

Shaken and Found Faithful

The Bible, Part I

Pastor Craig Sweeney | June 16, 2024

“While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city. He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there. He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers...he told them about Jesus and his resurrection...Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: ‘Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way, for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on it: ‘To an Unknown God.’ This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I’m telling you about.”

Acts 17:16 – 23 NLT

Thread: The heart of God revealed in the Bible untangles our knots.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” **2 Timothy 3:16 - 17 NLT**

“And it is only right that I should keep on reminding you as long as I live. For our Lord Jesus Christ has shown me that I must soon leave this earthly life, so I will work hard to make sure you always remember these things after I am gone. For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw his majestic splendor with our own eyes.” **2 Peter 1:13 - 16 NLT**

“We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life...We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us.” **1 John 1:1 - 3 NLT**

“Go...make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all I have commanded you.” **They were entrusted with the words of Jesus, “the words of eternal life.”**

Three goals for this week and next:

- To have confidence in our SOURCE.
- To know the truth and be set free.
- To connect the generations.

Why were the New Testament books and letters originally written?

- To be an authoritative witness of the life and teachings of Jesus.

How was the New Testament compiled in its present form?

- With sober judgment.

Five criteria the church used to compile the New Testament:

- 1) *Apostolicity* – The church accepted only those letters and books that had the authority of the apostles behind them.
- 2) *The rule of faith* – Not a document; rather an accumulation of apostolic teachings found within the churches they pastored.
- 3) *Chronology* – Only letters and books being from the period of the apostolic age would be accepted.
- 4) *Catholicity* – The letters or books universally accepted by the church as a whole.
- 5) *Self-evidencing quality* – These letters and books did not become scripture because a group of men said so; they were accepted into the Canon because they were recognized as inspired writings.

Takeaway 1 – No matter how many facts we bring regarding the Bible, we enter into its teachings by faith in Jesus Christ.

Takeaway 2 – We have the Bible because the early disciples fulfilled their responsibility to connect Jesus to the next generation after them.

“...but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

John 20:31 ESV

Challenge:

- TRUST the SOURCE—with your life.
- Follow Jesus to the life He has for you.
- Pray for the opportunities to come, and like Paul, introduce rather than exclude.

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