

The Inspiration of Scripture

Indelible Grace Church Sunday School, May 2, 2021

“All Scripture is breathed out by God...”

The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture. (Westminster Confession of Faith, 1.10)

The Scriptures are:

The very words of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
All we need to know God (Luke 16:29, 31)
The perfect guide for life (Proverbs 6:23)
Pure (Psalm 12:6)
True (Psalm 119:60, John 17:17)
Trustworthy (Proverbs 30:5-6)

Perfect (Psalm 19:7)
Powerful (Hebrews 4:12)
For everyone (Romans 16:25-27)
The standard by which all teaching is to be tested (Acts 17:11)
To be obeyed (James 1:22)

The foundational truth: God speaks

In the beginning...

The words of God in creation: *God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3)*

The words of God in cursing (Genesis 3:14-19)

The words of God in covenant: *Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, (Genesis 9:8–9)*

The Fall: questioning the word of God

The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” (Genesis 2:16–17)

Now the serpent... said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1)

God's words are an extension of himself

- ³ *The voice of the LORD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD, over many waters.*
- ⁵ *The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.*
- ⁶ *He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.*
- ⁸ *The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.*
- ⁹ *The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth
and strips the forests bare,
and in his temple all cry, "Glory!" (Psalm 29)*

- ¹⁰ *"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:10–11)*

God's divine speech; done through the appointed prophets

¹⁵ *"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—¹⁶ just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.'¹⁷ And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And **I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.** ¹⁹ And whoever will not listen to **my words that he shall speak in my name**, I myself will require it of him. ²⁰ But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. (Deuteronomy 18:15–20)*

*Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth."...
Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me,
"Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. (Jeremiah 1:6, 9)*

Then the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" (Numbers 22:28)

Jesus and the words of God

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (Hebrews 1:1–2)

For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. (John 17:8)

And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town. (Matthew 10:14–15)

“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. (Matthew 10:40)

Inspiration: God speaks through Scripture

“People who were providentially provided by God and motivated and superintended by the Holy Spirit, spoke and wrote according to their own personalities and circumstances in such a way that their words are the very Word of God. God’s supernatural guidance of the writers and their situations enabled them to receive and communicate all God would have us know for his glory and our salvation.” – *Gerry Breshears*

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16–17)

theopneustos: God-breathed

There are several elements that belong in a proper definition of inspiration:

- 1) The divine element – God the Holy Spirit superintended the writers, ensuring the accuracy of the writing.
- 2) The human element – human authors wrote according to their individual styles and personalities
- 3) The result of the divine-human authorship is the recording of God’s truth without error
- 4) Inspiration extends to the selection of words by the writers
- 5) Inspiration relates to the original manuscripts

Verbal Plenary inspiration. All scripture is breathed out by God. The Bible says exactly what God wants to say because the Holy Spirit was responsible for every word written in Scripture. He is the divine author behind the human authors.

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. (2 Peter 1:19–21)

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. 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 5:17–18)

Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. (Galatians 3:16)

And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. (2 Peter 3:15–16)