

Is all Scripture inspired by God?

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16–17

Code: QA171

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

God's Word is inspired.

Second Timothy 3:16 speaks of the inspiration of Scripture. "Inspired" is the translation of a Greek word that literally means "God-breathed." Every word of Scripture is from the mouth of God!

Theologians speak of inspiration as the mysterious process by which God worked through the authors of Scripture to produce inerrant and divinely authoritative writings. Inspiration is a mystery because Scripture doesn't explain specifically how it occurred. The only glimpse we have is from 2 Peter: "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" (1:20-21).

"Interpretation" speaks of origin. Scripture didn't originate on the human level but with the Holy Spirit, who "moved" upon the authors to write it (v. 21). "Moved" is the translation of a nautical term that describes the effects of wind upon a ship as it blows against its sails and moves it through the water. Similarly, the Spirit moved on the Biblical writers to produce the Word of God in the language of men.

The human authors of Scripture knew they were writing God's Word, and they did so with confidence and authority. Often they cited or alluded to one another as authoritative agents of divine revelation (e.g., 2 Peter 3:15-16).

On a personal level, inspiration guarantees that what Scripture says, God says. It's His counsel to you; so you can study and obey it with full assurance that it is true and will never lead you astray.

For further study, consider this: Often the New Testament affirms the inspiration of the Old Testament by attributing Old Testament quotations to God Himself. For example, compare these Old Testament passages with their New Testament counterparts: Genesis 2:24 with Matthew 19:4-5; Psalm 2:1-2 with Acts 4:25-26; Isaiah 55:3 with Acts 13:34; Psalm 16:10 with Acts 13:35; Psalm 95:7-11 with Hebrews 3:7-11. How might you respond to someone who says that the Bible is merely the words of devout religious men?

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