

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Various Views of Bible Inerrancy

Various Views of Bible Inerrancy - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/7/5 8:32

This has been raised on the other thread but wanted to post a new thread so as not to distract too much. Below are various views of biblical inerrancy. Personally I believe I would fall in line with #3.

VARIATIONS OF INERRANCY DEFINED

Professor David S. Dockery, formerly of the fundamentalist Criswell College, then of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, identified nine possible positions held by various theologians with regard to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy.

1. Mechanical Dictation

God dictated every word of the Bible. This view ignores style differences between various authors as well as differing historical and cultural contexts.

Proponent: John R. Rice

2. Absolute Inerrancy

The Bible is true and accurate in all matters. This view uses the plenary-verbal concept of inspiration, attempting to separate itself from the dictation view while assuring that the Bible is the written word of God. It does not take seriously the human aspect, or the historical contexts, in trying to harmonize the apparent differences and difficulties in Scripture.

Proponent: Harold Lindsell

3. Critical Inerrancy

The Bible is completely true in all that the Scripture affirms, to the degree of precision intended by the original author. This view does not seek to harmonize every detail. Scientific matters are considered to be treated with phenomenological language rather than technical and scientific thinking. This view allows the cautious use of critical methodologies in interpretation. It takes seriously both the human and divine elements.

Proponents: Roger Nicole, J. Ramsey Michaels, D. A. Carson, John Woodbridge

4. Limited Inerrancy

The Bible is inerrant in all matters of salvation and ethics, faith and practice, and matters which can be empirically validated. It is inerrant only in matters for which the Bible was given. This view seeks to be empirical, i.e., guided by observation alone without using science or theory. Some call this view "simple biblicism."

Proponent: Howard Marshall

5. Qualified Inerrancy

The Bible is taken - upon faith - to be inerrant in all matters of salvation and ethics, faith and practice, and matters which can be empirically validated. This is the same as the previous statement, except for the faith element. It attempts to take seriously the human and divine elements. This view is difficult to define.

Proponent: Donald G. Bloesch

6. Nuanced Inerrancy

The Bible's inerrancy varies with its types of literature: narrative, poetry, stories, or proverbs. Some passages require dictation in inspiration, while others, as in poetry, stories, or proverbs, may require only dynamic inspiration. This view takes seriously the human and divine elements.

Proponent: Clark Pinnock

7. Functional Inerrancy

The Bible is inerrant in its purpose or function. It is inerrant in its power to bring people to salvation and growth in Christian life.

Proponents: G. C. Berkouwer, Jack Rogers, Donald McKim

8. Inerrancy is Irrelevant

Inerrancy is neither affirmed nor denied. The doctrine of inerrancy is pointless, irrelevant, and concerned only with theological minutiae.

Proponent: David A. Hubbard

9. Biblical Authority

The Bible is authoritative only to point one to an encounter with God. This view does not take seriously the divine element in the words of the Bible. It freely admits human errors and finds them of no consequence.

Proponent: William Countryman

Re: Various Views of Bible Inerrancy - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/7/5 10:15

So Many Words :

"To affirm clearly one's belief in the inspiration of the Bible demands many words today. That was not always so. Formerly, it was enough to say, 'I believe in the inspiration of the Bible.' That said it all. Everyone understood those words to mean that the Bible was from God, completely accurate and reliable, and therefore authoritative.

Verbal Inspiration. Later, it became necessary to add, 'I believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible.' Verbal emphasized the fact that the very words were inspired, not only the thoughts, as some were saying. If only thoughts are inspired, they said, there can be considerable freedom in the choice of words to express those thoughts; thus, they concluded, 'It is not possible to speak about the inspiration of the words of the text of Scripture.' But those who held to full inspiration of words as well as thought insisted that God must have guided the very words used by the writers, or the Bible is less than inspired. Hence the phrase "verbal inspiration" seemed necessary.

Verbal, plenary inspiration. But some sought to undermine inspiration by asserting that although words might be inspired, not all of them were. They insisted that there was no way to claim that every word in the Bible was inspired. So to affirm inspiration it became necessary to add, 'I believe in the verbal, plenary (complete, full) inspiration of the Bible.' That assured that no part of the Bible would be omitted.

Verbal, plenary, infallible inspiration. In time another attack on the complete inspiration of all the Bible was launched. Some denied that the Bible, though 'inspired,' was infallible. Then it became necessary to say, 'I believe in the verbal, plenary, infallible inspiration of the Bible.' That affirmed that the words were exactly the ones God wanted in the text, and therefore every word was authoritative.

Verbal, plenary, infallible, inerrant inspiration. nevertheless, some could not accept the idea that the words were exactly those God intended, and yet they were reluctant to abandon the authority of Scripture. So there developed the attempt to allow for errors in the text while keeping the 'infallibility' of the message. To counter that, it became necessary to say, 'I believe in the verbal, plenary, infallible, and inerrant (without error) inspiration of the Bible.' Adding the word 'inerrant' focused on the necessary relation between accuracy of the words and authority of the message.

Verbal, plenary, infallible, inerrant, unlimited inspiration. Today there has appeared yet another attempt to undermine full inspiration. The new doctrine affirms belief in inerrancy but limits the extent of inerrancy. The Bible, they say, 'is inerrant when it speaks of science, history, or genealogies, and so on.' In other words, it possesses only 'limited inerrancy.'

But why say 'limited inerrancy'? Why not 'limited errancy'? If the Bible has limitations on its inerrancy, then obviously it is errant, though not completely so. So limited inerrancy and limited errancy amount to the same thing. But why do the proponents of limited inerrancy not want to use the equivalent label 'limited errancy'? One cannot be sure of the answer, but it could hardly be denied that limited inerrancy is a much more palatable label than anything that has the word errancy in it. What evangelical would not want to avoid using a label that suggests he believes that there are errors in the Bible? To speak of limited inerrancy seems much more respectable, but it is also more deceitful. Intentional or not, it is a semantic game played to help cover up a dangerously deceptive view. We need to expose limited inerrancy for what it is. If parts of the Bible are not inerrant, then those parts are errant. That is an inescapable conclusion.

Therefore today, 'in order to affirm clearly a belief in the full inspiration of the Scripture,' it has become necessary to say, 'I believe in the verbal, plenary, infallible, unlimited inerrancy of the Bible.'"

Charles C. Ryrie : "What you should know about Inerrancy" Moody Press 1981 writes p. : 15-17

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/7/5 10:38

So, in so many words-- Ryrie is a "1" or "2".

Where are you PP?

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/7/5 11:12

RE : /// Ryrie is a "1" or "2"///

I have never read/heard any one whom claims "Mechanical Dictation"

p.46,47

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth (John 16:13) Some people affirm the truthfulness of God and yet deny the truthfulness of the Bible. They say that God is true and that anything that comes from God must also be true. But, they continue, the reason the Bible is not true in every detail is simply that God had to involve men in producing the Bible, and whenever men are involved the possibility of error creeps in. Be they ever so few, errors are nevertheless there because sinful men were used in the production of Scriptures.

Logical as that may sound 2 Peter 1:21. The human wills of the authors were not the originators or the carriers of God's message. That does not mean that the authors were totally passive (as the dictation idea of inspiration asserts), but it does mean that whatever the Spirit was and did in inspiration, their human wills were not and did not do so. And the Spirit was the source and the guiding force; the authors' wills were not. The repetition of the same verb in both parts of the verse is significant ("no prophecy was borne ever by man's will but men were borne by the Spirit," authors trans.).

The conclusion is obvious: God did not permit the will of sinful man to divert, misdirect, or erroneously record His message.

RE : /// Where are you PP? ///

More importantly the question that needs to be asked is what do the Scriptures speak of their own nature ?

How did our Lord and others in the Scriptures use the Scriptures?

Re: Various Views of Bible Inerrancy - posted by Sree (), on: 2017/7/5 11:31

I think it is missing the view I have. I believe Bible is an inspired word of God. Bible may not be inerrant word to word but the spirit behind every word is inerrant. When we are connected with God through his spirit, we can understand these words.

2 Tim 3:16 - All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

John 6:63-The Spirit gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

I do not believe those words are dictated. If it is dictated word then we have no authority to read it in any other language than the original language in which it is written.

A living man cannot be constrained in a box and say this is what he is about. Each person will have a different understanding of a living man. For example my wife may have a deeper understanding of me than my fellow brothers in Church. My colleagues will have much shallow understanding of who I am. So anything that is living cannot be studied and understood in a like manner. Same is with God's word as well, which is a living word.

Re: , on: 2017/7/5 11:32

In all of these discussions about Biblical inerrancy I have 2 basic questions.....

1. Does anyone really read the Bible.
2. Does anyone obey what they read.

Bro Blaine

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/7/5 11:43

- RE : /// 1. Does anyone really read the Bible.
2. Does anyone obey what they read.///

Not many people in the western culture,
because the serpent of 'Historical Criticism' has subtly and craftily deceived them by whispering , "hath God said"

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/7/5 11:49

//In all of these discussions about Biblical inerrancy I have 2 basic questions.....

1. Does anyone really read the Bible.
2. Does anyone obey what they read.

Bro Blaine//

1. Yes, all the time
2. Yes, but less than all the time

Re: PP and Todd, on: 2017/7/5 11:58

Thanks Brothers. Just wondering. I know I listen and read the Bible myself extensively. But I certainly can improve in the area of obedience to what I know to be true.

I believe it was Mark Twain who said it's not what I "don't understand" about the Bible that bothers me. It's what I "do understand" in the Bible that bothers me.

Bro Blaine

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/7/5 12:22

I heard Len ravenhill say that once but maybe he was quoting mark twain.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/7/5 12:27

It is a Twain quote, Twain was very hostile to Christianity

add : The quote by Twain was intended to bash the Bible

Re: , on: 2017/7/5 13:36

Still we have these threads which talk about Biblical inerrancy. Or we have these threads which debate the one true Biblical translation. But in all of this discussion do we actually read the Bible that we are seeking to defend and say that is without error.

Such discussions remind me of two men who get into an argument over which handgun is the most effective. One will argue that the Glock pistol is more effective than the 9 millimeter. The other one will argue the 9mm is more effective than a Glock pistol. Only to find out that both men have never fired the pistols in questions.

My use of firearms is not to convey that I approve of the use of firearms and that would be another whole thread. But only to illustrate a point.

So I ask again do we read the Bible that we seek to defend and debate.

Bro Blaine

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/7/5 13:52

Much of it is a very moot point. The "problem passages" have little or nothing to do with the main themes and import of the Bible, i.e. The way of salvation, sanctification, waking by the Spirit, growing in ones relationship to Christ, etc.

Many Christians are so hung up on absolute inerrancy that their whole faith would seem to crumble if one error was found. This is an untenable position but explains why some are so insistent on absolute inerrancy.

I do not hold to 100% inerrancy but it's pretty close- probably 99.5%. But no errors(if they exist) would affect any of the major and important themes I noted above.

Re: Various Views of Bible Inerrancy - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/7/5 14:08

"3. Critical Inerrancy"

"RE ...This view allows the cautious use of critical methodologies in interpretation."

Historical Criticism is rooted in humanism despite how pious or spiritual or logical sounding men may cloth/present it or how subtly they mix it.

It ultimately ever so subtly and craftly is whispering : "hath God said"

Through Scholasticism pagan rational knowledge was mixed with the Bible.

"...it was assumed that man requires the wordly wisdom of paganism right along side Gods Word in order to make real intellectual progress. Gods Word was reduced to just one of two focal points for determining wisdom and knowledge. The Bible came to be regarded as authoritative only in those areas touching on redemption and the Christian life. Aristotle, in contrast, became the source of all knowledge of the world, that is, for the realm of natural sciences, social analysis, and so on. in other words, Gods Word was no longer regarded as reliable for these areas of knowledge.....

Humanism

At the beginning of modern thought stands the frightful decision, which was carried out by the forces of intellectual leadership, to circumvent God's Word and to seek direction instead in pagan antiquity. Humanism made the decision to make man the measure of all things. That was a decisive renunciation of God, even if such humanism usually adopted a thoroughly pious deportment and constantly mouthed God's Word. What was said about God no longer sprang from Gods revealed Word but rather from the human spirit...."

from :

Historical Criticism of the Bible: Methodology or Ideology: Reflections of a Bultmannian Turned Evangelical
by Eta Linnemann 24,25

Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/7/5 15:28

"God's disclosure about Himself and the nature of reality are always inerrant."

www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/biblical-inerrancy/