

Inspired By God

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

Each week, all around the world, Christians gather together in buildings large and small. They open the same book, read portions of that book, and usually have one of their number speak about some of the words from that book. But where did that book, where did those words, come from?

A lot of people—including, sadly, a lot of scholars who call themselves Christians—believe the words of this book to be nothing more than collections of the writings of human beings. In fact, many of those “Christian scholars” have devoted their life’s work to tearing apart this book, trying to show it contains nothing more than a bunch of ancient myths, fanciful stories, contradictions, and errors. Yet this same book, the book we know as “the Holy Bible,” is still read, studied, and trusted by millions of people who believe its words, in spite of all the “scholars” and critics who say otherwise.

Why? Because those Christians who gather to pay attention to the words of the Bible recognize it as the inspired Word of God.

What does that mean?

Well, of course the words of the Bible were written down by human beings. Its pages did not float down from the sky or magically appear in some sacred place. Human words were recorded with human writing tools in human languages, and we can see the different personalities of the different writers in their writings.

At the same time, the Bible tells us that God was working through those writers. How? That’s a mystery. In a way we cannot comprehend, St Paul tells us that God *breathed out* His Word through those writers. And St Peter says, “*men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit*” (2 Peter 1:21).

Thus the words of Deuteronomy are the words of Moses, and they’re also the Words of God. Likewise the words of Isaiah, and of Matthew, and of Paul, are the words of those men, and they’re also the Words of God. So it is for all sixty-six books in the Bible, whether we know the names of the human authors or not. Those words are the Words of God, which God breathed out through the writers, whom the Holy Spirit carried along as they wrote.

Because of this, we don’t say that the Bible “contains” God’s Word. We say that it “is” God’s Word. That’s an important distinction. If the Bible only “contains” God’s Word, then it might “contain” something else, and I don’t know how to figure out which words are God’s and which words are not. (That’s something those “Christian scholars” I mentioned before have argued about for centuries—not kidding.) But, because we say the Bible “is” God’s Word, we accept the whole thing.

Furthermore, to say the Bible is the inspired Word of God means the Bible is authoritative, infallible, and inerrant. As God’s Word, the Bible is the authority for what we need to know regarding our life under God and our salvation. The Bible is infallible, that is, it makes no false or misleading statements on any matter of faith or practice. The Bible is also inerrant, containing no errors or mistakes.

So this Book, inspired by God, is the one trustworthy resource we have for our faith and life. No wonder, then, that faithful Christians continue to gather together to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest these sacred words. Let us continue to do so, relishing and rejoicing in this gift in which our gracious God reveals Himself to us!