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**BIBLICAL  
INERRANCY  
AND THE  
ORIGIN  
OF THE  
BIBLE**

**By John C. Ribbens**

**DEDICATION**

**This booklet is dedicated to my grandchildren, Andrew, Erick, Hillary, Amelia, Autumn Rose, Lisa, Gaelan, and Heidi, by whose coming I have been greatly blessed.**

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## **FOREWORD**

**By Edward Michelic**

John Ribbens writes at a time when we need "reminding." God has preserved His inspired Word to reliably enlighten us and reassure us about what is right. The psalmist tells us, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:19). However, the Bible is under attack by people who love darkness instead of light because their deeds are evil (John 3:19-20).

This booklet carries the theme of enlightenment of man from Adam through the times of Bible writings, and how the Holy Spirit caused them to come to be. The author tells about Biblical inerrancy and how it is affected by modern translations. In this he emphasizes the principle of right-division by which the Bible may be interpreted correctly. He urges familiarity through our regular, active study of the Bible, and tells how our understanding is enhanced by the use of comprehensive study aids. Finally, we have Ribben's reminder that we are responsible to act on the light we receive, and that God honors us for being an active believer in Him. Let us take his reminders to heart.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Dedication

Foreword

Introduction

1. From Adam To The Origin Of The Written Word
2. The Instrumentality Of The Holy Spirit And The Formation Of The Bible
3. The Essence Of Biblical Inerrancy
4. Versions And Literal English Translations
5. God's Word And Man's Responsibility
6. Concluding Statement: Faith And Eternal Life Bibliography

# **BIBLICAL INERRANCY AND THE ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE**

By John C. Ribbens

## **Introduction**

Either the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of the living God, or it is the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on mankind. Long before the book we call "the Bible" came into existence, men living upon the earth had received the knowledge that above their being is One who is Supreme. This is made clear by the Gospel of John which declares, "**That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world**" (John 1:9). This infusion of the truth (in men) cannot be denied, although there are men who may reject or deny it. This contact between God and His creation cannot be denied. This act of God to enlighten men is an intrinsic aspect of a loving God. The Bible is a divine revelation of certain fundamental truths that can relate men to the Lord Jesus Christ. This relationship would not be possible apart from recognizing that the written Word of God, as originally conveyed by God to man, is inerrant. This book is so divinely perfect that not a sentence, not a clause, and not a word can be added to it. We speak not, of course, of the translations or versions of men, but the Scriptures as originally given of God—His own perfect revelation.

Among that vast company of men living today are three identifiable groups. The first group are men who have not only received the enlightenment of John 1:9, but have gone on to act in faith with respect to the written Word of God. As a result of believing that Jesus is the Christ, they now stand in possession of life (John 20:30-31). The second group are men who, although they have been enlightened by the process of John 1:9, have failed to respond to the written message of God. These are the kind of men who, although they have had access to the written Word of God, have made a conscious decision to reject God's provision for salvation. Failure to believe in Jesus Christ may have dire consequences. A third group of men, a number of whom have lived and died, are those people who have never had a clear-cut opportunity to respond to the written Word of God. Through circumstances beyond their control they never had access to a Bible nor ever heard men speak the message of salvation from it.

Men raised from the dead and those who will live on into the Kingdom of God will experience the universal enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. **Ignorance of his or her opportunity for salvation will be eliminated as the result of the work of the Holy Spirit. The time is coming when, through a work of the Holy Spirit, they will be enlightened concerning sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:7 -11). This supreme act of grace will be the result of divine intervention into the lives of every man. This includes the present-day believer in Christ. Men, who deliberately**

reject the direct enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, will mark their exclusion from life to be enjoyed in the Kingdom of God. The opportunity to enjoy this work of the Holy Spirit is critical to their survival. They will be given this opportunity because they have never had a "first opportunity." Failure to respond to this invaluable opportunity will deprive that person of the privilege to enter into eonian life. Jesus said, He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (John 3:17).

Jesus also said, If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father (John 15:22-24). These words were spoken directly to the Pharisees. They are not applicable to the life of men living today, inasmuch as no man living today has neither directly heard the words of God nor witnessed the miracles of Jesus Christ. The Bible is a divine revelation of certain fundamental truths that provide men with knowledge to relate to the Lord Jesus Christ (as God and their personal Savior).

No man having been enlightened by either the written or spoken word can claim ignorance of his or her responsibility toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Although millions of men, whether alive or in their graves (in the state of death), may never have had the opportunity to possess or read a Bible, the time is coming when, through a work of the Holy Spirit, they will be enlightened concerning sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:7-11). Failure to respond to this invaluable opportunity is to incur the condemnation of God: He that believeth in Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God (John 3:18). The doctrine of Biblical inerrancy is the key to unlock the salvation-bringing message of God.

## **1. From Adam To The Origin Of The Written Word**

Long before the book we call the Bible came into existence, God had already established contact with His creation. During these early centuries men had no book to read or think upon that would reveal the existence and character of his Creator. However, men did not live in isolation from their Creator. God spoke directly to men through His expression, who is the Logos of John 1:1. The earliest record of direct contact between God and man is recorded in Genesis 2:16-17, where He instructed Adam with respect to the trees of the garden, The Lord God commanded man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. In Genesis 3:1 we observe Satan testing the woman, Eve, saying, "Yea, hath God not said, Ye shall not eat of even- tree of the

garden?" Clearly this implies that God had laid down the principle of faith and obedience to His word from the earliest encounters with His creation.

The earliest record of the canon of the Old Testament can be found in Deuteronomy 31:24-26. First let us explain the word "canon." The term "canon" refers specifically to the 24 books of the Hebrew Scripture or the 39 books of the English version, which constitute what is termed "the canon of the Old Testament." Thus, "the canon of Scripture" means the complete collection of books which are regarded as having divine authority. The word "canon" is from the Greek (kanon) and literally means "a straight rod, rule or measure." This essential idea of straightness is easily discernible in other words from the same root such as "cane, canal," and "cannon." In its primary metaphorical sense which is that of a standard rule of faith, the word occurs in the New Testament; for instance: "As many as shall walk by this rule (kanoni), peace be upon them" (Gal. 6:16).

Now in the passage in Deuteronomy we read, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee (Deut. 31:24-26). It is important to note that in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, (while the temple was being renovated after long disuse during the evil reign of Manasseh) And Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it (2 Kings 22:8). This book of the law is identical with the one noted in Deuteronomy 31:24. The eighteenth year of Josiah's reign would be 624 BC (see Scofield Bible, 2 Kings 23). According to James Ussher's chronology, also, the book of the law, or the Pentateuch written by Moses, dates back to 1451 BC. This suggests that the Pentateuch had been written by Moses about 827 years before being rediscovered in the days of Josiah. Also, after Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (587 BC) and Cyrus had made a proclamation returning the Jews to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4, 536 BC), the new temple was finally dedicated in 516 BC. However, Ezra learned of the failure of the Jews to keep the law. and he went to Jerusalem (457 BC) with the approval of Artaxerxes: For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel (its) statutes and judgments (Ezra 7:10).

What is remarkable is that these Hebrew Scriptures, first printed by the Jews in 1488 AD, according to Drs. Joseph Angus and Samuel Green, only 18 years after the invention of the art of printing, were miraculously preserved by God. It is noteworthy that the first printed book by Gutenberg and Schoeffer, about 1457 AD, was the folio edition of the Old and New Testaments in the Vulgate version, printed in moveable types. The gradual formation of the canon (which we have today) spans about 15 centuries of time. It is important to recognize that this book

is not raised to the dignity and authority of Scripture by the church's acceptance of it; it was accepted because it was first perceived to be of divine origin. The perception of the Bible being written by "church authority" is both misleading and fictitious. (However, various translations do have the blessing of various churches, such as the "Authorized Version" [King James Version-KJV].) The Scriptures of the New and Old Testament were their own attestation.

## **2. The Instrumentality Of The Holy Spirit And The Formation Of The Bible**

In the final epistle of the Bible, written by the apostle Paul about 68 AD, he declares, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17). This acclamation makes it undeniably clear that every Scripture (Gk.-graphe, written word of God) is given by inspiration (Gk.-theopneustos, God-breathed), and is profitable for doctrine (Gk.-didaskalla, education or teaching), for reproof (Gk.-elegchos, this word occurs only twice in Scripture: here and in Hebrews 11:1; in both occurrences it means conviction based upon irrefutable facts), for correction (Gk.-epanorthosis, used only here in the N.T., to set up straight to an upright position, make an improvement; getting the facts straight, restoration). And continuing, Scripture is for instruction in righteousness (Gk. -paideia, occurring six times in the N.T., meaning primarily to correct mistakes and false assumptions by means of castigation with words; along with Gk. - dikalosune, by means of the highest spiritual, or God-given standards), in order that the man of God may be complete (Gk. -artios, perfect, mature, responsible), thoroughly furnished (Gk.-exartizo, fully equipped, fully furnished) unto all good works (in relationship to even good work). It is the application of this divine principle operating in the lives of believers that qualifies them to serve the God of every grace (1 Peter 5:10).

When Paul speaks of every Scripture, he is speaking of the totality of the Word of the living God from Genesis to Revelation. As such these words command obedience, love and respect to the ultimate Author of the Book. C.H. Macintosh said, "The value and importance of the Word of God cannot be overestimated at the present moment. Its integrity and authority are constantly being assailed from almost even<sup>1</sup> quarter. It speaks with a point of freshness as if it were written expressly for us, written this very day. The Bible is God's perfect revelation. It is His very own voice speaking to each one of us. It speaks in a language so simple that a child can understand it, and yet so profound that the most gigantic intellect cannot exhaust it. In a word, it is as the inspired apostle Paul tells us, it is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

**The means whereby the Bible came into existence is clearly expressed in 2 Peter 1:20-21 which makes plain that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, (no prophecy of Scripture comes out of private disclosure, it did NOT originate with man). For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. It is saying, "for prophecy (the telling forth of the words God gave them) did not come into existence at any time by the agency of some human being, but by men born along by the Holy Spirit." The word "moved" is the Greek pheromenoi which is the present passive participle of phero and means "to be under a moving influence," such as being carried along. This describes the action taken by God to use the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit to produce these original manuscripts which have been continually protected by the Holy Spirit and which today constitute our Bible.**

This fact is made crystal clear in the last words of David: David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God (2 Sam. 23:1-3). In view of this remarkable work of inspiration, it is not possible to conclude that the Bible is anything less than the verbally-inspired Word of the living God. This fact should dispel the false notion that this human institution called "the church" gave us the Bible. The Bible is a divine creation, not a human production.

The Bible is once again under attack. No wonder as Paul declared, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3). To insist that the Bible is of human origin is to reject the fact that God has spoken; it is the unmistakable mark of the unbeliever.

### **3. The Essence Of Biblical Inerrancy**

**The inerrancy of Scripture is based on the infallibility of God, the Author. Inasmuch as it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18), it would be an act of sin to deny the divine authorship of this majestic book we call the Bible. If the Bible were not the inerrant Word of God, faith would be impossible. The Apostle Paul declared, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Faith in the infallibility of the Word of God is the basis for our redemption, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life. In the words of Paul. But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that cometh to God must believe that He is (exists), and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). The Gospel of John says, No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:18).**

**God, that no man can see, is declared by His expression, the Word, the only begotten Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**By the term "inerrancy" we are also speaking of the precise selection of nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositions which constitute parts of speech essential to our understanding of the Word of God. The great prophet Jeremiah declared, Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts (Jer. 15:16). When God saw fit to use a particular word in the Hebrew language, He did not restrict Himself to simply one word which we are prone to do. For example, when He used the word "excellent" He had a choice of any one of sixteen different Hebrew words. When He used the word "man" He actually made use of one of the 38 different words available. In our Greek N.T. there are six different words that mean "to know." God had the option of using the Greek word *oida*, or *ginosko*—each having its own unique and distinct shade of meaning. Our God's purpose in using a precise verb, noun or preposition is based on the intrinsic inerrancy of the verbally-inspired Word of the living God. Assumed errors in Scripture are based on faults in transcription and translation, not errors in inspiration. No man has ever yet been deceived by God, unlike men who deceive other men (Matthew 24:4).**

The person who is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ accepts the verbally-inspired words of God in the Bible. The unbeliever rejects Jesus Christ because he/she does not accept the record of the New Testament. Or, in other terms, those who choose to believe in the verbally-inspired Word of God are those who are related to the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who deliberately reject His word have Satan for their father (John 8:44). Drs. Brooke Foss Wescott and Fenton John Anthony Hort wrote in their notes of their book, *The New Testament In The Original Greek*. "If comparative trivialities, such as changes in word order, the insertion or omission of the article with proper names and the like are set aside, in our opinion, the words still subject to doubt can hardly amount to any more than a thousandth part of the whole New Testament." This statement may not impress those men claiming to be "Biblical scholars," but it does reveal the fact that a sincere Bible student will not be diverted from the search for the truth.

#### **4. Versions And Literal English Translations**

According to Drs. Angus and Green, authors of *The Bible Handbook, An Introduction To The Study Of Sacred Scripture*, the earliest manuscripts of the New Testament books were written on papyrus, a fragile material preserved only under exceptional conditions, as in a very dry climate like that found in Egypt or Palestine. The oldest manuscripts go back to the Ptolemies. Greek kings of Egypt (after Alexander the Great died) in the third century BC. Since 1947, hundreds of

Hebrew and Aramaic scrolls have been discovered near the Dead Sea in the region of Kurbet Qumran within a score of miles of Jerusalem. In 11 different caves at Qumran, hundreds of scrolls were discovered, some in protective jars, including an almost complete scroll of the prophecy of Isaiah with several damaged and partial scrolls from adjacent caves. Their antiquity has been set by archeological scholars between 250 and 70 BC. These dates have been established by carbon-14 dating techniques, archeological evidence and paleography (the study of ancient writings and inscriptions).

Generally speaking, a version is a translation of the Scriptures into another language other than that in which it was originally written. Since the Revised Version of the New Testament, printed in 1881, numerous versions have been written. The earlier versions were intended to clarify some of the language used in the earliest manuscripts as textual critics examined and compared the many manuscripts which had been uncovered. These were used to modify the received text (KJV). However, some of the more recent versions have digressed from the original motives of uncovering the truth. These popular modern versions have been motivated by profit and a desire to make them more palatable to young people and the average church member.

One example should suffice. In the January 1, 1909, edition of the Scofield Reference Bible (KJV), 2 Timothy 2:15 reads, Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth. In contrast, The Living Insights Study Bible (New International Version) reads, Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, and who correctly handles the word of truth. The phrase "rightly dividing" in the Scofield Bible is a translation of the Greek word *orthotomeo*. It occurs only once in the New<sup>7</sup> Testament, but we have more tools to use. Strictly speaking this word means "to cut straight," or "cutting straight."

The exegesis of this Greek word reveals a principle called "divine interchange" by which men can properly understand the Word of God. By tracing it in the LXX, The Septuagint, or Greek version of the O.T., a further meaning of this term is found in Proverbs 3:6 which reads, "in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." This word translated "direct" is the equivalent Hebrew word *yashar* and it means "to make straight" or "ethical and upright." It occurs again in Proverbs 11:5 which states, "The righteousness of the perfect shall direct (\\>ashar-make straight) his way . . . ." To speak of "correctly handling" is an ambiguous translation and allows for a wide variety of meanings or opinions. Only by a rigorous application of the true meaning of *orthomeo* can a man properly understand the Bible. Paul in Hebrews 4:12 declared, For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Failure to assiduously apply this divine principle of interpretation can only lead to error, frustration and confusion. For example, Mark 16:15-20 reveals the commission Christ gave to the apostles. Verse 20 declares how "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the words with signs following." This commission was fulfilled in the life of the apostles as attested to by the miracles, signs and wonders they performed (Acts 5:12). All attempts to replicate these Acts-period miracles in the present Dispensation of Grace can only lead to confusion and desperation. While "All scripture is profitable . . . for doctrine . . ." (2 Tim. 3:16), not all Scripture was written to us. **Jesus said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father and whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask anything in My name, I will do it (John 14:12-14).** These instructions were clearly given to His apostles, not to you or me in this present day. Men have taken this passage as license to ask for anything for which they have some physical or material need. While we believe that God does pay attention to believers and even answers prayer ("pray without ceasing" [1 Thess. 5:17]), we must remember that we are living in a time of the silence of God, and these words were spoken to our Lord's disciples and were literally fulfilled during the Acts Period, from Pentecost to Acts 28:28. With respect to the matter of prayer in this present Dispensation of Grace, we are admonished by the Apostle Paul to **Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God (Phil. 4:6).**

Our study of the Bible can be enormously enriched by the use of lexicons (a dictionary of terms for Biblical languages), concordances (words in a dictionary of passages in which they occur) and other Biblical versions. These can be looked upon as "tools of the scholar's trade." They include translations and commentaries (in fact, every translation is actually a commentary). I make use of The New Testament In Modern Speech, by R.F. Weymouth (third edition); The Emphasized Bible, by J.B. Rotherham; The New Testament In Modern Speech, by J.B. Phillips; The Hebrew-Greek Study Bible, The New American Standard Version, by Spiros Zodhiates. This last volume includes lexical aids to both the Old and New Testaments. I have made frequent use of The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, by Alfred Marshall; The Analytical Greek Lexicon; The Greek-English Lexicon Of The New Testament, by J.H. Thayer, D.D.; The Biblical-Theological Lexicon Of The New Testament Greek, by Hermann Cremer, D.D.; The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance Of The Old Testament, by G.V. Wigram; The Englishman's Greek Concordance Of The New Testament, by G.V. Wigram; A Critical Lexicon And Concordance To The English And Greek New Testament, by E.W. Bullinger, D.D.; The Analytical Concordance To The Bible, by Robert Young, L.L.D.; The Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible, by James

Strong, LL.D., and The Scofield Reference Bible, by C.I Scofield, D.D.

These valuable references do not include numerous commentaries and books which are part of my library. While these tools are powerful aids to the study of the Bible, they cannot replace familiarity with the Scriptures. and they do not in and of themselves constitute a substitute for faith. This is because "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

## 5. God's Word And Man's Responsibility

In 1942, Otis Q. Sellers presented a series of five messages over radio station WAIT in Chicago, Illinois, under the title, "**God Has Spoken.**" These messages were well received, then transcribed into booklet form, and are available from The Word Of Truth Ministry ( as Special Full Length Study, # **SS06**). In his opening address, Sellers made the following statement, "**It is my conviction that the greatest fact in the universe is the fact that God has spoken. No other fact approaches this in magnitude or importance. God has spoken to us through the medium of a written message and this message is the book we call 'the Bible.'**" This is a fact that none can deny, and one which all men must face." I agree with this statement. In fact, it is of such importance that no man can claim to be a believer in Christ and yet reject the indisputable fact that Jesus Christ is THE Son of God, and be found believing in Him that men may have life through His name (see John 20:31).

Faith would have no meaning were the Bible not the inerrant, verbally-inspired word of the living God. Failure to take God at His word constitutes a denial of the inerrancy of Scripture. It is an offense against God and worthy of condemnation. No other book in the universe today deserves the acclamation of every individual more than the book we simply call "the Bible." God in His infinite wisdom has given mankind a book that cannot only be read and believed by a child, such as the Gospel of John, but also the Apocalypse (Revelation) of Jesus Christ that defies understanding by the most astute Biblical scholars. The man who opens the Bible and reads God's Word immediately comes into contact with the author of the book given by the inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16). He is not required to understand all he reads, but he is admonished to study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). The understanding of God's Word takes place through progressive revelation by the Holy Spirit as the "seeker for truth" gains familiarity through diligent study and application.

Man in his quest for the truth of God has been assured of the ministration of the Holy Spirit. John's gospel tells us that the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit (intelligently) and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). No greater honor and privilege can come to a man than to become an active believer in Jesus Christ, as well as student of the Scriptures. This means we have a supreme responsibility to the author of this miraculous book.

## **6. Concluding Statement: Faith And Eternal Life**

Having given careful consideration to the many aspects of the inspiration of Scripture, it is now my firm belief that this book (the Bible) constitutes the revelation (unveiling) of the mind and purposes of God. The importance of this fact is such that it impacts every aspect of man's relationship to God. Scripture makes abundantly clear that ". . . faith cometh by hearing (the instrumentality for perceiving), and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). This act of hearing is not simply listening to some audible sound, but permitting the written Word of God to penetrate our hearts and our minds. Unless the facts of Scripture are carefully examined and believed, faith is not possible. This is made exceedingly plain in John 6:63 where we read. It is the spirit that quickeneth (life producing); the flesh (what a man is by birth) profiteth nothing: the words that I (Christ) speak unto you, they are spirit (words of intelligence), and they are life.

The words of Scripture are a projection of the mind of God. They personify God's intelligence. In fact they ARE life. They are living words in contrast to the words of men. which often are void of meaning or significance, or in many instances just plain lies which can poison men's minds. The living Word constitutes the essence of our faith. Paul declares, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). Being at peace with God is not simply a good feeling, instead it implies that we are in full conformance with the truth of God, as the prophet Jeremiah made so plain in an earlier quote (Jer. 15:16), for we, too, are called by His name as the true out-called saints of the Lord Jesus Christ living today. Though we are presently the children of God, Ephesians 1:4-5 states His purpose for us. Sellers' rendering of this says, He determined beforehand to give us the son place through Jesus Christ, according to the kind intention of His will, for extolling His glorious grace with which He graces us in the Beloved One. We are not a "church" but part of that vast group in Ephesians 1:22-23, identified as the future company of the out-called ones which constitute His substance, called out to serve Christ in the theophany that will, in His Kingdom, reveal to all men God's benevolent character, called the Glorious Grace of God. The inseparability of these facts, with their source in God, is clearly established in the Gospel of John, where the purpose of the book is revealed. It says, But these

things are written, that ye (the reader) might believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name (John 20:31).

**By the very reason of this fundamental fact it becomes clear that the basis of eternal life is the love, even the grace of God. As John also stated, For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16). The term "everlasting life" means life flowing out of God which is His contribution to the world's salvation. John records the words of the Samaritans who saw His work. They said, Now we believe, not because of thy (the woman at the well) saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ (Messiah), the Savior of the world (John 4:42). I embrace this fact because of my steadfast belief in the inerrancy of this splendid, incredible book. This is where I stand. Where do you stand? (see Ephesians 6:14)**

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