

Can I Really Trust the Bible?
Why These Books and Not Those? (Part II)

I. REVIEW – THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

Three common arguments made against it:

Two preliminary responses:

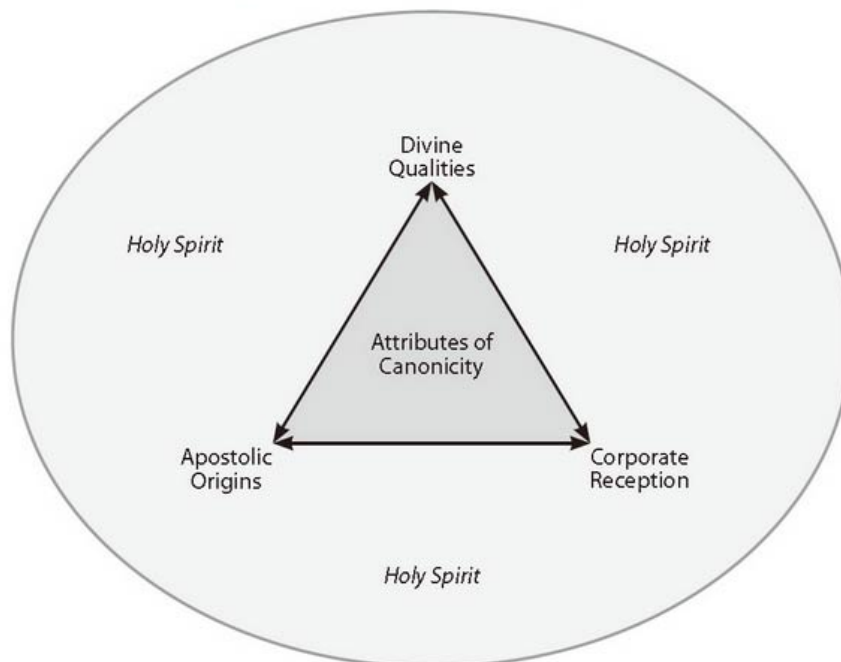
“The Church no more gave us the New Testament canon than Sir Isaac Newton gave us the force of gravity. God gave us gravity... Newton did not create gravity but recognized it.”

~ J. I. Packer

One defining question: what do these 27 books of the NT all have in common that unified them but excluded all others?

II. THE SELF-AUTHENTICATING MODEL

Figure 1. The self-authenticating model



III. APOSTOLIC ORIGINS

- The context for a canon: covenant
- The motivation for a canon: redemption
- The agents for a canon: apostles

IV. CORPORATE RECEPTION

A. Canon is a process – actual, functional, formal

B. The emergence of a canonical core in the 2nd century

- 2 Peter 3:16
- Justin (~150 AD)
- Muratorian fragment (~180 AD)

C. Problem books and canonical boundaries

Recognized Books: the 4 Gospels, Acts, the epistles of Paul (including Hebrews), 1 John, 1 Peter, and Revelation.

Initially Disputed but Recognized Books: James, Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John.

Rejected (but Helpful) Books: the Acts of Paul, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Apocalypse of Peter, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Didache, and the Gospel of the Hebrews.

Heretical Books: the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Matthias, the Acts of Andrew, and the Acts of John.

V. CONFIDENCE: THESE BOOKS, NOT THOSE

Spend some time apply the three self-authenticating attributes to these different books.

Spring Equip Classes 2019

The Bible: The Word of God for the People of God

(This course runs for 9 weeks from April 7 to June 16, excluding Easter Sunday and Memorial Day weekend.)

A general outline of the course:

- I. Introduction: *Rejoicing in God and His Word*
- II. What is the Bible? (dealing with doctrinal issues)
 - a. *God's Word Written: Inspiration & Inerrancy*
 - b. *Carried Along by the Holy Spirit: Human Authorship*
 - c. *Attributes of the Bible: Authoritative & Clear*
 - d. *Attributes of the Bible: Necessary & Sufficient*
- III. Can I really trust the Bible? (dealing with apologetic issues)
 - a. *Copies of Copies of Copies?*
 - b. *Why These Books and Not Those?*
 - c. *True Events from Trustworthy People?*
 - d. *Taking the Resurrected Jesus at His Word*

For how to better study, interpret, and disciple others with the Bible, join us for our upcoming *Impact* workshops:

- June 8 for men – *Fundamentals of Reading the Bible Well*
- June 21 & 22 for women

Resources used for the structure and content of this course:

- Craig Blomberg, *Can We Still Believe the Bible?*
- F.F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*
- F.F. Bruce, *The NT Documents: Are They Reliable?*
- Kevin DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word*
- Greg Gilbert, *Why Trust the Bible?*
- Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*
- Walter Kaiser, *The OT Documents*
- Michael Kruger, *Canon Revisited*
- J.I. Packer, *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God*
- Derek Thomas, *The Bible*
- B.B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*
- Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations*