

FORMATION OF THE

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**CANON OF SCRIPTURE**

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “With respect to the Old Testament, Jesus and the apostles accepted the Jewish canon of Scripture that existed at that time. The Hebrew Bible which was used by Jesus himself, as well as the apostles, is the same Bible that Protestants today call the Old Testament. So Jesus used the same Old Testament canon of Scripture that Protestants recognize today. The twenty-four books of the so-called Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible are the books which were recognized by Jesus to be inspired by God and to be God’s Word to us. This Masoretic Text is the same text that is recognized by rabbinical Judaism as the canon of the Hebrew Bible. It is the Bible that was used by Jesus.”
- ▶ Read more: <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#ixzz4S6Sak8WG>

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “There is, in addition to this Hebrew Bible, a Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint. This is usually abbreviated by the Roman numeral LXX, for 70. The Septuagint was a translation of the Old Testament that was used in Egypt by Hellenized Jews. That is to say, Jews who were Greek-speaking and lived in a Greek culture. In this Greek version of the Old Testament, there are a number of books that are accepted as part of the Old Testament canon by Roman Catholic and also by Eastern Orthodox confessions. This is where these additional books of the Old Testament recognized by Catholic and Orthodox churches come from. They are part of the Septuagint or Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. These are referred to as the Old Testament “apocryphal books” or the “deuterocanonical books.” These are not the same thing as the apocryphal books of the New Testament, which I’ll say something about later. When people talk about the New Testament apocrypha, they are talking about books that were written hundreds of years later than the time of Jesus and are not recognized by any Christian confession as belonging to the canon of Scripture. But with respect to the Old Testament apocrypha, as I say, Catholic and Orthodox churches do recognize these additional books found in the Septuagint as part of the Old Testament canon. These apocryphal books include things like Tobit, Judith, certain additions to the book of Esther, certain additions to the book of Daniel, a book called the Wisdom of Solomon, and 1st and 2nd Maccabees, among others. These are to be found in your Roman Catholic Bible today. The Greek Orthodox will also accept additional books like Psalm 151 and others. These would be part of the Orthodox church’s canon.”

- ▶ **Read more:** <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#ixzz4S6SpxbKV>

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “The earliest list that we have in church history of the canon of the Old Testament comes from a man named Melito of Sardis who flourished around AD 175. He lists all of the Old Testament books that are recognized by Jews and Protestants except for the book of Esther. He includes all of the typical canonical books that we would recognize except Esther. He does also add the Wisdom of Solomon, which was one of those apocryphal books that I mentioned. That is the earliest list that we have among the church fathers for the Old Testament.”
- ▶ “So with respect to the canon of the Old Testament, I think it is relatively uncontroversial when we say that we accept the same canon of Scripture that Jesus himself accepted, and are therefore on very solid grounds.”
- ▶ Read more: <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#ixzz4S6SxdDd5>

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “When you read the sub-apostolic church fathers, that is to say, those church fathers who wrote immediately after the apostles, we find them distinguishing very clearly between their own writings and the writings of the apostles that are found in the New Testament. They did not regard their own work as inspired, but they did treat the works that we today find in the New Testament as being authoritative. For example, Ignatius, who is one of the very earliest of the sub-apostolic fathers, much earlier than the canon of Scripture being established, already spoke of a collection of writings which he called “the Gospels and the apostles.” These were evidently the four Gospels and certain epistles of the New Testament written by people like Paul. This would be the early evidence of the canon of Scripture already being accepted, including the four Gospels and various epistles.”
- ▶ Read more: <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#ixzz4S6Tctuso>

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “From the very beginning, these four Gospels and the book of Acts were never doubted by anyone. Everyone recognized that the four Gospels and the book of Acts were part of authoritative Scripture. It wasn’t the case that the church selected these books to be in the canon, or that they decreed that these books would be regarded as authoritative. Rather these books imposed themselves upon the early church. It was never doubted that these were the correct record of the life of Jesus, and his teachings, and the history of the early church. These were not selected or declared to be authoritative. They simply imposed themselves upon the early church and were recognized right from the very beginning.”
- ▶ Read more: [http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#\\_ftn4#ixzz4S6TyvWeW](http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#_ftn4#ixzz4S6TyvWeW)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “In fact, even those who doubted the canonicity of some books that are today included in the canon of the New Testament always accepted the four Gospels, the book of Acts, thirteen letters of Paul, 1 John, and 1 Peter. That is already a substantial enough canon to establish fundamental Christian doctrine as authoritative. These books were accepted as authoritative Scripture even by persons who doubted some of the other books that were included eventually in the canon.”
- ▶ In the eastern part of the empire - that is to say, in the Greek-speaking eastern empire of Rome - there were doubts expressed about the book of Revelation, or (as it is sometimes called) The Apocalypse of John. Some doubted the book of Revelation was really authoritative Scripture. In the west (the Latin part of the empire), some church fathers expressed doubts about the book of Hebrews. They didn't think that that should be an authoritative book. So there was some doubt expressed about those two books. But the rest of those books that I mentioned were universally recognized.”
- ▶ Read more: [http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#\\_ftn4#ixzz4S6UAWNuK](http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#_ftn4#ixzz4S6UAWNuK)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “In AD 175 we have the earliest list of canonical books belonging to the New Testament. This is a list that was discovered by an Italian scholar named Ludovico Antonio Muratori, and so it is called the Muratorian Canon. The Muratorian Canon dates from around AD 175, as I say. What belongs in this list? What is listed in the Muratorian Canon? It includes the four Gospels, the book of Acts, thirteen letters of Paul, the book of Jude, two letters of John, and the book of Revelation or the Apocalypse of John. It doesn't mention Hebrews, 1 and 2 Peter, or James. Interestingly enough, the Muratorian Canon does accept the Wisdom of Solomon as canonical. It also accepts the Apocalypse of Peter, which is not in our New Testament today. This Apocalypse of Peter is not the same thing as a Gnostic document that goes by a somewhat similar name; this is something different, and the Muratorian Canon includes it.”

- ▶ **Read more:** [http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#\\_ftn4#ixzz4S6UJtLlx](http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#_ftn4#ixzz4S6UJtLlx)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “In the year AD 200 another church father named Caius provides a similar list of accepted books. He lists the same twenty-one canonical books that are found in the Muratorian Canon, so this shows that there was a pretty firm conviction about those books at that time.
- ▶ “I think you can see from the lists of New Testament books that I’ve provided that the issue of canonicity was never about the question, “Are there things outside the New Testament that should have been included in it?” Rather the doubts were, “Are there things in the New Testament that should have been left out?” There were some doubts expressed by certain church fathers about Hebrews and Revelation, for example. But, if anything, what we have in the canon would be too many books, but not too few! So we don’t need to worry that there may be some inspired book that has been left out of the canon and that therefore we are deficient because we lack this book in our authoritative Bible. Nobody was worried about that. The only concern was: Did something get in that should have been left out?”
- ▶ **Read more:** [http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#\\_ftn4#ixzz4S6UUaPfy](http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#_ftn4#ixzz4S6UUaPfy)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “By the year AD 340, the church father Eusebius gives the list of the canonical books of the New Testament that we accept today by all Christian denominations whether Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox.”
- ▶ “I don’t think, however, that we should think of the canon as something that is decided upon by men. I think it is rather the opposite, as we’ve seen. These books rather impose themselves upon the church. The church recognized them as being authoritative and therefore part of the canon. There was never any question that the apocryphal Gospels, for example, and other forgeries that were written centuries later should ever been included in the canon. Popularizers like Dan Brown in his book *The DaVinci Code*, who present the church as being some sort of a conspiratorial alliance to destroy these other Gospels and prevent them from becoming part of the Bible, is just a total fabrication and distortion of church history. Right from the very earliest time, the Gospels and Acts imposed themselves as the authoritative record of the life of Jesus, and everybody knew that these later so-called apocryphal gospels like the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Philip, and so forth were forgeries that arose decades, even centuries, after the death of Jesus and therefore were spurious.”
- ▶ **Read more:** [http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#\\_ftn4#ixzz4S6V0F6sO](http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-10#_ftn4#ixzz4S6V0F6sO)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

## The Authority Relationship Between Church and Canon

Incorrect View	Biblical View
The church is determiner of the canon.	The church is discoverer of the canon.
The church is mother of the canon.	The church is child of the canon.
The church is magistrate of the canon.	The church is minister of the canon.
The church is regulator of the canon.	The church is recognizer of the canon.
The church is judge of the canon.	The church is witness of the canon.
The church is master of the canon.	The church is servant of the canon.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “In the “Incorrect View” the authority of the Scriptures is based upon the authority of the church; **the correct view is that the authority of the church is to be found *in* the authority of the Scriptures.** The incorrect view places the church *over* the canon, whereas the proper position views the church *under* the canon. In fact, if in the column titled “Incorrect View,” the word *church* be replaced by God, then the proper view of the canon emerges clearly. **It is God who regulated the canon; man merely recognized the divine authority God gave to it. God determined the canon, and man discovered it.** Louis Gaussen gives an excellent summary of this position:
  - ▶ “In this affair, then, the Church is a servant and not a mistress; a depository and not a judge. She exercises the office of a minister, not of a magistrate. . . . She delivers a testimony, not a judicial sentence. She discerns the canon of the Scriptures, she does not make it; she has recognized their authenticity, she has not given it. . . . The authority of the Scriptures is not founded, then, on the authority of the Church: It is the church that is founded on the authority of the Scriptures. [Gaussen, 137]”

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. (*emphasis mine*)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “Appropriate methods must be employed to discover which books God determined to be canonical. Otherwise, the list of canonical books might be varied and incorrectly identified. Many procedures used in the study of the Old Testament canon have been marred by the use of fallacious methods (see Apocrypha, Old and New Testaments).
- ▶ *Inadequate Criteria for Canonicity*. Five mistaken methods have particularly troubled the church (see Beckwith, 7-8):
  1. failure to distinguish a book that was “known” from a book that carried God’s authority;
  2. failure to distinguish disagreement about the canon between different parties from uncertainty about the canon within those parties;
  3. failure to distinguish between the adding of books to the canon and the removal of books from it;
  4. failure to distinguish between the canon that the community recognized and eccentric views of individuals;
  5. failure to properly use Jewish evidence about the canon transmitted through Christian hands, either by denying the Jewish origins or by ignoring the Christian medium through which it has come (Beckwith, 7-8).

▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ *"Principles of Canonicity.* Granted that God gave authority and hence canonicity to the Bible, another question arises: How did believers become aware of what God had done? The accepted canonical books of the Bible themselves refer to other books that are no longer available, for example, the "Book of Jasher" (Josh. 10:13) and "the Book of the Wars of the Lord" (Num. 21:14). Then there are *Apocryphal* books and the so-called "lost books." How did the Fathers know those were not inspired? Did not John (21:25) and Luke (1:1) speak of a profusion of religious literature? Were there not false epistles (2 Thess. 2:2)? What marks of inspiration guided the Fathers as they identified and collected the inspired books? Perhaps the very fact that some canonical books were doubted at times, on the basis of one principle or another, argues both for the value of the principle and the caution of the Fathers in their recognition of canonicity. It provides assurance that the people of God really included the books God wanted."

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “Five foundational questions lie at the very heart of the discovery process:
- ▶ *Was the book written by a prophet of God?* The basic question was whether a book was prophetic. Propheticity determined canonicity. A prophet was one who declared what God had disclosed. Thus, only the prophetic writings were canonic. Anything not written by a prophet of God was not part of the Word of God. The characteristic words “And the word of the Lord came to the prophet,” or “The Lord said unto,” or “God spoke” so fill the Old Testament that they have become proverbial. If substantiated these claims of inspiration are so clear that it was hardly necessary to discuss whether some books were divine in origin. In most cases it was simply a matter of establishing the authorship of the book. If it was written by a recognized apostle or prophet, its place in the canon was secured.
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “Historical or stylistic (external or internal) evidence that supports the genuineness of a prophetic book also argues for its canonicity. This was exactly the argument Paul used to defend his harsh words to the Galatians (Gal. 1:1-24). He argued that his message was authoritative because he was an authorized messenger of God, “an apostle not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father” (Gal. 1:1). He also turned the tables on his opponents who preached “a different gospel; which is really not another; only . . . to distort the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:6-7). His opponents’ gospel could not be true because they were “false brethren” (Gal. 2:4).”
- ▶ “It should be noted in this connection that occasionally the Bible contains true prophecies from individuals whose status as people of God is questionable, such as Balaam (Num. 24:17) and Caiaphas (John 11:49). However, granted that their prophecies were consciously given, these prophets were not writers of Bible books, but were merely quoted by the actual writer. Therefore, their utterances are in the same category as the Greek poets quoted by the apostle Paul (cf. Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33; Titus 1:12).”

▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “The arguments Paul used against the false teachers at Galatia were also used as grounds for rejecting a letter that was forged or written under false pretenses. One such letter is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:2. A book cannot be canonical if it is not genuine. A book might use the device of literary impersonation without deception. One writer assumes the role of another for effect. Some scholars feel such is the case in Ecclesiastes, if *Koheleth* wrote autobiographically as though he were Solomon (see Leupold, 8f.). Such a view is not incompatible with the principle, provided it can be shown to be a literary device and not a moral deception. However, when an author pretends to be an apostle in order to gain acceptance of his ideas, as the writers of many New Testament *Apocryphal* books did, then it is moral deception.”
- ▶ “Because of this “prophetic” principle, 2 Peter was disputed in the early church. Even Eusebius in the fourth century said, “But the so-called second Epistle we have not received as canonical, but nevertheless it has appeared useful to many, and has been studied with other Scriptures” (Eusebius 1:193). On the basis of differences in the style of writing, it was felt by some that the author of 2 Peter could not be the same as the author of 1 Peter. But 2 Peter claimed to have been written by “Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:1). Thus, the epistle was either a forgery or there was great difficulty in explaining its different style. Those who were disturbed by such evidence doubted the genuineness of 2 Peter and it was placed among the antilegomena books for a time. It was finally admitted on the grounds that it was Peter’s genuine writing. The differences in style can be accounted for by the time lapse, different occasions, and the fact that Peter verbally dictated 1 Peter to an amanuensis (or secretary; see 1 Peter 5:13).”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- ▶ “The antilegomena is a collection of Bible texts that were subject to a high level of skepticism while the canon of Scripture was being established. The word *antilegomena* literally means “spoken against” and was applied to those writings that were accepted by the majority of the early church but had more detractors than other books.”- Got Questions

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “Inspiration was so certain in many prophetic writings that their inclusion was obvious. Some were rejected because they lacked authority, particularly the pseudepigrapha. These books provided no support for their claim. In many cases the writing is fanciful and magical. This same principle of authority was the reason the book of Esther was doubted, particularly since the name of God is conspicuously absent. Upon closer examination, Esther retained its place in the canon after the Fathers were convinced that authority was present, although less observable.”
- ▶ “*Was the writer confirmed by acts of God?* A miracle is an act of God to confirm the word of God given through a prophet of God to the people of God. It is the sign to substantiate his sermon; the miracle to confirm his message. Not every prophetic revelation was confirmed by a specific miracle. There were other ways to determine the authenticity of an alleged prophet. If there were questions about one’s prophetic credentials it could be settled by divine confirmation, as indeed it was on numerous occasions throughout Scripture (Exodus 4; Numbers 16-17; 1 Kings 18; Mark 2; Acts 5; see Miracles in the Bible).”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- ▶ “The pseudepigrapha are the books that attempt to imitate Scripture but that were written under false names. The term *pseudepigrapha* comes from the Greek *pseudo*, meaning “false,” and *epigraphēin*, meaning “to inscribe,” thus, “to write falsely.” The pseudepigraphical books were written anywhere from 200 BC to AD 300.”- Got Questions

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “There were true and false prophets (Matt. 7:15), so it was necessary to have divine confirmation of the true ones. Moses was given miraculous powers to prove his call (Exod. 4:1-9). Elijah triumphed over the false prophets of Baal by a supernatural act (1 Kings 18). Jesus was attested to by miracles and signs God performed through him (Acts 2:22). As to the apostles’ message, “God was also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will” (Heb. 2:4). Paul gave testimony of his apostleship to the Corinthians, declaring, “the signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles” (2 Cor. 12:12; see *Miracles, Apologetic Value of*).
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In *Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ *“Does the message tell the truth about God? Only immediate contemporaries had access to the supernatural confirmation of the prophet’s message. Other believers in distant places and subsequent times had to depend on other tests. One such test was the *authenticity* of a book. That is, does the book tell the truth about God and his world as known from previous revelations? God cannot contradict himself (2 Cor. 1:17-18), nor can he utter what is false (Heb. 6:18). No book with false claims can be the Word of God. Moses stated the principle about prophets generally that*
  - ▶ *“If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, “Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,” you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. [Deut. 13:1-3]”*

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “So any teaching about God contrary to what his people already knew to be true was to be rejected. Furthermore, any predictions made about the world which failed to come true indicated that a prophet’s words should be rejected. As Moses said to Israel,
  - ▶ “And you may say in your heart, “How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?” When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. [Deut. 18:21-22]”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “A prophet who made such false claims might be stoned. The Lord said, “The prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die” (Deut. 18:20). That kind of punishment assured no repeat performance by that prophet, and it gave other prophets pause before they said, “Thus says the Lord.”
- ▶ “Truth in itself does not make a book canonical. This is more a test of *inauthenticity* of a book, rather than canonicity. It is a negative test that could eliminate books from the canon. The Bereans used this principle when they searched the Scriptures to see whether Paul’s teaching was true (Acts 17:11). If the preaching of the apostle did not accord with the teaching of the Old Testament canon, it could not be of God.”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ **“Much of the *Apocrypha* was rejected because it was not authentic. The Jewish Fathers and early Christian Fathers rejected, or considered second-rate, these books because they had historical inaccuracies and even moral incongruities. The Reformers rejected some because of what they considered to be heretical teaching, such as praying for the dead, which 2 Maccabees 12:45 supports.** The apostle John strongly urged that all purported “truth” be tested by the known standard before it be received (1 John 4:1–6).”
- ▶ “The test of authenticity was the reason James and Jude have been doubted. Some have thought Jude inauthentic because it may quote inauthentic pseudepigraphical books (Jude 9, 14; see Jerome, 4). Martin Luther questioned the canonicity of James because it lacks an obvious focus on the cross. Martin Luther thought the book appeared to teach salvation by works. Careful study has cleared James of these charges, and even Luther came to feel better about them. Historically and uniformly, Jude and James have been vindicated and their canonicity recognized after they have been harmonized with the rest of Scripture.”

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ *“Did it come with the power of God? Another test for canonicity is a book’s power to edify and equip believers. This requires the power of God. The Fathers believed the Word of God to be “living and active” (Heb. 4:12) and consequently ought to have a transforming force (2 Tim. 3:17; 1 Peter 1:23). If the message of a book did not effect its stated goal, if it did not have the power to change a life, then God was apparently not behind its message. A message of God would certainly be backed by the *might of God*. The Fathers believed that the Word of God accomplishes its purpose (Isa. 55:11).”*
- ▶ *“Paul applied this principle to the Old Testament when he wrote to Timothy, “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. 3:15 kjv). If it is of God, it will work—it will come to pass. This simple test was given by Moses to try the truth of a prophet’s prediction (Deut. 18:20ff.). If what was foretold did not materialize, it was not from God.”*
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “On this basis, heretical literature and good noncanonical apostolic literature was rejected from the canon. Even those books whose teaching was spiritual, but whose message was at best only devotional, were deemed noncanonical. Such is the case for most literature written in the apostolic and subapostolic periods. There is a tremendous difference between the canonical books of the New Testament and other religious writings of the apostolic period. “There is not the same freshness and originality, depth and clearness. And this is no wonder, for it means the transition from truth given by infallible inspiration to truth produced by fallible pioneers” (Berkhof, 42). The noncanonical books lacked power; they were devoid of the dynamic aspects found in inspired Scripture. They did not come with the power of God.”
- ▶ “Books whose edifying power was questioned included Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs) and Ecclesiastes. Could a book that is erotically sensual or skeptical be from God? Obviously not; as long as these books were thought of in that manner, they could not be considered canonical. Eventually, the messages of these books were seen as spiritual, so the books themselves were accepted. The principle, nevertheless, was applied impartially. Some books passed the test; others failed. No book that lacked essential edificational or practical characteristics was considered canonical.”

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ *“Was it accepted by the people of God? A prophet of God was confirmed by an act of God (miracle) and was recognized as a spokesman by the people who received the message. Thus, the seal of canonicity depended on whether the book was accepted by the people. This does not mean that everybody in the community to which the prophetic message was addressed accepted it as divinely authoritative. Prophets (1 Kings 17-19; 2 Chron. 36:11-16) and apostles (Galatians 1) were rejected by some. However, believers in the prophet’s community acknowledged the prophetic nature of the message, as did other contemporary believers familiar with the prophet. This acceptance had two stages: initial acceptance and subsequent recognition.”*
- ▶ *“Initial acceptance of a book by the people to whom it was addressed was crucial. Paul said of the Thessalonians, “We also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God’s message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God” (1 Thess. 2:13). Whatever subsequent debate there may have been about a book’s place, the people in the best position to know its prophetic credentials were those who knew the writer. The definitive evidence is that which attests acceptance by contemporary believers.”*

▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “There is ample evidence that books were immediately accepted into the canon. Moses’ books were immediately placed with the ark of the covenant (Deut. 31:26). Joshua’s writing was added (Josh. 24:26). Following were books by Samuel and others (1 Sam. 10:25). Daniel had a copy of Moses and the Prophets, which included the book of his contemporary Jeremiah (Dan. 9:2, 10-11). Paul quoted the Gospel of Luke as “Scripture” (1 Tim. 5:18). Peter had a collection of Paul’s “letter” (2 Peter 3:16). Indeed, the apostles exhorted that their letters be read and circulated among the churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; Rev. 1:3).”
- ▶ “Since Scripture of every time period is referred to in later biblical writings, and each book is quoted by some early church Father or listed in some canon, there is ample evidence that there was continuing agreement within the covenant community concerning the canon. That certain books were written by prophets in biblical times and are in the canon now argues for their canonicity. Along with evidence for a continuity of belief, this argues strongly that the idea of canonicity existed from the beginning. The presence of a book in the canon down through the centuries is evidence that it was known by the contemporaries of the prophet who wrote it to be genuine and authoritative, despite the fact that succeeding generations lacked definitive knowledge of the author’s prophetic credentials.”

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “Later debate about certain books should not cloud their initial acceptance by immediate contemporaries of the prophets. **True canonicity was *determined* by God when he directed the prophet to write it, and it was immediately *discovered* by the people addressed.**”
- ▶ “Technically speaking, the discussion about certain books in later centuries was not a question of *canonicity* but of *authenticity* or *genuineness*. Because later readers had neither access to the writer nor direct evidence of supernatural confirmation, they had to rely on historical testimony. Once they were convinced by the evidence that books were written by accredited spokespeople for God, the books were accepted by the church universal. **But the decisions of church councils in the fourth and fifth centuries did not determine the canon, nor did they first discover or recognize it. In no sense was the authority of the canonical books contingent upon the late church councils. All the councils did was to give *later, broader, and final* recognition to the facts that God had inspired the books, and the people of God had accepted them.**”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. (*emphasis mine*)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “Several centuries went by before all the books in the canon were recognized. Communication and transportation were slow, so it took longer for the believers in the West to become fully aware of the evidence for books that had circulated first in the East, and vice versa. Prior to 313 the church faced frequent persecution that did not allow leisure for research, reflection, and recognition. As soon as that was possible, it was only a short time before there was general recognition of all canonical books by the regional councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397). There was no great need for precision until a dispute arose. Marcion published his gnostic canon, with only Luke and ten of Paul’s Epistles, in the middle of the second century. Spurious gospels and epistles appeared throughout the second and third centuries. **Since those books claimed divine authority, the universal church had to define the limits of God’s authentic, inspired canon that already was known.**”

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. (emphasis mine)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ ***“Applying Principles of Canonicity.*** Lest the impression be given that these principles were explicitly and mechanically applied by some commission, some explanation is needed. Just how did the principles operate in the consciousness of the early Christian church? Although the issue of the discovery of the canon center about the Old and New Testaments alike, J. N. D. Kelly discusses these principles as they apply to the New Testament canon. He writes,
  - ▶ “The main point to be observed is that the fixation of the finally agreed list of books, and of the order in which they were to be arranged, was the result of a very gradual process. . . . Three features of this process should be noted. First, the criterion which ultimately came to prevail was apostolicity. Unless a book could be shown to come from the pen of an apostle, or at least to have the authority of an apostle behind it, it was peremptorily rejected, however edifying or popular with the faithful it might be. Secondly, there were certain books which hovered for a long time on the fringe of the canon, but in the end failed to secure admission to it, usually because they lacked this indisputable stamp. . . . Thirdly, some of the books which were later included had to wait a considerable time before achieving universal recognition. . . . By gradual stages, however, the Church both in East and West arrived at a common mind as to its sacred books. **The first official document which prescribes the twenty-seven books of our new Testament as alone canonical is Athanasius’s Easter letter for the year 367**, but the process was not everywhere complete until at least a century and a half later. [Kelly, 59-60]”

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ *"Some Principles Are Implicit While Others Are Explicit. All criteria of inspiration are necessary to demonstrate the canonicity of each book. The five characteristics must at least be implicitly present, though some of them are more dominant than others. For example, the dynamic equipping power of God is more obvious in the New Testament Epistles than in the Old Testament historical narratives. "Thus-says-the-Lord" authority is more apparent in the Prophets than in the poetry. That is not to say that authority isn't in the poetic sections, nor a dynamic in the redemptive history. It does mean the Fathers did not always find all of the principles explicitly operating."*
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ *"Some Principles Are More Important Than Others.* Some criteria of inspiration are more important than are others, in that the presence of one implies another, or is a key to others. For example, if a book is authoritatively from God, it will be dynamic –accompanied by God’s transforming power. In fact, when authority was unmistakably present, the other characteristics of inspiration were automatically assumed. Among New Testament books the proof of apostolicity, its prophetic nature, was often considered a guarantee of inspiration (Warfield, 415). If propheticity could be verified, this alone established the book. Generally speaking, the church Fathers were only explicitly concerned with apostolicity and authenticity. The edifying characteristics and universal acceptance of a book were assumed unless some doubt from the latter two questions forced a reexamination of the tests. This happened with 2 Peter and 2 John. Positive evidence for the first three principles emerged victorious.”

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ *"The witness of the Holy Spirit. **The recognition of canonicity was not a mere mechanical matter settled by a synod or ecclesiastical council. It was a providential process directed by the Spirit of God as he witnessed to the church about the reality of the Word of God** (see Holy Spirit, Role in Apologetics). People could not identify the Word until the Holy Spirit opened their understanding. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice" (John 10:27). This is not to say that the Holy Spirit mystically spoke in visions to settle questions of canonicity. **The witness of the Spirit convinced them of the reality that a God-breathed canon existed, not its extent** (Sproul, 337-54). Faith joined science; objective principles were used, but the Fathers knew what writings had been used in their churches to change lives and teach hearts by the Holy Spirit. **This subjective testimony joined the objective evidence in confirming what was God's Word.**"*

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. (emphasis mine)

# FORMATION OF THE CANON

- ▶ “Tests for canonicity were not mechanical means to measure the amount of inspired literature, nor did the Holy Spirit say, “This book or passage is inspired; that one is not.” That would be disclosure, not discovery. The Holy Spirit providentially guided the examination process and gave witness to the people as they read or heard.”
- ▶ **“Conclusion. It is important to distinguish between the *determination* and the *discovery* of canonicity. God is solely responsible for determining; God’s people are responsible for discovery. That a book is canonical is due to divine *inspiration*. How it is known to be canonical is due to a process of human recognition.** Was a book (1) written by a spokesperson for God, (2) who was confirmed by an act of God, (3) told the truth (4) in the power of God and (5) was accepted by the people of God? If a book clearly had the first mark, canonicity was often assumed. Contemporaries of a prophet or apostle made the initial confirmation. Later church Fathers sorted out the profusion of religious literature to officially recognize what books were divinely inspired in the manner of which Paul speaks in 2 Timothy 3:16.”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. (emphasis mine)

A PROTEST TO THE TEACHINGS OF

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**CATHOLICISM**

# SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ▶ *"Sola scriptura* was the rallying cry of the Protestant Reformation. For centuries the Roman Catholic Church had made its traditions superior in authority to the Bible. This resulted in many practices that were in fact contradictory to the Bible. Some examples are prayer to saints and/or Mary, the immaculate conception, transubstantiation, infant baptism, indulgences, and papal authority. Martin Luther, the founder of the Lutheran Church and father of the Protestant Reformation, was publicly rebuking the Catholic Church for its unbiblical teachings. The Catholic Church threatened Martin Luther with excommunication (and death) if he did not recant. Martin Luther's reply was, "Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or by the clearest reasoning, unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the Word of God, I cannot and will not retract, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me! Amen!"

# SOLA SCRIPTURA

▶ What Sola Scripture (by Scripture alone) **is not:**

1. First and Foremost, sola scriptura is not a claim that the Bible contains all knowledge.
2. Sola scriptura is not a claim that the Bible is an exhaustive catalog of all religious knowledge.
3. Sola scriptura is not a denial of the authority of the Church to teach God's truth.
4. Sola scriptura is not a denial that the Word of God has, at times, been spoken.
5. Sola scriptura does not entail the rejection of every kind or form of "tradition."

▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 56-59. Print.

# SOLA SCRIPTURA

### ▶ What Sola Scriptura is:

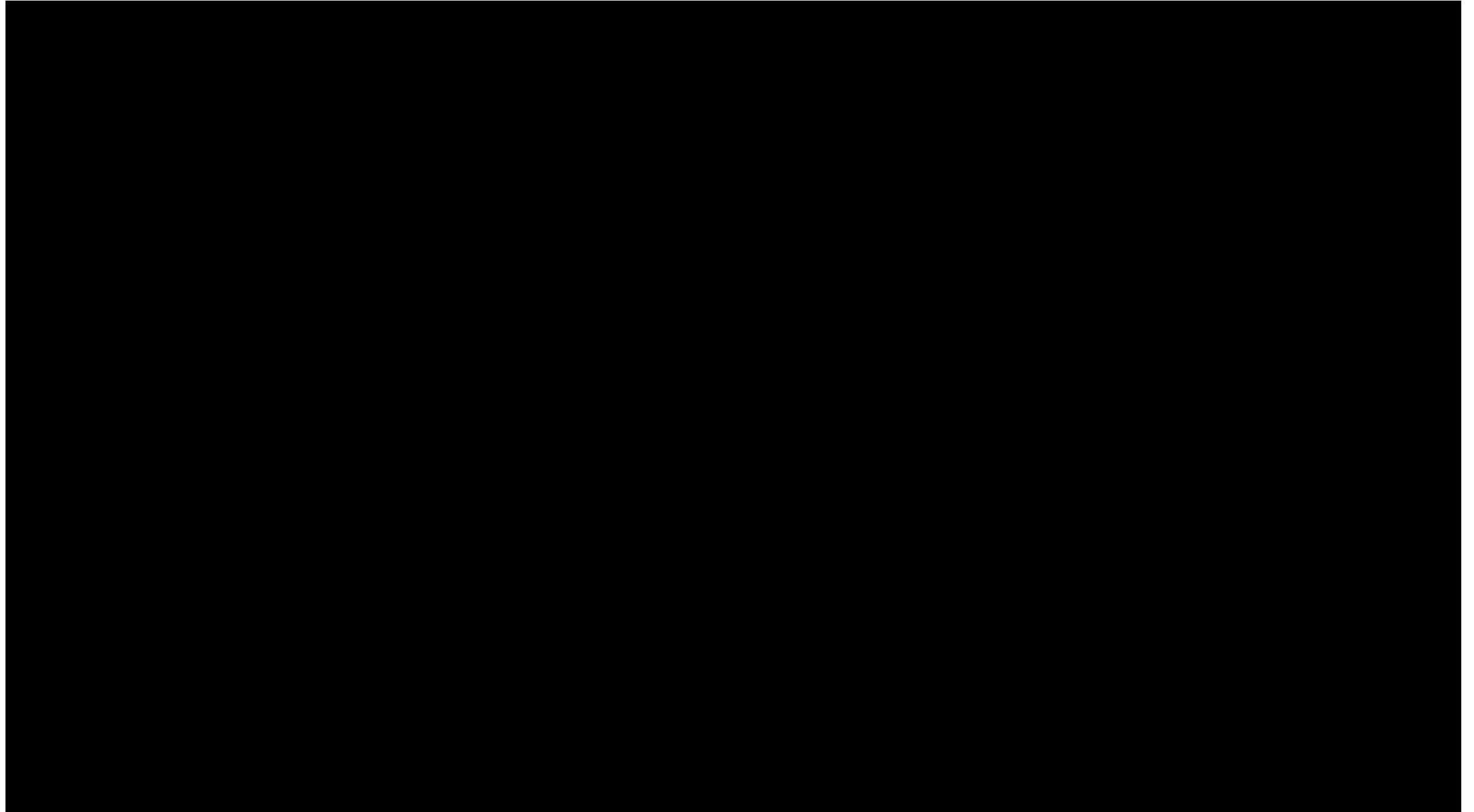
1. The doctrine of sola scriptura, simply stated, is that the Scriptures alone are sufficient to function as the *regula fidei*, the infallible rule of faith for the church.
2. All that one must believe to be a Christian is found in Scripture, and in no other source.
3. That which is not found in Scripture—either directly or by necessary implication—is not binding upon the Christian.
4. Scripture reveals those things necessary for salvation.
5. All traditions are subject to the higher authority of Scripture.

▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 59-62. Print.

A PROTEST

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# SOLA SCRIPTURA



# SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ▶ “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:14-17, ESV)
- ▶ “Paul’s words refer primarily to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, for it is obvious that Timothy would have had none of the New Testament writings at that time. Some have argued that this fact makes this passage irrelevant to any discussion of *sola scriptura*, since it speaks only to the Old Testament, and no one would wish to say that the Old Testament is wholly adequate and the New Testament is superfluous or unnecessary. However, such an objection misses the point, as the thrust of the passage is the *origin* and resultant *nature* of Scripture and its abilities, not the *extent* of the Scriptures (i.e. to the canon). That which God-breathed is able, by its very nature, to give us the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (“all things necessary for man’s salvation”) and to fully equip the “man of God” for the work of the ministry (“all things necessary for...faith and life”). **Both sides in this dispute agree that the New Testament books are “God-breathed.”** –Source: White, James R. “Sola Scriptura.” *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 63. Print. (emphasis mine)

## SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ▶ “The Greek term used here, *theopneustos*, is most expressive. It is literally translated as “God-breathed” (as in the NIV), and it does not refer to the idea of taking merely human words and breathing something special into them. What is more, the text says it is the *Scriptures*, **not the writers themselves**, that are “God-breathed.” Paul is here referring to the origin of the Scriptures, and insists in the strongest terms that they come from God himself. The foundation of Scripture, the fountain of divine revelation, is God the Almighty.”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. “Sola Scriptura.” *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 64. Print. (emphasis mine)

# SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ▶ “Paul quotes Luke’s writings with the standard introduction of “for the Scriptures say...” (1 Timothy 5:18, quoting Luke 10:7), and Peter refers to Paul’s writings as “Scripture” in 2 Peter 3:16. Hence, the same principles referred to here that apply to the Old Testament would hold true for the New as well.” -Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 63. Print.
- ▶ “For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, **“The laborer deserves his wages.”**” (1 Timothy 5:18, ESV) *(Paul is quoting Luke’s recording of Jesus’ teaching, pairing it with an O.T. reference side-by-side.)*
- ▶ “And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for **the laborer deserves his wages**. Do not go from house to house.” (Luke 10:7, ESV)
- ▶ “as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, **as they do the other Scriptures.**” (2 Peter 3:16, ESV)

# SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ▶ “Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.” He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: “ ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ ”” (Matthew 15:1-9, ESV)
- ▶ “Here we find the Lord providing us with the example that we must follow. The Jewish leaders objected to the fact that the disciples did not follow the rigorous hand-washing rituals of the Pharisees. They identified this as a breaking of the “*tradition of the elders*.” They firmly believed that this body of tradition was *authoritative*, and some even believed that it had been passed down from Moses himself, though this was without warrant. But does Jesus accept this claim of *authority*?” –Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 68. Print.

# SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ▶ “Not at all. Instead, He launches a counterattack against these leaders by pointing out how they nullify the command of God by their own traditions, specifically in this case with reference to the *corban* rule, whereby a man could dedicate his belongings to the Temple and not support his parents in their old age. The Lord Jesus hold this traditional teaching up the light of Scripture and finds it wanting.”
- ▶ It is vital to realize that the Jews viewed the *corban* rule as part of the “tradition of the elders.” To them this was a divine tradition with divine authority. They did not simply view it as a “tradition of men,” but as a concept revealed by God and passed down into the body of those teachings entrusted to the elders of the faith.”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 68. Print.

# SOLA SCRIPTURA

- ▶ “The parallels to the Roma claim regarding Sacred Tradition are many. Rome claims divine authority for her Sacred Traditions, and even subjugates Scripture so as to make it a part of Sacred Tradition along with the supposedly Apostolic, unwritten traditions, and the authority of the Magisterium of the Church. Yet, the person who wishes to follow the example of Christ will hold such traditions up to the light Scripture, knowing how fearful it is to be found guilty of nullifying the Word of God for the sake of mere human traditions. The Lord Jesus subjugated even this allegedly “divine tradition” to the supreme authority, the Scriptures. This is vitally important, for the most common response to the citation of this passage with reference to Roman tradition is, “Well, the passage refers to testing human traditions, not divine traditions.” Yet, when it comes to authority, *any* tradition, no matter what its alleged pedigree, is to be tested by the known standard, the Holy Scriptures.”

- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 68-69. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “The most common passage cited against the doctrine of Sola Scriptura and in support of the Roman position is 2 Thessalonians 2:15. Let’s look at the preceding verses as well to get the context:
  - ▶ “But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.” (2 Thessalonians 2:13-15, NASB95)”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 95-96. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “Verse 15 contains key terms. Paul speaks of “the traditions” that were passed on in one of two waysL by letter form us (i.e., 1 Thessalonians), or “by word of mouth,” as the NASB puts it. That is, orally by teaching. The most common use of the verse goes like this: “Here you have a positive command to hold to *both* the written transition, which is Scripture, *and* the oral tradition as well. Protestants hold to the one, but not to the other. Only Roman Catholics do both.” They underlying assumption, however, is that this oral tradition is somehow *different* or *separate* from the rotten tradition. But is this the case Does an host look at the context of the passage support this use by Rome?”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 96. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “The first thing we note is that this is a command to stand firm and hold fast to a *single body of traditions already delivered to the believers*. There is nothing *future* about this passage at all. For Paul say to stand firm and hold fast to traditions that *will* be delivered? Does he say to hold on to interpretations and understandings that have not yet developed? No, this oral teaching which he refers to has already *been* delivered to the entire Church, not just to the episcopate, not just to the bishops, but to *everyone* in the Church at Thessalonica.”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 96. Print.

# SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “This *single* body of traditions was taught in two ways. First, orally, when Paul was personally with the Thessalonians, and they by epistle, the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians. Now, what does the term orally refer to? We first note that the context of the passage is the Gospel. The verses that immediately precede verse 15 speak of the Gospel and its work among the Thessalonians. The traditions Paul speaks of are not traditions about Mary or Papal Infallibility. Instead, the traditions Paul refers to have to do with a single topic, one that is close to his heart. He is encouraging these believers to stand firm—in what? In oral traditions about subjects not found in the New Testament? No, he is exhorting them to stand firm *in the Gospel*. Note what Paul said to them in 1 Thessalonians concerning what he orally preached to them: “For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.”” (1 Thessalonians 2:13, NASB95)

- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 96-97. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “We have further evidence that Paul is speaking here of the Gospel, not some separate oral tradition that exists outside of Scripture. When Paul exhorts the believers to “stand firm,” he uses a term that is found elsewhere in his writings. For example, we read in 1 Corinthians 16:13 “Be on alert, *stand firm* in the faith, act like men, be strong.” The phrase “stand firm” comes from the same Greek term Paul uses in 2 Thessalonians 2:15. He exhorts the Corinthians to “Stand firm” in “the faith: that he himself found *explicitly* in Scripture? And what defines “The faith” for Paul but the phrase, “the Gospel of Jesus Christ”? From a simple exegesis of the passage, it is clear there is nothing in this passage *in its own context* that is supportive of either of the Roman positions regarding tradition.”

- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 97. Print.

# SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “Are there not other references to tradition in the Bible? Yes, there are. For example, Paul wrote to the Corinthians:
  - ▶ “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;” (1 Corinthians 11:23, NASB95)
- ▶ “The phrase “delivered to you” speaks of the passing on of a tradition, in this case the words of the Lord Jesus regarding the Last Supper. This provides little support for the specific and unique claims put forward by Rome, as this tradition is obviously recorded for us in Scripture. While it does illustrate the reality that for a time the early Christians were dependent on the transmission of this information in a oral manner, it does not logically follow that God intended Christians to *always* train dependent in this way. Not does it provide support for the idea that Paul taught the Christians things that, *while important for salvation and proper belief*, are nowhere recorded for us in Scripture. Instead, we find passages that indicate a harmony and identity between the preaching of the Apostles and their written epistles and gospels.”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 97-98. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “For example, note Paul’s words to the Thessalonians:
  - ▶ “Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?” (2 Thessalonians 2:5, NASB95)
- ▶ “Often the Apostles indicate that they are repeating in written form what they taught orally. Peter likewise reminded his readers in 2 Peter 1:12-15 that it was food for him to refresh their memory in some of the basic truths of the Gospel, since we all need to this from time to time.”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 98. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “Another passage referred to by those who present a concept of a separate oral tradition that exists outside of Scripture is 2 Timothy 2:2:
  - ▶ “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2, NASB95)”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 98. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “Here the aged Paul, facing the end of his ministry, exhorts young Timothy to entrust his teaching to faithful men who will be able to teach others as well. Some would say that this supports the idea of a separate oral tradition, for Paul does not say, “entrust my letters to these men” but “entrust my teaching to these men.” To believe that this is the case assumes that what Paul *taught* in the presence of many witnesses is different than what he *wrote* to entire churches.”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 98. Print.

# SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “This assumption is manifestly untrue. The deepest of teaching that has been given to Timothy is not different from what we have in Acts, Romans, or Galatians. It is important to point out that Paul speaks of his teaching as being *done in public*. This is significant to note because this passage has been pressed into duty more than once by groups seeking to defend a hidden or secret tradition, passed down in such a way that it is virtually unknown until it is brought to light by a particular group. The early church Father Tertullian faced men who did just this, and who used this passage as support. These teachers insisted that the Apostles had two different teachings, one that was open and known to all, and a second, secret doctrine known only to a few. Tertullian refutes this idea in the following words:
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 98-99. Print.

# SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “But here is the same madness: their allowing that the apostles were ignorant of nothing and preached not any (doctrines) which contradicted one another, but at the same time insisting that they did not reveal all to all men. But that they proclaimed some openly and to all the world, and others they disclosed in secret and to a few, because Paul addressed to Timothy: “O Timothy, guard thou which is entrusted to thee;” and again: “That good which was committed unto thee, keep.” What is this deposit? Is it so secret as to be characterize as a new doctrine? or is it a part of that charge of when he says, “This charge I committed unto thee, son, Timothy,” and also that priesthood to which he says, “I charge thee in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ who witnessed a good confession under Pontius Pilate, that thou keep this commandment.” Now, what is this commandment and what is this charge? From the preceding and the succeeding contexts, it will be manifested there is no mysterious hint darkly suggested in this expression about some far-fetched doctrine, but rather that a warning is given against receiving any other doctrine than that which Timothy had heard from himself [Paul], as I take it, “publicly before many witnesses” is his phrase.”

- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 99. Print.

## SOLA SCRIPTURA VS TRADITION

- ▶ “When we recall that such doctrines as the Bodily Assumption of Mary and Paps Infallibility have been defined on the basis of tradition, we can see the weight of Tertullian’s words about “some far-fetched doctrine.” It is quite obvious that when Paul spoke before many witnesses, he was not speaking about such doctrines but about the message of Christ in the Gospel.”
- ▶ Source: White, James R. "Sola Scriptura." *The Roman Catholic Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996. 99. Print.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ “Catholics and Protestants agree about the inspiration of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. They differ over eleven pieces of literature in the Old Testament (seven books and four parts of books). These disputed works became an issue in the Reformation and, in reaction to their rejection by Protestants, were “infallibly” declared to be part of the inspired canon of Scripture in 1546 at the Council of Trent”
- ▶ “The Roman Catholic Council of Trent stated: “The Synod . . . receives and venerates . . . all the books [including the *Apocrypha*] both of the Old and the New Testaments—seeing that one God is the Author of both . . . as having been dictated, either by Christ’s own word of mouth or by the Holy Ghost . . . if anyone receives not as sacred and canonical the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church . . . let him be anathema” (Schaff, 2:81). Another Trent document read: “If anyone, however, should not accept the said books as sacred and canonical, entire with all their parts, . . . and if both knowingly and deliberately he should condemn the aforesaid tradition let him be anathema” (Denzinger, *Sources*, no. 784). The same language affirming the *Apocrypha* is repeated by Vatican Council II.”

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ “The *Apocrypha* Rome accepts includes eleven books or twelve, depending on whether Baruch 1-6) is split into two pieces, Baruch 1-5 and The Letter of Jeremiah (Baruch 6). The Deuterocanon includes all the fourteen (or fifteen) books in the Protestant *Apocrypha* except the Prayer of Manasseh and 1 and 2 Esdras (called 3 and 4 Esdras by Roman Catholics. Ezra and Nehemiah are called 1 and 2 Esdras by Catholics).”
- ▶ “Although the Roman Catholic canon has eleven more pieces of literature than does the Protestant Bible, only seven extra books, or a total forty-six, appear in the table of contents (the Protestant and Jewish Old Testament has thirty-nine). As noted in the accompanying table, four other pieces of literature are incorporated within Esther and Daniel.”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

## APOCRYPHA The Literature in Dispute

Apocryphal Books	Deuterocanonical Books
The Wisdom of Solomon	Book of Wisdom (ca. 30 b.c.)
Ecclesiasticus (Sirach)	Sirach (132 b.c.)
Tobit (ca. 200 b.c.)	Tobit
Judith (ca. 150 b.c.)	Judith
1 Esdras (ca. 150–100 b.c.)	3 Esdras
1 Maccabees (ca. 110 b.c.)	1 Maccabees

2 Maccabees (ca. 110–70 b.c.)	2 Maccabees (ca. 110–70 b.c.)
Baruch (ca. 150–50 b.c.)	Baruch chaps. 1–5
Letter of Jeremiah	Baruch 6 (ca. 300–100 b.c.)
2 Esdras (ca. a.d. 100)	4 Esdras
Additions to Esther	Esther 10:4–16:24 (140–130 b.c.)
Prayer of Azariah (ca. 200–0 b.c.)	Daniel 3:24–90—”Song of Three Young Men”
Susanna (ca. 200–0 b.c.)	Daniel 13
Bel and the Dragon Prayer of Manasseh (or second Prayer of Manasseh, ca. 100–0 b.c.)	Daniel 14 (ca. 100 b.c.)

## APOCRYPHA

- ▶ ***"The Apocrypha as Scripture.*** The larger canon is sometimes referred to as the "Alexandrian Canon," as opposed to the "Palestinian Canon" which does not contain the *Apocrypha*, because it is alleged to have been part of the Greek translation of the Old Testament (the *Septuagint*, or LXX) prepared at Alexandria, Egypt. Reasons generally advanced in favor of this broader Alexandrian list are:

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

1. The New Testament reflects the thought of the *Apocrypha*, and even refers to events described in it (cf. Heb. 11:35 with 2 Maccabees 7, 12).
2. The New Testament quotes mostly from the Greek Old Testament, the LXX, which contained the *Apocrypha*. This gives tacit approval to the whole text.
3. Some early church fathers quoted and used the *Apocrypha* as Scripture in public worship.
4. Such early fathers as Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria accepted all of the *Apocrypha* as canonical.
5. Early Christian catacomb scenes depict episodes from the *Apocrypha*, showing it was part of early Christian religious life. This at least reveals a great regard for the *Apocrypha*.

# APOCRYPHA

6. Important early manuscripts (*Aleph*, *A*, and *B*) interpose the *Apocrypha* among the Old Testament books as part of the Jewish-Greek Old Testament.
7. Early church councils accepted the *Apocrypha*: Rome (382), Hippo (393), and Carthage (397).
8. The Eastern Orthodox church accepts the *Apocrypha*. Their acceptance shows it to be a common Christian belief, not one unique to Catholics.
9. The Roman Catholic church proclaimed the *Apocrypha* canonical at the Council of Trent (1546) in accord with the early councils noted and the Council of Florence not long before the Reformation (1442).
10. The apocryphal books continued to be included in the Protestant Bible as late as the nineteenth century. This indicates that even Protestants accepted the *Apocrypha* until very recently.
11. Apocryphal books in Hebrew were among Old Testament canonical books in the Dead Sea community at Qumran, so they were part of the Hebrew Canon (see Dead Sea Scrolls).

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ **"Answers to the Catholic Arguments. *The New Testament and the Apocrypha.*** There may be New Testament allusions to the *Apocrypha*, but not once is there a definite quotation from any *Apocrypha* book accepted by the Roman Catholic church. There are allusions to Pseudepigraphical books (false writings) that are rejected by Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, such as the *Bodily Assumption of Moses* (Jude 9) and the *Book of Enoch* (Jude 14-15). There are also citations from Pagan poets and philosophers (Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33; Titus 1:12). None of these sources are cited as Scripture, nor with authority."
- ▶ "The New Testament simply refers to a truth contained in these books which otherwise may (and do) have errors. Roman Catholic scholars agree with this assessment. The New Testament never refers to any document outside the canon as authoritative."

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ “*The Septuagint and the Apocrypha*. The fact that the New Testament often quotes from other books in the Greek Old Testament in no way proves that the deuterocanonical books it contains are inspired. It is not even certain that the *Septuagint* of the first century contained the *Apocrypha*. The earliest Greek manuscripts that include them date from the fourth century a.d.”
- ▶ “Even if these writings were in the *Septuagint* in apostolic times, Jesus and the apostles never once quoted from them, although they are supposed to have been included in the very version of the Old Testament (the *Septuagint*) that the Lord and apostles usually cited. Even notes in the currently used Roman Catholic New American Bible (nab) make the revealing admission that the *Apocrypha* are “Religious books used by both Jews and Christians which were not included in the collection of inspired writings.” Instead, they “. . . were introduced rather late into the collection of the Bible. Catholics call them ‘deuterocanonical’ (second canon) books” (nab, 413).”

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ *“Use by the Church Fathers. Citations of church fathers in support of the canonicity of the Apocrypha is selective and misleading. Some fathers did seem to accept their inspiration; other fathers used them for devotional or homiletical (preaching) purposes but did not accept them as canonical. An authority on the Apocrypha, Roger Beckwith, observes,”*
  - ▶ *“When one examines the passages in the early Fathers which are supposed to establish the canonicity of the Apocrypha, one finds that some of them are taken from the alternative Greek text of Ezra (1 Esdras) or from additions or appendices to Daniel, Jeremiah or some other canonical book, which . . . are not really relevant; that others of them are not quotations from the Apocrypha at all; and that, of those which are, many do not give any indication that the book is regarded as Scripture. [Beckwith, 387]”*

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ “Frequently in references, the fathers were not claiming divine authority for any of the eleven books infallibly canonized by the Council of Trent. Rather, they were citing a well-known piece of Hebrew literature or an informative devotional writing to which they gave no presumption of inspiration by the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ *The Fathers and the Apocrypha*. Some individuals in the early church held the *Apocrypha* in high esteem; others were vehemently opposed to them. J. D. N. Kelly’s comment that “for the great majority [of early fathers] . . . the deuterocanonical writings ranked as scripture in the fullest sense” is out of sync with the facts. Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Origen, and the great Roman Catholic biblical scholar and translator of the Latin Vulgate, Jerome, all opposed inclusion of the *Apocrypha*. In the second century a.d. the Syrian Bible (Peshitta) did not contain the *Apocrypha* (Geisler, *General Introduction*, chaps. 27, 28).

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ *"Catacomb Art Apocrypha Themes. As many Catholic scholars admit, scenes from the catacombs do not prove the canonicity of the books whose events they depict. Such scenes indicate little more than the religious significance the portrayed events had for early Christians. At best, they show a respect for the books containing these events, not a recognition that they are inspired."*
- ▶ *"Books in the Greek Manuscripts. None of the great Greek manuscripts (Aleph, A, and B) contain all of the apocryphal books. Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, and Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) are found in all of them, and the oldest manuscripts (B or Vaticanus) totally exclude the Books of Maccabees. Yet Catholics appeal to this manuscript in support of their view. What is more, no Greek manuscript has the same list of apocryphal books accepted by the Council of Trent (1545-63; Beckwith, 194, 382-83)."*

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ *“Acceptance by Early Councils.* These were only local councils and were not binding on the whole church. Local councils often erred in their decisions and were later overruled by the universal church. Some Catholic apologists argue that, even though a council was not ecumenical, its results can be binding if they were confirmed by a Pope. However, they acknowledge that there is no infallible way to know which statements by Popes are infallible. Indeed, they admit that other statements by Popes were even heretical, such as the monothelite heresy of Pope Honorius I (d. 638).”
- ▶ “It is also important to remember that these books were not part of the Christian (New Testament period) writings. Hence, they were not under the province of the Christian church to decide. They were the province of the Jewish community which wrote them and which had, centuries before, rejected them as part of the canon.”
- ▶ “The books accepted by these Christian Councils may not have been the same ones in each case. Hence, they cannot be used as proof of the exact canon later infallibly proclaimed by the Roman Catholic church in 1546.”

▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ “Local Councils of Hippo and Carthage in North Africa were influenced by Augustine, the most significant voice of antiquity who accepted the same apocryphal books later canonized by the Council of Trent. However, Augustine’s position is ill-founded: (1) Augustine himself recognized that the Jews did not accept these books as part of their canon (Augustine, 19.36–38). (2) Of Maccabees, Augustine said, “These are held to be canonical, not by the Jews but by the Church, on account of the extreme and wonderful sufferings of certain martyrs” (Augustine, 18.36). On that ground *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs* should be in the canon. (3) Augustine was inconsistent, since he rejected books not written by prophets, yet he accepted a book that appears to deny being prophetic (1 Macc. 9:27). (4) Augustine’s mistaken acceptance of the *Apocrypha* seems to be connected with his belief in the inspiration of the *Septuagint*, whose later Greek manuscripts contained them. Augustine later acknowledged the superiority of Jerome’s Hebrew text over the Septuagint’s Greek text. That should have led him to accept the superiority of Jerome’s Hebrew canon as well. Jerome utterly rejected the *Apocrypha*.”
- ▶ “The later Council of Rome (382) which accepted *Apocryphal* books did not list the same books accepted by Hippo and Carthage. It does not list Baruch, thus listing only six, not seven, of the *Apocrypha* books later pronounced canonical. Even Trent lists it as a separate book (Denzinger, no. 84).”
- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ *"Acceptance by the Orthodox Church.* The Greek church has not always accepted the *Apocrypha*, nor is its present position unequivocal. At the synods of Constantinople (1638), Jaffa (1642), and Jerusalem (1672) these books were declared canonical. But even as late as 1839 their Larger Catechism expressly omitted the *Apocrypha* on the grounds that they did not exist in the Hebrew Bible."
- ▶ *"Acceptance at the Councils of Florence and Trent.* At the Council of Trent (1546) the infallible proclamation was made accepting the *Apocrypha* as part of the inspired Word of God. Some Catholic scholars claim that the earlier Council of Florence (1442) made the same pronouncement. However, this council claimed no infallibility and neither council's decision has any real basis in Jewish history, the New Testament, or early Christian history. Unfortunately, the decision at Trent came a millennium and a half after the books were written and was an obvious polemic against Protestantism. The Council of Florence had proclaimed the *Apocrypha* inspired to bolster the doctrine of Purgatory that had blossomed. However, the manifestations of this belief in the sale of indulgences came to full bloom in Martin Luther's day, and Trent's infallible proclamation of the *Apocrypha* was a clear polemical against Luther's teaching. The official infallible addition of books that support prayers for the dead is highly suspect, coming only a few years after Luther protested this doctrine. It has all the appearance of an attempt to provide infallible support for doctrines that lack a real biblical basis."

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ *"Apocryphal Books in Protestant Bibles. Apocryphal books appeared in Protestant Bibles prior to the Council of Trent, and were generally placed in a separate section because they were not considered of equal authority. While Anglicans and some other non-Roman Catholic groups have always held a high regard for the inspirational and historical value of the Apocrypha, they never consider it inspired and of equal authority with Scripture. Even Roman Catholic scholars through the Reformation period distinguished between deuterocanon and canon. Cardinal Ximenes made this distinction in his *Complutensian Polyglot* (1514-17) on the very eve of the Reformation. Cardinal Cajetan, who later opposed Luther at Augsburg in 1518, published a *Commentary on All the Authentic Historical Books of the Old Testament* (1532) after the Reformation began which did not contain the Apocrypha. Luther spoke against the Apocrypha in 1543, including its books at the back of his Bible (Metzger, 181f.)."*

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ *"Apocryphal Writings at Qumran.* The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran included not only the community's Bible (the Old Testament) but their library, with fragments of hundreds of books. Among these were some Old Testament *Apocryphal* books. The fact that no commentaries were found for an *Apocryphal* book, and only canonical books were found in the special parchment and script indicates that the *Apocryphal* books were not viewed as canonical by the Qumran community. Menahem Mansoor lists the following fragments of the *Apocrypha* and *Pseudepigrapha*: *Tobit*, in Hebrew and Aramaic; *Enoch* in Aramaic; *Jubilees* in Hebrew; *Testament of Levi and Naphtali*, in Aramaic; *Apocryphal Daniel literature*, in Hebrew and Aramaic, and *Psalms of Joshua* (Mansoor, 203). The noted scholar on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Millar Burroughs, concluded: "There is no reason to think that any of these works were venerated as Sacred Scripture" (Burroughs, 178)."

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ *"The Catholic Arguments in Summary.* At best, all that the arguments urged in favor of the canonicity of the apocryphal books prove is that various apocryphal books were given varied degrees of esteem by various persons within the Christian church, usually falling short of claims for the books' canonicity. Only after Augustine and the local councils he dominated pronounced them inspired did they gain wider usage and eventual infallible acceptance by the Roman Catholic church at Trent. This falls far short of the kind of initial, continual, and full recognition among Christian churches of the canonical books of the Protestant Old Testament and Jewish Torah (which exclude the *Apocrypha*). True canonical books were received *immediately* by the people of God into the growing canon of Scripture (see Geisler, *General Introduction*, chap. 13). Any subsequent debate was by those who were not in a position, as was the immediate audience, to know whether they were from an accredited apostle or prophet. Hence, this subsequent debate over the antilegomena was over their *authenticity*, not canonicity. They were already in the canon; some in subsequent generations questioned whether they belonged there. Eventually, all of the antilegomena (books later questioned by some) were retained in the canon. This is not true of the *Apocrypha*, for Protestants reject all of them and even Roman Catholics reject 3 Esdras, 4 Esdras and The Prayer of Manasseh."

- ▶ Source: Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

# APOCRYPHA

- ▶ “The Apocrypha / Deuterocanonical books teach many things that are not true and are not historically accurate. While many Catholics accepted the Apocrypha / Deuterocanonicals previously, the Roman Catholic Church officially added the Apocrypha / Deuterocanonicals to their Bible at the Council of Trent in the mid 1500’s A.D., primarily in response to the Protestant Reformation. The Apocrypha / Deuterocanonicals support some of the things that the Roman Catholic Church believes and practices which are not in agreement with the Bible. Examples are praying for the dead, petitioning “saints” in Heaven for their prayers, worshipping angels, and “alms giving” atoning for sins. Some of what the Apocrypha / Deuterocanonicals say is true and correct. However, due to the historical and theological errors, the books must be viewed as fallible historical and religious documents, not as the inspired, authoritative Word of God.”

- ▶ Source: <https://www.gotquestions.org/apocrypha-deuterocanonical.html>

# APOCRYPHA

