

The Doctrine of Scripture

The inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of God's Word

Divine Inspiration

2 Timothy 3:16-17

[16] All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: [17] That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Peter 1:20-21

[20] Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. [21] For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

1 Corinthians 2:13

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Jeremiah 1:9

Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

Scripture is God-breathed—not merely human reflection on spiritual matters but the very words of God communicated through human authors. '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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit so superintended the biblical writers that, using their own personalities, backgrounds, and styles, they wrote exactly what God intended—without error in the original manuscripts.

This inspiration extends to every word (verbal), covering all subjects addressed

(plenary). Scripture is therefore not merely a record of revelation but is itself revelation.

What Scripture says, God says. To disbelieve Scripture is to disbelieve God; to obey Scripture is to obey God.

Inerrancy and Infallibility

Psalm 19:7

(See Psalm 19:7)

Proverbs 30:5-6

[5] Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

[6] Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

John 10:35

If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

Matthew 5:18

For verily 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.

Because Scripture is God-breathed and God cannot lie, the Bible is without error in all it affirms—inerrant in its original manuscripts and infallible in its purposes. 'The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.' Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. Jesus declared, 'The scripture cannot be broken.' Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law.

Inerrancy means Scripture speaks truth in everything it addresses—history, science, geography, theology. It does not mean using modern scientific language or addressing every question we might ask.

Infallibility means Scripture will accomplish God's purposes without fail. These

doctrines are not imposed on Scripture but derived from Scripture's self-testimony and its divine origin.

A God who cannot lie produced a Word that cannot err. To deny inerrancy is ultimately to question God's character and Christ's authority, for He affirmed Scripture's complete trustworthiness.

Authority of Scripture

Isaiah 8:20

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Matthew 4:4

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Acts 17:11

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Psalms 119:89

(See Psalm 119:89)

Scripture possesses supreme authority over all matters of faith and practice—the final court of appeal for what we believe and how we live. 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' Jesus rebuked Satan with 'It is written,' making Scripture the decisive authority.

The Bereans were commended because they 'searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so'—testing even apostolic teaching by Scripture. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Scripture's authority derives from its divine origin—God has spoken, and His Word carries His authority. This authority is self-attesting—Scripture does not need external validation but validates itself to the regenerate heart through the Spirit's

testimony.

It is supreme—standing above church tradition, human reason, personal experience, and cultural consensus. No pope, council, creed, or experience can override what God has said.

The Reformation principle of sola Scriptura—Scripture alone as the ultimate authority—remains essential for faithful Christianity.

Sufficiency of Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16-17

[16] All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: [17] That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

2 Peter 1:3

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Psalm 19:7-11

(See Psalm 19:7-11)

Scripture contains everything necessary for knowing God, understanding salvation, and living godly lives—we need no additional revelation. The man of God is 'perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works' through Scripture.

The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever—God has revealed what we need to know. His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart. Scripture does not address every question we might ask but provides principles sufficient for every situation.

We need no new prophecies, visions, or revelations to know God's will. The sufficiency of Scripture protects against adding human traditions as binding requirements and against seeking extra-biblical guidance through subjective impressions.

It directs us to mine the depths of what God has revealed rather than seeking what He has not disclosed.

Clarity of Scripture

Psalm 119:105

(See Psalm 119:105)

Psalm 119:130

(See Psalm 119:130)

Deuteronomy 30:11-14

[11] For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. [12] It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? [13] Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? [14] But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

2 Timothy 3:15

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Scripture's essential message is clear to ordinary readers who approach it seeking to understand and obey—perspicuity does not require scholarly expertise. 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.' The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off... the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. Timothy knew the holy scriptures from childhood—Scripture is accessible to children, not only scholars.

Clarity does not mean every passage is equally easy to understand—Peter acknowledged that Paul wrote some things hard to understand. It means that the central message of salvation through Christ, the basic requirements of godly living, and the essential doctrines of the faith are sufficiently clear for anyone who reads with humble dependence on the Spirit.

This clarity liberates believers to read Scripture for themselves, not depending on priestly intermediaries to interpret for them.

Studying Scripture Rightly

2 Timothy 2:15

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Nehemiah 8:8

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

Acts 8:30-31

[30] And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? [31] And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

Psalms 119:18

(See Psalm 119:18)

While Scripture is clear, diligent study is required to rightly understand and apply God's Word. 'Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' Ezra and the Levites 'read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.' The Ethiopian eunuch needed Philip's help: 'Understandest thou what

thou readest?

How can I, except some man should guide me?' Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Right interpretation requires:

1. Prayer—asking the Spirit to illuminate
2. Careful reading—observing what the text actually says
3. Context—understanding verses within their immediate and broader context
4. Historical background—knowing the original setting
5. Grammatical analysis—attending to words, grammar, and genre
6. Comparing Scripture with Scripture—using clearer passages to interpret less clear
7. Application—moving from understanding to obedience.

The goal is not mere knowledge but transformation—that we might be doers of the Word, not hearers only.

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