

“Setting the Record Straight”
 The Development of the Canon of Scripture
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1. “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.*” Matt 4:4.
2. “*All Scripture (graphé = “writings”) is breathed out by God ...*” 2 Timothy 3:16
3. But how did we get the NT “writings” and who determined which graphé would be recognized as the “word that comes from the mouth of God?”

Earlier, more conservative dating (all approximate)	Events & NT Scriptures
6-4 BC	Birth of Jesus
early 30s	Death, Resurrection & Ascension of Jesus
48/49 AD	Counsel of Jerusalem: “ <i>we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as (Gentiles) will.</i> ” Acts 15:11
33-early 50s	Christians meet in home churches, synagogues and open-air meetings to hear the Gospel message presented orally.
early 50s	1 Thessalonians
early 50s	2 Thessalonians
early 50s	Galatians
55-57	1 Corinthians
55-57	2 Corinthians
ca 57	Romans
ca 60	James
early 60s	Philemon
early 60s	Philippians
early 60s	Colossians
early 60s	Ephesians
early 60s	1 Timothy
60s	Gospel of Mark
mid 60s	Titus
mid 60s	2 Timothy
mid 60s	1 Peter
late 60s	Hebrews
late 60s	2 Peter
ca 70	Gospel of Matthew
70s-80s	Gospel of Luke
70s-80s	Acts
ca 80	Jude
ca 90	Gospel of John

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early 90s	1 John
early 90s	2 John
early 90s	3 John
ca 95	Revelation
late 90s	Council of Jamnia: Jewish elders finalize the Hebrew Scriptures and curses on Christians added to service.
< 200	Near unanimity of NT Scripture
325	Ecumenical Council of Nicaea
397	Ecumenical Council of Carthage: official list of canonical scriptures

4. Most likely chronology of the NT events and Scriptures

5. How were the Scriptures transmitted from God, the ultimate author, to chosen men?
 - a. Not audibly like the Quran and Book of Mormon, or as illustrated in Medieval manuscripts.
 - b. Through his Body: “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.” John 16:13.

6. The necessity of Apostolic authority for Scriptural authority.
 - a. Acts 1:21-22 *“So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”*
 - b. Paul insists repeatedly in his letters: *“Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the Gospel.”* (Romans 1:1)

7. Why were the testimonies and teachings of the Apostles written down?
 - a. *“I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain ...”* (Romans 15:24). Gospel preaching was rapidly spreading throughout the Roman Empire and beyond.
 - b. *“(Jesus) had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen ... ‘you will be my witnesses ... to the end of the earth.’* (Acts 1:1, 8). The Apostles were dying out.
 - c. *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing ...”* The rise of false teachings and heresies.

8. What was the criteria for a graphé to be embraced as Holy Scripture, on a par with the Old Testament?
 - a. The graphé was Apostolic (or a close companion of the Apostles) in its authorship.
 - b. The graphé was read in Church and quoted as Scripture by Church leaders. *“... our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him as he does in all his letters ... 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.”* 2 Peter 3:15,16
 - c. The graphé contained the Gospel core ... 1) the bodily resurrection of Jesus; 2) Jesus the Son of God and promised Messiah; 3) Jesus, the sacrifice for sin; 4) salvation by faith in God’s Son.
 - d. The graphé stood-up to long-time scrutiny, therefore delaying the full inclusion of Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John.

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Symbol Opinion of Authority

- ✓ accepted; true; scriptural; or quoted from very approvingly
- ✓ possible approving quotation or allusion
- ✗ acceptable, but only with changes
- ? dubious; disputed; or useful for inspiration
- ✗ spurious (in the classification of Eusebius)
- ✗ false; heretical; heterodox; quoted from very disapprovingly
- not mentioned or quoted from; opinion unknown

	Ignatius 110	Polycarp 110	Marcion 140	Justin Martyr 150-60	Irenaeus 180	Clement 180-200	Tertullian 200-210	Muratorian fragment 170	Origen 220-300	Eusebius 300-350	Codex Sinaiticus 350	Athan- asius 367
Matthew	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mark	·	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Luke	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
John	·	·	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Acts	✓	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Romans	✓	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
I Cor.	✓	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
II Cor.	·	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Galatians	·	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ephesians	✓	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Philippians	·	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Colossians	✓	·	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
I Thess.	✓	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
II Thess.	·	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
I Timothy	·	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
II Timothy	·	✓	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Titus	·	·	✗	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Philemon	·	·	✗	·	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hebrews	·	✓	·	·	✓	✓	✓	·	✓	✓?	✓	✓
James	·	·	·	·	✓	·	·	·	?	?	✓	✓

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I Peter	.	✓	.	.	✓	✓	✓	.	✓	✓	✓	✓
II Peter	?	?	✓	✓
I John	.	✓	.	.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
II John	✓	.	.	✓	?	?	✓	✓
III John	.	✓	?	?	✓	✓
Jude	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓
Revelation	.	.	.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✗	✓	✓
Gospel of Thomas	×	×	.	.
Gospel of Truth	×
Gospel of the Twelve	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	.	.
Gospel of Peter	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	?	×	.	.
Gospel of Basilides	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	×	.	.	.
Gospel of Egyptians	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	×	.	.	.
Gospel of Hebrews	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	?	×	.	.
Gospel of Matthias	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	×	.	.
Traditions of Matthias	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	.	.	.	.
Preaching of Peter	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	×	.	.	.
Acts of Andrew	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	.
Acts of Paul	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	?	×	.	.
Acts of John	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	×	.	.
Epistle to Laodiceans	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	?	.	.	.	.
I Clement	.	.	.	.	✓	✓	.	.	?	.	.	.
Epistle of Barnabas	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	?	×	✓	.
Didache	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	.	?	×	.	?
Shepherd of Hermas	.	.	.	.	✓	✓	?	?	?	×	?	✓
Apocalypse of Peter	.	.	.	.	.	✓	.	✓	.	×	.	.
	<u>Ig</u>	<u>Po</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>JM</u>	<u>Ir</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>MC</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>CS</u>	<u>A</u>