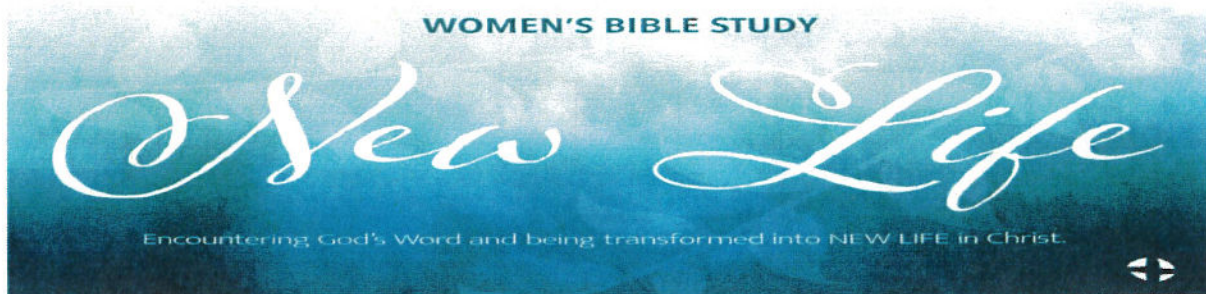


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THE NEW TESTAMENT – THE NEW COVENANT

BRIDGING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

The Bible as a 3-Act Play

- Act 1: Genesis 1–11: God and humanity
- Act 2: Genesis 1 –the end of the Old Testament: God and Israel
- Act 3: The New Testament: God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) and the Church

Metanarrative of the Bible

CREATION – FALL – REDEMPTION – RESTORATION (CONSUMMATION)

- Creation: Genesis 1–2
- Fall: Genesis 3
 - (the rest of the Old Testament)
- Redemption: the Gospels
 - (the rest of the New Testament and all of Church History, including us today)
- Restoration/Consummation: Revelation 19–21

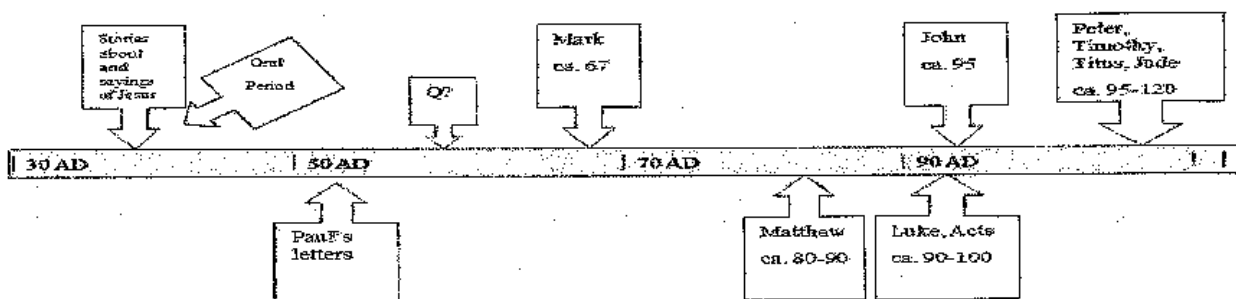
STRUCTURE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

- 27 "Books" (look at the Table of Contents)

- 4 types of literary material (genres):

- **Gospels** (4) – records of the birth, life, public ministry, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus the Messiah
- **History** (1) – although other books of NT do record history, "Acts" is specifically identified as history by Luke, its author, and as a narrative of the events that take place after Jesus's ascension
- **Letters** ("Epistles") (21) – letters written to early church communities to provide instruction on doctrine, identity and how the followers of Christ are to live
- **Apocalyptic** (1) – an extended vision of the culmination of history with the return of Christ and the defeat of evil; a New Jerusalem where God dwells with God's people forever

TIMELINE



THE GOSPEL GENRE

Gospel = *euangelion* (in biblical Greek) = "good news"

- Significance in the Roman Empire: in the context of emperor worship, "euangelion" was spread throughout the empire whenever a new emperor was born, or succeeded the throne, or had certain decrees – it was "good news" or "glad tidings"
- Significance in Isaiah (40:9, 52:7, 61:1): the prophet proclaimed good news to the people of Israel as they were emerging from Babylonian exile
- Significance in the New Testament: the oral tradition of the good news of salvation through Jesus (Matt 11:5, Rom 1:1, 1 Cor 15:1); not until years after they were written were they called "Gospels" and designated as their own genre

The genre of gospel is not: biography, myth, history, narrative, memoir

The genre *is*: religious proclamation based upon historical events = "religious propaganda" which was written for the express purpose of promoting the Christian faith and persuading people to believe certain things about Jesus." (Mark Allan Powell)

The gospels are a form of preaching (*kerygma* in biblical Greek which means "proclamation").

We could say the gospels are "persuasive narrative."

Consider these aspects of the genre of gospel:

- 1) Each of the four gospels are written from different perspectives by different apostles (or close associates of the apostles) – therefore, just as four different preachers would preach in a different way based on their location in the world and their "congregation"

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- 2) Each gospel writer has his own writing style, which we will explore as we go through the gospels. Matthew, Mark, and Luke contain very similar summaries, whereas John's Gospel is quite different stylistically. For that reason, Matt, Mk, Lk are grouped together under the term, "Synoptic Gospels."
- 3) None of the Gospels contain all of the things Jesus said and did while He was on earth. Each author picked and chose the stories that supported the picture of Jesus he was trying to portray.

Excellent (and encouraged!) questions to ask when reading the Gospels:

- What is this story trying to tell us about Jesus (the person and nature and work of Christ)?
- What is it saying about the gospel (the good news of our redemption in Christ)?
- How does the audience of this Gospel affect the way this story was written?
- How does the writer of this Gospel affect the way this story was written?
- Why was this particular story/teaching included? What is it trying to persuade us to believe or how is it trying to persuade us to act?

ULTIMATELY, THE NEW TESTAMENT CENTERS ON AND POINTS TO JESUS CHRIST, AND TEACHES THE KINGDOM OF GOD

GOSPELS: Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of God

ACTS and EPISTLES: The disciples expanded the Kingdom of God by the power of the Holy Spirit

REVELATION: The future consummation of the final perfected Kingdom

