



Canon: Which Books Belong?

Lesson Three: Inspiration—The Need and the Process

1. 🕊️ Begin the class session by asking students to explain why modern man needs an inspired record and why we should believe that the Bible is this volume.

Note: *The last question will not be answered definitely until the final lesson, but now there can be some general answers given.*

2. 🕊️ Specific points that reveal the urgent *need* for an inspired message to man from God:
 - a. Without an inspired communication man will follow the wrong way (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12; Psalm 25:4, 5).
 - b. 🕊️ Without an inspired communication man finds only tragic/sorrow (Jeremiah 6:16; Romans 1:26-32).
 - c. 🕊️ Without inspired communications man will not be able to know the divine will (Isaiah 55:8-11). Thus man would never know the joys of salvation (1 Timothy 1:12-17).
 - d. Historical data testifies to the urgent need for man to follow the inspired record given by God:
 - 1) 🕊️ Our modern times reveal a tragic erosion of reverence for the Scriptures. Today the Scriptures are not seen as the inspired, inerrant revelation of God to mankind. Failure to acknowledge the inspiration of Scriptures has led to the rejection of biblical doctrines that has resulted in the depreciation of human life.
 - 2) 🕊️ When man believes the Scriptures are inspired, he lives better because his faith is the compass for his life.
 - 3) 🕊️ When man refuses to believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures, he will compromise and live devoted to self.
 - 4) The tragic failure that results whenever man rejects inspiration is illustrated by the Unitarian Church.
 - a) It broke off of the Congregational Church because it rejected biblical teaching on Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
 - b) Soon it abandoned all tenets of doctrine and began to focus upon mortal “potential.”

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- c) Some of the Unitarian clergy signed the Humanist Manifesto!
 - d) *Note:* No religious group can long retain its former character once it rejects inspiration of the Scriptures. Rejection of the Scriptures opens a floodgate that destroys all aspects of Christianity. It is hard to exaggerate the end results!
3. The need for God to communicate His will with man is understood. It is also understood how this communication must be “inspired.” What is seldom considered is the importance of this inspired communication being placed in a “written” format.
- ☞ Why was it important for God’s revelation to be written? (We will later discuss how we are to discern which written records are actually from God.)
 - a. ☞ A written message is necessary. Oral communication is brief and insufficient (Luke 1:1-4).
 - b. ☞ A written message is trustworthy. A written form, once made, is free from the problems of oral transmission. It thus serves as the divine measuring standard (Matthew 5:18).
 - c. ☞ A written text has great benefits:
 - 1) ☞ It calls to mind the original message (Exodus 17:14; Malachi 3:16).
 - 2) ☞ It collects all messages (1 Corinthians 10:11). One is able to pan the whole plan from eternity to eternity and how God has worked.
 - 3) ☞ It is independent (Jeremiah 36:2, 4-21, 28, 32). The written message is mobile and reaches distances unknown to the author. The prophets have died but God still speaks via the writing!
 - 4) ☞ It is universal, indestructible, and almost omnipresent. The oral communication is to only a small group, but the written text is available to a numberless group (Psalm 102:18).
 - 5) ☞ It makes the readers personally responsible (2 Thessalonians 2:15; Luke 16:29).
 - d. *Note:* These reasons explain why it was urgent for God to provide a written revelation of His will for mankind.
4. ☞ The process by which God’s revelation was written is explained in the Bible.
- a. ☞ The fact that God used mortals to record His revelation has caused some to question the integrity of Inspiration.
 - 1) “How can such an ancient book be dependable today?”

- 2) “How can fallible men, produce an infallible book?” It was not directly given to man from God. Its main figure (Jesus Christ) did not write a single book. Every part came from men who were imperfect.
- b. ☞ The manner and extent of inspiration is revealed to us in 1 Corinthians 1, 2.
- 1) See the *Gospel Advocate*, May 24, 1979 on 1 Corinthians 2:6-13. “*The Manner and Extent of Inspiration*,” John L. Kachelman, Jr., 330.
 - 2) From Paul’s words we discover these facts about the written revelation from God.
 - a) ☞ There is a mind of the Lord; a mysterious, hidden, and eternal wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 2:7, 16). This eternal wisdom desires mankind’s welfare.
 - b) ☞ The natural man is unable to perceive or understand the eternal mind of God. Sin hinders man (1 Corinthians 2:14; 1:18, 23).
 - c) ☞ The only way God’s mind could make known the eternal wisdom is for God’s Spirit to reveal it to man. Only a spirit of man knows man’s thought. Only God’s Spirit knows God’s thoughts and must reveal God’s thoughts (1 Corinthians 2:11).
 - d) ☞ God took the initiative to reveal to man His eternal wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:9-12). He did this by giving His Spirit to the Apostles so they would know His thoughts (1 Corinthians 2:12).
 - e) ☞ The thoughts of the Spirit were communicated with “words.” These “words” were written down by the writers (2:13). ☞ Thus, the very words (of the original writings) were inspired!
- c. ☞ There are facts about the inspiration of the prophets that help explain further the process of inspiration.
- 1) ☞ There is a definite recognition that God has selected one through whom He will communicate to man (Exodus 4:11-16; 1 Samuel 3:1; Isaiah 6:8; Jeremiah 1:4, 9; Amos 7:14-15; etc.).
 - 2) ☞ This inspired revelation was not continuous and occurred only when God wanted His will written. Jeremiah’s writings were on specific occasions (Jeremiah 1:2; 14:1; 25:1; 26:1; 28:11; 34:1; 39:15; etc.). Thus, the prophets waited until a message was given to them and then they spoke and wrote.
 - 3) ☞ The writer’s were aware and conscious that they were receiving a communication from the Almighty God. Sometimes they even asked questions (Isaiah 6:11; Jeremiah 14:13; 15:15; Ezekiel 9:8; 11:13; Daniel 8:26; etc.).

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- 4) ☞ The message often surpassed the writer's comprehension (Daniel 12:8, 9; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Peter 1:10-12; etc.).
 - 5) ☞ Sometimes the message was imposed upon the person (Jeremiah 20:7-9; 1:7, 9; Numbers 22:35; 24:13).
 - 6) ☞ Sometimes the author did not suspect he was being used by God, but the Spirit was guiding him (Luke 1:1-4; Daniel 12:8, 9).
 - 7) ☞ Inspiration has no degrees—it is always perfect and complete. Balaam (Numbers 22-24) was just as inspired as David (2 Samuel 23:2). This perfection characterizes the Holy Bible—it is perfectly inspired!
 - 8) ☞ The prophets believed they were transmitting God's Words! (2 Samuel 23:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Revelation 1:1-2).
5. Implications of these facts on the study of the Canon of the Bible...
- a. ☞ God wants to communicate the Divine Will to man.
 - b. ☞ This communication has been preserved in written form and is permanent.
 - c. ☞ Thus, the written form of inspiration is God's communication to man today. This conclusion brings us to the next query in our series—"In what ways are the Scriptures 'inspired' of God?"



TWO SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS!

Why do we need an inspired Book?

**Why should we believe the Bible
is this inspired Book?**

Transparency 3/1

THE URGENCY FOR



INSPIRATION!

Without inspiration ~

Man follows error

Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12;
Psalm 25:4, 5

Man finds tragedy

Jeremiah 6:16; Romans 1:26-32

Man cannot know the divine will

Isaiah 55:8-11

Transparency 3/2



WHY INSPIRATION

USED WRITING

The following reasons explain why God utilized writing as He gave man the divine revelation...

It is necessary (Luke 1:1-4).

It is trustworthy (Matthew 5:18).

It has great benefits:

- Preserves the original message (Ex 17:14; Mal 3:16)
- Collects the whole (1 Co 10:11)
- Independent (Jere 36:2-32)
- Universal/Indestructible/Omnipresent (Ps 102:18)
- Forces personal responsibility (Lk 16:29)

Transparency 3/3



THE PROCESS DETAILED!

**One Nagging Fact–
Mortals**

**One Certain Text–
1 Corinthians 2:1-16**

**One Additional Point–
The Prophets**

Transparency 3/4

THE PROPHETS INSPIRED MESSAGES!

A Definite Recognition

Exodus 4:11-16; 1 Sam 3:1; Isa 6:8; Jere 1:4, 9

A Non-Continuous Source

Jere 1:2; 14:1; 25:1; 26:1; 28:11; 34:1; 39:15

Aware and Conscious

**Isa 6:11; Jere 14:13; 15:15; Ezek 9:8; 11:13;
Dan 8:26**

Surpassed Writer's Comprehension

Dan 12:8, 9; 1 Cor 2:9; 1 Pet 1:10-12

Sometimes Imposed On Writers

Jere 20:7-9; 1:7, 9; Num 22:35

Sometimes Writers Were Unaware

Luke 1:1-4; Dan 12:8, 9

No Degree Existed – All or None!

Num 22-24; 2 Sam 23:2

Writer's Were Confident

2 Sam 23:2; 1 Thess 2:13; Rev 1:1-2

Transparency 3/5



IMPLICATIONS OF A WRITTEN REVELATION ON CANON

**God wants to communicate the
Divine Will to mortal minds.**

**This communication has been given
and is preserved in written forms.**

**Thus, the written forms of
inspiration are God's communication
to mortals today.**