

What is right in the notion of an inspired scripture?

What is right is that fundamentum fidei essenziale and fundamentum fidei ministeriale cannot be separated from one another, as crucial as it is to distinguish them.—This distinction is simply an alternative way of formulating the distinction between the primal authorizing source of faith (implicit and explicit), on the one hand, and the primary authority authorized by this source, on the other. But, then, it must be true of the fundamenta fidei that they, too, are "correlative concepts in that each may and must be defined in relation to the other." If the fundamentum ministeriale is really that, then it must depend entirely on the fundamentum essenziale. On the other hand, what the fundamentum essenziale is for Christian faith depends entirely on the fundamentum ministeriale. In the one case, we have what is first in the order of being (and experiencing); in the other we have what is first in the order of knowing.

Of course, one can no longer reasonably identify the fundamentum ministeriale with the canon of scripture or of the NT. But assuming that one can and should identify it with what for us is the earliest and, therefore, apostolic witness, one can urge that the same relation exists between the essential foundations of faith, implicit and explicit, and the witness of the apostles. On the one hand, this witness depends entirely on a real foundation, or a foundation in reality, beyond itself, since were there no such foundation, or were it otherwise than this witness asserts or implies <sup>it</sup> to be, the witness itself could not be the ministerial foundation of (authentic) faith. On the other hand, what this real foundation of (authentic) faith is, in the sense of our knowledge, or explicit understanding of it, has to be determined, but also can be sufficiently determined, from the apostolic witness, and in this sense, depends entirely on this witness.

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