

A Brief User's Guide to Paul's Letters (Part 1)

Thirteen letters in the New Testament claim Paul as their author

<u>Undisputed</u>	<u>Disputed</u>
Romans	2 nd Thessalonians
1 st Corinthians	Colossians
2 nd Corinthians	Ephesians
Galatians	1 st Timothy
Philippians	2 nd Timothy
1 st Thessalonians	Titus
Philemon	

Paul's letters...

1. Reflect the structured format typical of letters as an art form in Greco-Roman culture (opening, body, closing) with elements typical of each section
2. Tend to be more elaborate in their closings than the typical Roman letter
3. Are written in response to specific circumstances
4. Are written (with the exception of Romans) to churches that Paul planted
5. Are written in lieu of (and often in advance of) a visit from Paul
6. Include either a disclosure (e.g., "I want you to know, brothers and sisters...") or an appeal (e.g., "Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters...")
7. Balance his authority as an apostle with his personal relationship to the audience

Paul's letters are generally dated to between 50 and 65 AD, making them the oldest material in the New Testament

Canonical order is based on length, not chronology

Paul uses standard tools of rhetoric to make his points, including:

- *Ethos* – establishing Paul’s trustworthiness via his resumé
- *Pathos* – an appeal to the emotions of the audience
- *Logos* – an appeal to logic or a reasoned argument

Paul also makes extensive use of diatribe and autobiography

The Churches of the Pauline Letters

