

Some others may say, Matthew is the great leader, and we have Matthew and what more do we need? There were great disagreements among Christians in early days about many points, but within 3 or 4 centuries, at most, after the resurrection we find among the Christians a consensus just as among the Jews. Just as in the providence of God the Jews came to a complete agreement as to what the books of the OT were, so the Christians came to a complete agreement as to what the books of the NT are.

From 400 A.D., at least, and possibly earlier than that we have a unanimity among the Christians as to what the books of OT(?) -- NT are. Russian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestants of various groups may argue about one thing and then another, and about the interpretation of this or that, of this ceremony or that ceremony, but there is no sizeable group of the Christian church that says the NT should have this book in addition, or these books besides the ones you have.

No sizeable group of the Christian church that says Hebrews doesn't belong in the NT, or Matthew does not belong. On this point we have as great an agreement of Christians as we have of Jews regarding the OT, arrived at within a few centuries after the writing of the last book, just as in the case of the OT. It seems to me that Christ in setting his seal upon the OT, not only set His seal upon these particular books, but set his seal upon the process by which in the providence of God, the people of God to whom God gave the OT came to an agreement as to which these were. That a similar process takes place with the NT. Jesus had validated that process in advance.

Then having found this remarkable thing that a similar process did take place, I feel we are fully justified in saying it. It is not a vital thing for me whether an apostle wrote Hebrews or not. It is not vital for me who wrote Jude or James or what their exact relation was to Christ. These books are part of the NT which is a definite entity just as the OT, and on Christ's authority I take both of them.

Question: (indistinct)

Answer: Not extensively, though of course they do quote from heathen writers occasionally in particular books. But much before 400 A.D. we find a practically complete consensus, but we do have 3 or 4 books which in the East they were not quite sure about which the West was sure about. And 3 or 4 books which the West was not sure about that the East had. But before long there was this complete consensus throughout.

We do not have any case of any Pope or outstanding Christian leader of any sort, Bishop or any one man, whose authority was important as far as any evidence goes in determining what are the books of the NT. We have evidence of a consensus just as in the OT.

We have no evidence of any council which debated seriously Should the Epistle of Barnabas be a part of the NT or not? We have no evidence of any council, or church council or any church