

Introduction to Scripture & The English Bible
The Doctrine of Inspiration of Scripture
Lesson 16

"Until new Bible translations came out, the King James Version shaped Western literature, culture, and education as no book except the Koran has ever shaped a culture. Everyone knew it. It was familiar, it was memorable, and it was memorized, because it was so memorizable. Paradoxically, it was the _____ that made it strikingly familiar. It stood out like a giant in a crowd of dwarfs. We now have 50 times more versions, and 50 times less biblical literacy.

We have more Bibles but read them less. As translations have multiplied, readership has divided - in complete contrast to the Koran." ~ Peter Kreeft, *New Oxford Review*, Apr. 2000 ~

I. A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE WORD OF GOD IS DESCRIBED IN I THESSALONIANS 2:13b

"Suffer not yourselves to be cheated of your birthright, the Bible, either by _____² _____ or by the exploded heresies of a bygone age, revived and recommended by living unbelievers. You, especially, who aspire to the Ministerial office, and are destined hereafter to undertake the cure of souls, O do you be doubly watchful! Give to the Bible the undivided homage of a childlike heart; and bow down before its revelations with a suppliant understanding also; and let no characteristic of its method by any means escape you. Notice how it is indeed all one long narrative, from end to end; and see therein God's provision that nothing shall be idealized, nothing explained away. Learn too that Man is thus called upon to look outward, and sustain himself by an external Law; not to depend on the promptings of his own conscience, and so to become a god unto himself. The Bible, I repeat, is all severest history, from the Alpha to the Omega of it. But then, underneath the surface there are meanings high as Heaven, deep as Hell: and why? because the true Author of it is not Man, but God!"

~ Dean John Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation*, v. II (Introduction) ~

II. FOUR GREAT DEBATES IN MODERN FUNDAMENTALISM

- A. What is the doctrine of Scripture?
- B. What is the proper text of Scripture?

One Approach is illustrated by Stewart Custer:

"The present-day believer should read his Bible with the faith that it is God's Word, but with the humility recognizing that he may not be able to solve every textual problem that may exist in our Bibles. The believer may safely leave such problems to the discussions of the theological and textual 'experts.' He should not try to become a botanist, but simply feed on the fruit of the Word. He can let the scholars chew over dry bones."

- C. What is the proper method for translating Scripture?

There are over _____ in English, over 200 still in print.

- D. What is the proper method for interpreting Scripture?

III. THE DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE [BIBLIOLOGY]

- A. _____ Inspiration - the very Words of Scripture are God's Words, Deuteronomy 9:10, 12:28; II Chronicles 34:21; Proverbs 30:6; Matthew 24:35; I Corinthians 2:13; Revelation 22:19.

- B. _____ Inspiration - extending to all parts alike, II Timothy 3:16.

- C. _____ Inspiration - "no error in its facts," Hebrews 6:18b; Titus 1:2c; Numbers 23:19; John 10:35.

- D. _____ Inspiration - "no error in the principles it teaches."

- E. _____ - the Bible only is our authority.

IV. A BRIEF DEFENSE OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

- A. It is translated from a superior text.

- B. It was translated by superior translators.

- C. It was translated by superior methods.

- D. It is translated from a superior theological perspective - with respect.

V. QUOTATIONS

- A. The New Hampshire Confession of 1833 states:

"We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end

of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried."

- B. The Baptist theologian J.B. Jeter says:

"Let us, then, reverently receive the Scriptures as an authentic and perfect revelation from God, interpret them by the laws which common sense and careful study supply, and live according to their directions, and we shall not fail to secure a blessed morality."

C. John Calvin observes:

"If true religion is to beam upon us, our principle must be, that it is necessary to begin with heavenly teaching, and that it is impossible for any man to obtain even the minutest portion of right and sound doctrine without being a disciple of Scripture."

D. Martin Luther declares:

"Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason - I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other - my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen, Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise."

E. Charles H. Spurgeon (in the introduction to Gaussen, *Theopneustia*) writes:

"The turning point of the battle between those who hold 'the faith once delivered to the saints' and their opponents, lies in the true and real inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. This is the Thermopyle of Christendom. If we have in the Word of God no infallible standard of truth, we are at _____, and no danger from rough weather without can be equal to this loss within. 'If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?' and this is a foundation loss of the worst kind. When a man falls into an error, but reverently conceives that he finds it in his Bible, he is on a very different footing from the man who says that he judges by his moral consciousness, or some other unreliable standard, and declares that if the Bible contradicts him he will sooner renounce Scripture than change his opinions. We can have a measure of fellowship with a mistaken friend who is willing to bow before the teaching of Scripture if he can be made to understand it; but we must part company altogether with the errorist, who overrides prophets and apostles, and practically regards his own inspiration as superior to theirs. We fear that such a man will before long prove himself to be _____, all the more dangerous because he will profess _____ to the Lord whom he dishonours."

F. Formula of Concord (historic Lutheran document) states:

"We believe, teach, and confess that the Prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines

and teachers alike must 'be appraised and judged ...' Scripture alone, in short, is the infallible norm of doctrine."