


2001

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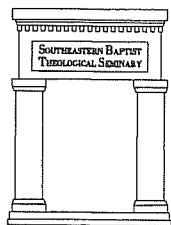
Recommended Citation

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Second-Century Heresy Did Not Force the Church into Early Canonization



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Introduction

An unsettled issue that still plagues scholars today is whether or not Marcion and his canon substantially effected the formation of the Canon of Scripture that was eventually ratified by the western church through the Councils of Hippo (A.D. 393) and Carthage (A.D. 397 and 419).² Recently, in a cover story for the "Science and Ideas" section of *U. S. News and World Report*, Jeffery Sheler, writing on the formation of the early church, stated that the controversy involving Marcion had a profound impact on the formation of the New Testament.³ As Sheler writes to a popular audience and reflects the majority view of scholars, he is promoting an idea that first and second-century evidence does not support. Marcionism and other second-century heresies *did not force* the early church to produce its own set of authoritative writings in self-defense. By early to mid-second century, many churches already had their own collections of inspired writings, writings that had canonical authority and were similar to each other. These collections were regarded as authoritative and distinct from all other religious writings.

Our earliest evidence of a canonical list that was later collectively agreed upon by the West comes from a list of twenty-seven authoritative books that comprised a New Testament listed by Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, as part of his A.D. 367 Easter letter. Later, under Augustine's guidance, the West collectively agreed on the same books of the New Testament under Augustine's guidance at the councils of Hippo in A.D. 393 and Carthage in A.D. 397 and 419.⁴ This canon has been used by most of Christianity up to the present time with the exception of the Revelation of John in the East. An important consideration regarding this issue is that there did not appear to be an urgency for leaders of the various areas to come to a collective agreement on a definitive canon during or shortly after Marcion proclaimed his false teachings in the second century.⁵ In fact, after hearing Marcion's view of God and Scripture at a special hearing before the church leaders at Rome, they immediately excommunicated Marcion from the church.⁶ If Marcion and other heretics had been such an imminent

threat to the proper proclamation of the gospel due to lack of agreement on Scripture or its meaning, it seems that the church would have responded more slowly to heretics and worked on developing a common set of authoritative writings. In reality, one finds evidence from a second-century witness, Irenaeus, that the church already had a firm Scripture, and therefore recognized heresy according to how a heretic altered or misrepresented existing Scripture (*Heresies* 3.15.1).

Not until the end of the fourth century, in which the Roman government influenced the church, did the Western Christians desire an agreed-upon official (canonical) list of authoritative New Testament writings; *this basic canon of authoritative Scripture had already been agreed upon unofficially in most areas for centuries*. Therefore, if Marcion and other heretics such as Valentinus did not cause the church to form an authorized canon of Scripture, one needs to ask if Marcion caused the churches in the various regions to change their perspective regarding the value of different parts of Scripture. Did Marcion change the church's mind on the value of any particular part or parts of the New Testament, and did he really force the church to canonize in response to his heretical work?

Prevailing View of Marcion's Influence on New Testament Canonization

John Knox (1942) is a good representative of that majority view in the mid-twentieth century which perpetuated the view of earlier scholarship. Knox said that when Marcion set aside a certain set of books as important for his community with unduplicated value, he had effectively closed the canon for his community⁷; he said that Marcion did not appropriate one of four Gospels, but instead worked with a more primitive form that was known as *The Gospel*, which required little editing.⁸ Knox and many others look at the church's New Testament development as a reaction to Marcion's heretical work, which resulted in a New Testament creation occurring sometime between the time of Justin (A.D. 150) and Irenaeus (A.D. 175). His proof is that Justin never mentions a New Testament, but Irenaeus does.⁹ In addition, Knox states that through the Muratorian Canon and the writings of Irenaeus and Tertullian, the idea of a New Testament clearly came into focus first at Rome.¹⁰

Knox lays out the canonization process for the New Testament as follows: 1) the early church had Jewish Scripture and the words of Jesus, which had authority from the very beginning starting with oral tradition; 2) Paul's letters had been published by many prior to the closing of the first century; and 3) starting with Irenaeus, there was a New Testament established that had full status and authority alongside the original Jewish Scriptures. New Testament canonization occurred in order to combat heresy, which was becoming a widely recognized problem by the time of Irenaeus. Knox went on to say that the church

broke the force of Marcion's authority by *absorbing* his Scripture and adding it to their existing Jewish Scripture, the Septuagint.¹¹ In a preliminary summary, Knox states,

We may conclude, then, that the more conservative churches, confronted with the facts that various "heretics" and particularly Marcion had exalted certain apostolic writings to the status of Scripture, were forced either to canonize these writings on their own part or else to appear less appreciative of them than their adversaries. The choice here was so clear that it is probably false to call it a choice at all: they canonized the writings, but they did so by adding them to their traditional Scripture, not by substituting them for that Scripture.¹²

E. C. Blackman (1948) agrees with Knox's conclusion that Marcion had the first closed canon.¹³ Blackman goes on to say that because Irenaeus *did not* treat Pauline letters as canonical, it is safe to say that Marcion made up his mind about the canonical authority of Paul's letters before the church as a whole did.¹⁴ The present writer believes that this is a defective premise because it implies that the various regions of Christendom of this era had no individual rulings on whether Paul should be considered authoritative or not.¹⁵ Evidence drawn from study of textual sources, the early church fathers, and heretical sources testifies the opposite. This paper will demonstrate that churches in general accepted the four Gospels and a collection of Paul's letters as authoritative Scripture prior to Marcion's false teachings.

The difference between Blackman's and Knox's perspectives is that Blackman states that there would have been a New Testament canon without Marcion's heresy. He states that many of the Hellenists were more interested in the New Testament than the Old Testament writing, which was a little foreign to them.¹⁶ Blackman's summary ideas on Marcion's influence parallel Brooke F. Westcott's in that they agree that Marcion may have had the first published canon, but that there was a general consensus among early church writers showing that there had not been a need to pronounce a universal judgment on the authenticity of the works. The shaping of the New Testament was gradual; therefore, there would have been a New Testament canon without Marcion.¹⁷

Bruce Metzger's (1987; 1997) argument follows Blackman's line of reasoning on some levels, but projects an earlier start for canon development. He makes an important distinction between the fundamental idea of canonicity (canonical authority) versus the publication of an official list of authorized books (canon),¹⁸ whereas F. F. Bruce states that it is nearer the truth to say that Marcion's canon accelerated the process of fixing the church canon, a process that had already begun in the first half of the second century.¹⁹ It is true that a process of collecting authoritative apostolic writings, which started in the first century, was well under way by the beginning of the second century. Yet, we possess no evidence that indicates that Marcion and/or other heretics forced the church

immediately to publish a universally fixed New Testament canonical list; this did not occur for the West until the end of the fourth century, which was over two hundred years after Marcion's heresy.

F. F. Bruce (1987) sees the heretical work of such individuals such as Marcion and Valentinius as innovation. He states that the church responded in two primary ways: 1) by forming a rule of faith called the apostolic tradition, and 2) by defining the identity of the Bible.²⁰ He goes on to say, "Where the interpretation of the Bible was at issue, there was a tendency to maintain that only the catholic church had the right to interpret it, because the Bible was the church's book; but in the Marcionite controversy an answer had to be given to the more fundamental question: What is the Bible?"²¹ Irenaeus helps to answer Bruce's question regarding the identity of the Bible in the second century, telling us that a definitive Bible exists, which he calls "the Scripture."

The Evidence

Textual

The Gospels. Although we do not have an early-second century codex containing all four Gospels, that does not prove that they did not yet exist. Bruce notes that \mathfrak{P}^{45} , an early third-century Alexandrian codex,²² contained the four-fold Gospel and Acts. It was also very possible that \mathfrak{P}^{75} , a late second-century or early third-century Alexandrian codex could have easily contained all four Gospels, although its present state only witnesses to two (Luke and John).²³ Even the small fragment called \mathfrak{P}^{52} , from an early second-century codex which only contains a small portion of John, might have originally contained all four Gospels.²⁴

Paul's Letters. Regarding Paul, the oldest textual evidence to which we currently have access is \mathfrak{P}^{46} , dating earlier than the time of Tertullian. This manuscript gives textual evidence of an early Pauline corpus that existed in the mid-second century. Kim notes paleographical evidence which indicates that \mathfrak{P}^{46} is actually a late first-century or early second-century document.²⁵

Most scholars today agree that Marcion modified and used *an existing* Pauline collection.²⁶ Blackman looks at Harnack's critical work and states that Marcion did not change as much of the New Testament Scripture as is credited to him; he was merely following the Western text which was available.²⁷ After carefully studying the Pauline corpus that Marcion used, John Clabeaux concludes that Marcion's role was not to create a new text but to adapt and modify an already existing Pauline corpus.²⁸ As Clabeaux drew his work to a close, he stated that the so-called Western text that Marcion used as the basis of his edition of the Pauline corpus was probably a product of the East. He went on to state that this would explain the high frequency of agreement between Old Latin

“I” and some of the distant Eastern Versions. The text type that he used could have already enjoyed a fairly broad circulation.²⁹

Apostles and Early Church Fathers

The Gospels. Papias (A.D. 60-130), bishop of Hierapolis (*H.E.* 2.15; 3.36), is presently our earliest-known patristic witness who discusses more than one Gospel; he discusses both Matthew and Mark per Eusebius (*H.E.* 3.39). F. F. Bruce notes that when Clement of Rome (a Western witness) wrote the Corinthians at the close of the first century appealing for unity, he used the words of Jesus as being at least on a level of authority with those of the prophets, as he quotes parts of the Sermon on the Mount (*1 Clement* 13.1-2).³⁰ Bruce Metzger notes that Clement made definite allusions to Romans, Galatians, Philippians, Ephesians, and Hebrews.³¹ An Eastern witness, Polycarp’s letter to the Philippians, written about A.D. 107, reveals that Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (*H.E.* 5.24), used quotes and/or direct allusions to Matthew, Luke, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, 1 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, 1 Peter, and 1 and 2 John as authoritative writings.³² This single letter shows a large group of authoritative New Testament writings, all considered part of an authoritative canon by Polycarp. These early witnesses, coupled with Peter’s earlier witness that Paul’s work was being twisted as other Scripture (2 Pet. 3:15-16), demonstrate that the early church used the gospel witnesses of the apostles and a collection of Paul’s letters as an authoritative canon of works inspired by God.

Through Justin Martyr, one finds that it is normal for the Gospels (*Memoirs of the Apostles*; *1 Apology* 66) and/or the prophets to be read during Sunday worship services, which was followed by an exhortation to imitate the good things thus learned (*1 Apology* 67.3-4).³³ Justin shows that it is normal for local churches to have and read from multiple Gospels and the Old Testament. Tatian, a student of Justin, helps one pin down the number of Gospels. After Justin’s martyrdom in A.D. 165, Tatian went back to his native Assyria and produced a single Gospel, the *Diatessaron*, from the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, using John as his general framework.³⁴ Tatian’s *Diatessaron* links Justin’s multiple Gospels to the four Gospels that were known to individuals such as Irenaeus simply as “the Gospel.”³⁵

Further early evidence comes from an author of an apocryphal work called the “Gospel of Peter.” Its author, probably writing in Syria or Asia Minor, also drew on all four canonical Gospels to write a Gospel according to Peter around the mid-second century.³⁶ This apocryphal work again shows usage of the four canonical Gospels as a norm for its day. Another witness of this time period, the Muratorian canon, provides a partial list of four Gospels.³⁷ The first two Gospels are missing from the fragment, but the fragment explicitly names the third Gospel

as that according to Luke and the Fourth Gospel as that according to John. He then goes on to discuss John’s letters (Muratorian Canon 1-30).

As one moves from the middle to the closing of the second century, one finds a church father, Irenaeus (A.D. 130-200), who was probably a native of Asia Minor, who listened to Polycarp as a boy in Smyrna, studied in Rome, and eventually became the bishop of Lyons in France. Being a well-traveled Christian leader and apologist, he states that the gospel proclamation consists of four Gospels, those according to John, Luke, Matthew, and Mark (*Heresies* 3.11.8). In addition to listing the four specific Gospels that make up “the gospel,” Irenaeus answers our main question regarding Marcion’s influence on the New Testament canon. He says that Marcion and his followers have mutilated “the Scriptures” by *not acknowledging* some writings at all and *shortening* the Gospel according to Luke and the letters of Paul (*Heresies* 3.12.12).³⁸

Paul’s Letters. As early as A.D. 68, we have evidence through 2 Pet. 3:15-16 that Paul’s letters were being collected and treated authoritatively as Scripture.³⁹ Clement of Rome, writing no later than A.D. 96, alluded to parts of a fairly large Pauline collection and used them authoritatively along with the Gospel according to Matthew. Polycarp, writing the Philippians around A.D. 107, quoted Eph. 4:26 as part of *sacred Scriptures*. He said, “For I have been persuaded that you have been trained in the sacred Scriptures,” and then went on to quote Eph. 4:26 (*Philippians* 12).⁴⁰ Through Hippolytus, we learn that Basilides (ca. A.D. 130), an older contemporary of Marcion, stated that Scripture said (ἡ γραφή λέγει), “Not through the taught words of human wisdom, but through the teachings of the Spirit, . . .” This initial part of the sentence is a direct quote in its Greek form with 1 Cor. 2:13a, but Basilides did change 2:13b to fit his message.⁴¹ In addition, Basilides used the formula ὡς γέγραπται (as it has been written) to introduce his combining of Rom. 8:22 with 8:19b.⁴²

Irenaeus’ View of Marcion’s Canonization

Irenaeus makes it perfectly clear that Marcion and his followers have taken their canon from an existing definitive set of authoritative Christian works that Irenaeus calls “the Scriptures.” Irenaeus strengthens this thought by saying that the rest of the heretics in his day *do not reduce* “the Scriptures,” they pervert the interpretation of it (*Heresies* 3.12.12). Irenaeus goes on to say that Luke’s work (Acts) regarding the acts and doctrines of the apostles is sound and that the teachings of the apostles are constant, reliable, and accessible to all (*Heresies* 3.15.1). A little later in his work, Irenaeus gives us a fuller idea of what Scripture is comprised when he says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as He has personally testified, as the apostles confess, and as the prophets announced (*Heresies* 3.17.4). In a different work, Irenaeus gives us an idea of the importance of reading both the Old Testament writings and the Gospel witnesses. He says that the followers

of Marcion and all other heretics who say that “the Prophets” were from a different god other than the One announced in “the Gospel” need to read with earnest care the Gospels and prophets in order to find out the whole account of the suffering of the Lord (*Heresies* 4.6.34).

Conclusion

Is there any reason to doubt Irenaeus when he says that Marcion and his followers have perverted “the Scriptures” by removing the parts that they did not want? Irenaeus was well traveled from Asia Minor to Rome to Lyons and eventually became the bishop of Lyons. In addition to saying specifically that Marcion and his followers had removed parts from the Scriptures, Irenaeus stated that the majority of the heretics recognized the Scriptures as they existed; their problem was that they misinterpreted the Scriptures (*Heresies* 3.12.12). By saying that Marcion and his followers had perverted the Scriptures by removing portions of it and others had misinterpreted the Scriptures, Irenaeus clearly understood that there was an authoritative group of New and Old Testament writings by the mid-second century.⁴³

Although we do not have an assortment of early lists telling us which New Testament writings were used at the various times and places, we have an assortment of early evidence from texts, church fathers, and heretics, that conclusively shows that Marcion was *not* the first to use a Gospel and a collection of Paul’s work as authoritative Scripture. We noted above that Irenaeus was not the first orthodox Christian leader to consider Paul’s letters as Scripture; there were many before him including Peter who had said that Paul’s letters were being distorted by the untaught and unstable as they did also the rest of Scripture (2 Pet. 3:15-16). Other early witnesses such as Clement of Rome and Polycarp, who referred to Eph. 4:26 as sacred Scripture (*Philippians* 12), show that Paul’s letters were treated as authoritative at an early time. Regarding the Gospels, we have early witnesses such as Papias, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Titian, the *Muratorian Canon*, and Irenaeus who clearly show early Gospel collection.

In addition to textual, orthodox, and heretical evidence that shows existing collections of Gospels and Pauline letters in use prior to Marcion, I conclude by posing a question. If Marcion and other heretics were such a great threat to orthodox churches, why did it take so long for the churches from different areas to gather and to publish collectively an authorized list of Scriptures? Not until the end of the fourth century did a large group of Christians, the Western church, decide collectively to set a canon at the Councils of Hippo (A.D. 393) and Carthage (A.D. 397 and 419).

Notes

¹Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 98.

²Jeffery L. Sheler, “Days of the Martyrs: In the Second and Third Centuries, Politics and Persecution Forged a Global Faith,” *U.S. News and World Report*, April 16, 2001, 44.

³Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 211-12, 237-38.

⁴John Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), 1-2. Marcion came to Rome around A.D. 130 and was expelled around 140 because he had gone against orthodox Christianity proclaiming that the God of the Old Testament was not the God of grace proclaimed in the New Testament. Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, trans. by Ernest Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 4.5.269-73; 5.2-21.513-641. What is important to us is that Marcion viewed Paul as the great apostle of the gospel of grace and based his version of the New Testament on a modified version of Luke’s Gospel and ten of Paul’s letters. Marcion’s New Testament collection as described by Tertullian is the oldest surviving canonical list to date. Justin Martyr (A.D. 100-65), *1 Apology* 26. Justin, a Christian teacher at Rome, says that Marcion had many followers around the world during his lifetime.

⁵Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 90-91.

⁶John Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), 25-26.

⁷*Ibid.*, 164-65.

⁸*Ibid.*, 32.

⁹*Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 158-59.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 37-38.

¹²E. C. Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence* (London: S.P.C.K., 1948), 23.

¹³*Ibid.*, 31-32.

¹⁴Although Blackman agrees with Zahn’s work, which shows that the majority of New Testament writings were read and considered authoritative by the end of the first century, he is sidetracked by looking for a time when the authoritative New Testament writings were actually called Scripture just as the Old Testament writings (25-26). Blackman acknowledges that a younger contemporary of Marcion used phraseology normally associated with Scripture when referring to portions of Paul’s letters. He states that Basilides used the phrase ὡς γέγραπται (“as it has been written”) and ἡ γραφή (“the Scripture,” “writing”) with passages from 1 Corinthians and Ephesians, which was recorded through Hippolytus’ *Refutations against Heresies* (7.13-14, 30).

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 24, 33.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 32-33.

¹⁷Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 99.

¹⁸Ibid., 99.

¹⁹F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 151.

²⁰Ibid., 99.

²¹Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*, 129. \mathfrak{P}^{45} is an early third-century codex. Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 2d ed. (1968; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 252. \mathfrak{P}^{45} is comprised of both Alexandrian and Western-type texts.

²²Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*, 129. \mathfrak{P}^{75} is a late-second century or an early third-century codex. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 255. \mathfrak{P}^{75} agrees with Codex B.

²³Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*, 129.

²⁴Y. K. Kim, "Palaeographical Dating of \mathfrak{P}^{46} to the Later First Century," *Biblica* 69, no. 2 (1988): 248-57. Kim's argument is based on the literary style, omission of iota adscriptum, and the usage of $\epsilon\gamma$ instead of $\epsilon\kappa$ before compounds beginning with β , δ , and λ . These three characteristics of the text caused Kim to consider an early dating for \mathfrak{P}^{46} .

²⁵Publications arranged chronologically. Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament*, 60-73. Knox builds a case demonstrating that Marcion worked from an existing list of Paul's letters that was already circulating the Roman world during his life. John James Clabeaux, "The Pauline Corpus Which Marcion Used: The Text of the Letters of Paul in the Early Second Century," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1983), 5, 12-15, 225-30. Clabeaux agrees with his peers regarding Marcion's use of an existing Pauline collection. His contribution to understanding Marcion's text comes from his statistical data. He worked with fifty-three Marcionite deviations from Alexandrian text. His work showed that Marcion's text as viewed through Tertullian's writing matched the Old Latin text (mostly I and D: I type shows exposure to non-Western Greek MSS and was widespread reaching even to present-day France and Spain, and D type is typified by Lucifer of Cagliari and the Latin parts of the Great Bilinguals) 90.5 percent of the time and the Greek Western MSS (mostly "D") 43.4 percent of the time. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 4. Metzger states that as early as Paul's own day, Paul encouraged the sharing of his letters (Col. 4:16). Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*, 130. Bruce states that it is important to realize that from the early second century onward, Paul's letters circulated not singly, but as collections.

²⁶Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence*, 50-51, 58, 168.

²⁷Clabeaux, "The Pauline Corpus Which Marcion Used," 5-6. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 93-94, works through some of the modifications that Marcion made to Paul's letters.

²⁸Ibid., 246-47. Gilles Quispel, "Marcion and the Text of the New Testament." *Vigiliae Christianae* 52, no. 4 (November 1998): 350, 356-59. Quispel concurred with Clabeaux saying that Marcion's text for Paul is pre-Western. He states that it does not match what became Western text by the end of the second century. He thinks that the text was taken over from some ancient Roman Christian community instead of being brought in from the East.

²⁹Ibid., 121.

³⁰Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 42-43.

³¹"The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians." *Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1, trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (1885; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 33-36. Following are some of the obvious quotes and/or allusions to New Testament Scripture within Polycarp's letter to the Philippians: § 1—quote from Eph. 2:8-9a; § 2—combining of Rom. 4:24 and 1 Pet. 1:21; allusion Eph. 1:20; Rom. 12:17; 1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Pet. 3:9; parts of Matt. 7:1; Luke 6:36-38; Matt. 5:3, 10; § 4—allusion 1 Tim. 3:3; quote from part of 1 Tim. 6:10; allusion to Eph. 6:10f; § 5—quote from Gal. 6:10; allusion to 1 Tim. 3:8; partial quote of 2 Tim. 2:12; § 6—quote from 2 Cor. 5:10; § 7 combining of 1 John 4:2-3 and 2 John 1:7; part of Matt. 6:13 and 26:41 (Mark 14:38); § 8—quote from 1 Pet. 2:24 with "tree" substituted for "cross (cf. Gal. 3:13 and OT for "tree" versus "cross;"; § 10—combining of Eph. 5:21 and 1 Pet. 2:12; § 11—quote from 1 Thess. 5:22 and 1 Cor. 6:2; § 12—quote from Eph. 4:26 and allusions to Matt. 5:43-48.

³²*First Apology* 67.3-4: καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἡλίου λεγομένης ἡμέρας πάντων κατὰ πόλεις ἢ ἀγροῦς μενόντων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συνέλευσις γίνεται, καὶ τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν ἀναγινώσκειται, μέχρις ἐγγωρεῖ. 67.4 εἶτα παυσάμενου τοῦ ἀναγινώσκοντος ὁ προεστὼς διὰ λόγου τὴν νοουθεσίαν καὶ πρόκλησιν τῆς τῶν καλῶν τούτων μιμήσεως ποιεῖται (TLG 001, 67.3-4) ("And on the day called Sun [Sunday], all who live in the cities or country at the/some place a meeting begins and the things to be remembered from the apostles [memoirs of the apostles = the Gospels] or the combined writings of the prophets are read, as far as allowed [time permits]; 67.4 then, when the reader has stopped, the one who has been leading [προεστὼς pf. ptc. of προϊστημι] verbally gives instruction and a challenge to imitate these good things"). Justin differentiates between Old and New Testaments. In the quote given above, it is possible that the records of the apostles refers to New Testament writings while the combined writings of the prophets refers to Old Testament writings. Even though we do not have a list of accepted writings for either category, we see that by mid-second century, a member of the Roman church states that it is normal to read from both the Old and New Testaments during Sunday worship services.

³³Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*, 126-27.

³⁴Earlier, Irenaeus had stated that heretics were perverting the interpretation of Scripture, which he defined as the evangelists, the apostles, the law, and the prophets (*Heresies* 3.3.6). Later, in the same book, Irenaeus goes on to show how *The Gospel* is comprised of four Gospels. He says that the Word, who has been manifested to men, has given us *The Gospel* under four aspects, but bound together by one Spirit. Irenaeus goes on to state that the four aspects are the Gospels according to John, Luke, Matthew, and Mark (*Heresies* 3.11.8).

³⁵Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha*, trans. by R. McL. Wilson, vol. 1 (Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 1991), 221. Schneemelcher places the time of writing around mid-second century, but implies that it is not a firm figure. Attested in Syria prior to A.D. 190 by Serapion through a manuscript found in Egypt. Cf. Alan Kirk, "Examining Properties: Another Look at the Gospel of Peter," *New Testament Studies* 40, no. 4 (October 1994): 572-95. Kirk presents a good argument showing that the author of the Gospel of Peter wrote his gospel after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and drew on all four of them as he wrote his. This view is opposed by individuals such as

John Crossan and Helmut Koester who advocate the writing of the Gospel of Peter prior to the Four Gospels. An interesting point in his argument came with his discussion of how the author of the Gospel of Peter identified the first day of the week, which we presently call Sunday. In the early church, all of the Gospel writers normally referred to Sunday as "the first day of the week" (μίαν σαββάτων), but later (as early as the writing of Revelation [1:10]), it was called "the Lord's Day (ἡ κυριακή ἡμέρα)." The author of the Gospel of Peter (9.35—Τῆς δὲ νυκτὶ ἧς ἐπέφωσκεν ἡ κυριακή and [12.50—"Ὁρθρου δὲ τῆς κυριακῆς Μαρίας ἢ Μαγδαληνῆ, (from a *TLC* search)]) calls it "the Lord's Day." This places the Gospel of Peter later than the Four Gospels. Yet, it would seem that it could have been written as early as sometime in the late first-century around the time that John wrote Revelation.

³⁶Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 36. The Muratorian Canon implies that Bishop Pius has not been dead long (lines 73-77) and that Valentinius and Miltiades have composed a new psalm book for Marcion (lines 82-83). It appears that the Muratorian Canon was written when Marcion was still alive and not too much after Bishop Pius died, which was around A.D. 154 (*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3d ed., 1292).

³⁷As a note of interest: When Irenaeus is refuting the Ebionites, Irenaeus considers Luke and Acts combined as part of "the Gospel," which has been made known through Luke. Irenaeus tells the Ebionites that they should reject Luke's work if they reject Paul as one of the elect of God. He stated that they should reject Luke's work because he testifies of Paul's authenticity and then proceeds to quote Acts 9:4, 15-16, which shows Jesus' personal call of Paul into Christian ministry (*Heresies* 3.15.1). Irenaeus discusses information from Acts and Paul's letters as Scripture (*Heresies* 3.12.9). W. A. Strange, *The Problem of the Text of Acts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 180. Strange seems puzzled because Justin Martyr writes of Jesus' post-resurrection appearance in such a way that he seamlessly combines Luke 24:25, 44ff. with Acts 1:8 (*Apology* 50.12; δύναμιν . . . λαβόντες). He is mystified because Justin's work shows an awareness of Luke but not Acts. This might be another case where Luke and Acts are known together as Luke.

³⁸Second Peter 3:15-16 (A.D. 68: See Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th rev. ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 843-44, for a discussion on possible dating of 2 Peter). 3:15 καὶ τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν μακροθυμίαν σωτηρίαν ἡγείσθε, καθὼς καὶ ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἡμῶν ἀδελφὸς Παῦλος κατὰ τὴν δοθείσαν αὐτῷ σοφίαν ἔγραψεν ὑμῖν, 3:16 ὡς καὶ ἐν πάσαις ἐπιστολαῖς λαλῶν ἐν αὐταῖς περὶ τούτων, ἐν αἷς ἐστὶν δυσνόητά τινα, ἃ οἱ ἀμαθεῖς καὶ ἀστήρικτοι στρεβλοῦσιν ὡς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτῶν ἀπώλειαν NA²⁷ (3:15 "And consider the patience of our Lord as salvation just as our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom which had been given to him, 3:16 as even in all (his) letters are saying concerning these things in which there are difficult things to understand that the unlearned and insincere are distorting as (they do) the other Scriptures leading to their own destruction"). All translations are the present author's unless otherwise noted.

³⁹After telling the Philippians that he thinks that they have been well trained in the sacred Writings (ταῖς ἱεραῖς γραφαῖς), he states that the following has been declared in these (holy) writings (ὡς ταῖς γραφαῖς ταύταις εἶρηται), "Be ye angry and sin not (ὀργίζεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε)," and, "let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυέτω ἐπὶ παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν; *Philippians* 12). This quotation appears to come directly from Eph. 4:26 in which Paul quoted Psalms 4:5 (Septuagint—ὀργίζεσθε

Hebrew—אָר) in the first half and then added the balance from his general understanding of Scripture. Ephesians 4:26 appears identical, ὀργίζεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε· ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυέτω ἐπὶ τῷ παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν ("Being angry, do not sin," and, "Do not let the sun go down on your anger"). The Greek source for the apostolic fathers is the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLC)*, CD-ROM ed.

⁴⁰Westcott and Bruce state that Basilides quotes 1 Cor. 2:13 as Scripture (Westcott, p. 301; Bruce, p. 122). This partial quote (1 Cor. 2:13a) has been modified to change the meaning as follows: the final participial clause was changed from πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες (by spiritual means comparing spiritual things) to λεγομένη (which it [Scripture] says for itself).

⁴¹Westcott and Bruce state that Basilides is quoting Rom. 8:19, 22 after introducing his proof text with the phrase, "As it has been written." (Westcott, p. 301; Bruce, p. 122). ὡς γέγραπται, φησί· καὶ ἡ κτίσις αὐτῆ συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει μέχρι τοῦ νῦν [cf. Rom. 8:22] 7.25.2 τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεκδεχομένη [cf. Rom. 8:19b]. Basilides quoted by Hippolytus in his work *Refutation of All Heresies* (parts of 7.25.1-2). (English: "As it has been written, it is being said that the creation itself is groaning and suffering together until now [cf. Rom. 8:22] 7.25.2 waiting the revelation of the sons of God" [cf. Rom. 8:19b]).

⁴²Remember that we had noted above that Irenaeus had said that Marcion's followers and all other heretics who were saying that "the Prophets" were from a different god other than the One announced in "the Gospel" needed to read with earnest care both "the Gospel" and "the Prophets" in order to find out the whole account of the suffering of the Lord (*Heresies* 4.6.34). To Irenaeus, the Old Testament was an important part of "the Scripture."