1. Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians
   “prison” or “captivity” letters
   Issues surrounding pseudepigraphy
   Colossians and Philemon
   Colossians and Ephesians

2. Colossians
   Dating and place of writing (Ephesus – CE 52-55; Rome – CE 60-62; later 60s or 70s)
   Colossian earthquake in CE 60/61
   Authorship: language & style; theology (Christology, eschatology, ecclesiology); issues with Philemon
   Other options for authorship: Timothy? Other close associate?
   Paul’s thought as consistent? Developed?
   Early contestation: Ephesians (?), Ignatius (?), Marcion, Irenaeus, Clement, Origen, p46

2. The Colossian Church
   Geography
   Laodicea and Hierapolis
   Visited by Paul? Founded by Epaphras (1.7; 4.12)

3. Colossian Structure
   1.1-2: Opening address with greeting
   1.3-23: extensive thanksgiving and prayer
   1.24-2.5: statements affirming Paul’s commitment to the gospel and to the Colossians, Laodiceans,
   and others who have not seen him
   2.6-4.6: main themes of the letter
   4.7-18: Series of personal greetings, including that “with my own hand” like Paul (recall Galatians…)

4. Colossian Themes/Occasion for the Letter
   Is there a Colossian “Heresy”? (2.8: “philosophy and empty deceit”)
   If there are opponents, who might they be?
   Role of Tychicus and the slave Onesimus
   Christology (1.15-20; 2.3, 9…): Soteriological Christology; Preexistence; Incarnation
   Domestic Code (Hau斯塔fel): Stoic and Jewish antecedents; Christ-centred; all of household included

5. Ephesians
   Date, location, and recipients (all difficult to determine)
   Authorship: language & style; theology (Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology)
   Overarching theme: God’s universal plan in Christ for Jews and Gentiles; addressed to Gentiles
   How Pauline is Ephesians? Familiar structure; unfamiliar language
   Who are the recipients? Few specifics about Paul or Ephesus. Does the author know the readers?
   Absence of Pauline problems: Jews vs Gentiles; law; circumcision; idol meat; church order
   Altered reference: Christ as body vs head (1.23, 4.16); Kingdom of Christ and God (5.5)
   Unfamiliar language: mystery (Gentile inclusion 3.3-4; marriage 6.19); past salvation (2.8-9), law
   “abolished” (2.15; contrast Col 2.14; Rom 3.31)
   “Paul’s best disciple, one whose religious perceptions and theological vision are equal to Paul’s own”
   (L.T. Johnson)
6. Ephesian Themes and Structure

   Summary of the Gospel: All-encompassing vision of: Christ, the Church, the Christian life
   Ephesian Theology: 2.1-3.13
   Ephesian Ethics: 4.1-6.20
   Key themes/images: unity, ekklesia (9 times), “the body of Christ” (10 times)

7. Philemon

   Overview: Philemon and other addressees (Apphia and Archippus), provenance and dating
   Structure:
     1-3: Opening verses and greeting
     4-7: Thanksgiving and prayer for Philemon
     8-22: Paul’s appeal on behalf of Onesimus
     23-4: Closing greetings
   The figure of Onesimus: 4 options
   Purpose of the letter: relationship between Philemon and Onesimus and nature of conversion

The Pauline Canon and the Pastoral Epistles

1. Canonical Paul

   Manuscript evidence: P^{32} (vss of Titus; c 200 CE) and P^{46} (all but 2 Thess, Pastorals, Philem; c 200 CE)
   Marcion and the Pauline canon (c mid-2nd century)
   Muratorian Canon (eccentric ordering)
   Amphilochius of Iconium (4th century: first explicit order of Paul’s letters as in NT now)

2. 1-2 Timothy and Titus

   The “Pastoral Epistles”
   Timothy and Titus
   Date: c 80-140? Possible early attestation (Polycarp?); absent from P^{46} and Marcion
   Authorship and Setting/Authenticity
     Linguistic
     Lack of attestation
     Historical framework and Paul’s ‘career’
     Church order
     Theological concepts and “heresy”
     Writing style
   Contradictory views re women, hierarchy, faith
   Details of Paul’s person

3. 2 Timothy

   Situation: Paul imprisoned and near death; emphasis on following Paul’s example and holding fast to tradition, opposing false doctrine. A major focus is also on the person Timothy himself needs to be if he is to be effective in his ministry.
   1: Thanksgiving and encouragement to Timothy
   2: Faithful preaching of the gospel; true vs false teaching
   3: Encouragement to Timothy: Paul’s example
   4: Practical charges and conclusion
   Notes re: 4.13 ( parchments and cloak); 3.16 (inspiration of Scripture)
4. 1 Timothy
Situation: Paul not imprisoned, writing to Timothy at Ephesus with guidance about church order in the face of false teaching.
Setting of 1 Tim: Timothy on assignment in Ephesus? Threat of ‘gnosis’, asceticism?
1: Introduction: Warning against false teaching
2: Orderly conduct of men and women in the church
3: Bishops and deacons
4: Warning against false teachers
5: Widows and elders/presbyters
6: Concluding warnings for Timothy
Is this the first example of de novo pseudepigraphy in the NT?

5. Titus
Situation: Titus is in Crete with a mandate from Paul to oversee various congregations and to give teachings that will undermine the efforts of opponents who are against the Pauline mission.
1: Introduction and church order
2: Christian family life
3: individual exhortations
Questions about what is behind this letter and its relation to Crete

Select Bibliography

Colossians Bibliography

Ephesians Bibliography
Philemon Bibliography

Canon

Pastoral Epistles