

MidWeek Study: Church Essentials: The Bible

Pastor Mike Ruel: Week 4

INTRODUCTION

- Back to the Bible: Review...
 - The Bible is an _____ of the church
 - The Bible is God's _____ of himself
- The Bible tells _____ story in four parts:
 - Creation
 - Fall
 - Redemption
 - Restoration
- Roadmap
 - ~~Week 1 we defined terms~~
 - ~~Week 2 we looked at the OT Canon~~
 - ~~Week 3 we looked at the gospels— are they reliable? (YES!)~~
 - This week, we will look at the rest of the NT Canon and how we got our English Bibles

- NT Canon: How did it come to be?

- What is a canon again? I always forget that.
 - A large gun that shoots a big ball with a big boom?
 - Canon = _____ / _____
- So therefore the canon of Scripture means the _____ of what books are considered _
Scripture
 - Kruger defines it as “The authoritative book that God gave his corporate church.”¹

- “The canon of the NT was completed when the least authoritative book was given to any church by the apostles, and that was when John wrote the apocalypse, about AD 98.”²
- The canon was not selected, it was _____
- Paul proves the reliability of this
 - 1 Corinthians 15:3-7
 - What things does this tell us?
 - “I _____ to you as of first importance what I also _____...”
 - Paul received these facts how? Oral testimony first from Jesus, then from Peter.
 - He tested the truth of what he received by vision - Galatians 2:2.
 - The message went from God, to Jesus, to the Apostles, to the Church...
- NT Canon Basics:
 - NT was written in _____ - “Koine” (Common) - not what is spoken today
 - “Protestant canon is composed of sixty-six books, while the Catholic canon is more extensive”³ as it includes the Apocrypha.
 - Books, authors, dates.⁴
- But very early on, these written records were _____ as canon.
 - “Canon consciousness thus arose at the inception of the Christian church and lies deep within the New Testament literature itself.”⁵
 - Process:⁶
 - Canonical books are written with _____.
 - Apostles began to die/be martyred
 - Need for the message to be proclaimed faithfully in new territories
 - Need for the churches to have the Word of God
 - Need to counter heresies

² Warfield, quoted in Kruger, 41

³ Allison, Historical Theology, 37

⁴ Timothy Paul Jones, How We Got the Bible, 75-77

⁵ Childs, quoted in Kruger, The Question of Canon, 21

⁶ Kruger, 43

- Technological advances - codex (early books), eventually the printing press
- Those books are _____ and _____ as Scripture by early Christians
 - Scriptural Proofs:
 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Galatians 1:1 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 14:37-38; 2 Peter 3:15-16; 1 Timothy 5:18
 - Early Church Fathers:
 - “Implicit canon” in the writings of the early church fathers
 - J. Warner Wallace - “The early disciples of the apostles confirm the content of the apostolic teaching.”⁷
 - Irenaeus (~170-180 AD)
 - “He believed that the message of salvation was ‘handed down to us in the Scriptures’ which the apostles themselves, and their companions had written. Thus he sees the concept of a Christian corpus of Scriptures as something that dates back to the Apostolic error, something that the church has possessed long before his own time. Given that Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp who knew the apostle John personally, his testimony about the origins of the scripture cannot be dismissed lightly.”⁸
 - _____ Fragment (180 AD)
 - Confirms 22 of 27 NT books⁹
 - ~325 AD Eusebius lists a general consensus
 - ~367 AD Easter letter of Athanasius is the first complete listing of 27 NT books
 - ~397 AD first council agreement on current 27 NT books
- The church reaches a _____ around these books
 - Written by a recognized prophet or apostle
 - Or by direct associates of the above (Ex. Mark with Peter and Luke with Paul)
 - Must be 100% truthful (Deuteronomy 18:20-22)
 - Cannot contradict another other canonically accepted writing

⁷ <https://coldcasechristianity.com/writings/can-we-construct-the-entire-new-testament-from-the-writings-of-the-church-fathers/>

⁸ Kruger, 160

⁹ All four gospels, Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, Jude, 1-3(?) John and Revelation. Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter are not mentioned. (Kruger 162)

- Conformed by Christ, prophet, or apostle (Luke 24:44, 2 Peter 3:16)
- Accepted as Scripture and used as such by the church
- Why is the canon _____?
 - Great Commission Jesus commanded us to take his message
 - OT example - Deuteronomy 31:24-26
 - Warnings to not add/take away from the message
- If you read the OT, there is a sense that it is unfinished - God's people are awaiting the arrival of the Messiah - New Covenant - so a new revelation would be appropriate.
 - Deut 18:18; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 11:1; Isaiah 61:1-2 / Luke 4:18-19

- Textual Criticism

- Original Writings (_____)
- Writings were copied thousands of times by scribes for distribution to the churches (_____)
- "The very worst Greek manuscript now in existence...contains enough of the Gospel in unadulterated form to lead the reader into the way of salvation."¹⁰
- Textual Criticism - "The study of the copies of a written document whose original (the autograph) is unknown or non-existent, for the primary purpose of determining the exact wording of the original." (Wallace)
- The vast majority of variants across manuscript copies are _____. (Spelling, word order, etc.)

¹⁰ Elijah Hixson, Peter Gurry, Myths and Mistakes in New Testament Textual Criticism, xii
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- History of the English Bible

- ~250 BC Septuagint (“LXX” = 70 Jewish scholars who translated it) - Greek translation of the OT
- The Bible was translated into various languages (Syriac 1st-5th c; Coptic 3rd-5th c; Armenian, etc.)
- By the 3rd century _____ became the dominant language of Christian writers and theologians.
 - Latin _____ - official Bible of the church - translated by Jerome from 383 to 405AD
 - Standard Bible in the church for over 1,000 years
 - Basis for other translations during the Reformation
- 14th century: _____ Bible (NT, 1380; Entire Bible, 1382)
 - Believed that people should have the Bible in their own language
 - Translated the Latin Vulgate into English
 - Still have over 200 copies of this
 - 1414 it became a capital offense to read the Bible in public
 - 1428 people were so angry about him that after he died they dug up his body and burned it!
- 16th century: _____ Greek NT
 - New Latin translation from the Greek
 - New Greek translation of the NT (which became the Textus Receptus - KJV)
- 16th century: _____ Bible (NT, 1526; OT portions, 1534)
 - First NT translated from the Greek
 - Printed in Germany to escape English persecution
 - Many were destroyed
 - 90% of his translation was used in KJV
 - 1525 he was kidnapped, strangled, and burned at the stake
 - Final words “Lord, open the eyes of the king of England!”
 - Soon afterwards, the King was licensing the English translations
- 16th century: _____ Bible (1535)
 - First to print complete Bible in 1535

- Used a lot of Tyndale
- Henry VIII licensed this verse
- A few other translations over the years...
- 16th century _____ Bible (1560)
 - As Protestants fled persecution, they influenced more translations (Bishops Bible, Geneva, etc.)
 - First Bible that had verse numbers
 - Very Anti-Catholic footnotes
- 17th century (1611) _____ Bible
 - Authorized a new translation to start in 1604
 - Used the 1602 version of the Bishops Bible (from 1516 Erasmus Greek TR), with consultations to the Hebrew and Greek (<25 NT; 2 OT)
 - Contained over 8000 margin translator notes (removed in the 1800s after the apocrypha)
 - Originally had the Apocrypha (was taken out in 1700s)
 - Goal was to supersede all other English translations
 - Became a stabilizing force for the English language (along with Shakespeare)

- Modern Translation Philosophies

- _____ Equivalence: as close to literal/word-for-word translation as possible
 - ESV, CSB, NASB
- _____/functional Equivalence: thought for thought
 - NIV (Best selling Bible in the world)
 - NLT
- _____: “free” translation
 - Message, TLB

Paul's letter to the Romans, for example, while Silvanus probably crafted Simon Peter's first letter (Romans 16:22; 1 Peter 5:12).¹⁷

Secretaries like Tertius and Silvanus used reed pens, sharpened and slit at the tips. The tips of the reeds were dipped in a mixture of water, soot, and sap; words were then inked on sheets of papyrus. If the letter was lengthy, papyrus sheets were pasted together to form scrolls that might measure as many as thirty or thirty-five feet when unrolled.¹⁸ Once a letter was finished, a trustworthy messenger carried the scroll to a local church and probably read the contents in a public assembly.¹⁹ Messengers mentioned by name in the New Testament include Phoebe, Epaphroditus, and Tychicus (Romans 16:1–2; Ephesians 6:21–22; Philippians 2:25; Colossians 4:7–9). Once a letter reached a church, it might be copied and shared with other churches (Colossians 4:16). That's how first-century churches began to gather and to preserve the epistles that we find in the New Testament today.

What Happened to the Autographs?

The original manuscripts of the Bible in their final form are known as the *autographs*. The autographs of the New Testament decayed into dust many centuries ago—but there is some evidence that the autographs might have survived at least until the end of the second century. Around AD 180, Tertullian of Carthage wrote, "You who are ready to exercise your curiosity, ... run over to the apostolic churches ... where their own authentic writings are read."²⁰ "Authentic writings" may refer to the original documents sent by apostles—especially since Tertullian follows this statement by listing the specific cities where the first-century apostles sent their epistles.

Disputed in Lxx or Garry?



Books of the New Testament

Book	Sender	Date	Background
James	James, Jesus' half brother	Mid 1 st century, perhaps later	Perhaps written to Jewish Christians outside of Palestine.
Galatians	Paul	48/49	Written to churches of South Galatia that Paul visited on his first missionary journey.
1 Thessalonians	Paul, Silvanus (Silas), and Timothy	50	Written to the churches of Thessalonica. Written during Paul's second missionary journey from the city of Corinth.
2 Thessalonians	Paul, Silvanus (Silas), and Timothy	50	Written to the churches of Thessalonica soon after the first letter.
1 Corinthians	Paul and Sosthenes	53 or 54	Written from Ephesus to the church of Corinth.
2 Corinthians	Paul and Timothy	54 or 55	Most likely written from Macedonia, perhaps from Philippi.
Romans	Paul; Tertius served as Paul's secretary	Mid- to late 50s	Perhaps written during Paul's stay in Greece.
Philippians	Paul	Late 50s	Written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome.
Ephesians	Paul	Early 60s	Written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome. May have been a letter intended for several churches including the church in Laodicea (see Colossians 4:16).
Colossians	Paul	Early 60s	Written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

Book	Sender	Date	Background
Philemon	Paul	Early 60s	Written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome.
Mark	John Mark, Simon Peter's interpreter	Mid-60s	Probably written in Rome.
Matthew	Matthew	Late 60s or later in Greek, perhaps earlier in Aramaic	Written for a Jewish audience.
Titus	Paul	Early to mid-60s	Written to Titus who was in Crete when the letter was written.
1 Timothy	Paul	Early to mid-60s	Written in Macedonia to Timothy, who was in Ephesus at the time.
2 Timothy	Paul	Early to mid-60s	Likely written during Paul's second imprisonment in Rome to Timothy, who was possibly in Rome as well.
1 Peter	Peter Silvanus may have served as Peter's secretary	Early 60s	Peter said that he was writing from "Babylon" (5:13); this was probably a metaphor for Rome.
2 Peter	Peter	Mid-60s	Probably written near the end of Peter's life.
Hebrews	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown authorship, received as apostolic due to the connection with the apostle Paul's protégé Timothy (Hebrews 13:23).
Luke	Luke	Late 60s or later	Written to Theophilus, perhaps Luke's literary patron

Book	Sender	Date	Background
Acts	Luke	Late 60s or later	Written to Theophilus, perhaps Luke's literary patron.
John and 1 John	John the apostle	Late 1 st century	Probably written from Ephesus.
2 and 3 John	John, perhaps the apostle or perhaps another eyewitness from the apostolic era known as "John the elder"	Late 1 st century	Perhaps written from Ephesus.
Revelation	John, probably the apostle	Late 60s during the reign of Emperor Nero, or 90s during the reign of Emperor Domitian	Written on the island of Patmos to churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

How the Gospels and Acts Were Written

But what happened once the apostles and eyewitnesses began to pass away? How were the testimonies about Jesus preserved? And what kept these testimonies from degenerating into myths and legends? The answer is found in the four New Testament Gospels.

All four of the New Testament Gospels were written in the lifetimes of the eyewitnesses, and their testimony can be traced back to firsthand encounters with Jesus himself.²¹ Here's a report from a second-century Christian named Irenaeus of Lyon about the origins of each Gospel:

Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews in their own

languages/Scriptures