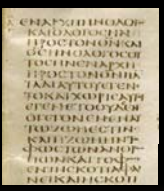



The Trustworthiness of God's Word

HOW CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?



The Bible




- History
 - The canon of the Old Testament
 - The canon of the New Testament
- Theology
 - What do we mean when we say that the Bible is the Word of God?
 - The problem of "proving" the Bible
- Comparison
 - What makes the Bible different from other so-called "words of God"?

History

How did 66 works become the Bible?




Scripture and Canon




- Scripture = sacred writings for a community
- Canon
 - "read," "list," "norm"
- For Christians
 - Norm for the church
 - (Stable) List of sacred writings
- Gal 6:16: "As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

The Old Testament canon



Authoritative book

- Josiah (2 Kings 22-23) in 622/21 BC
- Ezra (Neh 8:2; 4 Esdras 14:1-48)
- Maccabees (1 Macc 1:56-57; 2 Macc 2:14)



Typical Summary



- Torah in time of Ezra
 - 432 schism with Samaritans
- Prophets by end of 3rd BC
- Writings by AD 100
- Solidified in the Mishnaic period

Other aspects

- The Septuagint including the Apocrypha
- The Dead Sea Scrolls (scraps)
- Relation to the temple and its fall in AD 70



Christian Old Testament

- Roots in the Jewish list
- New Testament quotes the LXX
- New Testament also quotes apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha – a broader understanding?
 - E.g., Jude 9



The New Testament canon

- Writing
- Early Collections
- 3rd to 5th centuries
- Factors



Writings of the early church

- Works are situation-specific.
- Luke 1:3: "I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus."

Writings of the early church


- Works are situation-specific.
- Gal 3:1: "You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified!"

Writings of the early church

- Works are situation-specific.
- Revelation 1:10: "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, 'Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.'"

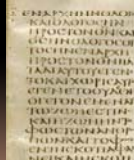
Writings of the Early Church

- Texts prepared by an amanuensis
 - Who wrote 1 Thessalonians?




Writings of the Early Church

- Texts were performed orally
- Romans 10:17: "Faith comes from hearing . . ."




Writing in the Early Church

- Reading was a late development




Forming the NT Canon - an analogy




Collections -- Paul

- Collecting began early -- Col 4:16
- Paul known over a wide area and had the authority of an apostle
- By the early part of the 2nd century, Paul letters were known as a group of ten letters and quoted as such by Ignatius and Polycarp



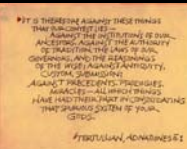
Collections -- Paul

- Marcion ca. 140
- Gnostic and dualistic
 - Harsh God of OT and Judaism
 - Loving God sent Jesus as his messenger
 - Harsh God had Jesus killed
 - Most apostles corrupted by harsh God
 - Only Paul pure
- Limited to books free of OT and Judaism
 - Luke and ten letters of Paul
- Explains why Paul's collection, although the earliest, is hardly quoted in the second century



Beginning of the 3rd century

- Tertullian against the Gnostics
 - Rehabilitated Paul
- Thirteen-book collection was in circulation
- Hebrews often added




Gospels

- Written gospels early
- Valued only in specific areas (situation-specific)
- Oral tradition alive until mid second century




Tatian in 170

- Wove together the gospel material into one narrative, the *diatessaron*
- Irenaeus -- the fourfold Gospel, but still one gospel
- by middle of the third century, the four were unanimously accepted



The catholic epistles

- Last to coalesce
- 1 Peter and 1 John widely accepted, but other less so
- Eusebius is the first to write of the Catholic epistles as 7 letters



Revelation

- Often controversial
- East widely accepted but interpreted allegorically
- In third century a dispute in Egypt over whether to interpret it allegorically or literally, and from then on it was often rejected in the east
- In the west, viewed with suspicion






3rd to 5th centuries

- Muratorian Canon
- Late 2nd to early 3rd century
- Fragmentary, badly translated into Latin
- Contents
 - 4 gospels and acts
 - 13 letters of Paul
 - no Hebrews
 - Jude, 1-2 John
 - Revelation
 - Wisdom of Solomon
 - Apocalypse of Peter




3rd to 5th centuries

- Codex Sinaiticus (4th century, discovered in 1844, 1853)
- Shepherd of Hermes (a mystical apocalypse)
- Didache (manual of discipline)
- Ep of Barnabas (moralistic commentary on Hebrew Bible)

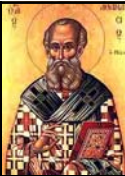
3rd to 5th centuries

- Eusebius (325)
 - 22 generally accepted
 - 4 gospel and acts
 - letters of Paul including Hebrews
 - 1 John, 1 Peter, and Rev
 - 5 widely accepted
 - James Jude 2 Peter
 - 2-3 John
 - 5 spurious
 - Acts of Paul
 - Hermas
 - Apoc of Peter
 - Barnabas
 - Didache
 - "perhaps Rev should be added"




3rd to 5th centuries

- Athanasius (letter of 367)
 - first in east to list all 27
 - many still disputed Rev
- African synods
 - 397 Hippo Regius
 - 419 Carthage
- Augustine supported this canon
- Jerome's translation made it permanent (including OT apocrypha)




Factors

- usage
- content
- unanimity
- apostolicity



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Theology

What do we mean when we say that the Bible is the Word of God?





Lutheran Hermeneutics

- "Inspiration"
- "Written Word of God"
- "Authority"



"Inspiration"



- 1 Timothy 3:16-17: "All **scripture** is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work."
- 2 Peter 1:21: "No **prophecy** ever came by human will, but people moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."
- 2 Peter 3:15-16: "So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, speaking of this as he does in all **his letters**. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the **other scriptures/writings**."
- References to the Old Testament. What of the NT?



Word of God

- First Incarnation
 - Word becomes flesh
 - Crucified and risen
- Then Inscripturation



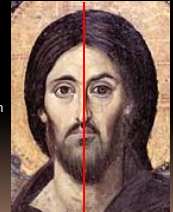

Word of God

- Scripture is like Jesus

A Chalcedonian Model

- Divine
- Human
- Without
 - Division
 - Separation
 - Confusion
 - Change




Scripture is like Jesus

- Divine
- Human
- Without
 - Division
 - Separation
 - Confusion
 - Change




Inspiration in NT

- Where Jesus is, there the Spirit is at work for the salvation of the world.
- Take Jesus out of the scriptures and what will you find there?



"Authority"


- Why is the word true?
 - because God sent Christ into this world to change history. The authority is in the event of Jesus.
- Resurrection is not just **logically** prior (he rose and they wrote about it), it is also **theologically** prior (that is why the Bible is authoritative). 1 Cor 15!



On the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35)

- Jesus question
- "How slow you are to believe all that the prophets declared!"
- Scripture is the key to understanding Jesus

Jesus Question




Jesus Scripture

On the road to Gaza (Ac 8:26-40)


- Scripture Question
- "Starting with this Scripture, he proclaimed to him the Good News about Jesus"
- Jesus is the key to understanding Scripture

Scripture Question



Jesus Scripture

The Hermeneutical Circle



Jesus Scripture

The Problem with Apologetics

- That is, "proving" the Bible is true through science and/or reason
- Examples:
 - Biblical archaeology
 - Creation science


Comparison

What makes the Bible different from other so-called "words of God"?




Word of God?

- Qur'an = "recitation"
- To Muhammad
- By Gabriel
- 610-632




Word of God?

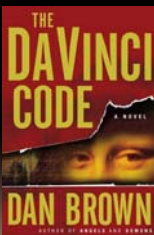
- Trans by Joseph Smith
- In "reformed Egyptian"
- On golden plates
- Received in 1827
- Angel Maroni



Word of God?



Word of God?



Word of God

| | |
|---|--|
| Holy Book | Religion |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bible ▪ Qur'an ▪ Book of Mormon ▪ Gospel of Thomas ▪ Lost Gospels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Christianity ▪ Islam ▪ Latter Day Saints ▪ Gnosticism ▪ Post modernism |

Each claims to be the Word of God!

Word of God

| | |
|--|--|
| Holy Book | Authority (according to believers) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bible ▪ Qur'an ▪ Book of Mormon ▪ Gospel of Thomas/Lost Gospels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspiration (?) ▪ Direct revelation to Muhammad ▪ Golden tablets to Joseph Smith ▪ Secret knowledge |

Are there differences?

Word of God

| | |
|--|---|
| Holy Book | Authority |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bible ▪ Qur'an ▪ Book of Mormon ▪ Gospel of Thomas/Lost Gospels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Death and resurrection of Jesus ▪ Direct revelation to Muhammad ▪ Golden tablets to Joseph Smith ▪ Secret knowledge |

A book like no other!

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The slide features a dark background with a central image of a scroll containing illegible text. The text on the scroll is arranged in approximately 15 horizontal lines. The overall design is simple and focused on the central question.