

psalms, and one can be sure that if Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, Augustus Toplady, and Reginald Heber had lived in the time of David and Solomon, and been *no more inspired than they were in their own day* [Beegle's italics], some of their hymns of praise to God would have found their way into the Hebrew canon.<sup>2</sup>

Beegle states further:

Undoubtedly, God's Spirit spoke in this vital way to the troubled soul of George Matheson (the Scottish minister who wrote "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go". This is the kind of inspiration of which the psalms were made. There is no difference in kind. If there is any difference, it is a matter of degree.<sup>3</sup>

At this point I should like to introduce some distinctions regarding the question of degrees -- distinctions between inspiration, authority and value. With respect to *inspiration*, I would propose the disjunctive: either Scripture is inspired (i.e., God-breathed), or it is not. Either men spoke from God, or they did not. In the nature of the case, degrees of inspiration are not possible. With respect to *authority*, I think we must make a distinction between the authority of historical truth and the authority of contemporary normativeness. With regard to the authority of historical truth, we must say: either this account in Scripture is historically true (i.e., factual), or it is not; there are no degrees involved. With regard to the authority of contemporary normativeness, I believe we must say: either this law, exhortation, teaching, or example is binding upon our obedience today, or it is not; there are no degrees involved. With respect to *value*, I believe it is permissible and proper to speak of degrees in Scripture. I believe that although no portion of Scripture is more inspired than another, and although no portion is more authoritative than another (either historically or normatively), yet some portions of Scripture are more valuable than others. I believe that a portion which states a basic condition of salvation is more valuable than one which mentions an obscure personage in a tribal enumeration. However, I recognize that certain portions of Scripture could be more valuable or less valuable, depending upon the context and need. Therefore I would understand 2 Tim 3:16 to mean that some portions of Scripture are profitable for teaching, some for refutation of error, some for correction of faults, and