

**Mount Olive Baptist Church**  
**Bible Study Series: *How We Got the Bible***  
**Session 2 – “Recognized, Preserved, and Passed On”**

**Purpose of This Session**

This session completes the Introduction to the series and begins Chapter 1 of the book *How We Got the Bible*.

Participants will:

- Understand how Scripture was **recognized** (canonization)
- Learn the role of faithful **theologians and scholars**
- Discover how God preserved His Word through **ancient writing practices** as presented in *How We Got the Bible*

**I. Brief Recap: Where We Left Off Last Week**

Last week, we established that the Bible:

- Is God-breathed, not merely human literature
- Was written through real people in real history
- Has endured because of divine preservation, not chance

We learned that this series exists so our faith is not built on assumption, but on assurance.

**II. A Word About Canonization**

**What Is Canonization?**

The word canon means *measuring rod* or *standard*.

Canonization refers to how the people of God recognized which writings carry divine authority.

Canonization was not the church creating Scripture—it was the church recognizing the Scripture God had already inspired.

**How Was Scripture Recognized?**

Scripture proved itself over time through three key markers:

**1. Apostolic Authority**

- Written by an apostle or closely connected to one
- Rooted in eyewitness testimony of Christ

## 2. Consistency with God's Revealed Truth

- God does not contradict Himself
- Scripture aligned with what God had already revealed

## 3. Widespread Use Among God's People

- Read in worship
- Recognized across the churches, not in isolation

### God's Role in the Process

Canonization was:

- Guided by God
- Discerned over time
- Not rushed or political

The same God who inspired the Word also governed its recognition.

### III. Learning from Faithful Voices: The Role of Theologians

Throughout history, God used faithful people to serve, defend, and preserve His Word.

These included:

- Early church fathers who defended Scripture during persecution
- Scribes and scholars who copied texts with precision
- Teachers who clarified doctrine for the church

Important boundary:

Theologians did not replace Scripture

They pointed people back to Scripture

### IV. *How We Got the Bible* — Chapter 1 “The Making of Ancient Books”

#### The Bible Did Not “Just Happen”

Chapter 1 reminds us that the Bible survived through:

- Careful writing
- Faithful copying
- Intentional preservation

Every word was once handwritten, protected, and passed down.

## Writing Existed Before Moses

Archaeology confirms:

- Writing existed thousands of years before Moses
- Alphabetic writing developed in the ancient Near East
- God gave His Word when tools to record it already existed

God prepared the medium before delivering the message.

## Materials Used to Preserve Scripture

Ancient people used a variety of durable materials:

- **Stone** – laws and covenants
- **Clay** – records and documents
- **Wood & wax** – temporary writing
- **Metal** – sacred inscriptions
- **Ostraca** (pottery shards) – everyday writing
- **Papyrus** – long texts and scrolls

God used both ordinary and durable materials to preserve eternal truth.

## V. Why This Matters for Us

- The Bible is historically grounded
- The Bible is carefully preserved
- The Bible is divinely protected

If God took such care preserving His Word, we should take care listening to it.

## Reflection & Discussion

1. What surprised you most about how Scripture was preserved?
2. How does understanding canonization strengthen your trust in the Bible?
3. What responsibility do we have toward God's Word today?