

The New Testament

Where did it come from and is it Authentic?

How do we know that the content in the “New Testament” is what the original authors wrote nearly 2,000 years ago?

D. Palmer

There is a technique scholars use to authenticate historical documents or ancient manuscripts. It is a scientific methodology called “**textual criticism.**” This science proves or disproves the accuracy of historical documents by:

- Comparing them to other archived documents from the same time.
- Comparing the accuracy of the ancient copies and possible variances.
- Comparing their context to other copies.
- Comparing the number of ancient copies made.
- Comparing the time lapse from when the copies were written and the original events.



The chart of ancient writings below compares their authenticity proving without doubt that the authenticity of the New Testament is far more reliable than any other historical document. Secular scholars and historians do not dispute any of these comparisons.

Written Works	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Lapse	Copies
Greek Historian Herodotus	488-428 BC	900 AD	1300 Years	8
Thucydides	499-460 BC	900 AD	1300 Years	8
Tacitus (Roman Senator)	100 AD	1100 AD	1000 Years	20
Caesar's Gallic Wars	58-50 BC	900 AD	950 Years	9
Livy's Roman History	59 BC-17 AD	900 AD	900 Years	20
New Testament	40-100 AD	130 AD	30 Years	5309

The four Gospels and Paul's Epistles were written not long after the crucifixion: Mark AD70, Matthew AD80, Luke AD85, John AD95, Paul AD55. Even the best critics and skeptics trust this data within a small window plus or minus. These testimonies were written thousands of miles apart with little discrepancy or inconsistency and with no means of communication among the authors to corroborate their testimonies. These eye witness testimonies are the most legitimate of all ancient writings, especially if we compare these writings to the likes of what we know and accept about others such as Alexander the Great 330AD. The earliest biographic sources of Alexander are 300 to 400 years after his death and yet no one doubts what we know about his life.

“The authenticity of the New Testament manuscripts dramatically stands alone as the best preserved literary works of all antiquity.”

Nicky Gumbel
Developer of The Alpha Course

