

It is instructive to note that in this definition inspiration is a special, extraordinary, supernatural act of the Holy Spirit; and that this act pertains to the writers of sacred Scripture at the time of their writing. As such, inspiration refers to the sacred writings as originally penned (the autographs), and says nothing about subsequent copies, versions or translations (the apographs, as they are called). Although this view of inspiration was commonly held by evangelical Christians in the first half of the twentieth century (with some exceptions), it may no longer be taken for granted as *the* view of those who profess to be evangelical.

In recent years we have seen much controversy among evangelicals on the question of the nature and extent of inspiration. This polemic has been stimulated and abetted by such works as Dewey Beegle's *The Inspiration of Scripture* (1963), H. M. Kuitert's *Do You Understand What You Read?* (1970), Beegle's *Scripture, Tradition and Infallibility* (1973), and G. C. Berkouwer's *Holy Scripture*, published in English translation in 1975. In addition, we have seen several crucial exchanges on the subject in the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation* and the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. Echoes of the deep cleavage among evangelical leaders over inerrancy are still reverberating from the Wenham Conference on Scripture, held some years ago on the campus of Gordon-Conwell School of Theology. And now our attention to the divergence among evangelicals on inspiration and inerrancy is once more directed by Harold Lindsell's book *The Battle for the Bible*, published in 1976.

The issue has become so sharp that Lindsell raises the question of whether the term "evangelical" should be redefined. He says:

Is the term "evangelical" broad enough in its meaning to include within it believers in inerrancy and believers in an inerrancy limited to matters of faith and practice? ... It seems to me that those who believe in inerrancy are left with little choice except to stand for a definition of "evangelical" that includes in it the notion of biblical inerrancy.<sup>1</sup>

Now if a concept of inspiration which implies inerrancy is such a crucial issue to evangelical Christianity, we ought to be able to find it in Scripture. Let us then proceed to the Scriptures themselves, to discover what