

Inspiration is a special act of the Holy Spirit whereby ~~He~~ guided the writers of the books which were to be a part of His holy Scripture, so that their words should convey the thoughts He wished conveyed, and should be free from errors of fact, of doctrine, or of judgment.

Thus parts of the Bible came as a direct revelation from God to the writer. All of it, ^{however} is inspired, and kept from error. All of it, as a result of inspiration, becomes a revelation from God to us.

Let us never get ^e these two aspects confused, because they are entirely different. Revelation is God giving truth, but inspiration is God guarding the writers from error in what they wrote.

Some people say that they believe in inspiration but I-~~dea~~-not in verbal inspiration; you might just as well say that you believe in food but not in meat, vegetables, fruit or grain—it would make just as much sense. Inspiration does not mean getting an idea. Inspiration, in the theological sense, means writing thoughts down in words which are free from error. If you don't have verbal inspiration you don't have inspiration at all—it is the only inspiration there is. Revelation deals with ideas, but inspiration deals with words. When one says that he believes in inspiration but not in verbal inspiration, he is like the man who said to me—"I believe in the resurrection of Christ. That is just the great principle of the permanence of personality." He should rather have said that he didn't believe in the resurrection of Christ at all!

When Christians have expressed belief in the resurrection of Christ, they have meant an actual resurrection. We should use words in their historic sense, and not try to twist them into something else. Historically the theological term inspiration has referred to words. If we believe in inspiration we believe in verbal inspiration. If we do not believe in inspiration we ought to say so.

Of course sometimes people mistakenly think that verbal inspiration means that God has dictated the Bible to the various writers. Such an idea is not involved in the ^{phrase} ~~word~~ at all. Men wrote what God had re-