

GLORIOUS DOCTRINE

THE WORD OF GOD

EXPLORING THE BIBLE'S
INSPIRATION, INERRANCY,
AUTHORITY, SUFFICIENCY,
NECESSITY, CLARITY
AND MORE...

1. SCRIPTURE'S INSPIRATION

The importance of this doctrine



"Almost every single collapse involving denominations and churches in regard to historic Christian beliefs can be traced back to a degradation in that group's view of the Bible as the inspired and inerrant revelation of God's truth. Once this foundation is lost, the house that was built upon it cannot long stand." (James R. White, Scripture Alone, p.43)

It is no understatement to say that this is THE _____ ISSUE when it comes to our doctrine of the Word of God: Do we, or do we not, believe that it is Divinely inspired?

A. PAUL: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

If there ever was a time where Paul might have referred Timothy to some other kind of extra-biblical source to equip him, it would be here. However, Paul points Timothy to scripture.

Paul doesn't point Timothy to something _____, but rather something _____, tried, and true - God's trustworthy written Word. Unlike the false teachers who were going after new teachings, Paul reminds Timothy to continue in the firm foundation he had learned from his godly upbringing in the scriptures.

I. All Scripture

- Some people may object to using this verse in reference to the Bible as a whole because in the context of Paul talking to Timothy, he is referring to the Old Testament scriptures.
- However, as we saw from our first session, from 2 Peter 3:15-16 and 1 Timothy 5:17-18, the New Testament writers considered their own writings as Scripture and this testimony was affirmed and recognized by the early church.
- Therefore, when Paul says that "all scripture" is inspired by God, it can be rightly understood to include the New Testament writings also.

II. God-breathed (θεόπνευστος - "theopneustos")

"The Greek term has ... nothing to say of inspiring or of inspiration: it speaks only of a 'spiring' or 'spiration.' What it says of Scripture is, not that it is 'breathed into by God' or is the product of the divine 'inbreathing' into its human authors, but that it is breathed out by God, 'God-breathed,' the product of the creative breath of God."

(B. B. Warfield, Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, p.133)

What this verse is saying with this word is not that God breathed “into” the scriptures, but rather that they are breathed out by God. **This term is saying that the Scriptures are not primarily human in their origin, but rather they are _____ in origin.**

III. Profitable to make us _____

- The four phrases Paul uses - “teaching,” “reproof,” “correction” and “training in righteousness” - encompasses the whole of Christian discipleship and life.
- Then to emphasize the point, the last phrase “equipped for every good work” makes it clear - there is no good work which scripture does not equip us for.
- The Greek word ἄρτιος (artios) used means “fully qualified, proficient, fully ready, complete or capable.” This is what scripture is able to make us because it is God’s Word.

B. PETER: 2 Peter 1:20-21

I. A “More _____ ” Prophetic Word

The adjective used here of this ‘prophetic word’ is βέβαιος (bebaios) is used “of something that can be relied on not to cause disappointment, reliable.” (BDAG) This is why the ESV translated it as ‘more fully confirmed’. Peter is saying that this prophetic word which he is directing his readers towards is something reliable and having continuing validity so that you can be confident in your trust of it.

II. The _____ of Scripture

Many misinterpret these verses as focusing on the individual’s interpretation of these divine prophecies. However, that is not the focus of these verses. The focus is on the origin and nature of the prophecies themselves.

- Peter emphatically denies emphasis on the human origin of the prophetic word by saying, “No prophecy was ever made by an act of human will.”
- The prophets did not just wake up one day and decide to write some prophecy. The repeated phrase throughout many of the prophetic books is “the word of the Lord came to me.” The origin of the word was not from within them, but from without them - from above - from God himself.

III. Carried Along by the Spirit

- God carried the prophets and biblical authors along by His Spirit so that what they wrote was exactly what He wanted to say.
- This did not override the human writer’s personalities and style, but rather it God worked through them, in concert with their humanity to produce something that was wholly from God.

This truth is of _____ importance: Notice Peter’s words, “but know this first”! If we do not realize that it is Scripture alone that is the “more fully confirmed” fully reliable word to us from God, then we may also be led astray by charismatic personalities and worldly wisdom.

C. Jesus - Matthew 22:29-32

- Jesus cites Exodus 3:6, which was written more than a thousand years before, yet Jesus says that they should have heard God speaking to them through it!
- Jesus held them accountable to what they had heard read in the Scripture as if God Himself had spoken to them - because He had!
- And it is the same with us: Scripture’s inspiration means that when Scripture speaks, God speaks to us.

If this is the view of Scripture that Jesus held, then as followers of Jesus, we must hold the _____ view of Scripture as Jesus!

D. Verbal Plenary Inspiration

- **Verbal** simply means it has to do with the words themselves. God inspired the very exact words which were used by the human authors to write scripture. This is why it is important for us to pay close attention to them, to study the original languages and the context of the text.
- **Plenary** is just a fancy way of saying "all of scripture" as we saw from 2 Timothy 3:16-17. God inspired all of it. There are not some parts that are more inspired than others - yes, even the genealogies!



E. 4 Major Errors Regarding Scripture's Inspiration

I. The denial of Scripture's _____ origin

This position reduces the Bible to a merely human book. It fails to listen to scripture's own testimony about itself as seen in many passages (e.g. Deut. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). To deny the divine origin of scripture is to deny the salvation it offers as well.

II. The denial of Scripture's _____ authorship

This view sees the human authors of scripture as mechanically writing down what was dictating to them like some sort of robot without their own personalities and unique writing styles, cultures, etc.

III. The denial of plenary inspiration

This view denies that all of scripture is inspired. It says that God's Word is contained in the Bible - not that the Bible is God's Word. It basically asserts that some parts of scripture are inspired, and some parts are not.

If the _____ Bible is not inspired, we can have no certainty that _____ of it is inspired.

IV. The denial of verbal inspiration

This position denies that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit does not extend to the very _____ the biblical authors wrote. It does not see as important the languages they wrote in, or the specific way they phrased things, or the intentional usage of specific words.

2. SCRIPTURE'S AUTHORITY

"The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God's words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God."

(Grudem, Systematic Theology, p.73)

A. SOLA SCRIPTURA

This doctrine of the authority of scripture was what was labeled in the Protestant Reformation the doctrine of "Sola Scriptura" - a latin phrase meaning "_____."

A Proper Understanding of Sola Scriptura

- We affirm BOTH that Scriptures must be understood and read _____ in the Church and also that it is the testimony of the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures which helps us understand _____.

- All other 'authorities' (such as teachers, church confessions, books, etc) are only authoritative in so far as they _____ the ultimate authority of God's Word and clearly and accurately communicate its intended meaning.

B. THE BIBLICAL CASE

I. The Bible is God's Word

- The often used introductory phrase, "Thus says the Lord" appears hundreds of times.
- God speaks "through" the prophets (see 1 Kings 14:18; 16:12, 34; 2 Kings 9:36; 14:25; Jer. 37:2; Zech. 7:7, 12) So, everything the prophets say in God's Name is what God says (see 1 Kings 13:26 with v. 21; 1 Kings 21:19 with 2 Kings 9:25-26; Hag. 1:12; cf. 1 Sam. 15:3, 18)
- Therefore, to disbelieve or disobey what the prophet said is to disbelieve and disobey God himself (see Deut. 18:19; 1 Sam. 10:8; 13:13-14; 15:3, 19, 23; 1 Kings 20:35, 36)
- Jesus uses the Scriptures as the authoritative source in disputes with the Pharisees. (eg. Matt. 19:4-6)
- Many other passages could be cited (see Luke 1:70; 24:25; John 5:45-47; Acts 3:18, 21; 4:25; 13:47; 28:25; Rom. 1:2; 3:2; 9:17; 1 Cor. 9:8-10; Heb. 1:1-2, 6-7).

II. The Bible is _____

- God cannot lie or speak falsely. Our God never lies (Titus 1:2) and in fact, it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18).
- Our God is not like sinful humanity that He should lie (Numbers 23:19).
- All His Words are true (2 Samuel 7:28).
- Because the Bible is God's Word, we are also assured that it is truthful since it is the 'unlying' God speaking. Every word of God proves true (Proverbs 30:5).

III. The Bible is our _____ Authority

- Written scripture is the final form of God's authoritative word.
- Even our Lord Jesus Christ himself, when tempted in the wilderness in Matthew 4, did not appeal to human words or traditions, nor did he even appeal to his own opinions or preferences (though he was the Son of God, the Word incarnate!). He instead appealed to the written word of God to rebuke the Devil three times by quoting from Deuteronomy!

C. HISTORICAL SUPPORT

Many Christian writers throughout church history have affirmed this doctrine of Scripture's inspiration and authority (Sola Scriptura) such as Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Augustine. A more thorough treatment can be found in chapter 4 of Gregg R. Allison's book *Historical Theology*.

D. TWO MAJOR ERRORS

I. I. The Rejection of the inspiration & authority of Scripture

II. II. The neglect or functional denial of Sola Scriptura

- **Functional Denial** - is to put some other authority alongside scripture and consider it either equally authoritative or more authoritative.
- **Neglect** - This happens when we close our Bibles and function in the world without the light and guidance of God's Word or when we trust our instincts more than we trust the wisdom of God's revealed Word.



So the question to us is - are we _____ to God speaking to us through the Bible and do we _____ at His Word?