

Part II — The Doctrine of the Word of God
Section 1. Forms of the Word of God
Section 2. The Canon of Scripture

1. Forms of the Word of God

1.1. Word of God as a Person: _____

John 1:1

John 1:14

1.2. Word of God as _____ by God:

Words as _____ (Genesis 1:3; Psalm 33:6)

Words as _____ (Genesis 2:16-17; 3; Exodus 20:1-3)

Words as _____ (Deut 18:18, 19; Jeremiah 1:9)

Words in _____
(Exodus 31:18; Isaiah 30:8; Jeremiah 30:2)

☞ The focus of study in the exercise of systematic theology is _____

in _____, that is the _____.

☞ **Practical Application**

“Do you think you would pay more attention if God spoke to you from heaven or through the voice of a living prophet than if he spoke to you from the written words of Scripture? Would you believe or obey such words more readily than you do Scripture? Do you think your present level of response to the written words of Scripture is an appropriate one? What positive steps can you take to make your attitude toward Scripture more like the kind of attitude God wants you to have?”
(Grudem, 51)

2. The Canon of Scripture What Belongs in the Bible and What Does Not?

2.1. Importance of the Canon

“When one realizes that canonicity deals with such fundamental questions like ‘how did God’s people know what belonged in the Bible?’ and ‘how can we be sure we still have what the inspired writers wrote?’ it becomes clear that one’s views on canonicity are vitally linked to the integrity of Scripture.”

(Robert I. Vasholz “Moses: Spokesman of God,” *Tabletalk* Oct 2008, p. 10)

2.2 Important Terms

❶ **Canon** – _____ or measuring rod

In reference to Scripture, “canon” refers to:

- a. the correct _____ of the _____ which belong in the Bible.
- b. the Bible as the _____ or _____ against which everything must be tested.

❷ **Canonical** – Meeting or Representing the standard

❸ **Septuagint** – _____ translation of the OT for Alexandrian Jews. It included some books not found in the Hebrew canon.

❹ **Apocrypha** – The group of _____ but not _____ books included in the Greek “Septuagint” but not found in the Hebrew Bible.

2.3 Canonicity: what does it mean?

Canonicity is not a status _____ a book by virtue of human designation.

Canonicity is not a _____ of the Christian church.

Canonicity is _____ to the book itself. Placement in the list of the

_____ canon is a _____ that a book is from God.

“For a book to belong in the canon, it is absolutely necessary that the book have _____ authorship. If the words of the book are God’s words (through human authors), and if the early church, under the direction of the Apostles, preserved the book as part of Scripture, then the book belongs in the _____.” (Grudem, 62)

2.4 The Old Testament Canon.

2.4.1. The Basis for Acceptance of the Old Testament Canon

a. The basis for accepting written texts as of divine origin began with the giving of _____.

God’s law was presented before a _____ of people. No other influential religious documents, other than the Scriptures, attest to this kind of corporate verification. (Vasholz, 12)

b. _____ accepted and affirmed the Hebrew canon.

Matthew 5:17 – Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

c. Jesus and the _____ quote the OT as having divine authority. For example: “It is written;” “Scripture says;” and “God says;”

They quote from other sources but never regarding those sources with the authority of the OT.

d. Jesus noted the different _____ of the canon.

Luke 24:44 — Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the _____ of Moses and the _____ and the _____ must be fulfilled.

e. Jesus and the NT writers quoted from OT more than _____ times and as having divine authority.

f. Though conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees was ongoing, there is no _____ of _____ over which books were canonical.

g. Josephus, a Jewish historian (b. 37-38 A.D.), wrote that a record of history since the time of Artaxerxes had been recorded but was not considered worthy of the same regard as the _____ (the present Old Testament).

2.4.2 The Apocrypha

This is the set of books to which Josephus referred. They were esteemed by the Jews but not held as canonical.

Jerome (345-420 A.D.) translated the Latin Vulgate and he included the apocryphal books, but carefully explained that they _____ true parts of the Bible.

The _____ (1500's), because many were reading the apocrypha as _____, emphatically distinguished the apocrypha from the _____ OT.

Meanwhile the Roman Catholic church took action to put the apocrypha on the _____ with the OT inspired books.

☞ So this _____ why these books are not in non-Catholic editions of the Bible.

Books in the Apocrypha: 1st & 2nd Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch, Epistle of Jeremiah, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Song of the Three Young Men, The Prayer of Manasseh, and 1st and 2nd Maccabees.

2.5 The New Testament Canon

2.5.1 Anticipated and Authorized

“The prospect of a NT Scripture to stand alongside the OT was anticipated, even authorized, in the OT itself, embedded in the _____ of God's ultimate act of redemption through the Messiah, in _____ to his covenant.” (ESV Study Bible, 2579)

Jeremiah 31:31-33; Isaiah 2:2-3; 49:6; Psalm 2:8; Hebrews 8:7-13; 10:16

☞ How was the proclamation of God's grace to all nations to take place?

☞ How could it without a new collection of written Scripture to complete the previous?

2.5.2. Commission of Jesus

The apostles were _____ with the stewardship of bearing witness to _____.

“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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20, ESV)

2.5.3. Self-Testimony of the New Testament

a. From the beginning the _____ of the apostles to deliver God’s word was recognized.

Acts 10:22; Ephesians 2:19-20; Jude 17-18

b. The writings themselves were characterized as canonical.

2 Timothy 3:16 – [[15] 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, (ESV)

2 Peter 3:15-16 – [15] 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**. (ESV)

2.5.4. Recognition of the Canon

By the end of the 2nd century, ___ of ___ books were generally recognized.

During the 2nd century, a number of documents were produced which paralleled or imitated NT canonical books, even written in the name of apostles. But they were _____ recognized.

In the 240s, Origen acknowledged all 27 books but reported that James, 2 Peter, 2-3 John, and Jude were disputed by _____.

60 years later Eusebius reported that some had doubts about Hebrews and Revelation. Five other books were _____ to many, but were judged spurious.

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria (A.D. 367), gave a list of NT books which comprised with no reservations _____ current NT books naming others useful but not canonical.

_____ later affirmed the 27 book canon in A.D. 397 at a church council in Carthage.

Criteria Used at Carthage:

Wide _____

Apostolic _____ or close apostolic association

Consistent with sound doctrine

2.5.5. Canonical Affirmation

1. The Faithfulness of God
2. Historical Data

2.6 Is the Canon Closed?

2.6.1. The unique authority of the apostles says, “_____.”

2.6.2. Any “newly discovered” writing would lack the opportunity for the test of wide _____ among the early church.

2.6.3. We trust the _____ of God that every writing that He wanted us to have has been preserved.

☞ “The canon of Scripture today is exactly what God wanted it to be, and it will stay that way until Christ returns.” (Grudem, 68)

☞ **Practical Application**

Why is it important to your Christian life to know which writings are God’s words and which are not?

What should one do to address doubts about the canonicity of any book of the Bible?

Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and members of other cults have claimed present-day revelations from God that they count equal to the Bible in authority. What reasons can you give to indicate the falsity of those claims?

In practice, do these groups treat the bible as an authority equal to these other “revelations”?

How should we respond when the Discovery Channel announces a documentary on a missing book of the Bible?

Is it permissible for a Christian to read any parts of the Apocrypha? Or other “writings”?

Memory Verse

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jeremiah 31:33 ESV)

“Break Thou the Bread of Life”

Break Thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves beside the sea;
Throughout the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord
My spirit pants for Thee, O Living Word.

Bless Thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me,
As Thou didst bless the bread by Galilee
Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall;
And I shall find my peace, my all in all.

Thou art the bread of life, O Lord, to me,
Thy holy word the truth that saveth me;
Give me to eat and live with Thee above;
Teach me to love thy truth, for Thou art love.

O send thy Spirit, Lord, now unto me,
That he may touch mine eyes, and make me see:
Show me the truth concealed within Thy Word,
And in thy book revealed I see the Lord.