

Summer Theological Institute June 8, 1977

The subject I dealt with the morning was the general matter of God's having spoken - God's revelation. We saw how natural inspiration (revelation) is, how common it is, how it is our best way of getting knowledge and that God is a Person and it is inconceivable that the universe came into existence any other way than that a Person planned and directed it and it is only natural to expect that He would reveal Himself to us.

Tomorrow, I'm going to speak about the matter of inspiration. Dealing specifically with exactly what we mean by inspiration and how it was done. While we may touch on areas of that a little today -- in a way I was tempted to reverse the two and have that first before inerrancy. But I think in view of the questions you are apt to raise related perhaps more directly to inerrancy than to the other, it's good to stick to the outline as it was given. So we speak of the matter of inerrancy of the OT now.

We note that the term inerrancy is a negative term. That is important to have in mind. People a century ago talked about inspiration; that was all that was necessary. Believe the Bible is inspired. Then the modernists began to tell us, Sure we believe the Bible is inspired just as Shakespeare is inspired and Homer is inspired, etc. So we had to limit (delimit) our terms and we began to speak of verbal inspiration, or plenary inspiration. But more recently the evidence seems to be turning to use the term inerrancy which is, I believe, a more satisfactory term. We know that the Bible is a presentation of God's truth, but we know a great deal of our problems have come in because it is assumed it is a complete presentation of all the truth. Of course that would be impossible. It would take a room full of books, 50 rooms this size to give all the truth about any area of knowledge. The Bible presents those truths it is important for us to have. Those truths it is important for God's people to have through the ages. Some of them of tremendous importance to us today; perhaps others of greater importance for people 100 yrs. ago, or 100 yrs. from now if the Lord should tarry. But He gives the truth He wants His people to have in order that they may know how to be saved and to grow in grace and to be fit to be the type of people He wants them to be. That is the purpose of the Bible.

The purpose of the Bible is not to explain all the facts of science to us. It is not even to explain all the facts of history. It is not even to tell us all the facts about the life of Christ. We find this very clearly in the Gospel of John where we read the statement: "And there are also many other things that Jesus did which ~~are not written here~~ if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain them. . . Any day of any one of us has more experiences and thoughts that could be written down, in a brief space. But Jesus Christ the Lord of the universe during his 33 yrs. on earth did far more than could possibly be told in the Gospels. "These are written that you might believe that He is the Son of God and that believing you might have life through His name." The Bible has its purpose then -- to give us these vital truths.