

# The God Questions: Is the Bible True?

Wylie United Methodist Church

Pastor Jeff Hatcher – April 14, 2013

2 Peter 1:16-2:3

*16 We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17-19... 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2:1-3...*

## Basic history of New Testament:

- The 1<sup>st</sup> century church relied significantly on oral testimony from the apostles and those close to them.
- It was between 50 - 70 AD that the gospels began to be put down in writing.
- Early church leaders quoted from Matthew, John and Paul's epistles, referring to them as scripture.
- All other disputed "gospels" were written centuries later.
- The Council of Nicea in 325 AD (convened by Constantine) recognized the books that make up the New Testament (The Canon)...
- But the 4 Gospels and other New Testament books had been written and recognized as authentic hundreds of years earlier.

## Criteria for New Testament Canon:

### 1. It had to be **APOSTOLIC**

– Each book had to be written by an Apostle or someone closely associated with them, usually Verified by Eyewitness Accounts.

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### 2. It had to be **AUTHENTIC**

– Each book had to be Universally Accepted by the local church leaders as Authentic.

If people in the first century began to make things up about Jesus, there were people still living that knew it would be false and they would not have stood for it.

### 3. It had to be **DIVINELY INSPIRED**

– Each book had to be Universally Accepted by church leaders as being Divinely Inspired by the Holy Spirit.

John 16:13 "... when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.

2 Timothy 3:15-17

*... the holy Scriptures, ... are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

### 4. It had to be **CONSISTENT**

– Each book had to be consistent with the doctrine that the church already possessed – namely, the Old Testament and Apostolic Teaching.

Matthew 5:17

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*

## Why should we believe in the authenticity of God's Word?

1. The gospels are rooted in multiple eyewitness testimony.
2. The gospels were written too close to the actual events to be untrue.
3. The NT contains embarrassing and hard to explain material that the authors would have deleted if they weren't true.
4. Science, archaeology and ancient writings outside the Bible tend to corroborate the New Testament Gospels.
5. Most of the NT authors were martyred for their beliefs. Would they have died for a lie?
6. It CHANGED MY LIFE !!