

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Our God-Breathed Bible

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 1343

Tonight we're going to deal with the subject of inspiration. To begin with, I want to just tell you something that happened to us in the last couple of weeks that came to my attention that I think is a good jumping off point for our study. A very well known song writer by the name of Bill Gaither, who has written many songs, not to be confused with Bill Gothard who doesn't write songs. But Bill Gaither is involved in writing many, many, many songs and a very popular song writer, recently, someone asked Bill Gaither to explain his interpretation of his song The King is Coming. Most of you have heard it.

Now the person who asked this received a letter and this is what the letter said. "Regarding the interpretation of the song The King is Coming, of all songs that song has been a gift from God. Bill and Gloria," that is Mr. and Mrs. Gaither, "do not profess to be theologians. The song came quickly to them and they do not care to discuss the theology of it. In fact, they feel that to dissect the song would be tampering with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who inspired the song."

Now that is a very startling claim for a song. That a song is inspired by the Holy Spirit. Now what does it mean when we say something is inspired. Grant it the theology of the song, The King is Coming, is confusing. You've got the events of the rapture and the second-coming all happening at the same time. But it's a nice song and well kind of enjoy it and the rest of the letter went on to say the important thing is that He's coming. And that is important.

But the Bible claims to be inspired. Is the song The King is Coming equally inspired with the Bible? Our we saying that the Holy Spirit inspired songwriters to write a song just in the way He inspired Paul to write the book of Romans? What do we mean when we say the Bible is inspired of God? Are people still receiving inspiration? Are people inspired of God when they write songs or books or when they preach sermons or when they teach or when they make decisions? It is Holy Spirit inspiration that gives them wisdom?

Now what about the term inspire? The term inspire is not a Greek term. Inspiro comes from Latin which means to breath in. And it's a little bit misleading. In 2 Timothy 3:16 when it says, "All Scripture is given by," what, "inspiration of God." Or all Scripture is inspired by God. The Latin term inspiration does not properly translate the word theopneustos, "God breathed." Really, it shouldn't be inspired, it should be expired.

All Scripture is breathed out by God, not breathed in. The idea then in the Scripture is that the Bible is the out breath of God. It's not God breathing into man's words. It's not God breathing into man's thoughts. It's God breathing out His words. Now, we believe that the Bible is God's breath. We believe God wrote every word of it. God gave it. God revealed it. What is in here is what God said.

Now, is it right to claim the same thing for a song? Is a man's sermon really Chapter 22 of John's gospel? Could we take my sermon this morning on the book of Acts and sandwich it between Chapter 23 and 24 and call it written by God? Is the song The King is Coming really to be added as Revelation 23? Is it, in fact, inspired by God? Well, it's interesting to think about that, because it says at the end of Revelation. "For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if anybody add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

So I don't think that that song belongs at the end of Revelation. Not on the basis of that statement. Should we translate songs into every language and place them in the Bible as the breath of God? Are books that come out about people's visions and people's communication from God really biblical, inerrant, infallible, authoritative, and efficaciously the word of God? Is David Wilkerson's vision equal to the book of Acts? What about tongues? What about current prophecies?

I remember being in Jerusalem and a man stood up in the middle of a communion on the Mount of Olives and gave a prophecy. "God hath spoken." And then he rattled off a long prophecy. Is that really equal to revelation from God? Is he equal to those writers who penned the word of God? Now someone's going to say hey MacArthur, you're pushing the point. I hope you're saying that.

Somebody else is going to say well, you don't understand there are degrees of inspiration. Some things are more inspired than other things. Oh? Bill Gaither and David Wilkerson and other people who have visions and write songs and it could be anybody, their not as inspired as Paul or David or Moses or John or James or Peter. They're not that inspired. They're less inspired. You see some things are inspired to a greater degree than other things. And those who wrote the Bible were the most inspired.

Now listen, inspired in terms of the Bible definition means God breathed. Now either something is the word of God or it is not the word of God. It isn't more or less the word of God. There are no degrees. It isn't a little bit of God's word or a little more of God's word or more even then that of God's word. It is either God's word or it is not God's word. It is either God breathed or it is not. Either God breathed it out or He didn't.

It can't be more or less. For example, you could refer to something being the highest or you can refer to something being the best or you can refer to something being the most. That is the highest

mountain, the best watch, or the most money. Now if it's true there is no mountain higher than the highest mountain, there is no watch better than the best watch, and there's no more money than the most money. There is no higher than the highest. There is no better than the best. And there is no more than the most.

And when God says something it is the most and the best and the highest. There is no more inspired or less inspired writing of God. God is an absolute. God's word is an absolute. An inspiration does not allow for degrees. No songs, no books, no visions, no poems, no sermons are inspired period. The cannon of Scripture is closed. That's what we believe.

You say where do you get that belief? Well, Revelation 22:18 says, "If you add anything to this book, shall be added unto you the plagues that are written therein." You say well, that's only talking about the book of Revelation. Fine, the book of Revelation is the last book in the Bible. So it says don't add anything to this book. Isn't it interesting that it's the last book in the Bible. If you added anything to the Bible, it would have to be added to that book, and that's forbidden.

You say well, was there some special thing that occurred to make a book a book of the Bible? Yes, it was a question of authorship. In the Old Testament, there were tests by which a book was judged to be true and divinely authored. And those were clear cut and there was never any problem. In the New Testament, the authors were either apostles who were with Jesus or those very closely associated to the apostles who were with Jesus. After that, no more Bible writers.

There are no inspired writers today. Now you may use the word inspiring in a very kind of general say. Oh I was inspired and you may not mean that God wrote something through you as He did through Paul. That's heresy friends to say you got revelation from God that is inspiration. It is not true.

I hate to say this, but it's true that not one single solitary sermon of mine was ever of the breath of God. Nobody's sermons are inspired by God. They are simply proclamations based on what has already been inspired by God. God does not speak through me direct revelation to you. He does not send me down my sermons. Or they would be equal to Scripture and I would have every right to be included in the New Testament as a writer of Scripture.

Now, you see, you must have a very careful understanding of what inspiration means. That's not a word you throw around globally. And one of the fearful heresy's that is rolling around today is that anybody's vision and anybody's voice from heaven and anybody's Holy Spirit inspiration is as good as Scripture.

You know it is not a far cry, mark it, it is not a far cry from traditional Catholicism, which accepts the Bible plus tradition. And we are seeing even in the name of Christianity all kinds of things that are

being propagated as the revelation and inspiration of God. Now, I enjoy listening to the song The King is Coming, and that's not particular my attack, that's just an illustration, but the same God that penned the book of Revelation did not write The King is Coming, because that would be to confuse what was in the book of Revelation clearly.

And the same God who wrote the clear word of God didn't preach my sermons which so many times are muddled. So we must understand inspiration. Now I want to give you two things, the definition of inspiration and the defense of it. First of all, the definition of inspiration, what do we mean? Let's talk about it in a very broad way. Now remember, revelation, important word and you're getting a real course in theology. Revelation is God's revealing of Himself and His will. Revelation is God's disclosure of Himself and His will.

Inspiration is the way in which He did it. Revelation is God's revealing Himself, making Himself known, and inspiration is the Holy Spirit taking this revelation and putting it through human writers who wrote the Old and New Testament in order to set down an exact and authoritative words the message that God wanted written.

Now in order to make our definition clear, let's look at some things. First of all, what inspiration is not. Now, you know, there's a lot of people who use the Bible for a lot of reasons. There are a lot of people who say the Bible is inspired and you don't know what they mean so you've got to ask for a definition. So I want to show you some of the things that people say that aren't true.

First of all, inspiration is not a high level of human achievement. It is not a high level of human achievement. That's what we call natural inspiration. There are some people who say the Bible is no more inspired than Homer's Odyssey, Mohammed's Koran, Danti's divine comedy or Shakespeare's tragedies.

In other words, whoever put this thing together was just a high level of genius, and it's full of errors and it's full of mistakes and it's full of problems and it's a lot of fallible stuff that we can't believe, but my it's ethics in certain parts and it's morals in certain parts and it's insights into humanity, etc., reveal a genius of a very high level.

It exalts the human authors to the level of geniuses, but it denies God totally. God did not write the books. Smart men did. Well, that's interesting. That just doesn't work. The reason it doesn't work is smart men wouldn't write a book that condemned them all. Smart men wouldn't write a book that provided salvation outside themselves in a perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Smart men and even the smartest could never conceive of a personality like Jesus Christ. They couldn't even fictionalize a personality like Christ who surpasses in purity and love and righteousness and perfection anything and everything ever found in the human consciousness.

Where did the authors find a model for Jesus Christ if they made it up? Man is busy writing books that exalt himself. He doesn't write books to damn himself. And incidentally, if this was just a high level of genius, why aren't people adding to again and again and again? And if the geniuses that so-called wrote it wrote this, why didn't they write other things that are here?

I mean, if Peter was smart, how come all we have is a couple of a little letters? If he was genius, why don't we have more than that? Why don't we have what we have from Shakespeare if it's a high level of genius?

And the Bible says in 2 Peter 1, "But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Let me give you a second thing. Inspiration is not a high level of human achievement. Secondly, inspiration is not extended just to thoughts of the writers. Now this interesting, and I'm going by these briefly, but just give you some kind of backdrop. These are things that are being taught in the dominants, seminaries, and churches across our world.

Inspiration does not extend just to thought. This is what's called thought or concept inspiration. That God never gave the writer's the words, He just gave them general ideas and they put them in their own words. Like He sort of zapped them with the thought about love is a nice thing and they sat down and wrote 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. Paul just sat down, "Though I speak tongues and the men and angels," and he wrote it out because he had love in his mind and God put love there, but nothing else, nothing specific, no words.

The view says God suggested concepts, God suggested the general trend of revelation, but men were left free to say what they wanted and that's why there's so many mistakes in the Bible. What it does is deny verbal inspiration. It denies that God wrote the words. And it means that any kind of Exegesis or expositional word by word study is stupid. I would say that the general run of the mill of neo-orthodoxy used to hold on to this, the kind of the far outside for the more liberal end of things. This is kind of where they were at for a long time until modern they got new philosophical things. But they were always saying well, God's thoughts are there, but all the words are just man's words.

You know what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:13? He said this, "We speak not in words, which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Spirit teaches." Mark it, 1 Corinthians 2:13, "The words are the words of the Holy Spirit," Paul says. Now Paul claimed that it wasn't just concepts and it wasn't just thoughts, it was words.

In John 17:8, Jesus said, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." Do you know that 3,808 times in the Old Testament we have expressions like "thus saith the Lord." The word of the Lord came. God said, 3,808 times. These phrases could hardly express wordless concepts. God communicates in words. Can you imagine passing on thoughts without words? Very difficult to

project a thought without words.

Paul says in Galatians 1:11, "I make known to you brethren the gospel which was preached by me that is not after man." I didn't get my gospel from men. "I neither received it of man, nor was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." In other words, he says, everything I teach you I received from the revelation of Christ.

For example, when Moses, you remember, was kind of excusing himself from serving the Lord because he had a speech problem. God did not say "I will inspire your thoughts." "I will be with your mind and tell you what to think." No, no, God said, "I'll be with you," what, "mouth and teach you what to say." God did not inspire thoughts. God gave words. This is the word of God. And 40 years later, Moses said to Israel in Deuteronomy 4:2, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you neither shall you diminish ought from it that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."

Don't take away the words, don't add to the words, God commanded those words to you through me, the words. You know, one of the greatest arguments against thought inspiration is a statement of 1 Peter 1:10. The prophets wrote a lot about the Messiah. It says "Of which salvation the prophets inquired and search diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come. Searching what person or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who was in them did signify."

Now, let me tell you what that says. The Spirit gave them prophecies, they wrote them down, and then read them to try to figure out what they meant. You say what's so amazing about that? The amazing part of that is they got words without understanding. In other words, they actually wrote down words and didn't even understand what they were writing in its full implication.

God didn't give them thoughts and they put them in their own words. God gave them words that they had to feed back to figure the thoughts out. Inspiration is verbal. Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 24:35. He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." It is the words in the Bible that God has authored. That's why we make such an important point out of pronouns, prepositions, some conjunctions. All kinds of things in Scripture just seeming minimal.

Do you remember when Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son, the living God." And Jesus said, "Flesh and blood didn't reveal that unto you, my Father in heaven did." He was just speaking right off of what God was planning in His brain. God reveals the words, not the thoughts.

One writer says "Thoughts are wetted to words as soul to body. As for thoughts being inspired apart from the words which gave them expression, you might as well talk about tune without notes or a sum without figures. We cannot have geology without rocks or anthropology without men. We cannot have a melody without music, nor can we have a divine record of God without words."

Thoughts are carried by words, and God revealed His thoughts in words. We believe the words are inspired. 1 Corinthians 14:37, "If any man think himself to be prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Paul says you are to recognize if you want to spiritual that what I say is the word of God.

So inspiration is not just extended to thoughts. It's extended to the very words. That's what we call verbal revelation. You know there aren't too many people that believe that anymore. That's where liberalism comes in. That's the destruction of the church. Let me give you another thought. Inspiration is not the act of God on the reader.

There are some today who teach what I call existential inspiration. In other words, the only part of the Bible that's inspired is what zaps you. You read along and you get sort of an ethical goose bump. And when you get your ethical goose bump, the word is inspired to you. It is not authoritative. The liberals say that the actual record here is not written by God. It's human, it's fallible and some men witnessed some things and wrote it all down but it isn't God's revelation, it's a witness to God's revelation in their life. And they got their ethical goose bump and wrote it down.

And it's sort of in there somewhere and they say the word of God becomes the word of God when you get zapped by it. Otherwise, it isn't. In other words, if it just sits there it's not the word of God. If you read it and you say oh wonderful, isn't that terrific, it becomes the word of God to you. When it hits you, when you get ecstatic, when you get emotional, it's not authoritative it just contains the word of God.

That's a very, very insidious statement. The Bible contains the word of God. No, the Bible, what, is the word of God. Very good class. The Bible is the word of God. It is not just a question of containing it is a question of is. And it isn't just a spiritual experience. Purely existential. You know, this is where you get into the theology where people don't even want to tell you what their...what their ethical goose bump was. I mean, they don't even want to get into that.

So you ask a theologian, has the Bible become inspired to you? Ah, yes, and he tells you about his first order experience. Or he tells you about his leap of faith. And you say well what was it? And he says, uh-huh, uh-huh, it's undefined. It's an existential happening. And you say I don't understand that. Who does? A liberal comes along and says we've got to de-mythologize the Bible. This is the big word that they use. We've got to get rid of the myth. So they send themselves through the Bible de-mythologizing and they get everything out like the pre-existence of Christ, the virgin birth, deity of Christ, the miracles, the substitutionary death, His resurrection, His ascension, His return, judgment, they get it all out and they say historically it's false, but spiritually and existentially it's true and it zaps you.

I don't understand that. They reject the historical character of the Scripture and still say it has something. It doesn't make sense to me because if it lies from beginning to end historically why would I ever believe it spiritually? I mean, let's face it folks, if the Book is lying where it is verifiable in history, why would I believe it in its spiritual content where I can't verify it. It seems to me that if God wanted me to trust the spiritual character of the Bible, He'd make sure that the historical and verifiable character of the Bible would substantiate it's truth. Don't you think so?

Ann Gelder says "That such men refuse to believe that God performed the miracle of giving us by inspiration an infallible Bible, but are ready to believe that God daily performs the greater miracle of enabling men to find and see in the fallible word of man, the infallible word of God."

How can you possibly have a divinely right experience through a wrong book. And that's what they tell us. Kierkegaard says "Only the truth which edifies thee is truth." Garbage. If the whole Bible's a lie in every other area, why am I going to believe its spiritual statements? Jesus said in John 17, "Thy word is truth." Truth. No, inspiration is not the inspiration of the reader.

Let me give you another thought. Fundamentalists like us who believe the Bible always get shot down and they say that we teach the Bible as dictated mechanically. A writer just went like this and God moved his arm and he was sort of a automaton, you know, a robot. And he just cranked it all out, hmmm, hmmm, hmmm, hmmm, see and that was it. That's called the dictation theory. And nobody ever believes that, but the liberals like to accuse of believing that God just dictated it all and that the people involved were just sort of secretaries and stenographers with no mind involved at all.

But that's a little hard to hold to because when you read the books you find personality don't you? Every book's got a different character. Every author a different style. It's amazing the uniqueness. Oh it's true God could have used dictation and gotten us the truth. I mean, it wouldn't have gotten corrupted at all. He could have just dictated the whole thing. In fact, He didn't even need to use a man. He could have gone zap and it all would have existed and dropped down in our houses.

You say why didn't He do that? I don't know why He didn't do that, but He didn't. It is true that God could have used that, but when you read the Bible you find He used men. There are variations in style. There are variations in language and vocabulary. From author to author there are distinct personalities visible. And have you ever notice how that you can read the emotion of the writer in the time that he's writing?

You can feel what he feels as we've gone through Paul we've seen this. God used writers according to 2 Peter "who were born along by the Holy Spirit." They were part of it. Carried along. Well, you say, how could God write it and it be God's words and still Paul write it and it be Paul's words? Because God had made Paul into the man that He wanted him to be.

Let me show you what I mean. God formed the personality of the writer. God controlled his heredity and God controlled his environment. And God controlled his life to make him into the man that He wanted him to be. When that man was exactly what He wanted him to be and what God intended him to be, He then directed and controlled the free and willing choice of the man so that he wrote down the very words of God. God made him into the man who would think the kind of thoughts that God could use to express His truth. And God literally selected the words of the man's own life, out of the man's own personality, his own words, his own vocabulary, his own emotions.

The words were the man's words, but in reality his whole life had been so framed by God that they were God's words, and so I can as easily say Paul wrote Romans as I can say God wrote it and be right on both counts. Listen to 2 Samuel 23:2, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me and His word was in my tongue." He says it was me and it was my tongue, but it came out His word. Fantastic.

Holy men of God were moved along by the Holy Spirit. They were authors, not secretaries. They made full use of their personalities. You read Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, you can see him weeping. It's all there. You read the divine impotence in his heart like a fire just roaring and raging and then you go over to Amos and his inside is like a lion roaring and raging and you can sense their personality, they're there.

Inspiration is not any of those things. Let me take you to two passages quickly and show you what inspiration really is. 2 Timothy 3:16, it says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, the authorized." Really it can be translated "All Scripture is God breathed." All scripasagrapha theopanustas, three words. All Scripture God breathed.

All Scripture is the breath of God. All writing. Let's take these three words and see what they mean. Theopanustas from theos and panu is a root that has to do with breath from which we get pneumatic tires or pneumonia any of those terms, the same. So it's God breathed. Now what do we mean we say the Bible is God breathed. All Scripture is God breathed. You ought to write that in the margin so you don't get mixed up on inspiration.

God breathed, you know God does everything by His breath. It means what comes out of His mouth His word. We are studying now when we look at the Bible what kind of revelation is this? Special right? What other kind of revelation is it? Natural revelation. Do you know that natural revelation was also authored in the same way? The whole creation was accomplished by the breath of God's mouth. Psalm 33:6 "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made and all the hosts of them by the breath of His mouth."

God breathed into existence the universe. Then God breathed into existence the Bible. Special revelation following natural revelation. Whatever the Scripture says God said. In fact, you know,

Paul amazingly feels free to personify the Scripture as if it was God speaking. Galatians 3:8, "And the Scripture says in these shall all nations be blessed." The Scripture says, interesting. He personifies the Scripture as God speaking. Galatians 3:22, "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

He actually personifies Scripture. It's the Scripture speaking. What the Scripture says God says. You know back in Exodus God said unto Pharaoh, "Even for this purpose have I raised thee up." Did you know God said that to Pharaoh? Listen to what Paul said in Romans 9:17, "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh," how about that. "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up." Whatever the Scripture said is the same as God said.

In Exodus it says "God said," here it says "the Scripture says." When the Scripture speaks God speaks. Beloved in every sense you pick up that word and you read it, that's God's voice. God is the author of what Scripture records. God is the author of what Scripture says.

In Acts Chapter 13, verse 32, "We declare unto you glad tidings how the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children and that He hath raised up Jesus again as it is also written in the second Psalm, thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead now no more to return to corruption, He said in this wise, I'll give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore, He saith also in another Psalm thou shalt not allow thine holy one to see corruption."

In all those cases, do you know who wrote those Psalms? David. But in all those cases it says here, He said, He said, He said. And who's the He referring to? God. It was David, yes. It was God too. That's inspiration. Do you realize in Romans 3:2 that the totality of Scripture is summed in this phrase. "The oracles of," whom, "God." Scripture is the oracles of God.

Beloved the Bible is the word of God. Samuel wrote, "The word of Jehovah was precious. There were no frequent visions." And then three times God called Samuel. Remember the story? And Samuel answered "Speak for thy servant heareth." And then it goes in 1 Samuel 3 and says this "Samuel did let none of His words fall to the ground." Did you hear that? Samuel preserved every single word that God spoke.

Isaiah saw the Lord in His holiness in Isaiah 6 and he said, "I heard the voice of the Lord saying," and he records what God said. "Whom shall I send and who will go for us." He recorded the words of God. Jeremiah wrote "The word of Jehovah came unto me saying before I form thee in the belly I knew thee. I sanctified thee. I've appointed thee a prophet unto the nations." Listen, "Whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak. Behold I have put my words in thy mouth. Jeremiah 1:4-9.

Listen to Jeremiah 5:14, "I will make my words in thy mouth fire and the people would and it shall devour them." And then Jeremiah responded to God in Chapter 15, and said, "Thy words were found and I did eat them." Thy words, not thoughts, words. Then he was given the promise of the Lord. "If you take forth the precious from the vial, thou shalt be as my mouth said God."

Jeremiah you're my mouth. Yes, these are the words of God. Ezekiel, "All my words shall I speak unto thee receive in thy heart and here with thine ears and go and speak unto them." God said, I'll give you the words and you tell them. Paul was told by Ananias, remember back in Acts Chapter 22 it tells us about his encounter with Ananias and at his conversion. And it said in Acts 22:14, "The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know His will, to see the righteous one, to hear a voice from His mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for Him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."

Paul wrote to the Galatians and said "when it was a good pleasure of God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles. Straight way I conferred not with flesh and blood." God called me to preach and I didn't need any lessons. I didn't need to be taught. God gave me the words.

John wrote in Revelation 1, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day and I heard a great voice crying. What thou seest write in a book and send it to the seven churches. Write there for the things which thou sawest, the things which are, the things which shall come to pass." And so it is that the Bible writers whether Old Testament or New Testament were commissioned to write the revelation of God in God's own words.

Drawing to an interesting passage in Acts 24:14, we read this as Paul defends himself before Felix. "This I confess unto thee that after the way which they call heresy so worship I the God of my fathers," listen, "believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." You want to know what Paul's view of Scripture was? Every bit of it was to be believed. You think he doubted it's integrity? I can't understand how these modern-day people and liberals can come along and deny Scripture when somebody like the apostle Paul says I believe every bit of it written in the law and the prophets, the Old Testament.

Scripture is God breathed. That's the first point. The second point in 2 Timothy 3:16, interestingly is how much Scripture has God breathed? How much? All. And that can pasau can be translated every. All or every. Now some of you will say what do you mean all Scriptures as far wide, that is in 2 Timothy 3, so that only refers to the Old Testament. That's a big argument they use. It can't refer to the New Testament, because the New Testament isn't finished yet. It hasn't been brought together yet. So Paul is simply referring to the Old Testament. And they leave us hanging with the New Testament. They can shoot the New Testament down.

All right, let me make a statement to you. All ducks waddle. We know that's a fact. All ducks waddle. Okay, what are you trying to prove? Does that mean all the past ducks waddle only? No, present ducks waddle too. What about future ducks? Future ducks will also waddle. In other words, whatever period ducks live they waddle. You have strange looks on your faces. Where are you going, right?

The point is this to say all Scripture is God breathed, doesn't just mean all past Scripture, it means all Scripture, whether it has been written, is being written or will be written. So 2 Timothy 3:16, I believe can have reference to the entire Scripture. Written, being written, yet to be written. All Scripture is God breathed includes all of the group of writings classed as Scripture. All of them are God breathed.

The Scripture was understood by Paul to be an aggregate and He knew He was adding to it. And He knew there would be others who would add to it. And He is making the statement that applies to the books being written as well as the books that would be written. All Scripture. You know what Jesus said? John 10:35, listen, "Scripture cannot be," what, "broken." Jesus said, all Scripture is authentic. None of it can be violated. All of it, and Jesus meant all that was written, all that was being written, all that would be written, that fit into the classification of the holy writings of God couldn't be broken. All.

Now what is Scripture, that's the other word, grapha, from which you graphite, which goes into pencil so you can write. Grapha is just writing, all writing. You mean all writing is God breathed? That's kind of shaky. Well, what writing are you talking about? We'll go back to verse 15, it tells you. "And that from a child thou hast known the," what kind of writing, "holy Scriptures." All holy writing is God breathed.

The apostle says notice now nothing about the writers. He doesn't say all the writers are God breathed. No, no, no, he says all the writings. It is not the writer that's inspired. When you say Paul was inspired, that is technically not right. Paul was not inspired, Romans was inspired and Corinthians, and Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, they were inspired.

Not Paul, the Bible doesn't talk about inspired men, do you know that? The Bible doesn't say Isaiah was inspired. Paul was inspired, David was inspired, John was inspired, no, not the men, the message. That's why a man could write an inspired message and never write another one in his whole life, because it was the message that was inspired not the man. The only writing that's inspired of God is the holy writing. That's verse 15. Mark that down, the holy Scripture, all of that holy Scripture has been breathed out by God.

And beloved the holy Scripture can't be broken. Boy when you start talking to some of these people who want to take this verse out and that verse out and the other verse out and they're the ones who decide what stays and what goes. You know what their usual principle is? They have this thing

called the Spirit of Jesus. This is the big liberal jag. The Spirit of Jesus, whatever fits the Spirit of Jesus, you accept whatever doesn't you reject. So you read along a passage and it says God wiped out the Canaanites. Oh no, no. Why that doesn't fit the Spirit of Jesus who was loving and gentle. We'll just throw that out.

Or they come to the New Testament and they don't like the cleansing of the temple. Oh that's not there. That's not in the Scripture. We'll can that because that isn't the spirit of Jesus. They've already determined what the spirit of Jesus is. It's sort of a casper milk toast that goes around just lovey dovey all the time and that's it. Has no sense of judgment or justice or anything else. Just whoever they wanted to be. They make them and throw everything out that doesn't conform.

But listen to what Jesus said, "Verily, I say unto you till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Listen to what the next verse says, "But wherefore, whosoever shall break one of these least commandments and teach men so shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." God doesn't want anybody tampering with His word. Not any Scripture can be broken because all Scripture is given inspired of God.

Luke 16, I think it is, verse 17, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fall." One little infinite tessimal dot. Easier for the entire universe to fold up than for that to happen. Boy I'm telling you God's word is eternal.

You know what was said, and this is really something, what was said to the Pharisees in Mark 7:13, "You make the word of God of no effect." Isn't that something? You have destroyed it with your lousy traditions and wrong interpretations. The writings can't be broken. All writing God breathed. All of it. Here it is.

Let's go to one other passage. 2 Peter 1, verses 20-21. 2 Peter 1:20, "Knowing this first," get this straight right off the bat, "know prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." Now what it means there is origin. No private origin. "For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of some man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." No Scripture is of private origination. No Scripture came out of a man's mind. That's what it says.

Now the key word here, I think is important, is that it doesn't come from a private origin, because "all the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they born along by the Holy Spirit." They were carried along by the Spirit, not their words, God's words. Not their origin, God's origin.

Now notice this little thought. "For the prophecy came not." You say well this is only talking about prophecy. What is prophecy refer to? Listen, prophecy isn't just prediction. We say the word prophecy and immediately everybody thinks about the second-coming. The word prophecy is much

broader than that. Did you know that Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are prophecies? You say you're kidding.

No, Moses was a prophet and when a prophet spoke he prophesied. You say where's the prediction? There isn't any prediction. There are some like the prediction of the Messiah, but basically prophecy was any speaking forth to tell forth. It didn't have to be predictive. That's only one kind of prophecy. What he's saying here is a prophecy is a communication from God. And all communication from God came not by the will of man, but men were used but born along by the Holy Spirit. That's inspiration worked.

Notice, no prophecy had a human origin, verse 20. None. Every bit of it came from God. And verse 21 really explains verse 20. "Prophecy was never at any time brought by the will of men, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit to speak His words."

What then is inspiration? Inspiration is God's revelation, communicated to us through writers who use their own minds and their own words and yet God had so arranged their lives and their thoughts and their vocabularies that the words that they chose out of their minds were the very words that God determined from eternity past they would use to write His truth.

You say that's a miracle. That's right. That's a miracle. And we believe if you want a title in what is called plenary verbal inspiration all Scripture is inspired, and every word in it is inspired. Plenary means all of it. Verbal means every word of it. We believe the Bible is the breath of God. What are the conclusions to such a definition? What does this mean to us? We say that the Bible is inspired by God in this sense? What does mean?

All right, let me give them to you. Are you ready? One, it's infallible. If God wrote it's infallible. That means it is absolutely authoritative. It is infallible. Do you remember Psalm 19:7? Listen, "The law of the Lord is," what, "perfect." Perfect. It is authored by God who cannot lie.

This is God's word. You say John are there any mistakes? In the original autographs, in the original manuscripts, absolute inerrancy. No mistakes. As it's come down to the generations of men, scribes have made little changes here and there, but basically as it stands today, there are so few scribal errors and omissions and additions that most of them are obvious and known to us and the totality of the word of God that we can still stand and say this is as it stands in its original languages, the words of God Himself.

Do you believe that God could inspire the Bible at the beginning? Do you believe that? Do you believe if He could inspire it at the beginning He could keep it the way he wanted it? Would that be a big problem? He created the universe by the word of His mouth. He upholds it by the word of His power. Could He not create the special revelation and uphold it? We believe He has. The Bible

then, first of all, is inerrant and infallible.

Proverbs 30, verse 5-6, listen to this, "Every word of God is pure," now listen to this, "add thou not unto His words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar." When anybody comes along and wants to add a new revelation or a new inspiration, let them fall into the category of Revelation 22:18 and Proverbs 30:5-6.

The law of the Lord is perfect. Every word of God is pure. Beloved, if I'm going to let biblical writers err anywhere, then I'm going to have a lot of trouble believing them anywhere else. What else? Scripture is infallible and inerrant, it is also complete. It is complete. Did you know this is all you need? You don't need a vision. You don't need a new revelation. You don't need some great act of God. You don't need voices from heaven. The cannon is closed. The word of God is finished.

You know when you look at the history of the church throughout the centuries, nothing has been added to the Bible. The only thing that comes close to that is the Catholic church having slapped in the middle of the apocrypha, which is a pile of books written in the 400 years between the Old and the New Testament. And it's erroneous. It's obviously not inspired of God. It has too many problems, too many errors, too many contradictions. Propagates the salvation by works, etc. But apart from that throughout the history of the church, nobody has added. It is so obvious that God has written these books. There is such a tremendous gulf. You stack on one side of your table all the greatest books every written by men and the Bible on the other side and there's gulf so vast it could never be compared.

These books, our New Testament demanded for their authenticity. Authorship by an apostle or someone close to an apostle, and beloved there aren't any more apostles around, believe me. Ephesians 2:20 says, "The apostles were the foundation of the church." This is the 20th century, you don't put the foundation on the 20th story. No more inspired writings. No more inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Now, we are enjoying illumination from the Holy Spirit. That's when the Holy Spirit all of a sudden puts the search light on the verse and it comes flying off the page. You know that? And the meaning comes clear. That's illumination. So the word of God is infallible, inerrant, complete. Then it is authoritative. Authoritative, boy when it speaks, you better respond.

Listen to Isaiah 1:2, boy I love this. "Hear, Oh heavens, and give Oh earth," why, "for the Lord has spoken." That really says it. This is God's voice. You better listen. Let me add another thing, because the word of God is the breath of God it is also sufficient. You don't need anything else. It's sufficient. You say what do you mean by that? Listen, remember our verse 2 Timothy? Listen to this, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God as profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction, and righteousness that the man of God maybe," what, what, "perfect." Thoroughly

furnished unto all good works.

Is there anything missing? What do you want beyond perfection? What do you beyond thoroughly furnished unto all good works. You say you mean the Bible's complete? Look at verse 15. "From a child," Paul said to Timothy, "you have known the holy writings which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." This is all you need to get saved and then verse 16 and 17 says it's all you need to get complete. Perfect, mature, full grown, that's it. Sufficient.

When somebody comes along and says oh you need this and you need that. Oh my, have you had this, have you had that. I don't need that. I don't need that. All I need is this. The Spirit of God through the word of God is sufficiency. Wise unto salvation and to make you perfect.

Oh the Bible is sufficient for every man, for every need. Listen, "For whatever things," Romans 15:4 says, "were written in earlier times and written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Paul says all we need is the Scripture. That's sufficient. We don't need anything else. Revelation 1:3 says this, "Blessed is he that reads and hears the words of this prophecy and keeps the things that are written therein."

James put it this way, he said, "Whosoever looks into the perfect law of liberty continues in it being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word this man shall be blessed. Earlier be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Be doers of the word is to be blessed. It is sufficient. There's nothing more needed. The word of God is all. It is infallible. It is inerrant. It is complete. It is authoritative. It is sufficient. Lastly, it is effective.

Remember this verse, "For the word of God is alive and," what, "powerful," Hebrews 4:12, "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It is alive and powerful. Do you know that? How many of you can say amen, the word of God is alive and powerful? I'll you it is in my life. It tears me up. Doesn't it you?

I mean, one of the reasons I know God wrote it is it tells me things about me only He and I know. And I don't know them usually until He tells me and then I recognize it. Isaiah 55:11, "So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it'll accomplish that which I please." Boy it's powerful. This book is powerful. It is able to make one wise to salvation. It is able to make one perfect.

Listen to what Paul said to the Thessalonians. "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power and in the Holy Spirit." Powerful book. You take the word of God and the Spirit of God and

you've got dynamite friend, dynamite. Beloved, we're to stand faithfully and carefully on this inspired word of God. The sad thing is that there's a world of people who don't. And Jesus classified them with these words. "He that is of God hears God words." Did you know that? "He that is of God hears God words. Ye therefore, hear them not because ye are not God."

You want to know how you tell a saved person from an unsaved one? One listens to the word of God and one doesn't. Beloved, let's listen. This is God's word to us.

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