

## Timeline of Early Christianity

### 1) Life of Jesus: 4 BC – 30 AD

### 2) Apostolic Period

- A) Paul establishes churches throughout Asia Minor (Turkey) and Greece starting in the mid 30's until his death in Rome in 63 or 64 AD. His letters are earliest New Testament documents, written mostly in the 50's.
- B) Oral transmission of Jesus' saying and deeds by other eyewitness apostles from the 30's to the late 60's.
- C) Mark, the first gospel, was written somewhere between 67-70 AD. Rome
- D) Jerusalem destroyed in 70 AD. The still surviving members of the mother church disperse. The apostles James, Peter, Paul, and James, the Lord's brother have already been martyred. Tradition says that John, together with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and others flee to Ephesus and establish the "Johannine" community which preserves their own memories of Jesus.
- E) Normative Judaism forms from the remnants of the scribes and Pharisees. The Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots disappear from history. (70 – 100 AD)
- F) Conflict breaks out between the two surviving Jewish groups: Normative Jews and Messianic Jews (Christians) (80 – 90 AD). Messianic Jews are expelled from the synagogues and a curse is proclaimed against them.
- G) Matthew is written between 80-85 AD. Matthew's sources are Mark, Q (sayings source), and Special Matthew. Matthew's community may have been located in Galilee. His gospel reflects the conflict with other Jews.
- H) Luke is written between 85-90 AD. Luke's community was mostly gentile and may have been located in Greece. His sources were Mark, Q (sayings), and Special Luke.
- I) John's gospel is written around 90 AD. As noted, John's community was in Ephesus, Asia Minor. He used his own sources which were very different from the other gospels.

- J) The so-called "general letters" (non-Pauline) were written mostly from just before to mostly after the end of the first century. This includes such epistles as James, Hebrews, Jude, Titus, and Revelation.
  
- K) The New Testament period is followed by the period of the Apostolic Fathers which was characterized by both rapid growth of Christianity and sporadic persecution. Many of the martyrs from this period are now canonized saints in Roman Catholicism.