

One of the great arguments which was presented from about 1900 on was that there is a *consensus of opinion* among scholars. It said that they all believe in these documents. That was a great argument for about thirty or forty years while the agreement was almost complete. In recent years there has come more diversity on many points. This we can say: that the critics agree almost to a man as to what constitutes the P document, but there have always been diversities as to what constitutes J and as to what constitutes the so-called E document.

How can somebody just say this argument of the consensus of scholarship is a lot of nonsense? After all, if the great scholars agree upon a thing we should at least consider their reasons. But of course, when it comes to that, it is important to examine exactly what the consensus of scholarship does amounts to. Does it mean that there are a great many men who are carefully considering these arguments and are agreeing upon them? Or do a good many of these men assume that certain other men have the truth and simply take over what they say. If they make that error, should we not be careful that we do not make a similar error on the Christian side? Because you will never reach truth through that approach.

There is an interesting illustration, that of evolution. I have found that practically every science teacher in a high school or in a college is thoroughly convinced as to the theory of evolution. But I used to find an interesting thing when I was in college. A man would be 100% for evolution, saying, "It is absolutely proven" "But," I would ask, "Professor So-and-so, in what field did you do your graduate work?" "Oh," he would reply, "I studied the circulatory system of the butterflies." Another one would say, "I studied the arrangement of the classification of plants in a certain category." Most of these scientists in the biological field, 95% of them, at least, did their graduate work in subjects which have nothing directly to do with evolution; they are dealing with other phases of science. Most of them take over whatever they know about the question of evolution from a very few; therefore a consensus of opinion of people who simply take over from other people does not prove anything. It is important to have a consensus of