

(Some special emphasis is placed upon the origin and nature of the Bible as the word of God in these last few issues of Preacher Of The Word. I shall continue with lessons on the Bible because it is obvious that Satan's attack upon the religion of Christ begins here with fallacious interpretations and translations - Editor).

IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?

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The Bible is either the word of God or it is the word of men. By its very nature it must come from the mind of God or it is nothing but a deception perpetrated upon the human race. Its claims are from God by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It charges that man's wisdom and doctrines are false and destructive, while the wisdom and teaching of the Bible are from above and are pure and perfect (James 1:17).

The attacks on the Bible ever since it was revealed have failed to reduce its power and influence upon the human race in every generation. True, some nations and generations have suffered the loss of their souls because they rejected the Word of God or they did not know it, but that did not in any way destroy the word of God. Jesus said heaven and earth would pass away, but my word will not pass away (Matt. 24:35).

Revelation From God to Man

Divine inspiration has the function of providing the writers of the Bible with the truth from the mind of God to enable them to state all truth accurately. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . ." (2 Tim. 3:16). "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10).

This operation of the Holy Spirit was not for the purpose of the apostles personally, but was for the purpose of revealing divine truth to the world. Whether they wrote of the past, present or future, they always wrote with perfect assurance that the truth and all the truth was revealed unto them. They were able to go into the deep things of the mind of God by the Holy Spirit, as God was pleased to reveal them unto the apostles. They could know no more than was revealed, and we can know no more than the apostles revealed in the written word.

There are several persons standing between the Mind of God and the person to whom truth was revealed. Each has his work in this communication of God's truth to mankind. This does not mean that we cannot know for certain what the will of God is. It does not mean that we have no way to test that revelation to be sure it is pure from God. We do.

1. Jesus Christ—All revelation from God to man of this age must come through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. God speaks to us through His Son (Heb. 1:1,2). Inspiration must include Christ. When Christ ascended to the right hand of God, he sent the message from the Father through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen (Acts 1:22,23). No man can know the mind of God unless he learns it through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

2. The Holy Spirit—All revelation from God must come through Christ by the Holy Spirit, one of the persons of the Godhead. Christ commanded his apostles through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2). Paul said the Spirit searched the deep things of the mind of God and revealed them unto us (1 Cor. 2:10). Without the Holy Spirit, which stands between the mind of God and the mind of man, the process of inspiration in revealing truth to man would be impossible. The Holy Spirit does not speak of himself, but whatsoever he hears, he speaks (John 16:13). Christ is the one between God and man who commands the Holy Spirit what to speak. Inspiration is therefore impossible without Christ and the Holy Spirit.

3. The Apostles—In God's plan of revelation in this age it is impossible for man to know the mind of God without the apostles chosen by Christ to bear witness of him and all the truth. Christ selected them to be witnesses of him to all the world. Christ said the world must believe on him through the word of the apostles (John 17:21). These apostles were not to speak this word of themselves, but were to speak the words given to them by the Spirit (Matt. 10:20). Christ gave the commandments to the apostles through the Spirit (Acts 1:2,3). The apostles were the human agents (earthen vessels) through whom the Holy Spirit spoke the words of Christ to all the world. The process of inspiration must include the apostles in revealing God's mind to man. All these things are absolutely essential to inspiration of God's word to man.

4. The Translators—Though these translators of the original tongue of inspiration stand between men of tongues other than the Koine Greek and God, they are not absolutely essential as Christ, the Holy Spirit and the apostles are. It is possible for man to learn the original language and understand it, but it is much easier for men acquainted with the original tongue to translate it into the common language of people in other countries. These men are not supernaturally guided by inspiration in making the translation and are therefore subject to error. A translator is only right when his work is an exact reproduction of the original into another language. Neither a translator nor his translation can be considered always free from error or the work of inspiration itself, but it sometimes stands between the mind of God and the men to understand His will.

5. The Interpreters—Those who interpret the word try to bring out the meaning of the words that have been translated from the original language of the Bible. The interpreter may be the person himself, or a preacher or teacher. Like the translator, this person is not supernaturally endowed as were the apostles, and inspiration does not work in them. They stand between the mind of God and the mind of man in understanding what God has revealed. The interpreter is not always free from error. He is only right when he correctly brings out the truth from the words of God as given by Christ through the Holy Spirit to the apostles. Each learner has the solemn responsibility to search the scriptures to prove what is truth. "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

The mind of God is brought to each individual soul through this process. We must have Christ, who speaks from the Father, through the Holy Spirit to the apostles, who wrote down these words and left them for a permanent record of God's truth. The translators and interpreters take these words of infallibility and convey to men today the mind of God as given through the apostles. These translators and interpreters must be in harmony with the original word of the apostles to be respected.

This requires the right attitude and diligent study of the word of the truth of the gospel (Col. 1:5).

The process of revelation, *guaranteeing infallibility*, only goes as far as the apostles of Jesus Christ. We are required to "try the spirits, whether they are of God" and the method of doing this is to see if they are of the apostles (1 John 4:1-6). Many today do not regard all the words of the Bible as being infallible and consequently do not try to obey them as the word of God.

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