**Did God Really Say?**

A Case for the Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible

Student Handout

Videos are found [**HERE**](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN5lBR8FF6x7UG35BRDEqkbkZeX4m7bAs).

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# Lecture #1. Defining Verbal Plenary Inspiration

Definition of Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI)

DEFINITION:

**Transcendent Truth!**

Answers to our deepest questions.

Helps us resist cultural conditioning.

We need truth for personal relationships to thrive.

Having access to God’s mind and thoughts: an unspeakable privilege!

Psalm 119

**Verbal**

The infinite-personal God can speak words to finite and fallen humans.

* First humans (Gen. 1:26-28; 3:9-19)
* Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:1ff; 17:1ff; 18:1ff)
* Moses (Ex. 3:1ff; 20:1-4)
* Samuel (1 Sam. 3:10-14)
* Elijah (1 Kin. 19:9-18)
* Job (Job 38-41)
* Isaiah (Isa. 6:8-13)
* Jonah (Jon. 1:1-2; 3:1-2; 4:1-11)
* Peter (Acts 11:12)
* Philip (Acts 8:29)
* Paul (Acts 16:6-10)

**Plenary (“all” or “complete”)**

All Scripture is inspired

Shouldn’t add or remove God’s words

Even the smallest parts are inspired

**Inspiration (“God-breathed”)**

God spoke his words through people

The Bible’s words are God’s words

The prophets wrote God’s words

**Summary: Two primary texts**

**(2 Tim. 3:16-17) All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

“All Scripture”

“All Scripture is inspired by God”

**(2 Pet. 1:19) We have the prophetic word made more sure, 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.**

**(2 Pet. 1:20) But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation.**

**(2 Pet. 1:21) For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**

“No prophecy of Scripture.”

“One’s own interpretation.”

“Interpretation” (*epiluseōs*)

“Moved” (*pheromenoi*)

Dictation theory?

Confluence

Conclusions

# Lecture #2. A Rational Case for VPI

Defending Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI)

#1. “The Bible is inspired because it claims to be inspired.”

#2. “The Bible is internally consistent.”

#3. “The Bible resonates with me.”

#4. “The Bible contains fulfilled predictive prophecy.”

#5. “The Bible is historically and archaeologically reliable.”

#6. “There is good historical evidence for the Resurrection.”

Cumulative Case for VPI

#1. The Gospels are relatively reliable historical documents.

#2. In the Gospels, Jesus claimed to be God.

#3. Several lines of evidence identify Jesus as supernatural (vindicating his claim to be God).

#4. Jesus (God) taught Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI).

Jesus affirmed:

(1) The *past* inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures

* The entire OT (Mt. 5:17-18; Lk. 24:44)
* Adam and Eve (Mt. 19:4-5)
* Noah (Mt. 24:37)
* Sodom & Gomorrah (Mt. 10:15; Lk. 17:28)
* Jonah (Mt. 12:39-41)
* Moses (Mk. 12:26)
* Isaiah (Mt. 15:7)
* Daniel (Mt. 24:15)

(2) The *present* inspiration of His own words

(Mt. 24:35) “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

(Jn. 12:48) “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.”

(3) The *future* inspiration of apostolic writings

(Mt. 10:14) Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, shake the dust off your feet.

15 It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.

20 It is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

40 He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.

(Jn. 14:26) The Holy Spirit will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

(Jn. 16:13) The Spirit of truth will guide you into all the truth… He will disclose to you what is to come.

(Jn. 17:8) The words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me…

18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

(Jn. 15:26) When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

27 and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

(Jn. 21:24) This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

(1 Jn. 1:2) We have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us.

4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

(4) Confirmation of Jesus’ views of inspiration

(1 Thess. 2:13) When you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

**Did the Apostles think their writings to be inspired by God?**

(1 Tim. 5:18) For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,’ and ‘The laborer is worthy of his wages.’

(1 Cor. 14:36-37) Was it from you that the word of God first went forth? Or has it come to you only? 37 If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord’s commandment.

38 But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.

(Gal. 1:8-9) If anyone should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 The gospel which was preached by me is not according to man…

12 I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

(Gal. 5:10) I have confidence in you in the Lord that you will adopt no other view. But the one who is disturbing you will bear his judgment, whoever he is.

(1 Thess. 4:2-3) You know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. 3 This is the will of God, your sanctification—that you abstain from sexual immorality…

8 He who rejects this is not rejecting man but God.

(2 Pet. 3:2) Remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

(2 Pet. 3:15-16) Our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 [Paul] writes the same way in all his letters… His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Conclusions

# Lecture #3. Defining and Defending Biblical Inerrancy

**Was Jesus accommodating a popular view of Scripture?**

Deductive Argument for the Inerrancy of Scripture

**(1) God cannot communicate any errors.**

**(2) The Bible is God’s communication.**

**(3) Therefore, the Bible does not communicate any errors.**

(Jn. 17:17) Your word is 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.

(Ps. 119:89) Forever… Your word is settled in heaven.

(Prov. 30:5) Every word of God is flawless.

**Key definitions**

**Inspiration:** The origin of Scripture: God-breathed

**Infallibility:** The purpose of Scripture: trustworthy

**Inerrancy:** The nature of Scripture: truthful

What’s the difference between infallibility and inerrancy?

**What is inerrancy?**

**What is *partial* inerrancy?**

**Case Study: Fuller Theological Seminary (1947-1976)**

1947: Charles Fuller founded Fuller Seminary with inerrancy

1963-1966: Professors needed to sign that they agreed with inerrancy

1967: Daniel Fuller openly broke away from inerrancy at ETS

1970-1972: Statement of faith

1976: Harold Lindsell’s book

1978: Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

The Chicago Statement(s)

**Key qualifications and nuances**

Inspiration was not by dictation.

Inerrancy is not a salvation issue.

Inerrancy does not apply to copies.

Inerrancy does not require “modern technical precision.”

Round numbers

Accurate spelling and grammar

Observational language

Paraphrase

*ipsissima vox* (“his own voice”)

*ipsissima verba* (“his own words”)

Non-chronological arrangement

**Interpretation is technically distinct from inerrancy but interconnected**

Grammatical-historical method is necessary for inerrancy.

Genre criticism is accepted.

**Science and Scripture**

Genesis 1-11 is factual—not mythical.

General revelation shouldn’t contradict specific revelation.

# Lecture #4. Objections to Inerrancy Considered

Historical Objections

**“Inerrancy is a new doctrine that was created by B.B. Warfield, Charles Hodge, and 20th century fundamentalists.”**

“These views aren’t identical to the Chicago Statement!”

Was this a Protestant invention?

Do non-inerrantists agree?

**“Inerrancy is only an American phenomenon. Therefore, it shouldn’t be adopted by Christians in other cultures.”**

Philosophical Objections

**“Since humans are sinful, doesn’t this mean that they corrupted the Bible when they wrote it?”**

**“Why does inerrancy matter if we don’t have the autographs?”**

**“What is the difference between the Chicago Statement and an authoritative ruling by a pope?”**

Moral Objections

**“Inerrancy is disunifying.”**

**“Inerrancy is used to bully those who disagree, and it’s led to people losing their careers.”**

**“If one error were found, it would destroy Christianity. Therefore, it leads to people losing their faith.”**

## Conclusions

# Lecture #5. Mike Licona and Biblical Inerrancy

**(Mt. 27:51-53) Behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. 52 The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.**

#### Is this report unbelievable?

#### Apocalyptic genre?

(1) Darkness (v.45)

(2) Earthquakes

(3) Opening of tombs

(4) Resurrected bodies.

**(Mt. 27:51) Behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.**

**(Mt. 27:52) The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;**

**(Mt. 27:53) and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.**

**(Mt. 27:54) Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”**

#### How does Licona prevent a slippery slope in his interpretation?

**(Jn. 18:6) When Jesus said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground.**

**(Jn. 19:28) After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, “I am thirsty.” 29 …So they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth.**

**Luke 24 and Acts 1: How many days?**

**Mark 3:2-5; Luke 6:7; Matthew 12:10-13**

# Lecture #6. Licona and Greco-Roman Bioi

#### Inaccurate genre influence and genre application

#### Bios is a flexible genre—not rigid.

#### The use of the genre is what matters most.

#### Internal evidence conflicts with such a loose view of historical biography.

Luke 1:1-4; John 19:35; 2 Peter 1:16

Authors control their works—not the genre.

Matthew and Luke quote Mark verbatim.

Editorial comments (Mk. 7:19; Jn. 2:18-21).

#### Matthew, Mark, and John were Jewish.

Were they aware of Greek historiography?

And would they practice it?

#### Were Jewish authors influenced by Greek *chreia*?

Aelius Theon (Progymnasmata) taught Greek by giving rhetorical exercises (*chreia*).

(1) Jews resented Greek influence (Sotah 49b; 2 Maccabees 4:9).

(2) If literary training did occur, how much influence resulted?

They learned the language, but did they learn the literary devices?

Why not use the Septuagint as your text?

(3) Papias (AD 110) rejects this view

*Church History*, 3.39.3-4, 15

#### Luke was a Gentile. Did he use it…?

#### If Paul, how much more Jesus?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Acts 22** | **Acts 26** |
| “Brothers and fathers” (v.1)  Educated by Gamaliel (v.3)  Dedicated to the law (v.12)  “Ananias” (vv.12-16)  Paul addressed the audience in a Hebrew dialect (Aramaic), rather than Greek (v.2).  Waits to mention “Gentiles” (v.21). |  |

Damages historicity

Damages hermeneutics

Creates a true slippery slope

In practice, this methodology rejects and undermines biblical inerrancy

“But the raising of the saints in Matthew 27 is just your interpretation! It’s basically the same as Genesis 1-2!”

Licona doesn’t reject inerrancy *de jure* (“officially”), but he does reject it *de facto* (“in reality”).

## Conclusion

# Study Guide for the Test

At the end of this study, we are going to have a test based on these questions below.

**What is the definition of Verbal Plenary Inspiration?** God so moved the human authors of Scripture that the resulting product was the Word of God, written totally without error in all that it affirms in the original autographs.

**What are four reasons *why* we need an inspired Bible?**

#1. Answers to our deepest questions.

#2. Helps us resist cultural conditioning.

#3. We need truth for personal relationships to thrive.

#4. Having access to God’s mind and thoughts: an unspeakable privilege!

**Give one verse that shows that ALL of Scripture is inspired.**

(Lk. 24:25, 27) Jesus said, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!” … 27 Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

(Acts 24:14) Paul told Agrippa, “I believe everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets.”

(Mt. 5:18) Until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

(Jn. 10:35) “He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken).”

**What are two primary verses on the inspiration of Scripture?**

(2 Tim. 3:16) All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.

(2 Pet. 1:20-21) But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

**What are problems with these evidences for VPI?**

**#1. “The Bible is inspired because it claims to be inspired.”** Circular reasoning.

**#2. “The Bible is internally consistent.”** Necessary but not sufficient.

**#3. “The Bible resonates with me.”** Scripture does have a self-attesting quality, but this is insufficient (e.g. Occult literature, New Age literature, music lyrics).

**#4. “The Bible contains fulfilled predictive prophecy.”** This would indicate that those predictions were inspired.

**#5. “The Bible is historically and archaeologically reliable.”** Many documents are historically reliable—but not inspired.

**#6. “There is good historical evidence for the Resurrection.”** This would demonstrate the uniqueness of Jesus, but what would this mean?

**What is the four-step case for VPI?**

#1. The Gospels are relatively reliable historical documents.

#2. In the Gospels, Jesus claimed to be God.

#3. Several lines of evidence identify Jesus as supernatural (vindicating his claim to be God).

#4. Jesus (God) taught Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI).

**Where does Jesus affirm the existence of these OT figures below?**

Adam and Eve (Mt. 19:4-5)

Noah (Mt. 24:37)

Sodom & Gomorrah (Mt. 10:15; Lk. 17:28)

Jonah (Mt. 12:39-41)

**Where does Jesus affirm the NT authors?**

(Jn. 14:26) The Holy Spirit will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

(Jn. 16:13) The Spirit of truth will guide you into all the truth… He will disclose to you what is to come.

(Jn. 15:26-27) When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, 27 and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

(Jn. 21:24) This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

**Did the apostles think that their writings were inspired?**

(1 Tim. 5:18) For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,’ and ‘The laborer is worthy of his wages.’

(2 Pet. 3:16) [Paul] writes the same way in all his letters… His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

**Was Jesus just accommodating to his culture’s view of Scripture?**

When did Jesus ever accommodate?

Affirming falsehood is different than admitting ignorance.

Accommodation is not adaptation.

**What is a three-part deductive argument for inerrancy?**

(1) God cannot communicate any errors.

(2) The Bible is God’s communication.

(3) Therefore, the Bible does not communicate any errors.

**Define inspiration.** The origin of Scripture: God-breathed

**Define infallibility.** The purpose of Scripture: trustworthy

**Define inerrancy.** The nature of Scripture: truthful

**What is full inerrancy?** Inerrancy is the doctrine that the Bible is fully truthful in all of its teachings.

**What is partial inerrancy?** The Bible is inerrant in regards to morality and spirituality—not history, geography, science, etc.

#### Chicago Statement: Does the Chicago Statement affirm any of these below?

Inspiration was dictation. **FALSE**

Inerrancy is not an issue of salvation. **TRUE**

Inerrancy only applies to the original writings—not the copies. **TRUE**

Inerrancy does not require “modern technical precision.” **TRUE**

Inerrancy cannot allow for round numbers. **FALSE**

Inerrancy needs to include spelling and grammar. **FALSE**

Inerrancy allows for observational language. **TRUE**

Inerrancy thinks that a paraphrase is considered an error. **FALSE**

Inerrancy requires chronological history—not topical arrangement. **FALSE**

Inerrancy can be denied by rejecting a grammatical historical interpretation. **TRUE**

Inerrancy was a Protestant invention. **FALSE**

**“Inerrancy is a new doctrine that was created by B.B. Warfield, Charles Hodge, and 20th century fundamentalists.”** The early church fathers affirmed inerrancy. They aren’t entirely identical, but they are substantially the same. These historical views are far, far closer than non-inerratists today!

**“Since humans are sinful, doesn’t this mean that they corrupted the Bible when they wrote it?”**

If we are necessarily in error, then so is the objector!

Humans aren’t logically or necessarily sinful (e.g. textbooks).

How is it that Jesus never sinned?

Jesus was human, but he wasn’t merely human.

The Bible is a human book, but not merely a human book.

**“Why does inerrancy matter if we don’t have the autographs?”**

(1) Many benefits to many copies. Wider and faster dissemination. No one could control the originals. No one could worship the originals.

(2) Key distinction: Did God or did humans distort the text? Scratchy voice or a scratched record? Creating people in a fallen state, or allowing fallen people to reproduce?

**“What is the difference between the Chicago Statement and an authoritative ruling by a pope?”**

(1) This was the agreement of a group, not one person.

(2) This was the agreement despite various denominations.

(3) This is a statement of scholarship, not spiritual authority.

(4) Who has a better scholarly and nuanced statement?

**“Inerrancy is used to bully those who disagree, and it’s led to people losing their careers.”**

All organizations hold boundaries.

What if a professor (or pastor) denied the resurrection of Jesus?

It’s unethical to teach this at seminaries or churches.

**“If one error were found, it would destroy Christianity. Therefore, it leads to people losing their faith.”**

The same is true of many doctrines (e.g. the Trinity, deity of Christ, impeccability of Christ, etc.).

One error wouldn’t destroy Christianity, but it would destroy inerrancy.

It’s odd when defenders of the Bible are being accused of weakening people’s faith!