

7. The Development of the New Testament Canon

PERIOD	CHARACTERISTICS	APPROXIMATE DATES	SIGNIFICANT SOURCES	BOOKS RECEIVED	BOOKS QUESTIONED
APOSTOLIC FATHERS	No serious debate, no official pronouncements	100-140	quotations in Apostolic Fathers	Four Gospels Pauline Epistles (unspecified corpus)	None
GNOSTIC OPPOSITION	reaction against Gnostic truncation of canon (esp. writings of Marcion)	140-220	quotations in Church Fathers Muratorian Canon (c.180) Gospel of Truth (Gnostic)	Four Gospels Acts 13 Pauline Epistles 1 Peter 1 John Jude Revelation	Hebrews James 2 Peter 2-3 John Shepherd of Hermas Didache Revelation of Peter
FINAL SOLIDIFICATION	general agreement by end of fourth century	220-400	Origen Eusebius Athanasius (Paschal letter of 367—final acceptance in East) Synod of Rome (382—final acceptance in West) Synod of Carthage (397—acceptance by entire church)	Four Gospels Acts 13 Pauline Epistles 1 Peter 1 John Revelation Four Gospels Acts 14 Pauline Epistles 1 Peter 1 John Present Canon Present Canon Present Canon	Hebrews James 2 Peter 2-3 John Jude Shepherd of Hermas Didache James 2 Peter 2-3 John Jude Revelation Shepherd of Hermas Didache Present Canon

8. Books Debated for Inclusion in the New Testament Canon

QUESTIONED BOOK	REASONS GIVEN FOR ACCEPTANCE	REASONS GIVEN FOR EXCLUSION	RESULT
HEBREWS	Thought Pauline in East	Thought non-Pauline forgery in West	Accepted
JAMES	Thought genuine in East	Authorship questioned in West	Accepted
2 PETER	Petrine authorship	Authorship questioned Similarity of chapter 2 to Jude	Accepted
2-3 JOHN	Johannine authorship	Lack of citations in early writings	Accepted
JUDE	Early citations Apostolic authorship	Authorship questioned	Accepted
REVELATION	Widely recognized as Johannine	Questioned by Eusebius largely because of his opposition to chiliasm	Accepted
THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS	Edifying contents Visions from God	Nonapostolic origin Late date	Excluded
DIDACHE	Record of genuine apostolic traditions	Uncertain origin Late date	Excluded
REVELATION OF PETER	Suspected Petrine authorship Similarity to Johannine Apocalypse	Authenticity doubted	Excluded