

breathed into it in a certain way. They have meant that God so directed the writers of those books that he intended should be part of the Bible, that their ideas would convey the ideas he wanted conveyed, and they did not convey ideas He did not want to convey.

That is a rather technical idea, but the word inspiration has been used in that sense through the centuries. Then about 150 years ago or a little less, ~~X~~ Coleridge said: I believe the Bible ~~is~~ is inspired because it inspires me; and the parts that inspire me the most are the most inspired!

That brings to utter confusion the idea of inspiration. So Christians began to talk about verbal inspiration, and many got the idea of verbal inspiration. But Christians said, Yes, we believe the very words are inspired. God led in inspiring the words to keep them from error.

So we use the term verbal inspiration. And now within the last 2 or 3 decades there have come some who have claimed to be evangelical Christians, claimed to be standing against the great onrush of modernism but have said, Yes the Bible is free from error; it is inspired, but they said, the writers wrote about historical or scientific matters according to the ideas of their time. So it's only when it speaks of religious matters that the words are free from error. So they said we believe the Bible to be verbally inspired; we believe the Bible is infallible because it can't fail to accomplish the spiritual purpose God has for it.

But you ask, Are there errors in it? Oh, they say, Of course both scientific and historical errors because that wasn't God's purpose, and so in the last couple of decades, and particularly within this last 2 or 3 years, those who want to stand for Biblical teaching have been using this word inerrant. The Bible is free from error.

I believe that we have to be a bit careful about the word verbal inspiration, because here we need to think clearly. God has revealed ideas through the Bible, and he inspires the writers by causing them to give us a true record of those ideas. In so doing he causes that every thing that is said should be free from error if properly understood.

And we always have to have that word accompanying it. Because you take simply the words of the Bible and you can say it is full of contradictions. That is to say, it will say one thing one place and another place it seems to say another thing. The reason why there is an apparent contradiction is because words have to be understood in the light of context.

So inerrancy while it relates specifically to words, it relates particularly to ideas. It means that the ~~words~~ words rightly understood do not reveal erroneous ideas.

Now as to a few apparent contradictions, let us turn to mention 2 or 3 that on the face appear to be contradictions. These are contradictions which are obviously not contradictions, but we can _____ about them.