

**Evangelistic Newspaper**  
**“All Honour to God”**  
**“Daar is Lig in die Wapad” 101**

Evangelistic Newsletter

New Testament Orientation Part 2

Edition 2/2016

Dear all in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour

There are 27 books in the New Testament written in Greek, by 15-16 different authors to communities or individuals between the years 50AC to 120 AC (van der Nest, 2013).

The Gospels (good news) were claimed at the end of the 2nd century to have been written by disciples (Matthew and John) and associates of famous apostles (Mark of Peter and Luke of Paul).

The 4 Gospels tell the story of the life and death of Jesus Christ – His birth, ministry, miracles, teaching, last days, crucifixion, and Resurrection (van der Nest, 2013).

For all Christians today, God is the author and inspiration of the Bible, known to us all as the Word of God. Through His Word He speaks to all believers in a human fashion through the work of human authors inspired by God’s own Holy Spirit, His Gift to us (Flor, 2014). The gospels were formed in three separate stages. These were (National Centre for Religious Studies, 2016):

- The miraculous birth, life, teachings, crucifixion, death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus;
- The oral tradition when the apostles handed on the words of Jesus and giving testimony to mighty deeds He had done, most importantly His Glorious Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven where he is seated at the right hand of God our Father (Hebrews 14; see also Bramer, 2016; Flor, 2016); and
- The writing down of the Gospels for others to read and believe even to us today.

After the 4 Gospels, of which the first three are called the Synoptic Gospels, and John “the Fourth”(Just, 2009), we find that one of the ways that the rest of the 21 books of the New Testament can be grouped is as follows (Just, 2009):

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- The Acts of the Apostles: the spread of Christianity and the Early Christian Church. Influence of Apostles Peter and Paul. Luke conveys the message that salvation from “sin, heel and death” (Bramer, 2016, p. 28) as promised to Israel in the Old Testament and confirmed through various covenants and accomplished by Jesus Christ, who now made the new and everlasting covenant, has now under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Te Wairua Tapu) been extended to the Gentiles (all people) as instructed by the Saviour in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-20.
- The 13 Pauline epistles or letters: Written by Christian leaders to various communities and individuals. It is suggested that some of these were written by disciples and co-workers of Apostle Paul. They can be divided into three groups:  
  
The undisputed Pauline epistles: Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon;  
The disputed Pauline epistles: Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians; and  
The Pastoral Pauline epistles: 1-2 Timothy and Titus
- The 8 universal or general epistles: Hebrews (more a sermon than an epistle) James, 1-2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John and Jude.
- The Book of Revelation of John also sometimes called the Apocalypse.

Composition of New Testament books were not finalised till some time about 367 AC.

Hope this helps. I am happy to try and answer emailed questions and to correct any mistakes.  
Nag Ou groete, Fluit-fluit, my storie is uit.

*7 u d Nest, Ph.D*

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**Glossary**

Te Wairua Tapu-Holy Spirit in Te Reo Maori

**Interesting Facts**

The Fragment of the Gospel of John is one of The John Rylands Library's in Manchester University's most famous artefacts (UML, 2016). This small piece of papyrus, 8.9 x 6.0 cm, provides evidence on the spread of Christianity in the first centuries (UML, 2016). It is widely regarded as the earliest portion of any New Testament writing ever found (UML, 2016) and is shown below (University of Manchester Rylands Library, n.d).



The first side of the fragment contains the beginning of seven lines from John 18:31-33 (UML, 2016). The reverse of the fragment contains the end of seven lines from John 18:37-38 (UML, 2016).

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