

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The word "Testament" means a covenant. A covenant is an arrangement made between two parties that could either be accepted or rejected, but not altered. The New Testament is God's new covenant with man. The Old Testament dealt mostly God's covenant with Israel on the basis of the Law given to Moses at Mt Sinai. The New Testament describes the new arrangement that God is making with mankind on the basis of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Old Covenant revealed God's holiness through the righteous standards of the Law and promised a coming Redeemer. The New Covenant shows the holiness of God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Himself the promised Redeemer. The New Testament contains the sacred writings that reveal and explain the content and details, and implications and promises of this New Covenant.

The New Testament divides up into four major divisions.

New Testament divisions
— *English Bible* —

GOSPELS	HISTORY	EPISTLES	PROPHECY
Matthew Mark Luke John	Acts	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PAULINE</u></p> Romans I Corinthians II Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians I Thessalonians II Thessalonians I Timothy II Timothy Titus Philemon <p style="text-align: center;"><u>GENERAL</u></p> Hebrews James I Peter II Peter I John II John III John Jude	Revelation

The Gospels. The four Gospels describe the life and earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah/King of Israel, and the Savior of the World. Each Gospel is written from a different perspective, and for a different audience.

- **The Gospel of Matthew** — wrote primarily to a Jewish audience and presented Jesus as Israel's long-awaited Messiah and rightful King. His genealogy focuses on Christ's royal lineage from King David. There is a vast number of Old Testament quotes and references, each bringing out some aspect of Christ's life and ministry as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

- **The Gospel of Mark** — was written for a primarily Gentile audience, especially a Roman one. Therefore, the Gospel of Mark is more of a fast-paced Gospel of action. The writer, John Mark, frequently uses the terms “*immediately*” and “*then*” to keep the narrative moving. Jesus is presented as the Servant of God who came to suffer for the sins of many.
- **The Gospel of Luke** — addresses a broader Gentile audience, especially the Greeks. Luke himself was a highly educated Greek; he was a doctor and a respected historian. He presents Jesus as the Son of Man who provides us the answer to the needs and hopes of the human race. Christ is presented as the One who came to seek and save lost sinners.
- **The Gospel of John** — emphasizes the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. John wrote his Gospel at the end of the New Testament era in order to strengthen the faith of the saints. He also wrote to present Jesus as the Savior, inviting lost sinners to put their faith in Him and be saved.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke present much the same material about the life of Christ. They present Him from a similar viewpoint. The term for this is *synopsis*, a viewing together. Thus we refer to these three Gospels as the Synoptic Gospels. Much of the material in John’s Gospel, on the other hand, is unique to his Gospel. His Gospel is organized more according to Jesus’ long discourses which follow several specific miracles, which John refers to as *signs*.

The differences in the four Gospels supplement each other without contradiction, and the similarities likewise complement each other. And so taken together, the four Gospels give us a complete and comprehensive portrait of the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the absolutely holy God and perfect/sinless man in One Person. And therefore, as such, He and He *alone* is the only acceptable sacrifice for the sins of the world.

It’s highly significant that the New Testament begins with a four-fold description of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It’s almost as if God wants to hammer this point home into our brains. Therefore the Holy Spirit begins the New Testament with four separate Passion narratives, each with its own extended intro and that’s the four Gospels !!!

The Book of Acts. This is the historical account of the beginning of the Church. It describes the spread of Christianity from Jerusalem throughout the rest of the Roman Empire during the first three decades of the new Christian era, *aka* the Church Age.

The Epistles. These are letters written to the local churches, or individuals on behalf of local churches, or to the Church at large. The Apostle Paul wrote 13 of these letters (although some say 14). They teach Christian doctrine both in formal argumentation, or in practical application to life situations.

The Revelation. This is the last book of the Bible and it describes the ultimate triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ over all wickedness and evil. It describes the establishment of His Kingdom and the eternal state that follows.
