

LETTER 4  
1983

**DETERMINING THE CORRECT  
TEXT OF SCRIPTURE**

Dear Dr MacRae,

.... In the New Scofield Reference Bible and the NIV there are footnotes for Mark 16:9-20, John 5:4 and John 7:53-8:11 which state that these verses were not found in the most ancient manuscripts. In fact John 5:4 is left out of the NIV. Are these verses the Word of God? If not, why are they a part of the Bible, and why are they used as references in footnotes....

Dear ...

Jesus Christ set His approval upon the Old Testament as the Word of God and authenticated the New Testament in advance. These 66 books are God's revelation of the facts He desires us to have. They include all that we need to know in order to live our lives in accordance with His will.

Since printing is now so common it is easy to forget that it was not invented until the 15th century. During the thousands of previous years all books were contained in manuscripts, each of which was individually written by hand.

As originally written the words of the Bible were absolutely free from error. Yet God did not choose to have these original copies preserved. They were probably copied and recopied many times before any copy was made that still exists.

It would be extremely difficult to copy a substantial part of the Bible by hand without making a number of mistakes. Even after careful comparison with the manuscript being copied it is very hard to avoid making an occasional error in copying.

Most of those who made copies of Bible books took extraordinary care to try to avoid errors in copying. Though the books of the Old Testament were originally written centuries before the