

# The text of the New Testament

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

The Bible is truth!

Joh 16:12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. (13) When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

Jesus promised he would send the Holy Spirit who would guide the apostles into all truth!

Joh 17:20 “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,

Joh 20:30-31 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The apostles were guided into all truth – not everyone who thinks they have had a vision or felt the presence of the Lord.

They wrote it down for us!

Jn 20.30-31 above

Paul wrote it down – 1Co 14:37 If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.

Peter said Paul wrote Scripture

2Pe 3:15-16 And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, (16) as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

The New Testament Scriptures were written down before the last apostle, John died in 100 AD.

In fact, if the Scriptures themselves are to be believed, they were completed before 70 AD when the temple was destroyed by the Romans.

Heb 10:1 For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?

**The temple services were still being offered at the time of the Hebrew letter was written.**

When Peter wrote his last letter, about the time the temple was destroyed, he said we had it all!

2Pe 1:3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,

Jude, writing about the same time, said it had been “once for all delivered to the saints”

Jud 1:3 Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.



Paul, in the last letter he wrote, told Timothy he had everything needed to make one perfect! It was in the “sacred writings.”

2Ti 3:15-17 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (16) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

We do not have any of the original manuscripts, but we do have a lot of copies. 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 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

What happens when all these copies contain mistakes?

Men sat listening and copying the Scriptures while one man read. If he said the word “quite”, perhaps the writer would put “quite.”

There are thousands of differences like this in the copies, but they are easily sorted out when one reads the context.

Men sat copying the Scriptures while looking at a manuscript. If his eye came back to the page he was copying after he finished writing what he could remember, he might skip to where the next place in the manuscript contained the word at which he stopped.

Again, there are hundreds of differences like this in the copies, but they are easily sorted out when one finds the text repeated or a line or paragraph missing.

Some men left out passages possibly because they didn't believe that passage, or inserted it because they thought it should be there.

Those mistakes were often copied repeatedly and they show up in all the manuscripts copied from the first mistake.

For this reason, scholars have looked at the age and quality of the ancient manuscripts.

Let's look at Mk 16.9-20, which is marked in the NAS [Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include 16-9]<sup>a</sup>

Of the 1600 manuscripts containing MK 16, only 2 do not include 16.9-20. These 2 are the oldest copy of the New Testament, Codex Vaticanus from about 325 AD and Codex Sinaiticus from about 350 AD.

Codex Vaticanus has a blank column of the text after Mk 16.8 and no such blanks appear anywhere else in this text.

In Sinaiticus, Mk 14.54-Lk 1.56 is written on replacement pages indicating another copyist filled in these pages, and the text of Lk 1.1-56 is written in very small letters while Mk 16.2-8 is stretched out – to avoid blank space.

Mar 16:17-20 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; (18) they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." (19) So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. (20) And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.]]



“will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them;” Mk

16.18

This is indeed true.

Act 28:3-5 When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. (4) When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live.” (5) He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.

Act 5:15-16 so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. (16) The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Act 14:3 So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

Act 19:11-15 And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, (12) so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. (13) Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” ... 15 “Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?”

On the other hand, Acts 8.37, does not fare so well as it is present in no ancient Greek manuscript, although it is in the Vulgate

“modern translations (like the ESV, NIV, NASB, etc.) have removed the verse due to a desire to "follow the Vatican" and "remove Believer's baptism from the Bible.””

However, we find several cases of believer's baptisms.

Act 16:14-15 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. (15) And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

Act 16:30-33 Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (31) And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” (32) And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. (33) And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family.

1Pet 3.20 who formerly were disobedient, [g]when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.  
21 There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (NKJV)

You might ask why I use these versions (like the ESV, NIV, NASB, NKJV, etc.) as I teach the word of God, and I reply that I want those whom I study with to put their trust in God not me.

For this reason, I look at the version the person I am studying with and judge whether they can comprehend the words given.



About 20 years ago, I asked a lady to read from Heb  
1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers  
manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the  
prophets,

She pronounced the words, Sunday times and in  
divers. I asked her if she understood and she said  
she knew about the meeting times on Sunday, but  
she didn't know what the divers were doing there.

I then asked her to read from my NASV and she  
read well.

Heb 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the  
fathers in the prophets in many portions and in  
many ways,

She told me she always wondered about that and  
now she knew the truth.

the drawnet cast into the Sea, 53 And how Christ is contemned of his own countrymen.

**T**he same day went Jesus out of the house, \* and sate by the sea side.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together vnto him, so that hee went into a ship, and sate, and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And hee spake many things vnto them in parables, saying, \* Behold, a sower went forth to sow.

4 And when he sowed, some feedes fell by the wayes side, and the foules

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I hope that here is not a person here who can read  
that cannot read and understand --

Mat 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of  
all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the  
Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (20)  
teaching them to observe all that I commanded  
you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end  
of the age."