

A Light in the Darkness

THE DOCTRINE OF THE WORD OF GOD

Inspiration: What Does it Mean to be “God-Breathed?”

- We have said up to this point that inspiration either *is* or results in Scripture being God’s words. But what does that mean, exactly?
 - Isa. 36:1-12 – In what straightforward sense are these “God’s words?”
 - Titus 1:12 – In what straightforward sense are these “God’s words?”
 - 1 Cor 1:16 - In what straightforward sense are these “God’s words?”
- **Text or Authors?**
 - While we regularly (and appropriately) speak of both inspired authors and inspired Scriptures, properly speaking, is “inspiration” a property that *primarily* belongs to Scripture (a very special kind of text) or one that *primarily* belongs to the *authors* of Scripture (a very special kind of influence). Which one more meaningfully explains the other?
 - The Challenge of Meticulous Sovereignty
 - God plans every detail of creation according to his will and wisdom and, in one way or another, infallibly brings his plan to pass by his power.

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- Grudem: “... the words of Scripture are God’s very words.”
 - **Pros/Cons?**
- Erickson: “...that supernatural influence of the Spirit on the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation or which resulted in what they wrote actually being the Word of God.”
 - **Pros/Cons?**
- Frame: “...a divine act that creates an identity between a divine word and a human word.”
 - **Pros/Cons?**
- Davis: “...that influence of the Holy Spirit on the writing of the Bible that ensures that the words of its various texts are appropriate both for the role that they play in Scripture and for the overall salvific purpose of Scripture itself.”
 - **Pros/Cons?**

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- Warfield: “It is this final act in the production of Scripture which is technically called ‘inspiration’; and inspiration is thus brought before us as, in the minds of the writers of the New Testament, that particular operation of God in the production of Scripture which takes effect at the very point of the writing of Scripture... with the effect of giving to the resultant Scripture a specifically supernatural character, and constituting it a Divine, as well as human, book.”
 - Pros/Cons?
- Krug: “To say that Scripture is inspired is to say that it is intended by God to serve as the authoritative and preeminent source of divine revelation, instruction and edification for the people of God throughout the ages.”
 - Pros/Cons?

Inerrancy | Concepts and Distinctions

- The Word “Inerrant” | Where Almost Everyone Agrees
 - To be without error; to be wholly true
 - This is simply a dictionary definition that lexicographers have assimilated from observation of widespread usage of the term in the English language.
- The Concept of “Inerrant” Scripture | Where All the Disagreement Lies
 - Particularly when applied to Scripture, there are many *conceptual* questions that must be asked (and answered) to even begin a discussion about whether Scripture is inerrant.
 - What does it mean to say that something is “true?”
 - What does it mean to say that a collection of questions, commands, interjections, parables and historical reports is “inerrant?” Does the Bible teach this kind of inerrancy?
 - What does it mean to “teach” something using language?
 - “Saying” vs Communicating
 - Reporting vs Affirming
 - Teaching vs Learning

Inerrancy | Concepts and Distinctions

– Truth

- Why not start with how the Bible uses the word “truth?”
 - Answer: We aren’t primarily interested in how the Bible *uses a word*, but in *understanding a fundamental concept* to see if it *properly applies to the Bible*.
- The Correspondence Theory
 - Truth is a property of propositions that correspond with reality, that describe the way things actually are.
 - “The cat is on the mat” is true if and only if the cat is on the mat.

– What are We Evaluating for Truth?

- Words
 - “God’s Holy Word is true, every word of it!”
 - Problem: words aren’t true or false
 - Apart from sentences and a context, words only have semantic range (possible meanings), not actual meaning.
- Meaningful expressions
 - What about interjections?
 - “By no means!”

Inerrancy | Concepts and Distinctions

- Complete sentences
 - What about questions and commands?
- Complete sentences that make a truth claim
 - What about Isa. 36:10?
 - “Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The Lord said to me, “Go up against this land and destroy it.”
- All meaningful, declarative statements
 - What about statements in parables and proverbs?
 - Is it true that a sower went out to sow? (Matt. 13:4)
 - Is it true that if you raise a child the right way that when he is old he will not depart from it? (Prov. 22:6)
- Suggestion: the *affirmations* made by the authors of Scripture—what Scripture *teaches*