

# Belleville First Assembly of God

## Defending Your Faith - 2017

### Topic 3: Bibliology – Inspiration, Canonicity, and Sufficiency

Class Goal: Equip the believer to respond to common challenges to Christianity in order to evangelize the lost and to disciple those with doubts.

Objectives for Meeting Our Goal: Upon completing this class, the believer should be able to...

1. Recognize common challenges to Christianity, categorize them, and...
2. Prayerfully and gently respond to these challenges (2 Tim 2:23-26; 1 Peter 3:15)

1. Bibliology: A systematic theology of what the Bible says about itself [Internal Evidence]
2. Inspiration: The words of Scripture (autographs) are spoken by God.
  - a. θεόπνευστος (*Theopneustos*) = “God-breathed” [2 Timothy 3:16-17].
  - b. φερόμενοι ὑπὸ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου (pheromenoi hypo Pneumatos Hagiou) = “being carried by the Holy Spirit” [2 Peter 1:20-21].
  - c. Verbal plenary inspiration: All (i.e., plenary [full]) of the words (i.e., “verbal”) of Scripture are God’s words.<sup>1</sup>
  - d. Specific examples:
    - Moses: Exodus 31:18; 32:16; 34:1, 28; Deuteronomy 31:9-13, 24-26
    - Joshua: Joshua 24:26
    - Isaiah: Isaiah 30:8
    - Jeremiah: Jeremiah 30:2; 36:2-4, 27-31; 51:60
    - Disciples of Christ: John 14:26; 16:12-13; 1 Cor. 7:10; 14:37; Revelation 1:9-11, 19
3. Canonicity: The list of all the books that belong in the Bible.<sup>2</sup> κανὼν (rule/measuring stick)
  - a. Old Testament criteria: Inspiration (God’s personal authorship or prophetic authorization)
    - God’s authorship: Exodus 31:18; Daniel 5: 5-6, 13-14, 24-25
    - God’s authorization: 1 Chronicles 29:29 and the examples in 2. d. above
    - After the prophets ceased, so did Hebrew canon<sup>3</sup>
      - 1 Maccabees 4:45-46; 9:27; 14:41 (apocryphal book, 100 BC)
      - Dead Sea Scrolls (Essene Scroll of Community Rule, 50 BC)
      - Josephus (Roman historian of Jewish background, 95 AD)
      - Talmud and Mishnah (Rabbinic teachings, 200 AD)

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<sup>1</sup> Grudem, Wayne, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Bible Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2000), 54.

<sup>2</sup> Grudem, 34.

<sup>3</sup> Grudem, 36.

- b. New Testament criteria: Inspiration (God’s apostolic authorization: examples in 2. d.)
  - Apostolic authorship: Matthew, John, Peter, and Paul
  - Apostolic oversight: Mark (Peter), Luke (Paul), James and Jude (Jerusalem church)
  - Church Father Attestation: Hebrews; quotes recreate entire NT (except for 13 verses)
    - Origen of Alexandria lists 27 books in 200 AD (only 100 years after last book)
    - 27 books were widely accepted and authoritatively used for 200 years<sup>4</sup>
    - Councils of Hippo (393 AD) and Carthage (397 AD) made 27 books canonical<sup>5</sup>

4. Sufficiency: Scripture contains all the words of God that He intended His people to have. This means we do not need to search church doctrine, or the latest “prophet”, or psychology to obtain what God requires us to know. It is found only through prayerfully seeking Scriptures. And as Pentecostals, any message that we receive from the Holy Spirit must conform to Scripture. We can trust God’s providence in revealing and preserving exactly what we need through Scripture.

- 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 1 Peter 1:23
- James 1:21-25
- Hebrews 4:12-13
- Psalm 119:9, 105, 165
- 2 Peter 1:2-4
- Psalm 1:1-3
- James 1:18
- Revelation 22:18-19

5. Apologetic Argument (class exercise):

**Challenge a.** 1 Chronicles 29:29 mentions “the book of Nathan the prophet” and “the book of Gad the seer” along with the book of Samuel. If an archaeologist claims to have found one of these books and various establishments want to include it into canon, how would you respond?

Sufficiency: \_\_\_\_\_

**Challenge b.** Some Jewish sect makes a push to include Essene rituals into the OT. Respond.

Canonicity: \_\_\_\_\_

**Challenge c.** Dan Brown claims in *The Da Vinci Code* that Emperor Constantine fabricated and selected only those NT books that fit his personal agenda. How would you respond?

Inspiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Canonicity: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>4</sup> Carson, D. A. and Moo, Douglas, J. *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, revised edition, 2005), multiple locations.

<sup>5</sup> Shelley, Bruce, *Church History: In Plain Language* (Nashville: Zondervan, 2008), 66.