

**THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE --- WHAT IT MEANS**  
**2Tim.3:16,17; 2Pet.1:20,21; 1Cor.2:9-13**  
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**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Having considered in a previous lesson the importance of the inspiration of the Bible, we now consider it essential to determine from the Bible itself and define accurately what is meant by Biblical inspiration.
2. This is essential because on the subject of the inspiration of the Bible there is much misunderstanding and confusion – even among confessed believers!
3. There are conflicting views on inspiration and some have maintained that the Bible never gives an exact definition of what is meant by inspiration.
4. We plan to show this is not true, for the elements or factors that enter into the nature and definition of inspiration are surely found in the Biblical writings and plainly reveal to us what is meant by inspiration.

**II. DISCUSSION**

**A. FIRST WE NOTE THAT “INSPIRATION” IS A TERM WHICH IS CURRENTLY BEING USED IN DIFFERENT SENSES BY DIFFERENT MEN.**

1. The Modernist of the rankest sort:
  - a. Claims to believe in God; but he doesn't believe in the God of the Bible.
  - b. Claims to believe in Christ; but he doesn't believe in the Christ and Savior of the Bible.
  - c. Also claims to believe in the inspiration of the Bible; but he doesn't mean by “inspiration” what the Bible teaches about inspiration.
    - (1) He believes that the writings of Paul, Peter and other Bible writers were “inspired” in the same sense as were the writings of Shake-speare, Milton, Tennyson, and Poe.
    - (2) He doesn't hesitate to attempt to explain the *profundity* of the book of Romans on the ground that “Paul felt better that day.”
2. Not only the rank modernist but many others who are tainted with modernism, and or other isms, have different, but equally erroneous, ideas on what inspiration of the Bible means.
  - a. First, there is what is known as **NATURAL INSPIRATION**.
    - (1) By this they mean, as already mentioned, that Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, and Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, Poe, et al are all inspired alike.
    - (2) Inspiration to them means a divine spark expressed in human genius.

- (3) The ability and the impulse to create are regarded as being from God but that which is produced as being the product of purely human wisdom and effort, acquired technique, information, and life's ex-periences
- (4) Every contribution in the fields of arts and sciences is, in this sense, regarded as being inspired.
- (5) The Gnostic and the infidel will grant this form of inspiration to Biblical writers. Even the Atheist could almost do so.
- (6) They will readily do this because this position, in fact, denies that there is any supernatural element whatever. It also denies all dis-tinction between genius and inspiration.

b. NOEMATICAL INSPIRATION, sometimes called THOUGH INSPIRA-TION is another theory of inspiration.

- (1) By this is meant that God gave only the thoughts to men and allowed them to express these thoughts in their own way and in their own words in transmitting God's will to the human race.
- (2) The fact that each Biblical writer is characterized by his own peculiar style of expression is urged as proof of this concept, as well as the fact that personal experiences of the writers are often insepar-ably woven into that which they have written.
- (3) See Mt.10:16-:20; Jno.16:13-15; 1Pet.1:10,11; Dan.12:8,9; Ac.2:36-40; Ac.10; 1Cor.2:1-13; Gal.1:11,12; Eph.3:3-6; 2Pet.1:20,21. All of these deny that only the thought was inspired and given by God and the words were supplied by man without divine aid.
- (4) In spite of the claims of the Modernists to the contrary, the natural and inevitable deficiencies of the human instruments employed by God in revealing his will to man make "Noemactical Inspiration" or "Thought Inspiration" impossible. Among these natural deficiencies of the human instruments, which are universally admitted, are:
  - (a) The fallibility and undependability of human memory, which is recognized by Jesus in promising the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles, Jno.14:26.
  - (b) The imperfection of human understanding. Even if men could remember all the Lord had said, their lack of understanding of it and its implications could well cause them to misrepresent him.
  - (c) The limitations of human genius with reference to the ability to express clearly and without error what they

have heard and seen, even granting a reasonable degree of understanding.

(1) Circumstances can arouse human prejudice and passion and hinder expression.

(2) Fear, hate, love, sorrow, and confusion can often have a telling effect upon man's ability to express himself lucidly and clearly.

(3) Many Bible subjects are highly technical and certainly unfamiliar to the untrained minds, and even totally unknown at the time, when they were chosen to express them, hence the very nature of the subject matter would preclude the possibility of a clear transmission of truth concerning them without divine aid. Cf. 1Pet.1:9-12.

(4) The inability of a speaker or writer to adapt his communication to the capacity of his hearers or readers presents another problem.

(d) The tendency of men to make accidental mistakes is too well known to need much argumentation.

(1) Paul inadvertently reviled the High Priest by reason of this fact on one occasion, Ac.23:1-5.

c. **MECHANICAL INSPIRATION**, or the **VERBAL DICTATION THEORY** is still another.

(1) This position makes the writers completely passive, resembling more a secretary or even a Dictaphone.

(2) This concept, if true, would mean they were mere robots, and would have in it no place for the peculiar style and experiences of the writers.

(3) A close reading of the Bible and just a little serious thinking will rule out this theory; for their individual peculiar styles and experiences are evident in their writings.

3. There are others, of which I am one, who believe in **PLENARY INSPIRATION** or **VERBAL INSPIRATION**.

a. The word, "plenary," comes from the Latin term, *plenus*, meaning "full or complete."

(1) This means that the Bible is "God-breathed" in, not some, but **ALL** its parts.

b. The term, "verbal inspiration," has to do with *words, not thoughts*

*only.*

- (1) Verbal inspiration does not suggest Mechanical Inspiration, as some suppose; for inspiration can be verbal without being mechanical.
- (2) Verbal inspiration simply suggests that God not only gave men the thoughts, but that he miraculously guided them in their choice of words so they might correctly and exactly express His thoughts, while retaining their own peculiar style and characteristics of expression.
- (3) More on this latter.

**B. NOW WE OFFER THE DEFINITIONS GIVEN BY PRINCIPAL AND REPRESENTATIVE UNINSPIRED WRITERS IN ORDER TO SHOW THE ACCEPT- ED POSITION ON THE MEANING AND NATURE OF BIBLICAL INSPIRA-TION DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES.**

1. L. Caussen: Inspiration is "...that inexplicable power which the Divine Spirit put forth of old on the authors of holy Scriptures, in order to the guidance even in the employment of the words they used, and to preserve them alike from all error and from all omission." –Theopneustia: The Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scrip-tures, p.34, as quoted by Wick Broomal in "Biblical Criticism," pp.16,17.
2. Robert Watts: "By verbal inspiration is meant such an agency of the Holy Spirit as rendered the sacred writers absolutely infallible in the communication of the Divine will to men, determining not only the substance...,but the form also of the message they were commissioned to deliver, and extending, not simply to the ideas..., but reaching to the words in which the Revelation was conveyed." –The Rule of Faith, p.97, as quoted by Wick Broomal in "Biblical Criticism," pp.16,17
3. F. Turrentin, "The sacred writers were so moved and inspired by the Holy Ghost, both in respect to thought and language, that they were kept from all error, and their writings are truly authentic and divine." –as quoted in Wm. G.T. Shedd's Dogmatic Theology, as quoted from "Biblical Criticism," by Wick Brooomal, pp. 16,17.
4. B. B. Warfield: "...the Bible is the word of God in such a sense that its words, though written by men and bearing indelibly impressed upon them the marks of their human origin, were written, nevertheless, under such an influence of the Holy Ghost as to be the words of God, the adequate expression of His mind and will...this conception of co-authorship implies that the Spirit's superintendence extends to the choice of the words by the human authors (verbal inspiration), and preserves its product from everything inconsistent with a divine authorship—thus securing, among

other things, that entire truthfulness which is everywhere pre-supposed in and asserted for the Scriptures by the Biblical writers (inerrancy)...”

5. Even Webster’s New 20<sup>th</sup> Century Dict. Of the English Language, Unabridged, 1950 Edition, p.901, says: “The supernatural influence of the Spirit of God in the human mind, by which prophets, apostles, and sacred writers were qualified to set forth Divine truth without any mixture of error.”
6. Of course, it should be understood that if the Bible itself does not bear out this definition, then, their definition is both wrong and useless.

**C. NOW STUDY WHAT THE BIBLE WRITERS THEMSELVES SAY ON THIS SUBJECT OF INSPIRATION, WHICH IS THE ONLY WAY TO LEARN WHAT THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS.**

1. A brief, general look at both some O.T. and N.T. passages.

a. In the case of Moses we are told:

- (1) Exo.4:10-12.
- (2) That “God spake these words,” Exo.20:1.
- (3) “And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord,” Exo.24:4.
- (4) “These are the words which the Lord hath commanded,”

Exo.35:1.

b. David said, “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue,” 2Sam.23:2.

c. Isaiah said, “Here, O heaven, and give ear, O earth for the Lord has spoken,” Isa.1:2.

d. Jeremiah said:

- (1) “The word of the Lord came unto me,” Jer.1:4.
- (2) “Whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak...Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth,” Jer.1:7,9.

e. Ezekiel saw visions of God and wrote:

- (1) “The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel, Ezek.1:3.
- (2) “Thou shalt speak my words unto them,” Ezek.3:4.
- (3) “Speak with my words unto them,” Ezek.3:4.

f. Daniel tells us he received his message in visions (Dan.7:1), and from the lips of Gabriel (Dan.9:21).

g. Amos says he wrote “the words...which he saw concerning Israel,” Amos 1:1.

h. Cf. Mt.1:22 and 2:15:

- (1) KJV: “now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet”
- (2) NASV: “now all this took place that what was spoken by (not of) the Lord through (not by) the prophet might be fulfilled”
- (3) Williams: “what the Lord had said through the prophet”

- i. In the case of the prophets and Jesus Christ we read, Deut.18:18,10; Ac.3:19-23 (esp.v.21); Jno.8:28; 12:48-50; 14:23,24; 15:15; 17:8,14.
  - j. Mk.12:36: “David himself said by the Holy Ghost”
  - k. Lk.1:70: “He (the Lord God) spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began.”
  - l. Ac.1:16: “The Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spoke concerning Judas”
  - m. Ac.2:4; 1Cor.14:37; 1Th.2:13 (Jno.14:26; 16:13,14); Gal.1:11,12; Eph.3:1-5; Mt.16:19; 18:18.
  - n. Rev.1:1,2,10,11; 2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14.
  - o. Mt.10:16-20: they would be verbally inspired when arrested and brought before unsympathetic rulers for trial.
  - p. 1Cor.2:12,13: “...that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth...”
  - q. Note: This leaves no room for doubt that the very words are inspired; another kind of inspiration than verbal inspiration would not do!
2. Now to a more in depth study of a few of the statements of the apostles Peter and Paul, the first of which is 2Tim.3:16,17, which is the Mt.Everest of the passages dealing with Biblical inspiration.
- a. “Every (All) scripture is inspired of God,” or “God-breathed.” (ASV)
    - (1) Here Paul is positively and emphatically stating that all scripture is the result of the creative breath of God, and is profitable and purposeful.
      - (a) This is in perfect harmony with the context, with what both precedes and succeeds.
      - (b) For having stated in the preceding verse the excellence of the sacred writings (vv.14,15), he then accounts for that excellence by referring to their origin or source.
      - (c) They are God-breathed, and hence their wide use and great power.
      - (d) The force of vv.16,17 is also felt and highly significant when you consider that it was uttered against a background of pre-dicted apostasy: “I charge thee therefore...preach the word...for the time will come...,2Tim.4:1-4.
    - (2) All scripture is “God-breathed,” but God did not “in-breath” the words of Scripture into the human authors, rather he “out-breathed” the Scriptures through the human authors.

- (3) “All” or “every Scripture” – that is, “every single passage of Scripture.”
  - (a) This lays the axe to the root of the erroneous idea that portions of Scripture writing which were within the observation and experience of the writer, such as history and biography, were written out of the observations and experiences of the writers without divine aid except in the way of divine superintendence to prevent error.
  - (b) Not part, but all Scripture is “God-breathed,” or is the result of the creative breath of God, or is the result of the out-breath-ing of God, and this includes the historical and the biographi-cal as well as the prophecy concerning events to come. Cf. Jno.14:26.
  - (c) No matter how well acquainted a Biblical writer may have been with the history he recorded, it was God who out-breathed the recording of that history; it was God who wrote the history, including and excluding as he willed.
  - (d) The human author was indeed merely the instrument of God in the writing, though it was not Mechanical Inspiration.

b. In this text Paul affirms three all-important things regarding the Scriptures:

- (1) The nature and source of Scripture: It is “God-breathed,” “inspired of God,” the result of the creative breath of God.
- (2) The consequences of its “God-breathed” character: It is “profitable for...”
- (3) The spiritual purpose of its inspiration: “that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.”

c. Now to some questions regarding 2Tim.3:16,17 and its meaning:

- (1) Does it refer to the O.T. only? Or, Must it be limited to the O.T. Scriptures only?
  - (a) It must surely include and have primary reference to the O.T., since “scripture” in the N.T. writings almost everywhere designates the O.T. documents.
  - (b) But the principle laid down here applies with equal force to all the N.T. writings, and they are a part of inspired Scriptures. (Take note of vv.14,15, esp.v.15b.)
  - (c) Also, Peter classified Paul’s epistles as “scripture” in 2Pet.3:15,16.

- (d) So, what would be wrong with Paul designating his own writings and the writings of other apostles as “scripture” in 2Tim.3:16,17? Cf. Eph.3:1-5; 1Cor.14:37; 1Pet.4:11.
  - (e) What Paul is saying in writing “every scripture is God-breathed,” after he had made reference to the O.T. Scriptures, is that the term Scripture is enlarged beyond the O.T. Scriptures which Timothy had known as a boy. Therefore, not only the O.T. but “every Scripture,” being inspired of God, is profitable for this very reason.
- (2) Is Paul here giving a definition of the nature of inspiration when he affirms that Scripture is God-breathed?
- (a) Certainly he is; and we offer examples of the practice of Bib-lical writers giving short, concise, definitions of sacred truths.
    - (1) Sin, for example, is defined tersely in 1Jno.3:4; 5:17; Rom.14:23; Jas.4:17.
    - (2) God’s nature is defined in a similar subject-predicate form in Jno.4:24; 1Jno.1:5; 4:8.
    - (3) In a negative-positive relationship the kingdom of God is defined in Rom.14:17.
    - (4) The true Jew is defined in a negative-positive way in Rom.2:28,,29.
    - (5) So also are the true children of Abraham, Gal.3:7,29; Rom.9:6-8.
    - (6) So is faith in Heb.11:1.
    - (7) So the definite, concise statement of 2Tim.3:16 regard-ing the nature of inspiration well conforms to the practice of Scripture.
- (3) Does “God-breathed” include such ideas as infallibility, inerrancy, and authority?
- (a) Certainly! For God has not breathed into his written will any-thing that borders on error of any kind.
    - (1) If like begets like in the natural, physical realm, the same principle must operate in the spiritual realm, Gen.1:11,12; Gal.6:7,8.
    - (2) If God is the Source and the Author of all truth in nature and in revelation, it is inconceivable that He would breathe into one of His messengers that which was lacking in veracity or reliability.



- (b) Satan is the author of the lie, not God, Jno.8:44 (Gen.3:4); Tit.1:2; Heb.6:16-18; 1Jno.3:8.
      - (1) It thus follows that the God-breathed Scriptures cannot lie, that is, they cannot err in any realm, whether it be in history, science, or purely spiritual truth.
      - (2) Men who preach them can lie! And often times do!
      - (3) Men who preach them can pervert them! Often do!
      - (4) But the Scriptures being “God-breathed” cannot lie!
    - (c) If this be so, and it most assuredly is, inspiration includes inerrancy, infallibility, and authority. They all stand or fall together!
    - d. And all of this is what 2Tim.3:16,17 is saying!
- 3. 2Pet.1:20,21 is another apostolic utterance which supports and corroborates the conclusions reached from 2Tim.3:16,17, and at which we now take a close look.
  - a. Translations which will help us in our study:
    - (1) Goodspeed: “For no prophecy ever originated in the human will, but under the influence of the Holy Spirit men spake from God.”
    - (2) Williams: “For no prophecy has ever yet originated in man’s will, but men who were led by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”
    - (3) NASV: “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”
    - (4) A literal translation: “For not by the will of man was prophecy brought at any time, but being borne on (being carried along) by the Holy Spirit the holy men of God spoke.”
  - b. First, in 2Pet.1:20,21 the origin of all prophecy is considered negatively as not being due to man’s own private interpretations of things.
    - (1) This simply means the Scriptures are not the result of human will, investigation or observation. This is also what Paul affirms in 1Cor. 2:9-13, which we shall deal with later.
    - (2) True, some Scripture may embrace much of the writer’s experience, but the Scripture does not come from this source.

- c. Then, the origin of prophecy is described positively as being from God. Cf. Heb.1:1.
- (1) This means they “spoke from God”; they spoke as they were moved, carried along, borne by the Holy Spirit.
  - (2) The verb literally means to pick up or to bear along to a goal of the bearer’s own choosing; the bearer in this case being God by means of the Holy Spirit.
  - (3) The same verb is used in Ac.27:15-17 of persons borne or carried along in a ship over the surface of the sea.
  - (4) It is used in our text of the mind, to be moved inwardly, prompted. Thus men wrote words “as born,” or prophecy “was brought” through them, by the Holy Spirit at God’s direction.
  - (5) As the instruments of God through the Holy Spirit, they spoke what He wanted them to speak, when He wanted them to speak it.
  - (6) This means they were no more self-moved, or no more moved by their own human genius, than a sailing vessel at sea is when it is impelled by the wind; and as the progress made by the sailing vessel is to be measured by the impulse bearing upon it, to Bible prophecy is to be traced to the impulse bore upon their minds.
  - (7) Thus the Biblical writers wrote not of or from themselves, but from and of God. An illustration of the truth of 2Pet.1:21 is found in Ac.1:15,16; 4:24,25; Mk.12:35,36.
- d. Men indeed spoke; there was thus the exercise of the human mind to a certain extent; there was the human form in what they spoke; there were even individual characteristics brought out in their writings; but the higher causal account of it was that they spoke from God, and because they were borne along unresistingly by the Holy Spirit.
- e. Worthy of note and emphasis here is the fact:
- (1) That Roman Catholic theology is obviously wrong when it uses this passages to assert that Scripture can only be interpreted by the Catholic Church, and not by private or individual Christians.
  - (2) That the principle here established applies to all divine prophecy whether it be the O.T. or the N.T. – it came from God by means of the Holy Spirit and through men.
  - (3) That there was thus secured certainty and infallibility in what they spoke, which happens to be the point Peter is making here.
  - (4) That 2Pet.1:21 and 2Tim.3:16,17 are in complete harmony:

- (a) Both writers by inspiration state in the most unequivocal language that the Bible is of divine origin.
  - (b) Both agree that its words are inspired of God.
    - (1) And further attesting this is the fact that in the Bible arguments are even built on the very words of Scripture, Gal.3:16; and even on the tense of a word, for in Mk.12:18-27, the Lord's reasoning depends on the very tense of a word. Cf. Exo.3:6.
  
- 4. Next we turn to 2Cor.13:3, where Paul is defending his apostleship and thus his inspiration and authority which are under question (vv.1-3), where v.3 is pregnant with mighty implications, and of sufficient importance to demand a careful study and explanation, and which necessarily implies verbal inspiration.
  - a. First let us make sure we understand what is said.
    - (1) KJV: "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me."
    - (2) ASV: "Seeing ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me."
    - (3) NASV: "Since you are seeking for proof of the Christ who speaks in me."
    - (4) Williams: "Since you demand a proof that Christ is speaking through me."
    - (5) Literal translation: "Since a proof ye seek of Christ in me speaking," or "since you are seeking a proof of the in-me-speaking Christ."
    - (6) Cf. Gal.1:11,12; Eph.3:1-5; 1Pet.1:9-11.
  - b. In studying this passage the following facts are highly significant.
    - (1) The main verb is present tense and indicates continuous action: "You keep on seeking."
    - (2) The object of their continuous search is some "proof" of Christ speaking in Paul. That is, since you make it your aim that the Christ speaking in me shall verify himself, shall give you a proof of his working in me, or a proof of the fact that he speaks in me.
    - (3) The participle is also present and adjectival, restrictively modifying Christ:
      - (a) That is, "The in-me-speaking Christ."
      - (b) Or more idiomatically in English: "the Christ who is speaking in me."
    - (4) The very preposition Paul used is also significant.

- (a) He used the Greek preposition “en” meaning “in”; and which always takes the dative case or the case of the indirect object.
  - (b) And when this preposition is used locally of a person it means “in the person.”
  - (c) He did not use the Greek preposition “dia” which, when used with one case, indicates agency and is usually translated by “through”. And when used with another case is used to give “a reason”; and is translated “on account of” or “because of,” etc.
  - (d) Of course we know that in his use of this preposition Paul did not mean that he was an incarnation of Christ.
  - (e) Which makes it obvious that he did mean that, in his office as an inspired apostle, Christ was in him speaking, or speaking in him; he was the mouthpiece of Christ. Cf. Mt.10:19,20; See also 2Cor.12:12 which he had just previously mentioned in this letter.
- c. To grasp the obvious meaning and feel the full force of this passage it must be understood in the light of the context, which, in this case, includes both of his epistles to Corinth.
- (1) Paul’s right to teach and act with apostolic authority had been questioned seriously by some in Corinth and an issue had been made of it.
  - (2) In this the closing chapter of 2Cor. Paul faces the challenge head-on and reminds them, the rebellious at Corinth, of “the moment of truth” which they face when he come if they yet have not repented.
  - (3) Paul knew he could deal with the rebellious, obnoxious, and im-penitent with full apostolic authority, which he mentions in v.10.
  - (4) But, as is evident, such a claim to authority and power and an attempt to so execute it, would be the idea of a deranged mind unless his authority, recognizable by him and by his readers, was based on the unquestionable fact that the Lord whom they worshipped was actually speaking authoritatively in speaking in and through him as he claimed.
  - (5) While Christ lives “in” the Christian “by faith” (Eph.3:17) through the agency of the word, he did more than that in Paul; he spoke “in” Paul in a direct, miraculous way. Paul was his inspired spokesman and had miraculous power to prove it,

1Cor.14:37; 9:1,2; 2Cor.4:1-7; 5:18-20; 10:8-11; 12:12; 13:1-3,10; Gal.1:11,12; Eph.3:1-5.

- d. Therefore, if we receive the teaching of Paul and the other inspired apostles and writers, we are receiving Christ; but if we reject the teaching of these inspired men, we are rejecting Christ and God's word through him, Deut.18:18,19; Jno.17:8,18; 12:48-50; Mt.10:19,20,40; Lk.10:16; Jno.13:20; 14:26; 16:13,14; Ac.2:1-4; 1Th.2:13.
5. 1Cor.2:13 is another apostolic utterance, and an unequivocal claim to verbal in-spiration .
- a. The Greeks were worshippers of worldly wisdom, a problem that plagued the church at Corinth.
  - b. The simplicity of the gospel as preached by Paul at Corinth gave the false teacher or teachers who followed him there an opportunity to hold him up to ridicule.
  - c. Writing in defense of his teaching, Paul recognized the fact that in the eyes of worldly-wise Greek philosophers his teaching would be regarded as "foolishness," but affirms that his teaching represented divine wisdom, a "wisdom not of this world," a wisdom which did not originate with him, but with the "Lord of glory," God's wisdom, 1Cor.1:18-2:8.
  - d. His teaching had to do with Divine matters ("Spiritual" matters), hence he was guided by the Holy Spirit in his teaching in the selection of the very words which he employed, that "spiritual" things (thoughts) might be "combined (connected) with spiritual words" i.e., Spirit given words, 1Cor. 2:9-13.  
(1) NASV: "Combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words," v.13.
  - e. The latter part of v.13 is a development of the statement that the methods of delivery or expression which the apostles used are taught by the Spirit, even as the subject they have to expound is given by the Spirit.
  - f. Here Paul declares the manner in which the things revealed were proclaimed: which things we also (in accordance with the fact of our having received the Spirit, v.12) utter, not in words learned of human wisdom (dialectics rhetoric, etc.), but in those learned of the Spirit...combining and or connecting spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.
  - g. Thus Paul was not guilty of uniting things unlike in nature, which would have been the case if he had given forth what was revealed by

the Holy Spirit in the speech of human wisdom, in philosophic discourse. (1Cor.2:1-5)

- h. Paul here affirms that he joined to the things or thoughts revealed by the Spirit the speech also taught by the Spirit – thus he connected things of like nature.
- i. Therefore, he expressed the matters which were the subject of Divine re-velation in words or speech of the Holy Spirit. To know the mind of the Lord, one must have the mind of Christ by means of the Spirit of Christ, v.16.
- j. So the Biblical writers not only had made known unto them miraculously the matter of Divine will and wisdom, but were likewise miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit in the manner of its expression, which, of course, is what verbal inspiration consists of or is.

**D. FOR EMPHASIS, LET US NOW NOTE WHAT VERBAL INSPIRATION DOES NOT MEAN.**

- 1. It does not mean a mere mechanical process as suggested by the verbal dictation theory, wherein there is a loss of individuality in the writers.
  - a. As noted already, one of the charges frequently brought against verbal in-spiration has been that, if the Bible writer was merely an instrument, writ-ing as and what God moved him to write, then he was an automation with a complete loss of freedom.
  - b. This is simply not true; for though verbally inspired in his writing, the indi-viduality of each Bible writer is indelibly marked upon his writing.
  - c. Though verbal inspiration means that God's words are expressed, it does not mean that only God's individuality is expressed.
    - (1) God's words may be expressed in terms of John's individuality, or Peter's or Paul's.
    - (2) Of course, this is done miraculously!
    - (c) But this would not be difficult for God who made man in the first place!
  - d. Surely, no God-fearing person could doubt that God could express his own will in his own words in and through the characteristics, colorings, and qualities that make up that man's individuality.
  - e. A close study of the Bible reveals that "the style of the Scripture is the characteristic style of the different writers; but God is the author of it. The style is a truly God's as is the matter: for if he has employed the style of different writers, he has likewise employed their expressions, thoughts, reasoning, and arguments. God did not leave them to the

operation of their own mind but has employed the operations of their mind in his word. The Holy Spirit could and did dictate to them his own words in such a way that they would also be their own words, uttered with the understanding. He could express the same thought by the mouth of a thousand persons, each in his own style.” – Robert Haldane, *The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, pp.117,118.

- f. The material of each writer bears unmistakable evidence of the peculiar style and characteristics of that individual. Examples:
  - (1) It is evident that Matthew does not write like Mark, Luke, or John, Peter or Paul.
  - (2) The Book of Acts and the Book of Luke in the original Greek betray the fact that they were written by a Gentile, a medical doctor, and a man of learning and culture.
  - (3) The book of Romans and the book of Galatians give evidence of the fact that they were written by a Hebrew, a man well versed in Jewish lore and not unacquainted with Greek learning and culture, and an individual possessed of restless energy and the fighting spirit of one who had been transformed from an inveterate enemy of the “despised Nazarene carpenter” to a militant “soldier of the cross of Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory.”
- g. Since God fashioned the mind of man – possessing both the wisdom and the power essential to its creation, -- who is the person, believing this, that could possibly question the knowledge and power of God to utilize the minds of men in giving to them a revelation of His will in literary styles compatible with the genius, learning, and experience of the human agents which he employed?
- h. Two illustrations from the realm of things material will in a measure serve to demonstrate the complete plausibility of the phenomenon of “verbal” in-spiration – that it can be verbal without being mechanical.
  - (1) A group of musicians (a band or an orchestra) could play a great composer’s musical production upon a variety of instruments. And each instrument, in such case, would maintain its own individuality and give forth a sound peculiar to it. The music forthcoming, how-ever, would be the same, and perfect harmony the result.
  - (2) Sunlight passing through the panes of a multi-colored, stained-glass window would appear in a variegated spectacle of many but har-moniously beautiful reflections. And yet the many

colors would not antagonize the fact of a common source nor the essential nature of the light itself.

2. Verbal inspiration does not mean there is no place for human experience.
  - a. The thought that verbal inspiration denies any place for human experience is unwarranted.
  - b. God may pour his words through the Bible writer without the extensive use of the writer's human experience; but even in such cases, as in prophecy, the Lord uses the language of the Bible writer and also uses his individual-ity, which are factors of human experience.
3. Verbal inspiration does not mean that every word in the Bible expresses the mind and will of God.
  - a. Verbal inspiration does not demand that the words of all the speakers who are introduced in them, such as those of Job's friends, or those of the devil himself, were inspired.
  - b. But it does mean that the inspired writers correctly related the words of these men and even those of the devil, even though the devil and others did not tell the truth.
  - c. See Gen.3:4; Job 4,8,11,12,13; Mt.4:1-11; Ac.17:28; et al.

**E. IT IS NOW IN ORDER TO OFFER A SUMMATION OF THE ELEMENTS AND FACTORS REGARDING THE DEFINITION AND NATURE OF THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.**

(If the Bible is in fact "the word of God," logic demands a recognition and un-reserved acceptance of certain facts or characteristics of the material which composes it, which facts or characteristics are clearly set forth in the Bible's claim for itself.)

There are seven of these which we now call to your attention:

1. The material composing the Bible was objectively derived by men from God; it was "revealed," Gal.1:11,12; Eph.3:3a; Jude 3; 2Pet.1:21; 1Cor.2:9,10.
2. It was reduced to written form, or produced in written form by men miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit; hence, in all its parts it was given by inspiration of God, Eph.3:3b; 1Jno.1:4.
  - a. This is what is called "plenary verbal inspiration."
  - b. "Verbal" has to do with "words;" "plenary" is from the Latin, *plenus*, meaning "full or complete;" "inspired" means it was "God-breathed," the result of the creative breath of God, 2Tim3:16,17; 1Cor.2:9-13; Mt.4:4,7,10; Eph.3:3,4.
  - c. It is thus of God, fully and completely in all its parts.



3. Therefore, it was and is true; it was and is infallible, Jno.10:35; 17:17; Psa.19:7; 119:142,160; Jas.1:25.
  - a. When we predicate “truth” as an attribute of the word of God, we are not permitted to mix that truth with error.
  - b. Truth is absolute, not relative.
  - c. No sacred writer ever attributed to God’s word that which is erroneous or faulty.
  - d. To them it was truth – truth in every category – whether in the realm of historical fact, in the sphere of physical phenomena, or in the kingdom of spiritual and eternal truth.
4. Being infallible, it is also immutable, Deut.4:2; 12:32; Mt.5:17,18; Gal.1:6-9; 1Cor.4:6; 2Jno.9; Rev.22:18,19; Psa.119:89; Heb.6:13-20.
5. Being infallible and immutable, it is indestructible and eternal, Mt.24:35; 1Pet.1:25.
6. These facts being true, it follows that it is authoritative in application. Man must be governed by it, Mt.28:18-20; Jno.12:48; Jas.4:12; 2:10-12; 1:19-25.
  - a. It is the supreme authority beyond which the sacred writers know no higher appeal, Isa.8:20; Ac.15:13-21.
  - b. Even Jesus, the Son of God, could cite no higher authority against Satan than the written word of God, Mt.4:4,7,10.
  - c. Modern man’s notion that man’s mind should sit in judgment on God’s word deciding what shall be accepted and what rejected is utterly detestable to the sacred writers and to all who truly believe in the inspiration of the Bible.
  - d. The Bible is the critic of man, Heb.4:12; and man dare not usurp that authority over the Bible.
7. Finally, it is all-sufficient in its provisions, Rom.1:16; 1Pet.1:22-25; Jas.1:21; 2Tim.3:16,17; 2Pet.1:3; 2Tim.4:1-5.
  - a. Thus nothing is lacking in the sufficiency of Scripture – it is all-sufficient and thoroughly furnishes us unto every good work.
  - b. There is no vacuum to be filled by latter-day revelations. Cite examples.

### III. CONCLUSION

1. This then is what we earnestly believe is the only true and acceptable position regarding the definition and nature of the inspiration of the Bible.
2. The explanation for practically all opposition to the truth of verbal inspiration is found in Rom.1:20-23.

3. Without a doubt the Bible claims to be the full and complete revelation of the mind of God to man; it claims to be the one and only revelation of God's will to man.
4. The Bible thus stands unique among all the books of human history. It alone is given by inspiration of God – it alone is God-breathed; it alone is the result of the creative breath of God.
5. But we need to keep in mind that miraculous inspiration relates to the original words of God's book. Translators are not inspired. But those original words came from God. They are the very words selected by the Holy Spirit. They mean what God wanted them to mean; they say what God wanted them to say.
6. No one can reject any word of God without in principle rejecting every word of God. Man cannot deny God in halves. To deny God on anything is to deny his Godhead. Hence, the absolute importance of accepting and revering every word of God.
7. Friend, will you not now heed what the inspired Scriptures say to you:
  - a. As a sinner who has never obeyed the gospel? Mk.16:15,16; Ac.2:36-41.
  - b. As a sinner who has obeyed the gospel but had gone astray? Ac.8:20-24; Gal.6:7,8.
  - c. As a faithful subject of God? 1Cor.15:58; Rev.2:10.
  - d. As one who will face the Lord in the final judgment? 2Cor.5:10; Jno.12:48; Heb.4:12,13.