

# FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH

## “The Library is Closed”

*How do we know the Bible is complete and ‘closed’—  
no books missing, and nothing else to be added?*

### REVIEW

Previously we studied proofs for the Bible: P R A I S E H I M

We also looked at “Canonicity”—how inspired scripture was identified by the early Church.

- Written by a Prophet or Apostle
- Received as scripture by the original audience • **1 Thess 2:13**
- Preserved as scripture • **Revelation 1:11**
- Distributed as scripture • **Colossians 4:16**
- Authoritative • **2 Peter 1:19**
- Evidence of being “living and active” • **Hebrews 4:12**
- Error free & in harmony with the rest of scripture • **John 17:8**

*But how do we know the Bible (“library”) is a CLOSED canon? How do we know other so-called scriptures are not truly inspired, but are dangerous substitutes for God’s truth?*

### WARNINGS NOT TO ADD TO GOD’S WORD

**Deuteronomy 4:2, 18:20–22 • Proverbs 30:5–6 • Jeremiah 23:28–40**  
**• 1 Kings 13 • Isaiah 8:20**

### THE TWELVE APOSTLES

Jesus spoke of the authority of the TWELVE disciples (soon to be apostles) in the upper room: **John 14:25–26 • John 15:26–27 • John 16:12–15**

KEY: The Holy Spirit would be INSPIRING these who were “WITH JESUS FROM THE BEGINNING”

**Ephesians 2:19–20** • the church is built on the foundation of Jesus & the Apostles

**Hebrews 2:1–4** • The TRUE inspired word of God was spoke by those who HEARD Jesus, and were performing SIGNS & WONDERS

**Acts 1:22** • Peter adds the qualification of an apostle—a witness with us of His resurrection.

## WHAT ABOUT THE APOSTLE PAUL?

Paul is UNIQUE among the “non-12” prophets because he was commissioned directly by Jesus (**Acts 9**). He was then RECOGNIZED and ACCEPTED by the “12” (**Acts 9:26–28**)

**2 Peter 3:14–17** • Peter calls Paul’s writings SCRIPTURE!!!

What is the PROOF of Paul’s PROPHETIC APOSTLESHIP? He does MIRACLES, just as Peter did = healings, raising the dead, released from prison, powerful preaching!

For Peter: See **Acts 3, 5, & 9** especially

For Paul: See **Acts 16 & 19**, especially

TO SUM UP • The PROPHETIC APOSTLES (inspired prophets writing the scriptures) were SANCTIONED and COMMISSIONED by “the Twelve” who Jesus said would be filled with the Spirit to know and remember His words.

Matthew = A “12” apostle

Mark = Peter’s secretary / also “useful” to Paul

Luke = Paul’s traveling companion & physician

John = A “12” apostle

Paul = last & least apostle

Peter = A “12” apostle

James = brother of Jesus

Jude = brother of Jesus

Hebrews = unknown, but likely Paul

## DON’T OPEN WHAT GOD HAS CLOSED!

**Revelation 22:18–21** • Don’t add to the words of this book, or you will be added to its curses. Ouch.

*Does this mean ALL of the Bible, or just the book of Revelation?*

*Probably just John’s revelation. But—would you want to test God on this? The consequences are eternally fatal!*

**Acts 20:26–28** • Paul warns of wolves coming in to prey upon the sheep; drawing away disciples after them, meaning: starting false cults!

**Galatians 1:6–9** • There is only ONE Gospel—which was preached and taught by the first Apostles sanctioned by Jesus. Any other so-called “gospel” is NOT good news, but a spiritual death sentence!

So, even if an angel delivers this so-called “gospel,” (ie., the Koran or Book of Mormon), don’t receive it!

**2 Peter 1:19–21** • Jesus’ Apostles were eyewitnesses of His majesty; they are the ones to pay attention to. But watch out for false prophets!

**Jude 3** • “Contend earnestly for the faith which was **once for all** handed down to the saints” (one of the clearest statements of a “CLOSED CANON”) and watch out for people creeping in with false teaching.

## WHY IS A “CLOSED CANON” CRITICAL?

(From “answerthebible.com”) *Belief in a defined canon of holy Scripture provides a protective barrier for the church. Having a closed set of books that comprise the Bible enables crucial safeguards:*

1. Prevents fabrication • 2. Upholds authority • 3. Promotes unity
4. Guards sound doctrine • 5. Rebuffs heresy
6. Shields from cultural trends • 7. Maintains moral boundaries

## WHAT ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF PROPHECY?

1 Thessalonians 5:19–22 • Don’t quench the spirit; Don’t despise prophecy; BUT test everything!

How are we to test the spiritual gift of prophecy? EASY: see if it lines up with SCRIPTURE!

What IS the spiritual gift of prophecy? To answer this, consider what it is to accomplish...

1 Cor 14:3, 29–31 • edification, exhortation, consolation!

It can also involve “revelation” (also involving other spiritual gifts, such as knowledge or discernment, for example)—but these are to be TESTED; those listening must PASS JUDGMENT and give confirmation to what is shared.

A dangerous type of “prophecy” in the church today are folks who are declaring new revelations from God apart from scripture, and holding these up on par with the same authority as the Bible.

The BEST USE of prophecy in the church today is the APPLICATION of scripture in Bible teaching: *Because God’s Word says \_\_\_\_\_, I believe God wants us to apply this truth to \_\_\_\_\_ and obey it in \_\_\_\_\_!!!*

And then, like good Bereans, the church can examine the scriptures and see if this message lines up (**Acts 17:11**).

So, instead of ADDING new “scriptures”—how about we simply try to obey the ones God has clearly given us!?! (**James 1:25**)