

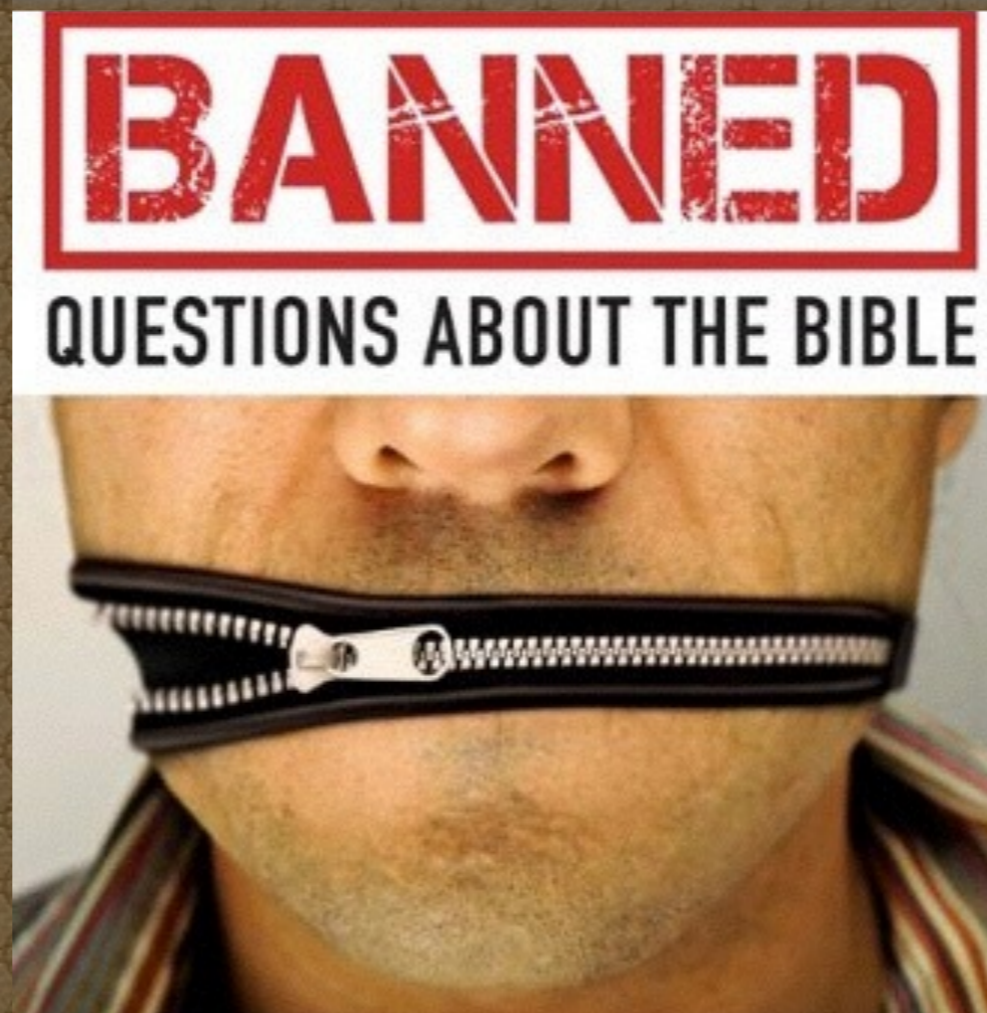
BANNED

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE



LOST CHRISTIANITIES & BANNED BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

The Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg



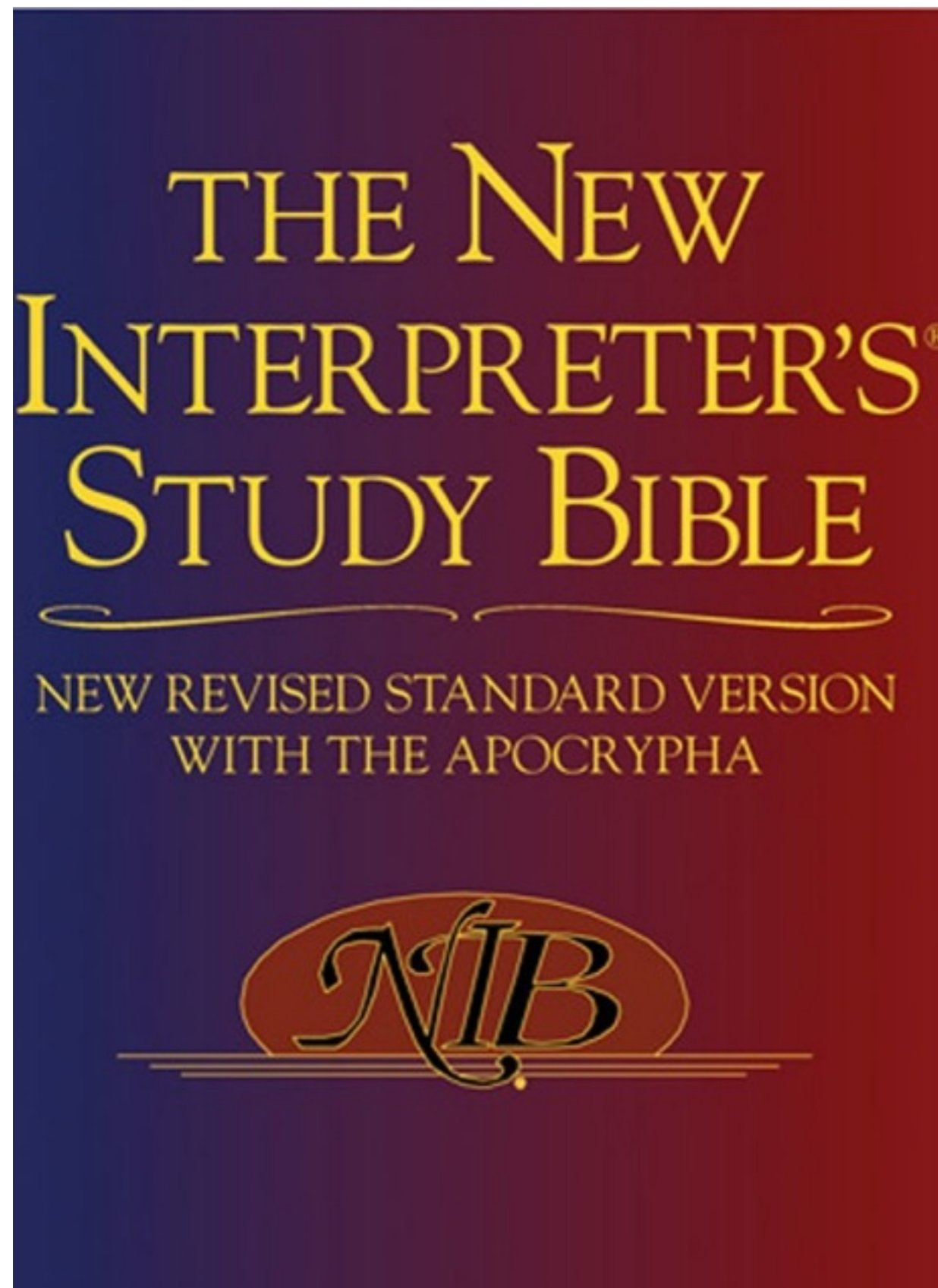
Next Class: “Banned Questions about the Bible”

Mondays, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm,

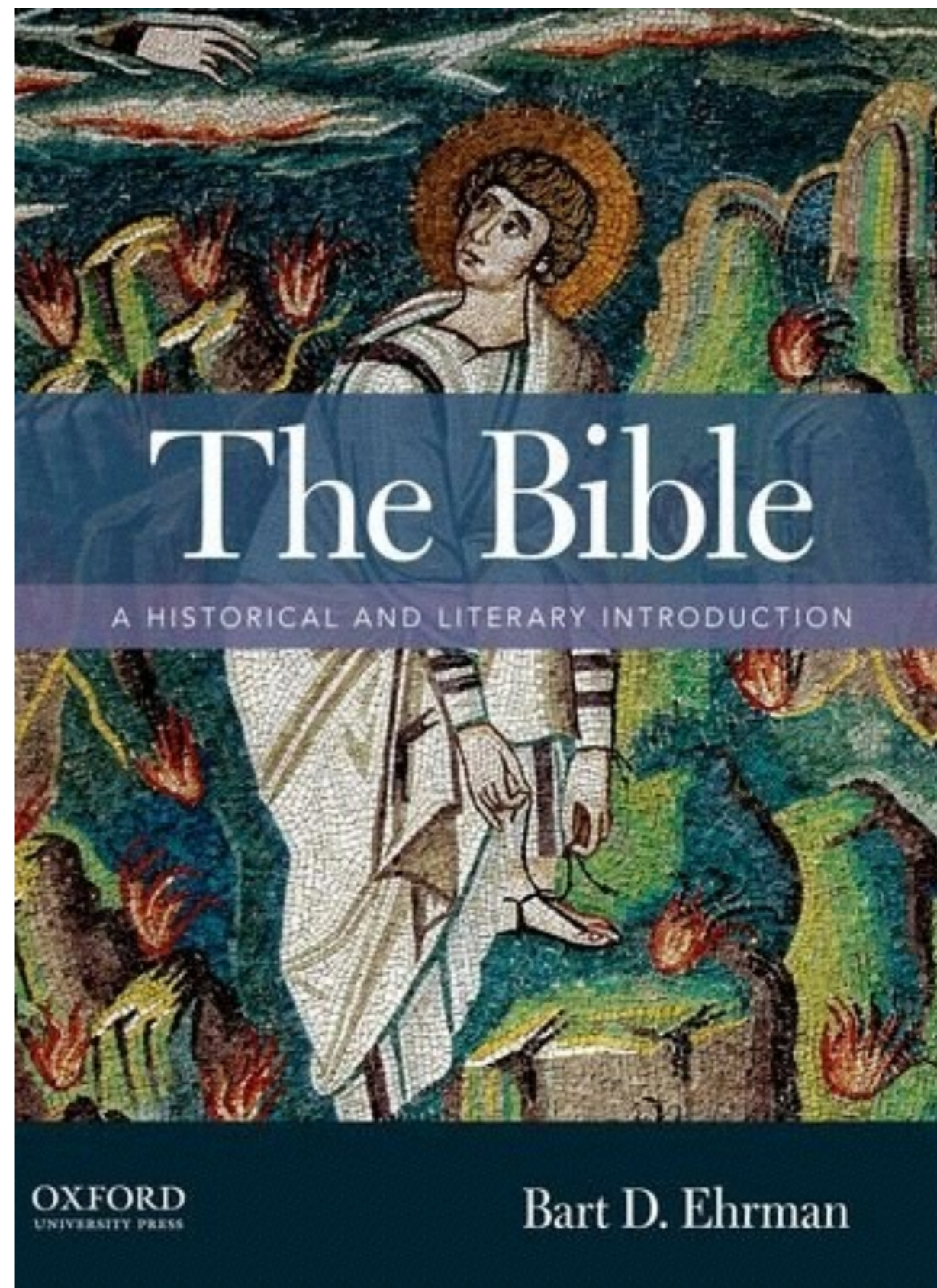
March 3 – April 14

(skip 3/24 for spring break)

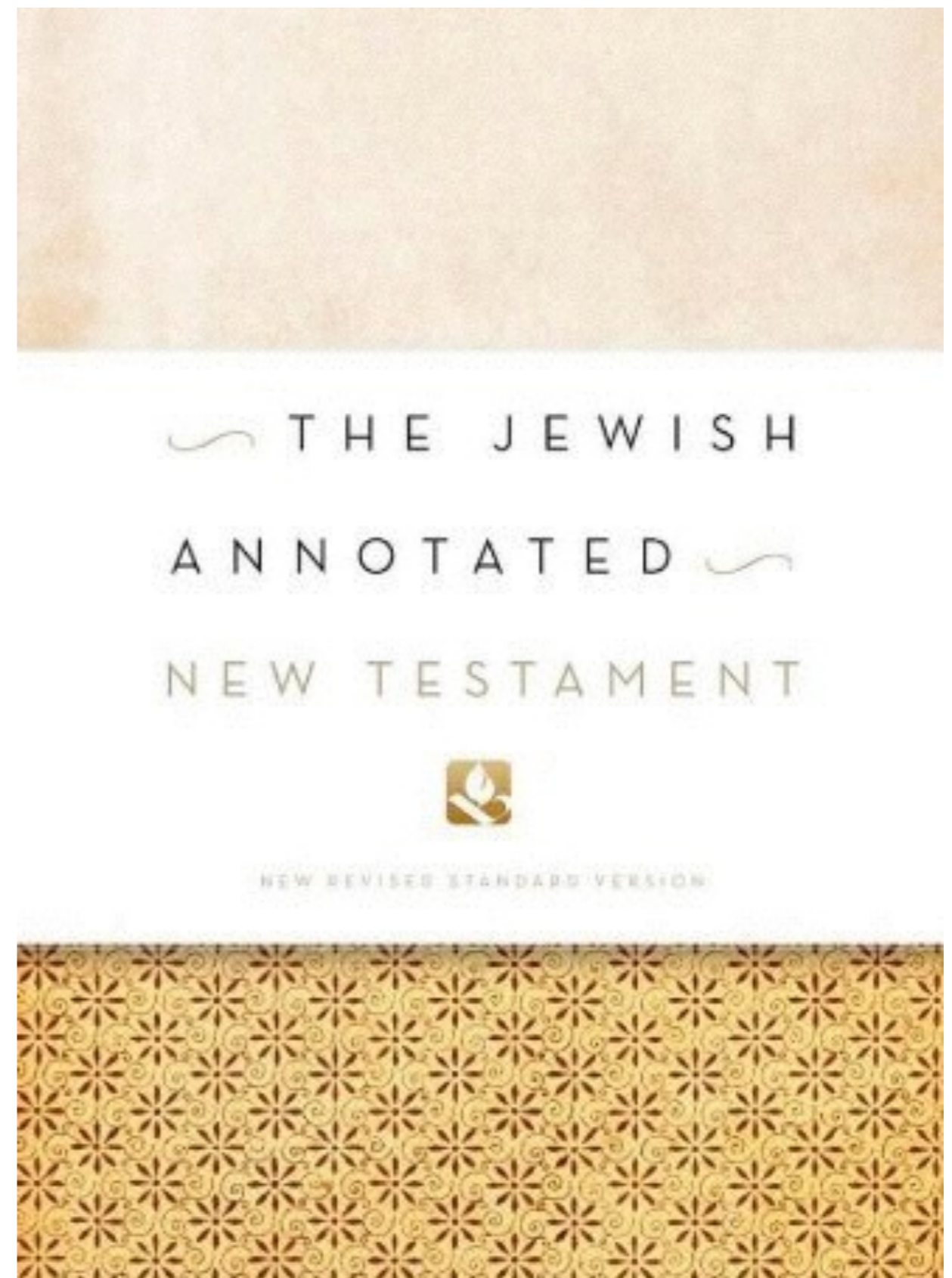
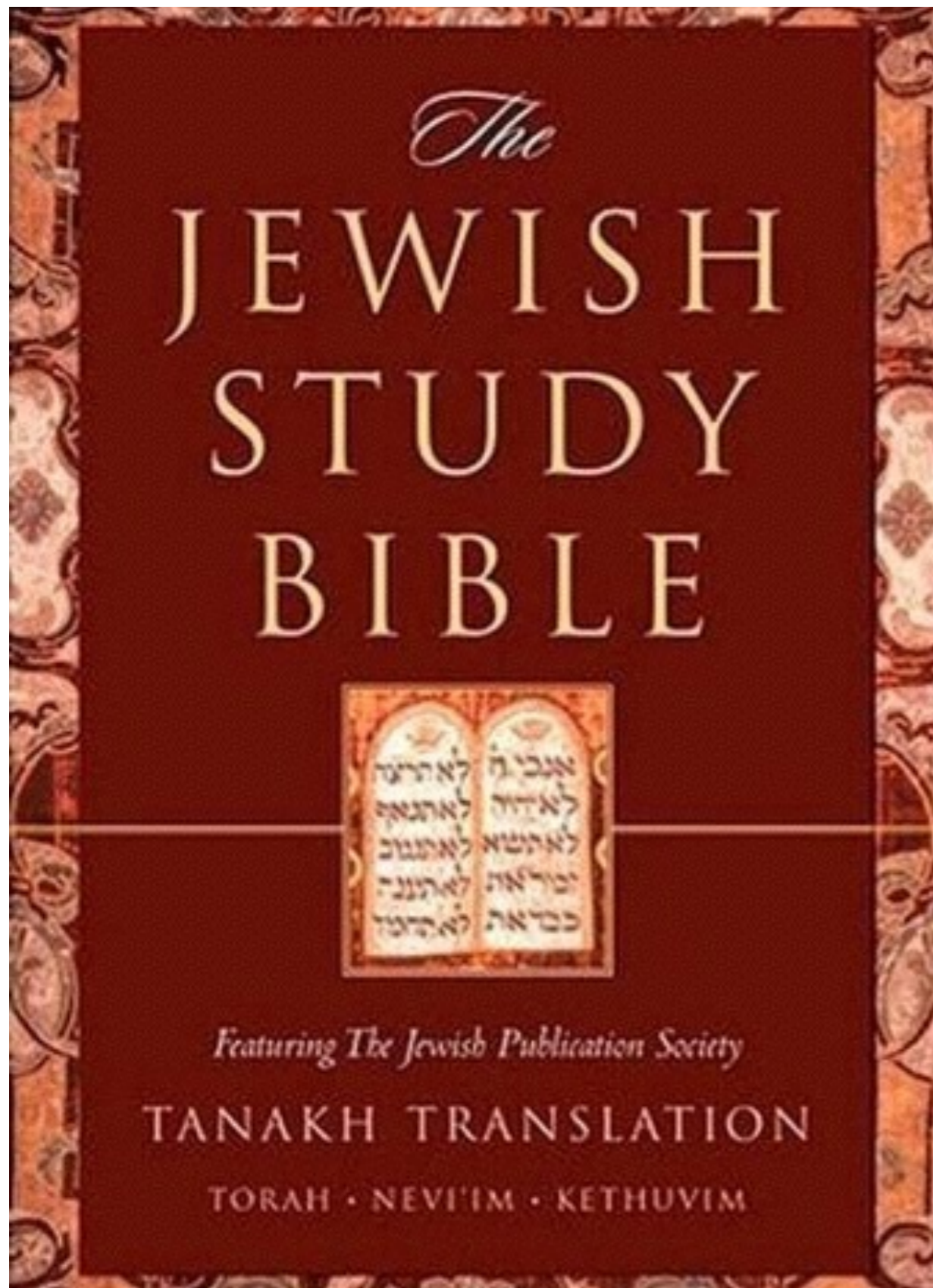
The Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg



\$36



432 p., \$63 on Amazon
(September 16, 2013)



Housekeeping

- **Slides:** frederickuu.org/about/Lost_Christianities
- **Attendance** for FCC
- Add to **email** list?
- **Other?**

Covenant

- Use **“I” statements**: *speak from your own experience.*
- **Ask permission before sharing** other participants’ stories outside the group.
- **Step-up, step-back**: be conscious of the level of participation that you bring to the conversation. Allow everyone a chance to speak before you speak again.
- You always have **permission to “pass.”**



MONDAYS, 11AM-12:25PM

Introduction: “Recouping our Losses”

Chapter 1, “Ancient Discovery of a Forgery: Serapion & the Gospel of Peter”

Chapter 2, “Ancient Forgery of a Discovery: *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*”

Chapter 4, “Forgery of an Ancient Discovery: *Morton Smith & the Secret Gospel of Mark*”

Chapter 5, “At Polar Ends of the Spectrum: Early Christian Ebionites and Marcionites”;

Chapter 6, “Christians ‘In the Know’: The Worlds of Early Christian Gnosticism”

Chapter 3, “Discovery of an Ancient Forgery: The Coptic Gospel of Thomas”

Chapter 7, “On the Road to Nicea: Broad Swath of Proto-orthodox Christianity”

Chapter 8, “The Quest for Orthodoxy”

Chapter 9, “The Arsenal of the Conflicts: Polemical Treatises and Personal Slurs”

Chapter 10, “Additional Weapons in the Polemical Arsenal: Forgeries and Falsifications”

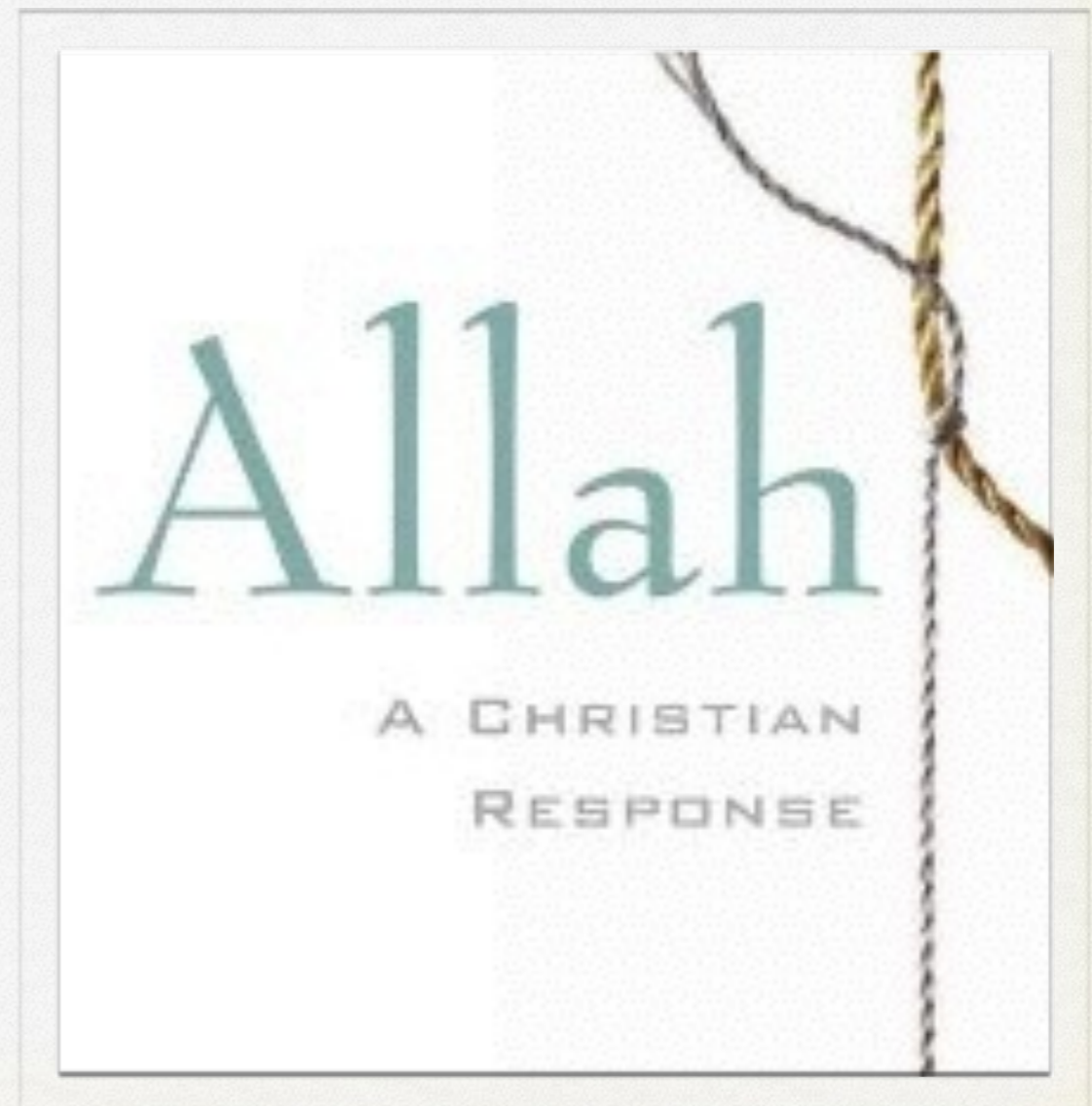
❖ **November 11:** Chapter 11, “The Invention of Scripture: The Formation of the Proto-orthodox New Testament”; Chapter 12, “Winners, Losers, and the Question of Tolerance”

THE TRINITY

- ✿ The New Testament contains no full-blown doctrine of the Trinity... nor does the word “Trinity” even appear.
- ✿ It was not until almost 200 years after Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians that the Christian apologist Tertullian, writing in the early 3rd century, attempted to apply the Greek word “Trinity” to Christian theology.
- ✿ Yet another century before the doctrine of the Trinity was more fully formulated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 and the Council of Constantinople in 381.
- ✿ 350 years after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus before proto-orthodox Christians articulated a doctrine of the Trinity similar to that confessed by orthodox Christians today.

MIROSLAV VOLF (1956-), YALE

- ✿ Christians and Muslims are both monotheists.
- ✿ Nicholas of Cusa (1401-64):
“In the manner in which Arabs and Jews deny the Trinity, assuredly it ought to be denied by all.”



2011

THEOLOGIES: CONCEPTIONS OF GOD

- ✱ Sabellius (ca. 215): single being with 3 divine names and 3 **modes** of divine manifestation (F/S/HS)
- ✱ Arius: one who, as the Father, **created the Son** to mediate b/w the One & the universe
- ✱ Athanasius: one existing as the Father, the Son and Spirit in three ways of being, which are genuinely distinct, but share the **same divine substance**.



THE MOST REV. DR. ROWAN WILLIAMS

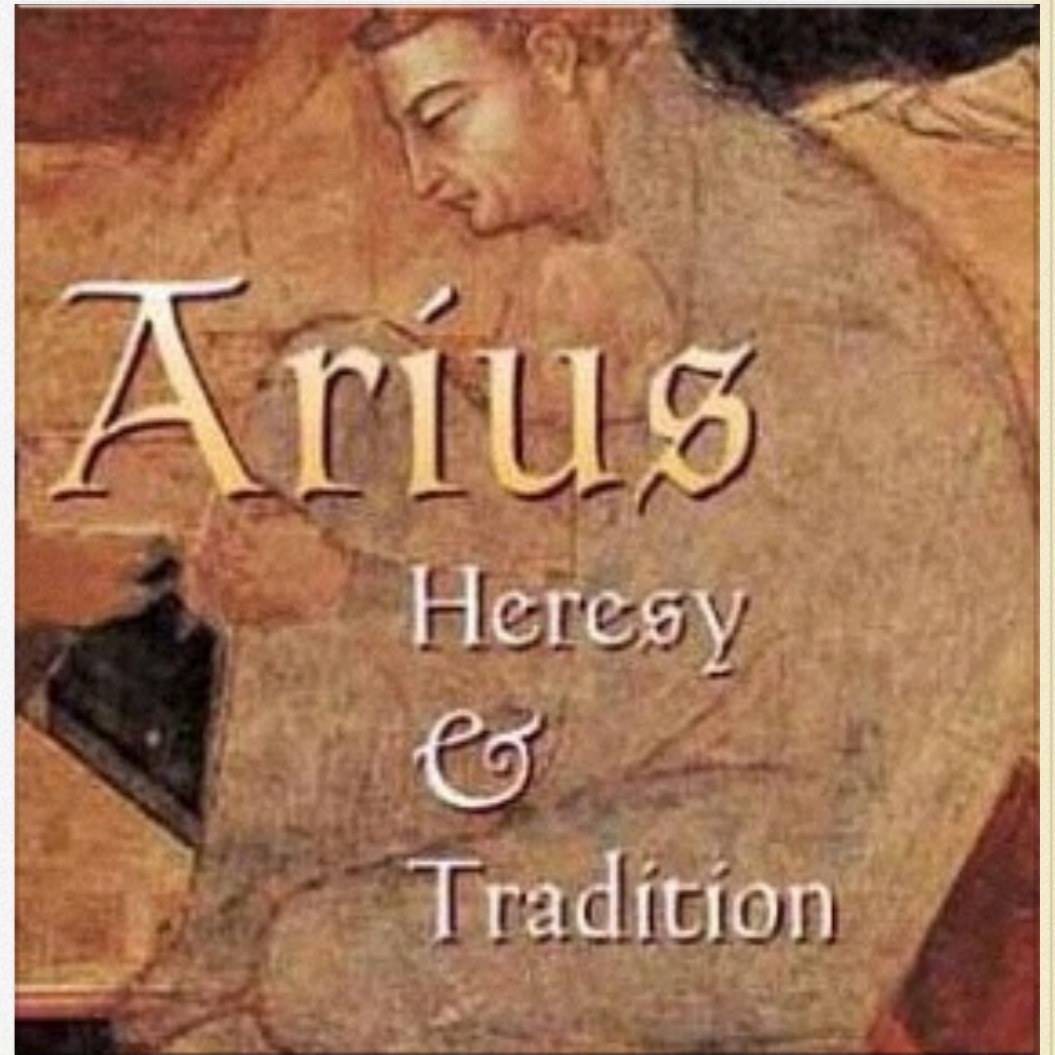
✿ “God exists in a threefold pattern of interdependent action.”



former Archbishop of Canterbury

ROWAN WILLIAMS

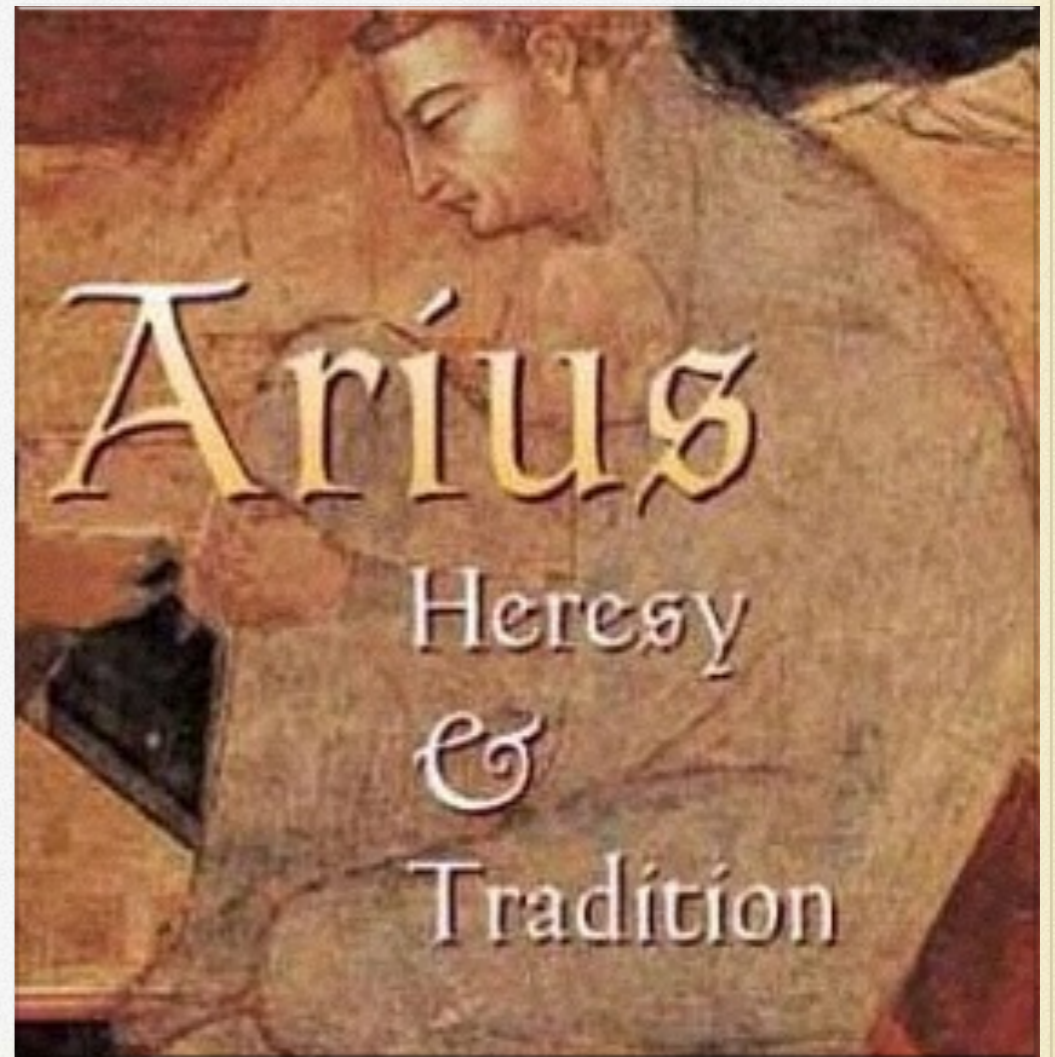
- ✿ No such thing in the 4th c. as a single, coherent “Arian” party.
- ✿ Those who suspected or openly repudiated the decisions of Nicaea had little in common but this hostility.
- ✿ Not loyalty to the teaching of Arius as an individual theologian.
- ✿ Arius did make converts to his beliefs, but left no school of disciples.



1987/2002

ROWAN WILLIAMS

- * “Arianism” is an very unhelpful term to use in relation to the 4th-century contrivers.
- * “Arianism” is the polemical creation of Athanasius above all (scapegoat to buttress his agenda: any alternative formulations at Nicene accused of being Arian heresies.”



1987/2002

TURNING POINTS

THIRD EDITION

Decisive Moments *in the History of Christianity*



MARK A. NOLL

An Essential Guide

CHURCH HISTORY



JUSTO L. GONZÁLEZ

GOD



CHRIST



APOSTLES



**THE APOSTLES'
SUCCESSORS**

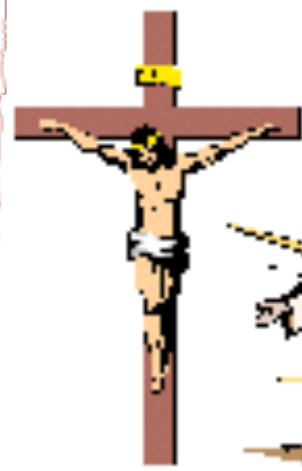


A succession of
bishops from God through
Christ in the churches

A single apostolic successor
in each church (that is, a
bishop)

An emphasis on a linearly
passed, entrusted tradition

UNITY AND ORTHODOXY



ORTHODOXY

Cerinthians

Marcionites

Judaizers

Valentinians

Gnostics

DIVERSITY AND CONFLICT



Experience
Reflection
Polemics
Myth

"Jewish Christians"

"Ebionites"

"Johannine school"

"Valentinians"

"Roman Christianity"

"orthodoxy"

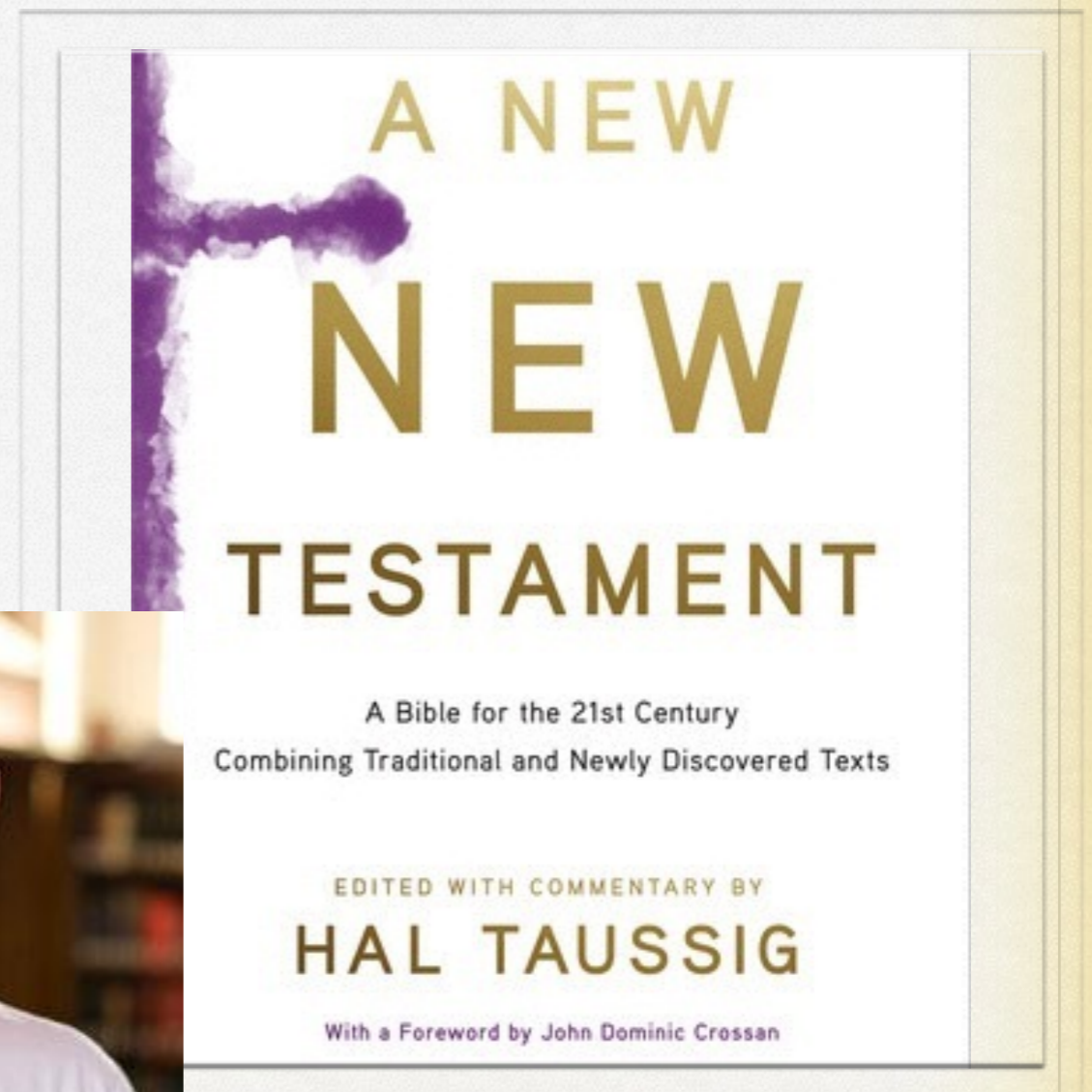
"Pauline school"

"Marcionites"

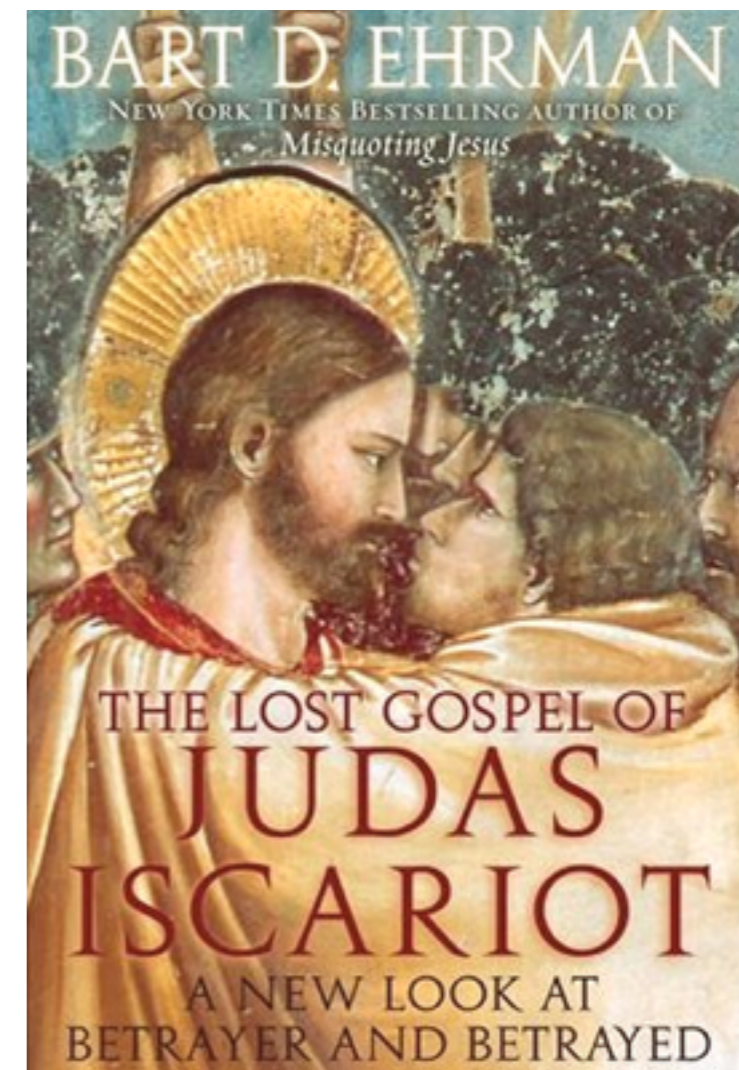
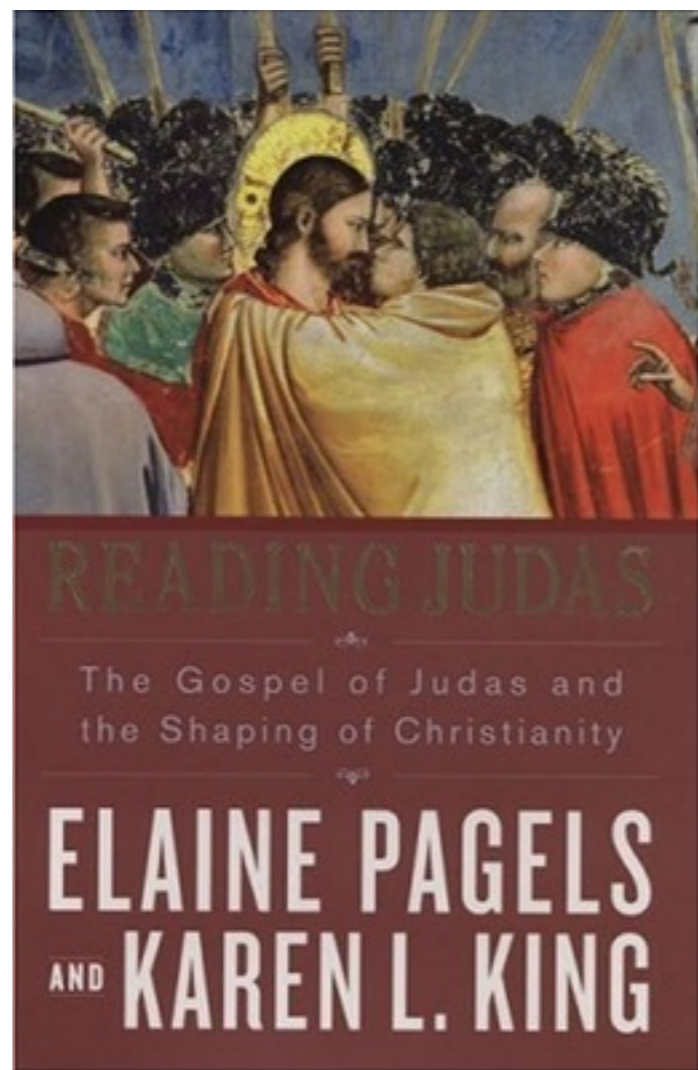
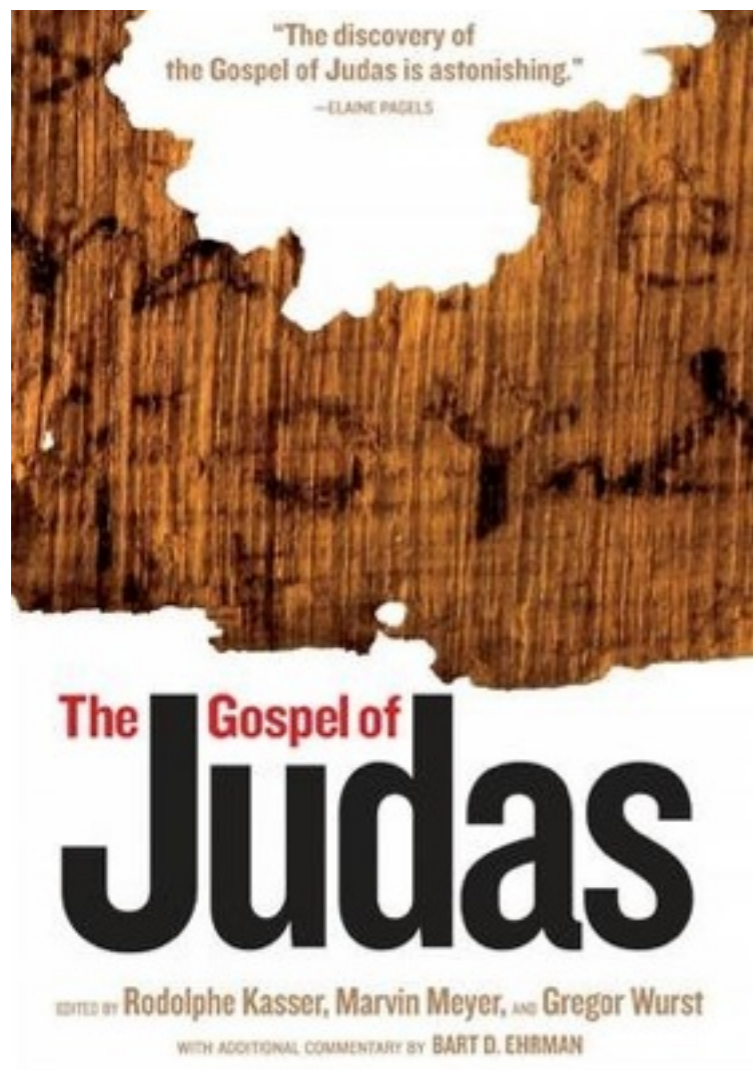
"docetists"

"Gnostics"

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?



2013



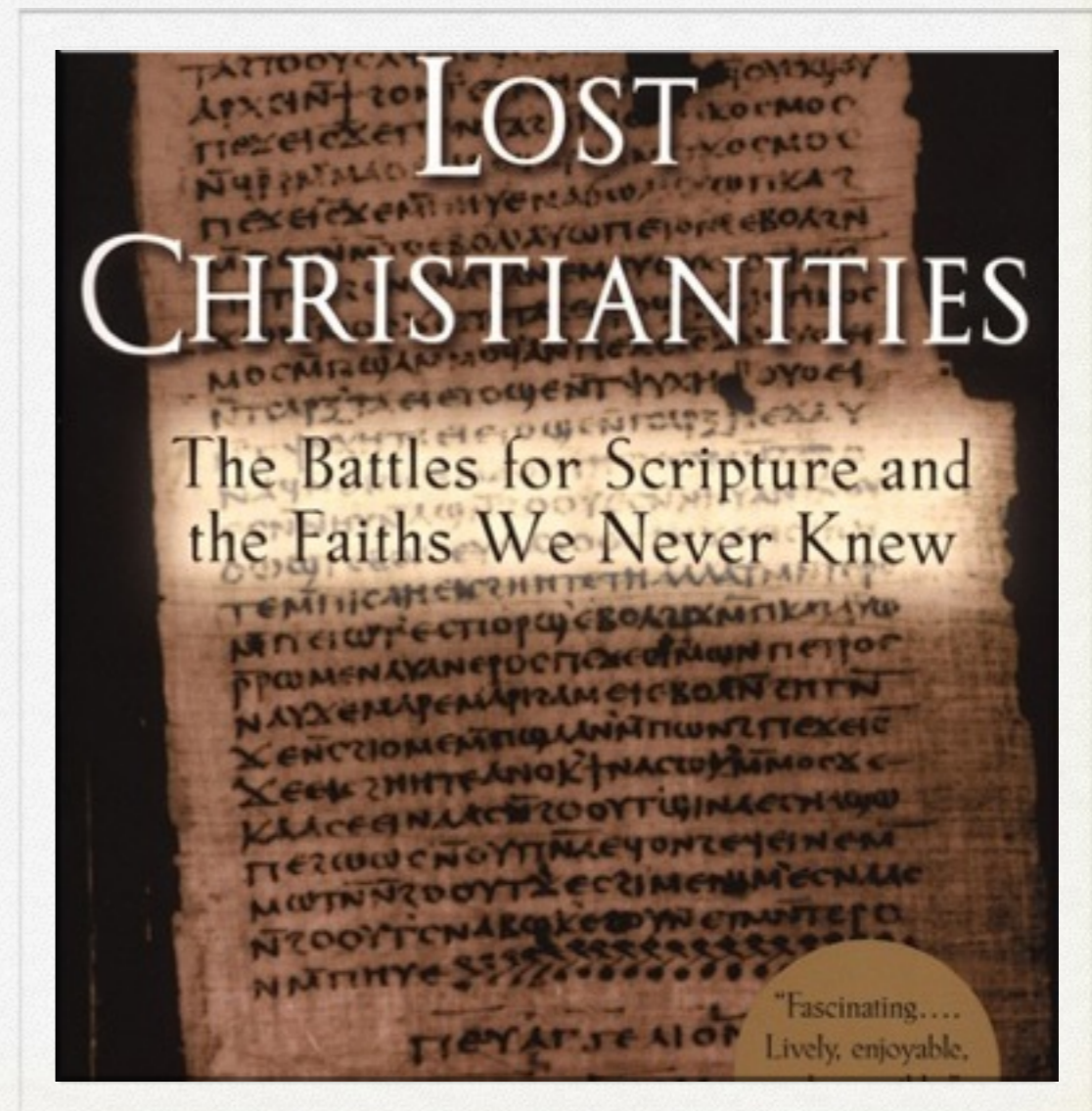
CHAPTER 11

The Invention of Scripture: Formation of the Proto-orthodox New Testament

✱ Chapter 12, “Winners, Losers, and the Question of Tolerance”

❖ “The victory of proto-orthodox Christianity in its quest for dominance left a number of indelible marks on the history of Western civilization. Of these, none has proved more significant than the formation of the New Testament as a canon of scripture” (229).

❖ Not inevitable, define against, defensive.

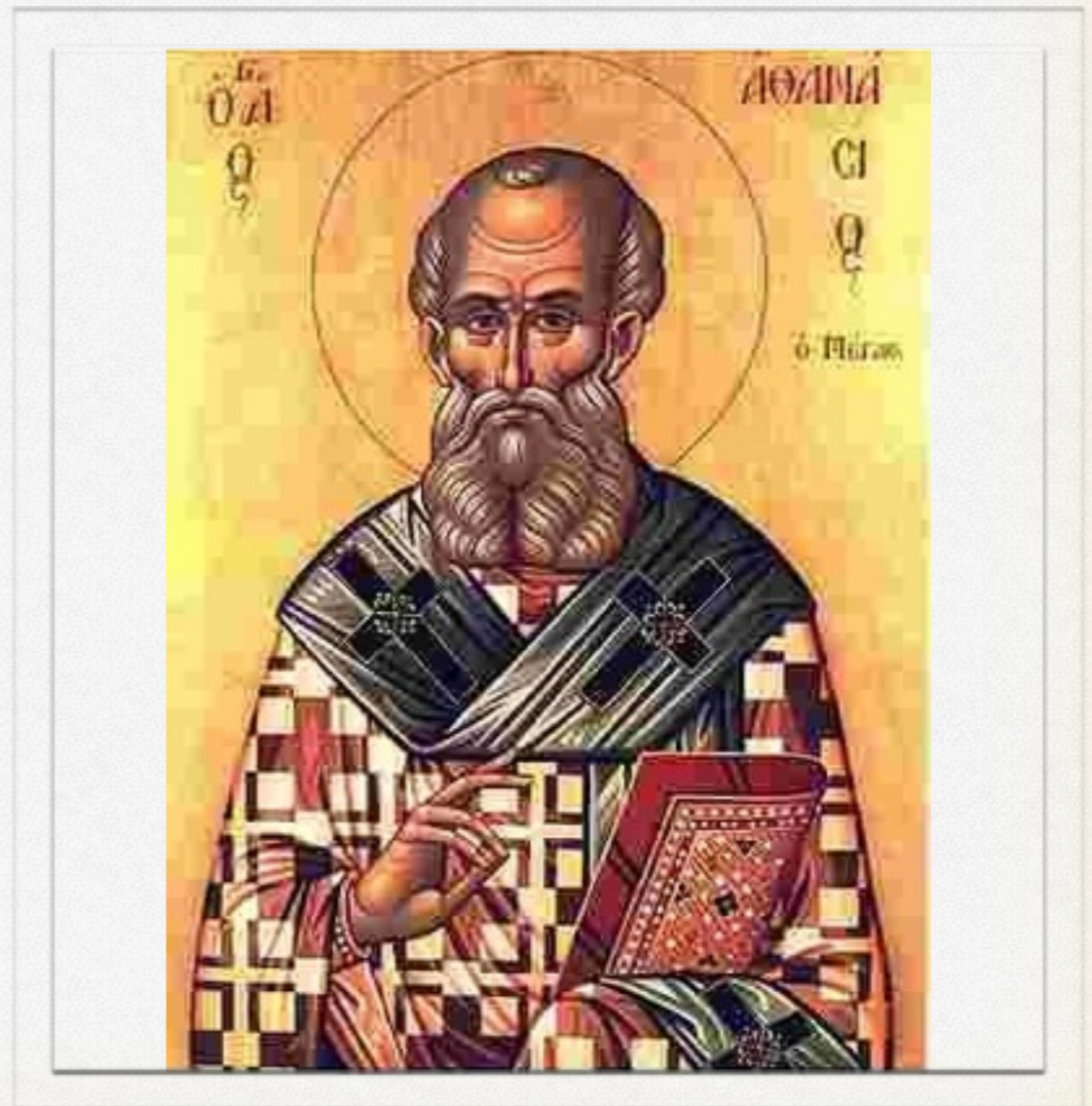


SHOULD THE NEW TESTAMENT BE SO SIGNIFICANT?

- ✿ Original authors did not have canon in mind, nor was significance of a written text inevitable.
- ✿ Variety of authors over 60-70 year time span (50 CE - 120 CE)
- ✿ From different places with different intended audiences
- ✿ Other books written at same time were excluded
- ✿ Forgeries
- ✿ Canonization took centuries and there was no unanimity.

ATHANASIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA (296/298 - 373)

- ✿ Festal Letter in 367 CE was 1st list of the 27 books of our NT (no more, no less).
- ✿ “In these alone the teachings of godliness is proclaimed. Let no one add to these; let nothing be taken away from them.”
- ✿ Only authoritative for the churches in Egypt that he oversaw.



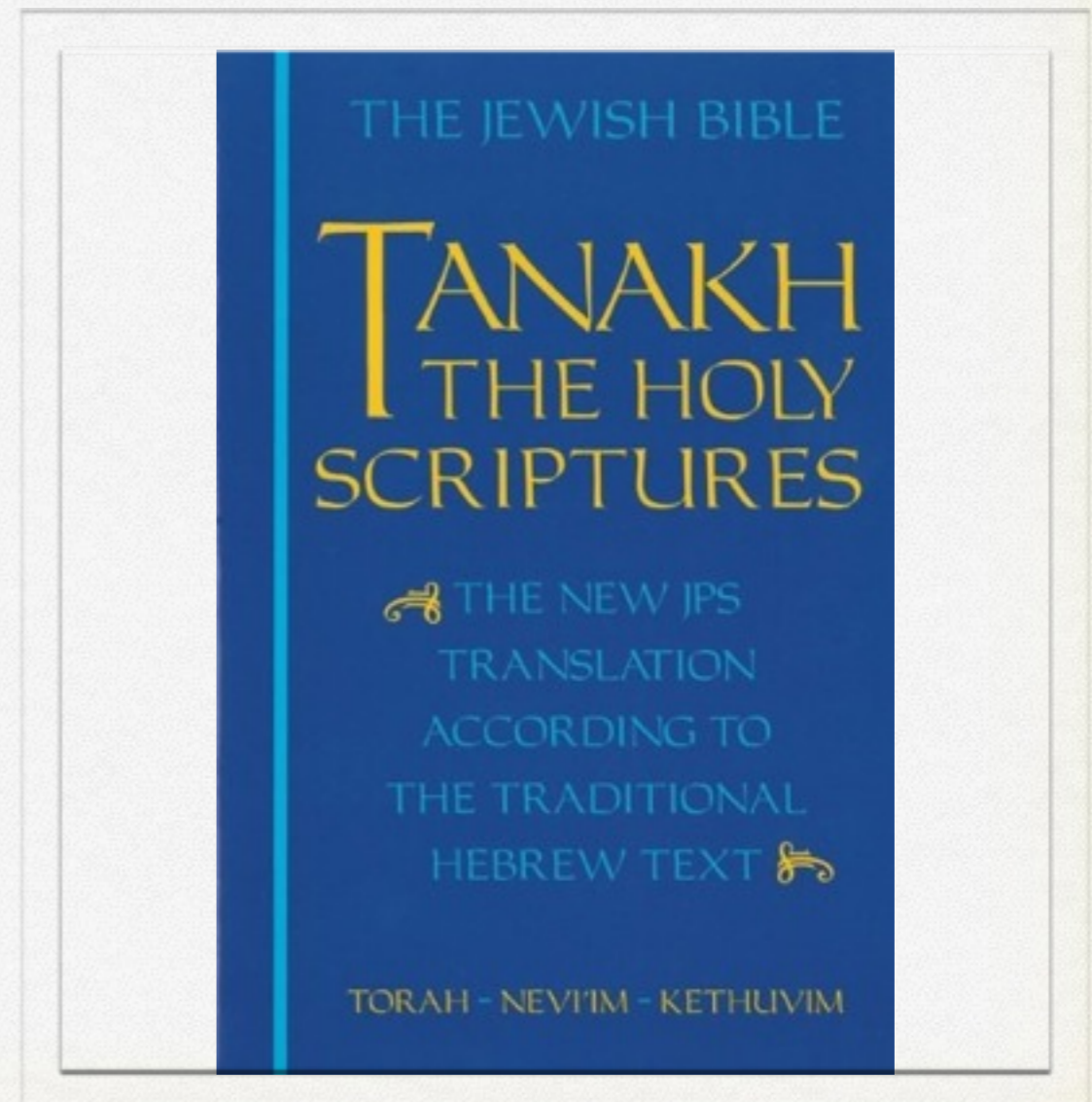
POST-ATHANASIUS DIVERSITY

- ✱ Church in Syria, 5th century – excluded 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation (*22 book canon*)
- ✱ Church in Ethiopia, added four to Athanasius' list: Sindodos, Book of Clement (not 1 or 2 Clement), Book of the Covenant, and the Didascalia (*31 book canon*)
- ✱ *No* official, churchwide ruling until the Council of Trent in the mid-1500s.
- ✱ Upshot: *consensus*, not proclamation. (General, though not complete agreement, by the beginning of the 5th century — 100 years after Constantine).

JEWISH CANON

(“*SIBLING RELIGIONS*”)

- ❖ 22 book Tanakh not settled until early 200s.
- ❖ Majority of Jews in Jesus’ time accepted authority of Torah, Prophets, and Psalms (and a few others)
- ❖ [*Harold Bloom*]



AUTHORS & (AUTHOR)ITY

✿ **Apostolic Authority**

- ✿ Jesus – directly from God [William James' 1st/2nd-hand]
- ✿ Ebionites – Peter (“closest disciple”) and James (brother)
- ✿ Marcionites – Paul
- ✿ Johannine Community - John (“Beloved Disciple”)

AUTHORS & (AUTHOR)ITY

✿ **Four Canonical Gospels**

✿ Anonymous, 3rd-person (*not* “One day Jesus and I...”)

✿ Apostles - Matthew and John

✿ Peter’s secretary (Mark)

✿ Paul’s traveling companion (Luke)

AUTHORS & (AUTHOR)ITY

Homonymous? (*same name as famous NT figure*)

- ✱ James – never claims to be brother of Jesus
- ✱ John never claims to be the son of Zebedee
- ✱ *Both* common names

Pseudonymous (*forgeries* – claim to be someone else): 2 Peter, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians.

AUTHORS & (AUTHOR)ITY

- ✿ Seven “authentic” letters of Paul
- ✿ 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, Philemon, 1-2 Corinthians, and Romans.

The Authentic Letters of Paul

A New Reading of Paul's Rhetoric and Meaning



ARTHUR J. DEWEY
ROY W. HOOVER
LANE C. MCGAUGHY
DARYL D. SCHMIDT

CHECKING IN ON CANON IN MID-2ND C.

- ❖ **“Uncertain steps** towards a canon”
- ❖ **Gospel of Peter** (Christians in Rhossus and their bishop Serapion eventually rejects it)
- ❖ **Accepted by some, rejected by others:** Apocalypse of Peter, Paul’s letter of 3 Corinthians, Epistle of Barnabus, 1 Clement
- ❖ **Constantly Debated:** Revelation and Hebrews, even two though eventually made the cut

EARLY CHURCH FATHERS ON CANON: JUSTIN MARTYR (2ND C.)

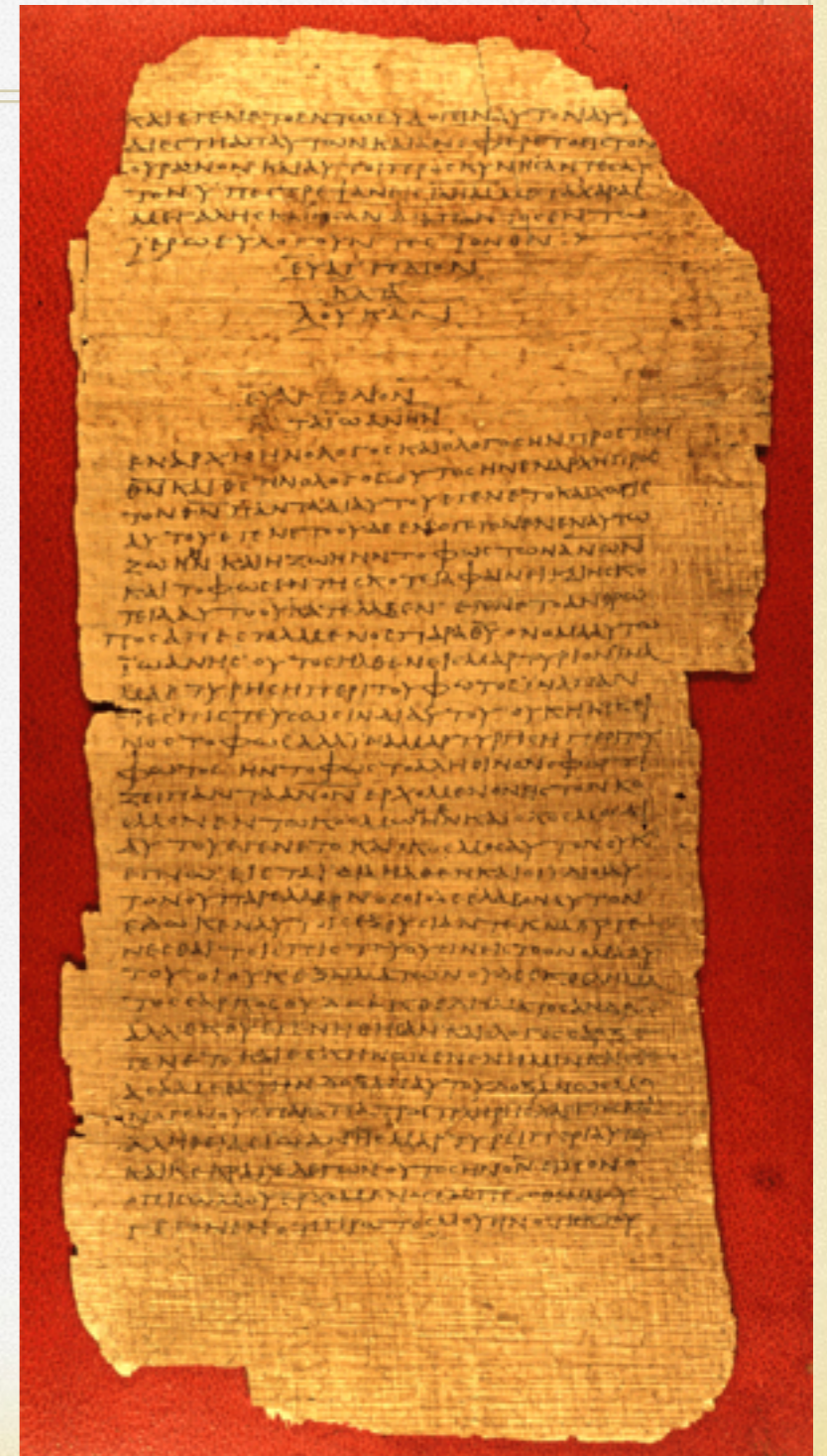
- ✱ Quotes scripture, but doesn't refer to canon at all.
- ✱ Calls the Gospels the "Memoirs of the Apostles," but doesn't name the authors.

EARLY CHURCH FATHERS ON CANON: IRENÆUS (30 YEARS AFTER JUSTIN)

- ✱ Ebionites only use Matthew
- ✱ Gnostics only use Mark (separates Jesus from Christ)
- ✱ Marcionites only use Luke
- ✱ Valentinian Gnostics only use John
- ✱ (Logical fallacy that just as there are four corners of the earth and four winds, there must be four Gospels, neither more nor fewer.)
- ✱ Difference in 30 years that lead Irenæus to name and number the Gospels: threat of *Marcion* and his canon of 11 books
- ✱ Justin never quotes Paul, but Irenæus quotes him extensively (*reclaiming from heretics*)

MURATORIAN CANON

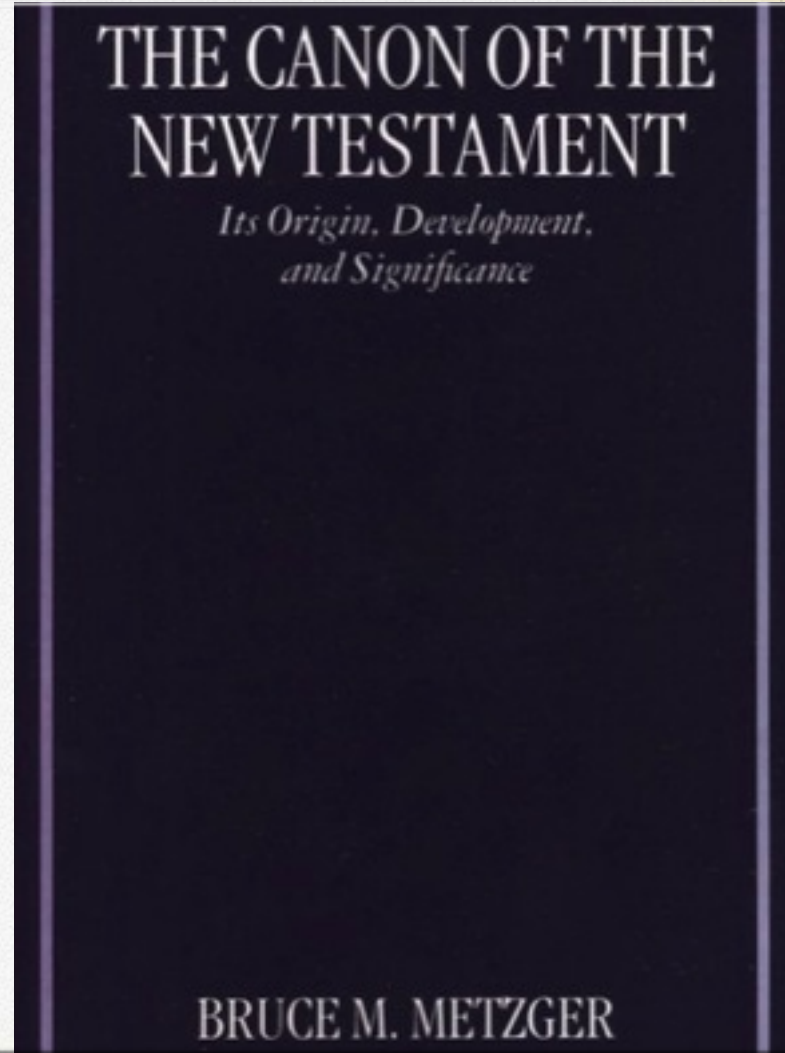
- ❖ L.A. Muratori discovered this list in a Milan library in 1740. (*Mss from 8th century, original is late 2nd century*)
- ❖ 22 books of the current NT
- ❖ Not included: Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, one of the epistles of John (unclear which)
- ❖ Extras: Wisdom of Solomon and the Apocalypse of Peter



CANON: VIEW FROM THE 4TH C.

- ✿ Eusebius' List [LC 244]
- ✿ Augustine's list(393 CE) – 27 books of NT for *North Africa* [LC 246]
- ✿ General Agreement: Four Gospels, thirteen Pauline epistles, 1 Peter, and 1 John
- ✿ Minor debates: *shorter* catholic epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude (“catholic” b/c to Christians *in general* v. specific person/church)
- ✿ Strong debate: Hebrews and Revelation (large books)

✿ “The recognition of the canonical status of the several books of the New Testament was the result of a long and gradual process, in the course of which certain writings, regarded as authoritative, were separated from a much larger body of early Christian literature. Although [canonization] was one of the most important developments in the thought and practice of the early Church, history is virtually silent as to how, when and by whom it was brought about. Nothing is more amazing in the annals of the Christian Church than the absence of detailed accounts of so significant a process.” (xi)

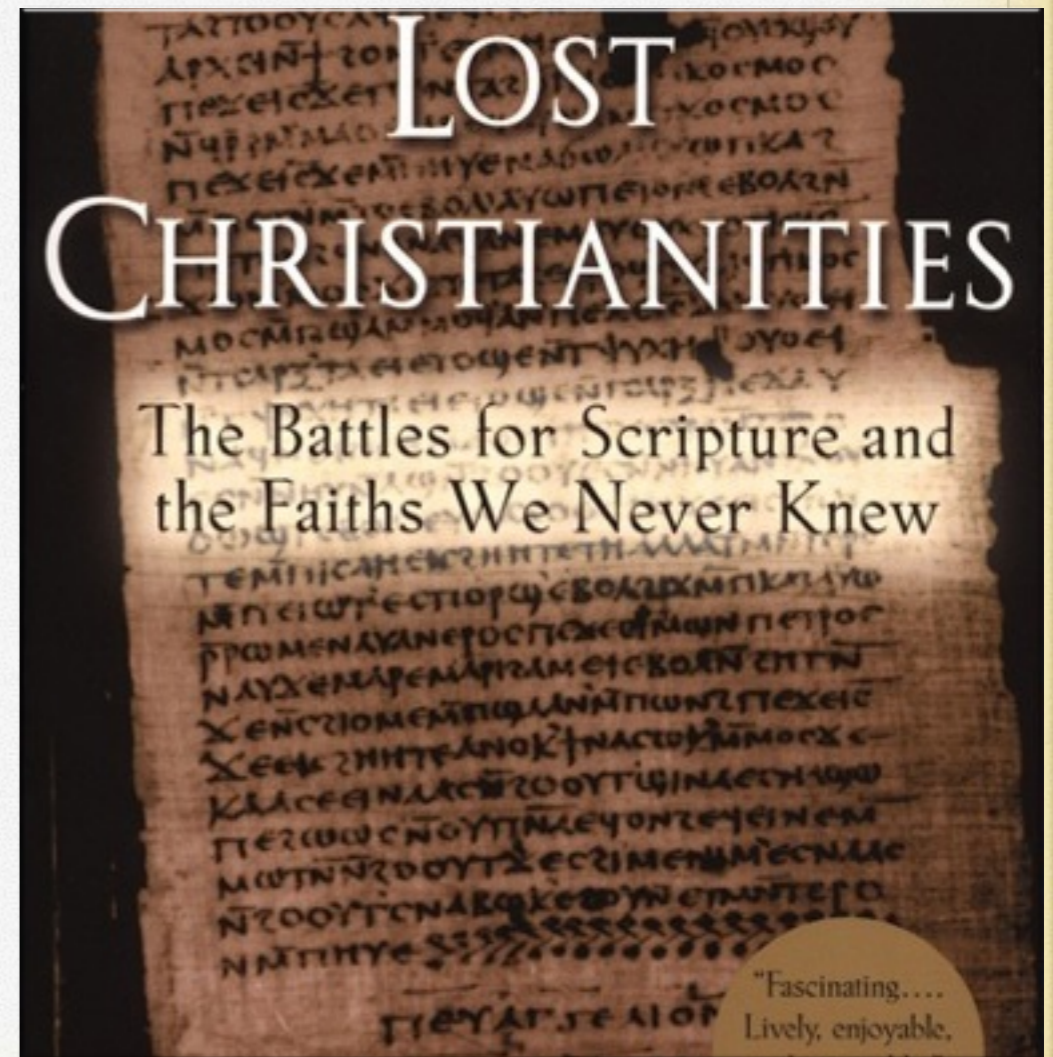
The image shows the front cover of the book 'The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance' by Bruce M. Metzger. The cover is dark blue with white text. The title is at the top in a large, serif font. Below it, the subtitle is in a smaller, italicized serif font. At the bottom, the author's name is printed in a serif font.

THE CANON OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT

*Its Origin, Development,
and Significance*

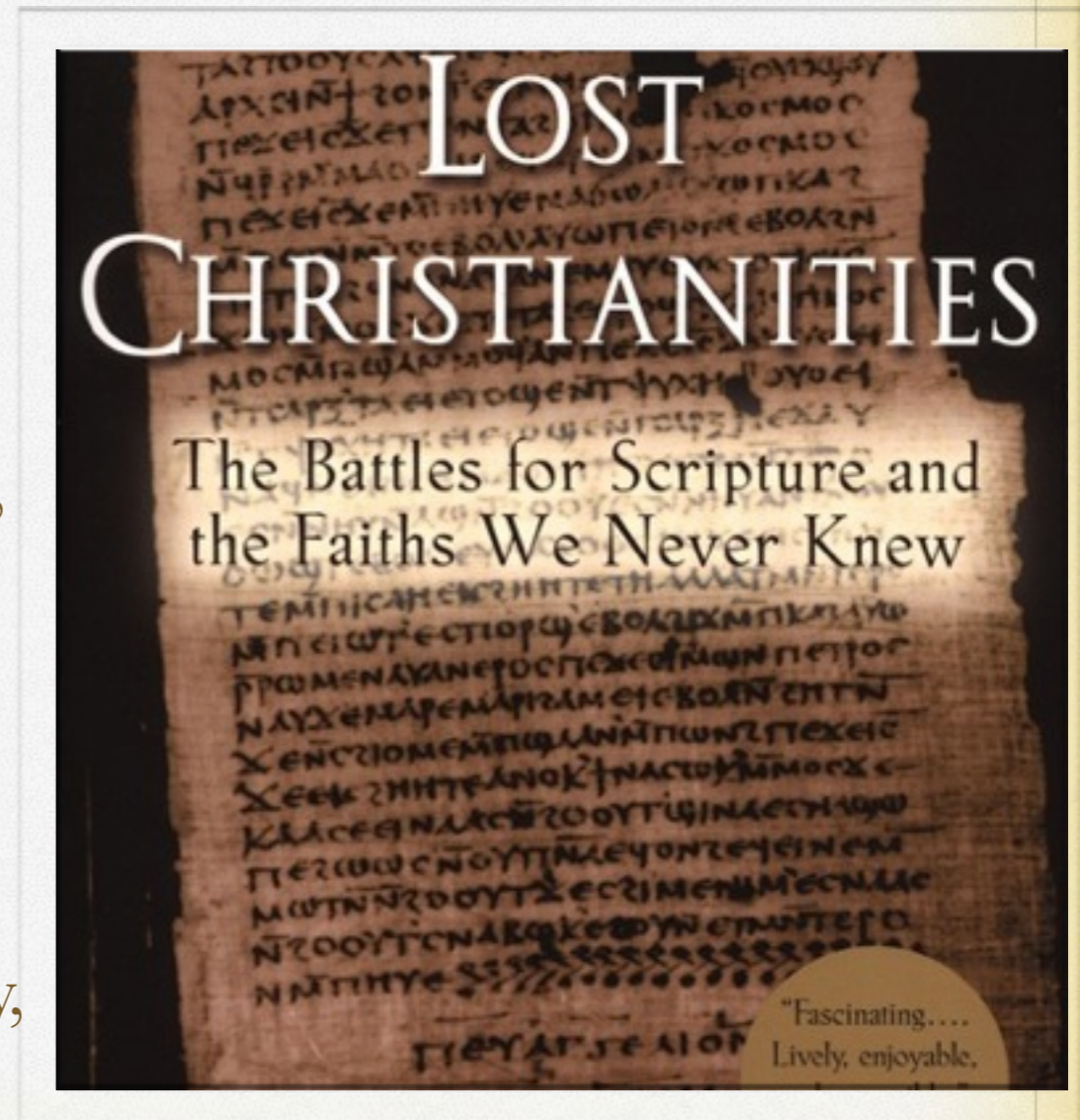
BRUCE M. METZGER

✿ “[Many] feel a sense of loss upon realizing just how many perspectives once endorsed by well-meaning, intelligent, and sincere believers came to be abandoned, destroyed, and forgotten—as were the texts that these believers produced, read, and revered. But with that feeling of loss comes the joy of discovery when some of these texts, and the lost Christianities they embody, are recovered and restored to us. For our own religious histories encompass not only the forms of belief and practice that emerged as victorious from the conflicts of the past but also those that were overcome, suppressed, and eventually lost.” (279)





* “The historical significance of the victory of proto-orthodox Christianity can scarcely be overstated. The form of Christianity that emerged from the conflicts of the second and third centuries was destined to become the religion of the Roman Empire. From there it developed into the dominant religious, political, economic, social, and cultural institution of the West for centuries—down to the present. Christians living in the midst of these conflicts could not have imagined how important their outcome would be for the shape of western civilization. The repercussions are still felt today, in ways that even we may have difficulty understanding.” (247)



❖ **Edict of Milan** (313 CE)

❖ Early 4th c. - 5-7% of Roman Empire Christians

❖ Late 4th c. - 50% Christians

❖ After Constantine, every emperor except one was Christian. (*Constantine's nephew, Julian, "the apostate", 361-363 CE*)

❖ **Theodosius I** (379-96 CE) made Christianity (specifically *Roman Christianity*) the official religion of the state [bishop of *Rome*]


❖ Persecuted church of the martyrs *becomes* the official religion of the Roman Empire.

❖ Difficult to see how any of the other forms of Christianity would have been as acceptable to the Roman Empire's goals— too difficult (*Ebionites* with boundary markers), too young (Marcionites), too Elite (Gnostics)

persuasive account of how the
West was won—for Jesus.”
—Newsweek

THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY



How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant
 Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries

RODNEY STARK

The --- **MYTH** --- *f* Persecution

HOW EARLY CHRISTIANS INVENTED
A STORY OF MARTYRDOM

Candida Moss

SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION



- ✿ Rather than cause the triumph of Christianity, Constantine's "Edict of Milan" was an **astute response** to rapid Christian growth that had already made them a major political force.

THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY

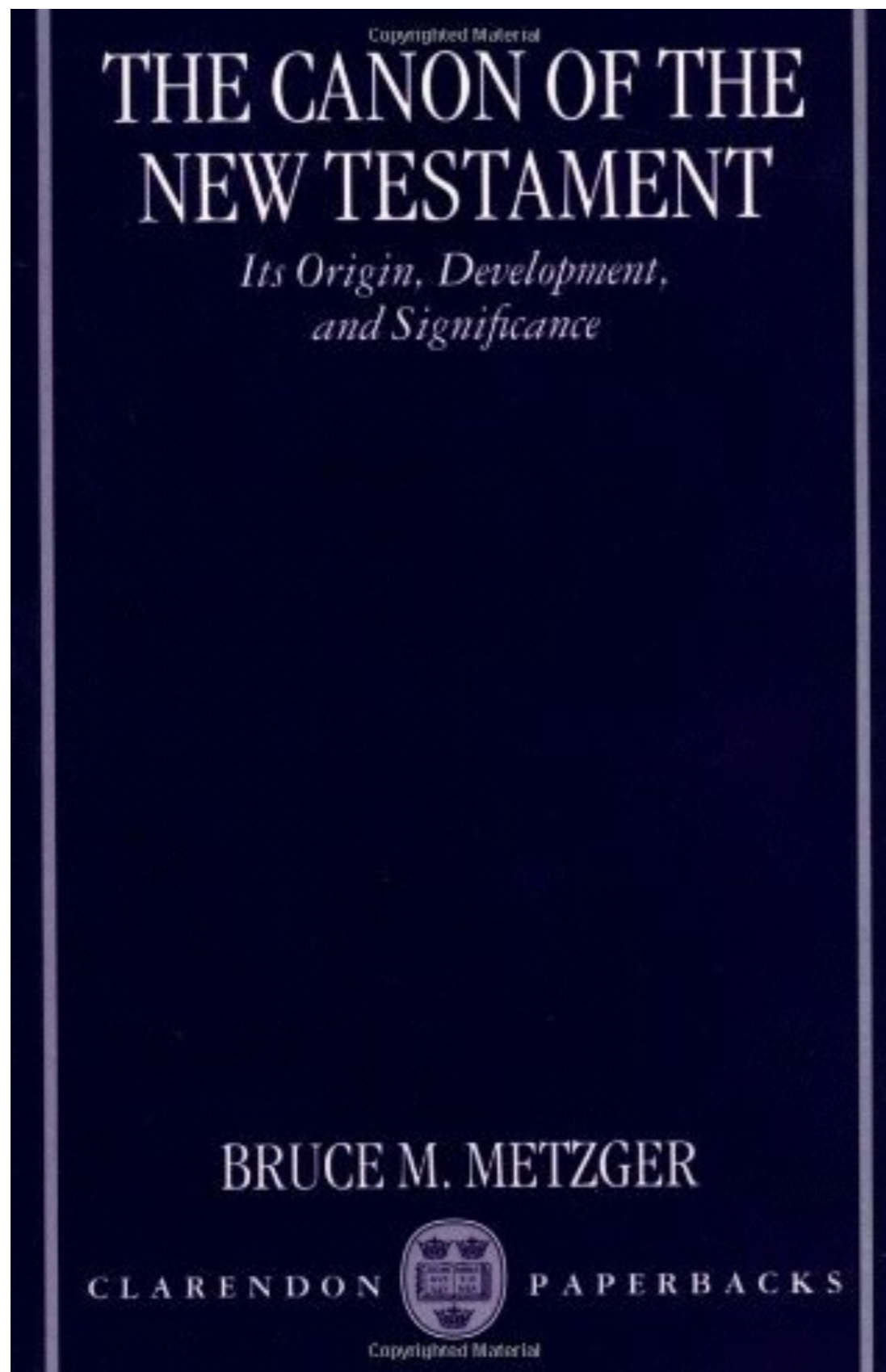


How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries

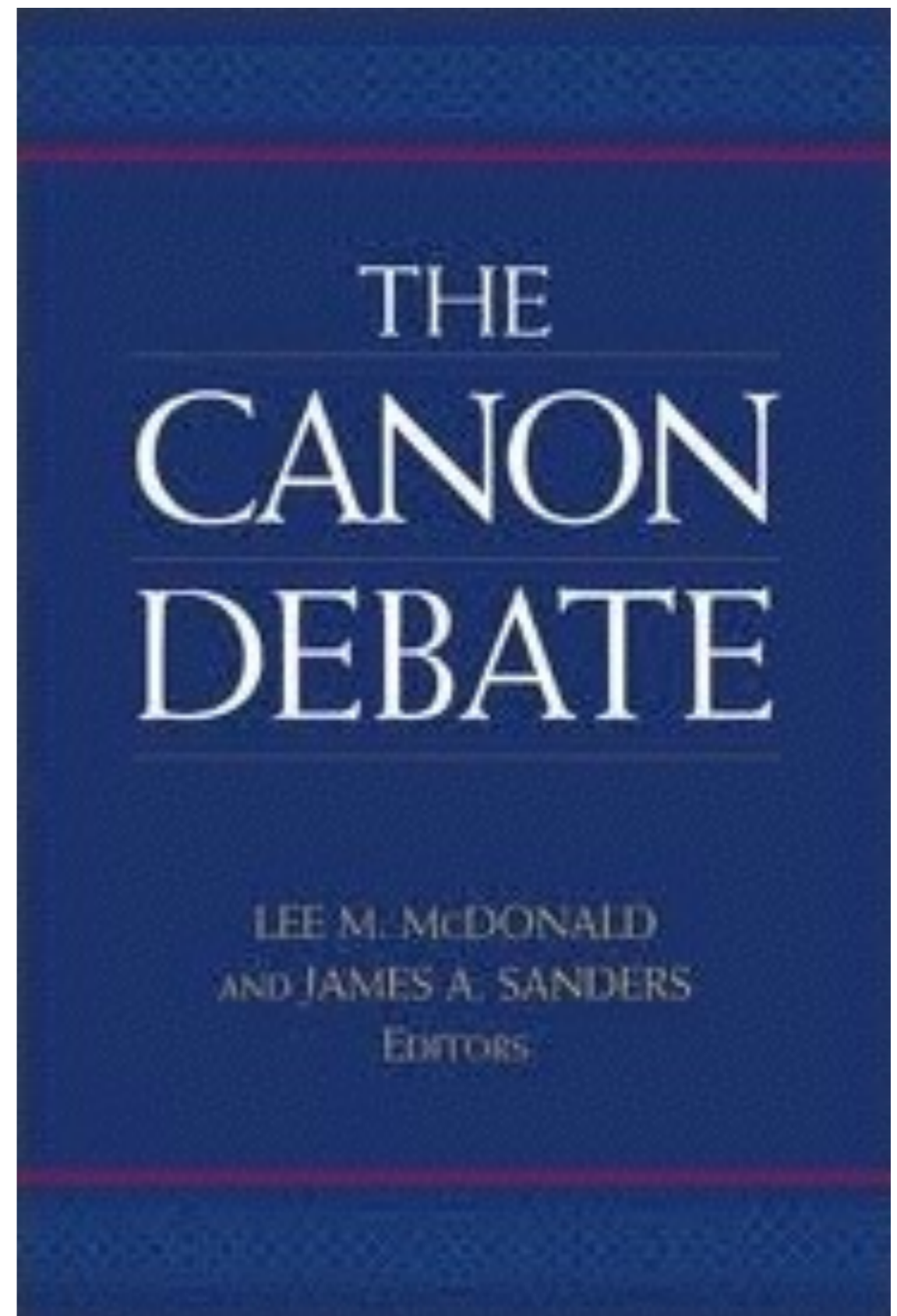
(Based on estimate population of 60 million)

Year	# of Christians	% of Population
40	1,000	0.0017
50	1,400	0.0023
100	7,530	0.0126
150	40,496	0.07
200	217,795	0.36
250	1,171,356	1.9
300	6,299,832	10.5
350	33,882,008	56.5

Christian growth projected at 40% per decade



1997



2002

Apostolic Fathers

- ✿ Extant works are approx. same size as NT.
- ✿ 1st and 2nd century, proto-orthodox church leaders. Writing *not* included in the canon (thought of as having personal contact with the Apostles)
- ✿ Examples: Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Didache, Barnabas, Hermas, Epistle to Diognetus, Papias.

Ante-Nicene Fathers

- ✿ non-canonical, proto-orthodox writings *before* the council of Nicea in 325 CE
- ✿ Examples: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tatian, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian

Codex

- around the turn of the second century CE, Christians began using a codex (leaf-book) instead of a parchment roll.
- Introduced a fixity to the order of the NT books (*as opposed to a bucket of scriptures*), but not definitively.
- In the 10th century, no fewer than *six* different lists of the Scriptures in the Old and New Testament were received in the Greek (Eastern) church.

CRITERIA FOR CANONICITY

- ✱ Rule of faith – congruity with (proto-orthodox) definition of normative Christian belief and practice
- ✱ Apostolicity – too recent, not linked to the apostles (*why the Shepherd of Hermas was rejected*)
- ✱ Consensus - Continuous acceptance and usage
- ✱ Although fringes remained unsettled for centuries, high degree of agreement was reached concerning the greater part of the NT within the first two centuries among very diverse and scattered congregations throughout the Mediterranean world and extending from Britain to Mesopotamia.

PROBLEMS

- ❖ **Plurality of Gospels** – as good as admitting that none of them is perfect? (Tatian’s *Diatesseron* and others singling out their favorite Gospel)
- ❖ **Particularity of Paul** – why should letters written to *particular* churches on *particular* occasions be regarded as universally authoritative and read in all churches?
- ❖ **Canon within the Canon?** (“*Great Commission*” vs. “*Great Commandment*”; *High/low points*)

OPEN OR CLOSED CANON

- ✿ Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from the Birmingham Jail”
- ✿ Contemporary Readings
- ✿ UCC: “God is still speaking,” Revelation is not sealed?
- ✿ *A New, New Testament*

WHAT IS A CANON?

- ❖ **Collection of *authoritative books*?** Recognize and collect individual books that had *prior intrinsic worth* before being assembled.
- ❖ ***Authoritative Collection of books*?** The act of the church collecting the books *creates* authority.

**CLICK
HERE TO
REGISTER**

The Textual Reliability of the

New Testament

A dialogue between Bart Ehrman and Daniel Wallace

April 4-5, 2008



Bart Ehrman
Chair of the Department of
Religious Studies at the University of
North Carolina at Chapel Hill

A Special Event of the **Evangelical Philosophical Society**



Daniel Wallace
Professor of New Testament
Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary

MISQUOTING JESUS

The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why



BART D. EHRMAN

BART D. EHRMAN & DANIEL B. WALLACE IN DIALOGUE
THE RELIABILITY OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT

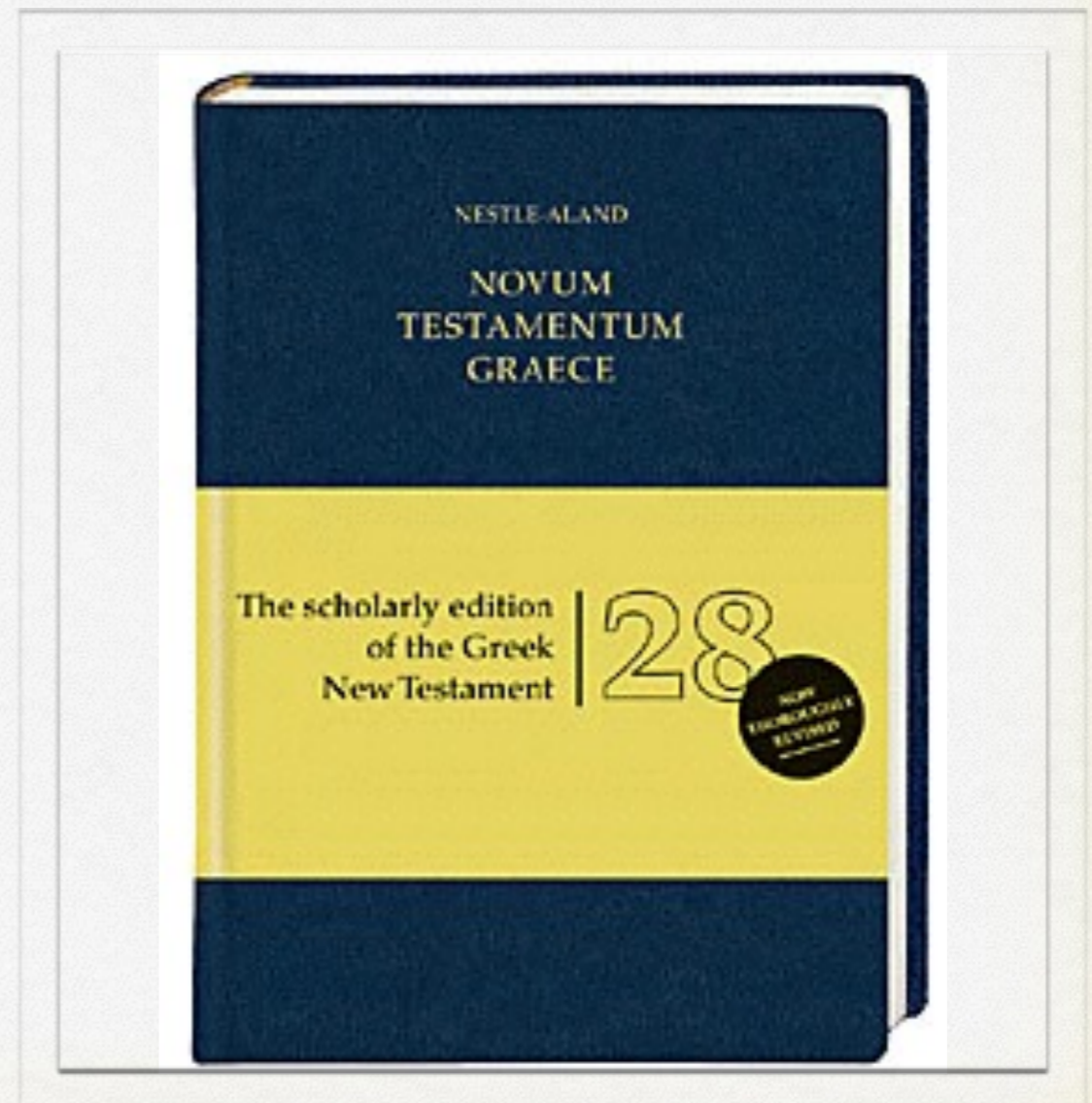
Robert B. Stewart, Editor

RELIABILITY OF THE NT

- ✿ We don't have *originals* of any scripture (“autographs”)
- ✿ Earliest mss of Paul's letters: c. 200 CE (*150 years after they were written*)
- ✿ Earliest Gospel Fragment (“P52”), credit card size from John 18 from trash heap in Egypt is dated to 125-130 +/- 25 years. (John written in ~90CE.)
- ✿ Earliest Complete New Testament mss: 4th-c. (*300 years after it was written*) — we have relatively full mss from around the year 200, but whole books and pages are missing.



THERE IS NO “THE BIBLE”

- * Only an *edited* Greek New Testament (then *translated*)
- * <http://www.nestle-aland.com/en/the-28-edition/>



2012

- ✿ **Earliest copy of Mark** (“P45”) is from c. 220 CE [*~150 years after written*]
- ✿ **Paleography** (“ancient” “writing” analysis -- not carbon 14)
- ✿ Next early copy of Mark is years later.
- ✿ **Earliest complete copy of Mark** doesn't show up until around the year 350 CE [*Almost three centuries after Mark originally written*]

- 
- 
- ✿ In the 4th and 5th c. the NT b/c much more common.
(printing press not until 1455...a thousand years later)
 - ✿ Total: 5,400 copies of all or part of the NT *(far more than any other book from antiquity)*. Even if a little fragment, still counted as a manuscript.
 - ✿ Homer's Iliad: fewer than 700 copies
 - ✿ Plays of Euripedes: fewer than 350 copies

- ✿ NT is “best-attested” book ancient world, but most copies are from *later times*, centuries after the copying process began.
- ✿ Of the ~5,500 Greek manuscripts of the NT:
- ✿ 2nd century: approximately a dozen
- ✿ 3rd c.: 64
- ✿ 4th c.: 48
- ✿ Subtotal: 124 within 300 years of NT’s composition (Most of these are *fragmentary*, but collectively, the whole NT is found in them multiple times.)
- ✿ 94% were made after the 8th century (700 years after the originals).
- ✿ Most are from the Middle Ages

- ❖ During the same period, the average classical Greek or Latin author has *no* literary remains. None.
- ❖ From any period, the total would be average less than 20, probably less than a dozen -- and they would all be coming much more than three centuries later after originally written.
- ❖ Thus, the NT text critic comparatively has an embarrassment of riches.
- ❖ Harder to know Plato's *ipsissima verba* ("the very words") than Paul

“TEXT CRITICISM” (COMPARING THE 5,400 COPIES)

- ❖ No two copies agree (*except the smallest fragments*)
- ❖ Around 300,000-400,000 variants (*more differences among mss than words in the NT*) [Liberals and Conservatives agree on this *fact*]
- ❖ Vast bulk of differences *affect virtually nothing*
- ❖ Most mistakes: careless errors
- ❖ Single most common mistake: spelling
- ❖ Other mistakes: leaving out words, verses, pages (*probably by accident*), leaving out word, inserting it later in the sentence, putting marginal note into text itself. No punctuation, paragraph divisions, or word division.

- ✿ In **1707**, an Oxford scholar named John Mill (*not* John Stuart Mill) produced a printed edition of the Greek New Testament indicating *30,000* places of variation among the hundreds of manuscripts to which he had access.
- ✿ We have far more mss today -- bringing us to a total of *300,000 - 400,000* differences.
- ✿ If scribes had spell check we may only have 50,000 mistakes. (Sometimes they leave out a word, sometimes a sentence, sometimes an entire page. Some copyists were incompetent, some were sleepy, others were bored.)
- ✿ **Less than 1% of manuscripts variables are both meaningful and viable** (that is, have a likelihood of reflecting the original wording)

SCRIBES SOMETIMES CHANGED THE TEXT TO
BRING IT INTO CONFORMITY WITH THEIR
ORTHODOX VIEWS

- ✿ Mark 1:2 - quotes Malachi, but really Isaiah (*scribe changed the error*)
- ✿ Mark 2:25 names *Abiathar* as the high priest when David entered the Temple, but 1 Sam 21:1-7 says it was Abiathar's father *Ahimelech*. Corrected this, too. Commonly altered.
- ✿ Endings of Mark (most scholars think it originally ended at 16:8)
- ✿ Story of not stoning women who committed adultery (almost all scholars think it wasn't original.) Not in earliest mss, writing style different, and not always found in in John 8.

BIBLE SOFTWARE

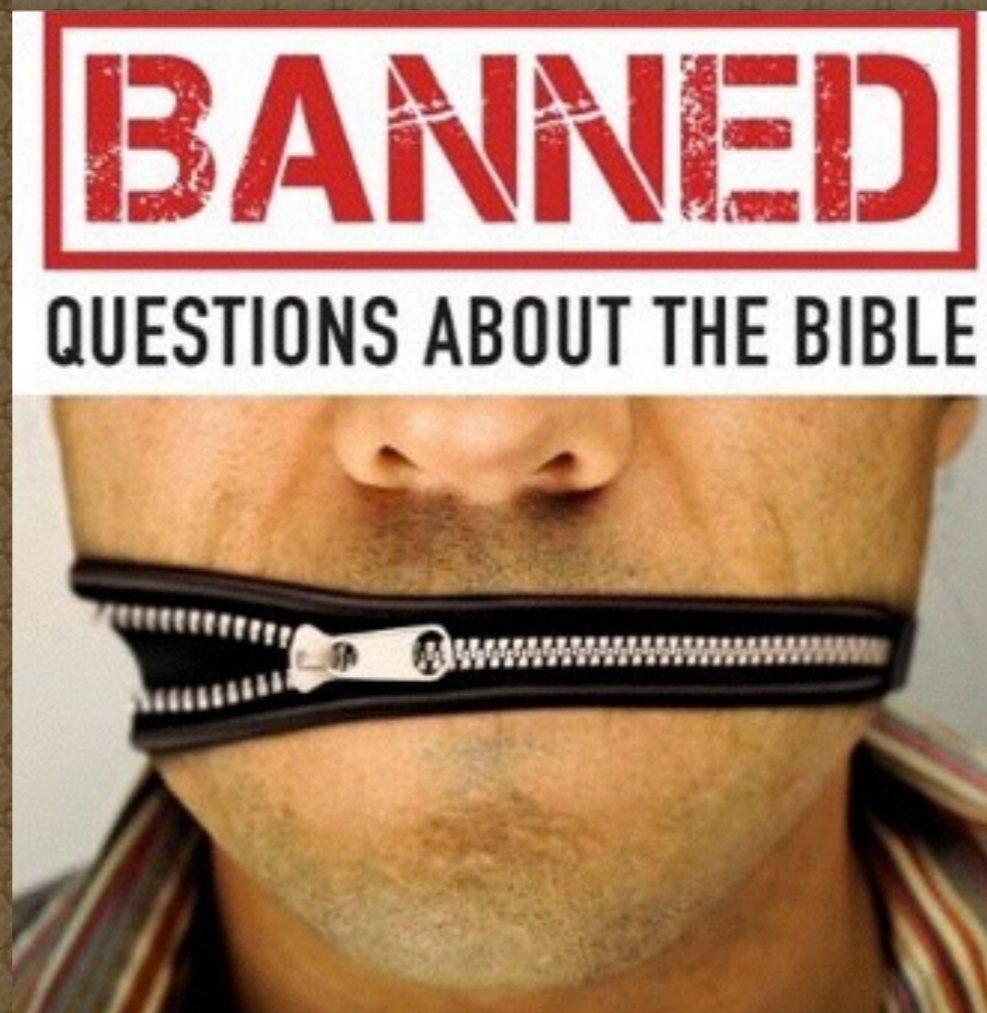
- * <https://www.logos.com/>
- * <http://www.accordancebible.com/>
- * <http://www.gramcord.org/>

✿ Evaluations

✿ Slides: *[upload new ones]*

frederickuu.org/about/Lost_Christianities

✿ Q&R



Next Class: “Banned Questions about the Bible”

Mondays, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm,

March 3 – April 14

(skip 3/24 for spring break)

The Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg