

Series Title: The story of the greatest Story  
Sermon Title: Week 1: The Bible- God's Word  
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– **RECAP- week three...**

† Reality! We cannot know God on our own, but God has chosen to REVEAL Himself first through CREATION, then through ISRAEL, and ultimately in JESUS CHRIST.

– **Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.**

– **God's revelation of who Jesus is, what he did, is NT**

† Reality! It can be strongly argued and demonstrated that the New Testament has greater historical (**events**), cultural (**known to the people of its time**), textual (**consistency of actual texts**), and procedural (**how it came together**) integrity and accuracy that any other book in human history.

† Reality! **If we believe that these ancient writings are GOD'S WORD**, That's still not enough. For the New Testament to move from being historically accurate to being scripture, it must be INSPIRED. It must be of GOD.

– **When Paul wrote his young friend Timothy, he reminded him that scripture is GOD BREATHED.**

– **As followers of Christ today, we confess by FAITH, but faith founded on EVIDENCE, that this book- the Bible, NT, is in fact GOD'S WORD TO US. KEY!!!**

† Why the concept of the Inspiration of Scripture is so important  
If scripture is not inspired, then it is not AUTHORITATIVE.

– **Not authoritative in its call to us, AND not in its promise of HOPE, LIFE, FREEDOM.**

– **Voices in the church have been trying for centuries to diminish the authority of scripture in parts of our lives where it is inconvenient to us.... But if I set aside Romans 13:1 (subject to governing authority), I also set aside Romans 8:1 (no condemnation)**

If scripture IS inspired, then it IS authoritative: To humanity, the CHURCH, and to ME. **THEREFORE...**

– **If scripture is truly GOD BREATHED, it is TRUTH, then it calls us to hear it, receive it, surrender...**

– **THIS BECOMES IMPORTANT!!**

† As conservative evangelical Christians, we confess that scripture is INSPIRED, it is INERRANT, and it is INFALLABLE. But what does this MEAN?

– **Growing up in Baptist church I was taught that scripture was God's infallible word, without any 'mixture' of error. OK, but what does that mean?**

**What we mean by the inspiration of scripture may be one of the least taught, but most important concepts regarding how we approach and engage scripture as the Truth foundation of the Christian Life.**

† Inspiration: What the Bible says about itself is LITTLE, but SIGNIFICANT. (**there are other scriptures along this**)

**2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work**

– **Paul is referring to OT. PRINCIPLE applies to NT. If scripture is OF GOD, then God has given it with a purpose. Scripture is NEVER just information. It always being used by God to teach, convict, grow, develop us into disciples- work of God's kingdom**

**John 14:26** *But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*

- **Here there is principle to us- work of the Holy Spirit to take God's Word and teach us, remind us of truth as we go through life... BUT KEY, Jesus gave this promise to Apostles who would be telling and writing down, with accuracy, the Gospel story.**

**2 Peter 3:15** *Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.*

- **1<sup>st</sup> Century church viewed writings of Paul as scripture.**
- **Little more subtle... Luke's intro to Gospel...**

**Luke 1:1-4** *Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, <sup>2</sup> just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. <sup>3</sup> With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.*

- **Here Luke tells us that his work is directly connected to the Apostles, and that through this scripture, we may know with CERTAINTY the truth of the Gospel.**
- **We can only know with CERTAINTY if OF GOD.**
- **One other concept- throughout the NT we see phrase "Word of God", or "Gods Word". What does this mean? NT didn't full exist yet. Example: 1 Thessalonians 2:13**

*And we also thank God continually because, when you received the **word of God**, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the **word of God**, which is indeed at work in you who believe.*

- **Old Testament. "Words of God" (Romans 3:2)**
- **Gospel, story of Jesus, the WORD.**
- **What the 1<sup>st</sup> century church viewed as scripture. Paul**
- **FROM GOD! At work in us! HEB4- Alive and active**
- **BACK TO QUESTION- Inspired, of God, but HOW?**

#### † Historic views/theories of inspiration and inerrancy

- **Naïve/dictation:** Human writers were the pens of God, not the pen-mans of God.
  - **Really naïve, entire book just given by god, intact.**
- **Inerrancy:** The Bible is God's Word, and God is perfect, therefore scripture is perfect. God used human writers with their own background and personalities, but the Spirit imparted the ideas and led the writers not to use any incorrect words or expressions. OR, Spirit led writers to a proper expression of the truth without imparting the particular words or forms of expression.

- **Peter describes this principle...**

**2 Peter 1:19-21** *We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. <sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

- **Key! God used very real people, but under strong leadership/influence, of Holy Spirit, so that the result is truly GOD BREATHED. More on this...**

– **A STEP DOWN....**

- **Illumination:** Writers experienced an intensifying of their spiritual perceptions. Perceptions that to a lesser degree all believers possess.
- *We reject this. Does God open the word in our hearts? YES. But this is not inspiration. What happened with Biblical writers was something fully unique to them.*
- **FURTHER** step down...
- **Limited inerrancy:** Without error in points dealing with salvation and core theology, but nothing else.
- *View that focus' on core of Gospel, but allows us to diminish or ignore teaching on ethics, how we live, history, etc...*
- **Whatever.** General guide to God, then whatever we want to make of it.
- *Reality- once we set aside the principle that All of scripture is inspired, and God's truth to us, it is a short journey from "GODS WORD" to "WHATEVER"*

‡ **The bottom line**

- Scripture was written by men, all possessing their own personalities, living in specific cultural and historic contexts, and writing for specific purposes.
- *VERY IMPORTANT! God chose to use specific people to write scripture, knowing who they were, their perspectives, what was happening in their lives- God used all of this to yield his message to us.*
- Scripture was inspired by God and shepherded by the Holy Spirit in its authorship, its meaning, its canonization, and its preservation through the centuries.
- **Conclusion we MUST REACH...**
- Therefore, all Scripture is **TRUE** and **TRUSTWORTHY**.

‡ That said, a few important concepts

- Scripture was not written in English, by people living in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Western culture. **The truth of scripture must be interpreted.** (Don't miss next week!)
- *No brainer, but this is critical! We often ignore this.*
- *"God said it, I believe it, that settles it"*
- **YES, BUT... it must be interpreted.**
- *Scripture is FOR US, but it was not written originally TO US. We're not all going to be biblical scholars, but there are principles... (Next week)*
- Scripture is inspired, interpretation of scripture is not.
- *God has blessed the church with wonderful scholars, teachers, pastors over the generations- but every teacher is a person with their own bias, traditions, pre-dispositions, and life story that impacts how they see scripture. AT BEST, we are second hand sources! This is why it is important for the CHURCH to engage God's Word, think, wrestle, cherish... we will continue to do this until Christ returns.*
- The Biblical Canon is **CLOSED**.
- *There will be no new books of the NT. If an ancient letter of Paul was discovered, it would not be added to the Canon*
- *Likewise, there is movement of teachers today claiming to speak 'new truth' from scripture... This is to be rejected!*

– **HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION**

*How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!  
What more can He say than to you He hath said—  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?*

✠ An example from scripture: The sacred practice of *communion*.

- **Story of Israel- God's deliverance from Egypt**
- **Over years, oral tradition, then written, memory of what God had done**
- **Jesus- ultimate revelation, gave PO new meaning, HE is God's deliverance from sin, INTO LIFE.**
- **Story told and written by the Apostles, circulated among the church, gathered together by church leaders, over several generations became part of what we today call the New Testament, GOD'S WORD**

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26** *For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." <sup>25</sup> In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." <sup>26</sup> For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes*