

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT



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WHAT IS THE MAIN AIM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT?

- ❖ In the Old Testament, the word 'law' is used to translate the Hebrew word Torah which is 'instruction'. This means to point, guide, instruct and teach.
- ❖ The aim of our Lord was not to publish a book of His teaching, but rather to show us how to live through His actions.
- ❖ In the New Testament, the Greek word used for law is 'Nomos' which means a 'rule governing ones actions'
- ❖ Christ did not leave a written book for His followers, but He sent them the Holy Spirit to inspire them about all what He said and did.
- ❖ Christ fulfilled the Ten Commandments by living a perfect and sinless life. We have Christ's righteousness so the Law can't condemn us (Rom. 8:1; 7:1-6; Rom. 5:1; 4:4-8).



WHAT IS THE MAIN AIM OF THE

In Summary: NEW TESTAMENT?

- ❖ Christ is the end of the Law and believers are not under the Mosaic Law. **New Testament** believers are not under Law but under grace (Rom. 6:14).
- ❖ Since the Lord Jesus Christ fulfills the Law by His person and work, believers are under a **new** law; the obligation to walk by the Spirit of Life through faith (Rom. 8:2-4). If we are led by the Spirit, then we are not under the Law (Gal. 5:18).
- ❖ Against such, i.e., the fruit of the Spirit, there is no law because the believer is then operating under the highest law, the standards are met as we walk by the Holy Spirit and grow in the Word (Gal. 5:22).



THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

How many books make up the New Testament? 27

Group	Books	Description
4 Gospels	Matthew, Mark, Luke & John	The life of our Lord Jesus Christ
Acts of the Apostles	Book of Acts	The miraculous growth and expansion of the Church
14 Epistles	Epistles of St. Paul	To explain the Gospel and it's practical application
7 Catholic Epistles	St. James x 1, St. Peter x 2, St. John x 3 & St. Jude x 1	They are teachings
Book of Revelations	Revelations	The prophetic Book of the New Testament by St. John



SPREADING THE BOOKS AMONGST THE CHURCHES

- ❖ Initially, the message of the 'Gospel of Salvation' was spread by the Disciples and Apostles to the believers by the word of mouth .
- ❖ The first books of the New Testament were the epistles of the Apostles which they sent to the newly established churches and to:
 - Emphasise what they taught verbally or to correct false teachings by the others (e.g. Galatians)
 - Answer some questions and improper behaviour (e.g. 1 Corinthians)
 - Correct any misunderstandings (e.g. 2 Thessalonians and James)
- ❖ These letters were circulated among the churches and by the second half of the first century, many churches had copies of these epistles.
- ❖ The books of the New Testament were completed by the end of the first century. The different churches were not in agreement about the canonical books since many other books suggested to have the Apostles authority



CANONISING THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

- ❖ By the early second century there was many Christian literature floating around .
- ❖ There were also, apocryphal gospels and many other books which were written by different heretical sects. This included esoteric writings or propaganda literature which in the eye of the Church were heretical.
- ❖ It was therefore important for the Church to officially canonize the writings that were truly determined to be of Apostolic authority.



CANONISING THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Year 110 AD:
St. Ignatious is the first to mention a collection of the Pauline's

Year 190 AD:
St. Irenaeus accepted the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John, Revelations and the Shepherd by Hermas

Year 300 AD:
St. Clement accepted all the 27 books of the NT except the Epistles of James, 2 Peter & 3 John

Year 367 AD:
St. Athanasius listed the 27 canonical books of the NT

100AD

200 AD

300 AD

400 AD

Year 150 AD:
Gospels and the 14 Epistles of St. Paul were used during worship beside the OT

Year 200 AD:
A list was drawn up called the canon of Muratori

Year 325 AD:
Eusebius of Caesarea the disciple of Origen followed his three groupings



TRANSLATIONS OF THE BOOKS

- ❖ The Coptic translation in the middle of the 2nd Century.
 - Provided great value in the study of the texts and started by St. Pantenos to encourage the Copts to read the word of God in their own language
- ❖ The Latin translation (the Volgata) 390 AD by St. Jerome
- ❖ The Ethiopian translation around the 4th Century



ATTACKS ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

- ❖ Throughout history, many have tried to discredit the authenticity of the New Testament.
- ❖ The two main questions they raise are:
 - 1) Are the records of the New Testament about a man named Jesus Christ true?
 - 2) Did the New Testament change or was it tampered with over the past 20 centuries?



PROOF POINTS OF JESUS

CHRIST

- ❖ One of the most striking features of the gospels is that the writers did not hesitate to record facts that might be used against them.
- ❖ Jesus did not promise His followers by any earthly or materialistic reward. On the contrary, He told them about the sufferings, torture and death that wait them because they follow Him.
- ❖ There are 4 writers giving the account about the life of Jesus. They are different in character, education and social background at the time they record their own accounts. With this in mind, they manage to give an almost identical account of the same person who is Jesus Christ.
- ❖ If Jesus Christ had never truly risen from the dead, then why would the disciples follow Him unto death (11 of the 12 were disciples were martyred).
- ❖ All archaeological discoveries prove beyond doubt that what is recorded about Jesus Christ is true and authentic. The time of His birth, the names of the rulers, other personalities recorded in the account, the time of His mission, His crucifixion, the empty tomb, etc.

