






The **Bible** is widely considered to be the **best-selling book** of all time, with estimated total sales of over **5 billion** copies.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible>

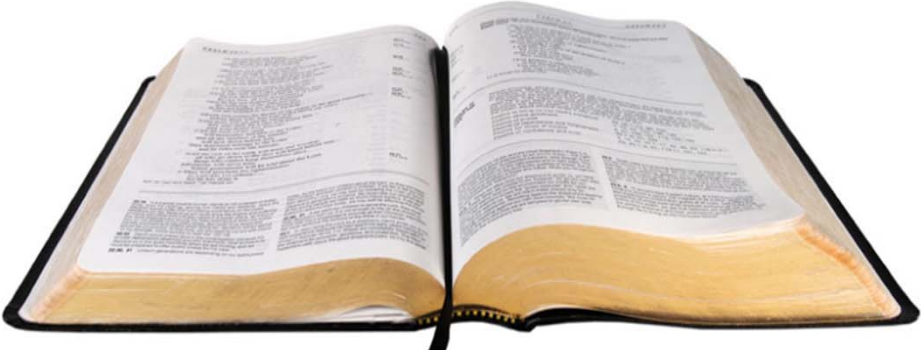


Matthew 5:33-37



The King James Bible
has inspired the
lyrics of more pop
songs than any other
book.

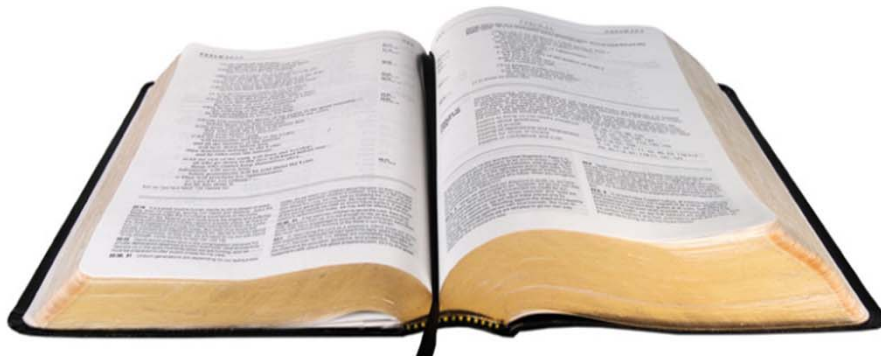
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/proginfo/2011/51/pop-goes-the-bible.html>



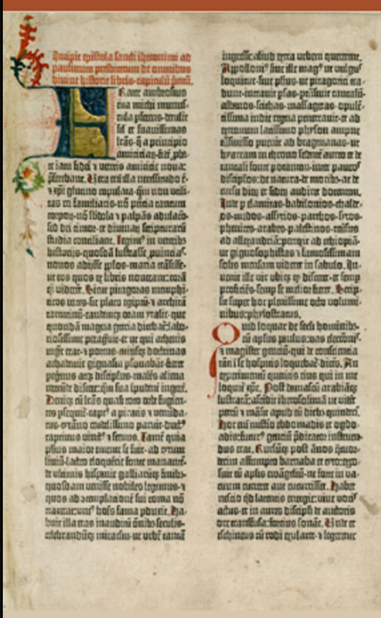
The Bible is the most shoplifted
book in the world.

<https://www.amazon.com/Quite-Interesting-Facts-Blow-Socks/dp/0393241033/?tag=factslices-20>

The Bible contains plenty of puns, funny names, humorous imagery, sarcasm and irony.

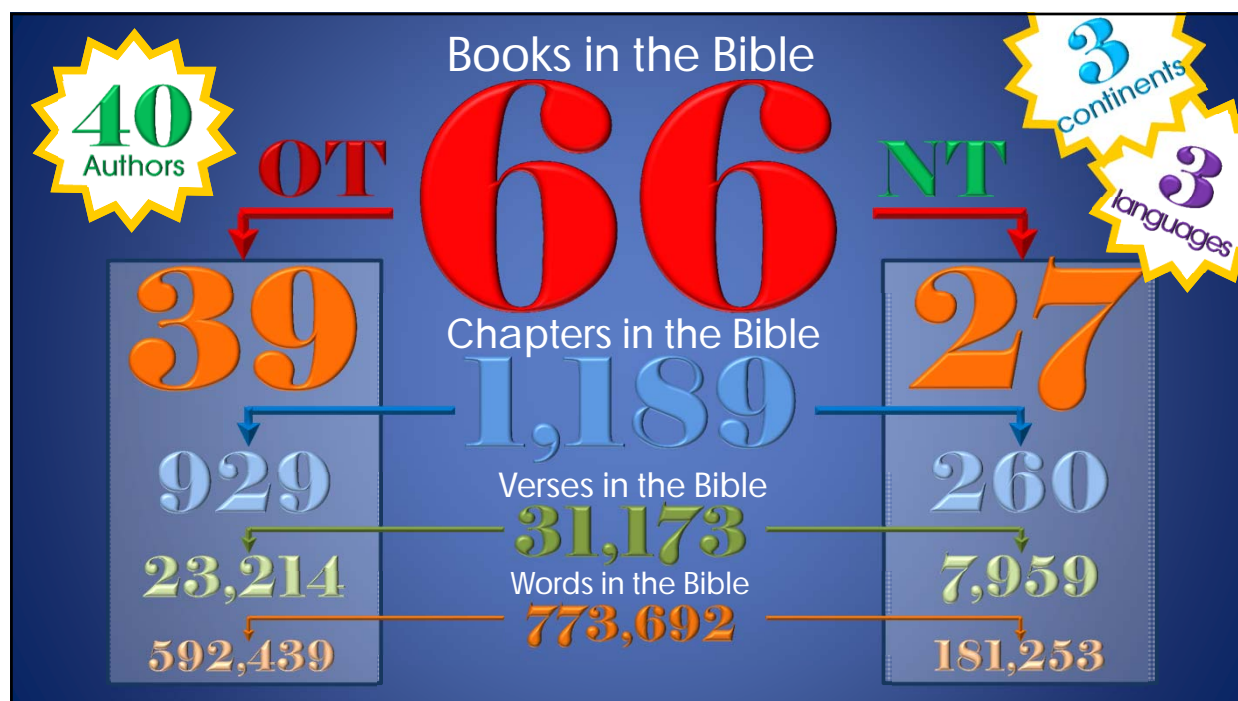


The Bible is available in 2,454 languages.



The Gutenberg Bible was the first major book printed using mass-produced movable type.

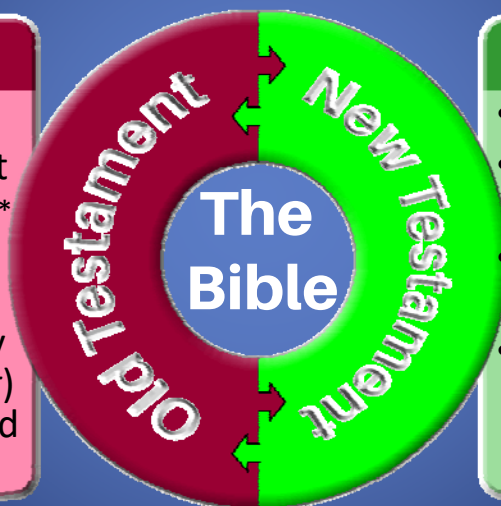
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gutenberg_Bible



Origin of the Christian Bible

Old Testament

- Hebrew & Aramaic
- Written from about 1900 B.C.*–400 B.C.**
- Translated into Greek by 70 (72) Hebrew scholars by 270 B.C. (*Septuagint*) quoted by Jesus and N.T. authors.



New Testament

- Greek originals
- Written A.D. 40-95 by Jesus' disciples
- All available to John in Ephesus by A.D.96
- Translated into Syriac c. A.D.125 and Old Latin c. A.D. 150.

Early Evidence of the Old Testament

Version	Examples	Language	Date Composed	Oldest Copy
Silver Scrolls	Found at Ketef Hinnom near Jerusalem in 1979	Paleo-Hebrew	650-587 BC	Amulets with Priestly Blessing-Num 6:22-27
Dead Sea Scrolls	Qumran Tanakh	Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek	c. 150 BC – AD 70	c. 150 BC – AD 70 (fragments)*
Septuagint	Early papyri	Greek	300–100 BC	2nd century BC (frags) 4th century AD (comp)
Peshitta	The name Peshitta in Aramaic means "Straight"	Syriac	c. AD125	Oldest dated manuscript is AD 464.
Masoretic	Aleppo Codex, Leningrad Codex	Hebrew	c. AD90	10th century AD (comp)
Samaritan Pentateuch	Abisha Scroll, by Aaron's GGS 13 years after Deut.	Samaritan Hebrew	200–100 BC XXX BC claimed	Oldest extant MSS, c. 11th century AD
Targum	Earliest date from Ezra's time to be read to unlearned	Aramaic	XXX BC claimed; Popular after AD70	5th century AD
Coptic	Crosby-Schøyen Codex, British Library MS.	Coptic (4 dialects)	Sahidic, 2 cent AD Bohairic, 3 cent AD	3rd or 4th century AD

Note: Qumran contained complete scroll of Isaiah as well as fragments of multiple copies of every book in the Tenakh other than Esther (due to Essenes?).



Early Evidence of the New Testament

Papyri	Contents	Date of Original	MSS Date	Approx. Time Span	Location
p⁵² (John Rylands Fragment)	John 18:31-33, 37-38	circa AD 96	circa AD125	29 yrs	Manchester, England
p⁴⁶ (Chester Beatty Papyrus)	Rom. 5:17-6:3, 5-14; 8:15-25, 27-35; 10:1-11, 22, 24-33, 35; 16:1-23, 25-27; Heb.; 1 & 2 Cor., Eph., Gal., Phil., Col.; 1 Thess. 1:1, 9-10; 2:1-3; 5:5-9, 23-28	50's-70's	circa AD200	Approx. 150 yrs	Ann Arbor, Michigan
p⁶⁶ (Bodmer Papyrus)	John 1:1-6:11, 35-14:26; fragment of 14:29-21:9	70's	circa AD200	Approx. 130 yrs	Cologne, Geneva
p⁶⁷	Matt. 3:9,15; 5:20-22, 25-28	70's	circa AD200	Approx. 130 yrs	Barcelona

How much early evidence?



early Greek New Testament manuscripts in existence.

Plus...



early manuscripts in Aramaic, Syriac, Ethiopic, Byzantine , etc.

The discovery of Papyrus 45, 46, and 66 provides proof that the Byzantine text preserves a reading that dates from early witness.

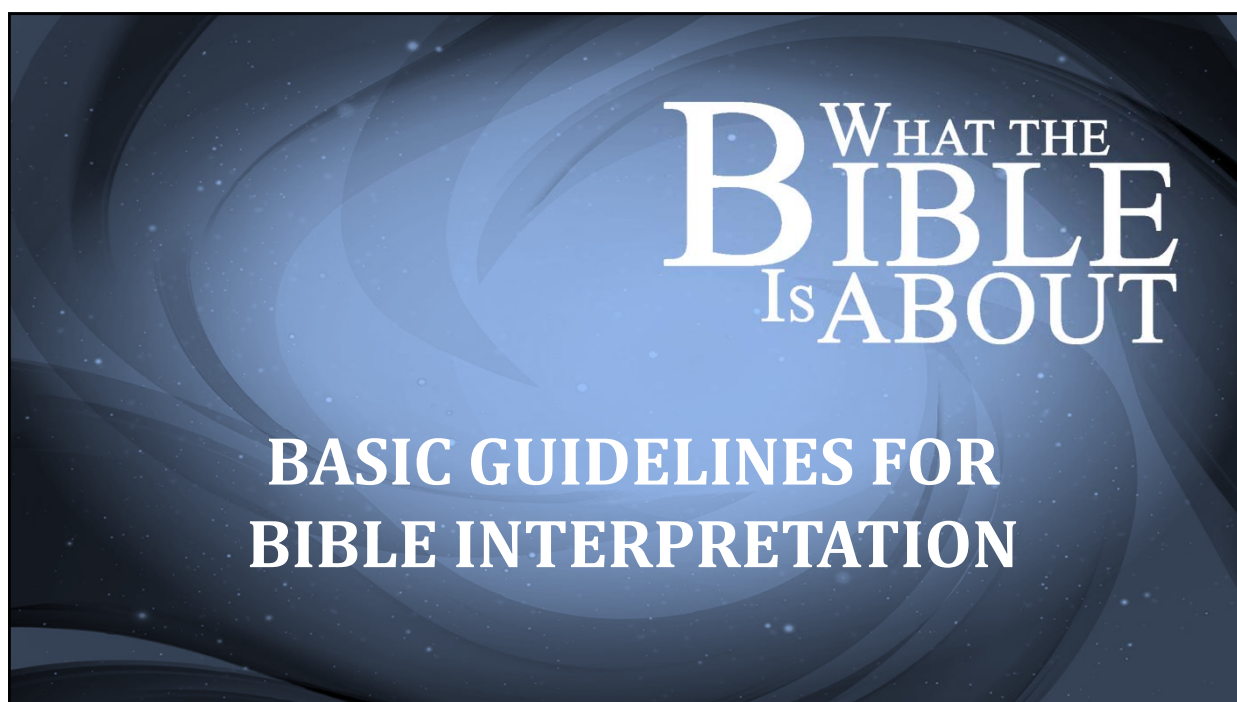


Frederick Fyvie Bruce
M.A., B.A. (CANTAB.)



“It may seem that the text of the New Testament is still largely clouded with uncertainty. Such would be an utterly false impression. Any trouble with the New Testament text rises not from scarcity of evidence but from the overwhelming wealth of evidence. No point of Christian faith or practice is affected by, these textual questions. Every fresh discovery helps to confirm the general reliability of our New Testament text.”

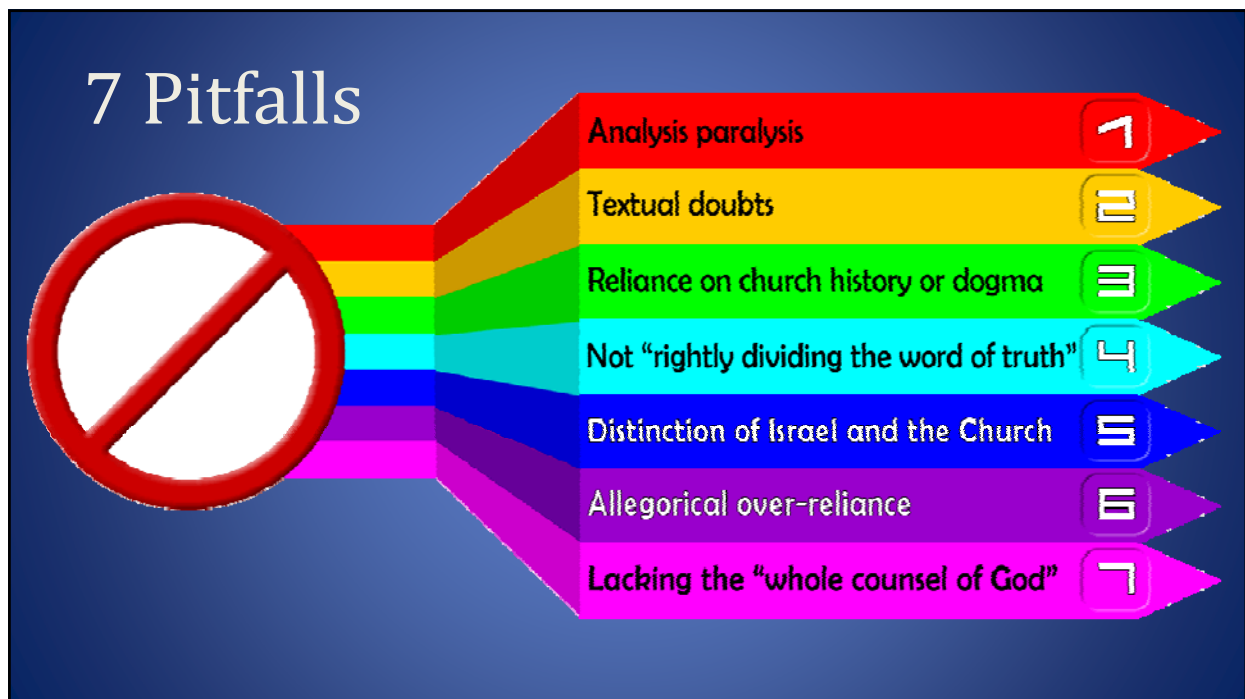
F.F. Bruce, *The Chester Beatty Papyri*, *The Harvester* 11 (1934): 163-164.



8 Guidelines

Rule 1	Approach the Bible with an open mind.
Rule 2	Study the Bible systematically.
Rule 3	All means 'all' is all that all means.
Rule 4	A text taken out of context is a pretext.
Rule 5	Interpret the Bible with the Bible.
Rule 6	If the plain text makes sense, seek no other sense.
Rule 7	The plain things are the main things and the main things are the plain things.
Rule 8	If you don't understand a passage, rejoice. An insight awaits.

The slide displays eight guidelines for Bible interpretation, each presented in a colored box that tapers from left to right. The guidelines are numbered 1 through 8, and each is followed by a brief explanation. The background is a dark blue gradient.



Analysis Paralysis

- Stick to the guidelines for Bible interpretation.
- Check the centre margin for parallel passages.
- Don't over-analyse a passage. If it doesn't seem to make sense, note it and move on.
- Discuss the passage with someone you trust.

ANALYSIS PARALYSIS

Textual Doubts



- Scholarship or simply arrogant skepticism?
 - Documentary Hypothesis. Did Moses write the Torah or did authors J, E, D, P, etc.?
 - Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah, Trito-Isaiah, or more Isaiahs based on stylistic distinctives?
- The Bible itself answers these “controversies” directly, but is *excluded* from giving evidence.



Church History/Dogma



- Different “churches” differ on Bible interpretation. Few believe that the Bible says what it means and means what it says.



A few of the thousands of monotheistic religions

Church History/Dogma

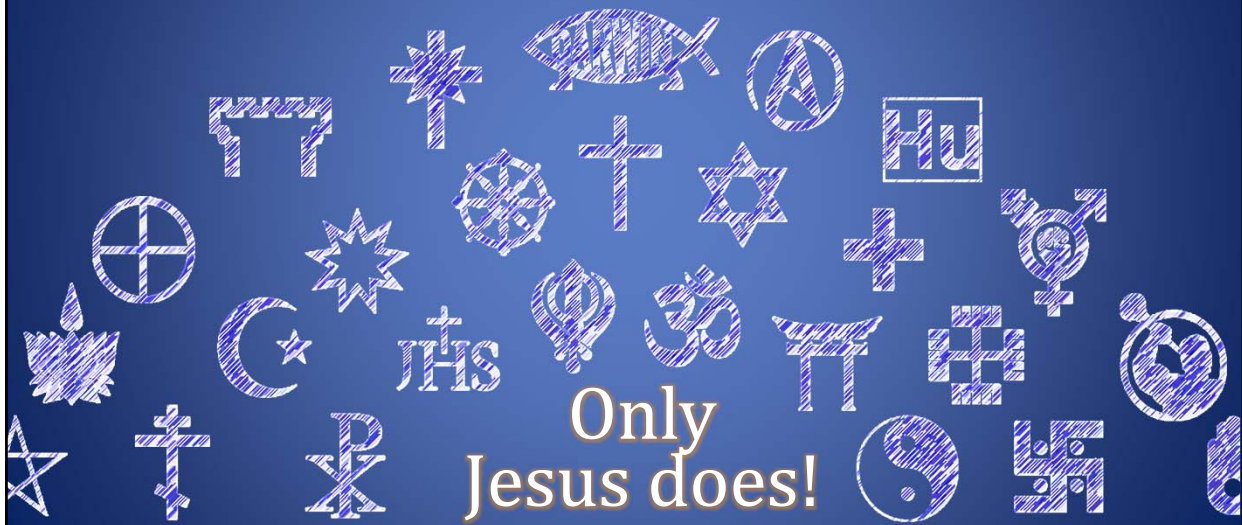


- Why do they differ on Bible interpretation?
- Religions are Man's way to get closer to God.



Jesus was possibly the most anti-religious man who ever lived!

Per the Bible, none of Man's religions, denominations or churches lead to God.



Not Dividing the Word of Truth

4

**RIGHTLY
DIVIDE
THE WORD
OF TRUTH**

- Note similarities and differences. Recognise and understand both.
- Recognise common terms and themes that run through the Bible, and...
- ... spot others that don't.
- Try to discern the truth!

Israel versus the "Church"

5

The Bible treats Israel and the "Mystical Church of Jesus Christ" mutually exclusively!

The origin, mystery and destiny of each is unique. The "Church" does not replace Israel.

The New Testament mentions Israel 73 times.

The "Church" was born at Pentecost (Acts 1:5).

No religion of Man is Christ's true "Church".

The Hazard of Presuppositions

- A presupposition is a belief that affects how someone thinks and interprets evidence.
 - Christians and atheists differ in presuppositions.
 - Their debate is over presuppositions, not evidence.
- An axiom is a proposition assumed to be true and thus not susceptible to proof or disproof.
 - The Bible's axiom is that God and His Word exist.
 - ∴ Prophets and apostles reasoned from Scripture.

"Lacking the Whole Counsel of God"

- 1** The final test of the Bible can only come from an understanding of the entire text.
- 2** e.g., most people don't understand the Book of Revelation because they don't know the OT, which Revelation's 404 verses allude to 800X.
- 3** Don't pick a single passage to build a pet theory. Other parts of the Bible will add missing context.