

Defending Doctrinal Distinctives

The Holy Bible: Inspiration and Inerrancy

An open Bible with a sword resting on it, symbolizing the defense of doctrine. The sword is positioned diagonally across the open pages of the Bible. The background is softly blurred, showing a lit candle and some other objects, creating a solemn and focused atmosphere.

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““Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth.”
(Jesus, John 17:17, LSB)

“I have not turned aside from Your judgments,
For You Yourself have taught me.”
(Psalms 119:102, LSB)

“Near are You, O Yahweh,
And all Your commandments are truth.”
(Psalms 119:151, LSB)

“And they said to one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was opening the Scriptures to us?””
(Disciples of Jesus, Luke 24:32, LSB)

Lesson Outline

- The Word of God
- Topic Overview: The Nature of the Bible
- Calvary's Doctrinal Statements
- Inspiration Defined
- Inerrancy Defined
- Implications and Application

What is 'The Word of God'?

- Jesus Christ (John 1:1, Revelation 19:13)
- Speech by God, e.g. decrees, personal address, e.g. Genesis 2:16-17
- God-given speech through Human Lips, e.g. Deuteronomy 18:18-20, Jeremiah 1:9
- Written Form: The Bible (2 Peter 1:19-21)

What is 'The Word of God'?

“God, having spoken long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days spoke to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds, who is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power; who, having accomplished cleansing for sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,”
(Hebrews 1:1-3, LSB)

What is 'The Word of God'?

“So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, **having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, is growing into a holy sanctuary in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.”

(Ephesians 2:19-22, LSB)

The only thing you can know for sure is God’s word is the Bible.

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which Yahweh God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, **has God said**, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?””

(Genesis 3:1, LSB, with emphasis)

Topic Outline:

The Nature of the Bible, i.e. Bibliology

- Session 1: Inspiration and Inerrancy (today)
- Session 2: Authority (10/5/2025)
- Session 3: Perspicuity and Sufficiency (10/12/2025)
- Session 4: Necessity (10/19/2025)

From Calvary's Statement of Faith

From Chapter One: The Scriptures (Bibliology)

1. We teach that the Bible is the written revelation of God and the sixty-six (66) books of the Bible constitute the plenary (complete or full) word by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

“Every word of God is tested;
He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.
Do not add to His words
Lest He reprove you, and you be proved a liar.”
(Proverbs 30:5-6, LSB)

“I bear witness to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.”
(Revelation 22:18-19, LSB)

The Canon of Scripture

How do we know the 66 books of the Bible are complete?

Old Testament (39 books):

- Recognized by the Jews as the Hebrew Scriptures
- Quoted and affirmed by Jesus and/or the New Testament

New Testament (27 books):

- Apostolic in origin
- Consistent internal cross referencing
- Generally accepted by the churches
- Codified by Eusebius under Constantine, the Council of Carthage A.D. 397

From Calvary's Statement of Faith

From Chapter One: The Scriptures (Bibliology)

*2. We teach that Scripture is God's verbal revelation to man and is objective (1 Thessalonians 2:13), **inspired** in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely **inerrant** in the original documents (Isaiah 30:8), and **infallible** (Isaiah 55:11). We teach that an accurate understanding of Scripture requires what has come to be known as **grammatico-historical exegesis**, which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six, twenty-four hour days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).*

“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,
And by the breath of His mouth all their host.
He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;
He lays up the deeps in storehouses.
Let all the earth fear the LORD;
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”

(Psalms 33:6-9, NAS95)

“Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him,
And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. "For My thoughts are
not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For
as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than
your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. "For as the rain and the
snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without
watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed
to the sower and bread to the eater; So will My word be which goes
forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”

(Isaiah 55:7-11, NAS95)

From Calvary's Statement of Faith

Inspired: This word has been used in many Bible translations for the Greek word *theopneustos*, which literally translated, is God-breathed. Therefore, when we say that the Scriptures are inspired, we mean that they have come from God Himself--He is their source.

Inerrant: Without error

From Calvary's Statement of Faith

From Chapter One: The Scriptures (Bibliology)

4. We teach that God spoke in His written Word through a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

Inspiration

“All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be equipped, having been thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

(2 Timothy 3:16-17, LSB)

Inspiration means from God, not merely ‘inspirational’.

Inspiration

“And we have as more sure the prophetic word, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. Know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes by one’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever made by the will of man, but men being moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

(2 Peter 1:19-21, LSB)

“Inspiration describes the process of divine causation behind the authorship of Scripture. It refers to the direct act of God on the human author that resulted in the creation of perfectly written revelation.”

(MacArthur, John; Mayhue, Richard. Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth, p. 118)

Inerrancy

“Now go, write it on a tablet before them
And inscribe it on a scroll,
That it may be in the time to come As a witness forever.”
(God to Isaiah, Isaiah 30:8, LSB)

“The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands forever.”
(Isaiah 40:8, LSB)

Inerrancy

“So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth;
It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what pleases Me,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”

(Isaiah 55:11, LSB)

“The words of Yahweh are pure words;
As silver tried in a furnace on the ground, refined seven times.”

(Psalms 12:6, LSB)

Inerrancy

“The inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.”

(Wayne A. Grudem, Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine, p.90)

“Inerrancy means literally “without error.” When applied to Scripture, it means that the Bible is without error in the original copies. It is therefore free, when properly interpreted, from affirming anything that is untrue or contrary to fact. The term infallibility has historically been largely synonymous with an evangelical view of inerrancy. Infallibility means unable to mislead or fail in accomplishing the divinely intended purpose.”

(MacArthur, John; Mayhue, Richard.

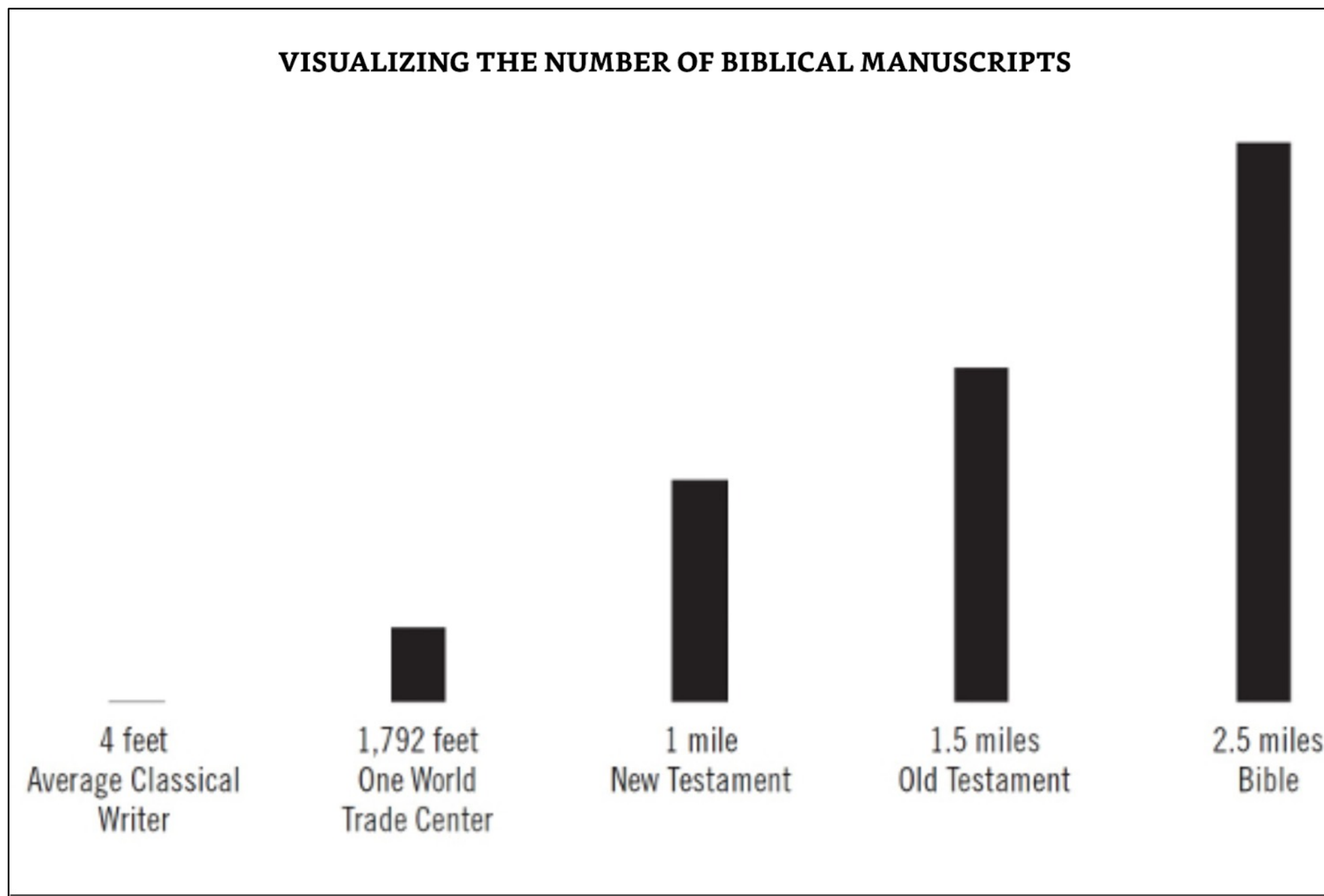
Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth, p. 170)

Inerrancy

Of what use is inerrancy if we don't have the original manuscripts?

- While the tracing of manuscripts and translation of the Biblical text can be complex, it is far more reliable than the translation and preservation of other ancient texts:
 - The total number of extant New Testament manuscripts was 5,856 and growing as of 2017 and growing. The earliest is AD 130.
 - The total number of extant Old Testament scrolls and codices is 42,300 as of the same date.
 - The most of any major classical work is 1800+ of Homer's Illiad, some 300 years past Homer's lifetime.

Inerrancy



(Source: Evidence That Demands a Verdict, 2017 Edition, McDowell, p.54)

Inerrancy

Believing that the Bible is inerrant still requires God-given faith even with the overwhelming evidence of its veracity.

“But to us God revealed them through the Spirit,
for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.”

(1 Corinthians 2:10, LSB)

“The law of Yahweh is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of Yahweh is sure, making wise the simple.
The precepts of Yahweh are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of Yahweh is pure, enlightening the eyes.
The fear of Yahweh is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of Yahweh are true; they are righteous altogether.
They are more desirable than gold, even more than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
Moreover, by them Your slave is warned;
In keeping them there is great reward.”

(Psalms 19:7-11, LSB)

Ultimately, the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture
are proven in its results.

Objection: The Bible Has Been Corrupted

- Like the 'telephone game', it is often claimed that the Bible we have today is a translation of a translation of a translation.... and that much has been lost in translation and retranslation.
- In fact the opposite is true; over time older manuscripts have been found which enable us to confirm and refine the translation from the original languages into the vernacular. For example, what we have in the 2021 Legacy Standard Bible is much more refined and accurate than the 1611 King James Bible.
- The Bible itself models the validity of translations, e.g. Jesus and the New Testament writers quoting directly from the Septuagint, which was a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.

Objection: The Evidentiary Fallacy

““But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’””

(Jesus, Luke 16:31, LSB)

Objection: 'Bibliolatry'

““And you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that bear witness about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.”

(Jesus to the Jewish leaders, John 5:38-40, LSB)

“I will worship toward Your holy temple
And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth;
For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name.”

(Psalms 138:2, LSB)

Objection: ‘Bibliolatry’

*“How confusing it must have been for the people of Jesus’ day to observe those who apparently knew God’s word the best reflect God’s character the least. **They knew the book of life but refused to draw near to its Author.** How could this be? Much could be said here, but suffice it to say that the Pharisees’ focus was not on God’s word, but on their own man-made traditions by which they invalidated it (see Matthew 15:3-9). **They worshiped not God, but themselves. They loved God and His word not too much, but too little.**”*

(Twombly, Mark, God and His Word: A Devotional Commentary in Psalm 119 p. 12, with emphasis)

Objection:

The Bible ‘Contains’ the Word of God

“Therefore I deem all Your precepts concerning everything to be right,
I hate every false way.”

(Psalms 119:128, LSB)

“The sum of Your word is truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments is everlasting.”

(Psalms 119:160, LSB)

“The Bible was inscribed over a period of 2000 years. In times of war and days of peace. By kings, physicians, tax collectors, farmers, fishermen, singers, and shepherds. The marvel is that a library so perfectly cohesive could have been produced by such a diverse crowd over a period of time which staggers the imagination.

*Jesus is its grand subject, our good is its design,
and the glory of God its end.”*

(Mark Hall, from the Casting Crowns song ‘The Word is Alive’)

Implications and Application

- What do you WANT to be true? See John 7:17
- Where does your view of Scripture fall short of its claims for itself?
- What objections to the truth of Scripture impact you the most, and how should you address them?
- A daily portion of Psalm 119 will remind you of that God's word is, does, and what our posture toward it - toward God - should be.

Questions? Email mark@calvaryem.org

Recommended Resources

