

WHAT GOOD IS GOOD DOCTRINE?

What Good is the Doctrine of Inerrancy?

Introduction: Last week we saw that God wants us to know Him. Therefore,

- God reveals to all people everywhere that He exists and is exceedingly powerful through the testimony of creation. The natural response of a person looking at the vast array of stars in the night sky says, "There has to be a God!"

But God wants us to know much more than that. He wants us to know His character, purposes, standards, actions, and words.

- Therefore God has chosen to reveal specific things about Himself to us by inspiring men who loved Him to write the Holy Scriptures.

2 Peter 1:21 NKJV for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

God did this through at least forty individuals over a period of 1,500 years: Moses, David, Isaiah, John ...

Yet, even though so many people were involved in the writing of the Bible, there is a perfect harmony of thought and instruction.

- What if we took everybody on rows 2 and 3 across the gym and gave you one controversial topic, like gay marriage. Even though this group assembled for worship is far more homogenous than just assembling the same size group from people passing by on the parking lot, yet do you imagine that they would all be of the same opinion and perspective? Not a chance! In fact you would see proof of the old saying that where two Baptists are together there will always be at least three opinions.
- Yet in the Bible, every controversial moral issue you can imagine is addressed, and the different authors always agree. They do not necessarily say it in identical words, but they speak the same thought and value.

The Holy Spirit explained how this is possible through the Apostle Paul.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV All Scripture *is given by inspiration of God, ...*

Inspiration means "**breathed out.**"

God breathed out **ALL** of the Scriptures, every single one!

I. INSPIRATION MAKES THE BIBLE INERRANT AND INFALLIBLE.

A. Inerrant means that in the original autographs, there are no mistakes.

B. Infallible means that if you follow it, it will not lead you astray.

C. How could words breathed out by God be anything less?

D. This is the testimony of the Scriptures themselves.

Psalm 19:7-11 NKJV The law of the LORD is **perfect**, ...; The testimony of the LORD is **sure**, ...; 8 The statutes of the LORD are **right**, ...; The commandment of the LORD is **pure**, ...; 9 The fear of the LORD is **clean**, ...; The judgments of the LORD are **true and righteous** altogether.

Psalm 119:160 NKJV **The entirety of Your word is truth**, And every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.

Isaiah 40:8 NKJV The grass withers, the flower fades, But **the word of our God stands forever**.

E. Jesus treated the Scriptures as if they were inerrant.

Matthew 5:18 NKJV For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, **one jot or one tittle will by no means pass** from the law till all is fulfilled.

The jot (yod in Hebrew) was the smallest letter.

The tittle (Hebrew keriah) was a part of a letter like the crossing of a t.

John 17:17 NKJV Sanctify them by Your truth. **Your word is truth**.

F. Jesus affirmed the historical accuracy of the Scriptures, and He did so at the very points that scoffers and skeptics mock the Bible today.

- Jesus referred to Adam and Eve as real, historical people, not symbols of mankind. (Matthew 19:3-5)
- Jesus referred to Noah's ark and the flood as historical events. (Luke 17:26-27)
- Jesus believed that Jonah was a man literally swallowed by a great fish. (Matthew 12:40)

G. Paul also affirmed that it is the very words, not just the thoughts, which are inspired. This is called Verbal Inspiration by Bible students.

1 Corinthians 2:13 NKJV These things we also speak, not in **words** which man's wisdom teaches but **which the Holy Spirit teaches**, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Paul made a major theological point because of the singular form of a noun that was used in Genesis rather than the plural.

Galatians 3:16 NKJV Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "*And to your Seed,*" who is Christ.

The doctrine of inerrancy is the teaching of Scripture that the Bible, as it was originally given, is perfect and without mistake or error.

II. WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE INERRANCY OF THE BIBLE MAKE TO ME?

A. I can have full confidence in what I read in the Scriptures.

- Have you heard the old saying,
 - **The Bible says it.**
 - **I believe it.**
 - **That settles it.**

That's good. This is better:

- **The Bible says it.**
 - **That settles it.**
 - **Whether I believe it or not!**
1. Sometimes people ask, "What difference does it make whether or not the Bible is inerrant?"
 2. The answer is, "All the difference in the world."
 3. The reason it matters is that once we are willing to say that any one portion of the Bible is in error, then anything in the Bible is open to question, unbelief, debate, and rejection. Once you have begun this journey, there is no place to stop. This is where I was in college and early seminary as I told you last week. It is a horrible place to be from which the only escape is to believe the words of Jesus "God's Word is truth."
 4. When we try to determine whether something in the Bible is true, you have made yourself the judge of Scripture. That is backwards. We are judged according to the Scriptures.

B. Having confidence that every word of the Bible is true makes me want to read it, study it, memorize it, and live it more.

If you do not like to read or study the Bible,

If you do not want to spend time memorizing Scripture,

If it does not genuinely matter to you whether you are living according to the precepts of the Bible,

The problem may well be that you do not really believe the Bible is completely true. You have no confidence in it.

C. Having confidence that every word of the Bible is true will clarify difficult moral issues which we face.

1. Homosexuality
2. Gay marriage
3. Living together outside of marriage
4. **The Sanctity of Human Life** In fact, today is Sanctity of Life Sunday, which makes it an especially good time to mention this issue as an example.

There remains a great divide in our nation about this critical moral issue. There are people who identify as Christians who are pro-choice and others who are pro-life.

But there is no ambivalence in the Word of God, and those who believe that word is inerrant, find clear guidance as they seek to know the mind of God in this matter.

III. GOD IS THE GIVER, PROTECTOR, AND TAKER OF LIFE.

A. Because life was originally a gift from God.

Gen 2:7 NKJV And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

B. Because life is still a gift from God.

1. While God has given man a part in procreation, it is still the Lord who has the power to open and close the womb. Rachel, Leah, Hannah,Sarah
2. Every person born is planned by God and has received the gift of life from God!

C. Because only God should take the gift of life away.

1. God allows man to take life in certain cases: in self-defense, by God-appointed authority over criminal penalties as in enforcing capital punishment in a court of law, and in the case of just war. But with these few exceptions, God reserves for Himself to be both the giver and taker of life!
2. The firmness of God on this principle of the sanctity of life is illustrated by God's strong pronouncements upon those who take it upon themselves to

usurp the authority of the Almighty and take a life other than that which He has declared should be taken.

Prov. 6:16-17 NKJV These six things **the LORD hates**, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, A lying tongue, **Hands that shed innocent blood**,

Jer. 22:3 NKJV 'Thus says the LORD: "Execute judgment and righteousness, and deliver the plundered out of the hand of the oppressor. Do no wrong and do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, or the widow, **nor shed innocent blood in this place**."

3. God has spoken specifically about the sanctity of life in the womb.

Exodus 21:22-25 NKJV "If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.

23 **"But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life,**

24 "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

25 "burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

In the law God established for the newly born nation of Israel, God said that if a man caused an unborn child to die, his own life would be taken in return.

See in this how precious the life of the unborn child is to God!

4. The sanctity of life extends to the elderly, the infirm, and the handicapped.

Exodus 4:11 NKJV So the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD?"

CONCLUSION:

Believing in the inerrancy of Scripture leads to

Confidence that what I read in the Bible is the very Word of God, which leads to

A greater Desire to know that Word, understand it, learn it, and live it, which leads to

Clarity concerning the great questions and moral issues of our day.

Folks, knowing the way this progression works is far from academic for me.

- After doubting the truthfulness of Scripture through college and my early years of seminary, in 1976, the evidence of the truth of creation convinced me to believe the doctrine of inerrancy.
- In 1979 I began to pastor my first church, and by then had developed great confidence in the Scriptures and taught and preached God's Word with passion.
- Legalized abortion had begun in 1973, and by the early 1980's more than 1.5 million babies were being killed while resting in what should have been the protective womb of their mother.
- Somewhere in the early 80's I became aware of what was happening all around us in the slaughter to the innocent children. I searched God's Word for what He had to say regarding the life of the unborn and the right of a mother and or a doctor to end the life of an unborn child.
- Clarity set in and resulted in two things:
 - One, a conviction that I must faithfully declare what Scripture declared even in the midst of a culture increasingly valuing the right of choice for a woman over the right to life of her baby.
 - Secondly, an overwhelming sense of guilt and sorrow that I had been silent in the pulpit concerning this abomination that had now been going on for nearly ten years. I was entering the battle about 13 million dead babies too late.
 - The first Sunday I preached the truth of God's Word concerning abortion in my church, I did so with my eyes flooded with tears, and I was the first to go down to the altar and declare my own repentance for my silence for so long and my commitment to never, never be silent again.

Where are you on this progression?

Where does God want you to be?

Would you commit to the Lord to take the next step?