

ATTENTION!

Business Meeting: next Sunday, August 14 at 2:30 p.m.

SPEAKER TODAY...THANK YOU!

Ron Robinson

Reasons to Listen to God

“Listen, my son, and accept my sayings, and the years of your life will be many. I have instructed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; and if you run, you will not stumble. Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.”

Proverbs 4:10-13

August Birthdays

12 Debbie Hoffman 12 Noemi Critchfield

August Anniversaries

24 Jack and Noemi Critchfield

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Website:
indiochurchofchrist.com

Preacher:
Jack Critchfield

Church of Christ
81-377 Ave 46
Indio, CA 92201
(760) 342-1859

(Address Service Requested)

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The Inspiration of the Bible

Mike Johnson

Many people do not believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures, and this number seems to be growing. There are even some religious people who deny “inspiration” in the sense that the Scriptures teach it. They define inspiration to mean only that the Bible bears the marks of literary genius, and the Bible is inspired only in the sense that Shakespeare was inspired!

God has inspired the Bible. II Timothy 3:16 says, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God. . .*” The Greek expression found in this verse means literally “God-breathed.” So the Scriptures are “God-breathed, i.e., God is the author of them; they are the “product” of His breath.

God used certain people who were guided by the Holy Spirit to reveal His will to us (note 2 Peter 1:21, John 16:13, Ephesians 3:3-5). The Bible did not originate through the mind of man, but instead, it is God speaking through man.

As noted, different people mean different things by inspiration. Those who say that the Bible is inspired only in the sense of literary genius do not think that the Bible is from God. Other people say that the Bible is from God, but it is not verbally inspired. They say that God inspired the general thoughts or ideas of the writers, but not their very words. Thus, according to this position, the inspired writers could have erred in conveying the general thoughts, and we cannot depend on every word of the Scriptures.

This position does not correctly represent the sense in which God has inspired the Bible. It is “verbally” (word-for-word) inspired. I

Corinthians 2:13 makes it easy for us to see this as Paul said, *“These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”* The NASB says, “. . . *not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.*” Thus, in showing verbal inspiration, Paul makes an argument in Galatians 3:16 based on the singular or plural nature of a word. Also, John 8:58 has Jesus making an argument based on the tense of a verb. This kind of reasoning means little if the Bible is not verbally inspired.

It is clear that the Bible is a book inspired by God, and inspiration means verbal inspiration. The Bible is “God speaking to us,” and we need to carefully listen to what it says.

Ink Blot Bible Class

By Jack Critchfield

When I was a child growing up, my brother and I knew we were expected to have our bible class studies prepared before Sunday or Wednesday came around. In fact, we knew better than to go to class without being prepared because we would not only embarrass ourselves but also our parents. As time passed, both my brother and I began to teach bible classes. Preparation was essential then and still is. But unfortunately, many do not come to bible class prepared to accurately handle the word of truth.

If this does not apply to you, please forgive me. However, over the years my impression of what often happens in Bible class goes something like this. People show up and open their Bibles to a passage which generally begins where the class left off the previous meeting. Some in the class have had their Bibles open to this spot during the week. The teacher reads the passage under discussion and makes some comments, and members of the class react to it. “React” being the key word here. The Bible is read, and then people start talking about “what this passage means to me” as

though God’s word was some sort of Rorschach test or word-association exercise. No study, no work; a plethora of opinions, suppositions, and I’ve-always-thoughts.

When the Apostle Paul was in Thessalonica on his second missionary journey, he encountered opposition to his preaching. He was accused of acting *“contrary to the decrees of Caesar...”* (Acts 17:7). Yet, as we continue our reading of the account, we notice a distinct contrast between those in Thessalonica and the Bereans. The text says, *“Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so”* (Acts 17:11).

The Greek verb translated “examining” in this passage is used sixteen times in the New Testament, often carrying with it the idea of examining of a witness or evidence in a legal proceeding. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon says the word, *anakrino*, means “to investigate, examine, inquire into, scrutinize, sift, question; specifically in a forensic sense of a judge to hold an investigation.”

The reason the nobility of the Bereans is mentioned is they spent time studying (putting in effort) God’s word to find out the accuracy of what is said. In other words, what God commands. What I think or feel does not matter. What does matter is what mattered to the Bereans – whether what I think, or feel is in line with God’s wishes. If it is not, there is an adjustment due to be made to my thinking or feeling.

So long as we approach Bible class as some sort of group therapy read-and-react exercise, we will learn more about each other than we will about God and what He expects. When we approach it as an examination of the message Jehovah God has sent, we will have the opportunity to be “corrected” and “trained” and *“equipped for every good work”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17).