

## 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).
2. The product or results (were the writers inspired or were their writings inspired, or were they both inspired?)
- a) Its extent.
    - (1) Only to Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16).
      - (a) Occurrence and meaning of the term “Scripture.”
      - (b) Certain portions of the New Testament were also classified as “Scripture.”
    - (2) To all Scripture (plenary).
      - (a) The “all Scripture” of 2 Timothy 3:16 could be translated “every Scripture.”
      - (b) The Scriptures are a unit (John 10:35).
    - (3) To every word of Scripture (verbal).
      - (a) Key verses: Matthew 5:18; Galatians 3:16.
        - (i) Even the smallest letters are important (Matthew 5:18).
        - (ii) Even plurals are important (Galatians 3:16).
      - (b) Inspiration of concepts without inspiration of words leaves us in uncertainty.
      - (c) Some ramifications (why verbal inspiration is important).
    - (4) To the original manuscripts.
      - (a) The original writings were the product of inspiration (2 Peter 1:21).

- (b) The variants between copies of the originals are for the most part inconsequential.

## Inspiration (continued)

- (5) To inerrancy
  - (a) The meaning of inerrancy
    - (i) The Bible is a record of things as they actually were and a true account of those things about which it speaks.
    - (ii) The Bible contains truth about God, but it is always accurate, even when it is not speaking about Him.
  - (b) The expectation of inerrancy
    - (i) Because of the character of God
    - (ii) Because of the need of people.
  - (c) What inerrancy does not demand.
    - (i) Proper grammar
    - (ii) Identical wording in parallel passages
    - (iii) Strict chronology of events: Only if the author indicates he is presenting a chronological account would there be a problem.
    - (iv) Exact quoting of the Old Testament in the New Testament: The Holy Spirit has the right to use Old Testament Scripture in the New Testament as He wills, as the ultimate Author of both.
    - (v) The use of scientific language (Job 26:11; Revelation 7:1; compare Isaiah 40:22)
    - (vi) The use of up-to-date language (Isaiah 2:4)
  - (d) Our approach to supposed historical and scientific inaccuracies and contradictions
- (6) To equality
  - b) Its profit (2 Timothy 3:16)
    - (1) Areas of profit
    - (2) Action of profit—it changes our life.

- c) Its purpose (2 Timothy 3:17)—to thoroughly equip us for every good work