

Missing Scriptures

Explanation

In the New Testament itself, other writings of the apostles are mentioned that have not survived. For example, lost letters of Paul to the Saints in Laodicea, Corinth, Philippi, and Ephesus are alluded to. Another epistle of Jude is also known to have once existed.

Based on Luke's statement that "many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration" of the life of Jesus (Lk 1:1) and other data, scholars have toiled to reconstruct these early records of the words and deeds of Jesus. Scattered among many early Christian writings are words or phrases attributed to Jesus. If these original writings had survived in full, they would have added much to our knowledge of the history of Jesus and his apostles. The restoration of all things looks forward to the time when these lost scriptures will once again be revealed.

References

- Richard Lloyd Anderson, "Missing Scriptures of New Testament Times," *Instructor*, October 1968, 419.
- Keith Marston, *Missionary Pal: Reference Guide for Missionaries and Teachers* (Salt Lake City: Publishers, 1987), 165.
- Stephen E. Robinson, "The Noncanonical Sayings of Jesus," *BYU Studies* 36/2 (1997): 74–92.
- Robert A. Cloward, "Scripture: Forthcoming," *EM*, 1282–83.

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FROM CHRIST'S MINISTRY

OTHER GOSPELS OR RECORDS: "Many" authors compiled Jesus' history (Lk 1:1–4).

MIRACLES: These are often partially described or not even recorded (Mk 1:32–34; Jn 20:30–31).

TEACHINGS: Some of Jesus' known sayings are not in the Gospels (Acts 20:35).

DEEDS: Only a fraction of his life is reported in the Gospels (Jn 21:25).

FROM THE MINISTRY OF THE APOSTLES

EARLY LETTERS OF PAUL: None preserved from the first seventeen years of Paul's ministry (Compare 2Th 3:17).

LETTER FROM LAODICEA: "Likewise read the epistle from Laodicea" (Col 4:16).

LOST CORINTHIAN LETTER: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators" (1Cor 5:9).

LOST PHILIPPIAN LETTERS: Bishop Polycarp alludes to more than one Philippian letter (Polycarp to Philippians 3:1).

ANOTHER EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS: "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in a few words" (Eph 3:3–4).

FORMER EPISTLE OF JUDE: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you" (Jude 1:3).

PAUL: No record of the close of his ministry exists.

OTHER APOSTLES: There is no connected record of their ministries.