

The Fear of the Lord

Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

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*"If **my** people,
which are **called** by my name,
shall **humble** themselves,
and **pray**,
and **seek** my face,
and **turn** from their wicked ways;
then **will I hear** from heaven,
and **will forgive** their sin,
and **will heal** their land."*

2 Chronicles 7:14

This is a call for revival. A revival of the Word of God precedes a revival of the people of God, as in the days of King Josiah. The purpose of this paper is to call us back to the Word of God and the Fear of the Lord, which accompanies repentance and revival. To articulate the Biblical doctrine of Inerrancy anew; this begins with a **high view of scripture** rooted in its divine authorship. Its authenticity and thereby authority lies in the Biblical and historical understanding of Inerrancy; of a **100%** pure Word of God given so by Him in its original by Divine Inspiration and kept so by Him in its copy by Divine Preservation. We've dropped the baton on this doctrine central to all others as taught in the scriptures, handed to us as memorialized in the Reformers' Confessions and recorded in our SBC heritage with an unbroken string of witnesses back to our early Baptist ancestry. Now, over 100 years later the result of our sin is; we have a **low view of scripture**, a post-Christian culture and a redefinition of the Family. The remedy is to obey God in humbling ourselves and repent and began anew boldly proclaiming the truth of the Bible for what it is; the **100%** pure, inerrant Word of God: ***"So then faith cometh by hear and hearing by the Word of God."*** May God's *Standard Bearers* rise to their calling!

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

Section One

Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

Beginning of Excerpts (from rough draft)

Introduction ~ Adrift

"If the boat is adrift, it will never drift upriver. It will only drift downriver. Now it may drift down the left side of the bank in liberalism. It may drift down the center of the river in neo-orthodoxy. Or it may drift down the right side of the river in what is confessing conservatism but with an ecumenical flair. But make no mistake about it; the boat will drift down the river..."¹ Dr. Paige Patterson

The issue we face today is articulating a coherent doctrine of inerrancy which would confront all heresies, including the latest, the 'emerging church' one. Every conservative when challenged on the doctrine of divine inspiration would immediately quote 2Timothy 3:16, but few could provide a scripture articulating a defense of the doctrine of divine preservation for which there are more scriptures. The reason they cannot is they have never been taught the doctrine of divine preservation of the Word of God.

The Biblical and historical definition of inerrancy rest upon two pillars: the divine inspiration of the original and the divine preservation of the copy. This is the only chain of evidence upon which inerrancy can be defended. Otherwise, how would you defend the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, which teaches the Word of God is **100%** pure, not **almost** pure? It's the position held by Protestantism up until the last 100 hundred year when we left this doctrine as taught in the Word of God and held by our Baptist heritage, hence the explanation for the 'emerging church'; it was only inevitable once we loosed from our moorings of the Biblical and historical doctrine of Inerrancy. Revival is our only hope and this is accomplished in returning to the Fear of the Lord which accompanies repentance.² The Fear of the Lord starts with a return to a **high view** of scripture whereby its integrity and authority is re-established.

My thesis is we need to restore the doctrine of the Fear of the Lord to our generation by restoring the authority of the Word of God. Its authority is derived from its authenticity; and its authenticity is derived from its authorship; being **100%** pure in its original; as received by divine inspiration and **100%** pure in its copy; as kept by divine preservation. This is in stark contrast to today's definition of an **almost** pure Word of God, being **almost** restored to its original by man. The integrity of scripture which leads to faith and obedience is the chain of:

Authorship³ → Authenticity → Authority → Faith⁴ → Fear of the Lord → Obedience → Fruitfulness → Witness

Re-establishing Biblical inerrancy is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end, restoring an understanding of the Fear of the Lord⁵. The Fear of the Lord means conducting ourselves according to the reality there are divine consequences for all of our behavior.⁶ We can 'arrive' at this reality one of one of two ways;⁷ one is by walking in faith, believing His Word is true and experiencing the blessings of His wisdom.⁸

¹ Patterson, *Vision for the Future*, SWBTS, Our Heritage. Patterson is the President of Southwestern Baptist Theology Seminary and past president SBC., <http://www.swbts.edu/centennial/vision.cfm>

² Hebrews 6:9

³ Authorship is founded on the doctrine of divine preservation, 1Timothy 3:16; 2Peter 1:18-21

⁴ How we hear it and receive it, whether as the Word of God or man determines our faith and faithfulness, "*So then faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of God*", Romans 10:17,

⁵ Jeremiah 9:23-24

⁶ Galatians 6:7-9.

⁷ Jeremiah 9:23-24

⁸ John 16:13; 1John 2:26-27; John 14:21-24; 1Kings 19:12; Proverbs 3; Proverbs 8

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The other is in walk by sight, ignoring His Word in favor of our own until we have experienced first-hand the lost we suffer in our inattentiveness.⁹ Our generation has done the latter and wandered in the wilderness of disobedience - and it shows to the point it is difficult to any longer ignore. God calls turning from Him and His Word; wickedness, evil, backsliding, bitter and can be true of a believer as well as an unbeliever:

“Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.” (Jeremiah 2:19; see Act 5:11)

We are **wandering** in the wilderness of unbelief because we are **wondering**, “*hath God said,*”¹⁰ as in the Garden of Eden and the time of Elijah. There is an absence of an authoritative word as in the days of Jesus, “*...for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.*”¹¹ The pathway to revival is to begin rowing our boat back up river to the pier of Biblical inerrancy and the **100%** pure Word, from whence its knot was loosed over 100 years ago. In light of this situation, the above words by Dr. Paige Patterson are worth repeating (emphasis mine):

“If the boat is adrift, it will never drift upriver. It will only drift downriver. Now it may drift down the left side of the bank in liberalism. It may drift down the center of the river in neo-orthodoxy. Or it may drift down the right side of the river in what is confessing conservatism but with an ecumenical flair. **But make no mistake about it; the boat will drift down the river...”¹²**

The church is adrift and rudderless regarding the doctrine of **Biblical** inerrancy, drifting down river, deaf to the impending falls and certain judgment. The church is seemingly oblivious to the ‘**Trojan horse**’ of naturalistic textual criticism whose leaven¹³ increasingly infects, confuses and undermines faith in the Word of God, as witnessed in the ‘emerging church’ heresy. These facts are indisputable by those of integrity and will be demonstrated in this paper as well as the book by Rev. Dr. Floyd N. [Jones](#), Th.D., Ph. D.: [Which Version is the Bible?](#)

This is a call for repentance, beginning with a revival of the Word of God. For a revival of the **Word** of God precedes a revival of the **people** of God. This is the example of the revival in the days of King Josiah¹⁴ following the recovery of the Word of God, ‘**lost**’ during the 55 years of the apostate reign of his grandfather, King Manasseh¹⁵. Again, it is illustrated in the revival at the Reformation when the Word of God was recovered, after being ‘**lost**’ in the Latin of Roman Catholicism, during the thousand years of the Dark Ages. Now, we stand again at the threshold **of the need of another revival, having to recover the ‘lost’ Word of God from the Greek eclectic¹⁶ texts of the naturalistic textual critics after having drifted down river in their boat for these last 129 years.**

⁹ Jeremiah 2:19; Proverbs 1:20-33; 2:21-22; 10:21; Psalms 32:9-10; Matthew 7:24-27; 21:44

¹⁰ Genesis 3:1

¹¹ Mark 1:22b

¹² Patterson, *Vision for the Future*, SWBTS, Our Heritage. Patterson is the President of Southwestern Baptist Theology Seminary and past president SBC., <http://www.swbts.edu/centennial/vision.cfm>

¹³ Matthew 16:6

¹⁴ 1Corinthians 10:11; compare 2Kings 22:11; 2Kings 23:2; 2Kings 23:25 =revival of the nation

¹⁵ 2Kings 21:1-12; Jeremiah 15:4

¹⁶

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In 1881, Westcott and Hort **changed** the Greek text of the New Testament to one of their own '*private interpretation*'¹⁷(sound familiar?) In so doing they rejected the New Testament Greek text which had been '*handed down*'¹⁸ unto us from the Apostles, and is referred to as the '*Textus Receptus*',¹⁹ (Latin for 'received text'), or amplified as '*the text received from the saints*'. In changing the **text of the canon** they forsook not only the text of the **100%** pure Word of God, but equally important they forsook the **Biblical** and historical doctrine of divine **preservation** as held by the early saints, Reformers and our Baptist ancestry as clearly revealed in the Word of God. **All English translations since have been based on their corrupted text**, which includes all modern translations. However, the textual basis for the KJB and NKJV remains the Greek text of the '*Textus Receptus*' (TR).

The overthrow of the *Textus Receptus* did not happen overnight, but was the next inevitable step in the chain of events which had begun in Protestantism 50 years earlier, which today has given birth to its great-great-grandchild, the 'emerging church' heresy. Hopefully, it is now apparent how wrong the remarks are which see this issue only as a '**tempest in a tea pot**' and '**no doctrines are at stake**'. In following the naturalistic textual critic's approach to scripture, **all** the major doctrines and practices are at risk of falling. This is echoed in the warning of **Francis Turretin**, as he stated in the Helvetic Consensus, "**...they thus bring the foundation of our faith and its sacred authority into perilous danger.**"²⁰

One can trace the march to the post-Christian culture from this period in Christendom.²¹ The doctrine of **Biblical inerrancy** rooted in divine inspiration and divine **preservation** was forsaken and subsequently removed from preceding Confessions of Faith, to accommodate this new '**emerging**' view of scripture; replacing **God's preservation** of a **100%** pure Word of God, without error; to **man's restoration** of an **almost** pure 'Bible'. This was the watershed which replaced the **high** view of scripture of being **100%** pure, to a **low** view of scripture, of being **almost** pure.

In the words of the prophet, "**How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons²² of war perished**".²³ We have 'lost' the Word of God to the extent that many can not hold up any Bible and boldly proclaim as they ought "**this the inerrant Word of God 100% pure, without error!**" Then we wonder and grieve why our children question its authority and reject its precepts for their own '*private interpretation*'.

¹⁷ 2Peter 1:20-21, "**Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**"

¹⁸ 2Timothy 2:2, "**And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**" See Romans 1:17b; Hebrews 11:4.

¹⁹ Jones, *Which Version is the Bible?* p. ix; The New Testaments of the King James Bible, William Tyndale's Bible, Luther's German Bible, Olivetan's French Bible, the Geneva Bible (English), as well as many other vernacular versions of the Protestant Reformation were translated from the Greek Text of Stephens, 1550, which (with the Elzevir Text of 1624) is commonly called the *Textus Receptus*, or the Received Text (TR). It is the "Traditional Text" (T.T.) that has been read and preserved by the Greek Orthodox Church throughout the centuries. From it came the Peshitta, the Italic, Celtic, Gallic, and Gothic Bibles, the medieval versions of the evangelical Waldenses and Albigenses, and other versions suppressed by Rome during the Middle Ages.

²⁰ The Helvetica Consensus; at <http://www.wscal.edu/clark/helveticformula.php>.

²¹ The error came to Protestants in America with its 'seed' being planted at Princeton by Archibald Alexander (1772-1851) its Founder and first principal, to the 'fruit' of this error in the new Greek text of Westcott and Hort in 1881; thereby overthrowing the Traditional text of the church and its doctrine of divine preservation. Dr. Floyd Jones will thoroughly demonstrate this error in his published work, *Which Version is the Bible?*. Also see a very insight presentation by Dr. Jeffery Khoo, Principal of Far East Bible College entitle; *Can Verbal Plenary Inspiration Do Without Verbal Plenary Preservation?: The Achilles' Heel Of Princeton Bibliology*, at http://www.febc.edu.sg/BBVol13_1c.htm

²² Ephesians 6:16 "**Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.**"

²³ 2Samuel 1:27

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This trend is documented in a January 2009 study by the Barna Group in titled, "[*Christianity is no Longer Americans' Default Faith*](#)".²⁴ It states (emphasis mine):

"Among individuals who describe themselves as Christian, for instance, close to half believe that Satan does not exist, one-third contend that Jesus sinned while He was on earth, two-fifths say they do not have a responsibility to share the Christian faith with others, and one-quarter dismiss the idea that the Bible is accurate in all of the principles it teaches."

Asked to describe what the research means for American society today, researcher George Barna offered the four following insights (emphasis mine):

- (1) "The Christian faith is less of a life perspective that challenges the supremacy of individualism as it is a **faith being defined through individualism**. Americans are increasingly comfortable picking and choosing what they deem to be helpful and accurate theological views and have become comfortable discarding the rest of the teachings in the Bible." (i.e. their own '*private interpretation*')
- (2) "Growing numbers of people now serve as their own theologian-in-residence. One consequence is that **Americans are embracing an unpredictable and contradictory body of beliefs**. Millions of people who consider themselves Christian now believe that the Bible is totally accurate in all of the lessons it teaches at the same time that they believe Jesus Christ sinned. Millions also contend that they will experience eternal salvation because they confessed their sins and accepted Christ as their savior, but also believe that a person can do enough good works to earn eternal salvation." (i.e. their own '*private interpretation*')
- (3) "In the past, when most people determined their theological and moral points of view, the alternatives from which they chose were exclusively of Christian options - e.g., the Methodist point of view, the Baptist perspective, Catholic teaching, and so forth. Today, **Americans are more likely to pit a variety of non-Christian options against various Christian-based views**. This has resulted in an abundance of unique worldviews based on personal combinations of theology drawn from a smattering of world religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam as well as secularism." (i.e. their own '*private interpretation*')
- (4) "Faith, of whatever variety, is increasingly viral rather than pedagogical. With people spending less time reading the Bible, and becoming less engaged in activities that deepen their biblical literacy, faith views are more often adopted on the basis of dialogue, self-reflection, and observation than teaching. **Feelings and emotions now play a significant role in the development of people's faith views** - in many cases, much more significant than information-based exercises such as listening to preaching and participating in Bible study." (i.e. their own '*private interpretation*')

This study reveals that at the core of this crisis of faith is the doctrine of inerrancy and its impact on the integrity and authority of the Word of God. The erosion of faith in the Word of God, due to the erroneous teaching of inerrancy; that Word of God is **almost** pure is typified in the statement by James A. Sanders, a

²⁴ Barna Group, *Christianity is no Longer Americans' Default Faith*.

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member of the United Bible Society who served on the committee that put out the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible when he states:

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“The NRSV is not the Bible; no translation is the Bible. So what is the Bible? What and whence these texts? I think it is time for us to stop fooling the people, making them think there is just one Bible and that our Bible committee got closer to it than their committee did.

...I have been told by some that this would just destroy the Bible because lay folk still want to think of the Bible as somehow inerrant. It may well be that if there should ever be the possibility of discussing the text of Isaiah with Isaiah, he might very well say, ‘but I did not say that’.”²⁵

It is a crisis of leadership. Think about it, if their pastors, professors and publisher can have their own “*private interpretation*”, like Westcott-Hort and the eclectic critical Greek text of our seminaries, then why cannot they? **We have ‘led by example’, but it is the wrong example, and has produced a self-inflicted loss, creating a crisis of faith in the Word of God in our generation, accompanied by a loss of the Fear of the Lord and everyone doing what they feel is right in their own eyes.** Then we wonder what the source is of this generation’s lax attitude toward the Word of God.

Perhaps by the end of my paper **you will be grieving as King Josiah**, as he rent his mantle and prostrated himself before God after being handed the ‘**lost**’ Word of God and realized the gravity of the situation.²⁶ However, it was not lost to God, only ‘lost’ to his generation as ours today as well as its attending blessing when God said (emphasis mine):

“See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply; and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.” (Deuteronomy 30:15-16)

Josiah realized that his people were under God’s certain judgment for having forsaken His precepts,²⁷ as it appears we have now done in our generation. However, we know God desires us to **rend our hearts** and not our garments; **to humble ourselves and acknowledge our error** and turn to His ways, for our good and His glory. In light of the above I have a question. Dr. Patterson notes in his book, *Anatomy of a Reformation*, the earliest tremor on the controversy of inerrancy was published in an article in 1961 entitled, ‘*Death In the Pot*’, by K. Owen White.²⁸

My question is, in the response of the ‘*conservative insurgence*’ to this issue of inerrancy, did we just replace the chefs and their lethal stew, or did we also take the **final step of changing the recipe of the doctrine of inerrancy** as well, and if so, **where is it?** It appears in the recapturing of our institutions we reclaimed control of the kitchen, but in the turmoil may have understandably overlooked replacing the corrupt recipe that produced the poisonous stew in the first place.

²⁵ Sanders, *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Forty Years*, 1991, p.60,71; published by Biblical Archeology Review.

²⁶ Deuteronomy 28:15-68

²⁷ Deuteronomy 28:15-68

²⁸ Ibid, p.1; http://www.paigepatterson.info/documents/anatomy_of_a_reformation.pdf

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I am now proposing we take the final step and make the recipe right by basing it on the Word of God. As the grey haired conservatives of the 'baby-boomer' generation, we have the recipe in our hearts and heads, having cut our teeth on this doctrine. However, our children's generation does not possess its memory and needs to see and be taught the recipe anew! If we do not leave them the legacy of the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, where will they learn it?

As the Shems²⁹ of our day, we have lived on 'the other side of the flood' of this post-Christian culture. Now, realizing what we know and what the next generation does not, how can we as shepherds neglect teaching our children this truth and providing them the armor to protect them from the wolves already howling at their door, the latest being the 'emerging church' heresy?

As the Word of God forewarns us; "*this know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come,*"³⁰ which we are already witnessing. May we each pray as King David when he petitioned God for the goal of his 'retirement years':

"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to everyone that is to come." (Psalms 71:17-18)

I have one final question for all who stand in defense of the inerrant Word of God, **100% pure**, without error. How would you feel if your pastor, who 'claims' to hold to the Biblical definition of inerrancy, stood in his pulpit next Sunday morning and said the following to those whom he has been charged by God to teach and protect as their shepherd?

"I would like to be sure I have taught you the truth about the Word of God. Therefore here is what I believe and hope you will follow my example of faith. I believe..."

(1) ...God *never* promised to preserve a Bible with 'total truth';

(2) ...The only 'total truth' of the Word of God was in the originals which were inspired by God, but which *no* longer exist;

(3) ...The Bible is not 'total truth' due to the 'slips' by those making the copies of them, but not to be concerned since none of the 'total truth' as been destroyed that would prevent a reader from being saved;

(4) ...There is *no* Bible with 'total truth';

²⁹ Joshua 24:3

³⁰ 2Timothy 3:1-17

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(5) ... It was **never** the expectation or goal of the saints to have a Bible with '**total truth**';

(6) ... Since the saints **never** expected a Bible with '**total truth**' it is no issue to have a Bible with **errors**;

(7) ... The saint's definition of inerrancy embraced a Bible whose '**total truth**' contained **errors**."

Do the above statements alarm you? They should - yet this **is** the definitive statement of **conservatives** on the 'Biblical' doctrine of inerrancy as contained in the Chicago Statement, **signed by the conservatives** of all major denominations, the facts of which will be irrefutable documented in this presentation. These points represent the essence of the Chicago Statement including its implications which I have distilled and paraphrased into layman's language.

Based on the above statements would those sitting in the pews be right in questioning the **authority** of the Word of God? That is what too many do today, and therefore are susceptible to heresies like the 'emerging church'. The generations after us are unsure about the authority of the Word of God due to the confusion of their pastors, professors and publishers. Should we not take a clearer stand to guide and encourage the next generation? At the heart of this issue is the **Fear of man** is trumping the **Fear of the Lord**.

Perhaps it is a good time to draw encouragement from our Baptist heritage and be reminded of the words of K. Owen White, former Pastor of First Baptist Church, Houston and President of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1964. When he states in his book, "*Death in the Pot*;

"If the appeal is made for "academic freedom," let it be said that we gladly grant any man the right to believe what he wants to – but, we do not grant him the right to believe and express views in conflict with our historic position concerning the Bible as the Word of God while he is teaching in one of our schools, built and supported by Baptist funds. ³¹

I wonder what Bro. White would think of his beloved denomination today? We do not give witness to the **Biblical** and historical doctrine of inerrancy in our BF&M and educational curriculum, while affirming an unbiblical one in the Chicago Statement. If we decide to become a better witness, the first thing we need to address is a clearer statement on what we believe regarding the doctrine of the divine **preservation** of the Word of God.

If my premise is true, we need to revise our **educational curriculum** and **Baptist Faith and Message** on **OUR** watch. To amend them, so they unwaveringly articulate the **Biblical** and **historical** definition of inerrancy rooted in divine inspiration, which they **do**; and in divine **preservation**, which they do **not**. Then these will become the '**bread crumbs**' which will safely lead our children out of the woods of error and back to home and **Biblical** inerrancy, even in our absence. It will be our enduring legacy to so do.

³¹ SBC net, A Biblical Heritage <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/heritage/white.asp>

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Our forefathers, in their Confessions of Faith so did and, “*being dead yet speaketh*”,³² who faithfully left behind for us to find the same godly instructions they themselves had received from their forefathers, instructions which will also lead us back to **Biblical** inerrancy, “*...from faith to faith*”³³...”. This need is well stated by D.A. Carson, as quoted by Dr. Denny Burk, Dean Boyce College, in his article, **Inerrancy Is Not Enough: A Proposal To Amend The Doctrinal Basis of the Evangelical Theological Society** (emphasis mine):

*“D. A. Carson has warned in various settings that what is assumed in one generation is often lost in the next.⁴ Rome should have shown us that many things can happen that we have never expected. It should also remind us of the inadequacy of assuming agreement on key doctrinal matters. We cannot foresee what the next challenge will be. That is why Christian groups have historically put into writing what they viewed as the non-negotiable points of agreement.”*³⁴

⁴ One place in print where Carson makes this point is Basics for Believers: An Exposition of Philippians (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, page 26–27)

The following (5) five questions might offer a starting point of the things for us to consider:

- (1) Does the SBC believe we hold an inerrant Word of God (i.e. Bible) that is **100% pure**, without error? Or do we believe, like the naturalistic textual critics, our Bible is **almost** pure?
- (2) Does the SBC include in its definition of Biblical inerrancy divine **inspiration** as well as its divine **preservation**? In other words, **how** do we arrive at the **authenticity** from which the inerrant Word of God (i.e. Bible) derives its **authority** to call us to obey (i.e. The Fear of the Lord)?

Is it so by the promise and character of God to keep it **100% pure** because He said so? Or is its authority ascribed so by man, who affirms it's **almost pure** due to his efforts in its restoration; thereby redefining and undermining the **Biblical** and **historical** understanding of Biblical inerrancy; which is the **only** definition from which the inerrancy, integrity and authority of the Word of God is derived?

- (3) If the SBC does include **divine preservation** of a **100% pure** Word of God, (not **almost** pure) in its definition of Biblical inerrancy, where would one go to find this doctrine **clearly written**, defined and articulated?

If we have not articulate a doctrine of divine **preservation**, perhaps it's time to 'hammer out' one and incorporate it into our BF&M and education curriculum that reflective of our Baptist heritage, the historical witness of the saints and as taught in the Word of God.

- (4) If the doctrine of **divine preservation** is embraced and taught by the SBC, then to which **text** do we point today as the **divinely preserved** Word of God, **100% pure** (not **almost** pure)? **Do we look to**

³² Hebrews 11:4

³³ Romans 1:17b

³⁴ Burk, Denny R. “Inerrancy Is Not Enough.” *Criswell Theological Review* 5, no. 1 (2007): 69-80.

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the *Textus Receptus* as the Greek text of our Bible, as witnessed to by the early saints, the Reformers, our Baptist heritage and the Word of God? If not, then **to which text do we look?**

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- (5) Finally, are our answers to these questions **congruent** with what we **practice**; **does what we 'say' match what we 'do'**? Meaning, is what we teach in our SBC institutions and Confession of Faith reflective of the **Biblical** doctrine of inerrancy that includes divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation** of a **100% pure** Bible (not **almost** pure), which is what we say we believe? Or, is what we **say** and what we **practice** as conflicted and convoluted as that of the Chicago Statement (and ETS), as Dr. Olson alleges?

The questions are legitimate for people of integrity, and necessary to answer if we expect to maintain a witness for the inerrant Word of God; as being **100%** pure and without error, in its original and its copy; our Bible. Perhaps the thought we may have left our Baptist heritage, exchanging our **100%** pure Bible for one with errors causes you to ask yourself in astonishment, **"How in the world did we ever get here?"** If so, then the book by Rev. Dr. Floyd N. Jones, Th.D., Ph.D, [*Which Version is the Bible?*](#) will answer this question. The intent of my paper, *The Fear of the Lord-Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy*, is to 'tee- up' his PowerPoint presentation upon which my paper draws; adding contemporary commentary and practical application to provide a fully appreciation for the layman.

Now let me 'cut to chase' and to the very kernel of truth as to why I believe the doctrine of divine preservation is debated, and why some 'conservatives' seem to stumble ³⁵ at this doctrine. It is because they cannot '**empirically prove the how**' of divine preservation, and in so doing forget a fundamental of hermeneutics; never overthrow the obvious with the obscure; rather always embrace the obvious, and in time by God's grace He will shed more light upon the obscure; remembering it is written, *"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing"*.³⁶ God calls believing what He says, when we do understand; true humility, and a test if we are serving the Fear of the Lord or the fear of man; being a respecter of persons.³⁷

"...be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble". (1Peter 5:5)

One of the most profound examples of this humility and faith is Mary, the mother of Jesus. Just for a moment, let's put ourselves in her shoes, when in a flash Gabriel appears before her out of nowhere. Then proceeds to inform her, *"behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."*³⁸ She asks the obvious, *"How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"* Gabriel responds, *"...with God nothing shall be impossible."* Mary's replies, *"...be it unto me according to thy word..."*. Her confession is an example to all who question in unbelief the promise of God to preserve His Word; yet she requests no further explanation for a promise just as amazing. She took no account of how ridiculous the statement of Gabriel sounded or how it would appear to others, even her husband Joseph; which is why Gabriel was able to proclaimed, *"...thou that art highly favoured [blessed]..."*.

The problem with us is, we do take account and thereby stumble; allowing the Fear of the Lord to be displaced by the fear of man, *"And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."*³⁹ Mary's pure heart of faith and

³⁵ Luke 7:23 *"And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."* See Matthew 21:44; Proverbs 25:2

³⁶ Proverbs 25:2

³⁷ Act 10:34-35 *"I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."*

³⁸ Luke 1:31-38

³⁹ Matthew 13:58

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trust in the Word of God because the hallmark of her life, and her counsel to those who served at the wedding feast in Cana or instructive to us today, *“Whatsoever he saith unto you, **do it.**”*⁴⁰

Introduction ~ Adrift

Our problem with the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy is the same as the one with creationism, it's not 'scientific'; meaning: popular, 'socially acceptable', respectable; hence the **Fear of the Lord** is being trumped by the **fear of man**; even among 'conservatives' who **say** they believe in Biblical inerrancy but in **practice** they do not, being ashamed of the Word of God; not wanting to look 'foolish', *“For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”* (John 12:43)

We will stand on the Word of God as long as we do not have to stand against what is popular, among our own - much less the world. Yet, we are the same shepherds who stand in our pulpits and tell those whom we pastor, not to fear, rather to stand alone and trust God, while we waver in the presence of man on the doctrine central to their faith - repent! We should be fervently teaching them this most precious truth, not shamefully denying it. God says it that settles, whether I believe it or not. Consider for a moment the inconsistency of our behavior by reflecting upon the following two questions.

Question Where's the empirical evidence for your salvation; explain how **does** God do it?

Answer You have no other empirical evidence, other than the Word of God; it's because He said it and you bear witness to the same!⁴¹

Question Where's the empirical evidence for divine preservation of His Word, explain how **does** God do it?

Answer You have no other empirical evidence; other than the Word of God; it's because He said it and the saints bear witness to the same!

Why is it we stand in faith on the Word of God regarding His promise of our salvation, but not on His promise to preserve His Word **100%** pure to all ages?⁴² Jesus told Nicodemus there was **no** way to 'understand' salvation other than the Holy Spirit, our Teacher, who bears witness to our hearts.

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” (John 3:7-8)

Why do we then demand 'empirical' evidence for how God preserved His Word **100%** pure, rather than accept it by faith as we do His promise of salvation? God reprov'd Habakkuk for similar unbelief when He said (emphasis and brackets mine),

⁴⁰ John 2:5

⁴¹ Romans 10:9, ***“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”*** (see: Act 16:30-32; Act 4:12; Revelation 22:17) **click to view: The 4 Spiritual Laws.**

⁴² Psalms 12:6-7; Psalm 33:11; Psalm 33:11; Psalm 100:5; Psalms 111:7-8; Psalms 119:89-90; Isaiah 59:21; Ecclesiastes 3:14; 1Peter 1:25 see Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:18.

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“Behold, his soul which is lifted up [prideful; unbelief] is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.” (Habakkuk 2:4)

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The same Holy Spirit who draws us to Jesus,⁴³ and leads us each day⁴⁴, can also reveal to us to the **100%** pure Word of God, kept by divine preservation; that’s His ‘ministry’.⁴⁵ The scriptures affirms; *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;”* then cannot the same Holy Spirit bear witness to our spirit what is the **100%** pure Word of God?

In closing, God desires a heart that is totally dedicated to Him; however in so doing we are totally vulnerable to the world; yet we trust and rest in God to protect us. God intentionally puts us in circumstances with odds impossible for success without His intervening providential care, *“Thou preparest a table before me **in the presence of mine enemies:...**”*⁴⁶ In order to show Himself strong; causing us to glory and trust Him as our heavenly Father. This is exactly what He did with Gideon;

“And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.” (Judges 7:2)

Perhaps the way God used to whittle down the troops of Gideon to 300 men gives us insight to His heart that we may know Him more intimately⁴⁷;

“...and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the [other] people go every man unto his place.” (Judges 7:5-7)

What’s the difference if I **lap** or **kneel** on one knee to drink from the brook? Well, try it and you will see, as I have done. The answer is; those who **‘lappeth’**, with their mouth to the stream were totally vulnerable to an attack; lying on their bellies with their ‘service belt’ which held their weapons removed and having no vision. Yet they were completely unconcerned for their wellbeing having entrusted it to God and his promise to Gideon, which no doubt Gideon had recited to them and the miracles of the fleece. Like the saints in Revelation, *“...they loved not their lives unto the death”*.⁴⁸

⁴³ John 6:44, *“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:...”*

⁴⁴ 1John 2:27, *“...ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things..”*

⁴⁵ John 16:13, *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:...”*

⁴⁶ Psalms 23:5

⁴⁷ Jeremiah 9:23-24, *“But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.” (see 1Corinthians 10:11)*

⁴⁸ Revelation 12:11

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However, those who knelt on their knee remained fearful for their lives, even after hearing the promise of God. Their hearts were double; not single and therefore blinded by covetousness and the unbelief, anxiety and disobedience which accompanies it (brackets and emphasis mine);

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“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, [double-minded] thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” (Matthew 6:21-34)

Man is not a complicated creature. He has only two concerns in life; **Security** and **Acceptance**. We can get these either from **God** or **man**, but not both; they are mutually exclusive, **“No man can serve two masters...”**.

If God is the source of our **Security** and **Acceptance**, we **will** confidently ‘lappeth’ water; abandoning ourselves to His care and purposes. We will **not** constantly waste our time and opportunities looking around to see what others think; allowing the fear of man to cause us to disbelieve His promises and disobey His commands, but will say; **“The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?”**⁴⁹

Those who **knelt on one knee** to drink represent our tendency to be fearful for our lives. This worry encompasses more than just dying; it includes the fear of our **reputation** dying, our **wealth** dying, our **health** dying, our **relationships** dying, our **opportunities** dying; our **access** dying, in short – our **‘standard of living dying’** to which we have grown accustomed. The same comforts we enjoy by God’s hand now cause us not hear and obey His voice; unless we repent we will lose both.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Philippians 2:5-8)

Oh, how we have left the footprints of Jesus, our Savior and Lord! How would you feel if you wrote something very dear to you and extremely important to those whom you love, then it was represented as not being true to the point they ignored it and suffered loss? It must grieve the Holy Spirit so, the superintendent of the Word, that we’re ashamed to own the Word of Him who gave Himself for us⁵⁰, for fear of man. In order that our **‘standard of living’** remains intact; when Jesus left all for us and went **‘outside the camp’**, rejected by man to purchase out redemption;

⁴⁹ Psalms 118:6

⁵⁰ ☩ This paper is not intended to be theoretical, but worshipful, let’s take a moment and worship Him; [Pass Me N’ot O Gentle Savior](#).

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“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.” (Hebrews 13:12-15)

Introduction ~ Adrift

Dear saints, it's not a sacrifice if it costs you nothing. What is your faith costing you, have you made this world your home, and for fear of losing, therefore you have disobeyed our Lord? Does it break your heart that we have traded the **100%** pure Word of God for a bowl of soup;⁵¹ selling our birthright as the custodians of the Word of God, despising the honor of such a high privilege? If so, then repent, and become part of the solution and not the problem. God does not need mighty numbers; rather pure hearts, who are fixed solely upon Him, as in the days of Gideon;

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.” (2 Chronicles 16:9)

The church is adrift and rudderless regarding the doctrine of **Biblical** inerrancy. This ought not to be. Let's restore the custodianship of the **100%** pure Word of God back to the saints and their shepherds. Reclaiming it from the school of naturalistic textual criticism, whose 'priesthood' sit in judgment of the Word of God rather than letting the Word of God instruct them. Who reject the promises in the Word of God that He gave His Word **100%** pure in the original by divine inspiration and He has kept it **100%** pure in the copy (our Bible) by divine preservation; as witnessed to by the Confessions of the saints of the Reformation and our Baptist ancestry.

The church does not need them to decide if we possess the **100%** Word of God, as so says their own 'dean' of the school of naturalistic textual criticism. The late Dr. Ernest Cadman Colwell (1901-1974), considered the foremost naturalistic textual critic and “dean” of New Testament textual criticism in North America says (brackets and emphasis mine):

“Textual criticism has never existed for those whose New Testament is one of miracle, mystery and authority [i.e. divine inspiration and divine preservation]. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been handed down under them and would have no need for textual criticism.”⁵²

Dr. Coldwell affirms the **historical** view held by the saint's toward inerrancy. He states the saints held a **high view** of the 'copy' of scripture and unashamedly viewed them as the very Word of God as received in its original by divine inspiration and kept by divine preservation, **100% pure**, inerrant **without** error; **handed down under them**.

This is described as a faith-based, **theological view**, versus the **rationalistic view** of the naturalistic textual critic, and has always been the view of the saints until the last 100 years. The logic of a faith-based, **theological view** as noted by Coldwell; is echoed by Daniel B. Wallace, Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary when he states (emphasis mine):

⁵¹ **Genesis 25:31**, “Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.”

⁵² Colwell, *What is the Best New Testament?* op. cit., p.8., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952.

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*"I wish to address an argument that has been used by TR/MT⁵³ advocates—an argument which is especially persuasive among laymen. The argument is unashamedly **theological** [faith-based] in nature: **inspiration and preservation are intrinsically linked to one another** and both are intrinsically linked to the TR/MT.*

Introduction ~ Adrift

*That is to say, the doctrine of **verbal-plenary inspiration necessitates the doctrine of providential preservation** of the text, and the doctrine of **providential preservation** necessarily implies that the majority text (or the TR)⁵ is the **faithful replica of the autographs**.*

If inspiration and preservation can legitimately be linked to the text of the New Testament in this way, then the (new) KJV NT is the most accurate translation and those who engage in an expository ministry should use this text alone and encourage their audiences to do the same.

But if this theological argument is not legitimate, then New Testament textual criticism needs to be approached on other than a theological a priori basis. And if so, then perhaps most modern translations do indeed have a more accurate textual basis after all."⁵⁴

The is exactly the thesis of this paper, that holds the **Biblical** and **historical** doctrine of inerrancy the Word of God **necessitates**; the original text being given **100%** pure by **divine inspiration**, and its copy, (our Bible) being kept **100%** pure by **divine preservation**, and preserved in the texts of the *Textus Receptus* and translated into the English of the King James Bible has not gone unnoticed.

Therefore, according to this **faith-based, theological view** acknowledged by Coldwell and Wallace, we already have the **100%** pure Word of God in its **copy**; then why are we wasting our resources looking for it? Even worse, why are we spending money God entrusted to us to teach and protect His Word; funding the efforts of those who attack and denigrated it authorship, authenticity and authority; whether ignorantly or willfully? Let's not forget the principle contained in the warning of the Word of God;

"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth." (Luke 11:17)

The SBC is conflicted on its witness to the **100%** purity of the Word of God. Do we feel so self-sufficient in our pride we think we can break the Word of God? When He has forewarned us;

"...the scripture cannot be broken." ([John 10:35b](#))

Are we so deceived we think God does not take note? When He has already forewarned us;

⁵³ TR is the Textus Receptus (the textual basis of the King James Bible 1611) and MT is the Majority Text (Byzantine or Syrian Text and textual basis of TR). <http://bible.org/article/inspiration-preservation-and-new-testament-textual-criticism>.

⁵⁴ Wallace, *Inspiration, Preservation, and New Testament Textual Criticism*. Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, Executive Director of the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts, and author of *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*. He works extensively in textual criticism and is the senior New Testament editor of the NET Bible and coeditor of the NET-Nestle Greek-English diglot. B.A., Biola University, 1975; Th.M., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979; Ph.D., 1995.

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“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Introduction ~ Adrift

Remember the words of James A. Sanders, the member of the United Bible Society who served on the committee that put out the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, who mocked the concept of a **100%** pure Word of God when he stated: “...***What and whence these texts...?*** - “...***no translation is the Bible. So what is the Bible?***”⁵⁵ Perhaps the spot light should be rightfully refocused on questioning the legitimacy of the efforts of **textual critics**, instead of the legitimacy of the **text** of the Word of God.

Those who would **change** the ‘text’ of scripture, rather than receive its ‘text’ has **handed down under them**. The real question for us today is **NOT**; ‘***What and whence theses texts***’, but ‘***What and whence these textual critics***’, who have ‘**manufactured a crisis**’ in producing their eclectic texts, creating confusion and a crisis of faith in the **100%** pure Word of God. Then adding insult to injury, create a ‘**priesthood**’ that few shepherd can enter to solve the problem they created- which **only perpetuates the problem** (sound familiar)? This is not my opinion but one of their own ‘priesthood’, Reverend Professor Kenneth Willis Clark, a Duke Divinity School faculty member for 36 years who says that textual critics are at a dead in and will never produce a text;

*“The textual history that the Westcott-Hort text represents is **no longer** tenable in the light of newer discoveries and fuller textual analysis. In the effort to **construct a congruent history**, our failure suggests that **we have lost the way, that we have reached a dead end**, and that only a new and different insight will enable us to break through.”*⁵⁶

Therefore, what should become of the textual critics who have wreaked such havoc in the church? Those who wish to **restore** the Word of God rather than belief the testimony of scripture, that we already possess it; kept **100%** pure in it **copy** (our Bible) by divine **preservation**? The answer is very simple, call our brothers to the truth of the **Biblical** and **historical** doctrine of inerrancy as taught in the Word of God, as witnessed to in the Confession of the saints and clearly articulated in this paper. Then send them out to teach this truth; exalting the Word of God and building up the faith of the saints, and no longer destroying it by denigrating the **100%** purity and authority of the Word of God. This is the fertile soil of revival; for a revival of the **Word** of God precedes a revival of the **people** of God as in the days of King Josiah.

Just a note, to allow me to elaborate on the heading of this paper which reads, ‘*excerpts from rough draft*’. This is intended to let the reader know this paper represents comments drawn from its larger, unfinished work entitled by the same. Therefore you may discern a slight abruptness between sections and within sections. However there is no loss in the continuity of substance, just that it’s not a finished work, nor has been adequately proofed for publication.

The reason it is available in this unfinished form is because the opportunity to make group presentations came sooner rather than later. Therefore I am using this to provide an overview in advance of the more formal and professional PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Jones which he gives from his book, [*Which Version is the Bible?*](#).

⁵⁵ Sanders, *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Forty Years*, 1991, p.60,71; published by Biblical Archeology Review.

⁵⁶ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 161.

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Therefore the content was selected to specifically point up the issue of inerrancy, particularly as it impacts the SBC. However the finished work addresses all Christendom and will include a fuller presentation on the meaning of the *Fear of the Lord* not found herein due to the above objective.

Introduction ~ Adrift

Finally the reason this paper is sub-titled, *The Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy*, is because the Fear of the Lord and the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy are intrinsically linked. If one possessed a proper understanding of the Fear of the Lord, we would be less likely to tamper with His Word which is an assaulted upon His character; for which God warned there would be negative consequences⁵⁷. For if God, in fact has said He will preserve His Word **100%** pure, without error, which indeed God has, then when someone says His Word has errors they are impugning His name and in essence calling God a liar; however we will be found the liar. ⁵⁸

Now, let's take a closer look and see if the current 'conservative' witness on Biblical inerrancy conforms to the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy as revealed in the Word of God, memorialized in the Reformer's Confessions and borne testimony to in our Baptist heritage; that the Word of God is **100%** pure in its original and in its copy, our Bible.†

⁵⁷ Revelation 22:18-19

⁵⁸ Proverbs 30:6 "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.";

†Let's take a moment and worship Him, [There is a Fountain Fill With Blood](#)

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

The Conservative Witness ~ Inspiration & Restoration

*“Think about this: If the Bible’s authority depends on its inerrancy **but only the original manuscripts were inerrant, then only the original manuscripts were authoritative.** The logic is impeccable and irresistible. And if “inerrancy” is compatible with flawed approximations, **faulty chronologies**, and use of incorrect sources by the biblical authors, **it is a meaningless concept.**”⁵⁹ Dr. Roger Olson, Professor Baylor University*

If you doubted my claim on the issue before us, then perhaps the statement above will cause you to ponder it more closely. Dr. Olson does not share the conservative view, but rightfully assesses our definition of Biblical inerrancy as *“a meaningless concept”*. The reason why this is true is simple.

The conservatives hold to the term ‘inerrancy’ but have changed its **Biblical** and **historical** meaning, thus rendering it an **impotent** and **indefensible** doctrine. Dr. Olson, professor of theology at Baylor University’s George W. Truett Theological Seminary, in his article: [Why ‘Inerrancy’ Doesn’t Matter](#), goes on to say (emphasis mine).

*Even its most ardent and staunch proponents admit no **existing** Bible is inerrant; they attribute inerrancy only to the **original manuscripts**, which do not exist. They **kill the ordinary meaning of the word** with the death of a thousand qualifications. If you doubt that, please read the **Chicago Statement on Inerrancy**, which usually is considered the **standard evangelical account** of the concept.”⁶⁰*

In the absence of the doctrine of Divine Preservation, we get the above argument that the **autographs (originals)** were inspired, however, since we only have **copies** we cannot say the copies are without error. Once you embrace this position, regardless how ‘insignificant’ (i.e. A.T. Robinson 1/1000%⁶¹), then it’s only a matter of time before you arrive at the ‘emerging church’ position, it’s inevitable. This is in sharp contrast to the historical position as maintained since the reformation, up until the last 100 years.

So let’s take Olson’s counsel and read the Chicago Statement, signed by the conservatives of every major denomination.

[1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy: Sections III & V, Exposition. C](#)⁶²

Transmission and Translation (emphasis and brackets mine)

⁵⁹ Olson, *Why ‘Inerrancy’ Doesn’t Matter*, The Baptist Standard, 2nd Opinion, 2-3-2006;

http://www.baptiststandard.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4670&Itemid=134

⁶⁰ Ibid., http://www.baptiststandard.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4670&Itemid=134

⁶¹ Robertson, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Nashville: Broadman, 1925, p.22. For more detailed information see the research by Rev. Dr. Khoo; Principal, and Lecturer in Systematic Theology, Far East Bible College at

http://www.febc.edu.sg/BBVol13_1c.htm, and Dr. Edward F. Hills, Harvard Th.D., in New Testament textual criticism at <http://www.febc.edu.sg/VPP12.htm>.

⁶² <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

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*“Since God has **nowhere** promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that only the **autographic** text of the original documents was inspired and to maintain the need of textual criticism as a means of detecting any slips that may have crept into the text in the course of its transmission.*

The Conservative Witness ~ Inspiration & Restoration

*The verdict of this science, however, is that the Hebrew and Greek text appear to be amazingly well preserved, **so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free”.***

*“Similarly, **no translation [Bible] is or can be perfect**, and all translations are an additional step away from the **autographa**. Yet the verdict of linguistic science is that English-speaking Christians, at least, are exceedingly well served in these days with a host of excellent translations and have no cause for hesitating to conclude that **the true Word of God is within their reach**.*

*Indeed, in view of the frequent repetition in Scripture of the **main matters** with which it deals and also of the Holy Spirit's constant witness to and through the Word, **no serious translation of Holy Scripture will so destroy its meaning** as to render it unable to make its reader “wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus”. (2 Tim. 3:15).”*

[1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy: Sections III & V, Exposition. C](#)⁶³

Infallibility, Inerrancy, Interpretation

*“When total precision of a particular kind was not expected nor aimed at, **it is no error not to have achieved it**. Scripture is inerrant, **not** in the sense of being absolutely precise by modern standards, but in the sense of making good its claims and achieving **that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed**.”*

The authors of the Chicago Statement are asking us to believe the early saints, Reformers and post-Reformation saints never thought or looked for a **100% pure**, inerrant Bible. **Is this true?** Well let's see for ourselves by reading in detail from their own documents in their own words the **'trail of bread crumbs'** they so faithfully left for us for such a time as this.

⁶³ <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

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The Reformation Witness ~ Inspiration-Preservation-Identification

Now, at this point, the question we should be asking ourselves is, 'what did the early saints, then later the Reformers believe regarding the Word of God'? Did they think they possessed an inerrant Bible, 100% pure, as God promised through divine inspiration and divine preservation? The late Professor Kurt Aland (1915-1994)⁶⁴ among the most renowned Biblical textual critics of the 20th century admits the Reformers believed they possessed an inerrant Bible, 100% pure, when he states (emphasis mine):

*"It is undisputed that from the 16th to the 18th century **orthodoxy's doctrine of verbal inspiration assumed ... [the] Textus Receptus**. It was the only Greek text they knew, and they regarded it as the '**original text**'."*⁶⁵

Again, Dr. Merrill M. Parvis says (emphasis mine):

*"It [the **TR**]⁶⁶ was the Scripture of many centuries of the Church's life...**The Textus Receptus is the text of the Church**. It is that form of text which **represents the sum total and the end product** of all the textual decisions which were made by the Church and her Fathers **over a period of more than a thousand years**."*⁶⁷

Did you understand what you just heard? This is not the words of 'pamphleteers', or 'KJV only' or even a 'conservative' but the objective observation of leading authorities on textual criticism. Who affirm that the early saints and Reformers believed that the preserved text of scripture (the copy) they held in the Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament was regarded as the same text (words) as contained in the **original** text as given by divine **inspiration** to the Apostles.

The late Dr. Ernest Cadman Colwell (1901-1974), considered the foremost naturalistic textual critic and "dean" of New Testament textual criticism in North America, also states this as being the **historical** view held by the saint's toward inerrancy. He affirms the saints held a **high view** of the 'copy' of scripture and unashamedly viewed them as the very Word of God as received in its original by divine inspiration and kept by divine preservation, 100% **pure**, inerrant **without** error (brackets and emphasis mine):

⁶⁴ Aland, His 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland text is the bases of the United Bible Societies version of the Greek New Testament of which Dr Aland was a principal editor. It is also the bases for all modern English versions of the New Testament—the Revised Standard Version, the New American Standard Version, the New International Version, and the English Standard Version.

⁶⁵ Aland, "The Text Of The Church?", *Trinity Journal* 8 (Fall 1987): p. 131.

⁶⁶ TR=*Textus Receptus*. Traditional Text (TT) is one of the 3 naming conventions associated with the pool of Greek New Testament manuscripts from which the *Textus Receptus* is drawn; Traditional, Byzantine and Majority. The 'Traditional Text' (TR) label refers to its predominate historical use by the Church. The '**Byzantine Text**' referring to the geographical location of its origin; **Byzantium** (667 BC) (later **Constantinople** (330 AD) and present day **Istanbul** in Turkey). Last the 'Majority Text' (MT) refers to the numerical dominance of the text of the *Textus Receptus* as compared to the total number of manuscripts among the four pools of Greek New Testament text-types: **Byzantine**, **Alexandrian**, **Western** and **Caesarean**. These four pools are man-made definitions refined in the naturalistic textual criticism of Westcott-Hort (1881), which they erroneously used to overthrow the text of the *Textus Receptus*, in favor of the Greek text used in all modern translations, except the KJB & NKJV.

⁶⁷ Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 406. He was Research Associate in the New Testament department of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. He is co-author with Allen Wikgren of the New Testament Manuscript Studies. B.D. degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

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*“Textual criticism has **never existed** for those whose New Testament is one of **miracle, mystery and authority [i.e. divine inspiration and divine preservation]**. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been **handed down under them** and would have **no** need for textual criticism.”*⁶⁸

The Reformation Witness ~ Inspiration-Preservation-Identification

These witnesses provide in a nutshell the clearest and simplest representation of the **Biblical** and **historical** definition of inerrancy; divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation**, handed down from “...from faith to faith⁶⁹...”. The next question we should ask ourselves is: **‘Did the saints following the Reformation have the same high view of inerrancy as the early saints and Reformers?’** Johannes Quenstedt (1617-1688) one of the most influential leaders and theologians of the post-Reformation Lutheran church affirms the same when he states (emphasis mine):

*“We believe, as is our duty, that the **providential care of God** has **always** watched over the **original** and primitive texts of the canonical Scriptures in such a way that we can be certain that the sacred codices **which we now have in our hands** are those which existed at the time of Jerome and Augustine, nay at the **time of Christ Himself and His Apostles.**”*⁷⁰

Again, the saint’s confidence rested in that **God ‘always watched over’** the text of His Word to keep it **100% pure**. They believed it was the same in its ‘original’ by divine **inspiration** as in the ‘copy’, and kept so by divine **preservation**, and held both as **identical** and the same scripture upon which theirs and our Bible (i.e. KJB) is based, which is the Greek texts of the *Textus Receptus* for our New Testament.

Let’s look at another post-reformation testimony to this truth. [Francis Turretin](#)⁷¹ (1623-1687) was a pastor and theologian of the Church and Academy of Geneva, and one of the authors of the Helvetic Consensus Formula Confession of Faith. He echoes Quenstedt, making it quite clear that they never thought of the pure, infallible and inerrant Scriptures in terms of the non-existent **autographs** (originals), as does the naturalistic textual critic, **but always the available and accessible apographs** (copies). He wrote (emphasis mine):

*“By **original texts**, we do not mean the autographs written by the hand of Moses, of the prophets and the apostles, which certainly do not now exist. We mean their **apographs** which are so called because **they set forth to us the word of God in the very words of those who wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit.**”*⁷²

What then is their witness as to the doctrine of inerrancy? It was that the **copies** made from the original scriptures, and **NOT** just the **originals** themselves, are the **100% pure**, inerrant Word of God. This is the witness of the early saints, the Reformers and post-Reformation saints as expressed through their Confessions of Faith which affirmed the Word of God was **kept pure to all generations** by the divine **inspiration** and the **preservation** of God.

⁶⁸ Colwell, *What is the Best New Testament?* op. cit., p.8., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952.

⁶⁹ [Romans 1:17b](#)

⁷⁰ Preus, *The Inspiration of Scripture*, op. cite., p.139.

⁷¹ Gerstner, called Turretin "the most precise theologian in the Calvinistic tradition." *‘Turretin on Justification’* an audio series by John Gerstner (1914-1996) a Professor of Church History at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Knox Theological Seminary.

⁷² Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992 reprint), 1:106, See also Robert Barnett, "Francis Turretin on the Holy Scriptures," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Dean Burgon Society held at Calvary Baptist Church, Ontario, Canada, in 1995. <http://www.deanburgonsociety.org/Preservation/barnett95.htm>

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The Reformation Witness ~ Inspiration-Preservation-Identification

2 Historical Confessions ~ Witness To Biblical Inerrancy

Let's review two of their Confessions as they speak to us again, on the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy (emphasis mine):

(1) **1646 Westminster Confession** ⁷³

“Chapter I – Of the Holy Scripture

VIII. *The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being **immediately inspired by God**, and, by **His singular care** and providence, **kept pure in all ages**, are therefore **authentical**; ^a so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them ^b. ^aMatt 5:18; ^bIsaiah 8:20.*

Observe their witness to the copy, as being ‘**authentical**’ (i.e. identical) to the original - what a statement! Webster’s 1828 dictionary defines ‘authentical’ as “*Having a genuine original*”. They held their copy of the Word of God [i.e. ‘Bible’] remained **authentical**, identical, as genuine as the **original**, therefore as authoritative as the original; having been given by divine inspiration and kept **100%** pure, without error by divine [God’s] preservation (not man’s restoration).

(2) **1675 The Helvetica Consensus Formula** ⁷⁴

“Canon 1:

*God, the Supreme Judge, not only took care to have His word, which is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believes" (Rom 1:16), committed to writing by Moses, the Prophets and the Apostles, but has also **watched and cherished it with paternal care** from the time it was written up to the **present**, so that it could **not** be corrupted by craft of Satan or fraud of man.*

*Therefore the Church justly ascribes to it **his singular grace** and goodness that she has, and will have to the **end** of the world (2 Pet 1:19), a "**sure** word of prophecy" and "**Holy Scriptures**" (2 Tim 3:15), from which though heaven and earth pass away, "the smallest letter or the least stroke of a pen will not disappear by any means (Matt 5:18)."*

Both the Westminster Confession and the Helvetica Consensus cite Matthew 5:18 as one of their proof texts for the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy; “*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*” This gives us an insight to their **high view** of scripture. They held God treated the New Testament just as the Old Testament in **His preservation** of scripture. Why would He not, for the scripture teaches us God does not change, “**Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.**” ⁷⁵ This is an example what is meant when we make an appeal to the

⁷³ <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/wcf.htm#chap1>

⁷⁴ <http://www.wscal.edu/clark/helveticformula.php>

⁷⁵ Hebrews 13:8.

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character of God to establish the inerrancy of his Word, **He preserves** His Word **100% pure**, not almost pure to **all ages** according to **His** promise to do so⁷⁶ and according to **His** character which does not lie;⁷⁷ and He is **NOT** dependent on man to do so!

The Reformation Witness ~ Inspiration-Preservation-Identification

3 Errors of Naturalistic Textual Criticism the Helvetica Confession Confronts

Naturalistic textual criticism is not new to us. The Helvetica Consensus Formula Confession addressed three errors of the naturalistic textual critics 335 years ago as seen in its Canon III:

- (1) The Helvetica Confession rejected the naturalistic textual critic's attempts to '**correct**' the scriptures, it being the equivalent of today's '**restoration**' (emphasis mine):

"Therefore, we are not able to approve of the opinion of those who believe that the text which the Hebrew Original exhibits was determined by man's will alone,.....They go even to the point of following the corrections that their own rational powers dictate from the various readings of the Hebrew Original itself which, they maintain, has been corrupted in various ways;

- (2) The Helvetica Confession opposes the naturalistic textual critic's attempts to change the Old Testament text of the Bible from the Hebrew Masoretic to the Septuagint, again very applicable to our day:⁷⁸

"Therefore, we are not able to approve of the opinion of those .who.....do not hesitate at all to remodel a Hebrew reading which they consider unsuitable, and amend it from the versions of the LXX and other Greek versions, the Samaritan Pentateuch, by the Chaldaic Targums, or even from other sources."

- (3) The Helvetica Confession saw the naturalistic textual critic's revision of the scriptures as a challenge to inerrancy, echoing the thesis stated by Ehrman's⁷⁹, that Biblical inerrancy is fundamental to the authority of the Word of God:

"They go even to the point of following the corrections that their own rational powers dictate from the various readings of the Hebrew Original itself which, they maintain, has been corrupted in various ways.....they thus bring the foundation of our faith and its sacred authority into perilous danger."

Therefore, we do not need to '**restore**' the Word of God, for God has already **Himself preserved the 'original'** in our **copy, 100% pure**, without error. This is a statement of faith and a rational affirmation for those who hold to Biblical inerrancy rooted in divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation**. Again the soundness of this logic is confirmed by the late Dr. Ernest Cadman Colwell when he stated (emphasis mine):

"It is often assumed by the ignorant and uniformed – even on a university camp – the textual criticism of the New Testament is supported by a superstitious faith in the Bible as a book dictated in miraculous fashion by

⁷⁶ Psalms 12:6-7; Psalm 33:11; Psalm 33:11; Psalm 100:5; Psalms 111:7-8; Psalms 119:89-90; Isaiah 59:21; Ecclesiastes 3:14; 1Peter 1:25 see Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:18.

⁷⁷ Titus 1:2; Numbers 23:19; also see Numbers 11:23; Jeremiah 32:17-*"there is nothing too hard for thee"*; Isaiah 14:27; 43:13.

⁷⁸ See Dr. Floyd N. Jones exhaustive analysis of this issue in his book, *The Septuagint: A Critical Analysis*. LXX stands for the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.

⁷⁹ Bart Ehrman, Ph.D., official website, <http://www.bartdehrman.com/>; see YouTube video where he shares his change from a 'Bible-believing conservative' to no longer believing the Bible or in God: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89SG2perxck&feature=related>

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God. That is not true. Textual criticism has **never existed** for those whose New Testament is one of **miracle, mystery and authority**. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been **handed down under them** and would have **no** need for textual criticism.”⁸⁰

The Baptist Witness ~ To Biblical Inerrancy

We have demonstrated the historical **high view** of scripture included divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation** in the definition of Biblical inerrancy. The question now for us to ask is: **‘Did the Baptist view inerrancy in the same way as the early saints, Reformers and post-reformation saints’?** First we will look at the Southern Baptist Convention specifically and then we will look at our Baptist heritage in general.

The inception of our present day Southern Baptist Convention was in May of 1845. The Charleston Baptist Association of South Carolina organized it in a meeting at the First Baptist Church of Augusta in South Carolina. Our first Confession was the, *Philadelphia Confession of Faith 1742*, as affirmed by Timothy and Denise George, a literarily prolific couple in Southern Baptist history, when they state (emphasis mine):

*“The Philadelphia Confession of Faith was transplanted to the Charleston Baptist Association in South Carolina. It soon became the most widely accepted, definitive confession among Baptists in America, both North and South. Each of the 293 “delegates,” as they were then called, who gathered in Augusta to organize the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, belonged to congregations and associations which had adopted the Philadelphia/Charleston Confession of Faith as their own.”*⁸¹

The Southern Baptist Convention’s first Confession, *Philadelphia Confession of Faith 1742*, like those of the Reformation, affirms divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation** as the Biblical view of inerrancy. Let’s review it now (emphasis mine):

1742 The Philadelphia Confession (Baptist)⁸²

“Chapter I – The Holy Scripture

1. The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience;^a although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men unexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and His will, which is necessary unto salvation.^b

*Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times, and in divers manners to reveal Himself, and to declare that His will unto His church;^c and afterwards for the better **preserving** and propagating of the truth, and for the more **sure** establishment, and comfort of the church against the **corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and the world**, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the Holy Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God’s revealing His will unto His people being now ceased.^d*

(^a2Tim. 3:15-17; Isa. 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Eph. 2:20; ^bRom. 1:19-21, 2:14,15; Psalm 19:1-3; ^cHeb.1:1; ^dProv. 22:19-21; Rom. 15:4; 2 Pet. 1:19,20)”

⁸⁰ Colwell, *What is the best New Testament?* op. cit., p.8.

⁸¹ *Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms*, edited by Timothy and Denise George; Broadman & Holman, 1996; Introduction.

⁸² http://www.baptiststart.com/print/1742_philadelphia.html#1,

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“8. The Old Testament in Hebrew, (which was the native language of the people of God of old),^e and the New Testament in Greek, which (at the time of the writing of it) was most generally known to the nations, being **immediately inspired by God**, and by **His singular care** and providence **kept pure in all ages**, are therefore **authentical**; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them“.^f

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“But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a right unto; and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read ^g and search them,^h therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar [i.e. common] language of every nation, unto which they come,ⁱ that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may hope“.^j (^e[Rom 3:2](#); ^f[Isa. 8:20](#); ^g[Acts 15:15](#); ^h[John 5:39](#); ⁱ[1Cor 14:6,9,11-12,24,28](#); ^j[Col 3:16](#).)”

The ***Philadelphia Confession of Faith (1742)*** is unequivocal in its affirmation of Bible inerrancy. First it confirms the divine **inspiration** of scripture; “**being immediately inspired by God.**” Then it continues in stating the divine **preservation** of the Word of God; “**by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages.**” The writers of this Confession embrace the same standard of inerrancy: ‘**authentical**’, **identical**, **100% pure**, as **genuine** as the **original**; as its predecessor, the Westminster Confession, the ‘mother’ of all Confessions.

Prior to the ***Philadelphia Confession of Faith*** and the SBC, our Baptist heritage traces back to the English Baptist of 1608 in Holland. From these early Baptist to the present is a long train of witnesses to their view of Biblical inerrancy. One of the earliest statements to the divine **preservation** of scripture is published in *An Orthodox Creed or a Protestant Confession of Faith*, London 1679. It was adopted on January 30, 1678 by fifty-four messengers from a group of orthodox General Baptist churches of the Midlands, in the England counties of Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Oxford. Its author, Thomas Monck, a farmer and a Messenger in Buckinghamshire, England published it in 1679 as follows (emphasis mine):

1679 - An Orthodox Creed or a Protestant Confession of Faith

“The truly Ancient and Apostolical Faith, that^a was once delivered unto the Saints, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and **miraculously confirmed unto us**, by Signs, and Wonders, and divers Gifts of the Holy Ghost^b, according to the good pleasure of Almighty God.

Which said Faith, and Practice, recorded in the holy Oracles of Truth, and **miraculously preserved from Age to Age**, even in the darkest times of Popery, and Apostacy, **by the infinite Wisdom, Mercy, and Goodness of God, is yet remaining, and to be continued ^c to the end of the World**; and hath been manifested in all, or most Nations^d for the obedience of Faith; the which Preservations of the Sacred Scriptures, or Revelation of Gospel-Light therein contained, (of which this Nation hath had a grate share, especially within this last Hundred Years) is^e undoubtedly a very great Evidence, of the **Divine Verity, and Authority of the same:**” (^aJude 3; ^bHeb. 2.4.; ^cMat. 28.20; ^dRom. 16.26; ^eSee Doct. Usher’s Body of Divinity, pag. 11) ⁸³

The *Orthodox Creed* affirms Biblical inerrancy rests upon in divine **preservation**; “**miraculously preserved from Age to Age**”, which has become referred to as the ‘**phenomena**’ of scripture. By phenomena it means in Colwell’s

⁸³ The Center for Theological Research, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, Southwestern Journal of Theology • Volume 48 • Number 2 • Spring 2006 <http://www.baptisttheology.org/documents/OrthodoxCreed.pdf>

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words the; “***miracle, mystery and authority***”⁸⁴ of scripture, what Thomas Monck affirmed two-hundred and seventy three years prior to Colwell’s statement.

The Baptist Witness ~ To Biblical Inerrancy

In 1707 the progenitor of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Philadelphia Baptist Association, was founded. Its history is chronicled by Walter B. Shurden, the Callaway Professor of Christianity and the Executive Director of The Center for Baptist Studies at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. He informs us of the significance of the Philadelphia Baptist Association when he states:

*“During the eighteenth-century in America, the Philadelphia Baptist Association was the single most important institution in Baptist denominational life. From 1707, the date of its founding, to 1814, the Philadelphia Baptist Association served essentially as a national convention for Baptists in this country. The association, the first of its kind in America, was so prominent in its influence on later Baptist associations that historians have come to refer to “the Philadelphia tradition.”*⁸⁵

These Baptist of early America brought their Confessions of Faith with them from Europe. The Philadelphia Baptist Association had adopted the *Second London Confession of Faith (1677 / 1689)*⁸⁶ as their first Confession as recorded in their church minutes. These journals were edited and preserved for us by Rev. A. D. Gillette, D.D., and founder of the Eleventh Baptist church in the same city in 1839. As published in, “*Minutes of the Philadelphia Association from 1707 to 1807*”, Dr. Gillette states (emphasis mine):

*“In the year 1724, a query, concerning the fourth commandment, whether changed, altered, or diminished. We refer to the Confession of faith, set forth, by the elders and brethren met in London, 1689, and owned by us, chap. 22, sect. 7 and 8.”*⁸⁷

The Philadelphia Baptist Association’s Second London Confession (1677/ 1689) echoes almost the identical statements on the inerrancy of scripture through divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation** as their later one in 1742 (emphasis mine):

[1677 / 1689 The Second London Confession of Faith](#)⁸⁸

“Chapter 1: The Holy Scriptures

1. The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience. Although the blight of nature and the works of creation and providence manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God so much that man is left without any excuse, they are not sufficient to provide that knowledge of God and His will which is necessary for salvation.”

⁸⁴ Colwell, *What is the best New Testament?* op. cit., p.8.

⁸⁵ Walter B. Shurden, “*Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association*” <http://www.centerforbaptiststudies.org/resources/philadelphia.htm>

⁸⁶ The 1644 [London Confession of Faith](#) being the first.

⁸⁷ William Cathcart, editor, *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, 1881; rpt.1988., http://www.geocities.com/baptist_documents/phila.query.answers

⁸⁸ The Second London Confession 1677, revised in 1689, was modeled after the Westminster Confession.

<http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/bcof.htm>

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^cTherefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal Himself, and to declare His will to His church; - and afterward, for the better **preserving** and propagating of the truth, and for the more **sure** establishment and comfort of the church, protecting it against the **corruption of the flesh and the malice of Satan and the world**, - it pleased the Lord to commit His revealed Truth wholly unto ^dwriting. Therefore the Holy Scriptures are most necessary, those former ways by which God revealed His will unto His people having now ceased.”

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(^a2Tim. 3:15-17; Isa. 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Eph. 2:20; ^bRom. 1:19-21, 2:14,15; Psalm 19:1-3; ^cHeb.1:1; ^dProv. 22:19-21; Rom. 15:4; 2 Pet. 1:19,20)

8. The Old Testament in ^e Hebrew which was the native language of the people of God of old, and the New Testament in Greek which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations, being **immediately inspired** by **God**, and by **his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages**, are therefore **authentic**; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them §....

^eRomans 3:2; ^fIsaiah 8:20; ^gActs 15:15;”

The Second London Confession of Faith (1677/1689) has the Philadelphia Confession of Faith (1742), is unequivocal in its affirmation of Biblical inerrancy. Again, it confirms the divine **inspiration** of scripture; **“being immediately inspired by God.”** Then it continues in stating the divine **preservation** of the Word of God; **“by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages,”** and embraces the same standard of inerrancy: **‘authentic’, identical, 100% pure**, as **genuine** as the **original**; as the Westminster Confession.

The Philadelphia Baptist Association assembly, on September 25, 1742, makes a motion regarding their first Confession. The motion as recorded in their minutes was to revised and published the Second London Confession (1677/ 1689) as their own as noted by Dr. Gillette (emphasis mine):

“Dearly beloved in the Lord Jesus, —

A motion was made in the Association for reprinting the Confession of faith, set forth by the elders of baptized congregations, met in London, A. D. 1689, with a short treatise of church discipline, to be annexed to the Confession of faith. Agreed, that the thing was needful and likely to be very useful; and in order to carry it on, it is ordered to send it to the several churches belonging to this Association; to make a trial of what sums of money can be raised, and to send an account to Mr. Jenkin Jones, to the intent, that when the several collections are computed, if it be found sufficient to defray the charges of the work, that then it shall go on; if not, then to drop it for this year; and if it be carried on, that then an addition of two articles be therein inserted: that is to say, concerning singing of psalms in the worship of God, and laying of hands upon baptized believers. Ordered, also, that the said Mr. Jones and Benjamin Griffith do prepare a short treatise of discipline, to be annexed to the said Confession of faith.”⁸⁹

The Confession was published with the recommended changes under a revised name, the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith 1742*. As we noted, this same Confession later becomes the first adopted Confession of the SBC in 1845. So our Baptist heritage has consistently affirmed Biblical inerrancy to include divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation**.

⁸⁹ *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, A Summary of the Early Records 1707-1768.* [pages 25-106]
http://www.geocities.com/baptist_documents/phila.minutes.1707-1768.html

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

20th Century Witness ~ Inspiration without Preservation

We have seen the saints' historical testimony to the **high view** of scripture in their doctrine of Biblical inerrancy. They give witness to the divine **inspiration** and **preservation** of scripture; beginning with the apostolic age through the Reformation and to the founding of the Southern Baptist Convention. This stands in sharp contrast to the **low view** of scripture currently held by the naturalistic textual critic embraced at the turn of the 20th century. Even Conservatives and Evangelicals have been infected as evidenced by their prevailing belief, '**only the originals are inerrant', without error', but the copy, our Bible has errors.**

This trend was noted over forty years ago by Harold Lindsell, in his book published in 1976. As former vice-president and professor Fuller Theological Seminary and Editor Emeritus of Christianity Today, he writes (emphasis mine):

*"More and organizations and individuals historically committed to an infallible scripture have been embracing and propagating the view that the **Bible has errors** in it. This movement away from the **historic standpoint** has been most noticeable among those often labeled neo-evangelicals. This change of position with respect to the infallibility of the Bible is widespread and has occurred in **evangelical denominations, Christian colleges, theological seminaries, publishing houses, and learned societies**"⁹⁰*

One of the purposes of this paper to demonstrate that this belief continues to be promulgated by those in Christendom who produce, publish and teach our Bible. This erroneous belief is articulated in 1991 by James A. Sanders, member of the United Bible Society and who served on the committee that put out the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible when he says (emphasis mine):

*"The NRSV is not the Bible; **no translation is the Bible**. So what is the Bible? What and whence these texts? **I think it is time for us to stop fooling the people, making them think there is just one Bible** and that our Bible committee got closer to it than their committee did. ... I have been told by some that this would just destroy the Bible because lay folk still want to think of the Bible as somehow inerrant... **It may well be that if there should ever be the possibility of discussing the text of Isaiah with Isaiah, he might very well say, 'but I did not say that.'**"⁹¹*

The error continues today and is very much alive in our SBC as we saw expressed by Dr. Roger Olson, Professor of theology at Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary, as reflected in his 2006 article in The Baptist Standard in which he comments (emphasis mine):

⁹⁰ Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible*, 1976, p. 20

⁹¹ Sanders, *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Forty Years*, 1991, p.60,71 as published by Biblical Archeology Review

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Why 'Inerrancy' Doesn't Matter,⁹²

*"Think about this: If the Bible's authority depends on its inerrancy but only the original manuscripts were inerrant, then only the original manuscripts were authoritative. The logic is impeccable and irresistible. And if "inerrancy" is compatible with flawed approximations, faulty chronologies, and use of incorrect sources by the biblical authors, **it is a meaningless concept.**"*

20th Century Witness ~ Inspiration without Preservation

*"Even its most ardent and staunch proponents admit no existing Bible is inerrant; they attribute inerrancy only to the original manuscripts, which do not exist. They kill the ordinary meaning of the word with the death of a thousand qualifications. If you doubt that, **please read the Chicago Statement on Inerrancy**, which usually is considered the standard evangelical account of the concept."*

Olson is right; the Chicago statement was signed by the who's who of 'Evangelicals' who claim to hold to 'Biblical' inerrancy. However their goal anticipates man's **restoration** of the Word of God by the means of textual criticism rather than its divine **preservation 100% pure** as God promised **He** would, when they state (emphasis mine):

[1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy: Sections III & V. Exposition. C](#)⁹³

Transmission and Translation

*"Since God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that **only the autographic text of the original documents was inspired** and to maintain the need of **textual criticism** as a means of **detecting any slips** that may have crept into the text in the course of its transmission.*

*The verdict of this science, however, is that the Hebrew and Greek text appear to be amazingly well preserved, **so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession**, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that **the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.***

*Similarly, **no translation is or can be perfect**, and all translations are an additional step away from the **autographa**. Yet the verdict of linguistic science is that English-speaking Christians, at least, are exceedingly well served in these days with a host of excellent translations and have no cause for hesitating to conclude that **the true Word of God is within their reach.***

*Indeed, in view of the frequent repetition in Scripture of the **main matters** with which it deals and also of the Holy Spirit's constant witness to and through the Word, **no serious translation of Holy Scripture will so destroy its meaning** as to render it unable to make its reader "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15)."*

Infallibility. Inerrancy. Interpretation

⁹² Olson, *Why 'Inerrancy' Doesn't Matter*, The Baptist Standard, 2nd Opinion, 2-3-2006;
http://www.baptiststandard.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4670&Itemid=134

⁹³ <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

*“When total precision of a particular kind was not expected nor aimed at, it is no error not to have achieved it. Scripture is inerrant, **not** in the sense of being absolutely precise by modern standards, but in the sense of making good its claims and achieving that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed.”*

Again, do you fully appreciate what you just read? The authors of the Chicago Statement are asking us to believe the early saints, Reformers and post-Reformation saints never thought or looked for a **100% pure**, inerrant Bible? Is this true? Is this what you understood from the foregoing saint’s Confessions as well as by the testimonies of the leading authorities on textual criticism?

20th Century Witness ~ Inspiration without Preservation

How do the signors of this Chicago Statement know *“that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed?”* Where did the authors of the Chicago Statement go to find the statements of the saints which affirm, *“When total precision of a particular kind was not expected nor aimed at, it is no error not to have achieved it?”*

The answer is the originators of the Chicago Statement say they get it from the Westminster Confession, *“so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.”*

Is this in fact what the Westminster Confession affirms? The answer is **NO**; this is **not** what the Westminster Confession teaches as will be demonstrated. Let’s look at the Chicago Statement where it states their position of an **almost** pure, but **not entirely error-free** Bible, is consistent with the position of the saints as stated in the Westminster Confession (emphasis mine):

[1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy; Sections III & V, Exposition, C⁹⁴](#)

Transmission and Translation

“The verdict of this science [textual criticism], however, is that the Hebrew and Greek text appear to be amazingly well preserved, so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.”

Let’s stop for a moment and examine this claim. They just said the Westminster Confession **agrees** with the Chicago Statement on inerrancy, **that the Bible has errors**. Is it an accurate statement that the Westminster Confession agrees the Bible has errors or does it rather affirm the Bible is **100% pure**, inerrant Word of God? Let’s review (emphasis mine):

⁹⁴ <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

Westminster Confession Witness ~ Inspiration- Preservation-Identification

5 Points Where Westminster Confession and Psalms 12 Affirms Divine Preservation

Let's take a close look at how the **Westminster Confession** affirms the divine **preservation** of scripture, contrary to the claims of the Chicago Statement. These 5 points are keyed with a subscript ① to the Westminster Confession & Psalms 12 below.

Chapter I – Of the Holy Scripture - VIII.

The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being **immediately inspired** by God, and, ① **by His singular care and providence**, ② **kept** ③ **pure** ④ **in all ages**, are therefore ⑤ **authentical**;^a so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them^b. ^aMatthew 5:18; ^bIsaiah 8:20;"

Psalms 12:6-7

"The words of the LORD are ③ **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven times**. ① **Thou** shalt ② **keep them**, ① **O LORD, thou shalt** ② **preserve them** ④ **from this generation for ever.**"

Point 1

The Saints Affirm God is The Protector of scripture, not man's and his feeble attempts to restore it.

- Westminster Confession = ① **"His singular care and providence"**
- Psalms 12 = ① **"Thou shalt kept them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them"**

The Confession says '**by His singular care and providence**'. **Who** is the focus of the Reformer's and the Word of God spotlight for preserving the scriptures? It is God alone!

The Psalmist affirming; **"...thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them ..."**. It is **God** and not man who is center stage in the undertaking of **keeping** the Word of God, **100% pure**, without error, and **not almost pure**.

The saints believed **ALL** of God's being is dedicated to **preserving** His Word. He is not depending on the **arm of man** to restore His Word. This is analogous to His plan of salvation where God employs us, but is not depended on us to declare His Word and praise, **"...I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."** ([Luke 19:40](#))

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Let's exegete further the mind of the saints as reflected in their choice of words as recorded in their Westminster Confession of 1646:

- **By His** _____ God is at work here, not the wisdom or ability of man;
- **Singular** _____ God alone takes the sole responsibility, not entrusting it to man;
Westminster Confession Witness ~ Inspiration- Preservation-Identification
- **Care** _____ God has His heart is in this, He desires it to happen more than man;
- **Providence** _____ God has His power committed to it; He is not limited to the ability of man.

When the saints use the word **Providence** they mean God's attributes of:

- **Omnipresence**, all present;
*"The eyes of the LORD **are in every place**, beholding the evil and the good."*
[Proverbs 15:3](#) (see [Psalms 139:1-13](#); [Jeremiah 23:23-24](#))
- **Omniscience**, all knowing;
*"...I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and **I will do all my pleasure:**"*
[Isa 46:9-10](#) ([Isaiah 42:9](#); [Daniel 2:28](#); [Matthew 24:36](#); [Acts 15:17-18](#))
- **Omnipotence**, all powerful.
*"Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing **too hard** for thee:"* ([Jeremiah 32:17](#))

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

Westminster Confession Witness ~ Inspiration- Preservation-Identification

“Chapter I – Of the Holy Scripture - VIII.

The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being **immediately inspired** by God, and, ⁽¹⁾ **by His singular care and providence,** ⁽²⁾ **kept** ⁽³⁾ **pure** ⁽⁴⁾ **in all ages, are therefore** ⁽⁵⁾ **authentical;**^a so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them^b. ^aMatthew 5:18; ^bIsaiah 8:20;”

Psalms 12:6-7

“The words of the LORD are ⁽³⁾ **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven times.** ⁽¹⁾ **Thou** shalt ⁽²⁾ **keep them,** ⁽¹⁾ **O LORD,** **thou shalt** ⁽²⁾ **preserve them** ⁽⁴⁾ **from this generation for ever.”**

Point 2

The Saints Affirm God is The Sovereign of scripture; He is Able to keep / preserve it, against all odds.

- Westminster Confession = ⁽²⁾ **“kept pure in all ages”**
- Psalms 12 = ⁽²⁾ **“Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them”**

The Confession says ‘by **His singular care and providence, kept**’. **How active is God?** The saints believed He **cherishes** and **broods** over His Word with a paternal and divine care. So it should be, God having birthed His Word now protects and watches it to fruition as He declares:

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” ([Isaiah 55:8-11](#))

The Psalmist affirming: “...thou shalt **keep them,** O LORD, thou shalt **preserve them...**”

The saints believed the Word of God was given by divine **inspiration** and is kept by divine **preservation** as opposed to the feeble attempts of the **arm of man to ‘restore’** His Word to its original. **If God can seal a book no man can open**⁹⁵, **can He not keep His Word no man can lose; “is anything to hard for the Lord?”**⁹⁶ Think about this, God can **preserve** His Word in heaven, **“and the books were opened:”,**⁹⁷ but **not** on earth?

⁹⁵ [Revelation 5:1](#)

⁹⁶ [Genesis 18:14](#); [Numbers 11:23](#); [Isaiah 43:13](#); [46:9-10](#); [Jeremiah 32:17](#); [27](#);

⁹⁷ [Revelation 20:12](#)

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The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being **immediately inspired** by God, and, ⁽¹⁾ **by His singular care and providence,** ⁽²⁾ **kept** ⁽³⁾ **pure** ⁽⁴⁾ **in all ages, are therefore** ⁽⁵⁾ **authentical;**^a so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them^b. ^aMatthew 5:18; ^bIsaiah 8:20;”

Psalms 12:6-7

“The words of the LORD are ⁽³⁾ **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven times.** ⁽¹⁾ **Thou** shalt ⁽²⁾ **keep them,** ⁽¹⁾ **O LORD, thou shalt** ⁽²⁾ **preserve them** ⁽⁴⁾ **from this generation for ever.”**

Point 3

The Saints Affirm God is The Standard of scripture; to keep it 100% pure, as He is pure.

- Westminster Confession = ⁽³⁾ “kept **pure** in all ages”
- Psalms 12 = ⁽³⁾ “words of the LORD are **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven** times.”

The Confession says ‘**by His singular care and providence, kept pure**’. Just how **pure** is the Word of God? It is **100%** pure.

The Psalmist affirming: “**as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.**”

As students of the Word of God know, **seven** is God’s number for **completion** or **perfection**.

“And on the **seventh** day God **ended his work** which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had **rested from all his work** which God created and made.” ([Genesis 2:2-3](#))

The saints believed **ALL** of God’s being; His ‘personhood’ is dedicated to **preserving** His Word **100%** pure. When God says He will do something, He means He will do it, He does not lie:

“God is **not a man**, that he should **lie**; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and **shall he not do it?** or hath he spoken, and **shall he not make it good?**” (Numbers 23:19)

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We had better hope God did **not** lie about preserving His Word otherwise we have bigger problems than the doctrine of inerrancy - how about the promise of His salvation? If He lied about preserving His Word, how do know He will not change His mind about our salvation? Because God does not lie: *"In hope of eternal life, which God, **that cannot lie, promised** before the world began;"* (Titus 1:2)

The only question we have to answer is: has God said **He will preserve His Word, 100% pure**, without error, which indeed God has and will continue to be illustrated in the paper. **Therefore when someone says His Word has errors, they are impugning His name, in essence calling God a liar.**

Westminster Confession Witness ~ Inspiration- Preservation-Identification

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*The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being **immediately inspired** by God, and, (1) **by His singular care and providence**, (2) **kept** (3) **pure** (4) **in all ages**, are therefore (5) **authentical**;^a so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them^b. ^aMatthew 5:18; ^bIsaiah 8:20;"*

Psalms 12:6-7

*"The words of the LORD are (3) **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven times**. (1) **Thou** shalt (2) **keep them**, (1) **O LORD, thou shalt** (2) **preserve them** (4) **from this generation for ever.**"*

Point 4

The Saints Affirm the Scope of God, as Protector of scripture; 100% Pure, to All Ages

- Westminster Confession = (4) *"kept pure in **all** ages"*
- Psalms 12 = (4) *"Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation **for ever.**"*

The Confession says *'by His singular care and providence, kept pure in **all** ages'*. How long will God watch and brood over His Word like a parent? He will forever, just as we would do as a parent!

The Psalmist affirming: *"...O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation **for ever.**"*

Not just the apostolic age, the Reformation age or to wait until the age of textual criticism, but to **all** ages. Just as Colwell said, it has been *'handed-down'* from saint to saint, from *'faith to faith'*,⁹⁸ to those who belief God's promise (emphasis mine).

*"Textual criticism has never existed for those whose New Testament is one of **miracle, mystery and authority**. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been **handed down under them** and would have **no** need for textual criticism."⁹⁹*

⁹⁸ [Romans 1:17](#); [1Corinthians 15:3](#); [Galatians 1:12](#); [Philippians 4:9](#); [1Thessalonian 2:13](#); [2Timothy 2:2](#); [3:14](#)

⁹⁹ Colwell, *What is the best New Testament?* op. cit., p.8.

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The saints believed **all** of God's being is dedicated to preserving His Word. He is not depending on the **arm of man** to restore His Word. This is analogous to His plan of salvation where God employs us, but is not dependent on us to declare His Word and praise,

"...I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." ([Luke 19:40](#))

Westminster Confession Witness ~ Inspiration- Preservation-Identification

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[Psalms 12:6-7](#)

*"The words of the LORD are (3) **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven times.** (1) **Thou** shalt (2) **keep them,** (1) O LORD, **thou shalt** (2) **preserve them** (4) **from this generation for ever."***

Point 5

The Saints Affirm the Authority of God's Word, it maintains its integrity because it's Authentic, as the Original

- Westminster Confession = (5) **"kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic;**

The confession says 'by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, **therefore is authentic**'. The source of its authenticity or authority is its integrity; the source of integrity is its purity, righteousness! Because it has God as its author, not man! Therefore it should be feared as one would the command of God. **God does not preserve scripture for naught, it's to be obeyed.**

The saints believed God breathed the scripture in divine **inspiration** and continues forever to brood over and keep His Word through divine **preservation**. Therefore it is and remains the **100% pure**, inerrant **Word of God**. It remains in its **copy authentic**, authoritative as the **originals**, being divinely endowed with His integrity; kept **100% pure**, inerrant.

The Psalmist affirming;

*"The law of the LORD is **perfect**, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is **sure**, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are **right**, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is **pure**, enlightening the eyes. The **fear of the LORD** is **clean**, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are **true** and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. **Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward."***
([Psalms 19:7-11](#))

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

The Westminster Confession clearly teaches the divine **preservation** of the Word of God. **The words of the saints reject the Chicago Statement** when it reads into the Westminster Confession something the Reformers did not believe when it states (emphasis mine):

“...so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.”

Westminster Confession Witness ~ Inspiration- Preservation-Identification

The saint's did not believe the Word of God was almost pure. That it was 90%, 95%, 99.9% pure (A.T. Robinson), but it is the **100% pure**, inerrant Word of God, identical to the originals! Would you expect anything less from God? **God's Word is pure as He is pure**, so much so He has exalted it above Himself.

*“I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: **for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.**” ([Psalms 138:2](#))*

So in light of the above, how does the Chicago Statement justify its claim that their definition of an **almost** pure Word of God is in agreement with the Westminster Confession when they state (brackets and emphasis mine):

*“The verdict of this science [textual criticism], however, is that the Hebrew and Greek text appear to be amazingly well preserved, **so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.**”¹⁰⁰*

The answer is they redefined the Biblical and historical definition of inerrancy as contained in the Westminster Confession. They change inerrancy to mean man's restoration rather than God's preservation of His Word of God. In so doing they forfeit the **100%** pure of the Word of God which only God could maintain, and had promised He would do. This redefinition of the Biblical doctrine of divine preservation was promulgated by B.B. Warfield, the principal of Princeton Seminary from 1887 to 1921 and considered the last great Princeton theologian. He suggested God had worked **providentially** through Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort to preserve the New Testament text in the meaning of the Westminster Confession. Dr. Edward Hills quotes this view of B.B. Warfield;

“In the sense of the Westminster Confession, therefore, the multiplication of copies of the Scriptures, the several early efforts towards the revision of the text, the raising up of scholars in our own day to collect and collate manuscripts, and to reform them on scientific principles—of our Tischendorfs and Tregelleses, and Westcotts and Horts—are all parts of God's singular care and providence in preserving His inspired Word pure.”¹⁰¹

Hills continues (emphasis mine);

¹⁰⁰ 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy; Sections III & V, Exposition, C, <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

¹⁰¹ Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, The Christian Research Press, 1973, pp. 109-110.)

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"Are naturalistic New Testament textual critics providentially guided? Many conservatives have adopted the theory that it is through textual criticism, and especially through the textual criticism of Westcott and Hort, that Christ has fulfilled his promise always to preserve in His Church the True New Testament Text. Dr. Warfield's treatment of the New Testament text illustrates this **cleavage in his thinking**. In the realm of dogmatics he agreed with the **Westminster Confession that the New Testament text had been "kept pure in all ages" by God's "singular care and providence,"** but in the realm of New Testament textual criticism he agreed with Westcott and Hort in ignoring God's providence and even went so far as to assert that the same methods were to be applied to the text of the New Testament that would be applied to the text of a morning newspaper.

Westminster Confession Witness ~ Inspiration- Preservation-Identification

It was to bridge the gap between his dogmatics and his New Testament textual criticism that he suggested that **God had worked providentially through Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort to preserve the New Testament text. But this suggestion leads to conclusions which are extremely bizarre and inconsistent.** It would have us believe that during the manuscript period orthodox Christians corrupted the New Testament text, that the text used by the Protestant Reformers was the worst of all, and that the True Text was not restored until the 19th century, when Tregelles brought it forth out of the Pope's library, when Tischendorf rescued it from a waste basket on Mt. Sinai, and when Westcott and Hort were providentially guided to construct a theory of it which ignores God's special providence and treats the text of the New Testament like the text of any other ancient book. But if the True New Testament Text was lost for 1500 years, how can we be sure that it has ever been found again?"

The results in the 20th Century of Dr. Warfield's thinking has been disastrous. It has left him and his followers with an **emasculated theory of inspiration that applies only to the lost autographs.** It has left the church without the conviction that it truly possesses the inerrant, inspired word of God today. It has sunk evangelicalism into the morass and quicksand of textual criticism. It has left the church at the mercy of a high priesthood of secular textual critics who will instruct her on what parts of the Bible are God's words and what parts should be emended or deleted per the latest textual theories. **It is the prime reason why at many evangelical colleges and seminaries any meaningful belief in the inerrancy and inspiration of the Scriptures is dead.**¹⁰²

This began the change from a high view of scripture to a low view and our march to post-Christian culture. So let follow this procession as his moves from Europe to America and into the bosom the Evangelical citadel of orthodoxy, Princeton Seminary.

¹⁰² Edward F. Hills, Th.D. Harvard University New Testament textual criticism, *'The King James Version Defended'*, The Christian Research Press, 1973, pp. 109-110 @ http://www.standardbearers.net/uploads/The_King_James_Defended.pdf; see also Hills, 'A History of My Defense of the Kings James Version' at http://www.standardbearers.net/uploads/A_History_of_My_Defense_of_The_King_James_Version.pdf

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy

The High View ~ The Low View

The low view of scripture moved from Princeton Theological Seminary to the Southern Baptist Convention. After its founding in 1812 Princeton became the citadel of historic Christianity standing firmly for the propagation and defense of the faith set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith. In 1929 a radical change took place which shifted the theological to twentieth-century [Barthianism](#) (a version of today's 'emerging church' error). The Barthian school of theology does not believe in the infallibility of Holy Scripture, while the Princeton had been noted for its insistence on this doctrine. The Barthians do not accept the scripture as the final authority, but rather in an authority which is to be found in fallible human experience. Barth's premises every doctrine and practice must inevitably find its authority in the experience of man as the determining factor; emphasizing experience rather than the Bible as the norm for Christian life.¹⁰³

How such a fortress of orthodoxy fell is a lesson for Southern Baptist today. The answer is they failed by continuing in the path of the same error we embrace today as contained in the Chicago Statement; that the Bible is **almost** pure, not **100%** pure. So let's take a forensic look at their procession from their high view of scripture to a low view in the hopes we can learn from their mistakes. We will discover the seed of their error was planted at its inception, but took over 100 years to bear it fruit; but bear its fruit it did as God's forewarning went unheeded, *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."*¹⁰⁴

Archibald Alexander (1772-1851) Founder and first principal

Archibald Alexander (1772-1851) was the founder and first principal of Princeton Seminary serving there from 1812 and 1840. As principal and professor of theology, he is considered the first of the great "Princeton theologians."¹⁰⁵ This is where the first hole in the dike among American Protestants began, when they departed from the **Biblical** and **historical** doctrine of inerrancy of a **100%** pure Bible, to an **almost** pure one as reflected in his following statements (emphasis mine):

*"It is even **possible** that some of the autographs, if we had them, **might not be altogether free from such errors** as arise from the slip of the pen, as the apostles [had] amanuens[es] who were not inspired."*¹⁰⁶

In his inaugural sermon at his installation as Princeton's first professor of theology, he spoke positively of textual criticism, and posited the theory of '*conceptual preservation*':

¹⁰³ Paper by American Presbyterian Church, *Princeton: The Reorganization of Princeton Theological Seminary*, at <http://www.americanpresbyterianchurch.org/princeton.htm>

¹⁰⁴ [Galatians 6:9](#)

¹⁰⁵ Theopedia, Archibald Alexander, http://www.theopedia.com/Archibald_Alexander

¹⁰⁶ Letis, *The Ecclesiastical Text*, 6, quoting Lefferts A Loetscher, *Facing the Enlightenment and Pietism* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), 228.; see [Can Verbal Plenary Inspiration Do Without Verbal Plenary Preservation?: The Achilles' Heel of Princeton Bibliology](#).

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*"For though the serious mind is at first astonished and confounded, upon being informed of the multitude of various readings ..yet it is relieved, when on careful examination, it appears that not **more than one of a hundred of these**, makes the slightest variation in the sense, and that the whole of them do not materially affect **one important fact or doctrine.**"*¹⁰⁷

The High View ~ The Low View

B. B. Warfield (1851-1921) Principal of Princeton Seminary from 1887 to 1921

B.B. Warfield was the principal of Princeton Seminary from 1887 to 1921. He is considered the last great Princeton theologian before the split in 1929 that formed Westminster Seminary and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church (previous known as American Presbyterian Church) confirms the Westminster Confession to mean a **100%** pure Word of God kept so by divine preservation and not by the mean of man's restoration, when they state¹⁰⁸ (emphasis and brackets mine):

*"The **orthodox**, the **Reformation**, the **Westminster** doctrine of the Scriptures has at least **two key points**. The first is that the Scriptures are the **inspired, inerrant**, word of God. The second, less well known, but equally important is **God's preservation** of these inspired Scriptures throughout history for the benefit of his church. As the Westminster divines stated it,*

*The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), **being immediately inspired by God and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic, [as the original]** so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them. (WCOF, Ch. 1, Sect. 8).*

The Westminster divines did not invent this doctrine or dream it up as a necessary support for any doctrine of the Scriptures. Rather they supported this doctrine of the **divine preservation** of the Scriptures with an abundance of Scripture proofs. Some of the proof-texts for this doctrine are...

- *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. [Matthew 5:18](#)*
- *The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. [Psalm 12:6-7](#)*
- *As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever. [Isaiah 59:21](#)*
- *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. [Isaiah 40:8](#)*

¹⁰⁷ Quoted by David Cloud, *Faith Versus the Modern Bible Versions* (Port Huron: Way of Life, 2005), 309.

¹⁰⁸ American Presbyterian paper; B. B. Warfield and the Reformation Doctrine of the Providential Preservation of the Biblical Text at <http://www.americanpresbyterianchurch.org/preservation.htm>

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- *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. [1 Peter 1:23-25](#)*

The High View ~ The Low View

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church chronicles the departure from the **Biblical** and **historical** definition of inerrancy and its damage in their paper, *B. B. Warfield and the Reformation Doctrine of the Providential Preservation of the Biblical Text*, in which they quote Edward F. Hills¹⁰⁹ (emphasis and brackets mine):

*“Dr. B. B. Warfield was an outstanding defender of the orthodox Christian faith, so much so that one hesitates to criticize him in any way. Certainly no Bible-believing Christian would wish to say anything disrespectful concerning so venerable a Christian scholar. But nevertheless it is a fact that Dr. Warfield's thinking was not entirely **unified** (does this sound familiar). **Through his mind ran two separate trains of thought which not even he could join together. The one train of thought was dogmatic, going back to the Protestant Reformation. When following this train of thought Dr. Warfield regarded Christianity as true. The other train of thought was apologetic, going back to the rationalistic viewpoint of the 18th century. When following this train of thought Dr. Warfield regarded Christianity as merely probable. And this same divided outlook was shared by Dr. Warfield's colleagues at Princeton Seminary and by conservative theologians and scholars generally throughout the 19th and early 20th century. Even today this **split-level thinking** is still a factor to be reckoned with in conservative circles, although in far too many instances it has passed over into modernism.”***

We can observe Warfield beliefs parallel those of the Chicago Statement not the Westminster Confession to which they purport to draw their doctrine. Having demonstrated the origin and chain of transmission of this error among Evangelicals from Archibald Alexander to Warfield, I will not belabor this point for brevity sake since the quotes on Warfield's departure from the **Biblical** and historical doctrine of Inerrancy are noted in my previous section; *Westminster Confession Witness ~ To Biblical Inerrancy*.

A.T. Robertson (1863-1934).

The departure from the **Biblical** and historical doctrine of Inerrancy was carried to the SBC by an admirer of the Princeton theologians, A.T. Robertson (1863-1934). He graduated in 1888 from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and later became a full professor there in 1895. Robertson was considered the premier Baptist New Testament scholar, delivering the Stone Lectures at Princeton Seminary twice as well as publishing the massive *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (1914).¹¹⁰ He was an admirer of Warfield and the Princeton theologians echoing their doctrine of conceptual preservation that the concern regarding textual variants amounted to but **“a thousandth part of the entire text,”**¹¹¹ and that **no doctrine** is affected.

¹⁰⁹ Edward F. Hills, Th.D. Harvard University New Testament textual criticism, *The King James Version Defended*, The Christian Research Press, 1973, pp. 109-110 @ http://www.standardbearers.net/uploads/The_King_James_Defended.pdf

¹¹⁰ Southern Baptist Theological Seminary archives, Special [Collections](#), Archibald T. Robertson papers

¹¹¹ Robertson, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Nashville: Broadman, 1925, p.22.

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Less we forget, all it takes to fell one's faith is "***a thousandth part of the entire text.***" indeed it was "***a thousandth part of the entire text,***" a '***picayune***' which Satan used to fell the faith of Eve, "...*hath God said...*" It was '***one picayune mistake in Mark 2***' which felled the faith of Ehrman.¹¹² It is not an overstatement to point to the product of naturalistic textual criticism in Bart Ehrman, who is a 'poster child' of the fruit of naturalistic textual criticism. He lost his faith due to having been taught the erroneous doctrine of an **almost** pure Bible, as reflected in his statements from his official website (emphasis mine):

The High View ~ The Low View

"In his groundbreaking New York Times bestseller, 'Misquoting Jesus', Bart Ehrman, one of the world's leading authorities on the Bible, dispelled the notion held by millions of Americans that the Bible is an infallible document.

*Now, in 'JESUS, INTERRUPTED: Revealing the Hidden Contradictions' in the Bible (And Why We Don't Know About Them), Ehrman goes even further, revealing not only that the Bible is riddled with inconsistencies and outright forgeries, but that many fundamental stories and doctrines don't actually exist within its pages--they were later inventions by people trying to make sense of a disconnected collection of texts. The Scriptures did not come down to us through the ages in one, harmonious, unbroken version. The story of Jesus was, in fact, interrupted."*¹¹³

Ehrman's journey from faith to unbelief is chronicled by Dr. Denny Burke, Dean of Boyce College and Associate Professor of New Testament.¹¹⁴ In Burke's article we observe Ehrman's crisis of faith unfold in the absence of the Biblical doctrine of inerrancy of the Word of God (emphasis mine):

*"Ehrman's book [Misquoting Jesus] is mainly about the discipline of textual criticism, but the whole work is framed in his personal spiritual journey. For Ehrman, the absence of the **original** biblical manuscripts was a "compelling problem," one that eventually led him to deny his previous commitment to the **inerrancy** of Scripture. In Ehrman's story, the undoing of **inerrancy** resulted in the undoing of his Christianity. Ehrman concluded that if the Bible could not be relied upon as **inerrant**, it certainly could not be relied upon as an **authoritative** or sufficient basis for Christian faith. Once **inerrancy** fell, so did everything else."*

*"Ehrman says that it was one '**picayune** mistake in Mark 2' that opened the 'floodgates' of skepticism and unbelief in a theological conviction concerning the person of God. To let go of **inerrancy** (properly conceived) is to let go of something about God Himself. If there are errors in the Bible, then there are errors in God. When one comes to this conclusion, then the entire edifice of the Christian faith falls. This is why the admission of **one 'picayune mistake** in Mark 2' had such a devastating effect on Bart Ehrman. When **inerrancy** fell, Christianity fell."*

¹¹² [Bart Ehrman, Ph.D., official website.](#)

¹¹³ [Bart Ehrman, Ph.D., official website.](#)

¹¹⁴ [Burke, Is Inerrancy Sufficient? A Plea to Biblical Scholars Concerning the Authority and Sufficiency of Scripture, p.81-82.](#)

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Observe it was the doctrine of divine **preservation**, not the divine inspiration of scripture that was the linchpin for Ehrman. In the absence of the divine preservation of the '**originals**', his faith in their divine inspiration was undermined, followed by faith in the Word of God and finally faith in God altogether. The story of his crisis of faith underscores my point; the most important doctrine for Christians to be taught is the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, particularly in a hostile 'post' Christian culture. Because our theology is not developed in crisis, it is tested and its weakness revealed. Ehrman correctly observed all doctrines stand or fall with the Biblical doctrine of inerrancy as established in divine inspiration and **preservation**. Would Ehrman's response have been different had he been taught the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy while in seminary? One that exposes this deception and teaches faith does not require the '**originals**', rather its rests in the truth that God has preserved His original word to the present in our copy, the Bible.

The High View ~ The Low View

The case with Ehrman shows that a rejection of divine **preservation** in favor of man's restoration could lead ultimately to a denial of verbal inspiration and the denial of the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures and God. This was clearly what happened to Bart Ehrman (PhD, Princeton Theological Seminary) who had Bruce Metzger—Princeton's George L Collord Professor of New Testament Language and Literature, Emeritus, but known also as "Bible Butcher"—for his mentor. In his book *Misquoting Jesus*, Ehrman testified how a Bible filled with scribal errors became a problem for him:

*"If one wants to insist that God inspired the very words of scripture, **what would be the point if we don't have the very words of scripture?** ... It's a bit hard to know what the words of the Bible mean if we don't even know what the words are!*

*This became a problem for my view of inspiration; for I came to realize that **it would have been no more difficult for God to preserve the words of scripture** than it would have been for him to inspire them in the first place. If he wanted his people to have his words, surely he would have given to them (and possibly even given them the words in a language they could understand, rather than Greek and Hebrew). The fact that we don't have the words surely must show, I reasoned, that he did not preserve them for us. And if he didn't perform that miracle, there seemed to be no reason to think that he performed the earlier miracle of inspiring those words."¹¹⁵*

It is significant to note that Ehrman began as a fundamentalist in Moody Bible Institute, but eventually succumbed to the "dark side" when he went to Princeton where he came under the mentorship of textual-critical Vader—Bruce Metzger—whom he calls his "Doctor-Father."¹¹⁶ He came to believe the Word of God had errors not because it was true, rather because he had not been armed with the doctrine of **Biblical** inerrancy which teaches divine preservation; therefore he had no '*shield of faith*' to handle the wicked and fiery challenge of Satan, "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*".¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Bart D Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 11. See paper by Dr. Jeffrey Khoo, Principal, and Lecturer in Systematic Theology, Far East Bible College, '*Can Verbal Plenary Inspiration Do Without Verbal Plenary Preservation?: The Achilles' Heel Of Princeton Bibliology*' @ http://www.febc.edu.sg/BBVol13_1c.htm

¹¹⁶ ⁷ Ibid, "Acknowledgments." Ehrman dedicated his book to Metzger.

¹¹⁷ [Ephesians 6:11-20](#);

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The 'shield of faith' is the Word of God which teaches unequivocally His divine preservation of His Word as it does its divine **inspiration!** *"How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished"*.¹¹⁸ Eve and Ehrman are not the exception but rather the rule, in the absence of a clear doctrinal teaching of the **Biblical** and **historical** doctrine of inerrancy. If we choose to ignore the weapons of warfare prescribed by God, how then are we going to arm our generation, since the challenge of, *"...hath God said..."* is not going to diminish but grow, as evidenced by the publishing of the atheistic authors like Ehrman, Barker, Hitchens, Dawkins, Harris and Dennett?¹¹⁹

The High View ~ The Low View

Our forensic journey has revealed how we moved for a high view to a low view of scripture and gives us a better appreciation just how entrenched it is among Conservatives and Evangelicals. However contrary is the witness of Princeton and the Chicago Statement to that of the Reformation saints as memorialized in their Westminster Confession, and even attested to by those who scribe to naturalistic textual criticism as noted below.

2 Naturalistic Textual Critics Witness to the Historical Text of the New Testament

Again, the historical witness of the saints is consistent to the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy from the apostolic age to the Reformation as well as at the inception of the SBC is consistent. That the Word of God is **100%** inerrant, **'kept'** **'pure'** to **'all ages'** by **'His singular care'**, and therefore is **'authentical'** meaning authoritative because its integrity is equal to God. This is affirmed by the foremost naturalist textual critics when they stated (emphasis mine):

(1) Kurt Aland

*It is **undisputed** that from the 16th to the 18th century **orthodoxy's doctrine of verbal inspiration assumed ... [the] Textus Receptus.** It was the only Greek text they knew, and they regarded it as the **'original text'**."*¹²⁰

(2) Merrill M. Parvis

*"It [the TR] was the Scripture of many centuries of the Church's life....**The Textus Receptus is the text of the Church.** It is that form of text which **represents the sum total and the end product** of all the textual decisions which were made by the Church and her Fathers over a period of more than a thousand years."*

¹²¹

¹¹⁸ 2Samuel 1:27

¹¹⁹ Dan Barker (like Bart Ehrman an evangelical turned atheist), [Christopher Hitchens](#), [Richard Dawkins](#), [Sam Harris](#), [Daniel Dennett](#) (are referred to as the four horseman of atheists).

¹²⁰ Aland, "The Text Of The Church?", *Trinity Journal* 8 (Fall 1987): p. 131.

¹²¹ Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 406. He was Research Associate in the New Testament department of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. He is co-author with Allen Wikgren of the New Testament Manuscript Studies. B.D. degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

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It has been demonstrated that the claim is erroneous when the Chicago Statement says:

*“so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized **by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.**”¹²²*

No, the Westminster Confession does **not** say the Word of God has errors; to the contrary, it affirms the Biblical and history doctrine of the divine preservation of a **100%** pure Word of God. Now, let's set straight the record on another claim of the Chicago Statement which claims its position is Biblical, which states that God never promised to preserve His Word pure. Is it a true statement; that God never promised to keep His Word to all ages? Let's see.

Word of God Witness ~ Inspiration & Preservation

“...Since God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that only the autographic [original] text of the original documents was inspired and to maintain the need of textual criticism as a means of detecting any slips that may have crept into the text [the copy, our Bible] in the course of its transmission...”¹²³ (brackets & emphasis mine)

Is the Chicago Statement right in claiming that preservation is **not** a Biblical doctrine? Does the Word of God in fact teach the divine **preservation** of scripture, **100%** pure, inerrant? Let's briefly look at a ten scriptures which affirm the doctrine of the divine preservation of the Word of God. The words in **BLUE** affirm the **purity** of God's Word and those in highlighted in **RED** affirm the **duration** of its purity; forever, to **all** generations.

10 Witnesses of the Word of God to Biblical Inerrancy (brackets & emphasis mine)

(1) *“The words of the LORD are **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified **seven** times. Thou shalt **keep** them, O LORD, thou shalt **preserve** them from this generation **for ever**.” (Psalms 12:6-7)*

- How pure does God say His Word is: perfect purity; purified seven times!
- How long does God say His Word is perfect purity- for ever! Its common sense the original manuscript did not last forever, therefore God is referring to the copy of the original.

(2) *“The counsel [Word] of the LORD **standeth for ever**, the **thoughts** [Words ¹²⁴] of his heart to **all generations**.” (Psalm 33:11)*

- How long does God say His Word will stand, for ever – to all generations! Common sense knows the original manuscript did not last forever; therefore God is referring to the copy of the original be pure forever.

¹²² 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy; Sections III & V, Exposition, C, <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

¹²³ 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy; Sections III & V, Exposition, C; Transmission and Translation, at <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

¹²⁴ [Isaiah 55:8](#), “For my **thoughts** are not your **thoughts**, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.”

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- How pure does God say His Word is: its purity is as long as its longevity - forever! Common sense knows if God says His Word was going to last forever, then it would have to remain in its copy as pure as receive in its in is original - forever.
- (3) *“For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his **truth endureth to all generations**.” (Psalm 100:5)*
- (4) *“The works of his hands are **verity** and **judgment**; all his commandments are **sure**. They **stand fast for ever and ever**, and are done in truth and uprightness.” (Psalms 111:7-8)*
- (5) *“LAMED. **For ever**, O LORD, thy word is **settled** in heaven. Thy **faithfulness** is unto **all generations**: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.” (Psalms 119:89-90)*
- Word of God Witness ~ Inspiration & Preservation**
- (6) *“Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are **truth**. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them **for ever**.” (Psalms 119:151-152)*
- (7) *“As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall **not depart** out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of **thy seed**, nor out of the mouth of **thy seed's seed**, saith the LORD, **from henceforth and for ever**.” (Isaiah 59:21)*
- (8) *“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be **for ever**: **nothing** can be put to it, nor **any thing** taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should **fear** before him.” (Ecclesiastes 3:14)*
- (9) *“For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass**, one jot or one tittle **shall in no wise pass from the law**, till all be fulfilled.” (Matthew 5:18)*
- (10) *“But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” (1Peter 1:25; see Isaiah 40:8)*

If God says His Word is pure forever, then it stands reason, common sense and the logic of faith that it would have to be preserved forever. Otherwise how else would you explain how the Word of God will remain pure to all ages if it is not kept by divine preservation? From the above scriptures, is it obvious God affirms He will keep His Word **100% pure, forever**?

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Historical Confessions Witness ~ Inspiration-Preservation-Identification

Now we will look at four orthodox Confessions of Faith from the Reformation period to see what their witness is to the doctrine of inerrancy is. Do they affirm the **Biblical** and historical definition of inerrancy that the Word of God was received **100%** pure in its original by divine inspiration, and kept **100%** pure in its copy by divine preservation? I think you will find that to be true as reflected in the following four historical Confessions of Faith (emphasis mine):

[1646 The Westminster Confession](#)

*"...inspired by God, and, by **His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages..**"¹, ¹[\(Matt 5:18\)](#)*

[1674 The Helvetic Consensus Formula](#)

*"God, the Supreme Judge, not only took care to have his word ...but has also **watched and cherished** it with **paternal care from the time it was written up to the present**, so that it **could not be corrupted by craft of Satan or fraud of man.**"*

*"the smallest letter or the least stroke of a pen **will not disappear by any means** ([Matt 5:18](#))."*

[1687/1689 The Second London Confession \(Baptist\)](#)

*"...Therefore it pleased the **Lord ...protecting it against the corruption of the flesh and the malice of Satan and the world**, - it pleased the Lord to commit His revealed Truth wholly unto writing⁴..."⁴[Prov. 22:19-21](#); [Rom. 15:4](#); [2 Pet. 1:19,20](#)*

*"...inspired by God, and by **his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages...**"⁶ ⁶[Isaiah 8:20](#)*

[1742 The Philadelphia Confession \(Baptist\)](#)

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“... ²Therefore it pleased the **Lord**...³against the **corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing;**...”. ²Rom. 1:19-21, 2:14, 15; Psalm 19:1-3; ³Heb.1:1

“...being immediately inspired by God, and by **His singular care and providence kept pure in all age;**...”⁶ ⁶Isa. 8:20

Did the Reformers believe God had promised to preserve an inerrant transmission of scripture? Did they believe it was **100%** pure or did they think errors that had crept into their Bible? **From the above it would appear that the Chicago Statement is clearly at odds with the scriptures¹²⁵ and the saints when they claim that, “...God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture.”**

Historical Confessions Witness ~ Inspiration-Preservation-Identification

As has been demonstrated, some Conservatives and Evangelicals are clearly at odds with the scriptures, the saints and our SBC heritage on the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy. Let’s briefly look at two last examples of this erroneous belief, that our Bible has errors, which appears to be held by all major Protestant denominations.

Evangelical Theological Society Constitution (ETS).¹²⁶

ETS says their mission is: “... **to foster conservative biblical scholarship**”. Yet they, like the Chicago Statement believe our Bible is only **almost** pure when they state (emphasis mine):

ARTICLE III: DOCTRINAL BASIS

“The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore **inerrant in the autographs.**”¹²⁷

They state the Bible is inerrant “**in the autographs**”, what they do not say but mean is the Word of God is **NOT 100% pure** in its **copy**, our Bible. Do you consider stating that our Bible has errors is the standard of ‘conservative biblical scholarship’?

The International Society of Christian Apologetics

So it is with the ISCA. Is there no witness on God’s earth for the Biblical and historical witness to the Word of God as being 100% pure in its copy, as kept by God through divine preservation? Here is the ISCA statement on inerrancy (emphasis mine):

“Doctrinal Basis

2. Bible: The sixty-six books of the Bible alone are the infallible and inerrant Word of God in the **autographic text**. This doctrine is understood as the one expressed by the Framers of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy in its “Chicago Statement” and as interpreted by the official ICBI Commentary on it.”

[Comment: Among the founding officers of the ISCA, one was a framer of the Chicago Statement (Geisler), and one was one of the original signers (Corduan). [Click here for the full text of the Statement.](http://www.etsjets.org/)]

¹²⁵ Deuteronomy 30:11-14; Psalms 12:6-7; 119:89; Isaiah 40:8; 59:21; Mat 5:18-19; 24:35; 1Peter 1:25

¹²⁶ <http://www.etsjets.org/?q=about/constitution>

¹²⁷ Evangelical Theological Society (ETS), Article III: Doctrinal Basis, <http://www.etsjets.org/>

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At this point we must ask ourselves a question: **Did the early saints, the Reformation saints and the saints at the founding of the Southern Baptist Convention get it wrong on the Biblical doctrine of the inerrancy of scripture?** If they were right, how did things change them to state we have errors in our Bible today?

As we have demonstrated the answer is the definition of inerrancy changed at the turn of the 20th century. The Confessions of Faith begin to accommodate the **low view** of scripture. This view was rooted in an unbiblical definition of inerrancy embraced by naturalistic textual criticism that holds to divine inspiration but **not** divine preservation. They **redefined** inerrancy to mean man's '**restoration**' of the Word of God, and no longer God's 'preservation' of the scriptures. This stands in complete opposition to the Word of God, the historical witness of the saints and our Baptist heritage to which we confess to look. Now let's look at the SBC Confessions of Faith to determine if they maintain the Biblical and historical doctrine of Inerrancy.

SBC Confessions Witness ~ Inspiration No Preservation

Does our current SBC Confession of Faith witness to our **historical** heritage regarding Biblical inerrancy? Our historical Baptist heritage held to a **100%** pure, inerrant Bible. Let's review the four SBC Confessions of Faith since the turn of the century in their statements as to Biblical inerrancy rooted in divine inspiration and divine preservation (emphasis mine):

1925 Baptist Faith and Message Statement ¹²⁸

"I. The Scriptures

*We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men **divinely inspired**, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, **without any mixture of error, for its matter;...**"*

1963 / 1998 Baptist Faith and Message Statement

"I. The Scriptures

*The Holy Bible was written by men **divinely inspired** and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, **without any mixture of error, for its matter...**"*

2000 Baptist Faith and Message Statement

"I. The Scriptures

*The Holy Bible was written by men **divinely inspired** and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, **without any mixture of error, for its matter...**"*

The SBC's 20th century Confessions of Faith reflect this change. Perhaps we should re-examine our 2000 Confession of Faith by the standard of our SBC preamble which states the basis of our Confessions are as follows (emphasis mine):

¹²⁸ Baptist Faith and Message, Official SBC website, <http://www.sbc.net/bfm/bfmcomparison.asp>

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*“Baptists are a people of deep beliefs and cherished doctrines. Throughout our history we have been a confessional people, **adopting statements of faith as a witness to our beliefs** and a pledge of our faithfulness to the doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture.*

Our confessions of faith are rooted in historical precedent, as the church in every age has been called upon to define and defend its beliefs. Each generation of Christians bears the responsibility of guarding the treasury of truth that has been entrusted to us [2 Timothy 1:14]. Facing a new century, Southern Baptists must meet the demands and duties of the present hour.”¹²⁹

At this point it should be obvious that there has been a major change in the meaning of inerrancy. Our later Confessions remain clear on the inerrancy of the autograph of scripture by divine **inspiration** of scripture. However, they become **ambiguousness** as to doctrine of the inerrancy of the apograph (copy) of scripture by of divine **preservation**.

SBC Confessions Witness ~ Inspiration No Preservation

In contrast to the clear witness in the previous three major Protestant Confessions of Faith; *Westminster Confession 1646*, *London Confession 1689* and the *Philadelphia Confession 1742* (which was also the adopted confession of the SBC at its founding in 1845). Does it make sense that the following witness to the doctrine of the inerrancy of the copy of scripture by of divine **preservation** was eliminated in the first official SBC Confession of Faith in 1925?

*“The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of its writing was most generally known to the nations) were immediately inspired by God, and were **kept pure through subsequent ages by His singular care and providence**. They are therefore **authentic**, so that in all controversies of religion, the church must appeal to them as final.”*

Furthermore what exactly does the ambiguous statement contained in our Confessions mean regarding its inerrancy mean when it states: **“...and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter...”**.

Is the above statement, **“...and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter...”** referring to the Word of God given **100% pure**, without error in its **original** by divine **inspiration**, or kept by God in its **copy 100% pure**, without error by divine **preservation**. Again, if this is the case, does it make sense one would exchange a clear statement; **“...kept pure through subsequent ages by His singular care and providence....are therefore authentic...”**, for one so ambiguous. To remain congruent, one is forced to interpret this statement in the clearer light of the Chicago Statement which these same conservatives embrace, and which **unambiguously** holds that only the **original** is inerrant and **NOT** the **copy**.

Or are they saying that the statement; **“...and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter...”** only applies to the **‘main matters’** necessary for salvation, but the rest is in question, as the Chicago Statement states:

*“Indeed, in view of the frequent repetition in Scripture of the **main matters** with which it deals and also of the Holy Spirit's constant witness to and through the Word, **no serious translation of Holy Scripture will so destroy its meaning** as to render it unable to make its reader **“wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus”**”*

¹²⁹ Preamble to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, Official SBC website; <http://www.sbc.net/bfm/bfmcomparison.asp>

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The SBC's 20th century Confessions of Faith reflect this change. Perhaps we should re-examine our 2000 Confession of Faith by the standard of our SBC preamble which states the basis of our Confessions are as follows (emphasis mine):

*"Baptists are a people of deep beliefs and cherished doctrines. Throughout our history we have been a confessional people, **adopting statements of faith as a witness to our beliefs** and a pledge of our faithfulness to the doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture.*

***Our confessions of faith are rooted in historical precedent**, as the church in every age has been called upon to define and defend its beliefs. Each generation of Christians bears the responsibility of guarding the treasury of truth that has been entrusted to us [2 Timothy 1:14]. Facing a new century, Southern Baptists must meet the demands and duties of the present hour."*¹³⁰

Chicago Statement Witness ~ Saying vs. Doing

7 Things the Chicago Statement **Says Regarding Biblical Inerrancy**

Let's review what the [Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy](#) **says** about inerrancy, and then we will look at what they **practice** (emphasis and brackets are mine):

- (1) It says the '**authority of Scripture**' rest in its integrity which is derived from its '**total truth**' (I'm assuming by '**total truth**' they mean the inerrancy of scripture).

"In our affirmation of the authority of Scripture as involving its total truth, we are consciously standing with Christ and His apostles, indeed with the whole Bible and with the main stream of Church history from the first days until very recently."

- (2) It says they are concerned that so many have taken the grave step of ignoring the '**total truth**' of scripture.

"We are concerned at the casual, inadvertent, and seemingly thoughtless way in which a belief of such far-reaching importance has been given up by so many in our day."

- (3) It says they lament the confusion and loss of authority suffered by scripture when the belief in its '**total truth**' is questioned.

"We are conscious too that great and grave confusion results from ceasing to maintain the total truth of the Bible whose authority one professes to acknowledge. The result of taking this step is that the Bible which God gave loses its authority..."

- (4) It says they acknowledge that the '**total truth**' of scripture is being ignored in favor of '**one's critical reasonings**' (isn't this the definition of naturalistic textual criticism?).

"...and what has authority instead is a Bible reduced in content according to the demands of one's critical reasonings and in principle reducible still further once one has started."

- (5) It says they realize when man's reasoning replaces the '**total truth**' of scripture it reduces the Word of God (I assume this is synonymous with a '**low view**' of scripture).

*"This means that at bottom **independent reason now has authority**, as opposed to Scriptural teaching."*

¹³⁰ Preamble to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, Official SBC website; <http://www.sbc.net/bfm/bfmcomparison.asp>

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(6) It says those who replace the **'total truth'** of scripture with mans' reasoning are being inconsistent with the position of evangelicals.

"If this is not seen and if for the time being basic evangelical doctrines are still held, persons denying the full truth of Scripture may claim an evangelical identity while methodologically they have moved away from the evangelical principle of knowledge to an unstable subjectivism..."

(7) It says replacing the **'total truth'** of scripture with the reasoning of man is a very slippery slope which can only lead further away from the integrity and authority of scripture (sounds similar to the words of Dr. Patterson of being adrift down river).

"and will find it hard not to move further."

The above affirmations of the Chicago Statement are impeccable, being everything I have stated thus far in this paper. At this point I would give them a loud Amen, had I not read what else was contained in their statement.

Chicago Statement Witness ~ Saying vs. Doing

7 Things the Chicago Statement Practices Regarding Biblical Inerrancy

So now let's see how **congruent** what they **say** in their Statement regarding the **'total truth'** of scripture, is with what they **practice** regarding the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy (**'total truth'** of scripture (emphasis and brackets are mine)):

(1) It says God **never** promised to preserve a Bible with **'total truth'**.

*"Since God has **nowhere promised** an inerrant transmission of Scripture..."*

(2) It says the only **'total truth'** of the Word of God was in the originals which were inspired by God, but which **no** longer exist.

*"...it is necessary to affirm that **only the autographic text of the original** documents was inspired..."*

(3) It says our Bible is not **'total truth'** due to the 'slips' by those making the copies of them, but not to be concerned since none of the **'total truth'** as been destroyed that would prevent a reader from being saved.

"...and to maintain the need of textual criticism as a means of detecting any slips that may have crept into the text in the course of its transmission."

*"Yet the verdict of linguistic science is that English-speaking Christians, at least, are exceedingly well served in these days with a host of excellent translations and have no cause for hesitating to conclude **that the true Word of God is within their reach**. Indeed, in view of the frequent repetition in Scripture of the main matters with which it deals and also of the Holy Spirit's constant witness to and through the Word, no serious translation of Holy Scripture will so destroy its meaning as to render it unable to make its reader "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15).*

(4) It says there is **no** Bible with **'total truth'**.

*"Similarly, **no translation is or can be perfect**, and all translations are an additional step away from the **autographa [original]**."* (

(5) It says it was **never** the expectation or goal of the saints to have a Bible with **'total truth'** (I would like to see the source upon which this statement is made since it contradicts everything the saints say in their Confessions).

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*“Differences between literary conventions in Bible times and in ours must also be observed: since, for instance, non-chronological narration and **imprecise citation were conventional and acceptable** and violated no expectations in those days, we must not regard these things as faults when we find them in Bible writers.”*

(6) It says since the saints **never** expected a Bible with **‘total truth’**, it is no issue to have a Bible with **errors** (again, this contradicts everything the saints say in their Confessions as demonstrated earlier).

*“When total precision of a particular kind was not expected nor aimed at, **it is no error not to have achieved it.**”*

(7) It says the saint’s definition of inerrancy embraced a Bible whose **‘total truth’** contained **errors** (this would assume the saint’s definition of inerrancy was that the autographs were given pure, inerrant by divine inspiration but not kept pure, inerrant by divine preservation. I believe this assumption has been demonstrated as false).

*“**Scripture is inerrant, not in the sense of being absolutely precise by modern standards, but in the sense of making good its claims and achieving that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed....**”*

Chicago Statement Witness ~ Saying vs. Doing

What the Chicago Statement **‘giveth’** in its first seven points, it **‘taketh away’** in its later ones. I believe it is reflective of the conflicted and convoluted positions held by Conservatives and Evangelicals on Biblical inerrancy. **They say the Bible is inerrant, but in practice they deny it, seemingly obviously to the contradiction.** This a dangerous place to be when dealing with the Word of God.¹³¹ How does one reconcile these inconsistencies on an issue of **“such far-reaching importance”**, borrowing the phrase of the Chicago Statement?

The answer is the Chicago Statement has redefined the **Biblical and historical** definition of inerrancy. The **Biblical** and **historical** definition of inerrancy includes divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation**; however their definition of inerrancy and that of many evangelicals refers only to divine inspiration of the **originals**. They do not subscribe to the divine **preservation** of the **100% pure copy** of scripture (our Bible); rather they have exchanged it from man’s **restoration** of the Word of God, to an **almost pure** original.

This destroys the integrity and thereby authority of scripture no matter how much one attempts to say otherwise. It results in an **impotent** and **indefensible** definition of inerrancy possessing authority only in word but not in fact, no matter how much man seeks to ascribe it so. The Word of God is only authoritative because God makes it so, deriving its integrity and authority from being; His **100% pure**, inerrant Word, received by divine **inspiration** and kept by divine **preservation**, and not derived from man’s feeble attempts of restoring the Word of God.

Frankly, would you not be just a little bit embarrassed to tell your children you believed the following regarding the Word of God (phrasing the last seven points of the Chicago Statement):

“Children, I like to be sure I have taught you the truth about the Word of God. Therefore here is what I believe and hope you will follow my example of faith. I believe...”

(1) ...God never promised to preserve a Bible with **‘total truth’;**

(2) ...The only **‘total truth’ of the Word of God was in the originals which were inspired by God, but which **no longer exist**;**

¹³¹ [Isaiah 29:13-16](#); [Titus 1:16](#); [Deuteronomy 4:2-5](#); [12:32](#); [Proverbs 30:5-6](#); [Revelation 22:18-19](#)

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- (3) ...The Bible is not **'total truth'** due to the 'slips' by those making the copies of them, but not to be concerned since none of the **'total truth'** as been destroyed that would prevent a reader from being saved;
- (4) ...There is **no** Bible with **'total truth'**;
- (5) ... It was **never** the expectation or goal of the saints to have a Bible with **'total truth'**;
- (6) ... Since the saints **never** expected a Bible with **'total truth'** it is no issue to have a Bible with **errors**;
- (7) ...The saint's definition of inerrancy embraced a Bible whose **'total truth'** contained **errors**."

Chicago Statement Witness ~ Saying vs. Doing

Based on the above would your children be right in questioning the **authority** of the Word of God, as too many do today. Those coming after us are unsure about the authority of the Word of God due to the confusion of their parents and shepherds. Should we not take a clear stand to guide and encourage the next generation?

Is Olson's complaint accurate, that the SBC and Evangelicals are being disingenuous in their claim to Biblical inerrancy? That while they seems to **say** they embrace Biblical inerrancy, this it is **not** what they **practice** when they speak of inerrancy. Let's review Olson charge again when he states (emphasis mine):

Why 'Inerrancy' Doesn't Matter.¹³² **Dr. Roger Olson, Professor of theology at Baylor** University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary.

*"The trouble is that, by and large, "inerrancy" has become a shibboleth—a gate-keeping word used to exclude people rather than to draw authentic Christians together for worship and witness. **Even its most ardent and staunch proponents admit no existing Bible is inerrant; they attribute inerrancy only to the original manuscripts, which do not exist.** They kill the ordinary meaning of the word with the death of a thousand qualifications. If you doubt that, please read the **Chicago Statement** on Inerrancy, which usually is considered the standard evangelical account of the concept."*

The decision before us is very succinct. Were the early saints, the Reformers and founders of the SBC right in their Confessions they possessed the **100% pure**, inerrant Word of God? Moreover, they said this **preserved** text of the Word of God, was **identical** to the **original** and contained in the *Textus Receptus*, were they right or wrong? It is an honest, simple question deserving of an honest, simple answer for those of integrity.

Either yes we do possess the 100% pure, inerrant Word of God, or no we do not. If we do, then where is the **text** of the inerrant Word of God? How do you **say** you believe in the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy when in **practice** you are unable or willing to identify the **text** which was kept **100% pure** by divine preservation? You cannot maintain different Greek texts while holding to **Biblical** inerrancy, there can be only **one** 'Bible'. Do we

¹³² The Baptist Standard, 2nd Opinion, 2/3/2006.

http://www.baptiststandard.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4670&Itemid=134

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believe God gave His Word **100% pure** by divine **inspiration** and kept it **100% pure** by divine **preservation to all ages**, even to our present Bible, as the Word of God, the Reformers and our Baptist heritage declares?

Or, are we prepared to go against the 2000 years of witness of the saints regarding the text of scripture? Now, if the saints are right, to which I agree, then the situation before us is quite simple. Return to the faith, the ancient paths contained in the saint's Confessions and taught in the Word of God; their Bible - the *Textus Receptus*. The words of Jeremiah are applicable to us today:

"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken." ([Jeremiah 6:16-17](#))

If God says His Word is pure forever, then it stands reason, common sense and the logic of faith that it would have to be preserved forever. Otherwise how else would you explain how the Word of God will remain pure to all ages if it is not kept by divine preservation?

4 Naturalistic Textual Critics Attest to the Historical Doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy

*"If we possessed the twenty-seven documents now comprising our New Testament **exactly in the form in which they were dictated or written by their original authors**, there would be **no textual criticism** of the New Testament."*¹³³ Souter

This is exactly what the Reformer affirmed, as has been demonstrated, we **do** have the twenty-seven documents now comprising our New Testament **exactly** in the form in which they were dictated or written by their **original** authors. There is no need for the **restoration** of the original of scripture; we have it in our hands. Neither is there need for the naturalistic textual critic to discover it for us, for it is **not** lost. Nor is there need for any other critical Greek New Testament text to help us sift through the variants, it's already has been **done** by the saints as previous stated by the authorities in New Testament textual criticism: Colwell, Parvis, Aland and Souter (emphasis mine):

(1) Colwell

*"Textual criticism has **never existed** for those whose New Testament is one of **miracle, mystery and authority**. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been **handed down under them** and would have **no need for textual criticism**."*¹³⁴

(2) Parvis

*"It [the TR] was the Scripture of many centuries of the Church's life...**The Textus Receptus is the text of the Church**. It is that form of text which **represents the sum total and the end product** of all the textual decisions which were made by the Church and her Fathers **over a period of more than a thousand***

¹³³ Souter, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament* (1913; 2d ed., London: Duckworth, 1954), p. 3. His critical Greek texts (1910 & 1947) was the second most widely used until the 1966 edition of Aland, Black, Metzger & Wikren.

¹³⁴ Colwell, *What is the best New Testament?* *op. cit.*, p.8.

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years." ¹³⁵

(3) Aland

"It is **undisputed** that from the 16th to the 18th century **orthodoxy's doctrine of verbal inspiration assumed ... [the] Textus Receptus**. It was the only Greek text they knew, and they regarded it as the '**original text**'." ¹³⁶

(4) Souter

"**If** we possessed the twenty-seven documents now comprising our New Testament **exactly in the form in which they were dictated or written by their original authors**, there would be **no** textual criticism of the New Testament." ¹³⁷

5 Points for the SBC to Consider Regarding its Position on Biblical Inerrancy

"Baptists are a people of deep beliefs and cherished doctrines. Throughout our history we have been a confessional people, **adopting statements of faith as a witness to our beliefs** and a pledge of our faithfulness to the doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture.

Our confessions of faith are rooted in historical precedent, as the church in every age has been called upon to define and defend its beliefs. Each generation of Christians bears the responsibility of guarding the treasury of truth that has been entrusted to us [2 Timothy 1:14]. Facing a new century, Southern Baptists must meet the demands and duties of the present hour." ¹³⁸

Perhaps it's time for the SBC to revisit their Confession of Faith and educational curriculum to state clearer their doctrine on inerrancy due to the climate of the culture. The following five questions might offer a starting point of the things for us to consider:

- (1) Does the SBC **believe** we hold a Bible that is the **100% pure**, inerrant Word of God? Or do we believe, like the naturalistic textual critics, our Bible is **almost** pure?
- (2) Does the SBC **include** in its definition of **Biblical inerrancy** both divine inspiration and divine **preservation**? In other words, **how** do we arrive at the **integrity** from which the Bible derives its authority? Is it endowed so by the character of God being His work, or ascribed so by man's redefined meaning of inerrancy?
- (3) If the SBC does **include** divine **preservation** in its definition of Biblical inerrancy, where would one go to find these doctrines **clearly written, defined and articulated**?

¹³⁵ Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 406. He was Research Associate in the New Testament department of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. He is co-author with Allen Wikgren of the New Testament Manuscript Studies. B.D. degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

¹³⁶ Aland, "The Text Of The Church?", *Trinity Journal* 8 (Fall 1987): p. 131.

¹³⁷ Souter, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament* (1913; 2d ed., London: Duckworth, 1954), p. 3. His critical Greek texts (1910 & 1947) was the second most widely used until the 1966 edition of Aland, Black, Metzger & Wikren.

¹³⁸ Preamble to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, Official SBC website; <http://www.sbc.net/bfm/bfmcomparison.asp>

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- (4) If the SBC does embrace and teach the doctrine of divine **preservation**, then to which **text** do we point as the divinely **preserved** Word of God? Do we look to the *Textus Receptus* as the Greek text of our Bible, as witnessed by our Baptist heritage in its historical lineage from the Reformation to SBC? **If not, then where is our Bible?**
- (5) Finally, are the SBC answers to these questions **congruent** with what we practice? Meaning, is what we currently **teach** in our SBC institutions and Confession of Faith reflective of the **Biblical** doctrine of inerrancy that includes divine **inspiration** and divine **preservation**? **Or, is what we say and what we practice as conflicted and convoluted as that of the Chicago Statement?**

Our SBC heritage has been the rigorous examination of our beliefs to ensure they are rooted in the Word of as Dr. Patterson states (emphasis mine):

*“...Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has been deeply committed from its conception to the thorough investigation of the texts of the Bible in order to determine not only what ought to be **believed** but also what ought to be **practiced**....”*¹³⁹

5 Points for the SBC to Consider Regarding its Position on Biblical Inerrancy

Again, let's remember the admonition from Dr. Denny Burk that the next generation needs for us to left a legacy of what we believe and not to assume they know when he states (emphasis mine):

*“D. A. Carson has warned in various settings that what is assumed in one generation is often lost in the next.⁴ Rome should have shown us that many things can happen that we have never expected. It should also remind us of the inadequacy of assuming agreement on key doctrinal matters. **We cannot foresee what the next challenge will be. That is why Christian groups have historically put into writing what they viewed as the non-negotiable points of agreement.**”*

⁴One place in print where Carson makes this point is *Basics for Believers: An Exposition of Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, page 26–27)

¹³⁹ Patterson, President SWBTS, 2009 Message from the President, http://www.swbts.edu/catalog/page.cfm?id=1&open=1_area

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A Failed Theory ~ An 'Impossible Possibility'

*"The textual history that the Westcott-Hort text represents is **no longer** tenable in the light of newer discoveries and fuller textual analysis. In the effort to **construct a congruent history**, our failure suggests that **we have lost the way, that we have reached a dead end**, and that only a new and different insight will enable us to break through."*¹⁴⁰ Grant

5 Naturalistic Textual Critics Say it is **Impossible** to Restore the Original Scriptures

If the SBC is depending on the naturalistic textual critic to give them a Bible, it appears at this point we have a **real** problem. Because the naturalistic textual critic now tells us it is **impossible** to restore the scriptures, as stated in their own words (emphasis mine):

(1) Grant, Robert M.

*"The primary goal of New Testament textual study remains the recovery of what the New Testament writers wrote. We have already suggested that to achieve this goal is **well nigh impossible**. Therefore we must be content with what Reinhold Niebuhr and others have called, in other contexts, an **"impossible possibility"**"*¹⁴¹

*"it is generally recognized that the original text of the Bible **cannot be recovered**."*¹⁴²

(2) Parvis, Merrill M.

¹⁴⁰ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 161.

¹⁴¹ Grant, *A Historical Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 51., Professor of New Testament at the University of Chicago.

¹⁴² Grant, "The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXVI (1947), 173.

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*"Each one of these critical texts differ quite markedly from all of the others. This fact certainly suggests that it is very difficult, **if not impossible** to recover the original text of the New Testament."*¹⁴³

(3) Lake, Kirsopp (1872-1946)

*"In spite of the claims of Westcott and Hort and of von Soden, we do not know the original form of the Gospels, and it is quite likely that **we never shall.**"*¹⁴⁴

(4) Epp, Eldon J.

*"the establishment of the NT text can be achieved **only** by a reconstruction of the history of that early text ..."*¹⁴⁵

*"we simply **do not** have a theory of the text."*¹⁴⁶

A Failed Theory ~ An 'Impossible Possibility'

(5) Clark, Kenneth W.

*"Great progress has been achieved in recovering an early form of text, but it may **be doubted that there is evidence of one original text to be recovered.**"*¹⁴⁷

*"... the papyrus vividly portrays a fluid state of the text at about A.D. 200. Such a scribal freedom suggests that the gospel text was little more stable than the oral tradition, and that **we may be pursuing the retreating mirage of the "original text."**"*¹⁴⁸

*The textual history that the Westcott-Hort text represents is **no longer** tenable in the light of newer discoveries and fuller textual analysis. In the effort to **construct a congruent history**, our failure suggests that **we have lost the way, that we have reached a dead end, and that only a new and different insight will enable us to break through.**"*¹⁴⁹

All the above confess they we're at a **dead end**. Now, we really have a problem in that we not only are, '**adrift down river**' but we are also '**without a paddle**' to get us back upriver. Or, in the sobering Words of God through Jeremiah and Hosea, His prophets in a similar time of unbelief he says:

*"For my people have committed two evils; they have **forsaken me** the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, **that can hold no water.**"* ([Jeremiah 2:13](#))

*"My people are **destroyed for lack of knowledge**: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: **seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.**"* ([Hosea 4:6](#))

¹⁴³ Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 397.

¹⁴⁴ Kirsopp, *Family 13, (The Ferrar Group)*, (Philadelphia PA: Uni. of PA. Press, 1941), p. vii., Professor of early Christian literature at Harvard University from 1915 to his retirement in 1938.

¹⁴⁵ Epp, "The Twentieth Century Interlude in New Testament Textual Criticism", *op. cit.*, p. 401.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 403.

¹⁴⁷ Clark, "The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 85:1, (March, 1966), p.16.; Reverend Professor Kenneth Willis Clark was a Duke Divinity School faculty member for 36 years.

¹⁴⁸ Clark, "The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXV (1966), p.15.

¹⁴⁹ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 161.

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Thus all of the efforts of the naturalistic textual critic over the past one hundred years have resulted in **maximum uncertainty**¹⁵⁰ as to the original reading of the New Testament text. **Have we come full circle back to the historical belief of the early saints, Reformers and the Word of God on the truth of divine preservation?** Dr. Floyd Jones sums it up best for us when he states:

*“By stark contrast, that person who simply puts his/her faith in God's promise to **PRESERVE** His Word concludes that God has done so and that it is to be found in the vast majority of extant mss – and preserved in the English language in the 1611 King James translation. This person is left with **maximum certainty**, with peace of heart and peace of mind.”*¹⁵¹

A Failed Theory ~ An ‘Impossible Possibility’

The ‘hemorrhaging’ of New Testament Greek texts is due to an **unbiblical** view of inerrancy. It will not be stopped just by reclaiming our institution, but only by an accurate diagnosis and remedy of the problem. The erosion of the **authority** of the Word of God **will continue until we repent and return to the pier of Biblical inerrancy**. We have left the old paths as taught in the Word of God and held by the saints, and are embracing an unsound doctrine of inerrancy. The remedy is to return to the Biblical doctrine of inerrancy which includes divine inspiration and divine **preservation**. If not, then below is perhaps where the naturalistic textual critics see the future, having failed in their high expectations of ‘restoring’ the Word of God.

Today it could be said of naturalistic textual criticism, “*129 years to nowhere*,” but this would not be completely true. Unlike a government, as shepherds we handle the Word of God and the souls of men. **The more accurate statement would 129 years in reverse**, paddling not just adrift downriver toward the impending falls. **It has produced a self-inflicted loss, creating a crisis of faith in the Word of God in our generation, accompanied by a loss of the Fear of the Lord and everyone doing what they feel is right in their own eyes**. Then we wonder what the source is of this generation’s lax attitude toward the Word of God.

At the heart of this is the **Fear of man** versus the **Fear of the Lord**. This is a battle we all have to resist, otherwise, we become the very thing we accuse the world of being. For instance:

- We decry the **revisionist** history of our Christian heritage by secularists; yet do we not have a **‘revisionist’** memory of our fathers’ Confessions of faith, forgetting the price they paid to preserve the Inerrant Word of God for us?
- We decry the teaching of **evolution** by secularists, yet have we not embraced the **‘evolution’** of the **Biblical** and **historical** definition Inerrancy by our own Textual Critics, from a **100% pure** Word of God, without error, to an **almost** pure one?

Is it time to sound a certain trumpet on this doctrine which is central to all other doctrines? To awake the saints to the truth they hold the very Word of God in their hands, and not the words of men.

¹⁵⁰ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-225. This designation and “maximum certainty” at the end of the paragraph are insights from Dr. Hills.

¹⁵¹ Floyd Jones, *Which Version is the Bible?*, p. 131

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21st Century Inerrancy ~ Historical Canon Challenged

*“Indeed, New Testament textual critics have been both slow and reticent to face what the term ‘original text’ might mean or what implications might flow from any given definition of it...Whether or not textual critics acquiesce in all of these charges, a strong challenge remains, for they are left not only with text-critical questions -- for example, which variants of Mark are most likely original? -- but also with penetrating canonical questions, such as, which Mark is original?”*¹⁵² Epp

The naturalistic textual critics have now overthrown the original Greek **text** of the **historical canon** of the New Testament. The *Textus Receptus* has been gradually displaced beginning in 1881 with the text of Westcott-Hort. Today, Westcott-Hort is being displaced by the eclectic texts, moving us even further from the historical canon. What does the future hold if we choose to continue down the road of man’s **restoration** versus God’s **preservation**?

Will it be their having overthrown the **original text** of the **historical canon**, now proceeding to overthrow an **original book** of the canon of scripture? This is not an unreasonable assumption, **being the issue of the text of the canon is more significant than the book of the canon**. Think about it, **the text is the canon**; the books are simply the jacket covers for the text. Therefore once you have embraced changing the **text** everything else is called into question, as noted by E. Jay Epp when he states (emphasis mine):

“The issue of ‘original text’ is, for example, more complex than the issue of canon, because the former includes questions of both canon and authority....what ‘original text’ signifies is more complex than Hermann von Soden’s, or Westcott-Hort’s, or any other system of text types, or B. H. Streeter’s theory of local texts, or various current text-critical methodologies, including the criteria for originality of readings, or

¹⁵² Epp, “The Multivalence Of The Term ‘Original Text’ In New Testament Textual Criticism”, *Harvard Theological Review*, 1999, Vol. 92, No. 3, pp. 245-281; this article is based on a paper presented at the New Testament Textual Criticism Section, Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Orlando, Florida, November 1998; <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Bible/Text/original.html>

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'rigorous' versus 'reasoned' eclecticism, or claims of theological tendencies or ideological alterations of readings and manuscripts, **because the question of 'original text' encompasses all of these and much more....**

Indeed, New Testament textual critics have been both slow and reticent to face what the term 'original text' might mean or what implications might flow from any given definition of it...Whether or not textual critics acquiesce in all of these charges, a strong challenge remains, for they are left not only with text-critical questions -- for example, which variants of Mark are most likely original? -- but also with penetrating canonical questions, such as, which Mark is original?"¹⁵³

Tell me how has the truth of inerrancy that the TEXT is the canon, gone so long unrecognized by those who hold to Biblical inerrancy? When you change the text you have changed the **historical canon of scripture. As you can see the future of textual criticism does not promise to make things clearer. By their own admission they have already failed at that. However they do appear prepared to make things even more confusing as seen in this statement by Epp (emphasis mine):**

21st Century Inerrancy ~ Historical Canon Challenged

"Now, if the goal of textual criticism is to recover the most likely "original" text, what in actuality is the object of textual critics' research -- a text of the gospels that is somewhat earlier than but very likely similar to the text of the earliest manuscripts, or a text of even earlier and now largely lost predecessor forms of these gospels?"

In other words, textual critics face two or more questions rather than one: first, a prior question as to which Mark (or John, or Corinthian letters, or Ephesians, etc.) is "original," followed by the more traditional inquiry as to which variant readings of a particular work are "original." More clearly than before, the multivalence of the term "original text" emerges and confronts textual critics with its complexity."¹⁵⁴

We began the twenty century shedding the Greek text of the saints in search for the 'originals'. **This was a serious error**, rejecting the Bible handed-down as witnessed to by the early saints, Reformer and our Baptist heritage. Now, more than 100 years later we confess it's impossible to recover the text of the autographs by naturalistic textual criticism as advocated by Westcott-Hort. Where do the naturalistic textual critics go from here? Do they admit their error and return to the historical and Biblical definition of inerrancy, embracing its divine inspiration and divine preservation; the Bible of the saints in their Greek text of the *Textus Receptus* and its translation in the KJB 1611?

This appears not to be the case, as God forewarns, *"the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing."*¹⁵⁵ The naturalistic textual critics having shed the Greek text of the saints, now at beginning of the twenty-first century appear prepared to **redefine the whole idea of the meaning of the 'original' Word of God** as stated by Epp (emphasis mine):

*"As New Testament textual criticism moves into the twenty-first century, it must shed whatever remains of its innocence, **for nothing is simple anymore.** Modernity may have led many to assume that a straightforward*

¹⁵³ Epp, "The Multivalence Of The Term 'Original Text' In New Testament Textual Criticism", *Harvard Theological Review*, 1999, Vol. 92, No. 3, pp. 245-281; this article is based on a paper presented at the New Testament Textual Criticism Section, Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Orlando, Florida, November 1998; <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Bible/Text/original.html>

¹⁵⁴ Epps, *Ibid*; <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Bible/Text/original.html>

¹⁵⁵ [Ecclesiastes 1:8](#)

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goal of reaching a single **original** text of the New Testament--or even a text as close as possible to that original--was achievable. Now, however, reality and maturity require that textual criticism face unsettling facts, **chief among them that the term 'original' has exploded into a complex and highly unmanageable multivalent entity.**

Whatever tidy boundaries textual criticism may have presumed in the past have now been shattered, and its parameters have moved markedly not only to the rear and toward the front, but also sideways, as fresh dimensions of **originality** emerge from behind the variant readings and from other manuscript phenomena. Nor (for those who choose to work within a theological framework) is textual criticism a "safe" discipline -- a phrase I have heard for four decades -- that can be practiced without challenge to theological convictions or without risk to faith commitments or truth assertions.

I doubt that it ever was "safe" -- at least for any who have thought through the implications of our myriad variation units, with their innumerable competing readings and conceptions, as well as the theological motivations that are evident in so many. But if it has been a "safe" discipline, it is safe no more. And if it has been or is now conceived to be a "narrow" or neatly circumscribed discipline, either by those inside or outside the field, it is narrow no more.

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*"Any who embrace it as a vocation will find its intellectual challenges to have been increased a hundredfold by its enlarged boundaries and broadened horizons, which extend into codicology and papyrology and also into related early Christian, classical, literary, and sociological fields, all of which favor accommodation of the richness of the manuscript tradition, with its multiplicity of texts and its multivalent originals, rather than the myopic quest for a single original text. Both broad training and knowledge, and a capacity to tolerate ambiguity will be high on the list of requisite qualifications for its practitioners."*¹⁵⁶

In time, will this eventually lead to rejecting the effort to establish if there ever was an original Word from God, in favor of an ecumenical text all can believe? Have we arrived to the point where people no longer want to believe the Bible, they just want a Bible they can believe? Yet, we wonder why our professors, pulpits and pews are confused and weak. Can the future eventually be; **there is no need to restore the Bible, because there is no Bible to restore?** If this sounds impossible, remember the noted textual critic Bart Ehrman and his celebrated pitch to our generation (emphasis mine):

*"Now, in JESUS, INTERRUPTED: Revealing the Hidden Contradictions in the Bible (And Why We Don't Know About Them), Ehrman goes even further, revealing not only that the Bible is riddled with inconsistencies and outright forgeries, but that many fundamental stories and doctrines don't actually exist within its pages--they were later inventions by people trying to make sense of a disconnected collection of texts. The Scriptures did not come down to us through the ages in one, harmonious, unbroken version. The story of Jesus was, in fact, interrupted."*¹⁵⁷

Were the Reformers wrong? If not, then why are we trying to restore what we already have? Perhaps it is time for a reflective question. **Why would anyone reject the train of witnesses of the saints regarding the identity of the 100% pure, inerrant Word of God?** Particularly, since the reasons which Westcott-Hort used to reject the *Textus Receptus* has now been discredited as false; meaning at best they were

¹⁵⁶ Epps, Ibid; <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Bible/Text/original.html>

¹⁵⁷ Bart Ehrman, Ph.D., official website, <http://www.bartdehrman.com/>

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ignorant and at worst they lied. Repeating the quote from Dr. Kenneth C. Clark on this point he states:

*“The textual history that the Westcott-Hort text represents is no longer tenable in the light of newer discoveries and fuller textual analysis. In the effort to **construct a congruent history**, our failure suggests that **we have lost the way, that we have reached a dead end**, and that only a new and **different insight will enable us to break through.**”* ¹⁵⁸

Does the situation need to be made any plainer? The problem is the theory of Westcott-Hort, like the theory of evolution, has done great damage to the succeeding generations and their **Fear of the Lord**. It is analogous to the sign we saw with the fall of Soviet Union on television in Moscow Square which stated, “75 years to nowhere.”

The SBC was only partially saved from the effects of this unbiblical doctrine of inerrancy. We addressed the symptom of the problem in reclaiming of our **institutions**, but not its root in correcting this erroneous **doctrine**. Furthermore, Conservatives and Evangelicals have adopted this error as reflected in their Confessions and educational curriculum which ignore divine preservation.

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Instead they have embraced the naturalistic textual critics’ avalanche of critical Greek New Testament texts in the institutions, which continue to erode the **authority** of scripture. The results of which are reflected in this generation’s **low view** for the Word of God which has contributed to producing a post-Christian culture and is the explanation for the ‘emerging church’ doctrine, it’s simply the inevitable outgrowth of the losing of our moorings from the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy.

Let me sum it up by way of analogy. There is a tree growing in the atriums of our Seminaries and churches laden with silver dross. Silver in that it’s represented as truth, dross in that it’s a half truth, therefore a lie. Moreover, the poisonous fruit of this tree is being handed to those whom have been called to teach and protect. It’s time to lay an axle to the root of this tree. This corrupt tree is the doctrine of inerrancy as articulated in the Chicago Statement and taught to our generation. Now is the time to plant the seed of God’s Word and grow the good tree of the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, rooted in the soil of divine inspiration and divine preservation. Otherwise, things will get worse and not better as we will now show.

¹⁵⁸ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 161., The point regarding the demise of the theory of West-Hort is very important and addressed in Dr. Jones book, 'Which Version is the Bible'.

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The Emerging Church ~ A 'Living' Text

"The gospels are 'not archives of traditions but living texts,'¹⁵⁹ and, therefore, 'the concept of a Gospel that is fixed in shape, authoritative, and final as a piece of literature has to be abandoned.'¹⁶⁰ ... 'The free text indicates that to at least some early Christians, it was more important to hand on the spirit of Jesus' teaching than to remember the letter.... The material about Jesus was preserved in an interpretive rather than an exact fashion."¹⁶¹

The above is an excerpt from an article by Jay Epp, *The Multivalence Of The Term 'Original Text' In New Testament Textual Criticism*.¹⁶² In which Epp cites David Parker, from his book, *The Living Text of the Gospels*, addressing the current discussion surrounding the definition of the 'original' text of the canon of scripture, our Bible. Epp writes:

"My final example of a new current in the discussion of 'original text' is the work of David Parker, who comes to this issue from a different perspective in his introductory volume, The Living Text of the Gospels.¹⁶³ Parker begins by challenging the common belief that 'the purpose of textual criticism is to recover the original text, followed by a call to examine whether there is an original text to be recovered.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, this question is 'the principal theme' of his book.¹⁶⁵ But Parker does not eschew the 'attempt to recover early text

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 119.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 93.

¹⁶¹ David C. Parker, "Scripture is Tradition," *Theology* 94 (1991) 15.

¹⁶² Epp, "The Multivalence Of The Term 'Original Text' In New Testament Textual Criticism", *Harvard Theological Review*, 1999, Vol. 92, No. 3, pp. 245-281; this article is based on a paper presented at the New Testament Textual Criticism Section, Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Orlando, Florida, November 1998; <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Bible/Text/original.html>

¹⁶³ David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 3-4.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 7.

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forms'; he does not,¹⁶⁶ because such a search is 'a necessary part of that reconstruction of the history of the text without which ... nothing can be understood.'¹⁶⁷ Yet Parker does distinguish the recovery of 'earlier forms of the text' from the 'original,' asserting that 'it does not follow that it is also necessary to recover a single original text.'¹⁶⁸ He states, 'The question is not whether we can recover it, but why we want to.'¹⁶⁹ To the question 'whether the task of textual criticism is to recover the original text,' Parker replies, '[I]t may be, but does not have to be,'¹⁷⁰ and he chooses not to emphasize and often not to seek a single original.

The reasons are clear enough from the several chapter-length examples that he gives and from the larger context of his book. First, the diversity of readings in the manuscript tradition of the gospels (to which he restricts his study) reveals a text that from the beginning grew freely,¹⁷¹ for 'sayings and stories continued to be developed by copyists and readers.'¹⁷² Parker affirms that the most dramatic changes in the text occurred in the first 150 years – 'initial fluidity followed by stability.'¹⁷³

The Emerging Church ~ A 'Living' Text

Hence, he characterizes the text of the gospels **'as a free, or perhaps, as a living, text,'**¹⁷⁴ and he asks again **'whether the attempt to recover a single original text is consonant with the character of a free manuscript tradition.'**¹⁷⁵

The gospels are **'not archives of traditions but living texts,'**¹⁷⁶ and, therefore, **'the concept of a Gospel that is fixed in shape, authoritative, and final as a piece of literature has to be abandoned.'**¹⁷⁷ As he says elsewhere, **'The [free] text indicates that to at least some early Christians, it was more important to hand on the spirit of Jesus' teaching than to remember the letter.... [T]he material about Jesus was preserved in an interpretive rather than an exact fashion.'**¹⁷⁸

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 132-37.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 211.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 208.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 209.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 182.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 203.

¹⁷² Ibid., 45-46.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 70; compare 200

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 200.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 209.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 119.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 93.

¹⁷⁸ David C. Parker, "Scripture is Tradition," *Theology* 94 (1991) 15.

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What's At Stake ~ What We're Losing?

The argument on the doctrine of **Biblical** and **historical** inerrancy is sometimes dismissed as a “*tempest in a tea pot.*” The rational goes that since “*no doctrines are at stake*”, the issue does not matter. When we say we have an **almost** inerrant Bible, is it true that ‘**no doctrines are affected**’? Perhaps we should be reminded again of the experience of Ehrman.

He began as a fundamentalist in Moody Bible Institute, then went to Princeton (remember Archibald, Warfield and Robertson) where he came under the mentorship of textual-critical Vader—Bruce Metzger—whom he calls his “Doctor-Father.”¹⁷⁹ There he came to believe the Word of God had errors, not because it was true, rather because he had not been armed with the doctrine of **Biblical** inerrancy which teaches divine preservation; therefore he had no ‘*shield of faith*’ to handle the wicked and fiery challenge of Satan, “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*”.¹⁸⁰

In his book, ‘Misquoting Jesus’, which is the first one written on New Testament textual criticism for the layman, Ehrman says (emphasis and brackets mine):

*“It would be wrong... to say—as people sometimes do—that the changes in our text have **no real bearing** on what the texts mean or on the theological conclusions that one draws from them. We have seen, **in fact, that just the opposite is the case**..... I started out as an ultra-conservative evangelical Christian who thought that the words of the Bible were without error. In part it was my study of these **manuscripts [naturalistic textual***

¹⁷⁹ ⁷ Ibid, "Acknowledgments." Ehrman dedicated his book to Metzger.

¹⁸⁰ [Ephesians 6:11-20](#);

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*criticism] that made me realize we didn't have **the original words**, and that made me change my views about the Bible. Eventually it came to have a very serious effect on my religious outlook."*¹⁸¹

Now, hopefully it is apparent how wrong the remarks are which see this issue as a "**tempest in a tea pot**" and "**no doctrines are at stake**." The naturalistic textual critic's approach to scripture puts **all** the major doctrines and practices at risk. Let us remember the warning of [Francis Turretin](#) as he stated in the Helvetic Consensus, "**...they thus bring the foundation of our faith and its sacred authority into perilous danger**."

The late Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984) comments on the erroneous believe that these small changes to the Word of God are harmless, being '**no doctrines are at stake**', when he warns:

*"Within Evangelicalism there are a growing number who are modifying their views on the inerrancy of the Bible so that the **full authority of scripture is completely undercut** but it is happening in very subtle ways. Like the snow lying side-by-side on the ridge, the new views on biblical authority often seem at first glance not to be very far from what evangelicals, until just recently, have always believed.*

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*But also, like the snow lying side-by-side on the ridge, the new views when followed consistently end up a thousand miles apart. What may seem like a minor difference at first, in the end makes all the difference in the world ... compromising the full authority of Scripture eventually affects what it means to be a Christian theologically and how we live in the full spectrum of human life"*¹⁸²

Now let's us consider a few of the foundational truths which are in perilous danger in the absence of the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy. At the top of the list is the doctrine of divine preservation itself. **How is it we have so long overlooked this cornerstone of Biblical inerrancy?** In the words of Ehrman, "**...once inerrancy fell, so did everything else**." His "*compelling problem*", surrounded his ignorance of the doctrine of divine preservation which eventually led him to deny his belief in the inspiration of scripture and finally God.

12 Doctrines Affected If We Embrace the Definition of Inerrancy of the Chicago Statement (and ETS)

The Chicago Statement says none of the '**main matters**' are at risk by holding to a doctrine of inerrancy which says we have an **almost** pure Bible. Is this true? **NO**, something is lost; below are 12 doctrines at risk with a definition of inerrancy which accepts an **almost** pure Bible. Would you consider these '**main matters**'?

<u>Status</u>	<u>Doctrine</u>
(1) Fallen	Doctrine of Divine Preservation;
(2) Fallen	Doctrine of Inerrancy; Scripture is 100% Pure;

¹⁸¹ Ehrman, "Misquoting Jesus" p.61

¹⁸² Francis Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, 1983, p. 44

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- (3) **Fallen** **The Integrity And Authority of Scripture, The **High View**;**
The lack of confidence in believing we hold the very Word of God and the boldness to preach it to a culture whose truth it rejects, becoming respecters of persons;
- (4) **Fallen** **Doctrine of the Fear of the Lord;**
- (5) **Fallen** **Wisdom of God** (*"The Fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom"*)¹⁸³
- (6) **Fallen** **Text of the Canon of Scripture** (Since 1881), Which **Is** The Canon;
- (7) **Fallen** **God's Design for Marriage & Family;**
- (8) **Teetering** **Our Witness & Evangelism** (*"..If the salt have lost his savour..it is..good for nothing."*);¹⁸⁴ The blessing of being God's voice to the world, as we have been since the Reformation.
- (9) **Teetering** **The Next Generation's belief in the Word of God;**
- (10) **Teetering** **Doctrine of Divine Inspiration;**
- (11) **Pending** **Book of the Canon Of Scripture;** (*"...The eye is not satisfied.."*).¹⁸⁵
- (12) **Pending** **The Bible**, as we are witnessing the in 'emerging church' heresy;

What's At Stake ~ What We're Losing?

Do you believe all the above doctrines represent '**main matters**' and our concerns over the prospects of their loss is not just a "**tempest in a tea pot**"? The rational which says "**no doctrines are at stake**", is grievously mistaken, because **ALL the doctrine are** at stake as Dr. Hills so eloquently affirms. Hills (1912-1981) was a Presbyterian scholar, perhaps the greatest 20th Century Traditional ("Byzantine") Text, and Received Text (*Textus Receptus*) defender. He integrated his theological perspective alongside New Testament criticism with an approach he called the "**logic of faith**". He graduated summa cum laude at Yale University (1930-1933); Th.D. from Westminster Theological Seminary (1935); Th.M. from Columbia Theological Seminary; Th.D. in New Testament textual criticism from Harvard.

He had long warned that a **denial** or even a **low** view of the special providential **preservation** of the Scriptures would logically and ultimately lead one **to a denial of the verbal and plenary inspiration of the same Scriptures as well as faith in God.**

*"But if the **providential preservation** of the Scriptures is not important, why is the doctrine of the **infallible inspiration** of the original Scriptures important? If God has not **preserved** the Scriptures by His special providence, why would He have infallibly **inspired** them in the first place? And if it is not important that the Scriptures be regarded as infallibly **inspired**, why is it important to insist that Gospel is completely true? And if this is not important, why is it important to believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God? In short, unless we follow the logic of faith, we can be **certain of nothing** concerning the Bible and its text".¹⁸⁶*

This is chain of unbelief is precisely what happened to Erhman. He begins as a 'conservative' embracing the inerrancy of the Word of God. Then is challenged on the doctrine of its divine **preservation** and told the Bible has errors. He's intimidated and caves in on his belief, having no developed theology on the Biblical doctrine of divine

¹⁸³ [Proverbs 9:10.](#)

¹⁸⁴ [Matthew 5:13a.](#)

¹⁸⁵ [Ecclesiastes 1:8.](#)

¹⁸⁶ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, op. cit., p. 225, <http://www.jesus-is-lord.com/kjvdefen.htm>

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preservation; never having been taught the same. In turn this finally leads to his reject of divine inspiration and ultimately is faith in God which us **to a very, very important point, one which is the essence of this paper**. Is the doctrine of divine inspiration and divine preservation inseparably link to the Biblical doctrine of inerrancy?

The Intrinsic Link ~ Inspiration and Preservation

It has been demonstrated it was the witness of the saints, that we **do** possess the inerrant original text of scripture in our copy, the Bible. This is what you would describe as a **faith-based**, *theological view*, versus the rationalistic view of the naturalistic textual critic (.i.e. Westcott-Hort). The thesis of this paper which holds that the Biblical and **historical** doctrine of inerrancy the Word of God **necessitates**; the original text being given **100%** pure by divine inspiration, and its copy, (our Bible) being kept **100%** pure by divine preservation, and preserved in the texts of the *Textus Receptus* and translated into the English of the King James Bible has not gone unnoticed. This view is addressed by Daniel B. Wallace. Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary when he states (emphasis mine):

*“I wish to address an argument that has been used by TR/MT¹⁸⁷ advocates—an argument which is especially persuasive among laymen. The argument is unashamedly **theological** [faith-based] in nature: **inspiration and preservation are intrinsically linked to one another** and both are intrinsically linked to the TR/MT.*

That is to say, the doctrine of verbal-plenary inspiration necessitates the doctrine of providential preservation of the text, and the doctrine of providential preservation necessarily implies that the majority text (or the TR)⁵ is the faithful replica of the autographs.”

If inspiration and preservation can legitimately be linked to the text of the New Testament in this way, then the (new) KJV NT is the most accurate translation and those who engage in an expository ministry should use this text alone and encourage their audiences to do the same.

¹⁸⁷ TR is the Textus Receptus (the textual basis of the King James Bible 1611) and MT is the Majority Text (Byzantine or Syrian Text and textual basis of TR). <http://bible.org/article/inspiration-preservation-and-new-testament-textual-criticism>.

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*But if this theological argument is not legitimate, then New Testament textual criticism needs to be approached on other than a theological a priori basis. And if so, then perhaps most modern translations do indeed have a more accurate textual basis after all.”*¹⁸⁸

Well, is the doctrine of divine inspiration and divine preservation intrinsically linked? Let’s review the testimony of those who think as so quoted in this paper.

Coldwell, the ‘Dean’ Textual Critics - Believed Divine Inspiration & Divine Preservation Are Intrinsically Linked

*“Textual criticism has **never existed** for those whose New Testament is one of **miracle, mystery and authority**. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been **handed down under them and would have no need for textual criticism.**”*¹⁸⁹

The Intrinsic Link ~ Inspiration and Preservation

Ehrman, Believer Turned Unbeliever - Believes Divine Inspiration & Divine Preservation are Intrinsically Linked

*“If one wants to insist that God inspired the very words of scripture, **what would be the point if we don’t have the very words of scripture?** ... It’s a bit hard to know what the words of the Bible mean if we don’t even know what the words are!*

*This became a problem for my view of inspiration, for I came to realize that it would have been no more **difficult for God to preserve the words of scripture** than it would have been for him to inspire them in the first place. If he wanted his people to have his words, surely he would have given to them (and possibly even given them the words in a language they could understand, rather than Greek and Hebrew). The fact that we don’t have the words surely must show, I reasoned, that he did not preserve them for us. And if he didn’t perform that miracle, there seemed to be no reason to think that he performed the earlier miracle of inspiring those words.”*¹⁹⁰

Hills, a Defender of Biblical Inerrancy - Believes Divine Inspiration & Divine Preservation Are Intrinsically Linked

*“But if the **providential preservation** of the Scriptures is not important, why is the doctrine of the **infallible inspiration** of the original Scriptures important? If God has not **preserved** the Scriptures by His special providence, why would He have infallibly **inspired** them in the first place? And if it is not important that the Scriptures be regarded as infallibly **inspired**, why is it important to insist that Gospel is completely true? And if this is not important, why is it important to believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God? In short, unless we follow*

¹⁸⁸ Wallace, *Inspiration, Preservation, and New Testament Textual Criticism*. Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, Executive Director of the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts, and author of *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*. He works extensively in textual criticism and is the senior New Testament editor of the NET Bible and coeditor of the NET-Nestle Greek-English diglot. B.A., Biola University, 1975; Th.M., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979; Ph.D., 1995.

¹⁸⁹ Colwell, *What is the best New Testament?* *op. cit.*, p.8.

¹⁹⁰ Bart D Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 11. See paper by Dr. Jeffrey Khoo, Principal, and Lecturer in Systematic Theology, Far East Bible College, ‘Can Verbal Plenary Inspiration Do Without Verbal Plenary Preservation?: The Achilles’ Heel Of Princeton Bibliology’ @ http://www.febc.edu.sg/BBVol13_1c.htm

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the logic of faith, we can be **certain of nothing** concerning the Bible and its text".¹⁹¹

The Word of God – Affirms Divine Inspiration & Divine Preservation Are Intrinsicly Linked

Observe how God consistently links the doctrine of divine inspiration & divine preservation when referring to His Word. God speaks with an 'economy of words' by not only what he says, but how He says something, either by repetition and / or association. God reveals His doctrine of inerrancy of His Word being **100%** pure by linking the doctrines of divine preservation and divine preservation within in the same verse(s).

The words in **BLUE** are where God affirms the **100% purity** of His Word to by divine inspiration; ("**the words of the Lord**") as opposed to the words of man. Those highlighted in **RED** are where God affirms the **100% purity** of His Word to all ages by divine preservation; ("**thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever**";) as opposed to their restoration by man!

The Intrinsic Link ~ Inspiration and Preservation

- (1) "The **words of the LORD** are **pure** words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven** times. **Thou** shalt **keep** them, O LORD, **thou** shalt **preserve** them from this generation **for ever**." ([Psalms 12:6-7](#))
- (2) "The **counsel [Word] of the LORD** standeth **for ever**, the **thoughts [Words** ¹⁹²] of his heart to **all generations**." ([Psalm 33:11](#))
- (3) "For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his **truth [word]** **endureth to all generations**." ([Psalm 100:5](#))
- (4) "The **works of his hands** are **verity and judgment**; **all** his commandments are **sure**. They **stand fast for ever and ever**, and are done in truth and uprightness." ([Psalms 111:7-8](#))
- (5) "LAMED. **For ever**, O LORD, thy word is **settled** in heaven. Thy **faithfulness** is unto **all generations**: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth." ([Psalms 119:89-90](#))
- (6) "Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are **truth**. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them **for ever**." ([Psalms 119:151-152](#))
- (7) "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and **my** words which I have put in thy mouth, shall **not depart** out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of **thy seed**, nor out of the mouth of **thy seed's seed**, saith the LORD, **from henceforth and for ever**." ([Isaiah 59:21](#))

¹⁹¹ Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, op. cit., p. 225, <http://www.jesus-is-lord.com/kjvdefen.htm>

¹⁹² [Isaiah 55:8](#), "For my **thoughts** are not your **thoughts**, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD."

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- (8) "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be **for ever: nothing** can be put to it, nor **any thing** taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should **fear** before him." ([Ecclesiastes 3:14](#))
- (9) "For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass**, one jot or one tittle **shall in no wise pass from the law**, till all be fulfilled." ([Matthew 5:18](#))
- (10) "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." ([1Peter 1:25](#); see [Isaiah 40:8](#))

The above represents God's witness to the **100%** purity of His Word as given by divine inspiration in its original. A perfect purity which He says He will also keep 100% pure forever by divine preservation in its copy. How can the Word of God stand forever unless **He** also preserves it forever- why would He not? If we say the Word of God is not **100%** pure, then God did not preserve it forever and we're calling God a liar – which He says he is not:

- "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and **shall he not make it good?** [Numbers 23:19](#)
- "God forbid: yea, let **God be true**, but every man a liar..." [Romans 3:4](#)
- "...the Strength of Israel **will not lie** nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent"! [1Sam 15:29](#)

The Intrinsic Link ~ Inspiration and Preservation

Why did God refer to King David as "a man after mine own heart"?¹⁹³ Can it be because of David's love for God as evidence for his love for God's Word; its purity and surety? King David devoted the entire chapter of Psalms 119 to extol the virtues of the Word of God; its righteousness (purity) and endurance (lasts forever). It is the longest chapter in the Book of Psalms (emphasis and brackets mine):

The **Law** of the LORD = Law speaks to God's legal Authority over our lives; its right and forever.

- "The **law** of the LORD is **perfect**, converting [changing] the soul:..." ([Psalms 19:7a](#))
 - When we submit to God's Lordship, it will change our way of understanding & thinking.¹⁹⁴

The **Testimony** of the LORD = Testimony speaks to God's Witness to something; it's the right way for lifetime.

- "...the **testimony** of the LORD is **sure**, making wise the simple." ([Psalms 19:7b](#))
 - When God gives witness to something, it's right; pure, not just now but forever (sure).¹⁹⁵

The **Statutes** of the LORD = Statues speaks to God's Revelation to us; it's true and the way of blessing.

- "The **statutes** of the LORD are **right**, rejoicing the heart:..." ([Psalms 19:8a](#))
 - When we obey one truth [precept] of God, it gives more revelation & joy, for another step.¹⁹⁶

The **Command** of the LORD = Command speaks to God Omniscience & Lordship over all things.

- "...the **commandment** of the LORD is **pure**, enlightening the eyes." ([Psalms 19:8b](#))

¹⁹³ [Acts 13:22](#); [1 Samuel 13:14](#)

¹⁹⁴ [Romans 12:2](#), "...be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." see [2 Timothy 2:21](#)

¹⁹⁵ [Numbers 23:19](#), "God is not a man, that he should lie;.....hath he said, and shall he not do it..."

¹⁹⁶ [Isaiah 28:10](#), "...precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept;..."

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- We obey God not because we always agree, but because He is our King, and His ways are always right; pure.¹⁹⁷

The **Fear of the LORD** = Fear speaks to the Holiness of God & ours; and our enduring reward as we follow Him.

- “The **fear** of the LORD is **clean**, enduring **for ever**:...” (Psalms 19:9a)
 - A proper appreciation for the fear of God will draw us unto obedience, holiness, service and eternal treasures.¹⁹⁸

The **Judgments of the LORD** = Judgment speaks of the rightness of His sentence and our reward.

- “...the **judgments** of the LORD are **true** and **righteous altogether**.” (Psalms 19:9b)

If God says His Word is **100%** pure forever, which He does; then it stands to reason, common sense and the logic of faith that it would have to be preserved **100%** pure forever. Otherwise how else would you explain how the Word of God will remain **100%** pure to all ages if it is not kept so by divine preservation? Therefore the doctrines of divine inspiration and divine preservation are *intrinsically linked* to one another and both are *intrinsically linked* to the *Textus Receptus*, and the *Textus Receptus* is *intrinsically linked* to the King James Bible and NKJB, being they're the only two of English translations of it. God changes not and His Word changes not – “...for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” (Psalms 138:2)

The Intrinsic Link ~ Inspiration and Preservation

This is the historical witness of the saints. We must appreciate that they believed in Biblical inerrancy and did not look to textual criticism for validation, rather to the Word of God in the doctrines of divine inspiration, divine preservation and the character of God. Are we now prepared to say the historical witness of the saints were mistaken in their belief they possessed the **100%** pure, inerrant Word of God in its *copy*, their Bible? Believing instead, the naturalistic textual critics' claim, that in the last 129 years and the first time since the apostolic church, they have provided us with an **almost** inerrant Bible?

At the heart of this issue is how did God preserve His Word 100% pure? If we can trust God with our eternal destiny, do you think we can trust Him for the preservation of His Word **100%** pure? Both truths are secured by the same sure foundation. One, because they're both **promised** in the Word of God, rightly divided. Two, they equally rest on the **character** of God to perform what He said. If God gives a promise but does not keep it, then what good is the promise in the first place? His Word and His character are of equal importance, therefore synonymous. This is true among men as well when we say someone has good character, meaning they keep their word. Would you say of anyone who lied, particularly concerning matters of great importance, that they had good character – I think not. **Therefore there is only one question you have to answer- did God promise to preserve His Word 100% pure to all ages?** The purpose of this paper is to encourage you in your faith and demonstrate the answer is an unequivocal yes; as well as saith the saints.

What really is all work here is the **Fear of man** has trumped the **Fear of the Lord**, “For they loved the **praise of men** more than the **praise of God**.”¹⁹⁹ God calls this dissembling which is hypocrisy and something we all must

¹⁹⁷ Proverbs 3:5, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”

¹⁹⁸ Proverbs 4:18, “...the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (see Psalms 19:11)

¹⁹⁹ John 12:43

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resist even as did Apostle Peter on the 'popular' doctrine of circumcision, similar to our present day 'divine preservation' controversy (brackets mine):

*"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I [Apostle Paul] withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, **fearing them which were of the circumcision**. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation..."*

Our problem with the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy is the same as the one with creationism, it's not 'scientific' [popular], therefore we don't want to look foolish. We will stand on the Word of God as long as we do not have to stand against what is popular, among our own - much less the world. Yet, we are the same shepherds who stand in our pulpits and tell those whom we pastor not to fear, rather to stand alone and trust God, while we waver in the presence of man on the doctrine central to their faith - repent! We should be fervently teaching them this most precious truth, not shamefully denying it. God says it that settles, whether I believe it or not.

Question Where's the empirical evidence for divine preservation, explain how **does** God do it?

Answer You have no other empirical evidence; other than the Word of God; it's because He said it and the saints bear witness to the same!

Question Where's the empirical evidence for your salvation; explain how **does** God do it?

Answer You have no other empirical evidence, other than the Word of God; it's because He said it and you bear witness to the same!

Naturalistic Textual Criticism ~ 129 Years to Nowhere

Why is it we have changed the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy from one of divine preservation to one of man's restoration? Particularly when we say our objective is to restore the Word of God; yet we have been informed by the 'deans' of naturalistic textual criticism of the following two realities:

(1) The Restoration Is An Impossibility

- **Grant, Robert M.**

*"The primary goal of New Testament textual study remains the recovery of what the New Testament writers wrote. We have already suggested that to achieve this goal is **well nigh impossible**. Therefore we must be content with what Reinhold Niebuhr and others have called, in other contexts, an "**impossible possibility**"²⁰⁰*

*"it is generally recognized that the original text of the Bible **cannot be recovered.**"²⁰¹*

- **Parvis, Merrill M.**

*"Each one of these critical texts differ quite markedly from all of the others. This fact certainly suggests that it is very difficult, **if not impossible** to recover the original text of the New*

²⁰⁰ Grant, *A Historical Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 51., Professor of New Testament at the University of Chicago.

²⁰¹ Grant, "The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXVI (1947), 173.

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Testament." ²⁰²

- **Lake, Kirsopp** (1872-1946)

*"In spite of the claims of Westcott and Hort and of von Soden, we do not know the original form of the Gospels, and it is quite likely that **we never shall.**"* ²⁰³

- **Epp, Eldon J.**

*"the establishment of the NT text can be achieved **only** by a reconstruction of the history of that early text ..."* ²⁰⁴

*"we simply **do not** have a theory of the text."* ²⁰⁵

- **Clark, Kenneth W.**

*The textual history that the Westcott-Hort text represents is **no longer** tenable in the light of newer discoveries and fuller textual analysis. In the effort to **construct a congruent history**, our failure suggests that **we have lost the way, that we have reached a dead end**, and that only a new and different insight will enable us to break through."* ²⁰⁶

Naturalistic Textual Criticism ~ 129 Years to Nowhere

The 'founders' of the school of naturalistic textual criticism of the New Testament say it is impossible to restore the Word of God to its original text. In the words of Clark, "we may be **pursuing the retreating mirage** of the "original text." ²⁰⁷ They go and say if you believe in divine inspiration then you do not need naturalistic textual criticism; since you already have the Word of God (brackets and emphasis mine):

(2) Restoration Is Not Necessary if You believe In Divine Inspiration

- **Colwell**

*"Textual criticism has **never existed** for those whose New Testament is one of **miracle, mystery and authority [i.e. divine inspiration and divine preservation]**.. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been **handed down under them** and would have **no need for textual criticism.**"* ²⁰⁸

- **Souter**

*"**If** we possessed the twenty-seven documents now comprising our New Testament **exactly in the form in which they were dictated or written by their original authors, there***

²⁰² Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 397.

²⁰³ Kirsopp, *Family 13, (The Ferrar Group)*, (Philadelphia PA: Uni. of PA. Press, 1941), p. vii., Professor of early Christian literature at Harvard University from 1915 to his retirement in 1938.

²⁰⁴ Epp, "The Twentieth Century Interlude in New Testament Textual Criticism", *op. cit.*, p. 401.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 403.

²⁰⁶ Clark, "Today's Problems", *op. cit.*, p. 161.

²⁰⁷ Clark, "The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXV (1966), p.15.

²⁰⁸ Colwell, *What is the best New Testament?* *op. cit.*, p.8.

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would be no textual criticism of the New Testament.”²⁰⁹

The above statements by two leading naturalistic textual critics are exactly what the Reformation saints say they believe:

- **Johannes Quenstedt**

*“We believe, as is our duty, that the **providential care of God** has **always** watched over the **original** and primitive texts of the canonical Scriptures in such a way that we can be certain that the sacred codices **which we now have in our hands** are those which existed at the time of Jerome and Augustine, nay at the **time of Christ Himself and His Apostles.**”*²¹⁰

- **Francis Turretin**²¹¹

*“By **original texts**, we do not mean the autographs written by the hand of Moses, of the prophets and the apostles, which certainly do not now exist. We mean their **apographs** which are so called because **they set forth to us the word of God in the very words of those who wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit.**”*²¹²

Naturalistic Textual Criticism ~ 129 Years to Nowhere

The above statements by two leading Reformation leaders are exactly what the naturalistic textual critics affirm is what the saints believe:

- **Aland**

*“It is undisputed that from the 16th to the 18th century **orthodoxy's doctrine of verbal inspiration assumed ... [the] Textus Receptus.** It was the only Greek text they knew, and **they regarded it as the 'original text.'**”*²¹³

- **Parvis**

*“It [the **TR**] ²¹⁴ was the Scripture of many centuries of the Church's life.... **The Textus Receptus is the text of the Church.** It is that form of text which **represents the sum total and the end product** of all the textual decisions which were made by the Church and her Fathers **over a period of more than a***

²⁰⁹ Souter, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament* (1913; 2d ed., London: Duckworth, 1954), p. 3. His critical Greek texts (1910 & 1947) was the second most widely used until the 1966 edition of Aland, Black, Metzger & Wikren.

²¹⁰ Preus, *The Inspiration of Scripture*, op. cite., p.139.

²¹¹ Gerstner, called Turretin "the most precise theologian in the Calvinistic tradition." *Turretin on Justification* an audio series by John Gerstner (1914-1996) a Professor of Church History at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Knox Theological Seminary.

²¹² Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992 reprint), 1:106. See also Robert Barnett, "Francis Turretin on the Holy Scriptures," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Dean Burgon Society held at Calvary Baptist Church, Ontario, Canada, in 1995. <http://www.deanburgonsociety.org/Preservation/barnett95.htm>

²¹³ Aland, "The Text Of The Church?", *Trinity Journal* 8 (Fall 1987): p. 131.

²¹⁴ TR=*Textus Receptus*. Traditional Text (TT) is one of the 3 naming conventions associated with the pool of Greek New Testament manuscripts from which the *Textus Receptus* is drawn; Traditional, Byzantine and Majority. The 'Traditional Text' (TR) label refers to it's predominate historical use by the Church. The '**Byzantine Text**' referring to the geographical location of its origin; **Byzantium** (667 BC) (later **Constantinople** (330 AD) and present day **Istanbul** in Turkey). Last the 'Majority Text' (MT) refers to the numerical dominance of the text of the *Textus Receptus* as compared to the total number of manuscripts among the four pools of Greek New Testament text-types: **Byzantine, Alexandrian, Western and Caesarean**. These four pools are man-made definitions refined in the naturalistic textual criticism of Westcott-Hort (1881), which they erroneously used to overthrow the text of the *Textus Receptus*, in favor of the Greek text used in all modern translations, except the KJB & NKJV.

The Fear of the Lord - Restoring the Biblical Doctrine of Inerrancy thousand years."²¹⁵

Therefore, why does one pursue the concourse of textual criticism, when it will not produce an original text of the Word of God in the end, according to the experts? Also, if you subscribe to the divine inspiration of the text by "*miracle, mystery*"; logic dictates you would equally hold to the same "*miracle, mystery*" in the divine preservation of its text, according to the 'deans' of the school who declare textual criticism "*has never existed for those whose New Testament is one of miracle, mystery and authority*", instead it "*would have been handed down under them*" which is the same testimony of the Word of God, the reformation saints and our Baptist ancestry.

The '*miracle and mystery*' of divine preservation is no less difficult to embrace than the '*miracle and mystery*' of divine inspiration. Therefore the logically assumption is; if you follow the path of the naturalistic textual critic and embrace restoration, effectively you do not believe in either divine inspiration or divine preservation, since divine inspiration is a mute point being we have no originals. Therefore the definition of inerrancy held by the Chicago Statement provides a 'fig leaf'; allowing us to **appear** orthodox in what we **say**, while remaining liberal in what we **do**. To resolve our incoherent doctrine of inerrancy there is only one question we must answer - **did God promise to preserve His Word 100% pure?**

If so, then embrace the Biblical and historical doctrine of inerrancy as revealed in the Word of God and receive the witness of the Reformation saints and our Baptist heritage. That we possess in our hands a Bible, that is the **100%** pure Word of God; has given so in its original by divine inspiration and kept so by divine preservation. Once we return to our roots all the other issue will come into focus.

3 Reasons to Address the Error on the Doctrine of Inerrancy

- (1) First, it is an affront to God to say His Word is not pure. He says His Word is more precious than His name; "*for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*"²¹⁶ God says to teach His Word is not pure is calling Him a liar, as we will see in point three. It does not get any more personal than misrepresenting what one says, particularly if it impacts the welling being of the ones we love. Would you be offended if you wrote something very dear to you and extremely important to those whom you love, then it was represented as not being true to the point they ignored it and suffered loss?
- (2) Next, because it is our responsibility to teach sound doctrine. We are entrusted as stewards with resources provided by God to feed His flock; "*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*"²¹⁷ As shepherds is there any greater foundational truth to teach the saints than the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy; that ever word in God's letter of love to His children is true and can be believed?
- (3) Last, because it is our responsibility to confront unsound doctrine. We are also entrusted with authority and power by God to protect His flock. "*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith*

²¹⁵ Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies", *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): p. 406. He was Research Associate in the New Testament department of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. He is co-author with Allen Wikgren of the New Testament Manuscript Studies. B.D. degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

²¹⁶ [Psalms 138:2](#).

²¹⁷ [Acts 20:28](#); compare [Ezekiel 34:2](#); [Jeremiah 3:15](#); John 10:11-12.

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which was once delivered unto the saints."²¹⁸ As shepherds can you think of anything more damaging error to protect the saints from than they being taught the Bible is almost pure; thereby causing them to doubt the integrity of God and His Word? Like God, we must confront this error by teaching the truth and warning of its consequences.

The severest reproof God ever spoke to believers was in violating this doctrine of Biblical inerrancy when He said through Agur; *"Every word of God is pure; he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."*²¹⁹ To say God's Word is not pure is to call Him a liar and it will return upon our head and we will be found the liar instead. The saints of old were cognizant of this admonition, approaching this doctrine of Biblical inerrancy with the proper '*fear of the Lord*'; in its copy, their Bible, which they received as the 100% preserved original. Think about it, was Agur referring to the 500 year old original of the law of Moses, or a copy?

Closing Remarks

In closing, this initiative is not a 'knee-jerk' response to the 'emerging church' movement, although it will effectively address this heresy. There have been heresies since the age of the Apostles and they will continue to the ingathering of the saints to glory. Not all doctrinal differences rise to the level of **being heretical**. For instance, views on the following topics do not:

- Baptism
- Security of the Believer
- Speaking in Tongues
- Partaking of Communion
- Events surrounding the Second Coming
- Salvation for everyone or just the "Elect"

²¹⁸ [Jude 1:3](#) compare; [2Timothy 3:16](#); [4:2](#).

²¹⁹ [Proverbs 30:5-6](#); compare [Deuteronomy 12:32](#); [Malachi 4:4](#); [Revelation 22:18-19](#); [Matthew 18:6-7](#).

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On the other hand there are 'beliefs' that are heretical. Those which **assault the central doctrines of the faith**, either by **denial or denigrating** them such as:

- The Inerrancy of the Word of God - the Bible is **100%** pure in its copy, as in its original; therefore 'authentic' using the term from the Reformers Confessions; meaning 'as the original' (heretical i.e. [The Chicago Statement](#)²²⁰, [Evangelical Theological Society](#)²²¹ hold the Bible has errors)
- The Deity of Jesus - sinless; born of a virgin (heretical i.e. Jehovah Witnesses claim Jesus is not God)
- Jesus is the Only Way of Salvation –
- The Depravity of Man – a sinner separated from God in need of salvation
- Salvation by Grace Alone - not by works; sacraments including Baptism (heretical i.e. Roman Catholic Church)

Perhaps you may be surprised that the first thing I listed as heretical is the denying or denigrating the Inerrancy of the Word of God and not the Deity of Jesus. It's because it is the foundational doctrine **central** to our faith since all the other doctrine securely rest, **only** upon the Biblical doctrine of inerrancy of the Word of God; meaning it is **100% pure** having been given and kept by the promises and character of God Who cannot lie; therefore it is **authentic and authoritative**.

Closing Remarks

If it falls all the others doctrines, given time will, and is the reason it must be taken seriously and defended as the saints have been called to do through the ages, and as the Word of God so charges us:

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3)

The issue before is obvious and should not require further explanation to those who love the Word of God. May it be our vision and prayer that God will bring healing to our homes and land as we returned to Him in repentance for so lightly treating²²² and obeying His Word, **which He has magnified above His name**²²³ Therefore I will leave us with the Word God gave King Solomon:

²²⁰ Exposition: TRANSMISSION AND TRANSLATION: “...Since God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that only the autographic text of the original documents was inspired...” [100% pure, i.e. therefore the Bible is not 100% pure] (brackets, comment & emphasis mine).

²²¹ ARTICLE III: DOCTRINAL BASIS: “The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs [originals].” (i.e. not its copy, our Bible – brackets, comment & emphasis mine).

²²² Does the Church have a perfect Bible? Yes, based on God's promise that He would preserve it 100% pure to all ages: [Psa 12:6-7](#); [119:89,111,152,160](#); [Eccl 3:14](#); [Matt 5:18,24:35](#); [Mark 13:31](#); [Luke 21:33](#); [John 10:35](#); [1 Pet 1:23-25](#); [Rev 22:18-19](#).

²²³ [Psalms 138:2](#), “...for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” [Gesenius Lexicon](#) says magnified means “to be greatly valued”. Do you think telling God, He lied when He said he preserved His Word 100% pure is 'greatly valuing His Word'? Consider the responses of God: [Numbers 23:19](#) “God is not a man, that he should lie;..”; [Jeremiah 32:27](#) “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?”; [Numbers 11:23](#) “Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.”

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“And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” (Ecclesiastes 12:12-14)

Pray God prospers our effort.

God bless,

Louis Kole

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Website: www.standardbearers.net

For more information on the defense of the inerrancy of the Word of God please view the above website.

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Restoring the Fear of the Lord

End of Excerpts (from rough draft)

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Standard Bearers Browser

Louis Kole

Vision

It is the **mission** of **Standard Bearers** to present the Biblical and Historical doctrine of Inerrancy; teaching the Bible is *100%* pure; inerrant in the *copy* which we hold in our hands today. Our goal is to strengthen the faith of Pastors, Teachers and Laymen in the authenticity and authority of the *100%* pure, inerrant Word of God, knowing ~ “*So then faith cometh by hearing, hearing by the word of God*” ([Roman 10:17](#)).

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Prayerful consider using the resources contained in the [Standard Bearers Browser](#) (next two pages) for: your Sermon preparation, Bible Study class, to forward to others and post to your Social media. For more, go to the [Standard Bearers](#) home page (www.standardbearers.net) for an overview of the Biblical and Historical Doctrine of Inerrancy. For another quick read see, [Retaking the Hill of Biblical Inerrancy: The Next Reformation~ The Westminster Confession Rejection of the Chicago Statement](#).

Teaching

For a presentation by [Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones, Ph.D, Th.D.](#) on any of these topics: Chronology of the Old Testament; Creation & Evolution, [Science & the Bible](#), The Identity of the Text of the New Testament or The Biblical & Historical Doctrine of Inerrancy, please contact me; Louis Kole at, kolelm@gmail.com.

Exhort

You *can* know for yourself the identity of the *100%* pure; inerrant, preserved *copy* of the Word of God by the aid of the Holy Spirit; the *Author, Superintendent* and *Teacher* of the Word of God. This is the promise of God and the witness of the saints.

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you." ([John 16:13-14](#))

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." ([1 John 2:27](#))

[Francis Turretin](#)¹ 1623-1687 (brackets and emphasis mine):

*"By **original** texts, we do not mean the **autographs** [originals] written by the hand of Moses, of the prophets and the apostles, which certainly do not now exist. We mean their **apographs** ² [perfect copy; genuine original; 'authentic'] which are so called because they set forth to us the word of God in the **very words** of those who wrote under the **immediate inspiration** of the Holy Spirit."*³

God bless,

Louis M Kole

[Hymn ~ Come, Gracious Spirit- Heavenly Dove!](#)

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." ([Revelation 3:11](#))

¹Gerstner, called Turretin, "**the most precise theologian in the Calvinistic tradition.**" *Turretin on Justification* an audio series by John Gerstner (1914-1996) a Professor of Church History at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Knox Theological Seminary.

² Apograh means "**a perfect copy, an exact transcript**". This is the same witness of the authors of the Westminster Confession when they described their *copy* of the Word of God as '**authentic**', which [Webster's 1828](#) dictionary defines as "**having a genuine original**".

³ Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992 reprint), 1:106, See also Robert Barnett, "Francis Turretin on the Holy Scriptures," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Dean Burgon Society held at Calvary Baptist Church, Ontario, Canada, in 1995.

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Louis Kole

Resources

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Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones

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- [The Gospel Colophons and the Synoptic Problem Dr Floyd Nolen Jones PhD ThD](#)
- [The Septuagint: A Critical Analysis](#)
- [Chronology of the Old Testament: A Return to the Basics](#)

In this book, [Dr. Jones](#) provides a systematic framework of the chronology of the Bible from Genesis through the life of Christ and it comes with a CD containing 14 chronology charts. In addition, a set of full-size prints can be obtained at: [A&E-The Graphics Complex](#) (713) 621-0022; 4235 Richmond Avenue, Houston, Texas 77027; Reference Quote Number: IQ9209 (Floyd Jones Charts).

Excerpts from Dr. Jones' [Chronology of the Old Testament](#)

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- ◇ [40 Years after What? The date of Absalom's Rebellion](#) ~ Chapter 5 excerpt (p.105)
- ◇ [Jehoiachin \(Jeconiah\) Age 8 or 18?](#) ~ Chapter 6 excerpt (p.202)

- [Chronology Charts](#) by Dr. Jones

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- ◇ [Chart 3A ~ The 4 Generations of Genesis](#)
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~ *So then Faith Cometh By Hearing, and Hearing By the Word of God* (custodianship of the Word of God)
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~ *Believing or Neutral to Divine Inspiration, Divine Preservation, Divine Identification* (textual criticism)
- [Preaching and Loss: Peer Pressure and the Fear of the Lord](#)
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- [Retaking the Hill of Biblical Inerrancy: The Next Reformation](#)
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Hymn ~ *We Rest on Thee, Our Shield and Our Defender!*

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Revelation 3:11)