

## **BIBIOLGY – *The Doctrine Of The Bible***

### **I. Introduction**

- A. The word Bible is from the Greek word which means ‘roll or book’.
- B. The word Scripture is used to denote the books of the Old Testament and also other parts of the New Testament.
- C. The phrase ‘Word Of God’ is used in the New Testament of both the Old and New Testaments in written form.
- D. The Bible is unique – It was written over a period of 1,500 years by about 40 different authors, and yet is one book without contradictions in what it says.

### **II. The Meaning and Means of Revelation**

- A. The word revelation means ‘unveiling’
  1. General revelation – all means of revelation apart from Christ and the Bible. This would include God’s revelation through nature (Rom. 1:18-21), through His providential dealings with man (Rom. 8:28), through His preservation of the universe (Col, 1:17), and man’s moral nature (Gen. 1:26, Acts 17:29).
  2. Special revelation – That which has come through Jesus Christ (John 1:18) and the Bible (I John 5:9-12).

### **III. Inspiration**

- A. Inspiration means to fill or to breathe into. The bible is inspired or ‘God-breathed’.
- B. Definition: God’s superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs.
  1. God superintended but did not dictate the material
  2. God used human authors and their own individual style
  3. The product was, in its original manuscripts, without error

### **IV. Views of Inspiration**

- A. Natural Inspiration – There was no supernatural dimension to the writing of scriptures.
- B. Dictation – The writers were completely passive and God dictated to them what was to be recorded.
- C. Partial Inspiration – Views only certain parts of the Bible as inspired.
- D. Conceptual Inspiration – Only the concepts but not the very words were inspired
- E. Neo-orthodox – The Bible is a witness to the word of God.
- F. Inspired Purpose – The Bible has ‘doctrinal integrity’ while at the same time containing factual errors.
- G. Verbal Plenary – This means that every word (verbal) is fully (plenary) inspired.

### **V. The Biblical Testimony**

- A. The Bible claims that all Scripture is God-breathed. 2 Tim. 3:16, *All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;*
- B. Men who wrote the Bible were ‘carried along by the Holy Spirit’. 2 Pet. 1:21, *For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*
- C. The Bible sometimes reflects the styles and expressions of the human authors. (See Rom. 9:1-3)
- D. The Bible claims inerrancy for itself. Matt. 5:18, *For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.*
  1. Jesus based His argument on a present tense in Matt. 22:32.
  2. Paul based his argument on a singular in contrast to a plural in Galatians 3:16.

- E. The Bible uses ordinary figures of speech, but they are used accurately.
- F. The authors sometimes researched their facts before writing.
- G. There are problems in our current text, however problems are different from errors.

#### VI. What Books are in the Bible

- A. The meaning of Canon – The word canon means rule or measuring rod, and in relation to the Bible it refers to the collection of books which passed a test of authenticity and authority.
- B. Tests for Canonicity – It is important to remember that the books of the Bible were authentic when they were written. The church or councils did not make them authentic or part of the canon, they simply recognized them to be so.
  - 1. The test of the authority of the writer. The book had to be written or authorized by an apostle.
  - 2. The content of the book had to give evidence of its unique character.
  - 3. The verdict of the churches was given to the books of the Bible.
- C. The Formation of the Canon
  - 1. The recognition of the canonical books by the church took some time.
  - 2. The Council of Carthage (A.D. 397) was the first to list all 27 books of the New Testament.
  - 3. The twelve books of the Apocrypha were never accepted by the Jews or Christ as being Scripture.

#### VII. The Reliability of Our Present Text

- A. More than 5,000 manuscripts of the New Testament exist today making the New Testament the best attested document in all ancient writings.
- B. Many of the manuscripts are very early, dating from A.D. 135.

#### VIII. Understanding the Bible

- A. Illumination relates to the meaning of the Biblical record.
  - 1. The unsaved cannot experience the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 2:14, *But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.*
  - 2. The believer has been promised illumination of the text. John 16:12, *I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will speak, and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of mine and shall disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine, therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.*
- B. Means of Illumination
  - 1. The Holy Spirit is the teacher
  - 2. The content of His teaching is ‘all truth’
  - 3. The purpose of the Spirit’s illumination is to glorify Christ
  - 4. Carnality in the believer can hinder and nullify this ministry of the Spirit (1 Cor. 3:1-2)

#### IX. Interpretation

- A. To interpret plainly one must understand what each word means in its normal grammatical historical sense.
- B. Plain interpretation does not exclude the use of figures of speech. However behind every figure of speech is a plain meaning.
- C. The context will always shed light on the meaning of a verse.
- D. Recognize the progressive nature of revelation. The Bible was written over a period of about 1,500 years.
- E. The Bible uses phenomenal language. It often describes things as they appear to be rather than in precise scientific terms.

F. Recognize the important divisions of the Bible when interpreting it.

1. Old Testament – New Testament
2. Types of writings – historical, poetic, prophetic
3. Israel – Church

REVELATION-----	CONTENT
INSPIRATION-----	METHOD
ILLUMINATION-----	MEANING
INTERPRETATION-----	INDIVIDUAL UNDERSTANDING

“The Bible is not infallible because *it* says so – but because *He* says so. There is no more reliable witness to the nature of Scripture than the one who died and rose to be our Saviour. According to Jesus, divine revelation is mediated in a written record with the authority of God speaking. What Scripture says, God says (Matt. 5:18; 19:4; John 10:34; Acts 4:25; 28:25; Heb. 10:15). Whether or not we receive the testimony to Scripture as an infallible record of God’s revelation is a commentary on the consistency of our Christian discipleship. It is not difficult to understand a biblical critic doubting the veracity of the Scripture who cares nothing for its divine Saviour, but it is strange to find a believer professing his Lord and then disregarding Christ’s doctrine of inspiration. The authority of Scripture rests upon the datum of the incarnation. As soon as a person comes to faith in the divine Son of God, the question of authority is settled.”

Clark H. Pinnock, *Set Forth Your Case*, Moody Press, 1971