

“Did the Church Create the Bible?”

What would you say to a Catholic person who said “the church created the Bible”?

In a very real sense, the person who says this is basically correct. But some qualifications are also needed.

First, the church did not create the Old Testament. These books preceded the church by quite a bit (assuming the church began on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2).

Second, it’s important to remember that the New Testament books (like those of the Old Testament) are both a divine and human creation. The books were authored by human beings, but their writings were superintended by the Holy Spirit (this is the doctrine of inspiration).

Third, it’s important to remember that Protestants and Roman Catholics have a slightly different canon of Scripture. That is, Catholics include some books (e.g. the Apocrypha) which Protestants do not include in the canon of Scripture (i.e. authoritative, divinely inspired books).

However, once we make these qualifications, it is evident (I think) that the New Testament was written (and brought into its present canonical form) by the church. These writings weren’t written by non-Christians after all, but by believers—who are part of the church. The same would go for the process of canonization. Of course, God was providentially guiding those leaders who ultimately decided which books should (and should not) be part of the New Testament. But the fact remains that this was also a decision of the church.

As a “bare bones” statement, then, I think the person who says this is essentially correct.

Shalom in Christ,
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