

Welcome to the
Connecting Class

Connecting with God

Connecting with His Church

Connecting with His World

Through

Exposition of light in Scripture

Experience of life in community

Expression of love in ministry

apttoteach.org

The John Rylands Fragment

117-138 C.E.

John 18:31-33

**The earliest
known copy of
any portion of
the New
Testament**



**O.T.
written**

**N.T.
written**

**93% of all
Biblical MSS
are dated after
900 C.E.**

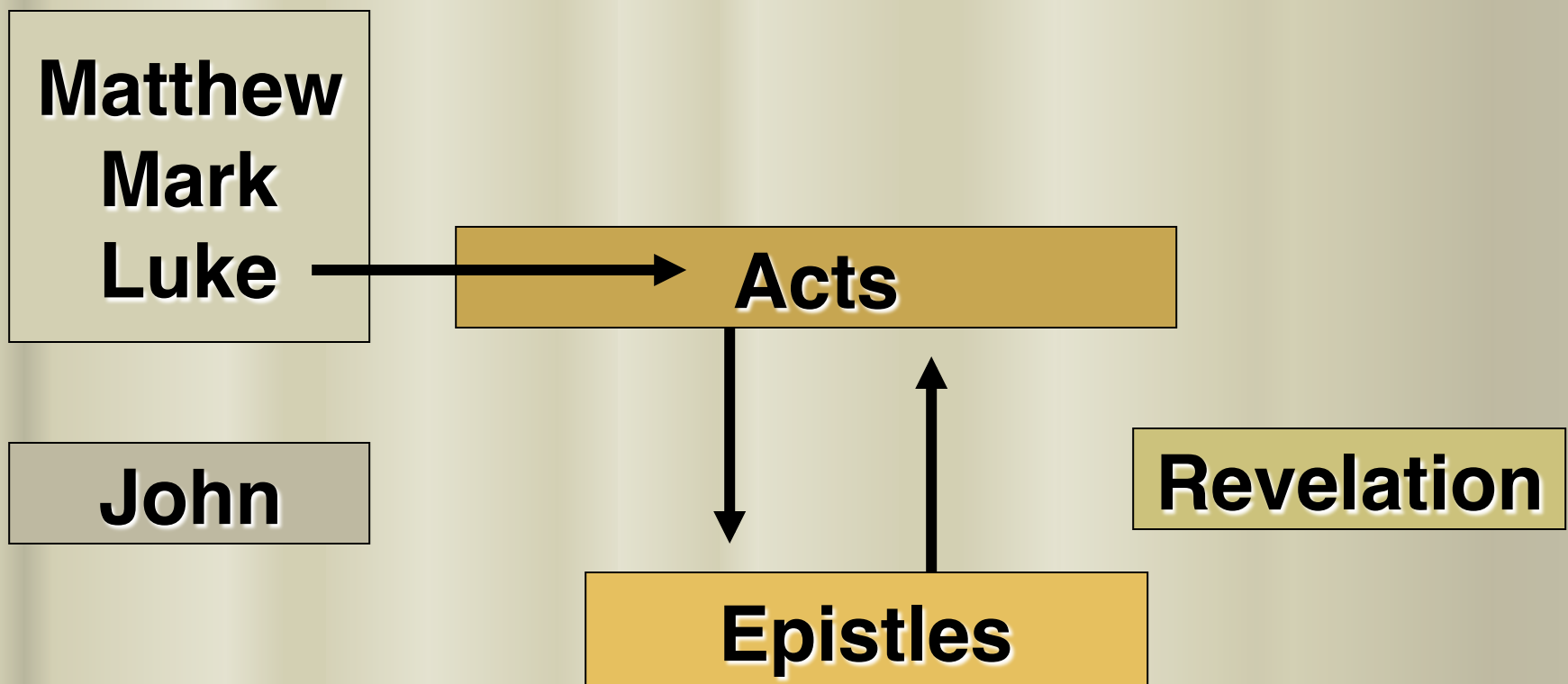
1500 B.C. 1000 B.C. 500 B.C. 500 C.E. 1000 C.E. 1500 C.E.

Codex Sinaiticus 331 C.E.

Codex Vaticanus 350 C.E.

Codex Alexandrinus 450 C.E.

The structure of the New Testament



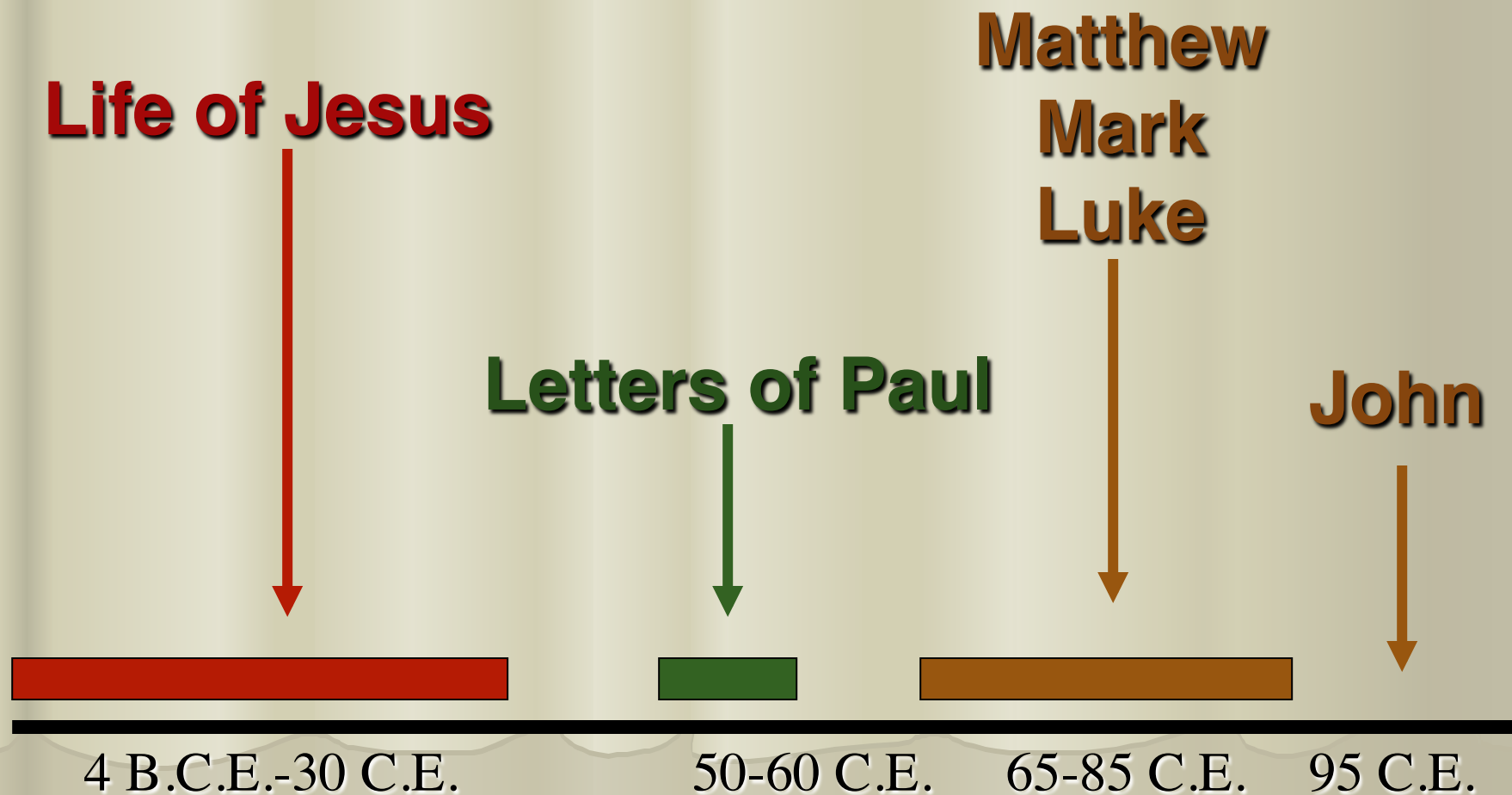
4 B.C.

33 C.E.

45 C.E.

100 C.E.

The time line of the New Testament



How are we to respond to

***Liberal
Historical Critical
Scholarship***

***when it discredits the authority of
the Bible?***



**The
Gospel**

***The integrity of the
messenger affects
the message.***



**The
banker**

***“George has
a bad record.”***



**The
courthouse**

***“It’s not as
bad as it
seems”
The rest of
the story***

The Bible

The Critic

Assumptions of the Liberal Historical Critic.

- ✓ The historian seeks a rational, natural, and common explanation.
- ✓ The historian is skeptical of tradition, dogma, and claims of the supernatural.
- ✓ ***Error #1 There is no truth beyond what can be explained naturally.***
- ✓ ***Error #2 We must explain everything naturally even if we have to use imaginary data or distort the data.***
- ✓ ***Error #3 Faith is irrational and foolish.***

***Error #4. "The Gospel can
be explained fully from
natural cultural sources."***

**Greco-Roman
Culture**

**Need for
security**

**Mystery
Cults**

**Social-political
circumstances**


**Personal
Psychological
experiences**

**Jewish
tradition**

***Jesus as...
the Christ***

**~~Holy
Spirit~~**

Error #5. “The N.T. evolved through the creative activity of the early church.”


**The
historical
Jesus . . .**

**. . . became
the Christ
of faith . . .**

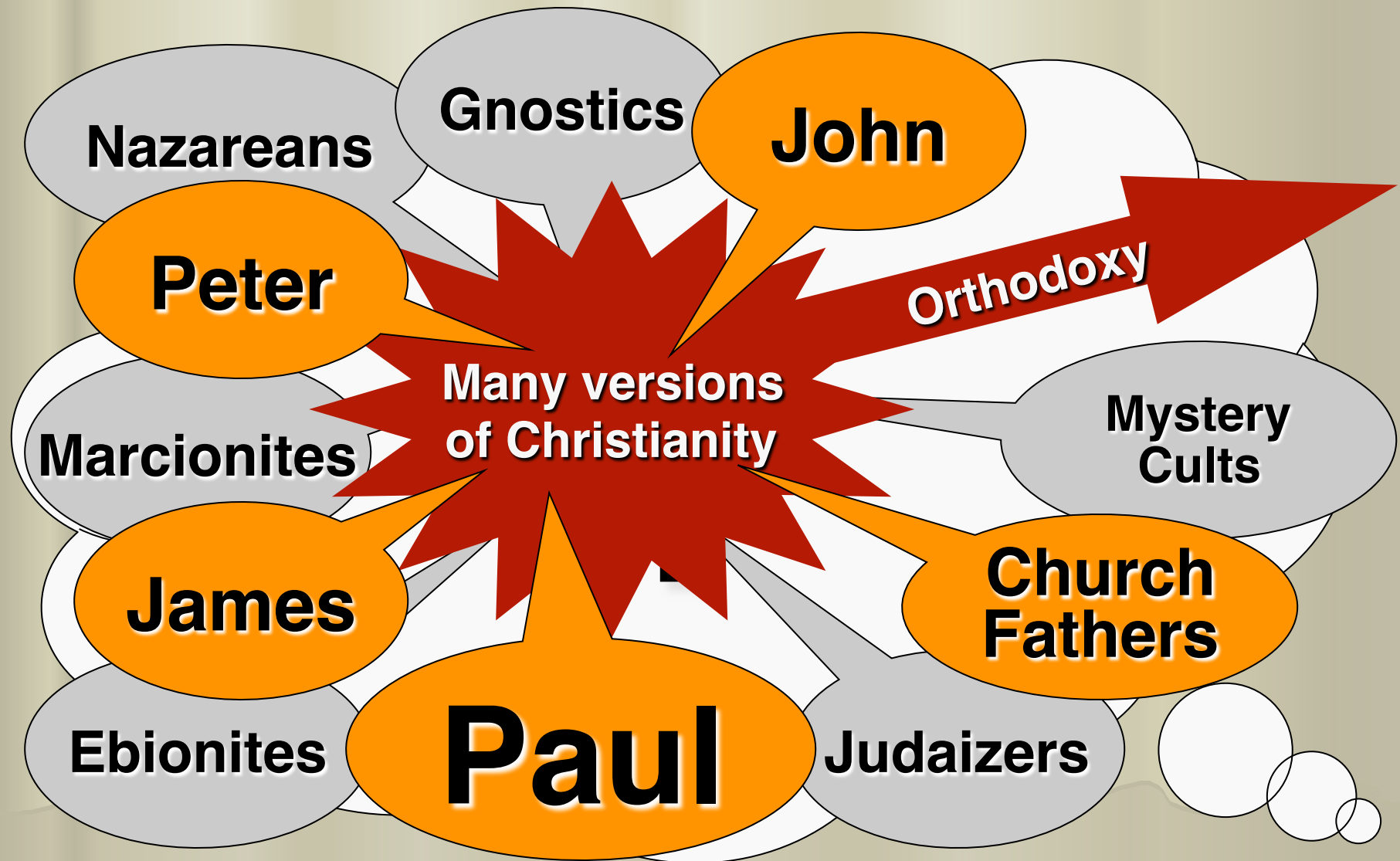
**. . . recorded
in the
Gospels.**

**We know very
little about the
historical
Jesus.**

**The early
church invented
Jesus as the
Christ.**

**The Gospels
were written to
support the
theology of the
early church.**

Error #6. "There were originally many different forms of Christianity."



Did the earliest Christian communities reflect the orthodoxy of the Gospels?

Hypothetical “Q”	The Gospel of Thomas
Material common to Matt. & Lk. but not in Mk.	A 2nd Cent. Gnostic document

- ✓ No mention of Jesus’ death and resurrection.
- ✓ No emphasis on Jesus’ deity.

The Critic’s Conclusion - *Many early followers of Jesus did not center their faith on the cross & resurrection.*

The weaknesses of the Historical Critical method.

- ✓ It is an infant “**creative**” science.
 - ✓ It is influenced by **fads**.
 - ✓ It has a poor **track record**.
- ✓ Its **presuppositions** are too restrictive.
 - ✓ It refuses to admit its own **bias**.
 - ✓ It make **too much** of **too little**.
- ✓ It wants to have its cake and eat it too.

“It is not merely that the Bible isn’t read from the *perspective* of faith, it isn’t even read from the perspective of the *possibility* of faith.” To make matters even more difficult for those of faith, many institutions of higher learning aggressively socialize students with unqualified or justified pressure from expressions like, “obviously,” “of course,” “everyone now knows,” “all scholars agree that.”

Eta Linnemann (a former eminent historical critic)

How do evangelical Christians understand the origin of the N.T.

- ✓ **The NT documents were identified as inspired by God's Spirit through Apostles or their close associates fairly soon after they were written.**
- ✓ **The early church identified (not invented) the N.T.**

II Timothy 3

“¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known **the sacred writings**, which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ **All Scripture is inspired by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

Hebrews 1:1

“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers **in the prophets** in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us **in His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.”

II Peter 3

“¹⁵ and regard the patience of our Lord {to be} salvation; just as also our beloved brother **Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,** ¹⁶ as also in all {his} letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as {they do} **also the rest of the Scriptures,** to their own destruction.”

II Peter 1:16

“We did not follow **cleverly
invented stories** when we told
you about the power and coming
of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we
were eyewitnesses of his
majesty.”

II Peter 1:21

“for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men **moved by the Holy Spirit** spoke from God.”

I Corinthians 2:13

“which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those **taught by the Spirit**, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.”

The unnatural origin of Christianity.

- ✓ **Its origin is dramatic, fast and certain (not evolved).**
- ✓ **The doctrine of the resurrection was established early.**
- ✓ **Christianity started in an obscure corner of the Roman empire.**
- ✓ **Jesus' ministry was short, local, and without writing.**
- ✓ **The hostility against Christianity was unusual in Rome.**
- ✓ **It was dangerous to be a Christian.**

It is reasonable to believe the N.T. writers were speaking the truth.

- ✓ They included embarrassing details about themselves.
- ✓ They included embarrassing details and difficult saying of Jesus.
- ✓ They left in demanding saying of Jesus.
- ✓ They distinguished Jesus' words from their own.
- ✓ They included events related to the resurrection that they would not have invented.
- ✓ They challenge their readers to check their facts.
- ✓ They describe miracles as historical events.
- ✓ They abandoned their long-held beliefs to follow their message.

The challenge to Biblical authority - four reactions



Big questions for critics!

***How honest and secure are you
with your conclusions?***

***How do you explain the
“resurrection of Jesus”?***

***What basis for your soul’s hope
do you have if this message
cannot be trusted?***

What should be our posture toward Liberal Historical Critical challenges?

- ✓ **Be informed.** Get your facts straight.
- ✓ **Be humble.** Don't be afraid to admit you don't have all the answers.
- ✓ **Be reasonable.** Recognize where you have a point to make and where they may have a valid point.
- ✓ **Don't demand too much.** Realize that faith does not demand absolute certainty but reasonable probability.

