

Theme: Inspiration refers to the work of God where the Holy Spirit spoke through human authors to give us authoritative and inerrant Scripture.

I. Intro – The Word of God?

- A. We refer to Scripture as God's Word
- B. Why do we say this? In what sense?
- C. If it is God's Word, what are the implications?

II. The Meaning of 'The Word of God'

- A. Several meanings to Word of God
 - 1. Jesus – John 1:1, 14
 - 2. God's Direct Speech – Genesis 1:3; Psalms 33:6
 - 3. God's Prophetic word through men – Jeremiah 1:4-5; Joel 1:1
 - 4. Scripture – God's written word – Exodus 24:4; Jeremiah 36:4
- B. Our focus today - Scripture as the Word of God
 - 1. We will look at this one aspect of Word of God
 - 2. We will discuss inspiration and its implications

III. Inspiration - The Bible is God's Word

- A. The Bible is inspired by God
 - 1. Inspiration is not like poetic inspiration
 - 2. 2 Timothy 3:16 - Inspiration - qeo,pneustoj - God breathed

3. Definition of inspiration - By inspiration of Scripture we mean that supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation or which resulted in what they wrote actually being the Word of God. – Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 199.
4. 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Samuel 23:2; Mark 12:36; Heb 3:7

B. The Divine and human side of Scripture

1. Scripture is **God's Word Through Men**
2. 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Sam 23:2; Mark 12:36

C. Key points regarding inspiration

1. Inspiration includes both the authors (2 Peter 1:19-20) and what they wrote (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. God is the ultimate author, but speaks through men
3. The Bible is written in real human language, following human standards of communication and literary conventions (poetry, proverb, etc)
4. Human authors of Scripture exhibit variation in style, vocabulary, genre, and literary competence
5. This means that God did not “dictate” Scripture – He spoke through real people prepared for task
6. Human authors of Scripture often did research and used other sources (Luke 1:1-4)
7. God sometimes even used later editors to complete the writing, but their additions are still fully God's Word (Numbers 12:3; Deuteronomy 34:6, 10)
8. God so prepared and influenced the human authors and editors that even the words they chose were the exact words God wanted written (Galatians 3:16; Matthew 5:18)

IV. Implications of Inspiration

A. The authority of Scripture

1. Since Scripture is God's Word it speaks with His authority
2. Scripture can not fail – John 10:35; Matthew 24:35
3. To ignore or disobey Scripture is to do so to God (Deuteronomy 18:18-19; 1 Thessalonians 4:8)

B. The truthfulness of Scripture – inerrancy

1. God's Word is absolutely true – John 17:17; Psalm 12:6; Psalm 19:7
2. Inerrancy – definition - The original manuscripts of the Bible, when correctly interpreted in view of the purposes for which it was given, and taking into account the literary standards of the time in which it was written, does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.
3. Unpacking the definition
 - a. Original manuscripts – inspiration and inerrancy apply to authors – not copyists
 - b. Correctly interpreted – Bible is true – not necessarily my interpretation of Scripture!
 - c. Purposes – Do not make peripheral statements as central affirmations
 - d. Literary standards – pay attention to genre, and to standards & methods of their time – not ours!
 - e. Affirm anything – can report others people errors without affirming them

C. Implications of inerrancy

1. Great care must be given to discern the original text of Scripture – textual criticism
2. Great care must be given to learn the literary and historical methods of writing during the times of the biblical authors - literary analysis
3. Great care must be given to the process of interpretation – hermeneutics
4. Scripture can be inerrant and still speak in the ordinary language of everyday people – phenomenal rather than scientific; round off numbers; approximate quotations
5. Humility – Scripture is inerrant – I am not!

V. Conclusion & Summary

A. God has revealed Himself to us through His Word

1. Scripture is the inspired Word of God
2. Although Scripture has real human authors, the ultimate author behind them all is God Himself.
3. This means that God is able to speak to us through the Scripture.

B. God's inspired Word is authoritative and truthful

1. We must listen to and obey God's Word – the Scripture
2. God's Word is accurate in its teaching, without error in all it affirms, so that we can trust it completely