



Is the Bible Reliable?

Historical Reliability

- The Gospels were written somewhere between 50-100 AD, extremely close to the life of Christ by historical standards.
- Early creeds in the Bible, esp. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, confirm the historical message. Extremely early - within 2-8 years.
- Oral Tradition culture - accurate transmission of religious messages was common.

Is the Bible Text Preserved?

- More than 24,000 manuscripts for the Bible. Next closest ancient document is Homer's Iliad with 643 manuscripts.
- Manuscripts are extremely ancient - oldest is 25 years after. Oldest manuscripts for writings about Caesar is 1000 years after.
- Only .002% of the Bible is in any sort of doubt with alternate manuscripts. No important theology hangs on these differences.

Do we have the right books?

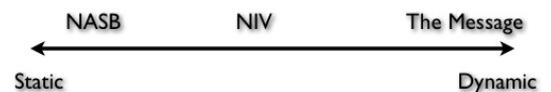
- The four Gospels, Acts, and most of Paul's epistles were all recognized by early Christians with virtually no exceptions. All core theological truth can be determined from this "Core Canon"
- Only a few books not in the Bible were ever seriously considered (ex. Shepherd of Hermes.)
- Extra-biblical books don't have much credibility.
 - Gospel of Thomas - Written around 100-110 AD
 - Gospel of Peter - 130-150 AD
 - Gospel of Judas - 130-170 AD
 - Infancy Gospel of Thomas - 150-200 AD

Are there different versions of the Bible?

- Slight difference is that Catholics accept the "Apocrypha" - 7 books written between Old and New Testament.
 - Never considered by Jews as Scripture, confirmed in Council of Trent in the 1500s.
 - Still, no major theological problems with these books even if they are included.
- Only a few books not in the Bible were ever seriously considered (ex. Shepherd of Hermes.)
- Extra-biblical books don't have much credibility.
 - Gospel of Thomas - Written around 100-110 AD
 - Gospel of Peter - 130-150 AD
 - Gospel of Judas - 130-170 AD
 - Infancy Gospel of Thomas - 150-200 AD

Biblical Translations

- There are different approaches to interpreting the Bible, but we have several different accurate translations.
- We can always consult the original text as well.



Recommended Resources and Tools

1. CARM.org
2. "The Case for Christ" (Lee Strobel)

