

DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE CONTINUED...

How did we get this Word?

Theories of Inspiration:

Intuition: believes the text contains a *high level of insight* beyond what most humans are capable of displaying.

- God did not equip the author, rather, they were just gifted.
- This is popular with those who view the Bible as a valuable human artifact but do not call themselves Christians.
- No obligation to obey the “insight.”

Illumination: The Holy Spirit gives some people a deeper illumination that allows them to have even deeper insights into reality.

- This is different than the doctrine of illumination.
- It is almost as if this person’s natural abilities had a booster shot.
- This has an open view of the canon and essentially is gnosticism.

Neo-Orthodox: While the text itself is *not* inspired, the Holy Spirit can work *through* the text to allow readers to have insight and experience revelation.

- Not that the Bible is the revelation, but that it makes it possible for us to have revelation.
- Confuses doctrine of inspiration with the doctrine of illumination.

Dictation: God spoke to the biblical writers and they wrote what they heard like a secretary.

- Here’s the issue: Why does each account sound different and unique? Each book has a distinctive feel based off author.

Dynamic: God helped certain writers grasp certain ideas. Then, the writers wrote them down in their own words without supernatural aid.

- Inspired *ideas* but not inspired *text*.
- This means the Word itself is not inspired and could have errors (man-made).

Plenary Verbal: God supernaturally empowered men to write down His words. He did so in a way that preserved their own personality, vocabulary, style, and even incorporated their own life experiences.

- “plenary” (all); “verbal” (word).
- This believes that *every* word is inspired by God.
- God progressively revealed Himself through the Scripture over time.
- This best fits what Scripture tells of itself.

Infallibility & Inerrancy

Historically, these terms have meant the same thing to most people. There are, however, some differences.

Infallibility: The Scripture and teaching of Scripture will prevail since it cannot and will not fail.
Inerrancy: The Bible, in the original writings, is without error.

We do not just hold to inerrancy because it flows logically (which it does), but because Scripture says it.

Prov 30:5-6... “Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.

1 Cor 2:7-13... “but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written, ‘things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.’ For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of men except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.”

There are many objections to the inerrancy of Scripture (that we do not have time to address), however, none of the arguments hold up. Most who argue such things are coming to Scripture with an already biased mindset to try to disprove Scripture.

We deny the views of limited and functional inerrancy and embrace what is classified as **balanced inerrancy**.

Balanced Inerrancy: Scripture is absolutely true in every word to the extent of the author’s intent.

If we cannot trust *every* part of the Bible, we cannot trust *any* part of the Bible.

Authority of Scripture:

- Because the Bible is without error, it has the same authority as if God were speaking to us right now.
- Thus, the reading and proclamation of the Word of God has the same authority of coming from God.
- Scripture, *by nature*, is authoritative. Not because of its function, a church’s allegiance to it, or long standing traditions.
- What we do with and how we respond to God’s Word is how we respond and treat God Himself.

The Bible Claims to be authoritative:

- Scripture itself claims authority.
 - Deut 1:3, 30:16-20 (Read in Bible)

- 2 Tim 3:16, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness."
- Jesus quoted Scripture as ground for His own teaching.
 - Matt 19:3-6 (Read in Bible)
 - John 8:28, "So Jesus said, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.'"
- The Holy Spirit has authority to deliver authoritative Word of God.
 - John 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."
 - 1 Cor 2:10-13 (go to notes above).
- The Apostles taught with the authority of God.
 - 2 Thess 2:13-15, "But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us."
 - 2 Pet 1:20-21, "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

Sola Scriptura: Scripture is the *final* authority for faith and practice.

- If anything ever contradicts Scripture, we choose to follow God's Word.

Sufficiency of Scripture: Scripture is sufficient (contains enough) to tell us everything we *need* to know in order to be saved and live a life pleasing to God.

- Does not tell us everything we *could* know, it tells us everything we *need* to know.
- Creeds, confessions, and catechisms are very beneficial in helping Christians to understand what we believe, but the Scripture with aid of the Holy Spirit is necessary and sufficient.

This is why...

We are warned not to add or subtract anything from God's Word (Deut 4:2; Prov 30:5-6; Rev 22:18-19).

We proclaim the gospel (Rom 10:14).

We do not look for other revelations (Heb 1:1-2; Eph 2:20).

Clarity (Perspicuity) of Scripture: Scripture is communicated in such a way as to be clearly understood.

- This does not mean all Scripture is easily understood. This does not mean anyone who reads the Bible instantly gets it. This does not mean there is no need for biblical teachers.

Summarized: We believe Holy Scripture to be inspired, infallible, inerrant, authoritative, sufficient, and clear. It is the Word of God and we must trust and obey His Word.

Any questions or thoughts?

Let's pray.