

wand it waves into nonexistence both the problem of errors in transmission and the need for textual criticism! Fourth, Dr. De Koster affirms that the Bibles which lie on our pulpits are inspired, infallible, and inerrant; then he denies inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy for the pulpit ministry; and then he affirms that God gets His inspired, infallible, inerrant Scriptures to the faithful in the pew. If this combination of statements seems mind-boggling, it should be remembered that to Dr. De Koster it is an "inexplicable mystery" which he is "naive enough to believe." Frankly, such a confession of belief seems more than faintly reminiscent of Tertullian's "I believe it because it is incredible," or Kierkegaard's "I believe it because it is absurd!"

Although this exchange between Dr. Lester De Koster and Dr. Edwin H. Palmer does not serve particularly to illuminate the discussion concerning the value of the doctrine of inerrancy (since we do not possess the originals) and concerning our ability to say that we are proclaiming the word, sound doctrine, and truth today (since we possess only errant copies), yet it serves to illustrate the kinds of tensions occasioned by the distinction between inerrant originals and errant copies. To these tensions we must now address ourselves.

The Concept of "Inspiredness"

In a paper first presented first presented at the 1977 Summer Theological Institute of Biblical Theological Seminary (Part One, above), I proposed a concept for which I coined the term "inspiredness." Under the general term "inspired," I included two terms which are more specific: "inspiration" and "inspiredness." "Inspiration" was defined as:

...that special act of the Holy Spirit by which He guided the writers of the books of sacred Scripture, so that their words should convey the thoughts He wished conveyed, should bear a proper relationship to the thoughts of the other books of Scripture, and should be kept free from error in thought, fact, doctrine, and judgment.

In brief, inspiration is the supernatural act of the Holy Spirit by which God's Word was inscripturated.

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