

Review:

- Forms of God's word: Jesus, God's direct decrees, God's personal addresses, God's speech through others, God's words in written form.
- Scripture is the written form of God's words that are preserved in the Bible, whose purpose is to transform individuals to be more like Christ. Therefore, all Scripture is applicable in some way to every generation and culture.
- Canon: The Protestant Canon (66 books) is the correct one, containing the only inspired books.

The Inspiration of Scripture

- Zech 7:12; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21
- The inspiration of Scripture is a topic that deals with the method of how God's words became Scripture.

Views on the Method of Inspiration (for each, ask what they think the theory means, do we see it in Scripture, and what problems might the theory have)

1. Dictation Theory of Inspiration

- God dictated the precise words directly to someone to write them down verbatim

2. Ecstatic Trance Theory of Inspiration

- The Holy Spirit possesses the body of the author, thus putting them in an ecstatic trance, and causes them to write Scripture

3. Intuition or Natural Theory of Inspiration

- This view takes the word "inspiration" literally, and the author just naturally or intuitively writes like how a painter paints. In the same way as a painter might see a flower, an animal, or even a certain colour and be inspired to paint, so too the authors see things around them and write (Isaiah sees the corruption in his day and writes in response). Typically, this view does not believe the Spirit actually has a hand in writing, but it comes from within.

4. Community Theory of Inspiration

- (Bird) - "inspiration is a community's verdict that a text has a sacred meaning and possesses various utilities for the community. Viewed this way, the word inspired nearly shares its meaning with the word canonical."

5. Conceptual or Dynamic Theory of Inspiration

- (Bird) - “The Spirit of God directed writers’ thoughts and concepts while allowing their respective personality, style, and disposition to come into play with the choice of words and expressions.”
- God’s Spirit worked in individuals and caused them to write His word. What they wrote were the concepts that the Spirit laid upon them, but the words were their own choice.

6. Verbal Plenary Theory of Inspiration

- God’s Spirit worked in individuals and caused them to write His word. What they wrote were the very words God placed upon their heart, but these words also reflect the author’s personality.

What is Actually Inspired?

What About Textual Criticism and Textual Variants?

Are Translations Inspired?

What Translations are the Best?