

IS THE BIBLE AUTHENTIC?
PART 2: NEW TESTAMENT AUTHENTICITY
PART B—THE RELIABILITY OF THE TEXT TODAY

- I. Three Main “CONTENDERS” for “STANDARD” Greek Text
 - A. The “MAJORITY” Text—essentially the Byzantine Text
 - 1. None earlier than the FIFTH century, but outnumbers all others by the NINTH century
 - 2. Has never been EDITED into a STANDARDIZED text
 - 3. Has never been the basis for an ENGLISH TRANSLATION
 - B. The “*Textus Receptus*”—an ISOLATED example from the MAJORITY text family
 - 1. DEVELOPED in the SIXTEENTH and SEVENTEENTH centuries
 - 2. PRIMARY basis of the KJV and the NKJV
 - 3. Today’s TR most closely resembles the THIRD of four revisions by Stephanus, but is not IDENTICAL with any previous text
 - C. The “Eclectic” or “CRITICAL” Text
 - 1. Produced in the mid-NINETEENTH century by team led by Westcott and Hort using MORE manuscripts and OLDER texts than had been available to Erasmus
 - 2. Sought to reconcile DIFFERENCES between the OLDEST texts and the most NUMEROUS texts, generally favoring the OLDEST
 - 3. Nestle-Aland revision, currently in its 28th edition became the basis for nearly every ENGLISH translation of the MODERN era
- II. Bibliographical Test for the RELIABILITY of the New Testament Text
 - A. Testimony of the SCHOLARS

1. Not one article of FAITH or precept of DUTY is ALTERED or OMITTED
 2. No fundamental DOCTRINE rests on a DISPUTED reading (cf. 1 John 5:7-8)
- B. MANUSCRIPT evidence
1. There are 24,000 to 27,000 NT manuscripts extant
 2. Earliest copy of a PORTION of the NT is separated from the original by no more than 25 years
 3. Earliest COMPLETE copy of the NT is separated from the original by no more than 250 years
 4. Comparison of copies of the NT leaves less than 0.5% in doubt
- C. Manuscript reliability is supported by early VERSIONS (TRANSLATIONS)
- D. Manuscript reliability is supported by early church SCHOLARS
- E. “How much DIFFERENCE do the DIFFERENCES make?”
1. The KJV translators sometimes employed textual VARIANTS
 2. The Greek texts contain almost the same number of WORDS
 3. There are a FEW verses which the Eclectic Text or the MT do not include
 4. Every QUESTIONABLE verse still appears in the footnotes of those texts
 5. Modern versions INCLUDE the questionable verses
 6. Modern versions give the benefit of the doubt to other DISPUTED passages
 7. Modern versions do not follow the Eclectic Text SLAVISHLY
 8. The test of a translation’s INTEGRITY cannot be the number of QUESTIONABLE verses it prints
 9. Only a SMALL PERCENTAGE of variants affect understanding significantly