

The Origin of Christian Doctrines

"Whence Authority: the Church and Scripture"

J. Warren Smith, Jan 2018

I. Meaning of "Doctrine"

adiaphora v dogma

"Now I would remind you, brethren, in what terms I preached to you the gospel, which you received, in which you stand, by which you are saved, if you hold it fast -- unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me." (I Cor. 15:1-8)

Heterodoxy and Heresy

II. Scripture before the Bible

"Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. 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 instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired 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." (II Tim. 3:12-17)

Paul's rhetorical method: *paraenesis*

Jewish Scriptures: 1) Hebrew/Aramaic (Masoretic Text 10th-11th c. AD)

2) Greek (Septuagint or LXX 3rd c. BC)

Key Dates for New Testament: I Thessalonians AD 53, Mark pre-70, Luke and Matthew post-70

Oral Tradition

I Cor 15:2 "terms in which I preached"

"Beloved, being very eager to write to you of our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith which was *once for all delivered to the saints*." (Jude 3)

III. Creation of the Catholic Canon

pseudopigraphia

A. Marcion and his Canon (2nd c.)

Anthitheses

B. Gnostics (2nd. c.)

Gospel of Peter, Gospel of Thomas, Apocryphon of John

C. Three Challenges

1st Reconcile OT and NT

Irenaeus of Lyons (late 2nd-early 3rd c.): theory of dispensations

2nd Establish Criteria for Canon

1) Apostolicity

2) Orthodoxy

Bishop Serapion of Antioch (late 2nd/early 3rd c.)

"For our part, Brothers, we receive both Peter and the other apostles as Christ, but the writings, which *falsely bear their names* we reject...knowing that such were not *handed down*."

"...the most part [of the Gospel of Peter] indeed was in accordance with the truth teachings of the savior, but some things were added which we [list] below for your benefit..."

3) Catholicity

Problem of Right Interpretation:

Irenaeus's Apostolic Succession and "Apostolic Witness" (*regula fidei*)

Papias of Heirapolos (2nd c.) fragments of *Sayings of the Lord Explained in Five Books*

"But I shall not be unwilling to put down, along with my interpretations, whatsoever instructions I received with care at any time from the elders, and stored up with care in my memory, assuring you at the same time of their truth...If anyone attended on the elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings, what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip or by Thomas...For I imagine that what was to be got from books was not so profitable to me as what came from the *living and abiding voice*."

