

## Chronology of the New Testament

1. Archeology has contributed dates for some of the events of the New Testament.
  - a. Herod the Great (Matthew 2:1) died in 4 BC.
  - b. John the Baptist began his career in the fifteen year of Tiberias (Luke 3:1). Depending on whether the reign of Tiberias is dated from his co-regency or his independent regency, this would be either 26 or 28 AD.
  - c. A comment from the crowd placed the first "cleansing of the Temple" by Jesus in the forty-sixth year of the renovation of the Temple (John 2:13-25). The work was begun in 20 BC, so John 2 is 27 AD. (Note: there is no year 0.)
  - d. Jesus death occurred in a year in which Passover was on Thursday evening. Pilate (Luke 23:1) was recalled to Rome in 35 AD. The only years with Passover on Thursday between 27 and 35 AD were 30 and 33 AD.
  - e. Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:23) died in 44 AD.
  - f. An inscription bearing the date and the name of Gallio (Acts 18:12) places that event in 51 AD.
  - g. A coin from the fifth year of Nero listed Festus (Acts 24:27) as procurator of Judea with three years tenure, or 56 AD.
  - h. The Jewish Revolt at the end of which Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed lasted from 66 to 70 AD.
  
2. Since Luke wrote his gospel "in consecutive order" (Luke 1:3), dates for many more events may be inferred. Assuming Luke continued this policy through Acts, many more events may be connected. Several of the letters make reference to the same events as recorded in Acts. So the dates of writing of several books may be inferred.
  - a. In the period after Pilate was recalled, the Roman overseers were lax, allowing the Jewish leaders broad powers, perhaps explaining the execution of Stephen without Roman intervention (Acts 7-9). Paul's conversion occurred shortly thereafter, probably in 37 AD.
  - b. Herod Agrippa gained control of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee in 41 AD. The execution of James (Acts 12:2) probably happened that same year.
  - c. Paul visited Jerusalem three years after his conversion, and again after 14 years (Galatians 1:18, 2:1). This places the council in Jerusalem (Acts 15) about 50 or 51 AD. Paul's first missionary journey was before that (Acts 13-14), in 48-49 AD.
  - d. Immediately after the council in Jerusalem, Paul set out on his second missionary journey, 50-51 AD.
  - e. The third journey included several long stays (Acts 18-21), so lasted from 51-54 AD.
  - f. Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea two years before Festus (Acts 24:27).
  - g. The voyage to Rome began in the fall of 56 and ended in the spring of 57 (Acts 27:9, 28:11)
  - h. Paul was in prison in Rome from 57 to 59 (Acts 28:30).
  - i. Paul was free to travel in his later years (2 Timothy 4:9-21, Titus 3:12).

3. Internal evidence for the time and place of writing

Matthew	Unknown
Mark	Unknown
Luke	After the last event recorded in Acts
John	Unknown
Acts	After the last event recorded in Acts
Romans	Paul was in possession of a contribution from Achaia and Macedonia (15:25-26) and was on his way to deliver it. That collection is also mentioned in 2 Corinthians 8:1-6. This collection was prior to Paul's arrest in Jerusalem, so this letter was likely written about 54, probably from Corith (Pheobe, 16:1; Gaius, 16:23 and 1 Corinthians 1:14; Erastus, 16:23, 2 Timothy 4:20).
1 Corinthians	From Ephesus (16:8). Priscilla and Aquilla were there (16:19), who accompanied Paul to Ephesus (Acts 18:18-26). It was before he went to collect the famine relief money (16:1-9, Romans 15:25-26 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-6). Actually the second letter (5:11).
2 Corinthians	Written after Paul left Ephesus, on his way through Macedonia (2:12-13), before picking up the famine relief contribution from Achaia (8:6). Acts 20:1-6 covers this period.
Galatians	Paul went through Galatia twice (Acts 14 and Acts 16:1-6). This letter was not too long after (1:6). Timothy, from Galatia, is not mentioned in the letter, so he may not have been present. This would correspond to the period that Paul spent in Corith while Timothy and Silas were in Thessalonika (Acts 18:5).
Ephesians	From prison (6:20)
Phillipians	From prison (1:7, 13-19)
Colossians	From prison (4:18)
1 Thessalonians	Paul had had time to spread the gospel into Achaia (1:8) and Silas and Timothy were there (1:1). So, it probably fits in Acts 18:5.
2 Thessalonians	Shortly after 1 Thessalonians.
1 Timothy	After leaving Ephesus (1:3), so probably the same as Acts 20:1
2 Timothy	After prison (4:9-21)
Titus	After prison (1:5, 3:12-14)
Philemon	From prison (1, 9-10, 13, 23)
Hebrews	Before 70 AD (9:7, and others)
James	Probably early, not long after 50 AD
1 Peter	Probably not long after 50 AD, Satan loose on earth (5:8)
2 Peter	Late, just before Peter's death (1:14), demons in prison (2:4)
1 John	Before 70 AD
2 John	Before 70 AD
3 John	Before 70 AD
Jude	Late, evil spirits already in chains (6)
Revelation	Before 70 AD