

Bible Doctrines 1

Session 2 - Bibliology (Inspiration, Inerrancy, Canon, Illumination)



I. The uniqueness of the Bible

- A. A unique author...God!
- B. A unique means of provision...God used men!
 - ✓ Not just one man, but 40+ authors
- C. A unique composition!
 - ✓ Variety of backgrounds for the authors: political leader, military, shepherd, king, herdsman, prime minister, tax collector, doctor, rabbi, fisherman, Jesus' brother
 - ✓ Variety of locations: Europe, Asia, Africa
 - ✓ Variety of conditions: Prisons (Paul, Jeremiah), deserts, countryside, royal court
 - ✓ Variety of eras: written over a period of 1500 years yet cohesive

II. The doctrine of Inspiration

- A. What is inspiration?
 1. A teaching of the Bible about itself
 2. A conclusion derived from the data contained in the Bible
 - a. The Bible is a witness of itself and has the right to testify
 - b. Self-witness: "all arguments for an absolute authority must ultimately appeal to that authority for proof: otherwise the authority would not be an absolute or highest authority." (Grudem)
 - c. The Biblical Data: *Its Source*
 - 1) **2 Timothy 3:10-17**
 - a. Theopneustos - inspired = "God-breathed"
 - symbolic of His creative activity (Gen. 2:7; Ps. 33:6)
 - b. All Scripture is inspired
 - 1) Passive tense used - the Bible is the result of God
 - 2) Men were part of the process, but Bible originated with God
 - 3) God takes total responsibility for its content
 - 4) 1 Tim. 5:18 - Paul combines OT/NT ref and calls them Scripture
 - 5) 2 Peter 3:16 - early acceptance and authority of Paul's writings
 - c. The entire Bible is profitable (inspiration's purpose)
 - teaching, reproof, correction, restoring, and training in righteousness

d. Goal = the reader be completely equipped in every area

“Through the centuries this verse has played a central role in the church’s doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture.” Mounce

2) 2 Peter 1:16-21

a. Negative considerations - clearly denies Scripture had its original source in men...doesn’t deny men’s part in it, however

b. Positive consideration - God is the source; HS “moved” men

c. describes the process by which it is “God-breathed”...men wrote not because it was their ambition, but the Spirit moved them

3) 1 Corinthians 2:13 - the actual words of the Bible are inspired (not just the ideas)

4) A variety of material God moved men to include

a. Material directly from Him (i.e. - the 10 commandments)

b. Researched material - (i.e. - the Gospel of Luke...consulted eyewitnesses)

c. Historical material - some experienced and some not (ie - creation)

III. A Definition of Inspiration

A. God carried men along so they wrote His message in the Bible. (Ryrie, p. 71)

B. God superintended the human authors of the Bible so that they composed and recorded without error His message to mankind in the words of their original writings.

a. **Superintended** - allows for variety in how He worked with the writers (sometimes very direct and sometimes less so, but always guarding accuracy)

b. **Composed** - authors were not passive stenographers to whom God dictated the content, but active writers

c. **Without error** - expresses the Bible’s own claim to be truth (John 17:17)

d. **Inspiration** - only assigned to the original writings

IV. Deviations from the Biblical Doctrine of Inspiration

A. **Natural Inspiration** - Not supernatural, but writings of **unusual** men, as Shakespeare

B. **Mystical or Spiritual Inspiration** -

Special spiritual insight of Spirit, a potential of any believer: say the writer was “inspired”, not writings.

C. **Partial or Degree Inspiration** - some parts are more inspired than others

D. **Conceptual Inspiration** - only ideas or concepts are inspired

E. **Divine Dictation** - men wrote passively as secretaries

F. **Neo-orthodox Opinion** -

The Bible *becomes* the Word of God, when the reader subjectively encounters Christ.

V. The Biblical Demand for Inspiration

A. Christ's View of Scriptures...as the final authority!

1. He is familiar with them
 - 1 He quotes them
 - 2 He alludes to them
 - 3 Views them as the final authority
 - a. John 10:31-35 - the Scripture cannot be broken - His whole defense was on the authority of God's Word, not His ability to perform signs and wonders
 - b. Matt. 22:29 - you are in error because you do not know the Scriptures
 - 4 He relies on them: Matt. 4 - His defense of Satan, "It is written"

B. The Scripture Writer's View of Scripture

- 2 Pet. 3:1-2 - apostles' words on same level as the prophets
- 1 Thes. 2:13 - you received the message as the Word of God
- 1 Tim. 5:18 - the Scripture says...referring to Deut. 25:4
- 2 Pet. 3:15-17 - Paul's words equated with the rest of Scripture

VI. The Inerrancy of the Bible (the degree of Inspiration): *Its Accuracy*

A. Scriptural Basis:

1. John 10:35 - Scripture cannot be broken
2. Matt. 5:18 - no aspect of it will disappear
 - a. the law is unaffected by time
 - b. jots are important (the smallest parts)
 - c. Christ argues from the nature of the law, not His own nature

B. Logical Basis:

1. All that God speaks is true (Heb. 6:18)
2. All Scripture is spoken by God (2 Tim. 3:16)
3. Therefore, all Scripture is all true (inerrant)
4. Our Bibles are translations of extant Greek/Hebrew Manuscripts
5. Those manuscripts are copies of the now lost original manuscripts
6. The autographs were directly written by the human author or his amanuensis
7. Only the autographs are technically inspired and thereby inerrant
8. Our Bibles are inerrant to the degree that they reflect the autographs.
9. 2 kinds of errors can exist in modern translations
 - a. those of transmission
 - b. those of omission

c. Clarke Pinnock - textual variants affect not a single item of evangelical belief...the high degree of purity in our present text is a demonstrable fact...a copy that is like the original can function like the original (Pinnock, p. 85)

VI. The Canon: Canonicity Its Degree of Truthfulness

- A. In Greek, Kanon, means a cane or rod used for a standard
- B. Theological usage - the books deemed authoritative by the redeemed community
- C. How was it determined which books were inspired? The essential criterion for canonicity:
 - 1. Written by an apostle or prophet
 - 2. harmonious with known Scripture
 - 3. received by the church (historically)
 - 4. the testimony of the Spirit
 - 5. providentially preserved

VII. New Testament recognition of The Old Testament Canon

- A. NT never quotes any of the apocryphal books
- B. Of the 22 OT books (by Jewish count), 18 are quoted in the NT (and two of these left out were alluded to)
- C. The NT was authorized by Christ prior to His death
- D. The NT authors were aware they were writing Scripture
 - 1. They claimed authority for their writings. - 1 Cor. 2:12-13
 - 2. They claimed authority for themselves. - John 21:24; 2. 2 Cor. 13:3, 10
 - 3. They claimed authority for one another. - 1 Tim. 5:18; 2 Pet. 3:15-16

VII. Illumination

- A. Since God-breathed it, God's help is necessary to understand it (1 Cor 2:11)
- B. Man's darkened mind requires illumination (Luke 24:44-45)
- C. "Ministry of the Spirit whereby He enlightens those who are in a right relationship or have a desire to know it (Jn 7:17) to comprehend the written Word"
- D. The Spirit must instruct the believer (1 Cor 2:9-13)
- E. Jesus foretold that the Spirit would instruct (Jn 14:26), guide them into truth (Jn 16:13), disclose truth to them (Jn 16:14-15)
- F. Ministry of Spirit touches the mind (Rom 12:2; Eph 4:23), the heart or will (Act 16:14-15; Eph 1:18)