

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 give your life for a copy of such a book?

God's Revelation To Us

REVELATION:

God's mind → mind of original writers

- 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.

God's Revelation To Us

INSPIRATION:

Writers' minds → original text

- 2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;
- 2Pe 3:16 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.

God's Revelation To Us

INSPIRATION:

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- 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.

God's Revelation To Us

INSPIRATION:

Writers' minds → original text

- 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,

God's Revelation To Us

CANONIZATION:

Original text → post-apostolic acceptance

TRANSMISSION:

Accepted texts → manuscript copies (MSS)

TRANSLATION:

MSS copies → contemporary translations

ILLUMINATION:

Contemporary translations → our
minds/hearts

Definition: CANON

Initially a measuring rod. When applied to the Scripture it means “an officially accepted list of books.”

Ireneus, A.D. 180, refers to the four Gospels and Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus, of 1 Peter and 1 John and of the Revelation

Canonization is the process of recognizing that a book is inspired. Acceptance is based on the ability to determine that it came from God.

The “Muratorian Canon“, 190 A.D., is nearly identical to today’s New Testament — the difference — it included two books that were later excluded — 1) the Revelation of Peter, and 2) the Wisdom of Solomon.

The Synod of Hippo Regius in North Africa (AD 393) did not decide the canon, but listed what those present agreed was in the canon.

Internal – Bible's claims about itself

- Claims of Jesus' words Mat 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.
- Bible's claims for itself

2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

2Pe 1:21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Overview

- Bible's warnings Rev 22:18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book;

– If the Bible is not true, then it's a hoax!

Overview

- The importance of this study
 - External – evidence of history
 - Internal – Bible's claims about itself
 - Claims of Jesus words (*Matt 24:35*)
 - Bible's claims for itself (*2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:21*)
 - Bible's warnings (*Rev 22:18-19*)
 - If it's not true, then it's a hoax!

The Original Witnesses

- Jesus appointed the 12 as official witnesses

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 have said to you. John 14:26

and you [i.e. the Apostles] will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8

The Original Witnesses - 12 apostles appointed to be Jesus' official witnesses; Matthias took Judas place, Paul added later

Act 1:21 "Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us-- (22) beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us - one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

1Co 15:8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. (9) For I am the least of the apostles ...

The Eye-Witness Claims

- John claimed to be an eye-witness
 - 1Jn 1:1-3 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-- (3) what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

The Eye-Witness Claims

- Peter claimed to be an eye-witness

2Pe 1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. (17) For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"-- (18) and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

The Eye-Witness Claims

- Luke claimed to be accurate researcher Lk 1:1-2

Luk 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; (4) so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

The Eye-Witness Claims

- Paul claimed to be an eye-witness of Jesus after Jesus' resurrection

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1Co 15:5-8 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. (6) After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; (7) then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; (8) and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

The Eye-Witness Claims

The writer of Hebrews appealed to eye-witnesses

Heb 2:3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, (4) God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

“Some writers may toy with the fancy of a ‘Christ-myth,’ but they do not do so on the ground of historical evidence. The historicity of Christ is as axiomatic for an unbiased historian as the historicity of Julius Caesar. It is not the historians who propagate the ‘Christ-myth’ theories.”

F. F. Bruce

PROBLEMS

- Jesus didn't write anything
- Witnesses and apostles spread the teachings of Jesus orally.

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PROBLEMS

- Some put into writing their testimony of Christ and his teachings.
 - 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.

PROBLEMS

- Some put into writing their testimony of Christ and his teachings.

2Pe 3:15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; 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.

PROBLEMS

- Some put into writing their testimony of Christ and his teachings – e.g. the apostle Paul.

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.

PROBLEMS

- Other writings began to appear claiming apostolic authority.

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!

PROBLEMS

- The apostles were concerned about corruptions of their teachings after they were gone

2Pe 1:1 Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: (2) Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; (3) seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

PROBLEMS

- The apostle Paul was concerned about corruptions of God's word after he was gone
- Act 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (29) "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; (30) and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

PROBLEMS

- The apostles made provisions for their teachings to be preserved and circulated
- 2Ti 2:2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
- Col 4:16 When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea.

PROBLEMS

- Succeeding generations were faced with determining which writings were authentic and authoritative.
- Greek manuscripts -- The tally from Leuden Database at 4 Feb 2010: minuscules = 2926; majuscules (uncials) = 322; papyri = 128; lectionaries = 2462 for a total of 5,838.
- The earliest New Testament Greek MS as of 2012 is the John Ryland's Papyrus (P52) which Bart Ehrman dates to "125-130, plus or minus twenty-five years."
- The New Testament has currently 24,970 manuscript copies dated prior to 1500 AD

The Book of Mormon

- Consider the difference – there are no ancient texts as it was written in 1830
- The Book of Mormon claims to have been written at least 1100 years prior to the KJV, but it contains exact copies of passages, e.g., Mark 16:15–18, which is quoted nearly word-for-word in Mormon 9:22–24
- There is no archeological evidence of any kind for the ancient people of the book of Mormon

1Pe 3:15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts,
always being ready to make a defense to everyone
who asks you to give an account for the hope that is
in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

- Are you ready to obey Jesus?
- Mat 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of
all nations, baptizing them in the name of the
Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
(20) teaching them to observe all that I have
commanded you.