

Outline for the Formation of the New Testament

I. Judaism and Christianity as Bookish Religions

- A. Unique in a pagan world
- B. Revelation from God in propositional phrases
- C. Timeless orthodoxy-set in place, doctrines, dogma
- D. God has spoken to us-John 1:18, Hebrews 1:2

II. New Testament-27 Letters

- A. Nine authors
- B. Dates written
- C. Usage

III. Problems in Copying the New Testament

- A. Illiteracy-85%
- B. Hand copied, amateur volunteers, done under persecution
- C. Poor materials-papyrus
- D. Greek language with no spaces separating words, no punctuation

IV. Attestation by Early Church

- A. Quotations-Polycarp, Didache, Clement, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus
- B. Lists of books used from various early churches
- C. Need for a “canon”-a defense against heresy, which books to die for
- D. Tests or qualifications of inspiration
- E. Progression and finalization of canon

V. New Testament Early Greek Manuscripts (copies)

- A. Problem of variants
 - 1. misspelling, grammar, omissions
 - 2. editorial comments added
 - 3. intentional
- B. Textual criticism-external, internal, family trees
- C. Examples-Jn.8:1-11, Mark 16:9-20, Jn. 5:3-4
- E. Superiority of ancient New Test. manuscripts over all other ancient literature

VI. Doctrine of Inspiration

- A. Definition
- B. Key passages-2 Tim.3:16, 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Cor.2:13; Jn.16:13; 1 Thes.2:13
- C. Internal evidence-eyewitness accounts

VII. Inerrancy

- A. Definition
- B. Relationship of variants to inerrancy
- C. Why would God allow variants?