

Foundations

Series #1

Bibliology / The Doctrine of the Bible

February 4th, 2024

Read John 1:1-5 & 14

Catechism – Read Galatians 6:6

SERIES INTRODUCTION

The task of trying to preach one message on the Doctrine of the Bible is monumental. I do not take this subject matter lightly, and the task of trying to condense down to one preached message on really perhaps one of the most important subjects there has ever been, is extremely humbling, and quickly shows the preacher how lacking He is in his abilities to preach such a message.

But I believe the Lord has led in placing the burden and the desire to establish this Foundations Series, preaching on Bible doctrines and seeking to continue the learning on that subject matter throughout the month with the catechism

cards, that I cannot shrink from my duty to preach this series. Still, please be in much pray for me as I take up this subject matter monthly throughout the next year or two, and please take this subject matter seriously:

- We need to be a people of the Book.
- We need to have a deep knowledge of God's Word – for that is how we can know Him, the Living Word Jesus the Word made flesh.

We need to dig deep. We need to worry about growing spiritually more than we worry about growing just numerically as a church.

Not only do pastors and Bible teachers need to understand theology to a greater depth – but all Christians do, the whole church needs that greater depth and understanding of theology.

So, Why Study Bibliology? Why Preach About It?

The paramount reason to delve into Bibliology, the study of the Bible, lies in recognizing it as the inspired and authoritative Word of God.

The Bible serves as the ultimate source of divine revelation, providing unparalleled insight into the character of God, the nature of humanity, and the redemptive plan of salvation.

Studying Bibliology allows us to cultivate a deep and intimate relationship with our Creator. It unveils the truths that shape our worldview, offering profound guidance for navigating the complexities of life. In the pages of the Bible,

we encounter the living God, gaining wisdom that transcends human understanding.

Moreover, Bibliology serves as the foundation for our faith. Understanding the divine origin and infallibility of the Scriptures instills confidence in the reliability of God's promises. It fortifies our convictions, providing a solid anchor in the storms of doubt and uncertainty.

Bibliology is not merely an academic pursuit but a spiritual discipline. God's Word is living and active, capable of penetrating our hearts and minds.

- It convicts,
- It comforts,
- and it compels us to live in accordance with the divine principles laid out in its pages.

As believers, delving into Bibliology equips us for effective service and ministry. It sharpens our ability to discern truth from falsehood, enabling us to confidently share the Gospel and defend our faith.

It empowers us to be ambassadors of reconciliation, carrying the message of God's love and redemption to a world in need.

In essence, the greatest and most important reason to study Bibliology is to draw near to the heart of God, to comprehend His will, and to align our lives with the divine purpose revealed in the Scriptures.

We all need to know doctrine. We all need to understand more comprehensively the very foundation of our beliefs—the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God.

Why is it crucial for every believer to grasp the intricacies of Bibliology?

One author wrote this about the need for truth:

“In the contemporary world where there is a strong current of postmodern relativism... Many people are far more interested in their own feelings, or what “works for them,” than they are in the question of what is actually true. But there is a price to be paid for rejecting truth.”¹

The King James Bible will serve as our compass in this exploration, leading us through the corridors of revelation, inspiration, and preservation. As we embark on this Foundations sermon series, may our hearts be stirred with a hunger for the Word, and may our minds be illuminated by the truths we uncover.

One quote I came across in my study for this series was the following and I think the author had a unique thought about the study of the Bible and theology and why it should not be as difficult to understand as we may think it can be, he wrote:

*“We should keep in mind that the author of scripture is also the author of the mind, and He has chosen to communicate to His creation with “words...printed in a book” (**Job 19:23**). These literal “words...are*

¹ (Lennox, 2015)

spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63) and are “noted in the scripture of truth” (Daniel 10:21). Since “scripture” is never defined in “the scripture” as the original manuscripts (Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic), when we read the English Authorized Version, we can trust with all confidence and assurance that we are reading “scripture” that “is given by inspiration of God” (II Timothy 3:16).²

So, let’s get to our first point...

THE RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE

Over the last 100 years, society has been slowly turning away from the church and the Bible to assist them in the issues of life. The Bible, Christianity, and biblical preaching and teaching are no longer authorities in the lives of the majority of people we interact with.

Despite America’s strong Christian heritage increasingly the primary voices people listen to for life direction are the so-called “experts,” and the scholars of psychology and psychiatry. There is a drought in the land for the Word of God (Amos 8:11).

Without a doubt, the most concerning issue in the church today, and the world at large, is the overall neglect of Scripture.

- How many Christians are actually in their Bible on a daily basis?

² (Walker, 2018)

- How many Christians actually utilize their Bibles to help them navigate the issues of life?

The Bible needs to be the centerpiece of the entirety of the Christian life. The Bible defines itself as a divine book intended to be used by man in all aspects of his life. In II Timothy chapter 3 *[please turn there]* the Apostle Paul recounts the pain and suffering he often faced in ministry.

He encourages his dear friend and apprentice Timothy to remember that amid suffering and abuse, the Word of God has the authority necessary to combat evil, assure one's heart, and provide wisdom when its doctrines are received in faith.

Look at II Timothy 3:10-15, “But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

The Bible makes many claims to its authority as well as its keen ability to reform the lives of those in need. Many of these claims can be found in Psalm 119. Among its 176 verses, perhaps the most vivid of its poetic declarations

come in verse 105, “*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*”

The Word of God is a lamp for our feet, informing and instructing how to take individual, decisive steps. It is a light to our path, allowing us to prepare for and anticipate what lies ahead so that we might not fear the unknown. For the Bible to do all this for us – we need confidence in it.

Which brings us to the topic of...

Biblical Inerrancy

Biblical inerrancy is the idea that the Bible is the very words of God and carries the full authority of His divinity. Furthermore, this perspective requires that every single word of the Bible be received as absolute truth and infallible, the authoritative source for all things concerning life, both universally and personally.

The inerrancy assertion is also the primary distinction between biblical churches and what dominates much of contemporary Christian churches today, which is the compromise of scripture for the sake of drawing the crowd and not offending anyone.

Biblical inerrancy presupposes that God supernaturally transmitted His divinely preserved truth; a supernatural perspective wholly rejected by postmodernity.

This foundational view is not blindly subscribed to but rather is derived from a series of logical inferences that have been held for millennia among Christian and Jewish believers. God inspired the writing of His Scripture as well

as preserved it through the process of translation into the common languages.³

All the Words in the Bible Are God's Words

Because of this to disbelieve or disobey any word in Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God. The Bible clearly teaches that God cannot lie or speak falsely (II Samuel 7:28, Titus 1:6, Hebrews 6:18).

Therefore, all the words in Scripture are claimed to be completely true and without error in any part (Numbers 23:19, Psalm 12:6, 119:89&96, Proverbs 30:5, Matthew 24:35).

God's words are, in fact, the ultimate standard of truth (***John 17:17 - Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.***). The Bible is Truth. Jesus is Truth, the Word made Flesh in Truth!

Psalm 12:6 “*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.*” – this indicates the absolute reliability and purity of Scripture.

Proverbs 30:5 “*Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*” – this verse indicates the truthfulness of every word that God has spoken.

Numbers 23:19 “*God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*” this was spoken by sinful Balaam, but even

³ (Briscoe & Kindler, 2022)

though it was spoken by him, it was from God, and therefore 100% true and inerrant.

The Bible can be inerrant and still speak in the ordinary language of everyday speech. The Bible is absolutely truthful in everything it says, in that it uses ordinary language to describe natural or supernatural phenomena or that it gives approximations or round numbers when appropriate in the text, these things in no way diminish from its inerrancy.

The New Testament Affirms the Reliability of Scripture

In ***Acts 24:14***, Paul says that he worships God, “*believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.*” In ***Luke 24:25*** Jesus says, “*O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.*” In ***Romans 15:4***, Paul says “*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.*” These texts give no indication that there is any part of Scripture that is not to be trusted or relied on completely.

God Deemed Every One of His Words Important

Every one of God's words in Scripture was deemed by Him to be important for us. Thus, God issued severe warnings to anyone who would take away even one word from what He has said to us (Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32, Revelation 22:18-19).

We cannot add to God's Word, or take from it, or cast doubt on any part of it, for all of it is part of His larger purpose in speaking to us. Everything stated in Scripture is there

because God intended it to be there. God does not say anything unintentionally.

We Can Stand on the Certainty of the Words of God

Proverbs 22:21 “*That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?*”

Luke 1:4 “*That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.*”

God’s Word is Certain - You can rely on every word in the Word of God with certainty.

In a world where uncertainties loom large, we stand firm on the foundation of the inerrant Word of God. Every word, every passage, and every book of the Bible speaks with divine precision, carrying the infallible truth of our Creator.

Charles Spurgeon said this:

*“These words come from him who can make no mistake, and who can have no wish to deceive His creatures. If I did not believe in the infallibility of the Book, I would rather be without it. If I am to judge the Book, it is no judge of me.”*⁴

Now, let’s look at...

Revelation

For one to believe the Bible is inerrant, one must accept that it is first and foremost God’s personal revelation, His Word, and His voice to mankind. God is known to conceive His

⁴ (Briscoe & Kindler, 2022)

words, and it was by the breathing out of His words that humanity was created (Genesis 1:26-27, Hebrews 11:3, Psalm 148:5).

God also spoke to us through His incarnate Son Jesus Christ and the testimony of His life (John 12:47-50). It is through the resurrection and life of Jesus, the Living Word, the Word made flesh, that we are reconciled to God and find our peace (Colossians 1:19-22).

One distinct and pertinent way in which God's revelation has come to us is through His prophets (Numbers 16:28, II Samuel 23:2, Luke 1:70). Peter in ***II Peter 1:21*** said, "*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*"

Through the whole of Scripture, we discover that God's revelation to mankind has come as both spoken and written words (through the Holy Spirit), with the appeal to worship Him and obey His voice.

We see His words come to man in the form of explicit communion, direct commands, and personal calling (Genesis 3:8-9, 8:15, Jeremiah 36:1). Clear and decisive communication has always been important to God.

Let's Look at Jesus and the Bible as Joint Revelations of God

The Bible is about Jesus. It points to Him. He can be found on almost every page.

The revelation of God to man is a revelation both embodied in the person of Jesus Christ and enshrined in the sacred pages of the Bible.

I want you to notice the parallel of divinity and humanity woven into the very fabric of both the living Word, Jesus, and the written Word, the Bible. We need the Written Word to know the Living Word – Jesus.

Jesus as the Living Word - In the Gospel of John, chapter 1, verse 1, we encounter the profound truth that Jesus is not merely a messenger or prophet but the very embodiment of the Word. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

Here, Jesus is revealed as the eternal, preexistent Word of God, fully divine and intimately connected with the Father, Who came to shed His blood and die for our sins.

The Bible as the Written Word - Similarly, we turn our attention to the Scriptures, the written Word of God. ***II Timothy 3:16*** declares, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God."*

Here, the Bible is affirmed as God-breathed, divinely authored, and preserved throughout the ages for the guidance, instruction, and revelation of God to humanity, to lead us to repentance of our sins – so we can have that personal relationship with Jesus as our Savior.

So, as we contemplate the parallel between Jesus as the Living Word and the Bible as the Written Word, we encounter the profound concept of duality. Just as Jesus is

fully God and fully man, so too is the Bible's authorship dual—fully divine and fully human.

The Gospel narratives unfold the mystery of the Incarnation, where the eternal Son of God took on human flesh. In the person of Jesus, we witness the divine condescension, a perfect union of deity and humanity, which theologians call the Hypostatic Union, revealing God's nature to us in a way that we can comprehend. God so loved us that He sent the Living Word, His Son, to come and die for us.

Similarly, the Scriptures bear the imprint of divine authorship through human agency. Human authors, inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, penned the words of the Bible, capturing the thoughts and intentions of God in human language and cultural contexts.

Just as Jesus, the Living Word, unveiled God's nature in human form, the Bible, the Written Word, unveils God's nature through the inspired words of God penned by the prophets, apostles, and disciples as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Together, they form a harmonious revelation, each aspect complementing the other in our understanding of the Almighty.

Inscripturation

As we explore the depth of God's revelation, we recognize the miracle of inscripturation—the process by which the divine message was perfectly entrusted to fallible human hands, ensuring that every word of God found its place in the written Word.

God not only speaks to man but also ensures that His words are recorded or inscripturated. The first clear example of God capturing His written word takes place on Mt. Sinai and the Ten Commandments.

Turn with me to Exodus 32:15-16 “*And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.*”

God also wrote His words through prophets and scribes, men to whom God spoke and inspired to write down His exact words (Jeremiah 36:4). This shows us that God is concerned about the precision of His words that are handed down from age-to-age (***Mark 13:31- Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.***).

It is not sufficient for mankind to simply have God’s general thoughts, loose impressions of His character, or a summary of ancient historical accounts. God is concerned that every bit of His Word be received and recorded with exactitude so that it might be understood literally and applied explicitly to the life of a believer.

Now let's look at another important point and that is the...

Transmission of Scripture

Another crucial component of the concept of biblical inerrancy is transmission, or the careful preservation of the Bible’s very words amidst the effort of its universal propagation. We see from the biblical account that God

gives supernatural attention to the conservation of His words from one medium to the next (Exodus 34:27, Jeremiah 36:2), from one culture to the next (Romans 1:16), and throughout time (Romans 15:4).

God has carefully managed the circulation of His written Word so that it might be made accessible to all of mankind (Titus 2:15). So, the world could hear the message of the Gospel, the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ to rescue us from our sins.

- We need the Word.
- The world needs the Word.
- Sinners need the Word.

Canonization

Canonization was the work of determining which Christian writings were inspired by God and should be included in the body of works referred to as the Bible. This process was not based on a series of literary decisions, but a supernaturally intended operation of God's Spirit.

The accepted body of writings that we refer to as the New Testament was ratified and formalized in 397 AD at the Council of Carthage.

There were several determining factors that led to the inclusion or exclusion of writings. Canonizers had to ask the following questions:

- (1) Does it bear the marks of divine inspiration?

- (2) Was it written and edited by recognized prophets or apostles?
- (3) Was it endorsed as inspired by other prophets and apostles?
- (4) What did the heritage of Saints hold to and have faith in as God's Word, or what the church had accepted as Scripture up to that point?

In general, the canonizers exercised the belief that what had been clearly preserved, historically accepted, and doctrinally coherent, was tantamount to affirming what was God's inspired word for the church.

We Have a Faith-Based View of Scripture

We must live by faith in all areas – so we have what you would call a faith-based view of scripture. To have a faith-based view of scripture is to believe God promised to hand down His Word from generation to generation without diminishment, maintaining that He was intimately involved in the process of canonization. The Word of God expressly communicates that His words are intended to last forever.

Psalm 119:89 “*For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*”

Psalm 119:152 “*Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.*”

Psalm 119:160 “*Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.*”

I Peter 1:25 “*But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.*”

Translation

Through the ages, the Word has transcended linguistic barriers, with translators guided by the Holy Spirit to faithfully convey the eternal truths to every corner of the earth. This has been accomplished because God promotes and manages the work of translating the Bible from language to language over time and between cultures.⁵

The Bible gives us repeated examples, for the text even translates itself for the reader, demonstrating God's eagerness to be understood (Genesis 31:47, Daniel 5:25-28, Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34, Luke 23:38, John 1:41, Revelation 9:11&16:16).

We find in Scripture that God actively uses the translation of language to provide His explicit words to people of varying linguistic backgrounds, those who would not otherwise have access. A great example of this is how God's Spirit uses the early disciples to share the gospel among the Gentiles who are visiting Jerusalem during the feast season.⁶

In His Providence, He provides them with the supernatural ability to speak in foreign languages, so that they might hear God's Word in their native tongue.

Turn with me to Acts 2:1-11 “*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other*

⁵ (Briscoe & Kindler, 2022)

⁶ (Briscoe & Kindler, 2022)

tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together; and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.”

We know from Scripture that God's love extends to every nation and every person, and it is for this very reason He sent His Son to earth (Galatians 3:26-19). It is not just His heart to reach the nations, but also His will.

God declares that His Word will one day be received by every kindred, tongue, people, and nation (Revelation 5:9, 14:6). For the same purpose, Jesus sends His church out into the world with the purpose of teaching all nations (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). It is evident from Scripture that God's heart for the world necessitates a translation work that He supernaturally oversees.

As an important aside, contemporary Bible translation is perhaps one of the most controversial subjects in Christianity. There are hundreds of English translations alone, each with variations that leave generous gaps for subjective interpretation and doctrinal leeway.

The deluge of English translations has naturally brought skepticism to the infallibility of Scripture and the precision of God's Word. The last century has been marked by the Western Church slowly losing its perspective on the authority of Scripture, unknowingly relinquishing that authority to an expert class of theologians, linguistics, and critics.⁷

It must be simply noted that with a multitude of differing and unagreeable Bibles, we have gained a multitude of human opinions, leaving us with a multitude of irregular doctrines and personal doubts. Confusion has proliferated with the introduction of multiple hundreds of English Bible versions. Now we know God is not the author of confusion. So that leaves one person behind the resultant confusion that has come as a result of the proliferation of English Bible versions. That is Satan himself. Satan is behind many of these other Bible versions that are out there.

Preservation

Perhaps most encompassing is God's promise to defend His words and preserve them from the moment of their inspiration into eternity future (Psalm 12:6-7, Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 24:35, Mark 13:31, I Peter 1:24-25). We see the concept of preservation illustrated within the biblical narrative of Moses.

In Exodus, when Moses comes down from the mount to find the nation of Israel indulging in riotous idolatry, he throws

⁷ (Briscoe & Kindler, 2022)

down and breaks the 10 commandments that were pinned by God's very hand.

When Moses returns to the mountain, because God is a preserver of His Word, He rewrites those exact words which had before seemed lost (Exodus 32:19, 34:1,4). God is a preserver of His Word.

Please turn with me to Jeremiah 36:27-32

In Jeremiah, we find a similar example. God had given His prophet Jeremiah a divinely inspired word which was recorded and delivered to the court of King Jehoiakim. When Jehoiakim heard God's words, they enraged him such that he had them cut up and thrown into a furnace.

But God was so intent on preserving His words that He not only recreated the original text but added even more inspired words. Man may try to stamp out the Bible, but God's promise of preservation guarantees to us that no man could ever rid the world of God's Word. God is a preserver of His Word.

Turn with me to Jeremiah 36:27-32 “*Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king*

of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not. Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.”

God is a preserver of His Word. We can have full faith and confidence that the King James Bible we hold in our hands is the very Word of God! – Hallelujah!

INSPIRATION

The inspiration of Scripture extends to every word, every jot, and every tittle, revealing the profound truth that God's breath has infused every page with divine authority and unerring wisdom.

In the back side of the desert, Moses saw a burning bush and came near to it. But God spoke to Moses out of the bush and said, *“Draw not nigh hither: put off they shoes from off they feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground”* (*Exodus 3:5*).

When we talk about the Bible we are on holy ground. When we go further and talk about the inspiration of the Bible we are especially on holy ground. Dr. John R. Rice introduces the subject of the inspiration of the Bible this way:

“That bush burning in the desert signified the miraculous presence of God to speak to man. The Bible is as truly miraculous as that burning bush. The bush had natural branches but they burned with supernatural fire. The Bible has human language, but it nonetheless speaks with the voice of Deity... So God speaks to us out of His burning Word in this desert world.”⁸

All of us today, I would hope, already know the Bible is the Word of God. We come with reverence, already accepting the Bible as the very Word of God, which it claims to be bowing to its authority as the authority of God and Christ.

We come to believe all its statements, to humbly try to follow its commandments, to claim gladly as many of its promises as our frail faith can claim.

One author wrote, *“God has made it possible for even the most unlearned to know that the Bible is His Word, by finding in it the power of God to their salvation and sanctification.”⁹*

Defining Inspiration

All Scripture is breathed out by God, not breathed in. The idea in Scripture, then, is God breathing out His words. So, we believe that the Bible is God’s breath and that He wrote every word of it.

What exactly do we mean by inspiration? Revelation is God’s disclosure of Himself and His will. Inspiration was

⁸ (Rice, 1969)

⁹ (Pierson, 2018)

the way in which He did it. Inspiration was the Holy Spirit taking God's revelation and putting it through human writers, who wrote the Old and New Testaments.

The result was the exact and authoritative Word of God, and it was the message that God wanted written. Dr. B.H. Carroll included this in his book about the inspiration of the Bible:

*"We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions will be tried."*¹⁰

The word inspiration is derived from the Latin word *inspiro*, which means to breathe on or to breathe into. That is the literal meaning of the word.

The theological meaning is to breathe on or to breathe into for the purpose of conveying the Holy Spirit, in order that those being breathed on or into may speak or write what God would have spoken or written. That is inspiration.

A scriptural example of this is found in **John 20:22** "*And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*" That gives us the true conception of inspiration. Following that, verse 23 gives the

¹⁰ (Carroll, 1930)

result, “*Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*”

That is, a man under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost can declare exactly the terms of remission of sins, and the terms upon which sins cannot be remitted, because he is speaking for God, God is speaking through him.

II Timothy 3:15-16 “*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*”

Inspiration means Scripture is God-breathed. Let's dig into II Timothy 3:16 for a minute and that phrase “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God.*” This is a translation of three Greek words, *pasa graphe theopneustos*.

Pasa – all, *graphe* – the writings or the Scripture, and *theopneustos* – literally means God-breathed.

So, let's look at that last word, *theopneustos* more closely – it comes from the root word *theo* meaning God, and the *pneo* meaning to breathe. So, therefore, we get that all Scripture is God-breathed. God-breathed then means that all Scripture came out of God's mouth.

Psalm 33:6 says, “*By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.*” God breathed the universe into existence. Then God breathed the Bible into existence. Whatever Scripture says, God said.

If the book is God-inspired, then it is God's book and not man's book. Another illustration is found in ***Genesis 2:7***, please especially notice this example, "*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*"

Notice the body was present, but it was dead. It had no vitality. The distinction between a body that is dead and a body that is not dead is the distinction between death and life. Therefore, a man's book is a dead book. I do not care how lofty it's thought, how fine its argument, or how perfect its rhetoric.

The book will pass away. It has not the principle of eternal life, but books that are God-breathed are called "*lively oracles*" (***Acts 7:38***). It is impossible for a God-breathed book to die.

Notice the difference that inspiration makes? The breath of God makes it alive because the Bible is inspired. Because it is God-breathed. It is alive. It is a living book. It's not a dead book like I would write, but it is a living book because it is God-breathed.

Man is a living soul, a living being because God breathed into Adam the breath of life. It takes God's breath, God's in-breathing, the inspiration of God, to make the Bible alive. To make the Bible effective.

The Apostle Peter also expresses the concept of inspiration. Here again is the idea of inspiration that when he, Peter, speaks, He does not speak his own will. When he writes, he does not write his own will, but he speaks and writes for

God, being moved by the Holy Spirit, being on-breathed by the Holy Spirit, being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Peter expresses this concept very well in ***II Peter 1:20*** “*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*” Peter is saying all Scripture is inspired or breathed-out by God.

Inspiration is God’s Revelation

Inspiration is God's revelation, communicated to us through writers who use their own minds and their own words. God had so arranged their lives, their thoughts, and their vocabularies that the words they chose from their own minds were the very words that God had determined they would use from eternity past.

Now that is what you would call a miracle. The theological title for this belief is called plenary Verbal inspiration. And we'll dig into that here in just a moment.

All scripture is inspired, every word of Scripture is inspired. Plenary means all of it, and verbal means every word of it. So, every word in the Bible is the breath of God.

The Bible is infallible. If God wrote the Bible, then it is infallible. That means it is absolutely authoritative. ***Psalm 19:7*** says, “*The law of the LORD is perfect...*” The Bible is authored by God, who cannot lie. The Bible is therefore perfect as it stands.

The Bible is inerrant. We can be confident that the Bible is the words of God Himself. God wrote it and He upholds it by the power of His Word. ***Proverbs 30:5-6*** tells us, “*Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their*

trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Word of God is perfect, and all of his words are pure.”

The Bible is complete. The Bible is all you need. You do not need a vision, you do not need a new revelation or some great act of God. The Canon is closed. The Word of God is finished. When you look at the history of the church throughout the centuries, nothing has been added to the Bible.

The only exception is the Roman Catholic Church. They put the Apocrypha in the middle of the Bible. The Apocrypha is a set of books written in the 400 years between the Old and the New Testaments. It's obviously not inspired by God because of its many errors, many contradictions, and faulty doctrine, but apart from that, nobody has added anything to the Bible.

The Bible is authoritative. When the Word of God speaks, you better respond. I love what it says in *Isaiah 1:2* “*Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken...*” In other words, listen up. Pay attention to what the Lord has said. Scripture is God's voice, so we had better listen to scripture.

Verbal plenary

Verbal Plenary Inspiration - is a fundamental doctrine that affirms the divine origin and authority of every word contained in the Scriptures. It holds that God, in His sovereignty and wisdom, inspired not just the ideas or concepts but every individual word of the Bible. So, let's break down this concept:

(1) Verbal Inspiration: This aspect emphasizes that each word of the Bible is inspired by God. In ***II Timothy 3:16***, we read, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God,*" affirming that the very words of the Scriptures originate from God Himself.

(2) Plenary Inspiration: The term "plenary" means full or complete. Plenary inspiration asserts that every part of the Bible—every book, every chapter, every verse, and every word—is equally inspired.

This is echoed in passages like ***Matthew 5:18***, where Jesus declares, "*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*" Even the smallest details are under the divine umbrella of inspiration.

(3) The Divine and Human Harmony: Our church believes in a high view of Scripture, and that leads us to naturally believe that God worked in harmony with the personalities, styles, and historical contexts of the human authors.

This understanding is reflected in ***II Peter 1:21*** "*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*" The Holy Spirit superintended the human writers, ensuring that their writings accurately conveyed God's intended message.

(4) Inerrancy: Verbal Plenary Inspiration also implies the inerrancy of Scripture. ***Psalm 12:6*** affirms, "*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in*

a furnace of earth, purified seven times." The Scriptures are without error, reflecting the perfection and truthfulness of God.

Verbal Plenary Inspiration emphasizes that every word of the Bible is inspired by God, that the inspiration is complete and covers the entirety of Scripture, and that the divine and human elements harmoniously work together, resulting in an inerrant and authoritative revelation of God's will for His people.

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE

The Bible is divine. The Bible itself is perfect and worthy of acceptance as the ultimate reference on the topic of human well-being. God has put His very words in one volume so that humanity may learn and apply them to our lives.

The Bible, as the mind of God, provides us the proof, the instruction, and the model for emotional, spiritual, and intellectual maturity.

- The Bible declares us the benefactors of forgiveness.
- The Bible declares us the heirs of grace.
- The Bible declares us the children of eternity through Jesus Christ, through His shed blood, through His death, and through His burial and resurrection.

The Bible provides us insight on how to obtain character qualities such as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Galatians 5:22-25).

God's Word provides hope, God's Word provides healing, and God's Word provides strength in times of weakness (Psalm 119:81). The Bible assigns us purpose and draws us into the eternal plan of God.

If the Bible is God's word to all of humanity, and it is, then we may conclude that it likewise contains the grace necessary for dealing with hardship and emotional trials, even amid tragic suffering.

The Bible is sufficient to address all matters involving the human condition, no matter how big or how small.

When Paul writes to his young apprentice, Timothy, he takes some time to warn him of false teachers. He reminds him to hold to the truths of Scripture that have been handed down to him from his youth.

Paul then states that those same divinely inspired truths of Scripture can change the way a person thinks and behaves, ultimately maturing them from the inside out.

II Timothy 3:16 “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*”

The whole of Scripture is given to us by God with the intent that it be the most valuable source of truth and teaching available to mankind. The words within the Bible are intended to reprove us or expose our flaws and weaknesses, showing us who we really are (James 1:23-25).

The Word of God then corrects those errors in our lives and instructs us on how to establish patterns of righteousness.

All of this is designed so that we may be mature and complete in every regard to live a life of holy purpose.

CONCLUSION

As we conclude our dive into the profound truths of the Doctrine of the Bible, let our hearts be stirred with awe and reverence for the unshakeable foundation upon which our faith stands—the Word of God.

In embracing the biblical inerrancy, let us stand firm in the conviction that every word penned in the sacred pages is divinely inspired, bearing the eternal truths of our sovereign Lord.

As we grasp the concept of verbal plenary inspiration, let us be ever mindful that every word, every verse, is infused with the very breath of God, calling us to approach His Word with humility and obedience.

May the authority of Scripture reign supreme in our lives, guiding our decisions and shaping our worldview.

Recognizing the necessity of Scripture, let us prioritize daily immersion in the Word. As we wake each morning, let the Scriptures be our first encounter, setting the tone for our day and illuminating the path of righteousness.

And in understanding the sufficiency of God's Word, let us release the tendency to seek truth in worldly wisdom or alternative sources. The Bible is complete, and in its pages, we find all we need for life and godliness.

Application

- (1) Daily Devotion: Commit to a daily routine of prayerful reading and meditation on the Scriptures. Let the Word be a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path (Psalm 119:105).
- (2) Memorization: Take intentional steps to memorize key passages, embedding the Word in your heart to withstand the challenges of life (Psalm 119:11).
- (3) Practical Obedience: Align your actions with the teachings of Scripture. Let the Word transform your character, influencing how you love, serve, and interact with those around you.
- (4) Prayerful Reflection: Regularly reflect on the Scriptures in prayer, seeking God's guidance and wisdom in every aspect of your life. Let the Word be the foundation upon which you build your relationship with the Almighty.
- (5) Study and Review: Study the catechism cards that you've been handed. Review this message. Study and review what you've learned about the Bible, and about the doctrine of the Bible.

We are almost finished, *turn with me to Matthew chapter 4.*

Matthew 4:1-11 “*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not*

live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”

Notice Jesus' response to the Devil trying to tempt Him:

- Verse 4 “*But he answered and said, It is written...*”
- Verse 7 “*Jesus said unto him, It is written again...*”
- Verse 10 “*Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written...*”

Matthew Henry wrote this about how Jesus defended Himself, “*Christ answered and baffled all temptations of Satan with, “It is written.” He is Himself the Eternal Word and could have produced the mind of God without having recourse to the writings of Moses, but He put honor upon the Scripture... to set us an example...”*¹¹

¹¹ (Henry, 1997)

We are to know and honor the Scripture. So, let's do that. Let's be a people of the Book.

- Let's read the Bible.
- Let's learn the Bible.
- Let's learn about the Doctrine of the Bible.
- Let's apply the Bible to our everyday lives.

“It is written” said the Living Word about the Written Word. The Living Word placed great honor and emphasis on the Written Word , on the Bible.

So, therefore, let's do the same.

- Let's dig into it.
- Let's love it.
- Let's cherish it.

And the greatest way we can honor the Written Word of God is to share its Gospel message with others.

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