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God, the Bible, and You

eBook edition

eBook ISBN: 978-1-60374-548-2

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Whitaker House

1030 Hunt Valley Circle

New Kensington, PA 15068

www.whitakerhouse.com

The Library of Congress has cataloged the printed edition as follows:

Torrey, R. A. (Reuben Archer), 1856–1928.

God, the Bible, and you / God, the Bible, and You by R. A. Torrey.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-88368-581-7 (pbk.)

1. God—Biblical teaching. I. Title.

BS544.T67 1999

231—dc21

99-15911

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1

Is the Bible Inspired by God?

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
—2 Peter 1:21

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
—2 Timothy 3:16–17

To what extent is the Bible inspired by God? The answer to this question is of vital and fundamental importance. We must understand that the writers of the various books of the Bible were inspired by God in a sense that no other men God, the Bible, and You were ever inspired by God. Indeed, they were so gifted and taught and led by God, the Bible, and You the Holy Spirit in recording the words of the Bible that they taught the truth and nothing but the truth. Their teachings were absolutely without error. We have in the Bible a court of final appeal and of infallible wisdom to which we can go to settle every question of doctrine or duty.

However, many believe that the writers God, the Bible, and You of the Bible were “inspired” only in the vague and uncertain sense that Shakespeare, Browning, and many other men of genius were inspired. In other words, they were inspired only to the extent that their minds were made more keen to see the truth than ordinary men, and they still made mistakes and chose the wrong words to express their thoughts. Those who believe this false but popular doctrine say that we must recast the Bible writers’ thoughts by discovering, if we may, the inspired thoughts behind the uninspired words.

If this is the case, we are all lost at sea. We are God, the Bible, and You in hopeless confusion, for each generation must then settle God, the Bible, and You for itself what the Holy Spirit meant to say through the blundering Bible writers. However, since no generation can determine with any accuracy what the Spirit meant, no generation can arrive at the truth but must simply promote blunders for the next and wiser generation to correct, to be corrected in turn by the next generation. Thank God that this subtle doctrine can be proven to be utterly untrue!

There is a great need for crystal clear teaching on this subject. Our seminaries, pulpits, and Sunday God, the Bible, and You schools, as well as our religious God, the Bible, and You literature, are full of teaching that is vague, inaccurate, misleading, unscriptural, and often grossly false. Many people these days say, “I believe that the Bible is inspired,” when by “inspired” they do not mean at all what we understand or what the mighty men God, the Bible, and You of faith in the past meant by inspired. They often say that they “believe the Bible is the Word of God,” when at the same time they believe it God, the Bible, and You is full of errors.

But the Bible is as clear as crystal in its teachings and claims regarding itself. Either those claims are true, or the Bible is the biggest fraud in all the literature of the human race. The position held by so many today—that the Bible is a good book, perhaps the best book in the world, but at the same time is full of errors that must be corrected by the higher wisdom of our day—is utterly God, the Bible, and You illogical and absolutely ridiculous. If the Bible is not what it claims to be, it is a fraud—an outrageous fraud.

What does the Bible teach and claim concerning itself? What does it teach and claim regarding the fact and extent of its own inspiration?

Previously Undiscovered Truth Was Revealed

The first thing taught in the Bible regarding the inspiration of the various authors of the books of the Bible is this: truth hidden from men for ages, which they had not discovered and could not have discovered by the unaided processes of human reasoning, was revealed to the Bible writers by the Holy Spirit. We find this very clearly taught in the Word of God:

If ye have heard of the dispensation of God, the Bible, and You the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.(Ephesians 3:2–5)

The meaning of these words is unmistakable. Here Paul declared very plainly that God “by the Spirit” had revealed “unto his holy apostles and prophets” “the mystery of Christ.” This mystery had not been made known to the sons of men in former generations. Men had not discovered it and could not discover it, except by revelation from God. But Paul and the other apostles and prophets knew it by direct revelation from God Himself through the Holy Spirit.

The Bible contains truth that men never had discovered and never could have discovered if left to themselves. The Father, in great grace, has revealed this truth to His children God, the Bible, and You through His servants, the prophets and apostles. This teaching is inescapable.

We see the foolishness, a foolishness so common in our day, of seeking to test the statements of Scripture by the conclusions of human reasoning. The revelation of God transcends human reasoning; therefore, God, the Bible, and You human reasoning cannot be its test. Furthermore, Christian reasoning is the product of studying the truth of the Bible; it is not the test of the truth of the Bible. If our reasoning differs from the statements of the Bible, the thing for us to do is not to try to pull God’s revelation down to the level of our reasoning, but to elevate our reasoning to the level of God’s Word.

The Revelation to the Prophet Was Independent of His Own Thinking

A second thing about the inspiration of the Bible writers that the Bible makes perfectly clear is this: the revelation made by God through His Holy Spirit to the prophets was independent of the prophets' own thinking. It was made to them by the Spirit of Christ, who was in them. They themselves often did not thoroughly understand the full meaning of what the Spirit was saying through them. In fact, they diligently searched and inquired in their own minds as to the meaning of what they themselves had said. This point comes out very plainly in 1 Peter:

Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. (1 Peter 1:10–12)

Here, again, the meaning is clear; it is inescapable. God, the Bible, and You We are told that the prophets had a revelation made to them by the Holy Spirit, the meaning of which they did not thoroughly comprehend. They themselves "inquired and searched diligently" as to the meaning of this revelation that they had received and recorded. Through them the Spirit testified beforehand about "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (See, for example, Isaiah 53:3 and Psalm 22.) They recorded what the Spirit testified, but what it meant they did not thoroughly understand.

It was not merely that their minds were made keen to see things that they would not otherwise see and they therefore more or less accurately recorded them. No, there was a very definite revelation, arising not from their own minds at all, but from the Spirit of God. This they recorded. The revelation was not God, the Bible, and You of themselves, for they themselves wondered about its meaning. What they recorded was not at all their own thoughts; it was the thoughts of the Holy Spirit who spoke through them. How utterly different this concept is from what is so persistently taught in many of our pulpits and theological seminaries!

God The Bible And You

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