

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY GENERAL INFORMATION and BIBLIOLOGY DOCTRINE

We shall not concern ourselves in this course with the distinctions usually made between various kinds of theology nor the history of the usage of the term theology. Any comprehensive work on the subject of systematic theology will furnish this data for ready reference without burdening the mind with much that is just as readily forgotten. We might merely name some of the intricate distinctions usually made just to illustrate:

There is that of natural and revealed, sometimes called natural and supernatural.

There is the distinction between True and False Theology; Theoretical and Practical; Dogmatic and Moral; Thetic and Antithetic; Didactic and Polemic; Critical and Electic; Subjective and Objective; Scholastic and Positive. This is enough for our purpose.

The study of Christian Doctrine is the foundation of all Bible study. It forms a firm bedrock for all other Bible studies or subjects. It should straighten our loose thinking, strengthen our faith, increase our love of the Word of God, and formulate into one coherent system all of our beliefs so that the Word of God will reveal itself as One Grand Harmony.

Many have derided the study of Doctrine as unnecessary, and particularly deadening to religious life; when in truth the very opposite is true. A tree is known by its fruit. A good tree like the systematic study of the Word of God must only bring forth good fruit. Any constant handling of the Word of God; any deep study in the Word of life must of necessity strengthen, and nourish that new life of God in the soul. Peter says that it is

"the sincere milk of the Word" that causes the growth in our spiritual life. By way of illustration, one may note within any given congregation, the ratio of real meaty Bible exposition, is the index of spirituality in the hearers. I have heard several times the boast by a preacher, "I do not have any doctrine in my sermons." How any man can preach the Word of God and not include doctrine is a mystery. If by doctrine he means great theological definitions and vagaries I could give a hearty Amen, but we shall see by our definition of what we sincerely believe true Systematic Theology to include, a man cannot preach the Word of God and not include doctrine.

Most opposition to the study of Doctrine may be traced to a desire to get away from the restrictions it would place upon unbridled thinking and license of speculation. As far as doctrine formulating a creed, every man must have a creed. It may be negative or positive. It may be a creed denying the possession of a creed, but nevertheless it is a creed.

General Introduction:

If it is the soul's belief, whether positive or negative, then it is the man's creed. It is the regulator of his life. Someone has aptly said, "A creed is like a backbone, a man doesn't need to wear his backbone in front of him, but he must have one, and that a correct one." It holds the figure erect and gives shape to the body. Such is the underlying purpose of the study of Doctrine.

I. THE DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Christian Doctrine is the aggregation of all that the Bible has to say upon anyone subject.

II Peter 1:20,21 (Rotherham Translation) "Of this first taking note, that no prophecy of Scripture becometh self solving; for not by will of man was prophecy brought in at any time. But as by the Holy Spirit they were borne along spake men by God."

(John Nelson Darby's Translation) "Knowing this first (first principle) that the scope of no prophecy of Scripture is had from its own particular interpretation, for prophecy was not even uttered by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke under the power of the Holy spirit."

This is the principle of truth in the Word of God that nowhere in any one place does the Holy Spirit give a complete outline of any particular truth. But since there is only one Author of the Bible though many writers, He could give to whomsoever He willed a little more of the particular doctrine until through the centuries the teaching is complete.

So throughout the whole Bible, many terms quite removed from each other, various writers, in various times, under different circumstances, by varying means, the Holy Spirit moved or carried Holy men of God along to add here and there different facets to the diamond of some truth until the finished Doctrine emerges. Here is the need for the study of Doctrine. Gathering from all the Scriptures all that is taught on any one subject, systematizing them into one coherent Doctrine. THAT IS SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

II. SOME DISTINCTIONS.

There must be kept in mind the difference between the study of Doctrine and experience.

1. MORALITY IS A LAW, CHRISTIANITY IS A LIFE.

Morality is conforming to an abstract law of right, while Christianity is a relationship in communion with God. We judge a man's theology by his creed, but his Christianity by his life. Theology is of the head, Christianity is of the heart. The prime danger in the study of theology as in all Bible study is the advancement of the head while the heart stands still. The words of Jesus still resound, "If ye know those things, happy are ye if ye do them. And except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5:20). They had morality, human righteousness but no real relationship with God. The Scribes and

Pharisees knew the Law of God frontwards and backwards, the latter more than the former, but they didn't know the God of the Law.

2. THEOLOGY IS A CREED, CHRISTIANITY IS A LIFE.

A man may be a theologian and yet not be a Christian. He may know something about God and yet not know God. Many a man who knew nothing of the five points of Calvin, or the thirty articles may yet be in Heaven, while another well-versed in the Westminster Catechism and well schooled in Theology may find himself in Hell damned in spite of his theology.

Sam Jones well said, "I'd rather know my a.b.c.'s in Heaven than Greek and Hebrew in Hell."

3. WORSHIP IS AN ART, CHRISTIANITY IS A LIFE.

Worship is but the outward expression of the God-given instinct to reverence the Supreme Being. A pagan worships, but according to God's Word, "the things that the heathen sacrifice they sacrifice not unto God but unto demons." A man may worship "He knows not whom," he may erect "an altar to the unknown God." But Paul says, "Whom ye therefore ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." The Christian worship is "in the Spirit, for The Father seeketh such to worship Him" for his spirit has been made alive by God's Holy Spirit and now has a living worshipping communion.

III. THERE ARE TWO TRUE SOURCES OF DOCTRINE.

1. NATURE. Which is very limited. In the story of Christian Evidence we shall see that it only shows forth, "His eternal power and Godhead" as Paul says in Rom. 1:20; Ps. 19. The inadequacy of Nature as a source of Doctrine may be seen from Acts 17:23.

2. THE SCRIPTURES. Doctrine must from the very necessity of the case be a subject of Divine revelation. "Man by searching cannot find out God," God must reveal Himself

to man. Man lacks the proper faculties and the ones he has by nature are fallen or depraved and deformed to give a contorted distorted picture of God. God must by bearing along Holy men of God by His Holy Spirit give to us through the Scriptures a revelation of Himself,"

IV. THERE ARE FOUR MISTAKEN SOURCES OF DOCTRINE.

1. **TRADITIONALISM.** Traditionalism is the accumulation of the ages of certain beliefs of the great men and institutions, until they partake of an aroma of infallibility on a par with the Scriptures and in certain pet beliefs superior to, and superceding the Scriptures. Many times they are contradictory to the Scriptures. One of the classical examples is to be found in the Gospels when Jesus came to His own people and accused them of making void the Word of God by their traditions, as included in their Targums, Talmud, and Kabalistic writings. See Matt. 15:2-9. Note verse 9 carefully.

This same Traditionalism setting aside the Word of God as a source of Doctrine may be brought up to date by considering the Catholic Theology by the so-called infallibility of the Pope and the College of Cardinals when they are speaking, "ox cathedra" (that is, in their office). How many times is the very plain teachings of Scripture set at nought and a diametrically opposing doctrine taught by the substitution of their traditions.

2. **RATIONALISM.** This is the source of doctrine of modernism and higher criticism. It would subject all of the teachings of the Bible to the criterion of human reason, and reject anything in the Bible that is contrary to their own slant of reasoning. How dangerous that can be is easily seen when we consider how biased toward evil the natural unconverted man is, how darkened his intellect is. Even in the converted man, there is a dangerous tendency to twist the Scriptures to fit man's opinions, how much more is this true of the unconverted.

Rationalism would make man a critic of the Bible rather than the Bible the critic of man as God declares that it is (Heb. 4: 12).

3. CONFSSIONALISM. This is the creeds of the various denominations. Many times these are appealed to as sources of doctrine to prove various points of dispute. John Calvin, for an illustration, is more quoted to prove some extreme Calvinistic points than is the Bible. But it seems to be forgotten by many that whatever truth Calvin taught, whatever authority he might have had was derived from the Word of God. He had no authority of his own.

Many set more store by the great confessions of the church such as the Westminster Confession, Augsburg or Heidelberg Confessions, etc., than by the Scriptures themselves. They say, "This is the teaching of our church as determined by that particular Synod or group meeting together to formulate a "confession of faith," and woe be to the man or woman who would dare to differ with them on any point of interpretation of the Word of God by the claiming of any independence of thought. The only point of truth in that stand is to be found in the general tenor of interpretation of the church throughout the church dispensation. Yet how many times has there been error taught for centuries, only to be discovered and exposed by some daring "protestant" who many times paid for it by excommunication and sometimes by death.

Remember this truth, the confessions of faith are themselves derived (if they are worth anything at all) from the Scriptures, and whatever authority they may have is according to how true to the Scriptures they are, and is derived from the Scriptures; but they themselves have no independent authority.

4. MYSTICISM. That is, Christian experience may and does witness to the truthfulness of the Scriptures, but isn't within itself either a source of doctrine or authority independent of the Scriptures. How many there are who would build a doctrine upon their experiences, and then go to the Scriptures to find something to prove it. And many times they must wrest the Scriptures to prove their experience. This is true many times of many Doctrines about the Holy Spirit, and Prophecy.

If your experience doesn't jive with the Bible, don't try to change the Bible to fit your

experience, You change your experience to fit the Bible. Do not interpret Doctrine by your experience, but interpret your experience to fit the Bible.

One of the classical illustrations of Mysticism as a mistaken source of Doctrine is to be found in some Quaker sects who follow what they call "the inner light" as a source of doctrine.

I would like to give you Bacon's beautiful illustration applied to the difference between the Catholic Traditionalism, the Rationalists human reasoning and Christian's direct study of the Word. "The Romanists are like the pismires (ant). They only lay up and use their own store. The rationalists are like the spiders; they spin all out of their own bodies. But give me," he adds, "the bee (as the humble Christian who studies the Bible for himself) who hath a middle faculty, gathering from abroad, but digesting that which is gathered by his own virtue." Such is the principle John announces I John 2:20,27 - "Ye have an unction (anointing) from the Holy One and ye know all things....but the anointing which ye have received of His abideth (dwelleth) in you and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things."

The Christian has no external officiating, infallible oracle of human source, but is himself a king and priest unto God, with direct access to the Word of God for himself with the same Infallible teacher, the Holy Spirit, abiding within as God's particular anointing to teach you all things. LEAN HEAVILY UPON HIM, "HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH."

PART ONE - BIBLIOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The Doctrine of Bibliology is the Doctrine of the Bible. The primary object in this Doctrine is the discussion of the question, "Why we believe the Bible to be the Divine Revelation of God to man." This we shall do from a primary discussion of the internal evidences but we shall also refer to the external evidences of its inspiration. We shall not vary much overlap the Christian evidences standpoint from an apologetical

viewpoint.

We shall consider why we believe this book to be the very Word of God after the last word was written almost 2000 years ago, and yet it still presents itself to us as the "Word of God." We shall see that our foremost consideration shall be the genuineness and authenticity of its various Books. "Why are some Books included as inspired of God and others are excluded?" Again, "Why was the canon of sacred Scriptures closed with the death of the Apostles?" "Why Isn't Scripture still being given?"

There is a wealth of critical material, which we shall not have opportunity to use, as it belongs to the province of another course than this one. There is the critical analysis of the text to determine its relative purity, including the various readings of the different manuscripts (we shall only illustrate from these) and then there is the subject, which should be a course within itself, namely, "How did we get our English Bible?" This would study the history of the translations of the Bible through the ages.

Within this introduction we would like to include as a preliminary dissertation some definitions. Two of these we shall deal with in separate chapters.

1. REVELATION. Revelation is the act of God whereby He communicated to man new truth, which man unaided could not discover for himself.

2. INSPIRATION. Inspiration is that Divine Influence which renders a speaker or writer infallible (unable to err) in the communication of truth. We shall deal with this under the same infallible purity, with which it was revealed. No matter how good the prophet gets it, if it is tainted with his infirmity, imperfections of mental activity, his own depravity, and biased opinions, then it would be but an imperfect revelation when we receive it, and wrong in many places. It could then be worthless or imperfect at best. Not only must it be by divine revelation, God revealing it, but He must also keep or "bear along by the Holy Spirit" to render the revelation in transmission as perfect as He gave it originally.

3. ILLUMINATION. Illumination is the Divine quickening of the human mind to

understand the revealed truth. Such a Divine God-given Revelation as we have been referring to, given or communicated by Divine Inspiration infallibly, must perforce be supernatural and the need arises for divine help to understand its deeper truths, this the Holy Spirit does by Divinely illuminating the mind to grasp God's divine Revelation.

REVELATION is the discovery by God of Himself to man,

INSPIRATION is the communication of that discovery infallibly to man, primarily in writing.

ILLUMINATION is the understanding of that discovery by Divine enablement.

The first two of these ceased with the completion of the Divine Canon of Sacred Scriptures except as God may give an Immediate revelation by dream or vision, but there is no need for infallibility or inspiration in the giving of that to others as it only has personal import. We do not believe that God is giving more Scripture today nor gifting men and women with inspiration or infallibility. Strictly speaking we should not call songs or poems, etc., inspired (gifted with infallibility). They may be so blessed of God as to be used of Him to bless His saints.

But as long as we are in this imperfect state we shall need the illumination of the Holy Spirit to rightly understand God's Words Ours should be a constant dependence upon the Spirit of Truth to lead us into all truth.

The Study of the doctrine of Bibliology is placed first, even before the Doctrine of Theology or the Doctrine of God because most of what we can know of God Himself is what He has been pleased to reveal in His Word. Therefore, we must study the doctrine of the Word first, to establish its authority and Divine origin, so that it may give its voice to every other doctrine without question.

I. A Consideration of REVELATION.

"Revelation is a discovery by God to Himself, or of His will to man over and above what He has made known by the light of nature or reason.

A. THE TWO METHODS OF GIVING A DIVINE REVELATION.

1. An immediate revelation to each person. There are a number of illustrations of such. In Heb.

1:1, "Sundry times in divers manners." Rotherham-- "In many parts and in many ways God spoke to the fathers by the prophets."

There was the usage of signs, portents, and symbols. There were dreams and visions. He spoke face to face with others. He used angels to carry His message. There was "Urim and Thummin" mentioned seven times in the Old Testament as a means of communicating the will of God. And mentioned a number of times as being "the Ephod" for the same purpose. These were the seine. It was the golden Ephod with the 12 manner of precious stones worn as a breastplate by the High Priest of Israel. There is much mystery as to how this Ephod determined the message (Num. 27:21; I Sam. 14:3, 18; 19:2; 3:2,4,9,11,12; 28:6; Jud. 20:28; II Sam. 5:23). Many believed that the changing color of the stones gave the message. But maybe the message was given to the High Priest by a direct revelation of God because He wore the breastplate as a badge of his office as Ex. 28:30 would show. There was also the casting of the lot to obtain a direct revelation as the choosing of Matthias in Acts.

But the requiring of a direct revelation to every person carries these objections as a permanent method.

a) It would require a continuous repetition to every person and for each occasion.

b) Because of our poor memories it would have to be repeated often for refreshing our memories or it would fade away.

c) Greatest of all, it would open the way for all manner of imposture and contradictions. Because of the shortness of human memory, a revelation given yesterday or last year

would be forgotten in part, and changed by the coloring of events and lapses of memory even on the part of the most honest minded, where there would be no intent to deceive.

But on the part of the willfully dishonest we see in the cults where a direct revelation is claimed contradictory to each other and to revealed truth, Human nature being what it is, outright fraud could be easily pawned off as a revelation from God, if there was no sure infallible external standard or rule by which to test it. I personally am leary of any man or woman purporting to have a vision or new revelation or new light.

God only used this direct communication as individual cases warranted, and then never contrary to His written revelation; and then to the most part where there was no written revelation as yet. If God has revealed His will in His Word why the need of some special dream or vision or angelical visitation? The Holy Spirit can quicken the living Word of God to each heart as it individually needs it. He thus serves two purposes, not only revealing the mind of God to us, but feeding our souls on heavenly manna at the same time.

2. The second method of giving a Divine Revelation is by giving a Divine Revelation once given and thoroughly accredited. That is fixed in literature and attested. Thus it is in permanent form for analysis, examination, proving and attesting. Thus instead of every man being a law unto himself, there is but one standard for all, unchanging to give its same voice today, tomorrow, and forever. It is this attesting of this written revelation that forms the basis for Bibliology. That the Bible claims to be that revelation there is no doubt as we shall shortly see, the only thing remaining is to test those claims. There are a number of methods of accrediting a written revelation, and innumerable methods of detecting a fraud. It is so much more permanent than an immediate revelation. Firmly fixed as coming from God, then the written revelation can form a fixed rule or standard to judge faith, practice, and doctrine. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECT IN THE WORLD, DEMANDS A PERMANENT UNCHANGING REVELATION. That this is so even those denying its inspiration attest by quoting it for authority as much as they can even though denying the most important parts of it.

B. SOME REASONS FOR BELIEVING IN A SPECIAL DIVINE REVELATION.

1. IT IS POSSIBLE. Certainly a God as powerful as shown in nature, a God of infinite wisdom as displayed by the almost infinite detail displayed in the designs in nature, a God who governs this universe with Intelligence, could make known unto other beings of Intelligence, creatures of His own fashioning, His own will for them. As the Scriptures themselves say, "He who made the intellect, shall He not know?" Here are those who stumble over the spirituality of God as being able to communicate with man. They would deny to the Creator of all the same ability they themselves display when they communicate with one another.

There is nothing in the way of the possibility of God's revealing Himself and His will to man.

2. IT IS PROBABLE. It is more than passing strange how universally man expects God or some gods of some kind to communicate with himself. All the false religions give one voice in claiming some type of revelation from their gods or God. GIVEN THE ONLY POSSIBLE EXPLANATION OF THE VERY FACTS OF THE CASE, that man is only a creature of God's fashioning and you have the very probability of a Divine revelation having been given. In fact if it could be proven the Bible was not such a revelation, the mind would naturally hunt a field for another one somewhere. The goodness and benevolence of the God of nature would prompt Him to communicate with and unto man.

CAN YOU CONCEIVE OF AN EARTHLY KING UNDERTAKING TO RULE AN EARTHLY COUNTRY WITHOUT PRESCRIBING LAWS SO THAT HIS SUBJECTS COULD KNOW HIS WILL FOR THEM? If such a thing is inconceivable in earthly things, how absurd to think of the King of Heaven, the Ruler of all not giving a code of laws or principles to govern the works.

3. IT IS CREDIBLE. With the thought of a Divine revelation as possible and probably, it

is natural to believe such a revelation was given. It is not only improbable and inconceivable but unbelievable to think of God leaving His vast moral universe to drift without law and intelligent direction. How remarkable and unbelievable it is to imagine that there would be no revelation.

L. IT IS NECESSARY.

a. The imperfect light of nature necessitates a further revelation of God to His creatures, both of His character and will governing the creatures of His fashioning. There is no revelation in nature of His trinity, of atonement, of man's moral obligations, his responsibility to God, the regulations of his worship of God, or of his life after death. Nature has no answer to the question of maladjustments in nature nor the outcome of it all. The fall is evidenced everywhere but not the love of God. THERE IS TOO MUCH LEFT UNANSWERED WITHOUT A DIVINE REVELATION. He who takes only nature as his Bible will never find the "Way of Life," Nature but reveals death.

b. There are the unfulfilled longings innate in the human soul. It cries out for a knowable God close at hand. There is the feeling of want for a God Who loves and cares and will guard and carry the soul over the chasm of death into an eternal heaven. The soul cries out for immortality as evidenced by every religion on earth. BUT ONLY THE BIBLE CAN TELL US WHAT TO EXPECT.

c. There is man's deep sense of sin and ill desert, which cries out for explanation and expiation. Every religion has some method of expiating its gods, trying by man to get right with God, and he feels out for the way back to Him, but only wanders into grotesque perversions, rather than the truth. Man needs for God Himself to tell him what He expects of man. He must show him the way back to holiness, peace of mind and heart, and harmony with God.

d. Man needs final authority, a final court of appeal to settle every question of life and conduct, and divine requirements. Only God Himself could so give that court of appeal in a written revelation.

5. THERE IS A BOOK THAT FULFILLS ALL THE CLAIMS OF REASON FOR SUCH A REVELATION. It itself claims to be that revelation and stands up to every test proving to be God's own revelation to man. THAT BOOK IS THE BIBLE WITH ITS 66 BOOKS, forming the complete sacred Canon of Scripture.

C. GOD HAS SET UP TWO PROOFS OF HIS REVELATION. (That is, it is sent from Him.)

Only God has dared to base the acceptance of His Divine revelation upon those two solid foundations--Miracles and Fulfilled Prophecy. There may be quacks who perform acts of jugglery to imitate and claim supernatural powers, but their artifices are exposed by superior knowledge. There may be quacks who purport to foretell the future for money, or notoriety, but their prophecies are ambiguous and given enough time and minuteness, and they are proven to be only finite guessers. IT IS RECOGNIZED BY ANY CLEAR THINKERS THAT ONLY GOD CAN EITHER FORETELL THE FUTURE OR CHANGE THE COURSE OF NATURE. Both are supernatural. MIRACLES ARE AN ATTESTATION OF SHOWING DIVINE POWER. PROPHECY IS AN ATTESTATION SHOWING DIVINE INTELLIGENCE AND FOREKNOWLEDGE. Both are miraculous as being above the human ability. One displays God's omnipotence, the other His omniscience. The former above human strength, the latter above human wisdom. Man has tried every way conceivable to explain away both miracles and prophecy in the Bible, for they know to concede them would be to establish the supernaturalness of the Word.

I. ATTESTED MIRACLES PROVE THE DIVINE SOURCE OF THE WORD OF GOD.

Man has had a downright repugnance to accepting miracles. This repugnance seems to arise out of a desire to do away with the Divine Authorship of the Bible To admit the miraculous is to admit the finger of God in its inspiration. On the one hand has arisen the infidelity which merely denies the miraculous without explanation. Hume is the classical example of sophistry without argument, He said, "A miracle supported by ~ human testimony is more properly a subject of derision than of argument... A miracle is

a violation (sic) of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined...A miracle, therefore, however attested, can never be rendered credible, even in the lowest degree."

a. How definition of a miracle is wrong --- " A violation of the laws of nature." The laws of nature are but the method by which God is working, expressions of His will. A miracle would be but a different expression of His will without any violence done to nature.

b. This repudiates all historical and scientific data, which we ourselves have not experienced but believe on the basis of evidence and witnesses. Yet all the characters of history are believed to have existed on the basis of credible witnesses. So with the vast array of medical and scientific data, one cannot in a lifetime himself perform all the intricate experiments necessary to any scientific investigation, but he is not afraid to accept another's works.

Then, on the other hand, there are the rationalists and modernists who wish to keep enough of the Bible to fill the pulpit and bury folks but wish to leave out the supernatural. They try to explain away the miracles.

a. One method is, "by much telling and over distances of time, common happenings have grown into the miraculous."

b. Again, "Christ's miracles were not miracles at all but great medical skill (where did He get that kind of skill? Our modern doctors would like to learn it.) and sometimes the results of accident or good fortune. Christ only knew more of the laws of nature--like going to a hottentot with modern science.

c. Another explanation (?), "The disciples imagined a miraculous Christ and clothed Him with the glory of their imagination.'" (Note the picture of the defeated disciples.)

First, as to the impossibility of a miracle. It is strange that man should arrogate unto himself such omniscience as to say what God could never do. The One Who made the laws of nature could do anything with them. I raise my hand and do not "violate the laws of nature;" personality merely supercedes that law with another law of life. Is it impossible for God to do the same?

Let us illustrate: A mechanic devises an intricate machine. He completes it as perfect as human ingenuity permits. Nothing can be added; it fulfills perfectly, uniformly his will. The maker of it wouldn't think of interfering with it since no improvement can be made, since it is endangered by the machine, and simply stopping or changing it for a few minutes would save the life. WHAT WOULD YOU THINK OF THE INVENTOR IF HIS ADMIRATION OF MACHINE SO OVERPOWER~ HIM THAT HE REFUSED TO CHANGE IT EVEN FOR A MINUTE TO SAVE A LIFE? But what of God, Who is so accused by the so-called lovers of nature? Millions of souls needing His message and help, yet they say God wouldn't alter a hairsbreadth the laws of nature. Who is God, nature or nature's God? The God Who knows the end from the beginning foresaw the very miracles or changes He would someday make.

We could go into a deep study here of the credibility of the witnesses, but that belongs to the province of Christian evidences. ONLY TO SAY, if a man were to come bearing a message he claimed was from God, the very natural thing we would expect is supernatural verification. Look at the time when Jesus came. Israel had wandered far from God; God would send His Son. "Surely they will reverence Him." But how was man to know it was the Messiah? BY THE TWO CREDENTIALS: MIRACLES AND PROPHECY. Like Samuel foretelling the destruction of Eli's two sons; when fulfilled, they said, "The Lord is with him." So Nicodemus of the Christ, "We know Thou art a teacher sent from God, for no man can do these miracles unless God he with him." The enemies of Christ attested His works, "When Messias comes, will He do more miracles than this Man?" "That a notable miracle has been done we cannot deny." Talmud acknowledges them but ascribes them to Beelzebub.

Note again how Jesus was willing to rely wholly upon the miracles--John 5:36; also see Jn. 10:25,26,37,38.

Note when the two disciples of John came to Jesus to ask if He were the one who should come or were they to look for another, the answer was His works--Luke 7:22.

Note His woes upon Chroazin, Bethsaida, etc. for not accepting His works-- Matt. 11:21,22.

Paul bases our faith and all hope, too, upon the veracity of the miracle of Christ's resurrection--I Cor. 15:12-20. Cf. in relation to this, Rom. 1:4.

Illustration--Like the time Moses was asked of God to deliver Israel; he was afraid they wouldn't accept him as God's messenger. God gave him three miraculous signs.

Let us close with a definition of a miracle; what would you say a miracle was?

A miracle is an event or effect contrary to the established constitution or order of things; a deviation from the known laws of nature, and effect above human or natural power, mostly performed as an attestation or some revealed message from God.

A.T. Pierson--"A miracle is both a sign and a wonder. It must have both elements in it--if just one, it is not a miracle. Sunshine is a wonder but not a sign. The rainbow is a sign hut not a wonder.

We who are saved know the miraculous attestation of God to the truthfulness of His Word by its life giving power in our lives when we accepted its promises in Christ.

II. FULFILLED PROPHECY ATTESTS THE MESSENGER AS BEING SENT FROM GOD.

Only God has dared to send a messenger with a prophecy of the future and rested His case upon its fulfillment, No other religion has dared it. Man must recognize that only God can foretell the future with accuracy. Note how strong the argument is when higher critics try to break its force by asserting Daniel was written after the prophesied things took place. For to admit a prior authorship was to accept inspiration, and that they would not do. Even Bolingbroke found it a hard pill to swallow. He couldn't break the force of the exact description of Isa. ~3 in relationship to Christ's death. So he was forced to say that Jesus brought on His own crucifixion by a series of preconcerted measures, merely to give the disciples who came after Him the triumph of the appeal to prophecy.

We shall not take up here the fulfilled prophecies in Babylon, Tyre, Jerusalem, and in Jesus; for we do so in Christian evidences. We are only here referring to these seals. Here certainly as in few other ways its equal, the Bible proves its Divine origin, as it abounds in minute prophecies centuries before their fulfillment. Only God could do that. We shall just refer to the fact that God rests His case upon fulfilled prophecy. Note the first incident in Deut. 18:20-22.

Note In Isa. 41.1:21-24; 46:9,10 (and a number of places where he taunts the idols for their ignorance of future things as well as helplessness.)

Note Jer. 28:9.

So Jesus in Jn. 5:37-39 gives one of the witnesses of His being sent from the Father-- the testimony of Scripture which told beforehand of His coming. And He said to His disciples, "I have told you beforehand so that when it is come to pass ye might believe." So has God said all the way through the Bible. Here is one of the beautiful reasons for the study of prophecy. There is born in the heart a greater appreciation of the Bible as the very Word of God. When one reads the Word of prophecy concerning Israel from beginning to now, and then sees the minute fulfillment of each jot and tittle, the heart thrills to the accuracy of the Word and must acknowledge, "It must be the very Word of God."

II. A Consideration of the CANONICITY. (Part Two)

A. DEFINITIONS

Canon - from the Greek kanon (reed or measuring rod). So the meaning, rule of life or doctrine. Every liberal art has a canon, as music, art, etc., which sets forth the principles and fundamentals of those subjects.

Then the canon of Sacred Scriptures comprises the 66 books of the Old and the New Testaments which being inspired of God constitute the infallible rule of faith and practice of the Christian Church and the individual believer.

Canon is only applied to the whole Bible. Canonicity to the books of the Bible. Canonicity then of any Book of the Bible means its right to a place in the canon of Scriptures.

The sixty-six books now comprising the Bible were not the only books which either claimed inspiration or had that claim made for them. Why then just these 66 books? What about the "Book of Enoch," the Apocrypha (the 14. books between Matthew and the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi), and all the epistles written in the early church, plus the "Gospel of the Infancy?"

There, therefore, must be some law of canonicity, which determined the right of any book to a place in the sacred canon, especially the New Testament. For the Old Testament was in the form we now have, over 200 years before Christ and used by Him without further additions, subtractions, or corrections.

B. THE LAW OF CANONICITY FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT.

To have a place in the Old Testament, a book must have been written, edited, or endorsed by a prophet.

There has been a warfare raging over many of the books of the Old Testament, not in

the camp of the saints, but in modern self-styled "higher criticism" They have set up arbitrary rules of criticism and assailed the Bible. But for the Christian there is an infallible rule of canonicity for the entire Old Testament.

Christ, the "Great Prophet," endorsed the Old Testament Scriptures and thus forever established their right to a place in the sacred Canon--Luke 24:27,44; Jn. 5:39. Here Christ divided the whole Old Testament into their three natural divisions: the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms and approved them. Note - - "Expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

Note--if any of these books were forgeries, Christ, as the Son of God, would have known it; would He have let that forgery go undetected? Jn. 14:2--"If it were not so, I would have told you." See here that it was the common belief, both from Jewish tradition and the Old Testament, of a literal Heaven, as a literal city, a literal place as the Father's abode (Ps. 23:6). Now Christ said, "If it were not so, I would have told you."

In fact, the very books most opposed by the critics are the very books Jesus quotes from as truth and therefore Scripture. Cf. Deut. On the mount of temptation--Matt. 4:4., Cf. Deut. 8:3; Mt. 4:7, Cf. Deut. 6:16; Mt. 4:10 Cf. Deut. 6:13; Mt. 12:39-14, Cf. Jonah (as Jonah was three days and three nights....)

There are to my count 262 direct quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament, and 817 allusions to Old Testament events and characters, with 112 of those quotations to be found in the four Gospels. All the 66 books of the Bible are quoted in the New Testament but seven, namely, Obadiah, Song of Solomon, Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah. These are books with no occasion for being quoted.

Note--on the Apocrypha Books. The Apocrypha means "hidden" or "secret" There are between 11 to 16 according to various groups. Some accept some, some others. But commonly there are 14: namely, I and II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Baruch, Song of Manasse, I, II, III and IV Maccabees; with some adding additions to Esther, Epistle of Jeremiah, History of Susanna.

The most important of these give the history of the interval between Malachi and Matthew, the so-called 400 silent years. They give a good history of that period. The Jewish Greek scholars at Alexandria, Egypt, when translating the Old Testament into Greek for the Septuagint Version, included these books; but the Palestinian Jews never included them, hence they were not in the Scriptures Jesus used.

The Catholic Church at the council of Trent, 1546, declared 11 of the books canonical, and they appear in the modern Catholic Bible.

The Protestant Church has commonly agreed to reject their canonicity, only admitting their literary and historical value. Their reasons are:

1. Mover quoted by Christ or alluded to by the Apostles.
2. Most early church fathers rejected them (even the Catholics).
3. They didn't appear in the ancient Hebrew Canon,
4. The internal evidence of inferior quality, as compared with the canonical books of the Bible.

However, the primary reason, I believe, for their rejection for the place in the sacred Canon is the distinct prophecy found in the Old Testament that there would be no word nor prophet during that period.

Cf. Amos 8:11 - No word, Micah 3:6 - No prophet. Jer. 13:16

All of these prophets prior to those 400 silent years.

Last of all: The Old Testament abounds in statements claiming inspiration and communication from God, such as "The Word of the Lord came unto...", "Thus saith the Lord," etc. But none of these is in the Apocryphal Books.

The Decrees of the Episcopal and Lutheran churches given them to be read "for example of life and instruction in manner but not for the establishment of doctrine."

C. THE LAW OF CANONICITY FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT.

To have a place in the New Testament, a book must have been written or endorsed by apostle or received as Divine authority in the Apostolic age. Thus, Mark was endorsed by Peter and in truth received most of his material, no doubt, from Peter. An Apostle was one who had seen Christ in the flesh. Paul, the unique apostle, saw Him in His glorified flesh.

No church arbitrarily formed the Canon of the Now Testament by decree. However, the Council of Laodicea in 363 A.D. did ratify the Canon as we now have it. But then it was only as it had already been accepted as the inspired library by the churches.

The Canon of the New Testament was formed gradually under the providence of God and the supervision of the Holy Spirit to accept the genuine and reject the spurious. The very reason that some books were held in doubt until proven argues well for the care of the early church. These were seven books, namely Hebrews, James, I and II Peter, Jude and Revelation.

The New Testament books wore a circulating library in the early church and accepted as final authority to settle disputes on doctrine and practice.

D. THE METHOD USED IN FORMING THE SACRED CANON.

As long as the prophets or apostles were alive and could under the same inspiration of God, tell what was inspired and what was not, there was no need of a canon of sacred Scriptures, They know the inspired, writings from the non-inspired. But with their death, inspiration ceased, and the need arose to discern the inspired from the non inspired. With the arising of the need for the Canon, it is interesting to note, the Holy Spirit superintended the compilation of the sacred Canon. The question arises, "How was this compilation accomplished?"

1. The Old Testament Canon.

The compilation of the canon of the Old Testament took almost 1500 years, from Moses to the postexilic prophets (those who wrote after the Babylonish captivity). During the wilderness wanderings some of the writings of Moses were kept in the Ark of the Covenant (Deut. 31:9,26).

When Solomon had finished the Temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem, he put in it all the earlier books (II Kings 22:8; Isa. 34.:16) and added to them all of his own writings that were inspired of God, both poetic and prophetic.

After Solomon and the division of the Kingdom under Rehoboam there followed a long line of prophets, flourishing before the destruction of the temple. Some of the minor prophets wrote after the Babylonish captivity and the return of the captives, such as Zechariah, Haggai.

After fifty years after the rebuilding of the temple, Ezra the Great Scribe, collected and edited all the sacred writings of the Old Testament (Neh. 8:2,3,14) with the addition of Ezra and Nehemiah. To Ezra primarily belonged the great task of the compilation of all the sacred writings of the Old Testament into the sacred Canon. According to ancient Jewish writings, Ezra was helped by the Great Synagogue, composed of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (all inspired prophets). This Canon was the one referred to by our Lord when He spoke of "all the Scriptures" (Jn. 5:39). And referred to by Christ as one integral whole as "The Scriptures" (Matt. 21:42; 22:29).

We can see the same hand of God in the preservation and compilation of the Canon of Old Testament Scriptures over more than a thousand years that prevailed upon receipt of the message.

2. The New Testament.

It was considerable time after the Ascension of our Lord before any of the books of the

New Testament was written. So long as the Apostles who walked with Jesus were alive and could give their oral account of His deeds and life, there was not so great a need for a written Gospel. Representatives of the Apostles carried this oral Gospel message throughout the churches.

But when the time for the removal of these apostles approached, the need for a permanent record became apparent--Luke 1:1-4.. Two of the four Gospels were written by apostles themselves and two by associates of the apostles.

Another kind of inspired method of writings had now come into existence, The necessary absence of the founders of the churches for further instructions to churches, encouragements, and correction. All the churches felt the authority of the apostles, and matters of the moment required their inspired utterances. These epistles finally were circulated among the churches and exchanged (I Thess. 5:27; Col. 4:16). Each church gathered copies of these epistles and Gospels into sacred libraries, accepted by them as inspired of God. Twenty of the now twenty-seven were accepted by all the early church as inspired, the other seven being accepted upon careful examination as to their genuineness.

Finally the Canon of the New Testament was ratified by a council of the churches at Laodicea 363 A.D. (before the corruption of the church under Constantine).

C. GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY.

1. DEFINITIONS.

a. The genuineness of any book in the sacred canon revolves around the question of authorship and the date of writing, Was that book written by the man or men ascribed to it at the time approximately to which it is assigned?

b. The authenticity of any book of the sacred canon has to deal with the contents of the book in question. Has the text been altered, or does the author deal truthfully with the

matter in hand?

The opposite of genuineness in any book is spurious or forgery, the opposite of authenticity is corrupted text. Much work toward establishing the genuineness of the books of the Bible and authenticity has been accomplished by the findings of hundreds of ancient manuscripts,

Dr. William Evans in "Book of Books" lists two primary reasons for the question raised by many as to the genuineness and authenticity of the Bible.

(1) Lack of harmony between the Bible and science. Here are stated the number of accommodations to human language and idioms of speech, such as the rising and setting of the sun, and the dew descending from heaven; but we still use those idioms of speech. How useless for the Bible to use scientific language to tell its story of redemption; it would go out of date as the scientific books do. But it is written in universal language of all peoples and times and places. It isn't written as a scientific treatise, but its primary object is the teaching of spiritual truths, and nowhere else does it outrage scientific discovery. As Galileo said, "The Bible doesn't tell us how the heavens go, but how to go to heaven," Jesus know, as the Son of God, the Creator of the universe, every secret of science, but He nowhere sought in His lifetime here on earth to clear up the ignorance then so widespread concerning science. Where the Bible does deliberately enter the realm of science and makes a scientific statement, there is never any contradiction to true science.

(2) So-called discrepancies in numbers in the Bible, and so-called contradictions between the two or more writers in the Bible. A lot of these are like the critic and atheist who condemned the statement of Moses carrying the Ark for forty years in the wilderness. He said, "I have read the description of that Ark in Genesis, 350 foot long and 50 foot wide, made by Noah; and how could the Israelites carry that ark for forty years on their shoulders?" Many of the so-called discrepancies hailed by the haters of the Bible and its message of redemption arise from pure unadulterated ignorance just like that--can't see that there were two arks, One of these fellows criticized the

statement in Lev, 11:21,22, saying that the Bible taught that the locust had only four legs. He wasn't reading close enough to read the statement, "Which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth." They can't allow for any growth in Israel. If there is a number given of them in one places, then another number in another place, they cry "Discrepancy," They forgot the plagues among them, as well as natural births, and deaths.

2. THE GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

This like the canonicity of the books of the Bible is settled by Christ--Luke 24::27,44; as when He quoted Daniel as being written by Daniel--Matt. 24:15 or Isaiah --Matt. 8:17, Here He answers the critics who claim a "Doutro-Isaiah," or two writers for Isaiah. For He ascribes to the same Isaiah the writing of the 53rd chapter (also Luke 4:17). Such may also be said for the authenticity of the Old Testament, Christ quotes from it as being true prophecy fulfilled in Himself.

3. THE GENUINENESS .AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

This may be based upon both external and internal evidences,

(1) Internal Evidences. This may be based upon:

a. The style of each book indelibly bears the stamp of its author. For illustration, given the proof of any book being the epistle of Paul, from that style we can see the imprint of his authorship on all the other writings accredited to him.

b. Language, showing the date primarily of the writing.

c. Contemporary history which is accidental to the text but is referred to by the writer setting the time, mentioning of places and secular characters who then ruled over the provinces or kingdoms then flourishing. The enlargement of these proofs do not belong to the province of our course.

d. The character of the writers. Competent, upright--not enthusiasts and fanatics.

(2) External Evidences.

This argument follows the line of early acceptance by the church of the books as genuine and authentic and the many manuscripts now discovered which substantiate the text we now have as uncorrupted.

a. The church accepted as genuine and authentic the New Testament as we now have it, just a little over 100 years after the death of the last apostle of our Lord, John. That was not enough time for corruption of the original text.

b. Parallel with this evidence is the fact that the early church fathers quoted from all of the New Testament writers, using their writings for the Scriptures. We have enough of the writings of the early church fathers so that from their quotations alone, should the New Testament be destroyed, it could be reproduced almost in total.

Illustration: Thomas Cooper spoke before a luncheon of scholars. He asked, "If the New Testament were destroyed and every copy lost by the end of the 3rd century, could it be collected again from the writings of the early church fathers?" Two months later Sir David Dalrymple was interviewed by one who was there at that dinner. He pointed to a table of books and said, "Look at those books. You remember the question about the New Testament and the fathers? It aroused my curiosity. I possessed all of the existing works of the fathers of the 2nd and the 3rd century. I commenced to search, and up to this time I have found the entire New Testament except eleven verses" (William Evans)

c. Ancient versions, such as the Syriac called the "Peshito," which means the true or literal translation. It contains the whole Old Testament and most of the New in the Aramaic. This was the language Jesus used. It doesn't have II and III John, II Peter, Jude and Revelation. Then there was the Vulgate by Jerome about 170 A.D. It has all the Bible except Hebrews, James, and II Peter. This was used by the Catholic Church

for over 1000 years, preserved in its original form.

d. Ancient manuscripts. The three greatest are:

(a) The Codex Sinaiticus, a codex of the Greek Bible of the fourth century. It was bought in 1933 by Britain from Russia for half a million dollars.

(b) The Codex Alexandrinus, fifth century. It is the whole Greek Bible except forty lost loaves. (c) Codex Vaticanus, probably fourth century. It is a Greek manuscript. Scholars accept as genuine any classical writing of an ancient as the proof of ten or a few more ancient manuscripts. Then what of the Scriptures, which have over 2000 manuscripts?

4. There is one more consideration--It has to do with the integrity of the Now Testament text, or the authenticity. The integrity has to do with the preservation of the text in pure form. Has the subject matter been transmitted down to us without alterations affecting the meaning? IS OUR BIBLE TODAY AUTHENTIC? IS THE TEXT THE SAME? A book may be given by inspiration as an infallible message from God, but if it could be so altered as to ruin or even reverse the message, its trustworthiness would be destroyed. Many of the higher critics and haters of the Bible have seen the force of this argument and have used it at the first, but after any learned discussion have had to abandon this field of antagonism. The more learned the less one will use this branch of combat.

We cannot go into the minute details required here, for it belongs to the field of Textual or Biblical criticism.

Most of the variations in copying the original and copies of the original have come from the fact of hand transcribing before the invention of the printing press. The press can turn out millions of copies exactly like the original copy so that with proof reading, etc., the first type can be corrected until perfect, then all prints will remain static. But this wasn't true before 1438, with the invention of movable type, and the printing of the first book, a Latin Bible, printed at Mentz by Gutenberg (inventor of printing) and Faust. still 18 volumes preserved, some selling for as high as \$19,000.

But hand copying was liable to much error, through weariness as he laboriously transcribed the complicated letters. You can see the warning of John in Revelation against adding or subtracting from Revelation.

THE NUMBER OF VARIATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TEXTS OF ALL 2000 MSS. as 120,000. It is this number that is used rather than any argument from them by atheists to slander the Bible and say, "You do not even have the Bible as given." Let us consider through the character of these variations -- "At first the student is startled by the number 120,000 variations. But as they are studied, it is found that only about 1000th part of them have any material bearing on the meaning of the text in question." (Dr. Hort)

1. The greatest variation is In Greek orthography. The most fruitful Is the putting in or omission of words not affecting the text, the choice of one synonym above another, or the Greek changing of words in the sentences. (The literal Greek text puts the words in a very awkward position to the modern mind. NOW ANY ONE OF THESE THREE HAVE NO AFFECT ON THE MEANING OF THE TEXT WHATSOEVER. The power of the Holy Scriptures to save in the King James Version (which certainly isn't the best) Is abundant proof of Its integrity.

Tregelles on Matt. 2 notes 2~ variations -- Not one affecting the text -- Note a few:

Vs. 3 - "The King Herod "Jerusalem with Him	"Herod the King." "All Jerusalem with Him"
Vs. 4. - "Inquired from them where the Christ would be born	"Just inquired where."

Now mind you of all the 120,000 so-called variations all but the 1000th part is of this nature, gathered from 2000 manuscripts in five or six different languages arid over 1200 years. Just to Illustrate, let me show you how the twenty-third Psalm comes out after translating into Indian, then back Into English to give you the idea of the difficulty many times in translating.

But to boil these variations down further--Scrivener leaves 6000 variations not of the first three mentioned--but of the 6000, almost all of them with but a matter of a few dozen are differences in spelling, in the tense of the case, in number, in the presence or absence of the particles, or presence or absence of the definite article (the), the substitution of the proper name for the pronoun used in other manuscripts in supplying words and phrases from the other evangelists to round out a narrative, etc. In 90 out of 100 cases these make no material alteration in the sentences.

Now in the very few cases where any case can be made out of interpolation or corruption of the text--there is still learned discussion among the textual critics.

Let us illustrate how many times the marginal note of the original transcriber may be inserted by a latter copyist. Acts 8:37--This whole verse according to the most all ancient manuscripts is an interpolation--but it is the clear teaching of Rom. 10:9,10; and Mark 16:16 that a confession of faith in Jesus Christ was a prerequisite to baptism. So that the interpolation is not misleading or doctrinally wrong.

There are a few like this verse. There are but three long passages ever held in doubt because omitted by many manuscripts--John 5:4 - Troubling of the waters.

The last twelve verses of Mark, and the woman taken in adultery in John's Gospel are also questioned. But these are all in keeping with the rest of the Bible text -- not out of harmony -- not contradictory, and most of the critics still hold to their integrity.

Doctor Hort, no mean authority: "There is no doubt we have the original perfectly preserved. See the superintending hand of the Holy Spirit in the preservation as well as inspiration."

D. INSPIRATION

I. DEFINITION:

The word 'Inspirations' as used in II Tim. 3:16 -- "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" -- is taken from two Greek words: *theos*, meaning God, and *pnein*, meaning to breathe. Hence the literal meaning of inspiration is "God-breathed." All Scripture is "God-breathed." Our English word "inspire" has the opposite meaning of expire. Inspire is to In-breathe, and expire, out-breathe.

We speak by means of expiration, the breath blowing over the vocal cords giving sound. So inspiration is the inbreathing of God in man, giving him God's message. This is the one statement of Scripture as to the method of Divine communication of God's message to man. God so inbreathed His Spirit of truth into selected men, enabling them to give forth without error His message.

The other reference is found in II Pet. 1:21 -- "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Or the Rotherham Translation gives the more perfect sense of the original-- "As by the Holy Spirit they were being borne along spake holy men of God." The context declares that "Scripture came not by the will of man." Inspiration here may be seen to mean that holy men were carried along of the Holy Spirit as they have the God in-breathed message. Here is the full meaning of inspiration. This enabled them to speak without error or write without error. The definition given earlier in the study of Bibliology applies here: "Inspiration is that Divine influence which renders a speaker, or writer, infallible in the communication of truth."

II. THEORIES OF INSPIRATION

Not only have there been controversy as to the fact of the inspiration of the Bible but also as to the method of inspiration. Here again there is an attempt to nullify the power and message of the Scriptures by denying to them the Infallibility of full Inspiration. By many false theories of Inspiration they try to make the Word of none effect. Lowering the meaning of inspiration is but to bring it down to the level of human literature and adds the difficulty of explaining its high moral tone and sweeping Influence.

We will briefly note some of these theories:

1. The Intuitionist or Natural Inspiration Theory.

This theory exalts the intuitionist consciousness in man which he possesses of the idea of God, It would rank the writers of the sacred Scriptures as merely possessing genius. This genius is admitted as of a high order and more or less permanent form, but by no means admitted as supernatural. The Unitarians hold to this theory and, in greater or lesser degree, so do modernistic thinkers who object to the supernatural element in Revelation, This theory grants to the writers of the Bible the possession of genius in matters of morals, ethics, and religion, only the same inspiration as that possessed by the writers of great literature of all ages. They exceeded the common run of writers in art, poetry, and philosophy; so these writers exceeded the other writers in matters pertaining to religion. Whether they wrote under any special influence of God or not is not conceded. They see no mysterious operation of the Spirit of God in the writing of the Bible, This theory ranks the sacred Scriptures on a par with all the other writings of genius through the ages, no matter the moral or immoral tone of those writings, no matter the subject matter nor the influence. It says, Was Paul inspired? Surely, but so was Milton. Was Peter inspired? Surely, but so was Shakespeare, Not only was John inspired, but so were Confucious and Mohammed."

How can any lover of truth accept such a theory of inspiration? It is so untrue to the claims of the writers of the Bible, who recognized the operation of God in their message. Where could the Scriptures ever constitute any court of authority when its writers would be liable to the same errors and uncertainty as all the writings of human genius? The tide of human knowledge concerning God and His will, instead of being raised by the Bible, should be left at the same low level that they found it.

Can a thinking man read the writings of any age who saw no influence of God even approaching inspiration and then change to the Scriptures without seeing any difference? As William Evans remarks, "The difference is not one of degree but of kind,

The Bible not merely ascends to a loftier outlook in the same human dwelling but ascends to a new region altogether,"

There is no power or conviction in such a theory of inspiration. It lays no compelling must to its precepts nor certainty to its prophecies. There is no authority, nothing that binds the soul. That writer's opinion may be no greater than my own. I catch intuitional perceptions of truth which shine upon the soul like e. clear sunrise, but there is no knowledge as the writers of the sacred Scriptures had, that `Thus saith the Lord.'" This theory answers none of the real inquiries into the question of inspiration. It scorns to arise from latter day loose handling of all things spiritual and supernatural. It tries to answer the question of Christ's Deity. It concedes that Deity to Christ would bind His commandments upon the will, so men try to rank Him on par with great men. They say, "Was Christ Divine? Well, so are we. All men are divine.' Here again the question is not one of degree but one of kind. He was not like other men, but other than other men. Rob either the Christ or the Scriptures of their supernatural clement, and the authority and power is nullified as far as the individual is concerned.

This theory is altogether a dishonorable explanation of inspiration and can never satisfy a believer who has felt the truth of the statement, "The Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb.4:12).

2. The Illumination Theory or Universal Christian Inspiration.

This is so closely akin to the natural inspiration theory, that the same arguments which apply to it apply here. It merely concedes the element of the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit and the specific religious aspect of inspiration. Otherwise, it bears the same criticism. Briefly stated, it consists of the following: Inspiration is the intensification or amplification of the religious perception already in a Christian to a higher degree. It confuses illumination with inspiration. Every Christian has illumination from the Holy Spirit, and those theorists say, "It is the same kind of illumination but of greater degree." By this theory, "we are all just as inspired as the Apostle Paul." It is more than passing strange then why new Bibles are not being written every

generation. It is no wonder then the lightness of so many modern scholars concerning the Word.

There are two objections which may be raised against this theory above those stated in the last consideration:

a. Where is there the possibility of infallibility in this theory? If this inspiration is universally prevalent, why the error today? Even in regeneration there remains enough of the old nature and imperfections to flavor natural production. For infallibility there must be some greater influence than that which is present in every Christian to understand the truth.

b. Where is there the ability by which to discover new truths, which are above natural observation and perception? How could Moses ever write the story of creation by this theory of inspiration? Or how could prophecy come by this method? This kind of truth must come by revelation of God, not intuitionally, but by communication.

No matter how high the spiritual perception of the saint of God, nor the illumination received of the Holy Spirit, there is always the need of the written Word for instructions, comfort, correction, and spiritual food. There is always the realization in the true Christian, when reading the Word, that this is the very Word of God, not just a little more of something I already have in my own perception. Here again the same charge may be brought against this theory as against the former one; it degrades the Bible to the same level as other writings.

3. The Mechanical Theory

This theory holds that the writers were mere stenographers taking the dictation of the Holy Spirit. They were only tools, passive Instrumentality, without any play of individual personality. They had no choice of language nor of words, but as machines they took what He dictated. This theory honors the Word and admits its infallibility but raises some objections. It is admitted that some of the writings in the Bible were direct, such as the

Ten Commandments. Here there was no choice of words nor display of human personality. Dan. 4: 21 gives the exact words of God spoken. So do other portions, such as Rev. 19:9 and 21:5, but to assure from these isolated portions a mechanical theory is stretching the point.

Objections: This theory makes no allowances for the differences in style of the writers, It makes no allowances for the difference in the choice of words by the four evangelists in the Gospel, who write about the same event in the life of Christ. Neither does it explain the presence of idiosyncrasies, which mark the authorship of the books.

4. The Concept or Thought Inspiration Theory.

Briefly stated, it holds that only the thought is inspired, not the words. The primary objections to be answered by this theory are: How can you express thought without words? How could inerrant thought be transmitted without the use of accurate words, when we know that there are shades of meaning in words expressing the same event or describing the same thing? Any careful study of the Word reveals great truths taught by the Holy Spirit's choice of words. This would seem to teach the mechanical theory, but it will be considered further in the last theory.

5, The Partial Inspiration Theory

This is another dishonoring theory. It dares to set the human criterion upon the Scriptures to determine what is inspired. It says, "The Bible contains the Word of God." Some is inspired and some isn't. Each individual has to determine for himself what is inspired and what is not inspired. Where is the authority of the Word? This is clearly against the statements of the word as to its inspiration.

6. The Verbal, Plenary Inspiration Theory, or Full Inspiration.

This theory teaches that all the Scriptures are alike inspired, contrary to the partial theory. It teaches that the very words themselves are inspired. The writers were divinely

led of the Holy Spirit in their choice of words, so It is contrary to the concept theory. By the word "plenary" is meant equal Inspiration for all the Scriptures; and by verbal inspiration, we mean that the words are inspired.

Dr. William Evans says, "The Spirit employed the attention, the investigation, the memory, the fancy, the logic, in a word, and all the faculties of the writer, and He wrought through these.

He guided the writer to choose what narrative and materials, speeches of others, imperial decrees, genealogies, official letters, state papers, or historical matter He found necessary for the recording of the Divine message of salvation. He wrought in and with and through their spirits so as to preserve their individuality to others. Ho used the men themselves and spoke through their individualities. The gold was His and the mold was theirs." (The Book of Books, P.26).

This is not dictation from without but the influence of the Spirit so upon men as to cause them to use the very words He wanted them to use, yet the style was theirs. It bears distinctly the impression of the human vessels through which it came, while always everywhere, bearing the stamp of its Divine authorship. This theory answers fully for the infallibility of the Bible, coming as it does as the very Word of God.

III. PROOFS OF INSPIRATION

To be considered from internal and external evidences.

1. Internal Evidences

- a. Direct statements of inspiration or supernatural supervision (II Pet. 3:16; 1:20,21).
- b. The respect of the Bible characters for the "Scriptures"; the high position in which they esteem them.

1) The Old Testament. Christ said, "All the Scriptures¹ (Luke 24.:27; Matt. 5:17,19) are not to pass away until all are fulfilled; and He said not to break the least commandment. This would constitute for the Christian a settlement of the question of inspiration of the Old Testament, even as it does the Canon, genuineness, and authenticity. 2) The New Testament. Peter ranks the writings or letters of Paul on the par with all the other Scriptures (II Pet. 3:1~,16). Christ delegated to His apostles the same authority, and therefore the inspiration which He possessed (Matt. 10:14, 15; Lk. 10:16).

c. Similar to the last evidence are the many quotations by Christ and the apostles to the Old Testament, using them for authority, prophecy, and proofs.

Christ quoted Isa. 61:1-3 as fulfilled in himself in Luke Li:17-21. Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16,17) and throughout the book of Hebrews.

d. The expression running throughout the Bible, which claims for the message a Divine origin. "Thus saith the Lord" is used over 2000 times; and all of the; like expressions such as "God spake," "The Lord said," "Thus saith the Lord," "The Lord. spake" occurs 3,808 times. Ten times in the first chapter of the Bible the expression "God spake" occurs. To Moses comes the word of the Lord explicitly the exact pattern of the Tabernacle. In Jeremiah, 63 times it expressly says, "The Word of the Lord came unto Him." So all the way through there are like statements proving inspiration. In Isaiah, 20 times it says, The Word, of the Lord."

e. Restrictions forbidding the enlargement or subtraction of any portions (Deut. 4:2; 13:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18,19).

f. Direct claims of the writers themselves to supernatural revelation. These could be multiplied and run parallel to the many expressions already considered; as when God answered the objections of Moses (Ex, 4:10-15); the commission of Jeremiah (Heb. 1:7-9); commission of Ezekiel (Ezek.3:4). Also true of the. New Testament writers. Paul claimed direct revelation of Jesus Christ and not from men (Gal. 1:11,12, 20).

Peter declares the inspiration of David (Acts 1:16).

Paul claims inspiration (I Cor. 12:13). Also Peter claims inspiration (II Pet. 3:1,2). So Paul again (I Thess, 2:13). Now these claims of the authors themselves have to be taken on face value or their testimony impeaches. When Moses said, expressly, "The Word of the Lord came unto Moses," then it did or Moses lied. There is no middle ground.

g. The marvelous unity of the Bible. This belongs primarily to our study in Christian Evidences but here are outlines.

- 1) Unity is structural,
- 2) Unity is historical.
- 3) Unity is prophetic.
- 4) Unity is progressive.
- 5) Unity is organic.

h. The moral character of its teachings.

2. External Evidences for Inspiration.

External evidences also belong to the province of Christian Evidences, but we shall outline them here for discussion:

- a. The Indestructibility of the Bible.
- b. The place of the Bible in literature.
- c. The Influence of the Bible.
- d. The historical testimony.
- e. The existence of the Church,
- f. The testimony of archaeology.
- g. Fulfilled prophecy.
- h. Adaptability (to every age and every clinic).
- I. Testimony of the Church.

j. Testimony of experience.

Through all the councils, synods, and conventions of the ages, the greater part of decrees and findings has been overwhelmingly toward the inspiration of the Bible.

Illustration: The last assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America went on record - - "The Bible as we now have it, in its various translations and revisions, when freed from all errors and mistakes of translators, copyists, and printers, is the very Word of God and consequently wholly without error."