

**Recap of 1/31/16 (2 Peter 1:21):**

1. *The importance of the Bible to us is that our faith is based upon a revelation from God. Our faith is on shaky ground if we can't trust that revelation. But there is abundant evidence of the trustworthiness and reliability of the Bible. This evidence can be seen in the acrostic UFACTS: Unity and consistency, Fulfilled prophecy, Archaeology; Canonicity; Transmission [of the text]; and Self-Testimony.*
2. *Canonicity concerns the formation of the Bible (the "canon" meaning "rule" or "measuring rod").*
3. *"Were the right books included in the bible? What if those church councils left some out or included some wrong books? The main point here is that the church councils did not determine what books should be in the Bible. God did that by using certain writings in the lives of His people." "Church councils only recognized what God was already doing." (DeWitt)*
4. *A summary of the tests for canonicity were along the following three lines: the authority of the writer (a prophet, leader, apostle, sanctioned by an apostle); internal evidence of the divine inspiration of the book (was it effective in people's lives); and the wide acceptance by the early church (was the book widely accepted, read, re-read, studied, used by many churches over a wide geographical area).*
5. *The fifth evidence revolves around the transmission of the text of the Bible. "Our modern English versions of the Bible are translated directly from preserved manuscripts in the original languages of the Bible." How accurate are these manuscripts? "There are more than 5,686 known Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Add over 10,000 Latin Vulgate and at least 9,300 other early versions (MSS), and we have close to, if not more than, 25,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament in existence today. No other document of antiquity even begins to approach such numbers and attestation. In comparison, Homer's Iliad is second, with only 643 manuscripts that still survive. The first complete preserved text of Homer dates from the thirteenth century." (McDowell [figures accurate as of the writing of New Evidence that Demands a Verdict, 1999, there would be many more discovered since that time.*
6. *Concerning the Old Testament text, McDowell writes: "For hundreds of years, Jewish rabbis have guarded the transmission of the Hebrew text with minute precautions."*
7. *"Since we don't have the original biblical manuscripts, the question is, 'How good are the copies?' The answer is that the bible has stronger manuscript support than any other work of classical literature—including Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Caesar, and Tacitus."*