# Appendix A
## *The Canon and Canonicity*

**I. Definitions**

A. Canon: a measure or rule, a standard of authority

1) **Scripture was *recognized* to be of this character. It was inspired at its writing; inspiration is the foundation for canonicity.**

2) **This *recognition* was by God's people—they saw that the various books *were* inspired.**

B. Canonization: the historical process whereby God's people *recognized*, *collected*, and *organized* the inspired writings.

1) **The Spirit assures the believer of the truthfulness of the Word of God, removing his sinful hostility toward it and replacing it with a certainty that the Bible is from God and His truth.**

2) **Canonization did not make the Scriptures inspired—they were inspired the moment they were written.**

**II. The Process Of Canonization: How Were The Inspired Books Recognized And Collected Into The Correct List?**

A. Principles

*Old Testament*

1) The book had to reflect that it came from God

- **Did the book claim to come from God?**
- **Was the book written by a prophet?**
- **Was the book written by a wise man?**

2) The book had to have a certain quality of subject matter

- **Was the book consistent with the Law (Torah)?**
- **Did the book have records that had a significant bearing on the nation Israel?**

*New Testament*

1) Was it connected with an apostle (apostolicity)?
2) Is it relevant to the church as a whole (catholicity)?
3) Does it agree with the faith of the church (orthodoxy)?
4) Has it been welcomed and profitably used in local churches (traditional usage)?

B. How long did it take for books to be recognized as inspired and collected into the list?

1) *Old Testament:* Some soon after they were written, such as the Pentateuch and Jeremiah (cf. Dan 9:2). Some we can't be sure about, such as Esther and Daniel.

2) *New Testament:* During the 4th century A.D. (*Decrees of the Council of Nicea,* 350; Athanasius' Easter letter in 367; Council of Laodicea, 363)

## II. What About The Apocrypha?

A. What is the Apocrypha?

1) Meaning: *Apocrypha* means "hidden" or "concealed." It refers to writings outside the Hebrew canon

2) Content:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 Esdras | Letter of Jeremiah |
| 2 Esdras | Prayer of Azariah and Son of the Three Young Men |
| Tobit | Susanna |
| Judith | Bel and the Dragon |
| Additions to Esther | Prayer of Manasseh |
| Wisdom of Solomon | 1 Maccabees |
| Ecclesiasticus | 2 Maccabees |
| Baruch | |

B. Why aren't they considered part of the canon?

1) The Jews never included them as part of the canon
2) They are never cited in the New Testament
3) They were never considered canonical until the Roman Catholic Church canonized them at the Council of Trent on April 8, 1546.
4) Some of them have unbiblical or heretical teaching (prayers for the dead, salvation by works)
5) Some have historical and chronological errors

## III. How Can I Know If These Are The Right Books Or All Of Them?

A. Regardless of what believers of the past have thought about the biblical books, what they say will ultimately not help you really know whether the books of the OT and NT are inspired.

B. The only way you will really know that the books of the OT and NT are inspired is by going to what they Scriptures say about themselves and what the Spirit testifies in you.

1) The Scriptures claim that they are from God and are authoritative. **We must accept this testimony as true. There is no greater authority to appeal to. The Bible claims to be the Word of God, that God is its author.**

- **No person, council, or religious body can give authority to the Bible if God is its author. Why? Because there is no higher authority than God! Who gives God authority to do anything? God never needs to seek permission or accreditation. The same applies to His revelation.**

- **There is nothing outside of God or His revelation in the Bible that can prove it to be the Word of God. Everything outside of God was created by Him, exists because of Him, and therefore reveals Him. Neither God nor His revelation are subject to an outside standard.**

2) At salvation the Spirit takes our hostility toward God's Word away and replaces that with a conviction that the Bible is from God and His truth (1 Cor 2:13-14). **The Holy Spirit gives us certainty that what the Bible claims about itself is true.**

## IV. What Does This Mean For *Me?*

A. I must present the truths of the Bible with authority. **Christianity is an authoritative religion. Unbelievers must be taught its truths authoritatively and with a demand to repent.**

- **Mark 1:14-15** "Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'"

B. I cannot compare or judge the Bible. **I must put myself under the Scriptures, not over them. Christianity is not one option among many; it is the only option.**

- **Matthew 7:28-29** "When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."

- **The common way Christians have sought to establish the truthfulness and reliability of the Bible is by seeing if its statements are consistent with scientific, historical, psychological, and archaeological "facts." This has the effect of looking outside the Bible (and thus God) for a higher standard of "truth" and makes man the judge of God's revelation.**

C. In order to accept everything the Bible teaches as true the Holy Spirit needs to work in my life.

1) **Acts 16:14** "the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things that were spoken by Paul"

2) **Romans 1:16** "the gospel is power of God *unto salvation"* (power is not unleashed by comparing but by God working)

D. The Bible as God's special revelation is superior to His general revelation.

1) **General revelation is "general" in that all men receive it. Everyone by his own conscience and by looking at creation knows that there is a God and something about what He is like. All general revelation accomplishes is humanity's condemnation (Rom 1:20).**

2) **Special revelation is "special" in that it is concrete knowledge of God and His will given to specific people.**

3) **The result: the God of the Bible is the same God everyone already knows about from general revelation.**