



Edification Complex of the Soul: Thought Testing Challenges Divine Viewpoint: Bibliology: Revelation, Inspiration, Illumination, Interpretation, Animation

- (27) **Thought Testing.** This is the challenge to become self-centered and put an over-emphasis on self. This is Operation Overthink which is a reaction to what the Bible teaches.
- (28) Following salvation, believers who undertake the task of spiritual growth through Bible study begin with an inventory of ideas that is based on their system of thinking while in unbelief.
- (29) Often many of these ideas are so ingrained that the person believes them to be biblically based. When Bible study exposes these beliefs to be in error there is a reaction to the teaching.
- (30) This results in hypersensitivity that causes the person to challenge the authority of the pastor and his interpretation of the Word.
- (31) The typical retort is “Well, that’s just your interpretation.”
- (32) This is a flippant remark that betrays inflexibility in one’s set opinions regardless of the evidence to the contrary. Yet there is a system that has been established that successfully and accurately conveys God’s communication to mankind.
- (33) This system is a five-stage process that includes interpretation. We will briefly define these stages from:

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Prolegomena-Bibliology-Theology Proper. Vol. 1 of Systematic Theology.* Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947).

Chapter 3: Revelation. Revelation is the divine act of communication to man what otherwise man would not know. This extraordinary form of revelation, since it originates with God, is, of necessity, largely dependent on supernatural agencies and means. (p. 48)

Chapter 4: Inspiration. Inspiration is that controlling influence which God exerted over the human authors by whom the Old and New Testaments were written. It has to do with the reception of the divine message and the accuracy with which it is transcribed. (Inspiration is) a God-given revelation ... bequeathed to man in a permanent, written form. (p. 61)

Definition of Inspiration:

1. God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture, that without waving their human intelligence, vocabulary, individuality, literary style, personality, personal feelings, or any other human factor, His complete and coherent message to mankind was recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, the very words bearing the authority of divine authorship.
2. This is called verbal plenary inspiration of the Scripture.
 - a. Verbal means that the Bible in its original words, from first to last, is the exact record of the mind and will of God as He intended it to be.
 - b. Plenary means the entire text is equally from God but not necessarily equally important or equally indispensable; for the Bible quotes human and Satanic lies, and erroneous views of false prophets. Therefore, inspiration guarantees the accuracy of what is there, but it does not condone or sponsor errors, evils, or falsehood; it merely explains them in detail.
 - c. Man is the instrument, but not the author of the Word of God.



Chapter 6: Illumination. The period of time between the two advents of Christ is often designated as *The Age of the Holy Spirit*, and properly so, since these days are characterized by the activity and administration of the Spirit. Among the age-characterizing operations of the Spirit is that of teaching or enlightening the individual in whom He dwells. This reception of truth is not confined to commonplace issues, but may reach out into the “deep things of God,” and the experience of the believer when thus taught by the Spirit is peculiar in this respect, that the divine Teacher is within his heart and he therefore does not hear a voice speaking from without and at stated times, as is the method of human teachers, but the mind and heart are supernaturally awakened from within to apprehend what otherwise would be unknown. (p. 109)

Chapter 7: Interpretation. It is properly required of the theologian that he both understand and expound the Scriptures. This is the distinctive field in which he serves. However, he confronts a wide latitude of interpretation which is represented when all schools of theological thought are considered. Nevertheless, whether any person or group of persons has ever attained unto it or not, there is but one system of revelation set forth in the Word of God. It is sometimes claimed that anything good or bad may be proved or defended from the Scriptures. Such an impression could be sustained only by the permission of violent misuse or disuse of the Sacred Text. It is noticeable that all theological systems and even modern cults make use of the Bible.

It is probable that, owing to human limitations, no theological system has reached that illation which is exempt from all error and which incorporates into itself all truth in its proper balance. Men of candor have long striven to reach this desideratum. (p. 114)

The uncompromising student will do well to study the Sacred Text and demand of himself that right relation to God which insures the priceless divine guidance into all truth. The conclusions of other men should be given due respect. It is the student's task, having considered and weighed the contribution men have made to the general understanding of the Scriptures, to advance these assured results of scholarship beyond the attainments of past generations, striving to be as humble and true as the fathers have been. Among other things stated, 2 Timothy 2:15 does enjoin “study” which is the application to, and the investigation of, the text of Scripture itself and not merely a perusal of the writings of other men about the text. (pp. 114-15).

The science of interpretation—usually designated *hermeneutics*, which term denotes the art of interpreting the Sacred Scriptures—includes the recognition of the principles upon which a true analysis must proceed. (p. 115)

NOTE: The subject of biblical hermeneutics has been recently examined from this pulpit. It consists of 89 lessons and covers the history of the two most dominant schools of hermeneutics from the second century down to the Reformation followed by an analysis of the systems developed by its Reformers. This study includes an in-depth analysis of the system of hermeneutics that I use to develop lessons taught at this church and why its techniques are thought to be superior to others. Men of good conscience and humble mind have differing viewpoints on which hermeneutical system leads to the most precise exposition of divine revelation. However, all those who interpret the Scripture are bound by biblical mandate to rightly divine the Word of truth and therefore have a clear explanation for the conclusions they reach and teach. It is perfectly fine for anyone to disagree with a specific interpretation of Scripture but such a critic must base his argument on sound hermeneutical principles, otherwise the response, “That’s just your interpretation,” becomes an empty denunciation of a well-founded position in favor of a preconceived opinion. As a result he may be described by the Roman bromide: *damnant quod non intelligent*: they condemn what they do not understand. (See *Clanking Chains: Hermeneutics*, lessons 285 through 373: http://www.gdcmedia.org/MediaMins/archive_id.asp?seriesid=CC02&ClassIDStart=285&ClassIDEnd=373&Subject=Hermeneutics)

When undertaking to interpret the Scriptures, due consideration should be given to: (1) the purpose of the Bible as a whole, (2) the distinctive character and message of each book of the Bible, (3) to whom is a given Scripture addressed, (4) consideration of the context, (5) consideration of all Scripture bearing on any given theme, (6) discovery of the exact meaning of the determinative words in the text, and (7) necessity of avoiding personal prejudices. (p. 115ff)



Chapter 8: Animation.

Hebrews 4:12 - The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

(T)here is practically no difference in the essential reality of the spoken Word and the written Word, for one is no more than a form in which the other appears. Both are like the breath of His mouth. The element of *life*, here asserted to be inherent in the Word of God, is ... *living* in the sense in which God is the *Living God*. The Word of God is *living*, it is *energizing*, it is *sharp*, it *pierces*, it *discerns*.

1 Peter 1:23 - For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living [ζῶω, *zao*] and abiding word of God.

Here, ζῶω (*zao*) appears, with the added thought of eternal duration. Not to be overlooked at this point is the utterance of Christ:

John 6:33b - "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life [ζωή, *zoe*]."

The second word in Hebrews 4:12, is ἐνεργής, *energēs*, which ascribes to the Scriptures the attribute of *energy*. It is the energy that vital life supplies. The written Word of God is God-breathed. Life inheres in it. This truth does not imply personality or that the Bible possesses the constitution of a living creature. It declares that divine life is resident in the Scriptures. Because of this fact, certain stupendous accomplishments are said to be wrought by the Word of God: (1) the power of God's Word upon the unsaved, and (2) upon the saved. (pp. 121-22)

God uses His Word. It is efficacious in the hand of the Holy Spirit in accomplishing supernatural results. (p. 122)

- (34) These are the basic concepts that have to do with the accurate communication of the Word of God. It begins with divine thought transferred to mankind in the form of the Old and New Testaments.
- (35) In the Church Age divine thought contained in Scripture is communicated to unbelievers through the spiritual gift of evangelist and to believers through the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher.