



1689 LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH Systematic Theology Course 2

Study 3: Of the Holy Scriptures 1:4,5

4. The Authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth it self), the Author thereof; therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God (a).

a. 2 Pet 1:19-21; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Jn 5:9.

5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God, to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scriptures; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, and the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, and many other incomparable excellencies, and entire perfections thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God; yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our Hearts (a).

a. Jn 16:13,14; 1 Cor 2:10-12; 1 Jn 2:20,27.

3.1 The Authority of Scripture

The authority of the Bible comes not from any religious guru, pastor or pope. It comes not from any religious institution, whether church, seminary or para-church organisation. The Bible's authority depends upon its Author and that of course is God Himself (1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:19-21). The Bible is self-authenticating because of this.

All that is recorded in the Bible is the product of the Spirit's direct and supernatural influence upon the human authors (instruments) of it, and because of this fact, it is authoritative and inerrant. This is what is known as the '*verbal, plenary inspiration*' of the Bible (Mt 4:1-11; 5:17,18; 22:29-32; 26:53,54; Lk 24:27; Jn 10:34-36; 14:25,26; Acts 4:25; Rom 9:17; 2 Cor 3:10,11; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:19-21; 3:2,15,16; Heb 1:1,2).

QUESTIONS:

Can Creation Science prove the inerrancy of the Bible? Explain.

Which part of the Holy Scriptures can we take less seriously? Why?

3.2 The Evidence of Divine Authority

3.2.1 The External Evidence of Divine Authority

It should be noted here in the Confession that the opinion of men is not to be regarded as unimportant. It is. In fact, it may be that people can have a very positive influence upon others in the commendation of the Scriptures (2 Tim 1:5; 3:14-17).

However the fact remains that this is not enough to convince an unbeliever of the authority of the Scriptures.

QUESTION:

What place has human argument in bringing a sinner to salvation in evangelism?

3.2.2 The Internal Evidence of Divine Authority

Clearly to the believer, Scripture abounds with self-authenticating evidence of its divine authority. The unity of Scripture, prophecies fulfilled to perfection, the comfort and encouragement derived from the Scriptures and many other self-authenticating evidences of divine authority cry out. Yet all this is not enough to persuade an unbeliever.

QUESTION:

How can an unbeliever be convinced of the authority of Scripture?

3.2.3 The Authenticating Spirit

The acceptance of the Bible as the Word of God cannot be established by mere intellect alone. Though Scripture is self-authenticating, man in his rebellion and sinfulness suppresses the truth in unrighteousness, refusing to hear it (Rom 1:21; Eph 4:17-21; 2 Cor 4:3,4). And it is here that the Spirit of God and His work of regeneration with the Scriptures is so vital, for He removes the disposition to suppress the truth and enables

the sinner to submit to the truth and believe (Jer 23:29; Mt 16:17; Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 2:14-16; Jn 3:3-8; 1 Cor 2:4,5; 1 Thess 1:5,6; Heb 4:12,13; 1 Pet 1:23-25; 1 Jn 20,21,27).

Only those who are persuaded as to the Divine authority of Scripture by the Holy Spirit will be (Jn 7:16; 14:24; 1 Cor 2:11-14). There is no point in trying to convince unbelievers by your arguments for Scripture, for this will have no effect. It is far better and indeed the only profitable course, to leave them with the truth of God's Word and to wait upon the Spirit to do His work if He so wills.

QUESTION:

What methods of evangelism will we then use? Give examples.

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