

HOW DO WE KNOW THE BIBLE IS COMPLETE?

In Jude 3, we read, "...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Notice especially the expression, "the faith once delivered." In the original language of the New Testament, the word "once" used here does not mean "once upon a time" but "once for all." In other words, the Christian faith was once for all delivered to the saints while Jude was still living. It was recorded by the writers of the New Testament, and we have it today in its complete form. In the light of this, it is impossible for anyone to claim to have a revelation from God in addition to what we have in our Bibles.

In Revelation 22:18,19 a curse is pronounced on anyone who adds to or takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy. Although this refers primarily to the last book in the New Testament, it would just as truly apply to any part of the sacred Scriptures.

Paul wrote to the Colossians, "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God." To fulfill the word of God means to complete it. Even though the apostle did not write the last book of the New Testament, there is a sense in which he completed the Word of God. His writings concerning the truth of the church, the rapture, and the other mysteries of the New Testament completed the body of truth. None of the later books of the New Testament added new truth. They dealt with subjects that had already been revealed elsewhere in the Bible.

The Apostle John warned his readers against those who pretended to have new truth, in addition to that which was already given by the New Testament apostles and prophets.

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

The literal meaning of the word "transgress" is "to go beyond." In other words these false teachers were going beyond the bounds of Christian doctrine. The faith had already been defined, but some were already trying to add to it.

A final verse on this subject is Proverbs 30:6: "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."