

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

Beloved Pastor,

I appreciate the misunderstanding surrounding the *Biblical* and *historical* doctrine of inerrancy. What makes the issue challenging is we've not been taught the whole of Biblical Inerrancy, which rests upon two doctrines: *Divine Inspiration* and *Divine Preservation*. Many know the first half of the doctrine; *Divine Inspiration* and might even be able to quote the proof texts of [2 Timothy 3:16](#) or [2 Peter 1:20-21](#).¹

The challenge is few have ever heard the last half, *Divine Preservation*. I believe, in part it's because the statement of the Baptist Faith and Message on inerrancy of the *copy* of the Word of God was not as clear when it was revised in 1925². The inerrancy of the *original* and *copy* of Holy Scripture is contained in both, however articulated in plainer language in our first Confession, the [Philadelphia Confession of 1742](#) than in its replacement, the [New Hampshire Confession of 1833](#) as noted below:

- [Philadelphia Confession 1742](#), Chapter 1, Section 8 on Holy Scripture (emphasis & brackets mine):

*“The Old Testament in Hebrew, (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek, which (at the time of the writing of it) was most generally known to the nations, **being immediately inspired by God [the Doctrine of Divine Inspiration of the original], and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic** [the Doctrine of Divine Preservation of the copy] ; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them.”*

- [New Hampshire Confession of 1833](#), Paragraph one On Holy Scripture (emphasis & brackets mine):

*“We believe that the Holy Bible was **written by men divinely inspired** [the Doctrine of Divine Inspiration of the original], and is a **perfect treasure of heavenly instruction**; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and **truth without any mixture of error for its matter**; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and **shall remain to the end of the world** [the Doctrine of Divine Preservation of the copy], the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.”*

¹ [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;”; [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.**”

² The statement of the Baptist Faith and Message was significantly abbreviated when it was revised in 1925. The Confession at the inception of the SBC in 1845 was the [Philadelphia Confession of 1742](#). This was replaced by another statement of the Baptist Faith and Message at the Southern Baptist Convention held in Memphis, Tennessee in May 1925, which followed the [New Hampshire Confession of 1833](#). The reason for the change is stated in the [minutes of the 1925 Southern Baptist Convention](#) as follows:

“Your committee recognizes that they were appointed ‘to consider the advisability of issuing another statement of the Baptist Faith and Message, and to report at the next Convention.’ In pursuance of the instructions of the Convention, and in consideration of the general denominational situation, your committee has decided to recommend the [New Hampshire Confession of 1833](#), revised at certain points, and with some additional articles growing out of present needs, for approval by the Convention, in the event a statement of the Baptist faith and message is deemed necessary at this time. The present occasion for a reaffirmation of Christian fundamentals is the prevalence of naturalism in the modern teaching and preaching of religion. Christianity is supernatural in its origin and history. We repudiate every theory of religion which denies the supernatural elements of our faith.”

Summarizing, the [New Hampshire Confession of 1833](#) and the [Philadelphia Confession of 1742](#) are both derived from the [Second London Confession of 1689](#). The [Second London Confession of 1689](#) and [Philadelphia Confession of 1742](#) follow an apologetic form intended to plainly explain the beliefs and practices of the adherents, so the reader can understand their declarations and doctrines. However, the [New Hampshire Confession of 1833](#), considered a “*kinder and gentler version*” of the [Second London Confession of 1689](#), is significantly abbreviated in articulating its doctrines. The dramatic change between the Confession at the inception of the SBC in 1845 and the one adopted in 1925 is illustrated by the difference in the size of their content. In stating its beliefs on Holy Scripture, the [Philadelphia Confession of 1742](#) contains 1067 words, whereas the [New Hampshire Confession of 1833](#) contains 191; less than 20% of its predecessor.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

At the inception of the SBC in 1845, the doctrine of the Divine *Inspiration* of the *original*, given 100% pure; inerrant and the doctrine of the Divine (Providential) *Preservation* of the *copy*, kept 100% pure; inerrant were clearly articulated in our ‘adopted’ [Philadelphia Confession 1742](#), as it had been since the Reformation as seen in the following phrase it contains (emphasis and brackets mine):

- *“Being immediately inspired by God [the Doctrine of Divine Inspiration of the original], and, by His singular care and providence, kept **pure** in all **ages**, are therefore **authentical** [a genuine original; i.e. the Doctrine of Divine Preservation of the copy]”³*

Observe the choice of words of our Confession in describing the *copy* of the Word of God as being *authentical*- what a statement! [Webster’s 1828 dictionary](#)⁴ defines *authentical* as *“having a genuine original”*. The authors of this Confession ascribe the same authority to their *copy* of scripture as to the *original*; both were 100% pure, ‘*authentical*’- genuine originals.

This *high* view of scripture, which holds to Divine *Inspiration* and Divine *Preservation*, has been the *Biblical* and *historical* doctrine of inerrancy for over three centuries. It is affirmed by two pillars of the Post-reformation, one a Lutheran and the other a Presbyterian. [Johannes Andrew Quenstedt](#) (1617-1688)⁵ is considered one of the three leaders and theologians of the post-Reformation Lutheran church. He was a professor at Wittenberg and his greatest work, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica Sive Systema Theologicum* (1685), is considered one of the most important works of Lutheran theology. It gives the Reformer’s view of the purity of scripture; that their *copy* was *identical* to the *original* when he states (emphasis & brackets mine):

- *“We believe, as is our duty, that the providential care of **God has always watched over the original and primitive texts [copy]** of the canonical Scriptures in such a way that we can be certain that the **sacred codices which we now have in our hands [copy]** are those which existed at the time of Jerome and Augustine, nay **at the time of Christ Himself and His Apostles [i.e. meaning their ‘copy’ is identical to the ‘originals’]**.”⁶*

This was the position of the Presbyterians as well as stated by [Francis Turretin](#)⁷ (1623-1687), among the most influential pastors and theologians of the Church and Academy of Geneva, and one of the authors of the *Helvetic Consensus Formula Confession of Faith*. They did not limit inerrancy to the non-existent *original* text of scripture as we, but extended it to the *copy* (apograph) when he says (emphasis & brackets mine):

- *“By **original** texts, we do not mean the **autographs** [originals] written by the hand of Moses, of the prophets and the apostles, which certainly do not now exist. We mean their **apographs**⁸ [perfect copy; genuine original; ‘authentical’] which are so called because **they set forth to us the word of God in the very words of those who wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit.**”⁹*

³ [1742 The Philadelphia Confession](#); For more, see the paper by [Standard Bearers](#); *Divine Preservation? How We Lost the Doctrine of the Divine Preservation of the Word of God*, by [Standard Bearers](#).

⁴ [Webster’s 1828 dictionary](#)

⁵ Following [Martin Luther](#) (1483-1546): [Martin Chemnitz](#) (1522-1586), [John Gerhard](#) (1582-1637), [Johannes Quenstedt](#) (1617-1688) [John Gerhard](#) is considered the most influential Lutheran theologian from the great “golden age” of Lutheran orthodoxy. [Martin Chemnitz](#) is regarded as the “Second Martin”: *Si Martinus non fuisset, Martinus vix stetisset*; (“If Martin [Chemnitz] had not come along, Martin [Luther] would hardly have survived”).

⁶ Cited in Robert Preus, *The Inspiration of Scripture: A Study in the Theology of the Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Dogmaticians*, London: Oliver & Boyd, 1955, 139)

⁷ Gerstner, called Turretin, “the most precise theologian in the Calvinistic tradition.” *Turretin on Justification*’ an audio series by John Gerstner (1914-1996) a Professor of Church History at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Knox Theological Seminary.

⁸ Apograph means “a perfect copy, an exact transcript”. This is the same witness of the authors of the Westminster Confession when they described their *copy* of the Word of God as ‘authentical’, which [Webster’s 1828 dictionary](#) defines as “having a genuine original”.

⁹ Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992 reprint), 1:106, See also Robert Barnett, “Francis Turretin on the Holy Scriptures,” a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Dean Burgon Society held at Calvary

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

What then is the saint’s witness as to the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy? The *copy (apograph)* made from the *original (autograph)*, is the **100%** pure, inerrant Word of God, as they memorialized in their *Westminster Confession*¹⁰, the ‘mother’ of all confessions when it states (emphasis and brackets mine):

*“By His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore **authentic**^a [a genuine original] ^aMatt 5:18”*

We’ve seen at the inception of the SBC in 1845 the doctrine of Divine *Preservation* was part of our Confession, but then abbreviated and obscured in 1925. Now we stand almost a century removed from our *Baptist Faith & Message of 1925*, and two generations have not heard the doctrine of Divine *Preservation*. **When is the last time you heard this doctrine preached or taught it yourself?** Where do you think we would be today if this had happened to any doctrines of the faith we take for granted; for instance the ‘*Security of the Believer*’? Like the doctrine of Divine *Preservation*, there would be similar uncertainty, because scripture instructs us how God imparts faith; *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”*.¹¹

This fact is dramatically illustrated when the doctrine of ‘*justification by grace alone*’ was ‘lost’ for 1000 years (400-1517).¹² It’s hard to conceive that such a fundamental doctrine was questioned. However, *Martin Luther* challenged the error held by ‘orthodox’ Christianity at the risk of his life. Observe the conviction and clarity of Luther’s appeal to scripture in his sole stand against both the Monarch and Pope, wonderfully presented in the five minute video presentation; *Here I Stand, I Can Do No Other*.

This turned Christendom upon its head, but where would we be today if *Martin Luther* had not dare question *justification by works*, an erroneous doctrine so apparent to us now. *Thomas Carlyle* captures the significance of this event when he writes, *“the germ of it all lay there”*:

The Diet of Worms, Luther's appearance there on the 17th of April, 1521, may be considered as the greatest scene in Modern European History; the point, indeed, from which the whole subsequent history of civilization takes its rise. After multiplied negotiations, disputations, it had come to this. The young Emperor Charles Fifth, with all the Princes of Germany, Papal nuncios, dignitaries spiritual and temporal, are assembled there: Luther is to appear and answer for himself, whether he will recant or not.

The world's pomp and power sits there on this hand: on that, stands up for God's Truth, one man, the poor miner Hans Luther's Son. Friends had reminded him of Huss¹³, advised him not to go; he

Baptist Church, Ontario, Canada, in 1995. (English translation from Institutes of Elenctic Theology by Francis Turretin, trans. George Musgrave Giger, ed. James T. Dennison, vol 1, Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1992, pp. 71-72)

¹⁰ Spurgeon, *Westminster Confession* Chapter 1, Section 8: *“The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore **authentic**; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.”*

¹¹ *Romans 10:17*

¹² For more see the paper by *Standard Bearers; The Lost Doctrine: Can A Doctrine Die Which Is a Fundamental Truth of the Faith ~ The 1000 Year Death and Rebirth of the Doctrine of Justification by Grace Alone*.

¹³ *John Huss* was judged an heretic because he believed in the authority of the Bible above the pope and Canon Law. He believed that salvation from sin was by grace through Faith in Christ Jesus alone. In the library at Prague there is displayed a triad of medallions dated 1572. The first contains the figure of *John Wycliffe* striking sparks from a stone, the second *John Huss* kindling a fire from the sparks, the third *Martin Luther* holding high a flaming torch. The medallions tell in symbolic form the story of the Reformation as it began, continued, and crystallized under the touch of an Englishman, a Bohemian, and a German. In November 1414, the *Council of Constance* assembled, and Huss was urged by Holy Roman Emperor *Sigismund* to come and give an account of his doctrine. Because he was promised safe conduct, and because of the importance of the council (which promised significant church reforms), Huss went. When he arrived, however, he was immediately arrested, and he remained imprisoned for months. Instead of a hearing, Huss was eventually hauled before authorities in chains and asked merely to recant his views. The council had stated that it had done nothing

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

would not be advised. A large company of friends rode out to meet him, with still more earnest warnings; he answered, “Were there as many Devils in Worms as there are roof-tiles, I would on.”

The people, on the morrow, as he went to the Hall of the Diet, crowded the windows and house-tops, some of them calling out to him, in solemn words, not to recant: “Whosoever denieth me before men!” they cried to him,—as in a kind of solemn petition and adjuration. Was it not in reality our petition too, the petition of the whole world, lying in dark bondage of soul, paralyzed under a black spectral Nightmare and triple-hatted Chimera, calling itself Father in God, and what not: “Free us; it rests with thee; desert us not!”¹⁴

Like Luther, we must hold to sound doctrine, which may necessitate confronting the error of our day¹⁵. For us, it’s the unbiblical doctrine of inerrancy which holds the *copy* of the Word of God has errors; which ignores the doctrine of Divine *Preservation*. We must address this in like matter as we do the error on the topic of Creation versus Evolution; by appealing to the Word of God.

For instance, if a layman was to say he believed creation occurred through millions of years of evolution; would you hesitate in your reply as his Pastor? No, we would confidently take him to [Genesis 1](#). Likewise, if he said the scripture is the word of *man* and not *God*, therefore not inerrant, we would immediately take him to [2Timothy 3:16](#) and [2Peter 1:20](#). In each instance our appeal was to the Word of God. Why then, when we are told the *copy* of scripture is not as pure as the *original* do we balk; in light of the Biblical doctrine of Divine *Preservation* and its historical witness, including our Baptist heritage?¹⁶

The answer is we have never been taught the whole of the Biblical doctrine of Inerrancy. The doctrine that teaches us that God promised to keep His Word 100% pure by Divine *Preservation* as received by Divine *Inspiration*. In the absence of having been taught this truth, we’re understandably confused and even intimidated by what ‘orthodox’ Christianity teaches today; which is **man’s restoration** of an almost pure Word of God. We readily admit we do not know the field of naturalistic textual criticism¹⁷ and probably never will and are not qualified to speak, therefore must accept the word of the scholar.

The good news is we do not need to know textual criticism in order to embrace Biblical Inerrancy. All one must do is believe the Word of God, just like we do on the truth of Creation and the doctrine of Divine Inspiration. Let me illuminate what I mean by drawing on the above example of Creation versus Evolution. Observe, your response when challenged by evolution on your view of creation was not, **“I will give you my answer once I master *Radiometric dating, Paleontology and Geophysics*”**. Why, because you believe what the Word of God says in [Genesis 1:1](#), *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”*

Moreover, this belief is founded solely upon faith; *“Through faith [not rationalism; i.e. science, falsely so called]¹⁸ we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were*

more pleasing to God than to punish the Bohemian heretic. The council never dreamed that the fire it lighted under Huss in Constance that day would burst into a mighty conflagration that was to sweep inexorably over the whole world with the true Gospel of Christ. Sources: [John Huss Jan Hus](#), compiled & Edited David L. Brown, Ph.D.http, (www.logosresourcepages.org/History/huss_b.htm). [John Huss, Pre-Reformation Reformer](#), Christianity Today, (www.christianitytoday.com/ch/131christians/martyrs/huss.html?start=2).

¹⁴ [Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes Hero Worship and The Heroic in History Thomas Carlyle](#), Chapter IV, Hero as Priest.-Lutheran, Knox, Reformation and Puritanism.

¹⁵ [Titus 1:9](#), *“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers [scorners of the truth].”*

¹⁶ For more see the paper by [Standard Bearers; God’s Standard Bearers: The Josiah Initiative ~ Witnesses to the 100% Pure COPY of the Word of God](#).

¹⁷ For more see the paper by [Standard Bearers; Textual Criticism 101: Theological, Faith-Based versus Naturalistic, Rationalistic ~ Believing or Neutral as to Divine Inspiration, Divine Preservation, Divine Identification?](#)

¹⁸ [1Timothy 6:20-21](#), *“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.”*

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

*not made of things which do appear.”*¹⁹ All the fundamental doctrines are received by faith; 1) Salvation of the Believer; 2) Heaven as our eternal home and 3) the Inerrancy of Holy Scripture. None can be proven by our mind, therefore why do we try to do so with the Biblical and historical doctrine of the inerrancy of Holy Scripture; *“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth..., Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”*²⁰

God admonished Habakkuk that, *“the just shall live by his faith”*,²¹ not by his rationalism; his own wisdom which is what caused the prophet to stumble at God’s Word. To *“walk by faith and not by sight”* means to believe what the Word of God says over our own understanding, not being snared from doing so by the *“praise of man”*²². The doctrine of Divine Preservation is clearly taught in the Word of God, as is the doctrine of Divine Inspiration, they’re opposite sides of the coin which establishes the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy.

So why, when asked about the **100%** purity of the *copy* of the Word of God, do we default to rationalism and balk in saying, ***“I have not yet mastered Textual criticism, Greek and Hebrew”***. The answer is; we do not know the promise in the Word of God it when it comes to the doctrine of the Divine **Preservation** of scripture, which instructs us; *“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.”*²³

Others may argue if the doctrine of Divine *Preservation* is true, it’s impossible for it to have gone ignored for so long. I would reply, not so and simply point to the Reformation and the rediscovered of the ‘lost’ doctrine of salvation by *grace alone*. The basis of our doctrine must be the Word of God and not the tradition of man, as happened with the doctrine of salvation, and today regarding the doctrine of Divine *Preservation*. The desire of **Standard Bearers** is to call Pastors to once again teach the doctrine of Divine *Preservation* as they do Divine *Inspiration*, they are the two pillars upon which the Biblical and historical doctrine of Inerrancy rest.

Let’s us not be daunted by claims of textual criticism which is unable to attain its goal of finding the ‘original text’ of scripture, as the fathers of this approach have long ago admitted; it’s an *‘impossible possibility’*, they have come to a *‘dead-end’* with no way to recover a *“better and better Bible”*. Let’s take a moment to listen to their prospects of discovering the original text and see if our confidence is warranted.

- **Grant, Robert M.**

*“The primary goal of New Testament textual study remains the recovery of what the New Testament writers wrote. We have already suggested that to achieve this goal is **well nigh impossible**. Therefore we must be content with what Reinhold Niebuhr and others have called, in other contexts, an **“impossible possibility”**”*²⁴

*“it is generally recognized that the original text of the Bible **cannot be recovered**.”*²⁵

¹⁹ Hebrews 11:3; John 1:3 *“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”*

²⁰ Galatians 3:1-3, *“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”*

²¹ Habakkuk 2:4, *“Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.”* See 2Corinthians 5:7, *“(For we walk by faith and not by sight:).*

²² Proverbs 29:25, *“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.”*

²³ Psalms 12:6-7; Seven is the Biblical number for perfection.

²⁴ Grant, *A Historical Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 51, [Professor of New Testament at the University of Chicago](#).

²⁵ Grant, "The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXVI (1947), 173.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

- **Parvis, Merrill M.**

*“Each one of these critical texts differ quite markedly from all of the others. This fact certainly suggests that it is very difficult, **if not impossible** to recover the original text of the New Testament.”²⁶*

- **Clark, Kenneth W.**

*“Great progress has been achieved in recovering an early form of text, but it may **be doubted that there is evidence of one original text to be recovered.**”²⁷*

*“. . . the papyrus vividly portrays a fluid state of the text at about A.D. 200. Such a scribal freedom suggests that the gospel text was little more stable than the oral tradition, and that **we may be pursuing the retreating mirage of the "original text."**”²⁸*

*The textual history that the Westcott-Hort text represents is **no longer** tenable in the light of newer discoveries and fuller textual analysis. In the effort to **construct a congruent history**, our failure suggests that **we have lost the way, that we have reached a dead end**, and that only a new and different insight will enable us to break through.”²⁹*

- **Lake, Kirsopp** (1872-1946)

*“In spite of the claims of Westcott and Hort and of von Soden, we do not know the original form of the Gospels, and it is quite likely that **we never shall.**”³⁰*

Upon reading the above, why would any *man of faith*, consider rowing one more mile down the river of naturalistic textual criticism and its impeding falls? [Westcott and Hort](#) have led us 130 years to nowhere. Convincing us to give up our **100%** pure Bible, in exchange for the mirage of a *‘better and better Bible’* as envisioned by [B.B. Warfield](#) (1851-1921), the President and ‘Lion’ of [Princeton Seminary](#) (1887-1921); once considered the citadel of Protestant orthodoxy. Warfield was considered its last great theologian, however he dropped the baton on Biblical Inerrancy as *‘hand down unto us’* by the saints when he writes: (emphasis mine):

*“The inerrant autographs were a fact once; they may possibly be a fact again, when textual criticism has said its last word on the Bible text. In proportion as they are approaching in the processes of textual criticism, **do we have an ever better and better Bible than the one we have now.**”³¹*

Warfield’s rationalist approach to the identity of the text of the copy of the Word of God remains the conservative position on Inerrancy to the present, as reflected in the [Chicago Statement](#) which [rejects](#) the theological view of Biblical Inerrancy articulated by the saints and memorialized in their [Westminster Confession](#).

²⁶ Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 397.

²⁷ Clark, "The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 85:1, (March, 1966), p.16.; Reverend Professor Kenneth Willis Clark was a Duke Divinity School faculty member for 36 years.

²⁸ Clark, "The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXV (1966), p.15.

²⁹ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 161.

³⁰ Kirsopp, *Family 13, (The Ferrar Group)*, (Philadelphia PA: Uni. of PA. Press, 1941), p. vii., Professor of early Christian literature at Harvard University from 1915 to his retirement in 1938.

³¹ Warfield, B.B., *ET*, p. 53.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

The Biblical and historical view of Holy Scripture holds to the Divine *Inspiration* of the *original* and the Divine *Preservation* of the *copy*; viewing both as **100%** pure; inerrant, ‘*authentic*’; genuine originals! The fathers of rationalistic textual criticism acknowledge the logic of this faith-based approach for those who hold to Divine Inspiration:

- **Ernest Cadman Colwell (1901-1974)**

Colwell was considered the foremost naturalistic textual critic and “dean” of New Testament textual criticism in North America. He says the theological view is the only logical choice for those who believe in the divine inspiration of scripture (emphasis & brackets mine):

“It is often assumed by the ignorant and uniformed – even on a university camp – the textual criticism of the New Testament is supported by a superstitious faith in the Bible as a book dictated in miraculous fashion by God [i.e. Divine Inspiration].

*That is not true. Textual criticism has never existed for those whose New Testament is one of **miracle, mystery and authority** [i.e. Divine Inspiration and Divine Preservation]. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been **handed down under them** and would have **no** need for textual criticism.”* ³²

- **Alexander Souter (1910 & 1947)**

Souter’s critical New Testament Greek text was the second most widely used until the 1966 edition of Aland, Black, Metzger & Wikren. He echoes Coldwell, that those who hold a theological, faith-based view, as did the saint of the Reformation, do not need textual criticism:

*“If we possessed the twenty-seven documents now comprising our New Testament exactly in the form in which they were dictated or written by their original authors, there would be **no** textual criticism of the New Testament.”* ³³

The Reformers could not have stated it better! The foregoing is exactly the saint’s position on the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy. **Johannes Andrew Quenstedt**, **Francis Turretin** and the **Westminster Confession**, all give witness that their *copy* of the Word of God as ‘**handed down under them**’ was as authentic as the *original*; **100%** pure, and had ‘**no need for textual criticism**’. It was their belief they possessed the *original* text in their *copy* as acknowledged by one of the most noted textual critics of our generation.

- **Kurt Aland (1915-1994)** ³⁴

The late Professor Kurt was among the most renowned Biblical textual critics of the 20th century and acknowledges the saints believed they possessed an authentic *copy* of the Word of God, **100%** pure as the *original* text, when he states (emphasis mine):

*“**It is undisputed** that from the 16th to the 18th century orthodoxy’s doctrine of verbal inspiration assumed ... [the] *Textus Receptus*. It was the only Greek text they knew, and they regarded it as the ‘**original text**’.”* ³⁵

³² Colwell, *What is the best New Testament?* op. cit., p.8.

³³ Souter, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament* (1913; 2d ed., London: Duckworth, 1954), p. 3. His critical Greek texts (1910 & 1947) was the second most widely used until the 1966 edition of Aland, Black, Metzger & Wikren.

³⁴ Aland, His 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland text is the bases of the United Bible Societies version of the Greek New Testament of which Dr Aland was a principal editor. It is also the bases for all modern English versions of the New Testament—the Revised Standard Version, the New American Standard Version, the New International Version, and the English Standard Version.

³⁵ Aland, “The Text Of The Church?”, *Trinity Journal* 8 (Fall 1987): p. 131.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

Did we appreciate what the foremost textual critic of our generation just said? Then, why are we continuing to look for the *original* text, when the witness of the Word of God and the saints is we already have it in our hands? Which position honors the Word of God and strengthens the faith of those we’ve been charged to build; the witness of the saints or textual criticism? Which do you believe? Do you believe the Bible you hold in your hands is **100%** pure, inerrant; authentic- the genuine original?

In summary, the issue on the **Biblical** and **Historical** doctrine of inerrancy comes down to two questions:

1. Does the Word of God teach the Divine Preservation of His Word 100% pure?

The Biblical proof texts for Divine Preservation are not presented here for sake of brevity. However, they are contained in my paper, *God’s Standard Bearers: The Josiah Initiative ~ Witnesses to the 100% Pure Copy of Word of God* (pages 6-9).

2. If so, how do we determine the identity of the text of the Word of God today?

This is why I refer to this position as the **Biblical** and **Historical** doctrine of inerrancy. It’s Biblical in that it’s taught in the Word of God (point 1), and it’s historical (point 2) in that it was believed by the saints. In addition to teaching us the doctrines *Divine Inspiration* and *Divine Preservation*, the Word of God reveals to us the doctrine of *Divine Identification*. The doctrine of Divine Identification is God’s method of bearing witness to the **100%** pure, divinely inspired and preserved text of His Holy Word. It is the principle taught in the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation of a two-fold witness. ³⁶

This is the background in the meaning of the phrase as used above by the textual critics when they say the Word of God would have been *“handed down under them”*. They are give credence to the Biblical precept the saints observed of a ‘two-fold’ witness. It’s the responsibility of each generation to give witness to the next, of the identity of the *copy* of the divinely preserved text of the Word of God they received from the previous generation. This practice is illustrated by Apostle Paul in his charge to the young pastor Timothy when he says:

*“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*³⁷

The principle of a two-fold witness is God means of transmitting His **100%** pure Word from generation to generation, *“from faith to faith”*. ³⁸ **This explains why you will never establish a history of the transmission of the text of the Word of God outside of this two-fold witness.** Textual criticism has tried to recovery the original text since 1881, and has failed. Let me provide an analogy to better explain God’s process of the transmission of the **100%** pure *copy* from the *original* text of the Word of God.

The transmission of the text of scripture is analogous to walking on the beach. In a short time our footprints in the sand vanish without a hint we were ever there or the **possibility** of re-tracing the path of our feet. So it is with the transmission of the text of the *copy* of the Word of God. Its authenticity can only be attested by the generation who received it, *‘as handed down unto them’*.

When they die, this living witness is gone like footprints in the sand, however this singular ‘voice’, like Abel, *“being dead yet speaketh.”* ³⁹ At which point, we now stand as the living witnesses and custodians of the **100%** pure Word of God, which we’re to *“handed down unto”* the next generation as received, hence the

³⁶ For a fuller explanation see [End Note 1](#) on page 17; *Two-fold witness, from faith to faith- A Faithful Witnesses*.

³⁷ [2Timothy 2:2](#)

³⁸ [Roman 1:17](#)

³⁹ [Hebrew 11:4](#) – “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he **being dead yet speaketh.**”

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

origin of the historical name of the New Testament of our Bible; the *‘Received Text’*.^{40 41 42} What a high calling and honor!

In addition to the witness of the saints, we have The Witness of the Holy Spirit; The **Author**, **Superintendent** and **Teacher** of the Word of God. The Holy Spirit authored the scriptures **100%** pure through Divine *Inspiration*, *‘hovers over’* the Word of God as Superintendent to keep it **100%** pure by Divine *Preservation*; and bears witness to the identity of the copy of the divinely preserved text as our Teacher. This is called the doctrine of Divine *Identification*. This what the saints memorialized for generations to come when they penned this phrase in the *Westminster Confession*⁴³ (emphasis & brackets mine):

*“being immediately inspired by God, by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore **authentic**”*^a [a genuine original] ^a*Matt 5:18*”

They were affirming the work of the Holy Spirit as:

- **The Author** (divine inspiration) *“being immediately inspired by God”*;
- **The Superintendent** (divine inspiration) *“by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages”*;
- **The Teacher** (divine identification) of the 100% pure Word of God, *“are therefore **authentic** [a genuine original]”*. We can know we possess the original text by the witness of the Holy Spirit. The same way we know we’re saved, as well as all the doctrines of the faith, which can only be spiritually discerned by faith; not rationally by sight (1Corinthians 2:13-16; 2Corinthians 5:7).

“These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.” (1John 2:26-27)

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you.” (John 16:13-14)

Do you really believe the Holy Spirit; **The Author**, **Superintendent** and **Teacher** of the Word of God would allow His Word to be corrupted so we would not have a **100%** pure copy today? Do the math;⁴⁴ God is

⁴⁰ Floyd Jones, *Which Version is the Bible?* p. ix; The New Testaments of the King James Bible, William Tyndale's Bible, Luther's German Bible, Olivetan's French Bible, the Geneva Bible (English), as well as many other vernacular versions of the Protestant Reformation were translated from the Greek Text of Stephens, 1550, which (with the Elzevir Text of 1624) is commonly called the Textus Receptus, or the Received Text (TR). It is the "Traditional Text" (T.T.) that has been read and preserved by the Greek Orthodox Church throughout the centuries. From it came the Peshitta, the Italic, Celtic, Gallic, and Gothic Bibles, the medieval versions of the evangelical Waldenses and Albigenses, and other versions suppressed by Rome during the Middle Ages.

⁴¹ Wikipedia, The origin of the term *Textus Receptus* comes from the publisher's preface to the 1633 edition produced by Bonaventure and his nephew Abraham Elzevir who were partners in a printing business at Leiden. The preface reads, *textum ergo habes, nunc ab omnibus receptum, in quo nihil immulatum aut corruptum damus, translated as, “so you hold the text, now received by all, in which (is) nothing corrupt.”* The two words *textum* and *receptum* were modified from the *accusative* to the *nominative* case to render *textus receptus*. Over time, this term has been retroactively applied to Erasmus' editions, as his work served as the basis of the others.

⁴² For more see, *The Received Text: A Brief Look at the Textus Receptus*, by Trinitarian Bible Society, GW and DE Anderson.

⁴³ Spurgeon, *Westminster Confession* Chapter 1, Section 8: *“The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.”*

⁴⁴ For a fuller explanation see [End Note 2](#) on page 17; *‘Do the Math Principle’*.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

not the author of confusion;⁴⁵ that’s the craft of Satan- *“hath God said?”* Our failure to believe and fulfill our role to be faithful witnesses to the **100%** pure *copy* of the Word of God (our Bible) will not diminish its pure transmission to the next generation; it never has or ever will. In every generation God has His unseen ‘7000’ faithful witnesses who have not bowed their knee to the Baal of their culture, which in our day is the false claims of textual criticism and science, which seek to replace faith with sight.

Our unbelief will lessen our temporal and eternal treasures because we refused to walk by faith and believe God; rather choosing to walk by sight, believing man. To follow the *fear of the Lord* or the *fear of man* is the choice we face all our days and it will determine the abundance of our lives. It’s instructive to observe the downward spiral of the evolving definition of Inerrancy of the **copy** of the Word of God as we drift further and further downstream in our unbelief, as noted below:

1. [Chicago Statement](#) - 1978

The *Original* but NOT the *Copy* is Inerrant, 100% pure

They attempt to identify the historical text by the means of man’s restoration, employing the tenets of naturalistic textual criticism (emphasis & brackets mine).

- *“...God has **nowhere** promised an inerrant transmission of ScriptureSimilarly, **no** translation [Bible] is or can be perfectWhen total precision of a particular kind was not expected nor aimed at, **it is no error not to have achieved it.** Scripture is inerrant, **not** in the sense of **being absolutely precise** by modern standards, but in the sense of making good its claims and achieving **that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed.**”⁴⁶*

The ‘conservatives’ flawed doctrine of Inerrancy which says the Bible has errors, reflected in the [Chicago Statement](#), is addressed by [Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones](#), Ph.D.,Th.D., in his book, [Which Version Is the Bible?](#)⁴⁷

THE ORIGINAL "AUTOGRAPHS" AND "PRESERVATION"

We are expected to believe in the "INSPIRATION" without believing in the "PRESERVATION" of the Scriptures. We are being asked to believe in the inspiration of the "originals" without believing in the preservation of the text of the Scriptures. It is a statement of unbelief when we say that we only believe that the original autographs were inspired. What we really are saying is that we do not believe that we have the infallible Word of God on this planet, or at least in our hands, at this moment. Let us consider that statement scripturally:

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

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

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works
(II Tim.3:14-17).

Here God tells us His purposes in giving us the Scriptures: "... for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Do we actually believe that God allowed them to become lost after giving them? If so, how could He use them to accomplish these purposes? Now we know that we do not have an original. The question is has God preserved His Word – *the original text* – although not the original piece of paper or vellum on which it may have been written?

⁴⁵ 1Corinthians 14:33

⁴⁶ [1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy; Sections III & V, Exposition, C⁴⁶](#), Transmission and Translation

⁴⁷ [Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones, Which Version Is the Bible?](#), Chapter 1, p.6.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

The observant reader will note that in the above cited verses given through Paul to Timothy no reference is being made with regard to the "ORIGINAL" Scriptures. Look at verse 15. Paul says to Timothy, "from a child you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation." Paul is obviously not speaking of the "ORIGINAL" New Testament Scripture. Second Timothy was penned about A.D. 65. Further, Timothy was old enough to join Paul and Silas c.53 A.D. ([Acts 16:1-4](#)).

Thus, **when Timothy was a child, there was no New Testament collection of Scripture anywhere.** Nor was Paul speaking of the "ORIGINALS" of the Old Testament for there was not an original Old Testament piece of paper or vellum extant at that time. Wrestle with this! Come to grips with it! These are the verses upon which many of us base our faith and say we believe in the "ORIGINALS". Yet these very verses are *not* speaking of the original manuscripts!

But are the copies inspired? The Bible itself clearly teaches that faithful **copies** of the originals **are** also **inspired** ⁴⁸. The word "Scripture" in II Timothy 3:16-17 is translated from the Greek word "graphé" (graph). Graphé occurs 51 times in the Greek New Testament and at every occurrence it means "Scripture" – in fact, it usually refers to the Old Testament text.

A perusal of the N.T. reveals that the Lord Jesus read from the "graphé" in the synagogue at Nazareth ([Luk.4:21](#)) as did Paul in the synagogue at Thessalonica ([Acts 17:2](#)). The Ethiopian eunuch, returning home from worshipping at Jerusalem, was riding in his chariot and reading a passage of graphé ([Acts 8:32-33](#)). These were not the autographs that they were reading; they were copies – moreover, copies of copies! Yet the Word of God calls them graphé – and every graphé is "given by inspiration of God" ([II Tim.3:16](#)). Thus, the Holy Writ has testified and that testimony is that faithful copies of the originals are themselves inspired. Selah!

Therefore, it all comes down to a promise given by God – that He would preserve the text which He gave us. Timothy never saw an original when he was a child of either the Old or New Testament, yet in verse 16 God says that what Timothy learned as a child was given by inspiration of God and **is** profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Now if God were talking about something which had been lost and/or is no longer true and accurate, why did He give verse 17?

Since we've loosed our moorings from the pier of Biblical Inerrancy by dropping the doctrine of Divine *Presrvation* of the *copy* of scripture, we continue to drift further down river as evidenced by the following statements on inerrancy by organizations which claim to hold to the Word of God.

2. [BioLogos](#) - 2007

Neither the *Original* nor the *Copy* is Inerrant, 100% pure

They attempt to identify the historical text by the means of textual criticism with the aid of science; therefore any claims of scripture must kneel to the claims of science.

- *"Christians are fond of saying that 'all truth is God's truth.' But it can be hard to appreciate this if we've chosen to treat science as anti-God. What if, instead of getting all threatened and frightened by scientific advances, we viewed scientific advancement as new vistas for theological consideration? The BioLogos Foundation will help us do that."* ⁴⁹
- *"Will we never be able to show the followers of [Albert Mohler](#), [John MacArthur](#) and others that Christian theology doesn't stand or fall on **how we understand Genesis 1** or the*

⁴⁸ Edward W. Goodrick, *Is My Bible the Inspired Word of God*, (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1988), pp. 61-62.

⁴⁹ [BioLogos](#), Daniel Harrell, Senior Minister, Colonial Church, Edina, Minn.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

*question of whether Adam and Eve were the sole genetic progenitors of the human race? These are extremely critical issues to many and the task of showing in a convincing manner that evangelical theology **doesn't depend on the age of the earth**, and it **doesn't depend upon whether Adam was made directly from dust** will likely take decades before it will be convincing to all.”⁵⁰*

3. Emergent Church

Inerrancy does **NOT** matter

They're not terribly pre-occupied in identifying the historical text since they consider it irrelevant, believing the Bible is not static; a fixed truth for **all** generations; rather a 'living' dynamic document thereby interpreted by the experiences of **each** generation, hence the truth is '**Emerging**'. This view is a generation removed from the one Warfield envisioned of, 'a *better and better bible*'; "*the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*".⁵¹

- *“The gospels are not archives of traditions but living texts,’⁵² and, therefore, ‘the concept of a Gospel that is fixed in shape, authoritative, and final as a piece of literature has to be abandoned.’⁵³ ...‘The free text indicates that to at least some early Christians, it was more important to hand on the spirit of Jesus' teaching than to remember the letter... The material about Jesus was preserved in an interpretive rather than an exact fashion.”⁵⁴*

The above positions on inerrancy represent the **low view** of scripture. **Low** in that they take the rationalistic approach of naturalistic textual criticism to identify the *copy* of the original text of the Word of God. They employ arbitrary methods, each producing an 'original' text which differs from the others; now that an oxymoron for 'original'. In doing so, they denigrate the authenticity and authority of the Bible and the faith of those we're called to build.

The multiplicity of competing 'original' text is noted by [David C. Parker](#), considered one of the world's foremost specialists in the study of the New Testament text and Greek and Latin manuscripts, when he stated (emphasis mine):

*“The text is changing. Every time that I make an edition of the Greek New Testament, or anybody does, we change the wording. **We are maybe trying to get back to the oldest possible form but, paradoxically, we are creating a new one.** Every translation is different, every reading is different, and although there's been a tradition in parts of Protestant Christianity to say there is a definitive single form of the text, the fact is you can never find it. **There is never ever a final form of the text.**”⁵⁵*

Parker reveals, contrary to the vision of Warfield of 'a *better and better Bible*', that textual criticism is leading to the place where we ask; "*hath God said?*"⁵⁶ This method has been taken to task by [Zane Hodges](#) (1932-2008) who was a pastor, seminary professor, and Bible scholar; chairman of Dallas Theological Seminary New Testament Department and Professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis

⁵⁰ Dr. Falk, 'Dawning of a New Day'. President of [BioLogos](#).

⁵¹ Ecclesiastes 1:8

⁵² Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁵⁴ [David C Parker](#), "Scripture is Tradition," *Theology* 94 (1991) 15. Source - Jay Epps: *The Multivalence Of The Term "Original Text" In New Testament Textual Criticism*; ⁵⁴ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 119; ² *Ibid.*, 93; ³ David C. Parker, "*Scripture is Tradition*."

⁵⁵ [David C Parker](#), Edward Cadbury Professor of Theology, Director of the Institute for the Textual Scholarship and Electronic, Editing. University of Birmingham UK. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_C._Parker#cite_note-BBC-0. [Parker](#) is considered one of the world's foremost specialists in the study of the New Testament text and of Greek and Latin manuscripts.

⁵⁶ [Genesis 3:1](#)

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

(1960–1987). He affirms the absence of justification for abandoning the text which was the historical witness of the saints, for one which lacks its credibility (emphasis mine):

“Modern textual criticism is psychologically ‘addicted’ to Westcott and Hort. Westcott and Hort, in turn, were rationalists in their approach to the textual problem in the New Testament and employed techniques within which rationalism and every other kind of bias are free to operate. The result of it all is a methodological quagmire where objective controls on the conclusions of critics are nearly nonexistent.

It goes without saying that no Bible-believing Christian who is willing to extend the implications of his faith to textual matters can have the slightest grounds for confidence in contemporary critical texts.”⁵⁷

We must not forget the admonition of Jesus regarding the way we’re to handle His Word when He says: *“Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”⁵⁸* There are consequences when we disobey God, and at times they can be severe; *“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”⁵⁹* This is an example of what the scripture calls, the Fear of the Lord. Dr. Floyd Jones illuminates on this command of Jesus not to change His Word:

“Most of the early Christians were not wealthy. They often wrote on paper which would be comparable to that of a daily newspaper. Most were not trained scholars or scribes, but they copied with fear in their hearts. They knew that God had warned four times that there would be a curse on anyone who added, subtracted or altered in any way the Word of God (Deu.4:2; Pro 30:5-6; Psa.12:6-7; Rev.22:18-19).

As believers, they would never deliberately alter the Holy Scriptures for they would have believed in the curse that these verses proclaimed. The only persons who would deliberately change the true text would be blasphemers who did not believe the warnings. In context, these verses forewarn not so much of accidental miscopying but of willful alterations.”⁶⁰

The **high view** of scripture is the theological, faith-based approach. **High** in that it believes the witness of the Word of God and the saints; that the *copy* of scripture is kept **100%** pure by Divine *Preservation*, just as pure as the *original* was received by Divine *Inspiration*. This is the doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy as revealed in the Word of God and memorialized in the Confessions of the saints including our Baptist heritage:

4. **Biblical & Historical view**

The *Original* & the *Copy IS* Inerrant, 100% pure

The saints embraced the Biblical principle the Word of God gives for the identity of truth; the two-fold witness of the saints ([Matthew 18](#)). Until 1881, this was the method of the identification of the **copy** of the text of the autographs of scripture. The faith-based perspective of the saints was overthrown with the rationalistic approach of textual criticism, who employ the same method used by evolutionists in their attempt to overthrow creationism; appealing to science, *“falsely so called”*.

⁵⁷ Zane Hodges, *Rationalism and Contemporary New Testament Textual Criticism*, Bibliotheca Sacra, January 1971, p. 35.

⁵⁸ [Proverbs 30:6](#)

⁵⁹ [Romans 11:22](#)

⁶⁰ Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones, *Which Version Is the Bible?*, Chapter 1, p.12.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

Perhaps it a good time to remember the words of our Lord penned through Apostle Paul when he warned pastors of his generation to not exchange the Word of God for the claims of pseudo-science as we have by rejecting the doctrine of Divine *Preservation* (emphasis & brackets mine):

*“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding **profane** [ungodly] and **vain babblings** [utterly empty discussions], and oppositions of **science falsely** [pseudo] so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.”⁶¹*

I think the admonition by [Dr. Paige Patterson](#), in his 2007 report to the SBC convention is also applicable to the issue on inerrancy in light of our drift down stream in regards to our flawed doctrine of inerrancy which omits Divine Preservation:

“If the boat is adrift, it will never drift upriver. It will only drift downriver. Now it may drift down the left side of the bank in liberalism. It may drift down the center of the river in neo-orthodoxy. Or it may drift down the right side of the river in what is confessing conservatism but with an ecumenical flair. But make no mistake about it; the boat will drift down the river...”⁶²

As Pastors, what we believe affects what others believe as well. This paper was written especially for pastors by a Pastor with the confidence it will build your faith and thereby the faith of others; *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”*. If we do not teach our congregation the whole counsel of God on the doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy, where will they learn it; *“how shall they hear without a preacher?”⁶³*

This brings us to the closing question. **Who did God make as the custodian of His Word?** I submit to you it's the Pastor and not the textual critic. The Pastor is the one charged by God to be the *custodian* of His **sheep** and His **Word**, and who will be held accountable:

*“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. **For I have not shunned** [stopped by fear of man] **to declare unto you all the counsel** [word] **of God**. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath **made you overseers**, to **feed** the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”⁶⁴*

At the **Bema** seat of our Lord,⁶⁵ when we're rewarded for our faithfulness, will we be confident in telling Jesus we taught His sheep that His Word had errors? Further more, will Jesus reply, *“Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things...”*⁶⁶ I think not.

As Pastor, the buck stops with us in the eyes of God. Neither our Convention, the Chicago Statement, the textual critic or even our church Deacons / Elders are an excuse for us to be found wanting at our divine post of feeding and protecting God flock. Recall Jesus' convicting words to Apostle Peter, telling him how we feed His sheep is reflective of our love for Him:

⁶¹ 1Timothy 6:20-21

⁶² [Patterson, President Report to the 2007 SBC Convention](#). Patterson is the President of Southwestern Baptist Theology Seminary and past president SBC., http://www.swbts.edu/resources/swbts/resources/general/sbc2007_presidents_report_swbts.pdf

⁶³ [Romans 10:14](#) – “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”

⁶⁴ [Acts 20:26-28](#)

⁶⁵ [2Corinthians 5:10](#); [1Corinthians 9:17](#)

⁶⁶ [1John 3:20-21](#)

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.”⁶⁷

What are we to feed God's sheep? The only right answer is the **100%** pure, inerrant **Word of God**. The **Word** and the **wool** are intrinsically linked. As a pastor, when we guard His **Word**, we're guarding His **sheep**. When we allow His Word to be denigrated we are neglecting His sheep as well. The Word of God teaches that, as pastors, our faithfulness to His charge of caring for His sheep is the basis of our eternal reward:

“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight [thereof], not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over [God's] heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”⁶⁸

The last line of our Declaration of Independence reads; *“For the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our **lives**, our **fortunes** and our sacred **honor**.”* Does God deserve any less commitment, this is our high calling! ⁶⁹ We are to feed and protect His sheep with a ready mind, meaning eagerness and without hesitation for our lives, possessions or standing.

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.”⁷⁰

[Thomas Carlyle](#) gives us insight into the heart of a pastor from the life of Martin Luther, who put his live, security and reputation on the line in stepping forth to protect those with whom he was charged of God. Carlyle writes (emphasis mine):

“The [Monk Tetzel](#), sent out carelessly in the way of trade, by [Leo Tenth](#),--who merely wanted to raise a little money, and for the rest seems to have been a Pagan rather than a Christian, so far as he was anything,--arrived at [Wittenberg](#), and drove his scandalous trade there.

*Luther's flock bought Indulgences; in the confessional of his Church, people pleaded to him that they had already got their sins pardoned. **Luther, if he would not be found wanting at his own post, a false sluggard and coward at the very centre of the little space of ground that was his own and no other man's, had to step forth against Indulgences, and declare aloud that they were a futility and sorrowful mockery, that no man's sins could be pardoned by them.***

It was the beginning of the whole Reformation. We know how it went; forward from this first public challenge of Tetzel, on the last day of [October, 1517](#), through remonstrance and argument;--spreading ever wider, rising ever higher; till it became unquenchable, and enveloped all the world.”⁷¹

⁶⁷ John 21:15

⁶⁸ 1Peter 5:2-4

⁶⁹ [Malachi 1:8](#), *“And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? **offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.**”*

⁷⁰ John 10:11-13

⁷¹ [Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes Hero Worship and The Heroic in History Thomas Carlyle](#), Chapter IV, Hero as Priest.-Lutheran, Knox, Reformation and Puritanism.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

Like Luther, our first loyalty must be to God in our charge to feed the sheep with whom we’ve been entrusted. This commission by necessity encompassed teaching them the Biblical doctrine of inerrancy which points them to the **100%** pure *copy* of the Word of God. However, due to ignorance or intimidation, Pastors have forfeited this divine custodianship, and in doing so we are repeating history. Today, the text of the *copy* of the Word of God is becoming ‘lost’ in the eclecticism of the textual critics; much like it was in the Latin of Rome’s priesthood.

There is one explanation why this persists. We have exchanged the doctrine of God’s Preservation for man’s restoration of the Word of God. Therefore we feel beholden to a ‘priesthood’ of textual critics to discover for us the **original** text, and thereby a **“better and better Bible”**, which they readily admit, they cannot do. To the contrary, they admit their efforts are moving us further and further away from, not closer to the *original* text as has been demonstrated.

The problem today is a crisis of leadership. Think about it, if their pastors, professors and publisher can have their own “*private interpretation*”, like Westcott-Hort and the **eclectic Greek text** of our seminaries, then why cannot the pew? We have ‘led by example’, but it is the wrong example, and **have produced a self-inflicted loss, creating a crisis of faith in the Word of God in our generation, accompanied by a loss of the Fear of the Lord.** Yet, we wonder the source of our ‘**post-Christian**’ culture,⁷² and this generation’s lax attitude toward the Word of God. The church is adrift and rudderless regarding the doctrine of **Biblical inerrancy**; “*the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God*”.⁷³

The challenge today is for Pastors to restore the custodianship of the **100%** pure, inerrant Word of God back unto themselves which they have received by divine commission. Reclaiming it from the school of naturalistic textual criticism, which sit in judgment of the Word of God rather than letting the Word of God instruct them. Who ignore the promises that God gave His Word **100%** pure in the **original** by Divine *Inspiration* and He has kept it **100%** pure in the **copy** (our Bible) by Divine *Preservation*.

If we will lay hold to the Word of God by faith, we will find we already possess the **100%** Word of God in our hands. Then we can stand in our pulpits, lifting our Bible and declare confidently, this is the **100%** pure Word of God; “*How shall they hear [know] without a preacher? ...So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*”.⁷⁴

In summarizing, it’s good that we have gained control of our seminaries and put them back on the right trajectory. However, if we only take back the ‘**kitchen**’, but do not replace the ‘**recipe**’ which created the ‘*Death in the pot*’,⁷⁵ what have we accomplished? Our success will be short-lived if we fail to address our faulted doctrine of Inerrancy, which instills unbelief in the hearts of those we’ve been entrusted to teach. We must return to the Biblical and historical doctrine of Inerrancy which embraces Divine **Preservation**.

Let me close by way of analogy, so as to be crystal clear. There is a tree growing in the atriums of our Seminaries and churches laden with silver dross. Silver in that it’s represented as truth, dross in that it’s a half truth, therefore a lie. Moreover, the poisonous fruit of this tree is being handed to those whom we have been called to teach and protect. It’s time to lay an ax to the root of this corrupt tree. This deadly tree is the doctrine of inerrancy as exemplified in the **Chicago Statement** and taught to our generation.

⁷² Barna Group, *Christianity is no Longer Americans' Default Faith*.

⁷³ 1Peter 4:17.

⁷⁴ Romans 10:14-17

⁷⁵ 2Kings 4:40; Text referenced by K. Owen White, in his article, “*Death in the Pot*” *Baptist Standard*, Jan. 10, 1962; see *Anatomy of a Reformation* (p.1) by Dr. Paige Patterson, President SWBTS. White was President, Southern Baptist Convention (1964) and Pastor First Baptist Church, Houston.

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

We must begin planting the seed of God’s Word and grow the good tree of the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, rooted in the soil of Divine Inspiration and Divine Preservation. The resource are readily at hand, all that is required is for us to *‘lay our hand to the plow’*⁷⁶, not looking backward to man, but upward to God. (For a call to action, see [The Josiah Initiative; Countering The Assault Upon the Inerrancy of the Word of God ~ How are the Mighty Fallen and the Weapons of War Perished!](#))

If my thesis is correct; that we have erred, how must this appear to God? It does not get any more personal than misrepresenting what one says, particularly if it impacts the welling being of those we love. Would you be offended if you wrote something very dear to you and extremely important to those whom you love, then it was misrepresented as not being true to the point it, they ignored it and suffered loss? As shepherds, is there any greater foundational truth to teach the saints than the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy; that every word in God’s letter of love to His children is true and can be trusted to guide our lives; *“for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”*⁷⁷

It’s my prayer, as Pastors, we will earnestly consider the foregoing and consider teaching on the doctrine of Divine Preservation this year. We all desire revival, however, history reveals a revival of the **Word** of God preceded a revival of the **people** of God, as in the days of [King Josiah](#) and the [Reformation](#). For more, see the [Standard Bearers](#) website, particularly the paper, *Retaking the Hill of Biblical Inerrancy: The Next Reformation - The Westminster Confession Rejection of the Chicago Statement*.

God bless,

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” [Rev 3:11](#)

Louis Kol
[Standard Bearers](#)

Hymn ~ [We Rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender!](#)

End Notes:

End Note 1 - Two-fold witness, from Faith to faith - A Faithful Witnesses ([return to page 7](#))

These scriptures demonstrate the significance of the Divine principle of a two-fold witness.

[Gen 22:17](#) (see [Heb 6:13](#) compare [Gen 15:17-18](#) = smoking furnace and burning lamp);

[Deu 19:15](#); [27:11-13](#); [30:19](#); [31:28](#); [Jos 24:22](#); [Rth 4:9-11](#); [1Ki 21:10](#); [Isa 8:2](#); [Isa 43:10](#); [Isa 43:12](#); [Jer 32:10,12,25,44](#); [42:5](#); [Mat 26:60](#); [Rom 1:17](#); [Act 1:8](#); [1Cr 15:3](#); [2Cr 13:1](#); [Gal 1:12](#); [Phil 4:9](#); [1Thess 2:13](#); [1Ti 5:19](#); [2Ti 2:2](#); [3:14](#); [Hbr 10:28](#); [Rev 1:5](#); [3:14](#); [11:3](#);

End Note 2 - Do the Math Principle ([return to page 9](#))

The principle of a loving Father’s heart is helpful in understanding God and His Word. It can clear-up the fog of winding theological arguments. There are times we are called to *‘calculate’* in our relationship with God based on His character as a loving Father, whose word is sure and will lead us right. This is what Abraham did when God asked him to doing something seemingly contradictory to what he had been previously told by God.

*“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: **accounting** that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”* ([Hebrews 11:17-19](#), see full story in [Genesis 22](#))

⁷⁶ [Luke 9:62](#) “And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

⁷⁷ [Psalms 138:2](#)

Letter To A Pastor ~How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

It says Abraham did **accounting** when confronted with seemingly contradictory and confusing statements from God. The Greek word used for **accounting** is translated, **count** in the New Testament five times and a synonym would be *‘to calculate’*. On what was Abraham **counting** or **calculating** to navigate these seemingly contradictory and confusing statements from God? It was on the character of God Himself!

*“...Accounting that God was **able** to raise him up, even from the dead;...”*

Abraham **‘did the math’**; taking *inventory* of God’s character and came up with the right answer and response! If we follow Abraham’s faith, and do the same when faced with seemingly contradictory and confusing statements from God, we’ll discover the right response as well!

Oswald Chambers has a very good quote on this point: *“All our fret and worry is caused by calculating without God”*⁷⁸ and in another place, *“We have nothing to do with the afterwards of obedience”*.⁷⁹ I might add, *“Confusion is **calculating** without God”* or as [Dr. Charles Stanley](#) states in number two, *The Life of Obedience* in his *30 Life Principles*, **“Obey God and leave all the consequences to Him”**.

This is easier to *confess* than to *possess*; it’s a process. The starting point is to know that, *“God hath said!”* rather than wondering, *“Hath God said?”* This is why the issue of the doctrine of Bible Inerrancy is so vital to our faith; *“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked”*; ⁸⁰ *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing **by the word of God**”*; ⁸¹ *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”*; ⁸² *“We walk by faith, not by sight”*. ⁸³ [Selah](#)

⁷⁸ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost For His Highest*, One of God’s Great Don’t, July 4

⁷⁹ Ibid, *After Obedience-What?*, July 28

⁸⁰ [Ephesians 6:16](#)

⁸¹ [Romans 10:17](#)

⁸² [Hebrews 11:6](#)

⁸³ [2Corinthians 5:7](#)