

I. Concerning the Scriptures

- ‘We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instructions; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and the truth without any mixture of error for its matter, that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.’

What are the Scriptures?

The Christian canon, as we believe it to be, are the 66 books from Genesis to Revelation. The scriptures that we study have been translated from various persons in various places during various time periods. The Bible was written by some 40 authors over a span of 1600 years. The word ‘Bible’ comes from the Greek word, ‘Biblia,’ meaning ‘books.’ Thus, the very word Bible indicates that from cover to cover, many books are contained.

Fundamental Verses

II Tim 3:15-17; Prov 30:5-6; Rom 2:12; Phil 3:16; I John 4:1; 2 Pet 1:21

(Sunday School Review)

Review from Last Sunday: Introduction to ‘*Where is that Verse?*’

The Cannon

The Cannon is what is considered to be the Holy, divinely inspired Word of God. There are different versions of the ‘Christian Cannon’ but only one is truly inspired. Only certain books should be considered God-Breathed. But, why these books? There were many ‘other’ accounts of the Jews, Jesus, and the Church written. Why do we not recognize them?

The Apocrypha or Deuterocanonical Books

The Apocrypha is an annex of the Old Testament still found today in many Catholic Bibles. The Catholic Church, like the Jews and early Christians, rejected these as non-canonical until 1546. It is in those books, Catholic doctrines immerge such as purgatory, Maryolotry, etc. The books include: I & II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, The Rest of Esther, The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, The Letter of Jeremiah, The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasseh, I & II Book of the Maccabees. They were written during the

400 years between the Old and New Testament. Though they are NOT SCRIPTURE they are a good source of the cultural and social happenings in that time period. In them, you will find the beginnings of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and synagogues. Though Paul quotes some, Christ never quotes them. Let's not forget Paul also quoted from Greek plays as well. Interestingly, the apocrypha has been in the modern Bible up until the early 1900's. However, they were viewed strictly as historical information. ¹

The Pseudepigrapha

The word itself means 'falsely inscribed.' It has never been part of the Christian cannon. It includes works such as the Psalms of Solomon, I Enoch, 4 Ezra, and Jubilees. ¹

The Gnostic Gospels

Gnostic comes from 'Gnosis' meaning 'knowledge.' 'Gnostic Christians' wrote the Gnostic Gospels in support of their own theoretical views. Some titles include: The Gospel of Thomas, The Apocalypse of Peter, Pistis Sophia, Wisdom of Jesus Christ, Acts of John, The Gospel of Mary, The Gospel of Phillip, Testimony of Truth, and, recently discovered, The Gospel of Judas. The underlying theme of these works is 'higher knowledge.' They are highly contradictory to the New Testament scriptures, and have never been recognized as a part of the Bible. Recently, they were made popular with the book/movie 'The Da Vinci Code.' The rule in which the early church judged authenticity of works was connections with the Apostolic Fathers. In other words, if the writing didn't come directly from an Apostle or someone related with an Apostle, it was hardly looked at twice. The Gnostic Gospels were written in the 2nd- 3rd centuries, generations after the Apostles! ²

- These are just a few of extra-biblical works that have been debated throughout the years. There are many books good for historical and cultural study; however, the Bible has been limited to our 66 books for many centuries. Though, they have changed name and time, place, and author of some have been debated, there is no question of harmony within our scriptures.
- J. M. Pendleton makes the following assessments:
 1. Without it (the Bible), there cannot be such knowledge of God as is essential to acceptable worship. If God is real, and he is, then it stands to reason that He would leave us a revelation from him.
 2. Without a revelation, it is impossible to fix the standard of moral right and wrong.
 3. Without a revelation, a future state must be a matter of conjecture. (Heaven & Hell). It answers where do we come from, why are we here, and where are we going?
 4. Without a revelation, there is not an intimation of a way of salvation for sinners.

Pendleton's proof of the Bible's inspiration:

1. The human intellect could not produce such a book as the Bible. It goes against the nature, philosophy, and will of man.
2. Man's heart would not prompt him to make such a book as the Bible. God is glorified, Man is humbled.
3. The person and character of Christ as revealed in the Bible prove the divine origin of the book. The uniqueness of our Savior stands alone.³

Works Cited in Section 1

- #1 'Studying the Historical Jesus.' Darrell L. Bock, PH. D. 2002. Baker Book House Company.
- #2 'Breaking the Da Vinci Code.' Darrell L. Bock, PH. D., 2004. Thomas Nelson.
- #3 'Christian Doctrines: A Compendium of Theology.' James Madison Pendleton. 1878. American Baptist Publication Society.