

I. The Inspiration of the Bible

What does “inspiration” of the Bible mean? - OPEN

Inspiration – involves God overseeing and directing men to write His words. God initiates the process and works through men, without compromising their individual personalities and vocabularies, to produce divinely inspired writings.

Theopneustos (Gr.) – literally means “God-breathed.” *Theos* – God; *pneo* – to breathe – used in 2 Timothy 3:16 to indicate that all Scripture is God-breathed.

So, *revelation* is God revealing Himself to us; *inspiration* is how He did it!

Do you believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God?

A. Divine Sovereignty

1. God is in total control of all things (including His Word)

Isaiah 46:10 (God speaking through the prophet Isaiah) – Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, ‘**My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure.**’

Whose purpose will be established? – God’s

What will God accomplish – **all** His good pleasure

Who is in control of all things? – God

2. God will preserve His Word

Isaiah 40:8 – The grass withers, the flower fades, but **the word of our God stands forever.**

What does Isaiah say “stands forever”? – the Word of God

As opposed to what? – the grass and flowers, which wither and fade

3. God is protective of His Word

Deuteronomy 4:2 – **You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it,** that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.

What does Moses warn the Israelites about? – adding to or taking away from the Word.

Revelation 22:18-19 – 18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book; if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

What will happen if one adds to or takes away from the Word of God? - consequences; punishment; indicative of no salvation.

What is the significance of the last few verses in the last book of the Bible containing such warnings? – serious warning against tampering with the Word of God; in fact, God has preserved His Word in numerous internally consistent manuscripts for 2000 years. This indicates that God wanted His truths accurately preserved so that His truths would last forever.

Practically speaking, what should we do if we encounter someone who claims to “have the Word of God”? – test what He says against the Bible to make sure that it is consistent with the Bible. If not, such a claim should be rejected.

So, we can see God’s sovereignty over all things, including the preservation and protection of His Word.

B. The Holy Spirit Witnesses to the Inspiration of Scripture

1. **The Holy Spirit, through the Word, leads men to salvation and a transformed life**
Romans 10:17 – faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ

What leads to faith? – hearing

Hearing what? – the word of Christ; the word about Christ

2. **The Holy Spirit, through the Word, convicts and judges our thoughts and hearts**

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.

What is living and active? – the Word of God

What does it mean to pierce to the division of soul and spirit and joints and marrow? – the truths of the Word of God can penetrate us at the deepest possible level

What does the Word of God judge? – thoughts and intentions of our heart?

What does that mean? – the Word is the standard by which our hearts and minds are judged; the Word convicts us of sin.

Is your life, including your thoughts, intentions, and motivations, submitted to the Word of God? OR, are you ignoring what you know to be the teachings of Scripture??

3. **The Holy Spirit enables us to know the things of God**

1 Corinthians 2:11-12 – 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 12 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.

Who is the only One who knows the thoughts of God? – the Holy Spirit

What does the Holy Spirit do in those who have received Him by salvation? – enables us to know the things of God

So, the Holy Spirit testifies to the inspiration of Scripture by leading men to salvation through the Word, convicting us of sin through the Word, and enabling us to know the Word.

C. **The Bible Claims to be the Word of God**

1. **All Scripture is God-breathed**

2 Timothy 3:16 – [a]ll Scripture is inspired by God.

How much Scripture is inspired by God? – all of it

2 Peter 1:20-21 – 20 know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

How much Scripture was made by an act of human will? - none of it.

How was Scripture made? - men moved by the Holy Spirit
Can Scripture mean whatever we want it to mean? - No.
Scripture is not a matter of what? - one's own interpretation.

We will see this more in Lesson 2, but Scripture is not subject to personal interpretation/meaning -- Scripture means what God intended it to mean through the original authors, to the original audiences. One meaning – one or more applications.

2. **The Bible Claims to be The Word of God**

The Bible itself indicates that it is God's Word over 2,000 times with phrases such as "God said ..." (Genesis 1:3, 6:3; Exodus 16:4; Acts 9:15; Acts 18:9) and "The word of the Lord ..." (Acts 8:25, 11:16, 12:24, 13:48; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; 1 Peter 1:25).

3. **Jesus Christ Confirmed that the OT was God's Word**

a. **Jesus' Temptation by Satan**

Matthew 4:1-11 – Jesus Christ quoted from the OT to resist Satan's temptations (Deuteronomy 8:3, 6:16, 6:13) – said “it is written”

4. **NT Writers Believed That They Were Writing God's Word**

There are also many other statements in the NT that affirm the fact that the writers of the NT believed that they were writing the very words of God.

1 Corinthians 14:37 – [i]f anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let Him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment

How did Paul refer to the things that he wrote to the Corinthians? – as a commandment from the Lord

See also: 2 Corinthians 12:17; Galatians 1:11-12; 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 4:15

So, in a number of instances, Paul believed his message to be the Word of God.

5. **Other Instances of Inspiration**

1 Timothy 5:18 – Paul refers to Luke 10:7 as “Scripture”

2 Pet. 3:15-16 – Peter regards Paul's letters as Scripture

John 12:50 – Jesus indicates that He spoke the word of God

So, the Bible claims to be the Word of God by: (1) explicitly making that claim (2 Timothy 3:16; “The Lord says...”); (2) Christ confirming the OT; (3) numerous parallel passages between the OT and NT in which God speaks; (4) NT writers believing that they were writing God’s Word

Summary: we believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God because: (1) God’s sovereignty; (2) the Holy Spirit’s witness; (3) the explicit claims of the Bible; and, (4) the New Testament writers affirming that the OT and what they wrote was God’s Word

II. Believability of the Bible

What evidences are there that the Bible is true, accurate, and ultimately, believeable?

A. Historical Accuracy

Archaeology has confirmed a number of biblical details – For interesting reading on this topic – <http://www.christiananswers.net/archaeology/home.html>

The Flood - The fossil record confirms that there was a worldwide flood about 4,500-5,000 years ago.

B. Internally Consistent – 40 writers/66 books written in 3 languages over 1600 years; BUT, no errors or contradictions!!!

C. Scriptures Confirmed by Christ

1. Confirms Jews' Rejection of Christ, as Predicted – Psalm 118:22

Mark 12:10 – Have you not even read **this Scripture**: ‘the stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief corner stone.’

2. Confirms Burning Bush Event – Exodus 3:6

Mark 12:26 – “But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, **have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush**, how God spoke to him saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’”

Other: Matthew 10:15 – Sodom and Gomorrah; Matthew 12:40 – Jonah in the belly of the whale; John 6:49 – manna to the Jews during the Exodus

In each of these instances, Christ refers back to the OT and indicated He believed them, confirmed them, and rebuked people for not reading/knowing the Scriptures.

D. Scripture is Life-Changing

The Bible has dramatically changed millions of lives for thousands of years.

Example in Scripture - Acts 16:14 – A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening [to what Paul was teaching]; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

E. Prophetic Accuracy (most powerful)

- 1. Birthplace of the Messiah – prophesied in Micah 5:2 (700 years before Christ); fulfilled in Luke 2:4-7**
- 2. Virgin Birth of the Messiah – prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 (700 years before Christ); fulfilled in Matthew 1:18-25**
- 3. Triumphal Entry – prophesied in Zech 9:9 (500 years before Christ); fulfilled in John 12:12-15**
- 4. Christ's Crucifixion – prophesied in Psalm 22 (1000 years before Christ); fulfilled in John 19**
- 5. Christ's Suffering**

Prophecy (700 years before Christ): Isaiah 53:4-7 – 4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

Fulfillment:

Matthew 26:63 – (fulfills Isaiah 53:7) - But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, ‘I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.’

How did Jesus respond to those who accused Him? – silence

2 Corinthians 5:21 – He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our

behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him

What did God make Jesus? – sin; a sin offering on our behalf

What portions of Isaiah 53 does this relate to? – pierced, crushed, caused iniquity of us all to fall on Him

1 Peter 2:24 – and **He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross**, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; **for by wounds you were healed.**

What did Jesus bear in His body on the Cross? – our sins

What do we gain by His wounds? – we are healed

Does this sound like physical healing? – No (context)

What kind of healing does this sound like? – spiritual healing

What does this tell us about Jesus' work on the Cross? – atoned for our sins, healed us spiritually, restored us to well-being

Have you embraced for yourself Jesus' work on the Cross?

F. Summary

So, we can believe what the Bible says because:

1. It is historically accurate
2. It is internally consistent
3. It was confirmed by Christ
4. It is life-changing, and has proven to be over time
5. It contains numerous fulfillments of prophecy

III. Application

Do you believe that what the Bible says is true?

Do you believe that the 66 books of the Bibles are God's Word?