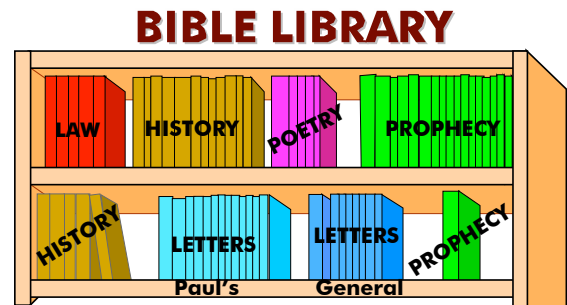


As we have seen in other lessons, the Bible is like a library.
All the books on the same topic are next to each other.

The Old Testament

The first 5 books deal with the **LAW** - the rules that God gave the Jews to live by.

Then there are books on **HISTORY**, **POETRY** or wisdom and **PROPHECY**.



The New Testament

The first 5 books are **HISTORY**

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell about the Life of Jesus.

Acts explains how people responded to the message of Jesus and how local churches began.

The next 21 books are **LETTERS**.

It ends with **PROPHECY**, just like the Old Testament.

Using a chart, we can see how the **New Testament** books fit together

Notice on the left hand side of the page, there is the life of Jesus and the beginning of local churches.

		SALVATION	CHRISTIAN LIFE	RETURN OF JESUS
LIFE OF JESUS	BEGINNING OF LOCAL CHURCHES			
TEACHING FOR church members				
* teaching reproof of action correction of belief 2 Tim. 3:16				

All the rest of the New Testament is **teaching**.

The first people to logically need teaching are **members** of the local churches formed under the ministry of Paul.

This teaching is very organized, covering the past, present and future.

It explains the **SALVATION** they received in the past.

The **CHRISTIAN LIFE** they are now trying to live.

The **RETURN OF JESUS** they are waiting for.

So on the chart, still further to the right and along the top of the page, there are 3 columns – salvation, Christian life, return of Jesus.

Paul explains his teaching in his 2nd letter to Timothy.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in rightness. 2 Tim. 3:16

The purpose of God's Word is to **TEACH**, **REPROVE** and **CORRECT** us, so we can live as God wants us to live.

What is amazing is that Paul's 9 books for church members have been arranged to fit this pattern.

First there is a book that gives **teaching** on one of these topics. Paul explains what it is.

The next book **reproves** church members for wrong **actions** in relation to the teaching.

The following letter **corrects** people for wrong **belief** about that teaching.

		SALVATION	CHRISTIAN LIFE	RETURN OF JESUS
TEACHING FOR	church members			
		{ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *teaching reproof of action correction of belief 2 Tim. 3:16		

So on the chart, immediately next to the top bracket that says *members*, we have 3 items - *teaching, reproof, correction*. When we understand how the 3 topics are developed - salvation, Christian life, return of Jesus - we will see how beautifully the New Testament books have been put together. This lesson is to see the big picture - how they all fit.

SALVATION

The first topic for church members is teaching about **SALVATION**. Paul does this in the book of **Romans**.

In a logical manner, he explains what salvation is, who is involved, how it is received and what the result is.

However instead of using the word *salvation*, Paul most often uses the word *righteousness* or *rightness*. He first tells about the rightness or holiness of God. Then he explains how people who are not holy can meet God's requirements of holiness.. To put it simply, he explains how people can become right with God. This is the **teaching of salvation**.

The next 2 books are written to the **Corinthian** church members. They have salvation, but they are not showing it in their lives.

Church members are guilty of immorality and jealousy. Some challenge Paul's authority. Others are fighting over which of their leaders is the most spiritual. Some are taking communion wine and getting drunk before Communion. They are misusing and abusing their spiritual gifts. Paul has to write them 2 letters, to **reprove their wrong actions**.

The next book is **Galatians**. They need correction because they have wrong **belief** about salvation. Paul had taught them faith in Jesus made them right with God. But false teachers came to the churches and said, *faith in Jesus is not enough. Gentiles have to be like Jews, for God to accept them. They must keep Jewish holy days and dietary rules. The men must be circumcised*. Gentile believers in Galatia believe this, so Paul writes to **correct their wrong belief**.

He starts out by saying, *I am astonished that you are so quickly turning to another gospel - another way to be right with God*. Later in the book he writes, *You foolish Galatians, who has deceived you?* In his correction he tells them they need to recognize false teaching. They need to reject these false teachers and not allow either the teaching nor the teachers in their churches.

The first 4 letters of Paul - Romans, Corinthians, Galatians - deal with **SALVATION**. The focus is Jesus, as Savior.

Romans is **teaching**

Corinthians, reproof of wrong **action**

Galatians, correction of wrong **belief**

This is wonderful but salvation is not the end. It is only the first step in their journey of faith. Since Christ lives within them, they now have a Christ-life - they live a *Christian* life. This becomes the 2nd topic of Paul's letters.

		SALVATION
TEACHING FOR	church members	{ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *teaching reproof of action correction of belief 2 Tim. 3:16

ROMANS
1-2 CORINTHIANS
GALATIANS

CHRISTIAN LIFE

For church members, the **teaching** of the **CHRISTIAN LIFE** is in the book of **Ephesians**.

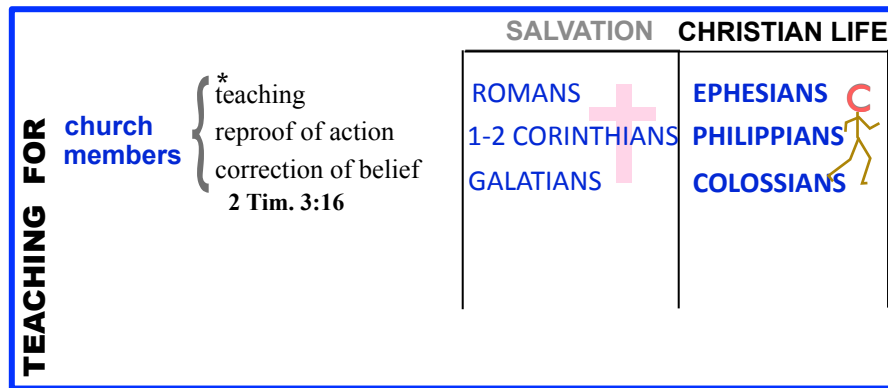
Paul uses the illustration of the body to explain how it works.

Christ is pictured as their Head. He is the one who gives spiritual life and spiritual blessings. He defines the standards and the boundaries of this life.

Believers are pictured as His Body. They have a responsibility to demonstrate His life, first of all, thru the changes God makes in their lives. They also demonstrate it thru their daily words and actions.

From the day of Pentecost until Jesus returns, anyone who puts their faith in Jesus automatically becomes a member of His Body. Another name for His Body is **the Church**. It includes all believers everywhere.

Ephesians is **teaching** about the Christian life based on the picture of Christ, the one Head and believers, as the one Body.



The **Philippians** are believers who know this teaching, but they are not putting it into practice. They are not standing **together** as a body against false teachers who came to their church.

Instead of resisting, believers have let the situation turn into power struggles. Their ambition, pride and selfishness has created in-fighting. They have gotten involved in arguments and complaints.

Paul reproves their wrong action. He tells them not just to think about themselves; they should also consider the well-being of other church members.

However, in trying to create unity, he emphasizes the unity has to be **in the Lord**.

There can never be unity with those who distort or twist God's Word.

There can never be unity with those who support things outside His boundaries.

Since they are expressing His life, unity has to be based on His standards.

Philippians is **reproof of wrong actions** within the Body.

The next book is **Colossians**. It is correction of wrong belief about their Head.

They think they need something **more** than Christ to advance in their Christian life. Paul explains Jesus is deity. He is the creator of all things in heaven and on earth. By being connected to Him as their Head, they have **His** power and wisdom to advance in their Christian life. There *is* nothing greater they could get.

These 3 books deal with the **CHRISTIAN LIFE**, using the picture of one Head and one Body. The focus is Jesus, as Head.

Ephesians is **teaching**

Philippians, reproof of wrong **action**

Colossians, correction of wrong **belief**

RETURN OF JESUS

When Paul visited northern Greece, he taught the **Thessalonians** not only about salvation and their Christian life, but also about the **RETURN OF JESUS**. Before he could finish all the teaching about this return, he was forced to leave town.

Within a few months he gets word that some of the church members have died. Naturally the others are grieving for the loss of family and friends. But they are also grieving because they think those who died are going to miss out on seeing Jesus' return.

When Paul hears about this, he writes a letter to the believers in Thessalonica, giving them more teaching.

He assures them, believers who died will see His return and be a part of it.

Their bodies will be resurrected and restored.

As they are rising to meet Jesus in the air, believers who are living will join them.

All believers will meet Jesus in the air and He will lead them to His home in heaven.

Together they will be with Jesus forever.

Paul gives this **teaching** to comfort and encourage the Thessalonians. It is also given to comfort us.



This was an encouragement to the Thessalonians. But then some church members misuse the teaching. Since Jesus might return at any time, they decide to quit their jobs, sell their homes and let other people provide them with room and board. Then with nothing to occupy their time, they spend their hours in gossip and meddling in people's affairs - trying to run everybody's life.

So Paul writes a 2nd letter to **reprove their actions**. He says,

If people will not work - and it is understood they are capable of working and there is work available - if people will not work, they should not eat. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command and urge such people to settle down and earn the bread they eat.

Besides wrong actions, there is also **wrong belief**.

Some church members are saying Jesus has already come and they in Thessalonica, have been left out. So in this same letter of *2 Thessalonians*, Paul not only reproves their actions, but also corrects their beliefs. He tells them Jesus has not returned and there are specific ways they can be sure of it.

Notice the progression of teaching to **church members** as these books are placed in our Bibles.

First about **SALVATION**: teaching, reproof, correction.

The **CHRISTIAN LIFE**: teaching, reproof, correction.

The **RETURN OF JESUS**: teaching, reproof, correction.

TEACHING FOR	church members			
		SALVATION	CHRISTIAN LIFE	RETURN OF JESUS
	* teaching reproof of action correction of belief 2 Tim. 3:16	ROMANS	EPHESIANS	1 THESSALONIANS
		1-2 CORINTHIANS	PHILIPPIANS	2 THESSALONIANS
		GALATIANS	COLOSSIANS	

All 3 of these topics make up the gospel message: Jesus as Savior, Jesus as Head and Jesus who will return. We usually think of the Gospel as the salvation message. But that is only 1/3 of the Gospel. The Christian life and the return of Jesus must also be included to make the Gospel complete.

Church members need teaching.

TEACHING FOR	SALVATION CHRISTIAN LIFE RETURN OF JESUS		
church leaders		1-2 TIMOTHY TITUS PHILEMON	

Church leaders also need teaching.

Over the years, Paul has been teaching Timothy, Titus and Philemon how to demonstrate the life of Christ in *their* lives and in their ministries - how to develop the Body of Christ by starting local churches and how to choose pastors and teachers that will remain true to God's Word. Now these young men need this teaching in written form.

The books of **Timothy**, **Titus** and **Philemon** are **teaching for church leaders**.

Jewish believers are a 3rd group who need teaching.

The last 9 books of the New Testament either state they are written to Jews, or they are so Jewish in style, it would be expected they would be for Jewish believers. Because these Jews are believers in Jesus, they are part of the Church. But they need **special** teaching because they still think God works with the Jews like He did in the Old Testament.

SALVATION

The series begins with the book of **Hebrews**.

From its name, we know it is written to Hebrew or Jewish believers. On the chart, you will notice it is listed under the topic of **SALVATION**, just as Romans is. But the books are very different, because circumstances are different.

Romans is written to Jewish and Gentile believers in local churches. They believe in Jesus and have no doubts about Him whatever.

Hebrews is written to Jewish believers who have many doubts. They are 2nd generation believers who learned about faith in Jesus from their parents. They have grown up in the Christian community in and around Jerusalem. Being Jewish, they think Jewish and from the Old Testament perspective. They have been expecting Jesus to return and set up His physical kingdom. They are expecting Jewish independence. Some 38 years have gone by since Pentecost. Persecution under the Romans is getting worse and worse. In their view, Jesus has let them down - He has not kept His promise to return.

Some are saying they need to worship God in Old Testament ways. Yes, they received forgiveness thru Jesus when they put their faith in Him. But now, if they return to animal sacrifices, they will have even more forgiveness and God's kingdom will be able to come more quickly.

Others Jewish believers think faith in **Jesus** is not enough. They are leaving the Christian community and going back to the Jerusalem temple with its Jewish faith and practices.

Hebrews is teaching about **SALVATION** from a Jewish perspective.

It explains why Jesus is **better** than animal sacrifices, **better** than angels or Old Testament prophets. It explains why forgiveness not only starts but also continues thru Jesus. It is not thru animal sacrifices or other Old Testament ways.

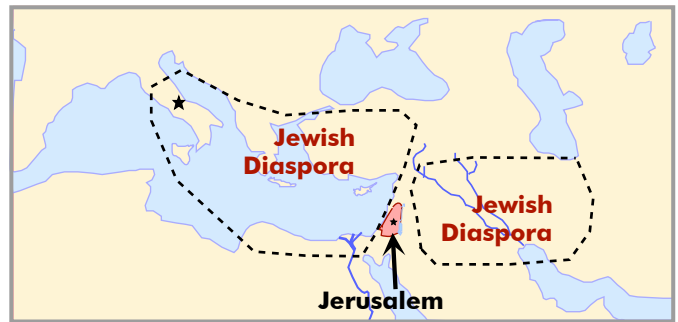
The author tells these Jews, if they put Jesus to one side, there will be consequences. They will have eternal life because of their faith in Jesus. But if they do not continue with Jesus, they will lose their physical lives in premature death.

Hebrews is teaching about **SALVATION**, telling the Jews, salvation is only thru Jesus and not thru any Old Testament practices.

TEACHING FOR	SALVATION	
Jewish believers		HEBREWS

The rest of the books are written to Jewish believers who do not live in the land of Israel. They are for the **Diáspora** - the dispersed Jews, either living in parts of Europe or to the east in the area of Mesopotamia and Babylon.

Seven of the 8 books are teaching about the **CHRISTIAN LIFE** - but they are very different from **Ephesians**, **Philippians** and **Colossians**, or even **Timothy**, **Titus** and **Philemon**. These Jewish believers have problems because they are thinking only from the Old Testament perspective.



CHRISTIAN LIFE

James writes the Jewish believers living near Babylon. He deals with their **conduct**.

They had grown up in Jewish communities, under Jewish teaching - *keep all of God's rules and you will be right with God*. So all their life they had been trying to be good enough to please God. Then on the day of Pentecost, while in Jerusalem in 31 AD, they heard Peter's message.

You are right with God thru Jesus - He paid the penalty for your sin. It is thru Jesus your sin is forgiven.

They believed. After the celebration of Pentecost, these Jews went back to their homes near Babylon.

With no further teaching, they thought if salvation is by faith, it did not matter what they did, nor how they lived. They thought this way because in the Old Testament, freedom from the law of Moses meant no rules whatever.

So James writes, *if your faith in Jesus does not motivate you to right **actions**, then you have not really understood the message. Your faith is not genuine.*

James writes about their **conduct**.

Peter writes other Jewish believers about **suffering**.

Over the years, Jews under the Roman empire were persecuted just because they were Jews. They thought if they put their faith in Jesus, He would protect them from suffering. In the Old Testament, under the law of Moses in Deuteronomy 28, God promised if His people obeyed, they would not suffer. But since putting their faith in Jesus, these Jews have been suffering twice as much - for being Jews and now for believing in Jesus.

Peter, in his **first** letter, tells them not be surprised by the suffering. It will come from both the government and from their enemies - **from outside sources**.

In his **2nd** letter, Peter tells them suffering will also come **from inside sources** - from people within their local churches.

There will be false teaching and those who do not accept it will be rejected and persecuted. Peter tells them how to handle suffering from inside sources - from family, friends and church members.

John writes the next 3 letters to Jewish believers about **the faith in common** they have with each other and with their teachers.

Many have come to local churches in Asia Minor, giving new teaching about Jesus, about sin and about the Christian life. The Jewish believers are confused. They are not sure who or what to believe. Since these teachers say they believe in Jesus, should the church members automatically accept all their teaching?

John writes his **first letter** to bring them back to 3 basics of the gospel message – what they believe about Jesus, about sin and about the way they treat other believers.

Later that year, one of these churches is still accepting traveling teachers who are giving false teaching.

John writes a **second letter** to them to say they need to remember the truth about Jesus and exclude all who are giving false teaching about Him.

Typical of human nature, another church carries this idea of exclusion to an extreme. The apostle John is pastor of a large church. He has a lot of smaller churches under his care. So as he trains men in his church, he would send them out the smaller churches to give them further teaching.

When they arrive at one church, the leader refuses to accept them because they are not members of his group. He even excommunicates church members who want to help these traveling teachers from John. John has to write this church a **3rd letter** to explain who should be *included* as teachers.

John's 3 letters are about Jewish believers and their **faith in common**

Only those who believe correctly about Jesus should teach them. This means there will be some they should exclude. It also means there will be traveling teachers they should include.

Jude is the last book about the Christian life. He deals with **responsibility**.

Jewish believers have a responsibility to contend or protect the faith. People had come into their churches giving false teaching and the people had just ignored it. They did this because in the Old Testament, dealing with false teaching was the responsibility of the prophets. Jude tells them it is now their responsibility. He explains first of all, **why** they should protect the faith and then **how** to protect it in their local churches.


So many Jewish believers were still living with Jewish concepts from the Old Testament so there is teaching in how they should demonstrate the life of Christ in these various areas.

James writes about their **conduct**

Peter, about their **suffering**

John, their **faith in common**

Jude their **responsibility**

		SALVATION	CHRISTIAN LIFE
TEACHING FOR	Jewish believers	 HEBREWS	JAMES 1-2 PETER 1-3 JOHN JUDE

The last book of the New Testament is also for Jewish believers, to answer a very Jewish question. It was the last question the apostles asked Jesus just before He went back to heaven

Now are You going to restore the kingdom to Israel - to be King in that perfect Kingdom.

Jesus told them His perfect kingdom had been delayed. *But it would come later.*

As the years passed, Jewish believers have been waiting, watching and praying, *Thy kingdom come*. They assumed the world would get better and better and then Jesus would return to rule in His kingdom. Forty years go by. And then everything falls apart. The Romans burn the Jewish temple; they destroy and level the city of Jerusalem. They kill one million Jews. The nation of Israel is taken off the map. This all happens in 70 AD.

Another 25 years go by. By this time Jewish believers are asking. Will God ever keep the promises He made to the Jews in the Old Testament? Will there ever be a physical kingdom? Has the nation of Israel been taken off the map forever. Jewish believers feel completely devastated and totally forgotten by God.

John is only apostle still living. God uses him to answer the questions of these Jewish believers.

Yes, Jesus will return and there will be a physical kingdom. There will be a nation of Israel and Jewish people to enjoy the kingdom.

RETURN OF JESUS

The book of **Revelation** is about the **RETURN OF JESUS**.

But what a difference between the book of Revelation and the book of Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians is written to **church** members to give comfort and certainty in the midst of death. For those who are the Body of Christ, the emphasis of Jesus' return is **security** of relationship - to be with Jesus forever; to be with family and friends who have put their faith in Jesus.

Revelation is written to **Jewish** believers. Yes, as believers they will be resurrected to meet Jesus in the air. They are part of the Body of Christ. But as Jews, their concern is about the promise God made to **them** as a people and nation.

So the emphasis of Jesus' return in Revelation is **nationalism**.

The **nation** of Israel will be restored; the Jewish race will survive.

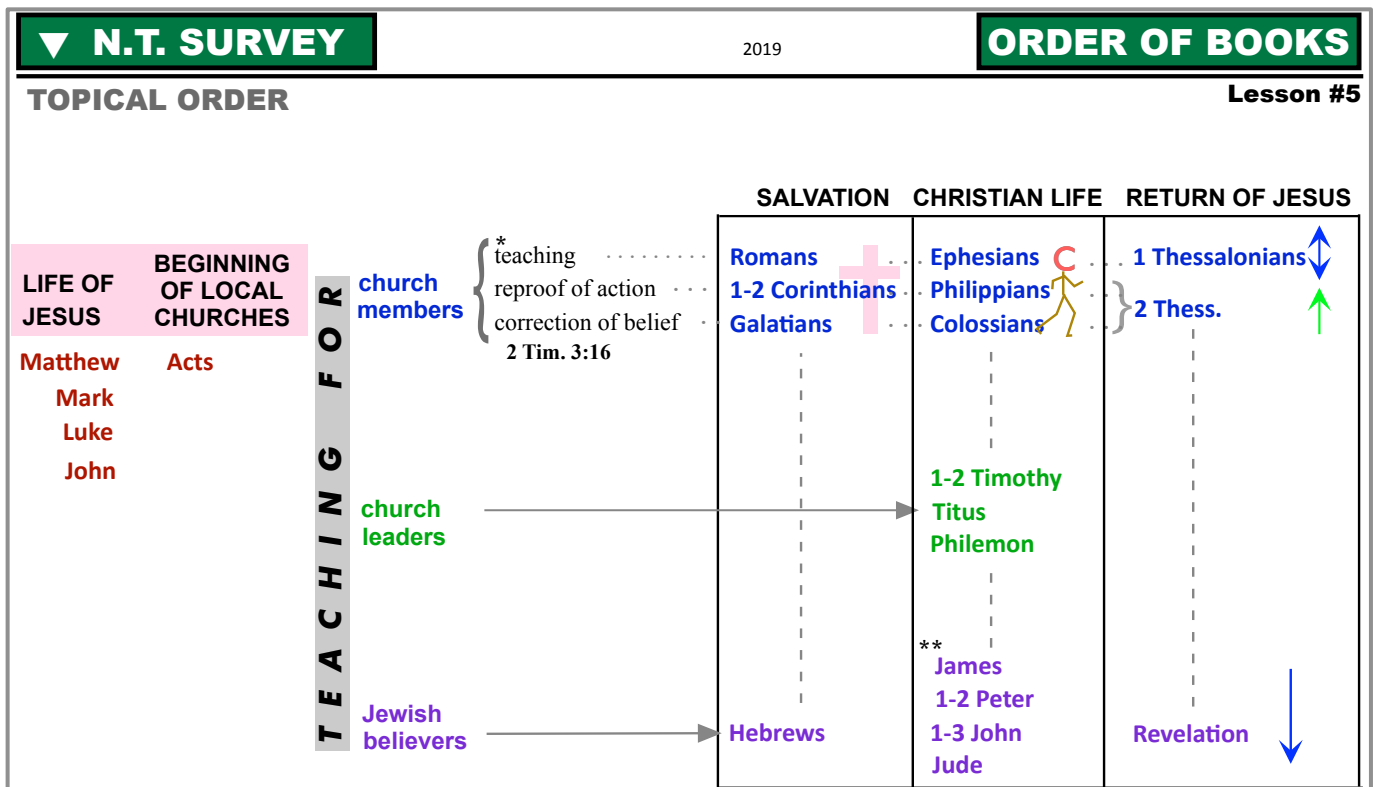
God's physical kingdom will come and Jews will be in that kingdom.

But they also need to understand - things will not get better and better. In fact they will get worse and worse.

Before Jesus' kingdom can ever come, Satan will first develop his kingdom.

Then Jesus will come, remove Satan's man and set up His kingdom.

Revelation is telling Jewish believers **how** the promised kingdom of the Old Testament will come.



The New Testament books in our Bibles are put together in an orderly way. It was Jewish believers who collected the books and arranged them. Since their Old Testament was put together by **topic**, it was only natural to arrange the New Testament by **topic**. As early as the 150's AD, Jewish believers had listed Paul's letters in this order. In the mid-200's, almost all the books were listed by topic, in the order we have them.

Understanding the books are put together by **topic** can be very helpful.

But our western mind also likes to know the **chronology** - in what order the books were written.

45-48 AD James was the first to be written

51-52 AD 1-2 Thessalonians.

54-56 AD Corinthians, Galatians and Romans were written.

58-60 AD Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Philippians are written while Paul is under house arrest.

We know *Philippians* was written near the end of that time because Paul says, *I hope to send Timothy to you soon and I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.* Philippians 2:23

Luke and Acts

Luke is with Paul during this time. The previous 2 years Luke had gathered information about the life of Jesus and what happened afterwards. Now while in Rome, he organizes this information and writes it in 2 books.

60-62 AD Mark and Matthew write their gospels.

1 Timothy and **Titus** written during the time Paul has his years of freedom.

65-68 AD Hebrews, 1-2 Peter prepare Jewish believers for 70 AD, when their temple is burned and the nation of Israel is taken off the map.

2nd Timothy written by Paul, just before his death.

Late 70's Jude

Some 15 years go by.

Early 90's Gospel of John, 1-3 John written by the last surviving apostle.

He still has his freedom at this time, serving as pastor in the church at Ephesus.

Mid 90's

John is taken prisoner and exiled to prisoner island - the island of Patmos.

Revelation is written when John is in his late 80's.

This makes it the last book in both the chronological order, as well as the topical order.

With this chart we can think our way thru the entire New Testament.

There are 4 gospels and the book of *Acts*.

Then we have a series of 9 books, 4 books and 9 books about salvation, the Christian life and the return of Jesus.

The teaching is either for church members, church leaders or Jewish believers.

Seeing the amazing order of the New Testament reminds us why it is called the Word of God, the Word of the Lord.

God was involved in its writing; He was also involved in its arrangement.

There is *teaching* so we know what God expects.

There is *reproof* of wrong actions so our lives reflect God's character.

There is *correction* of belief so we give God's message accurately.

Is that what Scripture is doing in our lives?

See the next page for the complete chart.

