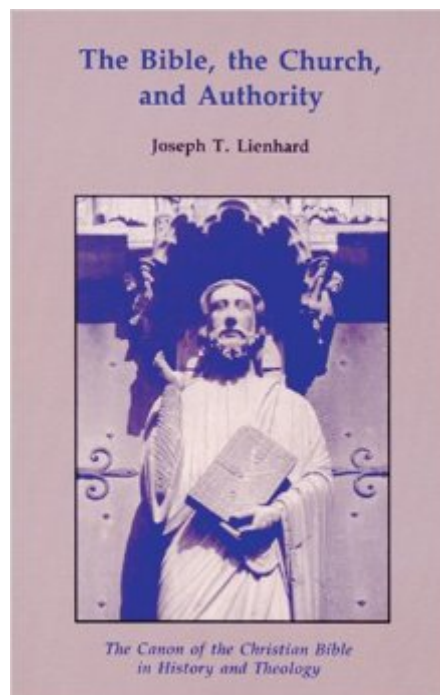


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# The Bible, The Church, And Authority: The Canon Of The Christian Bible In History And Theology (Michael Glazier Books)



## Synopsis

Since the early days of Christianity a tension has existed between the authority of the Bible and the authority of the Church. This has been further heightened by the question of Bible translation: How does the Word stand firm and yet continue to speak to a changing Church? Joseph Lienhard, a specialist in Early Christianity, examines the evolution of the Christian canon by casting this question against the life of the early Christians. Among the topics treated are the Christian use of Jewish Scriptures, the Catholic and Protestant Old Testaments, the emergence of the New Testament, the struggle for the right interpretation of the Scriptures, the problem of inspiration, and modern attempts to explain the Church's New Testament canon theologically. The book questions the use of historicist methods of interpretation and appeals to the Rule of Faith as the right norm for interpreting the Scriptures in the Church. Joseph T. Lienhard, SJ, earned his doctorate at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany) with two dissertations on Paulinus of Nola and Marcellus of Ancyra. His work is in patristics. He taught at Marquette University from 1975 to 1990, and since 1990 has been at Fordham University, where he is also chair of the department of theology. He has published *Ministry in the Message of the Fathers of the Church* series and other titles.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This wonderfully written book is not a history of the formation of the canon nor is it a justification for

the Catholic or Protestant Canon. The author doesn't try to justify any one position. This book deals with many difficult questions, but at the same time, he answers in a manner that allows you to come to your own conclusions. For example, Why are there two version of the Old Testament? Is the Canon infallible? What does and did Gods inspiration mean? Why can so many people read the Bible and come up with so many different doctrines? These questions are tackled in the manner that provides a tool rather than a simplistic answer. It was the "Rule of Faith." The author explains the role that the "Rule of Faith" played in the development of the Canon and its interpretation. A great book, easy to read, well written.

Especially edifying is the section on exactly when there became two Bibles, Catholic and Protestant. Written fairly, he shows how Trent did not "add" books to the Bible, only recognized books already considered canonical through the centuries by most of the Church. Luther in his turn, chose the shorter canon, with his own historical reasoning (some prominent Church Fathers preferred the shorter text, like Jerome). The book also does a good job of reviewing how the New Testament was formed. But this book puts to rest the deuterocanonical question. The Bible has 73 books, not 66, and arguments for the shorter canon shows their historical weaknesses. Very good read.

This slender paperback, based on lectures by a Jesuit scripture scholar, is the clearest and most concise summary of how the Biblical canon -- i.e. the official list of books in the Hebrew and Christian bibles as we know them today -- came to be formed over the course of many centuries. It unravels the mystery of how the Bible went from oral tradition, to fragmentary texts, to formal books and collections of books. It's the best scholarly treatment of this subject available in English, summarizing an incredible amount of research, but it's also accessible enough for non-scholars to read and understand. If you've ever wondered how the Bible came to be, as we all know it didn't fall from the sky, then this is the book for you. It's the best on the market.

An enthralling read. Being a novice at learning the origins of Christianity and First Century Christianity, I was most impressed with the ease at which Father Lienhard explained the issues faced by the Early Church Fathers and the later Reformationists. I was drawn to the book like a magnet. Father Lienhard does not write preferentially for one faith or the other. He gives you facts as they were (and are) and lets you form your own conclusions. I am totally satisfied with this book.

Solid exposition of Catholic teaching. Neither Catholic fundamentalist nor Catholic pabulum. Catholic

thought plainly stated in proper context

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