

Article 6 - Adult Catechism

Article VI Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

Of the Names and Numbers of the Canonical Books (listed)

And the other Books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine; such are these following: (listed)

All the Books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account them Canonical.

NOTE: Following from Griffith-Thomas pg 104: *The clause which defines the Canonical books was derived from the Confession of Wurtemberg, and was inserted in 1563. This also contained a list of the Canonical books and also of the Apocrypha... The object of the Article is to state the position of our Church in regard to Scripture, both in opposition to Rome and also to the extreme wing of the Protestants of the 16th century. It effectually meets errors rife on both sides. On the one hand it states the true position against the Roman view of the Rule of Faith; on the other it opposes the opinion of those who were so concerned with the illumination of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers that they despised the thought of religious teaching in books. The true Anglican position, following that of essential Protestantism, is careful to emphasise the written Word as against any dominion of ecclesiastical institution, or of subjective impressions of even genuine religious experiences. But there does not seem much doubt that the Article is mainly directed against the fundamental error of Rome which had been stated by the Council of Trent several years before.*

What is this "fundamental error of Rome"? FOURTH SESSION: DECREE CONCERNING THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES: "If anyone does not accept as sacred and canonical the aforesaid books in their entirety and with all their parts [the 66 books of the Bible plus 12 apocryphal books, being two of Paralipomenon, two of Esdras, Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Sophonias, two of Macabees], as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate Edition, and knowingly and deliberately rejects the aforesaid traditions, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA."

Trent & The Counter Reformation: The Protestant gains in Europe and the chaotic evolution of the Counter-Reformation finally forced Pope Paul III in 1545 to convene a council in Trent in order to define church doctrine once and for all. This council, called the Council of Trent, worked on this problem in three separate sessions from 1545 to 1563. This council eventually advised some far-reaching reforms in the abuses practiced by the church, such as the selling of indulgences. The Council forced bishops to reside in the region they presided over and also forbade the selling of church offices. On the reactionary side, the Council advised that a seminary be built in every diocese so that church doctrine could be fully and accurately represented. The reforms were very bold in many respects, but they were too little and too late. The new Protestant churches were the wave of the future; and Catholicism—although it would remain a major religion—would in a few centuries cease to be the majority religion in the Western world.

What is the Apocrypha (or Deutero-Canonical books)? The Apocrypha is composed of fourteen books which are found in the Septuagint and the Vulgate but never in the Hebrew Canon. Originally they were penned in the Greek language, except for Ecclesiasticus, First Maccabees, part of Judith and Tobit. While they are not canonical, they do fill us in on four hundred silent years between the Old and New Testament.

Why is the distinction made in the Article regarding the Apocrypha?

- These books were never in the Jewish Canon
- They are never quoted in the New Testament
- In the 4th century, full testimonies are found to this distinction in both the East and the West (church fathers)

- They were never confused by Origen and Jerome (who knew Hebrew)
- Even in the Septuagint they are found as an appendix and not with the rest of the Old Testament
- Internal evidence condemns them. Tobit and Judith have doctrinal, chronological, historical and geographical errors.
- The books make no claim to divine inspiration, and several clearly disown such a feature.

What is the proper use of the Apocrypha?

- Information regarding the 400 years pre-NT (inter-testament). These books are often our only source of historical data.
- Guidance in regard to life (much like any other well written book)

What then is this rule of the Church, by which a book is measured or defined as canonical? "whose authority was never in doubt by the church."

Why do we regard Scripture as Divine Inspiration? The claim of scripture itself:

The Plain Meaning of Scripture: (Genesis 1 -- Judges 1:2 -- Jeremiah 1, 2 -- Job 40)

The claim of the Prophets to authority and inspiration: (Deut. 8:15-20 -- 2 Sam 23:1-5 -- Isaiah 9:8-... -- Jer 2:1-... -- Ez 1:1-3)

Our Lord's relation to the Old Testament: (Matt 12:3 -- Matt 12:5 -- Matt 19:4 -- Matt 5:39-47 -- Luke 24:27-44 -- Matt 22:31-33)

What objective evidence do we have that the OT is authentic?

- Authenticity of OT manuscripts
- Consistency of Biblical principles across different authors over long periods of time
- Archaeological evidence of previously-disputed recorded bits of history
- Evidence of the Flood around the world
- The incredible level of God's knowledge of the OT world

What were some articles of faith established in the OT ?

1. God is the creator of heaven and earth (Ge 1:1)	a. The death of an innocent surrogate is required for atonement (Lev 16:9-10, 17:11)
2. He is almighty (Dt 32:39, Jer 32:17,26)	b. Repentance is a required part of faithfulness (Eze 14:6-8, Mt 4:17)
3. He is the author of life (Ge 2:7, Dt 32:39, Ps 104:30)	c. God honors repentance (1Ki 21:29, 2Ch 12:12, 33:12-13)
4. He is the author of death (Ex 12:12, Dt 32:39, Ps 104:29)	d. Man returns to his constituents at death: body to dust, spirit to Creator (Eccl 12:7)
5. He will send a saviour or Messiah (Is 53)	e. Man's Redeemer will return to stand upon the earth (Job 19:25)
6. He has established principles of proper behavior (Ex 20:1-17)	f. There will be a resurrection of man (Job 19:26)
7. We are to love God with all our heart, soul and strength (Deut 6:5, 11:1)	g. The faithful will be "renewed" after death (Job 14:14)
8. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves (Lev 19:18)	h. Man will stand before God after death (Job 19:26-27)
9. Faith is reckoned as righteousness (Ge 15:6)	i. The faithful have a Redeemer whom they shall see (Job 19:25)
10. Obedience precedes blessing (Lev 20:22, Deut 11:22-23, 26:16-19)	j. Spiritual disobedience is fatal (1Sa 15:23 ==> Lev 20:6)
11. God will test us to humble us and examine what is in our hearts (Ex 20:20, Deut 8:2)	k. Prayer is important (Daniel 9:1-3)
12. God will answer those who call upon Him (Jer 33:3)	