

The Bible claims that it is
God's direct verbal
communication with us, and is
the infallible source for
instructions in life and values.

Would you be willing to die in
order to have a copy?

God's Revelation To Us

REVELATION:

God's mind → mind of original writers

INSPIRATION:

Writers' minds → original text

CANONIZATION:

Original text → post-apostolic acceptance

TRANSMISSION:

Accepted texts → manuscript copies (MSS)

TRANSLATION:

MSS copies → contemporary translations

ILLUMINATION:

Contemporary translation → our minds/hearts

No original documents

1000's of copies and quotes
from NT writings

Manuscripts (MSS)

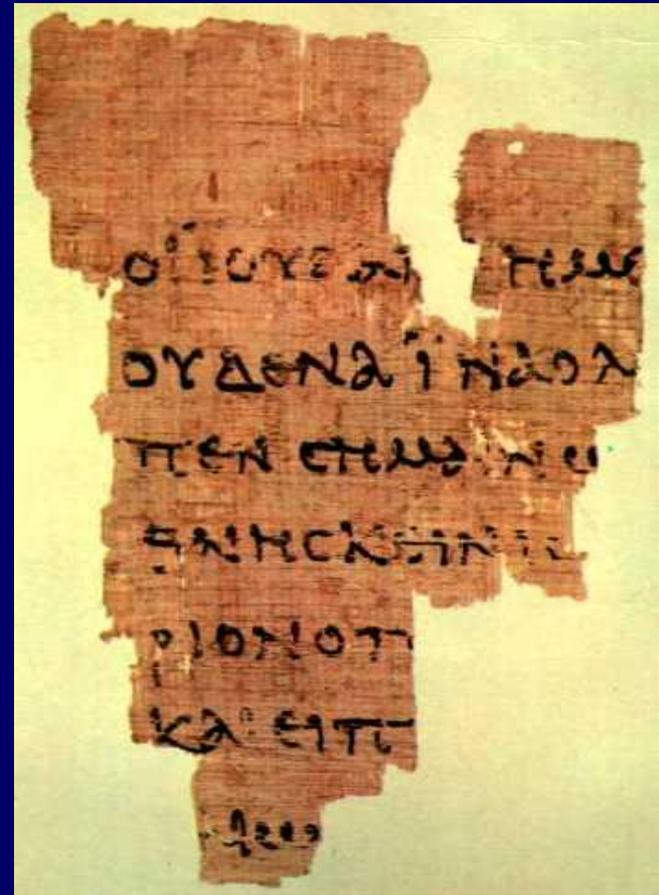
Lectionaries

Ancient Translations

Quotes found in early church
writings

The Rylands Papyrus
457 (a.k.a. P52)
discovered in Egypt;
dated not later than
A.D. 100-125 and
many believe A.D.
100. Jn 18:31-33; 37-
38 with 38-19:3 on
back. Its present
location is John
Rylands Library in
Manchester, England,

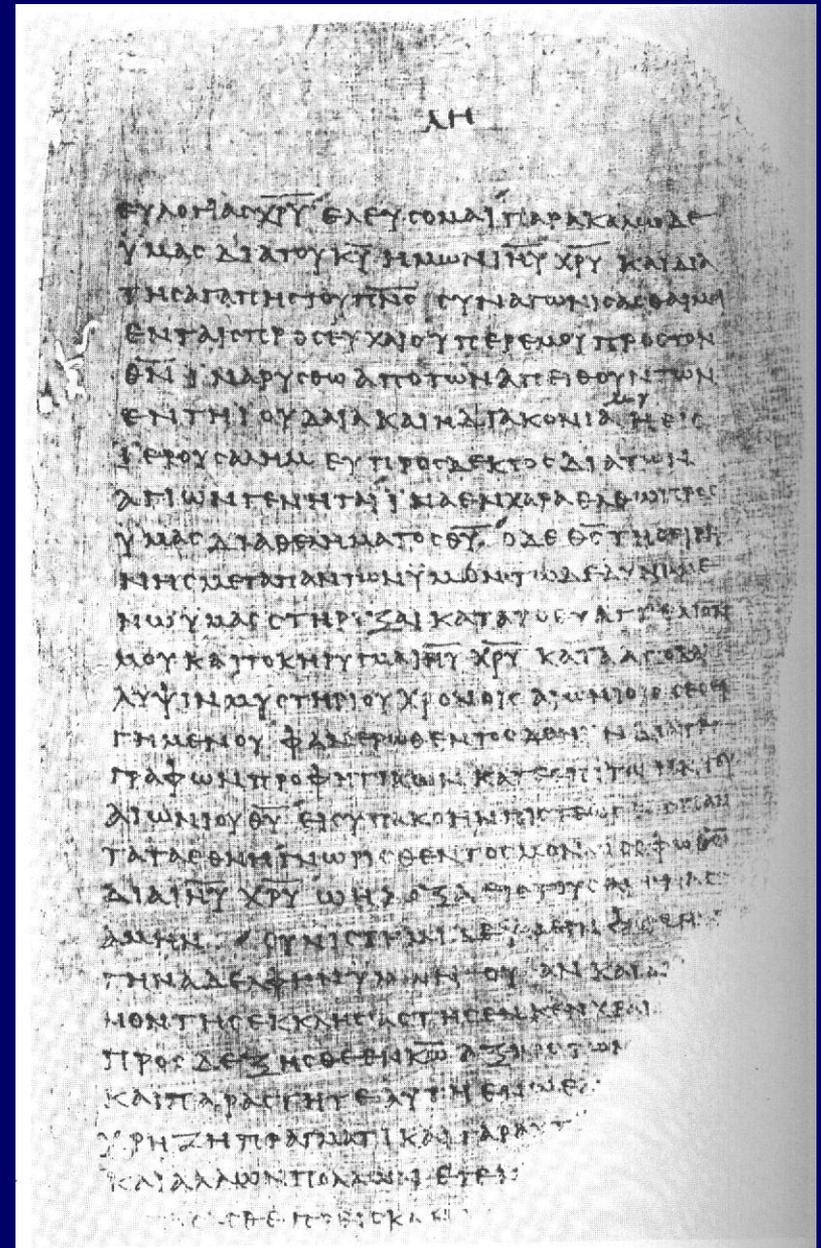
John 18:31-32, 37-38



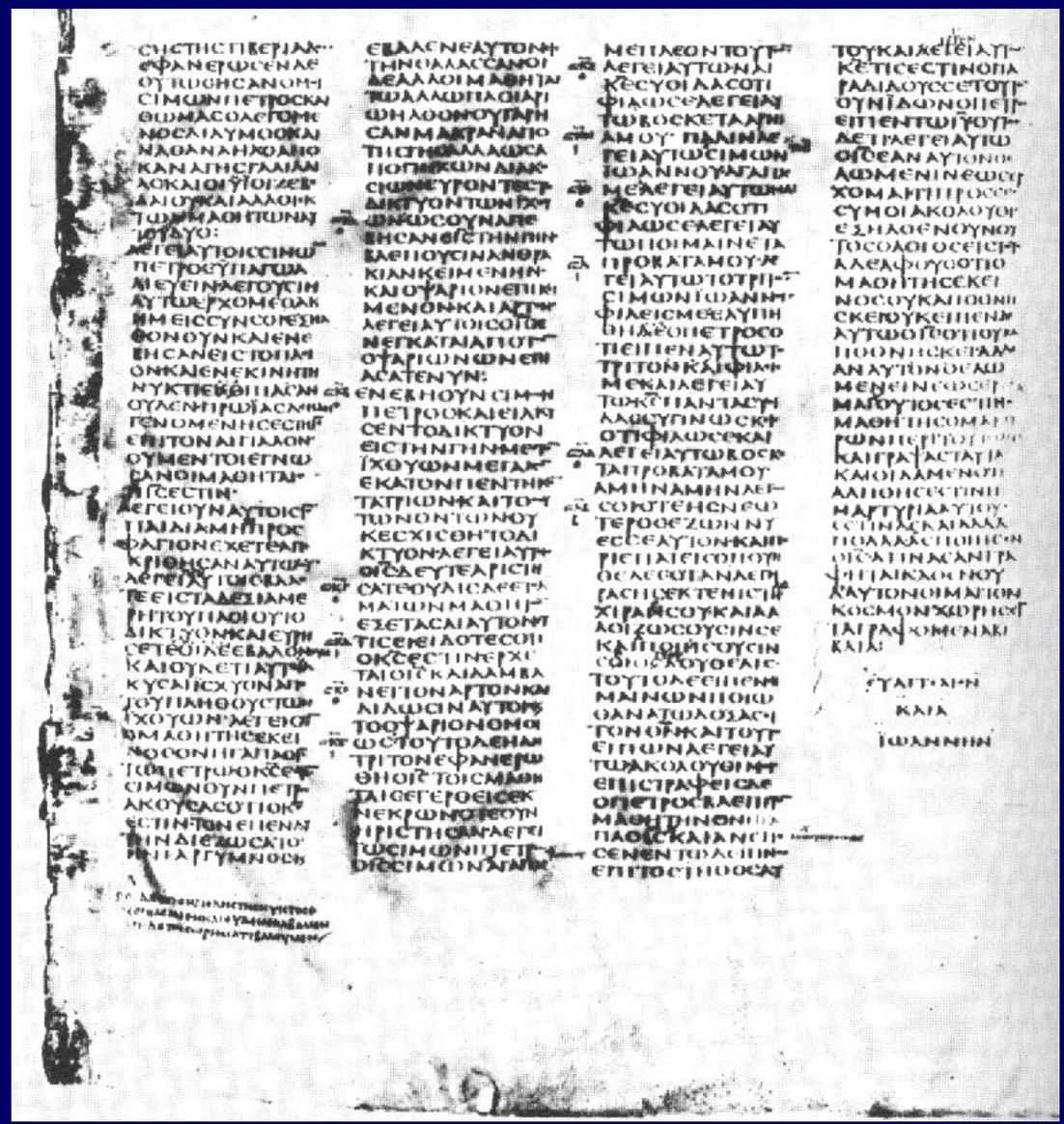
Chester Beatty
Papyrus II
(possibly A.D. 125 but
some place it at A.D.
200), a collection of 86
leaves, with parts of
Rom, Heb, 1Cor, 2Cor,
Eph, Phil, Col, 1Thess

Shown at right
Romans 15:29-33,
16:25-27

Bruce Metzger, The Text of the New
Testament, 2nd ed., Plate II.



Codex Sinaiticus
(350 A.D.), now in
British Museum.
Purchased for
100,000 pounds in
1933 from Russia.
Contains almost all
of New Testament
and over half of the
old Testament.
John 21:1-25



Bruce Metzger, The Text of the
New Testament, 2nd ed., Plate IV.

NUMBER OF EXISTING MSS

88 papyri MSS (A.D. 117-300)

John Rylands Fragment (A.D. 117-138) - oldest

Chester Beatty Papyri (A.D. 250) - most of the NT

267 parchment-uncials MSS (4-9th cent.)

Codex Vaticanus A.D. 325-350 – Oldest parchment

2,764 parchment-minuscule MSS (9-15th cent)

Oldest family of texts dates from 10th century

2,143 Lectionaries (7th-12th cent)

Total: 5,309 MSS

Comparing Number of Ancient MSS

	Time between writing and oldest copy (years)	Number of copies
• Homer's <i>Iliad</i>	500	643
• Caesar's <i>Gallic Wars</i>	1,000	10
• Tacitus <i>Annals</i>	1,000	2
• New Testament	30-50	5,015

Comparing time of writing to oldest MSS

- Caesar's *Gallic Wars* 900 years
- Tacitus' *Annals of Imperial Rome* 800 years
- Homer's *Iliad* (earliest fragments) 400 years
- New Testament
 - Complete MSS 250 years
 - Most of the NT less than 150 years
 - Some books 75 years
 - One fragment within 50 years

Canon Began With The Apostles

- The authority of the Apostles

Joh 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

- Joh 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

Canon Began With The Apostles

- The authority of the Apostles
- Joh 17:20 "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;
- Joh 20:30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Canon Began With The Apostles

- The authority of the Apostles
- 2Pe 3:15 ...just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, (16) as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Canon Began With The Apostles

- The authority of the Apostles
- Eph 3:3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. (4) By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,
- 1Co 14:37 If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.

Canon Established by Early Writers

- Gospel according to Luke Luk 1:1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, (2) just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, (3) it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus;

Canon Established by Early Writers

- Gospel according to Matthew
- Gospel according to John Jn 20:30-31
- Gospel according to Mark (Papias said dictated by Peter)
- References to the 4-fold gospel begin to surface in beginning of the 2nd century with Irenaeus (180 A.D.)

Circulation of the Apostolic Writings

- 1 Peter was written to Christians in Turkey, where Paul had preached 1Pe 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen
- Forgeries of Paul began to surface 2Th 2:2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

Circulation of the Apostolic Writings

- Luke records other accounts Lk 1:1-3
- Paul's epistles sent to churches with instruction to send on to other churches. Col 4:16 1Th 5:27
- Peter refers to "... Paul's epistles" (1 Peter 3:15-16)
- 1 Peter was written to Christians in Turkey, where Paul had preached
- Forgeries of Paul began to surface 2Thess 2:2

Canon Established by Early Writers

- Oral tradition

- References to the four-fold gospel surface early in the 2nd century with Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* , A.D. 180)

Early Writers in the Church

- Polycarp (AD 69-155)
- Clement of Rome (AD 95-96)
- Irenaeus (AD 115?-202)
- Ignatius of Antioch (110)
- Didache (100-150)
- Papias of Hierapolis (130?)
- Epistle of Barnabas (130?)
- Polycarp of Smyrna (110-135)
- Shepherd of Hermas (100-150)

Canon Established by Early Writers

Let us act according to that which is written (for the Holy Spirit saith, “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, neither let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, in diligently seeking Him, and doing judgment and righteousness”), being especially mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which He spake, teaching us meekness and long-suffering.

1st Clement to the Corinthians

Canon Established by Early Writers

Papias (ca. AD 130-140) -- “Mark became Peter’s interpreter and wrote down accurately all that he remembered, whether the sayings or the doings of the Lord, but not in order—for he had neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but followed Peter later on, as I said. Peter was accustomed to teach as occasion required, but not as though he were making a compilation of the dominical oracles. So Mark made no mistake in writing down certain things as he called them to mind; for he paid attention to one thing: to omit none of the things he had heard and to make no false statements in any of them.”

Papias, Oracles, 1 (early 2nd century)

For I did not, like the multitude, take pleasure in those who spoke much, but in those who taught the truth ... in those who rehearsed the commandments given by the Lord to faith, and proceeding from truth itself. If, then, any one who had attended on the elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings, — what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the Lord's disciples ... For I imagined that what was to be got from books was not so profitable to me as what came from the living and abiding voice.

INFLUENCES ON THE CANON

Apostolic Roots – false teachers present – Gal 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; (7) which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. (8) But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! (9) As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

INFLUENCES ON THE CANON

- Spread of False Teaching
- Judaizers (Apostolic times Gal 5:2-4 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. (3) And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. (4) You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

INFLUENCES ON THE CANON

- Spread of False Teaching
- Gnostics – the idea that God is a remote, non-earthly source

1Jn 1:1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life-- (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us-

SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANON

- Generally believed pattern of acceptance
 - Four Gospels (end of Apostolic period)
 - Paul's writings, Acts, Revelation (end of 1st cent.)
 - Rest of NT debated, took longer to be accepted.
 - Other books debated, but rejected.

SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANON

- General acceptance by Christian teachers
- Not set by church councils
- Use in church services

“Although the fringes of the emerging canon remained unsettled for generations, a high degree of unanimity concerning the greater part of the NT was attained among the very diverse and scattered congregations of believers not only throughout the Mediterranean world but also over an area extending from Britain to Mesopotamia.” -- FF Bruce

“By the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth century, the great majority of the twenty-seven books that still later came to be widely regarded as the canonical NT were almost universally acknowledged to be authoritative.”

Bruce Metzger

CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION

- Apostolic authority
 - Acceptance by the churches
 - Affirmed spiritual validation

The canon has been considered closed since AD 315 !

THE APOCRYPHA

- Additions to various OT books in Latin Vulgate
- Many historical and geographical inaccuracies
- Many doctrines conflicting with other Scriptures
 - Esdras
 - Tobit and Judith
 - Prayer of Azariah, etc.
 - Ecclesiasticus
 - 1 & 2 Maccabees, Psalm 151
- **Never accepted by the Jews!**

OTHER NON-CANONICAL WRITINGS

➤ Gospel of Thomas (A.D. 140)

➤ Gospel of Philip (2nd century)

➤ Exegesis of the soul (A.D. 200)

➤ – Gal 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

(9) As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

So faith comes from hearing, and
hearing through the word of Christ

Rom 10:17

For we also have had the gospel
preached to us, just as they did; but
the message they heard was of no
value to them, because those who
heard did not combine it with faith

Heb 4:2