

Biblical Apologetics
Dr. Ron Rhodes
1st. Lecture: Saturday, January 6, 2001

- I. Continuity of the Bible
 - A. One plan of salvation, unified, one program
 - B. Could only happen by inspiration of the Holy Spirit
 - *C. The Holy Spirit guided the process
 - C. Other Scriptures different (e.g. Koran compiled by one individual, Muhammad's father-in-law)
 - D. But the Bible has dozens of authors, many of whom did not even know each other
 - *E. Inspiration by the Spirit is key

- II. Indestructibility of the Bible
 - A. Many books cannot/do not survive for more than a century
 - B. Many attempts to destroy the Bible
 - 1. Diocletian (sp) in 303 AD issued a Roman edict to destroy Scriptures by fire.
 - C. Divine Providence keeping His Word available to people

- IIA. However, we live in a culture that is trying to keep people from knowing the Word!
 - A. 35% of "born-again" read the Bible, many during church!
 - B. We have many "fast-food" Bibles
 - C. Consumerist attitude towards church
 - D. Christians are Biblically illiterate
 - 1. e.g. survey: "Does the Bible say, 'God helps those who help themselves?'" Answer: 50% of Americans said "yes."
 - 2. Majority of Americans can't name even ½ the Ten Commandments
 - 3. Many prestigious seminaries don't even offer a course in apologetics
 - 4. Today: Out with doctrine and in with "practical" information
 - *5. Presupposition is that the Bible isn't relevant, but the Bible in fact gives the only reliable world-view for life.
 - E. 25% of people who have joined a cult once attended an evangelical church
 - *1. One of the reasons why cults are growing is because Christians are Biblically/doctrinally illiterate
 - *2. Cults use Esotericism: you don't read the Bible for its literal message, but for the *secondary meaning*. New Age: "my yoga is easy" ref. To Matt. II! In this approach one tries to find the hidden meaning.

3. The New Age movement is HUGE, put all the big organized cults together and they still would not be as large as the New Age movement.

III. Inspiration:

- A. Charles Spurgeon: turning point lies in inspiration, if no infallible truth, we're toast!
- B. Today: Bible is attacked like crazy.
- C. WILL be the pivotal issue this century and millennium
- D. Peasants, Kings, Doctors and many others comprise the Biblical authors...we see unity through inspiration
- E. Liberal Christians say Bible is "inspired" like Shakespeare is inspired
- ****F. Literally means: God-breathed (passive)
- F. From God, By God
- ****G. "God's super intending of the human authors so that using their own individual personalities and even their writing styles, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to humankind in the words of the original autographs."
- G. The apostles were not mere writing machines (dictation theory is wrong)
- H. 7 Key Elements:
 1. Divine origin and causality
 2. Human agency
 3. Written verbally
 4. Plenary (Full)
 5. Only autographs
 6. Also inerrant
 7. Final authority
- I. C.S. Lewis did not hold to inerrancy.
- J. Only 40-50 N.T. discrepancies in N.T. that have no bearing on doctrine
- K. Textual criticism traces mistakes back to their source

IIIA. What is the NEED for inspiration?

God inscripturated His revelation in the Bible. In other words, without inspiration, we would have no Word of God, we would be lost.

IV. Some False Views On Inspiration:

- #1 Natural Inspiration: denies the supernatural, authors wrote their own will (response: doesn't explain that the Bible itself teaches that it is God-breathed).

#2 Spiritual Illumination: Writers were spiritually illumined and other religious books had this type of illumination as well (“inspired by the Spirit”) (response: same as #1 above)

#3 Degree Inspiration: Some parts of the Bible are more inspired than others

#4 Partial Inspiration: Some parts of the Bible are inspired and others are not (esp. in regards to science and history)

#5 Concept Inspiration: Concepts inspired, but not words

#6 Divine Dictation (Mechanical Inspiration): Like Koran (response: But the Bible has more than one style)

#7 Neo-orthodoxy: The Bible not to be equated with Word of God, because God does not speak in propositions/facts. But God reveals Himself. Thus the Bible is a witness to the Word of God, the Bible BECOMES the Word of God as the reader encounters and experiences God. But the Bible has mistakes, contradictions, etc. As Christ is experienced.

V. The Evangelical View:

*A. Verbal Plenary View, that is “words” “full”

B. Holy Spirit inspired beyond concepts and used pool of words in the minds of the human authors

*C. Confluent Authorship: every word is fully divine and fully human

D. Human and Divine Interchange: 2 Peter 1:21**** (test)

1. “carried along by the Holy Spirit”
2. strong word in the Greek: forcefully carried long
3. human will not originator
4. ***God moved and the prophets mouthed, God revealed and man recorded His Word
5. Acts 27: same word used in regards to navigation of ship: carried along by the wind...guided and directed. Just as the sailors were active on the ship, but the wind controlled...same with the those who wrote, the Spirit drove them along...DROVE is a good word.
6. 2 Sam.23:2: David: “The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me, His word was on my tongue.”
7. Isaiah 59:21: “As for Me...my Spirit on you and MY Words on your mouth”
8. God is the author even though the prophets spoke the words in the OT. Acts 1:16: “The Holy Spirit spoke through the mouth of David...” Acts 4:24-25...spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth...

9. 2 Timothy 3:16***** (test) “All Scripture is God-breathed...” Is PASSIVE in the Greek, the Bible is the RESULT of the Breath of God. If Active, the Word would exude God. Instead, Scripture finds its origin in God.
10. Some object that it wasn't until the 4th century of which books were which...but 1 Tim. 5:18 ****already says that in NT times that there was an understanding of (and Luke 10) the books of the OT as Scripture/Word of God...Luke already called Scripture along side of Deuteronomy.
11. 1 Tim. written after Luke...just a few years later, Luke already recognized as Scripture!*****
12. When Paul in 2 Tim. 3:16 says all Scripture is inspired...which Scripture???? At least OT, but probably more. Paul has just used the same word in 1st Timothy for Luke's Gospel, 2 Peter 3:16, Peter uses the same word to describe ALL the writings of Paul!!!!*****
13. 3:16 is a great numerical reference by the way!!!!
14. Paul likely had more in mind than just the OT when using the word “Scripture”
15. There are NT refs. Where writers claim divine authority 1 Cor. 2:13...words taught by the Spirit, 1 Cor. 14:37...if anyone thinks he is a prophet...what I am writing is the Lord's command, 1 Thess. 2:13...not as the word of men, but the Word of God...Paul acknowledged that he was writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit
16. Genesis-Malachi: OT abounds with prophecy of the coming Messiah. Hundreds of Messianic Prophecies...these fulfilled prophecies under gird apologetics for the inspiration of Scripture
17. You couldn't conspire to fulfill them! Jesus couldn't choose to be born of a Virgin or be born in Bethlehem, etc.
18. Statistics show that the reality is astonishing! Peter Stoner, Science Speaks, 1 in 10 to the 17th power chance of one man fulfilling just 8 of the Messianic prophecies (cover the entire state of Texas two feet deep of silver dollars...mark one coin and blind fold a man and have him pick up the rich silver dollar...what are the chances????)
19. We live in a time of prophetic agnosticism. But Bible prophecy is a powerful apologetic. Don't fall to this!

VI. Objections to Inspiration:

- A. Numerous critics over the centuries.
- B. Many have already made up their minds, but there are many who haven't...be ready to dialog with these.

#1: NT writers were biased...theological motives to convince people that Jesus was God, therefore their testimony is not valid.

Response: Doesn't make sense that they would do this and willingly go through so much suffering. They died for their faith. Also, it is not necessarily wrong to be biased...one can still be objective and passionately believe in something. They were impassioned and objective.

2 Peter 1:16: Made up of eyewitness testimony! "Biased" based on what was SEEN! 1 John 1:1.

#2: Science disproves the miracles of which the NT speaks.

Response: Science suitable for studying nature, not super-nature. Science depends upon observation and replication. Many NT miracles are unprecedented events that cannot be replicated. When you look at the evidence there is good reason to believe. Another plus is the brief time lapse between miracles and NT witness...thus, witnesses are still alive AND less time for manipulation/false accounts to settle in. Also, there were hostile witnesses!

Also, science can't be definitive truth...science in itself is in flux: Thomas Kunz: The Structure of Scientific Revolution, he speaks of "paradigm shifts"...from relativism (Einstein) to quantum physics. Constantly bearing new theories on how reality works. Thus, to say that science is final arbiter ignores that science is in flux. What contradicts is not science and the Bible, but our current interpretation of general revelation and special revelation.

#3: The people of Bible times didn't understand the laws of nature, therefore the Bible is full of mistakes...miracles are just fantasies...people would not have made these "miracles" up if they had known better.

Response: C.S. Lewis is good at refuting this. People of Bible times did know enough about the laws of nature. They understood when the laws of nature were suspended. Like walking on water...people don't generally walk on water!

#4: NT writers made up resurrection.

Response: Writers who were predominantly Jewish people who were sternly against false witness. They would not have born false witness and given up their lives in defense of a lie. Also, there were many other witnesses.

C. If NT not true, then...

#1: NT is carefully orchestrated lie...in fact a conspiracy.

Page 6, Biblical Apologetics, 01/06/01:

Response: But then you would have historical fact and accuracy, but a fiction in regards to what is most important.

#2: The authors suffered and died for what they knew was not true. 2 Cor. 11:24-29: 5 times lashed, rocks, stones, shipped-wrecked, etc. etc.

Response: Does this make sense for the sake of a fiction????? NO!

#3: The NT writers are going against everything they themselves taught and what Jesus said. Putting away lying Eph. 4:25, etc. Going against their own message!

Response: Doesn't make sense!

VII. Qualifications on the doctrine of Inspiration:

Plenary verbal inspiration: (All Bible, all words)...

#1: Does NOT say that all parts of the Bible are equally important, but only that all parts of the Bible are equally inspired. John 3:16 is more important than Judges 3:16.

#2: Does not guarantee the inspiration of any ancient or modern translation of the Bible, but only the autographs. Rev. 3:14 NASB and NIV, considerable difference, "beginning" "ruler"??? The original Greek is inspired, not the translations...these are man-made, but nevertheless we have accurate translations. INSPIRATION APPLIES TO THE ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPHS.

#3: Does not allow for any false teaching, but does on some occasions record the lie of someone. Satan the father of lies...and his lies are recorded.

#4: Does not prohibit personal research. Luke for example.

#5: Allows for the use of the variety of expression. Different does not mean false.

#6: Does not violate the individuality and personalities of the Biblical authors.

#7: Allows for the use of non-biblical documents. Paul quotes a pagan poet, Joshua, Jude cites prophecy of Enoch, etc. Doesn't mean that those sources are canonical, but just that that particular fact was deemed accurate and was legitimately used in the inspired context.

#8: Allows for the use of non-scientific language. Does not necessitate the use of scholarly, advanced language, but the NT was written in the language the people speak. Including phenomenological language.

#9: Allows for the use of the variety of literary devices. For example: historical narrative and apocalyptic.

#10: Does not include accommodation to error. Christ didn't go along with inaccurate beliefs, etc.

VIII: Inerrancy:

- A. Corollary doctrine to inspiration.
- B. But some Christians don't hold to it, but if Scripture has some errors, how do you know what is true?
- C. Some Christians say that since the Bible doesn't teach inerrancy, then neither can we. But if this is true, then we must clearly show that the Bible doesn't teach inerrancy. There are no plain proof texts, BUT the whole of Scripture bears witness. Doctrine of Trinity is like this. And the clear teaching of inspiration bears witness to inerrancy.
- D. Another argument: Inerrancy is a recent invention...the Church was formally unconcerned about it. However, Christ and Paul seem to teach it! Others? Yes, Luther! "The Scriptures Have Not Errored." Also Augustine...nothing false in Sacred Books. Aquinas: nothing false underlies...Wesley too, etc. Not a recent invention!!!!

***Definition: Freedom from error or untruths. Certainty, infallible, etc. and we keep adding new qualifying words. Some started to say just the concepts, but not all words, so we started talking verbal inspiration and inerrant; then plenary, then others verbal, plenary, inspiration and inerrancy!

***Edward Young: "The Scriptures possess the quality of freedom from error, exempt from the liability to mistake, incapable of error, in all their teaching are in perfect accord with the truth."

E. Qualifications:

#1: Does allow for a variety of styles.

#2: Allows for variety in details in explaining the same event.

#3: Allows for the language of approximation. (e.g. measurements).

#4: Allows for phenomenological language "rising of the sun" (though the sun does not actually "rise")

#5: Allows for departure from standard forms of grammar. John 14:26, The Spirit, then the Spirit as "He" pneuma is neuter, but then pronoun is masculine, etc.

#6: Consistent with free quotations from Old Testament...not necessarily word for word, but the use is inspired and inerrant in the NT.

#7: Bible is inerrant in autographs only.

#8: Bible is inerrant when accurately interpreted.

#9: Does not imply omniscience on the part of the Biblical authors.

VIII. Incarnation and Inerrancy:

- A. Some insist that anything relating to human is sinful.
- B. But, no, the incarnation is proof that this is not true.
- C. In the same way, the Bible is both human and divine

	Word (written)		Word (Christ)
#1	Psalm 19:89 & 152	Eternal	
#2	Deut. 29:29	Revelation from God	John 1:18, 14:9
#3	Inscripturation	Manifest to Men	Incarnation
#4	by God to men	Incorporated Human & Divine	2 natures
#5	errorless	Errorless "Product"	Christ sinless

IX. Christ on the Bible:

- A. Inspiration of the O.T. taught: Matt. 4:4, Word from mouth of God, Matt. 5:17 & 18 fulfilled.
- B. Affirmed Bible's historicity: Mark 10:6-8, Jonah in Matt. 12, Flood in Matt. 24, Sodom and Lot in Matt. 10.
- C. Affirmed reliability: Scripture must be fulfilled, Matt. 26:54
- D. Sufficiency: Luke 16, they have Moses and the prophets!
- E. Indestructibility: Matt. 24:35
- F. Unity: Lk. 24:27 & 44 "concerning Himself" ***Jesus is the unifying factor; Psalm 102, Yahweh creator, Heb. 1, fulfilled in the person of Christ.

X. Rejection To Inerrancy:

#1 Scripture only for faith and practice, allows for false statements in historical detail and scientific facts. Response: All Scripture is inspired and God-breathed, 2 Tim. 3:16, Acts 24:14, Lk. 24:25; all that the prophets, Rom. 15:4 “whatever,” Ryrie: The Bible tells the truth. Can and does include approximations and different accounts as long as they don’t contradict. 1 Cor. 10:8 one day and Num. 25:9, no mention of “one day”, free quotations of O.T. in N.T. this use is also inspired though!

#2 Jack Rogers: No intentional deceit on the part of the Biblical writers. Response: Every paper we’ve written must also be inspired then!

#3 Daniel Fuller: Two kinds of Scripture: 1) Revelation on Salvation; 2) Non-revelation on History and Science.

#4 Liberals: Try to make Christianity relevant to modern man, anti-supernatural bias. Miracles are mythological, spiritually dead, for every person we accommodate to make Bible relevant, it loses real relevance for thousands. View as an ordinary book. DeWolf: Bible not the Word of God, collection of intensely human documents, contradictions, sub-Christian.

#5 Harry Emerson Fasdic (sp?): Ethics in Bible are cruel, so you can’t hear the voice of God at all in these passages, theological contradictions, “contains” but is NOT the Word of God.

#6 C.S. Lewis, great guy, BUT...liberal evangelical, held to LIMITED INERRANCY. Authority of Scripture only to salvation, degrees of inspiration. Examples:

1. Reflections on imprecatory psalms, can’t hear the voice of God here, hideously distorted, make room for...inconsistencies and contradictions, 1 Cor. 7:10 & 12 where Paul makes a distinction, Matt. 1 and Lk. 3 genealogies, death of Judas in Matt. 27:5 and Acts 1, Luke 1:4 and Luke used historical resources, human element, degrees of inspiration:

Response:

1. 1 Cor. 7 “I, not the Lord.” Not a denial of inspiration. 1 Cor. 7:40 “I also have the Spirit of God.” 2:13 and 14:37.
2. Genealogies, have a different purpose, tracing through Joseph in Matt. And through Mary in Luke.
3. Judas: just put the two together, hung and let down and bowls burst.

4. Luke's material = but inspiration has a human element, his research was carried along.

Lewis said there was myth in the Bible, e.g. Adam and Eve, Job, Jonah, Bible has historical limitations, not all statements are historically true, degrees of inspiration, the Psalms, human qualities show through, ignorance, wickedness, etc. Creation account, myth creation stories outside the Bible, theistic evolution in his book "Christian Reflections" pg. 163, and yet, he defended the incarnation, resurrection and salvation.

#7 Neo-Orthodoxy: suggests a new orthodoxy, better than liberalism, but keeps the foundations of liberalism, end of WWI, Barth's Commentary on Romans in 1919, liberalism was empty for those ravaged by the war, Barth returned to a serious consideration of the Bible, But the Bible is NOT the Word of God, to use "infallible" was to create "a paper pope." A person can experience the revelation of God, at that moment people experience the Word of God, existential, truths can't be known in propositions (but this is a proposition!), we must encounter Christ, words, how Bible aims towards becoming Word, words are a WITNESS to the Word of God according to Barth, goes on to speak of contradictions in the Bible, between Paul and James, between Synoptics and John, etc., not a return to true orthodoxy at all!!!!

#8 Neo-Evangelicalism: Dr. Harold Ockenga (1948): broke from three movements:

1. vs. Neo-orthodoxy: because authority is accepted.
2. vs. Modernists: full system of doctrine vs. liberalism.
3. vs. Fundamentalism: must apply to the social scene. (do not isolate)
 - A. Henry: arose as reaction vs. fundamentalism.
 - B. Kubado: The New Evangelicals (book)
 - C. Comparison:

Evangelical

1. Unlimited inspiration, text and teaching
2. Infallible and inerrant
3. No errors in Bible
4. True in whole and in parts
5. Bible covers salvation and non-salvation
6. Bible infallible on morals and history
7. Inerrant in writer's intentions and affirmation
8. Words are God-given

New Evangelical

1. Limited inspiration, just teaching
2. Infallible only, accomplishes purp.
3. No MAJOR errors (but some)
4. True & whole (but not all parts)
5. Covers salvation only
6. Infallible on morals, reliability true in history
7. Intention only
8. Only ideas are God-given

Page 11, Biblical Apologetics, 01/06/01:

Conclusion: Neo-Evang NOT truly Evang!!!! John Woodbridge annihilates Jack Rogers in "Authority of the Bible"...when Rogers says, "no intentional deceit" he takes Scripture out of context (ellipses dots misused).

Next: Historical Reliability and Canonization