

“What Is the Biblical Canon, and Why Is It Reliable?” Sunday, Sep 16, 2018

Once again I am acknowledging that I am relying heavily on Josh McDowell’s book, **EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT**, C. 1972 by Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc.

The word ‘canon’ applied to Scripture means “an officially accepted list of books.” – Ibid., p.33.

FOCUS: The list of books making up the Bible, both OT and NT.

1. _____ of a Book for Inclusion In the Canon.

- 1) Is it _____?
 - Does it come with a divine “thus says the Lord?”
- 2) Is it _____?
 - Was it written by a man of God?
- 3) Is it _____?
 - The Fathers had the attitude of “if in doubt, throw it out!”
- 4) Is it _____?
 - Did it come with the life-transforming power of God?
- 5) Was it _____ by the people of God?
 - Ibid., pp 33-34

2. Christ’s _____ of the Jewish (OT) Canon.

- He disagreed with the oral traditions of the Pharisees and the written traditions of the Talmud, but NOT with the OT Canon.
- As McDowell notes: *“There is no evidence whatever of any dispute between Him and the Jews as to the Canonicity of any Old Testament book.” – Ibid., p. 35*

3. _____ Testimony.

- **Josephus** (early Jewish historian) at the end of the first century A.D. wrote in *Contra Apion I: But what faith we have placed in our own writings is evident by our conduct;..no one has dared to add anything to them, or to take anything from them, or to alter anything in them.* – Ibid., p. 35.

4. _____ For Including a Book in the NT Canon:

- The same Five tests used for OT Canon.
- **But did the Disciples really look at their writings as “Scripture?”**
- **Yes!!!** Peter speaks of it concerning Paul’s writings in **2 Peter 3:16** (NIV 2011):
 - *...our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other scriptures,..*
- The basic factor for determining New Testament canonicity was _____ by God, and its chief test is _____.
- NOT necessarily written BY an apostle, but having apostolic approval of it as inspired.
- *The Edict of Diocletian (A.D. 303) declared the destruction of the sacred books of the Christians. Who wanted to die for just a religious book? **They needed to know the Canon!***