). The tragic end result of sin is death (John 8:21, 24).

The World under Satan: Jesus explains why the unbelievers commit sin; it is because their origin is from the Devil (John 8:44). Because they are children of their father, the Devil, it is natural that they commit the desire of their father. Because the Devil is a liar from the beginning, it is natural that

the Devils spiritual descendants should reject Christ who is the Truth. John continues this theme in 1 John 3:8 when he states, “The one who practices sin is of the devil.” There is a spiritual relationship between the Devil and the one who habitually practices sin. But Christ came destroy the power of the Devil so that the one believing in Christ need not live in spiritual bondage to the Devil (I John 3:9). Jesus rendered judgment upon the Devil and broke his power (John 16:11).

The Incarnation

Light: Light is a popular term with John (John 1:4-5, 7-9; 3:19-21;5:35; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36,46; 1 John 1:5, 7; 2:8-10; Rev. 18:23;21:24; 22:5). In dealing with the incarnation, John refers to Jesus as the light that has come into a world darkened by sin. John declares, “In Him was life; and the life was the Light of men” (John 1:4). Jesus does not show the way to the light; He is the light. Jesus equates Himself with God the Father in claiming to be the light. Just as the Father is the light (Ps. 27: 1; 1 John 1:5), so the Son is the light of the world (John 8: 12). It is a strong statement of deity. Because Jesus has come into the world as the light, it is imperative that men believe in Him (John 12:35, 36). Jesus, as the light of the world, can give physical light (John 9:7) and spiritual light (John 8:12).

Life: Life is also a popular term with John; he uses it thirty-six times in the gospel, thirteen times in 1 John, and fifteen times in the Revelation. The wonder of the incarnation is that Jesus is life (John 1:4). John equates Jesus with deity in that just as the Father is the fountain of life (Psalm 36:9; Jer. 2:13; John 5:26), so the Son has life in Himself (John 1:4). It is again a strong affirmation of the deity of Christ. Apart from God, everything else only has derived life, but Jesus has life in Himself. Everything and everyone else are dependent on Jesus for life and existence. “It is only because there is life in the Logos that there is life in anything on earth at all.

Life does not exist in its own right. It is not even spoken of as made ‘by’ or ‘through’ the Word, but as existing ‘in’ Him.” As the life, Jesus gives eternal life to those who believe in Him (John 3: 15,16,36; 4: 14; 5:24, 20:31), He gives abundant life (John 10:10) and resurrection life (11:25) moreover, it is a present possession (1 John 5: 11-13),

Son of God: John describes the incarnation of Christ by referring to Jesus as the “Son of God” or the “Son.” Jesus used these terms of Him-self; moreover, the unbelieving Jews caught the significance of the claim- they tried to stone Him for blasphemy because He was equating Himself with God (John 5:18). When Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, He was claiming equality with God. Jesus clearly claimed to be the Son of God (John 10:36), and as such He has the prerogatives of deity: He is equal with the Father (John 5: 18); He has life within Himself (John 5:26); He has the power to raise the dead (John 5:25); He gives life (John 5:21); He sets men free from slavery to sin (John 8:36); He receives honor equal with the Father (John 5:23); He is the object of faith (John 6:40); He is the object of prayer (John 14: 13, 14); He has the power to answer prayer (John 14: 13). Jesus indicated that His relationship to the Father was entirely unique. He always referred to God as “My Father,” never “our Father” (John 20: 17), John has a decidedly strong emphasis on equating Jesus with God.

Son of Man: Jesus commonly used the title “Son of Man” to refer to His mission (John 1:51; 3:13-14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23,34; 13:31). The origin of the term is undoubtedly Daniel 7: 13 and reference to the heavenly being who receives the kingdoms of this world. The term is a complex one that seems to involve several ideas: the deity of the Son (note the equation of Son of Man with Son of God in John 5:25, 27); the royalty of the Son in that He receives dominion, glory, and a kingdom (Dan. 7: 13); the humanity of the Son in that He suffers (John 3: 14; 12:23, 34); the heavenly glory of the Son since He came down from heaven (John 1:51; 3:13; 6:32); and the salvation the Son came to bring (John 6:27, 53; 9:35). “The term, ‘the Son of Man’, then points us to Christ’s conception of Himself as of heavenly origin and as the possessor of heavenly glory. At one and the same time it points us to His lowliness and His sufferings for men. The two are the same.”

Atonement

In prophecy: The English word atonement comes from the two words “at” and “onement,” suggesting reconciliation. Although the word atonement is not a New Testament word, it designates what Christ accomplished on the cross through His suffering and death. When John the Baptist declared, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29), John was bringing Old Testament sacrificial offerings to their consummation.

Beginning with God's provision of a lamb in place of Isaac on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:8), with the provision of the Passover lamb in Exodus 12 to the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7, where the prophet Isaiah indicated Messiah would go to His death, slaughtered like a lamb-the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to Messiah's atoning death. Undoubtedly, it the consummation of that theme that John the Baptist describes in John 1:29 Jesus emphasized the same truth in John 6:52-59. He spoke of coming down from heaven and giving His life for the world (John 6:33, 51) the substitutionary atonement being suggested by the preposition "for Gk. *huper*). In this section Jesus taught that His death is vicarious (6:51), provides eternal life (6:53-55, 58), provides union with Christ (6:56, 57), and results in resurrection (6: 54).

In history: The work that Christ came to do comes to a consummation in John 19:30. After six hours on the cross Jesus cried out, "It is finished" (Gk. *tetelestai*). Jesus did not say, "I am finished," but rather "it is finished." He had completed the work that the Father had given Him to do the work of salvation was accomplished. The perfect tense of the verb *tetelestai* could be translated "it stands finished," meaning the work is forever finished and the finished results remain.

In 1 John 2:1-2 John explains the provision that Christ has made for sin. Christ is an "advocate" (Gk. *parakletos*) for those who sin. In this context, advocate means a defense lawyer in a legal case. The believer has Christ as his defense attorney at the divine bar of justice. Moreover, John says Christ is the "propitiation" (Gk. *hilasmos*) for the sins of the world. The world is used only here, Romans 3:25, and in 1 John 4: 10. Propitiation means Christ atoned for sin by paying the price and thereby assuaging the wrath of God. Propitiation is Godward and suggests that while sin had offended the holiness of God, through the death of Christ God the

Father is satisfied and is free to show mercy and forgiveness to the believing sinner. John indicates the propitiation is "for our sins ... but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). Christ's death was a substitutionary death that made provision for believers, but John emphasizes the sufficiency is "for the whole world." Although the whole world is not saved, because Christ is' God His death is enough for the entire world; it is, however effectual only in those who believe.

The resurrection: John describes the resurrection scene in John 20 to show

that the atonement of Christ has come to a climax in the resurrection. The atonement of Christ does not end with His death but with His resurrection; the resurrection is necessary to vindicate the Son (Rom. I: 4). John vividly describes the race with Peter to the tomb. John arrived first, glanced into the tomb, and did not notice anything. Peter entered, theorized what had happened, and then John also looked and understood. They saw the grave clothes lying in the grave and still retaining their shape as though the body were in them. The facecloth was still wrapped in a circular shape (20:7), but the body was gone. John “saw and believed” because he understood only one thing could possibly have happened the body had passed through the linen wrappings. Jesus had risen. John provides a clearer, more detailed description than the synoptic gospels of precisely what happened at the resurrection. John later describes how Christ passed through closed doors in His physical body and appeared to the apostles in His resurrected body (John 20:19, 26). John verifies the reality of the bodily resurrection of Christ, showing that Christ in His final work had overcome death and thereby brought hope and life to believers (John 11:25-26).

Holy Spirit

In the Upper Room Discourse (John 14-16), John records Jesus’ teaching concerning the Holy Spirit. These three chapters provide the most detailed information concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

His person: The personality of the Holy Spirit is seen in the personal pronouns that are used to describe Him. Even though the word Spirit (Gk. *pneuma*) is neuter, Jesus says, “He will teach you all things” (John 14:26). “He” (Gk. *eheinos*) is a masculine pronoun. Although one might have expected a neuter pronoun (it) to agree with the neuter noun (Spirit), it would have been wrong to refer to the Spirit as “it” since He is a person like the Father and Son. Jesus’ reference to the Spirit as “He” confirms the personality of the Holy Spirit (d. John 15:26; 16: 13, 14).

His work: He convicts the world (John 16:8-11). The work of convicting (Gk. *elegxei*) is the work of a prosecuting attorney whereby He seeks to convince someone of something. The Holy Spirit acts as a divine prosecutor, convicting the world of sin because of its refusal to believe in Jesus; He also convinces the world of the righteousness of Christ because of His resurrection

and ascension; and He convinces the world of judgment because Satan was judged at the cross.

He regenerates (John 3:6). In explaining the new birth to Nicodemus, Jesus indicates it is a birth by the Spirit. He teaches the disciples (John 14:26). While the disciples were unable spiritually to assimilate all of the Lord's teaching, Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would remind them of Jesus' teaching. This statement also guarantees the accurate recording of the New Testament writings, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit would provide accurate recall as they would write the Gospels.

He indwells (John 14: 16-17). Jesus pointed to the new work of the Holy Spirit following Pentecost when the Spirit's presence with the believer would no longer be temporary as in the Old Testament, but His indwelling would be permanent. Jesus emphasized that following Pentecost the Holy Spirit would be "in them" (John 14: 17) and that indwelling would be "forever" (John 14: 16).

Last Things

The rapture. Although John does not provide an explicit statement concerning the rapture as does Paul, John undoubtedly refers to the rapture in John 14: 1-3. The rapture is related to the church, and Jesus was speaking to the nucleus of disciples that would compose the small begin of the church in Acts 2. Because the disciples were grieving at the imminent departure of Christ in John 14, He encouraged them by reminding them (as the infant church) that He was going to prepare dwelling places for them in His Father's home. His promise to return and take them to Himself (John 14:3) is understood as parallel to Paul's statement in 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18.

The tribulation. John gives extensive coverage to the tribulation, detailing the events in Revelation 6-19. The seven seals are unleashed upon the earth at the beginning of the tribulation (Rev. 6: 1-8: 1), bringing the triumph of the Beast (6: 1-2), war (6:3-4), famine (6:5-6), death (6:7-8), martyrdom (6:9-11), and celestial and earthly convulsions (6: 12 17). The seals apparently continue through to the end of the tribulation. The seventh seal initiates the seven trumpets (8:2-11:19). With the sounding of the trumpets the food and oxygen supply on earth is diminished (8:2-6), one -third of the sea life dies (8:7), the

water source becomes polluted (8:10-11), the celestial bodies are darkened (8: 12-13), people are tormented (9: 1-12), and one-third of mankind is killed (9: 13-21). The seventh trumpet inaugurated the bowl judgments (11:15-19; 15:1-16:21), resulting in painful sores (16: 1-2), the death of sea life (16:3), rivers turning to blood (16:4-7), people scorched with heat (16:8-9), darkness (16:10-11), the unleashing of the mighty eastern army for the consummating battle (16:12-16), and a great earthquake, destroying the cities of the nations (16:17-21). Both religious Babylon (17:1-18) and commercial Babylon (18:1-24) are destroyed. The tribulation culminates with Christ's return, whereupon He subjugates the nations of the world (19:11-21).

Antichrist: John uses the term antichrist to describe those of his day that held to false doctrine concerning Christ (1 John 2: 18,22; 4:3; 2 John 7). The nature of this heresy was a denial of the humanity of Jesus (2 John 7), Christ only appeared as a phantom; He did not really take on humanity. John declares that those who deny that Jesus came in the flesh are antichrist. John thus uses the term as referring to those who deny the true doctrine concerning Christ.

John refers to the culminating person who denies Christ as the Beast (Rev. 11:7; 13:1, 12, 14, 15). John describes this Beast as the "First Beast" (in contrast to the false prophet who supports the First Beast but is known as the Second Beast ["another beast," 13: 11]) The First Beast is a political ruler (13: 1-10) who emerges out of the final form of Gentile power and is empowered by Satan (13:2), receives worship and blasphemes the name of God for three and one-half years (13:4-6), persecutes believers (13:7) and dominates the world (13:8). The First Beast is supported by the Second Beast who is a false prophet and forces the people to worship the First Beast (13: 11-12); he deceives the people through his ability to perform signs (13:14); he limits commerce to those who have received his mark (13: 16-17). At the second advent of Jesus Christ, both the First Beast and the Second Beast are thrown into the lake of fire (19:20).

Second advent of Christ: At the end of the tribulation John envisions the triumphant Christ returning with His bride, the church (Rev. 19:6-8) The marriage of Christ and the church took place in heaven during the tribulation period. Christ returns with His bride to inaugurate the wedding feast, the millennial kingdom that takes place on earth (19:9 -10). John pictures Christ returning as a triumphant King-He has many crowns on His head (19: 12)-who

wages war against Satan, the Beast, and the unbelieving armies (19:11,19). His weapon is the authority of His Word (19:13), with which He conquers and subjects the nations (19:15). He destroys the nations' rulers and casts the Beast, false prophet (Second Beast), and Satan into the lake of fire for one thousand years (19: 19-20:3). With the conquest of His enemies, Christ establishes the millennial kingdom upon earth.

Millennial kingdom and eternal state: John describes the resurrection of Tribulation and Old Testament saints at the end of the tribulation (Rev. 20:4-5); they are part of the “first resurrection.” The term resurrection does not describe a general resurrection of believers, but a resurrection to life in the millennial kingdom (20:6). There are nonetheless several stages in the first resurrection: the church age saints are raised prior to the tribulation (1Thess. 4:13-18), whereas the Old Testament and tribulation saints are raised after the tribulation (Rev. 20:4). Unbelievers are raised at the end of the millennium, whereupon they are cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

In Revelation 21:1-22:21 John describes the eternal state. The New Jerusalem that John sees coming out of heaven (Rev. 21:1-8) is the abode of the church, the bride (21 :9), but undoubtedly also the redeemed of all ages in eternity The New Jerusalem is probably related both to the millennium and the eternal state as this is the dwelling place Christ went to prepare (John 14:2). “In both periods, eternal (not temporal) conditions obtain in the city and for its inhabitants. Therefore, the New Jerusalem is millennial and eternal as to time and position, and it is always eternal as to conditions inside it. “16 John describes the New Jerusalem as providing fellowship with God (22:4), rest (14: 13), fullness of blessing (22:2), joy (21:4), service (22:3), and worship (7:9-12; 19:1).

POSSIBLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the historical and methodological development of New Testament Theology, outlining key factors to be considered in proposing a methodology.
2. Explain how F. C. Baur of Tübingen (1792-1860) employed Hegel's philosophy of thesis-antithesis-synthesis to counteract the idea of contradiction between the Jewish emphasis of Peter's writings and the Gentile emphasis of Paul's writings by some New Testament scholars.
3. Examine the assertion that the Gospel writers did not set out to write a biography of Jesus, but to construct Christology for their communities.
4. Discuss the Synoptic problem, indicating how scholars have attempted to solve it.
5. Evaluate the methodologies used by scholars in studying the Gospels.
6. Evaluate Rudolf Bultmann's theology of demythologization of Jesus in the Gospels, noting the philosophy behind it and the dangers it poses to New Testament interpretation.
7. Discuss the theology of God in the Synoptic Gospels.
8. Examine what the book of Acts teaches about the Church.
9. Discuss the assertion that Christians need both Paul's theology of salvation by faith and James' theology of salvation by works.
10. Discuss the superiority of Christ over the Law in the book of Hebrews.
11. Discuss the theological themes in the writings of John. How are they similar and dissimilar from the theological themes in the Synoptic Gospels? What may have accounted for the differences?

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