

Theology Proper – Bibliology – The Doctrine of the Bible

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July 3, 2022

“The Bible contains sixty-six books written by more than forty authors, but is ultimately one book written by one author—God the Holy Spirit.” Matthew Y. Emerson and Heath A. Thomas, *The Story of Scripture: An Introduction to Biblical Theology*

The question—how is the Bible one book?

Bible Structure

The Structure of Scripture (English Bibles)

5-12-5-5-12 4-1-21-1

The Old Testament’s 39 books are categorized into five groups.

P	H	P	M	P	M	P
5 books	12 books	5 books	5 books		12 books	

The New Testament’s 27 books are categorized into four groups.

G	H	L	P
4 Books	1 Book	21 Books	1 Book

The Bible is a trinitarian book.

Scripture is given by the Father to reveal the Son by the power of the Spirit.

- God has given Scripture to his people in the context of the _____.
- God gives Scripture to us so we _____ him.
- The Bible is written to reveal the _____ to us.
- Its purpose is to make _____.

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.”

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 Doctrine of Scripture (Inspiration – Is it God’s Word?)

- Inerrancy
 - Scripture is _____
 - Because it is _____
- Authority
 - Scripture is _____
 - Because it is _____
- Sufficiency
 - Scripture is _____
 - Because it is _____

- Canonicity
 - Scripture is _____
 - Because it is _____

Because Scripture is _____

- It is _____
- It is _____
- It is _____
- It is _____

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

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

■ Significance of these variants:

_____ of the variants are meaningless and/or easily explained.

The Bottom Line:

John 17:14,17 – “I have given them Your word ... Sanctify them in the truth; Your Word is truth.”

WHAT WE BELIEVE

A Survey of Major Doctrines of the Bible

BIBLIOLOGY



BIBLICAL
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The Bible

“The Bible contains sixty-six books written by more than forty authors, but is ultimately one book written by one author—God the Holy Spirit.” Matthew Y. Emerson and Heath A.

Thomas, *The Story of Scripture: An Introduction to Biblical Theology*



The question—how is the Bible one book?

Bible's Single Purpose

Ultimately one book, the two testaments tied together based on:

1. Scripture's Subject: Jesus Christ
2. Scripture's Story: the grand narrative from creation (Genesis 1) to new creation (Revelation 21)

Recognition that the Bible is ultimately one coherent story, usually described as Creation-Fall-Redemption, that points to and culminates in the person and work of Jesus, the Son.

Geerhardus Vos, Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments

Bible ties together God's covenants

The one covenant of salvation God makes progresses throughout the Old Testament and culminates with the new covenant inaugurated by Jesus. After humanity's fall into sin:

1. God makes a covenant with Adam to crush Satan through the seed of woman. (Genesis 3)
2. Covenant with Noah not to destroy the earth before that redemption is accomplished (Genesis 6–9).
3. Covenant with Abram to bring the Messiah through his line and to make Abram a great nation (Israel) (Genesis 12; 15; 17; and 22).
4. Covenant with Israel regarding the land and the law (Exodus 19–23).
5. God promises him that David's heir will sit on his throne forever and that he will build God's house (2 Samuel 7).
6. Through the prophets God promises that, in the new covenant, Israel, exiled and scattered, will one day be restored and receive God's Spirit so that they can follow God's instruction and live under his reign, forever (Jeremiah 31–33).

Matthew Y. Emerson and Heath A. Thomas, *The Story of Scripture: An Introduction to Biblical Theology* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017), 14.

The Big Picture: Grasping the Master's Plan from Genesis to Revelation

Genesis Revelation

"In the Beginning" (Gen 1:1)	"I Am the Alpha and Omega..." (Rev 21:6)
God creates heavens and earth - sin (Gen 3)	God creates a new heaven and earth - no sin (Rev 21:6)
Satan is present (Gen 3)	Satan and sin are judged (Rev 19:11-21; 20:7-10)
Death enters (Gen 4:6-8; Gen 5)	Death is put to death (Rev 20:14; 21:4)
Sinful people lose intimate fellowship (Gen 3)	God's people serve Him in openness (22:3)
Community forfeited (Gen 3:8)	Genuine Community Experienced (21:3, 7)
Ashamed in God's presence (Gen 3:8-11)	God's people "see His face" (Rev 22:4)
Sin brings pain (Gen 3:16-17)	No more tears (Rev 21:4)
Forbidden to eat from Tree of Life (Gen 3:22-24)	God's people eat freely and live (Rev 22:2, 14)

The Bible is ultimately one book

- Given by one author for one purpose.
 - Given to his people in the context of the covenant of salvation he has made with them.
 - God gives Scripture to us so we might know him
 - Written to reveal the God of the universe to us
 - Making the one God, Yahweh, known to his people, his people who have been redeemed through his covenant-keeping
- The Bible is a trinitarian book.
 - Given by the Father to reveal the Son by the power of the Spirit. “trinitarian”

THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction.

–DTS Doctrinal Statement

The FBC doctrinal statement

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.”*



Inspiration

“The act by which God superintended the human authors of the Bible so that they composed and recorded without error his message to [humanity] in the words of their original writings”

(Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 71).



Inspiration

“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).



2 Timothy 3:10-4:5



2 Timothy 3-4

- Note the context of 2 Tim 3:16-17
- Apologetic for the Scripture based on those who taught Timothy
- Function of Scripture in salvation – “to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ”
- Significance of 3:16 – definition of “Scripture” and derivative functional value

2 Timothy 3-4

- Scripture is God-breathed; thus, that is what it means to call it “Scripture”
- Degrees of inspiration? – “All Scripture”
- Degrees of profitability? – “All Scripture”
- What “Scripture” is in view here?



2 Timothy 3-4

- What about the NT writings?
- Significance of 3:17 for sufficiency of Scripture
- Contrast with false teachers and its significance for inspiration and inerrancy



The Doctrines of Scripture in 2 Tim 3-4

- Inspiration (“God-breathed”)

- Inerrancy = it is true, not myths or false teaching
- Authority = it is profitable for salvation and godliness
- Sufficiency = it **thoroughly** equips for **every** good work
- Canonicity = it is to be preserved since it is from God



2 Peter 1:19-21



2 Peter 1-2

- “Make every effort” as the key to effective and productive spirituality
- Eyewitness testimony as claim to truth
- “the word of the prophets made more certain/reliable” – the OT has been verified and validated by Christ and the testimony/experience of the apostles
- This seems also to be a claim of inspiration for the apostolic testimony

The Doctrines of Scripture in 2 Peter 1-2

• Inspiration (“from God”)

- Inerrancy = it is true, not myths or false teaching
- Authority = it is confirmed by apostolic testimony
- Sufficiency = it is part of everything we need. If God “has already given” everything we need for life and godliness then we need nothing else
- Canonicity = it is to be preserved since it is from God



The Doctrines of Scripture

- Inspiration

- Inerrancy
- Authority
- Sufficiency
- Canonicity

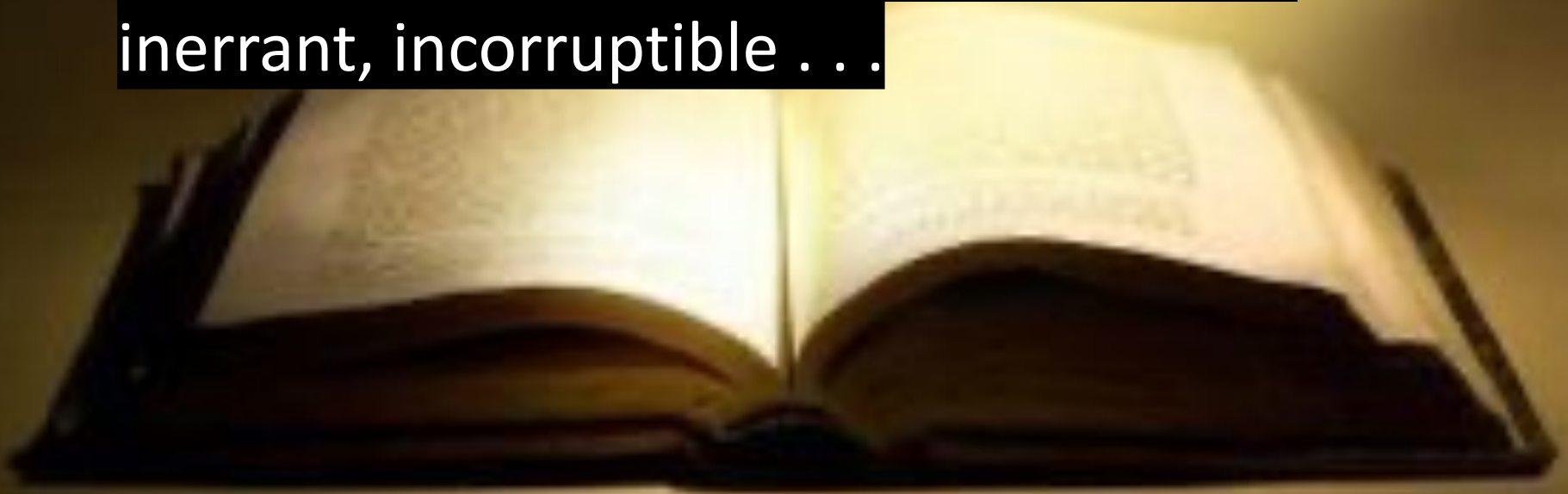


Inerrancy

- “Means that when all the facts are known the Scriptures in their original autographs [sic] and properly interpreted will be shown to be wholly true [sic] in everything they affirm, whether that has to do with doctrine or morality or with the social, physical, or life sciences” (Feinberg, *Inerrancy*, 299).

Inerrancy

- Truth
- Your word is truth (Jn 17:17)
- The Bible as the Word of God is true, trustworthy, reliable, accurate, infallible, inerrant, incorruptible . . .



Old Testament Prophets

- But what if the prophet's message did not contradict the word of God? Does that mean that it was true?
- Are all prophetic messages capable of validation, either through conformity to previous revelation or through external signs?



Old Testament Prophets

- Key Texts: Deuteronomy 13, 18
- A prophet = “I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him” (18:18)
- Standard of accuracy: 100%
- Additional test: the prophet’s message must conform to prior revelation, lead to worship of the true God
- “A false prophet is a dead prophet”

New Testament Apostles

- The apostles were chosen by Christ, appointed by him to reveal truth under the direction of the Holy Spirit. (John 15-16)
- New Testament apostles parallel Old Testament prophets – please note that “everyone” holds this view.
- What about New Testament prophets?



New Testament Prophets

- Does the definition of “prophecy” from the Old Testament govern our understanding of “prophecy” in the New Testament?
- Are NT prophets in a different category?
- Does “prophecy” mean something different in the NT than it did in the OT?
- Is there any evidence of a change in meaning?

1 Corinthians 2

- “This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.”
- The necessity of the Spirit to accept the things that come from the Spirit
- The inner testimony of the Spirit as apologetic for the Scripture

The Promise of the Spirit

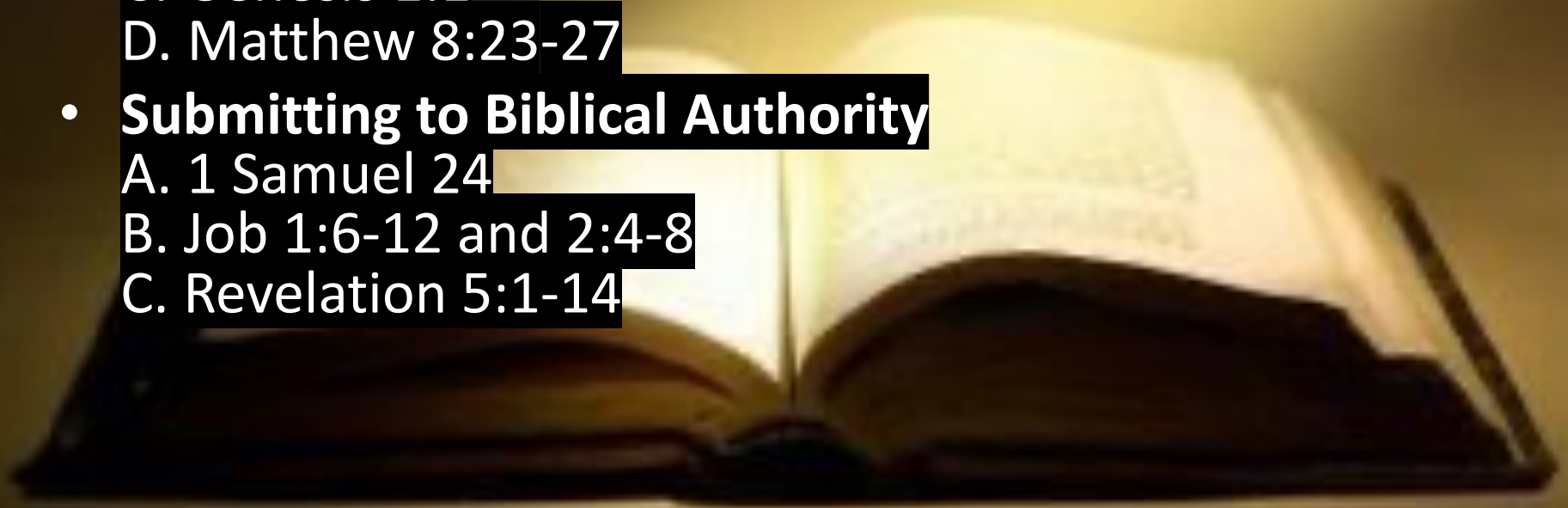
- John 14:16-17 – “I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever . . . you know him”
- John 14:20 – “on that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you”
- John 14:25-26 – “will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I said”

The Promise of the Spirit

- John 15:26-27 – “he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning”
- John 16:12-16 – “he will guide you into all truth . . . He will tell you what is yet to come”
- John 17:20 – “I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one”
- This promise of the Spirit’s work seems to be specific to the work of the apostles

Authority

- Scripture is to be obeyed
- Because it is from God
- **Arguments for Biblical Authority**
 - A. Matthew 7:24-29
 - B. Mark 7:1-13
 - C. Genesis 1:1
 - D. Matthew 8:23-27
- **Submitting to Biblical Authority**
 - A. 1 Samuel 24
 - B. Job 1:6-12 and 2:4-8
 - C. Revelation 5:1-14



Canonicity

- "Canon" which literally means a "reed or straight rod" used for measuring in architecture.
- The concept of canon cannot be divorced from authority, i.e., divine authority in the case of the Bible.
- The canon is a special collection of *authoritative book*.
- The theological assumption behind the biblical canon
 - The Holy Spirit not only superintended the writing process of the NT books
 - The Holy Spirit also superintended the process of their preservation in history as the canon for the Church.

The Authority of the OT Scriptures

- Judaism had come to recognize and accept an authoritative collection of OT writings at least by 100 B.C. *before* they were "officially" enumerated at Jamnia in A.D. 90 and before any NT books were written.
- Jesus frequently appealed to the OT as Scripture,
 - as authoritative, divinely inspired teaching (cf. Luke 18:31-33; 24:25-27; John 10:35; etc.)
 - called attention to its trustworthy record from beginning to end (cf. Matt. 23:35).
- Jesus affirmed that the OT in whole and in part had come to fulfillment in Him
 - (cf. Matt. 5:17-18; Mark 12:36; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39, 46; Rom. 3:31).
 - The OT Scriptures bore witness to Him.

The Authority of the NT Scriptures

- Key point: Jesus' words/teaching had "**canonical status**" in the Church from the beginning.
- The apostles were chosen by Jesus "to be with Him" (Mark 3:14) and "to be sent out by Him" as His witnesses (Acts 1:21-22).
- He granted them His authority (cf. Mark 3:14; 6:7) and He imparted this authority to the writing of the NT when He promised to send the Holy Spirit to them (Jn. 14:26).
- Key point: The apostles functioned as a "**living canon**" in the Church from the beginning.

Key Principles Explaining the Canonicity of the NT

- *Basic Criterion: Apostolicity* (apostolic origin), i.e., the authority of Jesus and the apostles authenticates the writing either directly or indirectly by association.
- **Universality** (catholicity): the continuous acceptance and widespread use in church worship as authoritative Scripture.
- **Veracity** (orthodoxy): doctrinal integrity and consistency with OT teaching and with other NT writings, a self-authenticating quality.
- **Antiquity** (1st century): leads to the assumption that authenticity preceded imitation or pseudepigraphy and forgery

Why the Canon is Closed

- Scriptural Implication
 - Jude 3-4, “the faith once for all delivered to the saints”
 - John 17:20; 1 Cor. 15:7-9; 2 Tim. 2:2; Heb. 2:3; 2 Peter 1:2-4.
- Theological reason
 - God’s revelation of Himself to the present age with respect to doctrine. Is complete in Jesus Christ and the apostolic witness (Heb 1:2)
- Historical reasons
 - There is no longer the apostolic office to validate writings

Hebrews 1:1–2, ESV

“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, ESV)



DTS Article I—THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings—historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic—as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the originals is therefore without error.

“Qualifications”

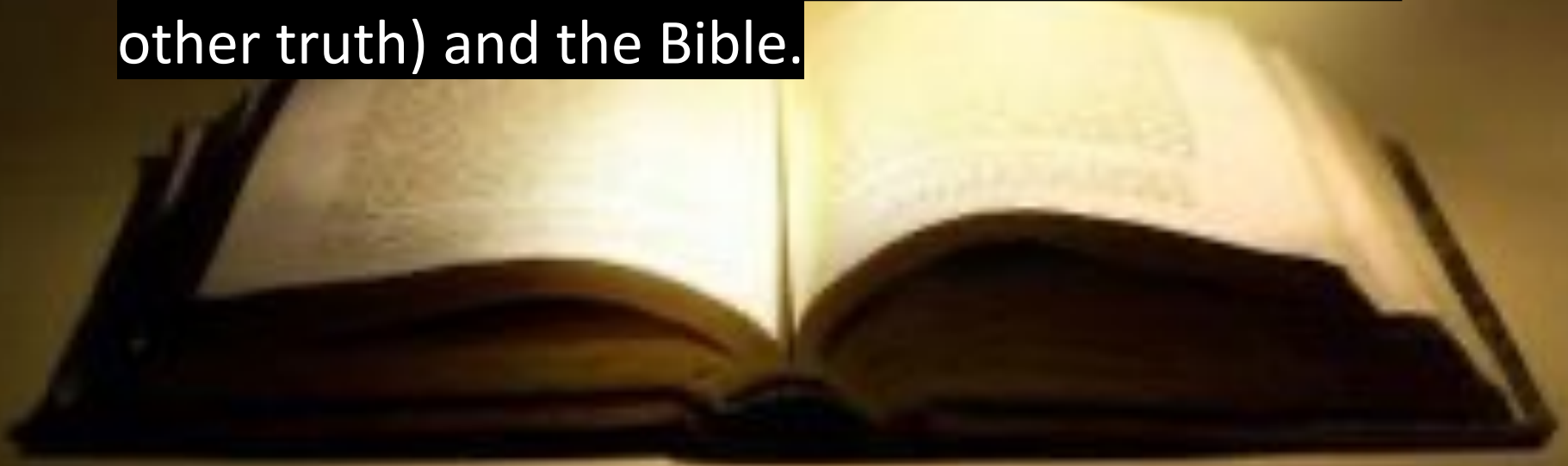
- Inerrancy does not demand adherence to rules of grammar.
- Inerrancy allows for use of general, phenomenal, and metaphorical assertions.
- Inerrancy does not demand chronological, historical, and scientific precision.
- Inerrancy does not require direct quotation of statements of others. Indirect quotation and paraphrase are commonly used.

Inerrancy means . . .

- The accounts presented as historical actually occurred; they are not simply legend or myth.
- What is stated is fully reliable, authentic, trustworthy, and authoritative.
- The biblical material has no contradictions which cannot be resolved, even though we might never know how to resolve them.

Inerrancy means . . .

- The Scripture is totally adequate to achieve its purpose.
- The interpretations presented by the authors of Scripture are truth, not simply their opinion.
- There is no final conflict between science (or any other truth) and the Bible.



Objections to Inerrancy

- Humans are fallible and what they write is fallible.
- Inerrancy is unscholarly since it is a “faith” issue.
- Inerrancy is “defended” by a circular argument.



Objections to Inerrancy

- Inerrancy is irrelevant since it applies only to the autographs which no longer exist.
- Inerrancy is not essential for salvation.
- There are errors in the Bible.

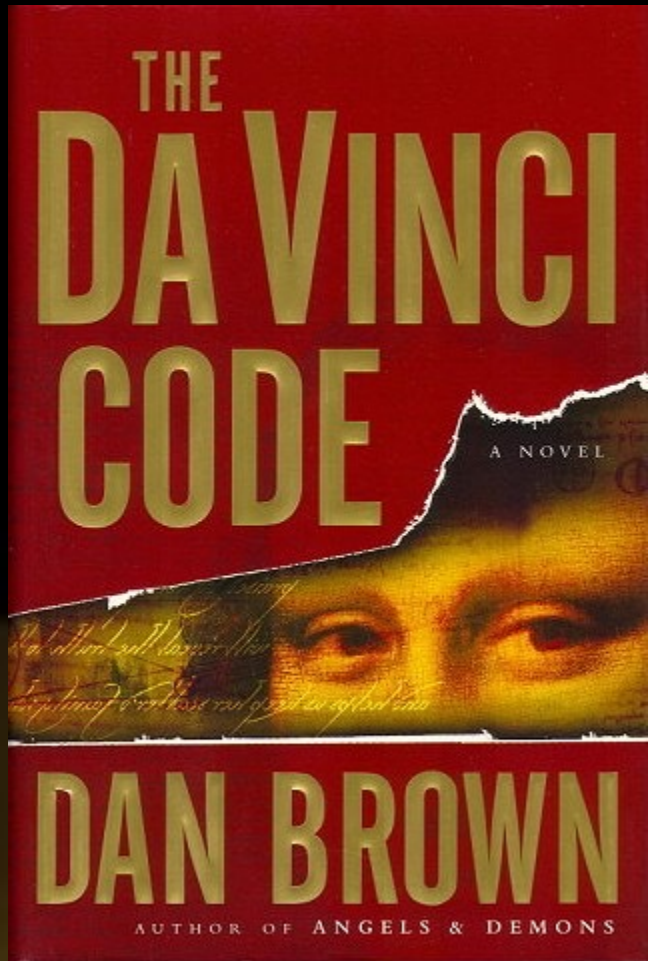


What are people basing their statements on?

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

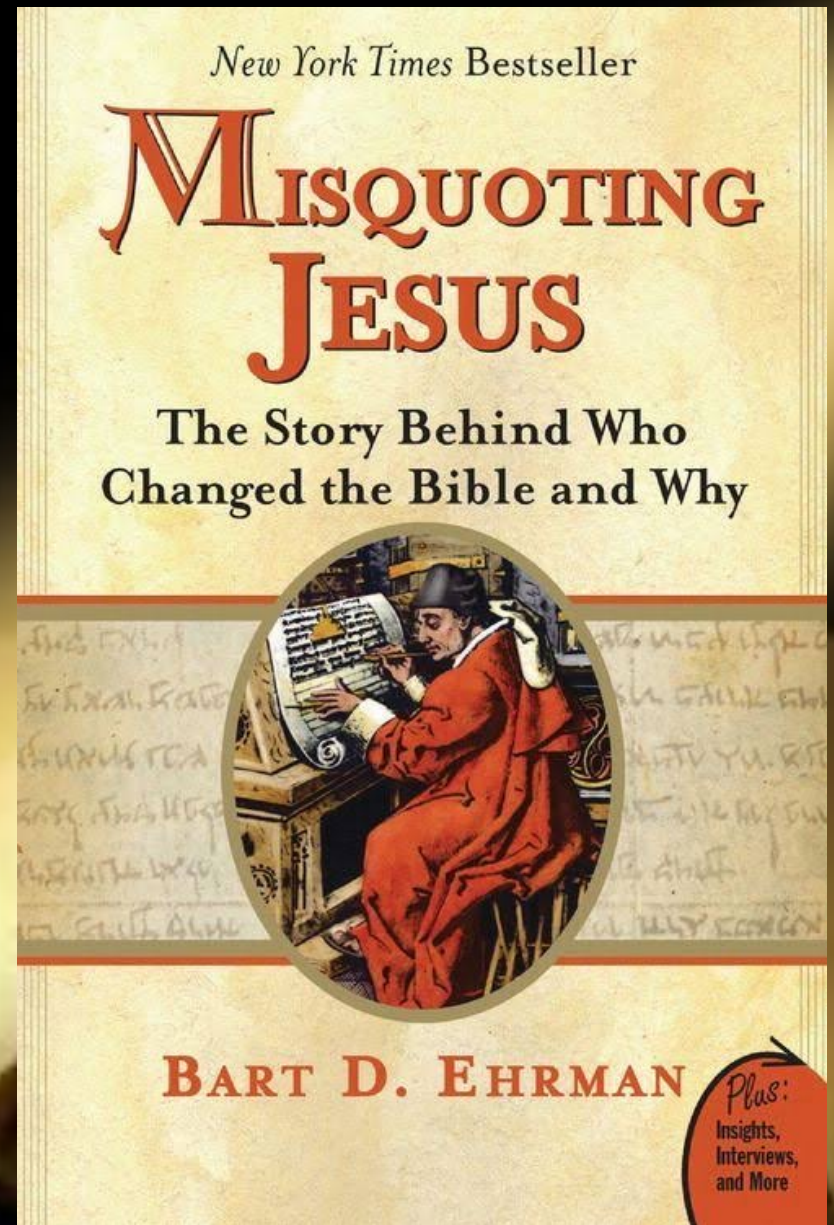
Challenges to Inspiration:

Is what they wrote then what we have now?

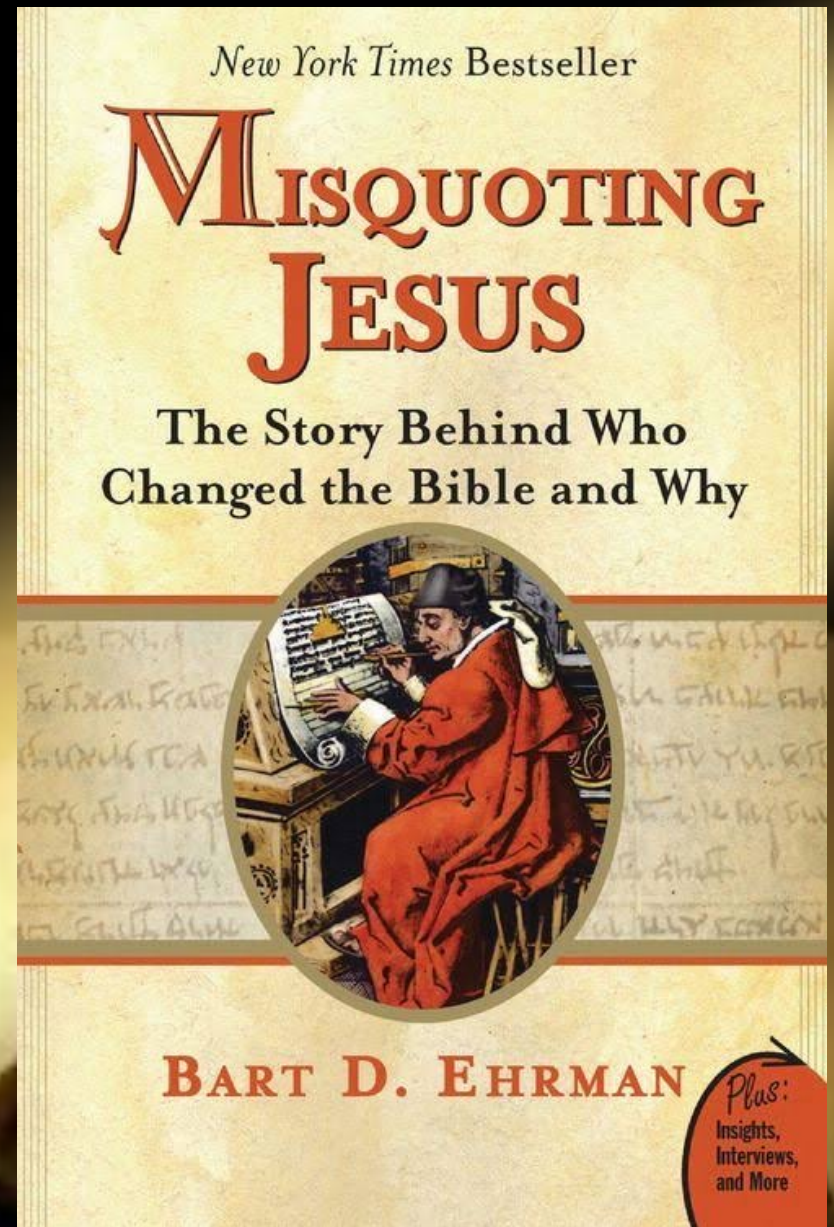


The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven . . . The Bible is the product of man, my dear. Not of God. The Bible did not fall magically from the clouds. Man created it as a historical record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book.”

“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.”



“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, or copies of the copies of the copies of the originals.”



Is what they wrote then what we have now?

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:

Number of MSS: GK – 5800 +

Latin – 10,000 +

Other Languages 5,000 – 10,000 +

Church Fathers - early churchman 1 Million +
quotations from NT



ΕΤΟΙΜΟΝ ΤΗΝ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΝ
ΕΝ ΤΗ ΚΑΤΑΛΗΞΕΙ
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ΠΕΝ ΟΥΔΕ
ΕΝ ΤΗ ΚΑΤΑΛΗΞΕΙ
ΠΙΟΝΟΤ
ΚΑ ΕΙΤΕ

ΚΤΟΙΣ ΠΑΝΤΕΣ ΟΥ
ΕΛΘΟΝ ΤΙΣ ΔΕ ΑΡΤ
ΕΙΤΙΤΙΣ ΑΝΘΡΩΠ
Α ΕΤΙ ΔΥΤΕΡΑ
ΚΤΟΥΤ
ΠΟΥΣΙ
ΕΝ



Codex Sinaiticus

What is a variant?

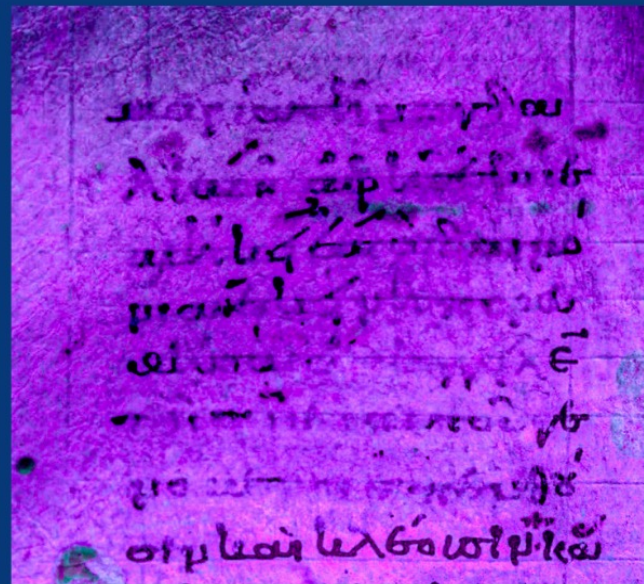
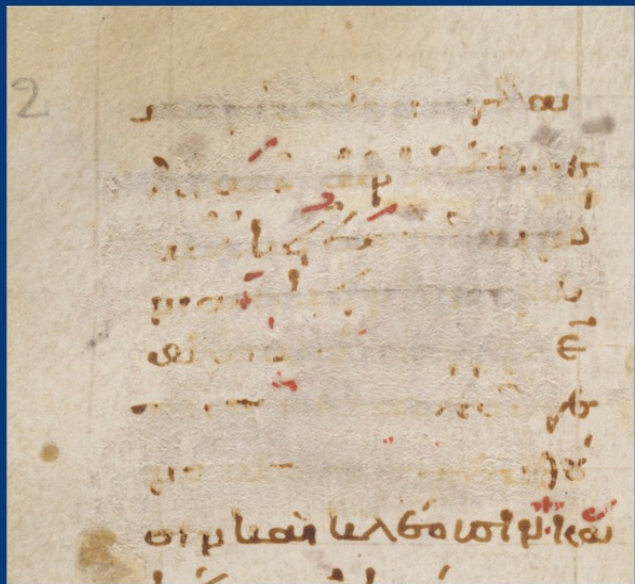
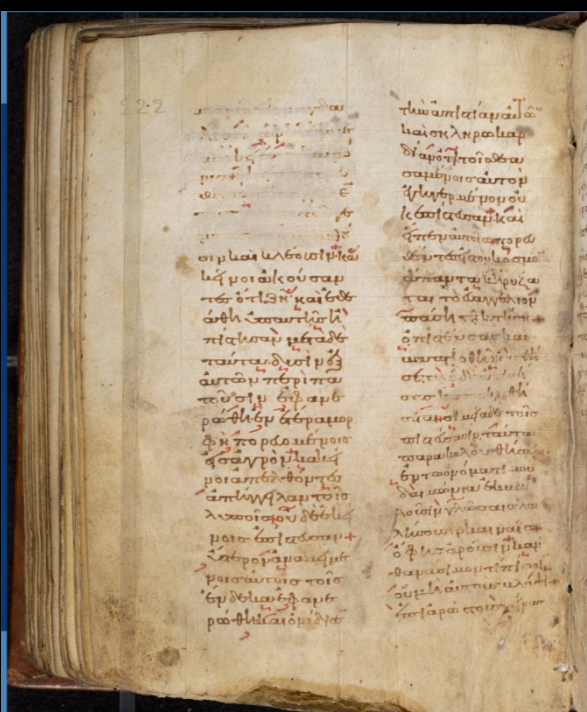
“Any place among the manuscripts in which there is variation in wording, including word order, omission or addition of words, even spelling differences.” (Dr. Daniel Wallace, Revisiting the Corruption on the New Testament)



Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts

- Over the past few months, the CSNTM team has examine and digitize Greek New Testament manuscripts along with other documents important to the history of the New Testament.
 - This yielded almost 15,000 new images, which we are now adding to our Digital Manuscript Collection.
- New equipment allows for special magnifying and UV equipment, makes text nearly illegible by erasure comes forward with UV lights
 - The tremendous opportunity that lies in the UK and Europe, these institutions hold a considerable number of Greek New Testament manuscripts, *nearly half of which have never been digitized.*

Daniel B. Wallace, PhD
Executive Director



How many variants are there?

400,000

This is where the critics leave people hanging.



According to Greek Scholar Dr. Daniel Wallace:

**99.75% of the variants are
meaningless and/or easily
explained.**



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

Spelling

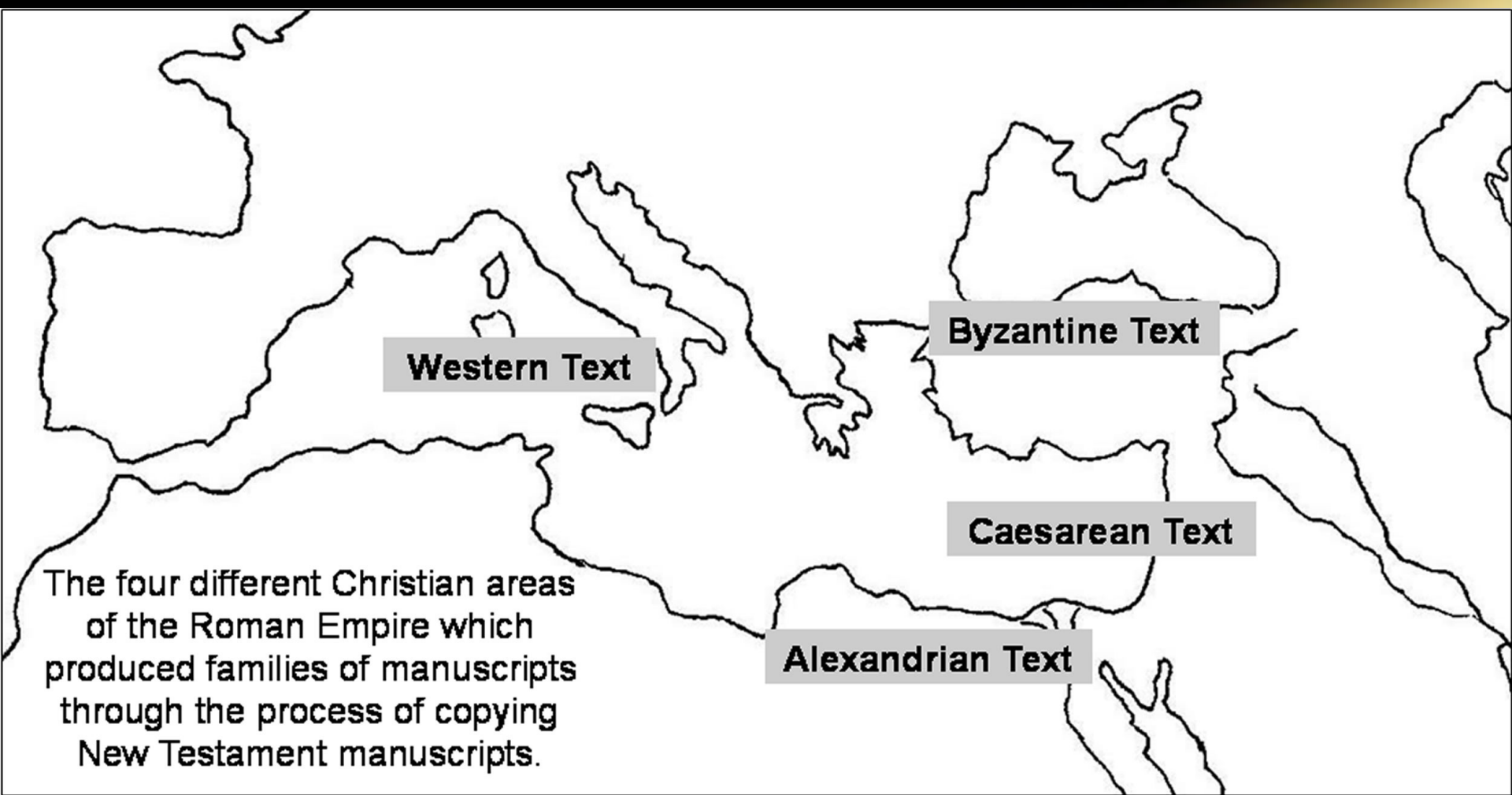
Repeated words

Grammar

Omitted words or lines

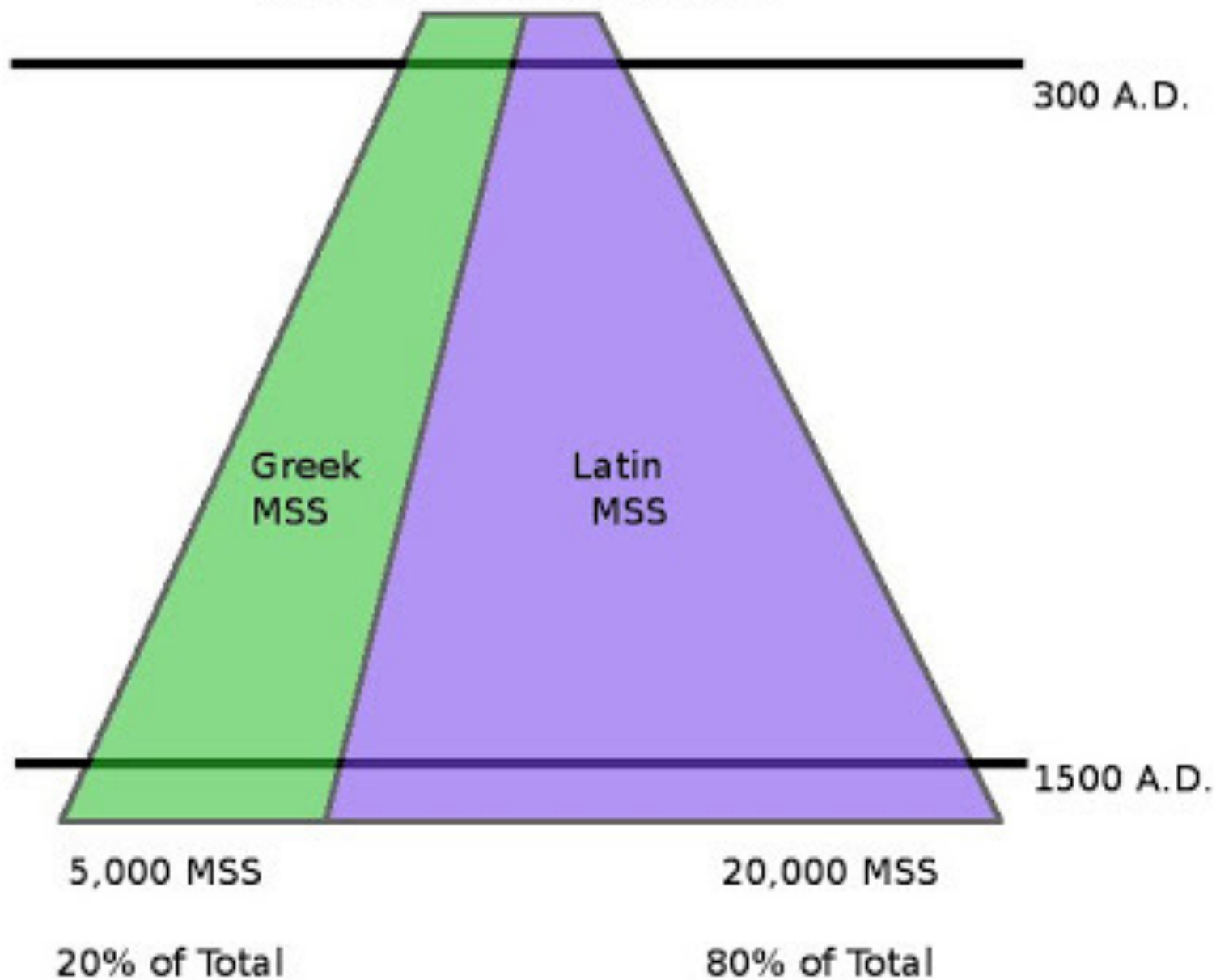
Synonyms





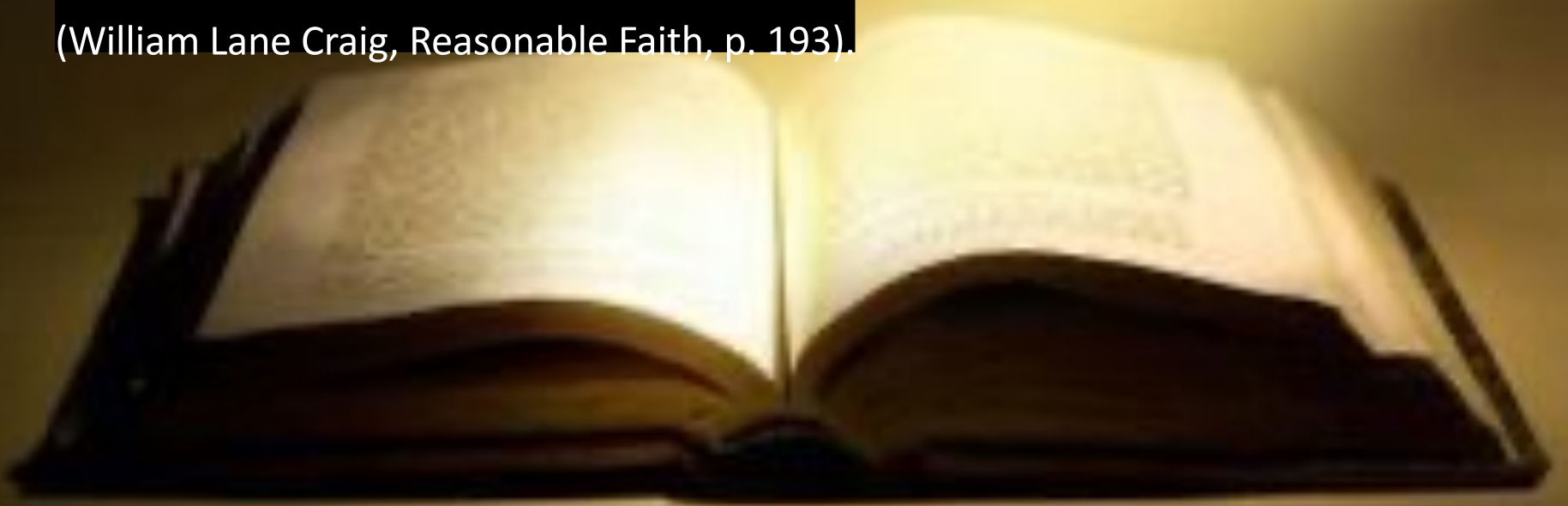
The four different Christian areas of the Roman Empire which produced families of manuscripts through the process of copying New Testament manuscripts.

more Greek than Latin MSS



“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 Syriac, 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:

Author/Work	Date Written	Earliest Copies	Time Gap	# Copies
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 2nd and 3rd centuries.

There is no comparison between the NT and other ancient writings.

Inerrancy of Scripture can be inferred by premises taught by Scripture

- Truthfulness is an attribute of God.
 - John 1:14; 14:6
- God speaks truthfully; He does not lie.
 - Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Titus 1:2; Rom. 3:3–4
- The Word of God, then, is true.
 - John 17:14, 17
- Scripture is the Word of God.
 - John 10:35
- Scripture then is true.
 - Pss. 119:142, 151, 160; Rev. 21:5; 22:6

God's Word leads us on an incredible journey from Genesis to Revelation.

- The master narrative allows us to see beauty, followed by sin and its consequences.
- However, God moves forward in spite of sin, making a covenant promise to Abraham, *guaranteeing* that through him will come a *nation* (the Jews) in a *land* (Israel) that will *bless the world* (through Jesus Christ).
- The trek to the fulfillment of that covenant promise is unique. Through Moses (and the Mosaic covenant), God reveals His Law. This Law, while good, demonstrates that man is a sinner in need of God's grace and *deliverance*.
- While judgment, because of unfaithfulness, came to the nation as promised in the Law and reinforced by the prophets, God's *unconditional promises* were still intact.

God's Word leads us on an incredible journey from Genesis to Revelation.

- God promised to David that an ultimate deliverer, the Messiah, would establish an everlasting kingdom, where God's people would be under a New Covenant that is eternal, and ratified by a pure heart, implying complete forgiveness of sin.
- *The New Testament writers are focused on showing the explicit fulfillment of all the covenants in the person of Jesus Christ.*
- *Jesus is the Messiah of the Davidic line who fulfills the covenant promises to Abraham.*
- *Jesus, as full deity and perfect humanity, lived out the Mosaic covenant flawlessly—doing what Israel could not do. Jesus, through his death and resurrection, inaugurated the New Covenant.*
- While all covenants are completed in Jesus, Jesus has yet to complete all covenants.
- That is why we await the Second Advent of Christ when He will return and finish what has been started.

Additional Studies

Past Sermon Series & Classes

- **Thrive: God's Word for Life (Sept –Nov 2019)**
 - Sermon Series
- **The Bible (June-Aug 2017)**
 - **Biblical Training Center Class (Theology)**

