**The Missing Letters of Paul**

If the total number of letters written by the apostle Paul exceeds the thirteen ascribed to him in the New Testament, should this be a cause of concern for Bible believers? Are the scriptures incomplete without these other writings? Does this legitimize the charges of Bible critics (Mormons and Muslims included) that the Christian canon is therefore corrupted and deficient? Is human negligence to be blamed, and would it then call into question the providential working of God in the preservation of his complete revelation?
     These missing letters pose a potential difficulty only if one begins with the following assumptions: (1) everything composed by an inspired author had to be preserved; (2) the absence of any apostolic document from the biblical canon is a mistake; and (3) vital information needed by Christians is unavailable without these writings. But if these assumptions and consequent concerns go beyond what the evidence demands, what other explanations should be considered?

Personally, I (Jared) believe God’s composition of the Canon was intentional and the Church has in its possession exactly what God intend the Church to have. This does not negate the method of composition or distribution which God used to compose the Canon but rather credits God with intentionality behind every “mistake.” Furthermore, if this indeed was the methodology of God than the believer is charged with a responsibility of understanding and digesting Scripture within the appropriate context which it was composed. Good thing God gave us the intellect to do so.