

## Lesson #5 – NT Writers: One Author (God)

**Teacher Prep:** The New Testament is one of the most exciting books in the world, because it tells one of the most amazing and exciting stories ever told; the story of Jesus, Immanuel, God with us! It follows His story, not from the cradle to the grave, but from the Manger to the Empty Tomb... and beyond! It tells us how to live as His Followers and what to expect in the years to come; even after our own deaths. It is a marvelous, perfect outpouring of God into our lives, which is enlivened in each of us by God the Holy Spirit, Himself.

**Major Points:** **Because Jesus Came, We have a New Testament**  
**NT was Written by People who Knew Jesus**  
**NT Tells About the Early Church and Teaches Christians**  
**NT Had Many Writers, but God is the Author of it All**

**Scripture Ref:** **Hebrews 1:1-3a** *God...spoke long ago ... in the prophets ... **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son... the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature,***

**1 John 1:1-3** *...what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands... **what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also...***

**2 Peter 1:16** *For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, **but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.***

**Before Class:** Bring your Bible, provide Bibles for the children (if possible), and consider writing down the Scripture verses (from the lesson) on slips of paper for children to read out loud during the lesson.

You may also need materials for the activities you choose.

**Lesson:** **Because Jesus Came, We have a New Testament**

- *(Start with the Bible out so everyone can see it.)*
- Today we are going to learn about the New Testament.
- *Use the Time Line to show the next few points.*
- On our Time Line, all of Time is divided into years BEFORE Jesus was here and years AFTER Jesus was here.
- The Old Testament was written BEFORE Jesus was born as a baby in Bethlehem.
- When Jesus was here on the Earth, there was no New Testament yet; only the Old Testament (or The Scriptures.)

- When Jesus was here, He spoke about the Scriptures and said that they testified about Him.
- Jesus believed in the words of the Old Testament.
- God wanted us all to know about His great love for us.
- He also wanted to provide the Way to pay for our sins.
- For these reasons, God sent His Son, Jesus, here.
- We can know what God is like, by looking at Jesus.
  - Hebrews 1:1-3a *God... **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son...** And He is the radiance of His glory **and the exact representation** of His nature*
- When Jesus came here and died for our sins, things changed between God and Mankind.
- Now there was a New Covenant between God and Mankind.
  - Because there was a New Covenant, we needed a new book to tell about it. The NT is that book!
- The New Testament tells about the New Covenant and about the beginning of the Church Age
  - The Church Age started at Pentecost with the coming of the Holy Spirit and continues to this day.
  - The Church Age will end when Jesus returns!

#### **NT was Written About Jesus, by People who Knew Him**

- All of the words in the New Testament were written AFTER Jesus lived, died, and was raised from the dead.
- They were all written within 60 years of the time when Jesus was raised from the dead (or resurrected.)
- Since the words were written down so quickly, many people, who had been alive when all of these things happened, were still alive and able to testify to the truth of them.
- The New Testament was written down by people who had actually met Jesus and knew Him personally.
  - Some of these people were His Disciples
  - Others had met Jesus in other ways and knew Him.
  - Ex: Paul, who met Jesus on the Road to Damascus, and James and Jude, who were Jesus' half-brothers.
- The Gospels are the first 4 books of the New Testament
  - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
- The 4 Gospels tell the story of Jesus' life on Earth.
  - Each one contains different details about Jesus' life.
  - Each one was written to a different group of people.

#### **NT Tells About the Early Church and Teaches Christians**

- Beside telling us about Jesus' life, the New Testament also tells us about what happened after Jesus ascended (left the Earth and went back to Heaven to be with God the Father.)

- The NT tells how the first Believers (now filled with the Holy Spirit) went out into the world telling others about Jesus, and how these new folks came to believe in Jesus, too!
  - These people who God sent out to tell others were called “Apostles.” (For example: The Apostle Peter)
- Soon churches with new Believers began to grow! Then there were more Believers in Christ, and more churches!
- Sometimes, the men who had started the churches wrote letters to tell them things they needed to know.
- Some of the letters they wrote became part of the NT
  - These letters are called “epistles.”
- As Believers, we can read these same letters. They help us to understand things we need to know *to be more like Jesus!*
- The NT also includes prophecy about things that will happen in the future; even all the way to the end of Time!
- So, the NT tells us about all the time from just before Jesus came as a baby until the end of time. We can see it on our Time Line as everything from the cross, indicating Jesus’ life, to the end of the string on the right, which is the end of Time.

#### **NT Had Many Writers, But God is the Author of it All**

- The NT had at least 9 different writers; but, through God’s Holy Spirit, it only had ONE Author – God!
- The writers wrote down things they had actually seen and heard, while they were with Jesus.
  - **Read 1 John 1:1-3** *...what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands... **what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also...***
  - **Read 2 Peter 1:16** *For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.***
- Even though there were many writers of the New Testament, there was just one Author– God!

Let’s thank God for sending Jesus and for the truth found in the New Testament.

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus.  
Thank you for giving us the New Testament.  
Thank you for preserving it for us, through your Holy Spirit.  
Thank you for loving us.  
We love you back!  
Amen.

Suggested Activities: Pick 1-2 activities to do that will work well with your group.

**Memorization** – *The children will continue memorizing the Books of the NT.*

Before Class: Provide copies of a printed list of the Books of the NT (*See Activity Sheets from lesson #3 or 4. The children already may have copies of these.*)

During Class: Using a printed list of the Books of the NT, have the children practice with partners saying the names of the books in order. First have them say them while looking at the page and then without looking at it. See how many they can say in order. Use songs or other memory aids to help learn the Books of the NT.

**Bible Replicas** – *The children will work on adding NT Books to their Bible replicas.*

*This will also help them learn the names of the Books of the New Testament.*

Before Class: Provide printed copies of the Books of the NT Activity Sheet found in lessons #3 or 4. Provide lots of paper – copy paper or notebook paper will be fine – along with pencils, or scissors and glue. Provide a hole punch, as necessary.

During Class: Explain that you are going to work on the Bible replicas. Have the children take paper and write the name of each Book of the NT at the top of the page. Alternatively, have them cut up their copies of the Activity Sheet from Lesson #4 and paste the names on various sheets of paper. Punch holes as necessary and place the papers in New Testament order, in their Bible replicas.

**Point of View** – *The children will learn about point of view and see how it can affect how you remember an event. They will discuss this in regard to the 4 Gospels.*

Before Class: Plan an unexpected event or experience that you will stage in your classroom on the day of your class. Let it be something that surprises (**but does not frighten**) the children. If necessary, ask another adult to help. As far as necessary, script out what you will do or say. Gather up any props you will need.

During Class: After the lesson, do the unexpected thing, which you have planned. Afterwards, ask the children to describe what they saw and heard. Take some time and let each child tell you their version of the story. (Each child's explanation may be slightly different.) Explain that whenever we see something happen, we experience it from different points of view. When we talk about the story later, we may all tell the story a bit differently, but that doesn't mean that any of us are wrong. Our stories will usually agree on the major facts. Explain to the children that the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) were written by 4 different writers, each of whom knew Jesus. These books all tell about the Life and Teachings of Jesus. In them, many of Jesus' miracles and parables are found recorded; often the same story can be found in more than one of the Gospels. The accounts are not usually word for word the same, but that is related to the different points of view of the various writers, and their various audiences. The 4 Gospels each agree on all of the major facts and teachings of Jesus, and they complement one another; meaning that some of them offer details that are left out of other versions.

Matthew was writing to the Jews in Jerusalem.

Mark was writing to the Gentiles in Rome

Luke was writing to the Greeks

John was writing to everyone.

**Names of the New Testament Books** – *The children will learn more about how the Books of the New Testament got their names.*

Before Class: Study the following information and decide how best to present it.

During Class: Use the following notes to present this additional information.

How did the Books of the New Testament get their names?

- 1) Sometimes the name of the book came from **the person who wrote it** down.
  - a. The Gospel of Matthew was written by the disciple named Matthew, who had been a tax collector – he was also known as Levi.
  - b. The Gospel of John was written by the “beloved disciple”, John. He also wrote the books of 1, 2 & 3 John, as well as Revelation.
  - c. The Gospel of Mark was probably written by John Mark, who was a follower of Jesus and accompanied the Apostle Peter on his journeys.
  - d. The Gospel of Luke was written by a doctor named Luke, who accompanied the Apostle Paul on his missionary journeys. Luke was a wonderful historian. It is thought that he actually talked to Mary (the Mother of Jesus) to get some of the information in his Gospel.
- 2) Sometimes the name of the book came from the **person or group it was written to**.
  - a. Philippians was written to a church located in the town of Philippi.
  - b. Ephesians was written to the believers in the town of Ephesus.
  - c. 1 & 2 Timothy were letters written to Paul’s pastoral protégé, Timothy.
  - d. Letters written to a person or a group are often called “epistles.”
- 3) Sometimes the name of the book is **self-descriptive**.
  - a. The book of Acts is actually titled “The Acts of the Apostles.” Acts was also written by Dr. Luke. It tells what happened during those first few years after Jesus went back into Heaven. It tells what the Apostles and the other early missionaries did on their travels.
  - b. Revelation is actually titled “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” It is a letter written by the Disciple John. It was sent to all of the churches and tells about a revelation he received, where he saw Jesus, the Risen Christ, and was told what would happen in the End Times. It was written to encourage Believers. It says that Jesus is coming back!

**Types of NT Books** – *The children will learn about grouping the books of the NT.*

Before Class: Copies of Activity Sheet and Key. Provide watercolors or map colors.

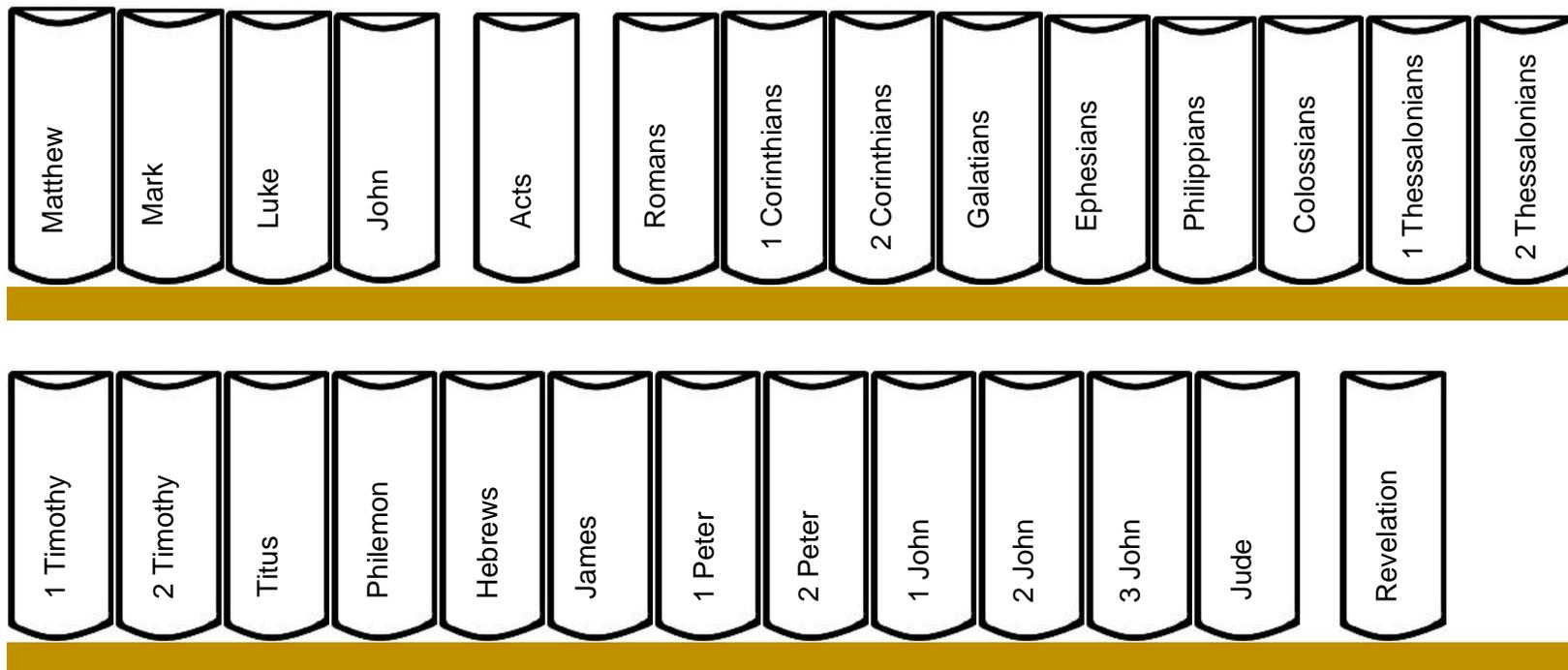
During Class: Talk about the names of the different books of the NT. Remind the children that they were all written by people who actually knew Jesus. Allow the children to color the activity sheet indicating the types of literature in these books. Use the answer key, which is already colored, to use if the children have difficulties. *(Have them color lightly so that the words on the books will show!)*

**Gospels** – The first 4 books of the NT that tell the story of Jesus’ life.

**History** – Acts tells the story of the very early church and missionary journeys.

**Letters** (or Epistles) – the 21 letters written by the Apostles to a person or a group.

**Prophecy** – Revelation – the last book of the NT, which tells what will happen in the future when Jesus returns.



### Books of the New Testament:

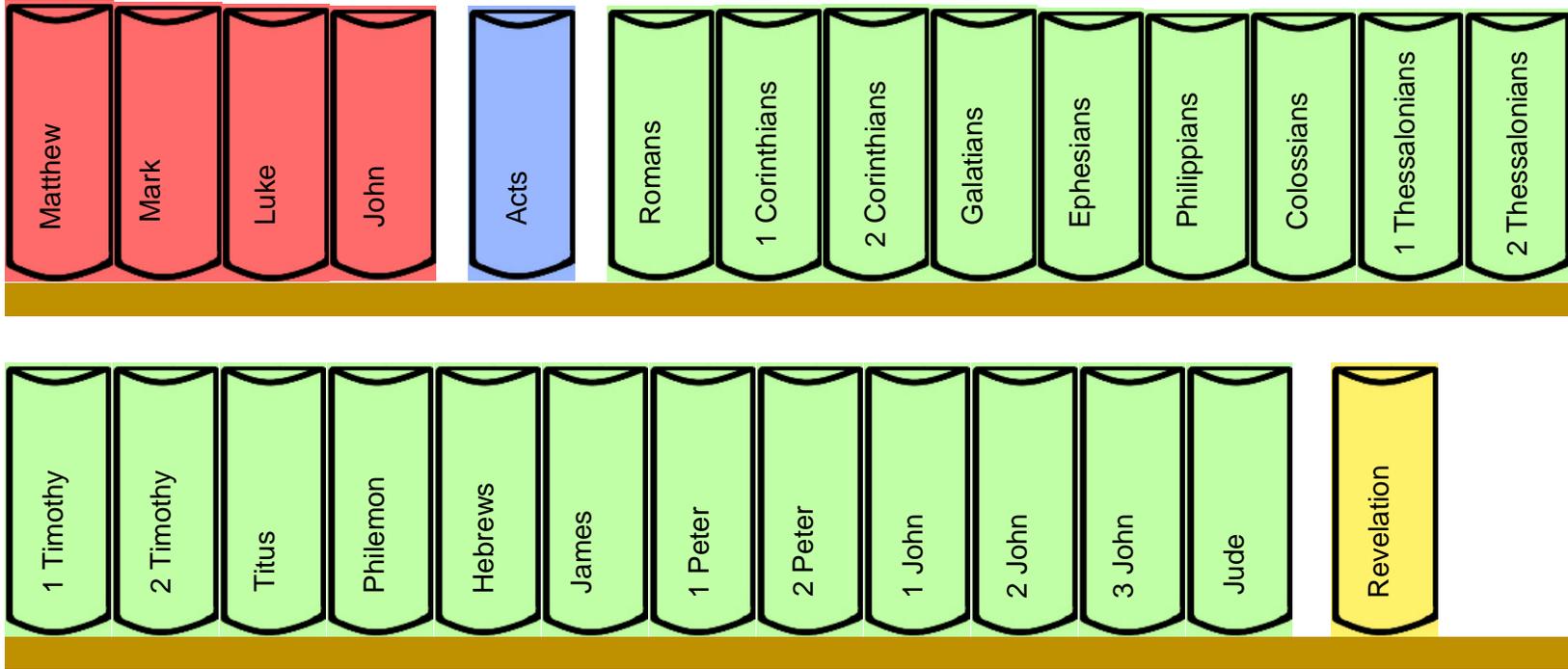
Consider the Books of the New Testament like Books on a Shelf. You can pick them up and read them anytime!

Color the four Gospels RED

Color the book of History (Acts) BLUE

Color the 21 Epistles (the 21 different Letters) GREEN

Color the book of Prophecy (Revelation) YELLOW



## Books of the New Testament:

Consider the Books of the New Testament like Books on a Shelf. You can pick them up and read them anytime!

Color the four Gospels RED

Color the book of History (Acts) BLUE

Color the 21 Epistles (the 21 different Letters) GREEN

Color the book of Prophecy (Revelation) YELLOW

