

The Bible: One Whole Truth

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An indispensable keystone in the Bible is found in II Timothy 3:16a, where we have the words, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” The original, literally, has *Pasa graphe theopneustos*. This is paraphrased, in our King James Version, as we have just stated it: “All Scripture.”—and here you have the great Reformation principle of *tota Scriptura*, the whole Scripture—“is given by inspiration of God.” Although, because it is paraphrase, this is not strictly, a translation, at least there is nothing misleading about the King James Version, as there *is* in the American Standard Version of it. “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable.” *That* version of it is not only misleading, but suspect—really more a perversion. For it implies uninspired and, therefore, unprofitable scripture.

As for the term *theopneusto*, it does not mean mere inspiration or “inspiring.” Literally, it denotes a divine inspiration. It does not mean that Scripture is breathed *into* holy men of old as it was breathed *out* from God. It means, “All Scripture is *God-breathed!*” Scripture is the very *breathing* of God. It is the living Word of the living God. Scripture as the breathing of God is the product, exclusively, of the almighty life and power of God. All things are the product of the breath of God. “The Spirit of God hath made me and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Jon 33:4). “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth” (Psalm 33:6). But Scripture, particularly, is God-animated. It is nothing less than the animation and activation of God. Scripture is God-spirited-full of God’s Spirit, and the mind of the Spirit.

With this stance on the infallible inspiration of Scripture, Jesus and His disciples were in full agreement. This is also their doctrine of Scripture. They all regard the Old Testament as infallible, and for that reason it necessarily had to be fulfilled. “Truly I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18). “All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning Me” (Luke 24:44). Jesus insisted that “the Scripture shall be fulfilled that thus it must be!” (Matthew 26:54). The writers of Scripture claimed to have the power of the Spirit. “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance” (I Thessalonians 1: 5). They also claimed that the words they wrote were not of man’s wisdom, but of the teaching of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 2:13). They claimed to speak as the prophets of God. “He, therefore, that despiseth (us), despiseth not man, but God, who hath given unto us His Holy Spirit” (I Thessalonians 4:8). They also claimed plenary authority for their writings. “The things that are freely given to us of God...we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth” (I Corinthians 2:12, 13).

It is quite plain from all this that the infallible rule of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and the Scripture itself can and does support its own claim to infallibility. For they require us to “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life.” Rebuking the religious rationalists of His day, Jesus said, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” Men *err* all the time: the Scripture never! They are an inerrant rule of instruction and behavior. Jesus also believed and taught the Old Testament’s infallible inspiration and authority when He said, “The Scripture cannot be broken.” The Old Testament writers themselves claimed to be inspired of God. “David

the son of Jesse said... ‘the Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue’.” (II Samuel 23:1, 2) They incessantly used such language as, “Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: thus saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 10:1). The New Testament writers believed not only the Old Testament but also by their *own* writings to be the word of God. Their stand was, “God, who at sundry times and divers manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son” (Hebrews 1:1,2).

What He, the divine Son of God, says in Scripture is the infallible truth. His word written comes to us from His mouth with the authority of heaven. His statements are without error. Wherever the Bible speaks, it is trustworthy for both salvation and general factual accuracy, for both their spiritual-ethical principles and their natural, geographical and historical statement. The Bible is the Word of Christ, and in all its parts, as to fact, history and interpretation, it is divinely authoritative. It is *verbally* inspired, that is, as to its very words, and not merely as to its general ideas. The idea of truth cannot be conveyed to the mind except in words. Distinct and reasonable thought arises in the mind and to expression in the form of words. Jesus said, “The flesh profits nothing: the *words* that I speak unto you are spirit and are life!” (John 6:63). Infallibility and inerrancy attach both to Scripture’s thought structure and its verbal expression. “Why do ye not understand My speech? Jesus cross-examined His enemies. I will tell you: “Because ye cannot hear My word. He that is of God heareth God’s *words*. Ye, therefore, hear them no, because ye are not of God.’ (John 8:43, 47). The *thought* in Scripture cannot express the divine mind if the words conveying the thought are faulty. If the script is vague the sense will be vague. The infallible mind of God is expressed in His own infallible word. For the absolutely perfect *God*, with His own purpose to reveal *Himself*, would do no less than to reveal Himself infallibly. Through the entire history of the world, it was His will and purpose that His church be in possession of an infallible record of His truth. Then “all Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God,” *is* verbally and plenary (fully) inspired, *is* divine revelation without error.

It is this verbal, plenary inspiration which renders the holy Scripture infallible. This is taught in that great document of the true church known as the *Belgic Confession*, which states that the word of God is uttered not by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. God by a special providence commanded those holy men, prophets and apostles to put His revealed word in writing, and providentially. He preserved these writings from error. For this reason we are bound to call such writings holy and divine Scriptures (Article 3. Belgic Confession). These writings are so *truly* the word of God that against them nothing can be alleged. This is *fact*, not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but because the Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, which is exactly their own testimony. Scripture is, therefore, in all respects, more perfect, complete, one whole organism of truth. Other writings of men, however holy or excellent in caliber, can in no wise be considered on a par with the divine Scriptures. Therefore, we reject with all our hearts whatsoever does not agree with this infallible rule which the apostles have taught us, saying, “*Try* the spirits, whether they are of God,” and where they also said, “if there come *any* unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house” (Articles 5, 7).

But where you have a so called “*church*” denying and so removing from itself Scripture’s claim to its infallibility, what have you left? Nothing but low-brow, sensationalistic religious innovations in which young people’s societies are exposed to various forms of “sensitivity training” and where the youthful society members are taught “situation ethics”. So the philosophy of pragmatism has made its inroads. It is dangerous, without standard or sound guidelines. Those foolish enough to swallow the pseudo-religion in the apostate churches will

think the Bible spotted with self-contradictions and errors. The most modern attack on the Bible is that it is theologically primitive, ethically outmoded, morally tyrannical, historically inaccurate, scientifically juvenile and sickly superstitious. But the one outstanding, constant attribute of the Bible is that it is God-spirated. That attribute makes Scripture in all its parts, in thought and word, the verbally, plenarily inspired inerrant and infallible Word of God!

Originally published in:
Volume 38 No 1 March 1979