

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Bibliology – Study of the Bible – Part 2
Inspiration & Infallibility

Introduction

- Last time we talked about:
 - Revelation – General and Special.
 - Reliability
- Today the focus will be on:
 - Inspiration
 - Infallibility
 - Inerrancy
- In the end, we will see what the Bible says about itself.

Inspiration

- Definition: *“The guidance or influence of the Holy Spirit on the human writers of Scripture so that God controlled them in such a way that what they wrote was exactly what God wanted them to write without error.”*
 - It is supernatural guidance executed on the writers of Scripture by the Spirit of God in which their own personal writings become the Word of God.



Accurate vs. True

- Not every statement in the Bible is true.
- Every statement in the Bible is accurate.
- What's the difference?
- Examples
 - Genesis 3:4: “You will not surely die,” is not true. The devil lied.
 - However, it is accurate since the devil did actually say these words to Eve.
 - Job's friends give a lot of advice that is not true, but what is recorded is accurate since it is what they said.

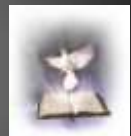


Inspiration – 2 Timothy 3:16

- 2Timothy 3:16 – All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
 - “Breathed out by God” = *theopneustos*.
 - Not primarily the work of man, but the work of God breathed out onto paper through men.
- 2Peter 1:20-21 – knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 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.

Three-Levels of Inspiration

1. Inspired guidance by the Holy Spirit.
 - See 2 Peter 1:20-21
2. Inspired personality of the human authors.
3. Inspired words written.



Three-Levels of Inspiration

- God used the unique writing styles and personalities of the individual authors.
- Take the Gospels for example.
- Distinction between “revelation” and “inspiration.”
 - Revelation = vertical process by which God gives His will to men. Does not necessarily lead to inspiration.
 - Inspiration = Holy Spirit preserves revelation with chosen men; uses them DESPITE their interpretative weaknesses.
- Thus, inspiration = divine preservation of divine revelation by using the human means of writing.
 - Something is only inspired if it is written down and preserved.

Vertical Transference

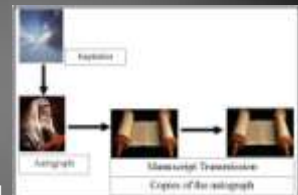


Importance of Vertical Transference

- Explains how special revelation did not get messed up by human sin nature.
- Explains the uniqueness of each book and author.
 - Human personality and circumstances of the writers are still present in each book (word choices, writing style, etc.)
- Explains the relevance of studying the author and historical background of each book.
- Explains how 66 unique books have a single canonical theme and are coherent and do not contradict.

Three-Levels of Inspiration

- Inspired Words
 - God did more than guide the words of the authors. He chose which words would be placed in each place.
 - **1Corinthians 2:13** – And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.
 - Verbal Plenary (complete) Inspiration of Scripture



One Missing Piece

- Even a verbal plenary inspired Bible would fall on deaf ears to fallen humanity.
- Thus, the final piece of the puzzle is illumination.
 - Illumination = Holy Spirit teaches us the spiritual truths of the Bible so we can understand them.
- **1Corinthians 2:14-16** – The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Summary of Inspiration

- God reveals truth from heaven.
 - If nothing else occurs, it is forgotten, misinterpreted, or recorded wrongly.
- God then inspires His special revelation through vertical transference.
 - If nothing else occurs, then a perfect divine revelation exists, but all humans misinterpret it due to sin.
- God illuminates the Scripture for believers so that we can properly interpret and understand it.



The Bible's Case for Inspiration

- The Scriptures own claims show it to be inspired.
 - This is priority one evidence.
- Many unbelievers claim the Bible never says it is inspired.
 - Other unbelievers say 2 Tim 3:16 & 2 Pet 1:20-21 speak of the OT only.
 - They then claim OT Canon was not set at this time.



The Bible's Case for Inspiration

- I will make the case with no particular order of books.
- All of the writings of David are inspired (e.g Psalm 109:8).
 - Acts 1:16 – Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the **Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David** concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus
- Other examples:
 - Acts 4:25-26 – who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed!"
 - Mark 12:36 – David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.'"

The Prophets – OT Case

- The prophets themselves declare their inspiration:
 - Micah 4:4 – but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.
 - Amos 3:1 – Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:
- There are nearly 1,200 other similar statements in the prophets.



The Prophets – NT Case

- The Apostles affirm the inspiration of the prophets.
 - Acts 3:18 – But what **God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets**, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.
 - Acts 3:21 – whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which **God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets** long ago.
- It is clear ALL the writings of the prophets are inspired.



Moses – NT Case

- In Acts 7, Stephen declares that Moses writings (e.g. Deut 18:15) are of the Holy Spirit.
 - Acts 7:37 – This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.'
 - Act 7:39 – Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt,
 - Act 7:51 – You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you.



Moses – OT Case

- The Torah itself speaks as if it's words are the Lord's.
 - Lev 1:1-2 The LORD called Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of livestock from the herd or from the flock.
- Some unbelievers claim Moses didn't write the Torah. Christ disagrees.
 - Mark 7:10 – For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.'



Christ's Comprehensive Statement

- Luke 24:44 – Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."
 - When He said prophets, He meant every book listed in the Neviim section.
 - When He said Psalms, He meant every book in the Kethubim section.
 - He literally claimed to fulfill the entire Old Testament, and in so doing declared them to be inspired.

Quotations, References, and Allusions

- In addition to direct quotations, there are many allusions of the OT in the NT.
 - Allusion = a story or a concept from one of the OT books that is retold, but is not quoted directly.
- In fact, here is the breakdown.
 - There are 278 exact quotations. They come from every OT book except: Judges, Ruth, the Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles.
 - There are 17 direct references.
 - There are 613 allusions. With the allusions, every OT book is referred to in the NT (Esther is a *possible* exception).
- If you add all the quotes, references, and allusions together, 10% of the NT is directly talking about the OT.
- This shows that 1st Century Jews (and the NT) recognized what OT books were inspired by God.

Jesus' High View of the OT

- When quoting the Psalms, Jesus said of the Scriptures:
 - John 10:35 –and Scripture cannot be broken
- He also said that none of Scripture would fail.
 - Matthew 5:18 – 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.

