Authority Issues
Picking and Choosing The Bible
Pastor Eric Nelson

Community Group Questions:

1. When you think about how the Bible came together, what have you heard or believed in the past?
2. What stood out to you about the four tests for New Testament books—Apostolicity, Antiquity, Orthodoxy, and Universality? Which of the tests do you think is the most compelling or important, and why?
3. If the New Testament books weren't chosen by power-hungry leaders but received and recognized over time, how does that impact your trust in the Bible?
4. Read 2 Timothy 3:16. Since the Bible is historically reliable and God-breathed, what could it mean for your daily life to let it be your primary authority? Is there an area where you've struggled to trust or submit to its authority?

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Who chose the books in the New Testament?

CANON: The list of authoritative books that make up the BIble.

It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. For, since there are four zones of the world in which we live, and four principal winds, while the Church is scattered throughout all the world, and the "pillar and ground" of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality on every side, and vivifying men afresh. Irenaeus

And the presbyter said this. Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. But afterwards, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his instructions to the necessities [of his hearers], but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord's sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he took special care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements. Matthew put together the oracles [of the Lord] in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as best he could. Papias

2 Peter 3:15-16 *Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. **16** He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in*

them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

No one chose, they **RECEIVED.**

4 Tests:
1. **APOSTOLICITY**

2. **ANTIQUITY**

"The Shepherd, moreover, did Hermas write very recently in our times in the city of Rome…therefore it ought to be read, but it cannot be made public in the Church to the people, nor placed among the prophets…nor among the apostles." Muratorian Canon

3. **ORTHODOXY**

Jesus says, "Every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven." Gospel of Thomas

4. **UNIVERSALITY**

The books that were recognized among the churches received this acknowledgement by their own merit. As for the rest, they lacked the direct and immediate note of inherent authority and, as has been said many times, nobody excluded them from the body of the New Testament writings, they excluded themselves." G.C.D. Howley

The New Testament documents are the most ancient, trustworthy, and reliable to tell us the **GOSPEL**.

John 14:26 *But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*

John 16:12-13 *"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. **13** But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

The Scriptures are shallow enough for a babe to come and drink without fear of drowning and deep enough for a theologians to swim in without ever touching the bottom. St. Jerome