

which the Jews had in the temple and in their synagogues, whose words they could check and read for themselves? Most probably the apographs. Incidentally, this text would argue, not only for the "inspiredness" (and thus the truth and divine authority) of copies, but would also argue for the uncorrupted preservation, in the apographs, of the truths of the autographs, in spite of errors of transmission.

In II Peter 1:19, Peter says "we have more certain the prophetic word." I believe that Peter was referring to the Old Testament Scriptures, which predicted the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet the prophetic word which Peter had was not the originals, but copies. However, in verses 20 and 21, Peter is referring to the manner in which the prophecy of Scripture originally came into being, and I believe he is there speaking of the autographs, not of copies. And yet both are inspired. The autographs had the quality of "inspiredness" because of the Holy Spirit's unique act of inspiration; the copies had the quality of "inspiredness" because they were derived from the autographs. In spite of the fact that the inscripturated Revelation was transmitted across centuries, copied, translated, and marred by copyists' errors, its truths were preserved in such a way that Peter could tell his readers to pay the closest attention to that prophetic word which was available to them.

From this quotation it is obvious that I believe my proposal concerning "inspiredness" to be scripturally grounded. I do not believe that it is exegetically defensible to interpret 2 Tim 3:16 as saying, "All Scripture was inspired, and is profitable." Because it is not exegetically defensible to interpret it in this fashion, I do not believe that it is theologically sound to understand the first predicate adjective -- "inspired" -- to refer to the unique act of inspiration in the past, and the second predicate adjective "profitable" -- to refer to a constant quality characteristic of Scripture in the present. Rather, I believe that Paul is saying that all Scripture -- both originals and all copies -- is characterized by the constant qualities of "inspiredness" and "profitableness." And that includes the copies which the Jews of Christ's day had, the copies which Paul and Timothy had, and the copies which lie upon our pulpits today!

However, at this point we must make an important qualification. "Inspiredness," although it is a product of inspiration, does not require the quality of inerrancy. Inerrancy is a quality which is a product of inspiration, not of "inspiredness". This raises the question, "If inerrancy is a quality distinct from "inspiredness," and if the quality of "inspiredness" (but not that of inerrancy) characterizes the apographs of Scripture, how much errancy can characterize the apographs before the quality of "inspiredness" is lost?" How much error can be accommodated in the process of transmitting the Word of God from God's original revelatory words and events to the proclamation of God's Word today? Can we say that we have God's Word today, or that we are proclaiming it? We know what we mean when we speak of "God's Word" as he originally revealed it. But do we mean the same thing when we speak of "God's Word" as we proclaim it today? This is one of the problems posed in this paper: how much error can the quality of "inspiredness" accommodate, before we reach a point at which we are no longer able responsibly to continue calling the copies of Scripture which we possess "The Word of God"? Thus the title "Inspiration, 'Inspiredness', and the Proclamation of God's Word Today," -- in which "inspiredness" is the connecting link which carries us safely from the inspiration of the originals to the proclamation of God's Word today.