

Josephus

- “For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from, and contradicting one another, [as the Greeks have], but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine... It is true, our history has been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but has not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there has not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation ... no one has been so bold as to either add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any changes in them. *Contra-Apiion 1:38-42.*”



What About the Apocrypha?

- RCC claims we removed 15 books (Apocrypha) from the Bible that we disagree with.
- Apocrypha was written in the intertestamental period.
 - This was after the OT canon was closed.
- Augustine favored their addition to the Bible. Jerome did not. Augustine was inconsistent on this in debates.
- Jews never recognized them.
- Who is right?
 - Jews and Protestant Christians, or Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox?

1.	Tobit (c. 200 B.C.)
2.	Judith (c. 150 B.C.)
3.	Wisdom of Solomon (c. 140-100 B.C.)
4.	1-2 Maccabees (c. 110-70 B.C.)
5.	Wisdom of Sirach (c. 30 B.C.)
6.	Ecclusiasticus (Sirach) (c. 175 B.C.)
7.	Baruch (ch. 5 = Letter of Jeremiah) (c. 110-100 B.C.) / Letter of Jeremiah (c. 200-100 B.C.)
8.	Three additions to Daniel (c. 140-100 B.C.)

The Facts

- None of these books ever claim to be the Word of God.
- They are not written by prophets or people who received a word from the Lord.
 - In fact, two of the apocryphal books inform us that there were no prophets and they received no word from the Lord.
- All 15 books were written after the office of the prophet had ceased.
- Also, not a single time is the Apocrypha quoted in the New Testament.
 - As previously stated, every Old Testament book is either quoted or alluded to in the New Testament,



Historical Errors

- Tobit 1:1-4 claims that he lived from Israel's division into two kingdoms (931 B.C.) until the Assyrian deportation (722 B.C.), which would be 209 years. No one in this period of biblical history lived such long lives.
- Judith 1:1 claims that Nebuchadnezzar was king of the Assyrians, when in reality he was king of Babylon.
- Bel and the Dragon reports that the prophet Habakkuk visited Daniel in exile in 539 B.C. This was 75 years after Habakkuk was called as a prophet; an event that took place later in his life. This would make him an impossible age.
- The Bible does not contain historical errors like this.

Theological Errors

- Sirach 42:14 = A man's wickedness is better than a woman's righteousness.
- Sirach 3:3, 14-15 = kindness to parents atones for sin.
- Sirach 3:30 = giving alms atones for sin.
- 2 Maccabees 12:40-45 = praying for the dead. RCC uses it to justify praying to the dead and purgatory.



Historical Truth

- RCC is dishonest to say we removed 15 books.
 - These books were never part of the canon.
- Council of Carthage in A.D. 397 was an ecumenical council that recognized only the 39 OT books and the 27 NT books.
 - Apocryphal books were rejected.
- It was only at the RCC Council of Trent in 1546 that the RCC officially added the Apocrypha to the canon. This was in response to the Protestant Reformation.
- What about the Apostolic use of the LXX?
 - They never quote the Apocrypha.
 - Jesus only used the Three-fold Jewish division.
 - Council of Carthage did not recognize Apocrypha, even though they adopted the LXX's arrangement of books.

What about the Pseudepigrapha?

- These were Jewish texts written between 200 B.C. and A.D., 200.
 - They are false books written under the name of famous biblical figures.
- No one claims these are inspired.
- The only problem is Jude alluded to them twice.
 - It does not make them canonical or authoritative.
 - Instead, it means on rare occasions, they record a valid oral tradition.
 - It was so rare, it only happened twice.



New Testament Canonization

- NT canonization could be argued in a similar fashion as the OT.
 - The church did not vote on their authority and choose the books of the Bible.
 - Instead, the books were canon the moment they were written.
- Despite this, eventually there will be much debate by the church regarding the canon.
 - Many books (Paul's 13 letters; Synoptic Gospels; Acts) were widely copied and circulated.
 - Others were not (James, Jude, Hebrews – Jewish context).
 - In the early years all the NT books were recognized, but as time progressed and the church spread under persecution, heretics starting writing their own books. It confused matters.
 - To fight it, the church formed a rigid hierarchy, but soon authority was vested in that authority rather than the Word.

NT Evidence for the Canon

- The NT books were recognized soon after they were written.
 - Early church father witness corroborates this.
- 1 Timothy 5:17-18 quotes Luke as Scripture.
- 2 Peter 3:15-16 says Paul's 13 letters are Scripture.
 - This covers 14 of the 27 NT books.
- John authenticates his gospel and his letters in John 14:25-26.
- John 14:25-26 – “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 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.”
 - This tells us the Holy Spirit would inspire what the Apostles wrote.
 - Books written by apostles, or approved by them (Luke) had authority.

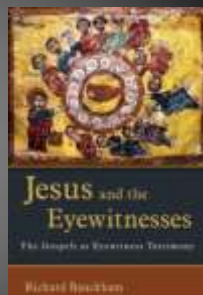
The Gospels

- Each Gospel has a superscription with the author's name.
 - E.G. kata-Matthion, or kata-Markon. Kata = according to.
- Gospels' lack their author's names in the text, but superscript was where an author could leave their name.
- All of the earliest Gospel scrolls have the superscription.
- The early church fathers knew what name was on each gospel. There was universal attestation.
- There was never a time that we know of where they lacked the superscription.



Eyewitness Testimony

- The apostles also claim to be eyewitnesses.
 - 2Peter 1:16 – For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.
 - 1John 1:3 – that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.
- Such testimony is a goldmine. This covers at least Peter and John's letters.
 - So we now have letters or Paul, 4 Gospels, and the letters of Peter and John. This brings us to 22 of the 27 NT books.



Eyewitness Testimony.

- The book of Revelation claims to be eyewitness testimony 13 times. So now the number is 23 books.
- Acts is recognized for a number of reasons.
 - First, Luke and Acts were originally one volume. When Paul quoted Luke, Acts' authority is assumed.
 - It was unanimously accepted by the early church.
 - Second, Luke makes it clear he is an eyewitness.
 - Acts 16:10-13 And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.
- We are now at 24 out of 27 books.

Only a Few Remained

- Only Hebrews, James, and Jude remain.
- This is one main reason these three books were heavily debated by the church leaders.
- They will be cleared up by the 4th century.



The NT Authors Understood Canon

- Did the writers of the NT think their works would be incorporated in the Scripture and placed with the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings?
- Perhaps, we should ask is our understanding of the Scripture in harmony with the biblical authors understanding of their own writings?
- We can look at Paul as a test case and say yes our view is the same as his. He had a functional view of his writings as Scripture.
- He functioned with an understanding that his letters had the authority of Scripture.
 - Colossians 4:16; Thessalonians 5:25 he expected them to be copied, read, and exchanged among the churches.
 - In 2 Thessalonians 3: 14 he expected his teaching to be unconditionally obeyed. To disobey Paul was to disobey the Lord.
 - In 1 Corinthians 14:37, he refers to his instructions as the Lord's command.
 - In 1 Corinthians 7:40 he claims to write under the authority of the Holy Spirit.
 - In 1 Corinthians 7:7 he claims to speak with authority. It is clear that his writings functioned on the level of Scripture.
- Peter recognized this.

Early Historical Witness

- First two generations of church fathers.
 - Clement, Bishop of Rome (AD 95). Letter to Corinthians quotes Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, 1 Corinthians, Titus, Hebrews, and 1 Peter.
 - This earliest non-Apostolic witness quoted Hebrews 1:3-14 in his 36th chapter.
 - Ignatius (AD 110) quotes Matthew, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, James, and 1 Peter.
 - Notice James. By 110, 26 books.



How the Church Lost its Way

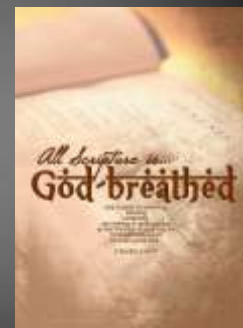
- Gnostic heretics will introduce their own books which will cause confusion.
- Certain pagan philosophies began to infiltrate the church.
 - Fetishism; sacramentalism; sacerdotalism; mother-worship.
- This threw the church into confusion. Some false books were accepted in some churches, while true canonical books were questioned in others.
- Gnosticism was defeated by around AD 280. So serious discussions of canon began. By the 300s it was settled by the church father Athanasius when he supported the 27 books.
- It became officially recognized in AD 397 at Council of Carthage.

Order of New Testament Books

- It is ordered topically, and by length.
- Gospels are put together first.
- Then early church history.
- Then Paul's letters.
 - First, his community letters – longest to shortest (Romans to 2 Thessalonians).
 - Second, his personal letters – longest to shortest (1 Timothy to Philemon).
 - Hebrews was thought to be associate to Paul, so it was at the end of this section.
- The Catholic (general) letters.
 - In the order of the Pillars (Gal 2:9) – James, Peter, and John.
- Finally, there is Jude and Revelation.

Closing Remarks about NT Canon

- From a theological and historical perspective, we cannot agree with the RCC claim that the church as an institution created the Bible.
- Instead, the Holy Spirit inspired the text and it was recognized the moment it was written.
- Just because the church became confused about certain books does not mean they ceased to be Scripture.
- God providentially led the church through that confusion to land on the right books.



New Testament Manuscript Evidence

- We do not have the original autographs, but we have so many copies, that scholars are convinced what we have is identical to around 99.97%
- We have a total of 24,970 NT manuscripts.
 - Of the Greek, 5,752. Earliest complete NT's in 4th century.
 - This is only a 250 gap.
- Compare with other ancient texts.

Author	# Manuscripts	Gap from Original
Homer	643 Manuscripts	1,800 year gap.
Caesar's Gallic Wars	50 Manuscripts	900 year gap.
Tacitus Histories and Annals	14 ½ Manuscripts	800-1000 year gap/

•Church Father Witness:

- Considered the NT text authoritative.
- Quoted the NT so extensively in the first 300 years, that we could reconstruct the entire NT off their writings alone. (only 11 verses in Revelation are lacking).

Authority

- The issue of authority naturally follows any discussion of inspiration, inerrancy, and canonization.
- The point to be made here is relatively simple. If the Bible is God's Word and is infallible, then whatever it says is authoritative.
- This is why true evangelical biblical Christianity places the Bible as the final authority in all matters of doctrine, belief, and practice.

Authority

- The RCC wrongly places authority in the church.
 - They claim the church made the Bible and has the sole authority to dictate its meaning.
 - We say the text determines its own meaning.
 - They say you need the magisterium. The writings mean what magisterium says, not what the text itself says.
 - Historically this has been used to control thought.
- The Bible was written in common languages. They were meant to be understood.

Importance of Following Scripture

- The Bible has not changed in 2,000 years.
 - RCC doctrine changes every century.
 - This runs against papal infallibility.
- The Bible transforms people's life.
 - RCC theology makes people dependent on the church for salvation rather than God.
- God wrote the Bible.
 - He did not create the Roman Catholic Church.
- Therefore, Christians base their life on the Bible.



Why the Bible is Authoritative

- It's infallibility demands authority.
 - All aspects of creation are now fallible.
 - Humans are fallible due to the universality of sin.
 - In contrast, we have a word from God, through man, that is infallible and inerrant.
- Thus, nothing else could be trusted in totality. If only one thing in the world is infallible, then it is to be trusted most of all, and is authoritative by nature.
 - Authority is a necessary attribute of a divinely inspired Word.



Why the Bible is Authoritative

- Every single thing in creation is contingent or derivative, meaning that it was caused and sustained by forces outside of itself.
- God Almighty, however, is original rather than derivative, and necessary rather than contingent.
 - As such, He carries universal and absolute authority over all things that exist.
- Since this creator has revealed Himself in the Bible through the process of inspiration, that recorded revelation is infallible and inerrant.
 - As such, these written words are the very words of God Himself.
 - Since God has absolutely authority over creation, so also does His inspired words.



Why the Bible is Authoritative

- We cannot be our own ultimate authority.
 - We are fallible, finite, and contingent.
- Because creation is cursed, general revelation cannot be our ultimate authority.
 - So science cannot be the ultimate authority or standard.
- Because the Bible is authoritative, it is our means of solving matters of theological controversy.
 - Remember the example of Jesus proving the resurrection to the Sadducees in Matt 22:29-32, by focusing on a single verb tense from Exodus 3:6.



Comparison of Christ to the Bible

- Jesus is the Word incarnate (John 1:1-3,14) and the Bible is the Word inspired (1 Thessalonians 2:13).
- Jesus is 100% divine and 100% human; the Bible is 100% of God and 100% of man.
- The Holy Spirit was the agent that caused the incarnation of Christ. The Holy Spirit was the agent that caused the inspiration of Scripture.
- Jesus Christ's humanity possessed none of the defects caused by sin. The human authors of the Bible did not taint it with sin.
- Jesus is the living Word (Gal 4:4); the Bible is the written Word (Matt 22:31-32).
- The written Word compliments the living Word (Luke 24:44), and the living Word compliments the written word in John 17:17 and Matthew 5:18.
- The written Word never contradicts the living Word, and vice versa.



Conclusion

- In conclusion, the Bible is in fact the Word of God.
- We have seen in this lesson that the Bible itself teaches the concept of canonization.
- It is not a human invention, but instead it is the process of humans recognizing what God has written.
- We traced Old Testament canonization from start to finish as we did with the New Testament.
- We then discussed the implications of authority that come from it.
- Finally, by comparing the Bible to Christ Himself, it becomes clear just how magnificent the Word of God truly is.