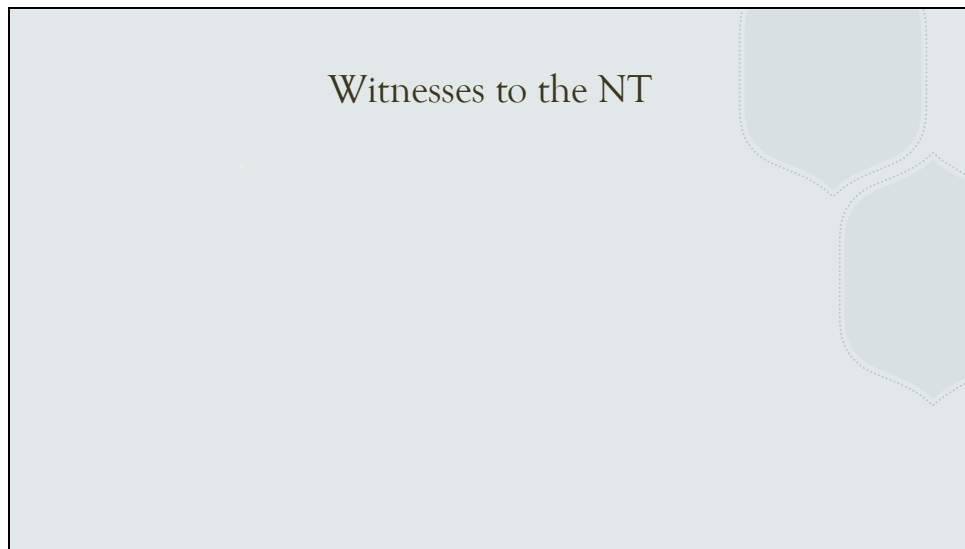


Slide 1

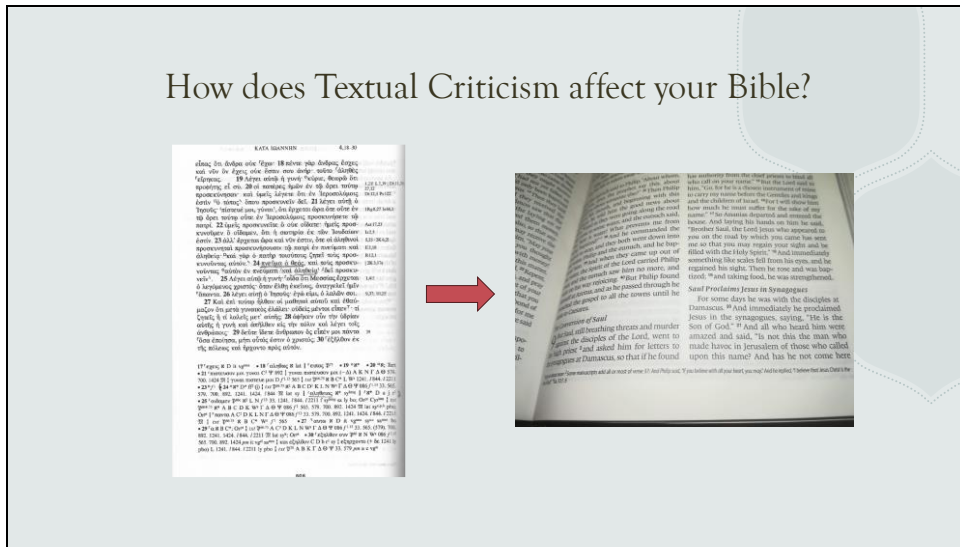


Slide 2



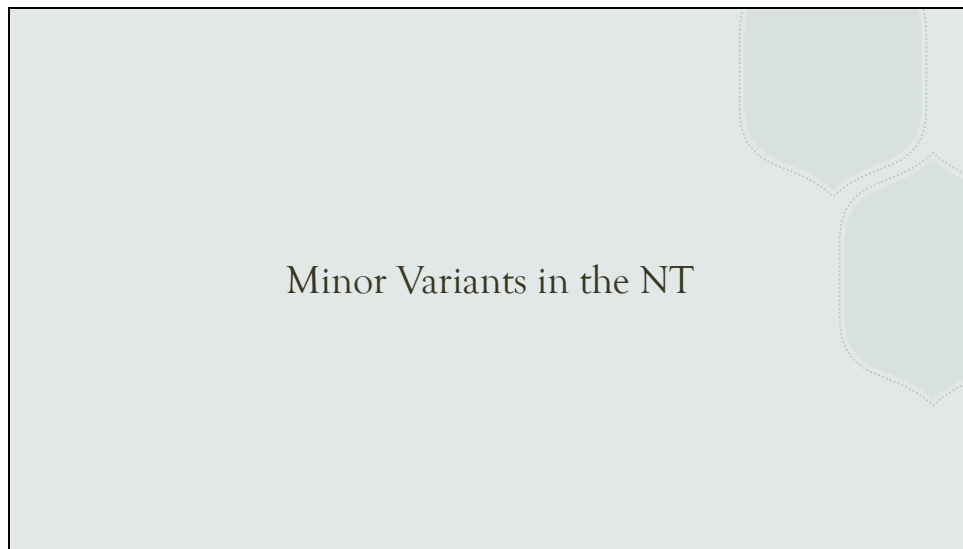
- Greek Manuscripts. ~5800
- You can see scanned copies of many manuscripts through the Center for the study of New Testament Manuscripts
- Quotations by early Christian writers. ~40% of the new testament could be reconstructed from these alone.
- Early translations give another source of evidence
 - Latin, Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic

How does Textual Criticism affect your Bible?



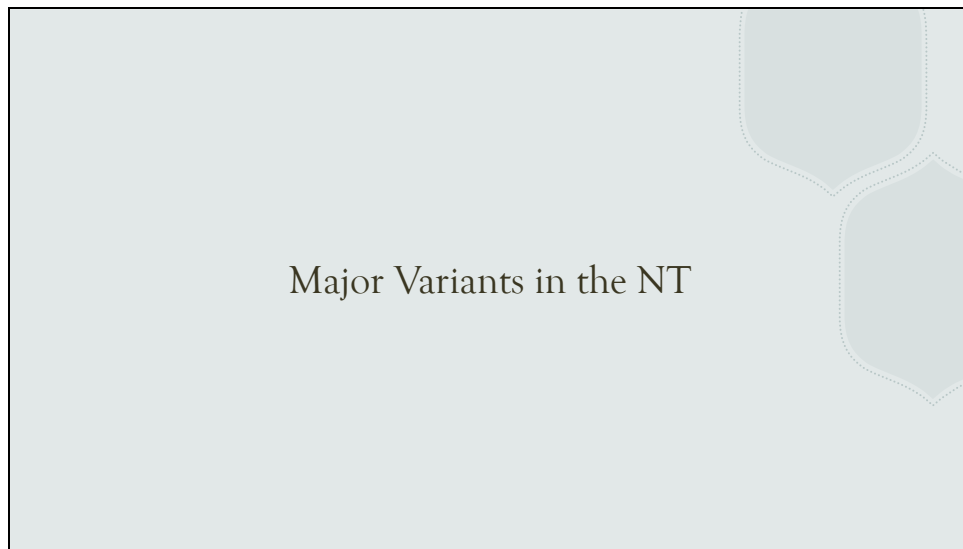
- All the variants from thousands of manuscripts are collected into a version of the bible called a "critical edition"
- People discuss each variant to decide which reading is most likely to be the original. A "textual commentary" can give you an insight into this discussion.
- Most issues are resolved with a lot of confidence. But any remaining uncertainties are expressed in modern bibles using footnotes.
- The text of the new testament is overwhelmingly consistent. Differences are almost always trivial and unintentional. It overwhelmingly affirms that the bible has not been substantially altered over time, and that it has been remarkably well preserved.

Slide 4



- There are about ~500,000 variants in the NT manuscripts.
- But the vast majority of these never make it into footnotes because they are either not significant, or the bible publishers feel they are certain about the correct reading.
- Even many of the variants which do make it into footnotes are not very “significant”.
- You can test this by picking a short book of the NT (e.g. 1 Peter) and going through the footnotes in a modern bible (try using the NRSV as this usually tries to give more footnotes than other versions). Look for notes that mention things like “manuscripts”, or “ancient authorities”. Also look for keywords like “add” or “omit”.
- People have said that around 97-99% of the text of the new testament can be considered "certain", though I don't know where this number comes from.

Slide 5



- While most of the text is certain, there are a few significant and controversial passages in which we cannot be certain about the original text based on the evidence we have. We will consider six of the worst cases.
- There's a lot of evidence to consider, and we could easily spend a lesson on each of the following passages. You will also find that people have very different and strong opinions about them (including me!). But here, we will just mention them. You can check the footnotes of a modern bible to find out more.
- The six worst cases of textual uncertainty are:
 - Mark 16:9-20
 - Luke 22:43-44
 - Luke 23:34a
 - John 7:53 - 8:11
 - Acts 8:37
 - 1 John 5:7-8