

Series: **A Firm Foundation** – week 3

CDOBC – beginning on 8/28/16

Today's Title: "**A Divine Testimony**"

September 11, 2016 ~ 2 Peter 1:20-21

OBJECTIVE: To help people know the bible is inspired by God and worthy of our complete and total trust and confidence.

Opening Prayer

I've always wanted to experience what it's like to parachute out of a plane and glide down to earth.

A question many will ask is, "*Why would you jump out of a perfectly good airplane with a parachute on?*"

Well...meet Luke Aikens. On Saturday July 30, 2016, he set a record by jumping out of an airplane at 25,000 feet without a parachute - and walking away from it!

Video: No-Parachute jump - Luke Aikens - (2:23)

Downloaded video from YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfU3u7KaysY>

Some say believing the bible is an even bigger leap of faith. They can't understand how anyone could ever trust what the Bible says about life - or about spiritual things.

Last Sunday we talked about the Apostle's eyewitness account of Jesus' life and ministry.

- We talked about how the Bible is true - and completely trustworthy in everything it teaches.
- We talked about how the 66 books of the bible were chosen and the criteria used to make those choices.

- We talked about the false notions of how the bible has been translated...and then we talked about the truth behind Bible translation.

Today we're going to talk about the ultimate author of the Bible - and how we can have unshakable trust and confidence that the Bible is God's inspired Word.

Turn in your bible / tap on your device to **2 Peter 1:20-21**.

I'll start with **vs. 19** for context.

“And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, **20** knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. **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 Bible testifies to its own integrity and power.

We believe and teach the Bible is inspired by God and His Word is alive and active - not dormant or stale truth.

What do you believe? *“My church believes _____”*

doesn't matter - what do **you** believe? (Your view of the bible)

This is the most important question before you today.

In this message I hope to explain these verses and help you understand the doctrine of biblical inspiration.

I want you to understand what the Bible says about its own origin.

But the most important question this morning is: What do you believe about the Bible?

This is the most important question because your answer will determine if this morning is simply a bunch of information you will file away in your brain...or, if you will understand the implications the doctrine of Biblical inspiration has in your daily life.

The source of Scripture was not people. vs. 20

There is so much confusion and falsehood floating around in modern thinking about the Bible, but our verses today tell us 2 things:

- 1) How the Bible was *not* written
- 2) How the Bible *was* written

As Peter wrote in vs. 16 - the human writers did not make up clever stories and myths when they wrote about Jesus. They were eyewitnesses to His life, ministry, His death and resurrected life.

Here in vs. 20 he gives a blanket statement:

“...knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.”

There's a priority here - Peter begins by saying: *'First of all'* - *'Begin with this'* (“...knowing this first of all”). The very first thing for you to understand about the Bible is the source of Scripture was not people. The English word “interpretation” may cause some confusion in this verse because in English it typically relates to the

meaning of something - how something is understood or interpreted.

But, the Greek words indicate *origin*, not meaning. So Peter is telling us the Scriptures did not originate with human beings.

He already told us the eyewitness accounts of Jesus were not made-up myths, and now he tells us the Scriptures were not written from the creative resources of human beings.

The obvious question is: *If the Bible does not originate from the creative resources of people, where does it originate from?*

The source of Scripture was the Holy Spirit. vs. 21

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 first ½ of this verse repeats what was stated in vs. 20, and the second ½ reveals how God was the ultimate author of Scripture even though He employed human writers.

First, he repeats the point of vs. 20 by saying:

“For no prophecy was ever **produced** by the will of man...”

Second, he reveals to us how God interacted with the human writers of Scripture.

“...but men spoke from God as they were **carried along** by the Holy Spirit.”

“but” is a change of direction word. It indicates something on the contrary...something just the opposite concerning the idea/belief that prophecy/Scripture finds its source in the will of man. It takes the negative in the 1st half of vs. 21 and introduces the positive statement of how Scripture was sourced.

“men spoke from God” - The speakers / writers used their own words, but they said what God wanted them to say. In the Old Testament alone, the writers refer to their writings as the words of God over 3,800 times (*MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 1924). What they wrote was not their own personal thoughts or personal beliefs, but the thoughts and truth of God.

The source of Scripture was the Holy Spirit of God. Next, Peter says “as they were **carried along** by the Holy Spirit.”

“carried along” is translated from a Greek word which was used to describe the wind filling the sails of a ship. It’s used 2x in this verse -

“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.”

“produced” and “carried along” is the same root word in Greek.

Re-phrase: For no prophecy was ever *carried along* by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were *carried along* by the Holy Spirit.

The source and content of Scripture was not in what the human writers thought up and wanted to write - it wasn't their personal opinions and thoughts written down for all of us to read, but they spoke from God - and through His Spirit He directed and guided them so what they wrote was what He wanted written.

They were not automatons robotically writing down in dictation form what they heard. God directed and guided them so their intellect, vocabulary, writing style and personality was utilized.

Another crucial verse which teaches and supports the divine inspiration of Scripture is:

2 Timothy 3:16

“All Scripture is breathed out (“inspired” NASB) by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...”

When Paul wrote Timothy, he wanted to encourage him to stay strong and faithful to the Scriptures.

Las Vegas is a city where you can see and do all kinds of things - some good...many not so good!

One of the things I do enjoy about Las Vegas is the amazing construction and building that takes place.

Over the past few decades, part of the process of building new hotels, casinos or convention space includes the demolition of older buildings in order to make land available for the new developments.

This past August 18th, the famed Riviera Hotel and Casino met its demolition fate.

It's amazing how they don't just blow up the place - but they engineer the demolition so the building implodes and crumbles to pieces in the very footprint it has stood for many years. All they have to do is place explosive charges in strategic places throughout the building and in the foundation, and when the charges are set-off the building is weakened to the point it can't remain standing - and it crumbles onto itself.

This is what the enemy tries to do with the Church.

Satan would love to destroy the Church - and specifically, he would love to destroy those who follow Christ.

One of the ways he started doing this was in the Garden of Eden where in the form of a serpent, he said to Eve:

"Did God actually say..." - **Genesis 3:1**

Casting doubt on God's Word is one of his oldest - and most effective attacks.

Just like the buildings in Vegas - if you want to demolish the Church or someone's faith in Christ - just weaken their belief and confidence in the Bible in some key areas - and in a very short time their faith will implode.

This is why a few weeks ago I mentioned 2 things to look for in a church: **1) Their view of Scripture and 2) Their view of Christ.**

This is not a static or theoretical exchange of doctrinal truths which have no bearing on our daily life.

The inspiration of Scripture is a huge issue in our life today! If you want to live your Christian faith in this culture, you better understand why the Bible is God's inspired, authoritative and inerrant Word!

The idea of objective truth is being overwhelmed and set aside by the post-modern belief of Relativism (A belief in 1 absolute truth: There are no absolute truths!) - which is defined as: *The doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute.* (Oxford English Dictionary)

Therefore, in our culture, the Bible is simply another religious book which is true for some people - but not true for others.

But the Book of Mormon and the Bible can't both be true.

The Koran and the Bible can't both be true.

The Jehovah Witness' translation of the Bible and the Bible can't both be true.

Hindu belief and the Bible can't both be true.

Truth is not relative or culturally specific. Jesus said truth is why He took on flesh.

John 18:37

“For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world -- to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to My voice.”

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth...”

You better have a strong belief and confidence in the Bible - because if you don't, you will end up compromising your faith and you will implode.

2 Timothy 3:16

“All Scripture is breathed out by God...”

All of Scripture - not just parts of it - are “breathed out” - inspired. As God breathed into Adam the breath of life - so He breathes His very life into the Scriptures.

Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is living and active...” (Not a dormant or stale collection of words!)

Some want to set aside and pick-and-choose which parts of the Bible they think is inspired.

- They take the supernatural works of God out. *(It was written by pre-scientific, superstitious men)*
- They take the passages out which speak of different roles for men and women. *(Poor Paul...he was a victim of his culture's chauvinistic and misogynistic views)*

- They take the passages out which speak of sex or other moral and ethical standards. (*outdated - we are more sophisticated & enlightened*)

But the Word is clear, the extent of the Bible's inspiration extends to "All Scripture". But some say,

"Paul was only referring to the O.T. - the N.T. wasn't written yet."

But parts of the N.T. was written when Paul wrote

1 Timothy. We read in:

1 Timothy 5:18

For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages." (Deut. 25:4; Luke 10:7)

Luke wrote his gospel about 5-10 years before Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy.

(see: <https://carm.org/when-were-gospels-written-and-by-whom> and <https://bible.org/seriespage/15-1-timothy-introduction-argument-outline> for dating of Luke and 1 Timothy)

Also, Peter writes in **2 Peter 3:15-16**,

"Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures."

There is no doubt Paul - and Peter both believed the N.T. writings of the other Apostles were Scripture.

So, when Paul, being "carried along" by the Holy Spirit wrote "All Scripture", he was referring not only to the O.T. but also to the N.T. which had been partially written by then.

Back to **2 Peter 1:21** - it certainly doesn't answer every question you might have - but Peter tells us how God worked in and through the human writers - His Spirit "carried along" the writers.

The Holy Spirit was their power - their energy - their source of content - and He moved them where He wanted to move them.

This same Greek word is used by Luke in **Acts 27:15,17**. In that passage, Paul was a prisoner and they were sailing to Rome. The ship encountered a strong storm, and Luke writes:

"And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along."

The Greek term we have in **2 Peter 1:21** is translated here with the words: "driven along".

So we could say the human writers of Scripture were "driven along" by the Holy Spirit so they spoke / wrote down the words of God.

Authority of the Bible - since God wrote it and He is sovereign over all - it has authority over us.

Inerrancy: A deduction from: **1)** the nature and perfections of God and **2)** The inspiration of the Bible

Since God / the Holy Spirit directed and guided the human writers to "speak from God" - and since we know God is perfect - God does not change - God is all-

knowing - God is all-powerful - we can conclude the original writings of the writers were without error - they were inerrant.

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."

Apply it...

Trust and believe what the Bible says about you and Jesus.

We are: the jewel of creation, Made in the image of God, Loved by God...but we are also sinners in need of a Savior, lost in our sin.

Jesus is: God / the only Savior who can forgive and atone for our sins / offers us His life and a divine purpose for our life.

Learn & Apply the Bible to your daily life - submit to the Bible's truth.

Commit your life to helping people know & understand the Bible:

Ministry

Bible translation work

Close in prayer