

# The Nature of Inspiration

by

Jason Dulle

[JasonDulle@yahoo.com](mailto:JasonDulle@yahoo.com)

---

[The Problem](#) · [Alternative Proposals in the Church](#) · [Biblical Teaching](#) · [Systematic Formulation](#) · [Apologetic Interaction](#) · [Relevance to Life and Ministry](#)

## **The Problem**

The Bible has been loved and followed by devout men and women throughout the last three and a half millennia, being viewed as the word of YHWH. There has been much attention given to the weight of authority the sixty-six books of our modern Bible possess, especially in the last few centuries. Most discussions have centered around the meaning and extent of inspiration. Questions raised under this banner have included whether any or all of the Bible is inspired, or if only certain topics or sections are inspired. Other questions include whether or not inspiration only pertains to the general message of Scripture, or to the very words and grammar of the writings themselves. These types of questions are usually discussed under the idea of Biblical inerrancy; i.e., determining if the Bible does, or can contain error, or if it is absolutely without human error..

What this paper attempts to address is the manner in which inspiration took place. In what way, or ways, were the writers of Scripture inspired? More specifically, what part did the divine element play, and what part did the human element play in the element of Scripture? If the Bible is a divine book, how are the human imprints on its many pages explained? If the Bible is a human book, how are the divine claims explained? Did the authors of Scripture realize they were being inspired by God and that their writings would be read by believers down through the centuries or did they write the literature, poetry, and letters in the same fashion as they did other non-Biblical writings?

There are two extreme ways of viewing the nature of the inspiration of the Biblical writers, and many variation of degrees falling in between. The extreme liberal side emphasizes the human element of the Scriptures to such an extent that the role of the Holy Spirit is extremely minimized, if not even excluded from the finished product. The more conservative side emphasizes the divine element to such an extent that the role of the human authors who penned the original autographs is severely minimized, if not altogether excluded from the finished product.

Most scholars, but not all, recognize and confess both the human and divine contribution in the writing of the Scripture. The debate revolves around the level of interaction between God and men in this endeavor. To what extent, and in what manner did God inspire the writers of Scripture? The view one takes on this position can heavily influence his view on the extent of Biblical inspiration and other related topics.

The problem to be addressed in this paper is related to verbal, plenary inspiration,

and the issue of inerrancy, but is not centrally hinged to either of these issues. Though not central, neither is it unrelated. Most assuredly, one's view of the extent and meaning of inspiration will inform and influence one's understanding of the way in which inspiration took place, but it does not necessarily dictate it. Also, one's understanding of the manner in which the writers of Scripture were inspired, will affect their understanding of inspiration and inerrancy. It is for this reason that this topic, though often neglected, is so important to our Bibliology.

### **Alternative Proposals in the Church**

This issue of the nature of inspiration has been discussed throughout the history of the church. We now turn our attention to these various theories and to some of the believers who subscribed to them.

#### *Intuition Theory*

This theory of inspiration denies any divine influence or superintendance over the writers of Scripture. Instead, the authors had a high degree of spiritual insight into divine things. It was no temporary endowment, but a permanent possession. The writers of Scripture are seen as religious geniuses, with an intuitive insight into the ideas of religion. Their writings proceeded from their own wills, just like any other writer of literature.[1](#)

The Deists of early American history held a view similar to this. The way in which they differed was that they did not necessarily believe that the writers were always "inspired," but that there were certain times in which their literary talents were "elevated during moments of special creativity."[2](#)

#### *Illumination Theory*

This view maintains that the writers of Scripture were influenced by the Spirit of God in that He heightened their spiritual awareness, but not in the sense of communicating any special revelation, or guiding their writing, but a mere increased sensitivity/perception to spiritual matters.[3](#) The difference between the authors of Scripture and the writers of other believers is one of degree, and not one of kind.[4](#)

Regarding this view, Charles Ryrie writes:

This viewpoint goes a step farther than natural inspiration [intuition theory], for it conceives of the writers as more than natural geniuses in that they were also Spirit-filled and guided. "The inspiration of the books of the Bible does not imply for us the view that they were produced or written in any manner generically different from that of the writing of other great Christian books.... There is a wide range of Christian literature from the fifth to the twentieth century which can with propriety be described as inspired by the Holy Spirit in precisely the same formal sense as were the books of the Bible" (Alan Richardson, *Christian Apologetics* [New York: Harper, 1948], p..207).[5](#)

There is a line of delineation made between the inspiration of the author, and the inspiration of the autographa. Inspiration only extends to the writer himself, not to that which is written.[6](#)

### *Conceptual Inspiration*

This theory is synergistic in that it confesses that the human and divine elements worked together in the inspiration of the Bible. The writers of Scripture were not inspired in the sense of a heightened awareness, or from a strong motivation during some creative moments as the term is commonly used in our modern English vernacular, but were divinely moved upon by the Holy Spirit in a special way so as to communicate divine truth. The Spirit did not over-rule the human element, however. The two worked in harmony.

The way in which the two worked was that the Spirit inspired the thoughts and concepts, but the writers clothed the concepts with their own choice of words and expressions. The choice of words is purely human. When reading the Word of God, then, to receive the divine revelation, one need not focus on the wording and grammar, but on the concepts conveyed by the wording and grammar. For it is there wherein lies the inspiration of God.

### *Mechanical Dictation*

The mechanical dictation view, also known as divine dictation, states that every word in the original autographa was determined by God. The inspiration extends beyond the direction of the authors' thoughts and concepts, to the very words employed to dress those concepts.<sup>7</sup> There was no active contribution from the men who physically penned the writings to the resultant manuscripts other than the physical process itself. They were passive in the whole process, while God was actively telling them to write every word, with its unique tense and grammatical structure.

### *Degree Inspiration*

This particular view of inspiration embraces the idea that although all of the Bible is inspired, and therefore God's Word, certain parts are more inspired than others. There are degrees of inspiration that are not alike in every passage, or in every book. In this view, although both the human and divine element are always present, one aspect will show through more in some places than in others. This view is similar to the conceptual theory in that it gives great amounts of room for human contribution to the final product, but it differs in that there is no static guidance from the Holy Spirit on the writers to keep what they write to be the words of God. Some concepts as found in the Scripture are "watered down" more with human thought than are others. Other concepts, or passages of the Bible are more "concentrated" with God's actual Word.

### *Partial Inspiration*

This theory maintains that only certain parts of the Bible are truly inspired. Those specifically inspired are the ones pertaining to salvation. Matters such as history, science, chronology, and other non-salvific matters are written by man without inspiration from the Spirit of God, and can contain error. Although all of the Bible is not inspired, the inspiration contained therein is sufficient to lead one to salvation.

## Early Christianity

The Greek Apologists seemed to have held a view close to that of mechanical dictation, if not mechanical dictation itself.<sup>8</sup> Writings from this time period speak of God as a plectrum, and man as the lyre.<sup>9</sup> The imagery is of God plucking the strings of a harp.

Justin Martyr, in his *First Apology*, said, "But when you hear the utterances of the prophets spoken as it were personally, you must not suppose that they are spoken by the inspired themselves, but by the Divine Word who moves them."<sup>10</sup> Justin declared this to be so because of the nature of prophecy (futuristic and therefore unknowable apart from revelation). Although advocating the divine origin of the prophecies, he also relegated the first-person point of view from which the authors spoke to be something of a phenomenalistic sort that is not meant to be taken literally. It appears to the reader that the writings of the prophet were written by the prophets, but this is only to be understood figuratively.

The Fathers held a similar view to that of the Apologists. Origen believed that inspiration extended to every letter of the Scripture.<sup>11</sup> This does not mean that Origen was not aware of the human contribution to Scripture. He even commented that the some of the Greek employed in the New Testament was not the best Greek.<sup>12</sup> He believed that even this bad Greek, however, was used by God to communicate to His audience.

Bruce Vawter claims that Justin, Theophilus, Clement of Alexandria, Ambrose, Athenagorus, and Tertullian all held to the basic views of mechanical dictation.<sup>13</sup>

Although the imagery and wording employed by the Apologists and Fathers seems to suggest mechanical dictation, there are some who believe that the Fathers have been misunderstood in their terminologies. Robert Preus, for example, comments: "They are not suggesting that the human authors of Scri=ture are unthinking, unwilling instruments, divested of consciousness or personality.... On the contrary, they at times affirm a condescension...of the Spirit whereby He condescend or accommodates himself to the style and personalities of the Biblical writers."<sup>14</sup> Even their understanding of condescension, however, could only indicate that they viewed God as using the vocabulary and style that was known to the individual authors, but all the while dictating exactly which words to be used within these limits.

Commenting further, Preus said:

And so for the fathers...total control of the Spirit over the penman was perfectly harmonious with the conscious and willing use of their unique endowments and styles of writing. The flute-lyre-instrument terminology was employed only to stress the instrumentality of human authors and the monergism of the divine inspiration. One might say that contributively the biblical writers were passive-the Spirit alone supplied to them *what* they were to write, the very form and content; but subjectively or psychologically...the biblical writers were active, in full and conscious possession of their faculties. Nowhere do the Fathers try to bridge this paradox."<sup>15</sup>

## *The Reformers*

Martin Luther held to a verbal inspiration view of the Scripture. Every word, and even the word order was inspired.<sup>16</sup> Luther wrote, "The Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, written and (I might say) lettered and formed in letters, just as Christ is the eternal Word of God veiled in the human nature."<sup>17</sup> That which is contained in Scripture did not come from the mind of the writers, but the writers wrote what they heard from God.<sup>18</sup> Even the different ordering of events in the gospels, Luther believed was determined by the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> This means that every phrase in the Bible is there because God told the writers to write it, even such statements as Paul telling Timothy to bring his books, parchments, and cloak (II Timothy 4:13). It seems that Luther went beyond providence, almost to the point of mechanical dictation as had the Apologists and Fathers before Him.

Calvin never wrote a major treatise on Scripture since it was not a major issue in his day. He spent much of his time fighting the theology of the Catholic Church, which accepted the full authority and inspiration of the Bible, but Calvin did comment on the manner of inspiration saying, "...the apostles, ...were to expound the ancient Scripture and to show that what is taught there has been fulfilled in Christ. Yet they were not to do this except from the Lord, that is, with Christ's Spirit going before them and in a sense dictating their words.... [They] were sure and genuine penmen of the Holy Spirit; and their writings are therefore to be considered oracles of God."<sup>20</sup> This seems to imply mechanical dictation. Calvin so revered every word of the Bible that he even said in his comments on II Timothy 3:16,

"...the law and the prophecies are not teaching delivered by the will of men, but dictated by the Holy Ghost.... Moses and the prophets did not utter at random what we have from their hand, but, since they spoke by divine impulse, they confidently...testified...that it was the mouth of the Lord that spoke.... We owe to the Scripture the same reverence which we owe to God, because it has proceeded from Him alone."<sup>21</sup>

Calvin, generally speaking, held similar views of the manner of inspiration as did Luther. The human authorship of the Bible is never denied, but it is placed so far behind God's inspiration that it virtually disappeared.

## *Roman Catholic Church*

At the Council of Trent, on April 8, 1546, the Roman Catholic church made this pronouncement concerning the Scripture:

keeping this always in view, that, errors being removed, the purity itself of the Gospel be preserved in the Church; which (Gospel), before promised through the prophets in the holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated with His own mouth, and then commanded to be preached by His Apostles to every creature, as the fountain of all, both saving truth, and moral discipline; and seeing clearly that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the unwritten traditions which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand;<sup>22</sup>

The Catholic Church sees the authority of Scripture as passing down from the words of our Lord Jesus while on this earth, to the message of the commissioned apostles, to the committing of their words on paper. They have recognized both the divine and human contribution to Scripture, and used a word common throughout church history to describe the manner of inspiration, *dictation*. This process of dictation is never elaborated upon, but the imagery of transmission being from "hand to hand" seems to indicate a near-mechanical view of inspiration.

### *Karl Barth*

Karl Barth advocated that the composition of the Scriptural material was no different than the composition of any other human work. There was no supernatural supervision in the writing of the books contained in our Bible, but they are the work of men who witnessed God's revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ. The Bible only becomes revelation to the individual who is reading or hearing it, as the Spirit inspires it to one's mind so as to reveal Jesus Christ.

### **Biblical Teaching**

In order to determine which of the above views is closest to understanding the way in which inspiration occurred, we will examine the Biblical data in its progressive revelation.

It must be understood before delving into the solution to the problem just posed, that we are dealing with a topic which the Bible does not specifically address. It simply affirms that God is the author of the words of Scripture, and that humans were employed in this process. The exact relationship between the two can only be deduced by looking at the general tenor of Scripture, and certain Biblical statements that give implication to one view or another. When examining the Biblical teaching, then, we have to examine what the Scripture says about itself concerning authorship; i.e.. the divine and human elements.

### *Pentateuch*

The Pentateuch records the first written revelation from God known to man. The ten commandments are said to be inscribed by the "finger of God," thus being the writings of God (Exodus 31:18; 32:16). In this particular instance, God was completely monergistic in the writing of His Word; there was no medium of man. These commandments were then written down by Moses in the book of Exodus. This is probably the best example of verbal inspiration in the Bible. This was most definitely a dictation of the words inscribed on the mountain tablets.

In Exodus 34:27, God told Moses to write down His words, because His covenant with Israel consisted of those words. Deuteronomy 31:9 notes that Moses wrote down God's law and gave it to the priests to teach the words to the people. Moses was accustomed to speaking directly to God, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the words written by Moses were exactly, or near exact, to the words uttered by God (Exodus 19:6-7).

## *Historical Books*

In many of the historical books, the phrase "as it is unto this day," or some close derivative appears. For example, II Samuel 18:18 speaks of Absalom's pillar, which he named "Absalom's Place." The author notes that it was still called by that name in his day. The author of Kings mentions that the poles that bore the ark could be seen from the Holy Place due to their great length, and could still be seen in his day (I Kings 8:8). Similar expressions abound throughout the historical books. These types of statements have nothing to do with retelling the history of Israel, but serve as bits of information for the original audience. It is a running commentary if you will. They are small interjections made by the authors to inform the reader of the effects of the history that could still be witnessed in their day. This seems to be an authorial interjection into the running historical account, which gives evidence to the contribution of the human author.

Chronicles mentions the law of God given at Sinai, describing it as the "book of the law of the LORD given by Moses (II Chronicles 34:14). It literally reads the "book of the law of the LORD by the hand of Moses," demonstrating their acknowledgment of the dual authorship of the Pentateuch. It was the law of YHWH, but it came through the hand of the man Moses.

Yet still another demonstration of the human element found in the historical books is their frequent use of literary works not found in the canon of the Old Testament.<sup>23</sup> They used these works, and referenced them for historical purposes, demonstrating that the information presented in their writings was not all received by direct revelation from God. Other historical accounts were incorporated into the Biblical narrative. Most assuredly, given the Hebrews' emphasis on oral tradition, some of the material contained in the historical books was received from elders who were handed down the stories from their elders.

## *Poetry and Wisdom*

This section of the Scripture gives great attestation to the human element of the Scriptures, especially the poetic portions. Although God is surely able to write poetry, poetry is the mark of human ingenuity. Biblical poetry is not some special form of poetry unique to the Bible, but is the common form of poetry written in those days. In the psalms, we find a wide range of human emotions expressed. They are full of poems of man speaking to God; not of God speaking to man. Although most assuredly God can use this poetry to speak to people today, the fact that they were composed to God shows the human initiative in the endeavor.

Psalms, such as the imprecatory psalms, demonstrate the humanness of the poetry in a dramatic fashion. David, for example, cries out "And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I *am* thy servant" (Psalm 143:12). If the psalms were dictated by God to the authors, all such intensity of human emotion would not make sense, unless one resorts to believing that God also dictated the emotions to the writers as they penned God's words. Even the fact that the psalms were written to God from man's point of view would not make sense under a divine dictation theory. These authors were freely thinking, and freely expressing their emotions to God, whether it be in praise or

lament.

The Book of Proverbs was not written entirely by Solomon. Agur, the son of Jakeh authored Proverb 30, and King Lemuel authored Proverb 31, writing what his mother had taught him. A question we might ask is when Proverbs 31 was inspired? Was it when King Lemuel's mother spoke it to Lemuel, or when he wrote it down, or when the compiler(s) of Proverbs added it to Solomon's proverbs? Whenever it was inspired, we still cannot determine if it was through mechanical dictation, or some other method, but it is interesting to note that it was compiled together with Solomon's writings after his death as part of an inspired book, though it was clearly human in its approach and content.

The Book of Proverbs was edited by men after Solomon's death. King Hezekiah's men collected more of Solomon's proverbs and added them to those that were already collected (Proverbs 25:1). Had Solomon written them under dictation from the Spirit of God, or had he been aware that they were inspired by God, it would seem that he would have collected them together with the rest of his Proverbs, but instead, it was not until Hezekiah's day that they were collected and considered inspired. It could be that God showed the compiler(s) that these other proverbs were inspired, but the fact that Solomon did not include them seems to indicate that inspiration could occur in subtle ways through which the author was not even aware that he was being inspired.

Ecclesiastes presents a world-view that is very human. The phrase "under the sun" occurs twenty-seven times, as Solomon explains the way things appear to man. It is written from the human perspective, and often paints a grim picture of life, though what is said is absolutely true. For example, Solomon said, "Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better" (Ecclesiastes 7:3). Again Solomon said, "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun. And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can man do that cometh after the king? Even that which hath been already done. Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness" (Ecclesiastes 2:11-13).

What should be noticed is that much of what was written was experienced by the author. God did not just pick a man to write these words without having experienced what was written, but God used a man who experienced these things to write them. The author was writing from personal experience, warning and instructing others.

### *The Prophets*

Of all the portions of the Scripture that seem to purport a divine dictation of verbal inspiration, it would be that of the prophets. Isaiah was told to write certain prophecies down on a scroll (Isaiah 8:1). Jeremiah, when he was called, protested that he did not have the ability to speak, seeing that he was but a child. YHWH answered him saying that he would give him what to speak (Jeremiah 1:4-7). It is said that the word of the Lord came to him, and then he spoke (Jeremiah 35:12). The prophecies spoken by Jeremiah were often spoken as though he were YHWH



Himself (Jeremiah 22:1-23:40; 28:2-4; 35:13-19). It seems that Jeremiah spoke the very same words that God first spoke to him. Some twenty years later, God spoke to Jeremiah and commanded him to write down all of the prophecies that were given to him against Israel and Judah (Jeremiah 36:1-3). Jeremiah dictated "all the words of the LORD which he [God] had spoken to him [Jeremiah]," to Baruch, son of Neriah (Jeremiah 36:4). It is possible that what Jeremiah wrote was not word-for-word what God had originally spoken, unless God superintended Jeremiah's memory so that he could remember everything he had prophesied over the last twenty years, word-for-word. This writing was burned by King Jehoiakim of Judah, so Jeremiah was commanded to write the words again. Jeremiah repeated the process through Baruch, and added many other sayings to it (Jeremiah 36:28-32). Whether or not the two scrolls matched word-for-word in the material that was repeated, cannot be ascertained. Nothing is said about the nature of the transmission, except that all the words of YHWH were written down.

God commanded Habakkuk to write down a vision he had been shown on a slab for all to see. The vision would eventually come to pass and everyone would have the writing as a witness against them (Habakkuk 2:2-3). The inscribing of this vision onto the slab was faithful to God's vision to Habakkuk, so that it could be considered the word of God that would "speak and not lie" (v. 3). This, again, seems to suggest that the writings of the prophets are word-for-word from YHWH, having written exactly what they heard YHWH say, or are so close that the written prophecies can be considered the truth of God, and can testify to mankind.

### *Synoptic Gospels*

Matthew records Jesus' statement when He said, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (5:18). This verse is very important for our understanding of the nature of inspiration. The inspiration behind the Old Testament Scriptures had to occur in such a way that the very words employed by the authors were either determined, desired, or accepted by God. Jesus upheld the words of the OT to such an extent that He said not one jot (the Hebrew letter *yod* which looks like the English apostrophe) or one tittle (a little protuberance on the Hebrew letter *dalet* that distinguishes it from the letter *res*) of the OT would fail to come to pass. If the authors of Scripture were only guided in their thoughts (conceptual inspiration), and not in the very words which they spoke, how could Jesus make such a statement?

When Jesus was arguing with the Saducees over the doctrine of the resurrection, He quoted Exodus 3:6 to prove the validity of a resurrection, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32). Jesus' entire argument centered around one word, and the tense of the word at that. If the understanding of the nature of inspiration was that of illumination or conceptual inspiration, this one word and its tense would not have carried much, if any force in Jesus' argument. The Saducees would have completely dismissed Jesus' quote as unworthy evidence. Jesus seems to make a clear case that in some way even the tenses of the words of the OT are inspired by God, and thus authoritative and true.

The nature of inspiration may be alluded to in Mark 12:36: "...David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared: 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet' " (NIV). "By the Holy Spirit" is a dative of means, indicating that it was by means of the Spirit that David said what he said. Jesus was quoting Psalm 110:1. Although *we* know it to be a messianic psalm looking back in retrospect, David nowhere claimed that it was prophetic. It is simply a psalm of David, yet it is said that he spoke by means of the Holy Spirit. Even though the writing appeared to be a mere psalm of David, it was in fact written by the Spirit of God. God used David to accomplish this writing, though David may not have even been aware of its significance.

The beginning of Luke's gospel offers some tremendous insight into the nature of inspiration (Luke 1:1-4). Luke claims that many had undertaken the project of writing an account of the things believed by the church, as they were told by the eyewitnesses to the life and events surrounding Jesus Christ. He declared that he had investigated the history from the beginning, and having gained a perfect understanding of the matter, set out to give an orderly account of Jesus' life and words. He used others' work in preparation for compiling his own.

If inspiration was mechanical dictation, we might have trouble understanding Luke's use of other materials from which he did studies into the historical matter on which he was about to write. Luke even gave a human purpose for his writing; i.e.. to assure Theophilus of the things he had already been taught. Whatever the nature of inspiration, it must include the human author's personal knowledge of the material, and the human purposes for writing.

#### *Acts*

The apostles declared a similar statement to that of Jesus in Matthew 22:43, saying, "[God] Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?" (Acts 4:25). David's mouth was the instrument through which God spoke Psalm 2:1-2 (*dia* followed by the genitive). Although it was a human author who penned Psalm two, the words are attributed to God instead, even though there is no trace of divine authorship in Psalm two, only that of David. Paul made a similar statement to that of the apostles in Acts 28:25, when he said God spoke through Isaiah.

#### *Pauline Corpus*

It is in the Pauline corpus where we find one of the foundational texts for Biblical inspiration. In II Timothy 3:16 Paul said all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. "Inspiration" comes from *qeo*pnustoj, literally meaning "God-spirated," or "God out-breathed." It is not the writer who is God-spirated according to this text, but the writings themselves.<sup>24</sup> This being so, Scripture is verbal inspiration by its very nature, because God's inspiration pertained to the written documents, which consist of words. Verbal inspiration simply means that every word of the Bible is the Word of God and is true.<sup>25</sup> Although verbal inspiration does not deal with the mode of inspiration, it does refer to the extent of inspiration, which will affect our view of the mode.

Some very interesting human elements shine through Paul's epistles. For example, in I Corinthians 1:12-17 Paul is arguing against the factions that had developed in the church when certain people declared that they were followers of Peter, others of Paul, or Christ. To show the ridiculousness of these factions, Paul asked if they had been baptized into *his* name. They had obviously been baptized into the name of Christ because they are His disciples. To demonstrate that he was not trying to draw disciples to himself, he made the point that he did not even do much baptizing: "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name" (vs. 14-15). This completes Paul's thought. Here he clearly stated that he only baptized these two individuals. Then in the next verse he said, "And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other" (v. 16). Here Paul seemingly remembered that there was one more person he had baptized. As a disclaimer for any more that he might have forgotten, Paul stated that he did not personally remember any more.

If every word of the Bible was given by inspiration of God, what do we make of such phenomenon? Are we to believe that this is a divinely intended slip-of-the-mind? Did God inspire Paul to momentarily forget who he baptized? Why did God's inspiration not bring to Paul's memory all that he had baptized when Paul made his first statement?

Paul did attest to a verbal revelation from God. In comparing the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of God, Paul said that he spoke of the things freely given to us by God, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;" (I Corinthians 2:13). The Holy Spirit teaches through words. Most would not dispute this fact. The question centers around the extent of the words God uses. God uses language (words) to communicate His truth, but when communicating that truth through men, is every word directly given by God to the medium, or does God only give enough words to communicate the basic truth, to which His prophets clothe with other words?

In I Corinthians 7 there are even more baffling statements. On three occasions Paul said that what he was writing was not the commandment of the Lord, but his own commandment or judgment (I Corinthians 7:10, 12, 25). If Paul believed he was being inspired to write this epistle, why would he have stated that these were not the commandment of the Lord, for in fact they would be inspired by Him, and thus authoritative? If God dictated these words through Paul, then how are we to account for God saying that these commandments or judgments were not from Him? It seems that Paul was not aware of the fact that he was writing inspired words from God. If he was, he did not communicate such in the epistle; which if he would have, it would have added weight to his argument.

Paul told the church at Thessalonica that he thanked God because of the way in which they had received the words spoken by Silas, Timothy, and himself. Paul said that they did not receive them as the words of men, but as they truly were, the words of God (I Thessalonians 2:13). Part of Paul's proof was that the words worked effectually in them (v. 13). It is very unlikely that Paul was claiming verbal inspiration when he preached to the Thessalonians, in the same sense that he believed the OT to be inspired. Instead, he was pointing out that his message

was God's message, and was truth. It was not a message coming from the mind of mankind, but a message coming from the mind of God.

Paul's meaning here is no different than the way in which we speak today. When it is said that a preacher is preaching the Word of God, we do not assume that he was speaking inspired revelation from God, but that his message is consistent with God's message. Paul spoke the same revelation given to him by Jesus Christ, but his speech itself was not inspired simply because of his office, as some have tried to claim based off of this verse.

In a very personal letter to Timothy, Paul asked Timothy to bring to him his cloak, books, and parchments, when he would come to visit Paul (II Timothy 4:13). This is just one of the many personal remarks that Paul makes. This too gives evidence to the humanness of Scripture. Concerning the awareness of the authors when being inspired, if Paul would have realized that what he was writing was divine Scripture, it may be wondered if such statement like these would be made. These statements give great weight to the argument that the authors of Scripture did not always realize that they were being inspired by God to write Scripture. Other personal letters such as I Timothy, Titus, and Philemon also indicate a passive understanding of the significance of what was being written. If the authors did not realize they were writing Scripture, how did God ensure that every word written was as He willed it? We might even wonder if God willed that every word of His be dictated word-for-word, or if God even spoke to all of the authors through words.

### *Johanine Corpus*

John does not say much concerning inspiration, and there is not much material to even make assumptions from. One area in which we can see the humanness of his gospel is in John 20:31 where he stated his purpose for writing the gospel; i.e. so that his audience might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and have eternal life. This was *John's* purpose. Although it could also have been, and most assuredly was the purpose of the Holy Ghost, John recognizes it as his own. He was not forced to write the way he did, but chose to write as he did in order to accomplish his, and God's purpose; i.e.. that man might believe and be saved.

John records many statements that portray Jesus' relationship to the Father. Jesus' many statements concerning the origin of His doctrine and words sheds some relevant light on our topic. According to Jesus, the content of His message was directly from the Father (John 8:26, 28, 38, 40). Even His words were from God. Jesus said that His words would judge the unbeliever on the last day because He did not speak of His own accord, but the Father told Him what He should say, and He spoke accordingly (John 12:48-50). Jesus was not the author of divine revelation, but rather the recipient. The very words He spoke were taught to Him before He ever taught them to others, yet even during this transmission from the Father to Jesus, what the man Jesus Christ said was considered to be the very words of the Father.

Jesus then, declared that He had given the apostles the words that He had been given by the Father, and prayed for those who would believe on Jesus through the

words of the apostles (John 17:8, 20). Jesus considered the words of the apostles to be faithful to His own words, which in turn were faithful to the words of the Father. If such transmission of the Father's doctrine could be made and could still be considered to be the same divine revelation from the Father, and the Father's words, surely God could direct the apostles to write down His words and it still to be considered God's Word too. Jesus seems to have mentioned this process when He said that the Holy Ghost would teach the apostles all things and bring all of Jesus' sayings back to remembrance (John 14:26; see also John 16:13).

The second and third epistles of John are personal epistles written to a certain lady and her children, and Gaius respectively.<sup>26</sup> The very fact that they are personal letters attests to the human intention behind them. God did not inspire the letters for just the individuals to whom they were written, but John makes no indication that a wider reading is ever intended. They seem to be letters written to friends in the faith, just as you or I might write today. Could it be that John did not realize that he was being inspired?

The Book of Revelation is quite different from John's other writings. From the very beginning, John declared that what was about to follow was direct revelation from God, the testimony of Christ, the Word of God (Revelation 1:1-3). John heard words and saw visions while in the spirit and penned them accordingly (Revelation 1:10, 19). John wrote what he saw while in the Spirit. There could be no better example of divine guidance in writing than that of this book. John ends the book by commanding that no words be added to it, nor taken away, lest there be serious consequences (Revelation 22:18-19). This gives credence to a verbal inspiration of that which was written.

### *Other New Testament Writings*

Peter's main contribution to the nature of inspiration is found in II Pet 1:20-21. He noted that the Scripture was written by man, but the content of what they wrote was not from any personal interpretation, nor did it proceed from their will, but rather from the Spirit of God. The ideas did not originate with them. The way in which the authors spoke was by being *moved* by the Holy Ghost. "Moved" is *feromenoi*, a Greek passive participle meaning, "to be carried, be borne along." This same word was used by Luke describing the ship being carried along by the wind in its sail in (Acts 27:15, 17). In some way, God carried the author in the Spirit so that the author would not inject any of his own personal ideas and biases, but would speak faithfully the Word of God.<sup>27</sup> The initiative is assigned to the Holy Spirit, and by bearing them along in the Holy Ghost, the product can be said to be the divine work and words of God Himself. Keathley comments:

This teaches us that both God and man were involved in the production of the Bible, but in such a way that God was the ultimate source (though man's will was involved, Scripture was never the product of human will). God both directed the writing and guaranteed the accuracy of the product. The human authors actively spoke God's Word and they were more than dictation machines, but to ensure the accuracy of what was spoken, the human authors were moved and carried along by the Holy Spirit.<sup>28</sup>

The author of Hebrews testified that God has spoken at different times and diverse

ways through the prophets (Hebrews 1:1). This would indicate that not all revelation or inspiration came in the same way. As far as the author's view of Scripture, on three occasions he attributed the sayings of David or Jeremiah to the Holy Spirit (3:7-11; 10:15-16; 10:17). There is not even a mention of the human author.

### **Systematic Formulation**

After having examined the major historical views and the relevant Biblical data, we now turn our attention to the summarization of the matter. So far, all we have done is examine what the Biblical writers said or implied about the Scripture and its dual authorship. Now we turn to forming a working hypothesis on how to account for all the Biblical data.

How is the finite and the infinite related to one another? In what way can we integrate the divine and human elements of Scripture? We can confess and believe that the truth of God can come through *both* human and divine elements in the same way that we believe God is the creator and sustainer of this world, and at the same time believe in cause/effect relationships. We know that God is active in His creation, and yet we can also confess "natural laws" that God uses to govern the world. To believe in one is not to deny the other. We must confess both. What we find difficult, if not nearly impossible to do, is to define what part God plays in the events of this world; i.e.. divine causation, and natural causation. We do not try to distinguish one from the other, even though we may not understand how they fit together.[29](#)

Drawing from the above analogy, I. Howard Marshall concludes that

on a human level we can describe its [the Scripture] composition in terms of the various oral and literary processes that lay behind it - the collection of information from witnesses, the use of written sources, the writing up and editing of such information, the composition of spontaneous letters, the committing to writing the prophetic messages, the collecting of the various documents together, and so on. At the same time, however, on the divine level we can assert that the Spirit, who moved on the face of the waters at Creation (Gen 1:2), was active in the whole process so that the Bible can be regarded as both the words of men and the Word of God.[30](#)

As has already been demonstrated, there were different ways in which the authors of Scripture were inspired. It is not possible to assign one way of inspiration to every writer. Moses and the prophets received their words in some sort of audible or visionary way, and apparently spoke and wrote the words near verbatim. This seems quite different from the evidence found in the poetic literature or epistles.. Although we cannot ascertain one universal way by which God inspired human authors to write His Word, some general observations can narrow down the possibilities. We may not know exactly how inspiration occurred, but we can know something of it by discovering how it could not have occurred.

It could not have happened by complete divine dictation. When one reads the original Hebrew and Greek texts, they will quickly become aware of the differing styles, vocabularies, and grammar employed by the various authors. Some books

reflect a higher use of language than others. For example, Isaiah's wording is much more beautiful than Amos'. Paul's Greek is much different than that of John. If God divinely dictated every word, we would expect to see a uniform use of grammar, and level of vocabulary, but we do not. This gives more evidence than almost any other phenomena found in the Bible to the fact that the authors contributed in some way to the finished product.

Paul giving his own commands (I Corinthians 7:10, 12), specifically saying they were not from the Lord, makes one doubt if Paul knew he was being inspired. As far as he was concerned, he was speaking from the wisdom of the Spirit (I Corinthians 7:40). His apparent forgetfulness over who he baptized (I Corinthians 12-17), and his personal request to Timothy to bring his personal belongings (II Timothy 4:13) all denote a tone other than divine dictation. There was such a liberty in the way Paul spoke that one must question Paul's awareness of being inspired.

It would seem that the only way to overcome any error, and to communicate God's word faithfully, would be to dictate the message to the writers. If there was not a divine dictation of the words, and the authors were allowed freedom to write under God's guidance (perhaps conceptual inspiration), seemingly not even knowing at times that they were writing revelation under the inspiration of the Spirit, how then can the Bible be considered to be the Word of God? This is especially perplexing when certain portions of Scripture are cited to prove a particular doctrine, and the entire argument hinges on a letter, punctuation mark, or the tense of a word. Jesus' use of the present tense "am" in Exodus 3:6 shows that even the grammar was considered inspired. Paul made a big deal of the fact that Genesis 17:8 uses the singular "seed," demonstrating the man Christ Jesus was in view. Jesus used the plural of "gods" in Psalm 82:6 to put down the Pharisees' complaint that Jesus called Himself the Son of God (John 10:35).

Conceptual inspiration cannot be entirely correct if every word, syllable, and punctuation is considered inspired by God, because man, by "putting meat" on the concepts given them him by God, could not produce inspired words that held authority in their smallest detail, because the revelation would not to be found in the words, but in the concepts behind the words. At best, only the whole collection of words put together would hold authority, and this still would only be because they portray the revealed and inspired concept.

There must be a way in which we can confess the Spirit's total control over the writing process, and yet at the same time make room for the human purposes as stated by the authors, expressions of communication, differing writing styles, differing grammar, and differing levels of vocabulary. Some have tried to deny the contribution of man, but it is not "necessary that the particular style and method of the writer should be abandoned. God may have wise purposes to answer in preserving this, while he secures, through his agency, an infallible declaration of his will. So that style, manner, etc., may be of the author's own choice, ...stated and taught under an immediate divine influence, without the possibility of error."<sup>31</sup> The human characteristics present in the Scripture are not an embarrassment to God. He is well aware of them. It might be compared to the divine accommodation that God made when He added humanity to His existence.

God was not ashamed of His humanness, and neither is he ashamed of the human distinctives found in His divine Word.[32](#)

In order to ensure that the words written were exactly as God would have them, and yet avoid using the human author as a mere medium, God would only have had to have been directing the thoughts of the authors. By guiding their thoughts, and using their own personal ways of expression and level of vocabulary, God would still be able to have the words used which would best portray the revelation He desired to communicate. "Inspiration involved God's directing the thoughts of the writers, so that they were precisely the thoughts that he wished expressed."[33](#) This takes into account even the specificity, or lack of specificity in which God wanted His revelation to be recorded.

The authors of the Bible followed the initiative of the Holy Spirit, and His guidance, although they continually retained their normal psychological and physical capacities. "The divine direction and control under which the biblical authors wrote was not a physical or psychological force, and it did not detract from but rather heightened the freedom, spontaneity, and creativeness of their writing."[34](#) The Spirit's work with the human authors is not to be thought of as a mechanical relationship between a divine master and an unknowing or unwilling subject, but rather like a worthy, personal relationship in which one individual moves on another and influences them, guiding them in a joint-effort, to reach a certain goal.[35](#)

Part of the solution lies in understanding what inspiration applies to. The inspiration of God must be assigned to the end product of the actual writings.[36](#) When the Bible says that men were "borne along by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21, *feromenoi*), this does not indicate mechanical dictation at the time of writing, of which information was unknown to the author before being inspired to write it. There was a preparation period before the writing. The prophets and other authors had experiences that they brought to the writing. The fact that the authors brought their experiences and prior understanding of God's revelation to their task of writing Scripture does not lessen the impact of God's work of inspiration. These experiences themselves can be said to be from God.

For example, Paul told the Corinthians that when he experienced tribulation, it was God preparing him to be able to comfort others who would go through the same. When Paul was comforted by God, it was so that he could comfort others also (II Corinthians 1:4-6). God prepared Paul for the end result before the result came to pass. Likewise God was preparing the authors of Scripture so that when it came time to write His Word, they were already prepared mentally and experientially for the process. God knew the authors of Scripture from before their birth and was providentially preparing their conceptual frameworks, experiences, emphases, and personalities for the task of writing His divine truth. God controlled the process of research and recall so that what was written was intended to be written by God Himself. They penned the words from their mind, as they were providentially led by the Spirit of God to recount the things they had learned by experience or revelation from God previously. It is in this divine leading that we find the most likely meaning of *feromenoi*.



No better summary can be given than that of the ISBE:

We seem safe only in inferring this much: that the gift of Scripture though its human authors took place by a process much more intimate than can be expressed by the term "dictation," and that it took place in a process in which the control of the Holy Spirit was too complete and pervasive to permit the product as the word of God. The Scriptures...are conceived by the writers of the New Testament as through and through God's book, in every part expressive of his mind, given through men after a fashion which does no violence to their nature as men, and constitutes the book also men's book as well as God's, in every part expressive of the mind of its human authors.<sup>37</sup>

### **Apologetic Interaction**

For those in favor of the mechanical dictation theory, it is argued that the information needing to be conveyed to mankind was too important to allow humans to have any contribution to it. It was very important for God to communicate His Word accurately to mankind, but using diverse humans with diverse contributions to the process need not color, nor pollute the revelation. If the subject matter is being handled by believers who were taught by the Lord Himself, and in whom the Spirit is at work, then we can be assured that they were under the guidance of the Spirit, and therefore their writings will display the very Word of God.<sup>38</sup> Being human does not demand error. Inspiration was of such a nature that the authors were kept from error.

Others claim that God could not use words to express His revelation because language is finite, and God is infinite. Any attempt to put God's revelation of Himself into words would automatically distort the revelation. Instead of verbal inspiration, all inspiration must be by insight or by concept only. This objection fails to recognize any possibility for God to condescend to the level of man, and work within the realm of mankind so as to reveal Himself to them. Although we can never understand God's true nature because of the chasm between His infiniteness and our finiteness, there is much that can be communicated to us. Besides, if the issue is God not being able to reveal Himself through words because of their inadequacy and finiteness, then God could not reveal Himself in any fashion, even by insight or concept, because these too are finite. Those who hold to concept inspiration believe that this allows them to bypass the problem of the human distinctive in Scripture, by claiming that God's revelation does not come in words, but it creates another problem by ignoring the portions which give evidence of a verbal, plenary view of Scripture (Matthew 5:18; Galatians 3:16).

If God uses concepts to communicate His Word, the concepts have to be expressed in some way. How are they to be expressed accurately? Concepts, in order to be transferred from one mind to another, must be encoded with various words. The more specific the words employed, the more accurately the transmission of the concept will be.<sup>39</sup> Without words, however, there can be no communication of concepts. For God to communicate and accommodate His concepts to man, He must use our words.

A particular concept or thought cannot be expressed by every word in any given language. There are a limited amount of words that can be used. Depending of the

specificity of the concept, sometimes there may only be one word that can be used to faithfully express a given concept.<sup>40</sup> The Spirit directed the thoughts of the Scripture writer, giving him precise concepts or in some cases precise words, and the writers correspondingly followed the divine initiative. "By creating the thought and stimulating the understanding of the Scripture writer, the Spirit will lead him in effect to use one particular word rather than another."<sup>41</sup>

The Partial Inspiration view falls short on both exegetical and philosophical grounds. The argument against the Bible being the innerant word of God, without any mistakes, is that since men wrote the Bible, and men make mistakes, the Bible can and does contain errors. This is a suicide argument because if men are so prone to mistakes, who is to say that the person arguing for this view is not mistaken in his argument? Just because we know that men can commit error does not mean that they always do, or must commit error.

We also need to ask ourselves whether or not God ever tries to do something but is not quite successful, or if God is always successful in that which He does? This aspect of the problem at hand concerns God's knowledge and ability. We may try to do something and fail because we do not have the ability, but this is not so with God. If the Partial Inspiration view is correct then we are led to believe that God tried to communicate His Word to man, but was not quite successful because the human personalities would not allow His Word to be transcribed accurately in certain areas. It may be objected that God preserved the salvific portions of Scripture without error because of their extreme importance, but not matters of history and science. My question to this would be why, if God had the ability to ensure that truth would be proclaimed in the salvific portions of Scripture, would He not ensure that every area of truth be recorded accurately?

God did not try to communicate His Word to men; He did communicate His Word to men. God is capable of taking humans who are prone to error and ensuring that they do not commit any error in the copying of His Word. Although God did not dictate His Word to the writers of Scripture, He was carefully overseeing the final product so that it would truly be an expression of His pure Word.

Karl Barth's charge that the Bible is no different than any other book in its formation, and that it only becomes inspired, or the Word of God when the reader is inspired by it, and it reveals to them Jesus Christ, is weak in the fact that while Barth emphasizes the need for *illumination now*, he denies the idea that it was *inspired then*, when originally written.<sup>42</sup> He admits that there is inspiration, but not in the original autographa, and its not inherent in the text itself, but in the experience with the text on an individual basis. Such an argument ignores the relevant Biblical data, and only pushes the idea of inspiration one step past the original writings.

A special word needs to be spoken concerning the tendency of some to define inspiration in a cut-and-dry manner, allowing for no mystery. In our attempt to secure the truthfulness of Scripture against attacks of liberalism, we may ignore some of the relevant facts about the transmission of Scripture in order to make it fit our model of inspiration and innerancy. Although our motives may be good, or integrity in such an approach is lacking. Many attempts to tightly define the nature

of inspiration and inerrancy are the result of a pre-commitment to a particular view of Scripture, and not to the evidence. Daniel Wallace observed that many times "Christians are more in pursuit of certainty than they are with truth." He said that "it would be better for us to have some doubts in an honest pursuit of truth, than it would be for us to be certain about something that was not true." With these words I concur.

There are some things in the transmission of the text for which a narrow view of inspiration and inerrancy cannot account for. This is especially true of the OT, seeing that it was written over a much longer period of time than the NT, and in a much different fashion. We must reckon with the fact that there is an older grammar of the Hebrew language which existed in Moses' day that is different from the grammar of the later books of the OT. This older grammar was revised around 1350 B.C. We know that the Pentateuch had to have had its grammar revised to fit the new form because the grammar of the OT is more or less uniform throughout. The Pentateuch, if it had not been edited to match the newer grammar, would be different than that of the OT, but it is not. Later scribes updated the text to reflect the newer grammar of their day. A cut-and-dry understanding of inspiration and inerrancy does not easily allow for such changes.

We must even question the necessity of neatly defining a theory of inspiration and inerrancy. Christianity does not stand or fall based on such theories. Whether it was conceptual inspiration or mechanical dictation does not change the fact that Christianity is true. Even if we found errors in the Bible, it would not prove that the message of the Bible is not true. It would not prove that Jesus never existed, or that His miracles are not real, or that He did not resurrect from the dead.

We must beware lest we come to think that the Christian faith depends on one's view of the Bible. This type of reasoning is ignorant of the historical fact that the early church did not have an innerent copy of the Scriptures. The majority of the people would never possess a copy of the Bible. Of those who did, the copies would contain many errors scattered throughout. It must be remembered that we are living in the days of the printing press when every book is printed alike. We seldom find errors in books. This is not the case in the days when each book was copied by hand.

The apostles did not even rely on a Bible for their preaching. Paul did not go to Corinth with a Bible in hand, and preach an exegetical message on Isaiah 58. Paul went to Corinth and gave them what he had; i.e. the gospel of Jesus Christ. He did not offer them a Bible. He offered them Jesus. He did not tell them to believe that the Hebrew Bible was inerrant in order for them to come to faith in Jesus. He told them the story of Jesus, the things He said and did, of His death and resurrection, and noted that it was foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Gentiles took Paul's testimony, mixed it with faith, and had a salvation-experience with Jesus Christ. Christianity is not dependent on an error-free Bible for its truthfulness. Only Jesus must be true for Christianity to exist. Although the topic of inspiration and inerrancy is important, the Christian faith is not at stake no matter side the ball falls on.

### **Relevance to Life and Ministry**

How does such a view of the nature and manner of inspiration affect our lives and ministry today? There does not seem to be any life-changing relevance to our lives as it pertains to any immediate behavior, but there are some subtle ways in which we are affected, especially in the life of the mind.

The main difference this study brings to the Christian is his/her outlook on the Bible. Instead of being a book of divinely dictated truths with no human input, or a book of mere concepts or spiritual insights with little traces of the divine, it is viewed as a divine-human book that faithfully communicates God's every Word through human words. Such a view may cause many of us to re-evaluate our understanding of what inspiration means. The main area in which this view affects our lives is in our understanding of inspiration, which affects our view of the Bible and its authority. It is a change of thinking, or a clarification of the way in which we think of the Bible.

When we understand that God used the individual writers' personal backgrounds and ways of expressing themselves literarily in order to communicate His divine truth, we learn that no matter how much we are in the will of God, and being used by God, our human element will always shine through. God uses *our* minds, styles, and emphases to perform His desires. God works with us to accomplish His goals, and is assured that our abilities, led and guided by His providence, will prove to be fruitful. God works with man to bring about His purposes. Just as He could inspire the authors of Scripture to be above error by leading them and guiding them through His providence, He can lead us and guide us into that which He wills, and see to it that the outcome will work out for the furtherance of His kingdom, and our good. Each individual has something to offer the kingdom of God, and it is our individual distinctiveness that makes us useful to God. He uses our own uniqueness to communicate His message to the world, and He is not limited by it, nor is He ashamed of it.

---

## Footnotes

1. J. Hampton Keathley, "Bibliology: The Doctrine of the Written Word." [http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297\\_57656](http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297_57656) [<back>](#)
2. Gordon L. Lewis and Bruce A. Demarest, *Integrative Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 132. [<back>](#)
3. Millard J. Erickson, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 206. [<back>](#)
4. Ibid. [<back>](#)
5. Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL, 1987, electronic media. [<back>](#)
6. Keathley at [http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297\\_57656](http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297_57656) [<back>](#)
7. Erickson, 207. [<back>](#)
8. John H. Gerstner, "The Church's Doctrine of Biblical Inspiration," in *The Foundation of Biblical Authority*, ed. James Montgomery Boice (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 27. [<back>](#)
9. Ibid. [<back>](#)
10. Justin, *First Apology*, XXXVI, found at

- [http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-46.htm#P3593\\_620967](http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-46.htm#P3593_620967) [<back>](#)
11. Gerstner, 27, referring to Origen, *Homily*, on Numbers 27:1. [<back>](#)
  12. Jack Rogers, "The Church Doctrine of Biblical Inspiration" (Waco: Word, 1977), 19, quoted in James Montgomery Boice, *The Foundation of Biblical Authority* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 28. [<back>](#)
  13. Bruce Vawter, *Biblical Inspiration* (Philadelphia: Westminster; London: Hutchinson, 1972), quoted in James Montgomery Boice, *The Foundation of Biblical Authority* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 28-29. [<back>](#)
  14. Robert D. Preus, "The View of the Bible Held by the Church: The Early Church Through Luther," in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman L. Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 363-4. [<back>](#)
  15. *Ibid.*, 364. [<back>](#)
  16. Martin Luther, *Sammtliche Schriften* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1881-1930), 1104, quoted in Norman Geisler, ed., *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 377. [<back>](#)
  17. Martin Luther, *Sammtliche Schriften* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1881-1930), 1770., quoted in Norman Geisler, ed., *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 377. [<back>](#)
  18. Martin Luther, *Sammtliche Schriften* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1881-1930), 1492, quoted in Norman Geisler, ed., *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 378. [<back>](#)
  19. Kirtische Gesamtausgabe, *D. Martin Luthers Werke* (Weimar: Bohlau, 1883), 80, quoted in Norman Geisler, ed., *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 378. [<back>](#)
  20. John Calvin, *Institutes*, IV. viii.; I. vi, 2. [<back>](#)
  21. J.I. Packer, "Calvin's View of Scripture," quoting Calvin, as found in *God's Inerrant Word*, ed. J.W. Boice (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974), 102. [<back>](#)
  22. Council of Trent, the fourth session as found at <http://history.hanover.edu/early/trent/ct04can.html> [<back>](#)
  23. Such references include the Book of Jashar (II Samuel 1:18), the annals of Solomon (I Kings 11:41), the annals of the kings of Judah (I Kings 14:29), the Book of Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet, Gad the seer (I Chronicles 29:29), the Book of Shemaiah the prophet, Iddo the seer (II Chronicles 12:15), and the annotations of the books of the kings (II Chronicles 24:27). [<back>](#)
  24. Lewis and Demarest, 143. [<back>](#)
  25. J. Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 187. [<back>](#)
  26. There is some debate as to the identity of the elect lady in II John. Some take this literally to refer to a lady, and others see John as typifying the body of Christ by the same term. Although this issue is beyond the scope of this paper, the author will state that he holds to the former view, and therefore maintains that II John is a personal letter, and not a letter for a particular congregation or the corporate body of Christ. One reason for this is verse four which speaks of the lady's children. The Greek possessive pronoun is in the singular, indicating that it is one lady's children, although if one sees the lady as referring to the collective body of Christ, the possessive pronoun could still be in the singular. [<back>](#)
  27. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, "Inspiration," on Bibleworks Version 4.0, Bibleworks, n.p., 1998. [<back>](#)

28. Keathley at [http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297\\_57656](http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297_57656)  
[<back>](#)
29. Analogy taken from Marshall in *Biblical Inspiration*, 42. [<back>](#)
30. I. Howard Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 42. [<back>](#)
31. John Woodbridge, *Biblical Authority: A Critique of the Rogers/McKim Proposal* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 62. [<back>](#)
32. Gordon R. Lewis, "The Human Authorship of Inspired Scripture," in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman L. Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 260. [<back>](#)
33. Erickson, 216. [<back>](#)
34. J. I. Packer, "The Inspiration of the Bible," in *The Origin of the Bible*, ed. Philip Comfort (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1992), 35. [<back>](#)
35. Lewis and Demarest, 162. [<back>](#)
36. ISBE, "Inspiration." [<back>](#)
37. ISBE, "Inspiration." [<back>](#)
38. Marshall, 40. [<back>](#)
39. Keathley at [http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297\\_57656](http://www.bible.org/docs/theology/biblio/biblio.htm#P297_57656)  
[<back>](#)
40. Erickson, 215. [<back>](#)
41. Ibid. [<back>](#)
42. Marshall, 37. [<back>](#)

[Email IBS](#) | [Statement of Faith](#) | [Home](#) | [Browse by Author](#) | [Q & A](#)  
[Links](#) | [Virtual Classroom](#) | [Copyright](#) | [Submitting Articles](#) | [Search](#)