## Contents

1. Setting the scene		
Chapter 1.	The world of the first Christians	14
2. Jesus: (	God's promised deliverer	
Chapter 2.	Jesus' birth and early years	46
Chapter 3.	Who was Jesus?	64
Chapter 4.	Why did Jesus die?	77
Chapter 5.	The resurrection	98
3. The kir Chapter 6.	ngdom is here What is God's kingdom?	112
Chapter 7.	Pictures of the kingdom	122
Chapter 8.	The power of the kingdom	136
Chapter 9.	God's kingdom in action	147
4. Knowii	ng about Jesus	
Chapter 10.	Understanding the Gospels	160
Chapter 11.	Four portraits of Jesus	181
Chapter 12.	Can we trust the Gospels?	198

5. Into all	the world	,
Chapter 13.	Confronting the ancient world	214
6. Paul: e	vangelist extraordinary	
Chapter 14.	Who was Paul?	247
Chapter 15.	Paul the persecutor	266
Chapter 16.	Into all the world	281
Chapter 17.	Paul the missionary	294
Chapter 18.	Paul the pastor	309
Chapter 19.	Paul reaches Rome	328
Chapter 20.	Letters from prison	339
7. Paul an	nd the Christian message	
Chapter 21.	What does it mean to be a Christian?	358
Chapter 22.	Freedom and fellowship	378
8. Unity i	n diversity	
Chapter 23.	The Spirit and the letter	392
Chapter 24.	The church and its Jewish origins	412
	The enemies within	453