

# **BIBLIOLOGY**

## **The Doctrine of the Bible**

The FBC doctrinal statement:

*“We believe the Bible consists of the Old and New Testaments and every word is the verbally inspired Word of God. The Bible is without error in the original manuscripts and is the only and final authority for faith and practice in all matters of which it addresses.”*

Definitions of Inspiration :

*“God superintended the human authors of the Bible so that they composed and recorded without error His message to mankind in the words of their original writings.”* (Charles Ryrie, Basic Theology).

*“By inspiration of the Scripture we mean that supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation or which resulted in what they wrote actually being the Word of God.”* (Millard Erickson, Christian Theology).

*“Inspiration is a supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon divinely chosen men in consequence of which their writings become trustworthy and authoritative.”* (Walter Elwell, editor, Evangelical Dictionary of Theology).

*“God supernaturally moved the writers of Scripture so that, although they wrote in accord with their own interests, style, and abilities, the resultant documents are his Word, authoritative in matters of faith and practice, and truthful in all they affirm.”* Gordon Lewis & Bruce Demarest, Integrative Theology, Vol. 1).

Key Biblical Passages:

2 Timothy 3:16-17 -- ***All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.***

- The entire Bible is in view.

\* cf. 2 Peter 3:15-16; 1 Timothy 5:18

- The entire Bible is God breathed.

- The entire Bible is profitable.

2 Peter 1:21 -- ***But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.***

■ The identity of Scripture's ultimate Author.

■ The methodology of the Author.

1 Corinthians 2:13 -- ***Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.***

Challenges to Inspiration: ***Is what they wrote then what we have now?***

*"The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven. . . . The Bible is the product of man, my dear. Not of God. The Bible did not fall magically from the clouds. Man created it as a historical record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book."*  
(Fictional Character, Sir Leigh Teabing, from Dan Brown's novel, "The Da Vinci Code" p. 231)

*"None of the copies is completely accurate, since the scribes who produced them inadvertently and/or intentionally changed them in places...So rather than actually having the inspired words of the autographs of the Bible, what we have are the error-ridden copies of the autographs."* (Bart Ehrman, Misquoting Jesus, p. 5).

*"Not only do we not have the originals, we don't have the first copies of the originals. We don't even have copies of the copies of the originals, or copies of the copies of the copies of the originals."* (Bart Ehrman, Misquoting Jesus, p. 10)

What's going on here?

1. TRUE: We do not have the original writings (autographs) of the Biblical writers.
2. TRUE: We do have a lot of copies.
3. TRUE: We do have a lot of variants in those copies.

QUESTION: SO -- can we be certain that the Bible we read today is the Bible originally written?

ANSWER: YES – most assuredly.

THE FACTS:

■ The number of New Testament manuscripts (MSS):

- Greek MSS =
- Latin MSS =
- Other Languages =
- Church Fathers =

→ today we have well over \_\_\_\_\_ handwritten MSS of the NT in various languages, including the original Greek.

■ The number of variants:

(Note: a variant = *“Any place among the manuscripts in which there is variation in wording, including word order, omission or addition of words, even spelling differences.”* – Dr. Daniel Wallace, Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament, p. 26.)

→ there are some \_\_\_\_\_ variants between all the manuscripts of the NT

→ there are approximately 140,000 words in the NT – thus an average between 2-3 variants for every word in the Greek NT.

■ Nature of these variants:

- misspellings
- repeated words
- synonyms used
- omissions

An example: 1 Thessalonians 2:7 -- ***“but we proved to be gentle among you”***

Word “gentle” in some MSS is *epios* and in others it is *nepios*. The 1<sup>st</sup> means “infant” the 2<sup>nd</sup> means “gentle.”

The word preceding this word in the Greek NT ends with the letter “n” which some scholars believe as mistakenly carried over to the beginning of the next word, *epios*. Does it impact the meaning of the verse? NO!

■ Significance of these variants:

According to Greek scholar Dr. Daniel Wallace -- **99.75%** of the variants are meaningless and/or easily explained. Less than **1%** impact meaning in some degree. (eg, Revelation 13:18)

*“Scholars of almost every theological stripe attest to the profound care with which the NT books were copied in the Greek language, and later transmitted and preserved in Syrica, Coptic, Latin and a variety of other ancient European and Middle Eastern languages.”* (William Lane Craig, Reasonable Faith, p. 193).

The New Testament in comparison to other ancient writings:

<b>Author/Work</b>	<b>Date Written</b>	<b>Earliest Copies</b>	<b>Time Gap</b>	<b># Copies</b>
Homer (Iliad)	800 B.C.	400 B.C.	400 yrs.	643
Herodotus (History)	480–425 B.C.	A.D.900	1,350 yrs.	8
Thucydides (History)	460–400 B.C.	A.D.900	1,300 yrs.	8
Plato	400 B.C.	A.D. 900	1,300 yrs.	7
Demosthenes	300 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1,400 yrs.	200
Caesar (Gallic Wars)	100–44 B.C.	A.D. 900	1,000 yrs.	10
Tacitus (Annals)	A.D 100.	A.D. 1100	1,000 yrs.	20

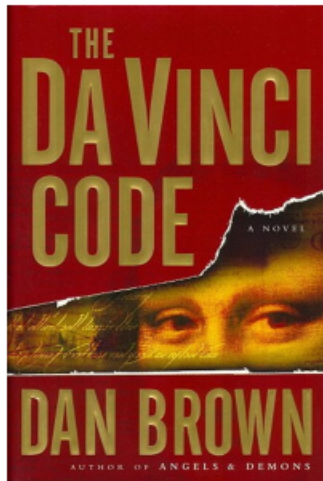
The Point: We have 1000s of New Testament documents, some of which date as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. There is no comparison between the NT and other ancient writings.

The Bottom Line:

John 17:17 – ***Sanctify them in the truth; Your Word is truth.***

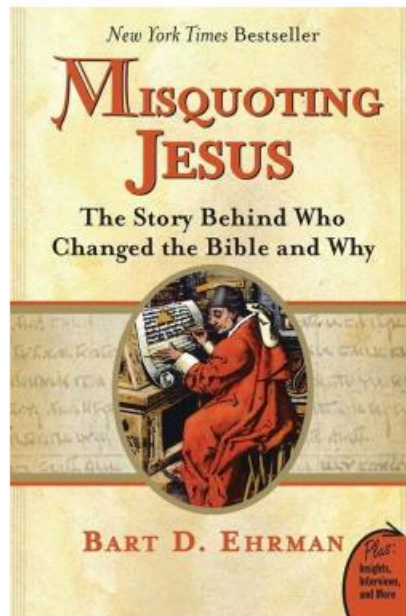
*“That God reveals himself in a book may seem too simple, too unspiritual, not mystical enough. One might excuse someone for thinking it too good to be true. But it IS true. The God who became man has revealed himself in human language. And his Word, recorded in a book, is the power of salvation.”* (Gene Edward Veith, Why God Gave us a Book)

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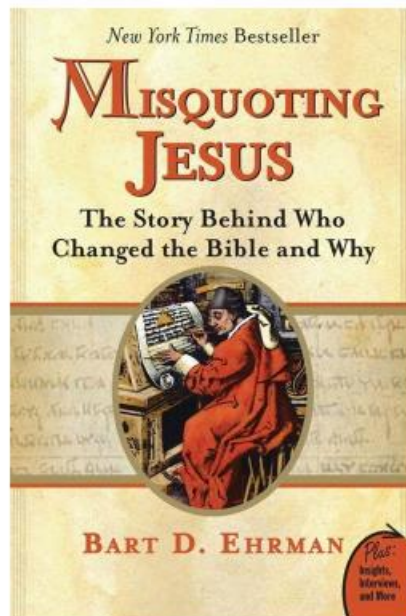


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What are people basing their statements on?

1. We do not have the original autographs.
2. We do have a lot of copies.
3. There are a lot of variants.

## **THE FACTS:**

Number of MSS: GK – 5800 +

Latin – 10,000 +

Other Languages 5,000 – 10,000 +

Church Fathers - early churchman 1 Million + quotations  
from NT

## What is a variant?

***“Any place among the manuscripts in which there is variation in wording, including word order, omission or addition of words, even spelling differences.”*** (Dr. Daniel Wallace, Revisiting the Corruption on the New Testament)

How many variants are there?

400,000

This is where the critics leave people hanging.



Many of these so called errors are mainly untranslatable scribal blunders, meaningless and easily explained.

Spelling

Repeated words

Omitted words or lines

Synonyms

Grammar

Number of MSS: GK – 5824

127 papyrus, rest on Vellum or paper

10-12 MSS by 2nd C

P52

P66

100 + by 3rd C

2.6 Million pages

**Oldest Complete text (27 books of NT): Sinaiticus**

**350 AD**

**Oldest almost complete text: Muratorian Fragment**

**170 AD**

ΕΤΟΙΜΟΝΤΕΣ ΟΥ  
ΜΟΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΙΣ  
ΑΛΛΗΤΕΡΑ ΚΑΙ  
ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΟΙΣ  
ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΙΣ  
ΚΑΙ  
ΑΛΛΟΙΣ

ΕΤΟΙΜΟΝΤΕΣ ΟΥ  
ΜΟΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΙΣ  
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ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΟΙΣ  
ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΙΣ  
ΚΑΙ  
ΑΛΛΟΙΣ

ΟΙΣ ΟΥΚ ΕΙΣΙΝ  
ΟΥΔΕΝΑΙ ΤΑ  
ΠΡΟΣΧΕΙΡΑ  
ΕΝΝΕΚΕΙΝ  
ΠΡΟΣΧΕΙΡΑ  
ΚΑΙ ΕΙΤΕ



Codex Sinaiticus – 4<sup>th</sup> century



Codex Sinaiticus



**John 17:17 --**

**Sanctify them in the  
truth; Your Word is word  
is truth.**