

THE DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE

Part One: A theology of Scripture

*The authorship, character, and
authority of the Bible*

Adult Sunday School

9:30 am

Teacher: Mark Lincoln

Doctrine of Scripture

1. Inspiration

- The *recording* of God's word; the words of Scripture are the words of God

2. Inerrancy

- The *result* of inspiration; wholly true in everything it affirms

3. Canonicity

- The *recognition* of inspiration; which writings are inspired and authoritative?

Canonicity

Essential Issue

- **Recognizing inspiration and authority**
 - which writings should form the canon; serve as the “rule” of faith and practice
 - Inspiration/Authority determines canonicity, not vice-versa

Key Question

- What criteria was used to determine whether a given writing was authoritative/inspired? *What criteria was used to recognize canonicity?*

NT Canonicity

Erroneous View

1. Process of Recognition

- Great number of writings contending for recognition during the first 300 years of church history
- Once Christianity is legal, the Council of Carthage (397) determines the NT canon

2. Criteria Used for Selection

- Authorship
- Orthodoxy
- Wide acceptance and use
- Evidence of inspiration

NT Canonicity

Historical View

1. Immediate Reception

- From the beginning the church recognized certain writings as uniquely authoritative – the very writings that compose our NT
- These writings were widely known and used, distinguished from other writings

2. Criteria Used for Selection

- ❖ **ONLY ONE** – Apostolic Authorship
 - writings from the “hand of” the apostles were immediately received as authoritative

NT Canonicity

Historical View

3. “Non-Apostolic” Authorship

- 21 of the 27 books of the NT are directly from a known apostle; what about *Mark, Luke, Acts, Hebrews, James, and Jude*?
- Their authority derives from the author’s relationship to an apostle (indirect authorship)
(role of an *amanuensis*)

4. Disputed Books

- A few letters were not received immediately by everyone (i.e Hebrews; 2 Peter)
- Question regarding authorship not content

NT Canonicity

Historical View

➤ Value of this Doctrine

1. Objective criterion for the recognition of our rule of faith
2. Explains why the canon is closed – no other writings are being added to the Bible