

KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE & WHY

Is Scripture reliable?



Challenge

How can someone know Scripture is reliable?

Response

The Five Ps:

1. **Profession** – Scripture claims to be inspired by God, written by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit to communicate the written word of God.
 - 2 Timothy 3:16
 - 2 Peter 1:20-21
2. **Production** – A work composed of 66 books written in three different languages by approximately 40 authors over a span of 1,500 years concerning hundreds of stories and topics but united by one theme: Jesus.

Criteria used to discover the authority of specific books (ABCD):

Author – Was the book written by a prophet, apostle, or someone who represented an apostle?

Belief – Does the book accurately reflect orthodoxy, convict and edify the Church?

Consistent – Is the book consistent with the rest of Scripture and the apostolic teaching?

Distribution – Was the book widely accepted and circulated by the Church?

3. **Preservation** – No other work in antiquity even comes close to the amount of manuscript evidence we have for both the Old and New Testaments.

Old Testament: Masoretic textual tradition, Leningrad Codex, Dead Sea Scrolls (1947).

New Testament:

Greek NT Manuscripts	5,700+
Latin Manuscripts	10,000+
Versions	10,000-15,000
Church Father Quotations	1,000,000+

The New Testament compared to other ancient works:

Author	Oldest MS	Number Surviving
Plato (427-347 BC)	AD 900	7
Sophocles (496-406 BC)	AD 1000	193
Aristotle (384-322 BC)	AD 1100	49
Homer (900 BC)	400 BC	643
Livy (59 BC – AD 17)	4 th Century AD	27
Tacitus (AD 56-120)	9 th Century AD	3
Suetonius (AD 69-140)	9 th Century AD	200+
Thucydides (460-400 BC)	1 st Century AD	20
Herodotus (484-425 BC)	1 st Century AD	75

4. **Prophecy** – There are over forty messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. Louis Lapidès, an expert on Messianic prophecy, said “the probability of just eight prophecies being fulfilled is one chance in one hundred billion billion. That number is millions of times greater than the total number of people who have ever walked the planet.” Jesus fulfilled them all.
5. **Personal Testimony** – Someone’s personal experience with the living, active written word of God (Heb 4:12).