

THE BIBLE - A CLOSED REVELATION  
GOD HAS SPOKEN

INTRODUCTION:

A. We believe that the Sixty-Six books of our Bible have been revealed by God and that they are verbally inspired.

1. By revelation we mean the various means God used to communicate His will to mankind.
2. By inspiration we mean that the words of the Bible were literally God-breathed.

(a) Inspired is from the Greek word θεόπνευστος θεόπνευστος which literally means God breathed.

(I) Psalms 33:6: "By the word of our Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

(ii) Rev. 4:11: "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

(I) Phillips translation says, "and it was through your will that they came into being and were created."

(iii) 2 Tim. 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God ..."

3. Dr. Benjamin Warfield says:

"Inspiration is, therefore, usually defined as a supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writer by the Spirit of God by virtue of which their writings are given trustworthiness."

Inspiration of the Bible, p. 131

4. Batsell Barrett Baxter in his I Believe Because, p. 171, writes:

"That men wrote exactly what God wanted them to write, without errors or mistakes, yet with their own personalities in evidence. This is sometimes called verbal inspiration. It holds that the original autographs of the Scriptures were inspired and fully authoritative, for they came as the Holy Spirit guided men to write."

B. Secondly, we are affirming that the Bible is the word of God and not that it just contains the Word.

1. God who is infinite in wisdom and knowledge has revealed His truth to man in human words, words which man's finite mind can fully comprehend, - this God's Word.

"Some true believers in Jesus Christ, embarrassed by the presence of serious difficulties in the Bible, seem ready to toy with the idea of thought-inspiration, as though it was somehow possible for thoughts, apart from the words in which those thoughts are expressed, to be inspired." Young, Thy Word Is Truth, p. 269.

2. If we dispense with the doctrine of Biblical infallibility, then slowly but surely, we shall lose all the other doctrines of Christianity. If God has erred in even one utterance, how do we know that He has not erred in even more than one? If in so-called minor points, He has inspired error, can we be sure that He has not done so in "more important matters?" That is the issue at stake.

C. Our need in the church today is to listen to the Bible.

1. "A generation which has as its background the rationalism of the eighteenth century, the evolutionism and "higher" criticism of the nineteenth century and the 'neo-orthodoxy' and dialectical theology of the early-twentieth century, may perhaps be expected to set itself up as a better judge of the Bible than the Bible itself." Edward J. Young, Ibid, p. 29.

D. We list seven areas of supporting arguments for inspiration - inerrancy:

1. The preponderance Influence of the Bible in history.
2. The Style of the Bible argues for inspiration. (40 writers - 1600 years).
3. The Unity of the Bible argues for credibility.
4. The Scope - Dealing with the Origin, Nature, and Destiny of man.
5. Fulfilled Prophecies display foreknowledge - thus revelation.
6. The Harmony of the Bible with the known facts of science shows foreknowledge.

7. The Scriptures Claim to be Inspired.

- (I) It is here, on this last point, that we direct the main thrust of our argument.

**I. THE BIBLE CLAIMS TO BE NOTHING LESS THAN THE VERBALLY INSPIRED WORD OF GOD.**

- A. This claim is either true or false. If it is the Word of God, it is completely true. It cannot be partly true and partly false. If it is false at all, it is not the inspired Word of God.
- B. If the Bible claim is true, we should do some serious thinking before we add to it or take away from it. We should pause long before deciding to alter it to fit our situations. We need to mould ourselves by its pattern.
- C. The Old Testament Writers claimed to be speaking the actual Word of God.

1. In reference to Moses:

Exodus 4:11-12: "So the Lord said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.'"

Exodus 4:14-16: "So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said: 'Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.'"

Deut. 18:18-19: "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him."

2. In reference to Amos:

Amos 7:14-16: "Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: 'I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet,

but I was a herdsman and a tender of sycamore fruit, then the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.' Now therefore, hear the word of the Lord: You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not spout against the house of Isaac.'"

3. In reference to Samuel:

2 Sam. 23:2: "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue."

4. In reference to Jeremiah:

Jer. 1:9: "Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched My mouth, and the Lord said to me, 'Behold I have put My words in your mouth.'"

5. Ezek. 2:7: "You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious."

D. Jesus claimed that His message came from God.

1. Matt. 4:4 lays down the principle we need to learn:

"But He answered and said, 'It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

2. John 6:38: "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

3. John 7:16-17: "Jesus answered them, and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.'"

4. John 8:28: "Then said Jesus to them, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught me, I speak these things.'"

5. John 12:48-50: "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him -- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

- (a) Here is a classic, marvelous, affirmation that the very words of Jesus were the very words of God the Father.
6. John 14:23-24: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words: and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me."
7. John 17:8: "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me: and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You, and they have believed that You sent Me."
8. Matt. 24:35: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

## II. THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDED INERRANTLY MEN AS THEY WROTE THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- A. The Apostles were to be guided by the Holy Spirit in their preaching:
  1. Matt. 10:19-20: "But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."
  2. 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 things that I said to you."
  3. John 16:12-13: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." Verse 14 says: "He shall glorify me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."

4. The Apostles on Pentecost: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. ... the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, 'Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?' And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born." Acts 2:4,6,8).

NOTE: The Holy Spirit gave the apostles the ability to speak in the languages of the Jews who had assembled in Jerusalem from around the Mediterranean Sea.

B. The Apostle Peter claimed that his message and that of the Old Testament was inspired.

1. 2 Peter 1:16-21: "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. We also have the prophetic word made more sure, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

(I) "Being borne by the Holy Spirit, men spoke from God" ...

(ii) ΦΕΡΟΜΕΝΟΙ "of the mind to be moved inwardly, prompted." Thayer, p. 650.

(iii) Vine says, \_\_\_\_\_ "to bear, carry, drive, lead, move."

2. 2 Peter 3:15-17: "And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rests of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand,

beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked.”

- NOTE:
- (i) Peter affirms that the Old Testament Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Spirit.
  - (ii) That his (Peter's) message was actually from Christ of whom he was a witness.
  - (iii) That the epistles of Paul were Scripture and that they should give heed to both of their writings.
  - (iv) That the Scriptures would be wrested (twisted out of context to pervert their meaning) to one's own destruction.

Conclusion: Don't change the message.

C. The Apostle Paul claimed that the Holy Spirit guided him in preaching-writing.

1. 1 Cor. 2:6-13: "However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
- 2, Gal. 1:11-12: "But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ."

3. Eph. 3:1-5: "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles -- If indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery; (as I wrote before in few words, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets."
  
4. 2 Tim. 3:14-17: "But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
  - (I) Paul is including the Old Testament Scriptures as being inspired as well as that which he had, himself, taught Timothy.
  - (ii) Timothy had learned from his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice. (II. Tim. 1:5)
  
5. 1 Thess. 2:13: "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe."
  - (I) How could the Thessalonians understand Paul. And brethren want to make truth subjective and relative?
  
6. Acts 28:25: Here Paul quotes from Isaiah and said that Isaiah spoke by the Holy Spirit.

"So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers."

Conclusion: If we cannot believe the writers when they tell us that their message both spoken and written was revealed by God and preserved by the Holy Spirit from error how can we believe them on any other point. If they

did not tell the truth here - then all scripture would be under suspicion.

**III. WE, THEREFORE, BOLDLY AFFIRM THAT GOD HAS SPOKEN AND THAT HIS AUTHORITY IS FINAL.**

- A. God's Will is Explicit. - Loud and clear on salvation, the church, human destiny.
- B. His Will is Infallible.
- C. His Will is to be Accepted as the Only Law for the Church. Now and forever.
- D. The Silence of the Scriptures is to be Respected.
- E. We must prove our faith and practice with a "Thus saith the Lord."
  - 1. This requires an acknowledgment that all of God's commands are both inclusive and exclusive.
- F. We must accept the Bible as our Blueprint or Pattern.
  - 1. James Bales "If the Bible is not a 'blueprint' or 'pattern' for church organization, doctrine, and worship, there is no ground on which to maintain that it is a blueprint for conversion or worship, or Christian living."
  - 2. The Pattern for any Bible Doctrine is the sum total the Scriptures teach on that subject.

**IV. WE AFFIRM THAT THE PRESENT "RESTORED TEXT" IS VERY RELIABLE.**

- A. The Original Manuscripts Have Been Lost.

"In the nature of the case, then, inspiration extends only to the original manuscripts of Scripture. Since the manuscripts were inspired, they were free from error. The originals are lost and we are today in possession only of copies, copies which contain textual errors and difficulties that no serious Christian can afford to ignore ... The copies, however, do give the actual Word of God. No point of doctrine has been affected." Young, Ibid, p. 61.
- B. How Difficult Are the Supposed Discrepancies in the Manuscripts Extent?

Charles Hodge has written most ably on this:

1. "These apparent discrepancies, although numerous, are for the most part trivial; relating in most cases to numbers or dates."
2. "The great majority of them are only apparent, and yield to careful examination."
3. "Many of them may fairly be ascribed to errors of transcribers."
4. "The marvel and miracle is that there are so few of any real importance. Considering that the different books of the Bible were written not only by different authors, but by men of all degrees of culture, living in the course of fifteen hundred or two thousand years, it is altogether unaccountable that they should agree perfectly, on any other hypothesis than that the writers were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. In this respect, as in all others, the Bible stands alone. It is enough to impress any mind with awe, when it contemplates the Sacred Scriptures filled with the highest truths, speaking with authority in the name of God, and so miraculously free from the soiling touch of human fingers. The errors in matters of fact which skeptics search out bear no proportion to the whole."

Systematic Theology, Vol. 1, pp. 169-170

Neil Lightfoot comments on the veracity of both Old Testament and New Testament texts.

"Our oldest Hebrew manuscripts date no farther back than the ninth century. This might prove to be a difficult barrier for the Old Testament text were it not for the safeguards devised and followed by the Massoretes and the strict rules observed by earlier Jewish scribes. Early versions of the Old Testament and other sources are of great value since they attest the reliability of our present text. The Biblical documents of the Dead Sea Scrolls are nothing short of sensational. The most important are the two Isaiah scrolls which, although they exhibit many minor differences of spelling, etc., confirm beyond doubt the accuracy of our present Hebrew text."

How We Got Our Bible, p. 51

"Textual variants are of different types and degrees of importance. Most variants are obvious slips made by the scribe and present no problem. Others are of no

consequence to our present text because they are not found in the most reliable manuscripts. Some represent substantial variation, but in this number no unique Biblical teaching or divine command is involved ... "

"Our present New Testament text is a reconstructed Greek text. Westcott and Hort are largely responsible for this reconstruction. Many enlightening discoveries have been made in the last eighty years, but all of them confirm the Westcott-Hort type of text. New materials which have turned up make the text of the Bible more and more secure."  
"None of the major translations are so bad, and no Greek text so faulty, as to lead one from the "lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."

Ibid, pp. 82-23

ILLUSTRATE:

President's letter read to 35 sixth graders. If the original letter, it could be reconstructed. About 5,000 manuscripts available with which to make a restored text.

**V. WE AFFIRM THAT THE CANON OF THE SCRIPTURES IS CLOSED.**

- A. The Sixty-Six books of our Bible have withstood the storms of history.
- B. The Church down through the centuries has confirmed these books as sacred.
- C. Those claiming new revelations from God today need:
  - 1. To tell us something New that God has told them in the realm of Morality.
  - 2. To tell us some addition or subtraction God has made to His Scheme of Redemption - Plan of Salvation.
  - 3. To name some additional Ethical Precept not already covered by God's word.
- D. God's Revelation is Final.
  - 1. The Holy Spirit was to guide the apostles into ALL truth.
  - 2. Jude 3 admonishes us to contend for "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints."

(If it be said that Revelation was written after Jude, those affirming would have to prove the same and would have to prove that the revelation to John had not been revealed to him before Jude wrote).

**VI. THE BIBLE GIVES AMPLE WARNING ABOUT THE AWFUL CONSEQUENCES OF CHANGING GOD'S WORD.**

- A. 2 John 9-11: "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds."
- B. Deut. 4:2: "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."
- C. Numbers 22:18: "Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, 'Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more.'"
- D. 1 Peter 4:11: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen."
- E. Rev. 22:18-19: "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."
- F. Gal. 1:8-9: "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."

**VII. NOT ALL TRANSLATIONS ARE RELIABLE.**