

## Summary of Session 2: Overview of the Letters of Paul

### I. Four Ways of Letter Writing in Ancient World

- A) Write oneself
- B) Dictate word for word to a secretary (*amanuensis*)
- C) Dictate the sense, leaving the formulation to a secretary
- D) Have someone write in one's name, without indicating the content

### II. Paul's Method of Writing

- A) Dictation e.g. Tertius (Rom 16:21)
- B) Paul adds greetings (1 Cor 16:21)
- C) Adds his own signature/writing (Gal 6:11)
- D) Dictated word for word or left secretary to formulate? (2 Thess. 3:17; Col. 4:18)

### III. Development of Paul's letters

- A) General outline based upon letter form of his day
  - 1) Opening
  - 2) Thanksgiving
  - 3) Body
  - 4) Ethical instruction or exhortation (*parenthesis*)
  - 5) Closing
- B) Overlapping of parts at times
- C) Knowledge of parts important for understanding context

### IV. Four "Paul's" in the New Testament

- A) The Undisputed Letters of Paul
  - o Philemon; 1 Thessalonians; Galatians; Philippians; 1 & 2 Corinthians; Romans
- B) The Disputed Letters of Paul
  - o 2 Thessalonians; Colossians; Ephesians
- C) The Pastoral Letters
  - o 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus
- D) The Paul of Luke/Acts
- E) References to other letters
  - 1) A previous letter to the Corinthians? (1 Cor. 5:9)
  - 2) A "letter written in tears" (2 Cor. 2:3-4)
  - 3) A Letter to the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16)

### V. Order of letters

- A) Not according to date written
- B) Generally from longest to shortest: From public (general) to personal letters
- C) Date of writings disputed

### VI. Why letters? Not Gospels?

- A) To stay in touch with communities
  - 1) Paul shows exceptional skill in his letters
  - 2) Paul's use of scribes
  - 3) Sent by couriers
- B) Gospel narrative was not Paul's interest; Rather sharing message of salvation through Christ

### VII. Brief Comments on Theological Aspects of each Pauline letter.