

MEDITATION

The formation of the New Testament

Someone recently asked me a very good question. They said, "Did certain Roman Catholic popes make the choice of which books were chosen to be in the canon of the New Testament?" This is really a very good question because all believers need to know how the New Testament came into being.

Of course, before there was a "New" Testament, there was the collection of Jewish Scriptures, which were originally written in Hebrew and were accepted by Jesus and quoted by him in his teachings. Alongside the Jewish Scriptures, early Christians also revered the words of Jesus, which were originally circulated orally from hearer to hearer, and later formed the core of the four Gospels.

Parallel with the teachings of Jesus were the apostolic interpretations of the significance of Jesus' person and work, which were communicated to newly established churches during the earliest Christian mission activity. These writings included the letters of Paul, Peter, James and others, and were written to address the spiritual is-

sues of their time, but they were revered by believers because they were understood to be written by the first "apostles" of Jesus.

By the second century, writers like Clement of Rome, and Ignatius, who was the bishop of Antioch, were adding to the growing volume of Christian literature. These writers were considered "fathers" of the Church, but not actually "apostles" of Jesus, as Paul was; and even though their works possessed a special authority for the Church, it was clear that believers perceived a distinct difference between writers like Ignatius and Paul. The writings of the church "fathers" were important, but not as important as the writings of the "apostles."

By A.D. 150, Justin Martyr tells us that on Sundays Christians customarily read from the "memoirs of the Apostles" (that is, the Gospels) as well

as the writings of the Prophets (the Jewish Scriptures)," which means that as early as the middle of the second century the writings of the apostles and the words of Jesus were considered equal with the Jewish Scriptures.

In the years that followed, the words of Jesus and the apostles were translated into several languages and their influence spread across the empire. Then, in the year A.D. 367, Athanasius, who was bishop of Alexandria, provided a list of books that were considered authoritative for Christians, and this list included the books we know today as our New Testament.

What this means is that the process of the formation of the New Testament was not a single decision made by any one council or body of Christian leaders. It was the result of a long and involved journey, a journey that I believe was led by the Holy Spirit.

As the Spirit of God worked in the hearts of believers, they came to revere the writings that we know today as our New Testament, so believers today don't need to worry that any one group of leaders, popes or otherwise, were the sole authority in determining the contents of our New Testament.

Meditation



Dr. Jeff Hensley
Pastor
Kings Mountain Baptist Church

CHURCH BRIEFS

Baccalaureate service June 6

June 6 at 7 p.m. the Kings Mountain High School auditorium will again be the site for the annual Kings Mountain Ministerial Association sponsored baccalaureate service honoring this year's high school graduates. Rev. Jeff Hensley, pastor of Kings Mountain Baptist Church, will deliver the inspirational address. Join us in praying for and encouraging these young men and women upon the completion of this milestone in life.

Health Fair Saturday

Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church, 618 Chestnut Ridge Church Road, is hosting a Health Fair 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, May 22. The fair is free and open to the public.

Cross Reference to Sing Saturday

A gospel singing featuring "Cross Reference" will be held Saturday night, May 22, at 7 p.m. at Cherokee Street Baptist Church, 421 Cherokee St. The public is welcome.

Dixon Presbyterian homecoming

Bert Sigmon, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, will speak at homecoming services Sunday, May 30 at 11 a.m. at Dixon Presbyterian Church, 602 Dixon School Road, Kings Mountain.

Following the service, a covered dish meal will be served in the church fellowship hall located in the old Dixon School building. The church was organized in Dixon School on February 4, 1944 and the current church building was dedicated on June 26, 1949.

The public is invited.

Fellowship & Faith



Featured Church of the Week:

Patterson Grove Baptist Church

KINGS MOUNTAIN

ethlehem Baptist Church
1017 Bethlehem Road
704-739-7487

Body of Christ Fellowship Center
405 S. Cherokee St.
www.bodyofchrist7.com

Boyce Memorial ARP Church
Edgemont Drive
704-739-4917

Burning Bush House of God
310 Long Branch Rd (KM)
704-739-2877

Calvary Way Holiness Church
1017 Second Street
Pastor Clifton Morgan

Carson Memorial Baptist Church
262 Sparrow Springs Road
704-739-2247

Central United Methodist Church
113 S. Piedmont Avenue
704-739-2471

Cherokee St. Baptist Church
421 S. Cherokee Street
704-739-7697

Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church
618 Chestnut Ridge Road
704-739-4015

Christian Freedom Southern Baptist Church
246 Range Road
704-739-4152

Christ The King Catholic Church
714 Stone Street
704-487-7697

Church at Kings Mountain
108 E. Mountain St.
(KM Women's Club Bldg.)
704-739-1323

Cornerstone Church Of God
202 Margrace Road
704-739-3773

Cornerstone Independent Baptist
107 Range Road
704-737-0477

Crowders Mountain Baptist
125 Mayberry Lane
704-739-0310

David Baptist Church
2300 David Baptist Church Road
704-739-4555

Dixon Presbyterian Church
602 Dixon School Road
dixonpresbyterian.com

East Gold Street Wesleyan Church
701 E. Gold Street
704-739-3215

East Kings Mountain Church of God
Hwy 161, Bessemer City/KM Hwy.
704-739-7367

Eastside Baptist Church
308 York Road
704-739-8055

Ebenezer Baptist Church
1621 County Line Road
704-739-8331

El Bethel United Methodist Church
122 El-bethel Road

704-739-9174

Emmanuel Independent Baptist Church
602 Canterbury Road
704-739-9939

Faith Ablaze Church
1128 S. York Road
704-739-8496

Faith Baptist Church
1009 Linwood Road
704-739-8396

Faith Holiness Church
Hwy. 161/Bessemer City Rd.
704-739-1997

Family Worship Center
1818 Shelby Road
704-739-7206

First Baptist Church
605 W. King Street
704-739-3651

First Church of the Nazarene
121 Countryside Road
704-734-1143

First Presbyterian Church
111 E. King Street
704-739-8072

First Wesleyan Church
505 N. Piedmont Avenue
704-739-4266

Galilee United Methodist
117 Galilee Church Road
704-739-7011

Gospel Assembly Church
202 S. Railroad Avenue
704-739-5351

Good Hope Presbyterian Church
105 N. Cansler Street
704-739-1062

Grace Fellowship
144 West Mountain Street
704-481-8888

Grace United Methodist Church
830 Church Street
704-739-6000

Harvest Baptist Church
144 Ware Road
704-734-0714

Kings Mountain Baptist Church
101 W. Mountain Street
704-739-2516

Kings Lighthouse Worship Center

420 Branch
704-739-7700



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Bessemer City
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704-739-4781
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Notice
In order to accommodate the number of churches in our communities, we will print two alternating lists of churches each week. If you don't see the church you're looking for, be sure to check next weeks paper.

PLONK Tire Inc.
227 S. Cherokee St.
Kings Mountain
704-739-0193

Dilling Heating Co.
1250 Linwood Rd. • Kings Mountain
704-739-3446
Mobile: 704-297-0397