

THE

STUDY 3 Bibliology



BIBLE

A "A thousand times over, the death knell of the Bible has sounded, the funeral procession formed, the inscription cut into the tombstone, and the committal read. But somehow the corpse never stays put. No other book has been so chipped, knived, sifted, scrutinized, and vilified. What book on philosophy or religion or psychology or belles lettres of classical or modern times has been subject to such a mass attack as the Bible? with such venom and skepticism? with such thoroughness and erudition? upon every chapter, line and tenet? The Bible is still loved by millions, read by millions, and studied by millions."¹ –Bernard Ramm

"There is majesty sparkling in every line of Scripture."² –Thomas Watson

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE

(For a visual overview of this study look at page 49.)

"The Bible is divine, for it is the voice of God, and it is human, for it is the language of men."³
–W. Graham Scroggie

A. REVELATION

(Also see "His Knowability" in Study 2.)

"Revelation is that act of God whereby He discloses Himself or communicates truth to the mind, whereby He makes manifest to His creatures that which could not be known in any other way."⁴ –Henry Thiessen



Revelation

1. GENERAL AND SPECIAL REVELATION

God has revealed Himself to all people in general through creation, through the conscience and through seeing how God cares for creation by His providence (general revelation). God has also revealed truth in a more specific, detailed manner (special revelation).

® How has God specifically revealed truth from John 14:6?

® From Psalm 119:160?

® Looking at page 50 what are some similarities between the two ways God has revealed specific truth?

2. THE MEANS OF SPECIAL REVELATION

(Remember: The verses in parenthesis and italics are for your further study.)

God specially revealed Himself in many ways such as dreams (*Genesis 40*), visions (*Daniel 7*), an audible voice (*1 Samuel 3*), an angel (*Genesis 19*), miracles (*Exodus 3*), and acts in history (*Exodus 14*) but, He has chosen a primary means of special revelation.

® What is the means in Deuteronomy 18:18 that God says He is going to use to reveal what He wants the people to know? (*Exodus 4:30; 2 Chronicles 18:12-13; Amos 3:8*)



® In Ephesians 3:4-5 to whom did God give special revelation which had been previously hidden?

® In Ephesians 2:19-20 who is the foundational group of people that the household of God, the church, has been built upon? What do you think it means that the household of God has been built upon them?

For Further STUDY



® There are many views of special revelation. Briefly state why you think the views in 1-3 below would fall short of being fully accurate in light of Hebrews 1:1-2.

1. Special revelation comes not through words but through God's actual deeds in history.

2. Special revelation comes not through words, but through a personal experience of God Himself.

3. Special revelation comes by the Bible *only* as it is interpreted and revealed by the church.

B. INSPIRATION

*"Revelation discovers new truth, while inspiration superintends the communicating of that truth."*⁵—Robert Evans

1. DEFINED

In 2 Timothy 3:16 the Greek word for inspired is "*theopneustos*" which has the idea of God "*breathing out*" the writings themselves.⁶

® How is the idea of God "*breathing out*" the writings themselves different from the idea of breathing into the writings?

® If God breathed it to men, why could not the men have made a mistake in recording it—2 Peter 1:21? (*Zechariah 7:12; Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; Hebrews 3:7*)

Charles Ryrie defines inspiration as, “*God’s superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded the sixty-six books of the Bible without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs.*”⁷



2. EXTENT

® What fallacy can you see in the theory that only the concepts and not the words were inspired? What light does 1 Corinthians 2:13 shed? (*Exodus 4:12; 2 Samuel 23:2; Proverbs 30:5-6; Isaiah 59:21; Matthew 4:4*)



® What strong assertion is found for inspiration that goes down to the smallest detail—Matthew 5:18? (*2 Timothy 3:16*)

3. PROVEN BY CHRIST

*“Indeed, it is probable that if we cannot know Jesus’ teachings about this, we cannot know His teaching about anything...Christ held the Old Testament to be historically true, completely authoritative, and divinely inspired.”*⁸—John W. Wenham

® What did Christ claim about the Old Testament—John 5:46-47? (*Matthew 5:17-18; Matthew 22:43; Luke 24:27,44; John 10:35; John 17:17*)

® What did Jesus promise that insured the New Testament would be inspired—John 14:26? (*John 16:13; Acts 2:42*)

4. PROVEN BY THE BIBLE'S OWN CLAIMS

The Bible witnesses to itself again and again. Over 3,800 times the Bible claims that God has spoken.

® For example, in this pair of verses, what does the second claim for the first—Jeremiah 25:11 and Daniel 9:2?

(*For other pairs see Genesis 2:24 and Matthew 9:4-5; Genesis 12:3 and Galatians 3:8; Psalm 95:7 and Hebrews 3:7*)

- I. Origin
 - A. Revelation
 - B. Inspiration
 - 1. Defined
 - 2. Extent
 - 3. Proven by Christ
 - 4. Proven by own claims

® What authority does the apostle claim for himself—1 Corinthians 14:37?

(1 Thessalonians 4:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:14,17; 2 Peter 3:15-16)



5. PROVEN BY PROPHECY

(Also see "Proven by Prophecy" in study 6.)

Hundreds of prophecies such as Christ's prediction of the fall of Jerusalem in Luke 19:41-44 have been fulfilled giving tremendous credibility to the Bible.

® Explain how fulfilled prophecy gives you confidence in God's promises to you. Does a promise from God's Word come to mind that is especially meaningful at this time?

6. PROVEN BY EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

The Bible was written over a 1600 year period by 40 authors in three languages on three continents yet with internal harmony. There are over 5000 handwritten manuscripts. The next closest in ancient literature is Caesar's Gallic Wars with nine copies. The Bible was the first book printed, it is the best seller of all history, it has been translated into more languages than any other book. Archeology and history continue to confirm the Scripture. One evidence of its inspiration is its endurance. For example:

Over 200 years ago the skeptic, Voltaire said, *'Fifty years from now the world will hear no more of the Bible.'* When Thomas Paine, author of *The Age of Reason*, returning to America, got off the ship to come ashore he boasted, *'When I get through there will not be five Bibles left in America.'*⁹

® What has God promised that assures that no skeptic will succeed in destroying God's Word—Matthew 24:35?

(Psalm 119:89; Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:24-25;

For Further STUDY



As with revelation there are inaccurate views of inspiration.

® From what you have learned about inspiration why do you think each of these 6 views on this and the next page fall short of the Biblical view. (For help review 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21 and the definition of inspiration)

1. The writers were inspired in the sense that all great writers are inspired.

For Further STUDY CONTINUED

2. The writers were completely passive and without including any of their own personality, they merely dictated as God spoke.
3. Only portions are inspired.
4. The concepts but not the words were inspired.
5. A type of teaching called Neoorthodox theology teaches that the Bible is not the Word of God but only points to the true Word of God. The writers had an experience with One who is indescribable and were prompted by Him to try and record, though with errors, their experience.
6. A group known as Neoevangelicals teach that the Bible is inspired in its purpose of bringing salvation, but includes errors in the historical facts and details.

C. INERRANCY

"Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives."¹⁰—The Chicago Statement of Biblical Inerrancy

® Knowing that the Bible is God-breathed, what fact assures that the Bible is also without error—Titus 1:2? (*Numbers 23:19; Romans 3:4; Hebrews 6:18*)



Inerrancy

For Further STUDY

Though not a science book, Henry M. Morris and Martin E. Clark affirm that the Bible is not only accurate in spiritual areas but in every area including science. A sampling of these where the Bible includes truth about science would include the roundness of the earth (Isaiah 40:22),...the law of conservation of mass and energy (2 Peter 3:7), the hydrologic cycle (Ecclesiastes 1:7), the vast number of stars (Jeremiah 33:22), the equivalence of matter and energy (Hebrews 1:3), the law of increasing entropy (Psalm 102:25-27), the paramount importance of blood in the life processes (Leviticus 17:11), atmospheric circulation (Ecclesiastes 1:6), the gravitational field (Job 26:7) and many others.¹¹

® State briefly why you believe it is important to hold to the Bible being totally without error in all its parts.

- I. Origin
- A. Revelation
- B. Inspiration
- C. Innerancy
- D. The canon



Canon

D. THE CANON

The books of the Bible were collected together into what is called the canon. *"The Greek word for canon means, 'a rule, standard, or measuring rod.' The canon of Scripture is the measuring rod of the Christian faith, and it is complete."*¹² –John MacArthur

There were five principles used for discovering canonicity:

1. Does it claim to be from God?
2. Was it written by a man of God?
3. Does it tell the truth about God, man etc.?
4. Does it have life changing power from God?
5. Was it received and collected by the people of God?¹³

We know that God wants us to have His truth since He chose to reveal it and then inspired men to record it. It would stand to reason that He also guided the process of the collection of the books into the Bible we now have.

® What can we discover about the character and purposes of God in 2 Peter 1:3-4 that gives us confidence that He has preserved for us His precious and magnificent promises in the books of the Bible?

It is important to note that inspiration determines canonicity. Man simply discovers canonicity.

For Further STUDY



1. Many claim that God is continuing to give inspiration today just as He did to the writers of Scripture. For example, Mary Baker Eddy as the proponent of Christian Science writes, *"I would blush to think of Science and Health and Key to Scripture as I have were it of human origin and were I apart from God its author. I was only a scribe."*¹⁴ The Jehovah Witnesses claim, *"The Watchtower is a magazine without equal on earth because God is the author."*¹⁵

® How would you refute this from Jude 3?
(Deuteronomy 18:20; Galatians 1:8; Ephesians 2:20; Revelation 18:20)

® Why should we be careful if we claim that God is inspiring words to someone today which are as authoritative as His written Word—Jeremiah 23:36?

II. THE CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?"¹⁶



A. ITS AUTHORITY

*"If it is a word from God, it has authority over men. For behind every word that anyone utters stands the person who speaks it."*¹⁷ – John Stott

Ⓡ What authority does God attribute to His Word—Psalm 138:2?

Ⓡ What was to be Israel's attitude toward God's Word in Deuteronomy 32:46-47?

Ⓡ What kind of person receives God's attention—Isaiah 66:2?

Ⓡ There are many authorities in our lives. Looking at the illustration on page 51 what place should the Bible hold in relation to other authorities?

B. ITS ABILITY AND RELIABILITY

Ⓡ What is God's Word able to accomplish—Isaiah 55:11?

(Numbers 23:19; Psalm 19:7,12; Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5-6; Matthew 26:54; Romans 10:17; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 4:15; Jeremiah 23:29)

C. ITS SUFFICIENCY

Ⓡ What is God's Word able to do—2 Timothy 3:17?

III. THE RECEPTION OF THE BIBLE

*"Well then may we count those sweetest hours which are spent in reading the Holy Scriptures."*¹⁸
– Thomas Watson

A. ILLUMINATION

(Note the chart and quote on page 50.)

*"Illumination is that work of the Holy Spirit in which He makes clear, enlightens and teaches the truth of the written revelation."*¹⁹ – W. Robert Cook

We need this work of the Holy Spirit when we seek to understand the true meaning of Scripture and weave it into the fabric of our daily lives.



® Why do people need to be illumined – Isaiah 55:8-9? (*Proverbs 14:12; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 3:1-2*)

® What should illumination yield – Colossians 1:9-10? (*Romans 12:2; Ephesians 1:17-18; 1 John 2:27*)

For Further STUDY

® Compare Ephesians 5:18-21 and Colossians 3:16-17. Why do you think these passages are so parallel?

® What are two things we can do to cooperate with the ministry of the Spirit in illuminating us? Romans 8:6-7

Psalm 119:18



B. INTERPRETATION

*"Search as for a vein of silver. This blessed Book will fill your head with knowledge, and your heart with grace."*²⁰ – Thomas Watson

Interpretation has to do with diligent study to find the meaning of a passage of Scripture. To find the correct meaning, certain rules must be observed. The use of these rules is known as hermeunitics. Some of the basic ones are:

1. Seek to discover the purpose of the Bible and the book as a whole from which you are studying a passage or verse.
2. Seek to understand Scripture in its natural, normal sense.
3. Seek to understand the historical and cultural setting.
4. Seek to understand the words, grammar, and literary style which are used.
5. Seek to understand what the rest of Scripture says in regard to the subject you are studying.

® What must we do to find the correct meaning—2 Timothy 2:15?

*"We fail in our duty to study God's Word not so much because it is difficult to understand, not so much because it's dull and boring, but because it is work. Our problem is not a lack of intelligence or a lack of passion. Our problem is that we are lazy."*²¹ – R.C. Sproul

- I. Origin
- II. Character
- III. Reception
 - A. Illumination
 - B. Interpretation

® The work of Bible Study is diagramed on page 50. Put the process of getting truth from the Scripture into our lives in your own words.

For Further STUDY

® If we believe that there is One Author behind the Scripture why is it not possible for there to be several meanings for one passage of Scripture?



® The chart on page 52 shows five ways to get a grasp on the Word of God. Which of these areas are you weakest in? What can you do this next week to grow in that area?



C. APPLICATION

*"Obedience is an excellent way of commenting on the Bible."*²² – Thomas Watson

® What is the goal of learning God's Word—John 13:17?
(Deuteronomy 29:29; John 14:21; James 1:22)

® What is the danger of not obeying what God has revealed to us—James 4:17?
(Proverbs 28:9; Hebrews 3:7-8; Hebrews 5:12-14)

® Write out the steps the psalmist took in applying the Scripture in Psalm 119:59-60.

® What is the most pressing thing which God has revealed to you lately and how will you obey?



® **SUMMARIZE:** Put the ideas presented in the illustration on page 49 in your own words.

Quiet TIME

® In your daily time with God for each of the next five days read 35 verses of Psalm 119. Each day pick one verse that relates to God's Word and:

- A- Ask questions about the verse, such as who, what, when, where, and why.
- E- Emphasize various words mentally to see their significance.
- I- In your own words rewrite the verse.
- O- Other passages should be looked up that correspond.
- U- Use the passage by writing a brief application.

KEY THOUGHT



® What is one truth (it may be a verse or a thought) you want to share with another this week from this study?

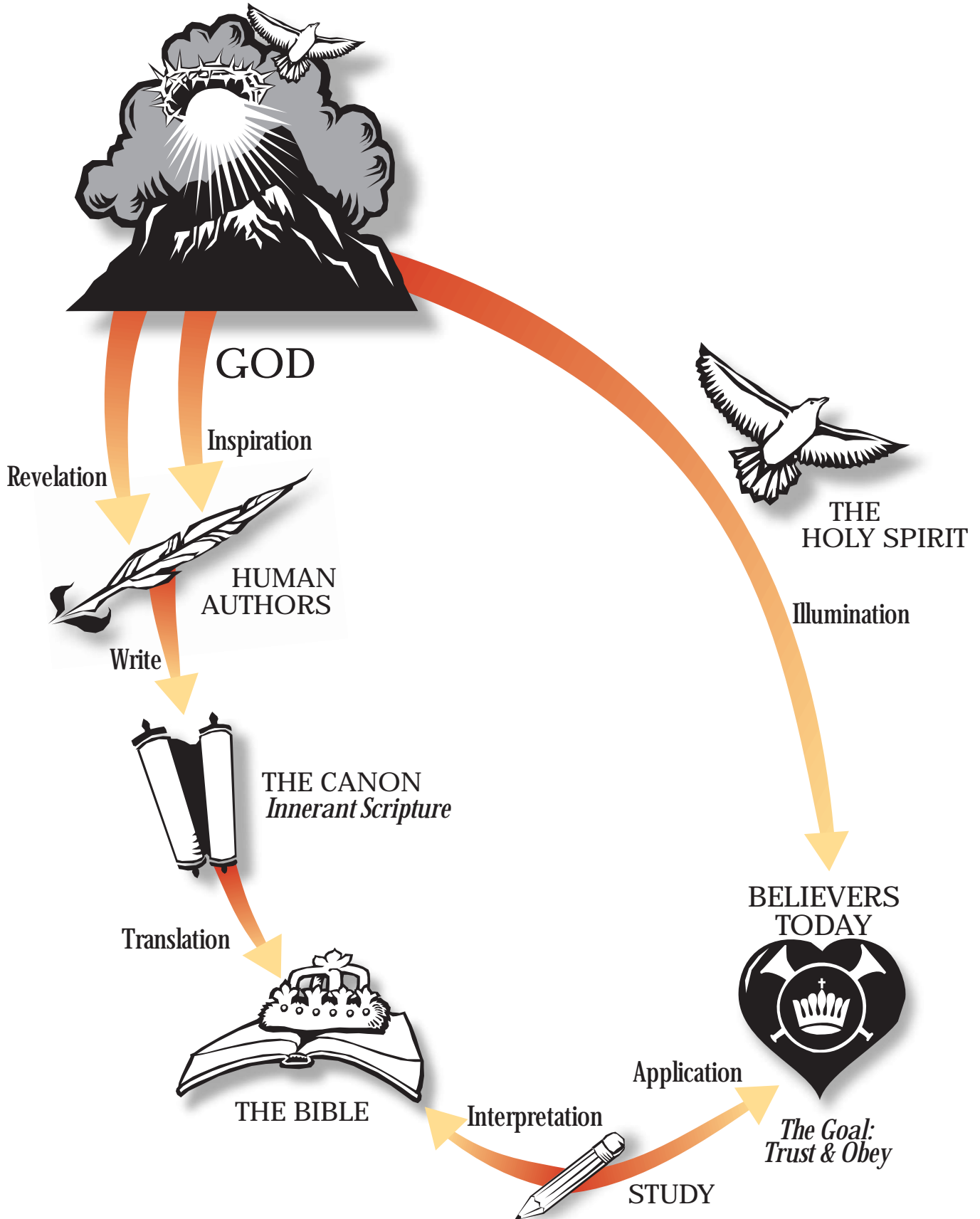


F "Father of mercies, in Thy Word what endless glory shines!
Forever be Thy name adored for these celestial lines.
Oh, may these heavenly pages be my ever dear delight,
And still new beauties may I see, and still increasing light
Divine Instructor, gracious Lord, be Thou forever near;
Teach me to love Thy sacred Word, and find my Saviour there." ²³

For Further READING

- ® Geisler, Norman L., ed. Innerancy. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980.
- ® Geisler, Norman L. and Nix, William E. From God to Us—How we got our Bible. Chicago: Moody Press, 1974.
- ® Henrichsen, Walter A. A Layman's Guide to Interpreting the Bible. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1978.

THE BIBLE *from God to us*



Take two
WORDS OF GOD

God

JESUS CHRIST



Human
Parentage

The Holy Spirit
Overshadowing

God

THE BIBLE



Human
Authors

The Holy Spirit
Superintending

The Living Word
Without Sin

The Written Word
Without Error

"The Scripture is among books what the man Christ Jesus is among men; as Jesus is God and man in one person, so is the Scripture a divine word and a human word; hence, only through...the Spirit can we understand the true meaning of the word."²⁴—Adolph Saphir

THE BIBLE *It's Authority*



HOME

Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ephesians 5:18-6:4;



GOVERNMENT

Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17



CHURCH

*1 Timothy 3;
1 Corinthians 14:37-38;
Hebrews 13:17*



PERSONAL
Romans 12-15



WORK

Ephesians 6:5; 1 Peter 2:18-20

Interpretation

The Work of
BIBLE STUDY



The Goal of
BIBLE STUDY



INTERPRETATION: To find the meaning

APPLICATION: To apply the meaning today



5
Methods of intake
to get a grasp on God's Word

NOTES

- 1 Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Christian Evidences*, pp. 232-233.
- 2 Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity*, p. 34.
- 3 W. Graham Scroggie, *Is the Bible the Word of God?*, quoted in "The Voice of God in the Language of Men", *The Discipleship Journal* March-April 1981, p. 15.
- 4 Henry C. Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, p. 7.
- 5 Robert Evans, *The Great Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 196.
- 6 Benjamin P. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, p. 133-135
- 7 Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, p. 38.
- 8 John W. Wenham, in *Inerrancy*, pp. 5-6.
- 9 W.A. Criswell, *Why I Preach the Bible is Literally True*, pp. 77-78.
- 10 "The Chicago Statement of Biblical Inerrancy", in *Inerrancy*, p. 494.
- 11 Henry M. Morris and Martin E. Clark, *The Bible has the Answer*, pp. 2-3
- 12 John MacArthur, *The Charismatics*, p. 23.
- 13 Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *From God to Us: How We Got Our Bible*, p. 67.
- 14 MacArthur, p. 34.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- 16 "K" in Rippon's Selection, "How Firm a Foundation" in *The Methodist Hymnal*, p. 315.
- 17 John R. W. Stott, *Understanding the Bible*, p. 183.
- 18 Watson, p. 34.
- 19 W. Robert Cook, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols., 1:48.
- 20 Watson, p. 34.
- 21 R. C. Sproul, *Knowing Scripture*, p. 17.
- 22 Watson, p. 37.
- 23 Anne Steele, "Father of Mercies," in *The Methodist Hymnal*, stanza 1, p. 389.
- 24 Warren Myers, "Digging Deeper in God's Word," *Discipleship Journal*, November 1981 1981 p. 25.