

## I. Development of the Canon

**A. Overview:** The Bible was written over the span of 1,500 years and contains 66 books.

### B. Old Testament

1. The Hebrew Bible was divided into 3 sections, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.
2. The Law (Pentateuch) was mainly written by Moses (15th century BC).
3. The rest of the OT was written either by prophets or by kings and sages (e.g. Proverbs).
4. The OT was completed by 400 BC.
5. The order of the books in the English Bible follows the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the OT done in the 2nd and 3rd centuries BC.

### C. New Testament

1. The NT was written mainly by the Apostles (including Paul).
2. The non-apostolic authors were closely associated with the Apostles (Mark, Luke, Jude, and the author of Hebrews).
3. The NT was written from AD 50-95.

## II. Evidence for the Canon (the list of books in the Bible)

**A. Overview:** Our evidence can be broken down into these three points (historical, biblical, and intrinsic evidence). All three are important to knowing what books are in the Bible.

### B. Historical evidence (from writings outside the Bible)

1. The Jews recognized the 3 sections of the OT (Law, Prophets, and Writings) by 130 BC (from the Greek translation of Ecclesiasticus).
2. The Jewish scholars at the council of Jamnia in AD 90 did not recognize the Apocrypha.
3. The Jewish historian Josephus excludes the Apocrypha from the books of the OT.
4. Early church did not accept the Apocrypha (Melito, bishop of Sardis AD 170).
5. The Roman Catholic church did not accept the Apocrypha until 1546 at the Council of Trent in response to the Protestant Reformation.
6. Our first list of books in the Bible is from AD 367 (39th Paschal Letter of Athanasius).
7. The church Council of Carthage in AD 397 also verified our NT books.

### C. Biblical evidence (texts from the Bible itself)

1. Jesus accepted the OT (Matt 5:17; Luke 24:44).
2. Jesus said that his apostles would write Scripture (John 14:26; 16:13-15).
3. The apostles refer to other NT writings as Scripture (II Peter 3:15-16; II Timothy 5:17-18 [quotes Duet 25:4 and Luke 10:7]).
4. Jesus and the writers of the NT quote the OT as Scripture (Matt 1:23; 4:4 and many more!)

### D. Intrinsic evidence (the nature and effect of Scripture)

1. Scripture is beautiful and excellent (Psalm 19:7, 8; 119:103, 129)
2. Scripture is powerful and effective (Psalm 1:1-3; II Tim 3:16; Heb 4:12)

## III. Inspiration, Inerrancy

### A. The NLBC statement of faith

We believe as a church *that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as originally written were God breathed, both verbally and in every part. We believe God, who is Truth, communicated through Spirit-controlled men so that the Scriptures are without error and therefore authoritative in all they teach and in all matters they touch. We believe the Bible is the supreme revelation of God's will for man and constitutes the only infallible guide for faith and life.*

**B. Scripture:** Matt 5:18; 15:4-6; Mark 12:36; John 10:34, 35; 17:17; Acts 1:16; Rom 3:1-4; Gal 3:16; II Tim 3:16-17; Heb 1:1-2; 4:12; II Peter 1:19-21; Rev 22:18, 19.

### **C. Transmission of Scripture**

1. We believe that God inspired the original writings of Scripture. This was a supernatural process with God working through people by the Holy Spirit, so that the words they wrote were His Words.
2. However, these original writings were copied many times by fallible people, and those people made mistakes. Today we do not have the original writings, but we have very reliable witnesses to those original writings.
3. We believe that God used means to preserve His Word. His supervision in the writing of Scripture was supernatural, but does not apply to the copying of Scripture.
4. It is important to note that the copying errors do not change the doctrine or message of the Bible.
5. We have reliable manuscripts, some that date to one hundred years after the NT was written.

## **IV. Manuscripts**

### **A. Old Testament**

1. Leningrad Codex (AD 1008), complete OT in Hebrew (from the Masoretes).
2. Dead Sea Scrolls (250 BC- AD 70), discovered starting in 1947 and contain sections of all the OT books except Esther. Included is the Great Isaiah Scroll (125 BC, includes the entire book of Isaiah) which is almost identical to copies of Isaiah from AD 900 and varies mainly in spelling.

### **B. New Testament**

1. John Ryland's MS (AD 125), contains John 18:31-33 and 37-38.
2. Bodmer Papyrus (AD 150-200), contains a good section of John.
3. Chester Beatty Papyri (AD 200), contains major sections of the NT.
4. Codex Vaticanus (AD 325-350), most of the Bible in Greek.
5. Codex Sinaiticus (AD 350), half of the OT and the entire NT in Greek.
6. Codex Alexandrius (AD 400), most of the Bible in Greek.

## **V. English Translations**

**A. Overview:** The Latin Bible was used in the western church until the beginning of the Reformation and invention of the printing press. The following translation *updates* were done by teams of scholars who referenced the original Greek and Hebrew. Before the 1800's some of the earlier manuscripts mentioned above had not been discovered, so translation updates were made as these manuscripts were found and as the English language changed.

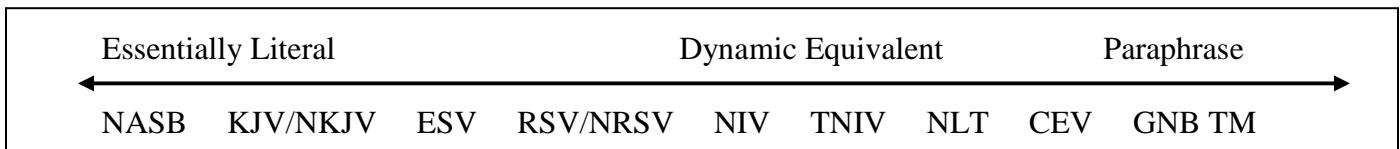
### **B. Translations**

1. Tyndale's NT (1525)- First English NT translated from Greek and Hebrew, also the first printed English NT (done by William Tyndale).
2. KJV (1611, update 1861)- Translated from the Greek and Hebrew by a group of scholars. Referenced four other English Bibles as its basis, including Tyndale's Bible, which influenced them all.
3. ERV (1885)- The English Revised Version (British), an updated translation based on the KJV, taking into consideration more reliable Greek and Hebrew manuscripts.
4. ASV (1901)- The American Revised Version, an American version of the ERV.
5. RSV (1952, update 1971)- A revision of the ASV.
6. NASB (1971, update 1995)- an updated translation based on the ASV.

- 7. NIV (1978, updates 1984, 2011): a completely new translation based on the Hebrew and Greek.
- 8. NKJV (1982)- substantial update to the KJV into modern English, with reference to more reliable manuscripts.
- 9. ESV (2001)- a conservative translation based on the text of the 2nd edition (1971) of the RSV.

### VI. Translation Theory

- A. Essentially literal:** captures the precise wording when possible (word-for-word).
- B. Dynamic equivalent:** translates the meaning of phrases (thought-for-thought).
- C. Paraphrase:** amplification of the text, a running commentary of the text.
- D. Charts** (translation continuum and translation theory comparison)



Word-for-word	Thought-for-thought
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Pros</b>
Faithful to the <i>words</i> of the text	Can be easy to read
Less over-translation	
Good for study <i>and</i> reading	<b>Cons</b>
<b>Cons</b>	Over-translation brings out one interpretation of the text
Can be more difficult to read	Not as faithful to the <i>words</i> of the text
	More correcting in preaching

### E. Recommended translations

- 1. English Standard Version (ESV)
- 2. New American Standard Bible (NASB)
- 3. New International Version (NIV)
- 4. New King James Version (NKJV)
- 5. Kings James Version (KJV)

### VII. Resources

*Evidence for Christianity* by Josh McDowell (2006)  
*The Word of God in English* by Leland Ryken (2002)  
*The Bible in Translation* by Bruce Metzger (2001)  
*Choosing a Bible* by Leland Ryken (2005)  
*Why Our Church Switched to the ESV* by Kevin DeYoung (2011)  
 Both *Choosing a Bible* and *Why Our Church Switched to the ESV* can be found online at:  
[www.newlifebaptist-il.com/resources/](http://www.newlifebaptist-il.com/resources/)