How Did We Get Our Bible? The Origin and Authority of Scripture

#1: Core Beliefs about the Bible: Meaning and Importance of Inspiration

Intro: Ever had a time in your life when you *really* doubted the Bible?

Class Description: Ever since the serpent in the garden asked, "Did God really say?", there have been never-ending challenges to the trustworthiness of God's word. Even as believers, we can doubt and wonder about where the Bible came from, how it was put together, and whether it is really God's word. This class will tackle some of these toughest challenges so that we can renew our trust and confidence in the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible.

Teachers

Mike Kruger, Teacher in Residence
Peter Leach, Pastoral Intern

Class Schedule

1. Jan 5: Core Beliefs about the Bible: Meaning and Importance of Inspiration
2. Jan 12: Core Beliefs about the Bible: Jesus' Own View of Scripture
3. Jan 19: Core Beliefs about the Bible: How Do We Know the Bible is God's Word?
4. Jan 26: Core Beliefs about the Bible: Sola Scriptura and the Reformation
5. Feb 2: Core Beliefs about the Bible: Role of Scripture in the Christian Life
6. Feb 9: Origins of the Bible: What about the So-Called "Lost" Books of the Bible?
7. Feb 16: Special Missions Sunday
8. Feb 23: Origins of the Bible: Have the Words of the Bible Been Changed?
9. March 1: Objections to the Bible: What about Offensive Passages and Doctrines
10. March 8: Objections to the Bible: Does the Bible Make Historical Mistakes?
11. March 15: Objections to the Bible: Why Are There So Many Differing Interpretations?
12. March 22: Objections to the Bible: Do the Miracles in the Bible Conflict with Science?
13. March 29: Objections to the Bible: What about Apparent Contradictions?

I. Importance of Inspiration

A. The Battle within Ourselves

B. The Battle within the Church

C. The Battle with the World

II. Definition of Inspiration

A. Working Definition

"Inspiration is the supernatural and providential influence of God's Holy Spirit upon the human authors which caused them to write what He wished to be written for the communication of truth to others." J.I. Packer

B. Two Key Passages

2 Tim 3:16: "All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

- "God Breathed" (θεόπνευστος) = specific words are inspired, not just ideas/concepts
- "All Scripture" = every part of the Bible is inspired

2 Pet 1:21: "For Prophecy never had its origins in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

- "men spoke": We don't deny that humans wrote the Bible!
- "from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit": But God controlled the process

III. Implications of Inspiration

A. Infallibility

- Means the Bible is incapable of making mistakes
- Flows naturally from God as the author; he cannot lie

B. Authority

- As God's word, the Bible is not just true, but the *standard for truth*
- Leads to *Sola Scriptura*, that the Scriptures are the highest authority (not the church)

C. Inerrancy

- Means there are not errors/mistakes in Scripture
- But we have to be careful how we determine what is an "error"
    - Don't judge the Bible by modern standards
    - Don't expect the Bible to be overly precise
    - Remember the Bible has different genres

C. Sufficiency

- Some Christians affirm Scripture's authority but still insist we need something *more* to live the Christian life
- But Scripture is enough to be equipped "for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16)