

(2) But the carried over ideas of the religious community are the keys to the interpretation and use of Scripture in the church.

(3) The result is this, in order of the priority ideal:

Real Authority: Christ

Immediate Descendent Authority: teaching conferred through the Apostles' and the resultant Scripture.

d. Bibliographic note: Those interested in pursuing the tradition matter will find these two works very helpful:

F.F. Bruce: Tradition: Old and New

D. J. Theron: Evidence of Tradition

Authority
in
Scripture

a. The Authority of Scripture... as Kelly says: (p. 42)..*"There is little need to dwell on the absolute authority accorded to Scripture as a doctrinal norm." There seems no doubt that the early church viewed Scripture as the ultimate and last word. The view of inspiration was sometimes overly structured but it is enormously clear. In our study, however, we have placed it after "reason" and "tradition" chiefly because of the time involved in the canonization of the New Testament and the debates in the very early church about which books were the final and authoritative books.*

Matters of
Canon!

a. As far as we can discern, the New Testament Church immediately accepted the Old Testament. It saw itself as the continuation of the true Israel and took her Scriptures for its own. There is, however, a question on the apocryphal books. These were never accepted by the Hebrews but were found useful in the church. It was due no doubt to their mystical and attractive presentations of divine dealings, but whatever the case, the church did make use of some of these. It seems that the fathers up until Augustine, at least, held that usage at a lower level than the Old Testament Scriptures. Irenaeus warns that those arguing with the Jews should be careful to use only the books the Hebrews will accept. By the end of our period, the western church nominally accepted the apocrypha as good reading at least, while the east denied it having much spiritual value.

b. The first New Testament canon was the errant one produced by Marcion and universally denounced in the church. In the late second century we have the Muratorii canon, a listing that omitted Hebrews, Peter, James, and 3 John and added a few others. There is no evidence that it was an off