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THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

Authoritative Books or Mandated Collection?

INTRODUCTORY BIBLIOGRAPHY

[*] Indicates a book is available as an ebook or in another digital format.

1 ~ Helpful Overviews & Backgrounds

Bock, Darrell L., and Gregory J. Herrick, eds. *Jesus in Context: Background Readings for Gospel Study*. Baker Academic, 2005. This reference work gathers into one volume the key extrabiblical texts that provide the necessary background for passages in the Gospels, along with introductory comments by the editors (from the summary on Amazon).

McDonald, Lee Martin, and James A. Sanders, eds. *The Canon Debate*. Baker Academic, 2002. An extensive and comprehensive collection of chapters (672 pp.) written by more than thirty scholars who discuss a wide variety of historical and methodological topics related to the development of the canons of both Testaments. [*]

Patzia, Arthur G. *The Making of the New Testament: Origin, Collection, Text & Canon*. 2nd ed. IVP Academic, 2011. Includes introductions to how first century books and documents were produced; how stories and sayings about Jesus were circulated, handed down, and shaped into gospels; ancient letter writing procedures; who decided (and why) which documents would be included in the New Testament, etc.

2 ~ For Researching on a Tight Schedule

Carson, D. A. and Douglas J. Moo. "The New Testament Canon" [chap. 26]. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. 2nd ed. Zondervan, 2005. pp. 726-743. [*]

Hill, C. E. "Canon." *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. 2nd ed. Joel B. Green, Jennine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, eds. InterVarsity Press, 2013. [*]¹

Holladay, Carl. R. "The Christian Scriptures: Witnesses to Christ and the Christian Faith" [chap. 28]. *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ*. Abingdon Press, 2005, 571-596. Expanded CD version, pp. 829-870. [*]²

Metzger, Bruce M. "The Formation of the Canon of the New Testament." *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, & Content*. Third Edition, Revised and Enlarged. Abingdon Press, 2003. pp. 309-319.

Patzia, Arthur G. "Canon." *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, eds. InterVarsity Press, 1993. [* see note 1]

_____. "Part 5: The Making of the New Testament Canon." *The Making of the New Testament*. 2nd ed. IVP Academic, 2011. pp. 166-191.

Walls, Andrew F. "The Canon of the New Testament." *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Vol. 1. Ed. Frank E. Gæbelein. Zondervan Publishing House, 1979.

3 ~ For More Comprehensive Study

Bruce, F. F. "Canon." *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. 1st ed. Joel B. Green, Stott McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall, eds. InterVarsity Press, 1992. pp. 93-100.

_____. *The Canon of Scripture*. IVP Academic, 2018. Originally published by InterVarsity Press, 1998. [*]

_____. *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* 6th ed. InterVarsity Press, 1981. The chapter, "The Canon of the New Testament" is available at <http://www.bible-researcher.com/bruce1.html>. Accessed September 23, 2016. [*]

_____. "Some Thoughts on the Beginning of the New Testament Canon." *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 65 (1983): 37-60.

Gamble, Harry Y. *The New Testament Canon: Its Making and Meaning*. Wipf and Stock, Publishers, 2002. (Originally published by Fortress Press, 1985).

Holladay, Carl R. "Appendix 1: Canonical Lists" and "Appendix 2: Patristic Comments on the Gospels." *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ*. Abingdon Press, 2005. CD version, pp. 871-890. [* see note 2]

_____. "The Shape of the Canon" [chapter 2]. *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ*. Abingdon Press, 2005, pp. 26-36. CD version, pp. 26-38. [* see note 2]

Kantzer, Kenneth S., ed. "The Canon: How God Gave His Word to the Church," *Christianity Today*. Vol. 32, No. 2 (February 5, 1988): 23-38. A supplement featuring five articles from differing viewpoints in response to questions raised by the discoveries at Qumran and Nag Hammadi. These short articles are useful for gaining an understanding of the history and duration of the current discussions. They remain available on Christianity Today's website— <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1988/february-5/christianity-today-institute-canon-how-god-gave-his-word.html>. A subscription is required to read them in their entirety.

Metzger, Bruce M. *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance*. Clarendon Press, 1987. [*]

Patzia, Arthur G. Appendices 3 & 4-Early and Later Canonical Lists of the New Testament. *The Making of the New Testament: Origin, Collection, Text & Canon*. 2nd Edition. IVP Academic, 2011. pp. 251-252.

Rudolf, Kurt. "Gnosticism." *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Vol. 2. Ed. David Noel Freedman. Doubleday, 1992.

4 ~ Useful for Responding to Dan Brown, Bart Ehrman, et. al.

Bock, Darrell L. *Breaking the Da Vinci Code: Answers to Questions Everyone's Asking*. Nelson Books, 2004. [*]

Bock, Darrell L. and Daniel B. Wallace. *Dethroning Jesus: Exposing Popular Culture's Quest to Unseat the Biblical Christ*. Thomas Nelson, 2007. [*]

Evans, Craig A. *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. InterVarsity Press, 2006. [*]

Komoszewski, J. Ed, M. James Sawyer, and Daniel B. Wallace. "Part 3: Did the Early Church Muzzle the Canon?" *Reinventing Jesus: How Contemporary Skeptics Miss the Real Jesus and Mislead Popular Culture*. Kregel Publications, 2006. pp. 119-166. [*]

Rhodes, Ron. "Crash Goes the Da Vinci Code." <https://virtueonline.org/crash-goes-da-vinci-code-ron-rhodes>. Accessed September 23, 2021.

5 ~ For Further Reading

I've added the following, cited in the above (sometimes multiple times) to my personal to-read list.

Ferguson, Everett. *The Rule of Faith: A Guide*. Cascade Books, 2015. [*]

Gamble, Harry Y. *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts*. Yale University Press, 1995.

Kruger, Michael J. *Christianity at the Crossroads: How the Second Century Shaped the Future of the Church*. IVP Academic, 2018. [*] [In the bibliography in the article by C. E. Hill, above.]

_____. *The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate*. IVP Academic, 2013. [*] [See also his earlier book, *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books*; Crossway, 2012.]

Stanton, G. N. "The Fourfold Gospel," *New Testament Studies* 43 (1997): 317-46.

Notes

¹ Available as a DRM free epub from christianbook.com for significantly fewer dollars than the print book.

² I utilized the chapter on the canon (and appendices) from the Expanded CD Version included with the book when I purchased it. A revised edition (more expensive) that includes the material from the CD Version has been published as *Introduction to the New Testament: Reference Edition* (Baylor University Press, 2020). (I have not found an ebook edition, but an internet search reveals links to digital versions of the original edition which may be accessible.)