



The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts

By Robert M. Price

 Download

 Read Online

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price

In this monumental work, Professor Price offers an inclusive New Testament canon with twenty-seven additional sacred books from the first three centuries of Christianity, including a few of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Nag Hammadi writings. Price also reconstructs the Gospel of Marcion and the lost Gospel according to the Hebrews. Here, for the first time, is a canon representing all major factions of the early church.

As an interpretive translation, Price's text is both accurate and readable and is tied more closely to the Greek than most previous translations. Price conveys the meanings of words in context, carefully choosing the right phrase or idiom to convey their sense in English. For words that had a specific theological import when first written, Price leaves the Greek transliteration, giving readers archons for the fallen angels thought to be ruling the world, paraclete for encourager, and pleroma for the Gnostic godhead.

Within the collection, each book is introduced with comments about the cultural setting, information about when a document was probably written, and significant textual considerations, which together form a running commentary that continues into the footnotes. The findings of scholars, documented and summarized by Price, will come as a surprise to some readers. It appears, as Price suggests, that most of what is known about Jesus came by way of revelation to Christian oracles rather than by word of mouth as historical memory. In addition, the major characters in the New Testament, including Peter, Stephen, and Paul, appear to be composites of several historical individuals each, their stories comprising a mix of events, legend, and plot themes borrowed from the Old Testament and Greek literature.

In the New Testament world, theology developed gradually along different trajectories, with tension between the charismatic ascetics such as Marcion and Thecla, as examples, and the emerging Catholic orthodoxy of such clergy as Ignatius and Polycarp. The tension is detectable in the texts themselves, many of which represent "heretical" points of view: Gnostic, Jewish-Christian, Marcionite, and proto-orthodox, and were later edited, sometimes clumsily, in an attempt to harmonize all into one consistent theology.

What may occur to many readers, among the more striking aspects of the narratives, is that the earliest, most basic writings, such as Mark's Gospel in inarticulate Greek, are ultimately more impressive and inspirational than the later attempts by more educated Christians to appeal to sophisticated readers with better grammar and more allusions to classical mythology and apologetic embellishments.

The critical insights and theories on display in these pages have seldom been incorporated into mainstream conservative Bible translations, and in many ways, Price has made the New Testament a whole new book for readers, allowing them, by virtue of the translation, to comprehend the meaning of the text where it is obscured by the traditional wording. Whatever usefulness teachers, students, and clergy may find here in terms of pedagogical and inspirational value, The Pre-Nicene New Testament is guaranteed to provoke further thought and conversation among the general public—hopefully toward the goal of more personal study and insights.

 [Download The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formati ...pdf](#)

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts

By Robert M. Price

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price

In this monumental work, Professor Price offers an inclusive New Testament canon with twenty-seven additional sacred books from the first three centuries of Christianity, including a few of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Nag Hammadi writings. Price also reconstructs the Gospel of Marcion and the lost Gospel according to the Hebrews. Here, for the first time, is a canon representing all major factions of the early church.

As an interpretive translation, Price's text is both accurate and readable and is tied more closely to the Greek than most previous translations. Price conveys the meanings of words in context, carefully choosing the right phrase or idiom to convey their sense in English. For words that had a specific theological import when first written, Price leaves the Greek transliteration, giving readers archons for the fallen angels thought to be ruling the world, paraclete for encourager, andpleroma for the Gnostic godhead.

Within the collection, each book is introduced with comments about the cultural setting, information about when a document was probably written, and significant textual considerations, which together form a running commentary that continues into the footnotes. The findings of scholars, documented and summarized by Price, will come as a surprise to some readers. It appears, as Price suggests, that most of what is known about Jesus came by way of revelation to Christian oracles rather than by word of mouth as historical memory. In addition, the major characters in the New Testament, including Peter, Stephen, and Paul, appear to be composites of several historical individuals each, their stories comprising a mix of events, legend, and plot themes borrowed from the Old Testament and Greek literature.

In the New Testament world, theology developed gradually along different trajectories, with tension between the charismatic ascetics such as Marcion and Thecla, as examples, and the emerging Catholic orthodoxy of such clergy as Ignatius and Polycarp. The tension is detectable in the texts themselves, many of which represent "heretical" points of view: Gnostic, Jewish-Christian, Marcionite, and proto-orthodox, and were later edited, sometimes clumsily, in an attempt to harmonize all into one consistent theology.

What may occur to many readers, among the more striking aspects of the narratives, is that the earliest, most basic writings, such as Mark's Gospel in inarticulate Greek, are ultimately more impressive and inspirational than the later attempts by more educated Christians to appeal to sophisticated readers with better grammar and more allusions to classical mythology and apologetic embellishments.

The critical insights and theories on display in these pages have seldom been incorporated into mainstream conservative Bible translations, and in many ways, Price has made the New Testament a whole new book for readers, allowing them, by virtue of the translation, to comprehend the meaning of the text where it is obscured by the traditional wording. Whatever usefulness teachers, students, and clergy may find here in terms of pedagogical and inspirational value, The Pre-Nicene New Testament is guaranteed to provoke further thought and conversation among the general public—hopefully toward the goal of more personal study and insights.

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price Bibliography

- Rank: #404457 in Books
- Published on: 2006-11-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x 2.10" w x 6.25" l, 3.45 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 1248 pages

 [Download The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formati ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price

Editorial Review

About the Author

Robert M. Price holds doctoral degrees from Drew University in both theology and New Testament. He is currently Professor of Scriptural Studies at the Johnnie Colemon Theological Seminary, traveling lecturer for the Center for Inquiry Institute in Amherst, New York, and editor of the *Journal of Higher Criticism*. His books include *The Amazing Colossal Apostle: The Search for the Historical Paul*, *Deconstructing Jesus*, *The Da Vinci Fraud*, *The Reason-Driven Life*, *Paul as Text: The Apostle and the Apocrypha*, and *The Widow Traditions in Luke-Acts: A Feminist-Critical Scrutiny*. He has published in the *American Rationalist*, *Evangelical Quarterly*, *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, *Reformed Journal*, and elsewhere.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

Marcionite invasion

The history of a distinctively Christian scriptural canon begins with Marcion of Pontus in Asia Minor. Traditionally dated about 140 AD/CE, Marcion actually may have begun his public ministry earlier, just after the turn of the century. One ancient tradition makes Marcion the amanuensis (secretary) of the evangelist John at the end of the first century. That is probably not historically true, but no one would have told the story if they had not assumed Marcion was living at that time. It was a general tendency of early Catholic apologists to late-date the so-called “heretics” to distance them from the apostolic period in the same way apologists today prefer the earliest possible date for the epistles and gospels.

Marcion was the first Paulinist we know of. It would later be a matter of some embarrassment to the church fathers that the earliest readers and devotees of the Pauline epistles were the Marcionites and the Valentinian Gnostics. We know of no Paulinists before these second-century Christians. The mid-first century existence of Pauline Christianity is simply an inference, admittedly a natural one, from taking the authorship and implied dates of the Pauline epistles at face value as works representing a wing of first-century Christianity. But it is quite possible that the Pauline literature is the product of Marcionite and Gnostic movements in the late first and early second centuries. Even if most of the Pauline epistles are genuinely from the first century, the most likely candidate for the first collector of the corpus remains Marcion. No one else in the relevant time period would have had either the interest or the opportunity. No one was as interested in Paul as Marcion. Why?

It was because he shared with his theological cousins, the Gnostics, the belief that the true God and Father of Jesus Christ was not the same deity as the creator and law-giver God of Israel and of the Jewish scriptures. In this belief Marcion was perhaps influenced by Zoroastrian Zurvanism, a dualistic doctrine, as Jan Koester suggests. Marcion allowed that the creator God was righteous and just but also harsh and retributive. His seeming grace was but a function of his arbitrariness: Nero might render a verdict of thumbs-up or thumbs-down as the whim moved him, and so with the God of Israel. Marcion deemed the Jewish scriptures historically true and expected messianic prophecies to be fulfilled by a Davidic king who would restore Jewish sovereignty. But Marcion deemed all of this strictly irrelevant to the new religion of Christianity. In his view, which he claimed to have derived from Paul’s epistles, Jesus Christ *was* the son and revealer of an alien God *who* had not created the world, had not given the Torah to Moses, and would not judge mankind. The Father of Jesus Christ was a God of perfect love and righteousness who would punish no one. Through

Jesus, and by extension Paul, the Christian God offered humans the opportunity to be adopted as his children. If they were gentiles, this meant a break with paganism. If they were Jews, it entailed a break from Judaism and the Torah. Marcion preached a strict morality. All sex was sinful. Begetting children only produced more souls to live in bondage to the creator. Marcion believed Jesus had no physical birth but had appeared out of heaven one day in a body that seemed to be that of a thirty-year-old, complete with a misleading belly button, although not human at all: rather a celestial being. Jesus taught and was later crucified. His twelve disciples were to spread his gospel of an alien God and his adoption of all who would come to him. But things went awry: the disciples, as thick-headed and prone to misunderstanding as they appear in the Gospel of Mark, underestimated the discontinuity of Jesus' new revelation with their hereditary Judaism, thereby combining the two. This was the origin of the Judaizing heresy with which Paul deals in Galatians and elsewhere.

Marcion had noticed an oddity most Christians never notice as they read the New Testament: if Jesus had named the Twelve to succeed him and seemed satisfied with them, why was there a need for Paul at all? And why should he come to eclipse the others in importance? The Twelve are, for the most part, merely a list of names. By contrast, Paul wrote letters that formed the basis of much of the church's theology. Marcion saw a simple answer: the risen Jesus saw how far off the track his disciples would go and decided to recruit another who would get the message straight. This was Paul. To invoke a recurrent pattern in Christian history, think of Martin Luther, Alexander Campbell, John Nelson Darby, Joseph Smith, Charles Taze Russell, Victor Paul Wierwille, and others. All these believed that original, apostolic Christianity was corrupted by an admixture of human tradition, and they believed they had a new vision of the outlines of the original, true Christianity and could restore it. This is what Marcion thought already in the early second century. It should not sound that strange to us. Like these later men, Marcion would succeed very well in launching a new church, one that would spread like wildfire all over and even beyond the Roman Empire. Most noteworthy is the fact that the New Testament was his idea.

The emerging Catholic Church, which would develop into the medieval church, which then subsequently split into Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, was by this time employing the familiar authority structure of scripture and tradition. By scripture was meant the Septuagint, the Greek translation of Jewish scriptures, including the so-called apocryphal or deuterocanonical books of the Maccabees, Judith, Tobit, Sirach/Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, Baruch, the Epistle of Jeremiah, 1 Esdras, and so on. This was "scripture." Tradition, on the other hand, was a growing body of sayings attributed to Jesus and stories about him, as well as the summaries of "apostolic" doctrine represented in such formulae as the Apostles Creed and similar summaries in the late second century by writers like Irenaeus and Tertullian, to name two. There were a number of early Christian writings of various kinds (gospels, epistles, apostolic acts, revelations, church manuals) that were written and circulated more or less widely, but these were at first more *expressions of the faith* than either the *source* or *criteria for faith*. That is not to say they were not important. Think of the writings of Calvin and Luther: they are important to Calvinists and Lutherans who still study them, but Calvinists and Lutherans would not consider the wise writings of their founders to be scripture on the same level with the Bible. Admittedly, the difference in actual practice may evaporate, but that is just the technical distinction that is important here. The question that concerns us is precisely how the early Christian writings came to cross that line and join the category of scripture. The earliest Catholic Christians felt no need as yet for new scripture since they found the Septuagint Bible adequate to their needs as long as they could use allegory and typology to see in it a book about Jesus Christ and Christianity.

This reinterpretation of Jewish scripture was not something Marcion was willing to undertake. He insisted on a literal, straightforward reading of the Septuagint, refusing to treat it as a ventriloquist dummy and make it seem to speak with Christian accents. Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428) had the same attitude, though he was no Marcionite. Read in a plain-sense fashion, the Jewish scriptures, Marcion realized, had nothing to do with Christianity. Even lacking his belief in two different biblical Gods, one can see his point when one

thinks of the strained arguments needed in order to make various Old Testament passages sound like predictions of Jesus. And it is still common today to hear Christians contrast the severe God of Israel with the tender Father of Jesus. So Marcion repudiated the Jewish scriptures. It wasn't that he didn't believe them, because he did. He simply felt they were the scriptures of someone else's religion and didn't overlap with Christianity as he understood it. Nor was he anti-Semitic or even anti-Judaic. For him, Judaism was true on its own terms, just not the religion of Jesus Christ or of the apostle Paul.

Without the Septuagint as his scripture, Marcion felt the need to compile a new canon that would teach Christian faith and morals authoritatively. He accordingly collected the early Christian writings he felt served this purpose. These were paramountly the Pauline epistles except for the Pastorals, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus, because these did not exist yet, still waiting to be written in reaction to Marcion and other "heretics" in the mid-second century. Marcion had shorter, earlier versions of the texts than ours. Likewise, he had a book he knew simply as "the gospel" corresponding to a shorter version of our Gospel of Luke. Catholic writers decades later would claim he had edited and censored the texts, cutting out material that served to link Christianity with its Jewish background. Marcion no doubt did do some editing, textual criticism as it seemed to him, but it seems that Catholic apologists did much more in the way of padding the texts with their own added material, claiming their own versions were original and should be adopted instead of the Marcionite text. Marcion called his scripture the *Apostolicon* ("Book of the Apostle"). In his and his opponents' claims and counter claims, we begin to see the inevitable relation of the twin issues of *text* and *canon*—which versions of which writings are authoritative?

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Corey Ison:

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information presently can get by anyone in everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even restricted. What people must be consider while those information which is inside former life are challenging be find than now could be taking seriously which one is suitable to believe or which one the actual resource are convinced. If you have the unstable resource then you get it as your main information you will have huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen throughout you if you take The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts as the daily resource information.

Ron Lauer:

Reading a book tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information that will give you benefit in your life. With book everyone in this world can share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire their very own reader with their story or their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the publications. But also they write about the information about something that you need instance. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors nowadays always try to improve their proficiency in writing, they also doing some study before they write with their book. One of them is this The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts.

Barbara Bell:

Typically the book The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts has a lot info on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of benefit. The book was published by the very famous author. This articles author makes some research just before write this book. This particular book very easy to read you will get the point easily after reading this book.

Eddie Drennan:

The book untitled The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains the woman idea with easy approach. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read the item. The book was written by famous author. The author will bring you in the new era of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or model, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open their official web-site and order it. Have a nice go through.

Download and Read Online The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price #WKGXA6E1FJH

Read The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price for online ebook

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price books to read online.

Online The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price ebook PDF download

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price Doc

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price Mobipocket

The Pre-Nicene New Testament: Fifty-four Formative Texts By Robert M. Price EPub