



## Part 1: How We Got The Bible

**Bottom Line:** The Bible didn't just appear out of nowhere—it was written, preserved, and passed down through history so that we can know God.

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### Introduction:

- In this message, we kicked off our **Book Club** series by acknowledging that many of us have questions about the Bible, especially how we got it.
  - Whether you're new to faith, exploring faith, or a longtime Jesus follower, understanding the Bible's history helps us trust it more.
  - The question we focused on was: **How did we get the Bible?**
  - Many of us may hesitate to trust something we don't understand, and this applies to the Bible as well. Knowing how it came to be can inspire us to engage with it more deeply.
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### The Bible is Not a Single Book:

- The Bible isn't one book—it's a collection of 66 books, written by over 40 authors across 1,500 years on three continents.
  - It's like a library, containing different styles of writing, such as history, poetry, prophecy, and letters. This variety of genres helps explain why the Bible can sometimes feel hard to follow.
  - The process of **canonization**—which means "measuring rod"—is how the collection of these documents became the Bible we have today.
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### Canonization Process:

- Three basic steps helped determine which writings would be included in the Bible:
  1. **Inspiration by God:** Jesus followers believe God inspired the authors of both the Old and New Testaments to write these documents.



2. **Recognition by the People of God:** These documents were quickly accepted by the communities who first received them, such as the writings of Moses in the Old Testament and the Gospels in the New Testament.
  3. **Collection and Preservation:** The documents were collected, preserved, and protected by Jesus followers, sometimes at great personal risk.
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#### **Luke's Account of Jesus:**

- A great example of how the Bible was preserved is the Gospel of Luke. Luke was not one of Jesus' original disciples, but he carefully investigated eyewitness accounts to document Jesus' life.
  - Luke didn't write his account thinking it would be part of the Bible—he was documenting real events for Theophilus, so that Theophilus could be certain of the truth about Jesus.
  - Luke's account was later included in the Bible because it was recognized as a reliable historical record.
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#### **Historical Preservation and Sacrifice:**

- Throughout history, Christians risked their lives to protect and preserve the Bible. In the early church, Roman emperors like **Diocletian** tried to destroy Christian literature, but they were unsuccessful because the writings had spread so widely.
  - Later, during the **Dark Ages**, the Catholic Church restricted access to the Bible, allowing it to be read only in Latin. Reformers like **John Wycliffe** and **William Tyndale** fought to translate the Bible into common languages so that everyday people could read it for themselves. Both faced persecution, and Tyndale was executed for his efforts.
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### Conclusion:

- The Bible we have today is the result of extraordinary efforts to write, collect, preserve, and pass down these sacred documents. People gave their lives so that we could have access to God's Word.
- This message challenges us to appreciate the Bible's history and to engage with it personally. The Bible is a miraculous gift that has survived centuries of persecution and preservation so that we can know God today.

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### Application:

- We encouraged everyone to **download the Bible app** if they don't already have it, and begin reading the book of Luke this week. Starting with chapter 1, reflect on how Luke's careful investigation and documentation were preserved so that we can learn from it today.