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# THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE: A Doctrine Under Fire

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## Introduction

Arguably the single most contributing cause to a flawed worldview is the denial of the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture. Inerrancy of Scripture means that “Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.”<sup>1</sup> For Christians to accurately interpret Scripture, they must regard it as infallible in its entirety, acknowledging the authority of each passage and its conformity to the rest of the Biblical Canon. This truth is foundational in forming a biblical worldview, and must be honored to properly engage in biblical exegesis. For the non-Christian, denial of the inerrancy of Scripture is to be expected, but for the believer in Christ as Lord and Savior, the error bears grievous consequences. Objections to this doctrine outside of the body of believers are vast; “if every one of them were written down... even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (John 21:25b [NIV]).<sup>2</sup> This study will focus on the Christian denial of the inerrancy of Scripture, the consequences of such denial and the evidences that secure the doctrine’s validity. Attempts to approach the doctrine objectively have been exhausted, but the presupposition of the inerrancy of Scripture does exist and therefore must be acknowledged. The doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture is integral in the life of the believer, and supported by Scripture and its sovereign author.

## Scriptural Inerrancy

The most prevalent definitions for Scriptural Inerrancy fall into two categories: without error and containing some degree of error. The word “inerrant” when stripped down to its Latin roots describes something not (*in*) erring (*errant*), or “without error.”<sup>3</sup> Logic only follows that any proper definition of Scriptural Inerrancy should at least include “Scripture free from error.” Even under this “defining umbrella” are found different views: mainly the inerrant view and the literalist view. Primarily held by Evangelicals, the inerrant position finds all portions of the Bible authoritative, natural and spiritual, but allows for certain “truths” to be conveyed through poetic or metaphorical means (i.e., “the Bible is God’s Word and all that it says is true”).<sup>4</sup> The more stringent literalist position holds

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<sup>1</sup> Rolland McCune, *A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity*, Vol 1. (Allen Park, MI: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 90.

<sup>2</sup> This Scripture reference is not meant to reflect the original context, but instead to convey a similar idea.

<sup>3</sup> McCune, *A Systematic Theology*, 90.

that all Scripture is to be taken without any qualification whatsoever (i.e., “the bible is the actual Word of God, and is to be taken literally, word for word”).<sup>5</sup> The inerrant and literal views will not be explored. Instead, their common trait: Scripture’s Inerrancy, will be studied and tested.

Arguably the most effective argument for the inerrancy of Scripture is the Standard Deductive Argument: “God is true (Rom. 3:4); the Scriptures were breathed out by God (2 Tim. 3:16); therefore, the Scriptures are true (since they came from the breath of God who is true).”<sup>6</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie remarks that just because someone denies Scripture’s inerrancy, doesn’t necessarily mean that they deny the truth of God. Often the argument is made that because God used fallible men, the product of their work (the Bible) contains errors.<sup>7</sup> Each argument appears to stand on its own merit, but one falls to the test of Scripture. 2 Peter 1:21 informs that “no prophesy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” ([ESV]). The words transcribed by fallible men were “delivered” by the Holy Spirit, removing any opportunity for human error to enter Scripture. When applied to the arguments in question, only the Standard Deductive Argument aligns with Scripture.

The Standard Deductive Argument can be further tested by examining the validity of the statement: “God is true.” Armin Baum makes the argument for the truthfulness of God by presenting passages such as Hebrews 6:18 (“it is impossible for God to lie” [ESV]), Romans 3:4 (“let God be true, and every human being a liar” [NIV]), and John 3:33 (“Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true” [ESV]).<sup>8</sup> Here, the obvious dilemma of Scripture affirming the Inerrancy of Scripture emerges, and therefore must be addressed. As this case study pertains specifically to believers in Christ, the presupposition of Christ’s deity can be assumed. John Goldingay inadvertently provides a key insight on the matter, with the observation that when questioned on matters of faith and life, Christ almost always referred to Scripture, often beginning with the words “truly I say to you”

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<sup>4</sup> Ted G. Jelen, Clyde Wilcox and Corwin E. Smidt, "Biblical Literalism and Inerrancy: A Methodological Investigation," *Sociological Analysis* 51, no. 3 (Fall, 1990): 307.

<sup>5</sup> Jelen, Wilcox and Smidt, "Biblical Literalism and Inerrancy," 307.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, "Some Important Aspects of Biblical Inerrancy," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136, no. 541 (January 1979): 16-24.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Armin D. Baum, "Is New Testament Inerrancy a New Testament Concept? A Traditional and Therefore Open-Minded Answer," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 57, no. 2 (06, 2014): 265-80.

(Matt 16:28; Mark 9:1).<sup>9</sup> This begs the question: would Christ, Son of God, have referred to Scripture when dealing with matters of spirituality and life, if it contained errors? Such a disregard for truth would contradict His own claims of honesty (John 8:45-46). Additionally, the doctrine of inspiration can be presumed, allowing for the authoritative application of passages such as 2 Timothy 3:16 regarding all Scripture as having been “breathed out by God” ([ESV]). Michael Grisanti notes that God’s very involvement in “inscripturation” demonstrates how Scripture ultimately comes from Him.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture stands up to the tests of reason and exegesis, and though the number of attacks on its validity have seen a significant rise in recent years, the doctrine is one of deep-rooted origin.

### Origin and History

One of the first known external references to scriptural inerrancy is found within Augustine’s 82<sup>nd</sup> letter (AD 405). In his letter, the church father wrote to Jerome, a theological confidant, distinguishing the inerrant books of the Bible from “the errant theological treatises of his colleague: ‘For I confess to your Charity that I have learned to yield this respect and honor only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error.’”<sup>11</sup> The doctrine emerges again in Martin Luther’s argument in defense of all the articles (1521). The German reformer quotes from Augustine’s 82<sup>nd</sup> letter to distinguish between the errant teachers of the church and inerrant Scripture.<sup>12</sup> Augustine’s letter is referenced once again in the Roman Catholic Constitution *Dei Verbum* (1965) to assert the inerrancy of Scripture.<sup>13</sup> Not long after, the doctrine would be addressed in the Evangelical Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978), which affirmed that Scripture is free of both error and deceit.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> John Goldingay, "Divine Ideals, Human Stubbornness, and Scriptural Inerrancy," *Transformation* 2, no. 4 (1985): 1-4.

<sup>10</sup> Michael A. Grisanti, "Inspiration, Inerrancy, and the OT Canon: The Place of Textual Updating in an Inerrant View of Scripture," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44, no. 4 (12, 2001): 577.

<sup>11</sup> Baum, "Is New Testament Inerrancy a New Testament Concept?," 265-80.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

Contrary to many objectors, the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy is not one of recent development. Instead it seems to have seen its heyday, and has now become a breeding ground for controversy. Long gone are the days of evangelical President Jimmy Carter, when polls revealed that anywhere between thirty to fifty million Americans claimed to be evangelicals and Time Magazine dubbed 1976 “the year of the evangelical.”<sup>15</sup> Postmodernism brought skepticism and the denial of absolute truth, resulting in distortion and refusal of scriptural inerrancy. “A number of authors want to exclude a commitment to biblical inerrancy as a major defining characteristic of an evangelical's beliefs.”<sup>16</sup>

### Arguments Against Inerrancy

Author John Bartkowski poses the idea that the existence of contradicting conclusions reached by conservative authors who subscribe to scriptural inerrancy is evidence of an errant source: e.g., both authors A&B hold the bible to be entirely true but arrive at different conclusions in their interpretations, therefore the bible is not entirely true. This improper use of syllogisms is easily detected when Bartkowski's ideology is stripped of its seemingly relevant case samples. His first analysis pits authors Larry Christenson and Ginger Gabriel against each other in their different takes on biblical marriage models. Christenson references Ephesians 5:22-24 in his support of the submission of wives to their husbands.<sup>17</sup> Gabriel takes an entirely different approach to the biblical marriage model, referencing Ephesians 5:21 to make the argument that “the Bible calls for mutual submission.”<sup>18</sup> In his other case study, Bartkowski reveals the stark contrast in the interpretations of authors James Dobson and Ross Campbell on a biblical parenting model. It is undeniably true that in each of these cases, the individuals have arrived at contrasting biblically derived conclusions. However, this no more proves the errancy of Scripture than the common occurrence of conflicting eyewitness accounts jeopardizes the integrity of the event witnessed. In the court of law, eye witness testimony is considered the least reliable interpretation of events. When two individuals, having witnessed the same event, present their inconsistent

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<sup>15</sup> John D. Woodbridge, "Recent Interpretations of Biblical Authority, Part 4: Is Biblical Inerrancy a Fundamentalist Doctrine?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 142, no. 568: 292-305.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> John Bartkowski, "Beyond Biblical Literalism and Inerrancy: Conservative Protestants and the Hermeneutic Interpretation of Scripture," *Sociology of Religion* 57, no. 3 (Fall, 1996): 259-72.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

testimonies, it is not derived that the event contained inconsistencies, but instead that some errors were made in the interpretations of said event. The absolute truth of Scripture is no different than the absolute truth of a crime committed. Those interpreting each may be close to the truth, or far from it, but the truth itself is never jeopardized.

The next commonly proposed argument against the inerrancy of Scripture is the involvement of man in its composition. Reverend J. Terrance Forestell states that “in the case of Sacred Scripture, we are dealing with human instruments.”<sup>19</sup> Taking a different approach from the more common argument that Scripture contains error because of its “human authorship” (a matter that will receive further attention at a later point), Forestell suggests that for God to use man as a mere “secretary” goes against his “all-wise” and “all-gentle” characteristics.<sup>20</sup> The reverend argues that scriptural inerrancy is not found within the text itself, but in the church’s interpretation of the text. Forestell describes the process of inspiration: “God chose to reveal Himself, conditioning His Scriptures to the lives and times of the sacred author, and leaving them to a living organ of interpretation... We must ask ourselves to what extent his speculative judgment is at play in the composition of his work.”<sup>21</sup> Forestell touches on some truths, but arrives at a conclusion which contradicts the defining characteristics of scriptural inerrancy. In stating that “the criterion of inerrancy lies in the intention of the sacred author and not in the material content of his text,” Forestell successfully transfers the attribute of inerrancy from the Scriptures to the individuals interpreting them, in this case the Roman Catholic Church. Not all Christians who oppose Scriptural inerrancy have completely abandoned the doctrine. There are many that would argue for partial inerrancy of Scripture.

### Partial Inerrancy

There are many Christians who would present their own interpretations of the inerrancy of Scripture. Some have argued that “the Bible is inspired truth about God, important in the life of believers, but not necessarily authoritative in all matters. It contains a mixture of literal and symbolic truth and some human errors.”<sup>22</sup> Many would even allow for the acceptance of other belief systems

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<sup>19</sup> J. Terence Forestell, "Limitation of Inerrancy," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (January 1958): 9-18.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Forestell, "Limitation of Inerrancy," 9-18.

<sup>22</sup> Andrew Village, "Assessing Belief About the Bible: A Study Among Anglican Laity," *Review of Religious Research* 46, no. 3 (2005): 243-5

alongside Christianity, holding that there is no absolute truth, only what is true for each individual. The result of these variances in the inerrancy of Scripture is a doctrine of limited errancy, which Ryrie astutely deems: errancy.<sup>23</sup>

Bartkowski presents a study suggesting that Christians mainly fall into three groups: “those who subscribe to extended inerrancy, and thereby insist that ‘when Scriptures affirm something as true, it is true exactly and precisely as stated,’ those committed to limited infallibility, in which minor conflicts in textual reports of a specific event (e.g., the Resurrection) are believed not to imply that the event never happened; and lastly those who argue for appropriate inerrancy, thereby attempting to distinguish the ‘essential truths’ of the Gospel (which are believed to be without error) from the Bible's non-essential qualities (e.g., pseudonymous writings, scientific inaccuracies, cultural accommodations).”<sup>24</sup> Deemed partial inerrancy, the views which would differentiate authoritative Scripture from non-authoritative Scripture are left with the burden of explaining how any of Scripture can be trusted. Richard Coleman explains, “the traditional conservative argument has been that if the inerrancy of Scripture is limited in any way, then it cannot be trusted concerning those truths necessary for man's salvation.”<sup>25</sup>

Among those that would subscribe to the partial inerrancy of Scripture is John Weisengoff, who questions the inerrancy of the Old Testament. Weisengoff presents a series of supposed contradictions between Old Testament and New Testament teachings, arguing that the “inconsistencies” prove the errancy of the Old Testament canon. His first piece of evidence is the legislation on marriage found within Deuteronomy 24:1-4, and the contrasting teachings of Jesus in Matthew 19:3-12.<sup>26</sup> In his attempt to prove the existence of opposing teachings, Weisengoff inadvertently presents the solution: “Moses permitted a bill of divorce be given a wife because of the hardness of heart of the ancient Hebrews.”<sup>27</sup> His next course of action is to claim that polygamy is tolerated within the Old Testament and later banned in the New Testament, but he fails to provide scriptural support. Supposing Weisengoff is referring to the multiple references in the Old Testament of men having numerous wives (Gen 4:19; 1 Sam 1:2; 1 Kings 11:3), one is hard

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<sup>23</sup> Ryrie, "Some Important Aspects of Biblical Inerrancy," 16-24.

<sup>24</sup> Bartkowski, "Beyond Biblical Literalism and Inerrancy," 259-72.

<sup>25</sup> Richard J. Coleman, "Biblical Inerrancy: Are We Going Anywhere?," *Theology Today* 31, no. 4 (January 1975): 295-303.

<sup>26</sup> John P. Weisengoff, "Inerrancy of the Old Testament in Religious Matters," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 17, no. 2 (April 1955): 248-257.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

pressed to find any mention of such actions being sanctioned by God. To the contrary, the exact opposite is found (Gen 2:24; Deut 17:17), where God's intent for marriage to be the unity of one man and one wife described in the Old Testament aligns perfectly with the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament.

Weisengoff next attacks the Old Testament's accounts of the oneness of God (Isaiah 45:18), suggesting they oppose the doctrine of the trinity, which he claims emerges in the New Testament.<sup>28</sup> Whether Weisengoff's omitting of passages such as Genesis 1:2 and 1:26 was intentional is unknown, but a close examination of the two reveals the doctrine of the trinity is present throughout the biblical canon. The Hebrew word *rûah* found in Genesis 1:2, commonly translated as *spirit*, is defined as "breath."<sup>29</sup> The process of inspiration is described in 2 Timothy 3:16: "all Scripture is *breathed* out by God" (ESV; italics added for emphasis), and in 2 Peter 1:21: "men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (HCSB). These verses collectively reveal that the same spirit which hovered over the waters in Genesis, referred to as the Holy Spirit, moved men to write the biblical canon. The existence of the trinity in the Old Testament is further expanded on in the gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1 [KJV]). *Word* in this passage derives from the Greek *logos*, which is defined as "a title of Christ."<sup>30</sup> When God spoke creation into existence (Psalm 33:9), it was through the *word*, Jesus Christ. "He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him..." (John 1:2-3b [ESV]). While the doctrine of the trinity may not have been so clearly defined in the Old Testament, it was nonetheless presented for those willing to seek it. More importantly, God did not reveal all in Genesis, but rather presented a narrative which builds throughout the Scriptures. The presence of revelation in the New Testament not found in the Old Testament does not create incongruity, but forms a comprehensive and cohesive story.

Holding a unique perspective on partial inerrancy, Armin Baum poses, "the word 'inerrancy' does not play any significant role in the New Testament."<sup>31</sup> Baum believes the only occurrence of the doctrine within the New Testament is found within Jesus' discussion with the Sadducees over the resurrection of the dead (Matt 22:29; Mark 12:24, 27). Baum further proposes the absence of "comment by any

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<sup>28</sup> Weisengoff, "Inerrancy of the Old Testament in Religious Matters," 248-257.

<sup>29</sup> John R. Kohlenberger III, ed., *The NIV Exhaustive Bible Concordance*, third ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015).

<sup>30</sup> James Strong, *The Strongest Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001).

<sup>31</sup> Baum, "Is New Testament Inerrancy a New Testament Concept?" 265-80.

of his apostles about the truth of the New Testament canon.”<sup>32</sup> To his first point, that Jesus only once displayed a belief of the inerrancy of Scripture, the burden lies with Baum to explain Jesus’ countless references to Scripture (e.g., Luke 24:27), often preceded by the phrase “truly, I say to you” (Matt 5:18 [ESV]). If one accepts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, possessing the truth of God, why would He then regularly refer to teachings that contain errors. The notion Baum presents here is a paradox. Regarding the absence of commentary by apostles on inerrancy, a brief survey of *Holman’s Topical Concordance* on the topic of inerrancy provides more than enough evidence to the contrary of Baum’s statement: “When you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of *men* but as what it really is, the word of *God*” (1 Thess 2:13 [ESV]); “*All Scripture* is breathed out by *God*” (2 Tim 3:16 [ESV]); “For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of *man*, but men spoke from *God* as they were carried along by the *Holy Spirit*” (2 Pet 1:21 [ESV]).<sup>33</sup> Either Baum is unfamiliar with these and similar passages written by the apostles, or he has chosen to omit them in forming his argument.

A great number of those subscribing to partial inerrancy believe that Scripture contains truth within error. Richard Taylor boldly proclaims, “it is possible to maintain a high view of Scripture in a way that inadvertently muzzles the voice of Scripture or fails to take seriously all its features.”<sup>34</sup> Terence Forestell offers his own take on the limitation of inerrancy, presenting the book of Judges as a prime example. He suggests that the author held an objective truth which he set out to convey through the telling of “stories circulating about the heroes of that period,” selected intentionally to support his thesis.<sup>35</sup> Forestell’s theory is constructed of assumption upon assumption, and offers no proof to substantiate his claim. He concludes in a manner not unlike that which he accuses the author of Judges, presenting his own thesis substantiated by his own storytelling of un-authoritative claims: “Since the sacred author himself does not insist upon these details, we are free to subject them to literary and historical criticism without thereby impugning the divine veracity of Sacred Scripture.”<sup>36</sup> In other words, the author of Judges didn’t claim the entire book to be truthful, therefore the only

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<sup>32</sup> Baum, “Is New Testament Inerrancy a New Testament Concept?” 265-80.

<sup>33</sup> Steve Bond, *Holman Concise Topical Concordance* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1998); italics added for emphasis.

<sup>34</sup> Richard A. Taylor, “The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 57, no. 4 (12, 2014): 801-3.

<sup>35</sup> Forestell, “Limitation of Inerrancy,” 9-18.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

conclusion is that parts of the book are untruthful. This negative inference committed by Forestell poses no serious threat to the inerrancy of Scripture.

The most prevalent modern arguments against the inerrancy of Scripture pose contemporary scientific theories and their incompatibilities with the scientific accounts within the Bible. In his article titled "Absolute Biblical Inerrancy is Not Biblical," Paul Seely states: "When the science-history in Genesis 1, as an example, is checked by empirical data, it is proven by that data to be false: e.g., earth history does not begin with a primeval ocean. If we obey Deut. 18:22 and 1 Thess. 5:21, then we must conclude that the science-history in that chapter is not a divine revelation."<sup>37</sup> Seely fails to provide the mentioned "empirical data," therefore one is left to assume that he is referring to the atheistic theory of earth's origin, which presumes earth was formed roughly four and a half billion years ago by clusters of matter expelled from the solar nebula. This theory is purely assumption, and is full of unknowns, one of which ironically being where the earth's water came from. The bible provides an account of the forming of the primeval waters: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth... the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" (Gen 1:1-2 [NIV]). Seely provides only one example to support his notion to separate the secular from the spiritual within Scripture, and offers no evidence to support his claim. The idea of science opposing religion is one of a recent origin. There was a time when religion was regarded as one of the pillars of science. Men of faith such as Galileo and Isaac Newton made significant contributions to science, having believed that scientific innovation was possible because God made man in His image, able to discover the wonders of God's creation. Atheists of the time held that much of the universe was without structure and impossible to understand. Many modern scientific and archeologic discoveries support the claims within Scripture (e.g., the discovery of salt water fish in the Midwest supporting the account of a global flood found in Genesis); to explore them all would exhaust the limitations of this work. A prime reference for more information on the topic is [answersingenesis.org](http://answersingenesis.org).

John Montgomery reasons that "Spiritual facts ('messages of faith') cannot be placed in an airtight compartment so as to separate them from secular facts (scientific and historical information)."<sup>38</sup> It is true that there is little known about the method by which God formed the primeval waters, but in the words of Montgomery: "If the scientific and historical material in the Bible--which can in principle be checked for accuracy--is not reliable, why should anyone accept the

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<sup>37</sup> Paul H. Seely, "Absolute Biblical Inerrancy is Not Biblical," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 63, no. 1 (2011): 71.

<sup>38</sup> John Warwick Montgomery, "A Reply to Lamoureux's Review of Beale's *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism*," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 62, no. 4 (2010): 302.

spiritual/faith material set forth there--which cannot be checked?"<sup>39</sup> Or in the words of Christ, "I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?" (John 3:12 [NIV]). The partial belief of Scripture's inerrancy can be just as dangerous as omitting the doctrine entirely, and can lead to perilous consequences.

### Consequences of Denial

Refusal of the inerrancy of Scripture is a momentous error, breeding doubt, uncertainty, confusion and false doctrine. The denial or partial belief of the inerrancy of Scripture removes God from his throne; the interpreter playing the role of usurper. Evidence for the existence of this flawed biblical worldview is immense, with perpetrators ranging from new-converts to those long in the faith. D.A. Carson describes this party as "supernaturalists;" those caught in between the worldviews of scriptural inerrancy and scriptural irrelevance.<sup>40</sup> Carson believes that these individuals struggle with the authority of Scripture, and consequently slip closer and closer to standing over Scripture.<sup>41</sup>

A lack of respect for the authority of Scripture leads to a lesser appreciation of God's Word. In a study conducted to determine whether liberal or conservative dogmas correlated with time spent reading God's Word, it was discovered that those who held conservative beliefs were more likely to read their Bible regularly. In his article titled "Assessing Belief About the Bible: A Study among Anglican Laity," Andrew village shares the results of said study, which reveal the positive correlation between conservative dogmas and regular Bible reading, and the negative correlation between more liberal dogmas and regular Scripture study.<sup>42</sup> Such findings only confirm the significance of the authority of Scripture in the life of a believer. In "Some Important Aspects of Biblical Inerrancy," Ryrie describes how the inerrancy of Scripture and the doctrine of authority are basic to theology: "One's view of inerrancy does affect one's doctrine of inspiration, and that in turn is bound to affect the concept of the authority of the Bible which is basic to the interpretation and application of its message."<sup>43</sup> The consequence of abandoning

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<sup>39</sup> Montgomery, "A Reply to Lamoureux's Review," 302.

<sup>40</sup> D. A. Carson, John Frame and Ben Witherington, "Plenary Discussion on Biblical Inerrancy," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 57, no. 1 (03, 2014): 41-62.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Village, "Assessing Belief About the Bible," 243-54.

<sup>43</sup> Ryrie, "Some Important Aspects of Biblical Inerrancy," 16-24.

complete commitment to the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture is the forfeit of sound theology.

### Conclusion and Applications

The awareness and acceptance of Scriptural inerrancy does not guarantee inerrant interpretation and application of Scripture. The believer in Christ should always approach the Holy Scriptures with prayer, reverence and dedication to proper exegesis. Scriptural inerrancy is not the sole doctrine and academic tool used when observing and interpreting God's Word. One must also recognize that there are variances in translations, and possess the ability and tools to refer to the original Greek and Hebrew texts. In response to the belief held by some, that all translations of God's Word are inerrant, Van Kuiken warns that this perspective opens the door to accepting apocryphal works.<sup>44</sup> One must also be aware of the genres found within Scripture (and the affect certain writing styles have on the delivering of truths (e.g., Proverbs should not be interpreted as promises). In the words of D.A. Carson, one must possess "literary chops" and be sensitive to the text, recognizing the different types of literature found within Scripture.<sup>45</sup>

The doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture provides the believer with the necessary foundation for building a biblical worldview. It should be utilized when answering all of life's significant questions, whether matters of science, history, philosophy or faith. The believer must not only submit to the authority of Scripture, but also be able to provide a reason for their beliefs (1 Peter 3:15). Christians must be aware of the differences of beliefs present among the body of believers, and learn how to correct their brethren "with great patience and instruction" (2 Tim 4:2 [NASB]). Regarding those that do not adhere to Scriptural inerrancy, John M. Frame explains that it is not a difference in argument or translation, but of presupposition and "heart orientation."<sup>46</sup> There are also those that question the truth of Scripture simply because they find it cryptic and difficult to understand. Should those same individuals deny the advancements in quantum physics merely because they lack education and dedicated study in the field?

Whether due to a hardening of heart, or misunderstanding, those that refuse the inerrancy of Scripture share a need for the life-changing love of Christ. John D.

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<sup>44</sup> E. Jerome Van Kuiken, John Walton and Brent Sandy, "John Walton's Lost Worlds and God's Loosed Word: Implications for Inerrancy, Canon, and Creation/An Expanded View of Biblical Authority: A Response to Van Kuiken," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 58, no. 4 (12, 2015): 679,691,693-695.

<sup>45</sup> Carson, Frame and Witherington, "Plenary Discussion on Biblical Inerrancy," 41-62.

<sup>46</sup> John M. Frame, "Inerrancy: A Place to Live," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 57, no. 1 (03, 2014): 29-39.

Woodbridge offers advice on confronting those who have strayed from the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture: “Evangelicals holding to Biblical inerrancy must take their stand to uphold the authority of God's precious written Word, which speaks of the Living Word, the loving Savior Jesus Christ. And may believers show that they truly love Him by loving one another and by keeping His commandments.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Woodbridge, "Recent Interpretations of Biblical Authority, Part 4," 292-305.

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