



Introduction: Christians have been called “people of the Book” throughout history. Christianity is based on the Bible. The question at times is asked, “do we have the right books?”

## I. What Does the Bible Claim? (last week)

“How do I know that God wrote the Bible?”

- It makes that claim
- Fulfillment of Prophecy
- Accuracy with history and archaeology
- Accuracy with the Sciences
- Unity of theme, doctrine and intent
- The goodness that comes from the Bible

2 Timothy 3:16-17  
*“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

## II. What We Have

A) Library of books

B) We Call It the Bible:

- English word “Bible” comes from *biblia* in Latin and *biblos* in Greek
- Holy Scriptures, Holy Writ, Scripture, or the Scriptures, which means “sacred writings.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ books and letters
- Written by more than \_\_\_\_\_ authors
- Over a period of approximately \_\_,\_\_\_\_\_ years
- Hebrew, koine or common Greek, and Aramaic
- Old Testament was written mostly in \_\_\_\_\_
- New Testament written in \_\_\_\_\_
- Gathered and presented in several divisions: Pentateuch, Historical Books, Poetry and Wisdom Books, the books of Prophecy (Major/Minor), Gospels, Acts, and the Letters.
- Originally written on scrolls of papyrus and later parchment, until the invention of the codex. A codex is a handwritten manuscript formatted like a book.

## III. How Was the Biblical Canon Determined? (John 20:30-31; 21:24-25)

A) “Canon” is a word that literally means a measuring rod.

B) Determining the Old Testament Canon

1. NT \_\_\_\_\_ references and general acknowledgment of truth about God’s plan of salvation (2 Peter 1:16-21).
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Noted 3 divisions of the Old Testament. (Luke 24:44).
  - Speaks of Psalms first and largest book of the poetry.
  - Never disputed the canonicity of the Old Testament (Matthew 15:3-9; Matthew 22:29; John 10:35).
  - Testified to the extent of the OT canon (Matt. 23:35).
  - Confirmed the sacredness of Old Testament (Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 24:27, 44-45).

### TESTS OF CANONICITY

- Is it authoritative (“Thus saith the Lord”)?
- Is it prophetic (“a man of God” 2 Peter 1:20)?
- Is it authentic (consistent with other revelation of truth)?
- Is it dynamic – demonstrating God’s life-changing power (Heb. 4:12)?
- Is it received (accepted & used by believers – 1 Thess. 2:13)?  
 (Norman L. Geisler & William Nix, *A General Introduction To The Bible*, pp. 137-144)

#### D) New Testament Canon

- Letters were being circulated among the churches (Galatians 1:1-2; Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27).
- New Testament books were being recognized as apostolic, authentic and authoritative.
- \_\_\_\_\_ considered Luke's writings to be as authoritative as the Old Testament (1 Timothy 5:18; see also Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7).
- \_\_\_\_\_ recognized Paul's writings as Scripture (2 Peter 3:15-16).
- New Testament, the process of the recognition and collection began in the first centuries of the church.



#### The History of Canonization

- Old Testament Canon – Recognizing the correct OT books
- Christ refers to Old Testament books as “scripture” (Matt. 21:42)
- Josephus, the Jewish historian (A.D. 95), indicated that the 39 books were recognized
- New Testament Canon Recognizing the correct NT books
- The apostles claimed authority for their writings (Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; 2 Thess. 3:14).
- The apostle's writings were equated with Old Testament scriptures (2 Peter 3:1-2, 15-16).

#### IV. Warnings and Applications for us all (2 John 9; Isaiah 55:8-9)

##### A) “\_\_\_\_\_ Canon”

- Completed Truth “Don't add to or take away from”
- A closed canon implies that other religious books or prophets are NOT inspired by God should be rejected.
- John 16:12-13; Jude 3

##### B) Why does this matter?


- Many claims of \_\_\_\_\_ day revelations from God
- Should they be counted equal to the Bible in authority?
- \_\_\_\_\_ church (46 Old Testament books)

This makes the “church” the determiner of the canon.

Canon is a \_\_\_\_\_ issue and not a \_\_\_\_\_ issue based on councils, church decisions, creeds and decrees.

- Mormons - (angel to Joseph Smith) “Doctrine and Covenants” (Galatians 1:6-10)
- Jehovah's Witnesses - Watchtower Society
- Muslims (Torah)

##### C) Chain of Divine Authority



**Faith in the Proper Chain of Divine Authority**

A) Father (Gen. 1:1)

B) Jesus (Matt. 28:18)

C) Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:13)

D) Apostles (Matt. 16:19; Jn. 13:20; 20:21)

E) Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Jude 3)

##### D) Do you have the authority to say what should be (or not) in the Bible?

- I believe YAHWEH is the one true and living God.
- I believe Jesus is His son and came to save me.
- I believe the Holy Spirit inspired the written word of God.
- I believe God has included all of what needs to be included in the Bible.

*“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.”*

(Hebrews 1:1-2)

*“You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”*

(2 Peter 3:17-18)