

Deuteronomist editor. Fictional narratives such as Jonah, Daniel, or the sensual Song of Songs are anonymous as to author. The Psalms, many attributed to David, and Proverbs, traditionally attributed to Solomon, are of unknown authorship and the attributes are honorary.

In the New Testament, only Paul's writings have a definitive author, and then only seven of the thirteen letters attributed to him are authenticated as his. Tradition has named the writers of the Gospels; however, they are all anonymous. The Gospels have multiple writers and are edited into their final form. For example, verses 9-20 in the last chapter of the Gospel according to Mark have been added, probably to bring it into line with the post-resurrection theology of the later synoptic Gospels of Matthew and Luke. The 4th Gospel's author is ambiguously identified as the Beloved Disciple, a mystery person. As well, the style of John's Gospel suggests several authors and multiple revisions.

Is authorship identity required to give the Bible credibility? Far more important is the unity of the Bible, the centrality of God as the subject, the great themes of justice, relationship, fidelity, equality, vision, universality, trust, and liberty, as well as the linear direction. God's purpose in creating "being," whether it be an atom or a human, Jesus or you, is one of realizing potentiality in promise and fulfillment leading to further potentiality and ultimately the realization that God is intimately at home with all humanity and all creation.

Next newsletter: The Bible as Authoritative

Submitted by: Dale Sparkes. Sources: The New American Bible, *The Catholic Bible*; HarperCollins *Bible Commentary*; HarperCollins *Bible Dictionary*; HarperCollins *Study Bible: NRSV*.