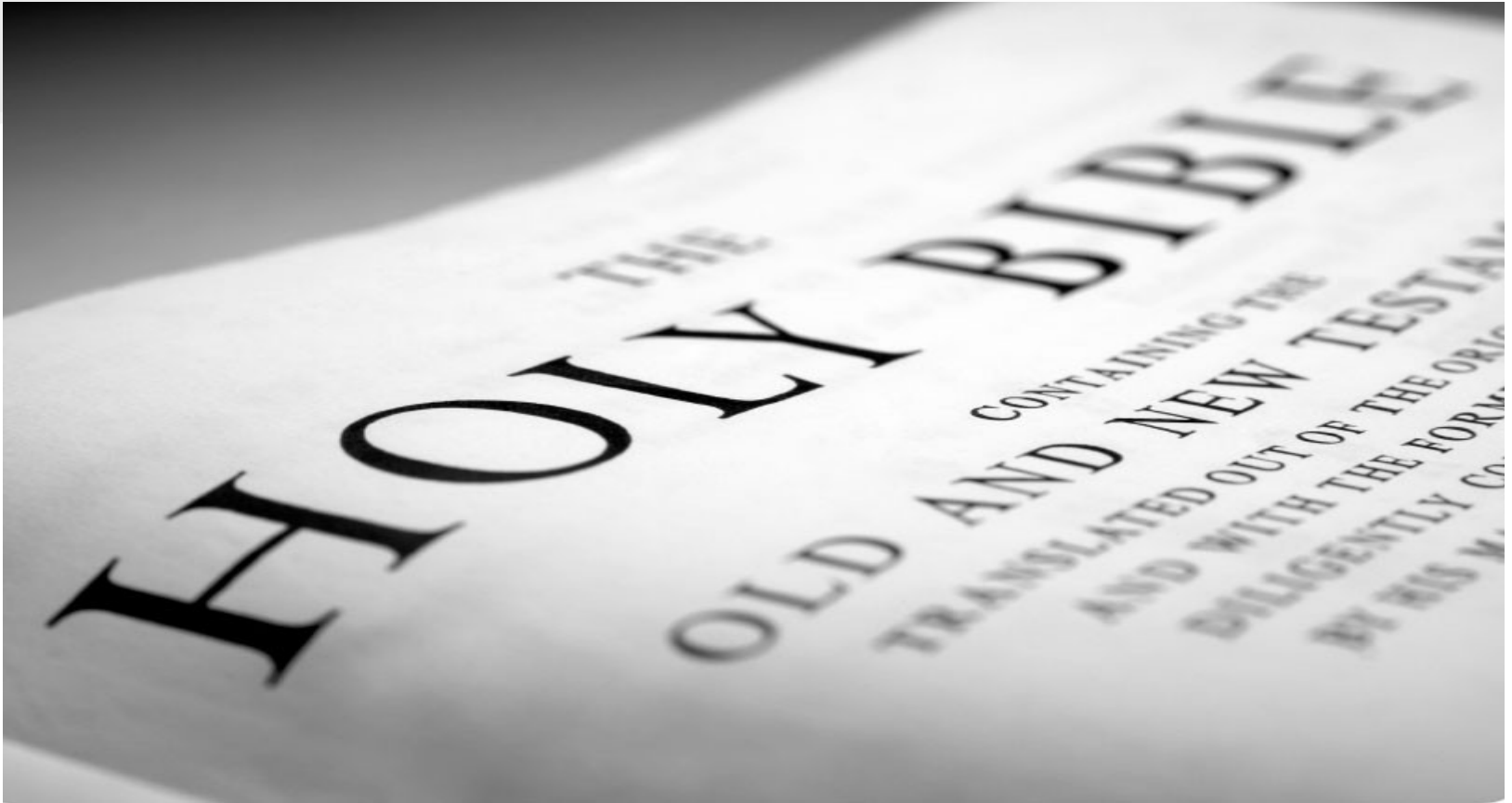


The Bible



Mr. Pablo Cuadra
Religion Class

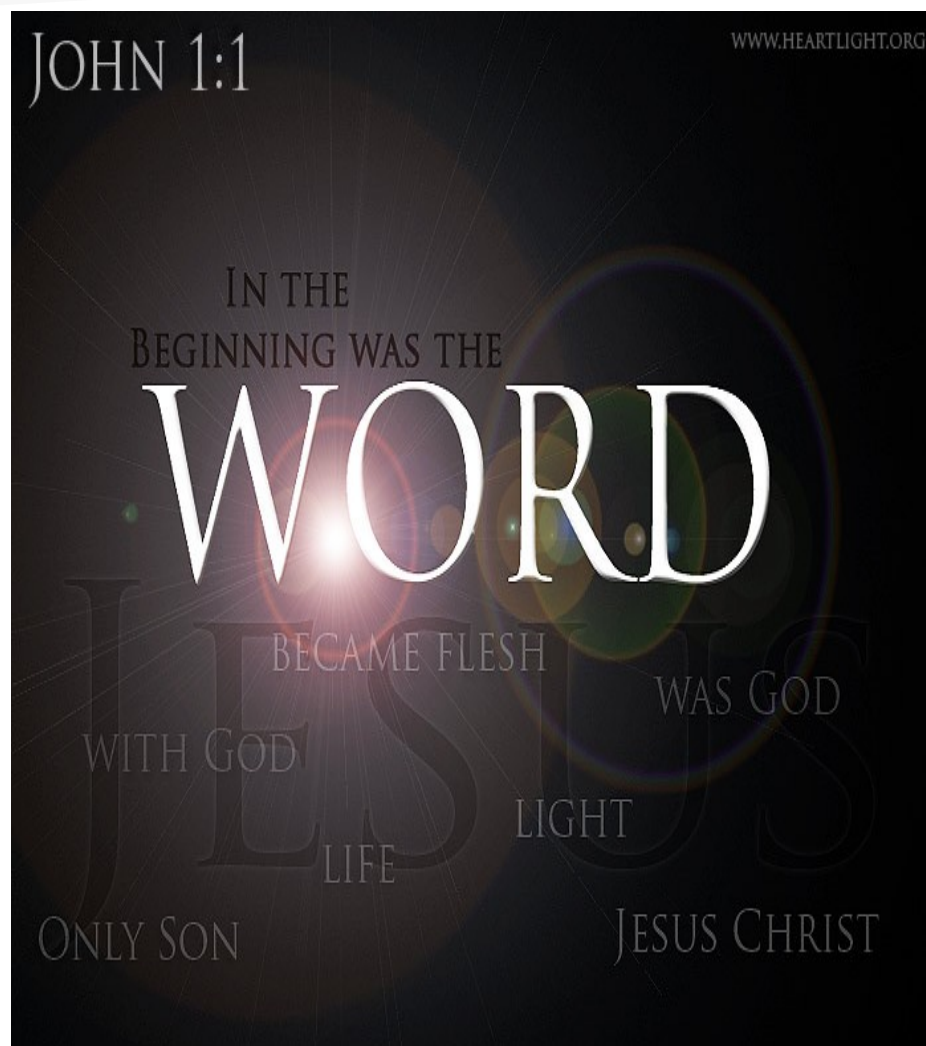
Scriptures

John 1: 1-5

■ “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.”



What is the Bible?

- A. The **Bible** or **Sacred Scripture** is the written, inspired, Word of God. 2 Tim 3: 16-17
- B. The Bible is a “fundamental” source of **Divine Revelation**. John 21: 24-25
- C. Divine Revelation is **God’s self-communication**, the unveiling of the mystery of God and of his redeeming activity.
 - God’s salvific activity has been present from the beginning of time and made manifest to every age and every generation.
 - His salvific work is evident in creation, in the covenants with the patriarchs, in the mighty works of the exodus, in the choosing of a people, in the giving of the law and covenant at Sinai, in the conquest of the promised land, in the sending of his Son. This is what we call **salvation history**, God reaching out to us time and time again.
- D. The **fullness** of Divine revelation of God’s redeeming works is **Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1: 1-4) the promised, incarnate, eternal Word of God made flesh for our salvation.
- E. Jesus’ **life** (deeds, words, preaching, person), **death** (passion, suffering, crucifixion), **resurrection** (victory over death) also known as **paschal mystery** unveils the totality of who God is and his plan of salvation.
- F. This fullness of revelation continues to be **handed down** to us through **Sacred Tradition**, the living, authentic, unbroken, oral transmission of Jesus’ teachings and through the Bible.

What is the relationship between the Bible and Sacred Tradition?

- **Jesus said** : "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me." **Luke 10:16**
 - Jesus words did not vanish with Jesus' ascension, His teachings continued to live under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the Apostles and their successors, the Pope and the bishops, collectively known as the **Magisterium** or teaching body of the Church.
 - This oral teaching, this living memory, this unbroken reception of the living Word of God from one generation of Christians bishops to the next is what we call, **Sacred Tradition**. The Magisterium is the **guardian** of this Sacred Tradition.
 - The testimony about Jesus emerges from Sacred Tradition, under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Its context and content can only be understood in light of the Sacred Tradition of the Church's Magisterium.
 - Together with Sacred Tradition the Bible form **one deposit** of Divine revelation.
 - Hence, that Vatican II, in its Dogmatic Constitution ***Dei Verbum*** states: "Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed.
- Therefore both Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and **venerated** with the same sense of loyalty and reverence." DV No 9

Synod of Bishops

Rome, October 5-26 (2008)

- “In the context of a living faith, then, Scripture is the living testimony of a lived history about the relationship of a living God with a living people. The Spirit, “who spoke through the prophets” (Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed), spoke in order to be heard and take effect.

It is primarily an oral and direct communication intended for human beneficiaries. The scriptural text is, therefore, derivative and secondary; the scriptural text always serves the spoken word.

It is not conveyed mechanically, but communicated from generation to generation as a living word. Through the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord vows: As rain and snow descend from heaven, watering the earth ... so shall my word go from mouth to mouth, accomplishing that which I purpose. (55.10-11)”

Address of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew to the synod of Catholic bishops gathered in Rome to reflect on the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church.



Pope Benedict XVI and Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople

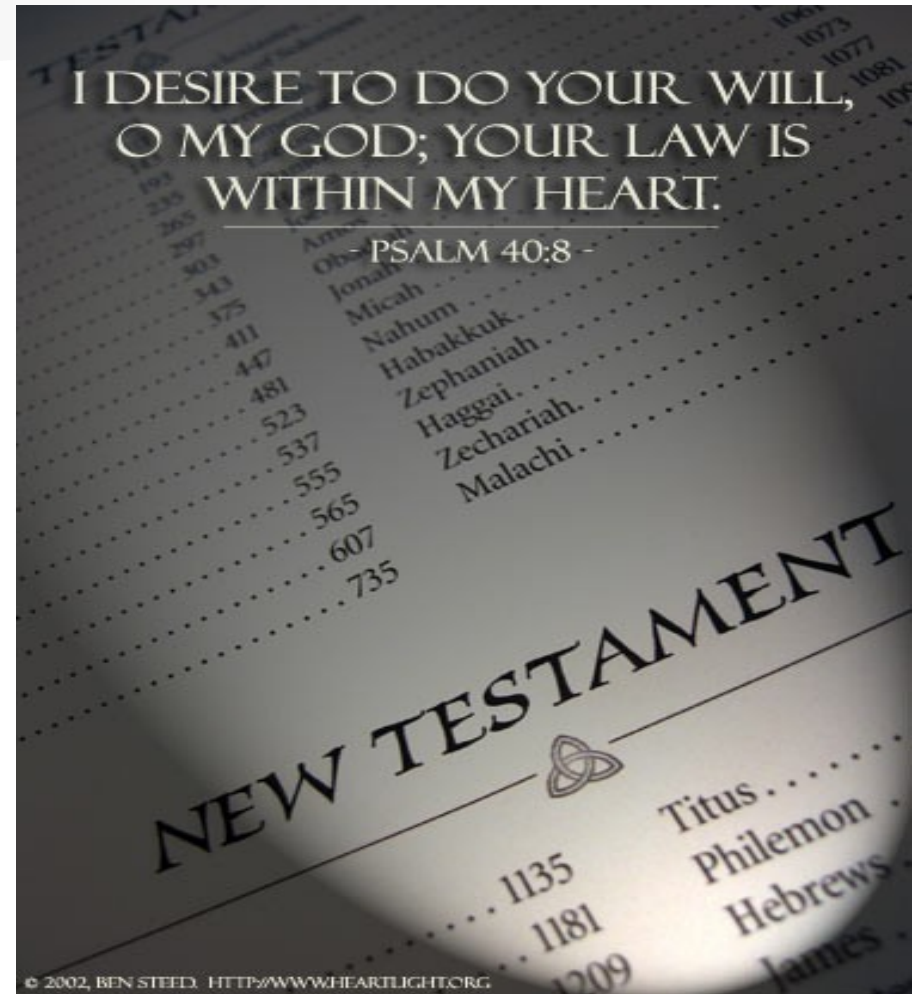
What is the meaning of the word Bible?

- The word Bible comes from the Greek word "**Biblia**" meaning "**books**".
- The Greek word Biblia itself is derived from **Biblion**, meaning paper, book or scroll and was a diminutive of the word **Byblos** or papyrus.
- Hence, Byblos is the root word for Biblia. The name comes from the Phoenician port Byblos from whence Egyptian papyrus was exported to Greece.
- The phrase "Ta Biblia", "The books" was used by **Hellenistic Jews** to refer to their sacred books, the **Septuagint**, in particular. This was the Greek version of the Hebrew scriptures.
- The Christian Scriptures was referred to in Greek as Ta Biblia as early as 223 A.D. The Word Bible itself is not found in any book of the Bible.



How is the Bible Divided?

- The Bible is divided in two sections:
 - A. **Old Testament** or O.T.
 - B. **New Testament** or N.T.
- The word Testament means "Covenant" or "Contract" and is derived from the Hebrew word "Berit".
- The Old Testament or Hebrew scriptures comprises stories about an ancient covenant between **Yahweh** and the Hebrews, as revealed to Moses. It also tells how this covenant worked out.
- The New Testament includes stories and teachings about a new covenant between God and humanity based on the life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

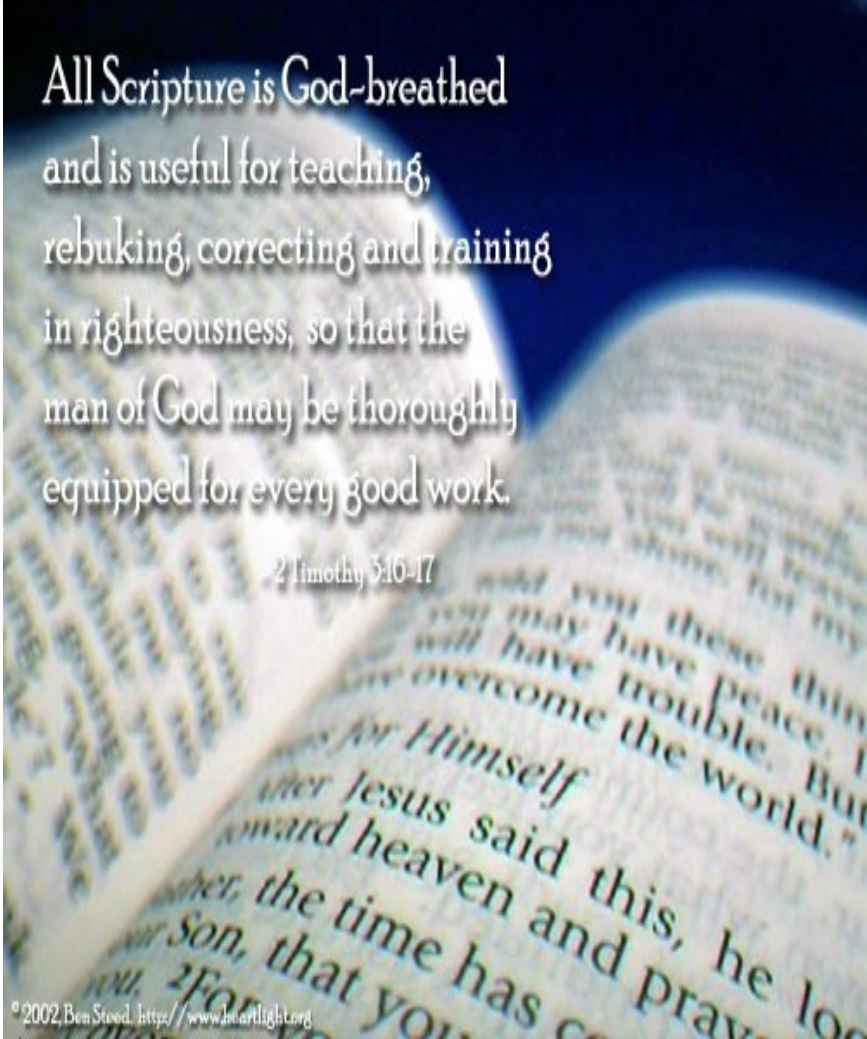


What is the Canon of the Scriptures?

- For Christians the books found in the Old and New Testament comprise the **Canon** of the Scriptures.

- The word Canon comes from the Greek "**kanon**" or Hebrew "**qaneh**" meaning a reed, rule, list or measuring stick. This word (s) was employed by ancient writers to denote a rule or standard.

- Therefore, the Canon of the Scriptures is the **authoritative list** of books that are acknowledged as "**divinely inspired**" by the Church, and are set as the standard for Christian teaching, preaching and edification.

A close-up photograph of an open Bible, showing the pages and the binding. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, serif font. The background is a dark blue gradient with a bright light source, possibly the sun or moon, creating a lens flare effect. The text reads: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Below this, in a smaller font, it says "2 Timothy 3:16-17".

All Scripture is God-breathed
and is useful for teaching,
rebuking, correcting and training
in righteousness, so that the
man of God may be thoroughly
equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

How many Canons are there?

- At the time of Jesus the question about the canonicity of the **Hebrew Scriptures** was an open question. There was no official, universal canon.
- For instance, some Jewish groups like the **Saducees** only recognized as binding the first five books of the Bible known as the **Torah** or the "**Law**", or **Pentateuch** in Greek. The word Torah in Hebrew means "Teaching or instruction".
- Other Jewish groups like the **Essenes** had a much longer canon, than the ones used by most Palestinian and Hellenistic Jews.
- Most Jews in Palestine adopted a canon containing the **Tanak** an acronym for the : Torah, The Prophets, The Writings. This canon contains 24 books and is known as the **Palestinian** or **Masoretic Canon**. This was the canon later adopted by the **Protestant reformers** in the 16th century.
- Jews outside of Palestine known as **Hellenistic Jews** had all the books contained in the Palestinian or Masoretic canon plus other books considered canonical by the Rabbis of these Jewish communities in the **diaspora**, as well as by some Rabbis in Palestine. Their Canon was known as the **Alexandrian Canon** or the **Septuagint**, translated by Jewish scholars in **Alexandria, Egypt** from early Hebrew and Aramaic versions of the Hebrew Scriptures. This canon consisted of 46 books, and was written in **Koine Greek** around the year 250 BC.
- The Palestinian and Alexandrian Canons were more normative than other canons at the time of Jesus and the Early Church.
- The Alexandrian canon was the canon of the Old Testament used and adopted by the **Apostles** and early Christian communities. It is the canon accepted and quoted by the **Church Fathers** and acknowledged as canonical by early Church councils such as **Hippo** 393 A.D and **Carthage** 397 A.D.. It is also the version used by the writers of the **New Testament** when quoting the Old Testament.
- It was not until the year 90 A.D that the Palestinian Rabbis officially fixed their canon in the city of **Yavneh**. In this council the Rabbis rejected the Septuagint version of the Old Testament adopted by Christians. This decision by the Palestinian Rabbis was in part a rejection of Hellenistic and Roman influences that colonized the region. The Romans destroyed the Jewish temple in the year 70 A.D.
- The fixing of the canon by the Palestinian community was also an attempt to radically break away from Christianity and anything Christianity considered sacred or canonical. By the year 90 A.D. Jews were heading in one direction and Christians in another, as two different entities.
- The Palestinian Canon and the decision of the rabbis of Yavneh was never recognized nor adopted by Early Christianity. It wasn't until the 16th century that the **Reformers** questioned the canonicity of some of the books found in the Septuagint known as deutero-canonical, forcing the Church to solemnly declared these books as divinely inspired and therefore canonical during the fourth session of the **Council of Trent** in 1545.

Did you know?

- The books found in the Palestinian or Masoretic canon are known as **Proto-canonical** or first canon.
- The books found in the Alexandrian canon or Septuagint but not found in the Palestinian canon are known as **Deuterocanonical** or second canon.
- The deuterocanonical books are: **Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, Baruch** and parts of **Esther** and **Daniel** not found in the Palestinian Canon, but found in the Greek version.
- Deuterocanonical books are sometimes intercalated with the other books in the Old Testament in Catholic Bibles or placed together in a separate section as done by St. Jerome in his translation, the Vulgate.
- The classification into protocanonical and deuterocanonical books was developed in the 16th century by a Catholic Jewish convert and theologian named **Sixtus of Siena**.



Who wrote the Bible?

- The Bible was written by different human authors, mostly Hebrews, many of them unknown.
- These sacred writers wrote under the inspiration and guidance of the **Holy Spirit** at different times and places over a period of about a thousand years from 900 B.C to 150 A.D.
- These human authors wrote from numerous geographical locations and cultures from Babylon, Palestine, Egypt, Rome , Corinth among others. They also wrote in different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek.
- It was the Holy Spirit who moved these human authors to communicate, to gather, to research, to edit , to pass on, to write down their collective experiences, stories, and oral traditions of faith.
- God did not dictate the Bible, the Holy Spirit encouraged these human authors to freely cooperate, using their skills, language, culture, talents, literary abilities, knowledge, oral traditions, and happenings to convey the people's experience of God's self-communication.



How many Books are in the Bible?

- The **Roman Catholic Canon** based on the Septuagint has 73 books divided this way:

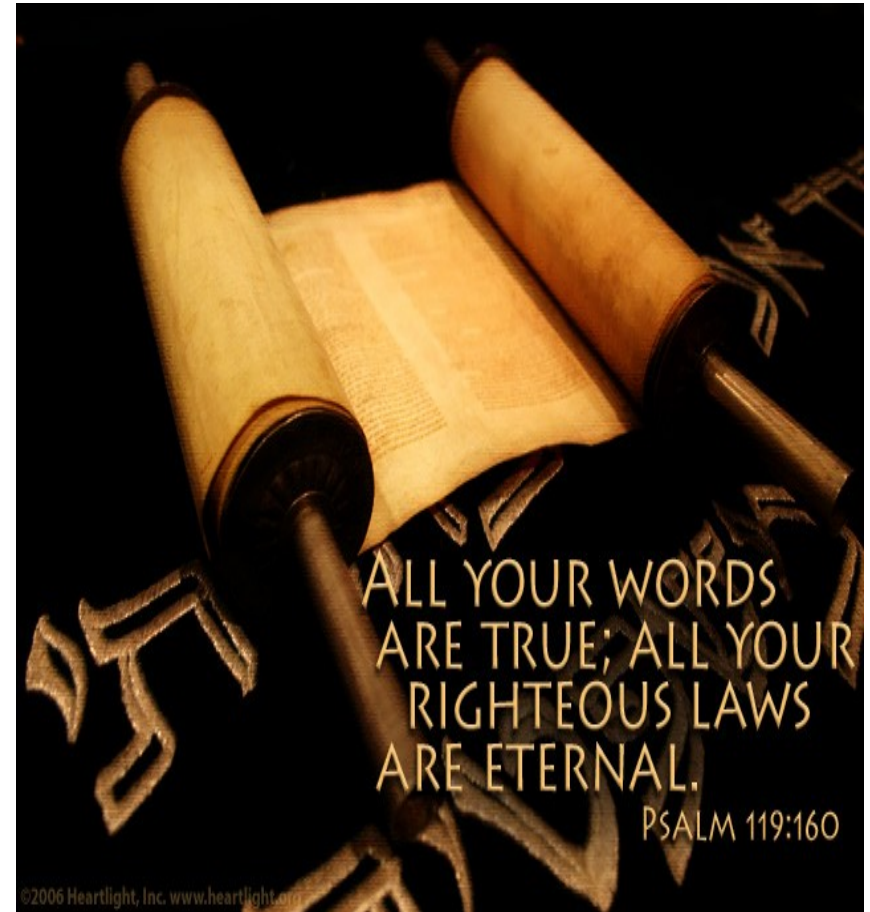
Old Testament: 46 books

New Testament: 27 books.

- The **Protestant Canon** based on the Palestinian Canon has 66 books divided this way:

Old Testament: 39

New Testament: 27



Did you know?

- The Christian Canon based on the Septuagint was unchanged until the 16th Century A.D., when the Father of the Protestant Reformation **Martin Luther** discarded the Deutero-canonical books, because they contradicted essential aspects of his new theological positions.
- Luther also attempted to removed from the New Testament the books of James, Hebrews, Jude and Revelation, fortunately, he faced opposition from other reformers and this did not happen.
- The Palestinian Canon used by Protestants has 24 books. This is due to the fact that some books are fused together in one, as it is the case of the twelve Minor Prophets. 1 and 2 Samuel; 1 and 2 King; 1 and 2 Chronicles; and Ezra and Nehemia are also counted as one. For instance, 1 and 2 Kings is just Kings in the Palestinian Canon.



Ask.

ASK AND IT
WILL BE
GIVEN
TO YOU;



Seek.

SEEK
AND YOU
WILL
FIND;



Knock.

KNOCK AND
THE DOOR
WILL BE
OPENED.

What are the sections of the Old Testament?

■ Catholic Bibles

Torah or Pentateuch

Historical Books

Wisdom Books

The Prophets

Deutero-canonical
books.*

* This section occurs only when they are not intercalated with the rest of the Old Testament books, and are grouped together as a separate section.

■ Hebrew Bibles

■ The Law (Torah)

■ The Prophets (Nebhim)

■ The Writings (Kethubhim)*

*In the Hebrew Canon the Historical books are part of the Prophets and Wisdom books are part of the writings.

Books of The Old Testament -Catholic Canon

<u>Pentateuch</u>	<u>Historical Books</u>	<u>Wisdom Books</u>	<u>Prophets</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Genesis2. Exodus3. Leviticus4. Numbers5. Deuteronomy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Joshua2. Judges3. Ruth4. I Samuel5. II Samuel6. I Kings7. II Kings8. I Chronicles9. II Chronicles10. Ezra11. Nehemiah12. Esther	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Job2. Psalms3. Proverbs4. Ecclesiastes5. Song of Songs <p><u>Deuterocanonical</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tobit2. Judith3. Wisdom4. Eclessiasticus or Sirach5. Baruch6. 1 Maccabees7. 2 Maccabees <p>Also fragments of Esther and Daniel found in the Greek Version..</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Isaiah2. Jeremiah3. Lamentations4. Ezekiel5. Daniel6. Hosea7. Joel8. Amos9. Obadiah10. Jonah11. Micah12. Nahum13. Habakkuk14. Zephaniah15. Haggai16. Zechariah17. Malachi

Books of the Old Testament – Palestinian Canon

The Law (Torah)

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

The Prophets (Nebhim)

A. Former Prophets

1. Joshua
2. Judges
3. Samuel
4. Kings

B. Latter Prophets

1. Isaiah
2. Jeremiah
3. Ezekiel
4. The Twelve

The Writings (Kethubhim or Hagiographa)

A. Poetical Books

1. Psalms
2. Proverbs
3. Job

B. Five Rolls (Megilloth)

1. Song of Songs
2. Ruth
3. Lamentations
4. Esther
5. Ecclesiastes

C. Historical Books

1. Daniel
2. Ezra-Nehemiah
3. Chronicles

Did you Know?

- The Torah or Pentateuch are the **first five books** of the Bible, and are considered the **constitution** of the entire Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament.
- According to Biblical Scholars these books long attributed to **Moses** actually originated from the stories and traditions of four primary sources, reflecting four different schools of thought about Israel's relationships with Yahweh.
- These sources are known as the Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist, and Priestly. This four sources contributed to the final form of the Pentateuch.



The four sources of the Torah or Pentateuch

- The Yawist or (Y) used Yahweh as God's name. This author pays special attention to the Southern kingdom of Judah, employed a great deal of narratives, highlighted God's intimate closeness to humanity, and depicted God acting as a human person also known as anthropomorphic language.
- The Elohist or (E) described God as Elohim or Lord. The Elohist composed about the Northern Kingdom of Israel and was apprehensive about idolatry and morality. One interesting characteristic of the Elohist is that he presents God speaking through symbols such as the burning bush.
- The Deuteronomist or (D) stressed the importance of the Law as the foundation for the Kingdom of Judah. The Deuteronomist appeared toward the end of the monarchy, when the Covenant Law seemed to have been forgotten.
- The Priestly writer or (P) highlighted religious rituals and the function of the Priesthood. This writer portrayed God as more distant and used a more ceremonial style. This source was written after the Babylonian Exile.

(Adapted from the Catholic Youth Bible)

The Torah or Pentateuch

Genesis	50 Chapters	1-11 Origen of the Human race 39-50 Story of the Patriarchs
Exodus	40 Chapters	1-18 The suffering of the Israelites, The exodus. 22-40 The covenant, The law
Leviticus	27 Chapters	1-7 Laws of sacrifice 8-10 Consecration of the Priesthood 11-16 Law of Clean and unclean 17-27 The holiness code
Numbers	36 Chapters	1-4 Census 5-25 Historical accounts 26 Census 27-36 Historical accounts
Deuteronomy	34 Chapters	1-11 Moses' address 12-26, 29 revised laws

Major and Minor Prophets

- Prophets are usually classified as **Major** and **Minor** Prophets.
- The Prophets were the moral conscience of Israel. Their mission was to announce and to remind the people of Israel about the love that God had for them. They also denounced the people's neglect of the **covenant**.

The **Major Prophets** are four:

- A. **Isaiah**
- B. **Jeremiah**
- C. **Ezekiel**
- D. ***Daniel**

(Daniel is not classified as a prophet in the Hebrew Canon)

The Minor Prophets are called this way because they are smaller works.

There are 12 **Minor Prophets**:

Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

Historical Books

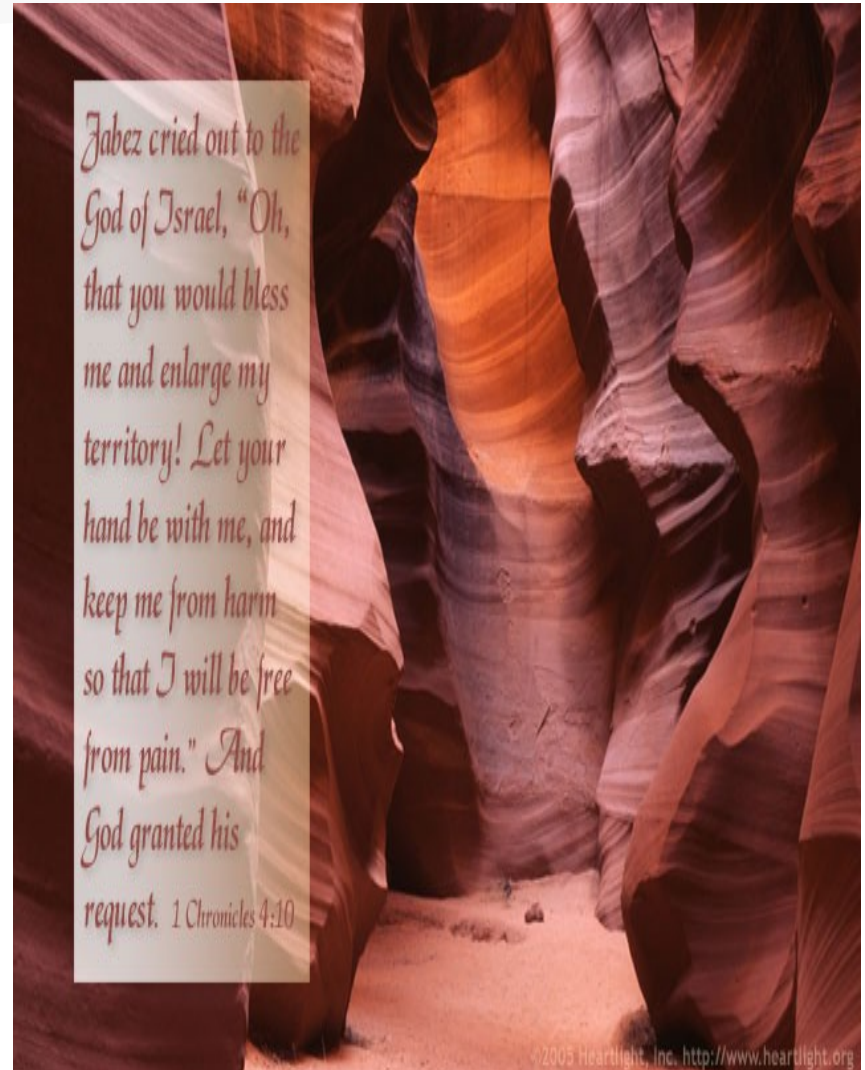
- The **Historical books** narrate the early history of Israel, the conquest of Canaan, the era of the Judges, the emergence and division of the Monarchy into Northern and Southern Kingdoms and the events leading to the captivity of both kingdoms by the enemies of Israel. These books are classified under Prophets in the Hebrew canon.
- The historical books are:

Joshua

Judges

I and II Samuel

I and II Kings



Did you know?

- In the Catholic version of the Scriptures the books of Joshua, Judges, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings are not classified under **Prophets** but under **historical books**. These books are included in the Hebrew Canon under Prophets.
- In the **Orthodox Canon** used by **Orthodox Christians** I and II Samuel are known as I and II Kingdoms. I and II Kings are known as III and IV kingdoms. I and II Chronicles are known as I and II Paraleipomenon.
- Orthodox Christians have a longer canon of the Old Testament than Catholics. Containing books such as: 3rd and 4th Maccabees, 2 Esdras and Psalm 151.
- These books are not in the Catholic canon, they were accepted as canonical by local Orthodox councils after the **Schism of 1054** that divided **Christendom** into **East** and **West**. They are used, however, by **Eastern Catholics** in their **divine liturgies**.



The Wisdom Books

- The “**Wisdom books**” are so called because they are mixture of philosophical treaties and poetry. These books are grouped in the Hebrew canon under “the writings”.
- The Wisdom books are:
 - Job
 - Psalms
 - Proverbs
 - Ecclesiastes
 - Song of Songs or Song of Solomon

Note: Sometimes the books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus or Sirach are intercalated with the Wisdom books. Sometimes they are grouped with the rest of the Deutero-Canonical books.



Did you know?

■ The **monophysite** Churches that broke away from the rest of Christianity in the 5th century due to doctrinal issues regarding the nature of Christ use larger canons in their liturgy. For instance:

Syrian Church: has 2 Esdras, 2 Baruch

Coptic Church: Apocalypse of Elias

Armenian Church: 3rd Corinthians, Twelve Patriarchs, Life of Adam and Eve

Ethiopian Church: Enoch, Jubilees

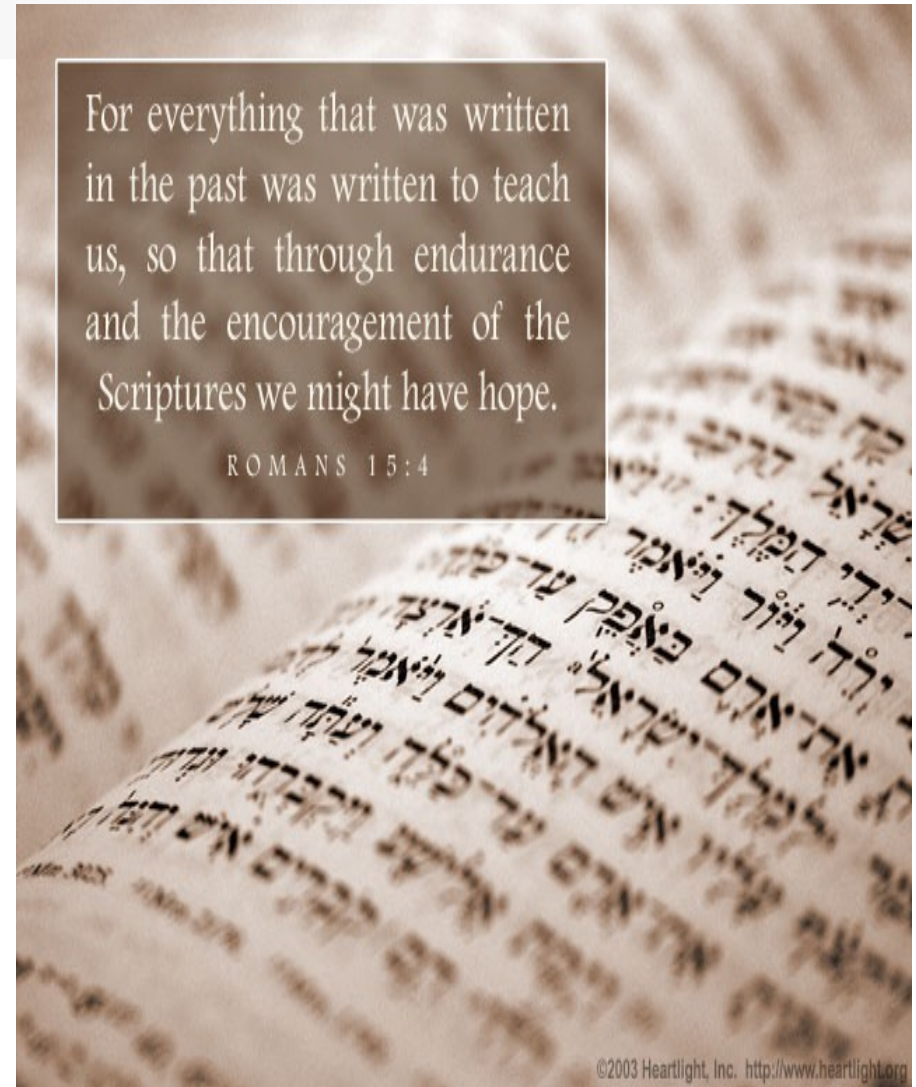
Note: The above mentioned books do not represent a complete list of scriptures regarded as canonical by these Churches.



Coptic Church in Egypt

Reflective Points about the Old Testament

- The Old Testament like the rest of the Bible is a document of faith. Its purpose is to elicit faith in those who ponder upon its divine content. The O.T. is not meant to be read as document of science, archeology, astronomy or history.
- The Term Old Testament does not mean outdated. The message of the Hebrew Scriptures remains as new as ever. God's faithfulness, love, redemptive work, covenant, are themes that never go out style in God's language.
- When reading the O.T. one must take into consideration the time, culture, language in which it was written. One cannot apply to the O.T. the assumptions and presuppositions of our modern era.
- The Old Testament is a sacred document of great importance in our Catholic liturgy, one must approach the text of the O.T. with a prayerful attitude of reverence and awe, for it is the word of God.



St. Jerome

- **St. Jerome** once said, “Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.” St. Jerome was a biblical scholar, Doctor, mystic and Father of the Church. His given name was **Eusebius Hieronymus Sophronius**. He was born in the year 342 at Stridonius.
- St. Jerome was commissioned by **Pope Damasus** in the year 382 to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew, in order to create an official Latin text for the liturgy. The Pope’s desire was to create a superior translation of the Bible than the ones circulating at the time. Many of the Bibles at that time were written in Greek and were full of errors due to poor translation.
- In order to accomplish this great task St. Jerome took upon himself to study many of the ancient languages in which the Bible was written such as: Hebrew, Aramaic, Chaldaic among others. Jerome spent years as a hermit working diligently of his translation. St. Jerome’s final work was the Latin version of the Scriptures known as the **Vulgate**, this translation of the Bible became the official Latin text of the Scriptures for the Catholic Church.
- St. Jerome settled in **Bethlehem** where he lived as an **anchorite** in a cave that was believed to have been the birthplace of Christ. St. Jerome died in Bethlehem in the year 420. Holy Mother Church celebrates his feast on **September 30**, the actual date on his death.



“Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.” St. Jerome

Did you know?

■ No original texts of the Bible remain, the six oldest codices (Bibles) are:

Codex Vaticanus 4th Century located in Rome

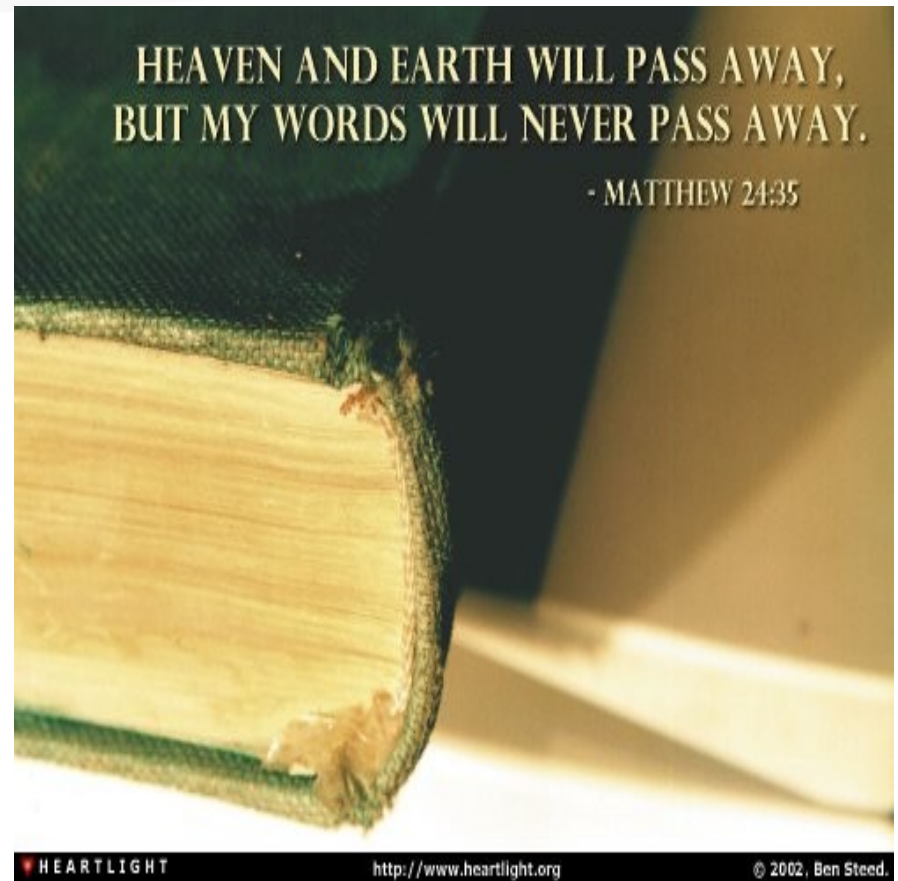
Codex Sinaiticus 4th Century located in London

Codex Alexandrinus 5th Century located in London

Codex Ephraemi 5th Century located in Paris

Codex Bezae 5th Century located in Cambridge University

Codex Ambrosianus 6th Century locate in Milan



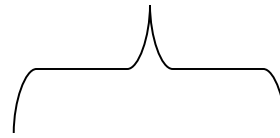
How To Read the Bible?

Parable of The Prodigal Son -- Luke 15: 11-32

Name of Book



Verses



Lk 15: 11-32

Chapter



What is the New Testament?

- The **New Testament** or **Christian Scriptures** are the inspired testimony about **Jesus Christ the Son of God** and the New Covenant (relationship) he came to establish between humanity and God. **Luke 22:20**
- The New Testament is centered in the Person of **Jesus of Nazareth**, his life, death, resurrection also known as **Paschal Mystery**.
- The New Testament present to us Jesus' ministry and teachings, and the Church's **post-resurrection** understanding (theology) of who Jesus really was.
- The New Testament is for Christians the living word of God as fully revealed in the person of Christ and his preaching about the **Kingdom of God**.



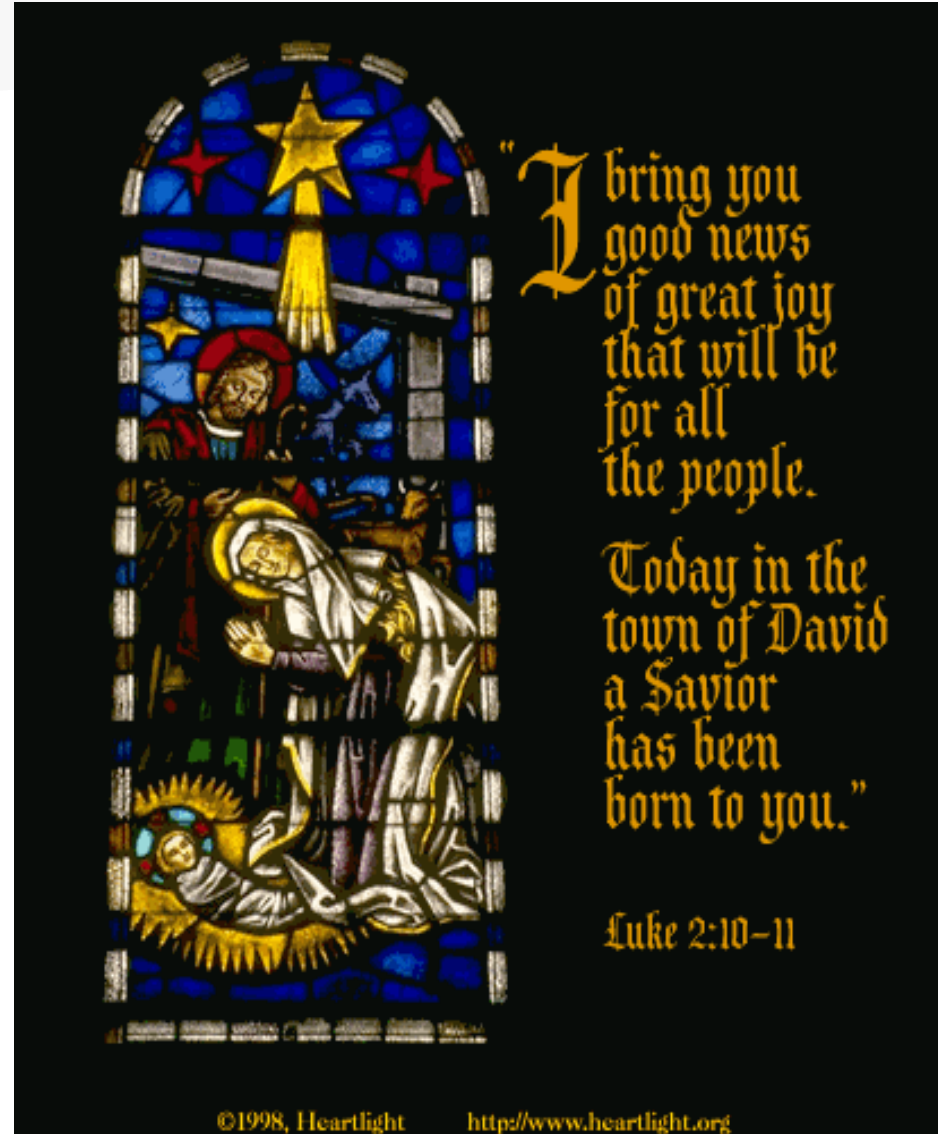
JESUS ANSWERED,
"I AM THE WAY
AND THE TRUTH
AND THE LIFE.
NO ONE COMES
TO THE FATHER
EXCEPT THROUGH ME."

How is the New Testament Divided?

- The New Testament is divided in four main sections:
 - A. Gospels
 - B. Acts
 - C. Letter or Epistles
 - Pauline Letters
 - Hebrews
 - Catholic Epistles
 - A. Apocalyptic

What is the meaning of the word Gospel?

- The word **Gospel** comes from the Greek word “**Euangelion**” or **Good News**.
- The canonical Gospels were written in **Koine Greek** in the period 65—100 A.D.
- There are four **Canonical Gospels**:
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
} **Synoptic Gospels**
- The Gospels are **not** arranged in **chronological order**. Matthew for instance, was not the first Gospel to be written nor is the first book from the New Testament to be written.
- **Biblical Scholars** believe the Gospel of Mark was the first to be written around the years 65-75 A.D. Mark seems to have been the source of early material for the other two **synoptic Gospels**.
- The synoptic Gospels are: Matthew, Mark and Luke. The word Synoptic literally means “seen with the same eyes”. These Three Gospels share a great deal of similarities in the events they cover.



When were the Gospels Written?

■ In **chronological** sequence

Mark 65-75 A.D

Matthew 75-90 A.D

Luke 80-95 A.D.

John 90 A. D



Anyone who receives instruction
in the word must share all good
things with his
instructor.

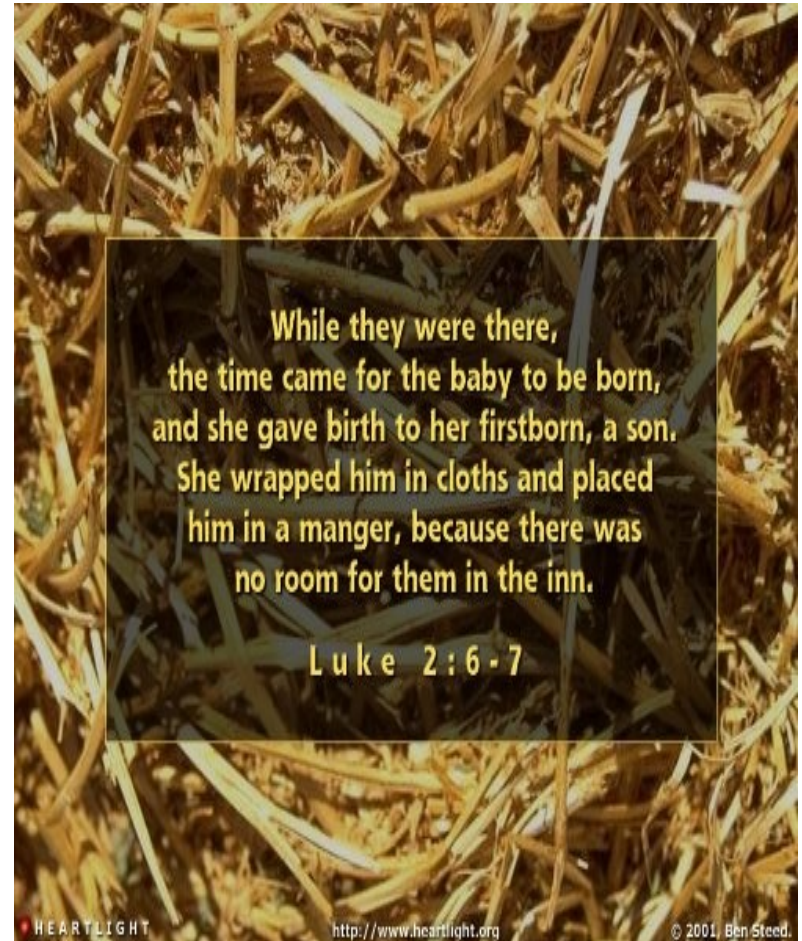
Galatians 6:6

The Gospels

Gospel	Date	Author	Audience
Matthew	75- 90 A.D	Unknown, maybe a Disciple of Matthew	Jewish Presents Jesus as the Fulfillment of the messianic prophecies and as a great teacher
Mark	65-75 A.D	Mark (according to Papias bishop of Hierapolis 130 A.D)	Gentiles Presents Jesus as Messiah and Son of God
Luke	80-95 A.D	According to Tradition Luke, the physician companion of St. Paul	Greek and Roman readers. Presents Jesus as a universal savior
John	90 A.D	Unknown, according to Clement of Alexandria the Gospel was written by John the beloved disciple	Written for the instruction of the early Christian Church. Presents Jesus as the eternal word of God who became flesh.

Did you know?

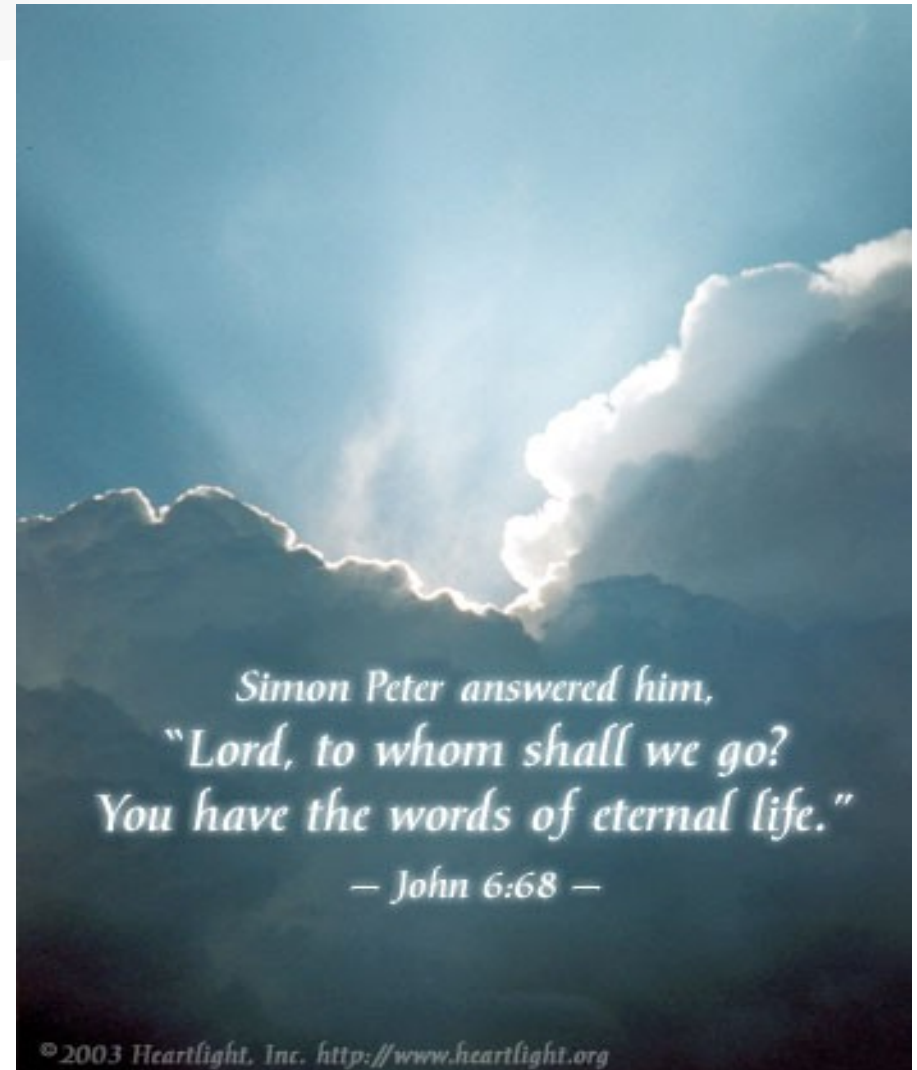
- There are two infancy narratives in the Gospels that tell the story of Jesus' birth.
- These narratives come from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.
- Matthew's account narrates the visit of the wise men from the East, the slaughter of the Holy Innocents by Herod and the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt.
- Luke's account narrates the story of Jesus being born in a manger, because there was no room in the inn and the appearance of the Angels to the shepherds.



How is John different from the Synoptic Gospels?

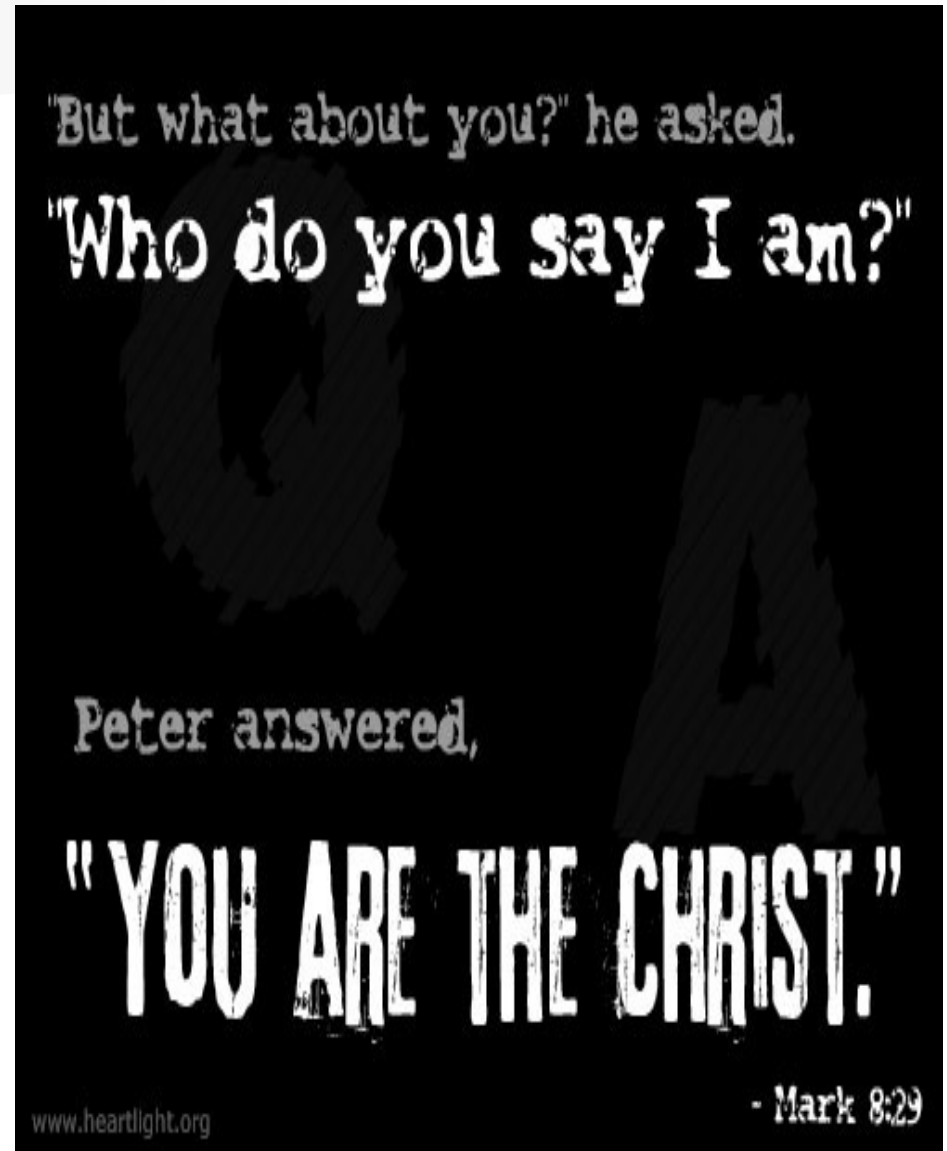
- A. John has no birth story or reference to a virginal birth.
- B. John has no record of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist.
- C. John does not include any narrative regarding Jesus being tempted in the desert by Satan.
- D. John never makes mention of Jesus exorcisms
- E. John does not employ parables of the synoptic type to present Jesus teaching, instead Jesus makes use of long philosophical discourses.
- F. John does not report any reinterpretation of the Mosaic Law as do the synoptics, nor does he give any ethical directives regarding: divorce, the Sabbath, ending the law of retaliation, and forgiving enemies
- G. John does not make any predictions regarding the fall of Jerusalem.
- H. John does not make any predictions regarding the second coming.
- I. John does not preserve a communion ritual or the institution of a new covenant at the Last Supper.
- J. The Jesus portrayed by John does not undergoes any agony before his arrest.

(Source: Stephen L. Harris, *The New Testament*)



The Importance of the Gospels

- The **Gospels** are four intimate portraits of the person of Jesus, as he was understood, interpreted, venerated, and remembered by the Christian communities that were touched by the experience of his **paschal mystery**: life, death, and resurrection.
- These sacred accounts of Jesus' life and ministry are not biographical accounts of Jesus in the modern sense of the word. They are first and foremost theological documents of the Church's faith, a **deep faith** in Jesus as **savior** of the world and his message about the **Kingdom of God** that he inaugurates among men
- The Gospels are the soul of the **New Testament**, they are the primary source for the words, sayings, teachings, sermons, parables, deeds, actions, miracles, preaching in the life of Jesus and his ministry among the men and women of his time.
- The Good News of Jesus Christ attested by the Gospels, through the centuries, continue to transform and to enrich the lives of those who come in contact with the living Son of God through the Gospel and its message of salvation. The life of the Church today also continues to be nourished in its liturgy, sacramentality, and mission by the richness and power of the Good News.



Did you know?

- The **Gospel of Luke** and the book of **Acts of the Apostles** were written by the same author as a single unit around the year 80 A.D.

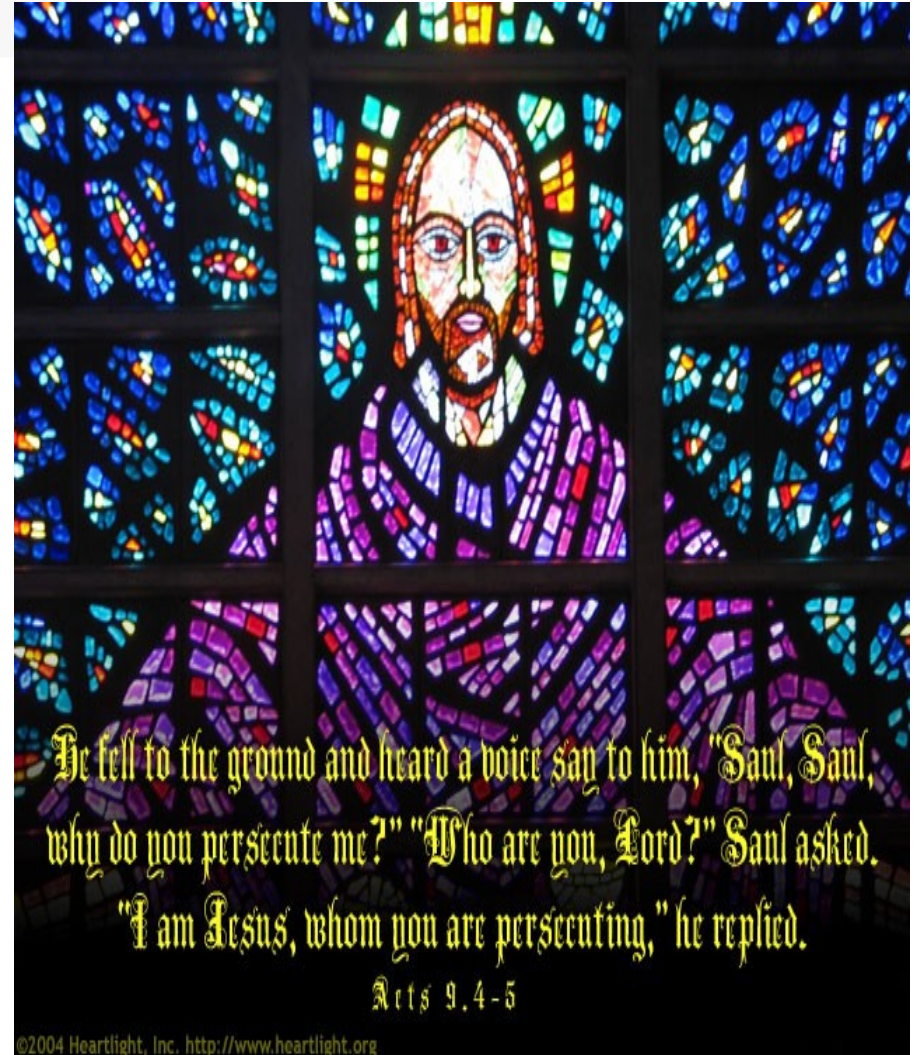
- Tradition assigns authorship of this two-volume work to Luke, the physician companion of the Apostle Paul. Acts is placed in the canon separate from Luke.

- The book of Acts was accepted in some circles as canonical as early as 200 A.D.

- Acts is the only early account of the Christian community found in the New Testament. It begins with a prologue and the account of Jesus ascension into Heaven.

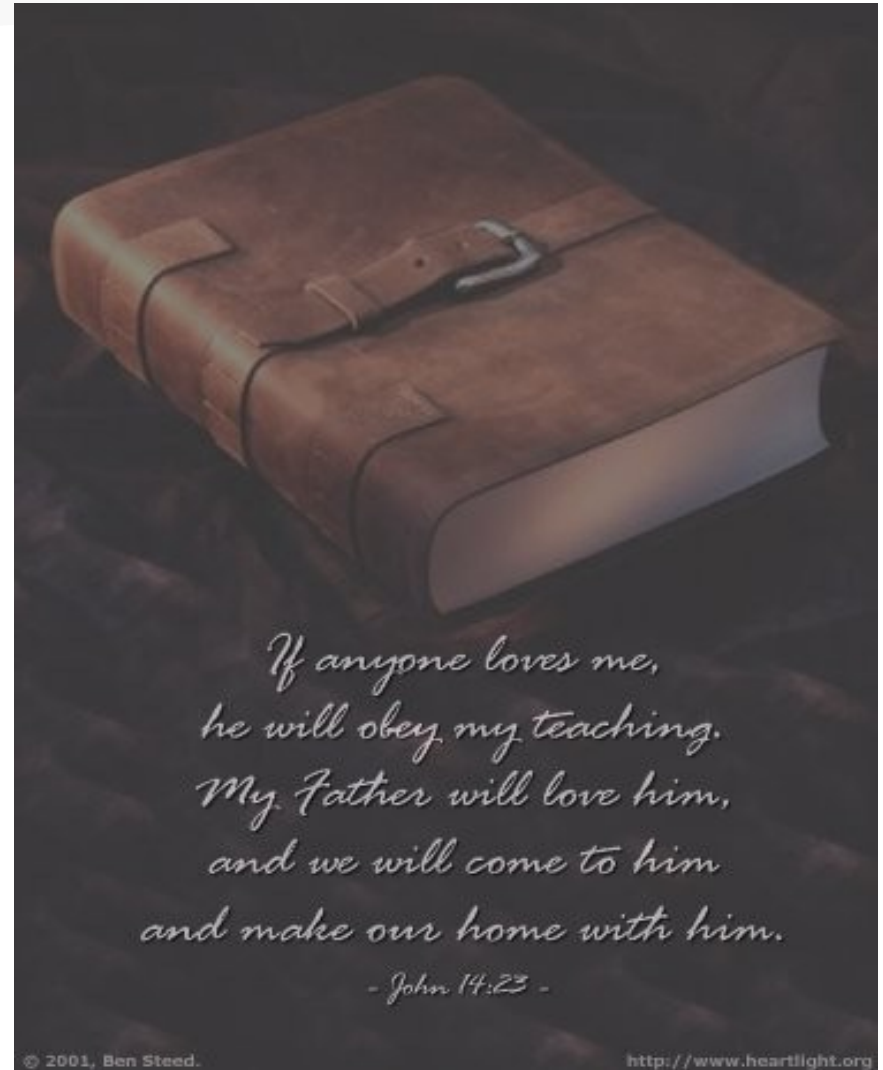
- Acts narrates the birth of the Christian Church at **Pentecost**; Its 28 chapters covers the first 30 years of the Church's life after the death of Jesus.

- Acts narrates the expansion of the Gospel from Palestine to Rome and **Paul's conversion** and missionary journeys to Judea and throughout the Roman world, up to his imprisonment in Rome.



The Letters

- There are **twenty one** letters or **Epistles** in the New Testament.
- Thirteen of these letters or epistles are attributed to the Apostle Paul and form what is known the **Pauline Corpus**.
- The other seven are called **Catholic Epistles**, the authorship of these letters is attributed to the Apostles for whom they are named.
- They are called **Catholic** (a word that means universal) because they are not written to specific communities as in the case of the **Pauline letters**, but to a broader, general, audience.
- The **Epistle to the Hebrews** written in the year (s) 60 or 70-80 A.D. is considered more a **sermon** than an Epistle and was in the past attributed to Paul even though neither the author nor the audience is explicitly mentioned.



Pauline Corpus

Early Letters

- 1 Thessalonians 51 A.D.
- 2 Thessalonians 51 or 90 A.D.

Great Letters

- Galatians 54-57 A.D
- Philippians 56-57 A.D
- 1 Corinthians 57 A.D
- 2 Corinthians 57 A. D
- Romans 58 A.D

Captivity Letters

- Philemon 56-57 or 61-63 A.D
- Colossians 61-63 or 70-80 A.D
- Ephesians 61-63 or 90-100 A.D

Pastoral Letters

- Titus 65 or 95-100 A.D
- 1 Timothy 65 or 95-100 A.D
- 2 Timothy 66-67 or 95-100 A.D

Deutero-Pauline Letters

- The Deutero-Pauline Letters or “Disputed letters” are the epistles Biblical scholars believe were written by Paul’s followers after his death, rather than Paul himself. The opinion of Biblical scholars on this matter is evenly divided, with some arguing for their authenticity.
- The Deutero-Pauline Letters or “Disputed letters” are:
 - Ephesians
 - Colossians
 - 2 Thessalonians
 - 1 and 2 Timothy
 - Titus

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

- Colossians 3:16



Catholic Epistles

- The Catholic Epistles are seven. They deal with different themes such as:

A. The relationship between works and faith

B. Faithfulness and Holiness of Life

C. The necessity to preserve the truth from false teachings

D. The value of Jesus death and resurrection

E. Christological and Theological themes.

F. Hope in the Second Coming

- The Catholic Epistles in order of composition are:

1 Peter 64 or 70-80 A.D

James 62 or 70-80 A.D

Jude 70-90 A.D

1 John 90 A.D.

2 John 90 A.D

3 John 90 A.D

2 Peter 100-150 A.D

Note: 2 Peter is the last work of the New Testament to be written. All the Books considered canonical in the New Testament were written by 150 A.D.

Did you know?

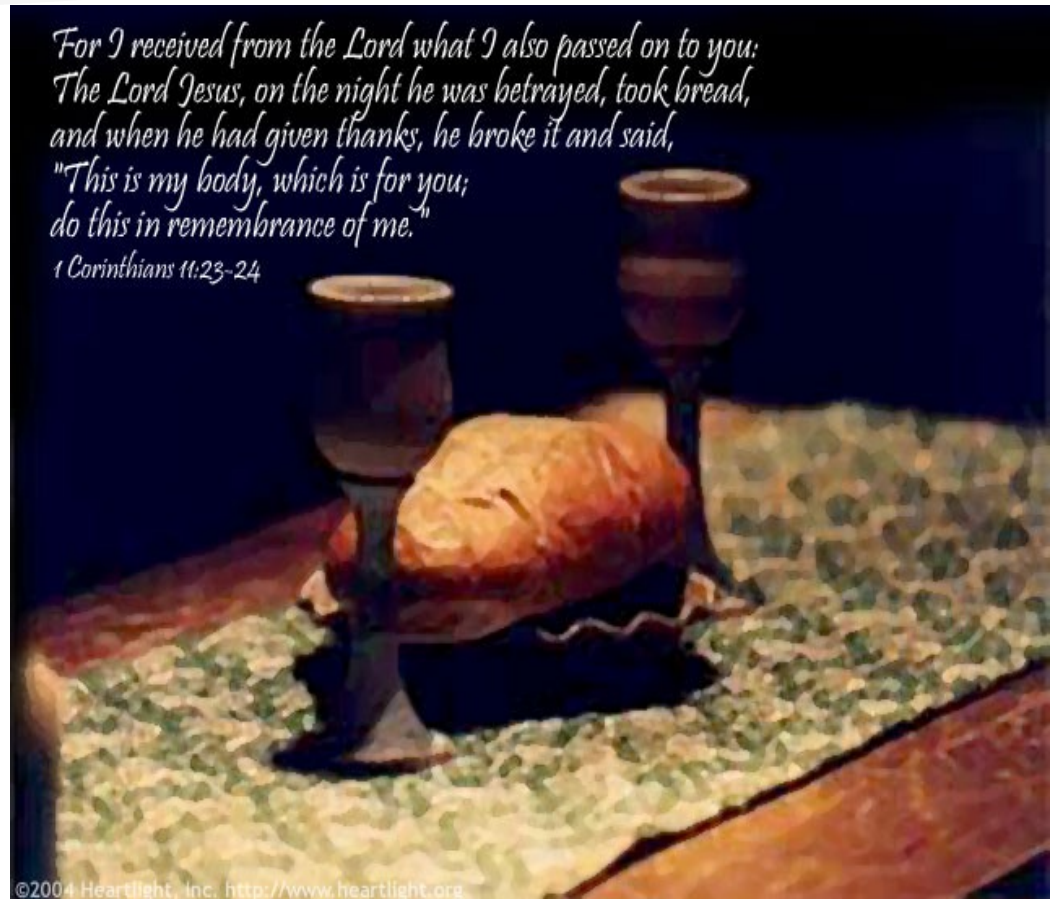
- Paul's writings are the earliest Christian Scriptures to be written and considered canonical in the New Testament.

- Paul wrote about two thirds of the New Testament. The first book of the New Testament to be written was the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians in the year 51 A.D.

- The earliest tradition of the "Institution of the Eucharist" comes from the writings of Paul and not from the Gospels as most people think. This early Eucharistic tradition is found in **1 Corinthians 11: 23-33**

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

1 Corinthians 11:23-24



Revelation

- The book of Revelation or **Apocalypse** was written around the year **90 A.D.** This book affirms Christianity's hope for an immediate transformation of the world, the destruction of all evil powers and the establishment of Christ's reign.
- The message of Revelation is a perennial message of Hope in the midst of tyranny and persecution; this message is conveyed through symbols, metaphors, and **cryptic language** typical of the Jewish apocalyptic literature of the time.
- Authorship of this book is attributed by some in the 2nd century to the Apostle John who also wrote the fourth Gospel and the letters.
- Modern Scholars, however, believe that the Gospel of John and Revelation were written by different authors. Most scholars refer to the author of Revelation simply as John.
- The book of Revelation was considered **suspect** by some early Fathers since it was used by an early 4th century heretical group of chiliasts (millenarianists).



*"I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA,"
says the LORD God, "WHO IS, AND WHO WAS,
AND WHO IS TO COME, THE ALMIGHTY."*

REVELATION 1:8

How did the New Testament come about?

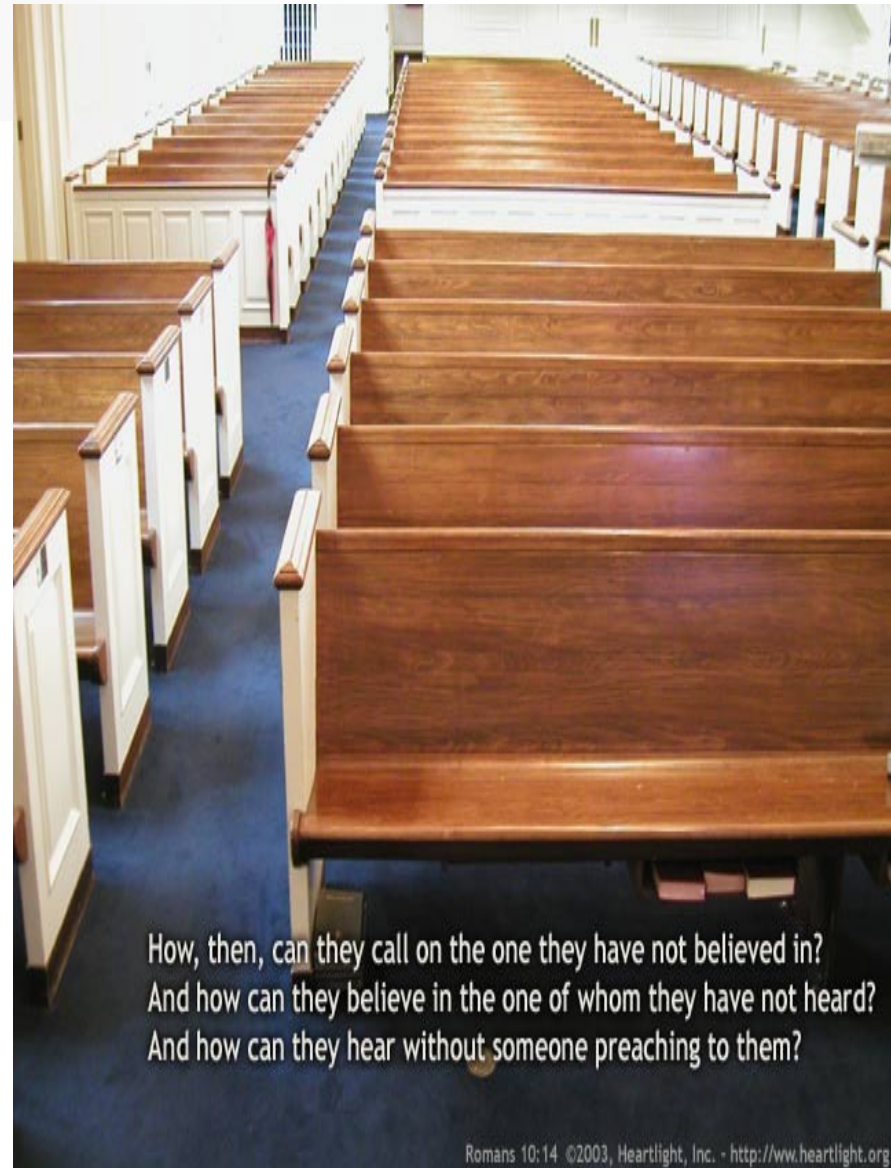
■ Biblical Scholar, Jesuit **Father Felix Just S.J.** proposes 10 stages in the development, formation, and transmission of the New Testament canon these are:

1. **The Historical Jesus:** The New Testament begins with the **Jesus event**: his life, words, and deeds being performed.
2. **Oral Traditions:** Traditions and beliefs about Jesus are developed, preserved, and pass on by early Christian communities in their preaching.
3. **Written Sources:** Some of the miracles and sayings of Jesus are compiled and recorded in early written documents
4. **Written Texts:** individual letters, full Gospels, are written with particular messages for particular situations
5. **Distribution:** Some writings are copied and shared with others Christian communities throughout the Mediterranean
6. **Collection:** Certain Christians begin collecting the letters of Paul and gathering together several different Gospels.
7. **Canonization:** Four Gospels, several collections of letters of Paul and a few other texts are accepted as authoritative scriptures.
8. **Translation:** Biblical texts are translated into ever more ancient and modern languages: Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, etc.
9. **Interpretation:** The meaning of the scriptures is investigated on various levels: literal, spiritual, historical, social, etc.
10. **Application:** Communities and individuals use the N.T for practical purposes such as: liturgical, moral, sacramental, theological.

Canonicity

- Why certain books were eventually accepted into the Canon of the N.T while other were rejected have to do with **Canonicity**, the distinction between what is authoritative and what is not . There are four major criteria at work in the process of canonization of the books of the N.T. These are:
- **Apostolic Origin:** attributed to or based on the preaching, teaching of the first-generation apostles and closest disciples.
- **Universal Acceptance:** acknowledge by all major Christian communities in the Mediterranean world by the end of the 4th century.
- **Liturgical Use:** Read publicly along with the O.T. when early Christians gathered for the Lord's supper or Eucharist.
- **Consistent Message:** Containing theological ideas compatible with other accepted Christian writings. Did not deny the fundamental Christian belief in the humanity and divinity of Christ.

(Source: Fr. Felix Just, S.J)

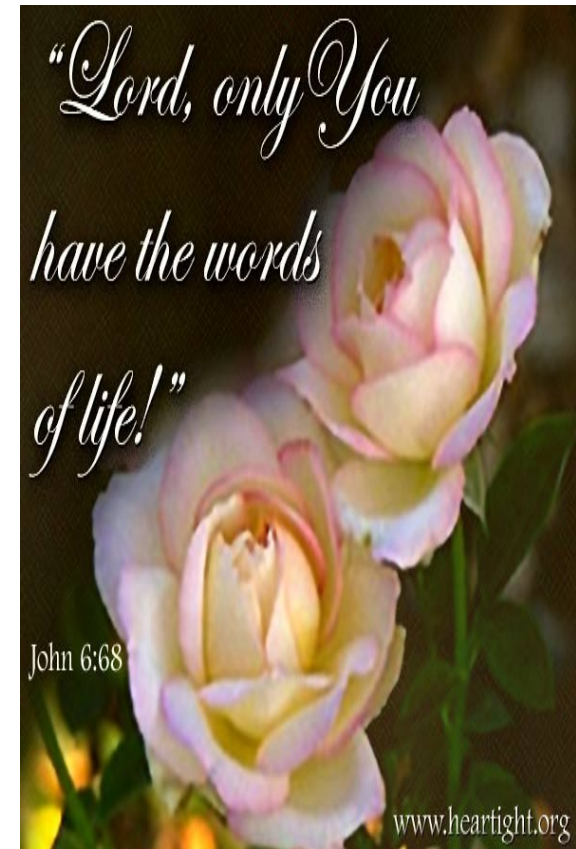


How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?
And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?
And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Praying with the Scriptures

- **Lectio Divina** or “divine reading” is a method of prayer involving the reading of Sacred Scriptures.
- Lectio Divina is composed of four steps: Reading, Meditation, Prayer, and contemplation.
- Pope **Benedict XVI** has encouraged this method of praying with the scriptures in many of his most recent allocutions.
- To Learn more about the method of Lectio Divina visit the following link:

<http://www.slideshare.net/pcuadra/lectio-divina>



Reflective Points

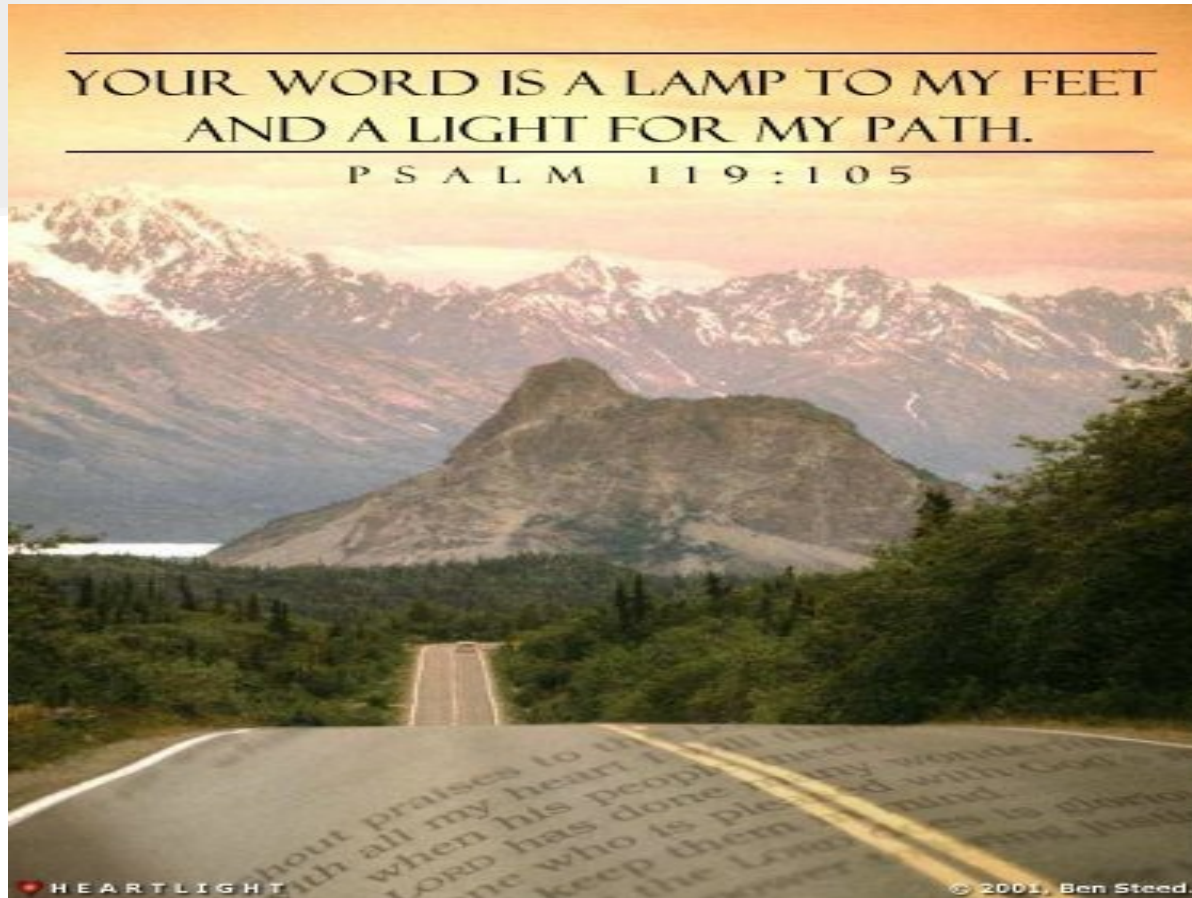
- People read the Bible for different reasons: Some people read the Bible out of curiosity, some read the Bible from an academic point of view, while others read it to draw strength during difficult times or as a form of prayer.
- **Faith** is an important component in the reading of the Scriptures. The Power of the word of God is unleashed when the Bible is read with Faith, with complete trust in God's self-communication.
- Take time each day to get to know the ever living, never ending, message of the Scriptures. Read one book at a time. Start with the Gospels.
- As you read visualize what you read. Pay attention to the thoughts, feelings, insights that God places in your heart.
- Keep a journal of the things that you read, look up the things you do not understand. There are several versions of Catholic study Bibles that can help you understand the meaning and context of a particular text.
- **Share the word of God** with others: family, friends, co-workers. Our Catholic faith invites us to share this gift of God's word with the World. Join a Bible study group at your parish.
- Finally, as the **rite of ordination** says: "Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach".

Just live it.

Do not merely listen to the word, and
so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

James 1:22

The End



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