

The Perfect Book: Inspiration

How was the Bible written?

- I. Occurrence and meaning of the term
 - A. Only occurrence in the New Testament and key verse: 2 Timothy 3:16
 - B. Meaning
- II. Definition and explanation of the doctrine
 - A. Definition: This is that work of the Holy Spirit in guiding human authors to compose and record through their personalities God's selected message without error in the words of the original documents.
 - B. Explanation
 1. The process or mode (how God did it): Acts 1:16; 4:25
 - a) By the guidance of the Holy Spirit: 2 Peter 1:21
 - b) By the work of human authors
 - (1) They were not passive instruments.
 - (2) The Spirit used their personalities, individual characteristics, and backgrounds.
 - (3) Some used an amanuensis.
 - (a) The example of Paul (Romans 16:22) (see also 1 Peter 5:12).
 - (b) The historical background.
 - (c) A possible problem: Did Paul give this freedom to his secretary? Probably not.
 - (4) Sources of information.
 - (a) Direct revelation (Galatians 1:12)
 - (b) Eyewitnesses (Luke 1:2-3)
 - (c) Personal experience (Acts 20:15)
 - (d) Oral tradition (1 Timothy 3:16)
 - (e) Written records
 - c) Conclusions
 - (1) The best word to describe the process of inspiration or how God did it is "guidance."
 - (2) Some words and portions were dictated (Exodus 21:1; 34:27).

- (3) Differences in writing style are against the mechanical dictation theory as a whole.
- (4) The use of research and written sources is not contrary to divine inspiration.
- (5) The Bible is both the word and work of people and the word and work of God (compare Matthew 15:4 with Mark 7:10 and John 12:39-41 with Acts 28:25-27).
- (6) The illumination of the writers was not guaranteed (Daniel 12:8-9; 1 Peter 1:10-12).