

Do We Need a Third Testament?

Introduction. In April 2026, Yvette Flunder, a lesbian bishop with the City of Refuge United Church of Christ in Oakland, California, said that we need a third testament. She finds parts of the Bible “problematic” and suggests that they be removed.

She stated in her blog Protestia, “This is a very dangerous thing that I’m about to say now, ... a bit dangerous. I’m of the opinion that we need a third testament because the Bible has become problematic.” She furthermore said, “Now I’m a believer. My whole heart, I trust God with my whole heart. I wake up in the morning talking to God and God talking to me. But I am completely frustrated with the ways in which the text speaks to the kind of vitriolic God that makes those kinds of things. And people will say, ‘Well, it’s in the book.’ And I said, then we need to pull that page out. And they said, ‘Well, you can’t do it. It’s the Word of God.’ I said, ‘No, it’s words about God.’ Come on now. But is it the Word of God?” she asked before responding, “No. It is not the Word of God.”

Take your Bible while we investigate Mrs. Flunder’s “third testament” issues, and then reconcile that idea with Bible teaching about the sufficiency of the Scriptures.

I. Examples of “Third Testament” Issues

- A. Instructions that slaves should obey their masters.
 - 1. Chattel slavery as we see in the Transatlantic slave trade is vastly different from what was practiced in the Ancient Near East. The traffic of Africans to the Americas was based on kidnapping, which is punishable by death in the Mosaic Law (Exodus 21:16). Involuntary slavery was forbidden.
 - 2. The Mosaic law created safeguards to protect the welfare and dignity of those who served. The Law thus transformed the institution of slavery by regulating the relationship between master and slave in ways intended to eliminate abuse.
 - a) Among the people of Israel, servitude was voluntary. People hired themselves into the service of others, usually because they were poor. That was the best way to meet their needs.
 - b) They worked hard in exchange for room, board, and an honest wage until they could pay off their debts. So, a better word for this kind of worker is servant, apprentice, hired hand, or indentured laborer.
 - 3. Culturally, the ancient Roman system in the first century wasn’t much different than the system in place under the Israelites. So this still means that the New Testament is addressing a different social reality than in the US.
 - a) In the first-century Roman world, people could become slaves through war, debt, birth, or other social conditions, and some could later be freed.
 - b) The New Testament established crucial moral and ethical guidelines for both slaves (1 Corinthians 7:21; Ephesians 6:5) and masters (Ephesians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10; Revelation 18:13). The relationship between Philemon and Onesimus is particularly important in illustrating this point (Philemon 15-16).

4. Essentially, both testaments, instead of abolishing slavery in the ancient cultures, regulated it for Israelites and Christians by condemning trafficking, limiting abuse, affirming equal worth, and declaring Christians to be brothers and sisters rather than property. To say that God and the Bible endorses slavery by the current cultural understanding is incorrect and disingenuous.
- B. Women keeping silent in the churches.
1. Paul, in 1 Timothy 2:11-15, lays out the prohibition for women in leadership roles. She's to learn quietly with submission; i.e. not taking control or exercising authority over a man.
 - a) The prohibition is explained by the fact that Adam was created first and that Eve was deceived by Satan.
 - b) The nature of headship is also expressed in 1 Corinthians 11:3, 7-8 as Paul begins a discussion of why women can only exercise spiritual gifts when showing submission to man; i.e. wearing a head covering.
 - (1) This coincides with the concept of male headship in the family.
 - (2) Wives are commanded to submit to their husbands as Christ is the head of the church (Ephesians 5:22-23).
 2. Additionally, it's noteworthy that while Jesus had many capable and devoted female followers (Luke 8:1-3), He purposefully chose only males to serve as His apostles (Matthew 10:2-4; Acts 1:13).
 3. Finally, the qualifications for overseers (elders) and deacons specify "a man" (1 Timothy 3:1; cp. Acts 6:5-6), and that they must be faithful husbands and fathers (1 Timothy 3:2, 4, 12; Titus 1:6).
 4. The Southern Baptist Convention overwhelmingly voted on June 11, 2026 to ban women pastors. This produced a firestorm of criticism because we've become so culturally adapted to women sharing equal roles in the ministry.
- C. Sexual orientation and gender fluidity.
1. Mrs. Flunder is the presiding prelate of The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, and a lesbian who's married to her same-sex partner Shirley Miller. It's not a large inferential leap to assume that Mrs. Flunder also holds the Bible's teaching on gender identity and homosexuality as "problematic".
 2. Some people argue that because Jesus didn't specifically mention homosexuality, He therefore didn't condemn it. Also, proponents emphasize that Jesus's inclusive posture toward outcasts and sinners precludes condemnation of gender fluidity and homosexuality.
 - a) June is Pride Month, and my cousin posted on social media from an LGBTQ+ affirming "pastor" who claimed that people in these categories of activities aren't a "problem to solve" or a "sin category to manage" because Jesus never addressed the issue of LGBTQ+ relationships.
 - b) However, Jesus said that "adulteries" and "fornications" will "defile a man" (Matthew 15:19-20). This covers the sin of same-sex marriage and homosexuals who leave their spouses for same-sex partners. It also covers people who change genders and have a relationship with people who are of the same biological gender as they. The answer was to "let not man separate" and "go and sin no more" (Matthew 19:6; John 8:11).

- c) Furthermore, the “doctrine of Christ” (2 John 9) which is recorded by the apostles and prophets also condemns sexual immorality (Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

II. The All-Sufficient Scriptures

- A. The Word of God is precious to millions of people today (Psalm 19:10). Why? Because they recognize it's the Word of God and it's truth (John 17:17).
- B. When people say it's the Word of God, they're saying it's inspired (1 Corinthians 2:10-12; Ephesians 3:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- C. Because it's inspired by God, it's sufficient to accomplish its purpose:
1. The gospel is God's power to save (Romans 1:16); therefore, it doesn't need addition or subtraction (i.e. a third testament).
 2. God's power has given us “all things that pertain to life and godliness;” therefore, we don't need a “third testament” (2 Peter 1:3-4). James Adams used to say that the Bible contains “all God wanted it to say and nothing He didn't want it to say.”
 3. The “faith” (teaching, doctrine, body of truth) doesn't need a “third testament” because it's been “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).
- D. Judah renounced her own real God to serve nobodies. They had hewn for themselves “broken cisterns” (Jeremiah 2:13). Mankind still has several “broken cisterns” upon which they build their religious convictions and practices:
1. Personal opinion. My opinion isn't authority. It must agree with what the Bible actually says.
 2. Popular preachers. Famous or gifted speakers can be wrong. Their teaching is only trustworthy if it agrees with Scripture.
 3. Church tradition. The seven ecumenical councils, the writings of the church fathers, and papal proclamations aren't biblical authority. Tradition can't overrule God's Word. Also, “We've always done it” isn't a biblical argument.
 4. Personal experience. Experiences can guide us, but feelings can be misleading. They must be tested by Scripture.
 5. Church leadership. Leaders aren't infallible. Only the Bible is without error and is our final authority.
 6. Culture and society. What the world believes doesn't determine what's true. Truth is found in God's Word.

Conclusion. I agree with April Chapman, who said, “You don't need a Third Testament. You need first-rate repentance.”

Paul said in 1 Timothy 4:1, “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,” Ms. Flunder's words aren't Bible scholarship or Bible commentary. They're insults to the living Word of God and flat-out rebellion toward God.

If you're a person who wants to edit and revise and create in your own image, then you're going to love what Yvette Flunder is doing. But if you're a Christian who belongs to Christ, then you'll realize that the holy Word of God isn't an idol waiting on your approval.