

The History of the Bible

Revelation: God communicates to mankind. When He makes Himself known through creation/nature, it is called General Revelation. He also communicates more directly in a variety of ways through Special Revelation.

Inspiration: The Holy Spirit moved men to write down a record of His Special Revelation. (See 2 Peter 1:21) The Apostle Paul coined this term in 2 Timothy 3:16 when he wrote all Scripture is *theopneustos*, literally “God breathed.”

Transmission: The original inspired documents are called autographs. While no autographs remain, over time those documents were accurately copied and re-copied. These copies are called manuscripts.

Canonization: This is the process by which God guided His people (first the Jews and later Christians) to recognize which books and letters were inspired.

Textual Criticism: Textual Criticism compares the many existing manuscripts to one another, comparing the slight differences in order to determine the original reading. All Bible translations are the result of Textual Criticism.

Translation: In translation, the words of the Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament) manuscripts are converted into another language. Translation techniques vary greatly from literal to paraphrase.

Interpretation: This happens when readers study the text of Scripture to determine what God intends for us to know. (See 2 Timothy 2:15) Interpretation considers the original writer, reader and historical context.

Illumination: The Holy Spirit who inspired the original writer also aids in leading the reader to the correct understanding and application of the Biblical text.

Application: This final step is accomplished only when the reader obeys the Word of God, applying it to their life. This is what James meant when he encouraged us to be “doers” and not just hearers. (James 1:22)

GOD

HISTORICAL MAN

MODERN MAN

US