Bible

(Bibliology)

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I. INTRODUCTION: THE SCRIPTURES AS A WHOLE

A. The Words: "Bible," "Scriptures," "Testament"

1. "Bible" simply means "Book"

a. From "biblos," the name of a papyrus reed (Exodus 2:3; Job 8:11) from which scrolls were made in the ancient world.

b. Early Christians began to refer to their sacred writings as "ta biblia" in the Greek (lit. "the books"), and the English word "Bible" is derived from that Greek expression.

c. Because of the understanding that the Christian Scriptures were actually the Word of God--one book by one Author, though produced by using many human writers--the name was changed from the plural ("ta biblia" - the books) to the singular ("ton biblion" - the Book).

d. We refer to Scripture as the "Holy Bible" to distinguish it from all other books. The Bible is set apart from all other writings because it is the Word of God.

2. "Scriptures" means "writings"

a. The Greek word for "writings" - "grapha"

b. This was the word used in the New Testament to refer to Old Testament books or some part of the Old Testament (Matthew 21:42; II Timothy 3:15).

c. New Testament writings were soon considered equal to the Old Testament, and then were also called "Scriptures."

3. "Testament" actually means "covenant" and has to do with an agreement or relationship established between two parties.

a. The Old Testament deals with the relationship of God to Israel, primarily under the Mosaic Covenant (II Cor. 3:14).

b. The New Testament deals with the relationship of God to all men under the New Covenant, established by the blood of Christ, shed at Calvary (II Cor. 3:6).

B. The Structure of the Bible

1. The Old Testament

a. **The Hebrew division, used in the days of Christ** (Lk. 24:44)

1) Law - 5 books (by Moses: Gen. - Deut.) ("Torah")
2) Prophets - 8 books ("Nebhiim")
3) Writings - 11 books ("Kethubhiim")

b. **The modern, English division**

1)	Law - 5 books (same as above)	(Gen - Deut.)
2)	History - 12 books	(Josh. - Esther)
3)	Poetry (Writings) - 5 books	(Job - Song of Solomon)
4)	Prophecy:	
	--Major Prophets - 5 books	(Is., Jer., Lam., Ezek., Dan.)
	--Minor Prophets - 12 books	(Hos. - Mal.)

c. Comparison of the Hebrew and English divisions of the Old Testament

HEBREW ARRANGEMENT

22 books perhaps because there are 22 letters in the Hebrew Alphabet

The TORAH (Law)
- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy

The NEBHIIM (Prophets)
- Joshua
- Judges (and Ruth)
- Samuel (both books)
- Kings (both books)
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah (with Lamentations)
- Ezekiel
- The Twelve (the Minor Prophets)

The KETHUBIIM (Writings or Poetry)
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Song of Solomon
- Ruth (if not with Judges)
- Ecclesiastes
- Esther
- Daniel
- Ezra-Nehemiah
- Chronicles (both books)

ENGLISH ARRANGEMENT

The PENTATEUCH (Law)
- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy

HISTORY
- Joshua
- Judges
- Ruth
- I Samuel
- II Samuel
- I Kings
- II Kings
- I Chronicles
- II Chronicles
- Ezra
- Nehemiah
- Esther

POETRY (or Writings)
- Job
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Song of Solomon
- Ecclesiastes

MAJOR PROPHETS
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel

MINOR PROPHETS
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi

2. The New Testament (27 books)

a. History (Matthew - Acts)

b. Pauline Epistles (13 books)

c. General Epistles (non-Pauline; 8 books)

d. Prophecy (Revelation)

3. The relationship between the two Testaments

a. Although the Old Testament is not nearly so well known as the New, the fact remains that the Old Testament is every bit as <u>important</u> as the New Testament. The Lord made this clear Himself in John 5:34, as well as in Luke 24. The fact of the importance of the Old Testament is also seen in the many ways that the New Testament is built upon the Old. One scholar has determined that there are 250 <u>direct</u> quotations of the Old Testament to be found in the New, and that there are 1,603 references, including looser quotations, allusions to Old Testament history, and so on.

b. Theologically, the Old Covenant was absolutely essential as preparation for the New. The extent to which New Testament authors draw upon the Old Testament Scriptures in explaining and applying the New Covenant clearly demonstrates this. Isaiah is referred to 308 times in the New Testament; Psalms is used 303 times. In the New Testament, only Philemon and the three epistles of John contain no direct reference to the Old Testament. Revelation contains 574 such references; Acts contains 169; Luke has 140; Matthew has 135; Hebrews includes 115; Romans contains 103.

c. The following poem expresses the relationship:

The New is in the Old contained,
    While the Old is by the New explained.
The New is in the Old concealed
    While the Old is in the New revealed.

4. The chapter and word divisions were developed long after Scripture was written, from the 13th to the 16th centuries A.D. (the Hebrew had its own divisions; The KJV contains 1,189 chapters, 31,100 verses, and 777, 133 words).

C. The Languages of Scripture

(The advantage of written language over oral tradition: precision, propagation; preservation)

1. The language in which the OLD TESTAMENT was written

a. **Primarily, <u>Hebrew</u>** - a Semitic language, Oriental in character (arose in Asia). Emphasized action and experience; few adjectives, but vivid nouns; originally no vowels.
Sample: Gen 1:1 -

b. **A few sections are written in <u>Aramaic</u>** (Dan. 2:4 - 7:28; Ezra 4:8 - 6:18, 7:12-26; Jer. 10:11) - a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew. Universal language of the business world in the Fertile Crescent.
Sample: Daniel 7:25

2. The language in which the NEW TESTAMENT was written

a. **Completely written in <u>Greek</u>** - the universal language of the New Testament era and the Roman Empire. Alexander the Great spread the Greek language. Many years ago, people said the New Testament was written in "Holy Ghost Language" (a "special" Greek); however, it is written in common Greek ("koine"), not classical Greek or any other kind.
Sample: Matthew 4:4 - ο δε αποκριθεις ειπεν γεγραπται ουκ επ αρτω μονω ζησεται ανθρωπος αλλ επι παντι ρηματι εκπορευομενω δια στοματος θεου

b. Some think Matthew or other portions of the New Testament were written in Aramaic in the original autographs. Most fundamentalists, however, believe it was all written in Greek.

3. The span of writing

a. **The Old Testament** - c.a. 1000 years (Moses, c.a.1400 B.C. - Malachi, c.a. 400 B.C.)

b. **The New Testament** - completely written during the first century A.D. It was written during a 50-year period (the first book, James, was written in 45 A.D. and the last book, Revelation, was completed around 95 A.D.), and closed by 100 A.D.

II. REVELATION: THE PROVIDENTIAL SOURCE OF THE BIBLE

A. The Definition of Revelation: Throughout history God has made Himself known to man.

1. **The term "revelation"** simply describes God's communication to man of truths which man did not know and could not discover for himself.

To reveal Himself to man, God used natural means (creation and conscience) and supernatural means (words - Heb. 1:1).

2. **The Biblical terminology**

a. The Hebrew term "galah" - to uncover, strip, remove (Examples: Gen. 8:13; Num. 22:31)

b. The Greek term, "apokalypsis" - to take a covering or veil from off of something (Mt. 11:27; Rev. 1:1)

The New Testament uses the word " Mystery" to describe something that was previously unknown, which now has been revealed (I Cor. 15:5; Eph. 1:9, 3:4 & 9, 5:32, 6:19; Col. 1:26, 27, 2:2).

Truth about God's plan for the Church age was hidden, but now, like a treasure chest, has been opened up because God has revealed Himself.

B. The Necessity for Revelation

In order for man to come to any understanding of God and His truth, God must reveal Himself to man, for two reasons:

1. By nature (creation) man is unable to discover God.

a. Man cannot see God - Is. 45:15; I Tim. 6:15-16.

b. Man cannot know God - Is. 55:9; I Cor. 2:14

2. By the fall (sin of Adam) man is uninterested in discovering God.

a. Because of sin, man now hides from God (Gen. 3:8)

b. Because of sin, man views spiritual things as " foolishness" (I Cor. 2:14)

c. Because of sin, man is totally depraved--" dead to spiritual things" (Eph. 2:1-5)

When man fell in the Garden, he broke fellowship and contact with God. Man died spiritually (Gen. 2:17) and now has a mind that:
forgets God, tends toward error , is easily deceived , etc.

If God had not revealed Himself to us (via the Scriptures), we would all end up in Hell!

Remember, only God can give a revelation or disclosure of truth (about His person, will, and plan for the future). Man's job is not to invent truth, but to discover it and interpret it.

C. The Two Types of Revelation:

*General Revelation (natural)
* Special Revelation (supernatural)

D. General Revelation (natural)

1. A Definition of General Revelation: God has revealed Himself to all men in a general (basic) sense by natural means.

a. General revelation comes to man as man (special revelation: man as sinner).

b. All general revelation was established before the fall.

c. General revelation comes through the natural order of things (special revelation: God interrupts regular history).

d. General revelation comes to all rational men (All have creation to look at; not all have a Bible).

2. The Channels of General Revelation:

a. Creation (The objective nature of the universe)
(Scripture: Ps. 19:1; Is. 40:12-14; Acts 14:15-17)

SEE: Rom. 1:18-21

What does creation reveal?

1) The visible creation shows the invisible creator.

a) "Eternal power" - His might points to God's everlasting nature (His "alwaysness"), which shows God to be sufficient to create the universe.

b) "Godhead" - His majesty: points to God's divine nature (His Deity); shows God to be worthy of worship.

NOTE: from creation we do not know God, but we know what He is like.

2) Creation shows man to be without excuse No one will defend himself at the Judgment by saying, "God, you didn't reveal yourself to me."

NOTE: General (natural) revelation via creation cannot save, only condemn.

b. Conscience (the innate nature of man)

1) Man was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27); therefore, man has a personality which is self -conscious and God-conscious (cp. Prov. 20:27).

2) Man's conscience is marred because of sin (It can be seared - I Tim. 4:2; and defiled - Tit. 1:15; and it needs to be purged - Heb. 9:14).

3. The Purpose of general revelation

a. While general revelation (creation and conscience) is not enough to save a man, it prepares the way for special revelation (cp. Ps. 19:1-6, cp. 19:7-14; Prov. 30:4; Acts 17:26-31).

b. General revelation is man's " Introduction to Theology." General revelation should put a desire in the heart of man to learn more about God.

c. General revelation is the foundation or basis upon which special revelation builds (man could not comprehend special revelation apart from general revelation).

NOTE: The Bible never proves God's existence; it assumes it and asserts it. Creation is all the objective "proof" man will ever get. And it is enough evidence to condemn him.

E. SPECIAL REVELATION (supernatural)

1. A Definition of special revelation:
God has revealed Himself to specific men at specific times
by supernatural means.

2. The Channels of special revelation (God's special [supernatural] revelation was given in "divers manners," i.e. many different ways - Heb. 1:1)

a. Miracles - the mighty acts of God in history. When God spoke by "event revelation," He always had a messenger to interpret it with "word revelation."

EXAMPLE: the Exodus - Ex. 5:1-2, cp. 7:4-5; Ps. 106:7-9.

b. Theophanes - physical appearance of God to man.

1) Natural theophany (appearances in nature) - Ex. 3 (burning bush) Ex. 13:21-22 (pillar of cloud and fire)

2) Auditory theophany (God's voice could be heard) - Ex. 19:1-3; Lk. 3:22.

3) Bodily theophany (The Angel [Messenger] of the Lord) - a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ - Gen. 16:10; Judges 2:1ff.

c. Urim & Thumim - two precious stones, used like lots, to determine God's will for Israel -
Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21; Dt. 33:8).

d. His Word

1) Direct words (Ex. 33:11)

2) Direct writing (Ex. 31:18)

3) Dreams (Dan. 7:1)

4) Visions (Ez. 1:1)

5) Jesus Christ - the incarnate Word (Jn. 1:17; Heb. 1:1)

6) Scriptures - the written Word (Ex. 17:14, 24:4, 7; Dt. 31:24; II Tim. 3:16)

3. **The <u>purposes</u> of special revelation:** that God's specific <u>will</u> (desires) and <u>ways</u> (plan for the ages) might be understood by man.

a. God spoke that we might "<u> know</u> <u>Him</u>" (I Jn. 5:20).

b. God spoke that we might "<u> Trust</u> <u>Him</u>" (I Jn. 5:13).

c. God spoke that we might "<u> Glorify</u> <u>Him"</u> (II Cor. 1:20).

III. INSPIRATION: THE PRODUCTION OF THE BIBLE

A. False Views of Inspiration:

1. Liberal view - the Bible is not inspired by God.

They would say:
"The Bible is only a remarkable human book - authored by men."

*The term used to describe this view would be "Natural Inspiration." The Bible was produced by religious men who followed their intuition in collecting and piecing together good religious statements.

They would say: "The Bible is `inspired' in the same sense as Shakespeare's writings or Beethoven's music."

2. Neo-Orthodox view - the Bible can become inspired by God.

They would say:
"When the Scriptures speak to an individual, it becomes the Word of God to him at that point."

*The term used to describe this view would be "Potential Inspiration."

Carl Barth, the father of neo-orthodoxy, believed that the Bible uniquely reveals God to man--not in propositions about God, but as a means of personal encounter by God with man in an act of revelation. In this existential experience--crisis encounter--the meaningless ink blots on the pages leap from the Bible to speak to man concretely and meaningfully. At this "moment of meaning" the Bible becomes the Word of God to the individual. (Geisler & Nix, p. 40).

3. New-Evangelical view - the Bible is partially inspired by God.

NOTE: Not all new-evangelicals deny the Biblical doctrine of inspiration, but many do.

*The term used to describe this view would be "Partial Inspiration."

This view has many varieties:

a. **Illumination theory** - God gave illumination (insight or an intensified religious perception) to the writers of Scripture so that at certain points of their writing, they wrote God's Word (what points? No one knows).

b. **Demythologizing theory** - God inspired the truths found in the Bible. They say that the true Bible is found by removing the cultural myths (EX: miracles) (Bultmann).

c. **Concept theory** - God inspired the ideas, thoughts, or concepts but not the words.

Each writer was free to record it in his own words. The Spirit did not guide him in his choice of words.

d. **Essential portion theory** - God inspired only portions of Scripture which describe salvation. This view, also held by the Roman Catholic church, says that the Bible is without error in matters central to the Bible, but has errors in "peripheral matter."

B. Faulty Views of Inspiration

1. **Dictationist view:** The Bible is inspired by God, but there is no real human participation in its production.

*The term used to describe this view would be: "Verbal Dictation" or "Mechanical Dictation."

Each word was dictated to the writer, who served only as a secretary. Human writers served only as "pen men" or "typists." God used only their physical bodies, not their minds or personalities.

NOTE: Some parts of Scripture were dictated (much of the book of Revelation; Ex. 24), but this view overlooks the fact that God utilized the various personalities of those He selected to write Scripture, and yet they still wrote every word He wanted.

"Let us not be mistaken. We do not speak of a stiff, mechanical, dictated inspiration of the Word. This would be completely unworthy of a divine revelation. A mechanical inspiration (automatic dictation) is found in occultism, spiritism, and therefore demonism, where the evil inspiring spirit works by setting aside and excluding the human individuality. Divine revelation, however, has nothing to do with such suppression of the human personality . . . Divine revelation desires not passive `mediums' but active men of God; not dead tools, but living, sanctified co-workers with God; not slaves, but friends (Jn. 15:15)." (Erich Sauer, Eternity to Eternity, p. 104-105).

C. Biblical View of Inspiration

1. Definition of Inspiration: ***Inspiration describes the unique process of the Holy Spirit in which He controlled and directed the hearts, minds, and wills of chosen men as they wrote exactly and totally what God wanted, so that the original manuscript was without error or omission.***

2. A Breakdown of this Definition:

--Inspiration was the unique process of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:26).

--The Holy Spirit controlled and directed the hearts, minds, and wills of chosen men (II Peter 1:20-21).

--Chosen men wrote exactly and totally what God wanted (II Tim. 3:16).

--The result was that the original manuscript was without error or omission (Mt. 5:17-18; Jn. 10:35).

a. Inspiration was the unique process of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:26).

1) Unique -

a) Inspiration is a unique process only true of Scripture and of no other literature (cp. II Tim. 3:16 - "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . .").

b) Inspiration is inexplicable. Man's comprehension cannot totally grasp all that occurred when the Holy Spirit directed the words that He used men to write.

2) Process -

Inspiration describes the actual process that occurred when the Holy Spirit guided men as they were in the act of writing God's Word.

3) Holy Spirit -

The Holy Spirit guided every word that was penned by the apostles and prophets.

David wrote "by the Holy Ghost" (Mk. 12:36).

"The Holy Ghost" spoke by Isaiah (Acts 28:25-26).

God spoke "by the prophets"
(Heb. 1:1-2).

Cp. I Cor. 2:13; II Pet. 1:20-21.

b. The Holy Spirit controlled and directed the hearts, minds, and wills of chosen men (II Pet. 1:20-21).

1) Controlled and directed -

Scriptures are not a product of human investigation, reason, or origin.

Men wrote as they were "moved by the Holy Ghost."

"Moved" - lit. "borne alone"; "carried along." The Spirit lifted them up, causing them to be led to write what God wanted. "The metaphor here is that the prophets raised their sails and the Holy Spirit filled them and carried their craft along in the direction He wished" (Rienecker, p. 773)

2) The hearts, minds, and wills -

"Men of God spake": Even though it was God's Word, it was men who wrote/spoke it.

EX: Jesus credited Moses with commands of God (Mk. 7:10). He credited Isaiah with prophecy of God (Mt. 13:14). Peter credited Paul with Scripture from God (II Pet. 3:15-16).

Even though Scripture came from the very mouth of God, He in His wisdom used the instrumentality of men. God, in using men, controlled and directed them, not stifling their own personalities or using them as machines or robots but as conscious, sober instruments.

On the one hand, while it can be said that man had nothing to do with the production of Scripture (he was passive), on the other hand, he did have an active part in its production.

This is a paradox.

[NOTE: However, man's part was also controlled by God - what occurred was "passive activity," in which God so worked in the writers that He gave them the will and the ability to write what He wanted (cp. Phil. 2:12-13).]

Throughout the entire life of a prophet or apostle, God's providential control prepared him with the particular talents, education, and experience which would be needed for the message which he was to give orally or by writing (Boettner, p. 24).

--God used the extensive education and patience of Moses to write the Pentateuch.

--God made use of the worshipful tender heart of David to write most of the Psalms.

--God employed the wisdom of Solomon to write Proverbs.

--God utilized the heavy heart of Jeremiah to write Lamentations.

--God applied the loving heart of John to write the Gospel and Epistles of love that bear his name.

--God exercised the detailed thinking of Dr. Luke to write Luke and Acts.

--God put into service the logical mind and appropriate religious background of Paul to write Romans and his other deep epistles.

[Remember, however, that it was God who equipped these men with the qualifications and personalities which they had.]

"God is One who in His infinite power can use as His agents and instruments fallible human beings, who can bring into His employ all the gifts, talents, and characteristics of those human beings, and yet can cause them to pen His own Word, and keep that Word utterly separate and distinct from their own sinful nature and the consequent imperfections which are the result of that nature" (Young, Thy Word is Truth, p. 74).

3) Chosen men -

"Holy men of God" - men whom God had sep apart for the special task of writing His Word.

God chose specific men to write His Word. These prophets and apostles proved that they were authorized to write Scripture by the signs and miracles that God did by their hands. God always vindicated His messengers (Ex. 4:28-31; II Cor. 12:13; Heb. 2:3-4).

When God chose select men to write His Word, He assured them that He would put His words into their mouths (EX: Moses - Ex. 4:11-16; Jeremiah - Jer. 1:5-9).

c. Chosen men wrote exactly and totally what God wanted (II Timothy 3:16).

The word translated "inspiration" is derived from the Greek Word "theopneustos" ("theo" meaning "God"; "pneustos" meaning "breathed").

Because the word is passive in its usage, it should be translated "breathed of God" or "God-breathed."

Scripture was "produced by the creative breath of the Almighty . . . it was God-given" (Boettner, Studies in Theology, p. 21).
The word "pneustos" which refers to both "breath" or "spirit" implies the divine creative action of God.

Just as the universe has its source in the God who spoke it into existence (Heb. 11:3; Ps. 33:6), and just as man's life had its source in the creative breath of God (Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4), the Scriptures came to man in the same way--right out of the mouth of God! Therefore, they are exactly what God wanted written.

NOTE: The word "God-breathed" does not suggest that God breathed into Scriptures that already existed; rather, He breathed the Scriptures out of Himself.

Isaiah 45:23 - "The word is gone out of my mouth."

Matthew 4:4 - "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

1) **"Wrote"** - "All Scripture": The word translated scripture is from the Greek word "graphe," which refers to that which was written. The word "graphe" refers to sentences, phrases, and words! (not just ideas).

Inspiration can only be applied to the writings, and not to the writers (i.e., God did not inspire the writers but the Scriptures).

2) **Exactly what God wanted** - "All Scripture" - the word "all" refers to every individual, written part.

Every detail of the Bible was inspired! Right down to the words, letters, and distinguishing parts of letters! This is called "Verbal Inspiration."

"Christ did not say of His thoughts, but of His words that they are spirit and life" (John 6:63). -- Luther

The message of Scripture at times depends on a single word. Therefore, God inspired every detail.

Cp. Gal. 3:16 - singular as opposed to plural

Cp. Jn. 8:58 - present tense as opposed to past

NOTE: God put specific words into the mouths of His prophets - Jer. 1:7-9; Num. 22:38, 23:12, 16; II Sam. 23:2.

NOTE: The grammatical/syntactical study of Scripture is based entirely upon the acceptance of verbal inspiration. (Those who have a low view of Scripture don't preach expositionally, and don't care about the details of the Bible)

3) Totally what God wanted - The whole complete Bible was inspired.

This is called "Plenary Inspiration."

If only parts of the Bible came from God's mouth, it would be left up to man to determine which parts were inspired and which parts were not.

The Bible would be all guess-work.

"All Scripture is God-breathed"; therefore all Scripture is without error (defect) and is fully authoritative (profitable).

Paul's entire purpose for placing the clause "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" in II Timothy 3:16 is to give a basis or support for the profitableness of Scripture for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction. If Scripture's source was not the mouth of God, it has no authority and no ultimate profit.

d. The result was that the original manuscript was without error or omission (Matt. 5:17-18; John 10:35).

1) "Original manuscript" - Inspiration only describes the Holy Spirit's superintendence of the original manuscript (by this we mean, the first copy written).

--Scribes who copied the autographa or copied from copies of the autograph were not inspired; nor was inspiration occurring while they copied.

--Translators were not inspired, nor were their translations.

Inspiration describes a miracle of God that happened only once!

God certainly would strengthen and help a scribe or translator who would sincerely ask Him. But He would not breath out any new revelation to them.

2) **"<u>Without error</u>"** - Jesus claimed authority for every letter that was written, even the parts of written letters (distinguishable marks that differentiated one letter from another were also inspired!) See Mt. 5:18 -

<u>"Jot"</u> = the smallest Hebrew letter, called the yodh י
(See Ps. 119:73).

<u>"Tittle"</u> = a part of a letter that would distinguish one letter from another (compare the daleth ד with the resh ר).

"John Wesley said, `If there be any mistakes in the Bible, there may as well be a thousand. If there is one falsehood in that Book, it did not come from the God of truth'." (Ryrie, <u>Inerrancy</u>, p. 26).

3) **"<u>Without omission</u>"** - The Scriptures are complete. All that God intended for us to have, He has given.

The Scriptures, as God gave them, are free from all errors, defects, or imperfections.

This is called "<u>inerrancy</u>."

Since the Bible was 1) <u>inspired</u>, it is
2) <u>inerrant</u> (because God could not make a mistake); and because the Scriptures are inerrant, they are 3) <u>infallible</u> (incapable of failing or leading you astray; the Bible is wholly true and wholly authoritative - Jn.17:17).

D. <u>Additional Features</u> of Inspiration

1. Inspiration often involved writing an <u>unwelcomed message</u> (Jer. 20).

2. Inspiration often involved writing a message that the prophet or apostle did <u>not totally understand</u> (Dan. 12:8-9; Rev. 5:1-4).

3. Inspiration often involved writing a message that was not too "<u>inspiring</u>" (Judges 19 & 20) or <u>truthful</u> from the standpoint of the one who is being quoted (EX: Satan is quoted - Gen. 3:4, 5; Mt. 4:8, 9).

E. The Bible's Own Claim to Inspiration

1. In the Old Testament, various phrases make this claim - 3,808 times ("The Lord spoke"; "the word of the Lord came to me," etc.).

2. The Pentateuch alone makes this claim 420 times.

3. The prophets identified their written message as the Word of God.

   For example -
   - Isaiah - 120 times
   - Jeremiah - 430 times
   - Ezekiel - 320 times
   - Amos - 53 times
   - Haggai - 27 times
   - Zechariah - 53 times

4. The New Testament writers claim to have spoke and written the Word of God.
   - Paul - I Cor. 14:37; I Thes. 2:13
   - John - I Jn. 5:10
   - Peter - II Pet. 3:2

5. To quote the Old Testament was to quote God Himself.
   - Rom. 9:17 - quote from Ex. 9:16
   - Gal. 3:8 - quote from Gen. 12
   - Acts 4:32 - quote from Ps. 2:2

F. Christ's Declaration of Inspiration

1. Christ accepted the Old Testament as fully authoritative (Lk. 24:44; Mt. 5:18; Lk. 16:31).

2. Christ stated that the Scriptures cannot be broken (Jn. 10:35).

3. Christ regarded prophecies of Scripture as being certain of fulfillment (Mt. 24:15).

4. Christ stated that His own words possessed absolute authority (Mt. 24:35; cp. Mt. 7:29).

5. Christ pre-authenticated the words of His apostles as being the authoritative, trustworthy words of God (Jn. 17:20).

G. Eight Rational Proofs for Inspiration

1. **Unity** - The Bible was written by means of 40 different writers, in three languages (Hebrew and Aramaic - O.T.; Greek - N.T.), over a 1,500 year period, and yet the Scriptures have only one theme: namely, Jesus Christ and His salvation of mankind through His sacrificial and substitutionary death (See: Lk. 24:25-27; Jn. 5:39, 46; Acts 10:43, 18:28; I Cor. 15:3).

2. **Prophecy** - Fulfilled by Jesus at His first coming (Mt. 5:17; Lk. 24:27; Jn. 19:24)
EX: Ps. 22 - written about 1,000 B.C.
Is. 53 - written about 750 B.C.

3. **Honesty** - Shows people as they really are. The Bible's heroes are not "sugar-coated!" Rather, the faults of even the greatest are brought out (Abraham, Moses, David, Peter).
The Bible also describes sin as it is; heaven and hell as they are; and God as He is (example of the tension between election and free will - If man wrote the Bible, he would have relieved it).

4. **Durability** - The Bible has lasted through the ages, though attempts have been made to exterminate this Book as no other (EX: Jer. 36:1-2, 27-28).
Voltaire, the French infidel, said: "Another century, [and] there will not be another Bible on earth." After his death, his printing press was used to print Bibles!

5. **Power** - To change (transform) lives.

6. **Freshness** - George Mueller said: "I read through the Bible 100 times, and each time it is new to me."

7. **Scientific Accuracy** –
The earth is round (a circle) – Is. 40:22
The earth hangs on nothing – Job 26:7
The life of the flesh is in the blood (Gen 9:4; Lev. 17:11)
Circumcision on 8th day – Lev. 12:3
Universal flood
Uncountable multitudes of stars – (Gen. 15:5, Jer. 33:22)
100 billion stars in our Galaxy alone!
Plants and Animals reproduce only after their Kind (Species) Gen. 1 etc

8. **Historical Accuracy** – Proven by – Recent Achaelogical discoverier (cities discovered customs proven etc.)
Proven by – Comparing the Bible with other Historical writings contemporary with the Bible
Ex. Josephus- cp. Acts 12 – Herod's speech and Death
With Josephus. Antiquities Book XIX chap. 7:2-5 & 8:1-2

IV. PRESERVATION: THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE BIBLE

DEFINITION OF PRESERVATION:

God has providentially guarded (protected) His Word, so that it would be kept completely intact, pure, and trustworthy throughout all ages.

A. God has providentially guarded (protected) His Word.

1. Promises of Preservation

a. Psalm 119:89 - "Forever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in heaven" ("settled" = stands firm).

b. Psalm 119:152 - "Concerning Thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever."

c. Psalm 119:160 - "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever."

d. Isaiah 40:8 - "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."

e. Matthew 5:18 - "For verily (truly) I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled" (cp. Lk. 16:17).

f. Matthew 24:35 - "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

g. I Peter 1:23-25 - "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

2. Bible illustrations of preservation:

a. Jeremiah 36:1-22 - A portion of Scripture is lost by deliberate destruction, and God directly intervenes to restore and preserve the text.

[God was careful to preserve His Word, yet did so through men.]

b. II Kings 22:8 (II Chron. 34:14-16) - A portion of Scripture is lost by human neglect and carelessness, and God providentially uncovers the missing Scripture.

c. Daniel 12:4, 9 - God promised to keep Daniel's prophecy closed up and sealed (meaning - kept intact) so that it will help those living in the future Tribulation days when it will be fulfilled.

3. God's providence in preservation

It is not by mere chance or coincidence that the Bible has persevered the test of time, and has been protected from its enemies who have sought to destroy it. God has been sovereignly superintending (watching over) His Word throughout the ages and has providentially preserved it.

The doctrine of "preservation" is not miraculous in nature like "inspiration" is, but it is providential. God has left men with the responsibility of safe-guarding His truth.

The commands in Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32; and Proverbs 30:6 as well as the warnings in Jeremiah 26:2 and Revelation 22:18, 19 reveal the following:

a. God is serious about His Word.

b. The possibility exists for man to corrupt God's Word either by adding to it or taking away from it (some have corrupted it - EX: Readers Digest Version; New Revised Standard Version).

c. Man is responsible to safe-guard Scripture from such corruption. Examples of how God has providentially protected His Word while using man to do it:

1) Old Testament: Stringent rules were followed by scribes to keep errors from creeping in. EX: The Masoretes (from A.D. 500 - 900) counted letters on each page and compared with original. The Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1947 revealed that the Masoretic text was accurate (these Scrolls dated almost 1,000 years earlier than the Masoretic text).

2) New Testament: Multitudes of Bible manuscripts have been discovered (when compared with each other, the agreement is outstanding). Consider these comparisons:

Document Name	Number of Manuscripts	Earliest Date
Caesar's Gallic Wars	10	A.D. 900
Livy's History of Rome	20	A.D. 400
Thucydides' History	8	A.D. 900
Herodotus' History	8	A.D. 900
The New Testament	14,000	A.D. 125

Chart taken from Can I Really Trust the Bible?
Radio Bible Class, 1986, p. 16

NOTE: The 14,000 New Testament manuscripts include:

5,000 mss (manuscripts) in Greek

8,000 mss in Latin

1,000 ancient versions (EX: Syriac and Egyptian coptic translations which are dated pre-200 A.D.)

B. God has kept His Word completely intact.

Jesus said: "The Scripture cannot be broken" (Jn. 10:35) (no part of Scripture may be severed from the rest).

Question: Since the Bible was written so many years ago, and since other books have been written that claim to also be from God, how do we know what is and isn't Scripture?

1. Canonicity (man's recognition of God's Word)

a. Definition of "canon" -

A "canon" was a measuring rod or a reed used to measure (Ezek. 40:3)

The word "canon" comes from the Greek word "kanon" which referred to a standard or rule by which one's writings or practices were measured (EX: II Cor. 10:13; Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:16).

Canonicity deals with the recognition and acceptance of Scripture by men.

Whereas inspiration reveals how the Bible received its authority, canonization tells how the Bible received its acceptance.

NOTE: Men can only discover which books were inspired. It is God who determined which books were inspired.

"A book is not inspired because men made it canonical; it is canonical because God inspired it." (See Geisler & Nix, p.135-137)

b. Necessity of a canon -

Having criteria to measure the authenticity of books, and then making a list of recognized books was necessary for the following reasons:

1) The death of the apostles

2) The abundance of false teachers

3) The production of false writings

a) The Old Testament Apocrypha (14 "hidden" books)

I Esdras, II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, the rest of Esther, the Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (the wisdom of Jesus, Son of Sirach), Baruch, the Son of the Three Holy Children, the History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasseh,
I Maccabees, II Maccabees.

*These books were written during the silent years - 400 B.C. -- the birth of Christ.

b) New Testament Pseudepigrapha ("false writings")

A large number of Jewish works attributed to men of Scripture, but were false (EX: I Enoch, Martyrdom of Isaiah, Sibylline Oracles).

c) The New Testament Apocrypha

Books that circulated during the early stages of the Christian era which supposedly related details about Christ and the apostles, but were never considered to be canonical.

EX: The Gospel of Peter, The Gospel of the Egyptians, The Gospel of Thomas, The Gospel of Nicodemus, the Epistle to the Laodiceans (which was a plagiarization of Philippians).

Why were the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal books rejected?

1) They abound in historical and geographical inaccuracies (EX: II Maccabees)

2) They teach doctrines which are false and contrary to inspired Scripture (much docetism, gnostisism and immorality [EX: Judith])

3) They resort to literary types and display an artificiality of subject matter and style inconsistent with inspired Scripture (EX: Tobit)

4) They propagate the fanciful, mystical (EX: Bel and the dragon), and fictitious.

5) They lack the distinctive elements which give genuine Scripture its divine character. Much imitation and plagiarism. (EX: II Esdras, the Epistle to the Laodiceans, the Epistle of Barnabas)

c. Rules for acknowledging canonicity -

Principles were employed by early historians (Eusebius d. 340) and believers (Polycarp d. 155) in order to recognize which books measured up to the canon (standard).

NOTE: While no official list has been discovered of the rules they used, a compilation of their comments about Scripture in their writings would reveal the following criteria which they demanded before they would accept a book as being from God:

1) Apostolic origin or authority
(Jn. 16:13; Jn. 2:22; Eph. 2:20-22; I Cor. 14:37; II Pet. 3:15-17; Heb. 1:1-3)

Either an apostle wrote it, or stood behind the man who wrote.

2) Doctrinal consistency with former revelation and apostolic teaching
(Gal. 1:8-9; Dt. 13)

God never contradicts Himself.

3) Evidence of divine inspiration

A believer who has the Holy Spirit will be able to discern truth from error
(I Jn. 4:1).

[Was the book under consideration able to influence or transform a person unto godliness?]

4) Reception and preservation by New Testament believers

Scripture was to be read publicly (I Thes. 5:27; I Tim. 4:13) and circulated (Col. 4:16).

5) Christological - Is the book centered around Jesus Christ?

Luke 24:27 - "Moses - Prophets"

II Cor. 5:20 - "I beseech you in Christ's stead"

C. God has kept His Word pure and trustworthy throughout all ages.

"Thy Word is truth" (Jn. 17:17).

Question: Does the Bible contain errors or contradictions? NO!

All of the "so-called errors" or alleged "contradictions" are consistently resolved when principles of hermeneutics are strictly followed.

Jumping to the conclusion that the Bible has an error, contradiction, or doctrinal discrepancy usually is caused by:

1. Mis-interpretation

The Bible is often misinterpreted because of: the nature of man.

a. Man's darkened mind has been prejudiced by sin (some read the Bible looking for "errors")

b. Man often has pre-conceived ideas.

c. Finite man often has difficulty comprehending an infinite God.

The Bible is often misinterpreted because of the reader's failure to follow hermeneutical principles of interpretation.

a. Failure to consider the context.

b. Failure to follow rules of grammar.

c. Failure to compare properly Scripture with Scripture (EX: in synoptic gospels)

2. Misunderstanding of Biblical <u>circumstances</u>.

a. Historical -

b. Geographical -

(EX: 2 Jerichos; Mt. 20:29-34; Mk. 10:46-52)

c. Cultural -

d. Chronological -

(EX: Matthew's gospel is arranged thematically not chronologically)

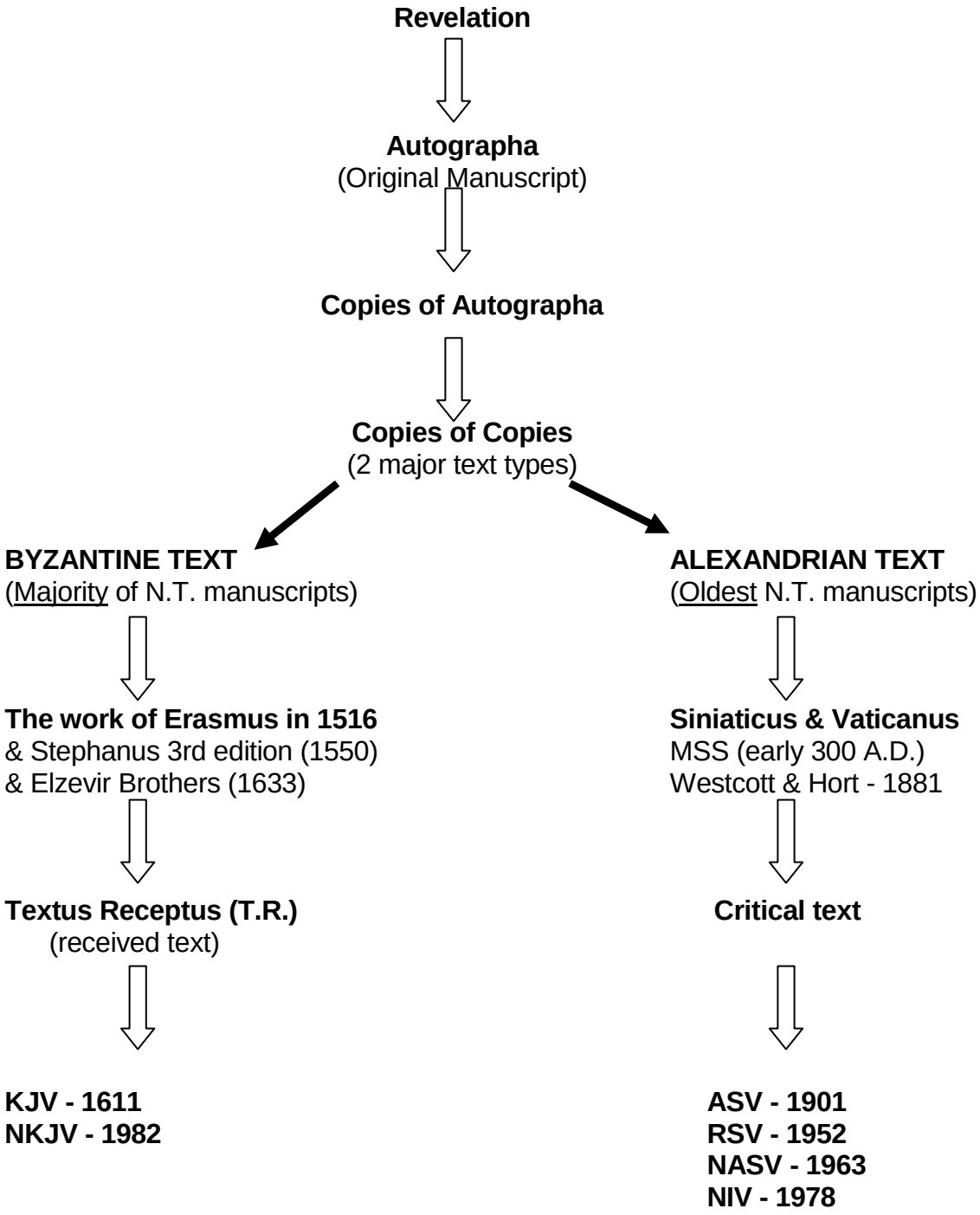
e. Different modes of <u>computation</u> - Different writers may arrive at different dates when describing the same event because they use different calendars.

3. <u>Mistranslation</u>

When someone says, "There is an error in the Bible," say, "No. There may be a poor translation from the Hebrew or Greek, but not an error in the Bible."

V. TRANSLATION: THE POPULAR LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE

A. Where did our English Bible come from?



B. What are some of the more popular translations?

1. The Septuagint (LXX)

a. The Hebrew Old Testament translated into Greek

b. This work was done in the third century B.C.; tradition holds that the work was done by 70 Hebrew and Greek scholars among the jews and that their resultant translations were identical (thus, the symbol LXX)

c. A very uneven translation: some sections are much better and more reliable than others.

2. English translations

a. The Wycliffe translation

(1) Made by John Wycliffe and aides in 1382

(2) The main failing of this translation: It was not a translation from the original Hebrew and Greek; but a translation from the Latin Vulgate.

(3) Wycliffe's design was to get the Bible into the tongue of the people, and for this he suffered much resistance and persecution.

(4) The Wycliffe Bible appeared in manuscript form only, and was not widely circulated, but it did reach many people and was an important step in preparation for the Reformation in England.

b. The Tyndale translation

(1) Translated by William E. Tyndale in 1526

(2) Tyndale translated from Greek manuscripts

c. The Great Bible

(1) Translated in 1539, this was the first authorized English copy of the Scripture.

d. Geneva Bible

(1) This translation was done by Marian exiles in Geneva, 1553-59

(2) This was the Bible of the Puritans

e. The King James (Authorized Version)

(1) Completed in 1611, this was the translation of the Anglican Church, done largely in response to the appearance of the Geneva Bible.

(2) This is a very accurate and dependable translation, done from the original manuscripts available in that day; it is beautiful English.

f. The Revised Version

(1) This work was done in 1881-84; the translators had the advantage of late manuscript discoveries, especially the Sinaiticus and the Alexandrius.

(2) Acceptable scholarship, except for II Timothy 3:16

g. American Standard Version

(1) Originally completed in 1901, and revised in 1963 (New American Standard).

(2) The 1901 version was careless in II Timothy 3:16; that was corrected in the NASV.

h. The Revised Standard Version

(1) The New Testament was completed in 1946; the Old Testament in 1952.

(2) This translation was done by modernists and unbelievers; it had a deliverate ecumenical flabor and design. There are some good sections, but this trnaslation is generally unreliable.

i. The New American Standard Version (NASV)

(1) Completed in 1963, the work was carried on under the auspices of the Lockman Foundation. The men who translated this version wanted to remain anonymous so that the glory would go to God and not man.

(2) The NASV is a very literal modern translation that paid special attention to the fine nuances of the Greek tenses.

j. The New International Version (NIV)

(1) Completed in 1978, it was the result of combined "New Evangelical" efforts.

(2) It is a very smooth reading translation (a dynamic equivalency) that omits the translation of some words and is very interpretive at points - giving what they viewed as the interpretation rather than a literal translation (EX: I Cor. 7:1).

k. The New King James Version (NKJV)

(1) The New Testament was completed in 1979; the Old Testament in 1982. Produced and published by Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, TN. The NKJV was the work of 119 conservative scholars, editors and church leaders.

(2) The NKJV is a very literal translation retaining the beauty and dignity of the KJV of 1611, yet re-translating the archaic words of its predecessor.

(3) A very reliable translation.

I. Many modern translations

(1) "There seems to be a contest among modern translations to see which one can be the most innovative, the most free in its rendering of the text. Formerly Bible translations were expected to meet three standards: 1) a translation should not add anything to the text; 2) a translation should not leave out anything in the text; 3) a translation should not twist anything in the text to change its meaning. Modern translations systematically violate all three standards." -- Stewart Custer, Faith for the Family, "Twisted Translations."

(2) Some translations of modern times that should be rejected:

(a) The Living Bible - a paraphrase by Kenneth Taylor

(b) Good News for Modern Man - a deliberate attempt to pervert the Word of God

(c) The New English Bible - liberal and ecumenical in spirit

(d) The Phillips Paraphrase - a very loose paraphrase

(e) The Jerusalem Bible - designed to further the ecumenical movement

(f) The Revised Standard Version

(g) The Readers Digest Bible - omits large sections of Scripture (whole chapters in Numbers)

(h) New World Translation (Jehovah's Witness Bible) - mistranslates Scripture involving the deity of Christ, etc.

C. Why do modern versions differ from KJV?

1. The Greek Text they used (T.R. vs. Critical Text)

2. The use of modern English

3. The personal input of the translators

Every translation has a theological bias (to some degree, every translation is slanted in favor of the beliefs of the ones who translated it). This is unavoidable. The way one understands the Bible as a whole will be reflected in how he translates the parts.

So when we begin looking for a good, trustworthy translation, we should look for one that was translated by genuine believers, who literally interpreted God's Word according to the grammatical, theological and historical context in which it was written.

4. The philosophy about translating

a. **Literal** - KJV, NKJV, NASV

b. **Dynamic Equivalent** (may add or delete or alter words to give the sense of the passage) - NIV

VI. ILLUMINATION: THE PERCEPTION OF THE BIBLE

A. The Definition of Illumination: *Illumination describes the Holy Spirit's enlightenment of man's mind to comprehend the written Word of God.*

Whereas "revelation" described God's Word revealed (manifested); and "inspiration" described God's Word written; "illumination" describes God's Word understood.

B. The Differences between Inspiration and Illumination:

1. Inspiration involved the writing of God's Word;
   Illumination involves the reading of God's Word.

2. Inspiration was a miracle (not to be repeated);
   Illumination occurs daily as men gain insight into God's Word.

3. Inspiration involved the Holy Spirit moving specific, chosen men;
   Illumination involves the Holy Spirit teaching any believer who is willing and eager to learn.

C. The Bible's Teaching on Illumination:

1. Illumination is needed by the unsaved.

a. The unsaved ("natural man") is without spiritual understanding. He views spiritual things (as revealed in the Bible) as foolishness (I Cor. 2:14).

b. The unsaved man has a blinded mind
   (II Cor. 4:4)

2. Illumination <u>begins</u> at salvation.

a. Heb. 6:4 - "once enlightened"

b. Heb. 10:32 - "ye were illuminated"

3. Illumination is a <u>work of the Holy Spirit</u>
(I Cor. 2:9-16)

a. The Holy Spirit reveals God's Word <u>only</u> to <u>believers</u> (I Cor. 2:9-10)

b. The Holy Spirit reveals the "<u>deep things</u> of God" (I Cor. 2:10)

c. The Holy Spirit <u>convicted</u> men of sin, righteousness and judgment (Jn. 16:8).

d. The Holy Spirit is our <u>guide</u> into all truth (jn. 16:13).

VII. TRANSFORMATION: THE POWER OF THE BIBLE

A. Definition of Transformation - *The Holy Spirit's use of the Bible to change (totally transform) a person's life from condemnation to salvation and from sin unto Godliness.*

Note the following word pictures which depict the unique power of the Bible:

1. The Bible is a Sword (Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17)

a. The Holy Spirit's offensive and defensive weapon is the Bible (Eph. 6:17). God is speaking by no other means today.

b. According to Heb. 4:12, the Bible as a sword is:

(1) Living ("quick" KJV)

(2) Powerful

(3) Piercing - ("sharper...piercing")

(4) Penetrating ("dividing asunder")

(5) Convicting ("discerner [judge] of the thoughts and intents of the heart")

2. The Bible is a Mirror (James 1:23-25)

It reflects the mind of God and the true nature and condition of man.

3. The Bible is a <u>Seed</u> (Mk. 4:1-20 *v. 14)

As a seed, the Bible produces life, growth and fruit.

4. The Bible is <u>water</u> (Eph. 5:26)

The Bible cleanses and quenches thirst.

5. The Bible is a <u>Lamp and Light</u> (Ps. 119:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 105)

It offers <u>protection</u> from danger and <u>guidance</u> into the right way.

6. The Bible is a <u>hammer</u> (Jer. 23:29)

It has ability to tear down (humble) and build up (edify).

7. The Bible is a <u>Fire</u> (Jer. 20:9; Lk. 24:32).

It convicts, judges, and purifies.

8. The Bible is <u>Nourishing Food</u>

a. It is <u>milk</u> that causes growth (I Pet. 2:2)

b. It is <u>meat</u> that gives strength (Heb. 5:14; I Cor. 3:1-3)