

PASSAGES RELEVANT TO INERRANCY*

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- Psalm **19:7** “*The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.*”
119:42 “*Your Law is truth.*”
119:160 “*The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever.*”
- Matthew **4:4** “*Man will not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of God’s mouth.*”
5:18 “*Till heaven and earth pass away, not one dot or one tittle will in any way pass from the Law till everything is fulfilled.*”
- Luke **16:17** “*It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Law to fall.*” (cp. 1 Corinthians **13:8**: “*Love never falls.*”)
18:31 “*We are going up to Jerusalem and everything written by the prophets will be accomplished to the Son of man.*”
24:25 “*. . . foolish men, slow in heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken.*”
24:44 “*These are the words I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything that was written about me in the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.*”
- John **10:35** “*The scripture cannot be broken. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms.*”
14:26 “*The Comforter, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and bring to your remembrance everything I said to you.*”
16:13 “*When the Holy Spirit has come, he will guide you into all truth.*”
17:17 “*Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*”
- Acts **24:14** “*I confess to you that after the Way they call a sect, I serve the God of our ancestors, believing everything according to the Law and written in the prophets.*”
“*If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord.*”
- 1 Corinthians **14:37** “*You received God’s message from us; you accepted it, not as man’s word but as it truly is, God’s word.*”
- 1 Thessalonians **2:13** “*All scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness that God’s people may be thoroughly furnished to every good work*” + (Titus **1:2**) “*God cannot lie*” (= Numbers **23:19**; Psalm **19:9**; cp. Psalm **119:142**, **151**, **160**; **19:7**, **12**; Deuteronomy **8:3** (Matthew **4:4**); Hebrews **6:18**; 1 Thessalonians **2:13**.)
- *2 Timothy **3:16** “*No prophecy in the scriptural sense comes from someone’s, own because no prophecy was ever brought by man’s will, but men spoke from God moved by the Holy Spirit*” (note 1 Peter **1:10-12**).
- 2 Peter **1:20-21**

1. In almost all these passages, the interest is in behavior (Psalm **19:7**; **119:160**; 1 Corinthians **14:37**; 2 Timothy **3:16**), in practice more than theory. So, they do not necessarily address accuracy without respect to the purpose of writing.

2. One effect of the previous observation is that infallibility would satisfy many of these passages. We should figure accurate communication relative to the purpose of communication and to the genre of communication. Without that qualifying factor, expected accuracy moves to an artificial absolute either in regard to the level of detailed exactness or, as infallibility advocates argue, in regard to immaterial or tangential matters in a communication. That is where advocates of infallibility get the idea that scripture does not have to be accurate in historical, geographical, and scientific matters; such matters lie aside from the purpose of divine revelation, which is a religious, practical, behavioral, relational matter.

Even if we agreed, however, that accuracy need not attend tangential and immaterial matters, we would not have to agree that only religious matters are free from error. That is too broad a purpose because it is defined relative to the canon as a whole, and it is too narrow because the purpose of the whole canon goes beyond “religious” matters. Such infallibility is also artificial because it unnaturally separates religious and non-religious matters when the truth is that all truth is God’s truth. If accuracy relative to purpose is applicable to this problem, it needs to apply to each communication in the Bible, because that is the level for defining purpose. At any rate, it is true enough that when an artificial standard of accuracy is called for, it leads to unnecessary criticism of biblical reliability among unbelievers; or it leads to division among believers because of problems over interpretation differences based on such presuppositions about the nature, level, and form of accuracy.

3. Some texts deal with predictive prophecy (Luke **18:31**; **24:25, 44**; 2 Peter **1:20-21**).
4. Absolute words may not mean absolute realities (Luke **18:31**; John **14:26**; **16:13**).
5. John **10:34** could be an *ad hominem* argument.
6. Some texts deal with truth about matters revealed by God (Psalm **119:42**; John **17:17**).
7. The most likely texts for undergirding inerrancy are Acts **24:14**; 1 Thessalonians **2:13**; 2 Timothy **3:16**; 2 Peter **1:16-21**.

*Personal translations