

EN-080. NEW TESTAMENT Content and History
By D. R. Miesner

FORE WORD to Course Management Statement

FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

PRIOR to coming to the first class (on July 21, 2008)

1. Read the Gospel of Mark; and
2. Write out for sharing in class:
 - a. Two newly gained insights or questions (or one of each) stimulated by your reading of Mark 1-8.
 - b. Do the same (as in "a") for Mark 9-16.
3. Bring your Bible, the Study Guide for the New Testament, and the Course Management Policy Statement (attached) along to class on July 21.

Concordia Seminary
Summer, 2008

EN-080 New Testament Content and History
D. R. Miesner, Guest Professor

COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

- I. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to assist the student in gaining the basic understanding of the content and history of the New Testament which is pre-requisite for the study of theology at the seminary level. (Credit not applicable to M. Div. or higher degree.)

Rationale: See Christ's work of redemption as the center of the Christian faith, and in that light pursue the study of the New Testament (NT) as God's revealed Word and as the message of God's work of creation, preservation, redemption and sanctification.

II. **COURSE OBJECTIVES.**

- A. **SKILLS.** To provide occasion for developing the skills of:
1. reading and interpreting NT for victorious Christian living;
 2. understanding and appreciating the unity of the NT revelation; and
 3. making good use of such study resources as Bible dictionaries, commentaries, and other bibliographic tools.
- B. **KNOWLEDGE.** To provide occasion for developing an understanding of:
1. the religious, political, social, and economic conditions which set the stage for the life and ministry of our Lord;
 2. the life and ministry of Jesus as they are presented in the four Gospels; and
 3. the growth and teachings of the early Christian church as they are illustrated in the acts and epistles and of the apostles.
- C. **ATTITUDES.** To provide occasion for developing:
1. a response of gratitude to God for the revelation of His will in Jesus Christ as this is given in the NT as the fulfillment of the OT;
 2. an appreciation for the value of the NT in terms of personal Christian growth and edification; and
 3. a desire to reflect on and to witness to the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the NT.

III. **PROCEDURES.**

- A. **ATTENDANCE.** Regular and prompt attendance at all sessions is expected in view of the sharing in the classroom and the swift movement of the course.
- B. **EPISTOLARY EXPOSITION.** Each student will introduce an epistle, as described on the attached page.
- C. **COROLLARY NOTES.** The student will prepare *in advance* the notes and responses to study questions provided in the course "packet" to correspond with the "daily" reading assignments.
- D. **EVALUATION.**
- 45%--Test I, on Gospels/Acts (July 28)
 - 45%--Test II, NT Competency (August 1)
 - 10%--Epistolary Exposition (on date designated)

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS:*

Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV). St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986.

Miesner, Donald. "Study Guide for New Testament." CPH Print Shop, 2004.

**Also, see Appendix G for the Library Reserve List. useful for the Epistolary Exposition and for the optional corollary readings in John Stott's The Story of the New Testament.*

V. ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Advance N.T. Readings</u>	<u>Stott pages</u> ***	<u>Special Notes</u>
July 21	Mark 1-16;	7-25	CMP; Study Guide; N.T. background; Mark
July 22	Matthew 1-28	26-44	Beginnings & Galilee
July 23	Luke 1-24	45-58	the Journey; Quiz
July 24	John 1-21	65-80	Jerusalem & Holy Week
July 25	Acts 1-28	58-64	to the nations; Quiz
July 28	Mid-Term TEST on the Gospels & Acts Galatians; 1 Corinthians		
July 29	2 Cor.; 1 & 2 Thess. Romans	85-104	Epistle Reports Quiz
July 30	Eph.; Phile.; Phil.; Col.; 1 & 2 Tim.; Tit.; Hebr.	105-116	Epistle Reports
July 31	Jas.; Jude; 1 & 2 Pet.; 1-3 John; Rev. 1-11 (sel. ch.)	117-155	Epistle Reports Quiz?
Aug. 1	Rev. 12-22 (sel. ch.) Course Review		Competency Exam

**Always do the Study Guide on the day's readings prior to class time.

***Stott readings are optional; text is on Reserve in the Library.

VI. Office hours: by appointment; home ph.: # 636-386-5141; e-mail: williemies@aol.com

Epistolary Exposition EN 080, Summer '08

Guidelines.

Develop a sentence outline for the epistle (segment) of choice, covering the seven points listed below. Correct English style is assumed. Length: a *minimum* of one typed page, single spaced; a *maximum* of two typed pages.

Due date for the outline: to the professor no later than the start of the day before the report to the class. Don't be late.

Class presentation. On the basis of the typed outline, present orally to the class on the "report date." Time frame: 15 minutes# (give or take two). Be ready for a few questions from the class after the presentation.

The Study Outline: Seven Steps.

1. *Historical background.*
 - a. Who wrote the letter?
 - b. When?
 - c. From where?
 - d. To whom sent?
 - e. Why?
2. *The epistle's chief concerns/teachings?*
3. *Key chapters/verses to remember?* (Give brief descriptor.)
4. *Two or three contemporary applications* for faith and/or life under God.
5. *Addenda* from a *commentary* or *Bible dictionary*. (Offer two or three salient observations.)
6. Brief *bibliographic* notes. List:
 - a. Two or three *commentaries* you found most useful, including one "scholarly" one;
 - b. One or two valuable *Bible dictionaries*; and
 - c. One *other* Biblical study *tool* you used (beyond the Bible).
7. *Key insight?* What one leading insight did you gain from this study?

Epistle Report Schedule

<u>Scholar</u>	<u>Epistle</u>	<u>Report date</u>
_____	2 Corinthians	July 29
_____	1 & 2 Thessalonians	"
_____	Romans*	"
_____	Ephesians/Philemon	July 30
_____	Colossians/Philippians	"
_____	1 & 2 Timothy/Titus*	"
_____	Hebrews	"
_____	James/Jude	July 31
_____	1 & 2 Peter	"
_____	1, 2 & 3 John	"

#expandable, depending on class size

*divisible, depending on class size

APPENDIX A

St. Matthew's Gospel

"Matthew gives us five discourses;
 In threes and sevens he likes his sources;
 He writes to show what O. T. meant,
 With an ecclesiastic bent."
*[Also, he presents the regal
 In a setting very legal.]*

APPENDIX B

The Synoptic Outline

	<u>Matthew</u>	<u>Mark</u>	<u>Luke</u>
Preparation		--	
Galilean Ministry	++	+	-
Journey to Jerusalem	-	-	++
Passion/Resurrection	+	++	

APPENDIX C

2. JOHN'S PREACHING OF REPENTANCE

Matt. 3:7-10

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruit that befits repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

Luke 3:7-9

7 He said therefore to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits that befit repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

3. JOHN'S PREACHING TO SPECIAL GROUPS.

Luke 3:10-14

10 And the multitudes asked him, "What then shall we do?" ¹¹ And he answered them, "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." ¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³ And he said to them, "Collect no more than is appointed you." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Rob no one by violence or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

4. JOHN'S MESSIANIC PREACHING.

Matt. 3:11-12

Mark 1:7-8

Luke 3:15-18

11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry;

he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

7 And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

15 As the people were in expectation, and all men questioned in their hearts concerning John, whether perhaps he were the Christ, ¹⁶ John answered them all,

"I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie;

he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he preached good news to the people.

5. JOHN'S IMPRISONMENT.

Luke 3:19-20

14:3-4 | 6:17-18
(§ 111, p. 78)

19 But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰ added this to them all, that he shut up John in prison.

6. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

72. THE CALL OF THE TWELVE.

Matt. 10:1-4 (§ 58, p. 40)

Mark 3:13-19

Luke 6:12-16

5:1 (§ 18, p. 20)

1 And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity.

² The names of the twelve apostles are these: first Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;¹ ⁴ Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

13 And he went up on the mountain,

and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him.

14 And he appointed twelve to be with him, and to be sent out to preach ¹⁵ and have authority to cast out demons:^{*} ¹⁶ Simon¹⁷ whom he surnamed Peter; ¹⁷ James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder; ¹⁸ Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus,^k and Simon the Cananaean, ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot,

who betrayed him

(3:19b-22, § 85, p. 67)

12 In these days he went out to the mountain to pray; and all night he continued in prayer to God. ¹³ And when it was day, he called his disciples, and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles;

¹⁴ Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, ¹⁵ and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶ and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

(6:17-19, § 71, p. 53)

* Mark 6:7 (§ 109, p. 77): And he called to him the twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

Luke 9:1-2 (§ 109, p. 77): ¹ And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal.

¹ text: A D λ ϩ it vg sy⁴ sy^p; add, *whom also he named apostles*: S B C? W Θ ϕ sa bo. ¹⁷ text: A D λ ϩ ϩ it vg sy⁴ sy^p sa bo; *demons*. ¹⁸ *So he appointed the twelve: Simon*: S B C. ¹⁹ text: S A E C Θ λ ϕ ϩ it (some MSS.) vg sy⁴ sy^p sa bo; *Lebbaeus*: D it (some MSS.). ²⁰ text: S B ϕ it (some MSS.) vg sa bo; *Lebbaeus*: D; *Lebbaeus called Thaddaeus*: C? W Θ λ ϩ sy^p; *Judas Zelotes*: it (some MSS.); add, *Judas the son of James* after "Cananaean" in v. 4: sy⁴.

To Luke 6:14a and parallels cf. John 1:42—Jesus looked at him and said, "So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter).

Matt. 17.1-9 3.17	Mark 9.2-10 1.11	Luke 9.28-36 9.37; 3.22b	John 12.28-30
<p>1And after six days 3 Jesus took with him Peter</p>	<p>2And after six days Jesus took with him Peter</p>	<p>28Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter</p>	
<p>and James and John his brother, and 6 led them up a high mountain apart. 2And he was transfigured before them, 9 and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light.</p>	<p>and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them, 3and his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them. 4And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses; and they were talking to Jesus.</p>	<p>and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. 29And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white.</p>	
<p>12 3And behold, there appeared to them Moses and 15 Elijah, talking with him.</p>		<p>30And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Elijah, 31who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep but kept awake, and they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33And as the men were parting from him,</p>	
<p>18 4And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is 27 well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses 30 and one for Elijah."</p>	<p>5And Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." 6For he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid. 7And a cloud overshadowed them,</p>	<p>to Jesus, "Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. 34As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen;" listen to him!"</p>	
<p>33 5He was still speaking, when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, 36 and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son," with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." 39 6When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe. 7But</p>	<p>and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son;" listen to him."</p>	<p>34As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen;" listen to him!"</p>	<p>12.28-30 (no. 302, p. 271) 33"Father, glorify thy name." Then a voice came from heaven, 36 "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." 37The crowd standing by heard it and said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." 38Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.</p>
<p>42 Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and 45 have no fear." 8And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one 48 but Jesus only.</p>	<p>8And suddenly they looking around no longer saw any one with them but Jesus only.</p>	<p>36And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen. (no. 163 9.37-43a p. 155)</p>	
<p>51 9And as they were coming down the mountain, 54 Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of man is raised from the dead."</p>	<p>9And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of man should have risen from the dead. 10So they kept the matter to them-</p>	<p>37On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him.</p>	

352. The Women at the Tomb

Matt. 28.1-8
26.32; 28.10

Mark 16.1-8
14.28

Luke 24.1-12
23.56

John 20.1-13
20.18; 20.17

(no. 350 15.42-47 p. 323)

¹And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices; so that they might go and anoint him.

²And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen.

³And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" ⁴And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large.

⁵And entering the tomb,

they saw a young man sitting on the right side,

dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed.

⁶And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him.

⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you."⁸And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid.^k

(no. 362 [concl. brev.] p. 334)

23.56 (no. 350, p. 323)

¹¹Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

(no. 350 23.50-56 p. 323)

¹But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices which they had prepared.

²And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,

³but when they went in they did not find the body.ⁱ

⁴While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them [v. 23... "a vision of angels..."]

in dazzling apparel;

⁵and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground,

the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"

[He is not here, but has risen.]⁶Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise."⁸And they remembered his words,

⁹and returning from the tomb

they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest.

(no. 350 19.38-42 p. 323)

¹Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark,

and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

v. 12 and she saw two angels in white ...

²So she ran,

and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they

Appendix G

EN-080 NT Content and History

(RESERVE List for the class of D. R. Miesner-----Summer, 2008)

Chronological and background charts of the New Testament. H. Wayne House.
BS2310 .H68 (REFERENCE---Not on Reserve)

Concordia Self-Study Bible. Robert G. Hoerber, ed.
BS195 .N37 1986 (DICTIONARY STAND---Not on Reserve)

Interpreting the Holy Scriptures. Herbert T. Mayer. St. Louis: Concordia, 1969.

An Introduction to the New Testament. Raymond E. Brown. The Anchor Bible
Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1997. BS2330.2 .B76 1997

The New Testament—Its Background and Message. Thomas Lea. Nashville: Broadman
and Holman, 1996.

The New Testament—Its Background, Growth, and Content. Bruce M. Metzger.
New York: Abingdon, 1965.

The New Testament Speaks. Glenn W. Barker, William L. Lane, and J. Ramsey
Michaels. New York: Harper and Row, 1969. BS2330.2 B33

Paul, Apostle of the Heart Set Free. F. F. Bruce. (20325)
BS2506 .B755 1977

Reading the New Testament for Understanding. Robert G. Hoerber. (30091)
BS617 .H.58 1986

The Story of the New Testament. John Stott. Revised by Stephen Motyer.
Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001.

A Survey of the New Testament. Robert Gundry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981.

Synopsis of the Four Gospels. Greek-English edition. Edited by Kurt Aland. Stuttgart:
German Bible society, 1989.

The Word of the Lord Grows. Martin H. Franzmann. (24619)
BS2330.2 .F7 1961 (REFERENCE—Not on Reserve)

The Writings of the New Testament. Luke Johnson. Revised edition.
Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999. BS2330.2 J64, 1999.

1. Historical background.

- a. Author? Scholars widely agree that Paul wrote Galatians (Gal. 1:1-3).
- b. When? Probably in 48-49 A.D. if one accepts the "South Galatian theory." DRM agrees with Franzmann's view (Word, p. 54), that it fits best before the Apostolic Council (Acts 15). This assumes that Paul is writing to churches he had already been *known* to have visited (Acts 13-14). His lack of allusion to the decisions reached in Jerusalem (Acts 15) would argue against a date after the Apostolic Council. [The argument of proponents of the "Northern Galatian theory" is for a later date to an area that Paul *may* have visited on his second missionary journey. "Similarity in content" with portions of Romans, written between 5-10 years later, is a weighty consideration for the latter theory.]
- c. From where? Probably from Antioch on the Orontes, if one accepts the argument advanced above for the 48-49 A.D. dating.
- d. To whom sent? The churches of Galatia (Gal. 1:2). DRM finds the churches of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe as the likely target audience (see "b" above).
- e. Why? Hoerber (N.I.V., p. 1791) states that Jewish Christians were upsetting the fledgling churches of "Galatia" by insisting that "faith in the gospel was not sufficient" and that Gentiles, to be complete Christians, needed to submit to circumcision and other ceremonial laws. Thus, law and gospel were confused, and grace was perverted. For Paul, that was "*anathema!*" In the process of this conflict, Paul's apostolic credentials were called into question by the legalists who had come to Galatia.

2. Chief concerns/teachings of Galatians.

- a. Paul's apostleship is valid. It is by God's appointment, not man's, Paul stated. The "pillar apostles" (James, Cephas, and John) accepted Paul's role as equal, with special responsibility to "the uncircumcised" (Gal. 1-2).
- b. The relationship of grace and works is developed. *Man is saved by grace*, the gift of God made possible through the complete faithfulness of Jesus Christ, *received by faith*. *The law both exposes sin and had served as a "guardian" to bring people to Christ*. Jesus came to redeem us "in God's appointed time" and gave us His Spirit so we can come into a child/parent relationship with God, no longer in "bondage" to the "law." Indeed, Abraham's "righteousness" came by faith in the promise (Gal. 2-4).
- c. The "faith" that justifies is not passive; it *produces good works* through love. The desires of the "flesh" are opposite the fruit(s) of the Spirit. *The law of Christ is the law of love*. Don't be weary in well-doing! Circumcision is not the real issue. A "new creation" is (Gal. 5-6)!

3. Key chapters/verses.

3:6-9. Abraham's faith was counted as righteousness. He believed in God's promise for the Gentiles.

4:4-7. You are children of God, not slaves, because God sent Jesus to redeem you and the Spirit to quicken you.

4:21-31. The “allegory” of Hagar and Sarah. Each had a son: one, slave; the other, free (law and gospel).

5:15-24. The desires of the flesh vs. the fruit of the Spirit (catalogued).

4. Contemporary applications.

- a. As a child of God, I am free from the fear and dread of God caused by sin and the threat of Satan. I know that God’s grace avails for me because of Jesus’ redemptive work and the Spirit’s nurturing presence within me.
- b. As God’s child, I am not shackled by certain time-bound rituals and ceremonies which were in place to prepare God’s people for the coming of the promised Messiah. Now He **has** come, and those rituals (e.g., circumcision, kosher food laws, etc.) **have** served their former purpose.
- c. As one who has received the gift of grace, I am called to bear the fruit(s) of the Spirit (e.g., love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, etc.).

5. Commentary or Bible Dictionary addenda.

- a. A.M. Hunter (*Introducing*, p. 119) notes that while circumcision may no longer be a live issue today, the message of Galatians remains relevant. Whenever any religious rite is made equal with faith in Jesus as a condition for salvation, it must be exposed.

J. Knox (*I.D.B.*, p. 339) suggests that next to the issue raised by the Judaizers, a second issue vies for major attention, the one about Christian freedom (Gal.

5:13-25). He argues that Paul needs to defend against two fronts: 1) *the legalists* who insisted on circumcision; and 2) *the antinomians* who misused their “freedom” as an occasion for the desires of the flesh. [Ed. Note: Whether there actually was an antinomian party in Galatia, or whether Paul is dealing with a charge made against him by the legalists is debatable.]

6. Brief bibliographic notes.

a. Useful commentaries.

*Barclay, William. The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958 (popular)

*Burton, Ernest DeWitt. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921. (scholarly)

*Luther, Martin. Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. Abridged translation by Theodore Graebner. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1949.

b. One or two valuable Bible dictionaries.

*The Anchor Bible Dictionary. David Noel Freedman, editor in chief. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

*The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible. Edited by George Buttrick. New York: Abingdon Press, 1962.

c. Other Biblical study tool used.

*Franzmann, Martin H. The Word of the Lord Grows. St. Louis: Concordia, 1961.

*Hunter, A. M. Introducing the New Testament. London: SCM Press, 1957.

7. My key insight?

If we see ourselves as living by the Spirit, we need to walk by the Spirit. Our freedom in Christ conquers our mortal fears; it also calls us to lively loving, energized by the “fruit of the Spirit,” which enables us to “bear one another’s burdens,” thus fulfilling “the law of Christ.”

EN-080, January 20, 2004

First Corinthians

I. Historical Background

- A. Written by: St. Paul (well attested)
- B. Year: 55 A.D.
- C. From: Ephesus (near end of Paul's stay there, 3rd MJ)
- D. Sent to: the church at Corinth
- E. Purpose: to reply to spiritual concerns brought to Paul in person and by letter

II. Background on Corinth (thumbnail sketch)

- See Concordia Self-Study Bible, pp. 1744-1745
- See Lea, pp. 408-409 (on Reserve)

III. Outline of chief teachings (to be detailed in lecture)

- A. Initial greeting (1:1-9)
- B. Reply to reports by Chloe's people concerning:
 - 1. Divisions/ true and false wisdom (#1-4)
 - 2. A case of incest (#5)
 - 3. Lawsuits (6:1-8)
 - 4. Sexual immorality in general (6:9-20)
- C. Reply to questions in a letter from Corinth about:
 - 1. Marriage and sex (#7)
 - 2. Food dedicated to idols (8:1-11:1)
 - 3. Order in public worship concerning
 - a. veils and hair (11:2-16)
 - b. the Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
 - c. spiritual gifts [the priority of prophecy and especially love over tongues], (#12-14)
 - 4. Resurrection [past: Christ's; future: believers'], (#15)
 - 5. The collection (16:1-9)
- D. Concluding remarks (16:10-24)

IV. Key chapters:

11, Lord's Supper; 13, Love; 15, Resurrection;
others-----your choice, see outline above.

V. How many letters to Corinth?

- A. Previous letter (1 Cor. 5:9)
- B. 1 Corinthians
- C. Severe letter (2 Cor. 2:4; 7:8)
- D. 2 Corinthians

VI. The value of the epistle:

Paul's evangelical and forthright dealing with contemporary practical problems of Christian faith and life which are of a timeless nature (*e.g., divisions in the church, centrality of the gospel ministry, incest, lawsuits, sexuality, marriage, sensitivity for the "weak brother," decency and order in worship, the Lord's Supper, the priority in spiritual gifts, the resurrection, etc.*).

FINIS

THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WORLD**OF THE NEW TESTAMENT****I. THE EMPIRE OF ROME****A. The Growth of the Roman Empire**

At the time that the New Testament was written, Rome controlled almost all of the civilized world. The Roman state took its name from its capital city, which was founded in 735 B.C. with the unification of a number of small villages. By the beginning of the 5th century B.C., it had developed a republican form of government, and by 265 B.C. had become master of the Italian peninsula. In the next 100 years Rome was involved in a great struggle with Carthage, a former Phoenician colony on the north coast of Africa. The wars between them ended with the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C. Rome also extended her control eastward over Macedonia and Asia Minor. In 63 B.C. Pompey organized Syria into a province and annexed Judea. Finally, in 58-57 B.C. Julius Caesar extended his control over Gaul (western Europe). In 30 B.C. Augustus succeeded in killing off his opponents and became the first Emperor.

B. Augustus, 27 B.C. to 14 A.D.

Under his rule the power of the imperial state was thoroughly established. His powers were actually handed over to him by the Senate in a series of acts, and he used them to rule wisely. Many reforms were carried out by him. In order to improve the morale of the people, he revived the state religion and introduced the worship of Rome as a state religion into the province.

C. Tiberius, A.D. 14-37

Tiberius was the adopted son of Augustus. He was distant, haughty, suspicious and cruel. During his reign Jesus was crucified.

D. Caligula, A.D. 14-37

Although he was very popular in the beginning, he soon alienated many people, including the Jews, when he demanded that they worship him as god. He ordered his statue to be erected in the Temple in Jerusalem--some think this is the "abomination of desolation" referred to in Mark 13:14--but he was assassinated before this was carried out.

E. Claudius, A.D. 41-54

He proved to be an abler ruler than his contemporaries expected. He made a strong effort to restore the ancient Roman religion. Under him the Jews were expelled from Rome because of the riots that had taken place "at the instigation of Chrestus." Some believe this is a reference to Christ, but this is uncertain.

F. Nero, A.D. 54-68

The first five years of Nero's reign were peaceful. However, he resorted to oppression and violence. Perhaps he was responsible for having set the great fire that broke out in 64 A.D., for which he falsely accused the Christians. In the persecution that followed, tradition says that both Peter and Paul were executed. Nero himself was overthrown in a revolt.

II THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

When Rome conquered new territories, these were organized into new provinces which became part of the imperial system. Except for Italy, most of the Roman world was under such provincial governments. The provinces that were generally peaceful were under proconsuls who were responsible to the Roman Senate. The more troublesome provinces were under the direct authority of the emperor. They were governed by prefects or procurators (Pontius Pilate was such a procurator--Matt. 27:11).

In general the provinces enjoyed considerable liberty. The worship life of the subject peoples was generally left undisturbed. Little settlements of Romans were established at strategic centers in the provinces. The worship of the Roman State and Emperor worship flourished in the provinces. The provinces were considered by Rome as her legitimate field of exploitation.

III THE HELLENISTIC KINGDOMS

By the first century the spirit of Greek culture had permeated both East and West (when Rome conquered Greece, Greece really conquered Rome).

A The Conquests of Alexander

The Hellenizing of the East was given a real impetus by the victorious campaigns of Alexander the Great. After his untimely death in 324 B.C., his empire was divided among some of his generals.

B. The Seleucids in Syria

After Antiochus III defeated the Egyptians in 200 B.C., he gained control of Palestine and attempted to Hellenize the Jews. This led to the Maccabean revolt. Under Seleucid kings, Antioch became a very important city, and Greek culture spread.

C. The Ptolemies of Egypt

With the death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C., the last of the Ptolemies perished, and Rome took over Egypt. Under the Ptolemies, Alexandria had become a very important city. In this city Jewish influence was always strong. Here the Old Testament was translated into Greek (the Septuagint) sometime after 275 B.C.

D. Cultural Effects

While the absolutism of the Seleucids and Ptolemies was resented by the people, these kings did succeed in introducing Greek culture into the areas they ruled. Above all, the Greek language became the common speech of the people. Thus the early Christians with a Greek Bible (O.T. as well as N.T.) and with the Greek language understood by all were able to penetrate many areas of the Roman world rapidly.

IV THE JEWISH STATE

A. The End of Judah

When Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captured Jerusalem in 597 B.C., the Jewish State came to an end. Jerusalem was completely destroyed in 586 B.C. During the 70 years in exile that followed, Synagog worship developed among the devout Jews in Babylon. The study of the Law became a substitute for animal sacrifices.

During the Persian and Greek periods the monarchy and the prophetic office disappeared, but the priesthood remained and became political. Since there was a great demand for the Scriptures in the various synagogues, a new class of leaders, the scribes, arose. They not only copied but also studied the text of the Scriptures daily.

B Under the Ptolemies, 322-198 B.C.

In this period a large number of Jews migrated to Alexandria and other Hellenistic cities. They were generally well-received. In Palestine the High Priest was the governing officer.

C Under the Seleucids, 198-168 B.C.

There was constant rivalry between the Ptolemies in Egypt and the seleucids in Syria. In 175 B.C. Antiochus IV (Epiphanes--"the manifest god") came to power. When his invasion of Egypt failed, he took his frustration out on the Jews. The Temple was desecrated, and heathen altars were built. The result was the revolt led by Judas, nicknamed "Maccabeus" ("the hammer") and his brothers. Independence was won in 142 B.C.

D. Under the Hasmoneans, 142-37 B.C.

Problems with Syria and inter strife continued. In 135 B.C., John Hircanus became High Priest and founded the Hasmonean dynasty. Continued internal strife led the Romans to take over in 63 B.C. As strife continued, the dynasty ended.

E Under the Herods, 37 B.C. to 6 A.D.

Antipater was the first of the Herodian dynasty. His son was Herod the Great. He began his reign in 37 B.C. He persuaded the Romans to make him king of the Jews. Constant intrigue and suspicion led Herod to order the execution of several of his close relatives. He never won the Jews' friendship. Violence and hatred continued to characterize his life to the end. He died a terrible death on April 1, 4 B.C.

F. Herod's Successors

According to Herod's will, Archeleus was to rule Judea, Samaria and Idumea. Antipas was named tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Philip received the area east of the Jordan River and north of the Sea of Galilee.

13 Archeleus, 4 B.C. - 6 A.D.

He was not liked and was deposed in 6 A.D.

14 Philip the Tetrarch, 4 B.C. - 34 A.D.

He was just and fair in dealing with the people. He built Caesarea Philippi.

15 Herod Antipas, 4 B.C. - 39 A.D.

He is mentioned a number of times in the Gospels. Jesus referred to him as "that fox" (Luke 13:32). He ordered John the Baptist executed. Before him Jesus was tried (Luke 23:7-12). He was deposed by Emperor Caligula and banished to Gaul.

16 Herod Agrippa I, 37 - 44 A.D.

Claudius appointed him to rule the territory once ruled by Herod the Great. He lived in Jerusalem and followed Jewish law strictly. He was one of the first persecutors of Christianity. He killed James and imprisoned Peter. See Acts 12:11-23.

17 Herod Agrippa II, 50 - 100 A.D.

He is mentioned in Acts 25:13-26:32 in connection with Paul's hearing.

G. Under the Priests to the Fall of Jerusalem, 70 A.D.

During the years of foreign rule from the Ptolemies on down, the people considered the priests as their real rulers. Associated with the High Priest was a council of elders, which by the time of Christ had become the Sanhedrin. From the death of Herod to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the priesthood was again the chief political power in Judea. The High Priest was the advisor to the Roman procurator.

H. Rome Rules Through Procurators

Soon after the death of Herod the Great his son, Archeus, was deposed by the Romans. From then on Judea was ruled almost all the time by procurators. Most of them lasted only a few years because of their unpopularity. Thus Pontius Pilate (26-36 A.D.) was deposed because of the dispute he had with the Samaritans. There was constant tension and frequent outbursts of armed resistance. In 66 A.D., the Jewish Rebellion began in earnest. In the spring of 70 Titus tightened the siege around Jerusalem, and in August the city fell and was completely destroyed. The inhabitants were either massacred or carried off into slavery.

V THE SOCIAL WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

A. Jewish Society

The wealthy aristocracy of the Jews was composed largely of the families of the priesthood and the leading rabbis. The priesthood controlled the business traffic connected with the sale of sacrificial animals and the temple tax. Although the majority of Palestinian Jews were freemen, they were generally poor.

B. Pagan Society

18 The Aristocracy

In the Roman World there was an aristocracy made up of the large land owners and those who were able to exploit the newly conquered provinces.

19 The Middle Class

This class largely disappeared as many of them lost their farms and joined the homeless and foodless mobs of the big cities.

20 The Plebs

There were many poor people who lacked steady employment. They were ready to follow anyone who would promise them bread and games.

21 The Slaves and the Criminals

Perhaps more than half the people of the Roman Empire were slaves. Many of them were skilled clerks, teachers and artisans of every kind. Slavery had a debasing effect on both the slaves and their masters. Thus society in general was filled with all kinds of evils.

C Cultural Attainments

22 Literature

There was a literacy revival in Rome under Augustus. This was the golden age of Roman poetry (Horace and Ovid). It is also the time when Virgil wrote his Aeneid. Some years later Tacitus wrote his Annals and his Histories, both of which reveal the prevailing corruption in his Roman society.

23 Art and Architecture

Under the emperors of the first century A.D. much new construction went on.

24 Music and Drama

The Roman stage at this time contributed much to the decline of morality among the people. The productions were coarse and cheap. Music of all kinds was quite prevalent throughout the Empire.

25 The Arena

The bloody contests in the amphitheater had an even greater debasing effect than the stage on the morals of the people.

26 Languages

The main languages of the Roman world were Latin, Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew. Latin was the language of the courts, while Greek was the cultural language. By the time of Christ, it had become almost the universal language of the Empire. It was also the language of the New Testament (KOINE Greek).

27 Schools

The children in an average Roman home were educated by the pedagogues, a slave. There were also private schools where the education of the children was continued. The curriculum was primarily practical. The education of a Jewish boy was very similar. However, he learned to read and write from the Old Testament. He was also taught the traditions of the fathers.

D Moral Standards

As already indicated, moral standards were generally very low. Human life was cheap, and divorce was easy to obtain. Unwanted infants (esp. girls) were often exposed to die. There was corruption in all areas of life.

VI THE ECONOMIC WORLD

A. Agriculture

Agriculture flourished to a much greater degree in the lands around the Mediterranean than it does today. Even North Africa contained immense farms. The large estates in Italy were farmed by tenants and sharecroppers.

B. Industry

Most of the articles that were manufactured were produced in small factories in homes. Luxury goods were imported from Africa and from the East.

C. Finance

Various aspects of banking were practiced in the Roman world. Private individuals often supplied funds to the banks. The normal rate of interest varied between 4% and 12%

D. Transportation and Travel

Rome was able to rule her provinces quite well to a large extent because of the excellent system of roads. These roads were as straight as possible and very well built. Inns were located at convenient places along the roads. However, most of the commercial transportation was by water rather than by land. Some of the merchant ships that sailed the Mediterranean were more than 200 feet long. There is a record of one ship that carried 1200 passengers.

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

I. THE PAGAN RELIGIOUS WORLD

A. The Graeco-Roman Pantheon

The primitive religion in Rome in the early days of the republic was animism. Each farmer worshiped the gods of his own farm and fireside. Gods of forest and field, sky and stream were worshiped. Eventually the Greek gods were given Roman names. By the time of Christ the worship of these gods was fading. The satirists and philosophers had ridiculed them. Yet in some areas the worship of certain gods survived in a fanatical way (see Acts 19:34).

B. Emperor Worship

The worship of the emperor grew gradually as more honors were given to him, and there was an attempt to centralize the state in him. While emperors were deified by a vote of the Senate after their death, it was not until the time of Domitian at the end of the first century that a concerted effort was made to force the people to worship a reigning emperor. The refusal of the Christians to participate in such worship was considered an act of treason against the state, for emperor worship was considered a patriotic duty and of expressing loyalty to the state.

C. The Mystery Religions

The mystery religions fulfilled the desire of the people to find personal strength for times of stress and trouble. They were generally of Eastern origin. They all had their rituals by which a person could gain immortality. In many respects they were like modern secret societies.

D. The Worship of the Occult

Among the masses there was a superstitious regard for the powers of the universe, which they did not understand. They believed the entire world was inhabited by spirits and demons that could be used to their advantage if one knew the correct rite of incantation to use. There was widespread belief in magic. Fortunetelling and the reliance on horoscopes were very popular. Astrology, which came originally from Babylonia, was also very popular. It was claimed that from the position of the planets at the time of a person's birth the future of an individual could be predicted, and he could be warned what he should avoid.

E. The Various Philosophies

Philosophy has always assumed man's ability to understand his world and to decide his own fate. Through the use of his mental abilities, man is able to understand completely the mysteries of this world. A number of these philosophies were current at the time of Christ.

1. Platonism

The philosophy of Plato is called idealism. He believed that the real world is the world of ideas. The material world is only a shadow of this ideal one. By seeking the Highest Good, the Supreme Idea, man can liberate himself from the enslaving material world and rise to a comprehension of the real world. Platonism led eventually to Gnosticism, which Christianity fought.

2. Gnosticism

Gnosticism promised salvation through the right knowledge (GNOSIS). Matter was evil. Man must therefore seek the invisible world to obtain salvation. Two opposite conclusions came out of this. Some believed that since the body was evil it must be kept under strict control. This led to asceticism. Others said that since the spirit was the real thing it did not matter how one used his body. This led to libertinism. The errors of Gnosticism are referred to in the writings of Paul and John.

3. Epicureanism

This school was founded about 306 B.C. by Epicurus. He taught that there is no absolute good. The highest possible good was pleasure, that is, the absence of pain. The individual should choose such enjoyments as would provide the greatest and most complete satisfaction. He believed that the gods were uninterested in the affairs of men. Therefore, man need not be interested in them either. It was a popular philosophy.

4. Stoicism

Zeno (340-265 B.C.), the founder of this philosophy, taught that the universe was controlled by an Absolute Reason. Thus, the world was not governed by chance, but by purpose. The highest good is conformity to reason. Emotions are harmful. Perfect self-control was the goal of the Stoics. The universe was to be accepted as it was and not changed. This was a form of fatalism, but with it was an appeal to a high type of morality. This led some people to confuse Stoicism with Christianity, although the two are completely different. The Stoic believed he could not in any way deal with God. God is not personal and takes no personal interest in man.

5. Cynicism

The Cynics taught that the height of virtue was to have no wants at all. One way to achieve this, they believed, was to abandon all standards and traditions and become complete individualists. In this way they believed they would become independent of all desire.

6. Skepticism

They believed that there can be no absolute standards, since knowledge rests on experience, and no two people agree in this area. For example, customs accepted in one country are completely rejected in another one. Since all judgment is relative, there is no such thing as absolute truth.

7. What Does This Mean?

Although all these philosophies had some followers, they were generally too abstract for the average person. Because they were unsatisfactory to many, they helped to prepare the way for Christianity with its down-to-earth certainties.

II. JUDAISM

A. Origin

Judaism as it existed at the time of Christ was largely a product of the exile. As the temple sacrifices disappeared, there was a new interest in the Law--this included not only the written law in the Old Testament, but also the easy oral traditions that had developed. Synagogues were established to hold the scattered Jews together.

B. Theology

Judaism insisted that man was the creation of God and that his chief purpose in life was to keep God's commandments. The Law--written and oral tradition--summarized the whole duty of man. It was during the period of the exile particularly that the Jews began to look upon the coming Messiah as a political deliverer of Israel. This idea was very prevalent among the Jews of Christ's day.

C. The Temple

The original Temple of Solomon was destroyed in 586 B.C. The second Temple was begun in 537 B.C. and completed in 516 B.C. In 168 it was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes. Three years later it was cleansed and repaired by Judas Maccabeus. Herod the Great began an ambitious rebuilding program in 20 B.C. The work proceeded slowly. The whole program was not completed until about 62 or 64 A.D., only a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. It was made of white marble with much gold leaf.

D. The Synagogue

The synagogues were founded in almost every city of the empire where there were Jews. It served a number of purposes: 1. The social center where the Jews of a city gathered weekly; 2. It provided instruction in the Law for both adults and children; 3. Its services provided a substitute for temple worship. Each synagogue had its leader. Each one also had a chest in which the scroll of the Law was kept. The services included a confession of faith, prayers, and readings from the Law and the Prophets. A sermon followed the Scripture readings, and the service closed with a blessing. The Christian Church of the first century took over much from the synagogue service.

E. The Sacred Year

The religious year began with the month in which the Passover occurred (Nisan--April). There were seven feasts or festivals.

1. The Passover: Anniversary of the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt. Every Jew from within 15 miles of Jerusalem was to be present. Others also came.

2. Pentecost, or Feast of Weeks. This was a harvest festival 7 weeks after the Passover.

3. The Feast of Trumpets or New Year (Rosh Hashanah). A joyous festival that marked the beginning of the new year (first part of October).

4. The Day of Atonement. A fast day on which the high priest entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled the blood of the bullock to atone for the sins of the people.

5. The Feast of Tabernacles. It began five days after the Day of Atonement and commemorated the years in the wilderness. For these days the people lived in booths of branches. This was a joyous festival.

6. The Feast of Lights (Hanukkah). Also known as the Feast of Dedication. It commemorated the cleansing and rededication of the Temple after it had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes. Every Jewish home was brilliantly lighted and gifts were exchanged. It occurs close to Christmas.

7. The Feast of Purim. This was a national holiday that reminded the Jews how Esther had risked her life to keep them from being massacred.

F. The Literature of the Jews

More than any other people of the ancient world, the Jews were the people of the book, that is, the Old Testament Scriptures. They considered it God's revelation to them. In these years before the birth of Christ the canon of the Old Testament was pretty well fixed at the books we now know as the Old Testament Scriptures. In the period following Malachi, the last of the prophets (about 456 B.C.), the various apocryphal ("hidden" or "secret") books were written. They reflect the restlessness of the Jews who were still dreaming of an independent state. Three of these books are historical in character: I Esdras, I & II Maccabees. The others can be classified as either romantic, legend, devotional, didactic or apocalyptic (II Esdras). Also produced in this period were many apocalyptic books with their strange symbolism. They were written to encourage the faithful to remain loyal to God in persecution and to hold out to them the hope of their eternal reward and the salvation of the nation.

G. The Sects of Judaism

Among the sects that developed in this period were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes and the Zealots.

1. The Pharisees (see p. 1483, NIV Study Bible)
2. The Sadducees (see p. 1483, NIV Study Bible)
3. The Essenes. Not much is known of this group. They were an ascetic brotherhood, who abstained from marriage and held their property in common. Their theological views were similar to those of the Pharisees. Some have identified the Qumran community that came to light with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls with them, but in many respects they differ.

4. The Zealots. A group of fanatical nationalists who advocated violence as the way to overthrow Roman control.

H. The Diaspora

At the time of the Roman Empire by far the greatest number of Jews lived beyond the borders of the Holy Land. They were known as the Diaspora or Dispersion. This scattering of the Jewish people had begun already when the Assyrians carried off the Ten Tribes (Israelites) in 721 B.C. Many from the southern kingdom were carried off to Babylon. After the conquests of Alexander the Great many other Jews emigrated to take advantage of the business opportunities that were opening up. Most of these Jews kept their religious beliefs and remained in contact with the Temple at Jerusalem and its worship. They were divided into two major groups:

1. The Hebraists. They kept not only the faith of Judaism but also the customs and the Aramaic language. Paul (Saul) is a good example of this group.
2. The Hellenists. Most of the Jews in the Diaspora absorbed the Greco-Roman culture. They remained Jewish only in their religious beliefs. They spoke Greek.

HERMENEUTICS (Major Rules of Interpretation)

1. The common meaning of a word must be assumed unless the context or the subject matter compels us to understand another meaning of the word (usus loquendi).
2. Sensus literalis unus est! (Writer's intended meaning)
3. Obscure texts of the Scriptures must be explained in the light of clear and simple parallels.
4. Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur. (Parallelisms).
5. Parallelismus realis est argumentativus (True parallels).
6. Every interpretation must be in agreement with the context.
7. No interpretation of Scripture is correct unless it is grammatically correct (Language and syntax).
8. No interpretation of Scripture is correct unless it is historically correct (Circumstances and contents).
9. Since all parts of the Bible are in full agreement with each other, no interpretation of Scripture dare contradict the Analogy of Faith (Scope of Scripture-Dogmatics).
10. A systematic and consistent loyalty on the part of the exegete to a sound common sense-grammatical - historical - theological - Christian method of exegesis forbids entirely the handling of a Biblical Book or Scripture Passage in an arbitrary manner.

The Date of Jesus' Birth

Bible scholars throughout the ages have asked the question, "Why didn't St. Luke (or St. Matthew) write down the exact date of Jesus' birth? He was an historian, wasn't he?" A good answer to this query is that Luke was not interested in setting or revealing the date of our Lord's birth; he was anxious to show how it was that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, and that He is the promised Messiah, the Savior. A better answer is that the Holy Spirit did not direct Luke to write down this information. This should not cause us any more pain than the fact that we do not have a photograph of Jesus, or that He was of Jewish blood. Divine Revelation does not concern itself with these details; it repeats again and again the only fact that matters: Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, is the Messiah, the Savior of the whole world.

Yet, especially since Christ's Birth divides all history into two parts, not only Bible students but all men have been interested in the exact date of His birthday. Though the exact date (not even the year) will probably never be determined, scholars have had apparent success from computations based on dates of secular history; we offer in capsule form some of these methods and their results:

1. Calculations based on the date of the Census. Caesar Augustus ordered a census or enrollment for the purpose of numbering the people and taxing them. He ruled 31 B.C. to 14 A.D. In Palestine this census is conducted according to ancestral usage by having every man hand in his name in the city or town where his family originally lived. Research has shown that in the Roman Empire a census was taken every 14 years, and that the census recorded by Luke was the first one. History reveals that there was a census in 20 A.D. This was when, we think, the census of Acts 5:37 took place. If we count back fourteen years we arrive at 6 A.D. Augustus ordered the census about 8 B.C. and since it would take some time for such orders to penetrate all the colonies, it may have been as late as 7 or 6 B.C. (some say 5 B.C.) when the census affected Joseph in Palestine. This would set the birth of Jesus between 7 and 5 B.C.
2. Calculations based on the date of the Ministry of John. Luke 3:1f. informs us that John the Baptist began his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius. Tiberius became emperor in 14 A.D., but he had been a co-regent of Augustus since 11 or 12 A.D. Adding 15 to 11 we get the year 26 as the year when John's ministry began. Jesus was only a half year younger than John. His ministry began when He was 30 years old (Luke 3:23). Hence Jesus began His public ministry in the year 26 or 27. Counting back thirty years from 26 A.D. we arrive at about 4 B.C. as the date of Jesus' Birth.
3. The Date based on the Death of Herod the Great. That the birth of Jesus could not have occurred in the year 1 and that hence our present calendar is wrong, is evident from the fact that Jesus was born before the death of Herod the Great, Matt. 2:1. Since Herod died in 4 B.C., the birth of our Savior must have taken place either in or before 4 B.C. Since according to Matthew 2:16 Jesus could have been a year or more old at this time, we are taken back to 5 or 6 B.C. as the date of Jesus' Birth.

4. The date based on the Building of Herod's Temple. The historical notice in John 2:20 is helpful. Early in Jesus' ministry the Jews said to Jesus: "This temple was built in 46 years." We know that Herod began to build the temple in 19 B.C. Counting forward from 19 B.C., adding 46 years, we arrive at 27 A.D. In this year, as we see from Luke 3, Jesus was at least 31 years old. Counting back from 27 A.D. for 31 years we again arrive at about 4 B.C.

Conclusions: All this data would seem to indicate that Christ was born either in 5 or early in 4 B.C. We cannot be altogether definite. This fact holds true in regard to much Biblical Chronology. Since the census of Luke 2 took place no earlier than 8 B.C. and all calculations result in about 4 B.C., most Bible scholars say that 8 B.C. is the terminus a quo (earliest possible date) and that 4 B.C. is the terminus ad quem (latest possible date). Therefore we have the paradoxical statement "Christ was born 8-4 before Christ."

Who made the mistake in calculation? The Bible chronology found in the back of many Bibles and the dates found in the margins of reference Bibles are from, as we say, "the chronology according Ussher." Archbishop Ussher died in 1650 and his chronology was placed in the Bible in 1701, even after the revision called the King James Version of 1611. But Ussher did not originate his chronology himself; he simply based his work on the computations of a Roman Monk of the sixth century whose name Dionysius Exiguus. Apparently he overlooked that Tiberius had been co-regent with August Caesar for about three years before the latter's death and based his calculation entirely on Luke 3:1, interpreting the 15th year of Tiberius as being 29 A.D. This makes our chronology about 4 years late.

"The date of the birth of Jesus Christ, the central event of the world's history, was first fixed in the sixth century A.D., by Dionysius Exiguus, a Roman Monk, in the year 753 after the building of Rome (A.U.C., Anno Urbis conditae). That this was not the exact year of our Lord's birth has been abundantly proved; but the use of the date all over Christendom is too firmly established to be changed. It is certain from St. Matthew that our Lord was born before the death of Herod the Great (spring of 750 A.U.C.). The Nativity can scarcely be placed later than the autumn of 749 A.U.C. (B.C. 5-4). For the date December 25, there is no direct evidence whatever." (Concordia Bible, p.26 of the Bible Dictionary).

EPISTLES OF PAUL

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LETTER</u>	<u>PLACE AND OCCASION OF WRITING</u>	<u>THEME</u>
48-49	Galatians	Antioch in Syria after first Missionary Journey and before the Jerusalem Council meeting (Acts 15 and Gal 2)	Freedom from ceremonial law: Justification by faith (Gal 3:23-25)
51	First Thessalonians	Corinth while Paul was in Corinth Timothy joined him from Thessalonica (3:6 & Acts 18:5) See also 2:14-16 and Acts 17:5-16	Christ the Hope of our Salvation -Second coming of Christ Remain steadfast in the face of persecution.
51/52	Second Thessalonians	Corinth in response to further information received through Silas and Timothy 1:1 and 3:17	Return of Christ could be any day. Therefore be steadfast and work for a living.
55 (Spring)	First Corinthians	Ephesus Toward the close of Paul's three years residency, as he received information concerning conditions existing in the church at Corinth (1:1 & 16:5-8)	The church amidst problems. Christ our Salvation, righteousness and redemption
55 (Fall)	Second Corinthians	Macedonia 2:13; 7:5 against false teachers who were challenging Paul's integrity and authority.	Joy and relief The transforming power of the Gospel. New Creation.
57 (Spring)	Romans	Corinth 15:25-27 suggests that Paul was on his way to Jerusalem with a gift from Macedonia and Achaia	Justification: The basic Gospel Righteousness from God. Sanctification & Security

- V. Third Journey of Paul in Galatia and Phrygia (18:23)
1. Apollos from Alexandria in Ephesus and Achaia (18:24-28)
 2. Paul in Ephesus (19:1-19)
 3. Summary at the end of the fifth main section: "The Word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily."
- VI. Christianity established in Rome (19:21-28:31)
- Key: "I will send you far away to the Gentiles."
1. In Ephesus (19:21-20:1a)
 2. Macedonia, Greece, Macedonia, Philippi, Troas (20:1b-6)
 3. Troas (20:7-12)
 4. Troas to Miletus (20:13-16)
 5. Miletus and speech to elders from Ephesus (20:17-38)
 6. Miletus to Jerusalem (21:1-15)
- VII. Paul in Jerusalem (21:16-23:30)
1. Paul's report to James (21:16-26)
 2. Paul's arrest by Jews (21:27-40)
 3. Paul's defense on the steps on the tribune's barracks (22:1-21)
 4. Dialogue with Roman authorities about citizenship (22:22-29)
 5. Before the Sanhedrin (22:30-23:10)
 6. The Jews plot to kill Paul (23:11-22)
 7. Paul and the Roman authorities (23:23-30)
- VIII. Paul in Caesarea (24:1-26:32)
1. Before Felix and Paul's speech (24:1-21)
 2. Paul in prison (24:22-27)
 3. Paul's appeal to Caesar (25:1-12)
 4. Paul before Agrippa (25:13-27)
 5. Paul's speech before Agrippa and Festus (26:1-32)
- IX. Paul's Journey to Rome (27:1-28:16)
- Departure for Rome, dangerous storm in the sea, shipwreck.
On the island of Malta.
Arrival at Rome.
Paul's final witness before Jews.
Final summary (28:30-31)