Bible 101 - Back to Basics - #2

I. Who decided what to put in the Bible

A. The canon - the word "canon" in Scripture means "an officially accepted list of

     books."

     1. Old Testament Canon - 3 parts -

          a. The Law

          b. The Prophets

               1. Former Prophets

               2. Latter Prophets

          c. The Writings

               1. Poetical Books

               2. Five Rolls (Megilloth)

               3. Historical Books

          The Christian Church has the same Old Testament canon as the Jews but the

          number of books differs. Why? We divide Samuel, Kings and Chronicles into two

          books each and the Jews combine the Minor Prophets into one.

B.  Christ's witness to the Old Testament Canon

     1. Luke 24:44 - Christ mentions the three divisions

     2. Luke 11:51 - From Genesis to Malachi - (Chronicles)

     3. II Chron. 24:21 - the last martyred prophet

C. Extra- Biblical writers' testimony

     1. Ecclesiasticus - 130 BC - Refers to the "Law, and the Prophets and the other

     books of the fathers. Three distinct sections

     2. Josephus - "For during so many ages that have already passed no one had been

     so bold as to add anything to them, to take anything from them or to make any

     changes in them.

     3. Talmud - " After the latter Prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, the Holy

     Spirit departed from Israel." Another reference to the third section.

D. New Testament Witness to the OT as Sacred Scripture (And there are many)

     1. Mathew 21:42, 22:29, 26:54,56

     2. John 5:39, 7:38

     3. Romans 1:2, 4:3, 9:17, 10:11

     4. 2 Peter 1:20, 21, 3:16

E. The New Testament Canon - Long before councils were ever convened, Christians, especially local church leaders were constantly collecting, evaluating and deciding which of the many writings of their day carried the authority of the apostles. To what extent is this book an authentic and pure representation of the life and teachings of Jesus and His apostles. Col. 4:16, 2 Pet. 3:15, 16. The content of the canon was determined general acceptance and usage, not by authoritarian pronouncement.

     1. Tests for a book to be included in the Canon

          a. Is it authoritative?

          b. Is it prophetic?

          c. Is it authentic?

          d. Is it dynamic?

          e. Was if received collected and used?

F. The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

     1. Apocrypha - means "hidden or concealed" - books added to the OT by the

     Catholic Church.

     2. Pseudepigrapha - "false writings"

     3. Website

     4. Why not canonical?

          a. They abound in historical and geographical inaccuracies

          b. They teach doctrines which are false and foster practices which at

          variance with inspired Scripture.

          c. They lack distinctive elements which give genuine Scripture their divine

          character