

*This message is based on the book, "Can We Trust the Gospels?"
by Mark D. Roberts*

"Critical Text": *A definitive rendering of Scripture that is considered
by scholars to be the most accurate, in light of all the available
evidence and research*

All Bible translations are rendered from the _____
critical texts in the _____ languages –
Hebrew and Aramaic for the Old Testament, and
Greek for the New Testament.

"Autograph": *An original version of a written work*

"Extant": *In existence today*

Earliest Extant Gospel Copies:

Fragment of John 18:31-11 & 37-38
"p⁵²" ("Papyrus 52")
~A.D. 125

Significant portions of all 4 Gospels
"p⁴", "p⁴⁵", "p⁶⁴", "p⁶⁶", "p⁶⁷", & "p⁷⁵"
Late 2nd century to the early 3rd century A.D.

Many Copies of all 4 Gospels
Including Codex Sinaiticus
Early 3rd century to the 4th century A.D.

The extant Gospel manuscripts are _____
_____ closer to their autographs than
those of Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Herodotus, and
Thucydides.

*Casting doubt on the extant Gospel manuscripts would require
casting doubt upon our knowledge of almost ALL ancient history
and literature*

The number of Gospel manuscripts in existence is about
_____ larger than the average number
of extant manuscripts of comparable writings.

Text criticism is an _____, peer-reviewed
discipline that relies on the _____
work of hundreds of scholars.

The many variants in the extant Gospel manuscripts are
the simple product of the incredible _____
of manuscripts we have – which also allows scholars to
more easily _____ variants.

**Why Should I Believe
Anything The Gospels
Say About Jesus?
(Part 1) // Page 2**

“extra-Biblical” / “non-canonical”: *Not part of the Bible / the canon of Scripture*

Because we know that the 4 Biblical Gospels were written _____ the non-canonical Gospels (e.g. the Gnostic Gospels), we know that they can be considered more _____.

Earliest Extant Non-Biblical References to the Gospels:

“Against Heresies” by Irenaeus
Identifies all 4 Gospels as authoritative, by name
Dates all 4 Gospels to the latter half of the first century A.D.
A.D. 180

The Muratorian Canon (author unknown)
Identifies 4 Gospels as authoritative, Luke & John by name
~A.D. 170

“Expositions of the Oracles of the Lord” by Papias
Identifies Matthew and Mark as authoritative, by name
Dates Matthew and Mark to the first century A.D.
~A.D. 130

3 of the 4 Gospels are direct _____
and the 4th is compiled from the eyewitness accounts
of others.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke likely used Mark's Gospel as a source – placing Mark's authorship around the middle of the first century A.D.

Generally-Agreed-Upon Gospel Dating:

Matthew: 65-85 A.D.
Mark: 60-75 A.D.
Luke: 65-95 A.D.
John: 75-100 A.D.