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## Content takes precedence over authorship

The content is what lends the books of the Bible their authority, not the respective author. This is the guideline on interpretation adopted by the District Apostle Meeting at its latest session in November.

The issue of authorship of certain biblical books is regularly the subject of theological discussion. And occasionally scientific knowledge conflicts with traditional classifications, some of which date back to the second century. Some interpreters and denominations see in these contradictions a loss of authority for the books concerned.

The International District Apostle Meeting has taken its position on such authorship issues. The details of this decision read as follows:

- “God is the actual author of the biblical books. The authority of the biblical writings is based upon their divine inspiration, and is not dependent on their authors, whether they were Apostles and prophets or not.
- “Therefore, the exegetical conclusion that a particular text derives from a particular author or not is of no relevance whatsoever for the authority of that text.
- “The teaching authority of the apostolate does not serve to solve individual exegetical problems. Rather, it is given to assure the purity of the Church’s doctrine and preaching.”

This decision follows the fundamental view as already presented in the Catechism of the New Apostolic Church: “The author of Holy Scripture is God, while its writers were human beings whom the Holy Spirit inspired. God made use of their abilities to commit to writing that which was to be passed on in accordance with His will. Although the contents of the biblical books have their source in the Holy Spirit, they bear the mark of their respective writers and their perceptions of the world in terms of style and form of expression” (CNAC 1.2).

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