

"You and Your Beliefs"--Bibliology, part 2

The Bible is a special book.

It's why Bob and Shirley Litteral moved to the jungles of PNG in the mid-1960's, began to live with a previously isolated tribal group that spoke the Angor language, learned that language, developed a written alphabet, taught the people to read, and devoted themselves to the task of translating the New Testament into the Angor language. Thirty-five years later they presented the Angor NT to the 1,300 people that speak that language...

It's why many brothers and sisters are in prisons this very moment.

It's why countless others have given their lives in previous years (countless to us, but known in personal detail to the Lord).

The question is, what makes the Bible different from other books? Why would people give their lives for it? On a more practical note, why do we study it, memorize it, share it with our workmates, and come to hear sermons explaining its meaning? We don't do that with other books. Why this book? We'll seek to answer that question this evening.

Present Series--"You and Your Beliefs"

Q: What do you believe about...

1. The Doctrine of God: Theology Proper
2. The Doctrine of the Scriptures: Bibliology
3. The Doctrine of Jesus Christ: Christology
4. The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit: Pneumatology
5. The Doctrine of Man: Anthropology
6. The Doctrine of Sin: Harmartiology
7. The Doctrine of Salvation: Soteriology
8. The Doctrine of the Church: Ecclesiology
9. The Doctrine of Angels: Angelology
10. The Doctrine of Last Things: Eschatology

Review from Last Week: The Doctrine of the Scriptures—part 1

Christianity is established upon the truth that God exists. How has God revealed Himself to Mankind? In two basic ways...

1. General Revelation

In General Revelation, God reveals His character through His work, namely through nature (Ps 8:3; 19:1), history, and conscience (Rom 2:15).

2. Special Revelation

What did God do in special revelation? God communicated to man through acts and words so we could know Him properly. God has given us a permanent, written record of His Special Revelation. The Scriptures!

How do you know the Bible is the true Word of God? Can we "prove" it? No. But we have certain "witnesses"...

A. External Witnesses

- 1. Archaeology (eg--recent discovery of Caiaphas's tomb)*
- 2. Science*
- 3. Fulfilled Prophecy*
- 4. Personal Experience ("It changed my life!")*

B. Internal Witnesses

- 1. The Witness of God's Word*
- 2. The Witness of the Prophets*
- 3. The Witness of Jesus Christ*
- 4. The Witness of the Apostles*

Tonight: Bibliology, part 2

What specifically do we believe about the Bible? Let's explore and define some key terms relating to the Doctrine of the Scriptures:

The Bible is...

- 1. Inspired*
- 2. Inerrant*

3. *Infallible*

4. *Authoritative*

5. *Sufficient*

1. *The Bible is inspired.*

Definition: B. B. Warfield, "Inspiration is that extraordinary, supernatural influence exerted by the Holy Spirit on the writers of our Sacred Books, by which their words were rendered also the words of God, and, therefore, perfectly infallible."

Q: What key text establishes the truth of "inspiration"?

II Tim 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed..."

"is given by inspiration of God" = one compound greek word--"God-breathed"

The Scriptures are God-breathed. They are "breathed out" by God. Probably a more accurate word than inspiration would be "expiration."

Q: How did God give us His Word? Did He dictate it word for word?

A: Perhaps in certain cases (10 commands?). But usually He utilized the personality, and style, and even grammar of the human writers. The following passage explains...

2 Peter 1:19-21 "...for prophecy came...holy men of God spoke as they were moved.."

Quote: Harold Lindsell, in *The Battle for the Bible*, stated, "Inspiration is the inward work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and minds of chosen men who then wrote the Scriptures so that God got written what He wanted." (30)

2. *The Bible is inerrant (free from error in all that it affirms).*

Sometimes you'll hear someone assert, "I believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible." Good words, but what do they mean?

a) Verbal--the very words of Scripture were given by the Spirit

The human authors weren't left to themselves. Not just their thoughts, but very words.

b) Plenary--fully and equally inspired in all their parts

Note: NT writers gave no indication of any unwillingness to trust even the smallest historic details in the OT:

Mt 12:40 Jonah was in the whale.

Lk 4:27 Naamen the Syrian was cleansed of leprosy.

Rom 4:19 Abe was about 100 years old

I Cor 10:11 The people of Israel passed through the sea, ate and drank spiritual food and drink, desired evil, sat down to drink, rose up to dance, indulged in immorality, grumbled, and were destroyed (Key: Paul said these things "happened." The verb is commonly used to refer to historical events that took place. Paul does not hesitate to affirm that even obscure details of the OT happened and were written down for our instruction)

3. *The Bible is **infallible** (it will not lead astray).*

There are 3 main lines of thought in Christendom:

- a) The Eastern Orthodox church believes the General Councils of the church are guided by the Spirit so as to be free from error.
- b) The Roman Catholic church believes the Pope is personally preserved from error by God.
- c) Historical Protestant teaching asserted that only the Scriptures are...

Q: What difference does it make if the Bible is inspired, inerrant, infallible?

A: If not, it can't be fourthly...

4. *The Bible is **authoritative**.*

The Bible is our final authority in life.

Discuss: What does that mean in practical terms?

Discuss: One of Satan's primary aims is to undermine biblical authority. Why? What are some evidences of this?

5. *The Bible is **sufficient**.*

It is this area that is most under attack today.

Discuss: For what is the Bible sufficient? According to 2 Timothy 3:14-17... For starters, it's

sufficient for salvation. In addition, it's sufficient for successful Christian living

Other related issues:

1. **Illumination of Scripture**

This answers the question... *Who can understand God's Word?*

--not the Unbeliever (I Cor 2:14)

--every Believer (Jn 16:13); NOT just spiritually "elite"!!

2. **Interpretation of Scripture**

Common objection: "Well that's just YOUR interpretation of the Bible! There are many interpretations!"

Key: The basic message of the Bible is clear, not fuzzy or controversial.

We must keep in mind the normal rules of grammar, speech, syntax, and context.

Our Task: To reconstruct the author's intent for each passage, and then apply.

**We practice Literal, Grammatical, Historical Interpretation.

Discuss: What does that mean?

3. **The Canonization of Scripture**

OT--God authorized and spoke through the Prophets.

NT--God spoke through the Apostles or Apostolic associates (eg--Mark, Luke)

4. **Preservation of the Scriptures (Modern Translations)**

Remember, the original manuscripts were inspired.

OT--Hebrew, some Aramaic

NT--Greek

God has preserved His Word through the centuries. He has prompted men to translate it into hundreds of languages. We no longer possess the original manuscripts. But there are hundreds of portions of the NT (dating back to the 2nd century) and the OT (Dead Sea Scrolls, dating back to the 2nd century BC).

The task of a modern translator is to faithfully reconstruct and communicate the original manuscripts as much as possible.

Translations--KJV, NIV, NASB, RSV

Paraphrases--LB, Good News for Modern Man (?)

Response: How should we respond to what we've seen tonight?

If the Bible is unique (and it is), if it is God's special revelation (and it is), if it is inspired, inerrant, etc (and it is), how should we respond? What should we do with the Bible?

1. *Thank God for His Written Revelation!*

2. *Read, memorize, and meditate on it.*

Q: What should we do with it?

Joshua 1:8 "This book...meditate in it day and night...do accordingly..."

3. *Make the corporate study of it a prime priority in your life.*

It's one of the main reasons why church should be valued in our lives. God has gifted His Body to teach His Word for the nourishment of His people.

4. *Share it.*

[\[1\]](#) These unedited notes were prepared for use in a Wednesday evening, discussion-oriented Bible study at Wheelersburg Baptist Church in Wheelersburg, Ohio. Although the notes are in draft form, I trust the seed thoughts contained will be used by our gracious God for your edification. –Pastor Brad Brandt