

The Inerrancy of the Bible

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Your kind invitation to speak on the inspiration of the Bible was tendered to me perhaps because I had previously published on the subject. In one book I discussed at length the relationship between inspiration and the nature of language. In another book I surveyed the views of Karl Barth on inspiration. Then Christianity Today published a 24-page booklet on *Revealed Religion*. The outcome of these efforts, the correspondence and discussions that have followed them, have impressed on me the importance of one phase of the matter which at first I thought required only slight mention.

At the beginning it was my notion that the objections to Biblical inspiration needed to be refuted in detail. But that the Biblical view itself, which the objections objected to was almost universally understood because so well known. And how could it not be well known if so many objections were raised against it. It was not necessary, so I thought, to expound it. This was, I now believe, a misapprehension. Not only is the extent of the Biblical teaching widely unknown, but in more liberal circles, it is said that the Bible presents no view at all concerning its inspiration.

For an example, one may cite Emil Brunner's *Divine Human Encounter*. What I wish to point out is not so much his dictum that the early church surrendered to an evil pagan influence when it thought of revelation as a communication of truth, but rather the assertion that "the Bible contains no doctrine of the Word of God." Other have said the same sort of thing. Still others, without being so explicit, have minimized or even neglected what the Bible says about itself. Therefore the first main section of this lecture will aim to show not merely that the Bible, contrary to Bruner, has in fact a doctrine of the word of God, but also both that this material is abundant and explicit.

It is not hard to know where to begin. For, regardless of widespread ignorance, there is one verse that everybody knows, nearly everybody. I would surmise that even Emil Brunner has heard of it. But neither he nor many others appreciate its full meaning. The verse is of course 2nd Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

The exegesis centers on three words. The first word is *all*. This word requires little explanation, for its meaning is clear. It refers to all Scripture without exception. In so doing it establishes the doctrine of plenary inspiration. Or at least it will help to establish plenary inspiration, unless other verses definitely contradict it. The word *inspiration* is not yet defined, but whatever inspiration may turn out to mean, the meaning attaches to all Scripture. The Psalms are no more inspired than the list of names in 1 Chronicles 24 and 25. This is plenary inspiration.

The second word in the exegesis is *Scripture*. The word *Scripture* in the New Testament sometimes refers to the New Testament itself, as we shall see in a moment. But no one can

deny that it applies to the Old Testament. Hence, when the apostle says that all Scripture is inspired, he is, at the very least, asserting the inspiration of Kings, Chronicles, and the other Old Testament books. Since liberal theologians began by attacking the Old Testament, and even today allow some sort of superiority to the New Testament, they cannot take much comfort from trying to base an argument on the allegation that this verse does not include the New Testament. This verse definitely asserts the inspiration of the Old Testament. And if we accept the inspiration of Chronicles, we can hardly deny the inspiration of Corinthians.

Now the third, and most important word, for it is but one word in Greek, is the word *inspired of God*. More literally, the word is *god-breathed*. And the verse may well be translated, all Scripture was breathed-out by God. When, as in ordinary English, we translate the word as *inspired* or *inspiration*, we could get the impression that there was some Scripture already in existence and then God breathed some breath into it. This is not at all what 2nd Timothy 3:16 says. The verse very literally says that God breathed out all the Scripture. A little more metaphorically, we could say that the Scripture is God's breath.

At this point I do not wish to belabor the conclusion that God does not breath out lies, falsehoods, errors, or mistakes. However, I do wish to return to the word *Scripture* and belabor one more important point. The word *Scripture* means something written. What is only spoken is not Scripture. All the less is something merely thought. The term *Scripture* refers to words written on paper, or sheepskin if you wish. But at any rate, to words written. Therefore the Biblical doctrine of inspiration does not concern the spoken prophecies or the many apostolic sermons. These may have been inspired, but 2nd Timothy 3:16 does not say so. Much less does this verse assert the inspiration of the thoughts of the prophets and apostles. The early position, that God inspired the prophets thinking, but left him to himself to express his thoughts in words, has no basis in the Bible. The Bible says that God breathed-out the written words. That is to say, the Bible teaches verbal inspiration. It is the words that were breathed out. Therefore the Reformers themselves and their successors taught the doctrine of plenary and verbal inspiration.

Let us now pass on. In the preceding exegesis it was sufficient to let the word *Scripture* refer to the Old Testament. But it also includes the New Testament. Peter, at the end of his 2nd epistle, refers to our beloved brother Paul who wrote in all his epistles some things hard to be understood which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. Note here that Peter classified all Paul's epistles with the other Scriptures. I do not aim to prove that the New Testament is superior to the Old. My purpose is merely to show that the epistles are themselves Scripture, and therefore, like the writing of the prophets, were breathed-out by God. Peter makes this point clear twice over. At the beginning of the chapter he puts both his own words and the words of Paul on a level with the words of the holy prophets. And at the end of the chapter, he explicitly classifies Paul's epistles, all of them, as Scripture.

Before we leave Peter, let us look in the first chapter of his second epistle. The words are, “no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” Note first that Peter is speaking of written prophecies, prophecies of Scripture. None of these is of any private interpretation. This is a somewhat unfortunate translation because it suggests that the matter has to do with our present day interpretation of the ancient prophecies. It also destroys the sense of the two verses because the reason given in the second verse has little connection with the activity of a present day reader or exegete. Both verses have to do with the activity of the prophet in his day. It is true that the word translated *interpretation* often means the solution to a problem and therefore its interpretation. But the root meaning is to sit free or release. Slaves can be set free, and debts can be discharged, as well as puzzles can be solved. Therefore, I suggest this translation: “No prophecy of Scripture came into being by private release for the prophecy did not come in old time by the will of man but only men of God spake as they were moved or brought along by the Holy Ghost.” Even if objections are raised against my translation, it is clear that the verses assigned to God the initiation of every prophecy. No prophecy of Scripture was ever made by the will of man. In every case the prophet was brought along by the Holy Ghost.

In a lecture that will take less than one hour, it is desirable to select two or three verses that are surefire clinchers. So clear are they that further quotations are unnecessary. In this way, time is saved for a fuller exposition of other points. This method of using clinchers is called the proof-text method. And the proof-text method is a good method. Well do I know how it is ridiculed by liberal theologians. But I also note that when an Aristotelian scholar wishes to show what Aristotle’s view was on some topic, the scholar quotes Aristotle and gives book, page, and line. Aristotelian scholars do not object to the proof-text method.

Of course it is possible to choose irrelevant quotations. No method can prevent the scholars from making a blunder. But surely there is no other method for discovering what Aristotle or the Bible means than the method of quoting them. Now I believe the verses I have used are truly clinchers. But I do not want to give the impression that these few verses are the only Biblical verses to inspiration. Nor must you suppose I have exhausted the implications of any one verse.

In connection with this verse, that is 2nd Peter 1:20 and 21, and in addition to the foregoing exegesis, would you kindly note the phrase “prophecy of the Scripture” and the word *prophecy* that follows it. To understand the full significance of the two verses, one must consider what the Bible means by prophecy and prophet. In the Old Testament, when Moses first complained to God that he was not a fluent speaker, God replied that Aaron should be Moses’ prophet to Pharaoh. And what God said in Exodus 4:16 is “He shall be to thee instead of a mouth and thou shall be to him instead of God.” The message, therefore that Aaron would deliver to Pharaoh was the message of Moses. Similarly, as the comparison made by the verse itself shows, a prophet of God is one who gives the message of God, and the message is the prophecy. This, that we find in Exodus, is repeated many times. Concerning their prophecies, the prophets say “the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.” In which words the prophet is claiming to be God’s mouth,

just as Aaron was the mouth of Moses. Therefore I offer 2nd Peter 1:19 and 20 as a clincher for the verbal inspiration of Scripture. This is a good and proper use of the proof-text method because the verse says just what I have said it says and all the other pertinent references throughout the Bible confirm it.

But we have only begun. Next we turn to John 10:35 where Christ says "The Scripture cannot be broken." Jesus made this statement in answer to the Pharisees' charge of blasphemy. At this moment, we are not considering Christ's claim to be the son of God. Our present purpose is to see how Christ made use of the Scripture. In the argument, Christ quotes Psalm 82:6. Does he quote this Psalm because it is more inspired than some other Psalm? Or because the book of Psalms is more authoritative than the book of Chronicles? Quite the contrary. His mode of argument allows him to quote any Scripture whatever because it is all of a piece, it cannot be broken. Christ is saying that the Pharisees must acknowledge this verse because they must acknowledge the whole Old Testament. Here Jesus asserts the authority of every written word in the Old Testament.

At the beginning of this lecture, I stressed the need of exegesis because liberal theologians are so ignorant of the Bible that some of them can say "the Bible contains no doctrine of the word of God." But it is also true that students in more conservative seminaries, though they would not make so extreme a denial, are largely unaware of the extent of the Biblical material on inspiration. Unfortunately this material cannot be surveyed in one hour. I regret that the remainder of the New Testament material must be omitted, but some space must be devoted to the Old Testament teaching, even though extended exegesis has to be curtailed.

2nd Samuel 23:2 says, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me. And his word was in my tongue." This verse, which asserts verbal inspiration by the Spirit of God, may be used as a heading for many other verses that say essentially the same thing. For example, God said to Moses, "I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shall say."

Consider also a series of verses from Jeremiah. "The words of Jeremiah, to whom the word of the Lord came." That's in the first chapter, first two verses. And then again in the first chapter, verse 7 to 9, "but the Lord said unto me, say not that I am a child. Whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak. Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, 'behold, I have put my words in they mouth.'"

Not only are there numerous statements that the word of the Lord came to me (Jeremiah 2:1, 7:1, 11:1, 16:1, and so on and so on.). But specific messages are said to be the words of the Lord without any explicit reference to the fact that Jeremiah is speaking or writing. For example, "at that time saith the Lord they shall bring out the bones of the Kings." That's Jeremiah 8:1. Just a few verses below, both of these ideas are combined. "Thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord." Or again in Jeremiah 10:1, "Hear the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, o house of Israel." In fact the prophecy of Jeremiah is crowded with expressions of verbal revelation.

That the words of God are true words should not need saying. But the Psalmist writes, “the law of the Lord is perfect.” And “the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace.” All 176 verses of Psalm 119 commend the word of God. And in connection with the Psalms we may refer to the New Testament statement, “This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake.” Acts 1:16. Note that the written words were those spoken by the Holy Ghost through the mouth of David. Here we have a strong assertion of verbal revelation.

Not every verse speaks so clearly. Not every verse asserts plenary and verbal inspiration. Some do. But other may mention verbal without referring to all Scripture, and some may refer to all Scripture without mentioning the written words. But when all the verses are collection, the doctrine of verbal and plenary inspiration appears in incontrovertible force and amazing repetition.

It is unfortunate that this amazing repetition, the material in its full extent, cannot somehow be covered in one lecture. But it must be reserved for more lengthy study. At any rate, here is the place to draw a preliminary, but extremely important, conclusion. The conclusion is that the Bible itself teaches verbal and plenary inspiration. One is non-plussed when a theologian like Brunner says that the Bible itself offers no theory of the word of God. The Bible view of its own source and nature is set forth so fully that such a denial can only be referred to as the technique of the big lie.

With this conclusion established now, that the Bible teaches verbal and plenary inspiration, it is necessary to consider some objections. There is one objection that has been used massively by the liberal theologians and has also been more cautiously used by some who still want to be known as evangelicals. A doctrine of inspiration, so they say, must be worked out, not only on the basis of what the Bible says about itself, but also on the basis of the phenomena of Scripture. By this is meant the verbal inerrancy of Scripture must be tested by determining, not so much what the Scripture says about itself, as whether or not the Scriptures speak the truth on matters historical, geographical, scientific, and the like.

The fully developed liberal theologian could very well admit that Scripture itself asserts its own inerrancy. But then add that this is just another of the long list of Scriptural blunders. The theologian who has just begun to the edge away from the position of historic protestantism and still wishes to be known as an evangelical, is more cautious. He is not willing to speak of a long list of Scriptural blunders. He has only two or three difficulties. Two or three insignificant places where the Bible has unfortunately missed the exact truth. But let me point out, with force, that the theological position is the same in both cases.

Whether the list of blunders is long or short., both these theologians contradict Christ who said, “The Scripture cannot be broken.” The liberal and the pseudo-evangelical both repudiate Christ as well as the Scripture. To answer the liberal would require a long treatise on archaeology

covering each point in this list, in his list. Archaeology has done remarkably well in this regard. And I have no time now to recount the numerous instances in which archaeological discoveries have forced the liberals to retract their accusations. But to the pseudo-evangelical who has just left the historic position of Protestantism, I wish to say this: If the Bible is in error in the hundreds of places where it speaks of its own inspiration, if the Bible is a hundred times mistaken about its own nature, what confidence can we have that it is not mistaken about the nature of God? If we cannot accept its view of itself, why should we accept its view on the atonement, the resurrection, justification, or anything else? Our only knowledge of redemption, regeneration, heaven and hell comes from the Bible. Give up the Bible and no Christianity remains, none at all. I hope my voice carries about 2000 miles.

A second objection to verbal and plenary inspiration can be reproduced by repeating a verse previously quoted. The verse was, "The Scripture which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake." And the rejection is the great outcry against the theory of mechanical dictation. The liberals regularly accuse orthodox Christians to reducing the prophets to the status of typewriters, or at most, stenographers. This makes them machines and violates their personality. Since it is unthinkable that God would violate anyone's personality, the doctrine of verbal inspiration must be rejected no matter what the Bible says.

In answer to this objection, I would like to make a minor point and a major point. Actually it is hard to tell which of these points is major and which is minor. But one is more remote and fundamental, the other is immediate and direct. The more remote and fundamental reply is the denial of the liberal concept of God on which their concept is based. For the liberal, man has certain rights that God cannot violate. Man is in some way independent of God and God is in some way subject to rules of justice that he did not set up. The Bible however presents a sovereign God who out of the same lump of clay create one man to honor and another to dishonor. No man has the right to complain to God and ask, "why has thou made me thus?"

Obviously God has created rocks and trees, birds and elephants. And no bird has the right to complain that it is not an elephant. Similarly, God is sovereign in creating men. And if he has created some men to be used as typewriters at times, no one has a right to complain. Hence the first reply to the liberals is to reject their notion of the relation between God and man. God is not man's valet nor even his cosmic pal and co-pilot. God is the sovereign creator against whom no one has any claim whatever.

The second reply to the liberals is more directly pertinent to verbal inspiration. And the reply asserts that although God has the right to create typewriters and stenographers, neither the Bible nor the Reformed theologians teach that the prophets were such. The liberals have ignored the teaching of Luther and Calvin, of Gausson and Warfield, and have themselves invented this theory of mechanical dictation. Then they attempt to put their invention in our mouths in order to refute us. The most effective way to explode this objection of the liberals would be to get them to read B. B. Warfield. But liberals do not read orthodox books as may be seen by inspecting their bibliographies. They even seem to think that we who proclaim the

historic Protestant position, read the Bible as little and as carelessly as they do. They seem to think we have never read the Gospel of Luke. Luke very explicitly asserts and his accounts support his assertion, that he obtained his information from eyewitnesses. In other words, Luke used the methods of historical investigation. He was neither an unconscious typewriter nor a scatterbrained stenographer.

Similarly, the liberals seem to think that we have never noticed the stylistic differences between the Psalms and Paul's epistles. Now perhaps at this point the liberals would reply, "oh yes, you have noticed Luke's methods and the stylistic differences, but what you fundamentalists never notice is that verbal inspiration is incompatible with differences in style. Verbal inspiration is mechanical, but style cannot be." In this situation one might have expected the liberals to have read B. B. Warfield and to see whether or not historic Protestantism had ever considered this point. If the liberals had done so, they would have seen that verbal inspiration does not mean mechanical dictation, and that God's breathing out the words is not inconsistent with stylistic differences.

It is true that Calvin and others have used the word *dictation*, but neither the English word *dictate*, nor the Latin *dictare* is restricted to the kind of dictation a stenographer receives. If we say that conscious dictates a certain course of action, we do not picture a stenographer. We could also say that God dictates the course of history, in which case no words at all are necessary. Of course dictation often refers to stenography, but it can also designate an authoritative imposition and control of any sort. It is in this latter sense that Reformed theologians have spoken of dictation and verbal inspiration.

Let me quote one short paragraph from the person I have now twice mentioned, B. B. Warfield, from his book, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, "It is by no means to be imagined that it is meant to proclaimed a mechanical theory of inspiration. The Reformed churches have never held such a theory. Though dishonest, careless, ignorant, or overeager controverters of its doctrine have often brought the charge. Even though special theologians, in whose teeth such an accusation has often been thrown, particularly Gaussen, are explicit in teaching that the human element is never absent."

The charge of mechanical dictation is an old one. Yet since it continues to be used, it must continued to be answered. There are also new objections that need discussion. This section, therefore, will consider two related objections. Objections that might be used separately but are more frequently conjoined. They differ from the old dictation argument in that the old one aims to show that plenary and verbal inspiration is false. Whereas the new objection dismisses verbal inspiration as meaningless. To do so, the argument proposes a new theory of language under which inspiration would make no difference, and combines this theory of language with a redefinition of the nature of religion.

Language, so it is said, has evolved from the chirping of birds and the unintelligible grunts of pigs. Or, if animal ancestry is not stressed, primitive human beings are supposed to have

invented sounds to designate the visible, tangible, things of the material universe. Then, by the use of figurative expressions, and particularly by a process of analogy, language rises from tangible reference to more abstract and intellectual concepts. One book on the growth of language used the example of the word *kid*, which was transferred from a little goat to a human child by, I suppose, a sort of analogy.

That figures of speech and analogies occur in language, no one doubts. And the word *kid* is an ancient example of teenage slang. But when questions are asked about some other words, the preposition *av*, or about abstract terms such as *right* and *duty* in ethics. Or about *mass* and *relativity* in physics. Or, most emphatically, about the number *one* in arithmetic, the explanations trail off. Some of these linguists have tried to explain the number one by the experience of a primitive man's seeing one tree or one stone. What this type of explanation fails to notice is that the primitive man before he can identify any object as one, must already have the idea of unity. Indeed, the problem is not really a problem about language at all. If a man has a concept, any concept, he has no great difficulty in inventing a sound to designate it. The difficulty is in learning the concept. And empiricism cannot explain the concept of unity.

When, finally, these empirical linguists come to theology, as some of them do, or when theologians utilize their implications, the result is that talk about God becomes meaningless. In its most extreme form, the form of logical positivism, all metaphysical and all theological statements are devoid of meaning because they cannot be verified in sensation. Logical positivists then do not try to accomplish the impossible, they prudently cease talking about religion and confine their studies to physics.

But there are others who still want to talk about theology and religion. Although language, because of its alleged sensory origin, is incapable of expressing truths about God, these theologians think they can still find a use for language in religion. They assert, that although the literal meanings of the words cannot be detached from their sensory origins, it is possible for religious purposes to use words symbolically. Words like justification and atonement, word God itself, can have a symbolic meaning. Nor is this merely a matter of words. It is a matter of concepts, too. Emil Brunner asserts, "all words have only instrumental value." "Neither the spoken words," but listen to the next phrase, "nor their conceptual content are the word itself, but only its frame."

This theory of language and concepts puts an end to verbal inspiration and to all theology as well. One can understand that the word *tree* or *stone*, that is the sound pronounced, is a symbol of a certain tangible entity. One can also understand that the word *one* is a symbol for a certain concept. And they are simply symbols, for if I were speaking French or German, I wouldn't say *one* or *tree*, I would say *ein* and *baum*, something like that. The sounds are simply symbols. But obviously, if we do not know what a *tree* means, or what *one* means, the word's symbols are useless to us. Without the knowledge of the tree, the word *tree* has no meaning.

But now the words *God* and *justification*. And not only the words the sounds pronounced, but their intellectual contents, are called symbols. We ask, symbols of what? Now I make a noise, *tree*, that's a symbol of something that grows out there with leaves. Now I make a noise, *God*, not merely the noise, but the concept, what is it a symbol of? Well, whatever *God* and *justification*, other terms, whatever they are symbols of must be expressed in religious language or perhaps even in religious concepts. But these too are only symbolic, and the question keeps reappearing. What are these symbols of? Theology then is reduced to symbols and can never escape symbolism to get into contact with reality.

Theology in this construction is no longer knowledge. Verbal inspiration is useless for it makes no difference whether the sentences are true or false. And this is just what Brunner admits. For along with his rejection of all intellectual content, he also adds that God can speak his word to man even through false doctrine. And yet these theologians acknowledge some kind of religion. Their religion however is not a religion of truth. It is anti-intellectual and thoroughly irrational.

For some writers, religion may consist of an emotional jag, others call in aesthetic experience, and in the past at least a few have recommended a mystic trance. This kind of religion despises logic, glories in contradictions, and deifies paradox. It is a religion devoid of knowledge and truth. It is also devoid of anything a Christian can recognize as God. When Brunner said that the word of God had no conceptual content, and that God can speak even through false doctrine, he really implied that God cannot speak at all. If I should ask God, "What is justification?", he could not tell me. If I should ask, "Is there a life beyond the grave?", God might say something false. If I wanted to know whether adultery is sin, God at best could only give me meaningless symbols.

This sort of God is not the God of Christianity. For Christianity claims, and Augustine long ago emphasized the claim, that God is the God of truth. God is wisdom. God's Son is his logos, his logic, the word of God. God created man a reasonable being, so that, by language and reason, man could understand God's message. This message is a rational message with an intellectually apprehensible content. It is a revelation that could be understood. And we identify that message with the words that God breathed out in Scripture.

Now, in conclusion, although it is less a logical conclusion than simply a last final point, I wish to indicate the place and importance of plenary and verbal inspiration in the Protestant scheme of things. At the time of the Reformation many points of theology were matters of controversy. Luther started out by opposing the sale of indulgences. This led him to an examination of the doctrine of purgatory. There followed also a vigorous fight over the number and nature of the sacraments. But more important than all these, and soon receiving more emphasis, was the doctrine of justification by faith alone. This came to be known, in slightly scholastic terminology, as the material principle of the reformation. The material principle, the stuffing, the contents of the Reformation. It was the matter, the contents, the substance of the Reformation. But in addition to this material principle, the Reformation also had a formal principle. The need of a formal principle is easily seen. Against Luther and Calvin, the Romanists asserted the authority

of the church. Perhaps the doctrine of purgatory is not mentioned in the Bible, but the Pope guarantees its existence on his own authority. Images, indulgences, and transubstantiation may not be Scriptural, but Rome has spoken and the matter is settled.

The question therefore concerns the seat of religion authority. Does the church have the final word and decide everything? Or is the Bible alone the supreme authority in all controversies? The position of the Reformers is clear. Let us first cite the *Westminster Confession* which in 1645 or 47 about, at the end of the Reformation period, summed up the Calvinistic position. "The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

The Lutheran position is no less clear. Consider Quenstedt, also a later theologian who summed up the movement as a whole. He wrote, "The canonical holy Scriptures in the original text are the infallible truth and are free from every error. No error, even the least, whether they pertain to doctrine or morals, to history or chronology, to typography or nomenclature." Let anyone should say that these later statements misrepresent the original position of the leaders themselves, Luther and Calvin, I would like to insist that Luther said everything Quenstedt said. For example, Luther wrote, "The Scriptures have never erred." Calvin's views are equally definite. In one place he says "God is its author." Continuing the quotation, "the principle proof therefore of the Scriptures is everywhere derived from the character of the divine speaker." And in another place he says, "God was pleased to commit his word to writing." And continuing the quotation, "Historical details were added which are also the composition of the prophets but dictated by the Holy Spirit, for the word of God is not distinguished from the words of the prophets as though the prophet had added anything of his own."

It would be possible also to quote the Belgic Confession of 1561, the Second Helvetic Confession, and numerous other documents. You may look them up yourselves. They all say the same thing. Therefore my final point is that verbal and plenary inspiration, that is the infallibility or inerrancy of the whole Bible is an essential part, and in fact the formal principle of Protestantism. One is not a Protestant or evangelical simply because he is not a Romanist. Obviously Hindus are not Protestants. Neither are Unitarians. A Protestant or evangelical is one who believes evangelical doctrine. Therefore no one who rejects the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture can properly and historically call himself a Protestant. Such a one may not assign all authority to the Pope. Such a one may belong to a non-Roman church, but such a one locating the ultimate religious authority elsewhere than in the Scripture is not an evangelical Christian.

The importance of this should be clear, for it is only in Scripture we find the material principle, the doctrine of justification by faith. It is only in Scripture that we find the nature of the sacraments. It is only in Scripture we find the atonement and the deity of Christ. Deny the truth

and authority of Scripture, and none of these doctrines can stand. Without the Bible there is neither Christ nor Christianity. With them we have a sure salvation.