

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

Canonicity

Essential Issue

- Recognizing inspiration and authority

Key Question

- What criteria was used to recognize canonicity?

New Testament Canonicity

- One criterion – *apostolic authorship*

OT Canonicity

Important Observations

- **The 39 books of our Old Testament are identical in content to the 22 books of the Jewish Scriptures**
- **The historical recognition is not as crucial as the New Testament since Jesus is our final authority regarding the OT canon**
- **Very little historical data exists regarding the recognition of the OT canon until the 200 B.C.**

OT Canonicity

Historical Recognition

1. Internal Evidence

- Abundant references to the writing of and adding to books; especially “the Law”
- These writings were immediately received and used as authoritative

2. No evidence of an ecclesiastical council

- Not established by the “Great Synagogue” under Ezra in 400 B.C.

3. The Canon is closed around 400 B.C.

- Those who lived after 400 B.C. were fully aware of the “close of the canon”

OT Canonicity

Criterion for Recognition

- ❖ ONLY ONE – Words of a Prophet
 - The Law is called the “law of Moses” – it was received because he was God’s spokesman
 - Moses and his words are the pattern for all subsequent prophets (Deut. 18:15-22)
 - Solomon and David were regarded as prophets – they were God’s spokesmen
 - Chain of prophets wrote a chain of histories from Genesis to Nehemiah (1 Chron. 29:29)

OT Canonicity

The Apocrypha

- Books written during the inter-testamental period; regarded as Canonical by the Roman Catholic Church

1&2 Maccabees

The Wisdom of Solomon

Ecclesiasticus

1 Esdras

Tobith

Judith

Baruch

2 Esdras

Prayer of Manasses

The Rest of Esther

The History of Susanna

Song of the Three Hebrew Children (Daniel)

Bel and the Dragon (Daniel)

OT Canonicity

The Apocrypha

1. Never received by the Jews as canonical

- No Hebrew text contains these books
- No claim to authority; give evidence that they are awaiting a prophet

2. These books were widely known in the church

- Viewed as edifying; portions were historical
- Church fathers (except Augustine) did not receive them as canon (not even Jerome)
- First attached to the Septuagint in the 3rd cent.

3. Roman Catholic Church

- Declared canonical in 1546 (Council of Trent)