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A short biography of St. Paul, the Apostle. Arthur G. Patzia explores the story, weighs the issues and traces the contours of the early church's expansion and growth, life and practices, leadership and worship. The Prolonged Struggle of Supernatural Forces for Creation's Loyalty as Revealed In— Vol. IV.—The Times and Ministry of the Early Christians —The Acts of the Apostles. Heritage Edition—Over 100 Century-Old Illustrations, 385 pages. This fourth volume—The Acts of the Apostles—covers the experience of the early Christian Church. While the Bible's book of Acts covers a period of only a little more than three decades, it is filled with important lessons for the church in every age. God clearly indicates that the Christian today shall experience the presence of the same Spirit who came with power at Pentecost and fanned the gospel message into a flame. The acts of the Holy Spirit through Peter and Paul, John and James, and others can be repeated in the modern disciple. The abruptness with which the book of Acts closes is not accidental; it deliberately suggests that the thrilling narrative is unfinished, that the acts of God through the Spirit are to have their sequel throughout the Christian dispensation—each successive generation adding a chapter full of beauty and power to the one that preceded it. CONTENTS SECTION I. — CHRIST ESTABLISHES HIS CHURCH 1. God's Purpose for His Church 2. The Training of the Twelve . 3. The Great Commission SECTION II. — PERSECUTED CHURCH GROWS 4. Pentecost 5. The Gift of the Spirit 6. At the Temple Gate 7. A Warning Against Hypocrisy 8. Before the Sanhedrin 9. The Seven Deacons 10. The First Christian Martyr 11. The Gospel In Samaria 12. From Persecutor to Disciple 13. Days of Preparation 14. A Seeker for Truth 15. Delivered From Prison 16. The Gospel Message In Antioch SECTION III. — PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS 17. Heralds of the Gospel 18. Preaching Among the Heathen 19. Jew and Gentile 20. Exalting the Cross 21. In the Regions Beyond 22. Thessalonica 23. Berea and Athens 24. Corinth 25. The Thessalonian Letters 26. Apollos at Corinth 27. Ephesus 28. Days of Toil and Trial 29. A Message of Warning and Entreaty 30. Called to Reach a Higher Standard 31. The Message Heeded 32. A Liberal Church 33. Laboring Under Difficulties 34. A Consecrated Ministry 35. Salvation to the Jews 36. Apostasy In Galatia SECTION IV. PAUL'S ARRESTS AND TRIALS 37. Paul's Last Journey to Jerusalem 38. Paul, a Prisoner 39. The Trial at Caesarea 40. Paul Appeals to Caesar 41. "Almost Thou Persuadest Me" 42. The Voyage and Shipwreck 43. In Rome 44. Caesar's Household 45. Written From Rome 46. At Liberty 47. The Final Arrest 48. Paul Before Nero 49. Paul's Last Letter 50. Condemned to Die SECTION V. PETER'S LATER MINISTRY 51. A Faithful Under-Shepherd 52. Steadfast Unto the End SECTION VI. JOHN'S MINISTRY AND THE REVELATION 53. John the Beloved 54. A Faithful Witness 55. Transformed by Grace 56. Patmos 57. The Revelation 58. The Church Triumphant The Companion Volumes are: Vol. I.—Adam & Eve Through King David's Reign — Patriarchs and Prophets. Vol. II.—King Solomon Until the Promised Deliverer — Prophets and Kings. Vol. III.—The Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ — The Desire of Ages. Vol. V.—The Christian Era Until Victory is Unanimously Achieved — The Great Controversy. \* Supernatural Revelations Explaining Past, Present, & Future \* —

TRANSFORMING TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION — When his friend Father Andréi is killed on a train en route to the Vatican, Father Nil, a Benedictine who teaches the Gospel of St. John to novices, decides to conduct his own investigation. The dead priest possessed proof of the existence of a 13th disciple and an epistle stating that Jesus was nothing more than an inspired prophet, not the son of God -- two things that would spell great danger for the Catholic church. Father Nil then discovers a previously unpublished account of the origins of Christianity. It tells of the Nazoreans, a community excluded from the official Church by Peter and Paul, which appears to have thrived until the seventh century and given birth to Islam. While the priest pushes ahead with his investigation, the Pope's advisors, rival factions, and secret societies are trying, by any means, to lay their hands on his findings. From the Mossad to Fatah, everyone seems to have a very good reason to keep the 13th disciple a secret. This book is a serious and powerful exhortation for the disciples to watch and imitate their Lord Jesus Christ, who should be the Only Focus of their lives. The author, Z.T. Fomum, makes sure he presents the Lord Jesus, during His earthly life, as a Lover who was ever thirsty for the presence of God. The Scriptures depict Him so. His multiple prayer retreats are clearly emphasised in support. Daily quiet time with God is properly explained in the book. These periods of the day invested in prayer and Bible meditation immerses the believer in a deep relationship with God and transform every aspect of his life and Christian walk. It is a statement of the secret of daily communication and communion with the living God. You will find examples and tips that will make it easy to practice the truths outlined in the book. The author published this book with the prayer that it should be used by the Lord to bless His children, to deepen their walk with Him; and to fulfill His purpose in man, so that man may know Him, that He should live in him and that man should find pleasure in Him forever! Who were the 12 men who were the closest to Jesus? The Twelve Disciples pamphlet takes believers inside this circle to learn more about these men, their backgrounds, their strengths and weaknesses, their purpose, and their mission. The disciples' personalities, their encounters with Jesus, and the lessons we can learn from each are presented in this bestselling glossy, full-color pamphlet. This bestselling resource is an excellent tool for teaching new and longtime believers about those who walked with Jesus and what it takes to be a disciple of Jesus today. Glossy and full-color, every pamphlet fact has a Scripture reference. Size: 8.5x 5.5 unfolds to 33 long. Fits inside most Bible covers. What do you know about the disciples who learned at Jesus' feet? The Twelve Disciples pamphlet offers a close-up look at the 12 plain ordinary men who Jesus trained to care for his church: Peter, James (son of Zebedee), Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James (son of Alphaeus), John, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot. The pamphlet presents the life and ministry of Jesus' 12 disciples in a convenient and easy-to-use, side-by-side comparison chart. Teachers will appreciate the thoroughness of the resource and its ease to teach. Students will gain a new insight into the men whose lives and faiths were shaped by walking with Jesus. Pastors or discipleship leaders may want to purchase one of these pamphlets for each church member. What were the backgrounds of the disciples? What was their collective purpose and mission? Here are a few of the facts people will find at a glance in The Twelve Disciples: Each of the disciples were from the Galilee region except for Judas. The disciples were Jesus' main focus of instruction Jesus knew their strengths and their weaknesses Jesus trusted them to carry God's message of redemption to the end's of the earth This bestselling pamphlet reveals the personality and characters of the disciples, for example, Peter was impulsive and courageous whereas John was vengeful and bold. Each disciple had unique and personal encounters with Jesus that speak to the roles of disciples today Peter was called to be a fisher of men (Matthew 4: 19) James was with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26: 36-46) Andrew told Jesus about the boy with five loaves of bread and two fish (John 20: 19-25) Thomas affirmed that Jesus was Lord and God (John 21: 2-7) Most believers can provide a few answers and details about the 12 men, but how about the other 39 followers of Jesus mentioned by name in the New Testament? Yes, there are 39 other key persons who were significant to Jesus such as: Cleopas, Joanna, Judas (brother of Jesus), Mary Magdalene, and dozens of others. The Twelve Disciples pamphlet also provides five key steps to being a disciple of Christ. April DeConick offers a new translation of the Gospel of Judas, one which seriously challenges the National Geographic interpretation of a good Judas. Matthias-The Thirteenth Apostle is a work of historic fiction which interweaves actual characters and events as recorded in the Holy Bible with fictitious characters and circumstances who help to tell an interesting story. Indeed, the Bible records that Matthias was named the apostle who took the place of the disgraced Judas Iscariot. Aside from this singular instance, no other mention of his name appears in the Biblical record. However, other records kept by contemporaries of Jesus do, in fact, provide additional historical data and insights that help modern readers gain a more complete understanding of not only the newest apostle, but also the cultural, linguistic, legal, and governing relationships between the Jews and their Roman overlords. Though the story's Matthias and the characters surrounding him are mostly a product of creative license, the author has based these actors on his decades of extensive research into the written records of Josephus, Publius Cornelius Tacitus and others. Hence, the reader can be assured that the setting and key players in this novel arise from a foundation of authenticity and historicity. In Bethlehem Mary has identical twins: Jesus and Jesse. The boys grow up together, but their education and interests diverge. Whereas the upbringing of Jesus is centered on the synagogue, Jesse attends Roman schools and becomes devoted to the integration of the Hebrew nation into the Roman Empire. Accordingly, while Jesus becomes an itinerant preacher in Galilee and Judea, Jesse undertakes a voyage with a Roman friend, Marcellus, to Italy. There he works as a shipping clerk in the port city of Ostia and falls in love with Adriana, daughter of a wealthy local merchant. When the father learns of their affair, however, he demands that Jesse depart. The young man's decision to do so is clinched by the accidental death of Marcellus in a chariot race. Jesse's return to Palestine is marred by a severe case of malaria, leaving him emaciated and enfeebled. His recovery is hastened by the loving ministrations of Mary Magdalene, with whom he establishes an intimate bond. Meanwhile, Jesse encounters his twin once more and becomes one of his followers, the thirteenth disciple. He is consequently present at the Last Supper, identified only as the one whom Jesus loved. Charged with being a radical dissident, Jesus is arrested, tried, and condemned to death under the regime of King Herod. The scene is thus set for the dramatic events of a crucifixion. Only, the executioners knew not what they were doing. In 4 BC, two babies were born beneath a brilliant star that shone down on the town of Bethlehem. The brilliance of the star was taken as a sign from God. Both were destined to survive the purge of Bethlehem. One child was Jesus of Nazareth, whose Jewish parents fled with their newborn son to Egypt in order to save his life. The second child was Marcus Titus. He was the son of a Jewish woman and Roman man. Knowing that their son faced certain death, they hid Marcus among some rocks on a hillside just beyond Bethlehem. There, he was found by Roman soldiers and sent to Rome to be raised as a Roman citizen. This is the story of two star-crossed lives. One life has been written about extensively, its history retold for multiple generations. The other life has remained a mystery except to a very few for an equal number of generations. Yet both are intimately connected to the Christian faith. Chosen by Jesus of Nazareth to write the history of his life and ministry, Marcus Titus wrote three gospels, two of which are contained in the New Testament. This is a story based upon fact, inspiration, and speculation about the one referred to in the New Testament as "the other disciple." Within this story are lessons that provide the foundation for life. The author of The Jesus Dynasty draws on St. Paul's letters and other early sources to reveal the apostles' sharply competing ideas about the significance of Jesus and His teachings while controversially demonstrating how St. Paul independently shaped Christianity as it is known today. 75,000 first printing. 13th apostle is the fictionalized autobiography of the rabbi Saul of Tarsus, who becomes Paul, servant of Jesus Christ. As Paul tells his own story, many experiences about which the Scriptures are silent come to life. There reader sees Saul at the trial and stoning of Stephen, Saul's persecution of the Christians, his conversion on the road to Damascus and his anguish when he realizes he has tortured guiltless. 13th apostle recounts the day-to-day trials, disappointment, aspirations. And triumphs as Paul becomes the "traveling apostles" his associates- Branabas, John Mark, Timothy, Luke, Lydia, and Silas - appear in vivid detail. Paul's life and ministry is told against the backdrop of Antioch, Jerusalem, Athena, Rome the cities of Macedonia and other lands. Here is more that the inspiring story of Paul's Christian witness. 13th apostle also offer enriching background materials to those who study the book of acts What if the story of Jesus isn't the one that happened? Christians are confronted constantly with references about "a certain place" or "a certain time". The object of The Bent Nail is to weave a narrative that connects these times, places and characters, and breathes coherence and timeliness into them. The novel also aims to bring to life obscure references in the bible, giving the reader a clearer understanding of events depicted in the Bible's narratives AND to expand the blame for Jesus' crucifixion beyond Pontius Pilate-to temple priests led by high priests Caiaphas and Annas and Galilee tetrarch, Herod Antipas. The New York Times bestselling author of Buddha and Jesus weaves together historical narrative, mystery, exciting adventure, and intrigue in this masterfully told novel that reveals surprising discoveries about the unknown last disciple of Christ, and a new understanding of who Jesus was in his

final days. When a solid gold reliquary missing from a church in Belgium suddenly resurfaces in America, a young newspaperman begins to investigate the story. At first, it seems like just another case of a treasure stolen during World War II that has resurfaced. But it soon becomes apparent that much more is at stake. Hidden within the medieval reliquary is a gold box that holds a sacred relic—a single finger bone—from an anonymous saint. Why would the remains of someone unknown to the Church be considered holy? The search for answers leads to a shocking discovery—a dangerous secret known only to a small band of people. If one touches the reliquary, a sacred vision is received—a vision involving a young girl who had a chance encounter with Jesus just before he was crucified. The few people who have been blessed with these miraculous messages have banded together into a mysterious school, a closed society that preserves this venerated wisdom. But their knowledge of the young girl and Jesus is at once so fascinating yet so highly controversial that it cannot be shared with the world. This young girl, curious about the charismatic man named Jesus, embarks on a quest to find out who he really was. What she finds—the knowledge the society protects—is at times far different from the accepted gospels. Could this unknown girl be the 13th Disciple—the last and truest apostle of Christ? This novel is about a young boy as he experiences life in the time of Jesus Christ. It tells of his early life at En-Gedi, his life as he travels with Jesus, his life after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus and about those he encountered as he lived his life out in Capernaum to the age of 100 years. In effect, it is a bible story that explains the rudiments of Christianity. It is a great adventure in Christianity. The author is retired from the U.S. Air Force where he became acquainted with North Africa and the Middle East. In 1999 he and his wife had the opportunity to tour the Holy Land and Egypt. He came to appreciate the rich history of the area of Jesus Christ and the Pharaohs. In order to put it all into perspective, he wrote this novel to assist him in better understanding his Christian religion and how Christian message has spread throughout the world. It is based on the history listed in the Reference section and a harmony of the gospels of Matthew, Luke, Mark, and John. It acquaints the reader with the Jewish One God in contrast with the multiple gods of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Their gods were laid bare by the free offer of salvation by the One God. Thrive Under Pressure

The apostle Paul was one of the great world-changers of all time. After a dramatic conversion experience, the former persecutor of Christians became a devoted follower of Christ. In this study, you will walk with Paul through the many struggles and victories of his life's ministry. As Paul was forced to face a diversity of difficulties, he learned to trust God for help and wisdom. The lessons we learn from Paul and the book of Acts provide guidance for contemporary crises today. In PAUL THE TRAVELLER, acclaimed historian and bestselling author of THE GREAT SIEGE Ernle Bradford breathes new life into the story of Saint Paul - the thirteenth apostle. Born into Asia Minor's Jewish aristocracy and a passionate student of scripture, Paul was part of a crowd that killed Stephen, a deacon regarded as the first Christian Martyr. But on the road to Damascus, Paul experienced a miracle that would change his life and in turn change history. This conversion experience convinced him that his true master was the man who would come to be known as Jesus Christ. Drawing on his vast command of ancient history and blending it with superb story-telling skills, Bradford weaves a tale that takes the reader from city to city as Paul spreads the teachings of Christ despite being beaten, stoned and shipwrecked. It's a thrilling tale and stirring biography of a man whose devotion and rhetorical genius laid the groundwork for the religion that soon swept the civilized world. A reprinting of Schillebeeckx's classic work. A standard in understanding the relationship between Christ, Sacrament and the Church. A positive and constructive ecclesial theology. April DeConick offers a new translation of the Gospel of Judas, one which seriously challenges the National Geographic interpretation of a good Judas. Kalas breathes fresh life into the faith of the men who journeyed with Jesus. The Apostle Paul remains one of the most fascinating, enigmatic, and controversial figures of the early Christian Church. While much of his writing is liberating and inspiring, his words have also been used to support slavery, male domination, and religious exclusivism. Drawing on the literary and historical insights that have revolutionized contemporary Paul scholarship, Tatha Wiley skillfully separates the apostle's different voices, illuminating the authentic, historical Paul. Encountering Paul is a compelling look at this key figure in Christian history and belief. Life was set in place and going well. I was slowly taking the lead in my father's business, and it was growing beyond what he had planned or envisioned, with the two of us buying and selling whatever things were needed or in demand. Then the sale with my brothers in Jerusalem changed everything. Though I did not understand Jesus' words, they somehow touched my heart, and I knew I would never be the same person I was before. After going home and selling all that I owned, and getting stuck with my best friend, we journeyed to Jerusalem. On the day we arrived, Jesus was being put to death. Words can't describe the sadness and loss I felt, not for what I gave up, but for what I had just lost. Then a clear voice called to me: "Matthew," and I answered him, "Yes, Jesus." He was waiting there for Justin and me to arrive so that He might invite us to do a mighty work for the kingdom of God. We learned things that gave us vision into the spirit realm, and taught us to see men as God sees us. Our vision and our spirits were often opened to see "in the spirit," so all we could do was go forward; there is no going back for us anymore. For each of us, one of our greatest joys was when we told our families about Jesus and they found His love, too. Tolerance and co-existence are both great! In fact, they are necessary. If we are to live together in peace without hating each other, or physically harming each other over differences in race, culture, sexual orientation, political views, and religious beliefs, we must have tolerance. However, we must also recognize that every belief can't be equally valid. If two beliefs directly contradict each other, both of them cannot be true, no matter how "tolerant" we become. This means it is false to say that every religion is true, or that every religion leads to God. When people make such claims they show that they have not taken the time to study the world's religions, because a brief reading of the sacred texts of only a handful of religions quickly reveals contradictions on the most fundamental levels. Religious Contradictions Reincarnation (Hinduism and Buddhism) contradicts the belief that this is your only life before eternity (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam). Salvation from sin (Christianity) contradicts the belief that there is no sin to be saved from but simply pain that can be escaped through enlightenment (Buddhism). Jesus Christ is the incarnate, Son of God (Christianity), contradicts the teaching that he is just a prophet (Islam) or that he was a false prophet (Judaism). In light of these contradictions alone, all religions can't be true. They could all be false, but they can't all be true. Are any of them true? This is the most important question anyone can ask. Recognize religious contradictions. Embrace them. Test them. Seek the truth.

[www.contradictmovement.org](http://www.contradictmovement.org) There are two things good and that which must become good. Humanity does not understand this. Reality and pseudoreality. There is God, and there is man. If a man seeks truth, he must be eligible for the reception of truth. Mankind does not know this. Consequently, believing in the existence of truth, he assumes he is therefore able to perceive it. This is not in accordance with experience in our religions, but it continues to be believed, particularly by the four thousand religions on the earth that we follow blindly. The science of effecting a bridge between the inner and outer man has been rare, and for the most part forgotten, inevitably there are those that think their religion stands them in good stead and accept the truth of these lesser experiences and rituals when they worship. They are wrong. God's heart lies only with the Sufis. A man cut down a tree one day. A Sufi who saw this taking place said, Look at this fresh branch, which is full of sap, happy because it does not yet know it has been cut off and ignorant of the damage that it has suffered. But it will know in due time. Meanwhile you cannot reason with it. This severance, this ignorancethese are the states of the leaders of religion, worshiping the ceremonies rather than God. This work introduces the reader to St Paul, not as the grim and pedantic figure of popular stereotype, but as a complex character: passionate, affectionate and very human. When his friend Andrei is mysteriously killed on his way back from Rome, Father Nil, a Benedictine who teaches the Gospel of St. John to novices, decides to conduct his own investigation. The dead priest possessed proof of the existence of a thirteenth apostle and an epistle stating that Jesus was nothing more than an inspired prophet, not the Son of God - two things that would spell great danger for the Church. Father Nil then discovers a previously unpublished account of the origins of Christianity. It tells of the Nazoreans - a community excluded from the official Church by Peter and Paul - who appear to have thrived until the 7th century, playing an important role in the birth of Islam. While he pushes ahead with his investigation, the Pope's advisors, rival factions and secret societies are trying, by any means, to lay their hands on the priest's findings. From the Mossad to Fatah, everyone seems to have a very good reason to keep the thirteenth apostle a secret... The story of an ancient sect detailed within papyrus sheaves hidden in the caves at Qumran forms the basis of this exhaustively researched novel. A captivating and thoroughly researched religious thriller comparable to Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. Donald Webb is an American consul stationed in the main port city of a Central American country. He has resigned himself, not unhappily, to a life of compromise and safety, until the day he receives a report from deep in the mountain jungle, a peculiarly incomplete report of the death of an obscure American painter whom he remembers from a brief and strange encounter. The report and the memory

draw Webb into the jungle to find out the truth, leading him eventually to the base of a steep and forbidding mountain. He is told by the persons in the camp there that he must climb to the top. It is during the climb that Webb finds his life on a new dangerous point of balance...an experience that leads him deep into himself far beyond the safeguards of civilization. Accompanying Webb is a jungle priest, Padre Paolo...a man of profound and, to Webb at times, irritating faith. Also to Webb's quest are certain inhabitants of the mining camp....the remarkably intelligent opponent of faith, Con Hernandez; Barrie, the vicious mining engineer; and Barrie's daughter, Mona. Brooding over all of Webb's experience stands the artist, Crispian, who once named Webb the Thirteenth Apostle: "He who is called but not chosen." --Judy Smith at Amazon.com. Father Montague revisits many of the most familiar passages from the Gospel of John and with rare and surprising insights helps us to see in depth much of what is hidden under the surface of these popular texts. This is a new edition of the 1963 classic which gave Christological thought a new direction. As far back as his first major book Schillebeeckx propounded an anthropological approach to the sacraments. In *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, he draws on theologically fruitful work by phenomenological anthropologists like Merleau-Ponty, Buytendijk and Binswanger. That makes Schillebeeckx's distinctive idiom and modern approach appealing even today. He rediscovers, as it were from within, the notions forged by scholastic theology, and thus restores to us a theology of the sacraments rooted in the biblical and patristic soil from which they first sprang. Schillebeeckx's speculative synthesis of this quest still has a fresh ring to it. He describes Christ as the primordial sacrament in a reflection on his public ministry, death and resurrection inspired by the universal human search for such a 'sacrament'. He concludes that the church's sacraments have to be an earthly extension of the liberation brought by Christ's story. Schillebeeckx ends by describing sacraments as grace made visible that gives crowning moments in Christian life a mystical quality. Edward Schillebeeckx *Collected Works* bring together the most important and influential works of the Dutch Dominican and theologian Edward Schillebeeckx (1914-2009) in a reliable edition. All translations have been carefully checked or revised, some texts are presented in English for the first time. The page numbers of earlier editions are included. Each volume carries a foreword by an internationally renowned Schillebeeckx expert. This edition makes Schillebeeckx available for a new generation of scholars and students. It's 33 A.D. in Jerusalem. A young beggar embraces the teachings of Jesus. He then wins his opponents with his knack of applying Jesus' parables to everyday life. Later he hears of the plot against Jesus and tries to warn Him. Intrigue, suspense, and miracles abound as he pursues his mission. The 13th Apostle was written especially for young people. Gamaliel's example will inspire them to do great things for God! **THREE SOULS. TWO THOUSAND YEARS. ONE TRUTH.** A worldwide conspiracy thriller for the millions of fans of *The Da Vinci Code* who've been left thirsting for more... Looking like Christ, Living like Christ How do we persevere in the face of suffering? For first-century Christians who were persecuted by their neighbors, staying focused on their "living hope" was hard to do. The Apostle Peter wanted to remind these hard-pressed Christians of their rich identity in Christ and encourage them to respond to their sufferings as Christ did. Peter doesn't deliver abstract teaching but applies it to their daily lives. His words will connect with your own life, too, as you dive into his heartfelt letter. LifeChange Bible studies will help you grow in Christlikeness through a life-changing encounter with God's Word. Filled with a wealth of ideas for going deeper so you can return to this study again and again. Features Cover the entire book of 1 Peter in 13 lessons Equip yourself to lead a Bible study Imagine the Bible's historical world Study word origins and definitions Explore thoughtful questions on key themes Go deeper with optional projects Add your notes with extra space and wide margins Find the flexibility to fit the time you have In many respects John remains the most beloved of all Gospels. In this careful study for laity, Frances Taylor Gench provides an opportunity for Christians to immerse themselves in this complex Gospel and become better acquainted with its intriguing and distinctive vision. Examining thirteen central texts (including the wedding at Cana, the woman of Samaria, the "I Am" passages, the woman accused of adultery, the raising of Lazarus, and the resurrection scenes), Gench focuses on each text's key features, including literary design, historical origins, and theological insights. Drawing on questions and insights raised by contemporary biblical scholars, Gench helps her readers see these texts anew. She explores the ethical challenges that these texts pose and discusses how this perplexing Gospel can inform Christian life and faith and the practice of daily ministry. Each chapter concludes with thoughtful and engaging study questions for individual or group use. Based on Pope Benedict XVI's weekly teaching on the relationship between Christ and the Church, this book tells the drama of Jesus' first disciples - his Apostles and their associates - and how they spread Jesus' message throughout the ancient world. Far from distorting the truth about Jesus of Nazareth, insists Pope Benedict, the early disciples remained faithful to it, even at the cost of their lives. Beginning with the Twelve as the foundation of Jesus' re-establishment of the Holy People of God, Pope Benedict examines the story of the early followers of Christ. He draws on Scripture and early tradition to consider such important figures as Peter, Andrew, James and John, and even Judas Iscariot. Benedict moves beyond the original Twelve to discuss Paul of Tarsus, the persecutor of Christianity who became one of Jesus' greatest disciples. Also considered are Stephen, the first Christian martyr, Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, the wife and husband "team" of Priscilla and Aquila, and such key women figures as Mary, the Mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and Phoebe. Jesus, the Apostles and the Early Church is a fascinating journey back to the origins of Christianity. It reveals how Jesus' earliest disciples faithfully conveyed the truth about the "Jesus of history" and how they laid the foundations for the Church, through whom people today can know the same Jesus. The time is the mid-first century AD. The followers of Jesus of Nazareth, called the Apostles, are meeting in Jerusalem to resolve disputes that have already broken out among them. Mary, from the town of Magdal attends the meeting and she proclaims that she alone knows the true teachings of Jesus. The other Apostles scoff at this idea and secretly plot to have her killed if she tries to gather a following. Paul and Luke, two of the Apostles, hire a Roman ex-centaurion turned mercenary named Quintas Cotta to get rid of her quickly. Cotta finds Mary alone in a garden and stabs her cleanly through the heart. As she is dying, she asks for forgiveness for Cotta. Haunted by Mary's words, Cotta decides to track down Paul and avenge her death. The events which follow alter his life forever. The Thirteenth Apostle uncovers a jarring world secret through loss, love, and human experience culminating beyond simple answers and instead in ultimate truth. Upset over the tragic loss of his infant son to a freak genetic abnormality writer Sasha Komarov, sets out on a quest for answers regarding his family's mysterious and illustrious past. His travels take him from Canada to Siberia, where a century ago his great-grandfather survived a massive explosion resulting from the devastating Tunguska crash. While there, Sasha becomes entangled in a forbidden love affair and thrust into nefarious dealings with Chechen terrorists-from which he narrowly escapes with his life. Amidst it all, Sasha reconnects with distant relatives who hold key not only to the mystery of his son's death, but to his grand purpose in life a mission of extraordinary global significance. The truth he uncovers is astonishing-certain to rattle the religious masses...but would the world accept it?