MONDAY The Process of Inspiration

Three outstanding lessons about the Word of God

1. **Inspiration Begins With God**
2. **God Used Different Methods and Different Messengers**
3. **Inspired Scripture Was Given to Transform Our Lives**

- Many books have survived thru / centuries = Bible stands alone
- It's God's message communicated to humanity thru individuals
    - chosen / guided by Holy Spirit
- Bible is unlike any other book = because it
    - reveals character of God / explains problem of sin
    - points us to Jesus Christ / shows us way of salvation
- We may not understand every detail of how inspiration worked, but
    - Scripture gives us enough information to trust
    - that God faithfully communicated His truth
- Consider 3 outstanding lessons = concerning process of inspiration

Lesson One: Inspiration Begins With God

- **2 Timothy 3:16** "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God"
- Literally = carries idea / **God-breathed =** Scripture originated w/God
- Bible = not simply product of human philosophy / imagination / religious opinion = its message came from / Divine mind

James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights."

- Bible is one of God's = greatest gifts to humanity
- Thru its pages = God reveals who He is / what He has done
    - what He is doing = what He will do in future

2 Peter 1:20, 21 "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."

- Biblical writers = "moved by the Holy Spirit."

- Similar to = ship being carried along by / wind
- Writers participated in process = but Holy Spirit directed message
- Means = authority of Scripture does not depend on education /
    - social position / occupation / personality of its human writers
- Authority comes from God = same Holy Spirit worked thru all
- Bible's ultimate source was not / writer = it was God
- Approach Scripture = with humility / prayer
    - Not merely reading ancient literature
    - Listening for voice of our heavenly Father
- Pray = "Lord, You inspired this Word. Please send Your Holy Spirit to help me understand what You want to teach me today."

Lesson Two: God Used Different Methods / Different Messengers

- God did not communicate w/every biblical writer /exactly same way

Numbers 12:6 "If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream."

- Some messages came thru dreams /visions.
- Isaiah saw Lord "sitting on a throne, high and lifted up"
- At other times, God used eyewitness testimony. John wrote:

1 John 1:3 "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you"

- John personally saw Jesus / heard His teaching / witnessed His miracles / stood near the cross / saw risen Lord
- Holy Spirit guided John = as he recorded / what he had witnessed
- God also used careful historical research
- **Luke 1:1-4** Luke explained he had investigated events surrounding Christ's life = arranged them in an orderly account so that his readers could "know the certainty" of what they had been taught
- Holy Spirit = guided research / protected message Luke recorded
- Sometimes God's message was spoken / sometimes it was written
- At other times, it was acted out dramatically
- **Ezekiel 4:1-8** Ezekiel was instructed to use visible objects and symbolic actions to communicate God's warnings to the people

- Divine inspiration did not turn people into lifeless machines
- Holy Spirit did not erase = personalities of biblical writers
- God used their vocabulary / experience / culture / education / and individual personalities
- Yet He guided them so that His message was reliably communicated
- Same God still uses different personalities in His service today
- Do not all speak alike / teach alike / pray alike / or minister alike
- Yet when we surrender ourselves to Holy Spirit
    - God can communicate His love / truth thru each one of us

Lesson Three: Inspired Scripture Was Given to Transform Our Lives

- Bible = given to lead us to salvation / transform our character
- **John 5:39** Jesus said = Scriptures "testify of Me"
- Central purpose of Scripture = to lead us to Christ
- From Genesis to Revelation = Bible unfolds God's plan to rescue humanity from sin thru righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ

2 Timothy 3:15 Paul reminded Timothy that from childhood he had known "the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"

2 Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"

- **Doctrine** teaches us what is true
- **Reproof** reveals where we have gone wrong.
- **Correction** shows us how to return to the right path.
- **Instruction in righteousness** teaches us how to continue walking faithfully w/ God
- **Vs. 17** purpose is "that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work"
- God's Word does more than inform the mind—it transforms the life

John 20:31 John explained why he wrote his Gospel:
"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name"

- Bible calls for /response = calls us to believe / repent / surrender
    - Obey / and live

James 1:22 "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves"

- We may know / stories = memorize / doctrines = explain the prophecies = but if Scripture does not change way we speak / think / forgive / worship / treat others = we have missed its purpose
- Strongest evidence / we trust inspiration of Scripture is
    - not merely / that we defend Bible
    - It is that we allow God's Word to direct our lives

- We trust Bible because its source is God
    - its message was guided by Holy Spirit = its central subject is Jesus Christ = its truth continues to change lives
- Bible exposes sin = offers forgiveness = gives hope to /discouraged, strength to / tempted, comfort to / grieving, and direction to those who have lost their way
- God has not left us to wander in darkness
    - He has given us His inspired Word
- Let us receive it gratefully / study it prayerfully / believe it wholeheartedly / obey it faithfully