

Inerrancy

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I. The Issue

A. Some Materials

1. Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible*, (1976, Zondervan, Grand Rapids).
2. Harold Lindsell, *The Bible in the Balance*, (1979, Zondervan, Grand Rapids).
3. Norman Geisler, ed., *Inerrancy*, (1980, Zondervan, Grand Rapids).
4. James Robison, ed., *The Unfettered Word*, (1987, Word, Waco)—This book proves that the leaders and scholars of the Southern Baptists have, for the most part, abandoned inerrancy.
 - a. p. 129, a quote from W. T. Conner and supported by the author of chapter 9—“Of course one would have to admit that man’s reason cannot apprehend the idea of God. ... But that is a different matter from asking me to accept as true a doctrine that is inherently immoral, simply on the ground that it is taught in the Scriptures. To ask men to quit thinking or stifle the voice of conscience while the preacher rams down their throats certain ‘revealed’ truths is to ask the impossible.”
 - b. p. 130, another quote the author of ch. 9 uses to support his notions—“I am more certain that my mind comes from God than I am that any book comes from God.”
 - c. The author of chapter 9 clearly supports evolution’s timetable, etc.

B. Inerrancy Defined (summarized from the ‘Chicago statement’)

1. The Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God
2. All authority is subordinate to this authority
3. The written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God
4. The whole of scripture in all of its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.
5. This inspiration guarantees true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to write.
6. Strictly speaking, inspiration applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscript evidence with great accuracy.
 - a. Copies and translations are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.
 - b. The absence of autographs affects no essential element of the Christian faith nor does it render inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.
7. The scriptures are fully consistent.
8. The scriptures clearly affirm inerrancy.
9. The text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.
10. This issue is central to any Bible teaching.

II. The teaching of our Lord (elements gleaned from the book by Norman Geisler.)

A. His use of the historical elements of the Old Testament shows his complete trust of the historical accuracy of the Old Testament

1. Abel—Lk 11:51
2. Noah—Mt 24:37-39; Lk 17:26-27
3. Abraham—Jn 8:56
4. institution of circumcision—Jn 7:22 comp. Gen 17:10-12; Lev 12:3
5. Sodom and Gomorrah—Mt 10:15; 11:23, 24; Lk 10:12
6. Lot—Lk 17:28-32
7. Isaac and Jacob—Mt 8:11; Lk 13:28
8. manna—Jn 6:31, 49, 58
9. the snake in the desert—Jn 3:14

10. David eating consecrated bread—Mt 12:3,4; Mk 2:25, 26; Lk 6:3,4
 11. David as a Psalm writer—Mt 22:43; Mk 12:36; Lk 20:42
 12. Solomon—Mt 6:29; 12:42; Lk 11:31; 12:27
 13. Elijah—Lk 4:25, 26
 14. Elisha—Lk 4:27
 15. Jonah—Mt 12:39-41; Lk 11:29, 30, 32
 16. Zechariah—Lk 11:51
 17. Moses as giver of the law—Mt 8:4; 19:8; Mk 1:44; 7:10 etal.
 18. sufferings of the true prophets—Mt 5:12; 13:57; 21:34-36 etal.
 19. popularity of false prophets—Lk 6:26
 20. Veracity of Genesis 1 & 2—Mt 19:4-5; Mk 10:6-8
- B. His use shows he regarded them as trustworthy history. He could have taught a spiritual lesson from basic truth without treating them as true.
1. Offer what Moses commanded (Mk 1:44) could have been given simply as that which Moses' law commanded. But, in giving it the way he did, he showed he believed Moses wrote it.
 2. His use of Jonah (Mt 12:41) shows a belief in a literal Jonah. The main idea could have been given without such a specific reference.
 3. He supported a literal story of Sodom and Gomorrah
 4. "Remember Lot's wife!"—Lk 17:26-32
- C. The Authority of the Old Testament
1. He commended their literalness and insisted it be carried further—Mt 5:17-20. Obedience was not just to the 'spirit' of the law but the 'letter' as well.
 2. Mt 23:2-3—Moses' seat was the place of authority for Israel. Therefore, they were to follow it's instructions totally even if those who sat there were hypocrites.
 3. Mt. 13:52—The Scriptures were the source of treasures new and old.
 4. Jn 5:39-47—Their lives showed they really did not believe Moses.
 5. The Sadducees (the rationalists of their day) were condemned for not knowing the Scriptures (in the sense of accepting them) or the power of God—Mt 22:29 comp. Mk 12:24.
 6. His appeal on every item (even a question meant to trick him) was the Scriptures—Mt 22:31, 32 etal.
- D. Reason starts with the teachings of the Scriptures. It is not a second source of truth apart from the Bible. Look at his use of scripture in the Sermon on the Mount.
1. Note his two quotes from Hosea, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." Hosea 6:6; Mt 9:13; 12:7. He rebuked them for not grasping the implications of Hosea's words.
 2. The need for divine instruction is mentioned in Jn 6:45. See Isa 54:13
- E. Ethics starts with the teachings of the Scriptures. It is not a second source of truth apart from the Bible. Look at his use of scripture in the Sermon on the Mount.
1. Christ quoted the commandments on love—Mt 19:18, 19; comp. Mk 10:19; Lk 18:20.
 2. He summed up the Old Testament with this—Mt 22:37-40 comp. Mk 12:29-31.
- F. Did Christ do this to accommodate the beliefs of his hearers?
1. He condemned the traditions of the Pharisees—Mk 7:6-13
 2. He condemned the liberalness of the Sadducees.
 3. Scripture can't be broken—Jn 10:35
 4. Not even the smallest mark or letter—Mt 5:18; Lk 16:17
 5. The Scriptures are more important than a human witness back from the grave—Lk 16:29-31.
- G. Christ's use of Scripture in the temptations proves that accommodation to hearers had nothing to do with his use of Scripture—Mt 4:4ff; Lk 4:4ff
- H. After the Resurrection, Christ taught from the scriptures—Lk 24:25-47
- I. The Inerrant Inspiration of the Old Testament is proved by the ministry of our Lord

1. Moses—Mk 7:10
 2. Isaiah was right—Mk 7:6 comp. Mt 13:14
 3. David was inspired—Mk 12:36; Mt 22:43
 4. Through the prophet Daniel—Mt 24:15
- J. Fulfillment of Prophecy—a few examples
1. Today—Lk 4:21
 2. About John—Mt 11:10; Lk 7:27
 3. His own death—Lk 18:31-33; Lk 21:22
 4. Many other things—Lk 24:25-27
 5. None lost but one—Jn 17:12
- K. Occasional interchange of Scripture and God—some examples
1. Rom 9:17—in the OT it is God who addresses Pharaoh though it is Scripture which records it
 2. Mt 19:4-5—Christ says that the Creator said it but in Genesis it is commentary by the author of Genesis—Gen 2:24
- L. Did Christ set aside the literal use of the OT? There are those who assert that Christ abrogated portions of the OT while approving of others. We list and comment on the alleged seven examples of such teachings. (This section reflects important adds to the published treatment.)
1. The Sabbath—picking and eating—Mk 2:28 comp Mt 12:8; Lk 6:5
 - a. This is a strange example of what is alleged because Christ's appeal is to the OT—He mentioned David's picking and eating on the Sabbath.
 - b. In short, Christ appealed to the OT studied carefully. He did not approve of tradition based on half-truth.
 2. Sacrifice—compared to mercy—cit. from Hos 6:6; Mt 9:13; 12:7
 - a. Clearly, the meaning is that God desires mercy not just sacrifice. Indeed, sacrifice without mercy is hypocrisy. Compare also 1Sam 15:22
 - b. For a similar figure of speech see Lk 14:26 (comp Mt 10:37). Bullinger in *Figures of Speech* mentions only Lk 14:26 and calls the figure there 'Hyperbole'. The issue is then that our devotion to the Lord is to me much more than our devotion to family.
 3. Cleansing all foods—Mk 7:18, 19
 - a. This is alleged to prove that Christ did not approve of clean vs. unclean.
 - b. Actually, Mk 7:1-13 is a denunciation of those who ignored the law. They did seem to keep what they wished to keep.
 4. The contrasts in the Sermon on the Mount—Mt 5:17-48; especially passages like verses 21-22.
 - a. He did not repudiate the OT. Note how the section is introduced in 5:17-20.
 - b. He did point to a future kingdom when men's thoughts could be put on trial for God sees the very thoughts of men. Thus, he looks to a time in the future when the situation is even harsher than in the OT
 5. Divorce—Mt 5:31-32 comp 19:3ff; Mk 10:2ff; Lk 16:18
 - a. Dt 24:1-4 is clear on what was required and Dt 26:16 states that the people must follow such laws.
 - b. Clearly, the law allowed practices for men in general. However, some practices that are legal are wrong. Christ was pointing this out. Legal and ethical or moral are two different concepts.
 6. Eye for eye—Mt 5:38-42
 - a. The issue in Ex 21:24 et al. was public justice
 - b. There is no place even in the OT for unbridled private revenge
 7. Hate your enemy—Mt 5:43
 - a. Here, men had assumed a corollary to commands to love the neighbor. Yet, Lev 19:18 and 19:34 do not allow such an interpretation of the commands.
 - b. In some sense, the godly man does 'hate' the enemies of God
- M. Postscript—items for further study
1. What about inexact quotations?

2. Does this imply an authoritative NT?
3. What of the apocrypha?
4. We do not possess the autographs—How does this affect the issues?

III. The Apostles' View of Scripture

A. The OT

1. Quotations and allusions to the OT—Estimates 295 quotes with many more allusions, about 10% of the text.
 - a. Note Paul's use of the OT in supporting sovereignty—Ro 9:12, 13, 15, 17
 - b. They treat it as an absolute authority, not a relative one.
 - c. Even though human authors are often mentioned, it is treated as from God himself—see Ro 9:27, 29. Note also Hebrews where the human author is rarely mentioned—see 1:5-13; 2:12-13; 3:7-11
2. 'Gegraptai' = 'it is written' is often used. This is a legal expression for what is authoritatively binding. Compare At 13:34; Ro 9:13, 15, 17.
3. Rom 3:2 - 'oracles' = 'very words of God'
 - a. This word is used in classical Greek to denote a declaration of a god.
 - b. Paul is declaring the entire OT as the very words of God (NIV so translates)
4. 'Graphe' - 'scripture' —used exclusively of sacred writings. Note Ro 1:2.
5. 2Tim 3:13-17
 - a. Any exegesis of 2Tim 3:16 must stress that the Scripture is 'God-breathed.'
 - b. The issue is the origination of the Scripture
 - c. Note: To those who favor the ASV (RV), "Every inspired Scripture is also profitable," we point out with the CB (Bullinger) that the same construction is in Ro 7:12; 1Co 11:30; 2Co 10:10; 1Ti 1:15; 2:3; 4:4,9; Heb 4:13 where the ASV (RV) does not duplicate this construction.
6. 2Pt 1:19-21
 - a. Once again, the issue is the origin of the Scripture.
 - b. There is an interesting figure of speech in verse 21. Men were 'carried along with the Holy Spirit.' This is a term from sailing. Men put raised their sails and the Holy Spirit filled them and carried the ship in the direction He wished.
7. Gal 3:16
 - a. Paul bases an argument on a fine point of grammar—singular not plural.
 - b. He applies it to Christ—Gal 3:16
 - c. He applies it to believers—Gal 3:29
 1. Collective singular—There are not two kinds of believers
 2. All are saved by faith not by law

B. Their view of their own writings

1. Paul
 - a. Calls himself an apostle, a herald, a witness, and an ambassador—Ro 1:1; Gal 1:8-9; 1Th 2:13; 1Tim 2:7; 2Co 5:20
 - b. His letters were to be read publicly and obeyed—Col 4:16; 2Th 3:14 (note: this was the practice in the synagogue of reading the OT Scripture—Lk 4:16-17; At 13:15 comp Rev 1:5)
 - c. He claimed inspiration—1Co 2:13; 14:27; 2Co 13:3
 - d. Peter's reference to Paul—2Pt 3:16 (other Scripture)
2. Other NT writers
 - a. 1Tim 5:18—Paul refers to both Dt 25:4 and Lk 10:7 as Scripture
 - b. John claims Rev is absolute truth—1:1,2,11; 22:18-19