

Those to Serve

(B) Doug Pruett
(FV) Jorge Garza
(O) Mike Mallett
(A) Keith Stifflemire
1st prayer Jack Wall
2nd prayer Judd Wall
Announcements: Calvin BURks
Singing: Kevin Grant

Prayer List:

B W Pruett (Family)
Kadence Payne
Elyza-(Esperance Garza
Daughter)
Anita Adams
Diane Savage (Virginia's niece)
Cheryl Burks
Virginia Lovell
Dora Martinez
Letha Sheldon
Pray for our Nation
Our Troops
Law Enforcement
Rescue Personnel

Happy Birthday

Anson Day March 28th
Doug Pruett April 1st
Steve Sugg April 6th
Denise Wall April 11th
Connie Mallett April 30th
Coryell Day May 7th

Happy Anniversary

April 1st
Calvin & Tammy Burks
April 18th
Jack & Cindi Wall

March 20th

Spring Begins

March 26th

Noon Fellowship

April 2nd

Mission Fund

April 9th

Easter Sunday

April 30th

Noon Fellowship

May 7th

Mission Sunday

Genesis 1:27

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Mark 10: 6-8

⁶ But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. ⁷ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; ⁸ And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

Edifier

Evant church of Christ

310 W Brooks Drive

Evant, TX 76525

254-471-5705

March 19, 2023



Attending church services regularly is like making a path through the forest: the more often you use it, the less obstruction you find in the way."

Sunday Worship:

Will Vann, Preacher

9:30 am Bible Study

863-899-0987

10:20 am Worship

Email: wvann@yahoo.com

12:30 pm Afternoon

www.evantchurchofchrist.org

Wednesday Night

6:00 pm

The Cannon

Manuscripts and Early Translations

How can we know that the words in [John 1:1](#), "In the beginning was the Word..." originally wasn't "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away?" That might sound silly, but the question is valid, how can we know that the words we now believe to be inspired by God are the exact same as those originally inspired words? Well, as Paul told the Thessalonians, "Test all things; hold fast what is good" ([1 Thes. 5:21](#)). If we had evolved from a common ancestor along with monkeys there would be evidence in skeletal remains that would show progress from ape to man, but there isn't. Just so, if the books of the Bible had evolved over time there would be manuscript evidence that showed the evolution from the divinely inspired to the man-made, but there isn't. Oh, there is plenty of manuscript evidence, but it points to the fact that the Bible, as we have now, is made up of the same divinely inspired writings that were in the apostolic age. Take for instance the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Biblical scholar F.F. Bruce in his book *The Books and the Parchments*, tells us how meticulous the scribes were in copying the Old Testament, preserving it exactly for generations. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1940s and 50s, they confirmed that the Old Testament we have now was the same as the one available to Christ being 1000 years older than the manuscript evidence used for many modern translations.

Not only that but there are also many translations that predate the KJV (1611) which was the first widespread English translation. We must remember that the first vestiges of the language that we now speak did not appear until more than 400 years after Christ, about 450 A.D., in the form of Old English. When King James commissioned his namesake translation, modern English was still in its infancy. According to Paul Wegner, a Bible scholar and professor of the O.T., there were many other languages that the Scriptures had been translated into far earlier than the modern English language existed including Syriac versions (ca. 178-fifth century), Coptic (Egyptian) versions (third-fourth century), Armenian (ca. fifth century), Georgian (ca. fifth century), Ethiopic (fifth-sixth century), and Arabic (eighth-ninth century). The Bible didn't disappear at the end of the first century only to reappear in 1611. It was always around, just not in a language that you and I would be able to read. Truly, an all-powerful God is able to preserve His will through ages of ignorance and skepticism.

Canonicity

Okay, so it is possible that God preserved His divinely inspired words throughout the centuries, BUT are all the words inspired? What about the Lost Books Of The Bible that airs on the History Channel every year not to mention the Apocrypha, is that supposed to be in the Bible or not? The question of what books make up the canon of the Bible is not a new one. The term canon simply means a comprehensive list of books within a certain field, so the canon of the Bible is the books that make up the totality of God's revelation to man To answer the question of which books are divinely inspired and should be included in the canon and which should not, one should read the books in question, remember, "test all things" ([1 Thes. 5:21](#)).

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The Cannon

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The reason that the Bible contains the books that it currently does and not others is that, just as we can today, immediately following the apostolic age people looked at both inspired and uninspired writings and have been able to tell what was authoritative and what was not. Consider as Jesus finished the Sermon On The Mount ([Mat. 5-7](#)), that, "the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" ([Mat. 7:28b-29](#)). F.F. Bruce said, "There is a difference between the canonicity of a book and its authority. Canonicity is dependent on authority." He then went on to speak about why each individual book was determined to be canonical, "But why does it belong? Because it is recognized as having special authority." Doug Burleson, from whom I quoted in part one, said, "The books themselves contain canonical qualities that give value to the list, not vice versa." The books of the Bible are not there because they won some popularity contest, some of the books have been very unpopular throughout the ages (c.f. Luther and the book of James). They are there because they are recognized as having authority beyond that of mere human contrivance.

What about the Apocrypha? The Apocrypha, meaning hidden away or obscure, in The O.T. is accepted by the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church, but not by Protestants and the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible. Not only that, but it was in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew O.T.), also written as LXX, that Jesus quoted from in the New Testament. When we look at what people in and around the time of Christ said about the Apocrypha we can get a good understanding of why it was there. The Jewish scholar Philo, a contemporary of Jesus, from Alexandria, the birthplace of the LXX, stated that while the various writings that make up the Apocrypha were in the LXX and beneficial, they were not seen as authoritative. These writings were viewed as commentaries and histories, especially of the intertestamental period (c.f. I, II Maccabees). Again, to see if they are authoritative, all one has to do is read them. Do they follow the tone of divinely inspired Scripture and more importantly do they agree with what we know to be God's word? Take the Apocryphal book of Tobit for example. In chapter twelve verse nine it says, "for almsgiving saves from death, and purges all sin" (12:9). This directly contradicts [Hebrews 9:22](#) which states that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." One cannot buy the forgiveness of sins, but you can see where the Roman Catholic Church gets its practice of buying Indulgences. Much like the O.T. the N.T. also has an Apocrypha, although not as readily accepted as the O.T. Apocrypha. To illustrate, simply look at the Gospel of Thomas which teaches that women must turn into men to enter heaven. "Simon Peter said to him, 'Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life.' Jesus said, 'I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven'" (GoT 114). Sorry, ladies! Thanks be to God that He has seen fit to give us His word and preserve it throughout all ages! "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" ([2 Tim. 3:16-17](#)).

By Will Vann