



BIBLICAL TRAINING CENTER

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Understanding Biblical Inspiration, Infallibility and Inerrancy

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When Christians say, "The Bible is from God" what do we really mean?

...we're really talking about 3 things:

1. Inspiration:

- This concerns the origin of the Bible.
- We're saying it is from God or "God-breathed."
- **"From God"**

2. Infallibility:

- This speaks to Bible's authority & enduring nature.
- Means incapable of failing; cannot be broken; permanently binding.
- **"Cannot fail"**

3. Inerrancy:

- The Bible is without error.
- It's a belief the total truthfulness of God's Word.
- **"Without error"**

Evidence for (1) biblical inspiration – "From God"

The source of the Bible is God

- It is called "God's Word" (Lk. 11:28) and "the Lord's Word" (Psa. 18:30).
- 2 Tim. 3:16—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...."
- 2 Sam. 23:2—"The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue."
- Zech. 7:12—"They made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets."
- 2 Peter 1:21—"For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Prophets were mouthpieces for God

- Heb. 1:1—"God who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets."

- Deut. 18:18—"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him."
- We find "thus says the LORD" 1,700 times in Old Testament.

Evidence for (2) biblical infallibility – "Cannot Fail"

The Bible has divine authority

- Mt. 4:7—"It is written: "Man does not live on bread alone, but [must live] on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Jesus kept repeating "It is written" cf. Deut. 8:3)

It cannot perish

- Matthew 5:17-18: "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 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." (i.e. smallest stroke of the pen)

It cannot be broken (is infallible)

- "If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken...." (John 10:35)

Evidence for (3) biblical inerrancy – "Without Error"

Jesus called it true

- Mt. 22:29--Jesus replied: "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God"
- Jn. 17:17--"Your Word is truth"

Jesus implied it is scientifically accurate

- Matthew 19:4-5: "'Haven't you read,' he replied, 'that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.'"
- In affirming the Genesis account he affirmed (1) creation and (2) that all humans genetically came from same parents (Adam & Eve).

Jesus believed it is historically reliable

- Believed in Adam/Eve (Mt. 19:4-5)
- Believed in Noah and that world was destroyed by a flood (Mt. 24:37-39)
- Said account of Jonah really happened (Mt. 12:40)
- See 32 items on slides
- If Jesus was wrong, we have a serious theological/soteriological problem!

It's based on the character of God

1. We know God cannot lie from the Bible
 - Titus 1:2—"...the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time..."
 - Hebrews 6:18—"...it is impossible for God to lie..."
2. We know God cannot lie from reason (philosophy)

God cannot lie on purpose

An absolute moral lawgiver is a perfect moral being.

God is an absolute moral lawgiver.

Therefore God cannot lie intentionally (cannot break own moral law).

God cannot lie on accident

Somebody who knows all things (is omniscient) cannot err in knowledge.

God is omniscient.

Therefore God cannot err in knowledge.

Therefore, if the Bible is the written Word of God (and it is), then it is without error.

It's the historic position of the church

Could show hundreds of quotes that they held high view of Scripture... here's a sample.

Clement of Rome (AD 30-100)

- Words from God – "Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit" (First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians)
- Writing c. AD95-97 he quotes the gospels Mt. 9:13; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32) and calls them "Scripture" (chap. 2). He appeals to "the Holy Scriptures, which are true, given by the Holy Spirit" (Epistles, chap. 45).

Justin Martyr (AD 100-165)

- Said the gospels were the "Voice of God" (chap. 65). He added, "We must not suppose that the language proceeds from men who were inspired, but from the Divine Word which moves them" (Apology 1.36).

Irenaeus (c. AD 130-202)

- Knew Polycarp, a disciple of John. He referred to the divine authority of the New Testament declaring: "For the Lord of all gave the power of the Gospel to his apostles [who]...handed it down to us in the Scriptures, to be the pillar and ground' of our faith."
- Said the apostles were "above all falsehood" (3.5.1).
- Called the Bible "Scriptures of truth," and we are "most properly assured that the Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they are spoken by the Word of God and His Spirit." (Against Heresies 3.1.1).

Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 150-215)

- Spoke of “the Scriptures... in the Law, in the Prophets, and besides by the blessed Gospel... are valid from their omnipotent authority.” (Stromata)
- Called the Scriptures “the rule of the truth” and said we must cleave to them to “cleave to the truth.” (Stromata)

Ways the Bible is Under Attack

- Saying the **Old Testament** is **filled with myths/legends** (Adam, Eve, Flood, Jonah, Leviathan; e.g., Gungor controversy)
- Saying John didn’t actually say “**I AM**” **statements** but a Johannine Community (e.g., Craig Evans)
- Saying **not all New Testament letters are authentic** (Eph, Col, 2 Thess, 1/2 Tim, Titus, Jam, 1/2 Pet, Jude)
- Saying **not all events in the gospels actually happened** (Licona controversy, Mt. 27:51-53, etc.)
- Saying **was a long period of time** between the Gospels/1st century church and the time NT was written.
- Saying the **canon** formed late.
- Saying the **Bible is a mix of God’s word & man’s word** (e.g., Paul spoke against homosexuality in Rom. 1:224-27 but not God)

Class Schedule

Title: Are There Errors in The Bible? How to Answer “Problem Passages”

- DONE** Understanding biblical inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy
- Jan. 21: Why is a high view of Scripture important to Christianity?
- Jan. 28: Common Bible difficulties with resolutions (Part 1)
- Feb. 4: Common Bible Difficulties with resolutions (Part 2)

If you know somebody who would be blessed by this class, feel free to invite them; visitors welcome at any time!

Class description: Critics argue that the bible is filled with myths, legends and errors. Is there any way to defend a high-view of Scripture in the modern age? Yes! This four-week class will present a defense of the Bible as the true Word of God which cannot err. Dates are Sundays Jan. 14, 21, 28 and Feb. 4 during second service (10:45AM) in the upstairs chapel building room C-205B. Biblical Training Center classes are geared for the average church-goer who is interested in learning more about the Bible, theology and the Christian worldview. Visitors are invited to attend all or individual Sundays of interest.

Where: Sundays second service (10:45AM) in the upstairs chapel building room C-205B