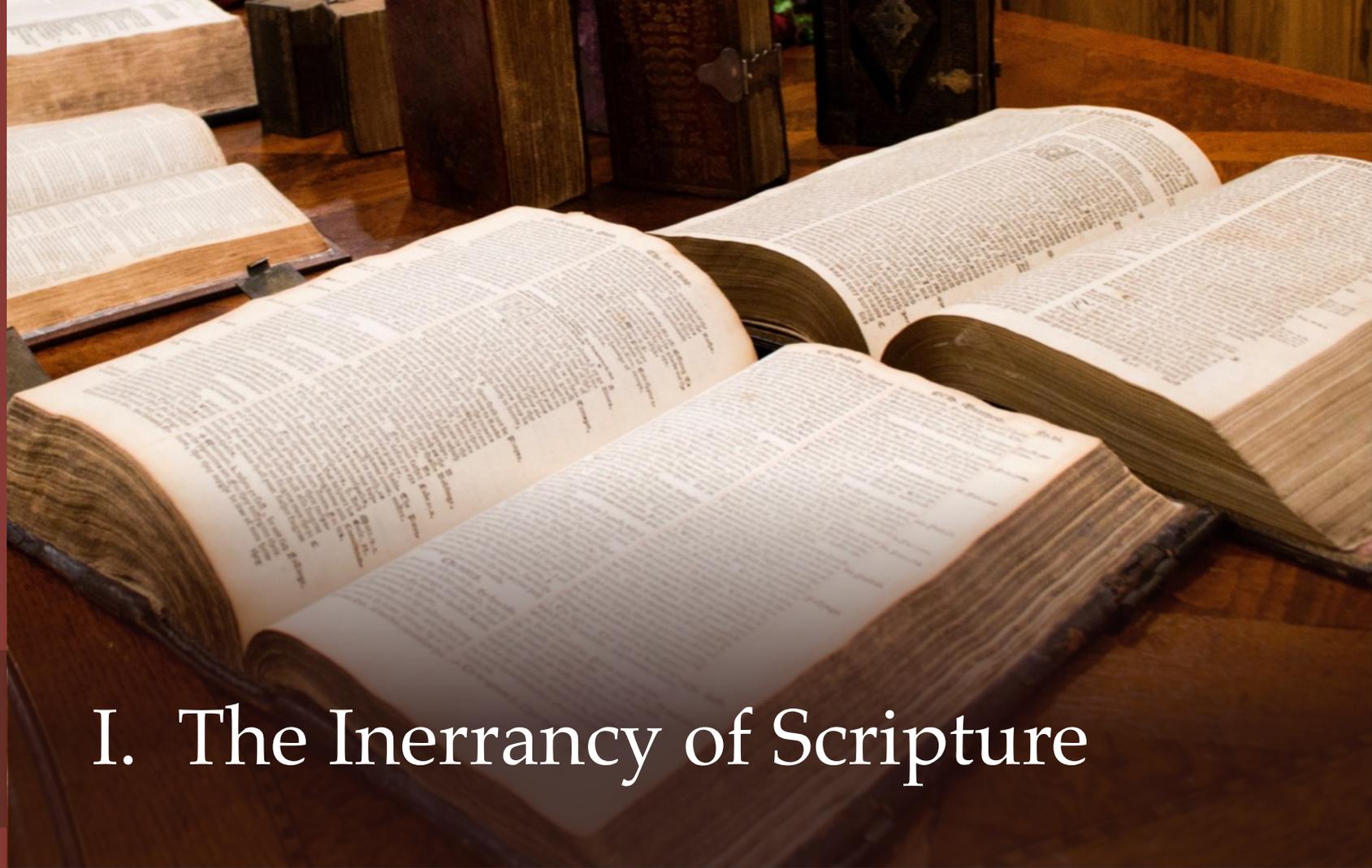


Inerrancy, Preservation, and Translation of Scripture (Part 1)

Tom Pennington | October 9, 2016



I. The Inerrancy of Scripture

What Jesus Taught about Scripture

- Its Permanent Authority
- Its Verbal Inspiration
- Its Plenary Inspiration
- Its Total Inerrancy



Definitions of Inerrancy

Paul Feinberg: "When all the facts become known, they will demonstrate that the Bible in its original autographs and correctly interpreted is entirely true and never false in all it affirms."

Robert Reymond: "The Bible does not err in any of its affirmations, whether those affirmations be the spheres of spiritual realities or morals, history or science, and is therefore incapable of teaching error."



Definitions of Inerrancy

Wayne Grudem: "Scripture in the original autographs does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact. ... The Bible always tells the truth...concerning everything it talks about."

Chicago Statement on Inerrancy: "We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses."



Attacks on Inerrancy

1. Ancient: from heretics
2. Renaissance : from the Enlightenment
 - Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) – a professor at Remonstrant seminary in Amsterdam.
 - Baruch Spinoza (1632-77) – a Jewish philosopher.
3. Modern: from within the professing church
 - Those wavering on the issue made this deadly distinction...
 - The Bible is infallible in its doctrine—that is, it is without error in matters of faith and practice.
 - But the Bible is not inerrant –that is, it is not without error in matters like history, genealogy, cosmology, and science.



Arguments for Inerrancy

1. The Historical Argument

Greg Allison, in his book *Historical Theology*, writes: "the church has historically acknowledged that Scripture in its original manuscripts and properly interpreted is completely true and without any error in everything that it affirms, whether that has to do with doctrine, moral conduct, or matters of history, cosmology, geography, and the like. Over time, the church has expressed this conviction by applying a number of terms to the Bible such as truthful, inerrant, and infallible. No matter what term you use, the church from its outset was united in its belief that the word of God is true and contains no error. The 1st significant challenge to this belief did not arise until the 17th century."



The Historical Argument

- Clement of Rome:
"you have searched the Scriptures, which are true... You know that nothing unrighteous or counterfeit is written in them."
- Irenaeus:
"the Scriptures are indeed perfect."



The Historical Argument

a) What Scripture affirms always corresponds to reality.

- Tertullian: "the statements of holy Scripture will never be discordant with truth."
- Augustine: "I have learned to ascribe to those books which are of canonical rank, and only to them, such reverence and honor, that I firmly believe that no single error due to the author is found in any one of them."



The Historical Argument

b) Scripture doesn't contradict Scripture.

- Irenaeus: "all Scripture, which is been given to us by God, shall be found by us perfectly consistent."
- Justin Martyr: "I am entirely convinced that no Scripture contradicts another."
- Athanasius: "it is the opinion of some that the Scriptures do not agree or the God who gave them is false. But there is no disagreement at all. Far from it! Neither can the Father, who is truth, lie; for it is impossible that God should lie."



The Historical Argument

b) Scripture doesn't contradict Scripture.

- Luther: "Everyone, indeed, knows that at times they [the fathers] have erred as men will; therefore I am ready to trust them only when they prove their opinions from Scripture, which has never erred."
- The Westminster Confession: calls the Scripture "the only infallible rule of faith and practice."



The Chicago Statement on Inerrancy

Part of its summary statement: "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."

Article XII: "We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit. We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood."



Augustine

“It seems to me that most disastrous consequences must follow upon our believing that anything false is found in the sacred books; that is to say, that the men by whom the Scriptures have been given to us and committed to writing did put down in these books anything false.... For if you once admit into such a high sanctuary of authority one false statement...there will not be left a single sentence of those books which, if appearing to anyone difficult in practice or hard to believe, may not by the same fatal rule be explained away.”



Arguments for Inerrancy

2) The Biblical Arguments

a) The Claims of the Scripture Itself

- Deut. 13:1-5; 18:20-22
- 2 Sam. 7:28 - "Now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are truth.
- Ps. 12:6 – The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.
- Ps. 119:160 - The sum of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.
- 2 Tim. 2:15 - Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.
- 2 Tim. 3:16
 - Num. 23:19 - "God is not a man, that He should lie.
 - Heb. 6:18 - it is impossible for God to lie.



Recommended Reading

- *A Peculiar Glory: How the Christian Scriptures Reveal their Complete Truthfulness.*
- By John Piper
- The internal witness of the Scripture



Arguments for Inerrancy

2) The Biblical Argument

b) The Statements of our Lord

- Luke 11:50-51
- Jesus referred to the OT as the “commandment of God” (Mk. 7:8, 9), “the Word of God” (Mk. 7:13).
- Jesus taught that the OT was the product of the Holy Spirit: “David himself said in the Holy Spirit” (Mk. 12:36).
- Matt. 4:4 - 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'
- John 10:35 - "the Scripture cannot be broken."
- John 17:17 - "Your word is truth."



Arguments for Inerrancy

2) The Biblical Argument

b) The Statements of our Lord

- Matt. 22:32 - 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB '? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."
- Matt. 22:43-45 (quoting Ps. 110:1) – Jesus builds his case for the deity of the Messiah on one Hebrew word!
- Matt. 5:18 - "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

