

Did the books depend on the identification of men for their importance and meaning? Could any books be overlooked or any wrongly placed in the Bible? When were these books recognized as being what they were? These questions are answered in a discussion of *canonicity*, and this is a very important part in the concept of man's role in giving us the Bible.

The term "canon" is a synonym for "standard" or "rule." A canon is a guiding principle; and when we speak of the "canons of the church," we mean the principles that guide the actions of the church. The canon of Scripture means the standard that a book had to attain to be accepted as authoritative. "Canon" has since come to have quite an independent meaning, but the term best describes the critical standard for measuring books. *Canonicity*, built on canon, describes the quality of a book when it comes up to the canon. If a book is canonical, it agrees with the standard.

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But books were not arbitrarily canonized. There is a principle involved in the matter of canon, and the role of men was to determine what books came up to the standard. That guide came from God himself when He gave the law. It is the fact of divine origination. All that should come afterwards would have to live up to the standard of the law. Man did not determine the principle; God gave it. But man must determine other things which profess to attain to that principle.

Measuring books by that standard involved one primary point: Was the work inspired? (Inspiration has been treated in earlier articles.) No matter how wise the work, were it not inspired it would have no place in the canon. But the recognition of inspiration rested on three points of truth:

- (1) Did the Word claim to come from God? Every work needed rapport with the dictum "Thus saith the Lord." Works out of harmony with