

(A discussion under the heading) WHAT DO WE MEAN BY VERBAL INSPIRATION?

There is today much widespread understanding about the meaning of the term inspiration. Now it may freely be admitted that a humanity has the right to use any term in any sense that it desires. Words are constantly in a change of flux and frequently the meaning of a word in a century or two becomes changed to the exact opposite of what it was before. Words are used - Very frequently very great changes take place in meaning and the same word may be used by different people in entirely different senses.

Yet if people are to have a discussion which will reach any result it is necessary that they agree upon the sense in which they are going to use the principle terms of the discussion. This is the great value of technical terms. A term may be used in many different senses in ordinary conversation, but in a particular science it is given a certain definite significance and this makes it possible for progress to be made in this science. This makes a handy tool contributing greatly to progress in that science. It is necessary in religion and in theology to ~~name~~ give specific meanings to words, else we become lost in a murass of uncertainty and no one can be sure what we are talking about.

It is commonly said among evangelicals that they believe in verbal inspiration. This idea is greatly attacked by - has many enemies. Yet it is to be feared that many of those who oppose verbal inspiration do not understand what is meant by it. Some think that verbal inspiration means dictation. As we will see before we are through with this discussion the actual meaning of verbal inspiration and that of dictation are quite different. Others think that verbal inspiration means in some way that the words become magical. That we will see just how erroneous this concept is. Some people have an idea that verbal inspiration is a medieval superstition, something that cannot possibly have relevance to the modern age. I trust that before we are through we will be able to show that this is an altogether unnecessary attitude. It is possible for us to believe exactly what the intelligent trained Christians believe in any age about the inspiration of the Bible, but that it is nothing that it is the least bit antiquated or out of line with scientific advance or with valid modern discovery.