

CONTENTS

Maps	14
Abbreviations	15
List of Tables	18
Preface: <i>The Perspective of This Introduction</i>	19
Using the “Exegetical Skill” Sections	23
1. THE NEW TESTAMENT AS PASTORAL RESPONSE	29
Issues in the First-Century Church	29
Formation of a “New” Testament	31
2. THE ENVIRONMENT OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY: <i>Essential Landmarks</i>	37
Prologue: Important Developments in the Intertestamental Period.	37
<i>The Septuagint</i>	42
<i>The Old Testament Apocrypha</i>	48
Key Players and Plots in the World of the Gospels and Their Readers	55
Torah, Temple and Tradition: <i>The Common Focal Points of Jews</i>	73
<i>The Shema</i>	74
<i>The “Eighteen” Benedictions</i>	80
The Diversity Within Judaism	82
<i>The Dead Sea Scrolls</i>	86
Greco-Roman Religion	90
<i>Gnosticism, the Nag Hammadi Library and the Hermetica</i>	92
Greco-Roman Philosophical Schools	96
Jews in the Greco-Roman World	100
Christians in the Greco-Roman World	105
3. THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL WORLD OF THE EARLY CHURCH:	
<i>Purity, Honor, Patronage and Kinship</i>	111
Purity and Pollution	111
<i>Purity and Pollution in the Oedipus Plays of Sophocles</i>	115
Honor and Shame	125
Patronage and Reciprocity	130
The Shape and Significance of “Family” in the Ancient World	137
4. THE FOUR GOSPELS AND THE ONE JESUS:	
<i>Critical Issues in the Study of the Gospels</i>	145
What Is a Gospel?	145
From the Historical Jesus to the Canonical Gospels	148
The Building Blocks Behind the Gospels: Oral Tradition	151
The Composition and Relationship of the Gospels	158



<i>B. H. Streeter's Solution to the Synoptic Problem</i>	166
<i>The Contents of Q</i>	168
The Fourfold Gospel Collection	174
From the Evangelists to Us: <i>Handing Down the Gospel Texts</i>	178
Searching for the Jesus of History.	179
<i>Criteria of Authenticity: A Summary</i>	186
<i>Just the Facts</i>	188
5. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK: <i>Following in the Way of the Cross</i>	194
The Historical and Pastoral Context of Mark's Gospel	194
<i>Who Was the Evangelist's Audience?</i>	197
<i>An Outline of Mark's Gospel</i>	200
Mark's Message	201
<i>John the Baptist</i>	207
Exegetical Skill: <i>Examining Literary Context</i>	219
Cultural Awareness: <i>Jewish Purity Codes and Mark's Gospel</i>	227
Mark and Ministry Formation	229
6. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW: <i>Following the Words of the Messiah</i>	234
The Historical and Pastoral Context of Matthew's Gospel	234
<i>An Outline of Matthew's Gospel</i>	239
Matthew's Use of Other Early Christian Resources	241
<i>Matthew's Special Material (M)</i>	243
The Message of Matthew	244
<i>Matthew as the Manifesto of a Jewish Messianic Sect</i>	245
The Continuity of the <i>Ekklesia</i> and the Heritage of God's People.	246
Exegetical Skill: <i>Redaction Criticism</i>	258
Matthew's Formation of the Church's Ethos and Discipline.	267
Exegetical Skill: <i>The Use of Comparative Material in New Testament Exegesis</i>	270
Cultural Awareness: <i>Honor Discourse in Matthew</i>	280
Matthew and Ministry Formation	290
7. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE: <i>Following the Heart of the Father</i>	298
The Historical and Pastoral Context of Luke's Gospel	298
Exegetical Skill: <i>Textual Criticism</i>	300
<i>An Outline of Luke's Gospel</i>	311
Luke's Use of Other Early Christian Resources	312
<i>Luke's Special Material (L)</i>	315
Luke's Message	316
<i>Differences Between the Greek and Hebrew Texts of the Old Testament</i>	317
Special Emphases in Luke	329
<i>The Role of Women in Luke-Acts</i>	332
Cultural Awareness: <i>Luke and Patronage</i>	334





Exegetical Skill: <i>Interpreting Parables</i>	337
Luke and Ministry Formation.	343
8. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES: <i>Following the Leading of the Spirit.</i>	348
The Genre of Acts: Acts and Ancient Historiography.	348
The Speeches in Acts	351
<i>The Kerygma—The Proclamation of the Gospel</i>	352
The Purposes of Acts	354
<i>Luke’s Geography</i>	356
The Structure of Acts	356
The Message of Acts	357
<i>An Outline of Acts</i>	358
<i>The Picture of the Early Christian Community</i>	362
<i>Early Christian Missionary Preaching</i>	367
Acts and History: Paul as a Test Case	369
Exegetical Skill: <i>Historical Criticism</i>	370
<i>The Gallio Inscription: Cornerstone of New Testament Chronology</i>	378
Exegetical Skill: <i>Rhetorical Criticism (1)—Judicial Topics.</i>	380
Acts and Ministry Formation	386
9. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN: <i>Following the One from Above.</i>	391
The Historical and Pastoral Setting of John’s Gospel	391
Exegetical Skill: <i>Narrative Criticism</i>	395
<i>John’s Gospel and the Role of John the Baptist in God’s Plan</i>	404
The Resources Behind the Fourth Gospel	404
<i>An Outline of John’s Gospel</i>	405
<i>John’s Style</i>	408
<i>Stories and Sayings Common to John and the Synoptics</i>	410
<i>The Fourth Gospel and the Historical Jesus</i>	416
John’s Message	417
<i>Eschatology in the Fourth Gospel</i>	426
<i>The Sacraments in the Fourth Gospel.</i>	428
<i>The Portrayal of Peter in John</i>	432
Cultural Awareness: <i>Kinship Language and the Interpretation of John’s Gospel</i>	436
Exegetical Skill: <i>Social-Scientific Criticism (1)—Orientation to the Larger World</i>	438
John and Ministry Formation	445
10. THE EPISTLES OF JOHN: <i>Painful Breaches of the Bond of Unity and Love.</i>	449
Introduction to the Johannine Epistles	449
<i>The Structure of 1 John</i>	455
The Message of the Johannine Epistles	457
<i>Christological “Slogans” and Source Criticism of 1 John</i>	458
<i>1 John and the Letters of Ignatius on Love</i>	460





Exegetical Skill: <i>Exploring Ideological Texture in a Text</i>	463
The Johannine Epistles and Ministry Formation	472
11. A PROLOGUE TO THE STUDY OF PAUL’S LETTERS	475
Challenges in the Study of Paul’s Life	475
Paul’s Pre-Christian Experience	476
<i>The Relative Value of Acts and Paul’s Letters as Historical Sources.</i>	477
Paul’s Encounter with the Living Christ.	480
<i>Paul’s Gospel and the Historical Jesus.</i>	484
The Ministry of the Apostle to the Gentiles.	486
12. THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS: <i>Walking in Line with the Spirit.</i>	493
The Historical Setting of the Galatian Churches	493
<i>The “New Perspective” on Paul and Early Judaism</i>	500
Paul’s Response in Galatians	504
<i>The “Faith of Jesus Christ” in Galatians</i>	506
Exegetical Skill: <i>Rhetorical Criticism (2)—Appeals to “Ethos”.</i>	508
<i>Criticisms of the “New Perspective”.</i>	518
Galatians and Ministry Formation	522
13. THE THESSALONIAN CORRESPONDENCE: <i>Living in the Light of the “Day”</i>	527
The City of Thessalonica	527
The Formation of the Christian Community in Thessalonica.	528
The Christians Paul Left Behind	529
Timothy’s Visit	530
Exegetical Skill: <i>Epistolary Analysis</i>	531
1 Thessalonians	535
2 Thessalonians	539
<i>1 Thessalonians 2:1-12: Is Paul Defending Himself?</i>	540
<i>The Development of the “Man of Lawlessness”</i>	546
<i>After Paul Wrote 2 Thessalonians</i>	548
The Thessalonian Correspondence and Ministry Formation	550
14. THE CORINTHIAN CORRESPONDENCE: <i>Valuing Oneself and Others in the Lord.</i>	555
Historical Setting	555
The Message of 1 Corinthians	566
<i>Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in 1 Corinthians</i>	569
Exegetical Skill: <i>Rhetorical Criticism (3)—The Analysis of Topics.</i>	572
Reading Between the Letters	575
Exegetical Skill: <i>Rhetorical Criticism (4)—The Functions of Parts of an Oration.</i>	578
The Message of 2 Corinthians	586
<i>Paul’s Lists of Hardships</i>	588
<i>Paul and the Conventions of Acceptable Self-Praise</i>	590





The Corinthian Letters and Ministry Formation	591
15. THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS: <i>The God of Jew and Gentile</i>.	598
The Setting and Purposes of Romans	598
Genre and Structure	604
The Message of Romans.	606
<i>The Literary Integrity of Romans</i>	607
<i>Faith in Romans: Whose Faith Is Involved?</i>	612
<i>Grace and Justification in Jewish Sources</i>	615
<i>Paul's Hermeneutics and the Pesharim of Qumran</i>	617
<i>The Enigma of Romans 7:7-25</i>	620
<i>The Law: Catalyst for Sin or Divine Remedy?</i>	626
Exegetical Skill: <i>Social-Scientific Criticism (2)—The Analysis of Ritual</i>	629
Romans and Ministry Formation	631
16. THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS: <i>Unity in the Face of Adversity</i>.	640
The Historical Setting of Philippians	640
Exegetical Skill: <i>Discerning the Situation Behind a Text ("Mirror Reading")</i>	650
Genre and Purposes.	653
<i>Paul's Strange "Thank You" Note</i>	654
Paul's Strategy for Sustaining Christian Unity.	655
<i>Opponents of Paul at Philippi?</i>	656
<i>The "Christ Hymn" in Philippians 2:6-11</i>	660
Persevering in the Face of Opposition	663
Philippians and Ministry Formation	665
17. THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON: <i>The Slave Is Our Brother</i>	668
Historical Setting and Pastoral Purpose: <i>The Story Behind Philemon</i>	668
Paul's Pastoral Strategy in Philemon	671
<i>Slavery in the Greco-Roman World</i>	672
Significance of the Letter	675
Exegetical Skill: <i>Postcolonial Criticism and Cultural Studies</i>	677
Philemon and Ministry Formation	682
EXCURSUS: <i>Pseudepigraphy and the New Testament Canon</i>	685
18. THE EPISTLES TO THE CHRISTIANS IN COLOSSAE AND EPHESUS:	
<i>Walking in the Light of Christ's Victory</i>	690
The City of Colossae and its Christian Community	690
Opposition	692
Purpose and Message	694
<i>Wisdom Christology in Colossians 1:15-20</i>	695
Authorship	696



Provenance	701
Exegetical Skill: <i>Word Studies and Lexical Analysis</i>	703
The City of Ephesus	714
Authorship	716
<i>The Parallels Between Ephesians and Colossians</i>	719
Destination	721
Purpose	722
Provenance	723
The Message of Ephesians	723
<i>Ephesians and Qumran</i>	724
Ephesians, Colossians and Ministry Formation.	727
19. THE LETTERS TO TIMOTHY AND TITUS:	
<i>Trustworthy Management of God's Household.</i>	733
The Historical Setting of the Pastoral Epistles	733
<i>The Didache.</i>	744
The Message of the Pastoral Epistles	748
<i>The Mastery of the Passions in Ethical Philosophy.</i>	751
<i>Ignatius of Antioch on Chains and Execution</i>	755
Exegetical Skill: <i>Feminist Criticism</i>	757
The Pastoral Epistles and Ministry Formation	770
20. THE EPISTLE TO THE "HEBREWS": <i>Living in Trust and Gratitude Toward God</i>	776
The Situation Behind Hebrews	776
Exegetical Skill: <i>Rhetorical Criticism (5)—Appeals to the Emotions</i>	781
Genre and Structure	789
The Pastoral Strategy of Hebrews	790
Exegetical Skill: <i>The Analysis of Intertexture (1)</i>	800
Contributions of Hebrews to Early Christology.	806
<i>Which Old Testament Did the Author of Hebrews Use?</i>	807
Hebrews and Ministry Formation.	810
21. THE EPISTLE OF JAMES: <i>Promoting Consistency of Belief and Behavior</i>	814
"James" and His Readers	814
<i>How Christian Is James?</i>	817
Composition and Structure	819
<i>An Outline of James.</i>	820
Genre and Purpose	821
<i>James and the Jewish Wisdom Tradition</i>	821
James and Paul	822
The Message of James.	823
Exegetical Skill: <i>Social-Scientific Criticism (3)—Analyzing Worldview and Ethos</i>	831
James and Ministry Formation	839

22. THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER:	
<i>An Ethic for Resident Aliens Awaiting Their Inheritance</i>	841
The Addressees of 1 Peter	841
The Pastoral Problem Addressed by 1 Peter	843
Who Wrote 1 Peter, and When?	844
1 Peter's Pastoral Response and Rhetorical Strategy	847
<i>Suffering as "Proving Ground"</i>	851
<i>Preaching to the Spirits in Prison</i>	854
<i>Hospitality and the Early Church</i>	857
Exegetical Skill: <i>Exploring Argumentative Texture</i>	858
1 Peter and Ministry Formation	861
23. JUDE AND 2 PETER: <i>The Dangers of Deviant Disciples</i>	865
The Letter of Jude	865
<i>The Peshrim of Quman</i>	868
<i>1 Enoch</i>	870
Exegetical Skill: <i>The Analysis of Intertexture (2)</i>	871
Jude and Ministry Formation	873
The Second Letter of Peter	875
<i>Epicureanism and the Teachers Opposed in 2 Peter</i>	876
<i>Testamentary Literature in Second Temple Judaism</i>	878
Exegetical Skill: <i>Redaction Analysis in Epistolary Literature</i>	879
2 Peter and Ministry Formation	882
24. THE REVELATION OF JOHN: <i>Living in the Light of God's Triumph</i>	885
Reading Revelation: <i>The Question of Genre</i>	885
<i>Does Revelation Stem from a Genuine Visionary Experience?</i>	890
<i>Sources Behind and Stages in the Composition of Revelation</i>	892
The Setting of Revelation	893
<i>The Other Side of Revelation 13?</i>	902
The Rhetoric of Revelation	906
Exegetical Skill: <i>Identifying and Analyzing Repetitive Texture</i>	908
The Message of Revelation: Redrawing Reality	912
Revelation, the Future and the End	923
<i>Revelation and the Millennium</i>	924
Revelation and Ministry Formation	927
Author Index	933
Subject Index	937
Ancient Texts Index	951
Scripture Index	957