

Bibliology – Discovering Doctrine

- In our Foundations booklet, the church makes four statements about Bibliology or the doctrine of scripture
 - We'll address each of them in this session...
1. We believe the Bible was written by men through the supernatural inspiration of God.
 2. We believe that the Bible is truth without any error.
 3. We believe that the Bible is the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to men.
 4. We believe that the Bible is the highest authority and should be mankind's basis for their actions, beliefs, and opinions.
- The Greek word "biblio" means relating to a book or books
 - The Greek word "ology" means the study of
 - Today we approach the doctrine (or the study) of God's book
- We will not address the history of the canon today
 - There will be no historical theology on the assembly of the component parts of the Old and New Testaments
 - Our plan is not to focus on its preservation
 - And the biographies of its authors will not be on the agenda either
- These are very important and helpful studies
 - If this were a seminary course, we would certainly include them
 - We are making no attempt to avoid them in this discussion
 - But these four beliefs - and their basis in scripture - will be our focus today
- Let's start with the concept of supernatural inspiration
 - Beginning with a key passage in any study of doctrine...

2 Timothy 3:12-17

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

- Inspiration is at the heart of this passage
- In a verse most of us would highlight - verse 16

- Which might be helpful to hear restated from the ESV...

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,"

- What does it mean for the scripture to be inspired or breathed out by God?
- Particularly in light of the fact that it was written by men?
- Another passage may help us understand...

2 Peter 1:16-21

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

- There is another key verse worth highlighting here
- Let's read a restatement of 2 Peter 1:21...

"For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

- The words we have written in the Old and New Testaments are not produced by the will of man
- They are not just things people wanted to write and therefore wrote them
- The authors "spoke from God"
- They were moved or carried along by the Holy Spirit
- God breathed out the words they transferred to the page
- These are words that came not from the minds and hearts of men, but from God himself
- This reality is seen in the context of these passages
- First, in what scripture is profitable for
- Second, in what scripture is better than
- Notice what scripture is profitable for according to 2 Timothy 3...

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

- We discussed the word for doctrine in week one
- Doctrine is teaching, instruction
- Men are instructed - in a definitive way - from scripture
- God teaches men through it
- Men who don't know Him are instructed on how to know Him
- And men who know Him are instructed on how to please Him

Romans 10:13-17

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- Jesus, praying for His disciples said...

John 17:15-17

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

- Reproof is something by which a thing is proved or tested
- The scriptures test men
- They reveal what we are because their words come from our Creator

James 1:22-25

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

- The word correction means straightened up again
- It means restoration to an upright or right state
- Scripture not only tests us
- But when it reveals that we have strayed, it can return us to the right path
- Because it is God-breathed, it reveals what is wrong and gives instruction that can make right

Hebrews 4:12-13

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

- Finally, instruction in righteousness is training in the right way to live
- God has given us a book to show us the right way
- To show us His way
- As Jesus said in Matthew 4:4...

"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

- That's why our first passage on inspiration ends this way...

"that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"

- Our God-breathed scriptures are profitable
- They are profitable to do all the things He outlines here and more
- Having been used throughout history to complete and equip His saints every day
- But inspiration is revealed not just in what the scriptures are profitable for
- But also in what the scriptures are better than
- Do you remember that text?
- When Peter said we have "a more sure word of prophecy?"
- More sure than what?
- Than Peter's personal testimony of hearing the audible voice of God
- Let's review his statements...

2 Peter 1:16-21

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

- God speaks in more than just an audible voice
- He gives us something more certain
- The written word of God
- Which He worked in the lives of men to write

- Beyond supernatural inspiration, we believe the Bible is truth without any error
- When we say the Bible is without error, we mean historical error, scientific error, and factual error
- The word of God can be trusted in all of its claims, promises, and assertions of fact

- Passages we have already quoted reveal this reality
- Consider Jesus' words in John 17:17...

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

- We know the word truth
 - We have a general idea of its mean
 - But I want to discuss it further

 - There are at least three aspects of truth discussed in one of the Bible resources I've been reading...
1. Ontological Truth
 2. Logical Truth
 3. Moral Truth
- Ontological means "of or relating to essence or the nature of being"
 - This is truth about existence and ultimate reality

 - Logical truth is about a claim matching up with facts
 - It's about the knower having the capability (by logical means) to know something for certain

 - Moral truth is about right and wrong
 - That which is moral (right) ought to be actively pursued
 - While that which is immoral (wrong) must be actively avoided
 - This truth establishes that which is right and that which is wrong

- The Bible, Jesus says, is truth
- His prayer is that the Father will sanctify (or set apart) His people by truth
- This is one point establishing a belief in inerrancy
- Consider also the God who cannot lie
- Providing a written revelation that does not lie...

Titus 1:1-2

1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;

2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

- We see a further claim about God's truthfulness in Hebrews...

Hebrews 6:13-20

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

- We see God's character in His interactions with Abraham
- And realize, based upon it, that it is impossible for Him to lie
- Therefore His word does not lie
- But there are many more direct passages we may also address
- Regarding words that come from God...

Proverbs 30:5-6

5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

6 Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

- The first verse could be expressed this way...

"Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him."

Psalms 12:6-7

6 The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

- The purity of His words is again proclaimed and then described here
- They have been refined and purified
- Preserved forever

Psalm 19:7-9

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

- Among the attributes of scripture listed here: perfect, sure, right, pure, true, and righteous altogether
- Do you see inerrancy within these attributes?
- Perhaps further definition will help

- The idea of perfect found here is complete, whole, entire, and sound
- Sure, in this passage, generally refers to faithfulness and certainty
- Right means straight, upright, correct
- Pure is free from contamination, clean
- True brings the idea of trustworthiness and reliability
- Righteous is just, altogether just

- From this passage alone we would have no difficulty proclaiming God's word sound, certain, correct, free from contamination, trustworthy, and right

- We also believe the Bible is the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to men
- Several of the passages we have already discussed contribute to this understanding
- I think the context of one in particular gives us some insight...

2 Peter 1:1-4

1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

- Just before Peter declares the scriptures a "more sure word of prophecy"
- He explains that God - through Jesus Christ - has given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness"
- He does this through the knowledge of Jesus, which is only obtained (and can only be found) in His word

- This passage may help us further...

Hebrews 1:1-3

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

- God has spoken in a variety of ways to and through His prophets in the past
- Today He speaks by His Son - the express image of His person
- In Him, God has spoken with finality

- Jesus helps us to understand in the gospel of John...

John 14:23-26

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

- The Father has spoken through His Son
- The word of His son is found in the word of God, the scriptures
- And the Holy Spirit, through it, will teach us all things

- We also assert that the Bible is the highest authority and should be mankind's basis for actions, beliefs, and opinions
- Again you'll find many of the best arguments for the truth of this statement found in the passages we have already quoted
- I would point us to one other...

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

- Disciples must build their lives upon obedience to the scriptures
- We have this comprehensive mission, to teach everything Jesus commands
- To believe everything Jesus commands
- To live according to everything Jesus commands
- That's what it means to be a disciple