

The fellow told me, I didn't know but I thought council was a good guess so I said it was decided by a council. And he said, No, no council ever made this decision." He thought thereby he could really show this fellow he really didn't know much about the Bible, and as for what he'd learned before he came to college he'd better learn what they gave him in class! Of course the President was in a very strategic position because if the student had said it was one man who decided, the President having been a professor of church history in the seminary before could have said, No there was no evidence that any individual ever picked them. Whatever he picked he could have been told he was wrong. The fact is there is no evidence of any individual having picked the books that are in the NT.

There are individuals who say we are glad we have the books that are in the NT, and give the list of them. But no one even suggests that there has been any doubt about it. And there have been councils that have passed measures saying, We affirm all that is written in the books of the OT and NT and then naming them in our present OT and NT. But they affirm what they already _____.

So we have the Holy Spirit working in providential ways that we don't understand in the period between OT and NT to produce a consensus of the people of God as to what the books of the OT were. The people of God to whom they were given (the Israelites)--there is no evidence of any sizeable group of them ever having thought that any other books belonged to the OT except those. What some Christians may have thought at a later time is quite beside the point, regarding the Old Testament.

But regarding the NT, within 400 years after the end of the writing of the NT books you find the NT ~~wasxxxxxxxx~~ people having a similar unity as to what were the books of the NT. The Holy Spirit worked providentially. We do not necessarily in ways we don't necessarily understand to give us a book which is the revelation of God. So when John said, The Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth he proved it by bringing to pass on these two instances this very strange thing--this unanimity among people who were ready to argue about all other kinds of things, but who were united on this and among Christians we've had in the Christian church a unity as to what the books of the NT are.

There have been divisions among Christians over many things. Sometimes courses are given called the history of the development of doctrine. Personally, I don't believe there is such a thing as a development of doctrine. I believe that the doctrines God wants us to know are clearly expressed in the OT and NT. To me it is most interesting to see how the early Christian writers believed two humanly impossible things: that there are three persons in the Godhead and yet only one God. And to believe two humanly impossible things: That Jesus Christ was fully man and fully God. He was not half man and half god. He was fully man and fully God. So you have some who said, How can this be? They said, Jesus is fully God but there was a time when he was only God and then Jesus was created. He was the first of all created beings, the one who created the universe, absolutely equal with God yet there was a time when he was not. And Arius put this into song and it was sung all over