

NEW TESTAMENT SYNTHESIS NOTES

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PROLOGUE TO THE EPISTLES

Twenty-one of the twenty-seven New Testament books are in the form of letters written by five writers Paul, James, Peter, John, and Jude.

Paul is the apostle of faith (14 Epistles).

Peter is the apostle of hope (2 Epistles).

John is the apostle of love (3 Epistles) [plus one Gospel and Revelation].

James is the writer of works (1 Epistle).

Jude is the writer of vigilance (1 Epistle).

James and Jude are not apostles, but half brothers of The Lord Jesus.

The Books in the canon of Scripture are not in the chronological order in which they were written. Although placed as the first Epistle after Acts in the canon of Scripture, Romans was not written until the winter of A.D. 57-58, after Galatians, First and Second Thessalonians, and First and Second Corinthians.

Paul's Epistles give us far more insight into his heart and life, and the beliefs, practices, difficulties, and general conditions of various churches than any other form of literature could. Nine Epistles are to churches, four to individuals, and Hebrews (for reasons to accept Paul's authorship, see paper entitled *A Consideration of the Attestation of Scripture to the Authorship of Hebrews* on the Happy Heralds website under Book Study) is universal.

There are six categories in grouping the Pauline Epistles:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Epistles</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Date Written</u>
1. Soteriological:	Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, and Romans	The Gospel of Christ " "	A.D. 49 A.D. 56, 57 winter 57-58
2. Christological:	Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians	The Christ " " " "	mid A.D. 62 late A.D. 62 early A.D. 63
3. Eschatological:	1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians	The Coming of Christ	winter 51-52 spring A.D. 52
4. Ecclesiological:	1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy	The pastor and the congregation	winter 64-65 A.D. 65-66 autumn A.D. 67
5 Covenantal:	Hebrews	Christ and the New Covenant	late A.D. 63
6. Practical:	Philemon	Receive the Offender	late A.D. 62

The first nine Epistles as listed above are Church Epistles.

Two of the church Epistles are circular: Galatians and Colossians.

Four Epistles are Prison Epistles: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Paul wrote Personal Epistles to Timothy (2), Titus, and Philemon; two were younger, fellow servants whom he highly trusted and one, a layman of Colosse, in whose house the church met (Col. 4:17 cf. Phile. 1,2).

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