



APPENDICES

SESSION ONE

APPENDIX A

WHO WERE THE CORINTHIANS?

by Garland Autry, Community Pastor, Fellowship Fayetteville, Arkansas

I. A TROUBLED CHURCH: 1 CORINTHIANS

Corinth was a city on the rise. Corinth was a very strategic and important city in that it connected the northern part of Greece (Athens) and the southern part (Sparta) through a tiny isthmus of land, where the city of Corinth was built. Thus, it was a major trade route and port city, with lots of people coming in and out. Originally a Greek city, it was destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C., but resettled by Julius Caesar himself in 44 B.C. Therefore, Corinth was a Greek city with a very 'Roman' feel and culture. The city population was probably around 80-100,000 people, making it a large ancient city. (Northwest Arkansas in 2021 is around 550,000 total; Fayetteville is about 110,000 when the U of A is in session. But the ancient cities were tightly packed together, with a very high population density.) Corinth was a wealthy city, with all the blessings and curses that come with a major trade city. It was also a famous city, one that enjoyed a long history of power and prestige.

As residents of a new city that was undergoing continual rebuilding and that was increasing in fame, the people of Corinth had both growing civic pride and individual pride. All sorts of Corinthians, even slaves, are mentioned in inscriptions, often paid for and erected by and for themselves, that describe their contributions to building projects or their status in clubs (*collegia*). The number of such inscriptions is staggering. Corinth was a city where public boasting and self-promotion had become an art form.

The Corinthian people thus lived within an honor-shame cultural orientation, where public recognition was often more important than facts and where the worst thing that could happen was for one's reputation to be publicly tarnished. In such a culture a person's sense of worth is based on recognition by others of one's accomplishments, hence the self-promoting public inscriptions.¹

Corinth boasted dozens of temples dedicated to a plethora of deities. Poseidon was a fan-favorite in this city, not surprisingly as the city sat near two seas. On the acropolis of the city (Acrocorinth) sat the temple to Aphrodite, the goddess of love and romance. Another popular deity (as evidenced by the archaeological evidence) was Asclepios, the god of physical and emotional healing and health.

Hera Argaea, the goddess of marriage and the sexual life, was also a favorite. Hera was associated with sacred marriage, which involved the uniting of

¹ Ben Witherington, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, 8.

two divine persons or a divine and human person. The sacredness of the marriage increased the chances of fertility. Hera was also associated with childbirth. (This may be in the background of some of the issues raised in 1 Corinthians 7, and childbirth in 7:14).

Many temples in Corinth, including the one serving the gods Demeter and Kore, housed dining facilities where lavish dinner parties (*convivia*) occurred. Here, young girls were often employed at these facilities, to serve as companions and sexual amusement for the wealthy, the powerful, and the paying customers. Additionally, in rooms within the temple precincts there were rooms in which initiatory rites and ceremonies occurred and may have involved young girls as well. There is evidence that a ceremonial headdress may have been worn during these ceremonies.

These various deities and the daily rituals involved with honoring them were crucial for the city's success. Additionally, Corinth housed temples dedicated to Caesar and honored the Empire of Rome.

Corinth also hosted the second most important series of semi-annual games, second only to the Olympic games themselves. These games brought tens of thousands of visitors to the city, many of which would require temporary shelter in tent-dwellings, as they sheltered on the hillsides nearby. This brought considerable wealth to the city, enabling its tent-making guilds to thrive, especially during the years in which games were played. This also brought people from all over the Greek-then-Roman Empire to Corinth, making the city a bit of a melting pot for ideas, deities, and intrigue.

Paul made his way to Corinth after his time in Athens on his second missionary journey, and spent a year and a half in this city, preaching the gospel and teaching of the Messiah's victory over the world powers and idols. The young church in Corinth was likely a small group of house-churches, probably no bigger than 12-20 each. Paul chose this city for its strategic location in the Roman Empire, as well as the ability to be self-sufficient and live on the income generated by his trade, tentmaking. Since the city of Corinth enjoyed much wealth, the divide between the 'have's' and the 'have-nots' would have been especially striking here. Erastus, mentioned in Acts 19:22, as well as noted by Paul in Romans 16:23 and 2 Timothy 4:20, was likely one of these house-church leaders. In 1929, excavators in Corinth found an ancient inscription, dated to the mid-first century A.D., with the name Erastus on it. The inscription reads: *Erastus in return for his aedileship paved it at his own expense*. In Roman politics, the aedile was a person responsible for the upkeep of public buildings and festivals. Perhaps Erastus encountered Paul and made Jesus his King. This man of honor was now forced to reckon with a gospel message that set every single person at the same table and at the same level. Corinth, indeed, was fertile ground to demonstrate the implications of the Jesus-movement with its shocking cross-shaped honor.

II. **WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CORINTH?**

After Paul had planted the Church in Corinth and spent a year and a half there, he made his way back to Jerusalem, thus concluding his second missionary journey in 53 A.D. When he began his third missionary journey shortly after (later in 53 A.D.), he went to the impressive and important city of Ephesus. Upon arriving there, he hears word of issues going on in the Corinthian church and writes them a letter. This first letter did not survive history.

Evidently, the Corinthians responded with a letter of their own, as well as a personal visit from 'Chloe's people' asking Paul to clarify some things and address some issues. Paul, then, wrote them back the letter we now know as 1 Corinthians. It may be easily stated that (to our knowledge) this was Paul's most difficult and troubling church and therefore they were having plenty of issues:

1. They had fallen prey to personality-cults, emphasizing style over substance.
2. They therefore had all sorts of division within the church over these stylistic differences.
3. They were forgetting that the gospel has changed all that, thus they were forgetting the power of the gospel.
4. They were accusing Paul of not being impressive enough.
5. They didn't know how to handle an incestuous relationship.
6. They were suing each other in the courts.
7. They were totally missing the point of sex, and especially in marriage.
8. They were divided over eating meat and the issue of eating food sacrificed to idols which highlighted a problem of personal conscience and 'freedom.'
9. They were divided over money and classes as the rich were eating without the poor.
10. They were unsure what to do with women leading in the church, probably and especially those who formerly were pagan prostitutes and cult leaders.
11. They were over-emphasizing a spiritual elite group who spoke in tongues.
12. They were completely disordered in the church gathering.
13. They misunderstood the importance of the Resurrection.

14. They were accusing Paul of not being a man of his word.

Put simply, scholar Jennifer Houston McNeel exposes the sad irony of the situation: “The Corinthians’ problem is not just that they are immature in faith, but that they have misunderstood their own level of maturity.”² Also helpful, Michael Bird suggests that the Corinthians’ problem was not too much eschatology, but too little...They did not think they had arrived in the kingdom. They were not thinking Jewishly at all, let alone in terms of the Jewish ‘two ages.’ Rather, they were still mentally living within the pagan world by whose standards they had attained a degree of wisdom superior to—and independent of—Paul himself. This produced a ‘boasting’ which ignored the judgment that was still to come. In their boasting they were heedless of God’s future judgment. Their ‘puffed-up’ posturing came from putting together their beliefs about themselves as Christians with the ideas from pagan philosophy, not least the kind of popular-level Stoicism which taught that all who truly understood the world and themselves were kings. The words ‘rich’ and ‘reigning’ had been catchwords of Stoic philosophy since the time of the philosopher Diogenes, who settled in Corinth and who popularized the aphorism, ‘I alone am rich, I alone reign as king.’³

Key Purpose

To rebuke the worldly thinking of the Corinthians and to correct and put to right several issues that had emerged in the church, as well as teach this struggling church what it looks like to live lovingly with nothing but the message of Christ crucified (always with the victorious new day of the resurrection in mind)

Date

53-54 A.D., from Ephesus, on Paul’s 3rd Missionary Journey

The Gospel Message

Christ’s death, burial, resurrection, and ascension have changed the entire world order—the breakthrough of the new creation has happened with all its massive implications—which flips on its head how the entire world operates; thus Christ’s followers live a life of love, counter to the world’s ways.

III. WHY DID PAUL WRITE 1 CORINTHIANS?

Paul needed to ‘get ahead’ of these issues and bring some sort of theological and gospel-centered wisdom to the situation. He knew that this church was struggling, and so this letter is written very formally and carefully, as Paul tries to bring his friends and this church back in line with a life in line with the

² McNeel, “Feeding with Milk,” 570.

³ Bird, *New Testament in its World*, 480-481.

Messiah and the Messiah crucified (and resurrected!). In a world where idols still had power and the idols of sex, money, and power were still attempting to leverage their authority, the gospel had changed all of that and it needed to be brought forward in a more fervent and clear way. It is not surprising that this city had problems; it was a tough city to plant a church in to begin with, so Paul carefully works with them with grace and truth.

IV. **PAUL'S FOUR LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIANS**

A. 'Previous' Letter

On Paul's third missionary journey, from Ephesus, he likely encountered some leaders from the church in Corinth, and heard word of some of the issues going on there. Somewhere early in this time, he wrote them a letter that is now LOST TO HISTORY.

- Upon receiving this now-lost letter, the Corinthians likely wrote Paul a letter in response "from Chloe's house" (1 Corinthians 1:11). It is this letter Paul receives and then responds to in what we now know as 1 Corinthians.

B. 1 Corinthians

The letter preserved in our modern Bibles is responding to these issues reported to Paul while he was in Ephesus in 53-54 AD.

- Paul sends Timothy (probably carrying the letter we now know as 1 Corinthians) to Corinth to check the situation out (1 Cor. 4:17, 16:10).
- This visit apparently did not go well, and Paul made a quick and hasty trip from Ephesus in early 54 AD over to Corinth that also did not go well. We now call this trip the "Painful Visit" (2 Corinthians 2:1; 13:1). It appears the Corinthian church rejected Paul and his authority and wanted to continue living with some of the issues that Paul addressed in 1 Corinthians. They didn't like his tone, his approach, or his message, and this rejection REALLY hurt Paul! (See 2 Corinthians 1:1-7:1)
- Upon returning to Ephesus, Paul wrote a letter we now know as the "Severe Letter."

C. Severe Letter

After Paul's painful visit to Corinth, he quickly and hastily wrote this harsh letter to the Corinthian Church that is also NOW LOST TO HISTORY (2 Cor. 2:3-4). This letter was sent with Titus to Corinth, and Paul waited

to receive word of how it was taken. (Some think that 2 Corinthians 10-13 IS the severe letter.)

D. 2 Corinthians

Paul began writing his now fourth letter to Corinth, as he traveled from Ephesus back to Greece around 56 AD. He began this letter on his journey, and halfway through (2 Cor. 7:1- 2) Titus met him and reported that things were better in Corinth. This drastically changed Paul's mindset and helped him greatly.

Key Themes

1. Worldly power and wisdom vs. gospel power and wisdom
2. Personality cults based on style
3. True spirituality
4. The nature of true freedom
5. Problems!!!
6. Love as the basis for gospel community
7. The power of the Resurrection and the hope it brings

Key Verses

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-10

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

SESSION ONE

APPENDIX B

FIRST CENTURY RESURRECTION BELIEF

I. **JEWS WHO BELIEVED IN A GENERAL BODILY RESURRECTION**

- A. Pharisees
- B. Essenes
- C. Zealots
- D. Scripture Supporting a General Resurrection
 - 1. Isaiah 26:19
 - 2. Daniel 12:2-3
 - 3. John 11:24-25

II. **JEWS WHO DENY ALL FORMS OF RESURRECTION**

- A. Sadducees
- B. Supporting Documents
 - 1. Matthew 22:23
 - 2. Josephus (The Jewish Wars, Book 2)

III. **PAGAN'S VIEWS ON THE RESURRECTION**

- A. No concept of the Messiah
- B. Any form of a resurrection was foreign to them
- C. Widespread range of afterlife beliefs¹
- D. 'Momento mori' (Remember you must die)

¹ N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 31.

SESSION TWO

APPENDIX C

BURIAL PRACTICES IN FIRST CENTURY PALESTINE

Ever wonder how first century Palestine buried their dead? This topic becomes important when considering the evidence for the resurrection and associated burial practices, tombs, and embalming customs during that time period. Professor of Religion at Wofford College and supervisor over numerous excavation sites in Israel, Byron R. McCane, states “burial practices in the New Testament are corroborated by archaeological evidence.”¹

Prompt burial was traditional in Palestine in the first century. In fact, an unburied corpse overnight would be uncommon.² The care of the deceased body was handled with great respect. McCane describes this process.

As soon as death was certain, the deceased’s eyes were closed; the corpse was washed, and then wrapped and bound. According to the third-century C.E. Jewish tractate *Semahot*, men could only prepare the corpse of a man, but women could prepare both men and women. Literary depictions often suggest that perfumes or ointments were used for this washing. The body was wrapped and bound in strips of cloth. John 11 has such preparations in view: Lazarus’s “hands and feet [were] bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth” (John 11:44). Thus prepared, male relatives and friends would carry the corpse in a procession toward the place of interment, accompanied by friends, neighbors, and relatives. Such processions are described in the New Testament (Luke 7:12, for example) and in Josephus, who emphasizes the splendor of Herod’s funerary cortege (War I.671-3). Some Mishnaic texts suggest that processions occasionally halted in order to “make lamentation” for the dead (m. Meg. 4.3; m. B. Bath. 6.7, for example).³

Once the body was prepared for burial some type of memorial for the deceased usually followed. This may have involved words or prayers from family, friends, or clergy. McCane illustrates this portion of the burial process.

Some tombs include an area that appears to have been the setting for lamenting and eulogizing the deceased. Made up of either a circle of benches or a row (or rows) of seats, these “mourning enclosures” are usually situated in front of and around the entrance to the tomb. Some literary sources describe a ceremony in which

¹ Byron R. McCane, “Burial Practices in First Century Palestine,” *Bible Odyssey*, Accessed on 5/23/2024, <https://blog.bibleodyssey.org/articles/burial-practices-in-first-century-palestine/>.

² Mishnah Sanhedrin 6.6.

³ McCane, “Burial Practices in First Century Palestine.”

friends and neighbors arranged themselves in rows in order to offer condolences to the bereaved in a kind of receiving line (m. Ber. 3.2; m. Meg. 4:3; m. Sanh. 2.1; Sem. 10.9). The ceremony of primary burial seems to have often included spoken words in appreciation for the dead and in sympathy for the bereaved. After primary burial, the procession returned to the family home, where expressions of condolence continued.⁴

The mourning process usually lasted about seven days. During this period of time most immediate family members either confined themselves to their homes or were seen visiting the burial site of their loved one. This practice is seen in John 11:31 when Mary leaves her home following the death of Jesus. The passage states, “When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.” Following the seven day period of mourning, most areas of life resumed.

⁴ McCane, “Burial Practices in First Century Palestine.”

SESSION TWO

APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE EMPTY TOMB¹

1. The presence of obscure eyewitnesses (Salome², Joanna³, Cleopas⁴) listed by their proper names is, indeed, consistent with eyewitness stories. Without further explanation of their role, opportunities to tell the empty tomb story from their viewpoint is lost which again, further authenticates the underlying story.
2. The Gospel accounts themselves are considered early documents and should be considered well within historical standards of reliability in regards to dating. Furthermore, each agree with the other in terms of the broad empty tomb story.
3. The empty tomb account did not grow in legend as may be expected if the story had been written at a later date.
4. There was no development of tomb veneration or a martyr cult that was common in the ancient world when the body remained in the tomb. The fact that we are not certain of where Jesus' tomb was is an indication of the lack of tomb veneration.
5. The women's perplexed state of mind after discovering the empty tomb suggests these reports were early and simple (as opposed to being written much later and over time). Few details were revealed and differing details went unresolved.
6. The tomb location was not emphasized suggesting there was little interest in the tomb itself, thus more likely empty.
7. The early church does not appear to discuss the empty tomb as an apologetic point, but rather the appearances of the risen Christ. In fact, 1 Corinthians 15 does not even mention the empty tomb.
8. Even if Matthew's account of guards at the tomb was not historically accurate, their alleged addition would indicate the tomb had been vacated, otherwise very little motivation to tell a false story existed.
9. No ancient Christian or non-Christian sources denied the empty tomb.
10. No ancient writings are present to suggest Jesus' body was placed in a common grave or pit.

¹ Habermas, *On the Resurrection: Evidences*, 625-630.

² Mark 16:1.

³ Luke 24:10.

⁴ Luke 24:13-32.

SESSION FOUR

APPENDIX E

RESURRECTION EVIDENCE: THE GREATEST RISK FOR THE APOSTLES¹

I. OBJECTION TO THE RESURRECTION AND WORSHIP OF JESUS AS THE RISEN LORD

- A. Since Wilhelm Bousset's influential book, *Kyrios Christos* (1913), critical (skeptical) New Testament scholars have held that the worship of Jesus as Lord (Kyrios) could not have begun with Palestinian (Jewish) Christians since they were strict monotheists.
- B. Instead, scholars building on Bousset's work proposed that the worship of Jesus as Lord could only have occurred as Paul's gospel entered the Greco-Roman world and was mingled with popular "Ruler (Kyrios) cults" (later, Emperor worship).
- C. Skeptical scholars state that this evolutionary process took several generations to develop. Consequently, all the gospels were written late in the first century to create stories of miracles, claims of divinity, and Resurrection appearances to justify worship of Jesus as Lord.
- D. These stories do not reflect the historical events of Jesus or the first Christians, but instead represent the needs of various communities of non-Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Greco-Roman world in subsequent generations.

II. RESPONSE: THE APOSTLES' RISK OF APOSTASY AND ETERNAL JUDGEMENT

- A. Why would the Apostles risk their eternal salvation by falsely proclaiming that Jesus was risen from the dead, unless it was in fact true?
 - 1. If God did not raise Jesus from the dead, then the Apostles would be false witnesses against God, attributing to Him an action that He did not do (1 Cor. 15:15).
 - 2. Being a false witness against God would result in eternal damnation in the Final Judgement, an even greater risk than being physically killed (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:4).
 - 3. If they knew the report of Jesus' Resurrection was a lie, they knew that their eternal punishment was assured (1 Cor. 15:16-19, 32b).

¹ Special thanks to Mark Burris for compiling this Appendix

B. Why would the Apostles, who were steeped in Jewish monotheism, risk their eternal salvation by falsely claiming that Jesus was Lord (Greek “Kyrios”; Hebrew “Yahweh”) and had been exalted to the right hand of the Father, unless the Resurrection and Ascension actually happened?

1. The early preaching of the Apostles about Jesus’ resurrection included His ascension and exaltation to the right hand of God, stating that God “has made Him both Lord and Christ – this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:29-36 NASB, see vv. 35-36).¹
2. To be identified as “Lord” meant that the Apostles included Jesus in the identity of God (Yahweh), not as an addition to God, which would be a clear violation of monotheism). On the contrary, Jesus is included in worship and in titles as equal to God, yet the first Christians continued to regard themselves as monotheists.^{2 3}
3. Numerous passages from the Old Testament that speak of God as Yahweh (Lord) were applied to Jesus as Lord in the New Testament. See especially Rom. 10:13; Phil. 2:6-11; 1 Cor. 8:5-6; Acts: 2:29-36.⁴
4. Jesus is worshiped alongside God in hymns, prayers, doxologies, baptismal rites, the Lord’s supper, confessional practices, and “prophecy uttered as the words of the heavenly Christ.”⁵

III. WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- A. The historical investigations of Christian origins by Hurtado, Bauckham, and others have shown that contrary to Bousset and his adherents, the multigenerational sequence of development does not match the historical information we have from that period of time.
1. “Certainly the old [Bousset’s] view that the transition coincided with the movement of Christianity from a Jewish to a pagan Hellenistic environment is mistaken.”⁶
 2. “The earliest Christology was already the highest Christology”⁷
 3. “The highest possible Christology – the inclusion of Jesus in the unique divine identity – was central to the faith of the early church even before any of the New Testament writings were written, since it occurs in all of them.”⁸

¹ Larry, W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord; How On Earth Did Jesus Become God?* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark: 2015), 105.

² Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity*. Wm. B. Eerdmans: 2008, pp. 175f. and 184f.

³ Hurtado, *One God, One Lord; How On Earth Did Jesus Become God?* 97-130.

⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity*, 182-232.

⁵ Hurtado, 105-130.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁷ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 19, 184, 235.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

B. Consequently:

1. The worship of Jesus as Lord did in fact originate with the first Christians within the context of Jewish monotheism and was not the result of the gospel being mingled with Greco-Roman “Ruler (Kyrios) cults.”
2. Late dating of New Testament documents is no longer required in order to accommodate the proposed creation of stories about Jesus.

C. Objection

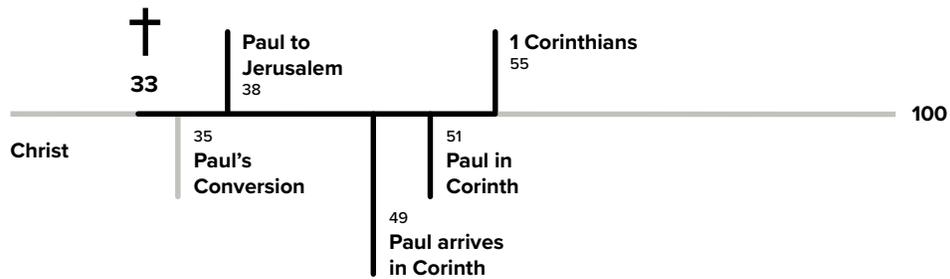
The dating and evaluation of New Testament documents can be discussed from valid historical methods rather than being guided by fallacious presuppositions.

APPENDIX F

TIMELINE REVIEW

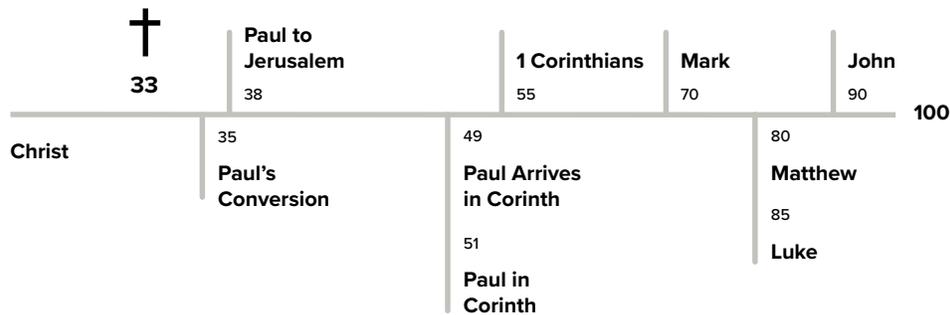
SESSION 1

The "Received" text recorded in 1 Corinthians



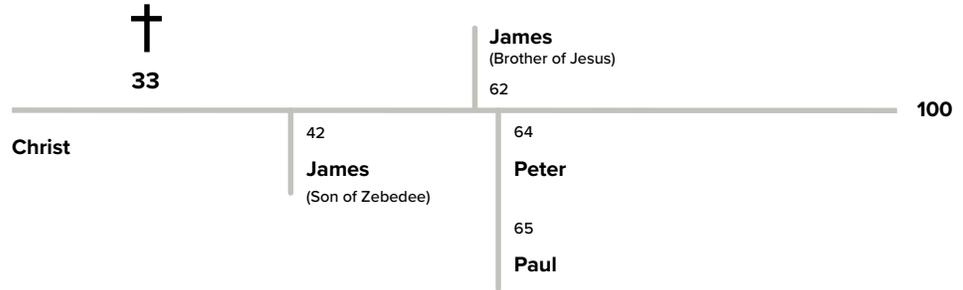
SESSION 2

Written Gospel Dates in Relationship to the Resurrection



SESSION 3

Martyrdom of the Apostles



Summary of Timeline Events for the Resurrection

