

the providential leading of the Holy Spirit. Exactly the same process took place as regards the New Testament. Jesus authenticated the New Testament in advance. He thereby authenticated the same process if one should occur, as it did. The only conclusion possible is that Jesus authenticated this process, and that we can rest secure that its results are correct.

The fact that the Roman Catholic Church, since the sixteenth century, considers the Old Testament to contain seven additional books which Protestants reject, does not affect this conclusion. The people of God to whom the Old Testament was given were Jews. At the time of Christ all groups of Jews agreed on the contents of the Old Testament. The New Testament was given to the Christians, who took over the Old Testament from the Jews. Among the Christians unanimity regarding the books of the New Testament came into being within a few centuries, and has continued ever since.

11. As a result of this authentication by the Lord Jesus Christ, we can be sure that our Bible contains those books, and only those books, that God intended it to contain.

Every Christian has the right and duty of private interpretation as to the meaning of Scripture. Its great outstanding teachings are so clear that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. On lesser points each one must study up to the limit of his knowledge and ability, see what is clearly taught in the Scripture, and stand upon it. This is God's will for the Christian.

The Christian does not have a similar right when it comes to deciding which books to accept as inspired. This is not a matter on which the organized church has a right to speak, other than to affirm the unanimity which the Christian church has had for many centuries. The individual Christian has no basis, either subjective or objective, on which he could now make a correct decision for himself, whether a particular book belongs in the Bible. He must accept the authority of Jesus regarding the Old Testament books. Jesus' approval of that process authenticated in advance a similar process if it should occur in the case of the New Testament, as it did. Our whole Christian faith is based on the authority of Christ, and on this authority we can be sure which books are inspired of God.