

5. Thus the writers of Scripture received direct revelation from God. Their completed autographs constitute the inspired Word of God. God's plan is revealed to believers through a detailed study of this inspired Word.
6. The primary source of revelation to the Church Age believer is the Bible. The secondary source of revelation to the Church Age believer is the interpretation of the Bible by a pastor-teacher who is equipped to analyze the Hebrew and Greek texts by means of a three-fold process:
 - (1) **Isagogics:** The interpretation of the Bible in the time in which it was written.
 - (2) **Categories:** The comparing of Scripture with Scripture in order to bring together all that the Bible has to say with regard to a particular subject.
 - (3) **Exegesis:** The study of the etymology, grammar, and syntax of the original languages of Scripture.
- 7- In its original languages, the Bible is the exact record of the mind and will of God. The inerrancy of the Scripture combined with a pastor-teacher who is filled by the Holy Spirit provides the positive believer with the opportunity to grow in grace.
- 8- The opportunity is made possible by Two Power Options: (1) the filling of the Holy Spirit converts human IQ into spiritual IQ and (2) under the mentorship of the Holy Spirit the believer can then comprehend the supernatural information found in Scripture utilizing the Grace Apparatus for Perception or Operation Z.
9. The human authors of Scripture, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, wrote the books of the Bible under the principle of inspiration.
10. The biblical confirmation of inspiration is found in:

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.
11. The phrase "inspired by God" is the Greek verbal adjective:

θεόπνευστος (*theópneustos*) "God-breathed."
12. This word is a compound made up of the word **Θεός** (*Theós*), "God," and the verb **πνέω** (*pnéō*), "breathe." This is obviously an **anthropomorphism**: language of accommodation that ascribes to God human physical characteristics He does not actually possess so man may comprehend His divine policy, character, and function.

13. Breathing involves both inhale and exhale. Inhale illustrates the ministry of the Holy Spirit in inspiration through which he directed the human writers. Exhale illustrates what the human writers wrote down under the Spirit's direction. This is summed up in the statement:

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.

14. The only true confidence in life is based on knowledge of divine thought from which decisions are made and problems are solved. Confidence built on any other system of thought results in a false confidence that cannot stand up under the pressures common to *cosmos diabolicus*.
15. This ongoing, unshakable confidence is built up by spiritual growth but is able to endure trial and testing because of one's core belief that the Bible is the inspired record of God's message to man for life and practice.
16. Nevertheless, revelation and inspiration only guarantee the veracity of the Bible.

(End JAS2-36. See JAS2-37 for continuation of study at p. 361.)



17. However, each person must make the personal decision to believe that Jesus is the Christ before he may delve into the treasures of wisdom and knowledge preserved within its pages.
18. In the Church Age the believer may be motivated to submit to the content of Scripture because he becomes convinced of its veracity. However his spiritual growth is dependent upon three principles, the two we have just noted and the third we will observe next.
19. These three principles have to do with the transfer of the Word of God from the pages of Scripture to the streams of consciousness of believers. The third is:

- (1) **Interpretation:** This is the duty of a man who has the gift of pastor-teacher. He is to utilize the science of interpretation known as hermeneutics. A summary of this method of biblical analysis is provided by Bernard L. Ramm:

The Protestant ministry is based upon the Word of God as expressed in the inspired canonical literature and as perpetuated in preaching.

One of the most important considerations of the Christian ministry must be the right use of the Word of God.

That theological discipline, which takes as its goal the proper interpretation of Scripture, is hermeneutics. A solid hermeneutics is the root of all good exegesis and exegesis is the foundation of all truly Biblical preaching. Therefore a sound hermeneutics is an absolute *desiderātum*¹ for the minister of the Word of God.²

1. Because the Protestant pastor views the Bible as the inspired Word of God, he must approach his interpretation of the Scripture with a theological frame of reference.
2. When translating a given passage, he must apply the principles of orthodox hermeneutics in his evaluation.
3. We will not discuss the entire subject of biblical interpretation, but I do want to emphasize two concepts that help to define our approach at Grace Doctrine Church: (1) consultation of the original languages and (2) the process of literal interpretation.
4. Dr. Ramm is one of the most respected theologians on the subject of hermeneutics. Following are two more excerpts from his books:

¹ “Desideratum (dē-sid-e-rā'-tum), that which is desired; that which is needed and wanted” (*Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary: Unabridged*, 2d ed., vol. 1 [Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1962], s.v. “desideratum.”)

² Bernard L. Ramm and Others, *Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), 5–6.



The great doctrines of our Christian faith can be established in any responsible or competent manner only by the interpretation from the original languages. The interpreter who interprets Scripture only in his modern language is always working with a linguistic veil between himself and original texts. And he never knows how thin or how thick this veil is.³

5. The best presentation of the original languages for us in the twenty-first century is the amalgamation into a Hebrew and Greek Bible of the most reliable manuscripts extant from the ancient world. The identification of these manuscripts is accomplished under the science of *textual criticism*. On this subject, Dr. Ramm provides more helpful information:

The conservative Protestant interpreter comes to his text believing in its divine inspiration. The interpreter presumes that the Protestant canon has been demonstrated to be the true content of Sacred Scripture. (p. 7)

After the Sacred Canon has been settled, the next task is to determine its true text. There is no single manuscript of the Old or New Testament which is *the official manuscript*. There are *manuscripts*. A study of these manuscripts reveals many differences. The first task is to collect all the manuscripts and other materials which will help to determine the true text.

Textual criticism is complicated and difficult. Enormous labors have been spent on collecting, collating, and interpreting the readings. This material is presented in critical editions of the Hebrew and Greek Testaments. (p. 8)

After the most careful scrutiny by scholars of the Old and New Testament texts, it is now evident that the Old and New Testaments are the best preserved texts from antiquity. The number of really important variations of the New Testament that cannot be settled with our present information is very small, and the new manuscripts available from the various caves around the Dead Sea show the remarkable purity of our present Old Testament text.⁴ (pp. 8–9)

6. One of the controversies that has arisen in England and America has to do with the veracity of English translations. The ability to print Bibles was made possible around 1450 by Johannes Gutenberg's invention of a printing press with movable type. This was followed quickly by the Protestant Reformation and the English translation of the Bible by William Tyndale, both occurring in the early 1500s.

³ Bernard L. Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics*, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 117.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 8–9.



Other translations came quickly thereafter: the Geneva Bible, which became the favorite version of English-speaking Protestants, but church leaders in England found it to be unacceptable. They soon provided an alternative that was called the Bishops' Bible.

Both the Geneva and Bishops' Bibles were to be displaced by the "Authorized Version" in 1611. Also known as the King James Version, it became the Bible of English-speaking Protestants for 300 years. Its inception occurred at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 between Anglican bishops and the Puritans. At that conference, John Reynolds, president of Corpus Christi College, suggested a new translation of the Bible.

King James I agreed to this and commissioned forty-seven language scholars to perform what was formally a revision of the Bishops' Bible. A brief history of the origin of the King James Bible follows:

Elizabeth, Queen of England, had a beautiful cousin, Mary Stuart, who had returned from France in 1561 to take her rightful place as Queen of the Scots. Scotland was in a state of turbulence: the new faith preached by John Knox swept across the locks; and Catholic Mary was held in contempt. Then Mary unwisely married the Scottish Lord Darnley. This created further antagonism to the Scots because he was Catholic.

The Scots had become Calvinistic in their beliefs and resented Mary's Romanism and the influence of her French court. The people were determined that never again should the Roman Church be allowed to gain and hold political power in their nation. Mary was forced to abdicate in favor of her infant son, who then became James VI of Scotland. (p. 47)

James was reared a Protestant. He was taught Calvinistic theology, Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Quite a student, he could discourse on theological subjects in both English and Latin. When Elizabeth died, she left no heirs, thus ending the House of Tudor. James VI was brought down from Scotland and crowned James I of England, beginning the reign of the House of Stuart.

The year was 1603. The Puritans were in revolt against the established church. One thousand Puritan preachers had gathered to write a petition. They beseeched his Majesty and Parliament for a change in the established church service and removal of ... the sign of the cross. This petition became known in history as the Millenary Petition because of the thousand signatures affixed to it. It resulted in the Hampton Court Conference on January 14, 1603, over which King James presided. It was during one of the endless debates that the leader of the Puritans, John Reynolds, said, "May your Majesty be pleased, that the Bible be new translated, such as are extant not answering to the original." (p. 48)



On July 22, 1604, the King announced that he had appointed fifty-four men to make the new translation. How did he select the scholars? His only requirement was that they must be good linguists. Half of them were Hebrew experts and the other half experts in Greek. The list included Anglicans and Puritans, believers and unbelievers. Of those selected, seven men died before the work was begun. Actually, only forty-seven men worked on what we call today “The Authorized” or “King James Version of the Bible.”⁵ (p. 49)

7. The development of English translations has continued until this day and made necessary by the discovery of older manuscripts. Within fifteen years of the publication of the King James Version, Codex Alexandrīnus was discovered in Turkey. It dates to the fifth century and contains most of the New Testament. Since then over 5,000 manuscripts of the Bible have been discovered that are more ancient and more accurate than those that had been used as the basis for the Authorized Version. Major among these were Codex Sinaiticus in 1844, a complete New Testament manuscript dating back to the fourth century, and greater accessibility to the fourth-century manuscript, Codex Vaticanus.
8. B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort established the principles for the science of textual criticism. In 1881 their two-volume work, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, was published and relied heavily on the codices, Alexandrīnus and Vaticanus.
9. In addition to the work of these men we must also mention philologists Adolf Deissmann and Hermann von Soden:

⁵ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Canonicity* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1973), 49–49.

