

Discovering the New Testament

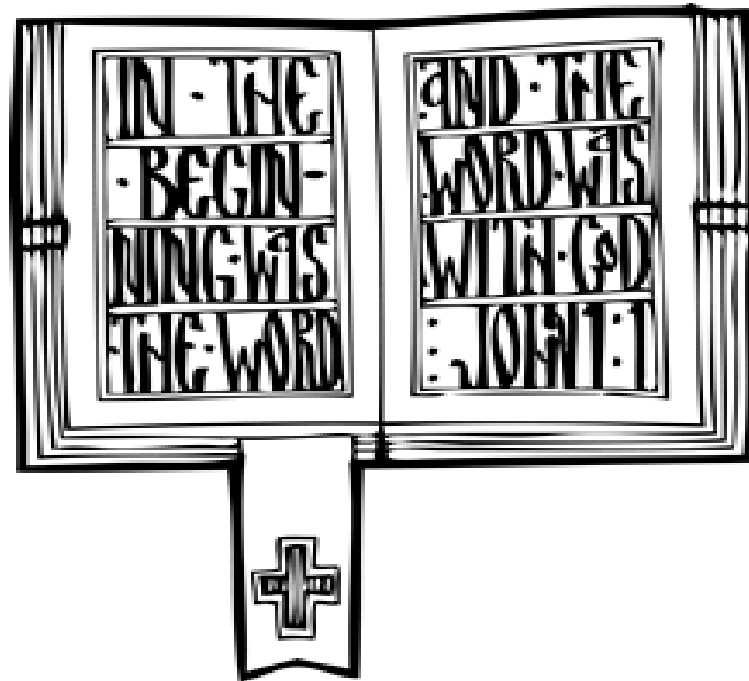
The Bible in Our Life

Introduction

Discovering the New Testament

Live the Word of God

“May the rising sun find you with a Bible in your hand”-4th Century Desert Father



Eat the Word of God

“We eat His Flesh and drink His Blood in Holy Communion but also in the reading of the Scripture”-St Gregory



People of the Bible

Orthodox Christians are a people of the Bible. Our worship, our teachings, our doctrine, our creed, our Church Fathers and Mothers are all based and founded on Scripture.



The Purpose of the Bible

Clement of Alexandria says that we should be “theodidacti” or taught by God through the Bible.



The Origin and Formation of the New Testament

Discovering the New Testament

The Bible

Old Testament

39 Books

New Testament

27 Books



History of the Bible Writings

The Bible consists of 66 Books

- Written by over 40 different authors
- Written over a period of 1500 years





Over 5000 Known Manuscripts

The Bible has more pieces of parchment and manuscripts than any other ancient book!

Formation of the New Testament

Six Stages in the Transmission of the Gospel Tradition

Stage One: Historical Jesus

Jesus says and does things that are considered remarkable.

Stage Two: Early Tradition

Oral

People remember what Jesus said and did and share memories with others

and/or

Written

People write down brief accounts of things that Jesus said and did

Stage Three: Composition of the Gospels

The Gospel writers compile their books, drawing on both oral tradition and early written sources to form narratives of Jesus' life and work.

Stage Four: Preservation of Manuscripts

People make copies of the Gospel narratives and distribute them.

Stage Five: Translation

Scholars translate copies of the Gospel narratives into other languages, including, eventually, our own.

Stage Six: Reception

We hear or read about what Jesus said and did in modern editions of the Gospels.

New Testament Writings Timeline

Book	Date	Book	Date
James	45-49	Philippians, Philemon	63
Galatians		1 Peter	63-64
49		1 Timothy	63-66
1 & 2 Thessalonians	51	Titus	63-66
Mark	50s or 60s	Hebrews	64-68
Matthew	50s or 60s	2 Peter	66
1 Corinthians	55	2 Timothy	67
2 Corinthians	56	Jude	68-80
Romans	57-58	John	85-90
Luke	60	1, 2, 3 John	85-90
Acts	61	Revelation	90-95
Colossians, Ephesians	61		

The Canon or Criteria for the New Testament

Four Basic Criteria for Choosing the Writings of the New Testament

1. Apostolicity
2. Contents
3. Universality
4. Inspiration

The New Testament in the Beginning

By the end of the second century, lists began to appear specifying which Christian writings were to be considered scripture by churches in line with the apostolic tradition (i.e., in line with what Jesus, his disciples, and the apostle Paul had taught). In most cases, these lists were more descriptive than prescriptive: they did not attempt to regulate which writings should be read as scripture, but rather shared with other Christians which books were accepted as scripture in some particular region or congregation.

Origen of Alexandria (ca. 215–250)

This early theologian does not provide a list but does discuss which books are disputed.

- 2 Peter: “Peter left behind one letter that is acknowledged, and possibly a second, but it is disputed”
- 2 John and 3 John: “not everyone agrees that they are genuine”
- Hebrews: probably not written by Paul, but acceptable anyway because “the thoughts of the epistle are marvelous and in no way inferior to the acknowledged writings of the apostle”

Athanasius of Alexandria (367)

This prominent bishop wrote a letter listing what he regarded as “the canon” of Christian scripture.

- lists all twenty-seven books of the New Testament
- also lists other books that are not to be included in the canon but that “have nonetheless been designated by the fathers as books to be read”: Didache, Shepherd of Hermas
- also says that “there should be no mention at all of apocryphal books created by heretics, who write them whenever they want but try to bestow favor on them by assigning them dates, that by setting them forth as ancient they can be, on false grounds, used to deceive the simple minded”

Third Synod of Carthage (397)

This regional meeting of churches was not a churchwide council but had significant representation.

- ratified the list of Athanasius (above), declaring the twenty-seven books of our current New Testament to be the canon of Christian scripture

The Message

Discovering the New Testament

Three Key Features of the Old Testament

1. A sense of being an incomplete Book
2. The constant flow of Blood
3. A yearning for eternity



The Old is Fulfilled in the New

"In the past God spoke to our forefathers . . . at many times and in various ways" (the Old Testament)...

...and "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (the New Testament).

All the Needs of Humanity are Satisfied in Jesus

"If anyone is thirsty; let him come to me and drink"
(John 7:37).

"If anyone eats of this bread [referring to Himself],
he will live forever" (John 6:5 1).

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

"Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you
free" (John 8:32).

The New Testament

The Gospels

The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ



Gospel According to Matthew

Gospel According to Mark

Gospel According to Luke

Gospel According to John

The New Testament



Acts

The History of the Early Church

Acts of the Apostles

The New Testament



The Letters of Paul

The Life, Teaching and Theology of the Church

Letter to the Romans

1st and 2nd Letter to the Corinthians

Letter to the Galatians

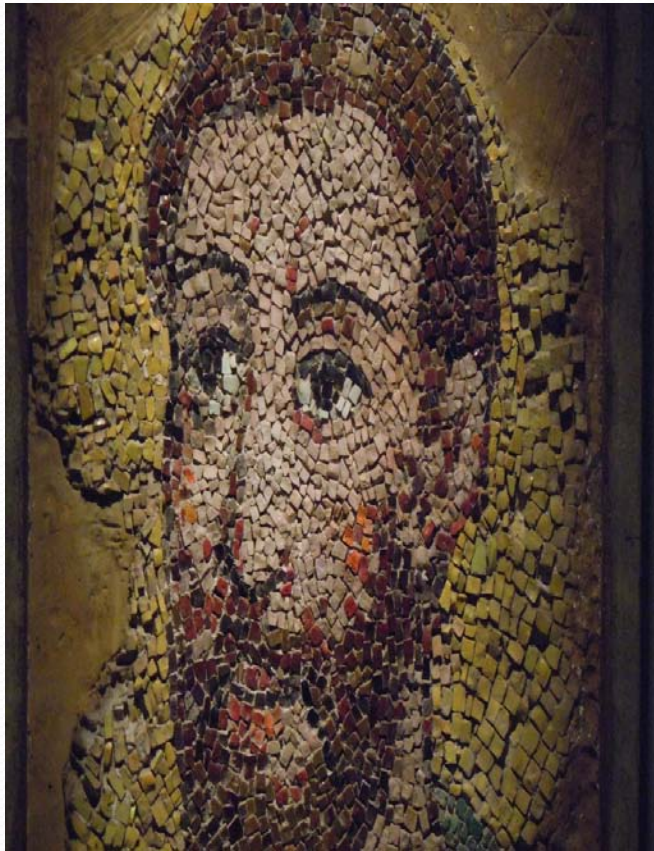
Letter to the Ephesians

Letter to the Philippians

Letter to the Colossians

1st and 2nd Letter to the Thessalonians

The New Testament



The Letters of Paul

The Letters Written to Individuals

1st and 2nd Letters to Timothy

Letter to Titus

Letter to Philemon

The New Testament



Hebrews

The Completion of the Old Testament in the Person of Jesus Christ

Letter to the Hebrews

The New Testament



General Epistles

Letters written for the church
by the inner circle of Jesus'
followers

Letter of James

1st and 2nd Letter of Peter

1st, 2nd and 3rd Letter of John

Letter of Jude

The New Testament



Revelation

The last book of the Bible about the end of time and the coming Kingdom of God

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Orthodox Study Bible

