

The Case For His Authorship

Holy Spirit – He Reveals

Please stand for the reading of God’s Holy Word. Reading 2 Peter, chapter 1, beginning at verse 16. This is the Word of God given to Paul by the Holy Spirit. Amen. Please be seated. Our focus this morning is verses 20 and 21, “**Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**”

On June 27, 1819, Adoniram Judson wrote of his first convert and baptism in Burma. Mung Nau had responded to the reading of Christ's “Sermon on the Mount.” He was deeply impressed. “These words,” Nau said, “take hold on my liver; they make me tremble.” Trembling before the truth of God’s Word is not unusual, God spoke through Isaiah the prophet 2,700 years ago and said, “... **this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. ... ⁵ Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at his word ...**” (Isaiah 66:2 and 5) Recognizing the truth of God when you hear it is enabled by the Holy Spirit awakening ones soul and it trembles within us with spiritual life.

For two thousand years the Bible has been taking hold of people's lives and has made them tremble. First, people tremble with fear because God’s Word reveals their sin. Second, people tremble with faith because God’s Word reveals His grace. It was just one single verse that convicted and converted the pagan Augustine. Hear the Word of God that turned Augustine from sinner to saved child of God. “**For in ~~it~~ Scripture the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’**” (Romans 1:17) Martin Luther, struggled as a monk, he did not know what God wanted of him? The light

broke through to his heart with the very same verse as Augustine. Martin wrote, “Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’ Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise.” (*Here I Stand*, pg.49) Martin’s soul trembled.

For Jonathan Edwards it was one verse also. Edwards wrote, “The first instance, that I remember, of that sort of inward, sweet delighting God and divine things, that I have lived much in since, was on reading these words, ‘To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.’ (1 Timothy 1:17) As I read the words, there came into my soul . . . a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense quite different from anything I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did.” (*Works*, vol. 1, p. xii) The Words of God penetrated his soul by power of the Holy Spirit. Augustine, Edwards and Luther’s souls trembled at the truth and power of God’s Word.

Paul wrote, “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18) From the beginning the Word of God went out to the nations. People in the Roman Empire cast away their false idols to live the gospel of Christ. Today, God’s Word is going forth to every corner of the world. As people hear the Word of God its power comes into their heart and they tremble. As Paul wrote, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:17–19)

Have you thought why this is true? Why has the Bible had this abiding application and power through the millennia? I believe the answer is found in our text. 2 Peter 1:20 and 21, “Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” This passage teaches that when you read Scripture, what you are reading does not merely come from a man but originates with God. The Bible is the writing of many different men. It is also far more than that. Yes, men spoke, they spoke with their own language and personality. But, beyond that, Peter mentions two other dimensions of their speaking: In verse 21, note they “spoke from God” by being “carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

Holy Spirit - He Speaks

First, these men, these writers of the Bible, “spoke from God.” What they have to say is not merely from their own limited perspective. They are not the origin of the truth they speak; they are the channels used by God. The truth they wrote is God's truth. Their meaning is God's meaning. Their message to mankind is God’s message.

Second, not only is what they “spoke from God”, but how they spoke it is controlled by the Holy Spirit. These men were “carried along by the Holy Spirit” and this enabled them to speak as instructed by God. God did not simply reveal truth to the writers of Scripture and then depart in hopes that they would communicate it accurately. Peter says that in the very communicating of it they were “carried along by the Holy Spirit.” The making of the Bible was not left to merely human skills of communication; the Holy Spirit himself carried the process to completion. God did not dictate every word, word-by-word. The Holy Spirit filled the minds of the writers so that they chose out of their own vocabulary and from their own

experiences the very words, thoughts and concepts given by God. Therefore, the words of the writers of the Bible are the very words of God.

Some might say that 2 Peter 1:20 and 21 only has to do with prophecy and not with all Old Testament Scripture and the writing in progress that was to be the New Testament Scripture. I disagree; look carefully how Peter frames his argument. In verse 19 Peter says that a prophetic word has been made “**more fully confirmed**” to him by his experience with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. Then in verses 20 and 21 he undergirds the authority of this prophetic word by saying it is part of Scripture. Verse 20, reads “**no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation.**” Peter is not saying that God inspires only prophetic parts of Scripture. He is saying, “We know the prophetic word is inspired precisely because it is a **‘prophecy of Scripture.’**” Peter knows this by the Holy Spirit and confirms that whatever stands in Scripture is from God, written by men who were “**carried along by the Holy Spirit.**”

Peter is teaching and confirms what Paul also taught. In Paul’s second letter to Timothy, that we just finished studying, he says, “**All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,**¹⁷ **that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.**” (2 Timothy 3:16–17) None of the Old Testament came by man’s thought and the writing in progress that was to be the New Testament was not man’s ideas either. All Scripture is the breath of God, given to men by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus spoke of the New Testament that would be written. Jesus said, as recorded in the Gospel According to John, “**I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.**¹³ **When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.**” (John 16:12–13)

The Apostle Paul testifies to the truth of Jesus' words when he wrote to the brethren in Corinth, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual." (1 Corinthians 2:12–13) Paul warns the Corinthians, who have a problem in living the gospel, the gospel Paul is telling them to live comes from "...Christ is speaking in me." (2 Corinthians 13:3) Paul affirmed this truth to the Galatians, as well, writing, "For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. ¹² For I did not receive *this gospel* # from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:11-12) History has proven Paul to be true; no person has shown proof that one word of what Paul wrote is false. If we look to Paul as our example of how an apostle writes then it is accurate to say that the New Testament, as well as the Old, are not merely the words of men with human wisdom, but are the very words of God. The Scripture stands as absolute truth through the millennia because God is eternally true and the writers of the Bible wrote as they were "carried along by the Holy Spirit."

This brings us to the only possible conclusion; The Holy Spirit is the divine author of all Scripture, which is only found in the Bible. The Holy Spirit is not the author of other books that men claim were inspired by God for the simple reason these books contain mistakes; it has been proven they contain false teachings and conflicts within them. Only the Bible has proven true over and over throughout history. I want to examine the implications of this truth. But first, I want to take a little time to layout the basis for our believing in this truth to help those who might be as one would say, "on-the-fence" and for the younger people that are working though what they do and do not believe.

The Case For The Belief In His Authorship

Most people come to trust in the Bible as a process – it often happens in stages.

Stage 1: We are guilty before the Holy God. The testimony of our broken lives, the reality of creation and the message of Scripture convict us that there is a God and that we are sinners who desperately need His grace. The message of Scripture comes into ones heart and convicts people that they stand guilty before the Creator and their soul trembles. This conviction is reasonable because we realize we have not honored the Creator and beyond not honoring God we have sinned against Him. We deserted God for the world and took idols of money, career, pleasure and many others. This realization is not a leap into the darkness or a leap of faith, but rather a step of faith as one evaluates the truth of God and the lies of the world.

Stage 2: Jesus wins our confidence of who He is. The second step on the way to a reasonable persuasion that the Bible is God's Word is that Jesus Christ is shown to us. Someone reads or tells us the story of this incomparable man-God who talked and acted like so much more than just a man. We see the authority He claimed, His forgiveness of sin and command over demons and control of nature. We see the purity of His moral teaching, His complete surrender to the will of God, His brilliant calm under cross-examination, His righteous fury against hypocrites, His tenderness toward little children, His patience with the humble seekers, His innocent submission to torture, and we hear from His lips the sweetest, most-needed words ever spoken, Jesus said of Himself, **“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”** (Mark 10:45)

So by the self-authenticating force of Jesus’ incomparable character and power, He wins our confidence and our trust and we take Jesus the Christ as Savior from our sin and Lord of our life. This is not an irrational persuasion. It is the way all people go about making reasonable decisions about whom they will trust in life. Will you

trust the babysitter with your children or this lawyer to give you good counsel or your friend to keep your secret? You look, you listen, and eventually you are persuaded or not persuaded that here is a person in whom you can place your trust and confidence. Jesus is that true and trusted friend, faithful always.

Stage 3: We follow the teaching and Spirit of Jesus. Once the character and power of Jesus has captured our trust, then He becomes the guide and authority for all our future decisions and persuasions. We begin to see the world as Jesus sees, we see who we are becoming as Jesus already knows who we will become. So, the third step on the way to a reasonable persuasion that the Bible is God's Word is to let the teaching and the Spirit of Jesus control how we evaluate the Bible. This happens in at least two ways. One is that we accept what Jesus teaches about the Old and New Testaments. When He says in John, “...Scripture cannot be broken ... because ... I am the Son of God” (John 10:35-36) we believe Him. Jesus made clear that the Law and the Scripture are true and eternal saying, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.” (Matthew 5:17-18)

We agree with Jesus' statements and base our confidence in the Old and New Testaments by His reliability and power. When Jesus chose the twelve apostles to found His church, He gives them His authority to teach and promises to send His Spirit to guide them into God's truth. We agree with Jesus and credit the writings of these men with the authority of Christ given through His Spirit to give us the Bible – the Word of God.

The other way the teaching and Spirit of Jesus controls our assessment of the Bible is that we recognize in the teachings of the Bible the many-colored rays of light refracted out from the prism of Christ whom we have come to trust. Just as Christ

enabled us to make sense out of our relation to God and bring harmony. So also, the many rays of light of His truth in every part of the Bible enable us to make sense out of hundreds of experiences in life and see the way to harmony with God. Our confidence in Scripture grows as we realize that Jesus affirmed it and as we realize that its teachings are as incomparable as Jesus himself. Time after time the Scripture helps us make sense out of life's puzzles - making sense of failing marriages, rebellious children, drug addiction, warring nations, the return of leaves in spring, the insatiable longings of our hearts, the fear of death, the coming into being God's children, the universality of praise and blame, the prevalence of pride and the admiration of self-denial. The Bible confirms its divine origin again and again as it makes sense out of our experience in the real world and points the way to harmony, eternal harmony of God.

I hope, therefore, that one of the doctrines we cherish at Canyon Bible enough to die for it and live for it is that God the Holy Spirit is the divine author of all Scripture and all Scripture is found in the Bible alone. The Bible is God's Word and not merely the words of men.

Personal Implications of Belief

I wish we could take all day to talk of the wonderful implications of the doctrine that God the Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible. Our time grows short this morning, so quickly let me list some of what this means to our hearts and minds that causes us to tremble before our Holy God. Your assignment will be to take these scriptures and as families expand on them this coming week. They are in your bulletin.

- God's words are eternal truth. **Psalm 119:142**
- God's words recorded in the Bible are the most reliable words ever written. **Hebrews 6:17-19**
- God's Word is powerful and works to change our hearts. **1 Thess. 2:13**

- God’s Word accomplishes His purpose and does not return empty. **Isa. 55:10-11**
- God’s Word is pure and refined. **Psalm 12:6**
- God’s Word sanctifies us in His truth. **John 17:17**
- God’s Word gives eternal life. **Ps. 119:37, 50, 93 and 107; Jn. 6:63; Mt. 4:4**
- God’s Word gives us wisdom, spiritual wisdom. **Psalms 19:7; 119:99-100**
- The purity of God’s Word gives joy and delight. **Ps. 19:8; 119:16, 92, 111, 143 & 174**
- God’s Word holds great promises for His children. **Psalm 119:11**
- God’s Word strengthens the weak. **Psalm 119:28**
- God’s Word comforts the distraught. **Psalm 119:76**
- God’s word shows us the right path for life. **Psalm 119:105**
- God’s Word confirms that Jesus brings salvation. **Ps. 119:155; 2 Tim. 3:15**
- The wisdom of God’s Word is inexhaustible. **Romans 11:33**

Praise God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit for this divine Trinity gives us truth, wisdom, joy, peace and grace that only His children understand and live. Jesus told His disciples and He tells us this truth, **“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”** (John 14:26-27) My beloved let us live the Word of God for His glory and our sanctification.

Let me close in prayer. God how precious to me are Your thoughts. Thank You, God the Holy Spirit for giving us the eternal gift of the Bible. God, Your truth and love surpasses the expanse of the universe that You created by Your Word – I am excited that I will learn more of You for all eternity. Your words and truths, if I were to count them, exceed the stars in the heaven and the gains of sand on the beaches of the world. How blessed you have made us, oh God, let us not take Your Word, the Bible for granted, let us read it, believe it, take it into our hearts and minds and live it out as Your witnesses to the world. God help us be faithful, fill us with Your Spirit that we may be filled with Your Word. Amen!