The Bible:

God's Living All-Sufficient Word

EXALTING CHRIST PUBLISHING

710 BROADWAY STREET VALLEJO, CA 94590 707-553-8780

www.cbcvallejo.org Ordering email: publications@cbcvallejo.org

Copyright © 2001 STEVE FERNANDEZ
Printed by permission only
Revised 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Preliminary Matters: The Bible, God's Living All-Sufficient Word 1
II.	Revelation: God's Self-Disclosure Of Himself To Man 7
III.	Revelation And Neo-Orthodoxy
IV.	The Inspiration Of The Bible: God's Part
V.	The Inspiration Of The Bible: Man's Part
VI.	Concepts Of Inspiration
VII.	The Sufficiency Of Scripture
VIII.	The Supreme Authority Of The Bible
IX.	The Canon: The Formation Of The Bible 61
Х.	Illumination 69

Chapter I

PRELIMINARY MATTERS: THE BIBLE, GOD'S LIVING ALL-SUFFICIENT WORD

- I. THE CLEAR TEACHING OF CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES IS THAT THE SCRIPTURES ARE THE INERRANT WORD OF GOD.
 - A. They Are Declared To Be Inspired By God (2 Timothy 3:16).
 - 1. They are "breathed out" by God.

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host (Psalm 33:6).

- 2. They are a product of God's own effort and initiative (see Psalm 33:1-6).
- 3. They are a decisive expression and disclosure of God's mind, will, and heart.
- B. They Are Cited As God's Utterances And Were Their Final Authority.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate author and the human writers are agents (Acts 1:16, 4:24- 25).
 - 2. Their fulfillment is certain unable of failure (Matthew 26:54; John 10:35; Luke 16:17).

II. THE DUAL AUTHORSHIP OF SCRIPTURE DOES NOT AFFECT THEIR DIVINE CHARACTER (2 Peter 1:19-21).

- A. The Supposed Problem: Either One Or The Other Must Be True.
 - 1. Either ... God had complete control so the authors functioned as robots without involving their own personality.
 - 2. Or ... Their minds moved freely as is evident by their unique styles hence, there must be some error.

In other words - the skeptic claims - freedom and control aren't compatible

B. The Supernatural Reality.

- 1. Freedom and control are compatible.
- 2. Simultaneously, God ordered man's mind and caused him to freely and spontaneously write only and wholly what God wanted written.

So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. 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 (2 Peter 1:19-21).

C. Examples Of Duality Of Authorship.

- 1. The Holy Spirit and David (Acts 1:16).
- 2. God and the Psalmist (Hebrews 1:8).

III. THE REALITY OF GOD'S LIVING PRESENT VOICE IS HEARD IN THE SCRIPTURES.

- A. They Are A Powerful Voice (Hebrews 4:12-13; 1 Peter 1:23; Isaiah 40:8).
 - 1. They pierce and convert (Hebrews 4:12-13; Acts 2:37).
 - 2. They make alive and renew (Luke 24:32; Psalm 19:7, 119:25, 50, 93, 107, 149, 156, 159).
- B. They Are His Present Voice: You Hear God's Voice in Scripture Today.
 - 1. The Spirit speaks to us today through Scripture, He bears witness (Hebrews 3:7, 10:15).

The Bible as a whole, viewed from the standpoint of its contents, should be thought of, not statically, but dynamically; not merely as what God said long ago, but as what He says still; and not merely as what He says to men in general, but as what He says to each individual reader or hearer in particular. In other words, holy Scriptures should be thought of as God preaching - God preaching to me every time I read or hear any part of it - God the Father preaching God the Son in the power of God the Holy Spirit.

J.I. Packer, God Has Spoken, p. 91

2. God is speaking in the Scriptures from heaven to us today (Hebrews 12:25).

C. They Are The Personal Voice Of Christ And The Spirit.

1. Christ rules through His Word (John 12:47-49).

The Scriptures are presently binding: His promises bind Him and His commands bind us.

2. Loyalty to Christ is measured by loyalty to His Word. You bow to Him by bowing to His Word (Isaiah 8:19-20).

D. They Are A Primary Means Of Grace And Of Advancing Christ's Kingdom.

1. His personal presence and voice are conveyed by the Spirit through the Scriptures (Hebrews 4:12; John 10:27).

Since the Word is the mediate presence of Christ, service is due. Paul rightly instructs the young pastor Timothy to be a workman "who correctly handles the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15) because the Word of God is "living and active" (Heb. 4:12). Spiritual truth is not a passive object for examination and presentation. The Word examines us. "It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (4:12). Christ remains active in his Word, performing divine tasks that one presenting the Word has no right or ability personally to assume.

Chapell, Christ-Centered Preaching, p. 28

- a. The Spirit regenerates through them (1 Peter 1:23).
- b. The Spirit sanctifies us through them (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).
- c. They are the voice of the Spirit (Hebrews 3:7).

2. His power to effect change is conveyed through the Scriptures.

- a. They are like grain that feeds and nourishes (Jeremiah 23:28).
- b. They are like a fire and a hammer (Jeremiah 23:25-29).
- c. They build up (Acts 20:32).
- d. They strengthen (1 John 2:14).
- e. They give perseverance, encouragement and hope (Romans 15:4).
- f. They sanctify (John 17:17).
- g. They regenerate (1 Peter 1:22-23).
- h. They convert (James 1:18).

Chapter II

REVELATION: GOD'S SELF-DISCLOSURE OF HIMSELF TO MAN

- I. THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF REVELATION.
 - A. Natural Revelation The Revelation Of God Through Creation.
 - 1. It is called Natural Revelation: There are specific truths about God revealed through nature (Psalm 19:1-2; Romans 1:20).
 - 2. It is also General Revelation: These truths are accessible to all (Psalm 19:4; Acts 14:17).
 - B. Special Revelation The Objective Self-Revelation Of God To Man.
 - 1. **Negatively it is not man finding God.**It is not man discovering God through his own activity or insight, intuitions, or impressions.
 - **2. Positively it is God revealing Himself.** It is a divine activity; a result of His free initiative. It is an extraordinary divine intervention; therefore it is called special (Genesis 3:8-15.).
 - 3. God is the agent, the object, and the subject of the reveals His own mind and will.
 - a. He spoke personally: It is God speaking, for Himself about Himself, to us (Hebrews 1:1-2).

- b. He spoke propositional, objective truth.
- 4. It was made necessary by the fall which incurred man's spiritual ignorance and darkness. It overcomes our ignorance giving us accurate knowledge of God (Ephesians 4:18; 1 Corinthians 1:21).
- 5. It concerns God's person, character and achievements; past, present, and future. As such, it is centered on the person of Christ and on the work of redemption (Romans 3:25-26; 9:22-24; 1 John 1:1-5; Luke 24:26-27; John 5:39; Genesis 3:15).
- 6. It is embodied and permanentized in His final revelation for this age, the Scriptures (Matthew 26:56; 2 Timothy 3:16).

II. THE BIBLICAL TESTIMONY OF NATURAL REVELATION.

- A. The Extent Of Natural Revelation (Romans 1:18-20).
 - 1. It reveals the existence of a divine Being who possesses a divine nature. He is entirely "other." He is distinct from and unlike creation. He is a being, supremely worthy of worship to Whom man is accountable (v. 20).
 - 2. It reveals self-evident truth about the Being of God that is clearly seen. His omnipotence is seen in His ability to bring all that exists into being. His eternality is evident since He preexisted prior to the creation (vv. 19-20).

- 3. It reveals aspects of God's character that can be deduced from what is made (v. 20); His glory (Psalm 19:1); His goodness (Acts 14:17).
- 4. It reveals the creative wisdom and versatility of God (Psalm 19:1).
- 5. It reveals enough to condemn, but is limited and must be supplemented by special revelation for there to be salvation (v. 20b; Acts 4:12).

B. The Effects Of Natural Revelation (Romans 1:21-32).

- 1. Man refuses to rightly receive it.
 - a. Its truth is suppressed because of the ungodliness and unrighteousness of man (v. 18).
 - b. Its truth is rationalized (v. 21), and replaced, (vv. 23, 25), because of a refusal to acknowledge God's glory (vv. 23, 28). It is misread (1 Corinthians 1:21).
- 2. God rejects man for his rejection of natural revelation.
 - a. God regards man as without excuse (v. 20).
 - b. God in wrath delivers man over to himself, removing restraint to the practice of his own lusts (vv. 24, 26, 28).

III. THE BIBLICAL TESTIMONY OF SPECIAL REVELATION.

The Bible clearly presents itself as a supernatural source of knowledge about God. It is information and knowledge that came from God in a special supernatural way.

A. The Necessity Of Special Revelation.

- 1. Man is alienated from God with a heart constitutionally darkened; unable to come to accurate thoughts of God from his own efforts (Ephesians 4:18; 1 Corinthians 2:14).
- 2. God is unknowable through man's wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:21); he can't even interpret natural revelation correctly.
- 3. God, as with any person, is fully known only through self-disclosure (1 Corinthians 2:10-13).
- 4. A definition: Revelation is God making Himself known through self-disclosure. He discloses objective propositional truth about His person and work which would otherwise be unknown and unknowable (1 Corinthians 2:6-12).

B. The Modes Of Special Revelation.

God revealed Himself.

- 1. By direct audible voice (Exodus 3:1-6; 1 Samuel 3:3-10).
- 2. By direct writing: The Ten Commandments (Exodus 32:15-16); and the handwriting on the wall (Daniel 5:25-28).

3. By visions: The characteristic method to the Prophets (Numbers 12:6, 1 Samuel 3:1)).

- a. They "saw" in a vision what God wanted them to speak (Isaiah 1:1; Jeremiah 23:18; Ezekiel 1:3, 4; Hosea 12:10; Amos 1:1, 3:7; Habakkuk 2:2; Revelation 1:10-11). The fact that a prophet received his revelation from God primarily by the objective method of visions is indicated by the reference in 1 Samuel 9:9, where it says that "He who is called a prophet now was formerly called a seer."
- b. God put His words in their minds and mouths when they spoke about what they saw and heard (Deuteronomy 18:18; Jeremiah 1:9, 12; Ezekiel 1:1-4, 28; 2:1, 3:4; Exodus 4:10-17; 7:1-7).
- c. False prophets "saw" nothing (Jeremiah 5:11-13, 30-31; 23:16-21, 26-27; Ezekiel 13:1-9).

The Old Testament is very clear in its definition and descriptions of prophecy. It involves direct revelation and it is communicated by an objective means primarily by a vision. It was not by a subjective means such as by intuition or by impressions on the mind. Jonathan Edwards states,

It is evident that this revelation of secret facts by immediate suggestion, has nothing of the nature of a spiritual and divine operation, in the sense fore-mentioned. There is nothing at all in the nature of the ideas themselves, excited in the mind, that is divinely excellent, above the ideas of natural men; though the manner of exciting the ideas be extraordinary. In those things which are spiritual, as has been shown, not only the manner of producing the effect, but the effect wrought is divine, and so vastly above all that can be in an unsanctified mind. Now simply the having an idea of facts, setting aside the manner of producing those ideas, is nothing beyond what the minds of wicked men are susceptible of, without any goodness in them; and they all either have or will have, the knowledge of the greatest and most important facts, that have been, are, or shall be. And as to the extraordinary manner of producing the

perception of facts, even by immediate suggestion, there is nothing in it, but what the minds of natural men are capable of, as is manifest in Balaam, and others spoken of in the Scripture. And therefore it appears that there is nothing appertaining to this immediate suggestion of secret facts that is spiritual, in the sense in which it has been proved that gracious operations are so.

Works of Jonathan Edwards, Vol. I, p. 272

- 4. By dreams (Daniel 2:1, 36, 7:1; Joel 2:28).
- 5. By theophanies: Personal appearances of the Son.
 - a. God appeared to the patriarchs (Genesis 17:1; 18:1; 26:2).
 - b. The angel of the Lord clearly identified as God, appeared to man (Genesis 16:7-11; Exodus 3:1-6; Judges 13:9, 17-22).
- 6. By angelic messengers (Daniel 9:21-22; Matthew 1:20, 3:20; Luke 1:26-35; Revelation 17:7).
- 7. By Christ, God Himself in the flesh (Hebrews 1:2-3; John 1:18, 12:48-49).

He doesn't just bring revelation like the prophets. He is the revelation of God. Since He is God, He reveals in His person and attributes all of what can be known about God (John 14:7, 9; Colossians 2:9).

C. The Scriptures: The Final Mode Of Revelation (Romans 1:1-2).

They are the consummate revelation. They are the embodiment of all others; the permanentizing of all other previous revelations (Romans 16:25-26). They are the consigning to public use, by the embodiment, the preservation and the permanentizing of all previous revelations. Therefore, they are the "Scriptures of the prophets" (Matthew 26:56).

D. Some Important Distinctions About Scripture As A Special Revelation.

- 1. The distinction between the Historic Orthodox position and the Neo-Orthodox position (see page 15).
- 2. The distinction between personal revelation by illumination in Christian living and the unique objective revelation of Scripture.

E. The Completion Of Special Revelation In Scripture.

- 1. The Bible is itself God's final complete prophetic Word (2 Peter 1:19-21).
- 2. The Bible reveals all we need (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

What of God it is needful and beneficial for us to know he has revealed in Christ, and whatsoever is not there, we may rest assured it is unfit and unnecessary for us to know. Truly the revelation is by no means scant, for there is vastly more revealed in the person of Christ than we shall be likely to learn in this mortal life, and even eternity will not be too long for the discovery of all the glory of God which shines forth in the person of the word made flesh. Those who would supplement Christianity had better first add to the brilliance of the sun or the fulness of the sea. As for us, we are more than satisfied with the revelation of God in the person of our Lord Jesus, and we are persuaded of the truth of his words 'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.'

Charles H. Spurgeon, MTP Vol 1, p. 506

3. The Bible is the completed revelation for this age.

a. Jesus anticipated the completion of the canon of scripture (John 16:13, 14:26).

So God raised up the Apostles to write these authoritative accounts in order that we might know what is true and what is false: that is the whole purpose of our belief in the canon of Scripture. The promise of Jesus Christ to the disciples when He said the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth was fulfilled in the writing of the New Testament Scriptures; and the wisdom given to the Church to deliver the canon of Scripture is that which can be traced back to the Apostles and which therefore can be regarded as the Word of God.

Martin Lloyd Jones, *The Love of God: Studies in 1 John*, p. 123

- b. The Apostles recognized it would be completed, (Colossians 1:25; Jude 3; Ephesians 2:20-3:6).
- 4. Revelation will be given in the future (Joel 2:28; Ephesians 2:7).

Chapter III

REVELATION AND NEO-ORTHODOXY

A. The Neo-Orthodox Position.

1. The Bible "becomes" revelation when it is used by God to bring us to a personal encounter with Himself.

...Yet we must go on to affirm that Scripture is more than a human witness to revelation: it is revelation itself mediated through human words. It is not in and of itself divine revelation, but when illumined by the Spirit it becomes revelation to the believer. At the same time it could not become revelation unless it already embodied revelation, unless it were included within the event of revelation. Scripture is not simply a "pointer to revelation" (as Brunner has asserted), but by the action of the Spirit it is a veritable bearer of revelation, a vehicle or "conduit of divine truth" (C. Henry).

Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Vol. I, p.82

- 2. The purpose of the revelation in Scripture is not to present truth about God, but to present God.
- 3. Revelation is not meant to present factual information, but to present the mighty acts of God in history; especially the act of God through the incarnation.

The prophets and apostles, even as such, even in their office, even in their function as witnesses, even in the act of writing down their testimonies were really, historically men, and therefore in their deeds sinful, and in their spoken and written word capable of error and were actually erring men like us all. In full use of their freedom, and the bounds set by that, have they spoken God's words.

Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. I, part 2, p. 587

The above presents partial truth. That is what makes it dangerous. It conflicts with the biblical testimony that revelation is objective truth from God, whether or not it is experienced by the reader.

4. The Scripture itself is not revelation. It is a vehicle and witness to revelation.

In our view inspiration is both conceptual and verbal, since it signifies that the Spirit was active in both shaping the thoughts and imagination of the biblical writers and also in guiding them in their actual writing. We read that the Spirit of the Lord came upon the prophet and his words (Isa. 59:21; cf. Exod. 31:18; II Sam. 23:2; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 49:2; Jer. 1:9; 1 Cor. 2:13). Verbal inspiration must not be confused with perfect accuracy or mechanical dictation.

...The doctrine or message of Scripture, which alone is infallible and inerrant, is hidden in the historical and cultural witness of the biblical writers. They did not err in what they proclaimed, but this does nor mean that they were faultless in their recording of historical data or in their world view, which is now outdated. The Scriptures are entirely trustworthy in what they purport to give us, but this trustworthiness is a property not simply of the letter of the Bible but of the Spirit, the primary author of Scripture. Apart from the work of the Spirit, the inherent, transcendent truth of the Scripture cannot be perceived. This is why our ultimate criterion is not the Scripture in and of itself but the Word and the Spirit, the Scripture illumined by the Spirit ... While it is important to underscore the inseparability of the biblical text and divine revelation, one must not make the mistake of equating them ..."It should ... be remembered," Barth declares, "that the biblical writings as such are "not the Revelation" but instead "the witness to the Revelation, and this is expressed in human terms."

Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Vol. I p. 82

B. Important Distinctions About The Scripture As Revelation.

Any revelation to the human author was objective.
 It was not dependent upon their feelings or experiences.

- 2. Not all the Bible, was revelation to the authors. Their feelings and experiences were not revelation to them (Exodus 3:6; 2 Corinthians 11:23-28). However, it is all revelation to us.
- 3. The Bible, technically speaking, is not a record of revelation. Only the author can say what is written is a record (Luke 1:1-4; Revelation 1:9-17). To us it is all revelation.
- 4. The Bible does not contain the Word of God. It is in all of its parts the Word of God.
- 5. The Bible is objective revelation whether or not it is experienced or believed. Therefore, the Bible does not "become" revelation when it is understood or when it brings us to a personal experience with God. It is already a revelation.
- 6. Revelation was given not only in God's acts in history, but in the words of Scripture which explain and give meaning to those acts.
- 7. Not everything in the Bible is true (Satan's lie to Eve, etc.). But the way the Bible presents things is always true.
- 8. The Bible says in words exactly what God wanted us to know. Therefore, every word is important.

Chapter IV

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE: GOD'S PART

- I. THE CONCEPT OF INSPIRATION (2 Timothy 3:16).
 - A. The English Term "Inspired" Doesn't Convey The Accurate Meaning.
 - 1. The English word, comes from the Latin word "Inspiro", which means 'to lift up from within; to breathe in' (Genesis 2:7).

The Greek term has, however, nothing to say of inspiring or of inspiration: it speaks only of a 'spiring' or 'spiration'. What it says of Scripture is, not that it is 'breathed into by God' or is the product of the Divine 'inbreathing' into its human authors, but that it is breathed out by God, "God breathed", the product of the creative breath of God. In a word, what is declared by this fundamental passage is simply that the Scriptures are a Divine product, without any indication of how God has operated in producing them...no term could have been chosen, however, which would have more emphatically asserted the divine production of Scripture than that which is here employed. God's breath is the irresistible outflow of His power. When Paul declares, then, that 'every scripture', or 'all scripture' is the product of the Divine breath, "is God-breathed", he asserts with as much energy as he could employ that Scripture is the product of a specifically Divine operation.

- B. B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*, p.133
- 2. The English term is inadequate. It conveys the idea of lifting up something that already exists, elevating it to a higher level. This is an inadequate, deficient view of what inspiration means in the Greek.

B. The Greek Term Is "Θεοπνευστοσ" Which Means "God Breathed."

The emphasis and significance of the term:

- 1. The initiative and activity is God's. The Scriptures are the result of His initiative, activity, and power.
- 2. The product of Scripture, in its content and substance, is from God. They are God's production. His effort and work produced them. The process or how He did this is not emphasized in the term "θεοπνευστοσ."

The thought here is that just as God made [produced] the host of heaven, 'by the breath of His mouth', Psalm 33:6, through His own creative fiat, so we should regard the Scriptures as the product of a similar fiat "let there be law prophets and writings.

JI Packer, God Has Spoken, p. 92

C. It Refers To A Quality And Attribute Of All Scripture: It is "Inspired Scripture."

There is a self-evident, self-vindicating quality to Scriptures. They possess a unique distinguishing God-breathed quality.

We know that this Word is from God, as we know that fire burns; not because any one has told us, but because a Divine fire consumes our hearts. O the brightness of the face of Moses! O the splendor of the glory of Jesus Christ, which no veil conceals! O the inward power of the Divine word, which compels us, with so much sweetness, to love and to do! O the temple of God within us, in which the Son of God dwells!

William Tyndale

D. It Extends To All Scripture And All Facets Of Scripture: "All Scripture."

- 1. To historical accounts: There is no distinction between the spiritual and historical in scripture.
- 2. To the Old Testament and the New Testament, which was yet to be completed.
- 3. To the words, not just concepts (Matthew 22:29-32; Galatians 3:16; Psalm 119:160; Matthew 5:18).

"The scripture says in words what God wanted said."

E. It Refers To The Scriptures, Not The Authors.

CONCLUDING NOTES:

- * Scripture is an inerrant historical record of Gods acts of revelation and a record of what God did to make Himself known.
- * Scripture is itself a revelation, an act of God in the form of a record.
- * Scripture is not just a human witness (man's own words) to or about God: It is God's own witness (God's own words about Himself to man for man).
- * Scripture is not just human words elevated and infused with divine insight, but Gods' words disclosing His mind, will, and heart.

II. THE CONFIRMATION OF INSPIRATION FROM OTHER SCRIPTURE

A. When Scripture Speaks God Speaks.

- 1. God is said to have spoken what the Scripture or the human author originally said (Matthew 19:4-5; Genesis 2:24).
- 2. The human author is referred to as if God was speaking it (Psalm 95:7; Hebrew 3:7).
- 3. The Scripture is referred to as saying something when it was God (Galatians 3:8; Genesis 12:3; Romans 9:17; Exodus 9:16).

B. The Prophets Revealed God's Word.

- 1. God put words in the prophets' mouth, which they wrote (Jeremiah 1:9).
- 2. They saw and heard God's words (Jeremiah 23:18).

C. The Prophets Were Commanded To Write And Speak God's Word (Habakkuk 2:1-2).

- 1. They wrote what God spoke (Exodus 24:3-4; Jeremiah 36:1-2; Habakkuk 2:1-2).
- 2. They were God's spokesmen (Deuteronomy 18:18; Jeremiah 23:22).

D. Jesus Attributed The Words Of Scripture To God.

- 1. He attributed them to God not to man (Matthew 15:3-6, 19:4-5; Genesis 2:24; Exodus 20:12).
- 2. He appealed to them.
 - a. To their authority. (Matthew 21:42, 22:29).
 - b. To their finality: "It is written" (Luke 24:46-47).
 - c. To their certainty of fulfillment. (Luke 24:44-46; Matthew 26:54, 56).

E. The Testimony Of Jesus Christ Concerning The Inspiration Of Scripture.

Jesus Christ's opinion of the Scriptures testifies of their inspiration:

- 1. He attributed the Scriptures to God (Matthew 19:4-5, 22:43).
- 2. He believed in the creation of Adam and Eve (Matthew 19:4-5).
- 3. He believed in the flood of Noah's time (Matthew 24:37-38).
- 4. He believed in Jonah and the great fish (Matthew 12:39-40).
- 5. He believed in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:28-29).

- 6. He believed that the book of Psalms was the Word of God (John 10:35).
- 7. He believed that the law of Moses was the Word of God (Mark 7:13).
- 8. He believed that everything in the Old Testament would come to pass (Matthew 5:18).

F. Our Choice About Jesus Christ And The Scriptures.

We don't have a real choice when it comes to Christ and the Scriptures. He clearly taught that the Scriptures, including its very words and its historical narratives, were from God. If we reject His view of Scripture, we are left with choices 2 or 3 below, which is impossible.

- 1. There are no errors in the Bible as Jesus taught: He is God.
- 2. There are errors, but Jesus was not aware of them: He was ignorant.
- 3. There are errors, but He covered them up: He was dishonest.

Chapter V

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE: MAN'S PART

The role of the authors involved a number of phases in a process that lead to an inspired Scripture.

I. GOD PREPARED THE AUTHORS.

- A. They Were Set Apart From The Womb (Galatians 1:15).
 - 1. The general influences in their lives were predetermined.
 - 2. Their religious training and personal experiences were predetermined.
- B. They Were Consecrated Prior To Conception (Jeremiah 1:5).
 - 1. Their personalities and mental emotional capacities were predetermined (Psalm 139:13-18).
 - 2. Their calling was predetermined before their birth.

We must not have a view of inspiration in which, in B.B. Warfield's words, God,

"Was reduced to the necessity of going down to the earth painfully scrutinizing the men He found there, seeking anxiously for the one who, on the whole, promised best for His purpose; and then violently forcing the material He wished expressed through him, against his natural bent, and with as little loss from His recalcitrant characteristics as possible.

Of course, nothing of the sort took place. If God wished to give His people a series of letters like Paul's, he prepared a Paul to write them, and the Paul he brought to them was a Paul who spontaneously would write just such letters."

The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, p. 155

II. GOD PRESENTED REVELATION TO THE AUTHORS (1 Corinthians 2:6-13).

- A. They Were Revealed Truth Unknowable To Mankind (1 Corinthians 2:6-12).
 - 1. It is called wisdom ... God's wisdom, not of this age (v. 6-7).
 - 2. It is called a mystery ... truth previously hidden (v. 7).
 - 3. It is revealed truth (things) which cannot be discovered or known through natural processes (v.9).
 - 4. It is called 'things' not seen (v.9). 'Things' revealed, (v 10). 'Things' freely given (v. 12). 'Things' we speak (v 13).
 - 5. It is called the "thoughts" of God that no one knows (v.11).
- B. They Were Revealed Truth Taught To Them With Specific Words From The Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:13).
 - 1. They were not left to express the revealed truth in their own wisdom. They were taught how to express them. Things we also speak not in words taught by human wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:13).

2. The Holy Spirit oversaw which "spiritual words" they were to use to accurately express the truth. But in those taught by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:13).

III. GOD PRESERVED THE AUTHOR'S PERSONALITY (1 Corinthians 2:13).

A. The Holy Spirit Used The Authors Own Vocabulary And Writing Style.

Which things we also speak; ... Paul says which things we also speak. He makes the point that the authors of Scripture wrote and spoke freely. In other words, God didn't dictate to them. They wrote and spoke freely out of their own vocabularies and according to their own personalities.

B. The Holy Spirit Chose Words To Exactly Express The Truth He Revealed.

Not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Holy Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts (in context, "thoughts" refers to, 'things' or 'truths') with spiritual words (v. 13). It is best translated "words" here because it has the same ending in the Greek as "words" back earlier in the beginning of the sentence. His point is that, although the men spoke and wrote freely, the Spirit Himself sovereignly oversaw exactly what they spoke and wrote including the very words they used.

Here we come to one of the most precise statements on the mode of inspiration, i.e., the connection and method by which the divine Spirit and the human author interacted in the transmission and recording of these 'deep things of God.'

Kaiser, p. 316

How is this done? What language did the apostle use in communicating what he had received by divine revelation? He answers, according to his usual method, first, negatively; and then, positively. It was not done "in the words which man's wisdom teacheth." This includes two things. The words used by the apostle were neither such as the skill of the rhetorician would suggest, nor such as his own mind, uninfluenced by the Spirt of God, suggested. The affirmative statement is, that the words used were taught by the Holy Ghost. This is verbal inspiration,

or the doctrine that the writers of the Scriptures were controlled by the Spirit of God in the choice of the words which they employed in communicating divine truth.

Hodge, Commentary, 1 Corinthians, pp. 40-41

Paul says, the Spirit did His work by "combining" [coordinating] spiritual thoughts (neuter case) — in the context "thoughts" are the "things" or the "revealed" truths from God, v.10 — with spiritual words (masculine case) out of the vocabularies of each human writer that would express the truth exactly and correctly. In the end, although men wrote the Scriptures, the truth of Scripture was conveyed and written precisely as the Spirit intended.

The original word, (sugkrino), means not only mentally to combine and hence to compare, but also to join together; and also to explain. It is used in the Septuagint to express the act of interpreting dreams or enigmas. The clause in question may, therefore, be translated either, 'combining spiritual things with spiritual words'; or, 'explaining' the one by the other. Besides, the word spiritual (pneumatikois), which has no substantive connected with it, most naturally agrees with 'words' (logois) understood, which immediately precedes.

Hodge, p. 41

IV. GOD PROVIDENTIALLY CONTROLLED THE AUTHORS (2 Peter 1:16-21).

A. The Reliability Of Scripture Is More Certain Than Even An Eyewitness Account (vv. 16-19).

For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased" — and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. (2 Peter 1:16-19)

1. Peter is asserting the credibility and reliability of the apostolic testimony (v. 16).

2. He asserts that Scripture is more certain and reliable than personal testimony and experience (v. 19).

B. Negatively: Men Did Not Originate The Message And Truth That They Wrote In Scripture (vv. 20-21).

But we 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. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

1. Scripture did not "come to be" because of human initiative (v. 20a).

The English word 'is' in the Greek is the word *ginomai*, which means 'come to be' (v. 20). Peter is asserting the origin and source of Scripture (what he calls "prophecy of Scripture") or in his words, how it "did not come to be."

2. Scripture is not a result of human enterprise or endeavor (v. 20b).

Peter declares, first, that Scripture did not originate from man. The phrase, 'One's own interpretation' refers, in context, to the personal ideas or thoughts of someone (v. 20). In other words, it does not to refer to the personal interpretation of an already existing Scripture. The phrase refers to the content of Scripture itself. In short, the Scriptures do not consist of the personal, religious thoughts (or interpretations) of men—even the prophets. It does not consist of man's own views and understandings—or using Peter's word "interpretations"—of spiritual matters such as redemption, sin, life and death, or God Himself.

3. Scripture is not a result of a human decision or act of will (v. 21).

The introductory "for" makes it clear that Peter is explaining exactly what he was referring to in verse 20. In short, the prophets did not make a decision to originate Scripture, so that they could publish their own ideas and views of God. In other words, the

content and concepts of Scripture revealed, proclaimed, and published, by a prophet were not the result of the prophet's own decision or will. The Scriptures, Peter declares, were not, "ever made by an act of human will."

C. Positively: God Oversaw The Production Of The Scripture.

1. Men were moved: The term 'moved' means more than to guide - it means to overrule in the direction and destiny of an object.

Positively speaking, Peter says that Scripture came from God. It wasn't man's will [decision], but God's that produced the Scriptures. The men spoke as they were "moved by the Holy Spirit." The Greek term for spoke is **Laleo**. It often refers to communication in general, in any form. It is used, for example, of the sound of a trumpet and the sound of thunder (Revelation 4:1; 10:3). It can, therefore, refer to writing which seems to be Peter's meaning in this context. The Greek term for moved is **Phero.** It means, "to carry, to move by bearing, to be conveyed or borne with a suggestion of speed or force" (Mark 1:32). It is used of, "bringing" the sick to Jesus, Luke 5:18, or 'carrying' on a bed a paralyzed man. It is used of a ship borne along by wind (Acts 27:15, 17). Peter, in short, says that God not only revealed the truth of Scripture, but He also oversaw the process by which Scripture came to be. The term "moved" is explained by Warfield as follows:

The term here used is a very specific one. It is not to be confounded with guiding, or directing, or controlling, or even leading in the full sense of that word. It goes beyond all such terms, in assigning the effect produced specifically to the active agent.

What is "borne" is taken up by the "bearer" and conveyed by the "bearer's power, not its own, to the "bearer's" goal, not its own. The men who spoke from God are here declared, therefore, to have been taken up by the Holy Spirit and brought under His power to the goal of His choosing.

The things which they spoke under this operation of the Spirit were therefore His things, not theirs. And that is the reason which is assigned why "the prophetic word" is so sure. Though spoken through the instrumentality of men, it is, by virtue of the fact that these men spoke "as borne by the Holy Spirit," an immediately Divine word.

B.B Warfield, "Inspiration," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Revised Edition

2. The authors, although they freely spoke and wrote, were sovereignly lifted and carried along by the Spirit of God.

It was God's will, not man's, that was the origin and source of Scripture. God Himself oversaw both the origin of Scripture and the process of its production. He did so when "men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." A more accurate translation would perhaps be; "men carried by the Holy Spirit." As a result, the prophets and writers of Scripture, wrote exactly what God had determined beforehand would in fact be written.

Chapter VI

CONCEPTS OF INSPIRATION

NATURAL INSPIRATION:

The authors had deep religious insight into God's truth. They had natural religious insight deepened to discover "divine truths." They possessed "godly genius." This concept conflicts with the biblical testimony of objective revelation and the concept of "God breathed" Scripture.

CONCEPT INSPIRATION:

The thought and basic concepts (or teachings) are inspired, but not the words. This view is linguistically impossible. Concepts require specific words to accurately convey ideas. It violates the biblical testimony. The phrase "the word of the Lord:" occurs over 3,000 times in the Old Testament. God's promise to the prophets is, "I will be with your mouth" (Exodus 4:15), and it ignores 1 Corinthians 2:13.

MECHANICAL DICTATION INSPIRATION:

The human authors supposedly dictated the words directly from God. It ignores the human personality evident in Scripture as well as the biblical testimony of 2 Peter 1:19-21 and 1 Corinthians 2:13.

EXISTENTIAL INSPIRATION: NEO-ORTHODOXY:

Inspiration is the act of God upon the reader. It is subjective experience of the reader, not the objective revelation of God. It is inspiration only when it confronts you in a vital experience with God.

VERBAL PLENARY INSPIRATION; THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT:

The very words of Scripture are from God, hence it is verbal inspiration. All of Scripture is inspired; the creation account, historical narratives, as well as that pertaining directly to salvation. Hence, it is plenary inspiration.

STATED DEFINITION:

"Inspiration is the result of the process where God sovereignly used the personalities and vocabularies of human authors to produce His own errorless, sufficient authoritative word."

Chapter VII

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE.

INTRODUCTION:

The Issue: It concerns the source of spiritual truth which is both necessary for and has final authority in all matters of salvation and sanctification.

Luther did not differ from the medieval tradition in his high regard for the inspiration and validity of the Bible. For him the Bible was "the Holy Spirit Book," "the vehicle of the Spirit," not only its words but even its phrases are inspired; while written by men, it is neither of men nor from men, but from God. Luther's corpus is filled with lofty statements such as these. Yet they reveal nothing distinctive about Luther's view of Scripture from the scholastic theologians...and, indeed, Luther's contemporary opponents were in perfect agreement with him there.

Timothy George, Theology of the Reformers, p. 82

The Definition: All things necessary for salvation and concerning faith and life are taught in the Bible and that, clearly enough for the ordinary believer to find it there and understand it for his own spiritual good.

The Implication: Christ's people hear Christ's authoritative voice in Scripture through the Holy Spirit of God, such that He works in them all that is necessary for their salvation and sanctification in its entirety.

I. THE CHALLENGE TO THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE (2 Timothy 2:15-18, 3:1-15).

A. The Challenge Comes From Within The Evangelical Church.

There is no other issue in the history of redemption that has brought more controversy than the sufficiency of Scripture. From the very beginning, even in the garden of Eden, the sufficiency of God's Word has been assaulted. Satan has always sought to diminish the sufficiency of Scripture in order to add to it his own ideas that distract from Christ's glory. Paul Himself had to deal with attacks on the sufficiency of Scripture in the early church. He dealt with these attacks in 2 Timothy.

1. Four times Paul refers to truth, (vv. 15, 18, 25, 4:4). Truth is Paul's alternate term for Scripture (3: 16-17). There were men who, not believing in the sufficiency of Scripture, opposed and turned away from the truth (vv. 18, 4:4) and added in extra-biblical teaching beyond Scripture.

Men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some. (v. 18) ... and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. (4:4)

- 2. Difficult times will come within the Church in which men deny the power and sufficiency of the Word of God (3:1, 5).
- 3. People will accumulate teachers to tickle their ears. They are teachers who, denying the sufficiency of Scripture, turn aside to extra-biblical teachings (myths) (4:3-4).
- 4. Men enter Christian households as Christian teachers, but are imposters (3:6, 13).

B. It Involves A Compromised View Of The Power Of The Gospel And Christ.

1. They declare their orthodoxy: Holding to a form of Godliness (3:5).

The word 'form' is 'morphe': It refers to the outward form of an inward reality (Philippians 2:5). It differs from 'schema' which emphasizes the outward only. Morphe is inward and intrinsic, schema is outward and incidental (Romans 12:1-2). These men, were "holding to a form of godliness." In other words, they claimed to have the real thing (morphe), when in fact they didn't.

2. They deny that Scripture and Christ alone have the capability to produce godliness: They have denied its power (3:5).

While they claimed to hold to the gospel, at the same time "they have denied its power." The word power is $\delta \nu \nu \alpha \mu \iota \sigma$. It is a power residing in a thing by nature, that enables it to accomplish a goal. They denied that the Scriptures, which are Christ's instrument of transformation, are sufficient or able to effect deep, internal lasting change.

a. It is insufficient to produce godliness.

They denied that through the Scriptures, Christ has the power or ability to effectually restore and to make people godly. Godliness refers to the practical out-working of a God-centered, God-glorifying life.

Herein chiefly appears the power of true godliness, viz. in its being effectual in practice. And the efficacy of godliness in this respect, is what the apostle respects, when he speaks of the power of godliness, 2 Tim. iii.5. for he there is particularly declaring, how some professors of religion would notoriously fail in the practice of it, and then the 5th verse observes, that in being thus of an unholy practice, they deny the power of godliness, though they have a form of it. Indeed the power of godliness is exerted in the first place within the soul; in the sensible, lively exercise of

gracious affections there. Yet the principle evidence of this power is in those exercises of holy affections that are practical; conquering the will, the lusts, and corruptions of men, and carrying them on in the way of holiness, through all temptation, difficulty and opposition. Again, the reason why gracious affections have their exercise and effect in christian practice, appears from this, that the first objective ground of gracious affections, is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themselves, and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest.

Edwards, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Vol. I, p. 317

- b. It is insisted that it must be supplemented and added to.
 - (1) They deny it is adequate to give us wisdom (3:15).
 - (2) They depend on the principles of the world (Colossians 2:8).

Such as:

- (a) Emotional and psychological problems are different from Spiritual problems.
- (b) Answers lie deep within: you must get in touch with your inner recesses.
- (c) Problems lie in childhood wounds and are buried.
- (d) Only a person specially trained in psychotherapy can unscramble it and find its deep roots.
- (e) Scripture, prayer and the Holy Spirit aren't enough to do deep surgery in the soul.
- (3) They do not hold fast to the head (Colossians 2:19).

C. It Has Been A Central Issue Of Church History.

1. The Pharisees' conflict with Christ (Matthew 15:1-9) was over the teachings of man taught as doctrine along side the Scripture (vv. 6, 9).

- 2. The Roman Catholic conflict with the Reformers was not over the inspiration of Scripture, but the sufficiency of Scripture.
 - a. The Catholic Church has three sources of authoritative truth
 - (1) Scripture
 - (2) Tradition is equal in authority to Scripture

The Second Vatican Council says:

This tradition which comes from the apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down...For as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fulness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her.

Sola Scriptura! p. 11

The Council of Trent teaches:

It is clearly perceived that these truths and rules are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which, received by the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down to us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand. Following, then, the examples of the orthodox Fathers, it receives and venerates with a feeling of piety and reverence all the books both of the Old and New Testament, since one God is author of both; also the traditions, whether they relate to faith or to morals, as having been dictated either orally by Christ or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church in unbroken succession.

Sola Scriptura! pp. 28-29

(3) The interpretations of the Church are authoritative and alone are to be accepted.

The Council of Trent also says:

Furthermore, to check unbridled spirits, it decrees that no one relying on his own judgement shall, in matters of faith and morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, distorting the Holy Scriptures in accordance with his own conceptions, presume to interpret them contrary to the sense which holy mother Church to whom it

belongs to judge of their true sense and interpretation, has held and holds, or even contrary to the unanimous teaching of the Fathers, even though such interpretations should never at any time be published.

Answers to Catholic Claims, p. 2

It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, sacred Scripture, and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others.

Sola Scriptura! p. 11

b. The Reformers' position

Martin Luther says regarding the Church's tradition and interpretation:

But this is what we have long been desiring and doing. What else do we contend for, but that the simplicity and purity of Christian doctrine should prevail, and that what men have invented and brought in along with it should be left behind and disregarded? But you, who give us this advice, do not take it yourself, you do the opposite; you write Diatribes; you cry up the decrees of Popes; you vaunt the authority of men; you try every means of carrying us off into these strange pastures and foisting upon us things both unscriptual and unnecessary that we may spoil the simplicity and sincerity of Christian piety, and disorder it with man-made additions. On the same account I have thus far hounded the Pope, in whose kingdom nothing is more commonly said or more widely accepted than this dictum: the Scriptures are obscure and equivocal; we must seek the interpreting Spirit from the apostolic see of Rome!' No more disastrous words could be spoken; for by this means ungodly men have exalted themselves above the Scriptures and done what they liked, till the Scriptures were completely trodden down and we could believe and teach nothing but maniacs' dreams. In a word, that dictum is no mere human invention; it is poison sent into the world by the inconceivable malevolent prince of all the devils himself!

Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will*, pp. 117, 124

John Calvin says of traditions and Scripture:

Therefore the Spirit, promised to us, has not the task of inventing new and unheard-of revelations, or of forging a new kind of doctrine, to lead us away from the received doctrine of the gospel, but of sealing our minds with that very doctrine which is commended by the gospel ... This, however, remains certain: the perfect doctrine he has brought has made an end to all prophecies. All those, then, who, not content with the gospel, patch it with something extraneous to it, detract from Christ's authority.

John Calvin, Institutes, pp. 94, 496

II. THE CLAIMS OF SCRIPTURE TO ITS SUFFICIENCY (2 Timothy 3:15; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

A. It Is A Complete Provision For Salvation And Godliness (2 Timothy 3:15).

1. Their ability is stated: "the sacred writings which are able to give wisdom."

The word 'able' is $\delta \upsilon \nu \alpha \mu \iota \sigma$, a self inherent power able to accomplish something, (Romans 1:16; 2 Corinthians 1:4; Hebrews 2:18).

2. Their accomplishment is stated: Wisdom for salvation.

- a. The concept of wisdom in general refers to the skillful application of knowledge in life that ensures success in life and relationships. It alludes back to "godliness" in verse 5.
- b. The comprehensiveness of salvation in all its aspects is referred to. The Greek preposition translated 'leads to' in the NASB, is normally translated 'for' (as in the ESV). The preposition is best translated here in its basic, general meaning so the phrase could be translated 'in regard to salvation'. Therefore, it is wisdom for, (or in regard to) salvation both for the initial conversion and the ongoing 'salvation' of daily living. (Philippians 2:12). The exact phrase is found in 1 Peter 2:2 where it is translated "In respect to salvation."

B. It Contains The Principles To Solve Every Spiritual And Emotional Problem Or Need In Life (2 Peter 1:3-4).

1. The subject matter involved is "everything pertaining to life and godliness."

God has given all His people "all things that pertain to life and godliness." Life and godliness refers to the realities and personal problems of daily living as seen by the immediate context (vv. 5-9).

2. The scope involved is "everything."

The Scriptures are sufficient to overcome any and all emotional and spiritual problem.

3. The sufficiency of the Word for life and godliness is an outworking of the sufficiency of Christ (2 Corinthians 12:9; 2 Peter 1:2).

III. THE COMPREHENSIVENESS OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE: IT IS THE COMPLETE AND PERFECT RESOURCE FOR LIVING (Psalm 19: 7-11).

A. The Author Who Wrote It: David.

Psalm 19:7-11 makes amazing claims about the sufficiency of Scripture. It can restore, make wise, etc. But what credibility did David have? David experienced and struggled with nearly all of life's serious emotional and spiritual problems. In spite of that God used the Word to heal, restore and sustain him. David experienced:

- 1. Betrayal, treachery and rejection (Psalm 55).
- 2. Guilt, anxiety, and depression (Psalm 6, 32, 38).
- 3. Grief over a great loss The death of David's infant child and also the death of Absalom (2 Samuel 12:15-23, 13:39, 18:33).

B. The Attributes Of Scripture In Relation To Its Usefulness And Sufficiency.

Much of the following is adapted from John MacArthur. The Word of God has the following attributes that prove its sufficiency:

- 1. It is perfect: This is the comprehensive term for the complete usefulness of Scripture for life's problems. Its basic meaning is whole, complete or sufficient. In other words, it emphasizes comprehensiveness. The Scriptures cover all aspects of an issue. They lack nothing in order to be what they ought to be. In short, nothing essential or necessary is lacking.
- **2. It is law:** This refers to the fact that the Scriptures are authoritive instruction. They are the final word on the matters of what they treat. All of Scripture is called 'law' in this sense (1 Corinthians 14:21, 34).
- **3. It restores the soul:** This term stresses that the Scripture is entirely able to revive, refresh, or transform the inner man, the core or the real person. David knew this from experience (Psalm 119; 25, 50; Luke 24:32; 2 Corinthians 3:18).
- **4. It is sure:** The Scriptures are unwavering, immovable, reliable, and trustworthy: They are a sure foundation to build on.
- 5. It makes wise the simple: The term, 'simple' literally is an 'open door.' It indicates an undiscerning, naive, gullible person. The Scriptures make someone wise, skilled, and adept in relationships, and in living by the right priorities (2 Timothy 3:5, 15).
- 6. It is right rejoicing the heart: They point us to the true path to go on in difficulties and troubles (Proverbs 14:12). They enable us, by Christ's power, to deal with depression, anxiety, and fear (1 John 4:18) As a result we find joy.

- **7. It is pure, enlightening the eyes:** This refers to something that is clear, or not puzzling. The Scriptures enlighten, bringing understanding when there is confusion.
- **8. It is enduring forever:** The Scriptures are unchangeable. They will never be outdated or unsophisticated. They have no need of updating, revising, or editing. They originate from the omniscient God. He is wiser than anyone who stands in judgment on them.
- **9. It is true:** The Scriptures give us the truth on issues unknown and unknowable. They are reliable on ultimate issues, such as life, morality, death, afterlife, happiness, and security.

IV. THE COMPONENTS OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE: IT IS THE PERFECT MANUAL FOR MINISTRY AND PROBLEM SOLVING (2 Timothy 3:16b; Hebrews 4:12).

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

- A. It Teaches: It Sets The Standard And Shows What Is Permissible, Acceptable Teaching; "Profitable For Teaching."
 - 1. It determines the truth to be believed, preached, and practiced (2 Timothy 4:1-3).
 - 2. It sets the norms and standard that govern our lives (Psalm 119:11).
 - 3. It transforms and renews values, priorities and perspectives (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

B. It Reproves: It Shows Where We Are Wrong, "For Reproof."

1. The definition of 'reproof' (John 3:19-20, 16:8; Ephesians 5:11, 13).

The basic meaning of the term ($\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\mu\circ\varsigma$) is to examine, inquire into a matter, then to refute. The term also means to convict with a suggestion of failure, shame and guilt or to bring to light, to expose fault. It involves analysis and evaluation. It is the logical exposition of facts with the purpose of refuting and showing things to be as they really are. Therefore evil is seen to be evil.

2. In connection with reproof, Scripture reveals and brings to light the deepest workings of the inner man - it is ... piercing as far as the division of the soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

The sufficiency of Scripture is seen in the fact that:

- a. It is active: Active (ενεργες) means to be operative, to be at work, to effect something, to bring about, produce or perform (Philippians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). It is not mere activity without result.
- b. It pierces: The term (διικνεομαι) is a compound word which means to come to, to reach, to penetrate or pass through thoroughly and deeply.
- c. It is able to judge the thoughts: The term (Greek: $\epsilon \nu \theta \nu \mu \epsilon o$, English: enthumeo) is a compound term, the prefix 'en' emphasizes the inner man. It refers to strong feelings, or intense emotions. The root word means to "glow" and it is used of "inflaming wine." The root verb also means to rush along in heat. The related word is the word (Greek: $\theta \nu \mu o \zeta$, English: thumos) a strong word for anger. Therefore, it refers to strong inner feelings and emotions. The Scripture exposes our true, deeper, feelings and emotions that often we ourselves do not see.

d. It is able to judge the intentions: This is also a compound term (εννοια) and refers to the deepest thinking, meditations, concepts, attitudes, values and perceptions of a person. It refers to the way a person sees and understands things. The Scriptures expose our sinful thinking so that we are face to face with ourselves, and our true values, priorities, and attitudes.

3. The Scripture distinguishes the primary and secondary causes of man's problems.

- a. The wrong relation of primary and secondary causes are often taught by Christian psychologists.
- b. The Biblical view of primary causes roots them in the heart (Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:18-23; Proverbs 26:23-27).
- c. The Bible recognizes the reality of complicating secondary causes to problems (1 Corinthians 15:33; Proverbs 13:20).

C. It Corrects: It Restores Us To Right Relations In Every Area "For Correction".

It shows how to recover from failure, and to break the dominion of the patterns and habits of sin. It also shows us how to be reconciled in areas of relationships. Such as;

- 1. The non-Christian to God.
- 2. The Christian to God (1 John 1:9).
- 3. The Christian to other Christians (Matthew 5:23, 18:15-18).
- D. It Trains In Righteousness: It Gives Principles To Stay On The Right Path, "For Training In Righteousness."

1. The concept and meaning of the term, "training".

The term for training $(\pi\alpha\iota\delta\epsilon\iota\alpha)$ refers to the overall restructuring and cultivation of the mind. It is used of the correcting and curbing of passions and drives. It is a basic term used in general for raising children (Ephesians 6:4). It is intended to prepare someone to take their useful place in the community.

2. The comprehensiveness of Biblical training in righteousness (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

- a. There is admonishment of the unruly.
- b. There is encouragement of the fainthearted.
- c. There is help for the weak.
- d. There is the exercise of patience towards all.

Chapter VIII

THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

INTRODUCTION:

- I. THE CONCEPT OF THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.
 - A. The Basis For The Supreme Authority Of Scripture.
 - 1. The inspiration of Scripture: The Scriptures are God's own self testimony, so they possess the authority of God Himself (2 Timothy 3:16-4:2).

Paul charges Timothy to preach the Word with a solemn appeal to the authority of God and Christ. The reason for his command to preach the Word is based on the authority of Scripture itself. The Scripture must be preached for it possesses supreme authority: It is the God-breathed Scripture! It is God's Word, not man's.

Christ is not truly Lord in a man's heart till the Scripture has been made Lord in his mind and conscience.

J. I. Packer

Peter said that you should give a reason for the faith that is in you, but this bull condemns me from its own word without any proof from Scripture, whereas I back up all my assertions from the Bible. I ask thee, ignorant Antichrist, does thou think that with thy naked words thou canst prevail against the armor of Scripture? Hast thou learned this from Cologne and Louvain? If this is all it takes, just to say, "I dissent, I deny," what fool, what ass, what mole, what log could not condemn?

Does not thy meretricious brow blush that with thine inane smoke thou withstandest the lightning of the divine Word? Why do we not believe the Turks? Why do we not admit the Jews? Why do we not honor the heretics if damning is all that it takes? But Luther, who is used to bellum, is not afraid of bullam. I can distinguish between inane paper and the omnipotent Word of God.

Luther in; *Here I Stand*, Roland Bainton, p. 125

- 2. The character of God, who cannot lie, gives the Scriptures absolute authority (Titus 1:2).
- B. The Character And Nature Of The Supreme Authority Of Scripture.
 - 1. Negatively: It is not a relative or provisional authority that changes when there is more information.
 - 2. Positively: It is the final and absolute authority that never changes (Isaiah 8:19-20; 1 Corinthians 4:6).

Here we come back to this vital doctrine of the ultimate and final authority of the Scriptures themselves in all matters of faith. And that is why we must ever insist upon that vital matter. There are those who say that they do not accept the authority of the Scriptures but they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The question I ask is, how do they know Him? What do they know about the Lord Jesus Christ except what they find in the New Testament?...How can I sit in judgement on the New Testament? How can I say this is true of Christ, but that is not? What do I know about Christ apart from the New Testament? I am shut up to this Book; anything that I may say that I believe apart from the Bible will be sheer imagination.

Martin Lloyd Jones, The Love of God, pp. 122-123

3. A definition: "The Scriptures are the final standard for truth, both for what is to be believed regarding salvation and sanctification as well as the final arbitrator and standard for practice, judgment, and decision making."

If the Word of God be in you, give it a place of rule. Let it be the master of your thoughts, ruling your understanding; the master of your affections, curbing your passions, and exciting in you holy desires...Put the Scripture, the inspired Word, put Christ, the Incarnate Word himself, upon the throne of your whole being, and surrender yourself to him, without attempting to make any terms or conditions ... As for me, I care not what men invent, or what they deny; the truth which I have learned from Scriptures, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, is the truth by which I shall stand so long as there is breath in my body; and with Luther I would say, I can do no other. To this I must stand, and let those who will do otherwise, follow after novelties till they weary of them.

Charles Spurgeon, *Place for the Word, in Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Volume* 44, pp. 398-399

II. THE CONTEMPORARY CLAIMS THAT DIMINISH THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.

A. The Claims That There Are Authoritative Revelations Equal To Scripture.

1. Inspired hymns.

Some of the great hymns are practically on a par with the Psalms, and one can be sure that if Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, Augustus Toplady, and Reginald Heber had lived in the time of David and Solomon, and been no more inspired that they were in their own day, some of their hymns of praise to God would have found their way into the Hebrew canon...the kind of inspiration of which the Psalms were made. There is no difference in kind. If there is any difference, it was a matter of degree. When the Biblical writers served as channels of God's revelation they needed more divine help, but the inspiration was not distinct in kind from that given to all the messengers of God down through history. What distinguishes the Bible is its record of special revelation, not a distinctive kind of inspiration.

Dewey Beegle, The Inspiration of Scripture, p. 53

2. Words of prophecy.

In the Spirit the present fellowship is as much the arena of God's vital presence as anything in the Biblical account. Indeed, in the light of what we may learn from this past witness, and take to heart, we may expect new things to occur in our day and days to come...all of this – to repeat – is quite surprising and startling. Most of us of course were familiar with prophetic utterance as recorded in the Bible, and willing to accept it as the Word of God. Isaiah's or Jeremiah's "Thus says the Lord..." we were accustomed to, but to hear a Tom or a Mary today, in the twentieth century, speak the same way.

J. Rodman Williams, *The Era of the Spirit*, pp. 16, 27-28

B. The Consequences Of The Claims That There Are Revelations In Addition To Scripture.

1. It diminishes the Scripture's uniqueness.

It is no longer unique, it becomes a mere model, a pattern. It also often causes the Scripture to be seen as the past, as opposed to the fresh voice of God, which diminishes the significance of Hebrews 4:12 and other Scripture.

2. It minimizes the fact that Scripture itself is a living, prophetic word (2 Peter 1:19-20; Matthew 26:56).

The Bible truly has become a fellow witness to God's present activity...If someone today perhaps has a vision of God, of Christ, it is good to know that it has happened before; if one has a revelation from God, to know that for the early Christians revelation also occurred in the community; if one speaks a "Thus says the Lord," and dares to address the fellowship in the first person — even going beyond the words of Scripture — that this was happening long ago. How strange and remarkable it is! If one speaks in the fellowship of the Spirit the Word of truth, it is neither his own thoughts and reflections (e.g., on some topic of the day) nor simply some exposition of Scripture, for the Spirit transcends personal observations, however interesting or profound they may be. The Spirit as the living God moves through and beyond the records of past witness, however valuable such records are as a model for what happens today.

J. Rodman Williams, *The Era of the Spirit*, p. 16

C. The Classic Examples From History.

- 1. The cults.
- 2. The teaching of the Roman church on tradition and church interpretation.
- 3. Recent Evangelical claims.

He exhaustively examined every scripture reference that could relate to the issue and found none to prove conclusively either that a Christian can or cannot be demonized. Without a clear scriptural position then, we need to consult those with experience in dealing with the problem under consideration. Those who work with cancer patients know that Christians can and do develop cancer. Likewise, those with 'clinical' experience with Christians having demonic symptoms have overcome their doubts and concluded that Christians can and regularly do carry demons.

Charles Craft, Defeating Dark Angels, pp. 64-65

The burden of proof lies with those who deny Christians can be demonized. They must adduce clinical evidence that clearly eliminates any possibility in any case, past or present, that a believer can have a demon...We must note that those who deny that Christians can be demonized generally are those who have not had counseling experience with the demonized. Their stance is largely theoretical."

C. Fred Dickason, Demon Possession and the Christian, pp.175-176

III. THE CASE FOR THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.

- A. They Are Cited As The Final Authority By Christ And The Apostles.
 - 1. "It is written" ends dispute (Mark 14:21; Matthew 21:42, 22:29).

- 2. All of Scripture is called "Law" (John 10:34-35, 15:25).
- 3. Its fulfillment can't be stopped (Matthew 26:54-56; Luke 21:22).
- B. The Fact That The Scripture Is A Complete And Final Revelation From God Allows For No Other Competing Authority.
 - 1. Paul spoke of "filling up the Word" and laying a "foundation" of revelation (Colossians1:25; Ephesians 2:20-3:5).

It is not in the power of the Roman pontiff or the Inquisition to construct new articles of faith. No believing Christian can be coerced beyond holy writ. By divine law we are forbidden to believe anything which is not established by divine Scripture or manifest revelation.

Luther in; Here I Stand, p. 89

- 2. Jude spoke of a completed body of truth called 'the faith' (Jude 3).
 - a. The content of scripture and what we believe is emphasized by the reference to "the faith."
 - b. Their content is complete
 - c. Their conveyance of truth is finished
- 3. Jesus declared a completed body of truth would be given through the apostles (John 16:13; Revelation 22:18).

I assert that a council has sometimes erred and may sometimes err. Nor has a council authority to establish new articles of faith. A council cannot make divine right out of that which by nature is not divine right.

Councils have contradicted each other, for the recent Lateran Council has reversed the claim of the councils of Constance and Basel that a council is above a pope. A simple layman armed with Scripture is to be believed above a pope or a council without it. As for the pope's decretal on indulgences I say that neither the Church nor the pope can establish articles of faith. These must come from Scripture. For the sake of Scripture we should reject pope and councils.

Luther; Here I Stand, p. 90

For in the process of time, when the power of the Roman empire gave a countenance and protection unto the Christian religion, another way was fixed on for this end, viz., the use of such assemblies of bishops and others as they called General Councils ... This way was begun in the Council of Nice, wherein, although there was a determination of the doctrine concerning the person of Christ – then in agitation, and opposed, as unto his divine nature therein – according unto the truth, yet sundry evils and inconveniences ensued thereon. For thenceforth the faith of Christians began greatly to be resolved into the authority of men, and as much, if not more weight to be laid on what was decreed by the fathers there assembled, than on what was clearly taught in the Scriptures...I have mentioned these few things, which belong unto the promise and prediction of our blessed Saviour in Matt. Xvi. 18, (the place insisted on,) to show that the church, without any disadvantage to the truth, may be preserved without such general assemblies, which in the following ages, proved the most pernicious engines for the corruption of the faith, worship, and manners of it. Yea, from the beginning, they were so far from being the only way of preserving truth, that it was almost constantly prejudiced by the addition of their authority unto the confirmation of it. Nor was there any one of them wherein "the mystery of iniquity" did not work, unto the laying of some rubbish in the foundation of that fatal apostasy which afterwards openly ensued. The Lord Christ himself hath taken it upon him to build his church on this rock of his person, by true faith **of** it and **in** it. He sends his Holy Spirit to bear testimony unto him, in all the blessed effects of his power and grace. He continueth his Word, with the faithful ministry of it, to reveal, declare, make known, and vindicate his sacred truth, unto the conviction of gainsayers. He keeps up that faith in him, that love unto him, in the hearts of all his elect, as shall not be prevailed against.

Owen, Vol.I, pp. 10, 12

IV. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.

- A. We Are Able To Distinguish The Voice Of God From Satanic Counterfeits In The Church.
 - 1. We reject false substitutes and alternatives (Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 2 Peter 2:1).
 - 2. We recognize the voice of the shepherd and the voice of the Spirit in Scripture (John 12:47-49; Ephesians 6:17).
- B. We Are Able To Depend On God's Word With Complete Trust.
 - 1. It converts and brings growth (Acts 20:32; 1 Peter 2:1-2; Romans 10:17).
 - 2. It is approached as a means, not an end: We seek the living Word in the written word by the Spirit (John 5:39).
- C. We Are Able To Differentiate The Final And Absolute Revelation Of Scripture From Individual And Relative "Revelation" Of Guidance.

We must learn to recognize the great difference between the universal absolute and binding nature of scriptural revelation and the individual relative nature of 'revelation' in personal guidance.

Personal "Revelation" and Guidance	Scriptural Revelation
1. Individual in application	Corporate and universal in application
2. Subjective and discerned	Objective and declared
3. Personal in direction	Universal and comprehensive in direction
4. Normally the result of a process	Instantaneous upon proclamation
5. Authoritive and binding only on the individual	Binding on all
6. Temporal for a specific situation	Eternal for every situation
7. Accepted provisionally after being subjected to the precepts and principles of Scripture	Accepted absolutely and immediately

Note: Words of prophecy, that is, direct words to individuals or a church, that are immediately accepted as binding are not in the church today. No one can command a person directly with a word from God that is apart from Scripture. The individual has the right to go to Scripture and to God to make a decision. Each individual is personally and directly guided by the Holy Spirit, through the Word. In addition, strong impressions on the mind are not biblical prophecy as is claimed by Grudem and others. Grudem defines prophecy as,

Reporting in one's own words something that God has spontaneously brought to mind (p. 1052). He defines revelation as, God could bring something spontaneously to mind so that a person prophesying would report it in his or her own words, Paul calls this "revelation" (p. 1056). Something that God may suddenly bring to mind, or something that God may impress on someone's consciousness in such a way that the person has a sense that it is from God. It may be that the thought brought to mind is surprisingly distinct from the person's own train of thought or that it is accompanied by a sense of vividness or urging or persistence. Or in some other way gives the person a rather clear

sense that it is from the Lord. Paul would call the sense or intuition of those things "a revelation" and the report to the assembled church of that prompting from God would be called a "prophesy." ... As far as we can tell, all New Testament "prophesy" was based on this kind of spontaneous prompting from the Holy Spirit (p. 1057).

However, contrary to Grudem prophecy in Scripture is never defined or described as impressions or intuition (Numbers 12:6). Jonathan Edwards' comments on the danger of accepting impressions as prophecy or words from God,

But it is exceedingly apparent that such ideas have nothing in them which is spiritual and divine, in the sense wherein it has been demonstrated that all gracious experiences are spiritual and divine. These external ideas are in no wise entirely, and in their whole nature, diverse from all that men have by nature; so far from this, they are ideas of the same sort which we have by the external senses, among the inferior powers of human nature ... There is nothing wanting in the soul, as it is by nature, to render it capable of being the subject of all these external ideas, without any new principles. A natural man is capable of having an idea, and a lively idea, of shapes, and colours, and sounds, when they are absent, even as capable as a regenerate man is: so there is nothing supernatural in them ... But as to these external ideas, though the way of their coming into the mind is sometimes unusual, yet the ideas themselves are not the better for that; they are still of no different sort from what men have by their senses; they are of no higher kind, nor a whit better ...

And as these external ideas have nothing divine or spiritual in their nature, and nothing but what natural men, without any new principles, are capable of; so there is nothing in their nature which requires that peculiar, inimitable and unparalleled exercise of the glorious power of God, in order to their production, which it has been shown there is in the production of true grace. There appears to be nothing in their nature above the power of the devil. It is certainly not above the power of Satan to suggest thoughts to men; because otherwise he could not tempt them to sin. And if he can suggest any thoughts or ideas at all, doubtless imaginary ones, or ideas of things external, are not above his power; for the external ideas men have are the lowest sort of ideas. These ideas may be raised only by impressions made on the body, by moving the animal spirits, and impressing the brain.

Jonathan Edwards, The Religious Affections, pp. 141, 143

He further comments,

Merely the way of persons receiving these imaginary ideas, does not alter the nature of the ideas themselves that are received: let them be received in what way they will, they are still but external ideas, or ideas of outward appearances, and so are not spiritual. Yea, if men should actually receive such external ideas by the immediate power of the most high God upon their minds, they would not be spiritual, they should be no more than a common work of the Spirit of God; as is evident in fact, in the instance of Balaam, who had impressed on his mind, by God himself, a clear and lively outward representation or idea of Jesus Christ, as the Star rising out of Jacob, when he heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, and saw the vision. But Balaam had no spiritual discovery of Christ; that day-star never spiritually rose in his heart, he being but a natural man.

Jonathan Edwards, Works, Vol.I, p. 268

As Spurgeon says,

I have heard many fanatical persons say the Holy Spirit revealed this and that to them. Now that is very generally revealed nonsense. The Holy Ghost does not reveal anything fresh now. He brings old things to our remembrance. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have told you." The canon of revelation is closed; there is no more to be added. God does not give a fresh revelation, but he rivets the old one. When it has been forgotten, and laid in the dusty chamber of our memory, he fetches it out and cleans the picture, but does not paint a new one. There are no new doctrines, but the old ones are often revived. It is not, I say, by any new revelation that the Spirit comforts. He does so by telling us old things over again; he brings a fresh lamp to manifest the treasures hidden in Scripture; he unlocks the strong chests in which the truth had long lain, and he points to secret chambers filled with untold riches; but he coins no more, for enough is done. Believer! There is enough in the Bible for thee to live upon for ever. If thou shouldst outnumber the years of Methusaleh, there would be no need for fresh revelation; if thou shouldst live till Christ should come upon the earth, there would be no necessity for the addition of a single word; if thou shouldst go down as deep as Jonah, or even descend as David said he did, into the belly of hell, still there would be enough *in the Bible to comfort thee without a supplementary sentence.*

Spurgeon, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Vol I, p. 38

Chapter IX

THE CANON: THE FORMATION OF THE BIBLE

I. THE BIBLICAL REVELATION OF A COMPLETE CANON.

A. The Explanation Of Canon.

1. "Canon":

It comes from the Greek term K α vov; meaning a ruler, staff, or measuring rod; from the root word "reed," a common instrument of measure.

2. The Metaphorical meaning:

A reed was a unit of measure; hence, canon is a term meaning a standard or norm (Galatians 6:16). It was used of a rule in grammar; of a table of dates; of a list of books, a standard in ethics art or literature.

3. The Theological meaning:

It meant; a rule or standard for anything; hence, a rule of faith, a standard for faith. Then it came to mean a standard of writings that are recognized to be inspired and authoritative.

B. The Evidence Of The Canon – Recognized Supremely Authoritative Writings – In The Old Testament.

1. There were sacred, separate, set apart writings.

- a. Deuteronomy 10:1-5 writings kept in the Ark.
- b. 2 Kings 22:8-13 writings kept in the Temple.

2. There were authoritative writings.

- a. Joshua 1:8; Malachi 4:4 Careful to do all that is written in them.
- b. Deuteronomy 17:18-19 Kings were to be subject to them.

They were to be read and observed.

Note: Acknowledged writings came quickly:

- (1) Moses: Joshua 1:8.
- (2) Joshua by Judges.
- (3) Job referred to in Ezekiel 14:14.
- (4) Psalm 18 is quoted in the historical book 2 Samuel 22.
- (5) Solomon's writings 1 Chronicles 6; 1 Kings 4:32.
- (6) Daniel refers to Jeremiah; Daniel 9:2.
- (7) Jeremiah 26:18 quotes Micah 3:12.

3. Completed authoritative writings were recognized by Christ.

- a. It is implied by Malachi 4:4; "Remember the Law of Moses" (cp. Matthew 11:13-14).
- b. It is asserted by Jesus "from ... Abel to Zechariah" (Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:49-51; (2 Chronicles 24:21).
- c. It is acknowledged by Jews "The Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms" (Luke 24:27, 44).

C. The Evidence Of The Canon In The New Testament.

It was anticipated by Jesus Christ (John 14:26, 16:13-15) "All truth."

As to the extent of divine revelations objectively, those which he granted, by his Spirit, unto his apostles after his ascension, were beyond those

which he personally taught them, so far as they are recorded in the writings of the evangelists. For he told them plainly, not long before his death, that he had many things to say unto them which then they "could not bear," John 16:12. And for the knowledge of those things, he refers them to the coming of the Spirit to make revelation of them from himself, in the next words, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you," verses 13 and 14. And on this account he had told them before that it was expedient for them that he should go away, that the Holy Spirit might come unto them, whom he would send from the Father, verse 7. Hereunto he referred the full and clear manifestation of the mysteries of the gospel.

John Owen, Vol. V, pp. 59-60

- It was asserted by the Apostles Paul (Colossians 1:25; Ephesians 2:20; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; Hebrews 1:2, 2:4). "The faith which was once for all handed down (Jude 3)."
- II. THE HISTORICAL RECOGNITION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON.
 - A. The Perception (not the creation) Of The Canon By The Early Church.
 - The inspiration of Scripture was recognized as giving to the Scripture a unique, self-authenticating, readily discernable quality.

Scripture, since it is God-breathed, is self-evincing and self-authenticating. In short, it possesses the same qualities as God Himself. How could it not? By definition, the person, presence, and power of God possesses and manifests a unique self-authenticating majesty, which needs no outside authentication.

For example, when the sun was darkened at midday and the earth shook, it caused the centurion to cry out, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54).

Also, Pharaoh's magicians in response to God's miracles through Moses cried out, "This is the finger of God" (Exodus 8:19). Clearly, God's power and majesty is self-authenticating and self-evincing. This same self-evincing, self-authenticating majesty resides in God-breathed Scripture. Therefore, the councils of the church did not decide or produce the Scripture. What the councils did (in part) was deal with heretics who denied inspiration of certain books and as a result, assaulted a consensus in the church that had already recognized the canon of Scriptures. We've seen that this was the case in the Old Testament. The New Testament evidence will demonstrate the same thing as well.

Let this point therefore stand: that those whom the Holy Spirit has inwardly taught truly rest upon Scripture, and that Scripture indeed is self-authenticated; hence, it is not right to subject it to proof and reasoning. And the certainty it deserves with us, it attains by the testimony of the Spirit. For then when it wins reverence for itself by its own majesty, it seriously affects us only when it is sealed upon our hearts through the Spirit. Therefore, illumined by His power, we believe neither by our own nor anyone else's judgment that the Scripture is from God; but above human judgment we affirm with utter certainty (just as if we were gazing upon the majesty of God Himself) that it has flowed to us from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men. We seek no proofs, no marks of genuineness upon which our judgment may lean; but we subject our judgment and wit to it as to a thing far beyond any guesswork.

Calvin, *Institutes*

2. A collection of writings was made

Certain information was rejected (John 20:30; 21:23-25). Certain letters were read (1 Thessalonians5:27; Luke1:1-4). Certain letters were circulated (Revelation 1:11; Colossians 4:16). Letters and information were collected (Luke 1:1-4; 1 Timothy 5:18). Apostolic writings (some) were recognized very early as belonging to the body of Scripture (1 Timothy 5:18; 2 Peter 3:16).

The writings commanded authority, and were considered to be inspired Scripture, and as such, legally binding upon the church.

3. The recognition of general facts about Scripture and the canon.

a. The Canon was discovered by men, not determined by men. It was perceived not produced.

The church is indeed active in the historical process of canon formation. But the crucial point is that the church neither creates nor validates the canon. The canon has prior authority and validity. What the church does in the historical process of canon development is to receive it, acknowledge it to be the truth of God, show reverence to it, and give unhesitating assent to it.

R.C. Sproul in, Geisler's, *Inerrancy*, pp. 339-340

- b. Inspiration determined canonicity, not canonicity determined inspiration: Canonized writings as inspired writings possessed a self- authenticating quality.
- c. The authority of the church was based on Scripture. The Scripture's authority was not based on the church.

The Church no more gave us the New Testament canon than Sir Isaac Newton gave us the force of gravity. God gave us gravity, by His work of creation, and similarly He gave us the New Testament canon, by inspiring the individual books that make it up.

J. I. Packer, God Has Spoken, p. 109

Negative factors:

Positive factors:

To discover the Canonicity of a writing:

The marks of Canonicity:

a. It was not its age.

- a. It had a divine self-vindicating authority: It uniquely in and of itself commands attention.
- b. It was not that it was written in Hebrew or Greek.
- b. It is prophetic or apostolic: a prophet, apostle, or someone directly connected to the apostles wrote it (2 Thessalonians 2:2).
- c. It was not simply that it was in agreement with present scripture.
- c. It is authentic: its content is accurate and consistent.
- d. It was not its religious value.
- d. It is dynamic: its transforming power is clear.
- e. It was received by overwhelming consensus of the church in its normal worship.

B. The Process Of The Recognition Of The Canon In The Early Church.

1. Its initial recognition:

All but five to seven books were recognized immediately. Luke's gospel is quoted as Scripture in 1 Timothy 5:18. Many of Paul's writings were recognized as Scripture by the time Peter wrote his second epistle (2 Peter 3:16). Most of the other seven were generally recognized early.

2. Its final acknowledgment:

Councils formalized the Canon to settle questions about a few debated books which were already widely accepted. Councils recognized what was already true by consensus in order to put the issue of heretical rejection of books to an end.

C. The Rejection of the Apocrypha.

1. Christ never quoted it, nor did he recognize it (Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:49-51).

Christ speaks of "the blood of all the prophets." He starts with Abel and ends with Zechariah. Zechariah is the last prophet in the last book of the Hebrew Old Testament (2 Chronicles). Christ's words are comparable to saying "from Genesis to Revelation." In short, Christ left no place, nor gave even indirect support, to the apocrypha. This, should settle the issue.

- 2. The church never had anything approaching a consensus in accepting it.
- 3. No council recognized it, until Trent.
- 4. They aren't apostolic or they aren't authentic in content; they contradict Scripture, etc.

Chapter X

ILLUMINATION

- I. THE PRIORITY OF THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN ILLUMINATION.
 - A. The New Testament, And Christ Himself Are As Meaningless And Inglorious Today, Apart From The Spirit, As The Old Testament Was To The Jews In The Time Of Christ (John 16:14; 2 Corinthians 3:13-15).
 - 1. Israel did not see that the glory of the Old Covenant was designed to be temporary, and to pass away.

Israel did not see that the old covenant pointed to and anticipated Christ (2 Corinthians 3:13-15; Galatians 3:21-24; Hebrews 10:1).

- 2. Israel did not see the glory of Christ that was prophesied in the Old Testament, though He was there, if they had had eyes to see Him (John 5:39, 12:37, 41; Isaiah 53).
- 3. Israel saw only a mere formal, external covenant and no glory in a person.

It is the same today with the New Covenant, until a person by the Spirit, is granted "sight" by the illumination of the glory of Christ in the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

B. We Do Not See Anything Of Christ's Glory Apart From The Spirit (John 16:14; 2 Corinthians 3:4-6, 17-18, 4:3-6).

- 1. Our own efforts are completely inadequate to produce any spiritual changes or effects or to give spiritual illumination and understanding of Christ and the gospel (2 Corinthians 3:5-6).
- 2. The Spirit gives a "sight" of the glory of Christ, to believers, those who formerly did not "see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (4:3-6)..

... We are there abundantly taught, that the saints differ from the ungodly in this, that they have the knowledge of God, and the sight of God, and of Jesus Christ... This plainly shows, that there is a discovery of the divine superlative glory and excellency of ... Christ, peculiar to the saints; and also, that it is as immediately from God, as light from the sun ... For it is compared to God's creating the light by his powerful word in the beginning of creation ... The change made by this spiritual opening of the eyes in conversion would be much greater, and more remarkable every way than if a man born blind should have the sense of seeing imparted to him at once, in the midst of the clear light of the sun discovering a world of visible objects. For though sight be more noble than any of the other external senses, yet this spiritual sense is infinitely more noble and the object infinitely more important.

Edwards, pp. 14-15

3. The Spirit gives a "sight" of the glory of the perfections and excellencies of Christ.

He gives the sight of Christ first in initial conversion (2 Peter 1:3), and then a further ongoing sight of Christ in sanctification. Paul says, "we all ... beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord ... just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18; see also John 6:40; 1 John 3:6).

Herein, then, is the Lord Christ exceedingly glorious. Those who cannot behold this glory of his ... know him not ... He that discerns not the representation of the glory of God in the person of Christ unto the souls of men, is an unbeliever ... The essence of faith consists in a due ascription of glory to God, Rom.iv. 20. This we cannot attain unto without the manifestation of those divine excellencies to us wherein he is glorious. This is done in Christ alone ... He who discerns not the glory of divine wisdom, power, goodness, love, and grace, in the person and office of Christ ... is an unbeliever.

John Owen, Vol. I, p. 295

NOTE: Paul uses language of sight instead of abstract terms such as "understand." He speaks of "beholding," "seeing," "shone," etc. It stresses that illumination is not a mere abstract understanding, as when one understands a mathematical formula. It is a relational and personal understanding. It is an experience, a "beholding," etc., that causes the heart to burn (Luke 24:27, 32).

II. THE DEFINITION OF ILLUMINATION.

A. The Definition Stated:

Illumination is the inward teaching and enlightening ministry of the Holy Spirit, whereby a person has the Scriptures opened to see the glory of Christ (Luke 24:27, 32) in His specific perfections and excellencies, and its personal relation to them. He enables the believer to understand the meaning, significance, and personal implications of divine truth and the glory of Christ's person and work (John 16:15) in relation to Himself (2 Corinthians 3:18).

B. The Definition Clarified:

1. Illumination is "revelation," however, only in a subjective sense.

We are revealed the meaning or enabled "to see" the truth of God and the glory of Christ already objectively revealed in Scripture (Ephesians 1:17-19; Luke 24:32).

2. Illumination is not revelation in the objective sense. The Bible is revelation whether or not it is understood.

III. THE NECESSITY OF ILLUMINATION: MAN'S INCAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND DIVINE TRUTH.

A. Man's Natural Incapacity – Natural Blindness.

Man is, by nature, unable to understand the meaning and significance of God's Word. This condition is the result of the fall.

1. The natural man does not welcome divine truth (1 Corinthians 2:14).

The truth in the context, is the foolishness of the word of the cross and the crucified Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 1:18, 2:6-8).

- 2. The natural man is darkened in his capacity to understand divine truth (Ephesians 4:18).
- 3. The natural man is dead to God (Ephesians 2:1-2).
- B. Satanic Incapacity Satanic Blindness.

Satan adds to man's natural blindness by confusing his mind more and making him blind to the grace of God, the glory of Christ's person and the sufficiency of Christ's death and resurrection.

- 1. The natural man is blinded by Satan to the glory of Christ, the essential message of the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:24-26).
- 2. To the natural man the preaching of the cross is foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:18-21).

IV. MAN'S ENABLEMENT TO COMPREHEND DIVINE TRUTH: THE DESCRIPTION OF ILLUMINATION.

- A. The Holy Spirit's Saving Work Of Granting Understanding Of The Truth.
 - 1. It is a sovereign, immediate and gracious work of God (Matthew 16:16-18).
 - 2. It is a result of the creative work of regeneration (John 1:11-13).
 - 3. It is an enlightenment to the Glory and Lordship of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4-6; Acts 26:18).
- B. The Holy Spirit's Sanctifying, Transformative Work Of Illumination Of The Believer.
 - 1. The believer is the recipient of a continual and progressive understanding of God and Christ through the indwelling, anointing ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 6:45; 1 John 2:20, 27).

It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me (John 6:45).

- 2. The believer grows in an increasing experiential knowledge and understanding of God and Christ (Colossians 1:9).
- 3. The believer progressively grows into the likeness of God, as he gains further understanding of the glory of Christ's person and work, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18).