

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

2 Timothy 2:15

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** Several weeks ago we began a series of lessons with the general theme of “grow[ing] in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.” (2 Pet. 3:18)
 - A. These lessons are designed to help Christians grow and be strong in the Lord (1 Pet. 2:2).
 - B. We cannot remain “babes” in Christ (1 Cor. 14:20); and even if we’ve been Christians for many years, we need to be reminded of these first principles (2 Pet. 3:1)
2. ****** To effectively study/understand the Word, we need an overall view of the Bible.
3. Notice Paul’s instructions to Timothy in **2 Timothy 2:15**: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
 - A. Orthodontics: *ortho* = straight, correct; *odon* = teeth.
 - B. ****** Gr. *orthotomeo*: “rightly dividing” from Gr. *orthotomeo* lit., “to cut straight” (*orthos*, “straight,” *temno*, “to cut”), is found in 2 Tim 2:15, KJV, “rightly dividing,” RV, “handling aright” (the word of truth); the meaning passed from the idea of cutting or “dividing,” to the more general sense of “rightly dealing with a thing.” (Vine)
 - C. **3** An important step in “rightly dividing” the truth is coming to a general knowledge of what the Bible is all about and an appreciation of its veracity and trustworthiness.
4. To many the Bible is a jumbled mess.
 - A. They may know a few passages, but don’t know the Bible’s general organization or purpose.
 - B. The Bible is under a withering attack by our “post-modern” society!
 - C. **4** Let’s study five important aspects of the Bible to gain an overall understanding and appreciation of it.

II. DISCUSSION:

1. **5** Inspiration of the Bible:
 - A. The Bible makes some very astounding claims about itself! **2 Tim. 3:16-17**: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
 - B. ****** “Inspiration” means “God-breathed”:
 - (1) *theopneustos*: from *Theos*, “God” and *pneo* “to breathe” (Vine).
 - (2) For example, plosives are consonants that are brought about by an explosive release of air from the mouth, e.g. ‘b,’ ‘p’).
 - (3) To some “inspiration” means excitement, motivation, or great ability (e.g., like Shakespeare or Hemingway were “inspired” to write their literature.).
 - (4) But, when the Bible claims to be “inspired” it means God miraculously gave the words of the Bible to its writers (still used their personality, research, style, etc.).
 - C. ****** The inspiration of the Bible is verbal (words) and plenary (complete), meaning that all of it is fully inspired even to the point of the choice of the words used. Read **1 Cor. 2:9-13**; complete: Jn. 16:13; Jude 3
 - D. Many people (Christians!) don’t realize the implications of verbal and plenary inspiration.

- (1) **6** For example, many say the Bible is historically inaccurate because of their *a priori* rejection of verbal and plenary inspiration (“post-modernism”).
- Instead, they believe the Bible contains mostly myths and stories handed down over the centuries and eventually these “tales” were written down in relatively recent times (within the last 2,500 years or so).
 - So, over the years these “Bible stories” were greatly embellished by men. Thus:
 - ✓ God didn’t create the Universe in a literal six days, but these “days” are extremely long periods of time (i.e., millions or billions of years).
 - ✓ The Flood (Gen. 6-9) was not a worldwide catastrophe, merely a “local flood.”
 - ✓ Jesus was not born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22-25).
 - ✓ Jesus was not literally resurrected from the grave (Acts 2:32).
- (2) There are grave and inescapable consequences to such beliefs.
- Such beliefs make the Bible unreliable and a false witness; if not a downright fraud.
 - If the Bible is wrong concerning its claims of *verbal, plenary* inspiration it is the world’s greatest fraud!
 - If the Bible is wrong on points of prophecy, history, geography, science, etc. it cannot be trusted about anything!
 - 7** Examples (general):
 - ☛ No resurrection, then no resurrection of Christ: **1 Cor. 15:12-18**; Rom. 1:4
 - ☛ Makes Jesus a liar concerning the creation: **Matt. 19:4**: “And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’”
 - ☛ Makes Jesus a liar concerning the Flood: **Lk. 17:27**: “They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.”

E. **8** Also, the inspiration of the Bible is supported by:

- ** Unity:** The Bible’s unity is amazing! Written by 40 writers over a 1,600 year time span with no substantial contradictions.
 - These writers accomplished this great feat even though they came from different times, backgrounds, spoke several different languages, lived in different areas, etc.
 - Maintain unity of theme from Genesis to Revelation...God’s scheme of redemption!

Gen. 3:15: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

Rev. 22:21: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”
- ** Prophecy:** Its prophecies have been fulfilled, many of which were made hundreds and even thousands of years in advance. Examples:
 - Cyrus, king Median king who conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. and founded the Medo-Persian empire. The Bible foretells him by name ~150 years in advance of his time (Isa. 44:28; Cyrus mentioned 23 times in the Bible!).
 - Virgin birth of Christ foretold ~700 years in advance (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22-25).

- (c) Crucifixion of Christ described 1,000 years in advance (Psa. 22:1, 11-18; Matt. 27:35ff; Mk. 15:24ff; Lk. 23:33ff; Jn. 19:23ff; when prophecy made, crucifixion not yet invented!).
- (d) **9** *Accordingthescriptures.org* says Jesus fulfilled 353 messianic prophecies.
- ☛ Probability of fulfilling eight prophecies is 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000 (1 in 100 quadrillion; 1×10^{17}).
 - ☛ Hard to imagine: 100 quadrillion silver dollars would cover the state of Texas to a depth of 2 feet.
 - ☛ Now, paint just one silver dollar red and send out a blindfolded man; allowing him to pick up just one.
 - ☛ The chance of him picking the red one is 1 in 100 quadrillion.
 - ☛ That's the same chance of eight prophecies concerning the Messiah being fulfilled (silver dollar example from Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks*, Moody Press, 1963).
 - ☛ Stoner also estimates the chance of 48 prophecies being fulfilled and says, "we find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10^{157} . The estimated number of electrons in the universe is around 10^{79} . It should be quite evident that Jesus did not fulfill the prophecies by accident."
 - ☛ Now imagine the chance of 353 Messianic prophecies being fulfilled!
- (3) **10** *Scientific foreknowledge*: the Bible is not a science book, but it is right about every science comment it makes.
- (a) Shape of the Earth: Isa. 40:22 (i.e., "circle of the earth").
 - (b) Earth suspended on nothing: Job 26:7 (especially interesting since all other ancient cultures had the Earth resting on some support, e.g., pillars, people, animals).
 - (c) Stars are innumerable: Gen. 15:5
 - (d) Valleys in the seas: 2 Sam. 22:16
 - (e) Springs and fountains in the seas: Gen. 7:11; 8:1, 3, 6, 8
 - (f) Water cycle: Job 26:8; 36:27-29; Eccl. 1:6-7
 - (g) Entropy: Psa. 102:25-26
 - (h) Health, sanitation and sickness: Lev. 12-14
- (4) **11** *Historical accuracy*:
- (a) *Acts of the Apostles*
 - ☛ Mentions 32 countries, 54 cities and 9 islands with no errors!
 - ☛ He also mentions 95 different people, 62 of which not named elsewhere in NT.
 - ☛ Uses correct titles for Roman officials (e.g., proconsul, praetors, lictors, serjants, tetrarch, etc.); took historians centuries to work all these out and Luke was right!
 - ☛ Luke refers to hundreds of people and places, many of which are not prominent; opening himself up to extreme scrutiny! But no errors!
 - ☛ Sir William Ramsay was an atheist archeologist who set out to prove Luke wrong. He spent decades at various archeological sites pertinent to the book of Acts and eventually concluded: "Luke's history is unsurpassed in trustworthiness."

12“I found myself brought into contact with the Book of Acts as an authority for the topography, antiquities, and society of Asia Minor. It was gradually borne upon me that in various details the narrative showed marvelous truth. In fact, beginning with a fixed idea that the work was essentially a second century composition, and never relying on its evidence as trustworthy for first century conditions, I gradually came to find it a useful ally in some obscure and difficult investigations.

13Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy; he is possessed of the true historic sense; he fixes his mind on the idea and plan that rules in the evolution of history, and proportions the scale of his treatment to the importance of each incident. He seizes the important and critical events and shows their true nature at greater length, while he touches lightly or omits entirely much that was valueless for his purpose. In short, this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.” Sir William Ramsay, *St. Paul, the Traveler and the Roman Citizen* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1920).

☛ **14**From *Conservapedia*: on Sir William Ramsay

“Sir William Mitchell Ramsay (15 March 1851 - 20 April 1939) was a British archaeologist and New Testament scholar. Educated at Oxford, he held several prestigious professorships, including “First Professor of Classical Archaeology” and “Lincoln and Merton Professorship of Classical Archaeology and Art” at Oxford, and “Regius Professor of Humanity” at the University of Aberdeen. He received gold medals from Pope LeoXII, the University of Pennsylvania, the Royal Geographical Society, and the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, and was knighted in 1906.”

Atheism and conversion

15Mitchell was raised as an atheist and as an archaeologist was convinced that the Bible was fraudulent. “He had spent years deliberately preparing himself for the announced task of heading an exploration expedition into Asia Minor and Palestine where he would [find] the evidence that the book was the product of ambitious monks, and not the book from heaven it claimed to be. He regarded the weakest spot in the whole New Testament to be the story of Paul’s travels. These had never been thoroughly investigated by one on the spot. Equipped as no other man had been, he went to the home of the Bible. Here he spent fifteen years digging. Then in 1896 he published a large volume, *Saint Paul, the Traveler and the Roman Citizen*.”

16Ramsay was struck by the accuracy of the book of Acts. In his quest to refute the Bible, he discovered many facts which confirmed its accuracy. He concluded that Luke’s account of the events and setting recorded in the narrative were exact even in the smallest detail. Of Luke, he wrote: *‘Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy...this author should be placed along with the very greatest historians.*

17“The book caused a furor of dismay among the skeptics of the world. Its attitude was utterly unexpected because it was contrary to the announced intention of the author years before. For twenty years more, book after book from the same author came from the press, each filled with additional evidence of the exact, minute truthfulness of the whole New Testament as tested by the

spade on the spot. And these books have stood the test of time, not one having been refuted, nor have I found even any attempt to refute them.”

18Ramsay shook the contemporary intellectual world by declaring that he had converted to Christianity, having found himself accepting the Bible as God’s Word because of the evidence of his explorations and discoveries.”

(b) **19** Example of Sir William Ramsay’s work (Caesar Augustus ordered a census.):

Lk. 2:2: “*This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.*”

- ✓ For years scholars claimed there was never a person named Quirinius who served as the Roman ruler of Syria, and that a census had never taken place as described by Luke
- ✓ Hence, Luke was wrong, he was a poor historian or a fraud, and his gospel account was totally unreliable.
- ✓ ******Ramsay found a marble fragment in Tivoli (19 miles NE of Rome) with an inscription (now preserved in the *Lateran Museum of Christian Antiquities*) proving Quirinius existed at the time of the census. It records his career and honors. He lived in the reign of Augustus, and survived that emperor. He conquered a nation; he was rewarded with two *Supplicationes* and the *Ornamenta Triumphalia* (i.e., the gorgeous dress of a triumphing general, with ivory scepter and chariot, etc.). He governed Asia as proconsul; and he twice governed Syria as *legatus* of the divine Augustus.

(5) **20** Influence on the world:

(a) The Holy Bible is the world’s bestselling book of all time!

- ☛ 2.5 billion copies sold from 1815-1975; total sold to date estimated at 4-6 billion.
- ☛ Entire Bible translated into 349 different languages.
- ☛ At least one Bible book translated into 2,123 different languages.
- ☛ One source on numbers sold: Bible, 6+billion; *Quotations from Chairman Mao*, 800+ million; The Qur’an, 800+ million; Xinhua Dictionary, 400+ million; *A Tale of Two Cities*, 200+ million.

(b) Influenced every realm of human existence: value of human life, compassion and mercy, marriage and family, education, government, science (Isaac Newton, Louis Pasteur, Faraday, Kelvin, Maxwell, Kepler), free enterprise, work ethic, art, music, literature, etc.

“No one can estimate or describe the salutary influence of the Bible. What would the world be without it?” --John McLean (1785-1861), U.S. Supreme Court Justice

(c) This influence does not prove the Bible’s inspiration, but it certainly makes it the world’s most unique book and in a class totally by itself!

21 STOP

2. **22** How we got our Bible:

- A. Our English Bibles of today are based upon copies (i.e., manuscript, MS; manuscripts, MSS) of the original autographs. The original autographs and manuscripts were written in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.
- B. None of the original copies (i.e., autographs) of the Bible books are available today (same is true for every ancient book).

- C. These manuscripts were very carefully copied and recopied over the years (e.g., Jewish scribes). Additionally, there are ancient copies (MSS) of translations into various languages.
- D. We also have the writings of the “Church Fathers” that support the accuracy of the Bible MSS (especially of the New Testament).
- (1) **23** “Church Fathers” were ‘Christian’ men who lived in the 1st- 3rd centuries AD.
 - (2) For example, Clement of Rome (AD 35-99); Ignatius (AD 35-108); Justin Martyr (AD 100-165); Irenaeus (AD 130-202); Clement of Alexandria (AD 150-215); Tertullian (AD 155-240); Origen (AD 185-254); Eusebius (AD 265-340); Athanasius of Alexandria (AD 296-373). They lived all over the ancient Roman world.
 - (3) In their writings (e.g., letters, treatises, apologetics, defenses against heresies) they quote a great deal of Scripture, especially the New Testament.
 - (4) In their writings, every New Testament book is quoted.
 - (a) Almost every book of the NT is explicitly cited by the ‘church fathers’ as Scripture.
 - (b) By around AD 300, nearly every verse in the New Testament was quoted in one or more of over 36,000 citations found in the writings of the Church Fathers.
 - (c) Not every New Testament book is cited by every Church Father, but every book was cited by some of them (Geisler, Norman L. and William E. Nix. *From God to Us: How We Got Our Bible*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1974).
 - (d) **24** Some were contemporary with the apostles (e.g., Polycarp, AD 35-110; disciple of the apostle John).
 - (e) Their writings prove that within a decade of the writing of the last NT book, the majority of the NT documents were being widely duplicated and circulated (i.e., Church fathers were widely scattered all over the Roman Empire.).
 - (f) Clearly refutes the idea it took many generations before the NT books came to be widely used among the early churches (Col. 4:16).
 - (g) “In the first half of the second century, then, collections of Christian writings which were due one day to be given canonical status were already taking shape—notably the fourfold gospel and the corpus of Pauline letters” (Bruce, F. F. *The Canon of Scripture*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 1988).
- E. **25** Reliability of the Bible: How reliable is the Bible as an ancient book? It is important for us to remember that the Bible is under attack by our “post-modern” society as never before!
- (1) Before examining this aspect of the Bible, I want to reiterate that the Bible is under attack by the postmodern philosophy which dominates the world’s thinking today.
 - (2) In the postmodern philosophy every man defines truth for himself; everyone is ‘free’ (not really!) to define truth based on his own background, culture, experience, etc.
 - (3) In a postmodern social climate, if one advocates for “absolute truth” (e.g., truth of God’s Word) he is labeled as a bigoted, prejudiced, intolerant, ignoramus; is vilified, marginalized, criticized and not considered a member of society in good standing (i.e., a pariah).
 - (4) **26** This aspect of postmodernism has manifested itself in what we generally call “political correctness.”
 - (a) Even though postmodernists claims to advocate diversity and tolerance; their extension of diversity and tolerance is only extended to those who meet their definition of what is right and wrong, good and bad.

- (b) Postmodernism is actually quite narrowminded and intolerant. If you don't conform to postmodern norms (i.e., what is politically correct) you are considered "bad" and unworthy to be a part of the "gang" (i.e., member of society in good standing).
- (5) **27** Postmodernism hates the Bible, because of the Bible's claims to be "truth" (e.g., Jn. 17:17).
- (a) This doesn't mean postmodern people aren't "religious"; they are!
- (b) However, God doesn't define truth for the postmodern religionist; each individual does that for himself (Whatever makes me 'feel good.' e.g., MDR).
- (c) In reality, postmodernism is not a new philosophy: **Judges 21:25**: "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."; Prov. 14:12; **Prov. 30:12**: "There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness."; **Isa. 5:20**: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"
- (6) **28** Postmodernism rejects the Bible out of hand as a book of myths, authored by "bronze-age," "flat-earth believing" luddites, etc., etc. Here are a few quotes to give you a flavor of the extreme bad attitudes toward God and the Bible we are dealing with:

******"I believed all this stuff when I was young. I believed there was a virgin birth, I believed a man lived inside a whale, and I believed that the Earth was five thousand years old. But then, something very important happened to me—I graduated sixth grade." —Bill Maher

"The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully." —Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*

******"To be fair, much of the Bible is not systematically evil but just plain weird, as you would expect of a chaotically cobbled-together anthology of disjointed documents, composed, revised, translated, distorted and 'improved' by hundreds of anonymous authors, editors and copyists, unknown to us and mostly unknown to each other, spanning nine centuries" —Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*

******"We cannot, of course, disprove God, just as we can't disprove Thor, fairies, leprechauns, and the Flying Spaghetti Monster. But, like those other fantasies that we can't disprove, we can say that God is very, very improbable." —Richard Dawkins

"It is time we admitted, from kings and presidents on down, that there is no evidence that any of our books was authored by the Creator of the universe. The Bible, it seems certain, was the work of sand-strewn men and women who thought the earth was flat and for whom a wheelbarrow would have been a breathtaking example of emerging technology. To rely on such a document as the basis for our worldview—however heroic the efforts of redactors—is to repudiate two thousand years of civilizing insights that the human mind has only just begun to inscribe upon itself through secular politics and scientific culture. We will see that the greatest problem confronting civilization is not merely religious extremism: rather, it is the larger set of cultural and intellectual accommodations we have made to faith itself." —Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason*

"The Bible is full of dubious scientific impossibilities, from Jonah living inside a whale, to the sun standing still in the sky for Joshua." —Lawrence M. Krauss

"Science is only truly consistent with an atheistic worldview with regards to the claimed miracles of the gods of Judaism, Christianity and Islam." —Lawrence M. Krauss

******“I can't prove that God doesn't exist, but I'd much rather live in a universe without one.”
—Lawrence M. Krauss

- (7) Christians must be prepared to defend the reliability and veracity of the Bible: 1) to maintain their own faith, and, 2) to have any chance of successfully sharing the gospel with people of the world.
- (8) **29** There are two ways to measure the reliability of ancient books.
- **** First, is the time span between the original writing (autograph) and the early manuscripts. The nearer the earliest manuscript to the original autograph the greater the reliability.
 - **** Second, is the number of MSS. The greater the number of early MSS the more reliable a text is considered. Also, the greater the number of MSS the more “cross checking” can be done to determine accuracy.

How does the Bible stack up with other ancient texts?

- (3) **30** Old Testament: I very briefly want to make a few comments about the Old Testament.
- **** The two traditional measures of reliability are not as applicable to the OT.
 - The Old Testament was written over approximately a thousand year time span (Pentateuch ~14th or 15th century B.C.; Malachi ~445 B.C.).
 - The ancient Jewish scribes that made copies of the Old Testament were very meticulous in their work. Manning (in *Process of copying the Old Testament by Jewish Scribes*) describes some of the key aspects of their work.
 - ☛ They could only use clean animal skins, both to write on, and even to bind manuscripts.
 - ☛ Each column of writing could have no less than forty-eight, and no more than sixty lines.
 - ☛ The ink must be black, and of a special recipe.
 - ☛ They must verbalize each word aloud while they were writing.
 - ☛ They must wipe the pen and wash their entire bodies before writing the word “Jehovah,” every time they wrote it (CVT: “*Jehovah*” appears 5,000 times in ASV).
 - ☛ There must be a review within thirty days, and if as many as three pages required corrections, the entire manuscript had to be redone.
 - ☛ The letters, words, and paragraphs had to be counted, and the document became invalid if two letters touched each other. The middle paragraph, word and letter must correspond to those of the original document.
 - ☛ The documents could be stored only in sacred places (synagogues, etc.).
 - ☛ As no document containing God's Word could be destroyed, they were stored, or buried, in a *genizah* – a Hebrew term meaning “hiding place.” These were usually kept in a synagogue or sometimes in a Jewish cemetery (i.e., buried with the scribe). This is why we have no original manuscripts of the Old Testament today; no really early MSS and a relatively low number of total OT MSS. The number of ancient OT MSS is somewhat superfluous because of this tradition.
 - 31** The oldest complete OT MS is the *Leningrad Codex* which is dated about AD 1008; there are approximately ~700 OT MSS (many not fully complete) in existence but the oldest Masoretic Texts date from about AD 980.
 - A very important OT translation is the *Septuagint* (abbreviated LXX). The *Septuagint* is a translation of the original Hebrew and Aramaic OT into Greek and was made in

the 3rd century B.C. It is the translation which Jesus and the apostles quote in the New Testament.

(f) **32** How reliable is the Old Testament we have today? I believe it is very reliable for the following reasons:

- ☛ Hundreds of quotations (or allusions) of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

Walter Kaiser: "Citing H.M. Shires, he says that 239 New Testament passages are taken from 185 different Old Testament sources. If one includes 'unacknowledged quotations,' along with 'rewording or paraphrasing' cases, there would be about 1,604 New Testament citations of 1,276 Old Testament texts (Kaiser 1985, 2-3). It is estimated that about ten percent of the New Testament has been taken from the Old Testament—either by direct quotations or general allusions." (Jackson, p. 191)

- ☛ Jesus and the inspired NT writers quote from the *Septuagint* version of the OT despite its imperfections (sometimes quote the Hebrew text or paraphrase).
- ☛ ****** Jesus endorsed events in the Old Testament that modernists deny as being true:

- ✓ The Creation: Matt. 19:4
- ✓ The Flood: Matt. 24:38-39
- ✓ The fate of Sodom: Gen. 19:24; Lk. 17:28-29
- ✓ The fate of Lot's wife: Gen. 19:26; Lk. 17:32
- ✓ The Passover lamb: 1 Cor. 5:7; Jn. 1:29
- ✓ The manna from heaven: Ex. 16:4; Jn. 6:49-50; cf. v. 58
- ✓ The brazen serpent: Num. 21:6; Jn. 3:14-15
- ✓ Jonah and the great fish: Matt. 12:39-40

- ☛ **33** The *Dead Sea Scrolls* (discovered 1947) take the OT MSS back ~1,000 years earlier than the Masoretic Text and are nearly identical with them and current OT MSS (*Dead Sea Scrolls* contain every OT book, except Esther). This is especially true concerning the prophecy of Isaiah. In the DSS collection there are 19 scrolls of the complete books of Isaiah, 25 of Deuteronomy, and 30 of the Psalms.

******"...the New Testament quotes more from the book of Isaiah than all other prophecies combined. There are 308 quotations from, or references to, Isaiah in the New Testament, and these involve forty-seven of the sixty-six chapters. The prophet is cited by name twenty-one times, and all three of the so-called divisions are credited to him. For example, in John 12:37-41, the apostle quotes from Isaiah chapter fifty-three and chapter six in the same breath, citing Isaiah as the author of both passages, even joining the two quotations together by saying, 'Isaiah said again...' (12:39). It is impossible to deny the unity of Isaiah without reflecting upon the integrity of the New Testament record." (Jackson, p. 182)

"Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in Qumran Cave I near the Dead Sea in 1947 were a thousand years earlier than the oldest dated manuscript previously known (A.D. 980), they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 per cent of the text. The 5 per cent variation consisted chiefly of obvious clips of the pen in variations in spelling (Archer 1964, 19)" (Jackson, pp. 190-191)

"Of the 166 words in Isaiah 53, there are only seventeen letters in question. Ten of these letters are simply a matter of spelling, which does not affect the sense. Four more letters are minor stylistic changes, such as conjunctions. The remaining three letters comprise the word 'light,' which is added in verse 11, and does not affect the meaning greatly... Thus, in one chapter of 166 words, there is only one word (three letters) in question after a

thousand years of transmission and this word does not significantly change the meaning of the passage (Geisler and Nix 1986, 263).” (Jackson, p. 191)

(4) **34** New Testament: early MS fragments:

- ☛ ******John Ryland’s fragment: Papyrus P⁵² is currently the oldest NT MS fragment; it is a business-card sized fragment of the Gospel of John which contains only five verses (Jn. 18:31-33, 37-38), but reads exactly the same as the Greek text today! It dates to no later than AD 125. It is believed John’s gospel was written AD 96; hence, this fragment may be only 29 years removed from the autograph! This is totally unheard of in other ancient works.
 - ☛ ******There are ~20 MS fragments written within the first 100 years of the completion of the New Testament. Some are fairly large and contain significant portions of the gospels and/or letters of Paul.
 - ☛ ******Now (2016) there is one MS fragment newer than P⁵² that may date from the late first century (it is a portion of Mark’s gospel); 18 MS fragments from the second century (AD 100-200); 48 MS from third century (AD 200-300) and 69 MS fragments from the fourth century (AD 300-400)(Sources: *Wikipedia, Expository Files*).
 - ☛ **35** 43% of all NT verses are found in the first and second century MS fragments.
 - ☛ *******Bodmer Papyrus II*: Dated ~200 AD (~130 years from originals). Contains the first fourteen chapters of John, and portions of the last seven chapters.
 - ☛ *******Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri*: Dated ~200 AD (~130 years from originals). Contains all four gospels, Acts, ten of Paul’s epistles, Revelation.
- (a) **36** *Codex Vaticanus*: Dated AD 300-325. This Greek MS contains nearly all the Bible (Old and New Testaments) except Mk. 16:9-20 and Jn. 7:53-8:11.
- (b) ****** *Codex Sinaiticus*: Dated AD 330-360. This Gr. MS contains the entire OT and NT.
- (c) ****** Since 1900 (116 years) 127 papyri have been found, examined, dated and published.
- ☛ Several new MS fragments dating to the 2nd century (6) and the 1st century (1).
 - ☛ They are being examined by experts before releasing pertinent data about each of them (Dr. Dan Wallace).
 - ☛ ******According to MS experts, “the papyri have *confirmed* various readings as authentic in the past 116 years, but have not *introduced* new authentic readings.” (e.g., “the Lord” vs. “Jesus”; or “Peter” vs. “Simon”).
- (d) *******Muratorian Canon*: the *Muratorian Canon* is a document fragment dating to ~AD 180 and lists 22 of the 27 New Testament books; very importantly it is a fragment (i.e., The original may have listed more of the NT books.)(explain significance).

(5) How does the Bible stack up with other ancient texts? See table below:

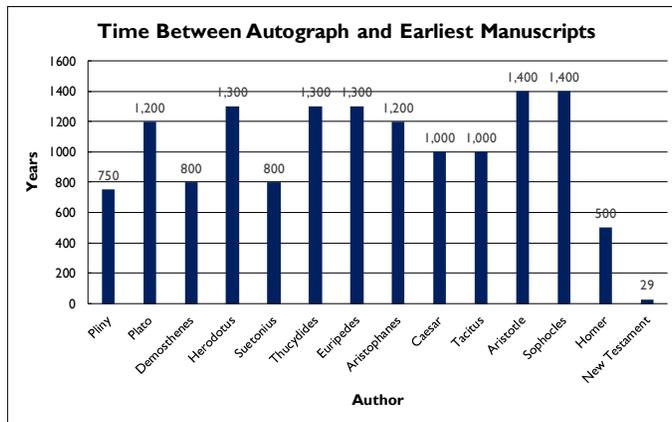
Author	Date	Earliest MS	Time autograph v. earliest MS	No. of MS	Accuracy of MS
Pliny (younger)	AD 61-113	AD 850	750 years	7	unk
Plato	427-347 BC	AD 900	1200 years	7	unk
Demosthenes	4 th cent. BC	AD 1100	800 years	8	unk
Herodotus	480-425 BC	AD 900	1300 years	8	unk
Suetonius	AD 75-160	AD 950	800 years	8	unk
Thucydides	460-400 BC	AD 900	1300 years	8	unk
Euripides	480-406 BC	AD 1100	1300 years	9	unk

Aristophanes	450-385 BC	AD 900	1200 years	10	unk
Caesar	100-44 BC	AD 900	1000 years	10	unk
Tacitus	AD 100	AD 1100	1000 years	20	unk
Aristotle	384-322 BC	AD 1100	1400 years	49	unk
Sophocles	496-406 BC	AD 1000	1400 years	193	unk
Homer (Iliad)	900 BC	400 BC	500 years	643 ¹	95%
New Testament	AD 50-100	AD 130	<100 years	25,100	99.5%

Source: CARM: *Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry*

¹According to Quinn & Berkley (p. 97) only 190 MSS contain a complete copy; they also cite 647 total MSS copies.

(a) **37** Time interval between autographs and earliest MSS:



(b) The graph shows that no ancient text even comes close insofar as the shortness of the time interval from autograph to earliest MS. Complete NT MSS (e.g., *Codex Vaticanus*) are ~225-250 years removed from the autographs.

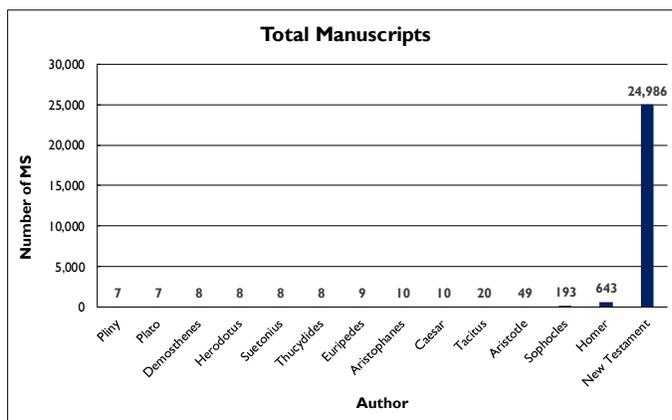
(6) The 2nd measure of reliability is the number of MSS. The greater number of early MSS the more reliable. Also, the greater the number of MSS the more “cross checking” can be done to determine accuracy. How does the Bible stack up with other ancient texts? **38**

(a) Greek MSS: ~5,800 (Wikipedia, Quinn & Berkley); 5,686 (CARM: *Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry*)

(b) Latin MSS: 10,000 (Wikipedia, Quinn & Berkley)

(c) Other MSS: 9,300 (i.e., Syriac, Slavic, Ethiopic, Coptic and Armenian)(confirmed by CARM; ~19,000 “other” MSS (i.e., Latin, Syriac, Slavic, Ethiopic, Coptic and Armenian)

(e) Quinn & Berkley (p. 98) also state that “The number of manuscripts being found is continually growing. Every decade and virtually every year new manuscripts are discovered.” **39**



F. **40** Accuracy of the Bible:

- (1) It is impossible to even estimate the accuracy of ancient texts from Plato, Caesar, Aristotle, etc. because there are so few MSS available to check.
- (2) There are 643 ancient MSS of Homer's *Iliad*; and by cross-referencing those MSS it has been determined to be ~95% accurate.
- (3) As we've seen, there are ~25,000 NT MSS; and by cross-referencing them it has been determined to be ~99.5% "textually pure" (source: CARM).

G. **41** Other thoughts on the New Testament's reliability.

- (1) All the NT documents were penned before the close of the first century.
- (2) Thus, they were written within 70 years, or less, of the death of Christ (~AD 30).
- (3) This means there were plenty of people around who would have known whether the documents were an accurate presentation of the facts.
- (4) However, there are absolutely no ancient documents contemporary with the first century that contest the NT's accuracy and factualness.
- (5) If the NT was this big fabrication, as many of its critics say, one would think there would be a wealth of contemporary writings exposing the fraud. There isn't!
- (6) If the critics of the Bible dismiss the NT as unreliable; they must also dismiss the reliability of the writings of Plato, Aristotle, etc.
- (7) ****** In light of this, John Warwick Montgomery, recipient of 11 earned degrees including PhD, ThD and LLD, rightly said, "to be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all the classical works of antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament."

STOP

H. **43** Supposed Bible contradictions:

- (1) Certain passages, at first glance, may appear contradictory, but closer examination will show this to be false.
- (2) Must be fair with the Bible and not use stricter standards than used on other literature.
- (3) I have studied many supposed "Bible contradictions," and I would never discourage any Christian from engaging in such studies.
- (4) However, it has been my universal experience that every contradiction: 1) has a logical explanation which resolves it, or 2) when fair standards are applied cannot be classified as a true contradiction (i.e., It may remain unexplained, but cannot be classified as a true contradiction.).
- (5) What constitutes a true contradiction?
 - (a) A true contradiction is something cannot be *a* and *not a* simultaneously (e.g., it cannot be raining and not raining at the same time).
 - (b) But, two statements may differ from one another without being contradictory.
 - (c) **44** Example: blind men of Jericho healed by Jesus:
 - ☛ Matthew 20:29-34: mentions two blind men.

- ☛ Mark 10:46-52 and Luke 18:35-43: mention only one (“*blind Bartimaeus*”; Mk. 10:46)
 - ☛ Matthew’s version (2 blind men) and Mark and Luke’s versions (1 blind man) have some differences, but are not contradictory; Mark and Luke’s account would contradict Matthews ***IF*** they unequivocally cited “*only one*.”
 - ☛ Explanation: I talk with the police chief and the mayor today. I tell my friend Tom I talked with the police chief and what he had to say. Later I tell Tim I talked with the police chief and the mayor and I tell him what each of them had to say. Neither statement denies the other, but are complementary. There would only be a contradiction if I told Tom that I *only* talked with the police chief. What I told Tom and Tim may have some differences, but are not contradictory.
- (d) **45** Some apparent contradictions arise from poor translation of the original language.
- ☛ Example: Saul and his traveling companions on the road to Damascus:

Acts 9:7: “*And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*” (KJV)

Acts 22:9: “*And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.*” (KJV)

✓ The Greek scholar, W. F. Arndt, explains:

“The construction of the verb ‘to hear’ (*akouo*) is not the same in both accounts. In Acts 9:7 it is used with the genitive, in Acts 22:9 with the accusative. The construction with the genitive simply expresses that something is being heard or that certain sounds reach the ear; nothing is indicated as to whether a person understands what he hears or not.

“The construction with the accusative, however, describes a hearing which includes mental apprehension of the message spoken. From this it becomes evident that the two passages are not contradictory.

“Acts 22:9 does not deny that the associates of Paul heard certain sounds; it simply declares that they did not hear in such a way as to understand what was being said. Our English idiom in this case simply is not so expressive as the Greek” (*Does the Bible Contradict Itself*, pp. 13–14.)

****Acts 9:7:** “*The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.*” (NASV)

Acts 22:9: “*And those who were with me saw the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.*” (NASV)
- (7) **46** Thousands of errors? Are the enemies of the Bible right?
- (a) Often enemies of the Bible boast that the Bible contains “thousands of errors.”
 - (b) But, the vast majority of these “errors” are really not errors:
 - (i) For example, a verse in one MS family reads, “Jesus Christ” in a certain passage, while another MS family reads, “Jesus Christ.”
 - (ii) If, for example, there are 3,000 MSS reading “Jesus Christ,” and there are 2,000 MSS “Christ Jesus,” textual critics would say there are 5,000 errors.
 - (iii) Over 99% of supposed “errors” fall into this category: slight variations in word order, variations in spelling, variations in names (e.g., “Jesus Christ” vs. “Christ Jesus,” “John” vs. “Johnn,” “Simon” vs. “Peter” vs. “Cephas”).

(iv) In 45 years of Bible study I've examined a lot of "errors," but have never found one that impacted a doctrine affecting salvation.

(8) **47** Supposed contradictions: substantive errors?

(a) How many died in the "plague" of Numbers 25? **Num. 25:1-9**

- ☛ Numbers 25 records the incident where Israel committed "harlotry with the women of Moab" (Num. 25:1).
- ☛ The Lord ordered Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the Lord, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel." (Num. 25:4).
- ☛ One Israelite had the audacity to bring "a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting" (Num. 25:6).
- ☛ Phinehas ran the man and the Midianite woman with his spear, "So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel. 9 And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand." (Num. 25:8-9).

(b) But Paul said, "Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;" (1 Cor 10:8).

(i) So, who is right? Moses (24,000) or Paul (23,000)?

(ii) ****** Easily resolved: The account in Numbers gives the grand total of 24,000 as dying in the plague, it doesn't say how many days the plague lasted (more than one day?). While Paul simply tells how many died due to the plague "in one day."

(c) The vast majority of "contradictions" are like this one; very easily explained.

(9) **48** Variant readings: Different translations are often translated from different Old and New Testament texts.

(a) **King James Version**: Old Testament: *Masoretic Text*; New Testament: *Textus Receptus*

(i) *Masoretic Text*: "is the authoritative Hebrew and Aramaic text of the Tanakh for Rabbinic Judaism. However, contemporary scholars seeking to understand the history of the Hebrew Bible's text use a range of other sources. These include Greek and Syriac translations, quotations from rabbinic manuscripts, the Samaritan Pentateuch and others such as the Dead Sea Scrolls." (Wikipedia)

(ii) *Textus Receptus*: "(Latin: "received text") is the name given to the succession of printed Greek texts of the New Testament. The term *Textus Receptus* may also apply to other ancient texts in other languages, traditionally copied and passed down by scribes.

The biblical *Textus Receptus* constituted the translation base for the original German Luther Bible, the translation of the New Testament into English by William Tyndale, the King James Version, the Spanish Reina-Valera translation, the Russian Synodal Bible and most Reformation-era New Testament translations throughout Western and Central Europe.

The series originated with the first printed Greek New Testament, published in 1516 – a work undertaken in Basel by the Dutch Catholic scholar, priest and humanist Desiderius Erasmus. This edition of the New Testament represents the tradition of manuscripts of the New Testament as the one that the Orthodox Church has 'received' and used without interruption since the 4th century. They are also the text type used in most Protestant denominations consistently throughout history before the 19th century adoption of the Alexandrian priority position within mainstream Biblical scholarship.

Manuscripts of the Byzantine family represent the vast majority of the 5700 manuscripts that have currently been found and collated.” (Wikipedia)

- (b) **New American Standard Version:** Old Testament: *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* with *Septuagint* influence; New Testament: *Novum Testamentum*
- (i) *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*: “is an edition of the *Masoretic Text* of the Hebrew Bible as preserved in the *Leningrad Codex*, and supplemented by masoretic and text-critical notes. It is the fourth edition in the *Biblia Hebraica* series started by Rudolf Kittel and is published by the *Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft* (*German Bible Society*) in Stuttgart.” (Wikipedia)
- (ii) *Novum Testamentum*: “refers to the Nestle-Aland editions, named after the scholars who led the critical editing work. The text, edited by the *Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung* (*Institute for New Testament Textual Research*) is currently in its 28th edition, abbreviated NA28. The *Nestle-Aland* text is the primary source for most contemporary New Testament translations...” (Wikipedia)
- (c) **49** Examples of variant readings:
- (i) **Mark 16:9-20:** The NIV and other more modern translations either omit Mark 16:9-20 or give a footnote saying the verses are not in all ancient NT MSS (e.g., NASV has a footnote stating: “Some of the oldest mss. omit from verse 9 through 20.”).
- (ii) It is certainly true verses 9-20 are not in some ancient NT MSS; however, should these verse be omitted from our Bibles? NO! Reasons:
- (iii) **50** Two of the earliest MSS (*Codex Vaticanus* and *Codex Sinaiticus*) both omit the verses, but even though these two MSS are very early, it is well-recognized that they are not the best early MSS.
- (iv) Only 1/3 of 1% of early MSS omit verses 9-20. Only 2!
- (v) The verses are found in the 2nd Century Old Latin and Syriac Bibles and the writing of Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Tertullian.
- (vi) The verses are found in all sorts of other manuscripts and books in the 3rd to 7th centuries. Researcher John William Burgon found 30 early writers who clearly included Mark 16: 9-20.
- (vii) **51** Read Mark 16:8: Surely Mark would not end his gospel account on such a negative note!
- “The Bible student who reads Mark 16 will find it difficult to believe that contextually the narrative could end at verse 8. No one has seen the risen Christ! Three women have seen an empty tomb and an angel who announces the resurrection but no one is an actual witness of the resurrection of Jesus. How can the gospel which is based on this fact end without a clear declaration concerning the eye-witnesses of the resurrection?” (Terry Partain. “Does Mark 16:9-20 Belong In Our Bibles?” *Guardian of Truth* XL: 3 p. 12-13. February 1, 1996)
- (viii) Who would end a gospel account with “for they were afraid.”? (Mk. 16:8)
- (ix) Who would end a gospel account without recording Jesus’s appearance to witnesses such as the disciples/apostles?
- (x) **52** Even if Mark 16:9-20 is left out, it doesn’t substantially change any NT teaching:
- ✓ Witnesses to resurrection (16:9-11) are recorded in other gospels: Matt. 28:9-10; Jn. 20:11-18

- ✓ Jesus' appearances to the disciples (16:12-13) is recorded in other gospels: Lk. 24:13-35
 - ✓ The Great Commission (16:14-18) is recorded in other gospels: Matt. 28:16-20; Lk. 24:44-49; Acts 1:6-8
 - ✓ The necessity of baptism (16:16) is taught in many other passages: Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:21
 - ✓ Christ's ascension (16:19-20) is recorded in other gospels: Lk. 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11
- (x) ** Everything recorded in Mark 16:9-20 is recorded elsewhere in the NT!
- (d) **53** Other examples of variant readings: Lk. 17:36 (read vv. 31-37)
- (i) NKJV reads: "Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."
 - (ii) NASV: omits the verse and adds a footnote: "Some mss. add verse 36, Two men will be in the field, one will be taken and the other will be left. Cf. Matt. 24:40
 - (iii) So this verse is included in some versions, but omitted from the NASV despite the fact that the NASV includes the verse in Matt. 24:40.
- (e) When you boil it all down, it doesn't make any substantive difference whether the verse is included or not. It doesn't change one aspect of doctrine!
- (i) Every one of the variant readings I've studied do NOT make any difference in the doctrine taught.
 - (ii) ** These variant readings make up a very small percentage of the text (<1%) and are of no consequence.
- (10) **54** Final word on contradictions/errors: Be careful with supposed contradictions!
- (a) Some arise over our inadequate knowledge about the passage (e.g., circumstances, language, etc.). These only prove we are ignorant of the background and shouldn't chalk up our lack of understanding to a contradiction.
 - (b) Remember Sir William Ramsay: just because we don't know how to resolve an apparent conflict doesn't mean we won't find new information (e.g., advances in historical and archaeological knowledge) that will shed new light and provide an explanation for difficult passages.
 - (c) Certainly a myriad of such problems in the past disappeared when new information was discovered (e.g., Hittites, Sodom, Gomorrah, Quirinius, etc.).
 - (d) History has vividly shown we need a 'wait-and-see attitude,' because jumping to conclusions has humbled many in the past.
 - (e) As Christians we must trust God's providential ability to preserve His word! **Isa. 40:8**: "The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."
- I. **55** English translations of the Bible:
- (1) Some are good standard translations like the KJV, NKJV, ASV and NASV.
 - (2) Some are not so good because they either paraphrase instead of translate or are translated with a "theological bias" (*Good News for Modern Man, Living Bible, New International Version, New World Translation*).

- (3) Also, one must be extremely careful with so-called “study Bibles” (e.g., *Ryrie Study Bible*, *Scofield Study Bible*, *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, etc.), because their notes are very heavily slanted towards false doctrines such as premillennialism and Calvinism.
- J. **56** Also, remember that the chapter and verse divisions were not in the originals. Stephen Langton put the chapter divisions in 1227 A. D. and the verse divisions were added by Robert Stephens in 1551 A. D.
- K. How the Bible came to be translated into English.
- (1) Many brave men in the Middle Ages such as John Wyclif (1382 A. D.; excommunicated by Pope, after death his bones burned), William Tyndale (1525 A. D.; persecuted by Catholic Church and ultimately burned alive Oct. 6, 1536).
- (2) King James Version (1611 A. D.; major revisions in 1629, 1638, 1762, 1769); not without problems, e.g., Acts 12:4 (Albert Barnes: “There never was a more absurd or unhappy translation than this.”).

STOP

3. **58** General information about the Bible:

- A. The word Bible means “book.” The word “bible” is derived from *Byblos*, which was an ancient Phoenician city famous for exporting papyrus an early type of paper.
- B. The overall theme of the Bible is God’s scheme of redemption for man (story of Jesus Christ; **Gen. 3:15**: “*And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*”; **Rev. 22:21**: “*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*”).
- C. Though the Bible is one book, it is made up of 66 books. These books were written by 40 writers over a 1600 year time span from about 1500 B. C. to AD 96.
- D. **59** The Bible has two major divisions: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The word “testament” refers to an agreement or covenant.
- (1) The OT consists of 39 books which were originally written in Hebrew. It is mainly a history of the origin of man and of the Jewish people, nation of Israel. It has 4 parts.
- (a) **Law** (5 books): The Law of Moses given to the Jews (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)(aka, Pentateuch = *penta* for “five”; and *teukhos* for “vessel”).
- (b) **History** (12 books): The history of the Jewish people (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther).
- (c) **60 Poetry and Wisdom** (5 books): Poetry containing wisdom (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon).
- (d) **Prophets** (17 books): Inspired teachers sent by God to Israel.
- (i) **61 Major Prophets** (5 books): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.
- (ii) **Minor Prophets** (12 books): Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.
- (2) **62** The New Testament consists of 27 books which were originally written in Greek. It deals with the coming of Christ and His church, and the spread of Christianity. It also has 4 parts.

- (a) **Gospels** (4 books): The life of Christ (The “synoptic gospels,” Matthew, Mark, and Luke, plus the gospel of John).
 - (b) **History** (1 book): History of the early church (Acts).
 - (c) **63 Epistles** (21 books): Letters giving instructions to Christians.
 - (i) Paul’s letters to churches (9 books): Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
 - (ii) **64** Letters to individuals (6 books): Paul’s “pastoral” (misnomer!) epistles, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus; plus, Philemon, 2 & 3 John.
 - (iii) General letters (6 books): Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 John, Jude.
 - (d) **65** Prophecy (1 book): Future of the persecuted church (Revelation; **Rev. 1:1**: “things which must shortly come to pass...”).
- (3) The old law of Moses was replaced by the gospel of Christ at Jesus’ death on the cross (**Gal. 3:15-29**).

4. **66** Outline of Bible history:

- A. The Patriarchal Dispensation (a divinely appointed order or age) (family religion; star light of revelation): Creation to 1491 BC
 - (1) ** Before the Flood (“Antediluvian”): Genesis 1-5 (1656 years).
 - (2) ** After the Flood (“Postdiluvian”): Genesis 6-11 (427 years).
 - (3) ** Journeys of the Patriarchs: Genesis 12-50 (215 years).
 - (4) ** Egyptian Bondage: Exodus 1-11 (215 years).
- B. **67** The Mosaic Dispensation (national religion; moon light of revelation): 1491 BC to AD 30.
 - (1) Wilderness Wanderings: Exodus 12-Deuteronomy 34 (40 years).
 - (2) ** Conquest of Canaan: Joshua (51 years).
 - (3) ** Judges: Judges 1-1 Samuel 8 (305 years).
 - (4) ** United Kingdom: 1 Samuel 9-1 Kings 11 (120 years).
 - (5) ** Divided Kingdom: 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17 (253 years).
 - (6) **68** Judah Alone: 2 Kings 18-25 (136 years).
 - (7) ** Babylonian Captivity: 2 Kings 25 (50 years).
 - (8) ** Restoration of Judah: Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther (305 years).
 - (9) ** Between the Testaments: No revelation for ~400 years.
 - (10) ** Life of Christ: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- C. **69** The Christian Dispensation (daylight of revelation): AD 30 to present
 - (1) ** Establishment and spread of the church: Acts (33 years).
 - (2) ** Post-Pauline: Revelation (AD 96).

5. **70** Important people and events of the Bible:

- A. Creation of the universe (Genesis 1-2): Gen. 1:1
- B. **71** Adam & Eve (Genesis 2): Gen. 2:18, 24
- C. **72** The first sin (Genesis 3): Gen. 3:6

- D. **73** The first prophecy of Christ (Genesis 3): Gen. 3:15
- E. **74** The flood (Genesis 6-8): Gen. 6:5-8
- F. **75** Abraham (Genesis 12-23): Gen. 12:1-3
- G. **76** Lot (Genesis 19): Gen. 19:24-26
- H. **77** Jacob (Genesis 27-35): Gen. 35:23
- I. **78** Joseph (Genesis 37-50): Gen. 45:4-5
- J. **79** Moses (Exodus 2-6): Ex. 3:10
- K. **80** 10 plagues (Exodus 7-11): Ex. 7:5
- L. **81** Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12-13): Ex. 12:51
- M. **82** Red Sea crossing (Exodus 14): Ex. 14:21-23
- N. **83** Law of Moses (Exodus 20-24): Ex. 20:1-17
- O. **84** Tabernacle (Exodus 25-40): Ex. 25:9
- P. **85** Joshua (Joshua): Joshua 24:15
- Q. **86** Samson (Judges 14-16): Jud. 16:21
- R. **87** Naaman (2 Kings 5): 2 Kgs. 5:11
- S. **88** Job (Job 1-2): Job 1:22
- T. **89** Jonah (Jonah): Jonah 1:17
- U. **90** Daniel (Daniel 6): Dan. 6:16
- V. **91** John the Baptist (Luke 3): Lk. 3:2-6
- W. **92** Birth of Jesus (Matthew 1): Mt. 1:22-23
- X. **93** Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7): Mt. 7:24-27
- Y. **94** 12 Apostles (Matthew 10): Mt. 10:2-4
- Z. **95** Betrayal of Jesus (Matthew 26): Mt. 26:1-2
- AA. **96** Crucifixion (Luke 23): Lk. 23:33
- AB. **97** Resurrection (John 20): Jn. 20:1-2
- AC. **98** Ascension (Acts 1): Acts 1:9
- AD. **99** Church established (Acts 2): Acts 2:47
- AE. **100** Stephen stoned (Acts 7): Acts 7:57-58
- AF. **101** Paul's three journeys (Acts 13-28): Acts 26:28-29
- AG. **102** Promise to all faithful Christians (New Testament): 2 Tim. 4:6-8

III. CONCLUSION: **103**

1. Let's be determined to learn more about the precious Bible God has given us and follow it as our only guide in life (Psa. 119:105; 1 Pet. 4:11).
2. **104** *"Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime,
Then looking in, I saw on the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.*

'How many anvils have you had,' said I,
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
'Just one,' he said; then with a twinkling eye,
'The anvil wears the hammers out you know.'
And so, I thought, the anvil of God's word
For ages skeptics blows have beat upon,
Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed and the hammers are all gone!"

Adapted from: *Growing in Grace and Knowledge of the Lord*, by Johnie Edwards, Titus Edwards,
Johnie P. Edwards, Edwards Publishing, pp. 37-40)

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