

MONDAY
30 AUGUST
1 Thessalonians
4:13-end
Psalm 96
Luke 4:16-30

TUESDAY
31 AUGUST
1 Thessalonians
5:1-6. 9-11
Psalm 27:1-8
Luke 4:31-37

WEDNESDAY
1 SEPTEMBER
Colossians 1:1-8
Psalm 34:11-18
Luke 4:38-end

THURSDAY
2 SEPTEMBER
Colossians 1:9-14
Psalm 98:1-5
Luke 5:1-11

FRIDAY
3 SEPTEMBER
Colossians 1:15-20
Psalm 89:19b-28
Luke 5:33-end

SATURDAY
4 SEPTEMBER
Colossians 1:21-23
Psalm 117
Luke 6:1-5

REFLECTION

The people of Nazareth still see Jesus as a local boy who grew up among them. They're fascinated by what they've heard about him and wonder what he'll



say to them. They probably don't expect him to claim that Isaiah's prophecy refers to himself! How could a carpenter's son be God's anointed one? That doesn't fit with their understanding of either Jesus or the promised anointed one of God.

Jesus continues the ministry for which he was anointed. He brings good news for those with ears to hear; he frees those held captive by disease or guilt; he sets free those for whom religion is a burden, weighing them down. Everywhere people are amazed at his authority and his teachings. But none of them recognises in him God's Messiah. It's only demons who know who he is: **"You are the Son of God... the Holy One of God,"** they scream and shout.

Jesus brings new ideas, new teaching, a new spirit into the lives of men and women everywhere. Sometimes they don't fit with old and worn out understandings. Is it time we opened ourselves to becoming new wineskins, ready to receive this new Spirit of God?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, open our hearts and minds to hear your message for us today.
 Let us not be closed to new ideas but willing to recognise you,
 to learn from you and to receive from you the new fresh wine of God's Spirit.

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THE THEOLOGY OF ST PAUL

PART II – THE AUTHENTICITY OF PAUL

Becky Mynett continues her series about the life and theology of St Paul.

The New Testament contains thirteen letters traditionally thought to have been written by Paul. Today, biblical scholars agree that he definitely wrote seven of them. These are the earliest surviving Christian scriptures and pre-date the Gospels. The first, 1 Thessalonians, was probably written in around AD 50 and the last, Romans, about eight years later. Between these, Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia, Corinth (several times – some of these letters are now lost, and some are combined to form 2 Corinthians) and Philippi, and to Philemon.

As for the rest, scholars disagree whether they were written by Paul or by later followers. However, the vast majority think it unlikely he wrote the two letters to Timothy or the letter to Titus. The style of these "pastoral letters" is quite different and they seem to have been written to more formally organised churches. It is now thought they were written long after Paul's death in around AD 64.

There is more doubt about the remaining letters. Even so, a majority of scholars think Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians and Colossians were written after Paul's death. Colossians is probably the earliest Pauline letter that was not actually by him, but it could possibly have been written by Timothy (who is mentioned as co-sender).

Of course, although these later letters were probably not written by Paul, they are still valuable early Christian documents. At the time they were written, it was common for letters to be written in the name of a respected teacher, so we should not think of them as forgeries. However, our understanding of the context in which issues were addressed may be different when we know that it was probably not Paul himself who wrote in the letter to Titus, **"Tell slaves to be submissive to their masters and to give satisfaction in every respect; they are not to talk back,"** nor in 1 Timothy, **"I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man"**

LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by Caroline Hodgson and Heather Smith



Convento de San Esteban, Salamanca, by an unknown seventeenth-century artist. Renata Sedmakova / Shutterstock.

Thirteenth week after Trinity

Monday 30 August to Saturday 4 September 2021

WEEK