

It is completely clear that there is not a single passage in the entire Bible that says anything about the self-understanding of the Bible. There is no passage in the entire Old Testament that says anything about the self-understanding of the Old Testament; and there is no passage in the entire New Testament that says anything about the self-understanding of the New Testament. Anyone who thinks he or she knows of such a passage can be told with utter confidence and certainty that he or she misunderstands the passage in question.

None of the New Testament writers claims for himself any such (so to say, unique, special) inspiration; and there is no passage in the New Testament where any such inspiration is claimed for the New Testament. Therefore, anyone who talks about inspiration in this sense imposes a view on the New Testament that he or she cannot support by appealing to the New Testament.

The decisive thing is that there is not a single passage in which the New Testament ever points to itself, ever calls for a faith in the New Testament. On the contrary, the New Testament writings--and this is what they have in common--want to proclaim to the men and women of their time God's decisive action in Jesus. It is not the New Testament, therefore, that is the central point, but Jesus Christ must remain the central point. Our faith is never faith in the New Testament but always faith in Jesus Christ together with the New Testament witness--albeit in a form, in a language, in which we can understand it and in which it can reach human beings today.