

God's Promises to Preserve Every Word of His Word

Concerning its origin and preservation, there are three terms that have historically been used to describe God's written Word: inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility.

Inspiration means that God wrote his Word as he moved upon men by the power of his Holy Spirit. *Inerrancy* means that his Word was written "without error" and *infallibility* means that it's "incapable of error." These are expressions of God's Divine nature that have been applied to his written Word. God is Divine and he's inerrant and infallible and so his written Word is as well. In other terms, inspiration defines God as the Author of the Bible while inerrancy and infallibility refers to the purity of its writing and its perfect preservation.

But over the past 150 years, this has changed. Slowly at first, and then more rapidly. Many profess inspiration, but have long since abandoned inerrancy and infallibility. This omission can be seen in almost any church bulletin or website where their doctrinal views on Scripture are found. They often read, "We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God," or similar. (Some no longer even say "inspired.") This seems resolute, but it's not. Notice that "inerrancy" and "infallibility" are missing. In real terms, what this means is that they don't believe that God has perfectly preserved his Word. They believe in its inspiration, but not its preservation. The original manuscripts – called autographs – have long since passed; and so all we have are copies that have been made from copies of copies, etc. They're of the mind that errors have crept into the written text of God's Word and so it can no longer be considered inerrant or infallible. Were this not true, they would've included these terms in their doctrinal statements. But they don't because they don't believe it.

Sometimes they claim all three, but only as it pertains to the original manuscripts. But this is just them saying the same thing a different way. Note the conditional statement... *in the original manuscripts*. In this scenario, they claim to believe in the preservation of Scripture, but it's a limited or conditional preservation. It's limited to the original manuscripts. But they've been gone for over 1000 years! So this too is them telling us that they don't believe that God has perfectly preserved his Word. And again, were it not true, there'd be no need for the conditional statement... *in the original manuscripts*. But let's take a closer look at these three terms. Taken from 2 Tim. 3:16, the first is *inspiration*.

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

Inspiration is translated from the Greek word *theopneustos* which means, "God breathed." Hence, all Scripture is God-breathed. Not just some, not just part, but *all*. Thus the same breath that created the heavens and earth and breathed life into man is the same breath that also brought us the written Word (Ps. 33:6). So as long as we're sharing God's Word, then we too can bring life (Jn. 5:39-40). Therefore man should live by its every word (Dt. 8:3; Mt. 4:4), and those words must exist else God lied, which of course he cannot do (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18).

Granted, there's a human element involved. God is the Author of Scripture and he did so as he moved upon men by the power of his Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21); and so the writing of Scripture has both a human and Divine element, but God is its sole Author. Man is not co-author. It isn't a collaborative work. Man and his experiences were simply the instrument by which God chose to communicate his Truth.

By definition, then, only those led by the Spirit of God were and are to be involved in its writing. And since the unsaved aren't led by the Spirit of God, then no spiritually unregenerate person has ever received written revelation from God, despite any claims to the contrary.¹ Only God's people have been given the authority to preserve Scripture. This simply means that any preservation work performed by the unregenerate must be rejected. It's that simple.

Second, Scripture is *inerrant*. This means that it's "without error" (Ps. 12:6-7). God doesn't sin nor does he tempt others with sin (Ja. 1:13). By his very nature he's perfect and holy and so his written Word must be as well.² How can that which is perfect create imperfection?³ And so just like his nature, his written Word is also pure, as was his Son Jesus – the Living Word.

And third, Scripture is *infallible*. This means that it's "incapable of error."⁴ Scripture is incapable of error because God is incapable of error. Thus, God's promises to preserve every word of his Word is but an extension of his Divine nature. So any attempt to add, subtract, or dilute its message can only be seen as a direct attack upon the very nature and character of God. But has God promised to preserve every word of his Word?

Is. 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the **word of our God** shall stand **for ever**.

Ps. 138:2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: **for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name**.

Ps. 12:6-7 The **words** of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. ⁷Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, **thou shalt preserve them** from this generation **for ever**.

Mt. 4:4 But he answered and said, It is **written**, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Mt. 5:18-19 For verily 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**. ¹⁹Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: **but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**

¹ Jn. 8:47; 1 Cor. 1:18, 2:14

² Lev. 11:44-45; Ja. 1:17; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 1 Jn. 3:5

³ Mt. 5:48

⁴ Ps. 12:6-7; Mt. 5:17-19; Jn. 10:35 etc.

Mt. 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. ³⁵Heaven and earth shall pass away, **but my words shall not pass away.**

Mk. 13:30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. ³¹Heaven and earth shall pass away: **but my words shall not pass away.**

Lk. 16:17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

Lk. 21:32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. ³³Heaven and earth shall pass away: **but my words shall not pass away.**

Jn. 10:35 "..., and the scripture **cannot be broken;**"

1 Pet. 1:24 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: ²⁵**But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.** And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Are we to believe that God would magnify his Word above his name and then allow it to be lost?

Modernists, those who prefer the newer more modern versions of the Bible, struggle with God's promises to preserve his Word because it relies on fallible man for its copying and distribution. But this assertion overlooks several important details. First, God said that he'd preserve his Word and so either he has or he hasn't. But in preserving his written Word, not once did he ever promise to preserve the autographs – only the words of his Word. And since only copies remain, then God's Word must be preserved in these copies else he lied, which of course he cannot do. Second, God gave the responsibility of maintaining the written text of his Word to men as overseen by his Spirit. Thus it's by God's command that men are to be involved in this process. And third, corruption has only entered because ungodly men have willfully and purposefully chosen to do so. There doesn't exist an inability on God's part to preserve his Word, there's only man's attempt to corrupt it (2 Cor. 13:8). Thus with God as its Author, Scripture was written without any errors. God by his very nature is both inerrant and infallible and his written Word is the same. Thus the doctrine of the perfect preservation of Scripture requires that God's Word remains inerrant, else God isn't all-powerful.

Summing, when God told Adam and Eve that they weren't to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, he couldn't have said it more clearly (Gen 2:16-17). Satan then came and massaged their reason into rebellion (Gen. 3:1-7). Similarly, God has made it clear that he'd not only preserve his Word, but his *words*. In Jeremiah 36, Jehoiakim burned the autograph and God promptly replaced it with a perfect copy. But overcome by his reason, man continues to sin against God. His reason tells him that it's impossible to maintain a perfect copy over centuries of time, but God says otherwise. Jesus in his day said he had a perfect copy (Mt. 5:18-19). So, who are we going to believe? Are we going to believe what God says or are we going to allow our reason to dissuade us from obeying the clear Word of the Lord? Selah.