



## •TIMELINE OF TOPICS•

### Quote

- Philip Jacob Spener (d. 1705)

### Early Church

- How we got the New Testament
- List of NT Apocryphal Gospels

### World Christianity

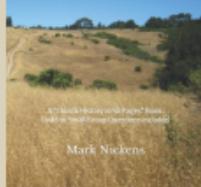
- Missions to India in early 1800s: Two friends created a new mission organization (which has 3700 missionaries right now)

### Examples of NT Apocryphal Gospels

1. Protoevangelium (Infancy Gospel) of James
2. The Secret Book (Apocryphon) of James
3. Gospel of Judas
  4. Infancy Gospel of Thomas
5. Gospel of Thomas
6. Book of Thomas
7. Gospel of Peter
8. Secret Gospel of Mark
9. Gospel of Philip
10. Gospel of Mary
11. Gospel of Matthias
12. Gospel of Truth
13. Gospel of the Ebionites
14. Gospel of the Hebrews
15. Gospel of the Nazarenes (Nazoreans)
16. Gospel of the Egyptians
17. Epistula Apostolorum
18. The Dialogue of the Savior
19. The Sophia (Wisdom) of Jesus Christ
20. Gospel of Eve
21. Gospel of Basilides
22. Egerton Gospel
23. Gospel of Marcion
24. Gospel of Apelles
25. Memoirs of the Apostles

2 Books on Amazon to help you learn more:

### How We Got the New Testament



### 50 New Testament Apocrypha before AD 200: Summaries, Heresies, and Errors

MARK NICKENS



## How We got the New Testament: New Testament Canonization

AD 100-150: The future New Testament books were shared and slowly formed several collections

- The future New Testament (NT) books were shared amongst the many house churches within Christianity (see Colossians 4:16 as an example).
- Two separate collections developed early on: the Four Gospels and Paul's letters.
- But the early church leaders did not see a need to develop a NT yet. Marcion (mid-100's)
- He believed in at least two gods: The god of the Old Testament and the god of Jesus. He believed that the Old Testament god was violent and the god of Jesus was loving.
- He believed that only Paul understood Jesus and decided to create a "scripture" that only contained letters connected to Paul: the Gospel of Luke (because Luke traveled with Paul) and 10 of Paul's letters (for some reason he didn't include the pastorals: I & II Timothy and Titus).
- This helped cause the early church leaders to consider creating the correct NT, mainly because Marcion created a false NT with his false understanding of Jesus.

Montanus (a decade or two after Marcion)

- Montanus believed that God continued to give new revelations about Himself to Montanus and his main followers.
- This helped cause the early church leaders to consider creating the NT to establish the fact that God's revelations about Himself ended with the Apostles.

Different lists by church leaders over a 170-year period

- In the late-100's, an unknown Christian leader decided to list the books that were accepted as from God in his geographic region. It is known as the Muratorian List in honor of the scholar who discovered it, Ludovico Antonio Muratori, in 1740.
- In the mid-200's, a Christian leader named Origen wrote a list of books that were accepted in his region.
- Around 300, a Christian leader named Eusebius wrote a list of books that were accepted in his region.
- You can see these three lists here. (You will also see a fourth list, which I describe below.)

Persecutions by Roman emperors

- Some Roman persecutions of Christians in the early 300s involved Christians handing over their sacred books to be burned. Therefore, Christians needed to know which books were sacred (and worth dying for) and which books were false and could be turned over to be burned by the Romans.

Athanasius' List

- Athanasius was one of the main church leaders of the 300's, and he was a bishop of Alexandria, Egypt.
- He wrote a letter in 367 that listed the books used in the churches under his authority in North Africa.
- He listed the 27 books that are in the NT. This is the first listing of the 27 NT books that has been discovered.

The Councils that "closed" the New Testament canon to 27 books.

- The Councils (or Synods) of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397) declared that only those 27 books could be used or read in the churches.
- This "closed" the NT to only those 27 books in northeastern Africa. Other areas of the Roman Empire established the same listing of 27 books.

Note: all branches of Christianity use only the 27 books of the New Testament: Protestant, Orthodox, Catholic, and other smaller groups. The differences come in the books used in the Old Testament.

"There is no success without sacrifice. If you succeed without sacrifice it is because someone has suffered before you. If you sacrifice without success it is because someone will succeed after."  
Adoniram Judson (d. 1850)

An old joke: If you put two Baptists in a room together, you will have three opinions. So what did finally bring Baptists together in the USA?

Prior to the General Convention of the Baptist denomination in 1814, Baptists did not have a central body that connected the Baptist churches in the USA. The first Baptist church in the American colonies was founded by Roger Williams in 1638 in present-day Providence, Rhode Island. By the establishment of the American colonies as a nation in 1800, that number had grown to almost 1200 churches who were connected amongst themselves into at least forty-eight different local associations. But no national connective Baptist group existed, the local Baptist associations each remaining autonomous. But that changed with the General Convention of the Baptists in 1814. For the first time in the USA, almost all Baptists joined together as they found commonality in the same causes: promoting foreign missions among all Baptist churches in the new country.

#### Do Congregationalist churches exist today?

Yes, there are two-and-a-half. In 1948, disagreeing with the liberal leanings of many other Congregationalist churches, the Conservative Congregational Church Fellowship formed. Today, it has around 300 churches as members. In 1967, many Congregationalist churches merged with the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ (a very liberal group). Those Congregationalist churches that did not wish to join that merger formed the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, which has around 400 churches. So, today there are two Congregationalist denominations and one denomination consisting of previously Congregationalist churches.

Map showing Burma (present-day Myanmar)  
India is the large country to its left



Questions or comments contact Mark  
at [marknickens@gmail.com](mailto:marknickens@gmail.com)

Two friends helped create a new mission organization  
(which has 3700 missionaries right now)  
and a denomination

Adoniram Judson (1788-1850) was raised in a Congregationalist house and his father was a Congregationalist pastor. He attended present-day Brown University and then Andover Theological Seminary, a Congregationalist school. In his last year there, he felt that God was calling him to become a missionary. At that time (around 1810), the Congregationalists did not have a mission organization. But due to Adoniram's desire, along with three other like-minded young men, the Congregationalists decided to create one, known as the American of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ACFM). He had a desire to go to Asia, and the newly formed mission organization agreed. Meanwhile, Luther Rice (1783-1836), also raised as a Congregationalist, eventually attended Andover Theological Seminary where he met Judson.

They were both commissioned as missionaries by the ACFM. [This is an important point: Congregationalist churches practice infant baptism.] They sailed for India in 1812, including Judson's wife of only two weeks, Ann. Five new missionaries in all left for India, with Judson and his wife on one boat and Rice on another boat.

While on board, and in the midst of Bible studies, Adoniram and Ann became convinced that infant baptism was incorrect and that believer's baptism was the proper mode of baptism. Once in India, they were both baptized. A few weeks later, Rice also became convinced that believer's baptism was correct. This caused a problem, because the sending organization for them both adhered to infant baptism. That did not deter them: the three wrote letters of resignation and then faced the problem of being missionaries in India without support.

They were forced to leave India by the British East India Company and traveled to neighboring Burma (current Myanmar). Rice did not adjust well to the climate, and so the three missionaries decided Rice would return to the USA and raise funds for Judson's, who would remain in Burma.

Upon Rice's return, he worked indefatigably to raise funds by traveling on horseback to many churches in an attempt to interest them in missions work. His labors help result in a variety of different Baptist churches and local associations coming together in Philadelphia in 1814 to form "The General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions." Therefore, this first national organization of Baptists in the USA formed for the purpose of doing foreign missions work.

Today, that organization is known as the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, which currently has roughly 3700 missionaries. It is almost unique among mission organizations because the missionaries are fully funded (all the missionaries that I have met from a variety of mission groups over the last 24 years of traveling overseas have had to raise their own support).