

# The Inspired Word

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon emphasizes the divine inspiration of Scripture, highlighting that every word is inspired by God and crucial for our understanding and faith. It explores the concept of men being moved by the Holy Spirit to write the Scriptures, emphasizing the importance of holding the tension between human writing styles and divine inspiration. The sermon stresses the significance of every word, letter, and detail in the Scriptures, pointing out the miraculous unity and relevance of God's Word throughout history.*

**Scripture:** 2 Peter 1:16, 2 Timothy 3:16, Matthew 5:18, Jeremiah 1:9, 1 Corinthians 2:13, 1 Samuel 3:19, Proverbs 30:5

**Topics:** "Divine Inspiration of Scripture", "The Authority of God's Word"

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## Description

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## Transcript

And we're in 2nd Peter, if you can remember. It's been, I think, four months since we were in Peter last. And we're going to finish off chapter 1, the last verse of chapter 1. So 2nd Peter chapter 1, and we're going to read 16 through the end of the chapter.

And this is a very, very important message. They're all important, but this one is very important. Nothing that you haven't heard before, and yet it's absolutely vital that we reestablish these truths.

So 1st Peter chapter 1, verse 16. Sorry, 2nd Peter. 2nd Peter chapter 1, verse 16.

For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when such a voice came to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with him in the holy mountain.

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation. For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God

spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Now I'm not going to recap because I'm concerned about running out of time. So if you can't remember where we've been, go back to YouTube and you'll find it there. But he is speaking about the prophetic word that we have in verse 19, which has been confirmed.

The word of God. And then verse 20 deals with the fact that the way we interpret the scripture is not of private interpretation. You can't just interpret the scripture any way you like.

It's not up to you to put whatever meaning you want to put to the scriptures. And we know that people like to do that. But then he says, and the reason we can't do that is in verse 21.

So we can't interpret the scripture as we choose because the scriptures did not come by the will of man. So because the scripture didn't come by the will of man, the scriptures cannot be interpreted by the will of man. But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

And so the Holy Spirit inspired the writing, and that's what we're going to speak about this evening. Inspired the writing of the scriptures. And therefore we need the Holy Spirit to help us to interpret the scriptures.

And this doesn't mean that you get some kind of revelation. But what we speak about is illumination. The Holy Spirit illuminates, lights up our mind.

So that when we read the word of God, it begins to make sense. The unbeliever reads the scriptures and it doesn't make sense to him. It's just a bunch of words.

It's a bunch of stories. It's a bunch of good sayings. But they really are dead to him.

And once we are born again, and I'm sure that many of us have had that experience. Suddenly the word of God becomes alive. And the Holy Spirit illuminates, lights up our minds.

So that we can understand the scriptures. So there's a difference then between revelation and illumination. Many people speak about revelation.

That God reveals things to them. There is no more revelation. I'm not going to continue.

I'm not going to deal with that in detail. Because we've dealt with that many times in the past. There is no revelation beyond the 66 books that we have.

This thing of prophets running around and saying. Well God revealed to me this and God revealed to me that. No, there is no more revelation.

That we have the scriptures. But what we do have is illumination which is different. And so he's not showing us new things.

He's showing us what is in the scriptures. And making them real and making them alive to us. And so that is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Now what we want to speak about is the last part of that verse. The men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Now that word moved is a difficult word to translate from the Greek.

But it literally, and moved is a good word in a sense. One of the other ways to translate this word is as they were carried along. As they were born along by the Holy Spirit.

I don't know if you saw on the news. There have been these big floods in Australia. And there was this house.

The whole house just running carried down by the river. And it was the most amazing thing to see. The whole house was intact with the addition on the back and everything.

And about half of it was above the water and half of it. But there it was and it was being born along by the river. It was being carried along by the river.

The house, even if it had a will of its own, couldn't say, well I want to get off here. The river was going to take it wherever the river was going to take it. And that's the same word here.

So men wrote as the Holy Spirit bore them along, carried them along as that river carried that house along. And so how then is Scripture inspired? So we speak about the inspiration of Scripture. And in 2 Peter chapter 3, we're going to get there sometime in verse 15.

And we've looked at this verse before. There's two verses together and they're a little bit more complicated. But consider that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.

Forget about that part for now. As also our beloved brother Paul, so Peter is writing and he says, our beloved brother Paul according to the wisdom given to him has written to you. So he is saying Paul wrote to you.

Let's just focus on that. Now verse 16. As also in all his epistles, all his letters, in other words the letters that we have in the New Testament from Romans through to Titus.

Speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. So he's saying people are twisting Paul's letters and that's been going on for a long time, still going on today. But they're twisting Paul's letters as they do the rest of Scripture.

What does that make Paul's letters? Scripture. Because he says as they also do the rest of the Scriptures. In other words even at this time already, this is about AD 60, about 30 years after Jesus was crucified and ascended.

At this point already Paul's letters are recognized as Scripture. Equal to the Old Testament. Remember that in the Gospels when it speaks about the Scriptures, it's meaning the Old Testament.

The New Testament hadn't been written at that point. But here is a very important verse because it's saying that at the very least Paul's letters are Scripture. They're equal to the Old Testament Scriptures.

And obviously we believe that the Gospels and Acts and the other letters are also part of Scripture. Now the thing that I want to emphasize this evening is what we call the verbal inspirational Scripture. And I didn't put it up on the board.

But you'll see in many statements of faith and certainly in our statement of faith we say that we believe in the verbal plenary inspirational Scripture. Now that's a lot of words. When it says verbal it doesn't mean

with the mouth.

It doesn't mean... we speak about written and verbal. That's not what it means in that sense. Verbal means word for word.

Verbal means word for word. When you find it in a statement of faith. We believe in the word for word inspiration of Scripture that every word is inspired.

Now this is under attack. It's been under attack for a long time. For the last 300 years particularly.

And it's more and more under attack today. And so I want to focus on this idea that every word is inspired. So we believe in the verbal plenary.

Plenary means general or total. So if you go... the only other place that I've seen them use that word is if you go to a conference. And if it's a big conference you'll have breakout sessions.

So you'll have 30 people in this room talking on that subject and another 50 in that room. But then in the evenings you will have the plenary sessions. And the plenary sessions means when everybody comes together.

So when we say we believe in the verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture we mean we believe every word is inspired and that all of Scripture is inspired. Not as we saw a few weeks ago with those who believe that only Paul's letters really are inspired. The others are less inspired.

They're also inspired but less inspired. There's always been those who say well we don't believe that James for instance is inspired. No, all 66 books are inspired and they're inspired word for word.

Now how do we... So I need to... I want to spend some time proving that every word is inspired from Scripture. But we must at the same time ask the question then how did these men who were moved by the Holy Spirit how did they write? And I know this may be a little bit technical but I think that it is helpful because it helps us to understand when people attack Scripture that we know where the attack is coming from. Now there are different views.

The people, the theologians have different views as to how Scripture is inspired. I'm only going to give you two, the two important ones to us. The first one is what we call mechanical inspiration.

Mechanical inspiration. Now I've spoken with you before about what we call auto-writing. Auto-writing is generally used and the only place I think we ever use the idea of auto-writing is with the President of the United States.

If the President of the United States is in Camp David or some other place, he is not in Washington and he has to sign an urgent bill and he can't get to Washington, to D.C. to sign the bill but the bill has to be signed by him. He can't just call his secretary and say, well just sign it on my behalf. He can't tell the Vice President to sign on his.

He must sign it himself. And so the way they then do it is they use what they call an auto-writer. And so he will take a pen and that pen is connected to a machine and that goes over the internet in the old days, over the telephone lines to another pen in the White House.

And as he signs where he is, and you can do that from Air Force One, wherever he is, as he signs, the actual bill is being signed in Washington. So the same movements that he is making, those movements, so that is an auto-writer. The author, the President, is controlling what is written in another place by another pen.

So the idea then is that people, and this was the view when I went to Bible College and it basically says that these men were robots. They simply wrote God dictated to them word for word and they wrote those words down word for word as God dictated to them. Now there is a problem with that.

The problem is this, that if you have read the Scriptures carefully and as you have sat under the teaching as we have taught through three of the Gospels so far, John in the Sunday School and then Matthew quite a few years ago and now the Gospel of Luke, you can see clear differences in the style of writing in Matthew because we speak about Matthew being written by a Jew for Jews, Luke written by a Gentile for Gentiles. There is a difference in style. So if God was dictating word for word, how come the style of the writer comes through? You understand the problem.

How come when you read Peter's epistles you can see that they are different to Paul's epistles? So that is the problem. So to answer that problem you now have the other extreme which in fact there is further extremes but that basically says that God gave these guys the idea, the thoughts, but they wrote down as they understood those thoughts from God. Maybe somewhat like an interpreter in a court of law or anywhere where you have an interpreter.

The interpreter does not translate the words word for word. So the speaker says today is Thursday and then he says today is Thursday. No, he listens to a sentence or two and when you are used to speaking with an interpreter who is a good interpreter you can speak two, three sentences.

He is not going to translate every word you said. He is going to translate the ideas, the thoughts that you presented in those sentences. He is going to paraphrase, he is going to put it into his own, not just in his own language but in his own thoughts.

So there are those who totally reject the inspiration of Scripture. The most liberal, more liberal theologians today say no, God inspired them thought by thought. So not word by word but thought by thought.

So here we have a problem. So that answers the question as to why do you apparently have differences. Oh well, because Luke wrote and God just gave him the ideas but Luke wrote in his own ideas.

I cannot accept that and I'm going to give you Scriptures why I cannot accept that. That every word is inspired. So how do you bring these two things together? Because we believe implicitly that God inspired every word.

Yet we can see the men writing in their own, in their own vocabulary. And this is one of the things that they do when they study Scriptures to try and understand was this written by Paul. You can look at his vocabulary, look at his style.

Is this Paul who is writing or is this somebody else who is writing? Looks like they are looking for somebody. So how do you bring these two things together? And the answer is by faith. By faith.

We have no intellectual way of bringing these two things together. They are things that we've spoken about before that we have to hold in tension. It is true that every word is inspired.

But it is true that the authors are writing in their own language, their own background, their own understanding. Somehow, in a way we don't fully understand, God is able to have them write the words that he wants them to write. And yet there's writing in their own style.

Remember that this idea of holding things in tension is a very important thing right throughout Scripture. We say that God is three. And yet we say God is one.

How can he be three and one at the same time? And of course we try and give analogies and explanations how that works. But they all fail. We have to accept by faith.

God is three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But he is one at the same time. At the same time.

And so there are many truths in the Word of God where they appear to be contradictory. And yet we look at the Scriptures and it says this is true. One of those examples is that God will keep us.

And yet at the same time we have a responsibility to make sure that we don't neglect so great a salvation. Now is God keeping me or must I do my part? Well both things are true. And I have to hold these things in tension.

There are many other truths like that. All right. I know that that's a difficult idea to grasp.

But for now let's focus then on the idea of every word. And I'm going to go through quite a few Scriptures and we're going to go as fast as we can. So 2 Samuel 23 verse 2. 2 Samuel 23 verse 2. The Spirit of the Lord spoke by or through me, and His word was on my tongue.

His word. Not His ideas. His word was on my tongue.

Jeremiah 1.9. And this whole passage, this whole first part of Jeremiah 1, Jeremiah explains how God had called him and given him the job to speak. And he says, Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, Behold, I have put my words, not my message or my thoughts or my ideas, my words in your mouth.

So when Jeremiah was speaking and the other prophets, they were speaking the words, the very words that God wanted to speak. In Matthew chapter 4. He answered and said, It is written, this is Jesus being tempted to turn stones into bread. It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Every word. Now if every word was not inspired, if Paul could choose or Isaiah could choose and say, I'm going to use this word and not that word. For those who've done some writing, you know that a lot of the time in writing is choosing words.

And I'm not a good writer and it takes me a long time because I write and I say, No, this is not the right word. It's not fully expressing what I want to say. There's got to be a different word, a better word.

And I think and I find another word. If that was what, let's say Isaiah was doing, then how can man live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God? Because every word that Isaiah wrote or that Paul wrote, did not come from God. But they did come from God.

And therefore we must live by every word. Now again, it emphasizes those two things. Remember I shared those two ideas with you.

The verbal and the plenary. The total. So every word deals with the whole of the word of God.

You can't cut certain sections out and say, I don't like those sections. You have to take the whole of the word. Every word.

But you can also not say, Well, it doesn't matter if, you know, that, you know, I don't like this word. I don't like the word repentance. So, so I'm just going to ignore it.

No, every word is important. And I need to pay attention to every word. So I pay attention to the whole, and I pay attention to the detail.

Now in Matthew chapter 5, and I think I've shared this with you before, probably when we did the good book of Matthew. That's quite a long time ago. Assuredly I say to you, Jesus speaking, and he says this on different times and different ways, but the same message.

Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. So he is saying as far as the law is concerned, the first five books, and obviously that now applies to all scripture, not one jot or one tittle will pass away. Now if not one jot or one tittle will pass away, what does it mean then? Are these things inspired by God? Are they there by the will of God? Yes, they are, because God's going to uphold them until heaven and earth passes away.

Now what are these things? Well, they are part of the Hebrew alphabet. And there is the Hebrew alphabet. And you'll see that the first, and I don't know why this list put it first, because it doesn't normally fit in first, but the first letter here is Yod.

So what we have in the translation is Jod or Jot, but in fact he is saying Yod. Can you see something about that letter in comparison to all the other letters? It is the smallest of all the letters. The Yod is the smallest of all the letters.

It's at least a quarter, I would say, half or a quarter of the size of any of the other letters. So what is Jesus saying? He is saying not the smallest letter will pass away. So is every word inspired? Yes, in fact, every letter is inspired.

And he's going to uphold that until heaven and earth pass away. Then he uses the word tittle. Now, up here we have, and I think everyone can see the screen, sorry Jason and Angela, but here we have the letter Bet and here we have the letter Kaf.

Are they the same or are they different? I always wanted to be an optometrist. They're actually not the same. There's a little difference here.

Can you see that? I think I have another slide. There you are. You see it has a little tail.

That's the tittle. A little squiggle. And I think this one makes the point that it's the same as the tail in the O which changes an O to a Q. So what's the difference between an O and a Q? Well, they're two very different letters.

But it's just one little squiggle. That makes the difference. In the same way, in a sense, you can say what's the difference between L and I? Well, it's the dot.

That's what makes the difference. And that appears a number of places. And you'll see that Dalit and Kaf are the same except this is just extended just a little bit.

And there are others that are so similar that just one little squiggle makes the difference. And so when he says that not one dot, then he means not the smallest letter and not the little embellishment, the little line that changes one letter to another will pass away. So by Jesus' own word, every letter, now remember, not in English, but every letter in the original languages, Hebrew or Aramaic or Greek, is inspired.

Now why is that important? Well, we know that one letter difference changes the whole word. And I'm not going to bore you with many examples. Where we have problems, where scribes didn't always, some scribes didn't write as badly as I do, but some of them didn't pay too much attention to these things.

And so is there a tittle there or isn't there a tittle there in the manuscripts? And in some cases it changes the word. In some cases, you can clearly see it's a mistake. I think all of us, when we text, we make lots of mistakes in texting because, you know, the nature of the thing.

And we don't always correct the mistakes because the person on the other side is going to figure out that, you know, I meant this or I meant that. But when it comes to the scripture, sometimes those mistakes can make a big difference. And that's why we get into the manuscripts and why the manuscripts become important.

So by Jesus' testimony then, the smallest letter and the little squiggles that change the letter are not going to pass away. They're part of the will and the plan of God. If that is true, then every word is important.

Every word is important. And so in 1 Corinthians 2, verse 13, these things we also speak, all of course writing, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches comparing spiritual things with spiritual. We're not using words of man's wisdom but words of the Holy Spirit.

Again, not ideas or thoughts or general messages. You know, if you go home tonight and your spouse wasn't here and they say, well, what was the message? You know, maybe you'd be good to give a three-minute summary of what I said. No, He is saying not the summary but the words, the words that the Holy Spirit teaches.

So take 2 Timothy 3, verse 16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God. All scripture, not some scriptures, all scriptures given by inspiration of God and is profitable for the doctrine, for a proof of correction and instruction and righteousness that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

So again, the emphasis here is that the scripture is given by inspiration of God. Men wrote as they were born along by the Holy Spirit. Men did not write these things out of their own ideas.

One of the things that you can clearly, how you can clearly see this is when you read the holy writings of other faiths, of the Koran for instance, when you read it you can see clearly this is written by a man because there's mistakes and there's contradictions and it just doesn't make sense. There's also what we call the apocryphal books, books that in the Catholic church and the Orthodox church are added to the scriptures. And many Christians study those books and they think well these things contain truth.

But when you read it, if you read it carefully, you see no, it doesn't make sense. It contradicts the rest of scripture. It has ideas that are totally wacky.

It just does not have the same witness of the spirit that this is in fact the scripture. But when you look at the word of God, there is something about it that is miraculous. There are no contradictions.

And I've been studying the scriptures for 50 years now. And I wish I will have another 500 years. Because the deeper I scratch, the more amazed I am at the way that the scriptures fit together.

How that there are messages and as we've been going through Luke and you just read the stories, oh well here's a story about this, another story about that. No, in fact they're fitting together. They dovetail.

And there's a message and a thread which can only come by the Holy Spirit. It cannot come by a man's intellectual understanding. And so all scripture is given by inspiration of God.

It is not a human document like other documents. And so let's close then with 2 Peter 1.21 then. For prophecy never came.

So you can't interpret scripture the way you like because it didn't come by the will of man. But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. And so two important things he's saying and we're going to move on to chapter 2 next week Lord willing.

But two important things he's saying. First of all, you can't interpret scripture the way you choose. And secondly, the scripture is inspired.

It is the holy word of God. It is God speaking word for word. We need to give attention to what God is saying.

I love Samuel. Samuel it says that as a young boy growing up in the temple it says that he did not let a single word of God fall to the ground. He did not let a word of God fall to the ground.

In other words, every word of God as Eli the high priest would read the scriptures as the priests would read the scriptures every word he hung on to it because it was important. And I wonder how easily we just let the word of God fall to the ground. We just let it slip through our fingers in one ear, out the other ear.

Gone. No, it is the life giving word of the spirit and it is inspired and it is God speaking. And one of the final things that is so amazing about the word of God is that while it was written thousands of years ago, some of it the newest ones two thousand years ago, others written three thousand, four thousand years ago, yet they are still relevant today.

You read the book of Proverbs and he's writing for us today. You read the Psalms. Every time we read the Psalms on Sunday morning, I say, yes Lord, that's me crying out to you for whatever it is.

Finding in you my comfort. Finding in you my strength. Those scriptures are still alive and real today.

That's true of some human writings in some sense. The writings of Shakespeare, I think it's three hundred years now and it still makes good reading if you can understand that English. But guaranteed it's not going to survive two thousand years if the Lord tarries.

It's going to go. It's going to disappear because it doesn't have the same inspiration that the word of God has that's endured thousands of years and that will continue to endure thousands of years if the Lord tarries until heaven and earth passes away. He says my word will endure forever.

Father, thank you for your word. Thank you Lord that it is miraculous, supernatural, given by the Spirit. Lord, we don't fully understand how the process worked.

But Lord, what we do know is that these are not the thoughts of men and they're not even your thoughts put in human ideas. But Lord, they are your words, word for word. Lord, help us to believe that.

Help us Lord to not just believe it in a theological sense but Lord, help us to believe it that as we read it we would not let your word fall to the ground. But Lord, that we would cherish every word, hang on to every word because in them we have eternal life. And so Lord, we pray that these things may be real for us.

We pray that you'd go with us, keep us, protect us, bring us together again safely on Sunday. I pray in Jesus' name.

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