

# The Discipleship Wheel Illustration

## Chapter Four

### The Word Spoke and The Doctrine of Inspiration

Last Revised: 2/7/2012

#### Scripture Memory

II Timothy 3:16

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching,  
for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness*

#### Review

- Draw the Discipleship Wheel Illustration
- II Corinthians 5:17
- Galatians 2:20

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!  
What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

Rippon's Selection 1787

## The Word Spoke and The Doctrine of Inspiration

Inspiration is a common word in our vocabulary. Someone is “inspired” to write a great book or symphony. We find the movie or music “inspiring.” A patriotic deed “inspires” others to feats of bravery or sacrifice. There are many common uses of this word in the English language; but like so many of our words, “inspire” can have more than one meaning. When used in terms of the Bible, the word “inspired” refers to its divine characteristic. Literally, in the Greek “inspired” means “God breathed.” It is as if one can feel the breath of God on our face as He speaks to us from His holy Word.

**Chaffer/Walvoord** : “The Bible is the only book ever written that was inspired of God in the sense that God personally guided the writers. The inspiration of the Bible is defined as teaching that God so directed the human authors that, without destroying their own individuality, literary style, or personal interest, His complete and connected thought toward man was recorded. In forming Scriptures it is true that God employed human writers; but these men, although they may not have understood all that they were writing, nevertheless under the guiding hand of God produced sixty-six books that form the Bible in which there is amazing unity and constant evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in directing what was written. Accordingly, although written by human pen, the Bible is God’s message to man rather than a message of man to his fellow man.” (Chaffer/Walvoord, Major Bible Themes, Zondervan Press, 1975, page 16.)

In studying the doctrine of the inspiration of the Word of God we will look at a classic passages from scripture. II Timothy 3:16: *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.*

In approaching this verse we must remember the axiom that “interpretation is subject to definition.” For language to have meaning how we interpret a verse must be subject to the definitions of the key terms found within the verse. “Clean up the room” cannot be interpreted as “watch TV” “Clean up” and “room” both have specific definitions that limit a child’s interpretation of the statement. In the same way we cannot just fall back on the old knee-jerk statement, “Well, that is not my interpretation.” The Bible is not subject to what we feel it says. Our feelings, rather, are subject to what the Word of God says. To correctly interpret a passage we must understand the key words or terms in the passage. Then our interpretation may not and must not exceed these definitions.

**Gene Warr**: “But to truly abide in (obey) the Word of God it is imperative that we recognize its authority. The two great attacks on authentic Christianity have always taken one of two routes. Critics either attack the work and person of Jesus Christ or they attack the authority and authenticity of the Bible. So what you believe about the Bible is of great importance in applying it to your life.” (Gene Warr, You Can Make Disciples, Word Publishing, 1978, page 44.)

**I. All Scripture** – The first two questions most people have are: “What is meant by the term ‘All Scripture?’ What constitutes the Bible and why?”

A. The Bible recognizes a beginning and an end to the Word of God

1. Beginning: In our Lord Jesus Christ’s teaching He recognizes clearly the Pentateuch in general and Genesis specifically as the starting point of the Word of God.

Luke 24:27: *And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.*

- a. At what point does Jesus recognize the Bible’s beginning?
- b. Moses is the author of the first five books of the Old Testament. They are known as the Pentateuch or Law of Moses. What then would be the first book of the Law of Moses?
- c. What then is the first book of the Bible?

Luke 24:44: *Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”*

**ALL** 3956 *pas* (pas); including all the forms of declension; apparently a primary word; all, any, every, the whole: KJV-- all (manner of, means), alway (-s), any (one), X daily, + ever, every (one, way), as many as, + no (-thing), X thoroughly, whatsoever, whole, whosoever. (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance)

**EVERY, EVERYONE (MAN), EVERYTHING**

*pas* 3956 signifies (1) with nouns without the article, (a) "every one" of the class denoted by the noun connected with *pas*, e. g., Matt. 3:10, "every tree"; Mark 9:49, "every sacrifice"; see also John 2:10; Acts 2:43; Rom. 2:9; Eph. 1:21; 3:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; 2 Tim. 3:16, RV; (b) "any and every, of every kind, all manner of," e. g., Matt. 4:23; "especially with nouns denoting virtues or vices, emotions, condition, indicating every mode in which a quality manifests itself; or any object to which the idea conveyed by the noun belongs" (Grimm Thayer). This is often translated "all." (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985.)

2. According to Luke 24:44, which book does Jesus say is the beginning of the Bible?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. According to the revelations of the Bible, of Jesus, and of God what is the beginning of the Bible?

B. The Bible recognizes Revelation as the ending point of the Word of God.

Revelation 22:18-19: *I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.*

1. How does this passage speak to the fact that this is the last book of the Bible?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In this passage the Word of God is brought to a close. The last living Apostle writing the last book of the Bible closes the last paragraph with the following words of Revelation 22:20-21:

Revelation 22:20-21: *He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.*

3. There are two questions that are usually asked concerning this passage:
  - a. Doesn't this just refer to the book of Revelation? Read the study supplied below on this issue and write a summary statement in response to this question.
    - (1) It is important to remember that to God the Word of God is His book written by His Holy Spirit and that God transcends both time and space, knowing the beginning from the end and the end from the beginning.

- (2) As a result, God does not see the Bible as a library of books written by men, but as the Holy Scriptures written by God.
- (3) The dynamic nature of the Word of God is seen in the statement in II Timothy 3:16: *All Scripture is....* Paul knew that there were in existence inspired writings, that he was writing under inspiration, and that there would continue to be inspired writings until God closed the Word of God. (I Thessalonians 2:13: *And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.*)
- (4) Yet, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Paul spoke of it as a whole and complete work. God was writing a book to be read as a whole, not as separate books to separate people groups and times.
- (5) It would be as if you had a sports manual which concluded with, "These rules are final; nothing can be added or subtracted" and then changed the rules based on the argument that the statement only applied to the last chapter and not the whole book.
- (6) In addition, the book of Revelation contains revelation in all aspects of the Word of God. If you have new revelation, then it is new and added to the book whether you actually added it literally or not.
- (7) For example, if a sports manual ends with the disclaimer, "These rules are final; nothing can be added or subtracted" and you create new rules but argue that they are valid because you did not literally "add" them to the book; you are just using them. This would, of course, be considered nonsensical. They have been added, whether or not you did so literally. They change the very nature of the manual.
- (8) In the same way, whether the passage refers specifically to Revelation or the whole Bible, it is still an addition of information to the revelation of God found in Revelation and, as such, adds to or takes away from both the book of Revelation and the Word of God as a whole.

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Summary Statement:

- b. What about similar passages in the Bible which occur before this? Again, read the study supplied below on this subject and write a summary statement in response to this question.

(1) This injunction is found in other passages in the Word of God.

Deuteronomy 4:2: *You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.*

Deuteronomy 12:32: *Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it.*

Matthew 5:19: *Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

1 Corinthians 4:6: *Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written, in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.*

Something immediately stands out in these passages. They are obviously dealing with the adding to or exceeding what God is saying and not the close of scriptural revelation. The tone and wording is distinctly different than the finality of Revelation 22:18-19.

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- (2) Again, remember that God, when authoring the Bible by the person of the Holy Spirit, was not in a creative mood, being carried along by His creative ability and not knowing where it would take Him. He was not starting and stopping as the need arose. Rather, from the beginning He knew the end and included these admonitions throughout scripture as one would naturally do when thinking of an entire book of Revelation and not simply its subparts.
  - (3) An example of this is the admonition found in Deuteronomy 4:2. Even at the giving of that admonition both God and Moses knew that the process of writing the Law of the Lord was not over. We read it and other passages in the light of the knowledge that God knew, even if man did not, that He was putting together a body of scriptures which would come to be known as the Bible, the Word of God. These admonitions are that man should not add to it. God was free to do so, but man was not.
  - (4) In Revelation 22, with the passing of John the Baptist and the ministry of the Apostles, the revelation of God ceases for the church age. Any new information will be added by man, even if he claims it is coming from God.
    - (a) Revelation 22:20 reminds us in the light of the finality of revelation that He who testifies to these things says, *“Yes, I am coming quickly.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*
    - (b) It then closes with the reminder that the grace of the Lord Jesus suffices.
    - (c) The period of revelation has ceased for the church age. There will be new revelation when Jesus returns, and there will be new revelation when we go to heaven. But for now—the church age—revelation has ceased and is limited solely and only to the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, the Bible.

Summary Statement:

4. A word of caution to those who are now thinking, “Gee whiz, I wish I could live in the days of Revelation when things are really happening, rather than in the boring old days of the Bible.”
  - a. It was not such a great deal to live in the times of the Prophets. They did not necessarily know or understand what they wrote.

I Peter 1:10–12

*As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look.*

- b. Nor would it have been better to live in the times of Jesus. If you are thinking you would be asking Him questions, think again

Mark 3:14: *And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach. (And you would not have been one of them.)*

- c. Nor are we to think, “If only an angel would appear.” Angels yearn to understand what we understand.

I Peter 1:12: *It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look.*

- d. No, we are regenerated. We are born again. We have complete revelation. We have instant access. We are at the pinnacle of the revelatory age for mankind on the face of the earth and should rejoice and yet respond soberly to our stewardship of the Word of God.

I John 2:27: *And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.*

- e. Write a summary statement expressing how the Word of God is for us a superior blessing rather than to have lived in any other epoch of the people of God to date.

## II. *Inspired* – the form of inspiration has taken place in a number of ways

### A. Dictation

1. Some of the Word of God was dictated by God to the authors.
2. Examples of these are:
  - a. Moses

Exodus 34:1: *Now the Lord said to Moses, "Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered."* And again in Exodus 34:27: *Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."*

- b. Jeremiah

Jeremiah 30:2: *Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, "Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book."*

- c. The Apostle John

Revelation 21:5: *And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."*

### B. Proclamation

1. In other cases men proclaimed God's Word by the power of the Holy Spirit, God ensuring by His own devices that His Word was accurately recorded either at that time or at a later date.
2. What follows are just a few examples of the over 400 times the phrase *Thus says the Lord* occurs in the Word of God.

Isaiah 28:16: *Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed."*

#### **INSPIRED**

2315 *theopneustos* (teh-op'-nyoo-stos); from 2316 and a presumed derivative of 4154; divinely breathed in: KJV-- given by inspiration of God. (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance)

#### **INSPIRATION OF GOD, INSPIRED OF GOD**

*theopneustos* ^2315^, *inspired by God* (*Theos*, "God," *pneo*, "to breathe"), is used in 2 Tim. 3:16, of the Scriptures as distinct from non-inspired writings. Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale and the Great Bible have the rendering "inspired of God." (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985.)

Jeremiah 7:20: *Therefore **thus says the Lord GOD**, "Behold, My anger and My wrath will be poured out on this place, on man and on beast and on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground; and it will burn and not be quenched."*

Ezekiel 3:27: *But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth, and you will say to them, '**Thus says the Lord GOD.**' He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house.*

Amos 3:11: *Therefore, **thus says the Lord GOD**, "An enemy, even one surrounding the land, will pull down your strength from you and your citadels will be looted."*

Obadiah 1:1: *The vision of Obadiah. **Thus says the Lord GOD** concerning Edom-- We have heard a report from the LORD, and an envoy has been sent among the nations saying, "Arise and let us go against her for battle"—*

**Robert Lightner:** "Therefore, regardless of how seriously and piously one may talk about truths contained in the Bible, there can be little progress made in these areas unless the Bible is accepted as infallibly authoritative. It is pure theological double-talk and intellectual dishonesty to discredit the authority of the Bible and at the same time to seek refuge in its teachings on other matters, however important they may be." (Robert P. Lightner, A Biblical Case for Total Inerrancy, Kergel Press, page 4.)

These men were then speaking directly in obedience to the command of God and saying exactly what God had commanded them to say. It is no surprise then that what they proclaimed was not always fully understood to them nor to the hearers.

In fact, these men did not always know what they were saying.

I Peter 1:10–12: *As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.*

### C. The Divine Use of Man

1. This is most commonly seen in the writings of the New Testament where God used men; but their will and words, though seen, are always subject to His desire for the contents of the Word of God.

2. This is most clearly understood in II Peter 1:20-21.

II Peter 1:20-21 *But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*

### **INSPIRATION**

Two terms often used in any discussion of the inspiration of the Bible are plenary and verbal. Plenary, a term meaning "full" or "complete," means that each book, chapter and paragraph of the Bible is equally derived from God. Verbal inspiration emphasizes the truth that the wording of the text, as well as the ideas conveyed, is supernaturally inspired by God through the Holy Spirit.

Inerrancy is a term used along with plenary verbal inspiration to convey the view that the Bible's teaching is true on everything of which it speaks. The Bible is not just a useful body of human ideas. It makes clear the mind of God Himself.

Infallibility is a term often used as a synonym for inerrancy. However, the root meaning of infallibility is "not liable to fail in achieving its purpose." Truth, or inerrancy, is affirmed of the content of the Bible; infallibility refers to the effectiveness of the wording in conveying the reliable ideas, as well as the effectiveness of those ideas when used by the all-powerful Holy Spirit <Is. 55:11>.

Important as biblical infallibility is, it is not enough without inerrancy. The reason why the all-powerful Spirit can use Scripture so effectively is that He directed its production from the beginning so that all of it is God's reliable information.

Inspiration, then, is a statement about God's greatness. God is intelligent and able to communicate with man, whom He created in His image. God knows everything about all reality in creation and is absolutely faithful and true <Rev. 3:7; 21:5>. It follows that ideas communicated by divine revelation are true and conform to reality as God knows it. God overruled human limitations and sinful biases so that His spokesmen were able to write what He wanted written. God guided the thought conveyed so that it was without error, accomplishing the objectives He intended.

(Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986.)

**Thiessen:** “Perhaps the best definition of inspiration is that by L. Gaussen, Professor of Systematic Theology, Oratoire, Geneva. He says it is ‘that inexplicable power which the divine Spirit put forth of old on the authors of Holy Scripture in order to their guidance even in the employment of the words they used, and to preserve them alike from all error and from all omission.’ Op. cit., p. 34. Inspiration thus is really ‘inexplicable.’ It is power put forth by the Holy Spirit, but we do not know exactly how that power operated. It is limited to the authors of Holy Scripture. This excludes all other ‘sacred’ books as uninspired: it also denies final authority to all Churches, Church Councils, Creeds, and Ecclesiastics. It is essentially ‘guidance.’ That is, the Holy Spirit supervises the selection of the materials to be used and the words to be employed in writing. It, finally, preserved the authors from all error and from all omission. We have, therefore, in the Bible the verbally inspired Word of God. We note, further, that inspiration extends to the words, not merely to the thoughts and concepts. If it extended merely to the latter, then we are left to wonder whether the writers correctly understood God, whether they remembered exactly what He said, and whether they had the ability to express God’s thoughts accurately.” (Thiessen, Introductory Lectures In Systematic Theology, Eerdmans Publishing, 1949, page 107.)

- D. In the space below, write a summary statement of the doctrine of the divine inspiration of the Word of God.

**Quiet Times Alone With God —Jeremiah 15:16—Chapter 4 Theme: The Word Spoke and  
The Doctrine of Inspiration**

**Passage for Meditation: II Timothy 3:16**

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

**Passage for Meditation: Romans 3:2; 15:4**

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

**Passage for Meditation: Galatians 1:12; 3:19**

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

**Quiet Times Alone With God —Jeremiah 15:16—Chapter 4 Theme: The Word Spoke and  
The Doctrine of Inspiration**

**Passage for Meditation: Hebrews 3:7; 9:8**

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

**Passage for Meditation: II Peter 1:20-21; 3:15, 16**

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

**Passage for Meditation: I John 4:6**

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?