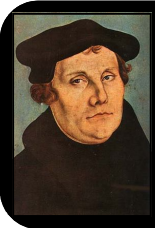


agreed that this church council fixed the limits of the New Testament canon as including all twenty-seven books as we have them today.

5. A note on Luther's opinion of the Book of James.



"St. John's Gospel and his first Epistle, St. Paul's Epistles, especially those to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and St. Peter's Epistle—these are the books which show to thee Christ, and teach everything that is necessary and blessed for thee to know, even if you were never to see or hear any other book of doctrine. Therefore, St. James' Epistle is a perfect straw-epistle compared with them, for it has in it nothing of an evangelic kind."  
- Martin Luther

Thus Luther was comparing (in his opinion) doctrinal value, not canonical validity.

### Review the Tables

#### The Apocrypha

- Apocrypha most commonly refers to disputed books that Protestants reject and Roman Catholics and Orthodox communions accept into the Old Testament.
- The word apocrypha means "hidden" or "doubtful."
- In all, there are fifteen books, eleven of which are accepted as canonical by the Roman Catholic church.
- They were revered but were not considered Scripture.

The Council of Trent (1548) recognized them as canonical, though the Reformers rejected this decree. In our English Bibles the Apocrypha was set apart in the Coverdale, Geneva, and King James versions. The first English Bible to exclude it entirely as a matter of policy was an Amsterdam edition of the Geneva Bible published in 1640, and the first English Bible printed in America (the Aitken Bible, 1782) omitted it.

### Summary Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that no church council (17) \_\_\_\_\_ the canon of Scripture.

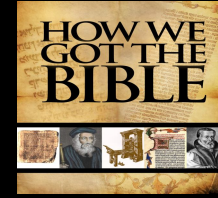
As a child identifies its mother, the later church identified the books which it regarded as having unique canonical (18) \_\_\_\_\_.



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Answers: 1-worthy 2-inspiration 3-divine 4-same 5-immediately 6-Ark 7-temple 8-copy 9-future 10-Ezra 11-authority 12-unique character 13-acceptance 14-apostolic 15-twenty-seven 16-Carthage 17-MADE 18-authority

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**Pastor Jeremy Johnston's Sermon**  
**Wednesday, February 10, 2010**  
**"The Canon Controversy: Do We Know We Have the Bible In Completed Form?"**  
Message #3 in the series, "How We Got the Bible"

### The Meaning of Canon

The English word "canon" comes from the Greek word *kanon* and also the Hebrew word *qaneh*.

- It came to refer to the standard by which various books of the Bible were judged as (1) \_\_\_\_\_ of being called the Word of God.

### Difference between Canonicity and Authority of a Bible Book

- A book of the bible first has divine authority based on its (2) \_\_\_\_\_, and then attains canonicity due to its general acceptance as a (3) \_\_\_\_\_ product.

**Key Point: No church council by its decrees can make the Books of the Bible authoritative. The Books of the Bible possess their own authority and, indeed, had this authority long before there were any councils or conferences of the church.**

### The Canon of the Old Testament

Time and Time again Jesus and His Apostles are quoting from Old Testament writings. They designate them as:

- "The Scripture": John 7:38; Acts 8:32; Romans 4:3
- "The Scriptures": Matt. 21:42; John 5:39; Acts 17:11
- "The Holy Scriptures": Romans 1:2
- "the Sacred Writings": 2 Tim. 3:15

The Christian of today can be confident that Jesus Christ read the (4) \_\_\_\_\_ Old Testament books as Scripture we do today!

- External support for the Old Testament comes from the well-known Jewish historian Josephus.

### How the Books Were Collected

Some of the Old Testament books were (5) \_\_\_\_\_ recognized as

authoritative.

- Moses, after he wrote a book, put it in the (6) \_\_\_\_\_ of the Covenant (Deut. 31:24-26).
- After the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ was built, the sacred writings were kept there (2 Kings 22:18).
- Early on, God commanded the kings to write for themselves a (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of the law. *“And he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God”* (Deut. 17:19).
- As the prophets spoke God’s word, saying, “Thus saith the Lord,” they also recognized that their message had to be recorded for (9) \_\_\_\_\_ generations.
- Some assert that all the books of the Old Testament canon were collected and recognized by (10) \_\_\_\_\_ in the fifth century B.C.

### **The Canon of the New Testament**

#### **The Tests for Canonicity**

- It is important to remember that certain books were canonical even before any tests were put to them.
- The church or its councils recognized and verified certain books as the Word of God, and in time those so recognized were collected together in what we now call the Bible.

#### **What tests did the Church apply?**

1. There was the test of the (11) \_\_\_\_\_ of the writer.
2. The books themselves should give some internal evidences of their (12) \_\_\_\_\_, as inspired and authoritative.
3. The verdict or (13) \_\_\_\_\_ of the churches as to the canonical nature of the books was important.

### **The Formation (Recognition) of the New Testament Canon**

The canon of Scripture was, of course, being formed as each book was written, and it was complete when the last book was finished.

- About the middle of the second century, a Christian writer, Justin Martyr,

stated that on Sundays in the Christian worship assemblies the “memoirs of the apostles” were read together with the “writings of the prophets”.

- Paul’s letters were carefully gathered into a single whole; next came the collection of the Four Gospels, and then all the others New Testament books followed.
- The first church council to officially recognize all twenty-seven books of the New Testament was the Council of Carthage in A.D. 397.

1. *The witness of the (14) \_\_\_\_\_ period.* The writers witnessed that their own writings were the Word of God.

*Colossians 4:16, “Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.”*

*1 Thessalonians 4:15, “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.”*

1 Timothy 5:17-18, “For the Scripture says, “*You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,*” and, “*The laborer is worthy of his wages.*”

*2 Peter 3:15-16, “And consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.”*

2. *The witness of the period A.D. 70–170.* During this period all the New Testament books were cited in other writings, and the church Fathers recognized as canonical all (15) \_\_\_\_\_ books.

3. *The witness of the period A.D. 170–350.* Three important pieces of evidence come from this period.

- A. The Muratorian canon (170) omitted Hebrews, James, and 1 and 2 Peter.
- B. The Old Syriac Version (end of second century) lacked 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation. But no extra books were added to bring the total to twenty-seven.
- C. The Old Latin Version (200) lacked 2 Peter, James, and Hebrews, but added no extra books.

4. *The Council of (16) \_\_\_\_\_ (397).* It is generally