

Part 2 – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE INSPIRATION AND PRESERVATION OF SCRIPTURE

There are three important doctrines comprising by what is called ‘the doctrine of Scripture’:

1. *The Bible teaches that it is Inspired by God*
2. *The Bible teaches that it’s Inspiration is verbal and plenary (word for word/full/complete)*
3. *The Bible teaches it’s Preservation to every generation of God’s people by God’s sovereign purpose and providence*

We have thoroughly established these doctrines from the Scriptures in the first part of our study. **Our only authority for this belief or doctrine is the Bible itself**, so we glean our evidence from the Scriptures. Any other circumstantial evidence is not to sway us in our belief, for as we have seen, it is Scripture which is “given by inspiration of God and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 *Timothy 3:16*).

There are various doctrines which are implications of these, such as: The Bible is the Word of God; it is inerrant, it is infallible etc., but these three are the fundamentals of what can be called the ‘Doctrine of Scripture’ (or the “Reformed Doctrine of Scripture”). We could summarise it by saying, **The Bible is fully inspired by God and fully preserved by God’s grace.**

It is also important to note at the beginning of this study, that when we speak of “the Bible” or “the Scriptures”, **we speak of the Protestant Bible, the 66 books from Genesis to Revelation, not including the Apocrypha.** There are good reasons for this which I won’t go into now but they will become evident also as we proceed.

Please keep in mind these important doctrines, *that God’s Word is fully inspired and fully preserved in the Bible.* As we go through various Scriptures, we will see many proofs of the basic *Doctrine of Scripture*, and also some important doctrines which stem from it.

1. Where do the Scriptures come from? – Answer: From God.

“**All scripture** *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:” (2 *Timothy 3:16*) – (plenary and verbal inspiration)

Compare Scripture with the mere writings of men and see that, because it is given by the Creator, Scripture has absolute authority; it is from the Author of all things visible and invisible! The writings of Confucius, or Mohammed, or the popes, or others who claim to be prophets, are worth less than nothing, compared to God’s Word – “let God be true but every man a liar” (*Romans 3:4*). See *Genesis 1:1*, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” *John 1:1-3*, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God. 1:3 **All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.**” Buddha did not create the worlds! Mohammed is

not “God ... manifest in the flesh!” (**1 Timothy 3:16**). Let us hear the Word of God! And let us weigh all things in the balance of God’s Truth, not man’s opinion and man’s error – the Scriptures are the very Word of God.

2. What is ‘inspiration’?

Inspiration means – ‘*divinely breathed in*’ (Strong) i.e. as the prophets were speaking, God was literally speaking through them. See **2 Peter 1:20-21**, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Peter declares here that the Holy Ghost gave the Word, and so *the Holy Ghost* must interpret, according to *His* original meaning and purpose.

The Church of Rome says the “Church” must interpret.

Others would say every man (as an individual) has full authority to interpret since the Holy Ghost is given to all believers, and that he doesn’t need to hear what the Church says.

But both these ideas are humanistic extremes. Both men and churches err. They are not infallible. Hence the warning of the apostle Peter (above)! **And if all Scripture is profitable for our instruction, then Scripture must interpret Scripture.** This is how the Holy Ghost interprets Scripture to us (not because we ask in prayer and the first idea that pops into our head *must* be the Holy Ghost) – the Holy Ghost opens the Scriptures to us by use of the Scriptures themselves. So, if Scripture is given by God, it must be interpreted by God, not men.

3. How is inspiration carried out? **2 Peter 1:21**, “... holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” **But there are various ways God worked this out.**

God Himself wrote some of His words on stone – **Exodus 31:18**, “And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.” – Let no man make light of the Ten Commandments, or say they are no longer relevant, for God wrote them directly onto stone! No other writings are in this category.

God spoke to Moses face to face – **Exodus 33:9-11**, “And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood *at* the door of the tabernacle, and *the LORD* talked with Moses. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand *at* the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man *in* his tent door. And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.”

Deuteronomy 34:8-10, “And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moses were ended. And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face”

Moses was the inspired writer of ‘the law’ (Genesis-Deuteronomy) – *John 5:46*, “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me”; *John 1:45*, “Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Moses is the inspired author of the Law! Beware of liberal theologians and commentators who deny this. Let Scripture interpret Scripture – let God interpret His own Word!

God inspired other prophets also – The original ‘autographs’ were written by prophets, or by scribes who worked with the prophets. There is an example in Jeremiah: “And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. (*Jeremiah 36:1-2*)

Numbers 12:6-8, “And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: **If there be a prophet among you, *I* the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses *is* not so, who *is* faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold:** wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam *became* leprous, *white* as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, *she was* leprous.” Therefore men ought to be afraid to speak against the Scriptures – yet the foolishness of unbelieving men is incredible, as we’ve seen recently, even in our local newspaper, where open attacks and blasphemies against the King James Bible have been printed.

2 Samuel 7:4-5, “And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?”

1 Kings 13:1-2, “And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.”

2 Kings 9:35-37, “And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of *her* hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This *is* the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This *is* Jezebel.”

Sometimes the Lord spoke audibly – To the boy Samuel (*1 Samuel 3:7-11*), Just before Jesus' betrayal (*John 12:28-30*), John "heard a great voice as of a trumpet" (*Revelation 1:10*).

4. What is Scripture? – Answer: Written prophecy, or the written Word of God.

Mark 12:10, "And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:" (*Psalms 118:22 – David*)

Luke 4:17-21, "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." (*Isaiah 61:1-2*)

John 17:12, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." (*Psalms 41:9 – David*)

John 19:33-37, "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced." (*Exodus 12:46 – Moses, Psalms 34:20 – David, Zechariah 12:10*)

2 Peter 3:15-16, "And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." – Peter declares Paul's epistles to be 'Scripture'.

You get the clear picture from this that the true Church of God has always, in every age, recognised the Scriptures as the Word of God. Hence the term "Received Text" upon which the KJV New Testament is based – by contrast, the "Critical Text" which has been popularised since Wescott and Hort in 1881, was never generally received by the Church in earlier times as Scripture.

The fulfilment of Scripture sets Christianity apart from all other religions – that it is of God, Who is the Creator of all things, and the Author of all Scripture.

What did the Reformers teach? As Luther and the other Reformers said, *Sola Scriptura!* (Scripture alone!) – It is the sole authority, for it is the Word of God.

What does the Roman Catholic Church teach? By contrast to the Scriptures and the Reformers, it teaches that '*Tradition*' has authority.

The Catholic Dictionary definition of ‘tradition’ is: *‘In the strict theological sense, tradition is the communication by the teaching Church of the revelation made by Christ and the Holy Spirit to the apostles. The definition includes three elements:*

1. Actual communication: This is the act of proposing or preaching. The precise method will vary with time and circumstances – sermons, encyclical letters, radio addresses, and the like.

2. By the teaching Church: The teaching may be proposed directly by the apostles and their successors, who are the authentic and official teachers in the Church. Concretely, the magisterium, as it is called, is the Holy Father and the bishops. The teaching may be proposed indirectly, when the official teaching of the Church is preserved and propagated through the writings of the Fathers and theologians, the liturgy, and the general belief of the faithful.

*3. Revelation: What is communicated is matters of faith and morals which Christ or the Holy Spirit made known to the apostles and which all men must accept in order to be saved. **Christ left no written compendium of His teachings, nor did He commission any disciple to write one.** For at least a decade after His Ascension, oral tradition was the only method of propagating Christ’s doctrine. None of the New Testament books nor all of them taken together purported to express the entire deposit of Christian revelation. **It is evident then that in addition to Holy Scripture Christ intended the infallible teaching of the apostles and their successors as a means of preserving and propagating revealed truth.**’ (NB: By ‘successors’, they basically mean popes.)*

Martin Luther’s testimony before the Diet of Worms in 1521 is a milestone in the advancement of the kingdom of God and a highlight of the Protestant Reformation. When asked if he would recant his books he replied, “Unless I am refuted and convicted by testimonies of the Scriptures or by clear arguments (since I believe neither the Pope nor the councils alone; it being evident that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am conquered by the Holy Scriptures quoted by me, and my conscience is bound in the word of God: I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is unsafe and dangerous to do anything against the conscience.”

We owe a great deal to Luther, Calvin, and other great Reformers – but note that it is God who is at work in providence, using men as His instruments, performing what he has promised in His Word, to preserve it for ever. **The Roman Church claims that the words of its many popes and ‘saints’ have authority equal with Scripture (i.e. equal with what Jesus and His apostles called “Scripture”), not only this, but Rome also has a different definition of Holy Scripture to that of the Protestants (e.g. firstly, it includes the Apocrypha, and secondly, Rome reserves the right to alter the Scriptures continually through textual criticism, so that this “mother of harlots” uses a different text also).** Hence it is evident that Protestants and their forerunners who believed the Word of God as *they* did, and as *we* do today, were able to discern what was Scripture and what was not, so that, although as Rome says, the Lord did not give a written commission to His disciples to set forth a canon of Scripture, He did so by His Spirit, and their work is evident to the Church (i.e. to true believers). In other words, **the Scriptures themselves are their best evidence of**

authenticity – they prove and confirm themselves as the very Word of God, but only to those who honestly and earnestly seek Him and search the Scriptures reverently. To unbelievers, this seems like a circular argument, but the truth is that the Lord reveals Himself to us through His Word, and those to whom He does *not* reveal Himself in this way, remain blind! **NB:** We observed in our introductory session that the modern Bible Societies, namely UBS, are by nature and practice **ecumenical**, hence their translation work favours Roman Catholic and New Age doctrine, this is true even of the New King James Version.

5. What is the Subject or Purpose of the Scriptures? – The Scriptures reveal the Lord Jesus

John 5:39-40, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and **they are they which testify of me**. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”

Acts 3:22-26, “For **Moses** truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise **foretold of these days**. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” **The Word of God given to Moses and all the prophets speaks of nothing more and nothing less than Jesus Christ and His eternal kingdom!**

He is The Word – John 1:1-3, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made”

He has the final Word – Hebrews 1:1-3, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” As God spoke audibly from heaven to Peter, James, and John, on the mount of transfiguration, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; **hear ye him!**” (**Matthew 17:5**). **This exposes the error of all false prophets today!** Since Christ and His apostles, who gave us the full canon of Scripture, God has not appointed a single prophet! He speaks to all through His Son! And so, the only way any man today can rightly say, “Thus saith the Lord,” is if he is quoting God-inspired Scripture!

The heir has received His kingdom (**Luke 19:12**). He is “both Lord and Christ” (**Acts 2:36**). He is “Messiah the Prince” (**Daniel 9:25**). He is the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King, “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS,” and also in **Revelation 19:11-16**, “... *his name is called The Word of God.*” God speaks through Him! Scripture speaks of Him!

Again, as Martin Luther said, *Sola Christus!* (Christ alone!)

6. What is the Authority of Scripture? – Jesus always referred to Scripture as the Supreme and Only Authority, as the Very Word of God to Man.

He quoted it as the very Word of God and taught us to live by it: *Matthew 4:4*, “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (*Deuteronomy 8:2-3*) – verbal and plenary inspiration)

As Jesus referred to Scripture alone as authority, so also did the Old Testament Prophets. The prophets never gave forth their own opinions but in every case they declared the “Word of the Lord”, very often with the familiar introduction, “**Thus saith the Lord.**” (If I have counted correctly, this expression appears 473 times in the AV Old Testament!) They would never have dreamed of quoting some other so-called ‘authority’. They knew very well that there *was* no other authority. In other words, Martin Luther may have coined the phrase, ‘*Sola Scriptura*’, but he did not invent the doctrine. All true prophets and all true believers have held that doctrine since the foundation of the world!

7. Just How Accurate are The Scriptures? – The apostles even referred to individual words of Scripture as having full authority

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” (*Galatians 3:16*) (*Genesis 22:17-18*) (plenary and verbal inspiration). If ever there was a question in Paul’s mind about the absolute, word-for-word accuracy of the preserved copies of the Scriptures, he could not have made such a claim which rests entirely on the plurality of the word “seed”!

Since the Scriptures are the Word of God to us (and indeed the very words of God), preserved for us to all generations, and they speak of Christ alone as their great subject and theme, we (His Church) must be like the apostles and never cease to teach and preach the Lord Jesus Christ, from every word of Scripture.

8. How Great is the Power of Scripture? – It is the Scriptures by which God’s people are regenerated (given new life – eternal life)

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” (*1 Peter 1:23*) (plenary and verbal inspiration and providential preservation)

Ephesians 5:25-26, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”

Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is **the power of God unto salvation** to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

9. If Individual Words of Scripture were Supreme in Authority and Power to Jesus and the Apostles, What Does This Mean for us Today?

God has promised to preserve His Word. And the prophets spoke clearly of the preservation of Scripture, therefore we can rely on every Word of Scripture today:

“As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.” (*Isaiah 59:21*) – (This is providential preservation) Scripture is preserved and unchanging, even as God Himself is unchanging. **Hence the Bible teaches the Immutability of Scripture.** Hence He also forbids men to alter it.

“The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.” (*Psalms 12:6-7*) – (plenary and verbal inspiration & providential preservation)

“For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” (*Matthew 5:18*) – (plenary and verbal inspiration and providential preservation); “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (*Matthew 24:35*) (plenary and verbal inspiration and providential preservation)

“Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever:” (*Isaiah 30:8*) (plenary and verbal inspiration and providential preservation)

“Every word of God is pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” (*Proverbs 30:5-6*) – (plenary and verbal inspiration and providential preservation)

“Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do *them*, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.” (*Deuteronomy 4:1-2*) – (plenary and verbal inspiration and providential preservation). How can you possibly be faithful to keep the commandments of God if they are not accurately preserved for you so that you can clearly understand them?

It is possible to “diminish” from the Word of God by physically removing parts of it, by questioning its validity as Satan did in the garden of Eden, and as modern textual critics have done, by adding footnotes in their Bibles to cast doubt on the text, or it could be diminished also by the sheer neglect of applying its plain truth to every aspect of life (e.g. to replace it by something else, such as the ministries of gifted men, cultural traditions, church traditions, philosophy, business principles, psychology etc., even creeds have taken the place of Scripture in some circles.)

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of

this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.” (*Revelation 22:18-19*) – (plenary and verbal inspiration and providential preservation)

By contrast to this, the Roman Catholic Church, with its doctrine of ‘apostolic succession’, is adding to the Word of God, and likewise any others who declare themselves to be ‘prophets.’ All modern textual critics, who continually change the text of Scripture by their supposed scholarship, are also adding to Scripture and subtracting from it against the express commandments of God!

10. How were the Scriptures preserved?

By God’s purpose (or decree) and by His providential care, He not only predicted and promised to preserve His Word, as we have already seen, but He provided the means and carried out His plan perfectly.

- i. **The Old Testament Scriptures were preserved among the Covenant people of that age, the Hebrews.** – *Romans 3:1-2*, “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.”

Modern Bible versions rely heavily on the **Septuagint**, supposedly a Greek translation of the OT, dating back to about BC250, so-called because it was supposed to be the work of six translators out of each of the twelve tribes of Israel i.e. 72, so it is called ‘the 70’ or **LXX** (?). Those of this school of thought claim that a work known as Origen’s Hexapla, in the early 3rd Century (a six column Bible of different versions), contains a copy of the LXX, and that Jesus quoted the LXX. Others claim that because Origen’s work and the LXX contain apocryphal books, they could not be the work of the Jews as the LXX is claimed to be. The Puritan, John Owen (1616-1683), says of the LXX, “.. *nothing almost is manifest concerning it but that it is woefully corrupt. Its rise is uncertain.*” Owen lists various claims about the LXX and adds, “... *all of them incredible.*” He goes on to say, “*Some of the Jews say that they made the translation out of a corrupt Chaldee paraphrase; and to me this seems not unlikely.*” **According to Keith Piper**, the Septuagint contains the Law, Psalms, the Prophets, and the Apocrypha (in that order). Piper also says, “***Jesus did not endorse the Septuagint, nor the Dead Sea Scrolls, nor the Latin Vulgate, nor any ancient Hebrew version, only the Masoretic Text.***” “*Jesus authorized the Hebrew Masoretic Text in Matthew 5:17,18, Luke 24:27,44 by the phrase, ‘the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms’. This is the order of books in the Masoretic Text.*” (Keith Piper – “*Serious Omissions in the NIV Bible*”). The Masoretic Text was produced in the early 11th Century AD. I can only conclude that whether Jesus did quote the LXX or not, it seems clear He did not fully endorse it. And based on the comments of John Owen and Keith Piper, I think there is sufficient reason to even doubt whether Jesus ever quoted it. Remember it was Jesus Who talked about the preservation of “every jot and every tittle of the Law”. Why would He then contradict Himself by quoting from what is proven to be a corrupt manuscript, and which is in all probability, a more recent fabrication along the lines of the critical text?

ii. The New Testament Scriptures were preserved among the Covenant people of that age, the Christian Church.

*“Various Church Fathers held differing positions as to which books of the New Testament should be added to the Old Testament to make up the Christian Scriptures, but in the end they recognized the twenty-seven books which, added to the Old Testament, make up what we know today as the Bible. During the first 500 years of the Christian era several men produced translations of these scriptures into various language: Coptic, Gothic, Syriac, Armenian, Itala etc. One of the most important of these, the Vulgate, was the Latin translation produced by Jerome in the 4th Century. For several centuries this Latin translation became the basis for translations into other languages. it was not until the thirteenth century that a language resembling English came into being, and it was not until the fourteenth century that a truly English translation of the Scriptures was produced. Wycliffe, knowing no Hebrew or Greek, translated from the Latin Vulgate. At the time of the Renaissance and the Reformation, men began to study Greek and worked to produce a single Greek New Testament text from the various manuscripts available to them. The Greek **New Testament text of Erasmus**, in time referred to as the **Received Text**, and the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament, came to be used by many scholars of the time.”* (“The English Bible, its Origin, Preservation and Blessing” by GW & DE Anderson – A101)

This statement is not a blanket endorsement of all so-called “Church Fathers”. Some of the ‘fathers’ were heretics, or at least held some strange points of doctrine. From the apostles right through Church history, faithful men had always recognized the Scriptures. The genuine books were never seriously in doubt but, as spurious writings entered in, they had to be assessed and set aside by the Church.

Just as faithful scholars of the past were valuable instruments of the Lord to preserve the integrity of His Word, so today, **every Church member who fears God and takes His commandments seriously, has a responsibility to continue that preservation through the faithful use of the Scriptures.** For some it may be nothing more than reading the AV themselves and being faithful members of a Church which uses the AV and upholds the sound doctrine which the AV maintains. Nor is this a small thing; it is a powerful contribution to the preservation of the Scriptures in each generation.

See “The Translators to the Reader – The Preface to the Authorised Version of 1611” – P 3.

See the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 1.

iii. The history of the Authorized (King James) Version shows proof of this providential preservation of the true texts of Scripture, while other English versions are based on a corrupt text built from a corrupted stream of manuscripts. Firstly, “John Wycliffe (1329-1384) translated the entire Latin Bible into English, but the most accurate translation works leading up to the KJV really began with Tyndale.

11. Notes on the doctrine of Scripture – Inspiration & Preservation – Trevor W Sullivan

- William Tyndale (1494-1536) – first printed English Bible in 1525 ...
- In 1535, Miles Coverdale translated an English version from Latin Vulgate and Latin and German versions, also relying heavily on Tyndale’s version
- In 1537, John Rogers, a close friend of Tyndale, produced the ‘Matthew Bible’ named after Thomas Matthew, a pseudonym for Rogers himself. This Bible contained Tyndale’s OT & NT, and Coverdale’s OT not covered by Tyndale
- In 1539, Coverdale revised the Matthew Bible which, because of its size, became known as the ‘Great Bible’
- The Geneva Bible was published in 1560 by English Protestants in exile in Geneva, fleeing from Roman Catholic Bloody Mary’s persecutions
- The Bishops Bible was published in 1568
- “In 1603, when King James I came to the English throne, there existed in the Church of England a large party of Reformers called ‘Puritans’ whose aim was to purify the English Church by removing from it all remnants of Roman Catholicism. They called for a new version of the English Scriptures, and it was the Puritan leader, John Reynolds, who first suggested this to King James at a church conference called by the King at Hampton Court in 1604, **It was printed in 1611 in loose leaf form so that people could buy it with or without the Apocrypha which was only regarded as a commentary on the period between the OT and NT, not as part of Scripture**

..... **None of the translators were Jews or Catholics.**” (Ref: “Serious Omissions in the NIV Bible” by Keith Piper)

There have been two streams of NT manuscripts used by scholars in Bible translation – the Byzantine (Eastern Roman Empire – Greek Church – Textus Receptus – TBS) and the Alexandrian (Egyptian – Critical Text – Wescott and Hort – UBS – Modern Versions).

“To accept the 19th Century theory which underlies almost all modern versions, we would have to believe that the text which has been preserved by faithful Christians (not Pagan/Christian scholars) has all been a mistake, and God has failed to keep His promise to preserve His Word! God has not failed! Erasmus (1516) recognized the True Text and rejected the readings of Codex Vaticanus (B), Beza (1598) recognized it and rejected the readings of Codex Bezae (D). The 47 learned men who translated the Authorized Version (1611) followed the Reformers, (Luther, Tyndale etc.) and recognized the True Text, divinely preserved in the majority of manuscripts, and known as the Received Text, Byzantine Text, or Majority text.” (Modern Versions and 19th Century Critics by JR Ecob)

We can safely conclude that the Critical Text underlying modern Bible versions is based on the 19th century revival of previously discarded manuscripts, manuscripts rejected by the Church and those responsible for the major translation works right up till the late 19th century. And the committees responsible for the Critical Text and the modern translations, from the time of

Wescott and Hort till now, have had the input of Liberals, Roman Catholics, and Jews – men of distinctly unsound doctrine.

By contrast to the Reformers, “*Five (5) prominent scholars of the 19th Century put forward a new theory to determine which Greek Text was the True Text. These men were Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tragelless, Wescott and Hort.*” (*Modern Versions and 19th Century Critics by JR Ecob*)

“*In fact, Wescott and Hort, who dominated the Revised Version Committee of 1881, accepted what they called a ‘neutral text’. Only Codex Aleph and Codex B, in their opinion, preserve this text in its purest form. Of these two, when they differ, B (Vaticanus) is preferred to Aleph*” (*Modern Versions and Ancient Manuscripts by JR Ecob – See also Page 8.*)

NB: The Revised Version Committee, which included Wescott and Hort, was commissioned to revise the English translation, not the Greek Text!

Keith Piper notes, “Aleph (Sinaiticus) and B (Vaticanus) have apocryphal books included throughout the inspired text.”

It is clear from these facts that the present day Church is in the grip of terrible apostasy, so that many are unaware that they do not have the preserved Scriptures to read, and are being taught out of corrupted Bible versions. Think about the awful effect on Bible students who use any of the multitude of corrupt modern versions, which are changing continually, which disagree substantially with each other – **the consistent message implied to them on every page of such fluid ‘Bibles’ is not “Thus saith the Lord”, but “Yea hath God said ...?”**

How important, and relevant to our times, then is Paul’s charge to Timothy: 2 Timothy 4:1-5, “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

And so, in conclusion, we can summarise: The Scriptures are **fully inspired by God**, the Scriptures are **fully preserved by God**, according to Scripture, according to God’s promises.

You either believe the Scriptures or you don’t. Only the sovereign grace of God can enable you to do so. But why would any man claim to be a believer in Jesus Christ if he does not believe the Scriptures which testify of Him?

May God have mercy on this generation and revive again the Scriptural “Doctrine of Scripture”, (the doctrine of Scripture held by the Reformers who first gave us the Bible in print almost 500 years ago), so that the Church might give Him the glory due to His name, and be delivered from the many serious errors which are fostered by modern Bible versions. May He give us grace to be faithful in an increasingly unfaithful age. Amen.