

Good morning Church

This morning I would like to share with you a message entitled:

"From God to Us"

A message on the Word of God and how this Word comes to us and the trustworthiness of this Word.

Pastor Barry asked me to address the subject of the Word of God and how we at Harvest should understand its place in the church.

In the first week of March I had the privilege of attending The Summit on Biblical Innerancy in Los Angeles. Over 5,000 Pastors, Elders and church leaders from all over the world came together to be challenged in their commitment to biblical ministry and to find encouragement as together we sought to become more effective servants of our chief Shepherd.

With the fruit of this summit fresh in my mind and heart my desire this morning is to give you a deeper **understanding** and a **greater appreciation** of this Holy Book that our Lord has so graciously given His church for His glory and for our good.

I want to communicate to you this morning the **source** and **character** of God's Word by using the 3 I's of Biblical Authority.

The 3 I's. ***Inspiration*** - ***Inerrancy*** - & - ***Infallibility***

3 big words that I will take time to **define** and to **explain** to you this morning.

My intention is to "**front load**" the message - meaning I will take more time on the first **I - *Inspiration*** because it is my belief that if we believe and understand that the source of God's Word is God himself and we understand that God cannot lie - then it naturally follows that this God given Word is ***Inerrant*** and ***Infallible***.

Let's begin then with the first **I** of the Authority of God's Word - ***God's Word is Inspired***

The first text that was read this morning is 2 Timothy 3:12-17

12 "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,
13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it

15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture is **breathed out by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The context of 2 Timothy chapter 3 is the Apostle Paul writing his last letter to his protegee Timothy - he is reminding Timothy that he is to remember the great value of these Scriptures that he was instructed in from his childhood sitting at the feet of his faithful mother and Grandmother

He tells Timothy that this Word is "**God breathed**"

The Greek word "**θεοπνευστος**" is literally "God Breathed out"

Meaning that the **source** of this Word finds itself coming from God Himself

It is God **expiring - breathing** out this Word for man as a self revelation of who He is and How he relates to man.

Let me tell you what **Inspiration** is **not**. Some have taught that God took the already existing writings of men and He breathed into them and they then **became** the Word of God.

No - that false teaching contradicts the second passage that we read this morning - 2 Peter 1:16-21

"16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,"

18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,

20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

Peter tells us that the Word of God comes to us not from "**someone's own interpretation**"

Nor was this Word "**produced by the will of man**"

This Word - this prophecy - this forth-told inscripturated revelation of God comes from - finds its source - from men who spoke from God as they were "**carried along**" by the Holy Spirit.

When my Grandson and I review his catechism lessons every morning I love when we get to question 14 and I ask him:

Q. 14. Where do you learn
how to love and obey God?
Answer: In the Bible alone.

Q. 15. Who wrote the Bible?
Answer: Holy men who were taught by the Holy Spirit.

That's from the Children's Catechism

This Bible - this Word - is written by Holy men who were "**taught**" by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit took these men and He so superintended their lives - so that their parents, where they lived, their education, their personalities and vocabularies were uniquely their own - yet they were "**carried along**" - The Holy Spirit breathed out through their writings - the very words and concepts that He wanted them to write. As their pens wrote the letters upon the scroll or upon the parchment it **was** the inspired - God Breathed out - Word of God.

It was **not** a **dictation** as a boss would dictate to his secretary who would short hand **word for word** - but these men were "carried along" so that their pen strokes their letters, their words, their phrases were also God's Words, His phrases and His sentences - they were God breathed - their very source is God Himself.

Now in full disclosure - I'm sure that you've come to experience that not everyone believes that the Bible is God's Inspired - God's "θεοπνευστος" - God's breathed out Word.

Some object saying that the Bible is an old - out of date book - written by men who didn't have an understanding of technology and science as we do - this book written by men is myth or fairy tales - and is a book that was written by men to control other men and it was made up along-the-way and that it cannot possibly be the actual revelation of God.

Now, when someone tells me that or a variation thereof - my question to them is:

Really? And how do you know that? Why do you believe that?

More often than not there response is: "Well - I read it"

Now wait a minute! You don't believe the Bible because it was written by men - but you believe what you read in another book that was also written by a men?

And. ---- you don't see the problem with your logic here?

Now at this point in the conversation this is your opportunity to tell them why **you** Believe the Bible.

Think about it for a second. What would you say?

Well, I believe the Bible because that's how I was raised.

My parents believe it Or I believe the Bible because that's what I learned in Sunday school as a child or that's what my church teaches.

Or I tried it and it changed my life...

Why should we believe the Bible - I got the following quote from a Pastor in Texas - Voddie Baucham. He said:

"I choose to believe the Bible because it is a reliable collection of historical documents written by eye witnesses during the lifetime of other eye witnesses, that report supernatural events that took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies and claim that their writings are divine rather than human in origin."

Let me give that to you again:

"I choose to believe the Bible because it is a reliable collection of historical documents written by eye witnesses during the lifetime of other eye witnesses, that report supernatural events that took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies and claim that their writings are divine rather than human in origin."

What do we know about the Bible:

The Bible is a collection of 66 Books

The Bible Was written on 3 continents - Asia - Africa - Europe

The Bible was written in 3 different languages - mainly Hebrew & Greek with a little Aramaic in portions of the OT

The Bible was written by over 40 authors

The Bible was written by men in many walks of life - Kings, prophets, farmers, generals, fishermen, a doctor, a tax collector, and the list continues

These men give us 66 volumes containing hundreds of subject matters and wrote over a period of 1500 years.

This is not one individual making a claim... This is a **reliable collection** - from many men - many individuals

Listen again to what Peter says:

"For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

Men - plural - in contrast to **authors** of other religious books:

The Quran - a single source Mohammed the Prophet

The Book of Mormon - a single source Joseph Smith

What distinguishes the Bible is that it is a **collection** of historical documents in 66 volumes containing hundreds of subject matters and written over a period of 1500 years.

To fake a document of this nature with its internal consistency from beginning to end and the fact that it never contradicts itself would be an impossible feat.

But I want to go beyond all that I've said so far -

Another reason We can believe the Bible to be the Inspired - God Breathed - Word of God - brought to us by men "carried along" by the Holy Spirit is because Jesus Himself believed it to be the very Word of God.

Listen to the words of Jesus:

In Matthew Chapter 4 Jesus is tempted by Satan in the wilderness listen to His response:

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."

4 But he answered, "**It is written**, " 'Man shall not live by bread alone, **but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple

6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, **for it is written**, "He will command his angels concerning you," and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."

7 Jesus said to him, "**Again it is written**, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

9 And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

10 Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! **For it is written**, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."
Matthew 4:1-10

Repeatedly throughout the ministry of Jesus the Gospels record him saying:
"It is written".

Jesus spoke of Abraham, Moses, David, Jonah, Isaiah, Daniel

We just heard a sermon a few weeks ago where Jesus stood on the Mountain with Moses and Elijah and was transfigured.

Jesus believed the OT scriptures to be the very words from the mouth of God

Listen again:

In John 10:31 "The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?"

33 The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."

34 Jesus answered them, "**Is it not written in your Law**, 'I said, you are gods'?"

35 If he called them gods **to whom the word of God came-and Scripture cannot be broken"**

"to whom the word of God came-and Scripture cannot be broken."

Jesus quoted Psalm 82:6 called it the Word of God and said it could not be broken. (Hold that thought in your mind). **Scripture cannot be broken.**

Listen as I read Matthew 5:17-19:

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

In John 10 Jesus told the Scribes and the Pharisees that Scripture cannot be broken in Matthew 5 He explains that not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

An iota is the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet and the dot that Jesus refers to is the small markings on the Hebrew letters that distinguishes one letter from another

Jesus says that the smallest parts of God's written - inscripturated - God breathed out Word will stand '**as written**' until All things are accomplished.

And those who relax this Word - those who fail to honor - fail to teach others to honor and obey this God given Word will be called least in the Kingdom of God and whoever **does** them and **teaches** them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Although I would love to continue with the first I - Inspiration - I must move on to the **second I - Inerrancy**

Inspiration describes - **how** we received God's Word - it is a self revelation - a God given - God breathed out Word - that was superintended through Holy men carried along by the Holy Spirit.

In **Inerrancy** - we see in the word Inerrancy - spelled Inerrancy - the small word "err" which means:

To be mistaken or incorrect; to make a mistake.

You've heard the quote: "To err is human to forgive divine."

The term in reference to Scripture means that Scripture is Inerrant or has **no** mistakes or errors.

The 3rd I of Biblical Authority - **Infallibility** -

Is "higher" in meaning than inerrancy - Infallibility means that Scripture not only **has** no errors or mistakes - it is **incapable** of containing errors or mistakes.

RC Sproul in his book Everyone's A Theologian illustrates the difference between Inerrancy and Infallibility with this:

"The church historically has seen that the Bible alone, of all the written literature in history, is uniquely infallible. The word infallible may be defined as "that which cannot fail"; it means something is incapable of making a mistake. From a linguistic standpoint, the term infallible is higher than the term inerrant. By way of illustration, a student can take a test made up of twenty questions and get twenty correct answers, giving him an inerrant test. However, the student's inerrancy in this restricted arena does not make him infallible, as mistakes on subsequent tests would verify." (Close quote)

So you can take a test - ace it and get 100% that is Innerant

But you are not infallible - because you will not always be right 100% of the time.

But God's Breathed out Word is!

So then we have the 3 - I's of Biblical Authority

Inspiration - Inerrancy - & - Infallibility

We have an **Inspired** - God breathed out Word that finds its source from God through Holy men of God carried along by the Holy Spirit

We have an **Inerrant** Word of God that is without error and 100% True

And we have an **Infallible** Word that cannot possibly have any errors mistakes and as Jesus said - "For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished." Matthew 5:18

You have heard it said about the Bible:

"God said it - I believe it - that settles it!"

A better way to say it is:

"God said it - that settles it!"

It is God's Word whether you believe it or not.

We have an Infallible Word of God - verbally inspired, totally inerrant, fully sufficient and absolutely authoritative.

There will be attacks upon the Bible - these attacks will come from without and from within the church.

Attucks upon the Word of God are as old as the "Did God really say" when Satan tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden

Listen to a quote from John MacArthur:

The most important lessons we ought to learn from church history seem fairly obvious for example in the 2000 year record of Christianity, no leader, movement or idea that has questioned the authority or inspiration of Scripture has ever been good for the church. Congregations, denominations and evangelical academic institutions that embrace a low view of Scripture invariably liberalize, secularize, move off mission, decline spiritually and either lose their core membership or morph into some kind of political, social or religious monstrosity. That downhill trajectory (what Charles H Spurgeon referred to as "the Down Grade" is distinct and predictable. The spiritual disaster looming at the bottom is inevitable. Those who decide to test their skill on the gradient *always* lose control and seldom recover." (Close quote).

At present our culture, our government, our educational systems and our churches are on the down grade with regards to the Word of God -

Charles Spurgeon the great 19th Century preacher stated this:

"A great many learned men are defending the gospel; no doubt it is a very proper and right thing to do, yet I always notice that, when there are most books of that kind, it is because the gospel itself is not being preached. Suppose a number of persons were to take it into their heads that they had to defend a lion, a full-grown king of beasts! There he is in the cage, and here come all the soldiers of the army to fight for him. Well, I should suggest to them, if they would not object, and feel that it was humbling to them, that they should kindly stand back, and open the door, and let the lion out! I believe that would be the best way of defending him, for he would take care of himself; and the best "apology" for the gospel is to let the gospel out. Never mind about defending Deuteronomy or the whole of the Pentateuch; preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. Let the Lion out, and see who will dare to approach him. The Lion of the tribe of Judah will soon drive away all his adversaries." (Close quote)

Let us together as a church open the door to the cage and let the Lion out! Let us take the Gospel of Jesus Christ into our homes, our work places - into all of relationships and interactions let us declare the overall message of this book: The Gospel -

"This Gospel is the proclamation of the person and work of Jesus Christ plus how the benefits of that work can be appropriated to us by faith and by faith alone."

Let us read and study God's Word as a church

Let us teach and preach God's Word to each other and to our children and to our children's children

Let us stand upon that solid Rock of God's Inspired, Inerrant, Infallible Word - and become Good Bereans and study God's Word as God's people.

God has spoken - from God to us in His Holy Word!

