**God’s Bible, Not Constantine’s – A Critique of David L. Dungan’s**

***Constantine’s Bible : Politics and the Making of the New Testament***

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This is a critique of David L. Dungan’s Book, *Constantine’s Bible* (abbreviated as *CB*). It is not a full refutation, because many things Dungan writes are correct. However, the main points of his book are deeply flawed. Unlike evangelicals, he claims that early Christians did not have a canon of scripture, especially the New Testament.

In other words, among early Christians (prior to Constantine and Eusebius and including Marcion!), while many early Christians used the writings of the books of what we would later call the New Testament canon, Dungan claims they had no concept of “New Testament” or “canon of scripture”. Dungan agrees that they used the terms “canon of the church”, and “canon of truth”, but they never used the term “canon of sacred scripture”. Dungan is not just quibbling about words here, but his point is that what was scripture was very fluid with no “canon or “rule” of what should be included as scripture.

Dungan’s main thesis is flawed for three critical reasons:

1) I see evidence that Dungan does not know what a true Christian is. Christians are those who know the real Jesus, Son of God who became man, and follow His teachings, as their Lord and Savior. Other people, who reject the Jesus was a real man, reject the Old Testament, reject Jesus physically rising from the dead, and reject His teachings are not Christians at all, no matter how many non-Christian scholars might say otherwise.

2) Unlike what Dungan wrote, Pre-Nicene Christians DID have a concept of a New Testament, as well as the Old Testament. They did use the word “canon” for the New Testament, because they did have a concept, as well as discussion of what was in and what was out. Though admittedly the canon was not as crisp and settled as in later times.

3) Finally in all of Dungan’s discussion, he fails to mention even once the great love and study the early Christians had for the New Testament writings. In discussing the early church view of scripture, Dungan’s silence is deafening. Here is how the rest of this article is organized.

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# 1. What a true Christian is

A true Christian is a person who has put their trust in the genuine Jesus, our Lord and Savior. While authentic Christians can disagree on secondary doctrines, there are some primary beliefs, that if rejected, Jesus and Paul said they would die in their sins, and their faith is worthless. They are fake, or inauthentic Christians, not according to our opinions, but according to what Jesus and Paul said. Before we get to these beliefs, let’s see what David L. Dungan said first.

## 1.1 What David L. Dungan said about being a Christian

 Dungan call the heretic Marcion of Pontus a “charismatic Christian leader”. How can Dungan think that Marcion was anything but a heretic, if he had any idea what a Christian was. You can’t excuse Dungan by saying he did not really know what Marcion believed. Dungan correctly mentions that Marcion rejected the God of the Old Testament, did not think Jesus was a physical man, etc. Dungan might not be completely accurate on some minor points. Dungan calls Marcion a Gnostic, and scholars disagree on whether Marcion should be thought of as a full-blown Gnostic, or a “proto-Gnostic”. Dungan says Marcion taught the Old Testament God was a demon. Marcion thought the Old Testament God was a powerful, malevolent spiritual being, but Dungan did not give any evidence that Marcion used the term “demon”. Except for these smaller issues though, Dungan basically has the correct details of what Marcion taught. And yet Dungan says Marcion is a Christian, at least by Dungan’s understanding what a Christian is.

Here is Dungan’s quote. Apologies for the length, but this is to get the full context, to show what Dungan got right and what Dungan messed up completely.

*CB* p.82 “Other Christian attempts to distinguish themselves from the Jews took an even more radical bent. Around mid-century, the charismatic leader Marcion of Pontus insisted that Jesus had never been Jewish to begin with and that the Christian gospels that portrayed him as the son of Jewish parents were infected with ‘Jewish blasphemy.’ Marcion went on to claim that the god of the Jews was a demon while the god of Jesus had previously never been heard of. He called for a sweeping rejection of all orthodox Christian leaders who had allowed the Christian message to become tainted with ‘Jewish corruption.’” As we have seen, Marcion insisted the only accurate historical narrative of Jesus of Nazareth was his own version (apparently the Gospel of Luke, once the ‘Jewish interpolations’ – all of chapters 1 and 2, plus many other passages – had been removed). … He rejected the Old Testament in its entirety as the worship of a demon. Though they seem extreme to us today, Marcion’s ideas about authentic Christian scripture, his fundamentally anti-Jewish message, and his insistence upon a pure and ascetic lifestyle attracted a huge and sympathetic following.”

Marcion did not call him a demon. Don’t know how popular his teachings were.

*CB* p.143 Dungan [correctly] calls some books such as *1, 2 Clement* and the *Shepherd of Hermas* as “Early Christian Writing”. They are not in our New Testament, but these are works by early Christians, so there is not a problem with Dungan saying this.

*CB* p.147 However, Dungan also calls the Gospel of Thomas, the Preaching of Peter and the Revelation of Peter as “Early Christian Writing” right along side the books of the New Testament. The Gospel of Thomas was not a Christian work, any more than the *Book of Mormon* is a Christian work.

Would you call these Christian scripture, or even Christian teachings, like David L. Dungan has?

*Gospel of Thomas* saying 12) The disciples said to Jesus, “We know that You will depart from us. Who is to be our leader?” Jesus said to them, “Wherever you are, you are to go to James the righteous, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being.”

*Gospel of Thomas* saying 114) “Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of Life.’ Jesus said, ‘I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.’”

*Gospel of Thomas* saying 98) “Jesus said, ‘The Kingdom of the Father is like a certain man who wanted to kill a powerful man. In his own house he drew his sword and stuck it into the wall in order to find out whether his hand could carry through. Then he slew the powerful man.’”

## 1.2 What Jesus and Paul said about being a Christian

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you-unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas [Peter], then by the twelve. After that he was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.” 1 Corinthians 15:1-6 (NKJV)

If someone does not believe Jesus is the one He claims to be, they will die in their sins, as Jesus said in John 8:24. Jesus, among other thing, claimed to be the Promised Messiah of the Old Testament.

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” Galatians 1:8-9 (NKJV)

“For I [Paul] am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” 2 Corinthians 11:2-3 (NKJV)

## 1.3 What Early Christians said about being a Christian

**Clement of Rome** (96/98 A.D.) “For this reason righteousness and peace are now far departed from you, inasmuch as every one abandons the fear of God, and is become blind in His faith, neither walks in the ordinances of His appointment, nor acts a part becoming a Christian, but walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice of an unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world.” *1 Clement* ch.3 p.6

Clement of Rome (96/98 A.D.) “Let your children be partakers of true Christian training; let them learn of how great avail humility is with God-how much the spirit of pure affection can prevail with Him-how excellent and great His fear is, and how it saves all those who walk in it with a pure mind.” *1 Clement* ch.21 p.11

**Ignatius**, disciple of the Apostle John (100-116/7 A.D.) Ignatius asked the Ephesian believers to pray, “that I may be found in the lot of the Christians of Ephesus, who have always been of the same mind with the apostles through the power of Jesus Christ.” *Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians* ch.11 p.54.

Ignatius (100-116/7 A.D.) “The tree is made manifest by its fruit; so those that profess themselves to be Christians shall be recognized by their conduct.” *Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians* ch.14 p.55.

***Epistle to Diognetus*** (c.130-200 A.D.) ch.6 p.26 uses the word “Christian” 15 times (not counting chapter titles). One place is “To sum up all in one word-what the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, yet is not of the body; and Christians dwell in the world, yet are not of the world.”

**Justin Martyr** (c.150 A.D.) “And let those who are not found living as He taught, be understood to be no Christians, even though they profess with the lip the precepts of Christ; for not those who make profession, but those who do the works, shall be saved, according to His word: ‘not every one who saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. For whosoever heareth Me, and doeth My sayings, heareth Him that sent Me. And many will say unto Me, Lord, Lord, have we not eaten and drunk in Thy name, and done wonders? And then will I say unto them, Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity. Then shall there be wailing and gnashing of teeth, when the righteous shall shine as the sun, and the wicked are sent into everlasting fire. For many shall come in My name, clothed outwardly in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly being ravening wolves. By their works ye shall know them. And every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.’ And as to those who are not living pursuant to these His teachings, and are Christians only in name, we demand that all such be punished by you.” *First Apology of Justin Martyr* ch.16 p.168

**Evarestus** (c.169 A.D.) “And when the proconsul yet again pressed him, and said, ‘Swear by the fortune of Caesar,’ he answered, ‘Since thou art vainly urgent that, as thou sayest, I should swear by the fortune of Caesar, and pretendest not to know who and what I am, hear me declare with boldness, I am a Christian. And if you wish to learn what the doctrines of Christianity are, appoint me a day, and thou shalt hear them.’” *Martyrdom of Polycarp* ch.10 p.41

***Christians of Vienna and Lugdunum*** (177 A.D.) vol.8 p.782 “Attalus also was vehemently demanded by the mob; for he was a man of mark, He entered the lists a ready combatant on account of his good conscience, since he had been truly practised in the Christian discipline, and had always been a Witness of the truth among us. He was led round the amphitheatre, a tablet going before him, on which was written in Latin, ‘This is Attalus the Christian; ‘and the people swelled with indignation against him.”

**Theophilus of Antioch** (168-181/188 A.D.) Even though he is mocked by being called a Christian, Theophilus has a whole chapter on what it means that they are called Christians. Here is what he says. “And about your laughing at me and calling me ‘Christian,’ you know not what you are saying. First, because that which is anointed is sweet and serviceable, and far from contemptible. For what ship can be serviceable and seaworthy, unless it be first caulked [anointed]? Or what castle or house is beautiful and serviceable when it has not been anointed? And what man, when he enters into this life or into the gymnasium, is not anointed with oil? And what work has either ornament or beauty unless it be anointed and burnished? Then the air and all that is under heaven is in a certain sort anointed by light and spirit; and you are unwilling to be anointed with the oil of God? Wherefore we are called Christians on this account, because we are anointed with the oil of God.” *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 1 ch.12 p.92. See also ibid book 1 ch.1 p.89.

Theophilus of Antioch (168-181/188 A.D.) And therefore it is proved that all others have been in error; and that we Christians alone have possessed the truth, in as much as we are taught by the Holy Spirit, who spoke in the holy prophets, and foretold all things. *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 2 ch.33 p.107

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) uses the word “Christian” 11 times. Here is one place: “Thus God and the Father are truly one and the same; He who was announced by the prophets, and handed down by the true Gospel; whom we Christians worship and love with the whole heart, as the Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things therein.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.10.5 p.426

**Minucius Felix** (210 A.D.) “How beautiful is the spectacle to God when a Christian does battle with pain; when he is drawn up against threats, and punishments, and tortures; when, mocking the noise of death, he treads under foot the horror of the executioner; when he raises up his liberty against kings and princes, and yields to God alone, whose he is; when, triumphant and victorious, he tramples upon the very man who has pronounced sentence against him! For he has conquered who has obtained that for which he contends. What soldier would not provoke peril with greater boldness under the eyes of his general? For no one receives a reward before his trial, and yet the general does not give what he has not: he cannot preserve life, but he can make the warfare glorious. But God’s soldier is neither forsaken in suffering, nor is brought to an end by death. Thus the Christian may seem to be miserable; he cannot be really found to be so.” *The Octavius of Minucius Felix* ch.37 p.196

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-217/220 A.D.) “Virtue is a will in conformity to God and Christ in life, rightly adjusted to life everlasting. For the life of Christians, in which we are now trained, is a system of reasonable actions-that is, of those things taught by the Word-an unfailing energy which we have called faith.” *The Instructor* book 1 ch.13 p.235

**Tertullian** (205 A.D.) “For he who confesses himself to be what he is, that is, a Christian, confesses that likewise by which he is it, that is, Christ. Therefore he who has denied that he is a Christian, has denied in Christ, by denying that Christ is in him, while He denies that he is in Christ, he will deny Christ too.” *Scorpiace* ch.9 p.642

Tertullian (205 A.D.) “Therefore it will be to no purpose to say, ‘Though I shall deny that I am a Christian, I shall not be denied by Christ, for I have not denied Himself.’ For even so much will be inferred from that denial, by which, seeing he denies Christ in him by denying that he is a Christian, he has denied *Christ* Himself also.” *Scorpiace* ch.9 p.642

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) (implied) “Because, after all, the earliest Christians are found on the side of the Creator, not of Marcion, all nations being called to His kingdom, from the fact that God set up that kingdom from the tree (of the cross), when no Cerdon was yet born, much less a Marcion.” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 3 ch.21 vol.3 p.339

Tertullian (198-220 A.D.) “…and great facts and records of the Christian religion…” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 4 ch.4 p.349

Tertullian was a Montanist later in his life, but in *CB* p.120 David L. Dungan throws Montanus in with Marcion, Valentinus, and others.

**Commodianus** (c.240 A.D.) “The law is our field; whoever does good in it, assuredly the Ruler Himself will afford a true repose, for the tares are burned with fire. If, therefore, you think that under one they are delaying, you are wrong. I designate you as barren Christians; cursed was the fig-tree without fruit in the word of the Lord, and immediately it withered away. Ye do not works; ye prepare no gift for the treasury, and yet re thus vainly think to deserve well of the Lord.” *Instructions of Commodianus* ch.55 p.213

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) “Moreover, since he frequently calls the Christian doctrine a secret system (of belief), we must confute him on this point also, since almost the entire world is better acquainted with what Christians preach than with the favourite opinions of philosophers. For who is ignorant of the statement that Jesus was born of a virgin, and that He was crucified, and that His resurrection is an article of faith among many, and that a general judgment is announced to come, in which the wicked are to be punished according to their deserts, and the righteous to be duly rewarded? And yet the mystery of the resurrection, not being understood, is made a subject of ridicule among unbelievers.” *Origen Against Celsus* book 1 ch.7 p.399

**Novatian** (250-254/257 A.D.) (implied) mentions that some claim the name of Christian falsely. “Nor yet are there wanting, among such things, those who, although they have claimed to themselves the sound of the Christian name, afford instances and teachings of intemperance; whose vices have come even to that pitch, that while fasting they drink in the early morning, not thinking it Christian to drink after meat, unless the wine poured into their empty and unoccupied veins should have gone down directly after sleep: for they seem to have less relish of what they drink if food be mingled with the wine.” *On Jewish Meats* ch.6 p.649

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “Why is he who does not altogether trust in Christ named and called a Christian? The name of Pharisee is more fitting for you.” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 8 ch.12 p.479

**Firmilian of Caesarea** to Cyprian (256 A.D.) “But if this unity which cannot be separated and divided at all, is itself also among heretics, why do we contend any more? Why do we call them heretics and not Christians? Moreover, since we and heretics have not one God, nor one Lord, nor one Church, nor one faith, nor even one Spirit, nor one body, it is manifest that neither can baptism be common to us with heretics, since between us there is nothing at all in common.” *Epistles of Cyprian* letter 74 ch.26 p.397

**Seventh Council of Carthage** (258 A.D.) p.568 “Another Secundinus of Carpi said: Are heretics Christians or not? If they are Christians, why are they not in the Church of God? If they are not Christians, how come they to make Christians? Or whither will tend the Lord’s discourse, when He says, ‘He that is not with me is against me, and he who gathereth not with me scattereth?’ Whence it appears plain that upon strange children, and on the offspring of Antichrist, the Holy Ghost cannot descend only by imposition of hands, since it is manifest that heretics have not baptism.”

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) “Moreover, I testified openly that I worshipped the only true God and none other, and that I could neither alter that position nor ever cease to be a Christian.” Epistle 10 ch.4 p.105. See also Epistle 10 ch.4 p.104.

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) asks Megethius that if he could show who Paul was, would Megethius become a Christian. Megethius says that he already is a Christian, but Adamantius denies that Megethius is one. Here are the quotes. “AD. If now I should show that he [Paul] was not present [at the crucifixion], but even persecuted the members of the Church after this, would you become a Christian?” “MEG. But surely I *am* a Christian?” “AD. How can you be a Christian when you did not condescend to bear the name of Christian? You do not call yourself a Christian, but a Marcionite.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* first part ch.8e p.46

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) “For it is not enough for a tree to live and to have no fruit, even as it is not enough to be called a Christian and to confess Christ, but not to have Himself in our work, that is, not to do His precepts.” *Commentary on the Apocalypse* from the third chapter ch.2 p.347. For “Christian people” see *Commentary on the Apocalypse* from the fifth chapter no.8,9 p.350.

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) “If we must understand by pearls the glorious and divine teachings, and by swine those who are given up to impiety and pleasures, from whom are to be withheld and hidden the apostle’s teachings, which stir men up to piety and faith in Christ, see how you say that no Christians can be converted from their impiety by the teachings of the apostles. For they would never cast the mysteries of Christ to those who, through want: of faith, are like swine.” *Extracts from the Work on Things Created* ch.1 p.379

**Lactantius** (c.303-320/325 A.D.) “But all of these, ensnared by frauds of demons, which they ought to have foreseen and guarded against, by their carelessness lost the name and worship of God. For when they are called Phrygians, or Novarians, or Valentinians, or Marcionites, or Anthropians, or Arians, or by any other name they have ceased to be Christians, who have lost the name of Christ, and assumed human and external names.” *The Divine Institutes* book 4 ch.30 p.133

Lactantius (c.303-320/325 A.D.) “The mother of Galerius, a woman exceedingly superstitious, was a votary of the gods of the mountains. Being of such a character, she made sacrifices almost every day, and she feasted her servants on the meat offered to idols: but the Christians of her family would not partake of those entertainments; and while she feasted with the Gentiles, they continued in fasting and prayer.” *Manner in Which the Persecutors Died* ch.11 p.305

**Alexander of Alexandria** (313-326 A.D.) “For it becomes us as Christians to turn with aversion from all who speak or think against Christ, as the adversaries of God and the destroyers of souls, and ‘not even to wish them Godspeed, lest at any time we become partakers of their evil deeds,’ as the blessed John enjoins.” *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* Epistle 1 ch.6 p.298.

Early Christians were pretty clear on what was a Christian and what made someone not a Christian. Unfortunately there were some schism among genuine Christians, Tertullian and the Montanists, the Novationists, and later the Donatists. But all of these groups are crystal-clear that Marcion, Valentinus, and other Gnostics were not Christians. But David L. Dungan does not see it that way.

## 1.4 A Sampling of What Early Christians Said About Marcion

Was Marcion considered a “fellow Christian” albeit with some differences in belief? Judge for yourselves.

**Justin Martyr** (c.150 A.D.) says the devils put forward Marcion of Pontus. *First Apology of Justin Martyr* ch.58 p.182

**Dionysius of Corinth** (170 A.D.) wrote in a lost work refuting Marcion, according to Eusebius vol.8 preface p.765

**Hegesippus** (170-180 A.D.) listed 11 heresies of the following: Simon, Cleobius, Doritheus, Gorthaeus, Masbothaeus, Menandrianists [Menander], Marcionists [Marcion], Carpocratians [Carpocrates], Valentinians [Valentinus], Basilidians [Basilides], Saturnilians [Saturnilus]. *Concerning His Journey to Rome* (*ANF* vol.8) p.764 From *Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History* book 4 ch.22 p.198-200

**Rhodon** (c.180 A.D.) mentions the heretics Apelles, Potitus, Basilicus, and Marcion. *Rhodon fragment* *Ante-Nicene Fathers* vol.8 p.766.

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) The Encratites (meaning self-controlled) came from Saturninus and Marcion. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 1 ch.28.1 p.353

Irenaeus mentions Cerdo, and his successor Marcion. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.4 p.417

**The Muratorian Canon** (190-217 A.D.) p.604 is against Arsinous, Valentinus, Miltiades, Marcion, and Basilides as rejected.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) uses the term Gnostic in a positive sense, but he “co-opts” the name, because Orthodox Christians are the true Gnostics. *Stromata* book 2 ch.11 p.359 and book 4 ch.22 p.434-435. However, Clement is against Basilides, Valentinus in *Stromata* book 2 ch.8 p.355-356. Clement is against Marcionites in *Stromata* book 3 ch.3 p.383.

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) “On this false principle it was that Marcion actually chose to believe that He was a phantom, denying to Him the reality of a perfect body.” *Treatise on the Soul* ch.17 p.197

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) “Marcion, I pity you; your labour has been in vain. For the Jesus Christ who appears in your Gospel is mine.” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 4 ch.43 p.423

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) has the entire work: *Tertullian’s Five Books Against Marcion.* “For indeed the notorious Philumena persuaded Apelles and the other seceders from Marcion rather to believe that Christ did really carry about a body of flesh; not derived to Him, however, from birth, but one which He borrowed from the elements. Now, as Marcion was apprehensive that a belief of the fleshly body would also involve a belief of birth, undoubtedly He who seemed to be man was believed to be verily and indeed born.” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 3 ch.11 p.330

**Asterius Urbanus** (c.232 A.D.) speaks of the heresy of Marcion and Marcionites. They alleged “a great multitude of martyrs for Christ, yet they do not confess Christ Himself according to the truth.” fragment 6 p.337

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) discusses Marcion and other heretics. *Refutation of All Heresies* book 7 ch.17-19 p.110-113

**Julius Africanus** (235-245 A.D.) mentions the followers of Marcion. *Five Books of the Chronology of Julius Africanus* ch.18.4 p.137.

**Origen** (c.240 A.D.) speaks against Marcion, Basilides, and Valentinus. *Homilies on Jeremiah* homily 10 ch.5 p.99

Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) mentions Apelles the disciple of Marcion in *Origen Against Celsus* book 5 ch.54 p.567.

Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) “Of those, then, who seek to enter in, those who are not able to enter will not be able to do so, because the gates of Hades prevail against them; but in the case of those against whom the gates of Hades will not prevail, those seeking to enter in will be strong, being able to do all things, in Christ Jesus, who strengtheneth them. Of those, then, who seek to enter in, those who are not able to enter will not be able to do so, because the gates of Hades prevail against them; but in the case of those against whom the gates of Hades will not prevail, those seeking to enter in will be strong, being able to do all things, in Christ Jesus, who strengtheneth them. And in like manner each one of those who are the authors of any evil opinion has become the architect of a certain gate of Hades; but those who co-operate with the teaching of the architect of such things are servants and stewards, who are the bond-servants of the evil doctrine which goes to build up impiety. And though the gates of Hades are many and almost innumerable, no gate of Hades will prevail against the rock or against the church which Christ builds upon it. Notwithstanding, these gates have a certain power by which they gain the mastery over some who do not resist and strive against them; but they are overcome by others who, because they do not turn aside from Him who said, ‘I am the door,’ have rased [razed] from their soul all the gates of Hades. And this also we must know that as the gates of cities have each their own names, in the same way the gates of Hades might be named after the species of sins; so that one gate of Hades is called ‘fornication,’ through which fornicators go, and another ‘denial,’ through which the deniers of God go down into Hades. And likewise already each of the heterodox and of those who have begotten any ‘knowledge which is falsely so called,’ has built a gate of Hades-Marcion one gate, and Basilides another, and Valentinus another. “ *Commentary on Matthew* book 12 ch.12 p.457

Origen (239-242 A.D.) speaks against Marcion and Valentinus, calling them heretics. *Homilies on Ezekiel* homily 7 ch.3.1 p.101 and homily 7 ch.4.2 p.103

Origen (239-242 A.D.) speaks against Marcion. *Homilies on Ezekiel* homily 8 ch.2.3 p.112-113

**Cyprian of Carthage** (256 A.D.) “it is no pleasure to speak of that which one either dreads or is ashamed to know, let us examine in the meantime about Marcion alone” *Epistles of Cyprian* Letter 72 ch.5 p.380

**Firmilian** (c.246-258 A.D.) in his letter to Cyprian mentions the heretics Marcion, Valentinus, Cerdo, Apelles, Basilides in *Letter 74* p.390

Saturninus of Thucca at the **Seventh Council of Carthage** (258 A.D.) p.579 mentions Marcion and those who approve of Marcion’s baptism.

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) *Dialogue on the True Faith* disputes against Megethius in part 1 p.35-76. He dispute against the Marcionite Marcus in the second part p.77-109.

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) “They say, like Sabellios [Sabellius] that the Almighty Person of the Father Himself suffered.” Methodius mentions Artemas, Ebionites, Marcion, Valentinus, Elkaisites. Jesus did not only come in appearance. *The Banquet of the Ten Virgins* book 8 ch.10 p.338

**Lactantius** (c.303-320/325 A.D.) (partial) “For when they are called Phrygians, or Novarians, or Valentinians, or Marcionites, or Anthropians, or Arians, or by any other name they have ceased to be Christians, who have lost the name of Christ, and assumed human and external names. Therefore it is the Catholic Church alone which retains true worship.” *The Divine Institutes* book 4 ch.30 p.133

# 2. Pre-Nicene Christians and the Canon of the New Testament

## 2.1 What David L. Dungan Claimed about the Canon

David L. Dungan is trying to separate “scripture” which he thinks of as religious texts, with “canon” which is thinks is a government-organized or enforced rule of what scripture is.

*CB* p.133 “This huge mass of growing, evolving, traditional material illustrates my contention in Chapter One that *scripture* is a boundless, living mass of heterogeneous sacred texts found in many religions of the world. [27] These *scriptures* are very different from *canons of scripture*, which are brought into being by government officials legalizing the choice of a particular collection of scripture. Comparisons with other scriptures and other canons allow us to recognize that the Christian *canonization* process involved a governmental intrusion into what had been a *scripture selection process*, which grew naturally out of the Greek schools, and the Greek philosophical quest for authentic writings of a school’s founder and accurate interpretations of them.”

In my opinion, David does not realize, or accept, that Scripture is God’s Word to us. We will look closely in later sections how early Christians viewed the collections of included and excluded books of scripture, long before any friendly government forces got involved.

*CB* p.138 “It is not accident that it is primarily in modern America that the most persistent, creative, and important proposals for alternatives to traditional Christian and Jewish and Muslim belief, practice, *and scripture* have appeared. Many scholars and laypeople strongly agree that ‘the Christian [and Jewish] canon is obsolete.’ [33]”

… I [Dungan] would propose this correction to our modern rejection of the scriptural canon; freedom from having a *canon*, i.e., from restriction to a specific set of writings compelled by the use of force, need not and should not extend to jettisoning, at the same time, the valuable results of the original orthodox Christian *scripture selection process* as described by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*.”

p.209 footnote 33. “For a typically scintillating presentation of this idea, with bibliography, see Robert W. Funk, ‘The Once and Future New Testament,’ in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, p.541-57.

In *CB* p.138 says “scholars and laypeople …” but he does not say that genuine Christians believed this. So technically, we have to give Dungan credit for being correct here.

In *CB* p.24 David L. Dungan says 1,2 Timothy, Titus are by pseudo-Paul. So Dungan acknowledges that he does not believe these are by the apostle Paul. I am not sure if he would say these are scripture (he might), but he does not affirm they are by the apostle Paul or given by God.

“The oldest example of the new trend toward written church regulations are the late first-century pseudo-Pauline epistles known to us as the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus) … Closely related to the Pastoral Epistles, in spirit if not in content, is the late first-century church order having the title *Teaching of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations*, or simply *Didache* (Greek for ‘teaching’).”

In *CB* p.120 The book eventually known as the New Testament

“If Marcion, Montanus, Valentinus, and others had not freely and vociferously challenged the orthodox Catholics, compelling Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius to respond to their accusations about the true apostolic writings and their correct interpretations – and thus goading the forces of orthodoxy into sustained efforts to provide the validity of the orthodox use and interpretation of scripture - we would not have the many attempts to defend and explain the selection of Christian scripture eventually known as the New Testament, nor the Creed, nor above all the invaluable history of the scripture selection process written by Eusebius. All of the competing collections of scripture – Marcion’s tiny scripture comes immediately to mind – forced the orthodox scholars to justify their rejection of selections like his.” P.120

*CB* p.129 Difference between scripture and a canon of scripture

*CB* p.129 “If used to be the custom to point to the “Council of Jamnia” as the occasion when the Hebrew Bible was “canonized.” No longer. The scholarly consensus has gone through a sea-change in understanding, largely because of the devastating critiques of the Jamnia hypothesis brought forward by two scholars, Jack P. Lewis [10] and Sid Z. Leiman. [11]. However, “shedding the Jamnia mentality has not been easy.” [12] I suggested in Chapter One that this was because biblical scholars were ignorant of the comparative religions evidence concerning the enormous difference between *scripture* and a *canon* of scripture. As far as Judaism is concerned, there is no evidence that the Hebrew *scriptures* were ever *canonized*. Christian scholars invented the canonization event called “the Council of Jamnia” and described it in terms resembling a Christian council. The evidence from Qumran vindicated Lewis and Leiman, so that today scholars like J. VanderKam can categorically assert: ‘As nearly as we can tell, there was *no canon* of scripture in the Second Temple Judaism.” [13] C. A. Evans agrees: ‘From the sources we possess, it is not possible to deduce the precise boundaries of the ‘canon’ of Jesus … or of anyone else in the early first century.” [14]

[10] Jack P. Lewis “Questioning the Consensus” in The Canon Debate (ed. McDonald and Sanders) p.126-162 “What Do We Mean by Jabneh” JBR (1964) p.125-132.

[11] Sid Z. Leiman, ed., *The Canon and the Masorah of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Ktav 1974) Sid Z. Leiman, ed. The Canonization of the Hebrew Scripture: The Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence …

[12] J.A. Sanders “The Issue of Closure in the Canonical Process” in The Canon Debate (ed. McDonald and Sanders) … (this quote is from p.253)

13. See J.C. VanderKam, Questions of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls” in ibid 91.

14. See C. A. Evans “The Scriptures of Jesus and His Earliest Followers” in ibid p.185.

Excuse me, but Jewish people today, and throughout history, would recognize the Tanakh, which Christians call the Old Testament. Even the Christian *The Muratorian Canon* (190-217 A.D.) p.603 mentions “the Old Testament scriptures”

## 2.2 What Pre-Nicene Christians said about “Canon”, Both the Word and Concept

Admittedly Dungan is correct that early Christians did not use the exact term “canon of sacred scripture”. However, Tertullian discussed the “canon” of scripture.

**Tertullian** (213 A.D.) said, “After the ancient examples of the patriarchs, let us equally pass on to the ancient documents of the legal Scriptures, that we may treat in order of all our canon. ... If, then, forasmuch as there is in the law a precept that a man is to take in marriage the wife of his brother if he have died without children, for the purpose of raising up seed to his brother; and this may happen repeatedly to the same person, according to that crafty question of the Sadducees; men for that reason think that frequency of marriage is permitted in other cases as well: it will be their duty to understand first the reason of the precept itself; and thus they will come to know that that reason, now ceasing, is among those parts of the law which have been cancelled.” (Deuteronomy 25:5-6) *On Monogamy* ch.7 p.63-64

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) in discussing the canon of scripture vs. what Marcion accepts, discusses Paul being the author of Galatians, Corinthians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Ephesians, Romans, and John being the author of the Apocalypse (Revelation) in *Five Books Against Marcion* book 4 ch.5 p.350.

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) asks Marcion why he rejects as scripture the apostle’s two letters to Timothy and one to Titus. *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.21 p.473.

**Tertullian** (c.213 A.D.) discusses in detail Genesis 2:21,23; 3:5,19; 4:10 then says, “This is the answer I should give in defence of the Scriptures before us, for seeming here to set forth the formation of the heaven and the earth,...” *Against Hermogenes* ch.32 p.495. See also *Against Praxeas* (c.213 A.D.) ch.12 p.607 (Genesis 1:3) ch.13 p.608 (Genesis 19:24).

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

**Caius** (190-217 A.D.) “The sacred Scriptures they have boldly falsified, and the canons of the ancient faith they have rejected, and Christ they have ignored, not inquiring what the sacred Scriptures say, but laboriously seeking to discover what form of syllogism might be contrived to establish their impiety. And should any one lay before them a word of divine Scripture, they examine whether it will make a connected or disjoined form of syllogism;” ch.3 p.602

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (202 A.D.) quotes 1 Timothy 6:20,21 as by Timothy. Then he says, “Convicted by this utterance, the heretics reject the Epistles to Timothy.” *Stromata* book 2 ch.11 p.359

The “divine scripture” is the Old and New Testament.

Dionysius bishop of Rome (259-269 A.D.) “For the doctrine of the foolish Marcion, which cuts and divides the monarchy into three elements, is assuredly of the devil, and is not of Christ’s true disciples… For these [true disciples] indeed rightly know that the Trinity is declared in the divine Scripture, but that the doctrine that there are three gods is neither taught in the Old nor the New Testament.” *Dionysius of Rome Against the Sabellians* ch.1 p.365

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) “I accept all the canonical [scriptures]. *Dialogue on the True Faith* 5th part ch.e19 p.173. See also ibid fourth part ch.424a p.129 on Genesis 1:2.

This sounds like the Gospels are as canonical as the Law and the Prophets.

Adamantius(c.300 A.D.) “he who does not accept the Law and the Prophets does not accept the Gospel either.” Adamantius is debating Megethius the Marcionite. *Dialogue on the True Faith* Second part ch.10 p.87. See also ibid part 2 867a 12 p.100.

Adamantius (c.300 A.D.) From what Scriptures do you propose to prove this?” *Dialogue on the True Faith* Second part ch.10 p.87

Adamantius (c.300 A.D.) “Let us be guided by the Scriptures!” *Dialogue on the True Faith* Fifth part b 15 p.167

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) “And the books of the Old Testament that are received are twenty-four” *Commentary on the Apocalypse* from the four chapter no.8 p.349

## 2.3 Pre-Nicene Christians who recognized the “New Testament” by that term

This section show that many early Christians not only referred to and quoted from the New Testament, but the called it “The New Testament” long before the time of Constantine. Despite this, David Dungan says that early Christian quoted from “the book eventually known as the New Testament.” *CB* p.120. This is central to Dungan’s argument that while the various New Testament scriptures existed, there was no canon of the New Testament until the time of Constantine. This section proves his key point as incorrect.

**Justin Martyr** (c.138-165 A.D.) mentions “how the New Testament, which God formerly announced” *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* ch.51 p.221.

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) mentions the New Testament in *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 5 ch.34.1 p.563, and the Old Testament on p.564

Irenaeus of Lyons (c.160-202 A.D.) mentions the “New Testament”. *Proof of Apostolic Preaching* ch.91.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “For God is the cause of all good things; but of some primarily, as of the Old and the New Testament; and of others by consequence, as philosophy.” *Stromata* book 1 ch.5 p.305

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) mentions the New Testament in *An Answer to the Jews* ch.6 p.157.

Tertullian (208-220 A.D.) uses the term “New Testament”. *Tertullian on Modesty* ch.6 p.76

Tertullian (c.213 A.D.) “He is clearly defined to us in all Scriptures-in the Old Testament as the Christ of God, in the New Testament as the Son of God.” *Against Praxeas* ch.24 p.620

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) mentions the New Testament in *Tertullian’s Five Books Against Marcion* book 4 ch.1 p.346.

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) “Our denial of his existence will be all the more peremptory, because of the fact that the attribute which is alleged in proof of it belongs to that God who has been already revealed. Therefore the ‘New Testament’ will appertain to none other than Him who promised it - if not ‘its letter’, yet ‘its spirit;’ and herein will lie it *newness*.” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.11 p.452

**Asterius Urbanus** (c.232 A.D.) was fearful in writing lest anyone think he was trying to “add some new word or precept to the doctrine of the gospel of the New Testament”. *The Exordium* fragment 1 vol.7 p.335

Asterius Urbanus (c.232 A.D.) mentions “the Old Testament prophets, or any of the New”. from book 3 ch.9 p.337.

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) mentions the New Testament of our Savior in *Commentary on Genesis* 49:12-15 p.165.

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) spoke of the New Testament and said there were only four gospels. *Origen’s Commentary on John* book 1 ch.1 p.299.

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) mentions the Old and New Testaments in *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.4 p.348.

**Novatian** (250/4-256/7 A.D.) mentions the Old and New Testaments in *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* ch.17 p.627 and ch.30 p.642-643.

***Treatise on Rebaptism*** (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.13 p.675 “plain that he is a heretic who believes on another God, or receives another Christ than Him whom the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament manifestly declare.”

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) mentions the Old Testament referring as we would understand it in many places. He says, “That another Prophet such as Moses was promised, to wit, one who should give a New Testament, and who rather ought to be heard.” Then he quotes Deuteronomy 18:18,19 as Deuteronomy. *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 12 18 p.512

The “divine scripture” is the Old and New Testament.

**Dionysius bishop of Rome** (259-269 A.D.) “For the doctrine of the foolish Marcion, which cuts and divides the monarchy into three elements, is assuredly of the devil, and is not of Christ’s true disciples… For these [true disciples] indeed rightly know that the Trinity is declared in the divine Scripture, but that the doctrine that there are three gods is neither taught in the Old nor the New Testament.” *Dionysius of Rome Against the Sabellians* ch.1 p.365

Alexander of Lycopolis (301 A.D.) (partial, old and New scriptures) “These men, taking to themselves the Old and New Scriptures, though they lay it down that these are divinely inspired, draw their own opinions from thence; and then only think they are refuted, when it happens that anything not in accordance with these is said or done by them.” *Of the Manichaeans* ch.5 p.243

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) mentions the Old and New Testaments in his *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John* ch.15 (2nd time) p.345

**Lactantius** (c.303-320/325 A.D.) “But all Scripture is divided into two Testaments. That which preceded the advent and passion of Christ-that is, the law and the prophets-is called the Old; but those things which were written after His resurrection are named the New Testament.” *The Divine Institutes* book 4 ch.20 p.122

Lactantius (c.303-c.325 A.D.) “After He had risen again on the third day, He gathered together His apostles, whom fear, at the time of His being laid hold on, had put to flight; and while He sojourned with them forty days, He opened their hearts, interpreted to them the Scripture, which hitherto had been wrapped up in obscurity, ordained and fitted them for the preaching of His word and doctrine, and regulated all things concerning the institutions of the New Testament; and this having been accomplished, a cloud and whirlwind enveloped Him, and caught Him up from the sight of men unto heaven.” *Manner in Which the Persecutors Died* ch.2 p.311

**Alexander of Alexandria** (321 A.D.) “And besides the pious opinion concerning the Father and the Son, we confess to one Holy Spirit, as the divine Scriptures teach us; who hath inaugurated both the holy men of the Old Testament, and the divine teachers of that which is called the New.” *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* Letter 1 ch.12 p.296

**Among heretics**

**Mani** (262-278 A.D.) said we are not to follow the Law and the Prophets, just the New Testament. *Disputation with Manes* ch.13 p.188

## 2.4 Pre-Nicene Christians who recognized the “Old Testament” by that term

If early Christians had the concept of the “New Testament”, then shouldn’t they also have the concept of the “Old Testament”? – of course. Even early Christians who only mentioned by Old Testament imply that there is another “New” testament too.

**Melito of Sardis** (170-177/180 A.D.) mentions the “Old Testament” and lists the books in fragment 4 from the *Book of Extracts* vol.8 p.759

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) mentions the New Testament in *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 5 ch.34.1 p.563, and the Old Testament on p.564

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) p.603 mentions the Old Testament.

**Tertullian** (c.213 A.D.) “He is clearly defined to us in all Scriptures-in the Old Testament as the Christ of God, in the New Testament as the Son of God.” *Against Praxeas* ch.24 p.620

**Asterius Urbanus** (c.232 A.D.) mentions “the Old Testament prophets, or any of the New”. from book 3 ch.9 p.337.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “We must know, then, that if Paul is ‘young in respect to time’ -having flourished immediately after the Lord’s ascension-yet his writings depend on the Old Testament, breathing and speaking of them.” *Stromata* book 4 ch.21 p.434. See also *Stromata* book 1 ch.5 p.305.

Clement of Alexandria (193-202 A.D.) “For God is the cause of all good things; but of some primarily, as of the Old and the New Testament; and of others by consequence, as philosophy.” *Stromata* book 1 ch.5 p.305

**Commodianus** (c.240 A.D.) “The first law of God is the foundation of the subsequent law. Thee, indeed, it assigned to believe in the second law. Nor are threats from Himself, but from it, powerful over thee. Now astounded, swear that thou wilt believe in Christ; for the Old Testament proclaims concerning Him. For it is needful only to believe in Him who was dead, to be able to rise again to live for all time.” *Instructions of Commodianus* ch.25 p.207

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) refers to the “Old Testament” in *Origen Against Celsus* book 7 ch.24 p.620. He mentions the Old and New Testaments in *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.4 p.348.

**Novatian** 254-256 A.D. “But of this I remind *you*, that Christ was not to be expected in the Gospel in any other wise than as He was promised before by the Creator, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament; especially as the things that were predicted of Him were fulfilled, and those things that were fulfilled had been predicted.” *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* ch.10 p.619. See also, He was promised before by the Creator, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament” *Treatise on the Trinity* ch.10 p.619

Novatian (250/4-256/7 A.D.) mentions the Old and New Testaments in *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* ch.17 p.627 and ch.30 p.642-643.

***Treatise on Rebaptism*** (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.13 p.675 “plain that he is a heretic who believes on another God, or receives another Christ than Him whom the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament manifestly declare.”

*Treatise on Rebaptism* (250-258 A.D.) ch.12 p.674 “as it likewise has not upon the Jews who only receive the Old Testament Scriptures.”

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) mentions the Old Testament referring as we would understand it in many places. He says, “That another Prophet such as Moses was promised, to wit, one who should give a New Testament, and who rather ought to be heard.” Then he quotes Deuteronomy 18:18,19 as Deuteronomy. *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 12 18 p.512

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**Dionysius bishop of Rome** (259-269 A.D.) “For the doctrine of the foolish Marcion, which cuts and divides the monarchy into three elements, is assuredly of the devil, and is not of Christ’s true disciples… For these [true disciples] indeed rightly know that the Trinity is declared in the divine Scripture, but that the doctrine that there are three gods is neither taught in the Old nor the New Testament.” *Dionysius of Rome Against the Sabellians* ch.1 p.365

**Anatolius of Alexandria** (270-280 A.D.) quotes from the Old Testament to prove his case. “Accordingly, it is not the case, as certain calculators of Gaul allege, that this assertion is opposed by that passage in Exodus, where we read: ‘In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.’ From this they maintain that it is quite permissible to celebrate the Passover on the twenty-first day of the moon; understanding that if the twenty-second day were added, there would be found eight days of unleavened bread. A thing which cannot be found with any probability, indeed, in the Old Testament, as the Lord, through Moses, gives this charge: ‘Seven days ye shall eat unleavened bread.’” ch.8 p.148

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) compares Mt 5:39 and Isaiah 66:5 in the “Old Scripture” and “But giving to the poor is not a new teaching, for it was commanded in the Old Testament:” and quotes Proverbs 3:27 (Septuagint) (Adamantius is speaking) *Dialogue on the True Faith* second part 15c-d p.94.

Alexander of Lycopolis (301 A.D.) (partial, old and New scriptures) “These men, taking to themselves the Old and New Scriptures, though they lay it down that these are divinely inspired, draw their own opinions from thence; and then only think they are refuted, when it happens that anything not in accordance with these is said or done by them.” *Of the Manichaeans* ch.5 p.243

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) “And the books of the Old Testament that are received are twenty-four” *Commentary on the Apocalypse* from the four chapter no.8 p.349

Victorinus of Petau (martyred 304 A.D.) mentions the Old and New Testaments in his *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John* ch.15 (2nd time) p.345

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) mentions the Old Testament in *The Banquet of the Ten Virgins* discourse 10 ch.2 p.348.

**Lactantius** (c.303-320/325 A.D.) “But all Scripture is divided into two Testaments. That which preceded the advent and passion of Christ-that is, the law and the prophets-is called the Old; but those things which were written after His resurrection are named the New Testament.” *The Divine Institutes* book 4 ch.20 p.122

**Alexander of Alexandria** (321 A.D.) “And besides the pious opinion concerning the Father and the Son, we confess to one Holy Spirit, as the divine Scriptures teach us; who hath inaugurated both the holy men of the Old Testament, and the divine teachers of that which is called the New.” *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* Letter 1 ch.12 p.296

**Among heretics**

**Marinus** (c.300 A.D.) a Bardesene, in disputing with Adamantius, appealed to the “Old Testament” and referred to David as a prophet. *Dialogue on the True Faith* fifth part ch.862a 20 p.173

## 2.5 That there were Only Four True Gospels

**Ignatius of Antioch** (c.100-117 A.D.) (implied that everyone know what he meant by the gospel) “It is fitting, therefore, that ye should keep aloof from such persons, and not to speak of them either in private or in public, but to give heed to the prophets, and above all, to the Gospel, in which the passion [of Christ] has been revealed to us, and the resurrection has been fully proved.” *Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans* ch.7 p.89

On the other hand Ignatius of Antioch (c.100-117 A.D.) [partial, does not say the source was gospel or scripture] “When, for instance, He came to those who were with Peter, He said to them, 'Lay hold, handle Me, and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit.'” [This is from the Gospel of the Nazarenes according to Jerome.] *Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans* ch.3 and footnote 8 *ANF* vol.1 p.87

The heretic Tatian (-177 A.D.) wrote a harmony of the four gospels called the ***Diatessaron***, which means “the four”.

***Muratorian Canon*** (170-217 A.D.) Third book of the gospels is Luke. *Muratorian Canon* 1.

*Muratorian Canon* (170-217 A.D.) Fourth Gospel is that of John. *Muratorian Canon* 1.

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. … the ‘pillar and ground’ of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality on every side.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.11.8 p.428 (*CB* p.46 also agrees that Irenaeus emphasized just four gospels.)

X Contrary to this, **Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) quoted from the Gospel of the Egyptians, as the *Gospel of the Egyptians* in *Stromata* book 3 ch.9 p.392.

X Clement of Alexandria (193-202 A.D.) “So also in the Gospel to the Hebrews it is written, 'He that wonders shall reign, and he that has reigned shall rest.'” *Stromata* book 2 ch.9 p.358

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) “For we may venture to say that the Gospel is the first fruits of all the Scriptures.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.4 p.298. “Now the Gospels are four. These four are, as it were, the elements of the faith of the Church,...” Then he discusses John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.6 p.299. Also ch.6 p.300

Origen has two whole chapters on why the gospels and not other books are called that in *Commentary of John* book 1 ch.7,8. p.300,301

Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) mentions Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. *Origen Against Celsus* book 5 ch.56 p.568.

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) mentions four who preached the gospel, but they preached the same, so the four gospels are one gospel. “There are four gospels, but it is one gospel” *Dialogue on the True Faith* first part ch.6 p.43.

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) mentions the four Gospels, four rivers flowing in paradise, and other fours. *Commentary on the Creation of the World* p.341

**Methodius** (280-312 A.D.) “For which cause, also, four Gospels have been given, because God has four times given the Gospel to the human race,” *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* Discourse 10 ch.2 p.348

**Among heretics**

Mani (262-278 A.D.) (partial) mentions the gospels. *Disputation with Manes* ch.5 p.182

**X Megethius** (c.300 A.D.) a self-labeled follower of Marcion, in his debate with Adamantius rejects the four gospels. *Dialogue on the True Faith* first part ch.1 p.36

X Megethius (c.300 A.D.) “Neither are there four evangelists, for the Apostle says [Gal.1:7] : ‘which is not another [according to my gospel ,’[Gk], but there are some that trouble you and would divert (you) unto a different gospel of Christ.’” *Dialogue on the True Faith* first part ch.6 p.43

**After Nicea**

**Eusebius of Caesarea** (323-339/340 A.D.)”the ecclesiastical canon” which recognizes no other gospels but the four. Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History book 6 ch.25.

**Athanasius** (367 A.D.) “Again it is not tedious to speak of the [books] of the New Testament. These are, the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Afterwards, the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles (called Catholic), seven, viz. of James, one; of Peter, two; of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen Epistles of Paul, written in this order. The first, to the Romans; then two to the Corinthians; after these, to the Galatians; next, to the Ephesians; then to the Philippians; then to the Colossians; after these, two to the Thessalonians, and that to the Hebrews; and again, two to Timothy; one to Titus; and lastly, that to Philemon. And besides, the Revelation of John.” (Athanasius’ *Festal Letter 39* ch.5 p.552)

**Cheltenham Canon** (=Mommson Catalogue) (c.360-370 A.D.) mentions each of the four gospels, Acts, Paul’s letters, 1 Peter, 1 John, and Revelation.

**Cyril of Jerusalem** (c.349-386 A.D.) says only four gospels in Lecture 4 ch.36 p.27

**Epiphanius of Salamis** (360-403 A.D.) mentions as scripture the four gospels, 14 letters of Paul, James, Peter, John, Jude, Acts, Apocalypse of John, Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach (=Ecclesiasticus).

**Jerome** (317-420 A.D.) mentions by name the “New Testament”, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John as “the Lord’s team of four”, seven church letters of Paul, Hebrews, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Acts of the Apostles, seven epistles among James, Peter, John, and Jude, and the Apocalypse of John all in letter 53 ch.9 p.101-102.

**Augustine of Hippo** (388-430 A.D.) mentions the Epistles of Paul and then the four books of the Gospel. *On the Profit of Believing* ch.7 p.350

[others after Nicea too]

## 2.6 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Matthew through Revelation as scripture

While early Christians loved to quote scriptures in their (and our) New Testament, that alone would not prove they held those books as scripture, or in the canon. After all, on occasion they referred to other Christian writings, Greek philosophers, and Greek and Latin poets too, and that does not prove they thought those were scripture. This section contains only quotes or references where they said New Testament scriptures were “scripture”, “God said”, or “by the Lord”.

### 2.6.1 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Matthew specifically as Scripture

(Jesus / the Lord / the Savior said is not counted.)

*2 Clement* (120-140 A.D.) ch.13 p.254 (partial) quotes part of Matthew 9:13 and Luke 6:32 as Scripture. “An another Scripture saith, ‘I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.’” *2 Clement* also quotes Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13, in ch.16 p.252.

Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (partial) “It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. … the ‘pillar and ground’ of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality on every side.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.11.8 p.428

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “After abandoning idols, then, they will hear the Scripture, ‘Unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees’” [Matthew 5:20] *Stromata* book 6 ch.18 p.519

Clement of Alexandria (193-217/220 A.D.) quote a fourth of Matthew 15:14 as scripture. *The Instructor* book 1 ch.3 p.211

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) quotes Matthew 25:34; Revelation 22:15; Isaiah 66:24, and 1 Thessalonians 4:12 and then says, “These things, then I have set shortly before thee, O Theophilus, drawing them from Scripture itself, in order that, maintaining in faith what is written, and anticipating the things that are to be, thou mayest keep thyself void of offence both toward God and toward men,” *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* ch.67 p.219.

Hippolytus of Portus (222-235/236 A.D.) (partial, the Lord says) quotes Matthew 24:15 as the Lord says. *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* ch.62 p.217

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) “For we may venture to say that the Gospel is the first fruits of all the Scriptures.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.4 p.298. “Now the Gospels are four. These four are, as it were, the elements of the faith of the Church,...” Then he discusses John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.6 p.299. See also *Commentary on Matthew* ch.13 p.421.

Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) discusses in detail Matthew 18:23-34 as “scripture”. *Commentary on Matthew* book 14 ch.6 p.498

Origen (235 A.D.) calls Matthew 13:23, Mark 4:20, and Luke 8:25 scripture. *Exhortation to Martyrdom* ch.7.49 p.194

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) “But in what you have written to me you have made out very clearly, and with an intelligent understanding of the Holy Scriptures, that no very exact account seems to be offered in them of the hour at which He rose. For the evangelists have given different descriptions of the parties who came to the sepulchre one after another, and all have declared that they found the Lord risen already. It was ‘in the end of the Sabbath,’ as Matthew has said; it was ‘early, when it was yet dark,’ as John writes; it was ‘very early in the morning,’ as Luke puts it; and it was ‘very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun,’ as Mark tells us. Thus no one has shown us clearly the exact time when He rose.” *letter 5 to Bishop Basilides* canon 5 p.94

***Treatise on Rebaptism*** ch.1,2 p.668 (250-258 A.D.) “And therefore we shall, as is needful, collect into one mass whatever passages of the Holy Scriptures are pertinent to this subject.” Then in chapter 2 he quotes Matthew 3:11b and Acts 1:4,5 as Acts of the Apostles, Acts 11:15-17, Acts 15:5,8

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) “What has been reasonably stated in the Scriptures you want to interpret unreasonably. The Prophets and the Gospel plainly speak of two Advents of Christ - the first in humility, and the one after this, in glory. Isaiah spoke in this way of the first: [Isaiah 53:2-3] ... This is just what has been clearly indicated in the Gospel: that He came into Jerusalem, seated upon an ass.” [Matthew 21:7] (Adamantius is speaking) *Dialogue on the True Faith* ch.25 p.68-69

**Theophilus** (events c.315 A.D.) quotes Matthew 10:39 and Matthew 7:6 calling them Scripture. *Martyrdom of Habib the Deacon* vol.8 p.694

### 2.6.2 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Mark specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Also, towards the conclusion of his Gospel, Mark says : ‘So then, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God;’” [Mark 16:19] *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.10 verse 5. p.425

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) “It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. … the ‘pillar and ground’ of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality on every side.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.11.8 p.428

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) “But when the Word of God says, ‘No man knows the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him,’ He declares that no one can know God but by the help of divine grace coming from above, with a certain divine inspiration.” *Origen Against Celsus* book 7 ch.43 p.628

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) “Consider however, whether the divine Scriptures do not in many places teach this; as where the Saviour says, ‘Or have ye not read that which was spoken at the bush, I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. He is not God of the dead but of the living.’” [Mark 12:26] *Commentary on John* book 2 ch.10 p.333

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) “For we may venture to say that the Gospel is the first fruits of all the Scriptures.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.4 p.298. “Now the Gospels are found. These four are, as it were, the elements of the faith of the Church,...” Then he discusses John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.6 p.299

Origen (235 A.D.) calls Matthew 13:23, Mark 4:20, and Luke 8:25 scripture. *Exhortation to Martyrdom* ch.7.49 p.194

***Treatise on Rebaptism*** (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.14 p.675 “if a man should survive and amend his faith, as our God, in the Gospel according to Luke, spoke to His disciples, saying,” and quotes Luke 12:50. “Also, according to Mark He said, with the same purpose, to the sons of Zebedee:” and quotes Mark 10:38.

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) “It is something possible; for Mark makes mention of His saying, ‘Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee.’ [Mark 14:36]. And they are possible if He wills them; for Luke tells us that He said, ‘Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me.’ The Holy Spirit, therefore, apportioned among the evangelists, makes up the full account of our Saviour’s whole disposition by the expressions of these several narrators together. ... For this reason, the other scripture says, ‘All things are possible unto Thee.’” [Matthew 19:26] *Commentary on Luke* ch.12 verse 42 p.115

### 2.6.3 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Luke specifically as Scripture

(Jesus / the Lord / the Savior said is not counted.)

*2 Clement* (120-140 A.D.) ch.13 p.254 (partial) quotes part of Matthew 9:13 and Luke 6:32 as Scripture. “An another Scripture saith, ‘I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” *2 Clement* also quotes Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13, in ch.16 p.252.

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) quotes all of Luke 2:29-32 as scripture. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.16.4 p.441

**Muratorian Canon** 1. (190-217 A.D.) Third book of the gospels is Luke.

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) “For we may venture to say that the Gospel is the first fruits of all the Scriptures.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.4 p.298. “Now the Gospels are four. These four are, as it were, the elements of the faith of the Church,...” Then he discusses John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.6 p.299

Origen (235 A.D.) calls Matthew 13:23, Mark 4:20, and Luke 8:25 scripture. *Exhortation to Martyrdom* ch.7.49 p.194

***Treatise On Rebaptism*** (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.14 p.675 “if a man should survive and amend his faith, as our God, in the Gospel according to Luke, spoke to His disciples, saying,” and then quotes Luke 12:50.

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) “It is something possible; for Mark makes mention of His saying, ‘Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee.’ [Mark 14:36]. And they are possible if He wills them; for Luke tells us that He said, ‘Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me.’ The Holy Spirit, therefore, apportioned among the evangelists, makes up the full account of our Saviour’s whole disposition by the expressions of these several narrators together. ... For this reason, the other scripture says, ‘All things are possible unto Thee.’” [Matthew 19:26] *Commentary on Luke* ch.12 verse 42 p.115

Dionysius of Alexandria (246-265 A.D.) “But in what you have written to me you have made out very clearly, and with an intelligent understanding of the Holy Scriptures, that no very exact account seems to be offered in them of the hour at which He rose. For the evangelists have given different descriptions of the parties who came to the sepulchre one after another, and all have declared that they found the Lord risen already. It was ‘in the end of the Sabbath,’ as Matthew has said; it was ‘early, when it was yet dark,’ as John writes; it was ‘very early in the morning,’ as Luke puts it; and it was ‘very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun,’ as Mark tells us. Thus no one has shown us clearly the exact time when He rose.” *letter 5 to Bishop Basilides* canon 5 p.94

**Athanasius of Alexandria** (318 A.D.) quotes Luke 17:12 as scripture. *Against the Heathen* part 2 ch.30 p.20

### 2.6.4 Pre-Nicene Christian references to John specifically as Scripture

(Jesus / the Lord / the Savior said is not counted.)

**Muratorian Canon** 1. (190-217 A.D.) Fourth Gospel is that of John.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-217/220 A.D.) quotes John 21:4-5 as scripture. *The Instructor* book 1 ch.5 p.212

**Tertullian** (c.213 A.D.) “And the Scripture narrative goes on to explain in an exoteric manner, that ‘they understood not that He spake to them concerning the Father,’” [John 8:27] *Against Praxeas* ch.22 p.617. See also *Against Praxeas* ch.20 p.615; ch.23 p.619 [John 13:32].

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) “To explain this fully, and to justify the conduct of the Christians in refusing homage to any object except the Most High God, and the First-born of all creation, who is His Word and God, we must quote this from Scripture, ‘All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them;’ and again, ‘The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy;’” [John10:8-10] *Origen Against Celsus* book 7 ch.70 p.639

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) “For we may venture to say that the Gospel is the first fruits of all the Scriptures.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.4 p.298. “Now the Gospels are four. These four are, as it were, the elements of the faith of the Church,...” Then he discusses John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.6 p.299. See also *Commentary on John* book 6 no.2 p.351.

***Treatise on Rebaptism*** (250-258 A.D.) ch.2,3 p.668 “Even as the Holy Scriptures declare to us, from which we shall adduce evident proofs throughout each individual instance of those things which we shall narrate. (3) And to these things though perchance, who art bringing in some novelty, mayest immediately and impatiently replay, as though art wont, that the Lord said in the Gospel: ‘Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven.’” [John 3:3,5]

*Treatise on Rebaptism* (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.14 p.675 “as says the Scripture” and quotes John 7:38. He also quotes John 3:16 “even as God also says” in ch.13 p.765.

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) “But in what you have written to me you have made out very clearly, and with an intelligent understanding of the Holy Scriptures, that no very exact account seems to be offered in them of the hour at which He rose. For the evangelists have given different descriptions of the parties who came to the sepulchre one after another, and all have declared that they found the Lord risen already. It was ‘in the end of the Sabbath,’ as Matthew has said; it was ‘early, when it was yet dark,’ as John writes; it was ‘very early in the morning,’ as Luke puts it; and it was ‘very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun,’ as Mark tells us. Thus no one has shown us clearly the exact time when He rose.” *letter 5 to Bishop Basilides* canon 5 p.94

Dionysius of Alexandria (246-265 A.D.) “For which reason the Holy Scriptures, that indicate in many various ways the dire distressfulness of life, designate it as a valley of weeping. And most of all indeed is this world a scene of pain to the saints, to whom He addresses this word, and He cannot lie in uttering it: ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation.’” [John 16:33] *Commentary on Luke* ch.22 verse 46 p.116

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) quotes part of 1 Corinthians 1:24 as “The Apostle says”; John 1:3 as by “John the Evangelist”; Jeremiah 1:15 (Septuagint) as by Jeremiah, Psalm 118:73 (Septuagint) as by David, Genesis 2:7 as Genesis , and then says, “If then the Scriptures show that the Word of God moulded Man into a living creature, how is it that God accepts what is considered shameful (For you people claim that the Godhead can feel a sense of shame!), while you on your side disparage something higher and even more glorious?” *Dialogue on the True Faith* fourth part d 15 p.147.

**Athanasius of Alexandria** (318 A.D.) “more, seeing the power of the Word, we receive a knowledge also of His good Father, as the Saviour Himself says, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. But this all inspired Scripture also teaches more plainly and with more authority, so that we in our turn write boldly to you as we do, and you, if you refer to them, will be able to verify what we say.” *Athanasius Against the Heathen* ch.45 p.28

### 2.6.5 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Acts specifically as Scripture

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) *ANF* vol.5 ch.2 p.603 “Moreover, the Acts of the Apostles are comprised by Luke in one book,”

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) “quotes Jeremiah 23:18 and Acts 10:36 then immediately says, “These things then, brethren, are declared by the Scriptures.” *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* ch.13-14 p.228

***Treatise on Rebaptism*** ch.1,2 p.668 (250-258 A.D.) “And therefore we shall, as is needful, collect into one mass whatever passages of the Holy Scriptures are pertinent to this subject.” Then in chapter 2 he quotes Matthew 3:11b and Acts 1:4,5 as Acts of the Apostles, Acts 11:15-17, Acts 15:5,8

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “divine Scripture proves this, when it says, ‘But the multitude of them which believed were of one heart and of one soul.’ [Acts 4:32] And again: ‘These all continued with one mind in prayer with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren.’” [Acts 1:14] *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 1 ch.25 p.429

**Among heretics**

**X Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) in debating Adamantius Eutropius. Eutropius asks “Does your party, Marcus, accept the ‘Acts of the Apostles and those called Disciples’ as genuine, or not?” Marcus answers: We do not accept anything beyond the Gospel and the Apostle” *Dialogue on the True Faith* second part 828d p.90.

### 2.6.6 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Romans specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (implied) quotes Romans 1:1-4 as by Paul writing to the Romans. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.16.3 p.441. See also ibid book 3 ch.16.8 p.443.

Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) “And Paul likewise declares, ‘And so all Israel shall be saved;’ [Romans 11:26] but he has also said, that the law was our pedagogue [to bring us] to Christ Jesus. [Galatians 3:24]” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.2.7 p.465

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “‘With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Wherefore the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed; that is, the word of faith which we preach: for if thou confess the word with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.’” *Stromata* book 4 ch.16 p.427

**Tertullian** (207/208 A.D.) “Now (Marcion), since you have expunged so much from the Scriptures, why did you retain these words, as if they too were not the Creator’s words?” Then Tertullian quotes in order Romans 12:9; Psalm 34:14; Romans 12:10; Leviticus 19:18; Romans 12:12; Psalm 20:1; Romans 12:12; Romans 12:16; Isaiah 5:21; Romans 12:17; Leviticus 19:17,18; Romans 12:19; Romans 12:19 quoted from Deuteronomy 32:25; Romans 12:18; Romans 13:9. *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.14 p.460-461

Tertullian (c.213 A.D.) quotes Romans 8:11 discusses it, and then says, “Silence! Silence on such blasphemy. Let us be content with saying that Christ died, the Son of the Father; and *let this suffice*, because the Scriptures have told us so much.” *Against Praxeas* ch.29 p.625

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) quotes Romans 9:16 as “in Paul” [both Latin and Greek versions] *Origen Against Celsus* book 3 ch.1 p.307

+ Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Among heretics**

pseudo-Clement ***Two Epistles on Virginity*** (3rd century A.D.) Epistle 1 ch.8 p.58 quotes Romans 7:9 as scripture.

The heretic **Manes** (262-278 A.D.) accepts as scripture Archelaus quoting Romans 5:14. *Disputation with Manes* ch.29 p.202

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.7 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 1 Corinthians specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) “yet as to us ‘there are diversities of gifts, differences of administrations, and diversities of operations;’ and we, while upon the earth, as Paul also declares, ‘know in part, and prophesy in part.’” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 2 ch.28.7 p.401

Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (implied) quotes 1 Corinthians 8:14 as by Paul. *Irenaeus Fragment 26* p.574

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “Expressly then respecting all our Scripture, as if spoken in a parable, it is written in the Psalms, ‘Hear, O My people, My law: incline your ear to the words of My mouth. I will open My mouth in parables, I will utter My problems from the beginning.’ [Psalm 73:1,2] Similarly speaks the noble apostle to the following effect: ‘Howbeit we speak wisdom among those that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought. But we speak the wisdom of God hidden in a mystery; which none of the princes of this world knew. For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.’” [1 Corinthians 2:6-8] *Stromata* book 4 ch.4 p.450.

Clement of Alexandria (c.195 A.D.) calls 1 Corinthians 2:9a scripture. *Exhortation to the Heathen* ch.10 p.198

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) quotes part of 1 Corinthians 2:13 as Scripture in *The Refutation of All Heresies* book 7 ch.14 p.107.

**Origen** (c.240 A.D.) says that 1 Corinthians 3:6 is scripture. *Homilies on Jeremiah* homily 5 ch.13 p.56

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) calls 1 Corinthians 3:2-3 scripture. *Dialogue on the True Faith* first part ch.9c p.49-50

Adamantius (c.300 A.D.) quotes part of 1 Corinthians 1:24 as “The Apostle says”; John 1:3 as by “John the Evangelist”; Jeremiah 1:15 (Septuagint) as by Jeremiah, Psalm 118:73 (Septuagint) as by David, Genesis 2:7 as Genesis , and then says, “If then the Scriptures show that the Word of God moulded Man into a living creature, how is it that God accepts what is considered shameful (For you people claim that the Godhead can feel a sense of shame!), while you on your side disparage something higher and even more glorious?” *Dialogue on the True Faith* fourth part d 15 p.147.

**Among heretics**

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.8 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 2 Corinthians specifically as Scripture or God says

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) quotes 4/11 words changing “himself” to “devil” as scripture. *Stromata* book 6 ch.8 p.496

Clement of Alexandria (193-202 A.D.) quotes 2 Corinthians 7:1, 6:16,17,18 as God is speaking. *Stromata* book 4 ch.21 p.433

**Tertullian** (207/208 A.D.) in speaking of what the Creator says writes, “Of Israel he says, ‘Even unto this day the same veil is upon their heart;” [2 Corinthians 3:13] *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.11 p.453

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) “The Scriptures speak what is right; but Noetus is of a different mind from them.” ... He soon after quotes Ephesians 3:15 and 1 Corinthians 8:6. *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* ch.3 p.224

**Origen** quotes 2 Corinthians 4:17,18 as by Paul, in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians in *Origen Against Celsus* book 6 ch.19 p.582

+ Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) refers to many of Paul’s letters as scripture such as 2 Corinthians 1:20 in *Dialog of the True Faith* second part ch.867a p.99-100.

**Among heretics**

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.9 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Galatians specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) quoted all of Galatians 3:5-9 as scripture “in the Epistle to the Galatians” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.20.12 p.492

Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) “And Paul likewise declares, ‘And so all Israel shall be saved;’ [Romans 11:26] but he has also said, that the law was our pedagogue [to bring us] to Christ Jesus. [Galatians 3:24]” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.2.7 p.465

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) refers to Galatians 2:12 as by Paul in the Letter to the Galatians. *Origen Against Celsus* book 2 ch.1 p.429

+ Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) quotes Galatians 6:7 as scripture. *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part 824a p.81.

Adamantius (c.300 A.D.) refers to many of Paul’s letters as scripture such as Galatians 1 (Paul sent to the Galatians) on *Dialog of the True Faith* first part p.44

**Among heretics**

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.10 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Ephesians specifically as Scripture

**Polycarp** (100-155 A.D.) quotes Ephesians 4:26 “For I trust that ye are well versed in the Sacred Scriptures, …It is declared then in these Scriptures, ‘Be ye angry, and sin not,’ and , ‘Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.’” (12/12 words of the verse) *Polycarp’s Letter to the Philippians* ch.12 p.35

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-199 A.D.) quoted all of Ephesians 4:6 as scripture. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.20.2 p.488

Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (implied) quotes Ephesians 4:5-6 as by Paul. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.32.1 p.506

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “‘And let not the sun,’ says the Scripture, ‘go down upon your wrath.’” [2/3 of Ephesians 4:26] *Stromata* book 5 ch.5 p.450

**Tertullian** (207/208 A.D.) “Since Christ, then, is the person of the Creator, who said, ‘Let there be light,’ it follows that Christ and the apostles, and the gospel, and the veil, and Moses - nay, the whole of the dispensations - belong to the God who is the Creator of this world, ...I here pass over discussion about another epistle, which we hold to have been written to the Ephesians, but the heretics to the Laodiceans. In it he tells them to remember”, and then he discusses Ephesians 2:12. *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.11 p.454

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) quotes Ephesians 5:14f (14/21 words quoted) as Scripture in *The Refutation of All Heresies* book 5 ch.2 p.51.

Hippolytus of Portus (222-235/236 A.D.) “The Scriptures speak what is right; but Noetus is of a different mind from them.” ... He soon after quotes Ephesians 3:15 and 1 Corinthians 8:6. *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* ch.3 p.224

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) quotes Ephesians 5:16 as by Paul. *Origen Against Celsus* book 6 ch.55 p.598

+ Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Gregory Thaumaturgus** (240-265 A.D.) paraphrases Ephesians 5:5-13 saying, “Scripture says” in *Canonical Epistle* ch.2 p.18.

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) quotes Ephesians 5:28-32 as Scripture, by Paul. *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* discourse 3 ch.1 p.317

**Lactantius** (c.303-320/325 A.D.) quotes half of Ephesians 4:26 as “God has enjoined us not to let the sun go down upon our wrath.” *The Divine Institutes* book 6 ch.18 p.185

**Alexander of Alexandria** (313-326 A.D.) “Since the body of the Catholic Church is one, and it is commanded in Holy Scripture that we should keep the bond of unanimity and peace,” [Ephesians 4:3] *Letters on the Arian Heresy* Letter 2 ch.1 p.297

**Among heretics**

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.11 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Philippians specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) “Wherefore also Paul says,” and he quotes part of Philippians 4:17. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.8.2 p.471

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) “And the Divine Word, well knowing this, speaks to that effect in many passages of Scriptures, although it is sufficient at present to quote one testimony of Paul to the following effect:” and then he quotes Philippians 2:5-9. *Origen Against Celsus* book 4 ch.18 p.504.

+ Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

***Treatise Against Novatian*** (250/4-256/7 A.D.) ch.1 p.657 quotes two-thirds of Philippians 3:2 as scripture.

**Among heretics**

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.12 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Colossians specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (implied) quotes Colossians 4:14 as by Paul. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.14.1 p.438

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-217/220 A.D.) “‘And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which ye are called in one body; and be thankful.’ [Colossians 3:15] For there is no obstacle to adducing frequently the same Scripture in order to put Marcion to the blush, if perchance he be persuaded and converted; by learning that the faithful ought to be grateful to God the Creator, who hath called us, and who preached the Gospel in the body.” *Stromata* book 4 ch.8 p.421

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) refers to Colossians 2:8 as by Paul. *Origen Against Celsus* book 1 preface no.5 p.396

+ Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) “‘These only to me are fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, who were to me a consolation’. And the rest. And again [Col.4:14]: ‘Salute you Luke and Demas’. Out of this scripture [it] is made clear that the apostle Paul himself offers this testimony.” *Dialogue on the Truth Faith* first part ch.5 p.42-43

**Alexander of Alexandria** (313-326 A.D.) “For according to them, the space of time in which they say that the Son had not yet been made by the Father, preceded the wisdom of God that fashioned all things, and the Scripture speaks falsely according to them, which calls Him ‘the First-born of every creature.’ Conformable to which, that which the majestically-speaking Paul says of Him: ‘Whom He hath appointed heir of all things. By whom also He made the worlds. But by Him also were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things.’” *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* Epistle 1 ch.6 p.293

**Among heretics**

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.13 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 1 Thessalonians specifically as Scripture

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-217/220 A.D.) quotes all of 1 Thessalonians 5:5-7 and the first five of fourteen Greek words of 1 Thessalonians 5:8 as scripture. *The Instructor* book 2 ch.9 p.258

**Tertullian** (207/208 A.D.) in discussing the canon of scripture vs. what Marcion accepts, discusses Paul being the author of Galatians, Corinthians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Ephesians, Romans, and John being the author of the Apocalypse (Revelation) in *Five Books Against Marcion* book 4 ch.5 p.350.

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) quotes Matthew 25:34; Revelation 22:15; Isaiah 66:24, and 1 Thessalonians 4:12 and then says, “These things, then I have set shortly before thee, O Theophilus, drawing them from Scripture itself, in order that, maintaining in faith what is written, and anticipating the things that are to be, thou may keep thyself void of offence both toward God and toward men,” *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* ch.67 p.219.

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) “And by Paul in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians like things are said: ‘For ye brethren became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judaea in Christ Jesus, for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen even as they did of the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men.’” [1 Thessalonians 2:14-15] *Commentary on Matthew* book 10 ch.18 p.425

**+** Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. The only exception is where Paul writes “I say, and not the Lord”. Here is what Origen writes: “Consider on this point the language of St. Paul. When he declares that ‘Every Scripture is inspired of God and profitable,’ does he include his own writings? Or does he not include his dictum, ‘I say, and not the Lord,’ and ‘So I ordain in all the churches,’ and ‘What things I suffered at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra,’ and similar things which he writes in virtue of his own authority, and which do not quite possess the character of words flowing from divine inspiration.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Among heretics**

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.14 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 2 Thessalonians specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) “Paul also refers to this event when he says” then he quotes 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.33.11 p.509

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

Tertullian (198-220 A.D.) (partial) quotes 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9 as by the Apostle. *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.16 p.463

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) quotes 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 as by Paul. Then he quotes Daniel 9:29. “So many, out of a greater number of passages, have I thought it right to adduce, that the hearer may understand in some slight degree the meaning of holy Scripture, which gives us information concerning the devil and Antichrist;” *Origen Against Celsus* book 6 ch.47 p.595

+ Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

### 2.6.15 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 1 Timothy specifically as Scripture

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) quotes 1 Timothy 6:20,21 as by Timothy. Then he says, “Convicted by this utterance, the heretics reject the Epistles to Timothy.” *Stromata* book 2 ch.11 p.359

**Tertullian** (207/208 A.D.) asks Marcion why he rejects as scripture the apostle’s two letters to Timothy and one to Titus. *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.21 p.473.

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) quotes the first half of 1 Timothy 1:7 and discusses the second half as “mentioned by Paul”. *Commentary on Matthew* book 12 ch.41 p.472

**+** Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. The only exception is where Paul writes “I say, and not the Lord”. Here is what Origen writes: “Consider on this point the language of St. Paul. When he declares that ‘Every Scripture is inspired of God and profitable,’ does he include his own writings? Or does he not include his dictum, ‘I say, and not the Lord,’ and ‘So I ordain in all the churches,’ and ‘What things I suffered at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra,’ and similar things which he writes in virtue of his own authority, and which do not quite possess the character of words flowing from divine inspiration.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Among heretics**

**X Basilides** (132-135-4th century ) rejects 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews according to Jerome. *ANF* vol.2 p.380.

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.16 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 2 Timothy specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) (implied) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (implied) quotes 2 Timothy 4:10-11 as by Paul. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.14.1 p.438

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) quotes 1 Timothy 6:20,21 as by the Apostle. Then he says, “Convicted by this utterance, the heretics reject the Epistles to Timothy.” *Stromata* book 2 ch.11 p.359

**Tertullian** (207/208 A.D.) asks Marcion why he rejects as scripture the apostle’s two letters to Timothy and one to Titus. *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.21 p.473.

**Origen** (c.240 A.D.) quotes Isaiah 11:2-3 and then 2 Timothy 1:7. “And you yourself can bring together from the Scriptures these *winds*.” *Homilies on Jeremiah* Homily 8 ch.5 p.81

**Among heretics**

**X Basilides** (132-135-4th century) rejects 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews according to Jerome. *ANF* vol.2 p.380.

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.17 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Titus specifically as Scripture

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Tertullian** (207/208 A.D.) asks Marcion why he rejects as scripture the apostle’s two letters to Timothy and one to Titus. *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.21 p.473.

**Origen** (c.240 A.D.) “But Paul, the Apostle from Israel, one blameless according to the justice in the Law, does say” add quotes Titus 3:3. *Homilies on Jeremiah* Homily 5 ch.1 p.41 (translated by Jerome)

**+** Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. The only exception is where Paul writes “I say, and not the Lord”. Here is what Origen writes: “Consider on this point the language of St. Paul. When he declares that ‘Every Scripture is inspired of God and profitable,’ does he include his own writings? Or does he not include his dictum, ‘I say, and not the Lord,’ and ‘So I ordain in all the churches,’ and ‘What things I suffered at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra,’ and similar things which he writes in virtue of his own authority, and which do not quite possess the character of words flowing from divine inspiration.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After saying that Moses left only five books, said, “But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem around about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines.” Then he talks about 1 Peter. *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) (implied) “Moreover, belief in divine Scripture declares to us,...” *Epistles of Cyprian* letter 58 ch.3 p.354 + “For it is written” and quotes Titus 1:15. *Epistles of Cyprian* letter 58 ch.4 p.354

**Among heretics**

**X Basilides** (132-135-4th century) rejects 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews according to Jerome. *ANF* vol.2 p.380.

**Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) (implied) “We do not accept the Law and Prophets, nor do they come from our God. We do, however, accept the Gospel and the Apostle”. Adamantius asks which Apostle? Marcus answers “Paul.” *Dialogue on the True Faith* 2nd part ch.12 c p.89-90

### 2.6.18 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Philemon as Scripture

***The Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) ch.3 p.603 mentions that Paul wrote to seven churches in his epistles, Corinthians (2 letters), Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians (2 letters), Romans. Paul wrote Philemon, Titus, two letters to Timothy.

**Origen** (235-245 A.D.) “This is what Paul with understanding was saying to Philemon in the Letter to Philemon concerning Onesimus: ‘so that your good be not according to compulsion, but according to free will.” (Philemon 14) *Homilies on Jeremiah* Homily 20 ch.2.2 p.224

**+** Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. The only exception is where Paul writes “I say, and not the Lord”. Here is what Origen writes: “Consider on this point the language of St. Paul. When he declares that ‘Every Scripture is inspired of God and profitable,’ does he include his own writings? Or does he not include his dictum, ‘I say, and not the Lord,’ and ‘So I ordain in all the churches,’ and ‘What things I suffered at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra,’ and similar things which he writes in virtue of his own authority, and which do not quite possess the character of words flowing from divine inspiration.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

### 2.6.19 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Hebrews specifically as Scripture

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.12.12 p.434-435

+ Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) (partial) quotes Hebrews 13:15b as by Paul. *Irenaeus Fragment 37* p.575

Clement of Alexandria (193-217/220 A.D.) (partial) says that Hebrews was by Paul the apostle. However, Paul did not put his name on it to avoid prejudicing the Jews. Fragment from *Hypotyposes* vol.2 p.579. from *Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History* book 6 ch.14.

Tertullian (198-220 A.D.) quotes Hebrews 6:4-8 in *On Modesty* ch.20 vol.4 p.97

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) quotes Hebrews 1:1,2 as “Paul says in the Epistle to the Hebrews” *Origen’s Commentary on John* book 2 ch.6 p.328

**+** Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. Origen argues that the name “gospel” can also be applied to Paul’s epistles in one sense, because the gospels are the first fruits of all the New Testament. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) (partial) mentions “the Epistle to the Hebrews” and quotes Hebrews 11:37. *Commentary on Matthew* book 10 ch.18 p.435.

***Treatise Against Novatian*** (254-256 A.D.) ch.8 p.659 quotes Hebrews 10:30 as “Scripture says”.

**Alexander of Alexandria** (313-326 A.D.) says that Hebrews 13:8 was by Paul. *Deposition of Arius* ch.3 p.70

**Among heretics**

**X Basilides** (132-135-4th century ) rejects 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews according to Jerome. *ANF* vol.2 p.380.

### 2.6.20 No Pre-Nicene Christian references to James specifically as Scripture

### 2.6.21 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 1 Peter specifically as Scripture

**Tertullian** (205 A.D.) quotes as “the marrow of the Scriptures” 1 Peter 2:20 and 1 Peter 4:12. *Scorpiace* ch.12 p.645

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) quotes with scriptural authority 2 Peter 2:19b. He says he is quoting a scriptural passage when he says, ‘By whom each man is overcome, of him also he is he slave.’”

**After Nicea**

***Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History*** (323-339/340 A.D.) book 3 ch.3 p.133-135 discusses the books of the New Testament. He says 1 Peter is genuine. He says that Paul’s 14 letters are well-known, though the church in Rome doubted that Paul wrote Hebrews. He says that 2 Peter is disputed. The so-called Acts of Paul, [Shepherd of] Hermas, Acts of Peter, and Gospel of Peter and Preaching of Peter, and the Apocalypse are not genuine. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Second Series* vol.1 p.123-145

### 2.6.22 No Pre-Nicene Christian references to 2 Peter specifically as Scripture

### 2.6.23 Pre-Nicene Christian references to 1 John specifically as Scripture

The ***Muratorian Canon*** (170-210 A.D.) *ANF* vol.5 p.603 canon 4 mentions the Letter of 1 John. It also quotes 1 John 1:1 as by John in his epistles in canon 1.

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) quotes all of John 4:24 and 1 John 1:5 as scripture. *Origen Against Celsus* book 2 ch.71 p.460

Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) has three chapters discussing the books of scripture. After discussing Peter he says, “What are we to say of him who leaned on Jesus’ breast, namely, John, who left one Gospel, though confessing that he could make so many that the world would not contain them? But he wrote also the Apocalypse, being commanded to be silent and not to write the voices of the seven thunders. But he also left an epistle of very few lines. Suppose also a second and a third, since not all pronounce these to be genuine; but the two together do not amount to a hundred lines.” *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.3 p.346.

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) (implied) mentions two letters by John the apostle, but not a third. *Two books on the Promises* ch.4-5 p.82-83

### 2.6.24 No Pre-Nicene Christian references to 2 John specifically as Scripture

### 2.6.25 No Pre-Nicene Christian references to 3 John specifically as Scripture

### 2.6.26 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Jude specifically as Scripture

The ***Muratorian Canon*** (190-217 A.D.) “John wrote the Apocalypse. Two letters belonging to John, or bearing the name John. The Epistle of Jude.” *ANF* vol.5 p.603.

**Origen** (225-253/254 A.D.) in discussing scriptural books, quotes Jude 1 as by Jude. *Origen’s Commentary on Matthew* book 10 ch.17 p.424. He also quotes part of Jude 1 as by Jude in his *Commentary on Matthew* book 13 ch.27 p.491.

### 2.6.27 Pre-Nicene Christian references to Revelation specifically as Scripture or the Lord says or the Holy Spirit teaching

**Justin Martyr** (c.138-165 A.D.) “repent before the great day of judgment come, wherein all those of your tribes who have pierced this Christ shall mourn as I have shown has been declared by the Scriptures.” *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.118 p.258

Justin Martyr (c.138-165 A.D.) mentions a literal millennium in *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.75-81 p.236-240. In ch.81 he says, “And further, there was a certain man with us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, who prophesied, by a revelation that was made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would dwell a thousand years in Jerusalem; and that thereafter the general, and, in short, the eternal resurrection and judgment of all men would likewise take place.”

**Christians of Vienna and Lugdunum (Lyons)** (177 A.D.) “for they felt no shame that they had been overcome, for they were not possessed of human reason; but their defeat only the more inflamed their range, and governor and people, like a wild beast, showed a like unjust hatred of us, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still.’” [Revelation 22:11] vol.8 p.783

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “For it is said, ‘He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And the Lord says, Write all this; for these words are faithful and true. And He said to me, They are done.’” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 5 ch.35.2 p.566

**The Muratorian Canon** (190-217 A.D.) John wrote the Apocalypse. Two letters belonging to John, or bearing the name John. p.603.

**Tertullian** (208-220 A.D.) discusses in detail Revelation 2:18,20-22 as by John in the Apocalypse and the Holy Spirit teaching. *Tertullian on Modesty* ch.19 p.95

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) quotes Matthew 25:34; Revelation 22:15; Isaiah 66:24, and 1 Thessalonians 4:12 and then says, “These things, then I have set shortly before thee, O Theophilus, drawing them from Scripture itself, in order that, maintaining in faith what is written, and anticipating the things that are to be, thou mayest keep thyself void of offence both toward God and toward men,” *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* ch.67 p.219.

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) (implied, … other prophets) “gathered from John in the Apocalypse, though the other prophets also do not by any means conceal the state of matters from those who have the faculty of heaving them. John speaks as follows:” and then quotes Revelation 14:1-5. *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.1 p.297

***Treatise Against Novatian*** (250/4-256/7 A.D.) ch.13 p.661 “although the Scripture cries aloud and says, ‘Remember whence thou hast fallen, and repent, or else I will come to thee except thou repent.’” (Revelation 2:5)

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “the divine Scripture in the Apocalypse declares that the waters signify the people, saying,” and quotes Revelation 17:15. *Epistles of Cyprian* letter 62 ch.12 p.361-362

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “And in the Apocalypse the Lord directs His divine and heavenly precepts to the seven churches and their angels, which number is now found in this case,” *Treatise of Cyprian* Treatise 11 ch.11 p.503

**Gregory Thaumaturgus** (240-265 A.D.) quotes half of Revelation 3:7, which is like Isaiah 22:22. “And this same principle is expressed indeed in the Holy Scriptures themselves, when it is said that only He who shutteth openeth, and no other one whatever;”

Dionysius of Alexandria (246-265 A.D.) (partial) says that Revelation was written by John, but thinks it was a different John than the author of the Gospel, and 1 and 2 John. He thought this based on the fact that John did not use his name in the other books, Dionysius says there were two different monuments in Ephesus, and both of them are to a John. *Two books on the Promises* ch.4-5 p.82-83

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) wrote an entire *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. In the beginning he quotes Revelation 1:1a stating it is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” p.344

Victorinus of Petau (martyred 304 A.D.) “After them there is now given to the same completed Churches the comfort of having the prophetic Scriptures subsequently interpreted, for I said that after the apostles there would be interpreting prophets.” *Commentary on the Apocalypse* from the tenth chapter no.3 p.353

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) “John, in the course of the Apocalypse, says:” and quotes Revelation 12:1-6 calling it scripture. *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* discourse 8 ch.4 p.336

Lactantius (c.303-320/325 A.D.) refers to Revelation 19:12: “his name is known to none, except to Himself and the Father, as John teaches in the Revelation.” *The Epitome of the Divine Institutes* ch.41 p.238.

**From Nicea I to Ephesus (325-431 A.D.)**

***X Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History*** (323-339/340 A.D.) book 3 ch.3 p.133-135 discusses the books of the New Testament. He says 1 Peter is genuine. He says that Paul’s 14 letters are well-known, though the church in Rome doubted that Paul wrote Hebrews. He says that 2 Peter is disputed. The so-called Acts of Paul, [Shepherd of] Hermas, Acts of Peter, and Gospel of Peter and Preaching of Peter, and the Apocalypse are not genuine. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Second Series* vol.1 p.123-145

**Among heretics**

**X Marcus the Marcionite** (c.300 A.D.) in debating Adamantius Eutropius. Eutropius asks “Does your party, Marcus, accept the ‘Acts of the Apostles and those called Disciples’ as genuine, or not?” Marcus answers: We do not accept anything beyond the Gospel and the Apostle” *Dialogue on the True Faith* second part 828d p.90.

# 3. Pre-Nicene Christians and their View of New Testament Scriptures

First a couple of differences in terms. What Dungan in *CB* p.195 calls the Pre-Constantinian church is normally known as the Ante-Nicene Church or Pre-Nicene Church. During this time period what Dungan calls “Orthodox Christians” are also known as “Proto-Orthodox Christians” since this is prior to splitting of Orthodox, Arians, Monophysites, and Nestorians. Dungan’s terms are not in any way mistakes, just differences.

## 3.1 What David L. Dungan Claimed about New Testament Christians

Dungan in *CB* p.54 claims that Montanists had no scripture at all. One could see this based on some attacks against the Montanists. However Tertullian was a Montanist late in his life and he certainly used scripture.

**Theodotus the probable Montanist** (ca.240 A.D.) “so also, when Scripture is read, one is helped to faith, another to morality, and a third is freed from superstition by the knowledge of things.” *Excerpts from Theodotus* ch.28 p.47

Theodotus the probable Montanist (ca.240 A.D.) “We must, then, search the Scriptures accurately, since they are admitted to be expressed in parables, and from the names run out the thoughts which the Holy Spirit, propounding respecting things, teaches by imprinting His mind, so to speak, on the expressions” *Excerpts from Theodotus* ch.32 p.47

Augustine and the embarrassment

*CB* p.133 “In two ways, Augustine created a path that would be followed by subsequent bishops and theologians in the west for the next thousand years. First, he established a conception of the Christian faith that, in practice, had little need for the scriptures which had been laboriously selected and preserved by his predecessors over hundreds of years. Second, He [Augustine] pioneered a harmonizing method of Gospel interpretation that permitted the church to overlook the embarrassing presence of four rather disparate narratives (the Gospels) by treating them as a single monolithic block.”

*CB* p.75 Dungan claims that Dionysius [bishop of Alexandria] had waged a powerful campaign against the tradition of the Apocalypse of John being written by the Apostle John.

“Prominent among them was Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria and a contemporary of Eusebius. Dionysius waged a powerful campaign against the tradition that the Apocalypse of John had been written by the Apostle John, author of the Gospel. … Equally damaging was the contention of Dionysius and others that the Apocalypse of John was orthodox only if it were interpreted *allegorically*. [53] If taken literally, they argued, it expressed the heresy of Cerinthus (whom some alleged to be its actual author.)”

## 3.2 The Authority of Scripture for Pre-Nicene Christians

Scripture itself shows that:

Scripture is not just “suggestions for life”, but we must take its authority in our lives as seriously as our Lord and Biblical writers meant. John 10:35; Matthew 4:1-11; John 14:23-24; 2 Peter 1:19-21;3:16; Romans 3:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-16; Proverbs 30:5-6; Amos 8:11-2; Isaiah 66:5

;Ps119:74,81,89, 92,105

The entire Bible is authoritative, trustworthy, primary, and complete. Proverbs 30:5-6; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Samuel 22:31; Psalm 33:4;119:72,97,105,120,151; Proverbs 30:5-6

**Clement of Rome** (96-98 A.D.) “Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit. Observe that nothing of an unjust or counterfeit character is written in them.” *1 Clement* ch.45 p.16.

Clement of Rome (96-98 A.D.) “Ye understand, beloved, ye understand well the Sacred Scriptures, and ye have looked very earnestly into the oracle of God. Call then these things to your remembrance. When Moses went…” and he quotes Exodus 32:7-10. *1 Clement* ch.53 p.19

***The Apology of Aristides*** (125 or 138-161 A.D.) ch.15 p.277 mentions that we should worship God the Creator, give hear to His incorruptible words, to escape from condemnation and punishment, and be found as heirs of life everlasting.

***Epistle of Barnabas*** (c.70-130 A.D.) ch.13 p.145 “Hear ye now what the Scripture saith concerning the people.” And then refers to Genesis 25:21.

***2 Clement*** (120-140 A.D.) vol.7 ch.14 p.521 appeals to scripture as “Scripture says”, and right after that, “the Books and the Apostles”

**Polycarp** (100-155 A.D.) “For I trust that ye are well verses in the Sacred Scriptures, and that nothing is hid from you; but to me this privilege is not yet granted.” *Polycarp’s Letter to the Philippians* (100-155 A.D.) ch.12 p.35

**Justin Martyr** (c.138-165 A.D.) says, “Are you acquainted with them, Trypho? They are contained in your Scriptures, or rather not yours, but ours. For we believe them; but though you read them, do not catch the spirit that is in them.” *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.29 p.209

Justin Martyr (c.138-165 A.D.) “I [Justin] replied again, ‘If I could not have proved to you from the Scriptures that one of those three is God, and is called Angel, because, as I already said, He brings messages to those to whom God the Maker of all things wishes…’” *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.56 p.223

Tatian’s *Diatessaron* (c.172 A.D.) (partial) section 37 p.101 says that “it is not possible in the scripture that *anything* should be undone”

**Athenagoras** (177 A.D.) discusses those who attack God, God’s knowledge, His operation, and “those books which follow by a regular and strict sequence from these, and delineate for us the doctrines of piety.” *The Resurrection of the Dead* ch.31 p.149

**Melito of Sardis** (170-177/180 A.D.) proves many things about Christ and His passion from the Old Testament. *From the Oration on Our Lord’s Passion* ch.9 p.760-761.

Melito of Sardis (170-177/180 A.D.) “We have collected together *extracts* from the Law and the Prophets relating to those things which have been declared concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may prove to your love that this *Being* is perfect reason, the Word of God;” *On Faith* ch.4 vol.8 p.756

**Theophilus of Antioch** (168-181/188 A.D.) “But do you also, if you please, give reverential attention to the prophetic Scriptures, and they will make your way plainer for escaping the eternal punishments and obtaining the eternal prizes of God.” *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 1 ch.14 p.93

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith. *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.1.1 p.414

Irenaeus of Lyons (182-188 A.D.) uses proofs from Scripture in many places, including *Against Heresies* book 4 ch.24.1 p.495

Irenaeus of Lyons (c.160-202 A.D.) proves his point by “as Scripture declares”. *Proof of Apostolic Preaching* ch.52. See also ch.68.

**Polycrates of Ephesus** (196 A.D.) “I … have read through all Holy Scripture, am not frightened at the things which are said to terrify us. For those who are greater than I have said, ‘We ought to obey God rather than men. [Acts 4:19, 5:29]’” *Epistle to Victor and the Roman Church* vol.8 p.774

**Caius** (190-217 A.D.) ch.2.1 p.601 “And perhaps what they allege might be credible, did not the Holy Scriptures contradict them.” Then he mentions earlier church writers.

**Apollonius of Ephesus** (c.210 A.D.) “Do you not think that Scripture forbids a prophet to receive gifts and money?” *Concerning Montanism* ch.2 vol.8 p.776

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) calls scripture the “omnipotent authority” *Stromata* book 4 ch.1 p.409

Clement of Alexandria (193-202 A.D.) “Now the Scripture kindles the living spark of the soul, and directs the eye suitably for contemplation; perchance inserting something, as the husbandman when he ingrafts, but, according to the opinion of the divine apostle [Paul] exciting what is in the soul.” And then quotes 1 Corinthians 11:31,32. *Stromata* book 5 ch.1 p.301

Clement of Alexandria (193-202 A.D.) “For what things the Scripture speaks were written for our instruction, that we, through patience and the consolation of the Scriptures, might have the hope of consolation.” (Romans 15:4) *Stromata* book 4 ch.5 p.412

Clement of Alexandria (193-202 A.D.) “And again: ‘Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.’” *Stromata* book 1 ch.1 p.299

Clement of Alexandria (193-217/220 A.D.) (implied) “It becomes us who truly follow Scripture.” *The Instructor* book 2 ch.8 p.255

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) “Now they who reject that Scripture can neither belong to the Holy Spirit, seeing that they cannot acknowledge that the Holy Ghost has been sent as yet to the disciples, nor can they presume to claim to be a church themselves,…” *On Prescription Against Heretics* ch.22 p.253.

Tertullian (198-220 A.D.) “We assemble to read our sacred writings, … However it be in that respect, with the sacred words we nourish our faith, we animate our hope, we make our confidence more steadfast; and no less by inculcations of God’s precepts we confirm good habits.” *Apology* ch.39 p.46

Tertullian (208-220 A.D.) mentions the Old Testament as an “authority”. *Tertullian on Modesty* ch.2 p.76. He says to meditate on it in *On Modesty* ch.6 p.79.

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) “Our denial of his existence will be all the more peremptory, because of the fact that the attribute which is alleged in proof of it belongs to that God who has been already revealed. Therefore the ‘New Testament’ will appertain to none other than Him who promised it - if not ‘its letter’, yet ‘its spirit;’ and herein will lie it *newness*.” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.11 p.452

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) appealed to scripture many times for his arguments, including *Tertullian’s Five Books Against Marcion* book 5 ch.4 p.437

**Asterius Urbanus** (c.232 A.D.) was fearful in writing lest anyone think he was trying to “add some new word or precept to the doctrine of the gospel of the New Testament”. *The Exordium* fragment 1 vol.7 p.335

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) “There is, brethren, one God, the knowledge of whom we gain from the Holy Scriptures, and from no other source.” *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* ch.9 p.227

Hippolytus of Portus (222-235/236 A.D.) “Let us then look at the testimony of Scripture with respect to the announcement of the future manifestation of the Word.” *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* ch.12 p.228

Hippolytus of Portus (222-235/236 A.D.) “I have thought it right to set these matters of inquiry clearly forth to your view, drawing largely from the Holy Scriptures themselves as from a holy fountain, in order that you may not only have the pleasure of hearing them on the testimony of men, but may also be able, by surveying them in the light of (divine) authority, to glorify God in all.” *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* ch.1 p.204

**Theodotus the probable Montanist** (ca.240 A.D.) “so also, when Scripture is read, one is helped to faith, another to morality, and a third is freed from superstition by the knowledge of things.” *Excerpts from Theodotus* ch.28 p.47

Theodotus the probable Montanist (ca.240 A.D.) “We must, then, search the Scriptures accurately, since they are admitted to be expressed in parables, and from the names run out the thoughts which the Holy Spirit, propounding respecting things, teaches by imprinting His mind, so to speak, on the expressions” *Excerpts from Theodotus* ch.32 p.47

**Commodianus** (c.240 A.D.) “In the law, the Lord of heaven, and earth, and sea has commanded, saying, Worship not vain gods made by your own hands” *Instructions of Commodianus* ch.2 p.203

**Origen** (230-235 A.D.) “3. Do you then, my son, diligently apply yourself to the reading of the sacred Scriptures. Apply yourself, I say.” *Letter from Origen to Gregory* ch.3 p.394

Origen (240-254 A.D.) “…ancient Jewish writings, which *we* also use, but especially from those which were composed after the time of Jesus, and which are believed among the churches to be divine.” *Origen Against Celsus* book 3 ch.45 p.482

Origen (225-253/254 A.D.) “If we seek to bring these words up to the Savior according to the worthiness of the Word and according to the truth, it is necessary to take the Scriptures as *witnesses*. For without witnesses, our interpretations and exegeses are unfaithful.” *Homilies on Jeremiah* Homily 1 ch.7.3 p.9

Origen (233/234 A.D.) emphasizes studying scripture. *Origen On Prayer* ch.29.10 p.118. See also ibid ch.6.5 p.35-36.

Origen (235 A.D.) says that God’s word is our authority. *Exhortation to Martyrdom* ch.2.7 p.148

**Novatian** (250/4-256/7 A.D.) says that we should not hesitate to declare what the Scripture does not shrink from declaring. “The truth of faith should not hesitate where the authority of Scripture has never hesitated.” *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* ch.12 p.621

Novatian (250/4-256/7 A.D.) “But even as we hold, and read, and believe this, thus we ought to pass over no portion of the heavenly Scriptures, since indeed also we ought by no means to reject those marks of Christ’s divinity which are laid down in the Scriptures, that we may not, by corrupting the authority of the Scriptures, be held to have corrupted the integrity of our holy faith.” *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* ch.30 p.642

***Treatise Against Novatian*** (250/4-256/7 A.D.) ch.3 p.658 accusing the Novatianists of only reading instead of understanding the heavenly scriptures. It then quotes from Isaiah 42:19 as by Isaiah and Numbers 5:2 as by Moses.

*Treatise Against Novatian* (250/4-256/7 A.D.) ch.9 p.659 says that Scripture cries to repent.

***Treatise On Rebaptism*** (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.1 p.667 speaks of people who are irreverently against the precept of the law and of all the Scriptures.

*Treatise On Rebaptism* (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.1 p.668 says it will “as is needful collect into one mass whatever passages of the Holy Scriptures are pertinent to this subject.”

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “Neither do I vouch for this on my own authority; but I promise it on the faith of the Holy Scriptures, and on the authority of the divine promise.” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 8 ch.9 p.478

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “a large number of bishops, whom their faith and the divine protection had preserved in soundness and safety, we met together; and the divine Scriptures being brought forward on both sides, we balance the decision with wholesome moderation,…” *Epistles of Cyprian* letter 51 ch.6 p.328

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “Divine Scripture proves this, when it says, …” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 1 ch.24 p.429

**Moyses, Maximum, and Nicostratus** (248-257 A.D.) say “Certainly their spirits are to be cheered and to be nourished up to the season of their maturity, and they are to be instructed from the Holy Scriptures how great and surpassing a sin they [the lapsed] have committed.” *Letter to Cyprian 25* ch.6 p.304.

How can the scriptures have authority, if you don’t know what is and is not scripture?

**Januarius of Lambesis** at the Seventh Council of Carthage (258 A.D.) “According to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, …” (p.566)

Novatus of Thamguda at the **Seventh Council of Carthage** (258 A.D.) p.566 under Cyprian says that “all the Scriptures give witness concerning the saving baptism”

**Pontius** (258 A.D.) (implied) “when he [Cyprian] had learned from the reading of Scripture certain things not according to the condition of his noviciate, but in proportion to the earliness of his faith, he immediately laid hold of what he had discovered, for his own advantage in deserving well of God.” *The Life and Passion of Cyprian* ch.2 p.268

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) mentions “the demonstration and teaching of the Holy Scriptures”. *Two books on the Promises* ch.2 p.82

**Dionysius bishop of Rome** (259-269 A.D.) mentions “divine Scripture” in ch.1 and uses Moses in Deuteronomy [32:6] to “convict” these men. *Dionysius of Rome Against the Sabellians* (*ANF* vol.7) ch.2 p.365

**Anatolius** (270-280 A.D.) “are not only unable to make that good by the authority of Scripture, but turn also into the crime of sacrilege and contumacy, and incur the peril of their souls;” *The Paschal Canon* ch.7 p.148

**Theonas of Alexandria** (282-300 A.D.) “Let no day pass by without reading some portion of the Sacred Scriptures, at such convenient hour as offers, and giving some space to meditation. And never cast off the habit of reading in the Holy Scriptures; for nothing feeds the soul and enriches the mind so well as those sacred studies do.” *Letter of Theonas, Bishop of Alexandria, to Lucianus, the Chief Chamberlain* ch.9 p.161

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) mentions the “authority of Scripture”. *Dialogue on the True Faith* part 5 f26 p.185

Adamantius (c.300 A.D.) “I accept all the canonical [scriptures]. *Dialogue on the True Faith* 5th part ch.e19 p.173. See also ibid fourth part ch.424a p.129 on Genesis 1:2.

Adamantius (c.300 A.D.) From what Scriptures do you propose to prove this?” *Dialogue on the True Faith* Second part ch.10 p.87

Adamantius (c.300 A.D.) “Let us be guided by the Scriptures!” *Dialogue on the True Faith* Fifth part b 15 p.167

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) says this is what we gladly know by Scripture. *Commentary on the Apocalypse* from the second chapter no.18 p.347

**Phileas of Thmuis** (martyred 306/307 A.D.) mentions “the divine and holy Scriptures” *Letter of Phileas to the People of Thmuis* ch.1 p.162

**Lucian of Antioch** (c.300-311 A.D.) (implied) refers to Jesus as “born of a virgin, according to the Scriptures, and became man,” *Creed of Lucian of Antioch* in *The Creeds of Christendom* by Philip Schaff vol.2 p.26-27

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) “Now the whole spiritual mediation of the Scriptures is given to us as salt which stings in order to benefit, and which disinfects, without which it is impossible for a soul, by means of reason, to be brought to the Almighty; for ‘ye are the salt of the earth,’ said the Lord to the apostles.” [Matthew 5:13] *The Banquet of the Ten Virgins* book 1 discourse 1 ch.1 p.311

**Theophilus** (events c.315 A.D.) “Habib said: I worship not a man, because the Scripture teaches me, ‘Cursed is every one that putteth his trust in man;’ [Jeremiah 17:5] but God, who took upon Him a body and became a man, *Him* do I worship and glorify.” *Martyrdom of Habib the Deacon* vol.8 p.693

Theophilus (events c.315 A.D.) “Now Habib, who was of the village of Telzeha and had been made a deacon, went secretly into the churches which were in the villages, and ministered and read the Scriptures, and encouraged and strengthened many by his words,” *Martyrdom of Habib the Deacon* vol.8 p.690

**Peter of Alexandria** (306,285-310/311 A.D.) (implied) “and in this, according to the Word, when he speaks of the day of our holy festivity, which the election hath attained; but the rest have become hardened, as said the Scripture; and after other things.” Fragment 5 : *That up to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem…* ch.1 p.281

**Athanasius of Alexandria** (318 A.D.) “But the godly teaching and the faith according to Christ brands their foolish language as godlessness. Then he quotes Genesis 1:1. *Incarnation of the Word* ch.3.1 p.37

Athanasius of Alexandria (318 A.D.) says scripture is an “authority”. *Athanasius Against the Heathen* part 3 ch.45.2 p.28

Athanasius of Alexandria (318 A.D.) “For although the sacred and inspired Scriptures are sufficient to declare the truth,—while there are other works of our blessed teachers compiled for this purpose, if he meet with which a man will gain some knowledge of the interpretation of the Scriptures, and be able to learn what he wishes to know,—still, as we have not at present in our hands the compositions of our teachers, we must communicate in writing to you what we learned from them,—the faith, namely, of Christ the Saviour; lest any should hold cheap the doctrine taught among us, or think faith in Christ unreasonable.” *Athanasius Against the Heathen* part 1 ch.1.3 p.4

**Lactantius** (c.303-320/325 A.D.) says that those who conspired against Jesus were ignorant of the sacred scriptures which foretold these things many age before by His prophets. *The Divine Institutes* book 4 ch.18 p.119.

**Among corrupt or spurious books**

**pseudo-Hippolytus** (after 236 A.D.) says that the scriptures were instruction for us. *Discourse on the End of the World* ch.21 p.247

**Even among heretics**

The Ebionite ***Clementine Homilies*** (-188 A.D.- uncertain date) homily 2 ch.41 p.237 appealed to scripture to judge truth.

The Ebionite *Clementine Homilies* (-188 A.D.- uncertain date) homily 3 ch.10 p.240 Peter says, “But we also can easily show many passages from them [the Scriptures] that He who made the world alone is God, and that there is none other besides Him. But if any one shall wish to speak otherwise, he also shall be able to produce proofs from them at his pleasure. For the Scriptures say all manner of things, that no one of those who inquire ungratefully may find the truth, but *simply* what he wishes to find, the truth being reserved for the grateful; now gratitude is to preserve our love to Him who is the cause of our being.”

The Ebionite *Clementine Homilies* (-188 A.D.- uncertain date) homily 3 ch.48 p.245 used scripture to prove his point.

The Ebionite ***Epistle of Peter to James*** (-188 A.D.- uncertain date) ch.1 p.215 says they should only believe according to the Scriptures and mentions the prophets. They do not let anyone teach unless they have first learned how the Scriptures must be used.

The Ebionite ***Recognitions of Clement*** (c.211-231 A.D.) book 10 ch.42 p.203 “authority of the Scriptures”.

The Ebionite *Recognitions of Clement* (c.211-231 A.D.) book 3 ch.75 p.134 appeals to Scripture. See also book 1 ch.68 p.95 and book 10 ch.42 p.203.

pseudo-Clement ***Two Epistles on Virginity*** (3rd century A.D.) Epistle 1 ch.3 p.56 appeals to scripture.

pseudo-Clement ***Two Epistles on Virginity*** (3rd century A.D.) Epistle 2 ch.4 p.62 appeals to scripture.

Marcionite heretic **Megethius** (c.300 A.D.) a self-labeled follower of Marcion, in his debate with Adamantius appeals to scripture. *Dialogue on the True Faith* first part ch.2 p.36 and ch.4 p.40

**Marinus** (c.300 A.D.) a Bardesane, in disputing with Adamantius, said to reject philosophical speculations and be guided only by the scriptures. *Dialogue on the True Faith* fifth part ch.b 15 p.167

Marinus(c.300 A.D.) a follower of Bardesanes, “The teaching of Christians stands by faith and the scriptures, so we must convince or be convinced from Scriptures.” *Dialogue on the True Faith in God* fourth part d12 p.144

## 3.3 The Importance of Studying Scripture for Pre-Nicene Christians

**Clement of Rome** (96-98 A.D.) “Ye understand, beloved, ye understand well the Sacred Scriptures, and ye have looked very earnestly into the oracle of God. Call then these things to your remembrance. When Moses went…” *1 Clement* ch.53 vol.1 p.19 (See also vol.9 p.245)

**Polycarp** (100-155 A.D.) “He [Paul], when among you, accurately and stedfastly taught the word of truth in the presence of those who were then alive. And when absent from you [Philippians], he wrote you a letter, which, if you carefully study, you will find to be the means of building you up in that faith which has been given you, and which, being followed by hope, and preceded by love towards God, and Christ, and our neighbour, ‘is the mother of us all.’” *Polycarp’s Letter to the Philippians* ch.3 p.33

Polycarp (100-155 A.D.) quotes Ephesians 4:26 “For I trust that ye are well versed in the Sacred Scriptures, …It is declared then in these Scriptures, ‘Be ye angry, and sin not,’ and , ‘Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.’” (12/12 words of the verse) *Polycarp’s Letter to the Philippians* ch.12 p.35

**Tertullian** (c.213 A.D.) discusses in detail Genesis 2:21,23; 3:5,19; 4:10 then says, “This is the answer I should give in defence of the Scriptures before us, for seeming here to set forth the formation of the heaven and the earth,...” *Against Hermogenes* ch.32 p.495. See also *Against Praxeas* (c.213 A.D.) ch.12 p.607 ( Genesis 1:3) ch.13 p.608 (Genesis 19:24).

**Theonas of Alexandria** (282-300 A.D.) “Let no day pass by without reading some portion of the Sacred Scriptures, at such convenient hour as offers, and giving some space to meditation. And never cast off the habit of reading in the Holy Scriptures; for nothing feeds the soul and enriches the mind so well as those sacred studies do.” *Letter of Theonas, Bishop of Alexandria, to Lucianus, the Chief Chamberlain* ch.9 p.161

**Even among heretics**

The Encratite Gnostic **Tatian** (c.172 A.D.) “And these things severally it is possible for him to perceive who does not conceitedly reject those most divine explanations which in the course of time have been consigned to writing, and make those who study them great lovers of God.” *Address of Tatian to the Greeks* ch.12 p.70

## 3.4 We are to Believe Scripture, according to Pre-Nicene Christians

This is not a pick-and-choose of what you want to follow, but authoritatively having to believe what scripture says.

**Justin Martyr** (c.138-165 A.D.) (implied) “But if I [Justin] quote frequently Scriptures, and so many of them, referring to this point, and ask you to comprehend them, you are hard-hearted in the recognition of the mind and will of God. But if you wish to remain for ever so, I would not be injured at all; and for ever retaining the same [opinions] which I had before I met with you, I shall leave you.’ And Trypho said,’ Look, my friend, you made yourself master of these [truths] with much labour and toil. And we accordingly must diligently scrutinize all that we meet with, in order to give our assent to those things which the Scriptures compel us [to believe].’” *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.68 p.232

**Caius** (190-217 A.D.) (implied) “For either they do not believe that the divine Scriptures were dictated by the Holy Spirit, and are thus infidels; or they think themselves wiser than the Holy Spirit, and what are they then but demoniacs?” ch.3 p.602

**Clement of Alexandria** (183-202 A.D.) He who believeth then the divine Scriptures with sure judgment, receives in the voice of God, who bestowed the Scripture, a demonstration that cannot be impugned. *Stromata* book 2 ch.2 p.349

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) “Believe, then, your own books, and as to our Scriptures so much the more believe writings which are divine, but in the witness of the soul itself give like confidence to Nature.” *The Soul’s Testimony* ch.6 p.179

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) (implied) “There is, brethren, one God, the knowledge of whom we gain from the Holy Scriptures, and from no other source.” *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* ch.9 p.227

Hippolytus of Portus (222-235/236 A.D.) “… and learn that the Scripture deals falsely with us in nothing” *Fragment 6 on Susannah* ch.41 p.193

Hippolytus of Portus (222-235/236 A.D.) (partial, word of truth, not scripture) “9. ‘The words are closed up and sealed.’ For as a man cannot tell what God has prepared for the saints; for neither has eye seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man (to conceive) these things, into which even the saints, too, shall then eagerly desire to look; so He said to him, ‘For the words are sealed until the time of the end; until many shall be chosen and tried with fire.’ And who are they who are chosen, but those who believe the word of truth, so as to be made white thereby, and to cast off the filth of sin, and put on the heavenly, pure, and glorious Holy Spirit, in order that, when the Bridegroom comes, they may go in straightway with Him?” *Scholia on Daniel* book 12 from chapter 12 verse 9 p.191

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) “For let him believe from our own Scriptures that Peter obtained his freedom after having been bound in prison, an angel having loosed his chains; and that Paul, having been bound in the stocks along with Silas in Philippi of Macedonia, was liberated by divine power, when the gates of the prison were opened.” *Origen Against Celsus* book 2 ch.34 p.445

*Treatise on Rebaptism* (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.4 p.669 (partial) “Because the Holy Scripture has affirmed that they who should believe in Christ, must needs be baptized in the Spirit; so that these also may not seem to have anything less than those who are perfectly Christians;”

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “Moreover, belief in divine Scripture declares to us,” *Epistles of Cyprian* letter 58 ch.3 p.354

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) (implied) “for there is no contradiction nor absurdity in the Holy Scripture.” *Discourse on the Resurrection* part 1 ch.9 p.366

## 3.5 Scripture is called the Word of God by Pre-Nicene Christians

Clement of Rome (96-98 A,D.) (partial since used as a play on words) Both these appointments, then, were made in an orderly way, according to the will of God. Having therefore received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand.” *1 Clement* ch.42 p.16

Ignatius of Antioch (100-107/116 A.D.) (partial) “Now, as to Philo the deacon, of Cilicia, a man of reputation, who still ministers to me in the word of God, along with Rheus Agathopus, an elect man, who has followed me from Syria, not regarding his life,” *Letter to the Philadelphians* ch.11 p.85

***Epistle of Barnabas*** (c.70-130 A.D.) ch.10 p.144 “That we ought to join ourselves to those that fear the Lord, those who meditate in their heart on the commandment which they have received, those who both utter the judgments of the Lord and observe them, those who know that meditation is a work of gladness, and who ruminate upon the word of the Lord. But what means the cloven-footed? That the righteous man also walks in this world, yet looks forward to the holy state [to come]. Behold how well Moses legislated. But how was it possible for them to understand or comprehend these things? We then, rightly understanding his commandments, explain them as the Lord intended. For this purpose He circumcised our ears and our hearts, that we might understand these things.”

**Justin Martyr** (c.138-165 A.D.) “Then I answered, “I know that, as the word of God says, this great wisdom of God, the Maker of all things, and the Almighty, is hid from you.” *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.38 p.213

**Theophilus of Antioch** (168-181/188 A.D.) “And Moses, who lived many years before Solomon, or, rather, the Word of God by him as by an instrument, says, ‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.’” *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 2 ch.10 p.98

Theophilus of Antioch (168-181/188 A.D.) (partial) For the divine writing itself teaches us that Adam said that he had heard the voice.” *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 2 ch.22 p.103

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “In this strain also the Apostle Paul, inasmuch as he had a good conscience, said to the Corinthians: ‘For we are not as many, who corrupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ;’” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.26.4 p.498

**Clement of Alexandria** (c.195 A.D.) (implied) “For a boon so great, the greatest ever given by God to the human race, would never have been hated and rejected, had not you been carried away by custom, and then shut your ears against us; and just as unmanageable horses throw off the reins, and take the bit between their teeth, you rush away from the arguments addressed to you, in your eager desire to shake yourselves clear of us, who seek to guide the chariot of your life, and, impelled by your folly, dash towards the precipices of destruction, and regard the holy word of God as an accursed thing.” *Exhortation to the Heathen* ch.10 p.197

**Tertullian** (200-220 A.D.) “For herein is figuratively described the difference of doctrines, since in other passages also the word of God is likened unto seed.” *Prescription Against Heretics* ch.31 p.258

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) “but the Lord said, ‘Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.’” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 4 ch.26 p.393

Commodianus (c.240 A.D.) (partial, does not say scripture) “Dost thou wish to see the former things which thou hast renounced? Art thou again conversant with them? What shall the Anointed One profit thee? Or if it is permitted, on account of weakness, that thou foolishly profane ... Love not the world, nor its contents. Such is God’s word, and it seems good to thee. Thou observest man’s command, and shunnest God’s.” *Instructions of Commodianus* ch.57 p.214

**Origen** (240-254 A.D.) “We acknowledge, however, although Celsus will not have it so, that we *do* desire to instruct all men in the word of God, so as to give to young men the exhortations which are appropriate to them, and to show to slaves how they may recover freedom of thought, and be ennobled by the word.” *Origen Against Celsus* book 3 ch.54 p.485

Origen (240-254 A.D.) “let us show from the holy Scriptures that the word of God also encourages” *Origen Against Celsus* book 6 ch.7 p.576

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “For he labours thus because he believes-because he knows that what is foretold by God’s word is true, and that the Holy Scripture cannot lie-that unfruitful trees, that is, unproductive men, are cut off and cast into the fire, but that the merciful are called into the kingdom.” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 8 ch.8 p.478

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “Also in Deuteronomy, the word of God to Moses: ‘Call the people together to me, ...’” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 12 third part ch.20 p.540

**Dionysius bishop of Rome** (259-269 A.D.) “For I have heard that some who preach and teach the word of God among you are teachers of this opinion, who indeed diametrically, so to speak, are opposed to the opinion of Sabellius.” *Against the Sabellians* ch.1 p.365

**Victorinus of Petau** (martyred 304 A.D.) “For even the very word spoken to him testifies to him, saying, ‘Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.’ But he was not a prophet unto the nations; and thus the truthful word of God makes it necessary, which it has promised to set forth, that he should be a prophet to the nations.” *Commentary on the Apocalypse* from the eleventh chapter verse 5 p.354

**Peter of Alexandria** (306,285-311 A.D.) “and at Damascus he was let down by night in a basket by the wall, and escaped the hands of him who sought to take him. For what they set before themselves, first and foremost, was to do the work of an evangelist, and to teach the Word of God, in which, confirming the brethren, that they might continue in the faith, they said this also, “that we must out of much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.’ For they sought not what was profitable for them, but that which was profitable for the many, that they might be saved, and that they might be enabled to say unto them many things conducing to this, that they might act suitably to the Word of God, ‘unless,’ as says the apostle, ‘the time should fail me in speaking.’” *Canonical Epistle* Canon 9 p.273

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) (implied) “For it is to be observed that the word *of God* says, that after the cry all the virgins arose, that is, that the dead shall be raised after the voice which comes from heaven, as also Paul intimates, that ‘the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first;’ that is the tabernacles, for they died, being put off by their souls. ‘Then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them,’ meaning our souls.” *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* discourse 6 ch.4 p.330

## 3.6 Scripture is Holy or Sacred, according to Pre-Nicene Christians

**Justin Martyr** (c.148-165 A.D.) “Pay attention, therefore, to what I shall record out of the holy Scriptures, which do not need to be expounded, but only listened to.” *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.55 p.222

Justin Martyr (c.138-165 A.D.) “But now, by means of the contents of those Scriptures esteemed holy and prophetic amongst you, I attempt to prove all...” *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.32 p.210.

**Theophilus of Antioch** (168-181/188 A.D.) “Then holy Scripture gives a summary in these words: ‘This is the book of the generation of the heavens and the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and every green thing of the field, before it was made, and every herb of the field before it grew. For God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.’” *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 2 ch.19 p.102. See also book 2 ch.13 p.100.

Theophilus of Antioch (168-181/188 A.D.) “I met with the sacred Scriptures of the holy prophets, who also by the Spirit of God foretold the things that have already happened, just as they came to pass” *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 1 ch.14 p.93

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “promised by His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son,” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.16.3 p.441

**Polycrates of Ephesus** (196 A.D.) “I … have read through all Holy Scripture, am not frightened at the things which are said to terrify us. For those who are greater than I have said, ‘We ought to obey God rather than men.’” *Epistle to Victor and the Roman Church* vol.8 p.774

**Caius** (190-217 A.D.) ch.2.1 p.601 “And perhaps what they allege might be credible, did not the Holy Scriptures contradict them.” Then he mentions earlier church writers. “I mean Justin and Miltiades, and Tatian and Clement, and many others, in all which divinity is ascribed to Christ. For who is ignorant of the books of Irenaeus and Melito, and the rest, which declare Christ to be God and man?”

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-217/220 A.D.) “let me act and speak In all things as Thy Holy Scriptures teach;” *The Instructor* book 3 To the Paedagogus p.296

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) goes into great detail about early Christian worship. “After manual ablution, and the bringing in of lights, each is asked to stand forth and sing, as he can, a hymn to God, either one from the holy Scriptures or one of his own composing,” *Apology* ch.39 p.47

Tertullian (208-220 A.D.) “The law of piety, sanctity, humanity, truth, chastity, justice, mercy, benevolence, modesty, remains in its entirety; in which law ‘blessed (is) the man who shall meditate by day and by night.’ About that (law) the same David (says) again: ‘The law of the Lord (is) unblameable converting souls; the statutes of the Lord (are) direct, delighting hearts; the precept of the Lord far-shining, enlightening eyes.’ Thus, too, the apostle: ‘And so the law indeed is holy, and the precept holy and most good’ -’Thou shalt not commit adultery,’ of course.” *Tertullian on Modesty* ch.6 p.79

**Hippolytus of Portus** (222-235/236 A.D.) “There is, brethren, one God, the knowledge of whom we gain from the Holy Scriptures, and from no other source.” *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* ch.9 p.227

Hippolytus of Portus (after 236 A.D.) speaks of Holy Scripture. *Refutation of All Heresies book 1 Proemium* p.10

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) “Thus we see that he who aims at a complete understanding of the Holy Scriptures must not neglect the careful examination of the proper names in it.” *Origen’s Commentary on John* ch.6.24 p.371

Origen (c.240 A.D.) speaks of “sacred scriptures” and then quotes Jeremiah 332:16 and Psalm 75:8. *Homilies on Jeremiah* homily 12 ch.2 p.112

Origen (230-235 A.D.) “3. Do you then, my son, diligently apply yourself to the reading of the sacred Scriptures. Apply yourself, I say.” *Letter from Origen to Gregory* ch.3 p.394

Origen (240-254 A.D.) “let us show from the holy Scriptures that the word of God also encourages” *Origen Against Celsus* book 6 ch.7 p.576

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) “‘I am the resurrection.’ Jesus preaches to the poor those things which are laid up for the saints, calling them to the divine promises. And the holy Scriptures bear witness to the Gospel announcements made by the Apostles and to that made by our Saviour.” *Commentary on John* ch.1 no.10 p.302

Origen (233/234 A.D.) “And now we must prove from Sacred Scripture what we have said,” *Origen On Prayer* ch.9.1 p.38

Origen (235 A.D.) says that scripture is sacred. *Exhortation to Martyrdom* ch.1.2 p.141

***Treatise on Rebaptism*** (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.4 p.669 “Because the Holy Scripture has affirmed that they who should believe in Christ, must needs be baptized in the Spirit; so that these also may not seem to have anything less than those who are perfectly Christians;”

*Treatise On Rebaptism* (c.250-258 A.D.) ch.1 p.668 says it will “as is needful collect into one mass whatever passages of the Holy Scriptures are pertinent to this subject.”

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “because he knows that what is foretold by God’s word is true, and the Holy Scripture cannot lie-” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 8 ch.8 p.478

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “Neither do I vouch for this on my own authority; but I promise it on the faith of the Holy Scriptures, and on the authority of the divine promise.” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 8 ch.9 p.478

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “For he labours thus because he believes-because he knows that what is foretold by God’s word is true, and that the Holy Scripture cannot lie-that unfruitful trees, that is, unproductive men, are cut off and cast into the fire, but that the merciful are called into the kingdom.” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 8 ch.8 p.478. See also ibid Treatise 12 part 1 Heads no.4 p.507.

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “when Holy Scripture speaks by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel, and says, “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you.” *Epistles of Cyprian* Letter 75 ch.12 p.401

**Moyses, Maximum, and Nicostratus** (248-257 A.D.) say “Certainly their spirits are to be cheered and to be nourished up to the season of their maturity, and they are to be instructed from the Holy Scriptures how great and surpassing a sin they [the lapsed] have committed.” *Letter to Cyprian 25* ch.6 p.304

**Januarius of Lambesis** at the Seventh Council of Carthage (258 A.D.) “According to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, …” (p.566)

**Nemesianus of Thubunae** at the Seventh Council of Carthage (258 A.D.) “That the baptism which heretics and schismatic bestow is not the true one, is everywhere declared in the Holy Scriptures, since there very leading men are false Christs and false prophets,…” (p.566)

Felix of Gurgites at the Seventh Council of Carthage (258 A.D.) “I judge that, according to the precepts of the holy Scriptures, he who is unlawfully baptized by heretics outside the Church, when he wishes to take refuge in the Church, should obtain the grace of baptism where it is lawfully given.” (p.571)

**Gregory Thaumaturgus** (240-265 A.D.) quotes half of Revelation 3:7, which is like Isaiah 22:22. “And this same principle is expressed indeed in the Holy Scriptures themselves, when it is said that only He who shutteth openeth, and no other one whatever; and what is shut is opened when the word of inspiration explains mysteries.” *Oration and Panegyric to Origen* argument 15 p.36

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) mentions “the demonstration and teaching of the Holy Scriptures”. *Two books on the Promises* ch.2 p.82. See also *Epistle to Bishop Basilides* Canon 1 p.94.

Dionysius of Alexandria (246-265 A.D.) “However, it will be acknowledged cordially by all, that from the date of the resurrection of our Lord, those who up to that time have been humbling their souls with fastings, ought at once to begin their festal joy and gladness. But in what you have written to me you have made out very clearly, and with an intelligent understanding of the Holy Scriptures, that no very exact account seems to be offered in them of the hour at which He rose.” *Letter to Bishop Basilides* p.94

**Anatolius** (270-280 A.D.) ch.3 p.147 “who was one of the Seventy who translated the sacred and holy Scriptures of the Hebrews for Ptolemy Philadelphus and his father, and dedicated his exegetical books on the law of Moses to the same kings. These writers, in solving some questions which are raised with respect to Exodus, say that all alike ought to sacrifice the Passover”

**Theonas of Alexandria** (282-300 A.D.) “Let no day pass by without reading some portion of the Sacred Scriptures, at such convenient hour as offers, and giving some space to meditation. And never cast off the habit of reading in the Holy Scriptures; for nothing feeds the soul and enriches the mind so well as those sacred studies do.” *Letter of Theonas, Bishop of Alexandria, to Lucianus, the Chief Chamberlain* ch.9 p.161

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) “You maintain, then that figurative language has been used in regard to the term “Son of Man”? … By your [heretical] theory, either Christ is found to be a liar because He calls Himself ‘Son of Man’, although He is not man; or all the Holy Scriptures are to be understood in the spiritual sense, even if figurative language has not been used.” [Adamantius is speaking here, arguing against Megethius the Marcionite] *Dialogue on the True Faith* First part 808a.7 p.45. See also ibid the fifth part 12 p.164.

**Phileas of Thmuis** (martyred 306/307 A.D.) “Having before them all these examples and signs and illustrious tokens which are given us in the divine and holy Scriptures, the blessed martyrs who lived with us did not hesitate, but directing the eye of their soul in sincerity to that God who is over all, and embracing with willing mind the death which their piety cost them, they adhered steadfastly to their vocation.” *Letter of Phileas to Thmuis* ch.1 p.162

Phileas of Thmuis (martyred 306/307 A.D.) quotes Exodus 22:20 and 20:3 as “by the Holy Scriptures” *Letter of Phileas to the People of Thmuis* p.163

**Methodius** (270-311/312 A.D.) “for there is no contradiction nor absurdity in the Holy Scripture.” *Discourse on the Resurrection* part 1 ch.9 p.366

Methodius (270-311/312 A.D.) “Virginity is something supernaturally great, wonderful, and glorious; and, to speak plainly and in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, this best and noblest manner of life alone is the root of immortality” *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* discourse 1 ch.1 p.310

**Athanasius of Alexandria** (318 A.D.) “one who was named Adam in Hebrew, is described in the Holy Scriptures” *Athanasius Against the Heathen* ch.2 p.5

**Lactantius** (c.303-320/325 A.D.) “God completed the world and this admirable work of nature in the space of six days, as is contained in the secrets of Holy Scripture, and consecrated the seventh day, on which He had rested from His works.” *The Divine Institutes* book 7 ch.14 p.211

Lactantius (c.303-320/325 A.D.) “the writings of Holy Scripture” *The Divine Institutes* book 4 ch.20 p.122

**Alexander of Alexandria** (313-326 A.D.) “Since the body of the Catholic Church is one, and it is commanded in Holy Scripture that we should keep the bond of unanimity and peace” *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* Letter 2 ch.1 p.296

## 3.7 Scripture is Divine, according to Pre-Nicene Christians

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “and I shall plainly set forth from these divine Scriptures proofs to [satisfy] all the lovers of truth.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 2 ch.35.4 p.413

**Caius** (190-217 A.D.) says that heretics boldly falsified scripture. ch.3 p.602 “But as to those men who abuse the arts of the unbelievers to establish their own heretical doctrine, and by the craft of the impious adulterate the simple faith of the divine Scriptures, what need is there to say that these are not near the faith?”

**Clement of Alexandria** (183-202 A.D.) He who believeth then the divine Scriptures with sure judgment, receives in the voice of God, who bestowed the Scripture, a demonstration that cannot be impugned. *Stromata* book 2 ch.2 p.349

Clement of Alexandria (199-217/220 A.D.) “And by and by I will fortify them with the divine Scriptures.” *The Instructor* book 3 ch.2 p.273

Clement of Alexandria (193-217/220 A.D.) calls Baruch 3:16-19 “divine scripture” *The Instructor* book 2 ch.3 p.247

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) said that the chamberlain [Ethiopian eunuch] was reading “divine Scripture” *On Baptism* ch.18 p.678

Tertullian (208-220 A.D.) “By (the standard of) Idolatry we are measured; by her disjunctive intervention we are conjoined; to her, outjutting from our midst, we are united; the Divine Scripture has made us concorporate;” *On Modesty* ch.5 p.78

**Hippolytus** (222-235/236 A.D.) “‘And he [Daniel] wrote the dream.’ The things, therefore, which were revealed to the blessed prophet by the Spirit in visions, these he also recounted fully for others, that he might not appear to prophesy of the future to himself alone, but might be proved a prophet to others also, who wish to search the divine Scriptures.” *Scholia on Daniel* ch.7 verse 1 p.188

**Origen** (240 A.D.) quotes Micah 2:9 as “this is what the divine Scripture expresses”. *Homilies on Jeremiah* Homily 28 ch.5 p.264 (translated by Jerome)

Origen (c.227-240 A.D.) “Consider however, whether the divine Scriptures do not in many places teach this; as where the Saviour says, ‘Or have ye not read that which was spoken at the bush, I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. He is not God of the dead but of the living.’” [Mark 12:26] *Commentary on John* book 2 ch.10 p.333

**Novatian** (250/4-256/7 A.D.) “Scripture has frequently declared Him [Christ] both Angel and God, so the same divine Scripture declares Him also both man and God.” Then Novatian quotes Genesis 32:24-27 to prove his point. *Novatian Concerning the Trinity* ch.19 p.630

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “a large number of bishops, whom their faith and the divine protection had preserved in soundness and safety, we met together; and the divine Scriptures being brought forward on both sides, we balance the decision with wholesome moderation,…” *Epistles of Cyprian* letter 51 ch.6 p.328

Cyprian of Carthage (c.246-258 A.D.) “Divine Scripture proves this, when it says, …” *Treatises of Cyprian* Treatise 1 ch.24 p.429

**Firmilian of Caesarea** to Cyprian (256 A.D.) “so that of none more than of you does divine Scripture say, ‘A wrathful man stirreth up strifes, and a furious man heapeth up sins.” *Epistles of Cyprian* Letter 74 ch.24 p.396

Felix of Amacora At the **Seventh Council of Carthage** (258 A.D.) p.659 “Also another Felix of Amaccora said: And I myself, following the authority of the divine Scriptures,”

**Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) “Moreover, divine Scripture calls us makers of those motions which proceed from the heart, when it calls us doers of the law of judgment and of justice.” *Epistles of Dionysius* Letter 4 ch.11 p.93

**Dionysius bishop of Rome** (259-269 A.D.) “For these indeed rightly know that the Trinity is declared in the divine Scripture,” in ch.1 and uses Moses in Deuteronomy [32:6] to “convict” these men. *Dionysius of Rome Against the Sabellians* (*ANF* vol.7) ch.2 p.365

**Anatolius** (270-280 A.D.) “And therefore we have said that those parties have committed no trivial offence who have ventured either on anticipating or on going beyond this number, which is given us in the divine Scriptures themselves.” ch.16 p.151

**Theonas of Alexandria** (282-300 A.D.) “On occasion also he will endeavour to laud the divine Scriptures, which, with marvellous care and most liberal expenditure, Ptolemy Philadelphus caused to be translated into our language;” ch.7 p.160

**Phileas of Thmuis** (martyred 306/307 A.D.) “Having before them all these examples and signs and illustrious tokens which are given us in the divine and holy Scriptures, the blessed martyrs who lived with us did not hesitate, but directing the eye of their soul in sincerity to that God who is over all, and embracing with willing mind the death which their piety cost them, they adhered steadfastly to their vocation.” *Letter of Phileas to Thmuis* ch.1 p.162

**Lucian of Antioch** (c.300-311 A.D.) refers to “divine Scriptures” *Creed of Lucian of Antioch* in *The Creeds of Christendom* by Philip Schaff vol.2 p.28

**Athanasius of Alexandria** (318 A.D.) “For the soul is made after the image and likeness of God, as divine Scripture also shews, when it says in the person of God ‘Let us make man after our Image and likeness.’” *Athanasius Against the Heathen* part 2 ch.34 p.22

Athanasius of Alexandria (318 A.D.) “For which of the righteous men and holy prophets, and patriarchs, recorded in the divine Scriptures, ever had his corporal birth of a virgin only?” *Incarnation of the Word* ch.35.2 p.54

**Alexander of Alexandria** (313-326 A.D.) “By saying these things, and by unfolding the divine Scriptures, we have often refuted them [Arians].” *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* Letter 2 ch.5 p.298

**Even among heretics**

The Ebionite ***Recognitions of Clement*** (c.211-231 A.D.) book 10 ch.42 p.203 “For there are many sayings in the divine Scriptures which can be drawn to that sense which every one has preconceived for himself; and this ought not to be done.”

## 3.8 But some Corrupted Copies of Scripture, according to Pre-Nicene Christians

There had to be a body, or canon, of scripture to have something to falsify.

**Justin Martyr** (c.138-165 A.D.) has a quote he says is from Jeremiah. *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* ch.72 p.234-235. He says the Jews cut this out of their scriptures. Here is the quote “And from the sayings of Jeremiah they have cut out the following: ‘I [was] like a lamb that is brought to the slaughter: they devised a device against me, saying, Come, let us lay on wood on His bread, and let us blot Him out from the land of the living; and His name shall no more be remembered.’ And since this passage from the sayings of Jeremiah is still written in some copies [of the Scriptures] in the synagogues of the Jews (for it is only a short time since they were cut out), and since from these words it is demonstrated that the Jews deliberated about the Christ Himself, to crucify and put Him to death, He Himself is both declared to be led as a sheep to the slaughter, as was predicted by Isaiah, and is here represented as a harmless lamb; but being in a difficulty about them, they give themselves over to blasphemy. And again, from the sayings of the same Jeremiah these have been cut out: ‘The Lord God remembered His dead people of Israel who lay in the graves; and He descended to preach to them His own salvation.’” “Irenaeus quotes this as from Jeremiah in *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 2 ch.22 and as by Isaiah in *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.20.

**Dionysius of Corinth** (170 A.D.) “It is not wonderful, then, if some have attempted to adulterate the Lord’s writings, when they have formed designs against those which are not such.” p.765

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “And there was nothing astonishing in God having done this,-He who, when, during the captivity of the people under Nebuchadnezzar, the Scriptures had been corrupted, and when, after seventy years, the Jews had returned to their own land, then, in the times of Artaxerxes king of the Persians, inspired Esdras the priest, of the tribe of Levi, to recast all the words of the former prophets, and to re-establish with the people the Mosaic legislation.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 3 ch.21.2 p.451

**Caius** (190-217 A.D.) says that heretics boldly falsified scripture. ch.3 p.602 “But as to those men who abuse the arts of the unbelievers to establish their own heretical doctrine, and by the craft of the impious adulterate the simple faith of the divine Scriptures, what need is there to say that these are not near the faith? For this reason is it they have boldly laid their hands upon the divine Scriptures, alleging that they have corrected them. And that I do not state this against them falsely, any one who pleases may ascertain. For if any one should choose to collect and compare all their copies together, he would find many discrepancies among them. The copies of Asclepiades, at any rate, will be found at variance with those of Theodotus. And many such copies are to be had, because their disciples were very zealous in inserting the corrections, as they call them, i.e., the corruptions made by each of them. And again, the copies of Hermophilus do not agree with these; and as for those of Apollonius, they are not consistent even with themselves. For one may compare those which were formerly prepared by them with those which have been afterwards corrupted with a special object, and many discrepancies will be found. And as to the great audacity implied in this offence, it is not likely that even they themselves can be ignorant of that. For either they do not believe that the divine Scriptures were dictated by the Holy Spirit, and are thus infidels; or they think themselves wiser than the Holy Spirit, and what are they then but demoniacs? Nor can they deny that the crime is theirs, when the copies have been written with their own hand; nor did they receive such copies of the Scriptures from those by whom they were first instructed in the faith, and they cannot produce copies from which these were transcribed. And some of them did not even think it worth while to corrupt them; but simply denying the law and the prophets for the sake of their lawless and impious doctrine, trader pretexts of grace, they sunk down to the lowest abyss of perdition.”

Clement of Alexandria (193-202 A.D.) (partial, interpret it wrong, but do not change the words) “And if those also who follow heresies venture to avail themselves of the prophetic Scriptures; in the first place they will not make use of all the Scriptures, and then they will not quote them entire, nor as the body and texture of prophecy prescribe. But, selecting ambiguous expressions, they wrest them to their own opinions, gathering a few expressions here and there; not looking to the sense, but making use of the mere words. For in almost all the quotations they make, you will find that they attend to the names alone, while they alter the meanings; neither knowing, as they affirm, nor using the quotations they adduce, according to their true nature.”. *Stromata* book 7 ch.16 p.531

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) says that heretics corrupted scripture. *On Prescription Against Heretics* ch.17 p.251

Tertullian (198-220 A.D.) “What Pontic mouse [Marcion] ever had such gnawing powers as he who has gnawed the Gospels to pieces? Verily, O Euxine, thou hast produced a monster more credible to philosophers than to Christians.” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 1 ch.1 p.272

**Origen** (.225-253/254 A.D.) “Now I know of no others who have altered the Gospel, save the. followers of Marcion, and those of Valentinus, and, I think, also those of Lucian. But such an allegation is no charge against the Christian system, but against those who dared so to trifle with the Gospels. And as it is no ground of accusation against philosophy, that there exist Sophists, or Epicureans, or Peripatetics, or any others, whoever they may be, who hold false opinions; so neither is it against genuine Christianity that there are some who corrupt the Gospel histories, and who introduce heresies opposed to the meaning of the doctrine of Jesus.” *Origen Against Celsus* book 2 ch.27 p.443

Origen (239-242 A.D.) “those who have corrupted the apostolic Scriptures” *Homilies on Ezekiel* homily 1 ch.7.2 p.37

**Adamantius** (c.300 A.D.) says that Marcion has corrupted scripture. *Dialogue on the True Faith* second part 829a.12 p.89.

**Among heretics**

The Ebionite ***Clementine Homilies*** (-188 A.D. - uncertain date) homily 2 ch.38 vo.8 p.236 says that heretics falsified scripture.

Revised Valentinian ***Tripartite Tract*** (200-250 A.D.) part 2 ch.12 p.91 says some accepted scripture in an altered way.

## 3.9 Meditate on God’s Word / Commands, according to Pre-Nicene Christians

What the Scriptures themselves say.

Psalm 63:6; 77:3,6,12; 119:15,27,47-48,78,148

Meditate on God and His word, laws, promises, ways, wonders. Ps 104:34; 1:2; 119: 15,23,27,48,78,97,99,103,140,148; 39:3; 2 Cor 7:1; 2 Pet 1:4, and works. Ps 77:12; 143:5

-morning/night. Ps 5:3; 16:7; 63:6; 119:55,148; 92:2; 42:8; 77:6; Is26:9;*Job 35:10; Gen 24:63*

meditating on God pleases Him.Ps19:14;5:1;104:34 and enriches us. Js1:8; Ps1:2-3

***Epistle of Barnabas*** (c.70-130 A.D.) ch.10 p.144 “That we ought to join ourselves to those that fear the Lord, those who meditate in their heart on the commandment which they have received, those who both utter the judgments of the Lord and observe them, those who know that meditation is a work of gladness, and who ruminate upon the word of the Lord. But what means the cloven-footed? That the righteous man also walks in this world, yet looks forward to the holy state [to come]. Behold how well Moses legislated. But how was it possible for them to understand or comprehend these things? We then, rightly understanding his commandments, explain them as the Lord intended. For this purpose He circumcised our ears and our hearts, that we might understand these things.”

**Justin Martyr** (c.150 A.D.) quotes all of Psalm 1. *First Apology of Justin Martyr* ch.40 p.176

**Irenaeus of Lyons** (182-188 A.D.) “Now the law has figuratively predicted all these, delineating man by the [various] animals: whatsoever of these, says [the Scripture], have a double hoof and ruminate, it proclaims as clean; but whatsoever of them do not possess one or other of these [properties], it sets aside by themselves as unclean. Who then are the clean? Those who make their way by faith steadily towards the Father and the Son; for this is denoted by the steadiness of those which divide the hoof; and they meditate day and night upon the words of God, that they may be adorned with good works: for this is the meaning of the ruminants.” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 5 ch.8.4 p.534

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “Again, he commands to eat that which parts the hoof and ruminates; ‘intimating,’ says [the Epistle of] Barnabas, ‘that we ought to cleave to those who fear the Lord, and meditate in their heart on that portion of the word which they have received, to those who speak and keep the Lord’s statutes, to those to whom meditation is a work of gladness, and who ruminate on the word of the Lord.” *Stromata* book 5 ch.8 p.456

**Tertullian** (208-220 A.D.) “The law of piety, sanctity, humanity, truth, chastity, justice, mercy, benevolence, modesty, remains in its entirety; in which law ‘blessed (is) the man who shall meditate by day and by night.’ About that (law) the same David (says) again: ‘The law of the Lord (is) unblameable converting souls; the statutes of the Lord (are) direct, delighting hearts; the precept of the Lord far-shining, enlightening eyes.’ Thus, too, the apostle: ‘And so the law indeed is holy, and the precept holy and most good’ -’Thou shalt not commit adultery,’ of course.” *Tertullian on Modesty* ch.6 p.79

Tertullian (207/208 A.D.) “For what could better tend to make a man happy, than having ‘his delight in the law of the Lord?’ ‘In that law would he meditate day and night.” *Five Books Against Marcion* book 2 ch.19 p.312

**Cyprian of Carthage** (c.246-258 A.D.) “For that those things which are written must be done, God witnesses and admonishes, saying to Joshua the son of Nun: ‘The book of this law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate in it day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.’” *Epistles of Cyprian* Letter 73 ch.2 p.386

**Methodius** (c.270-311/312 A.D.) “If I shut my ears against detraction and slanders, and open them to the word of God, having intercourse with wise men, then have I offered up my ears to the Lord. If I keep my hands from dishonourable dealing, from acts of covetousness and of licentiousness, then are my hands kept pure to God. If I withhold my steps from going in perverse ways, then have I offered up my feet, not going to the places of public resort and banquets, where wicked men are found, but into the right way, fulfilling something of the commands. What, then, remains to me, if I also keep the heart pure, offering up all its thoughts to God; if I think no evil, if anger and wrath gain no rule over me, if I meditate in the law of the Lord day and night?” *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* discourse 5 ch.4 p.327

## 3.10 Scripture or its Writers were Inspired, according to Pre-Nicene Christians

**Justin Martyr** (c.150 A.D.) “And that the prophets are inspired by no other than the Divine Word, even you, as I fancy, will grant.” *First Apology of Justin Martyr* ch.33 p.174

Justin Martyr (c.150 A.D.) “And again the same prophet Isaiah, being inspired by the prophetic Spirit, said, ‘I have spread out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people, to those who walk in a way that is not good. They now ask of me judgment, and dare to draw near to God.’” *First Apology of Justin Martyr* ch.35 p.174

**Athenagoras** (177 A.D.) (implied) But, since the voices of the prophets confirm our arguments-for I think that you also, with your great zeal for knowledge, and your great attainments in learning, cannot be ignorant of the writings either of Moses or of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and the other prophets, who, lifted in ecstasy above the natural operations of their minds by the impulses of the Divine Spirit, uttered the things with which they were inspired, the Spirit making use of them as a flute-player breathes into a flute;-what, then, do these men say? *A Plea for Christians* ch.9 p.133

**Theophilus of Antioch** (168-181/188 A.D.) “Moreover, concerning the righteousness which the law enjoined, confirmatory utterances are found both with the prophets and in the Gospels, because they all spoke inspired by one Spirit of God. Isaiah accordingly spoke thus: ‘Put away the evil of your doings from your souls; learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.’” *Theophilus to Autolycus* book 3 ch.12 p.134

**Clement of Alexandria** (193-202 A.D.) “Accordingly, those fall from this eminence who follow not God whither He leads. And He leads us in the inspired Scriptures.” *Stromata* book 7 ch.16 p.553

**Tertullian** (198-220 A.D.) “and we read that ‘every Scripture suitable for edification is divinely inspired.’” *On the Apparel of Women* ch.1.3 p.16

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) discusses how Paul’s epistles are scripture. The only exception is where Paul writes “I say, and not the Lord”. Here is what Origen writes: “Consider on this point the language of St. Paul. When he declares that ‘Every Scripture is inspired of God and profitable,’ does he include his own writings? Or does he not include his dictum, ‘I say, and not the Lord,’ and ‘So I ordain in all the churches,’ and ‘What things I suffered at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra,’ and similar things which he writes in virtue of his own authority, and which do not quite possess the character of words flowing from divine inspiration.” *Commentary on John* book 1 ch.5 p.299

Gregory Thaumaturgus (240-265 A.D.) (partial) says He [the Holy Spirit] inspired the prophets. *Oration and Panegyric to Origen* argument 15 p.36

**Alexander of Lycopolis** (301 A.D.) (implied) “These men, taking to themselves the Old and New Scriptures, though they lay it down that these are divinely inspired, draw their own opinions from thence; and then only think they are refuted, when it happens that anything not in accordance with these is said or done by them.” *Of the Manichaeans* ch.5 p.243

**Athanasius of Alexandria** (318 A.D.) “For although the sacred and inspired Scriptures are sufficient to declare the truth,—while there are other works of our blessed teachers compiled for this purpose, if he meet with which a man will gain some knowledge of the interpretation of the Scriptures, and be able to learn what he wishes to know,—still, as we have not at present in our hands the compositions of our teachers, we must communicate in writing to you what we learned from them,—the faith, namely, of Christ the Saviour; lest any should hold cheap the doctrine taught among us, or think faith in Christ unreasonable.” *Athanasius Against the Heathen* part 1 ch.1.3 p.4

## 3.11 Search the Scriptures as Pre-Nicene Christians exhorted

Acts 17:11 (implied)

**Irenaeus** (182-188 A.D.) “Wherefore also John does appropriately relate that the Lord said to the Jews: ‘Ye search the Scriptures, in which ye think ye have eternal life; these are they which testify of me. And ye are not willing to come unto Me, that ye may have life.’ How therefore did the Scriptures testify of Him, unless they were from one and the same Father, instructing men beforehand as to the advent of His Son, and foretelling the salvation brought in by Him?’ For if ye had believed Moses, ye would also have believed Me; for he wrote of Me;’” *Irenaeus Against Heresies* book 4 ch.10.1 p.473

**Hippolytus** (222-235/236 A.D.) “‘And he [Daniel] wrote the dream.’ The things, therefore, which were revealed to the blessed prophet by the Spirit in visions, these he also recounted fully for others, that he might not appear to prophesy of the future to himself alone, but might be proved a prophet to others also, who wish to search the divine Scriptures.” *Scholia on Daniel* ch.7 verse 1 p.188

**Theodotus the probable Montanist** (ca.240 A.D.) “We must, then, search the Scriptures accurately, since they are admitted to be expressed in parables, and from the names run out the thoughts which the Holy Spirit, propounding respecting things, teaches by imprinting His mind, so to speak, on the expressions” *Excerpts from Theodotus* ch.32 p.47

**Origen** (c.227-240 A.D.) “Christ is written about even in the Pentateuch; He is spoken of in each of the Prophets, and in the Psalms, and, in a word, as the Saviour Himself says, in all the Scriptures. He refers us to them all, when He says: ‘Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Me.’” *Commentary on John* book 5 ch.4 p.347

**Athanasius of Alexandria** (318 A.D.) says to Search the Scriptures. *Incarnation of the Word* ch.57.1 p.67

# 4. Conclusion

 Concerning knowing which books are scripture, David L. Dungan in *CB* p.72 says, “How do people on either side know they are right? Who is to judge which of us is telling the truth? Tertullian’s answer, as Irenaeus before him, and Origen and Eusebius after him, was to point to the succession churches and say, in effect: ‘Because those churches are based upon the apostolic tradition, those bishops are more likely than anyone else to know which writings are genuine writings of Jesus’ apostles and which writings are not. What is the combined verdict of all of the bishops in apostolic succession?’”

 Hold your horses here! This sounds, apparently even to Dungan, like an argument with the Marcionites about the canon. And this was back around 204/205 A.D. So maybe even Dungan should admit, deep down, that there were not just loose copies of various religious, scripture-like books floating around, but there was, over a century before any possible influence by Constantine, a concept of authoritative canonical books.

**Concluding Points**

1) Not Constantine, not early Christians, But God gave us His communication to us, which Christians, long before Constantine, cherished as the Old and New Testaments.

2) While early Christians did not give us scripture, we owe them a debt for recognizing scripture.

3) All the books they unanimously agreed were scripture, as Christians today would agree.

4) However, pre-Nicene Christians had some disagreement on James, 2 Peter, 2, 3 John, Jude, and Old Testament apocryphal books.

5) The final form of the canon was not completely agreed on until after Constantine’s time.

6) While Constantine was very supportive of the church, calling the Council of Nicea, Constantine did not choose to influence anything about which books were canonical.

You may consult the list of references for more details on these points.

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