

# EXCERPTS FROM

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# THE LINK

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**North Road Chapel** (Evangelical)

**BIDEFORD**

## Internet Edition

The strategic centre of Christian theology is the doctrine of the Divine inspiration of Scripture, The Bible must be the starting point and base of all reasoning or discussion, for upon this foundation stands or falls the entire edifice of Christian truth. If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do? (PS. 11 v 3) Deny that the Bible is without qualification the very Word of God, and one is left without any ultimate standard of measurement, and with no supreme authority. Grant that the Bible is a Divine revelation, and the very communication of God's own mind and will to men, and one has a fixed starting point from which to advance into the realm of spiritual truth.

But let us define the doctrine:-

Divine inspiration means a complete communication by the Holy Spirit to the minds of the writers, and effective guidance and superintendence, enabling them to perfectly set down and transmit their knowledge without mistake. Every sentence, yea every word is therefore God breathed, (2 PET 1 v 21). The writers are the voice, but the Spirit of God is the Speaker, (2 TIM 3 v 16), The Bible therefore is the Word of God and not a book which merely contains the Word of God,

The tragedy is however that this truth is assailed in a very subtle but real way, and that by many who would claim to be evangelical. The doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures was broadly jettisoned a little over a century ago, but over the past generation the canker has spread with amazing rapidity. When the theory of evolution gained favour in the early 20th century, men began, to approach the Scriptures in a new way. They commenced to treat the Bible just like any other ancient book, it had to be proved to be true according to the method of textual criticism before it could be accepted as being authentic. This approaching the Bible from a natural point of view immediately denies its supernatural character. Sad it is to say that a very great number of Orthodox Christians adopted this line in order to prove as they thought, the reliability of the Sacred Word. Little did they realise how much they were surrendering. Spurgeon was among the few who saw where all this would lead, he knew and spoke out in unmistakable language concerning this grave error, for the inspiration of Scripture can never be proved by logical argument or philosophical discourse. These men, said Spurgeon, are defending a doctrine of Scripture in the wrong way, and soon he was proved to be right, as vast hoards of Christians began to abandon the traditional view long held by the church of verbal inspiration. All too common

today is the view that inspiration is of a general rather than a verbal nature. Hence the Bible is the Word of God to us in a general sense. In it, is God's mind and will, but it is not the words of the Almighty, the words may be criticised, they are in part contradictory, unimportant, uninspired. They so often reflect an antiquated outlook and have no relevance for today, we must separate the revelation from the record.

So it is argued, if the Bible is to mean anything to modern man, if its teachings are to be accepted, then its obsolete trappings must be dropped, it must be reformulated in the light of modern knowledge and re-stated in terms favourable to the thought-world of today. The weakness of such reasoning is obvious, for what is fashionable today is discarded tomorrow. To assert that the final authority for my life is the verdict of my reason upon the Bible, is in fact to say, "I THINK THAT GOD SAYS". - NO, - reason, modern thought, or even tradition must never sit in judgement over the Word of God.

The Christian's confidence in the Holy Scriptures should not lie in the conclusions of literary and historical critics, but our trust and reliance on the inspiration and supreme authority of Scripture should stem from the fact of our faith in God Himself.

As we approach the Word of God, ever should we pray the prayer of the Psalmist, "O Lord open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law". When our eyes are opened, we do see wonderful things in God's Word, The Word is itself alive, quick, powerful, authentic, it does not need to become alive to us, we need to become alive to it, and to God its author, and this is the work of the Spirit alone. The great barrier in the mind of man is considered by so many to be natural, and must be overcome by a logical and intellectual approach, when in actual fact the barrier is spiritual. The natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned. (1 COR. 2 v 14). Whilst this is true of the natural man, it is also true of the Christian who comes to the Scriptures in a questioning manner. The Pseudo intellectual approach of Christians today is not a spiritual approach, as parts of the Word of God are made out to be foolishness - not relevant in a scientific age.

In the Old Testament we read "They shall surely ask counsel at Abel, and so they ended the matter" (2 SAM. 20.v.18), but to a very large degree, the days are past when we can expect a simple appeal to the words of Scripture to be generally accepted as a final settlement of a disputed question, either

of doctrine or practice. The reason is obvious, the Scriptures are no longer for most men the very AUTHORITY OF GOD, hence the Bible is not allowed to end the matter.

God forbid that ever we as a church at North Road, should drift into such a position, for this is a denial of Divine inspiration and the hands of the faithful are immediately crippled, and become powerless in their efforts to meet the attacks of the adversary. Let us then stand fast for the Word - yes even the Words (2 TIM 1 v 13). It is His Word which will accomplish His purpose, it is His Word which is His power. The Scriptures are infallible as to truth, and final as to authority. It is unthinkable that inaccuracy and mistake can co-exist with inspiration. The preacher can rest assured if he is preaching the Word (whether he be successful or not, as men count success) that he is a sweet savour unto God (2 COR 2 v 15).

Our Lord on the very evening of His Holy ministry on earth as He closed His work in prayer said "Father I have given them THY WORD" (JOHN 17 v 14). As with the Lord, so with the apostles, Peter and John were bold in their declaration of BIBLICAL TRUTH. (ACTS 4 v 13 & 29). The early church when persecuted went everywhere preaching THE WORD (ACTS 8 v 4). Paul, reasoned with them out of the SCRIPTURES (ACTS 17 v 2) (Mark, not about the Scriptures, but out of them). Never has the world seen a greater adherent to the Word of God than the apostle Paul. On his way to Jerusalem and to martyrdom he says "neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God" (ACTS 20 v 24). His last recorded words are found in the second letter to Timothy. He urges Timothy to preach THE WORD<sup>9</sup> He speaks of the time when men will not endure sound doctrine, when ears shall be turned from THE TRUTH and concludes by saying "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept THE FAITH"

What is the application of this? How is it to be outworked in a contemporary situation? Are we going to shun not to declare all the counsel of God? Or yield to accommodation compromise, and then to adjust the Word of God to the thinking of the liberal minded Christian? These are searching questions with which elders are faced today, and in turn the church. May God keep us obedient and loyal, and give us grace and courage to follow in the train of the faithful for HIS GLORY.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION

As we look back over the past quarter, we have indeed had some very searching ministry. We thank God for His servants and for the help given to them, and for the privilege which is ours in being able to come together so often around the Word. Let us not forget what we have heard. R. C. Chapman said "meditation on the Word of God is the chief means of our growth in grace, without this even prayer itself will be little better than an empty form. Meditation nourishes faith, and faith and prayer are the keys which unlock the hidden treasures of the Word".

This quarter our pulpit will be filled by more local brethren, we prayerfully look forward to the visits of old friends.

The London City Mission will be with us again in February. The service will be at 7.30 on this night and an offering taken for the work of the Society.

We take this opportunity of sending love and greetings to our sick and shut-in brethren and sisters, assuring you yet again of continual remembrance in prayer.

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### WHAT WILL IT BE?

What will it be, that first transcendent moment  
When faith and sight in joyful union meet,  
When changed into the likeness of His glory  
I fall in love and worship at His feet?  
What will it be, to gaze upon His glory  
While every tongue His matchless worth declares,  
To hear His voice, to feel His hand upon me  
And see the marks of love and grace He bears?  
What will it be, to know in all its fullness  
The vast unfathomed love that He has given?  
But sweeter far than all the joys undreamed of,  
To be at last with Him - this will be Heaven.

Joan Suisted

Part of John Bunyan's Dying Sayings

Of the Lord's Day, Sermons, and Week Days -

Have a special care to sanctify the Lord's Day; for as thou keepest it, so will it be with thee all the week long. Make the Lord's Day the market for thy soul; let the whole day be spent in prayer, repetitions, and meditations, lay aside the affairs of the other part of the week, let the sermon thou hast heard be converted into prayer. Shall God allow thee six days, and will thou not afford Him one? In the church be careful to serve God, for thou art in His eyes, and not in man's.

Thou mayest hear sermons often, and do well in practising what thou hearest; but thou must not expect to be told thee in a pulpit all that thou oughtest to do, but be studious in searching the Scriptures, and reading good books. What thou hearest may be forgotten, but what thou readest may be better retained.

Forsake not the public worship of God, lest God forsake thee, not only in public, but in private.

In the week days, when thou risest in the morning, consider: 1. Thou must die, 2. Thou mayest die that minute, 3. What will become of thy soul. Pray often. At night consider: 1. What sins thou hast committed, 2. How often thou hast prayed, 3. What hath thy mind been bent upon, 4. What hath been thy dealing, 5. What thy conversation, 6. If thou callest to mind the errors of the day, sleep not without a confession to God, and a hope of pardon. Thus every morning and every evening make up thy accounts with almighty God and thy reckoning will be the less at the last.

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The whole world lieth in the wicked one. The natural man goes to sleep on the brink of hell, lulled to sleep by the wicked one, with a hope of mercy that is contrary to justice.

R. C. CHAPMAN

We admire a man who was firm in the faith, say four hundred years ago. but such a man today is a nuisance and must be put down. Call him a narrow-minded bigot, or give him a worse name if you can think of one. Yet imagine that in these ages past, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and their compeers had said "The world is out of order; but if we try to set it right we shall only make a great row. and get ourselves into disgrace. Let us go to our chambers, put on our night-caps, and sleep over the bad times, and perhaps when we wake up, things will have grown better". Such conduct on their part would have entailed upon us a heritage of error. Age after age would have gone down into the infernal deeps, and the pestiferous bogs of error would have swallowed all. These men loved the faith and the name of the Lord Jesus too well to see them trampled on ...

It is today as it was in the Reformer's days. Decision is needed. Here is the day for the man, where is the man for the day? We who have had the truth passed to us by martyr hands dare not trifle with it, nor sit by and hear it denied by traitors, who pretend to love it, but inwardly abhor every line of it ... Look you sirs, there are ages yet to come. If the Lord does not speedily appear, there will come another generation, and another, and all these generations will be tainted and injured if we are not faithful to God and to his Truth today. We have come to a turning point in the road. If we turn to the right, maybe our children and our children's children will go that way; but if we turn to the left, generations yet unborn will curse our names for having been unfaithful to God and to His Word.

TAKEN FROM SERMON BY CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON 1888

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ALL OF GRACE: All is of grace: grace in the original plan, grace in the execution of that plan, grace in its application. The entire system of salvation is undergirded, shot through, and crowned with grace. If we are God's elect, that is by grace. If we have been justified and adopted into God's family, it is by grace. If we enjoy comfort, it is of grace; if we enter God's glory, it is according to His grace. Grace establishes the foundations and grace lays the top stone.

WILLIAM BAGSHAW

ADAM A HISTORICAL PERSON. The argument of Paul in Romans 5 depends absolutely for its validity on the fact that, as Christ was an historical Person, so was Adam an historical person. There cannot be a proper parallel between a mythical Adam and an historical Christ. Adam is as essential to the Christian system of theology as Jesus Christ is. Christ is indeed called in Scripture "the last Adam" or "the second man". Any theory which tends, as the common form of evolution does, to eliminate Adam as a real historical person, is destructive of Christianity - J. G. VOS.

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THE JEWS are unique in that their history is written in advance; their religion, not being self-invented, denounces them, they are indestructible and live to see all their enemies perish. They gave the Bible to the world yet do not believe it themselves; they gave Christ to the world yet do not receive the Lord Jesus themselves, they taught the world to expect a Messiah yet do not believe their own report. ISA 53. 1.

"THE SCATTERED NATION" OCTOBER 1933

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THE MAN who can "hold the fort" at one time is the very man who can capture a fort at another time. He who can stand well can march well.

C. H. SPURGEON.

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THE WORLD NEEDS FEWER MAN-MADE GODS, AND MORE GOD-MADE MEN.

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"TRY SOMETHING NEW" SAYS MODERN MAN.

"ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS" SAYS GOD. JEREMIAH 6 v 16.