

Final Authority: Locating God's Word in English

What is Inspiration?

Common Misconceptions

- All versions are essentially the same.
- All versions contain the basic doctrine of the Christian faith without deviation.
- Modern translations are simply updates of the outdated language of the King James Bible.
- The important thing in Bible translation is the communication of the ideas and not the words themselves.
- In order to really understand the Bible one needs to know the original languages.

The Viewpoint of Faith

- Textual Criticism: is the task of determining which variant readings in the ancient manuscripts most likely preserve the original wording and then reconstruct a text that best represents the autographs.
- Before we go further let me ask you the following series of questions. Do you believe:
 - that God created the world in six days?
 - that God destroyed the earth through a flood saving only Noah and his family?
 - that God confounded the languages of men and scattered them across the face of the earth?
 - that God through Moses delivered Israel out of Egyptian slavery through the Red Sea?
 - that David killed Goliath?
 - that Jonah was swallowed by a whale?
 - that Jesus Christ was the incarnated, Virgin Born Son of God who died on the cross for our sins and rose again the third day?

The Viewpoint of Faith

- Why do you believe these things? Because you believe the Bible.
- So then why when it comes to the issue of textual criticism and the reconstruction of the text and its translation into English do so many believers leave the viewpoint of faith in favor of textual theories and human viewpoint?
- We need to believe what the Bible teaches about itself. We need to remember that the Bible is God's book and that when we deal with the Bible we are dealing with God himself. We need to adopt the viewpoint of faith.

Inspiration

- In order to begin our study we need to look first at the doctrine of inspiration.
- Inspiration is the Bible's claim for itself. That is to say the Bible says that it is an inspired book.
- II Timothy 3:16—"all" every part of the Bible is the word of God, it is all inspired. Not just the parts you like, or the parts that speak to you, the entirety of the Bible is inspired.
- I Timothy 5:18—the first part of this verse is a quotation from Deuteronomy 25:4. The second part of this verse is a quotation from Luke 10:7. Notice that God the Holy Spirit calls both Scripture. In other words, both the Old and New Testaments are inspired.
- II Timothy 3:16—"scripture" comes from the Greek word *grafe* which means that which is written down. Paul is not saying that the **writer** is inspired but the **writings**.

Inspiration

- II Timothy 3:16—“inspiration” comes from the words God and to breath. As a result, the Scriptures are God breathed that is they came out of the mouth of God.
- Psalm 33:6—the words that were written down came from the mouth of God.
- II Peter 1:21—the prophets did not write of their own will or in their own words rather they recorded the words God told them to say.

Five Views on Inspiration

- Natural View—the Bible is a high level of human achievement
- Partial View—certain parts are inspired
- Existential View—only the parts that speak to me are inspired
- Dynamic View—it is the concept or thought that is inspired.
- Plenary Verbal Inspiration—all the words are inspired by God.

The Case for Plenary Verbal Inspiration

- It wasn't simply God's message that men were free to state in their own words; their very choice of words was from God.
- Exodus 4:14-15
- Numbers 22:38
- Deuteronomy 18:18
- II Samuel 23:1-2
- Jeremiah 1:9
- Jeremiah 5:14
- Jeremiah 15:16—the word singular is made up of the words plural.
- Jeremiah 23:9
- Jeremiah 36:1-4
- Biblical inspiration is not only verbal (located in the words), but it is also plenary, meaning that it extends to every part of the words and all they teach or imply.

Complete Definition of Inspiration

- **The Bible is of Divine Origin:** the ultimate source of a divinely inspired Bible is God Himself. For the Scriptures did not originate from human impulse (II Peter 1:20-21), and every word of Scripture come from the mouth of God by inspiration of God the Holy Spirit (II Timothy 3:16).
- **The Bible Came Through Human Agency:** judging by the various vocabulary, grammar, styles, figures of speech, and human interests of the various authors, God did not disregard the personality and culture of the biblical writers when he supernaturally placed his words in their mouths and in their pens.
- **The Bible Is a Written Authority:** inspiration deals with the written text of Scripture (*graphie*). This is evidenced by the Bible's continued use of the phrase "it is written" which reveals that the focus of God's authority for his people is on his written word.

Complete Definition of Inspiration

- **The Bible Has Final Authority:** when speaking of its divine authority, the Bible makes it clear that this is a final authority, the court of last appeal in everything it affirms (or implies). Psalm 138:2, Psalm 119:89
- **The Sixty-Six Canonical Books of the Bible Alone Possess Divine Authority:** this element is one of the distinguishing factors between the evangelical and Roman Catholic views of Scripture: The sixty six canonical books of the Protestant canon alone are invested with divine authority. No other source equals or surpasses that of Scripture; the Bible and the Bible alone, is a supremely authoritative book in matters of faith and practice.