

This matter of inerrancy is of great importance. There is always the effort to draw it away from the essentials of the Christian faith. That effort is always present. People used to speak of the Bible as inspired. Then Coleridge said, I believe the Bible is inspired because it ~~inspires~~ inspires me; the parts that inspire me the most are the parts that are the most inspired. Well, of course when you get through with that, it is nothing like what we believe by inspiration. The word inspiration simply means "to breathe in" so you can put into that word just about any meaning you want to put. So it was necessary for Christians to put an adjective along with the word.

They began to talk about verbal inspiration. It is the words that are inspired. There are those today who talk about what they call dynamic inspiration--the ideas are inspired but the words are not inspired. So we have on the one hand those who have false views of inerrancy, false views of the Bible because they do not give it full authority. Our Lord Jesus put His seal of approval upon it that this was God's Word. That this is determinative for the Christian in whatever it teaches.

On the other hand we have those who (I shouldn't say on the other hand because there will be three hands before I get through) but in a second direction there are those who say as I saw some papers that were sent to me that said, I must be able to hold the Word in my hands. I must have something I can hold and that's the KJV. It's God's inspired version I can hold it in my hand! There are some very outspoken people who are taking that attitude that the KJV is the inspired, inerrant Word of God.

One such paper said, Can we believe God left Himself without an inerrant word until these two translations were made this year? The answer is, Can we believe God left them that way until the KJV was made? The difference between 16 centuries and 20 centuries is not after all a great difference.

We have those who are taking such attitudes, and it is easy to see how that grows out of the statement: This is not the Word of God, this is merely a translation from things that were copied from copies of copies of copies. The inerrant Word of God is those original MSS!" Now they no longer exist. Nobody today has ever seen an original MSS. What great good does it do us to say that the original MSS were inerrant if you have no copies of them?

I've been giving quite a bit of thought to this recently and I've reached some conclusions I had not reached before which I think need further thought and consideration of different details before I'd be ready to publish anything about them. But I think we can clarify our ideas on this. I believe we should do so.

When you say, I want to hold God's Word in my hand, immediately we say, Can you hold a word in your hand? You can't. You can hold a representation of certain sounds in your hand. You are not holding the sounds in your hands. You are certainly not holding the ideas in your hand. You are holding a representation of certain sounds.