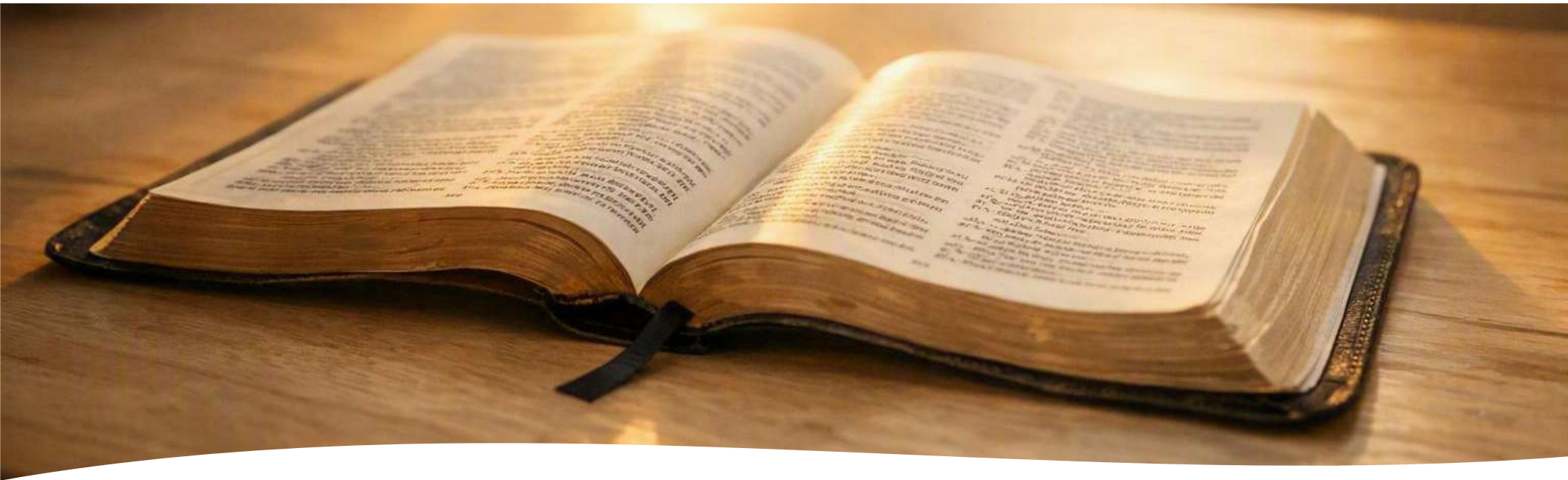


The Inspiration of Scripture





Foundational Scripture

"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 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV)

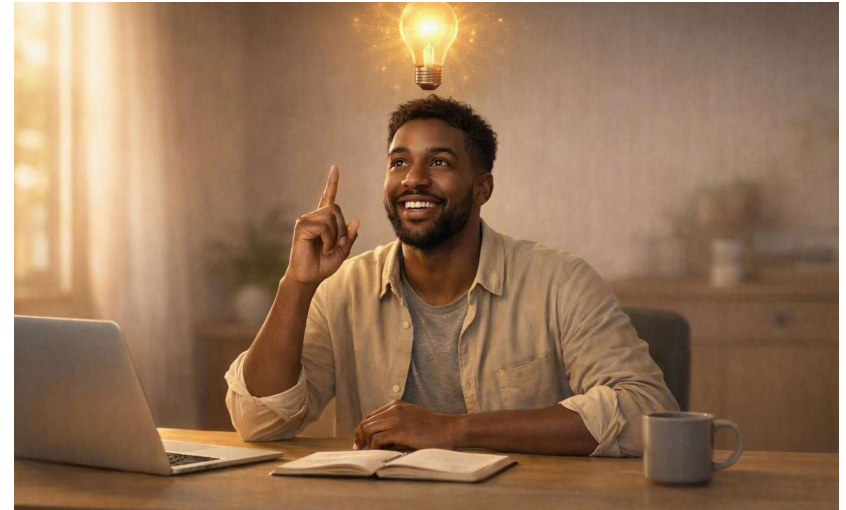
DEFINING THEOPNEUSTOS

To understand the nature and authority of the Bible, we must first define what we mean when we say it is "inspired." This is not a casual word. It is not a synonym for "moving" or "emotionally powerful." When the church confesses that Scripture is inspired, she is making a claim of the highest order: that the Bible is theopneustos — God-breathed.

Phonetic Pronunciation

theh-OP-nyoo-stos

What Theopneustos Does NOT Mean





How do divine origin and human authorship coexist in a single text? (Dual Authorship)

The classic answer is found in 2 Peter 1:21:

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 Ghost.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete. 14 But not long after, there arosed against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. 15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.

Trumpet, Clarinet and Kazoo



Trumpet



Clarinet

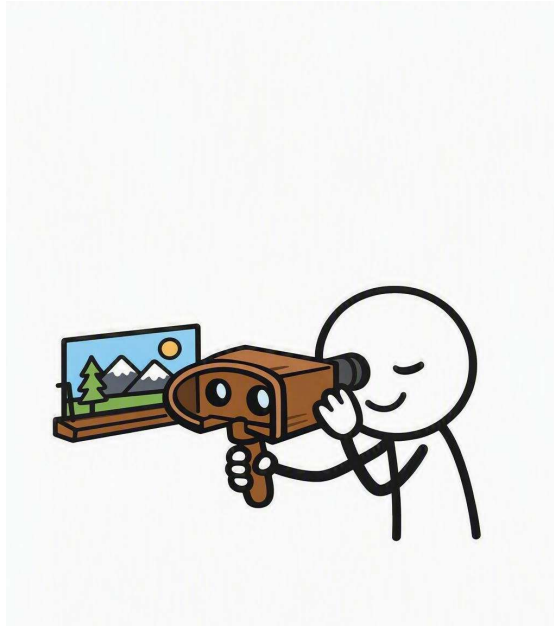


Kazoo

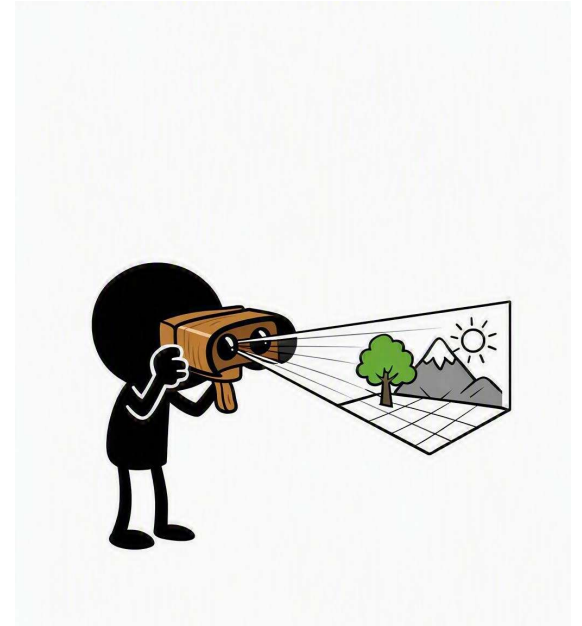
The Stereoscope



**One lens:
flat image**



**Other lens:
flat image**



**Both lenses:
depth**



What This Means for Us

First, it means Scripture is authoritative. If God breathed it out, then it carries the weight of His authority. It is not one voice among many; it is the final voice. When Scripture speaks, God speaks. As the psalmist declares:

The sum of thy word is truth: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever. (Psalm 119:160, KJV)

Scripture Is Sufficient



Secondly, it means Scripture is sufficient. Paul tells Timothy that the God-breathed Scriptures are able to make the believer "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." We do not need extra revelations. We do not need new prophecies. We do not need mystical experiences to know God's will for salvation, doctrine, and godly living. The Scriptures contain everything we need for life and godliness.

Sufficiency means Scripture is the final court of appeal the norm that norms all other norms. It does not mean God is silent; it means that when He speaks, He will never contradict what He has already written. The Bible does not answer every question we might ask in explicit detail, but it equips us to make every decision in a way that honors God.



- Thirdly, it means Scripture is trustworthy. If God is the ultimate author, then the Bible is without error in all that it affirms. It is true historically, scientifically, doctrinally, and morally. We need not be embarrassed by its claims. We need not apologize for its doctrines. We need not trim its edges to fit the preferences of a fallen culture.
- Why does this matter for the church? If the Bible is merely a human book, then it is subject to human revision. It can be edited, updated, and corrected by the latest scholarship or the prevailing cultural mood. But if the Bible is theopneustos, if it is the very breath of God, then it stands above every human opinion, every cultural trend, and every philosophical system. It is the fixed point in a turning world. It is the anchor of the soul.



THE FINAL AUTHORITY

Scripture is the highest and final authority among many sources of religious authority, specifically, Christian faith and practice, overriding all appeals to tradition, reason, and experience.

More precisely, the Bible contains all necessary and sufficient knowledge concerning God to save sinners and is believed to be the infallible word of God, the final criterion for the faith and life of Christians. Only those truths about God and our saving relationship with him, which are clearly taught in Scripture or shown to follow from the teaching of Scripture, may be required of Christians to believe.

Additional Scriptures for Study

Inspiration and Authority

2 Timothy 3:16-17

2 Peter 1:20-21

2 Samuel 23:2

Truth and Power of Scripture

John 17:17

Hebrews 4:12

1 Thessalonians 2:13

Permanence and Precision of Scripture

Matthew 5:18

John 10:35

Matthew 24:35

Psalms 119:89

Warning Against Tampering

Proverbs 30:5-6

Revelation 22:18-19



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean that Scripture is “God-breathed”? How is this different from saying the Bible is “inspiring” or “inspirational”?
2. In what ways do you see the distinct personalities and writing styles of different biblical authors? What does this tell us about how inspiration works?
3. What is the difference between the Bible being sufficient and the Bible being exhaustive? How does this distinction affect your daily decision-making?
4. Can you think of a time when Scripture shaped your thinking or guided a major decision in your life?