

The Doctrine of Inspiration – Part I

Key Text: 2Timothy 3:16-17

- The Word of God - God's Word is His revelation to us, but it is not the only way He reveals things to us. By revelation is meant anything revealed by God. There are two types of revelation from God general revelation and special revelation. We are in need of revelation because we are not God, and we do not have all knowledge. It is necessary for God to reveal to us the truth He desires for us to know. We cannot rely on our subjective experiences, which each person can interpret differently. We cannot rely on our imaginations, as do those who have no knowledge of the truth. We can only rely on God's revelation.
- General Revelation - God reveals truth generally through several venues: nature, providence, human conscience, human nature, and history. General revelation is not enough information to save a person, but it is enough to condemn him. What can be known about God can be seen in creation, therefore men are without excuse for ignoring Him.
- First, nature. God reveals Himself through nature. Psalm 19:1-6, Romans 1:18-32
- Next, providence. God reveals Himself through His providential provision to give and sustain life. Acts 14:17
- Then, human conscience. God reveals Himself to us in our hearts. Acts 17:26-28, Romans 2:14-16
- Then, human nature. We are made in His image. Genesis 1:27
- And finally, historical prophecy. God continually preserves the Nation of Israel, His chosen people. Jeremiah 23:3
- Special Revelation - God's revelation of Himself to specific people, in specific places, at specific times. It is found in dreams and vision, theophanies and Christophanies (God or Christ manifesting Himself personally to a human - e.g. the Voice of the Burning Bush), direct voice communication (which are also either theophanies or Christophanies), miracles, the incarnate Christ (who is the living Word of God and the self-revelation of God), and Scripture (which is the written Word of God). Exodus 2
- The Bible is the exact expression of the mind of God, who is Christ. "In the beginning was the Word" (Gr. - logos, which means reason, order, thought, principle, explanation, discourse. Christ is the Logos of God. John 1:1-14
- The Scripture is perfect like its Author. It makes perfect those who accept and employ it. It should be made available to all people with the least possible delay. To set aside the Bible's teaching in the Church in exchange for the thoughts and opinions of men is blasphemous.

The pulpit is no place for the opinions of men. Hebrews 1:3, Colossians 2:9, Ephesians 4:14, Colossians 2:22, Matthew 15:9

- The Bible teaches that God’s Word came about through inspiration. What is inspiration? We will examine two texts in this excursus: 2Timothy 3:16-17, 2Peter 1:20-21
- "all Scripture" - This means that every word of Scripture is inspired - theological term, "plenary." "All Scripture" - both the OT and the NT. Jesus often quoted from the Scriptures (His favorite was Deuteronomy), and in doing so, quoted and, thus, validated, the OT. 2 Timothy is the final letter of Paul who, apart from the Gospels, wrote roughly 2/3rds of the NT. Nearly all of what would eventually be canonized by the early Church was written by this time. Peter attests to Paul’s letters as being Scripture. 2Peter 3:15-16
- "inspired" - (Gr. - theopneustos) which means "theo" - God, "pneustos" - breathed, as in pneumos, which means Spirit or breath." "Inspired" means literally God-breathed.
- The Bible does not contain the Word of God along with some of man’s opinion and non-factual information or untruth. If the Bible contains anything of the minds of men, then men must discern what is truth and what is not. One of my early mentors said to me, “If we believe in a Dalmatian Bible, how are we to know where the spots are?” God would not have given us a diluted version of His Word and left us to figure out which parts were true or from Him and which parts were from fallible men.
- It does not become the Word of God as I understand it to apply to my life. My ignorance or lack of understanding of God’s Word has no bearing on its purity or validity because its purity and validity are not relative to my experience.
- The Bible does not contain the Word of God; IT IS the Word of God. God superintended the Bible, so that men moved by His Spirit wrote what He intended them to write. They wrote through their languages, personalities, and cultural influences (e.g. - figures of speech, illustrations), but only what He intended.
 - Hosea 12:10 I have also spoken to the prophets, And I gave numerous visions, and through the prophets I gave parables.
 - Hebrews 1:1-2 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
 - Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
 - Matthew 5:17-18 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and

earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”

- Key Text - 2Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
 - "profitable" - God's Word has a purpose. It is useful to accomplish whatever God desires. It is profitable in the life of the one who loves it. Isaiah 55:11, Proverbs 1:1-7
 - "teaching" - the doctrines and precepts of the faith. The truth: the way things really are. Teaching addresses man's ignorance of God.
 - "reproof" - conviction of sin leading to repentance. Reproof addresses man's shortcomings.
 - "correction" - of false doctrine. Correction addresses man's errors in learning and knowledge.
 - "training in righteousness" - godly living according to the will of God for man needs to know not only what is in error, but also what is right in the sight of God. God's plan.
 - "equipped" - God's Word is profitable for man to be equipped to do His will - good works.