

WHY I BELIEVE THE BIBLE CAME FROM GOD

SUBJECT: Criticism-Evidences

TITLE: Why I Believe the Bible Came From God

PROPOSITION: To set forth reasons for believing that the Bible came from God

OBJECTIVE: To strengthen the faith of all in the divine authorship of the Bible

INTRODUCTION

1. At this time we continue our studies from the general field of Christian Apologetics, and our particular point of interest just now is the divine authorship of the Bible.
2. We have previously shown--
 - (1) That if the Bible did not come from man that it did come from God; and
 - (2) That it did not come from man.
3. There are many other evidences of the divine authorship of the Bible, and at this time I want to study with you some of the reasons for believing that the Bible came from God.

DISCUSSION

I believe the Bible came from God--

- I. Because I want to believe it came from God.
 1. I do not like the alternative
 2. With the Bible, there is purpose to life.
 3. With the Bible, there is a standard for life
 4. With the Bible, there is marvelous hope with reference to the hereafter.
 5. With the Bible, there is value to human life.
 6. With the Bible, there is compassion and consideration for others.
 7. With the Bible, there is the greatest challenge.

II. Because of its conception of God.

1. It presents man as a worshipping being, and God as the proper object of worship.
2. By following his own steps man becomes involved in idolatry; but the Bible declares there is one God. Cf. Deut. 6:4; Mk. 12:29; Jno. 17:3; Eph. 4:6; I Tim. 2:5.
3. Finite mind would never have conceived of an omnipotent being: yet the Bible presents God as being omnipotent. Cf. Gen. 1:1; Mt. 19:26; Luke. 1:37; Acts 26:8; Rev. 19:6.
4. Finite mind would never have conceived of an omniscient being; yet, the Bible presents God as being omniscient. Cf. 1 Sam. 2:3; 1 Sam. 16:7; Rom. 8:28; Rom. 11:33; Ps. 139:1-6.
5. Finite mind would never have conceived of God as being omnipresent, yet, the Bible presents God as being omnipresent. Cf. Ps. 139:7-10; Acts 17:27

III. Because of its conception of man

1. To those who reject the Bible a human being is little more than a glorified ape.
 - (1) He is not one created in the image of God;
 - (2) He is the product of organic evolution;
 - (3) The only difference between a man and a mouse is one of "molecular sequence."
2. But, think of the Bible's majestic story of the origin of man.
3. Think of the Bible's conception of the mission of duty of man Cf. Ecc. 12:1
4. Think of the Bible's conception of the destiny of man.
5. Cf. Ps. 8.

IV. Because of its unity of purpose.

1. The purpose of the Bible is: The glory of God and the salvation of man through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(1) This is the "purpose line" which runs throughout the Bible.

(2) On this purpose line fastens every book in the Bible.

2. This marvelous and unusual volume--

(1) Is made up of sixty-six separate books, which were written by forty different writers, over a period of 1600 years.

A. It was begun by Moses in the desert of Arabia, and was completed by John on the Isle of Patmos.

B. The writers generally were not conscious of the works of others.

C. The writers were widely separated in geography and in chronology.

(2) Was written by fishermen, farmers, shepherds, soldiers, kings.

(3) Was written in palaces, pastures, prisons, and tents.

(4) Was written by men of education and by men who were untutored.

(5) Was written by men who were not a literary people.

3. Yet--when these writings are all brought together in one sacred volume there is perfect unity.

4. Consider:

(1) If a 40-piece orchestra should begin to play--in perfect timing, melody and harmony--it would be evidence of direction by a single mind.

(2) If 40 archers, in 40 different places, widely separated in time, should shoot their arrows and all hit the same target "dead-center" it would be evidence of (proof of) direction by a single mind.

(3) If forty men--widely separated in geography, with varied backgrounds, and living over a period of 1600 years--should each write down a few lines, and these lines when brought together constitute a beautiful poem it would be evidence of direction by a single mind.

(4) The Twentieth Century Christian recently published a special edition entitled "Back to the Bible." There were many writers, widely separated in geography and time. But, when the articles were put together

in one volume there is wonderful unity. Why? Direction by one mind!

V. Because of its high moral standard.

1. Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire is a marvelous commentary on the corrupt and immoral condition of the world when Christianity was born.
2. According to Romans 1,2 and 3 the whole world was lost in sin, and Rom. 1:28-32 is one of the blackest pictures ever painted of any portion on mankind.
3. In spite of the prevailing conditions, we have --
 - (1) The Great Sermon on the Mount;
 - (2) Rom. 12:1,2;
 - (3) Titus 2:11-14;
 - (4) Gal. 6:10;
 - (5) Jas. 1:27.

VI. Because of its description of man as he is.

1. We do not like to see ourselves as we really are. Cf. a photograph.
2. Human biographers do not ordinarily discuss the mistakes and sins of their subjects.
3. The Bible records without partiality:
 - (1) The mistakes of Noah, Gen.9:20,21;
 - (2) The deception of Abraham, Gen. 12:11,12;
 - (3) The trickery, lying, and deception of Jacob, Gen.27;
 - (4) The disobedience of Moses, Num. 20:7-12;
 - (5) The tragic sins of David, 2 Sam.11;
 - (6) The idolatry of Solomon, I Kings 11:
 - (7) The hypocrisy of Simon Peter, Gal. 2:11-14.

CONCLUSION

1. These are six wonderful reasons for believing that the Bible came from God.
2. As the Word of God ~~is~~ must be the governing factor in our lives.
3. Let us love it, believe it, learn it, obey it, share its blessings, and teach it to others.

See "Unity of the Bible" and "Inspiration--Its Meaning" filed at the end of this lesson

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INTRODUCTION

1. At this time we continue our study of the evidences that the Bible is the word of God, as it claims to be.
2. In previous study it has been stressed: I believe the Bible came from God--
 - (1) Because I want to believe it came from God;
 - (2) Because of its conception of God;
 - (3) Because of its conception of man;
 - (4) Because of its unity of purpose;
 - (5) Because of its high moral standard;
 - (6) Because of its description of man as he is.
3. And now, I want us to consider additional reasons for believing--additional evidences of the inspiration of the Bible.

DISCUSSION

I believe the Bible came from God--

- I. Because of its great literary quality.
 1. English literature begins with the translation of the Bible.
 2. The writings of Shakespeare, Milton, Addison, Steel, Browning, Tennyson--all abound with references to the Bible.
 3. The great orations of Daniel Webster were filled with references to and quotations from the Bible.
 4. The Bible has been the inspiration for thousands of books, poems, and songs

I. Continued

5. What is more beautiful--

(1) Than Longfellow's "Psalm Of Life"?--David's "Twenty-Third Psalm."

(2) Than Poe's "Raven"?--Paul's great speech on Mar's Hill.

II. Because it does not become obsolete.

1. Tremendous progress has been made in practically every field of human endeavor:

(1) In transportation;

(2) In communication;

(3) In engineering;

(4) In astronomy;

(5) In medicine;

(6) In education.

2. Yet, human progress cannot get ahead of the Bible.

(1) It is always up to date;

(2) It never has to be adapted, changed, or modified;

(3) It meets human needs as always;

(4) It is like a perennial mountain spring;

(5) If it were a purely human product men could now write a better book.

(6) The infidel's criticisms will have no weight until he writes a better book.

3. The Bible contains the oldest records of that with which it deals. The Bible itself is the oldest book. Yet, it is as fresh as today's newspaper.

III. Because of its indestructableness

1. The Bible is the most loved book in the world--yet, it is also the most hated book in the world.

III. Continued.

2. Men hate the Bible because--

- (1) It pictures man as he really is;
- (2) It claims authority over man;
- (3) It tells man that he is accountable to God;
- (4) It tells man that he will stand in judgment;
- (5) It interferes with man's sinful schemes. Cf. Hitler had to raise a generation of young people under the influence of the god of war rather than under the influence of the God of the Bible.

3. When men hate other books they simply let them alone. But--

- (1) The Bible demands attention;
- (2) The Bible cannot be ignored.

4. Many forces have set themselves against the Bible.

- (1) During the "Dark Ages" the Bible was chained to the pulpits.
- (2) During the French Revolution the "goddess of reason" was exalted in opposition to the Bible. Voltaire prophesied that "In less than a hundred years the Bible will be discarded and Christianity swept from the earth." Voltaire's works are scarcely read. His old printing press has been used to print Bibles. His old house has been used for storage of Bibles. The Bible lives on.
- (3) Our own Thomas Paine, who was so influential in early American history wrote a book which he called THE AGE OF REASON and which he said would destroy the Bible and Christianity. You seldom hear of THE AGE OF REASON, but the Bible lives on.
- (4) Then came the age of "higher criticism," which sought to undermine and to destroy the influence and authority of the Bible.

III. 4. Continued

- (5) The proponents of the theory of evolution have done--and continue to do-- everything in their power to destroy the Bible and its influence.

5. The Bible has worn out many infidel hammers. Consider:

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring and the vesper chime.
When looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then with twinkling eye--
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, thought I, the anvil of God's word.
For ages skeptics' blows have beat upon.
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed--the hammer's gone!

IV. Because of its translateableness

1. God wants His message proclaimed to the whole world--to every man in his own language--and He has given a book which can be translated into every language.
2. Human productions thrive only in the language in which they were originally written.
3. The Bible was written in Hebrew and Greek. Yet, it flows so easily into our own language that we often fail to recall that it was written originally in a language other than our own.
4. The Bible has been translated into more than 1000 languages, tongues, and dialects.

V. Because of its message of redemption.

1. The Bible sets forth the beautiful story of human redemption.
 - (1) It records the sin of Adam and Eve.
 - (2) It emphasizes that by this transgression sin entered into the world.

V. 1. Continued

- (3) It stresses that when men transgress the will of God that they become sinners, and stand condemned before God.
- (4) It declares that all accountable persons become lost in sin, and therefore stand in need of redemption.
- (5) It shows that God has provided human redemption through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

2. This message of redemption would not have originated in the minds of men.

- (1) Man would never have conceived of himself as being lost and in need of salvation.

(2) Men who reject God and the Bible do not picture themselves as sinners.

VI. Because of its marvelous influence.

1. A tree is judged by its fruit, Mt. 7:16.

2. The Bible has brightened the path, lifted the load, and vanished the tears.
It has given hope, brought consolation, and provided purpose of life.

3. The Bible has exerted tremendous moral influence.

(1) Its message, when heard and heeded, has changed the drunkard, the thief, the adulterer.

(2) Its moral influence is clearly inscribed in 1 Cor. 6:9-11.

(3) The gospel is God's saving power for all men, Rom. 1:16.

4. The Bible has exerted great influence in education.

(1) Nearly all of the older American institutions of learning were founded upon respect for the Bible, and to advance knowledge of the Bible.

(2) Where the Bible does not go, the people remain in ignorance.

(3) Infidelity is not noted for founding schools. In many instances it has taken them over--but it didn't establish them.

VI. 4. Continued

- (4) Many alphabets have been developed for translation of the Bible.
5. The Bible has exerted great influence in the field of benevolence.
- (1) The Bible emphasizes compassion and concern for others.
- (2) Because of the influence of the Bible thousands of hospitals and orphan homes have been established. Infidelity establishes no hospitals; it is not concerned about the care of orphans.
6. The Bible has exerted great influence with regard to human freedom.
- (1) When Christianity made its advent into the world the Roman empire, with a population of 125 million, had 65 million slaves.
- (2) Where the Bible is loved and respected and applied slavery is destroyed.
- (3) The Bible teaches the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.
- (4) Christianity emphasizes the value of the individual and the rights of the individual.
7. The Bible has exerted great influence in the field of literature.
- (1) English literature begins with the translation of the Bible.
- (2) The best-known works of English, Spanish, French, and American writers are filled with references to the Bible.
8. The Bible exerted a great influence in producing a better attitude toward women.
- (1) In ancient days, and in many cultures, women were treated more like property than like human beings.
- (2) In Rome, a man could put his wife to death without a trial.
- (3) The Bible speaks to men and women alike, and stresses that they are equally accountable to God.
- (4) The Bible stresses the value and the power and the influence of the good woman.

CONCLUSION

1. These are six additional reasons for believing that the Bible came from God.
2. May God help us to write these (and the reasons previously studied) deeply upon our minds.
3. May these thoughts strengthen our faith, and better prepare us for the battle against infidelity.

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INTRODUCTION

1. We are presently engaged in a study of reasons for believing that the Bible came from God, as it claims.
2. In two recent studies we have considered twelve distinct reasons.
3. And now, we want to study additional reasons for believing--additional evidences of the inspiration of the Bible.

DISCUSSION

I believe the Bible came from God--

I. Because it is no respector of persons.

1. God is no respector of persons (Acts 10:34, 35), and His word is no respector of persons.
2. The world stresses class distinctions, but in regard to their obligations to God the Bible speaks to human beings.
3. The Bible has the same message of salvation for all men--whether king or peasant, bond or free, rich or poor, male or female.
4. Cf. Gal. 3:28
5. If a king wants to become a Christian, and if a servant wants to become a Christian--the Bible speaks the same message to both.

II. Because of its universal appeal.

1. Though it has a common message equally applicable to all accountable persons it also has special instructions to persons in various stations in life.

II. Continued.

2. The Bible gives special instructions to--

- (1) Masters and servants,
- (2) Husbands and wives,
- (3) Parents and children.

3. It contains stories and instructions of special interest to--

- (1) The rich and the poor,
- (2) Rulers and subjects,
- (3) Fishermen, farmers, soldiers, kings, merchants, builders, athletes.

4. It recognizes the basic needs of men, and is designed to meet these needs.

III. Because of the calmness of its writers.

1. Its writers were men of normal emotions. Cf. Acts 14:15; Mk. 16:10.

2. Yet, their emotions do not enter into their sacred record.

3. Without emotional display or excitement they record--

- (1) The Master's great miracles;
- (2) The murder of John the Baptist;
- (3) The Lord's crucifixion;
- (4) The Lord's resurrection;
- (5) The Lord's ascension;
- (6) The beginning and growth of the early church.

4. Such calmness precludes the possibility of purely human authorship.

IV. Because of its brevity.

1. The writers had an abundance of source material, John 21:25.

2. Luke summarizes the Lord's days from infancy to age 12 in one verse--

Lk. 2:40.

IV. Continued

3. Luke summarizes the Lord's days from age 12 to age 30 in one verse--
Lk. 2:52.
4. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John record the Lord's life and works in less than thirty-five pages each in our Bible.
5. Luke, the writer of Acts, records the majestic story of the beginning and early development of the church in less than forty pages.
6. Matthew records the Lord's baptism in five verses (3:13-17).
7. The story of persecution which resulted in the spread of the gospel into Judaea and Samaria is told in one verse, Acts 8:1.
8. In the record of the Lord's life--
 - (1) Two writers don't even mention his birth;
 - (2) All pass over the first thirty years in almost complete silence;
 - (3) All devote most of their attention to the last three and one-half years;
 - (4) Though the writers are dealing with a period of 1260 days (three and one-half years), they make reference only to thirty different days--speaking of some of the events of one day out of every forty!
9. Nowhere else is such significance combined with such brevity. How account for it? God selected the material.

V. Because it cannot be mastered.

1. God is omniscient, and the finite cannot completely encompass the infinite.
2. There are many things which one can master--often in a single sitting:
 - (1) A math problem or principle;
 - (2) The declension of a Greek noun;
 - (3) The conjugation of a Greek verb.

3. But one cannot completely master the Bible.

(1) Our obligations are stated in language clear and plain and simple.

(2) There are mysteries and difficulties in Bible study, but these are on the divine side, and are God's business anyhow.

(3) Truth is cumulative and is harmonious.

(4) The one hundredth reading means far more than did the first reading.

VI. Because revelation would be natural.

1. In previous studies we have emphasized the fact of the existence of God.

2. God is the creator of the heavens and the earth, and is the creator of man.

3. That which distinguishes man from the lower creation is the ability to think, to reason, to understand.

4. If God exists, and is the creator of man, and if man possesses this unique ability--then God would most naturally address himself to this ability.

5. Further--God made man that he might love man, and genuine love compels expression of that love.

VIII. Because of its profound themes.

1. The Bible deals with themes which have baffled the minds of men for ages.

2. The Bible speaks authoritatively and with an air of infallibility.

3. Without hesitancy, without apology, and without argumentation the Bible discusses--

(1) The fact of God;

(2) The origin of the universe;

(3) The origin, mission, duty, and destiny of man;

(4) The origin, nature, and consequences of sin;

VIII. 3. Continued

(5) The development of the scheme of redemption;

(6) Heaven, hell, angels, the devil.

4. How account for such discussion of such profound themes?

(1) Were the writers simply beside themselves?

(2) Were they simply overwhelmed with their own stupidity?

(3) Were they so far advanced over their fellows?

(4) Or, did they write what God dictated?

CONCLUSION

1. These are seven additional reasons for believing that the Bible came from God as it says that it did.

2. May God help us to love it, to believe it, to obey it, to teach it, to defend it.

3. By it our lives must be governed, for by it our destinies will be determined.

INSPIRATION--ITS MEANING

In 2 Tim. 3:16,17 Paul affirms the inspiration of the Scriptures ("Every scripture inspired of God..."), makes reference to the use to be made of the Scriptures ("...is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness..." and shows the designed consequence of this inspiration and use ("... that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good wor."))

Numerous are the verses which set forth the Bible's own claim to be miraculously inspired of God. But, what does the Bible mean in making this claim? What is the meaning of inspiration?

It is important that careful attention be given to answering this question. "Inspiration" is a term which is currently being used in different senses. The modernist of the rankest sort claims to believe in God. But he doesn't believe in the God of the Bible. He claims to believe in Christ. But he doesn't believe in the Christ of the Bible. Just so, he claims to believe in the inspiration of the Bible, but he doesn't mean by "inspiration" what the Bible teaches about inspiration. He believes that the writings of Paul were "inspired" in the same sense as were the writings of Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, and Poe. He hesitates not to attempt to explain the profundity of Romans on the grounds that "Paul felt better that day."

Promise and Fulfillment

The Lord promised to certain ones miraculous inspiration. "...ye and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak," Mt. 10:18,19. "Howbeit when he,

the Spirit of Truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth; for he shall not speak for himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you," Jno. 16:13,14.

The Lord kept His promise. On Pentecost of Acts 2 these very men to whom the promise had been made "...were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance," verse 4. In verse 39 Peter said, "For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him." This passage is a good illustration of the miraculous inspiration by which Peter spake. Its significance certainly encompasses salvation of Gentiles. And yet, Peter himself--at the time--did not believe that the Gospel was for Gentiles. In Acts 10 God had to perform a miracle three times to enable Peter to understand that he was to preach to Gentiles. God thus helped him to understand the meaning of what he had preached approximately ten years before. It was Peter who later declared that God's divine power "hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness...", 2 Pet. 1:3. Paul explains the matter: "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ," Gal. 1:11,12. New Testament writers affirm that the Lord kept His promise.

God and Authority

All authority is inherent in God, the Father. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. 1:1. "The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land," Ps. 95:5. He is the

"...living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is....," Acts 14:15. He is "The God that hath made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth....," Acts 17:24. He is the creator--our maker and sustainer. It is in Him that we live and move and have our being. Because He is what He is, all original authority--source authority--is inherent in Him.

The Son and Authority

The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were written to convince men that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the son of the Living God--the Messiah about whom the Old Testament message had been penned. God said that Jesus was His Son. Jesus claimed that God was His Father. These writers set forth the irrefutable evidences designed to prove His claim. "Now the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake, and the things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God," Mt. 27:54.

But, what is so important about this fact? Why prove that He is the Son of God? The answer is: as such, He was in position to be heir of authority from the Father. Therefore, shortly prior to his return to the Father He met with His disciples upon a mountain of Galilee and confidently affirmed that "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth," Mt. 28:18. God gave authority to the Son--authority to deal with the problem of human sins.

The Apostles and Authority

The Lord knew that His life on the earth would be short but that His message to men would continue. He called, selected, taught, tutored and developed a small group of men upon whose shoulders he placed the responsibility of getting the gospel story to the whole world. He promised to be with them in their work, and He was with

them. Acts of Apostles is the sacred story of how the Lord went with them in getting the gospel to every creature in the whole world. They preached the gospel by miraculous inspiration; their word was confirmed by miraculous demonstration.

These men sustained a special relationship to Christ, the King. In fact, they were the king's "ambassadors." Paul writes, "We are ambassadors" therefore on behalf of Christ....," 2 Cor. 5:20. The word "ambassadors" as used here involves the divine "embassy" and this divine "embassy" necessarily involved special authority. The apostles were the authoritative, official representatives of the King! The King reigned from heaven, but He had an embassy among the men--the apostles to whom He gave authority to bind and loose on the earth.

The Gift of Prophecy

There were miraculous gifts--spiritual gifts--in the early church. The people of that day did not have the completed New Testament in written form, but there was desperate need for divine instruction and guidance. To meet these needs, God placed in the early church special gifts. A wonderful discussion about these spiritual gifts is found in 1 Cor. 12,13, and 14. In chapter 12, Paul discusses nine of the miraculous gifts. In the light of Acts 8:14ff we confidently affirm that only an apostle could--by laying on of hands--impart a miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit to someone else. The evidence clearly is that each apostle possessed all nine of the spiritual gifts, and that each apostle was able to impart any of the spiritual gifts.

One of the tremendously important spiritual gifts was the gift of prophecy. In 1 Cor. 14 Paul stresses the superiority of the gift of prophecy. It is imperative that we understand this gift. "To prophesy" does not mean "to foretell coming events." Its meaning includes this

future aspect, but it includes far more than this. The word literally means, "to speak for, to speak in behalf of." The prophets (whether Old Testament prophets or New Testament prophets) spoke for--in behalf of--God. They were the ones through whom God spoke. In Ex. 7:1 God said to Moses, "...and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." Moses would speak through Aaron. This is the meaning of the word. The prophets sometimes dealt with the past; they sometimes dealt with the (then) present; they sometimes dealt with the future. But they were prophets because God spoke through them.

The gift of prophecy, therefore, is the authority underlying every word in the Bible. Every word (original word) is one which came as a result of the miraculous gift of prophecy. If Luke is one of the writers of the New Testament, and if Luke was not one of the apostles, then Luke was a prophet in the early church.

Let it be stressed that there is no prophecy without (1) revelation plus (2) inspiration. God revealed, then the one to whom the revelation came spoke or wrote the revealed message. The speaking and/or writing was done by inspiration. There were inspired teachers in the early church, but they were not the same as the prophets. The teachers dealt with the message which came to the prophets by revelation. A significant passage in this connection is 1 Cor. 14:30.

Pertinent Passages

One of the clearest and simplest passages on the inspiration of the Bible is 1 Cor. 2:9-13. In verse 9 Paul refers to certain "things which God prepared for them that love him. In verse 10 he says, "But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit." In verse 12 Paul says, "But we received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God." Note: God revealed--by the Spirit--the things. The revelation

came to those encompassed in the word "us." You and I are not in the word "us". We receive no direct revelation. Question then: how does the revealed message come from those included in the "us" to the rest of us? Answer: "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words," verse 13. This makes it plain enough! God revealed the things to certain ones (who possessed the gift of prophecy) who in turn spoke it (and wrote it down) in words selected by the Holy Spirit. This is the Bible's own definition of inspiration: the marvelous combination of the things revealed, in words selected by the Holy Spirit.

A similar affirmation and explanation is found in Eph. 3:1-5. God revealed (the mystery, by words) to Paul, enabling him to understand the mystery. Paul wrote (in words) the mystery, for others, enabling them to read, and to perceive his understanding of the mystery.

Conclusion

This, my brethren, is inspiration. We need to keep in mind that miraculous inspiration relates to the original words of God's book. Translators are not inspired. But those original words came from God. They are the very words selected by the Holy Spirit. They mean what God wanted them to mean; they say what God wanted them to say.

God gave authority to the Son. The Son gave authority to the Apostles. The apostles (and others upon whom apostles laid their hands) possessed the gift of prophecy. The gift of prophecy was the vehicle by which God revealed his message. Those to whom the revelation came then spoke it and wrote it "...not in words which man's wisdom taught but which the Spirit teacheth." They combined "spiritual things--the things revealed--with spiritual words--words selected by the Holy Spirit.

Newsweek Magazine of March 22, 1965, carried a lengthy article entitled, "Campus '65."

1. Newsweek had sent a "team of interviewers from the staff of Louis Harris and Associates" to a representative cross section of American Colleges and Universities.
2. The Harris staff interviewed 800 students, in many cases for as long as three hours.
3. On pages 57 and 58 is found the report of the students' reaction to questions about God. The article is headed: "A Belief In God, Highly Qualified." Here are quotes from that article:

"Next to his high-school class ring, the first thing today's impressionable freshman learns he can do without is his old ideas about God.

For most students, it is less a sudden traumatic loss of faith than a gradual fade-out of their adolescent concept of God. This Deity just disappears like a benevolent Cheshire cat. And for the remainder of the undergraduate career, there is little time, inclination, or opportunity to find a more viable replacement. ...today's collegians are less inclined toward theological speculations than earlier generations. ... Almost 40 per cent of the students said that their experiences in college had made them question their faith. The doubts increase as students grow older. Almost twice as many seniors as freshmen said college had raised questions about their faith. ... Confusion usually begins with a student's first encounter with the intoxicating variety of philosophic thought in freshman survey courses. ... Predictably, religion maintains a strong influence at the private denominational and church-related schools. Only 10 per cent of the students at these colleges classified themselves as agnostics or atheists, while 58 per cent said it was very important

to marry someone of the same faith. ...

Yet the winds of conflicting truths are touching students at church-run institutions. 'We can almost be the creator of our own world today,' says bespectacled Craig Emerick of Richmond, Ind., senior-class president at Methodist-run Albion College in Michigan. 'There's no great need to believe in a creator.'

'I had lots of holes shot in my beliefs when I came to college--it was painful,' admits Emerick, a history major who intends to become a minister. 'I can't buy the old words any more. You use 'Jesus' or 'Christianity' in our chapel and the kids just freeze up.' ...A high degree of tolerance pervades campus attitudes toward morality--...and more than four out of five said that their experiences in college had made them take a more tolerant attitude toward those who defy traditional sexual morality. Fifty-eight percent of the girls said they feel current attitudes make it harder for them to say 'no.' Presumably, the same permissive climate encourages the boys to ask the question more often, and 37 per cent of both the boys and the girls approve the prescription of oral contraceptives in student health centers, a practice followed at the University of Chicago."