

IS THE BIBLE AUTHENTIC?
PART 2: NEW TESTAMENT AUTHENTICITY
PART A—THE EARLY COPIES

- I. Manuscripts Are Distinguished by WRITING MATERIALS
 - A. *Papyri*, primitive form of PAPER (sort of)
 - B. *Parchments*, LEATHER—either SCROLLS or CODICES/BOOKS
- II. Manuscripts Are Distinguished by COMPLETENESS
 - A. Containing only the GOSPELS or parts of them—about 1500
 - B. Containing only FRAGMENTS of books—THOUSANDS
 - C. Containing ALL or MOST of the NT—about 200
 - D. Containing nearly the ENTIRE BIBLE—a FEW
- III. Manuscripts Are Distinguished by STYLE of WRITING
 - A. *Uncials*, unconnected CAPITALS, 26 to a line with no SPACES—about 260, primarily 2nd to 6th century
 - B. *Minuscules*, flowing SCRIPT—over 2750, all from after the 10th century
 - 1. FASTER and CHEAPER to produce
 - 2. Led to greater VARIATION among COPIES
- IV. Manuscripts Are Categorized into “FAMILIES”—SIMILAR copies grouped GEOGRAPHICALLY
 - A. Alexandrian Text—the most “CONCISE”

1. By far the OLDEST, including ALL the papyri and NEARLY ALL of the uncials
 2. Only about 8% of total mss, but the African Church shifted to LATIN during the 5th century
 3. Basis for the earliest TRANSLATIONS into Syriac and Coptic
 4. Basis for the writings of the early CHURCH FATHERS
- B. Western Text—CLOSELY RESEMBLES the Alexandrian, but FEW Greek examples because European Church shifted to LATIN by 2nd or 3rd century
- C. Byzantine Text—more “FULL”
1. Oldest examples from about 5th century, but becomes most NUMEROUS by the 9th century because the Eastern Church continues to use GREEK
 2. About 90% of total manuscripts, but NONE of the OLDEST
 3. Primary basis for text called the MAJORITY TEXT today
 4. *Textus Receptus*, the basis for the KJV, DEVELOPED from this text
- D. All are merely SLIGHT variations of the SAME New Testament
- V. What About DIFFERENCES Between the Manuscripts?—“VARIANTS”
- A. No two copies are IDENTICAL
 - B. No copy is without obvious SPELLING errors, SKIPPED words, REPEATED lines, or other scribal ERRORS
 - C. After OBVIOUS errors are corrected and word order differences ignored, significant variation amounts to LESS than 0.2 % of total