

# The Bible's Very Words Are Inspired

Joe Slater

We communicate with words. They may be written or spoken. Yes, you might communicate with a look; but that look means something that can be expressed in words.

God also communicates with words; He always has. Creation occurred when God spoke words such as *“Let there be light”* (Genesis 1:3). *“He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast”* (Psalm 33:9).

Today God speaks with us through the Bible, the written word which He inspired. Paul wrote, *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”* (2 Timothy 3:16), *“breathed out by God”* (ESV). Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, *“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4).

Since the very words of Scripture proceeded from God’s mouth, we ought to treat every word reverently with careful effort to understand. For example, Jesus proved an important point based on the tense of a verb. He quoted God’s words to Moses in Exodus 3:6, *“I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”* (Matthew 22:32). Not *“I WAS”* their God back when they were alive, but *“I AM”* their God. Jesus then said, *“God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,”* showing that though they were physically dead, their souls were indeed alive, proving that the Sadducees erred in denying the doctrine of resurrection.

Likewise Paul used the number of a noun (singular as opposed to plural) to prove that only those in Christ were heirs of the promises God made to Abraham. *“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your seed,’ who is Christ”* (Galatians 3:16).

Every word of Scripture is inspired. Let us strive for accuracy in our understanding and our teaching!

# THE PRIZE AWAITS

**“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness . . .”** (2 Timothy 4:7-8a).

While in basic training, my son Daniel mailed home several letters. The first letter spoke of how training had been quite intense. As time progressed, the tone within his letters began to change. Near the end, he sent a letter that contained these words: *“It’s been tough, but I’m doing well. I’ve not had my card pulled yet (no demerits). I have my heart set on the prize.”* In other words, he anticipates the finish.

In Revelation 2 – 3, Jesus offers encouraging words to believers. He promises to give His followers *“the right to eat from the tree of life”* (2:3), to *“write on them the name of God”* (3:12), the right to *“become pillars in the temple of God”* (3:12), and most importantly...the opportunity to escape the second death (2:11). As exciting as these words appear, the promises of Revelation come with a caveat. Believers must be *“faithful unto death”* (2:10) to be victorious.

I remember from childhood the TV credits that proclaimed, *“the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.”* For Daniel the thrill of victory comes when he graduates basic training. A large number that began the journey alongside Daniel did not finish the course. The same holds true for those who lose their focus on the prize of eternal life. These will experience the ultimate agony of defeat – the second death (Rev. 21:8). To the victors belong the spoils (Revelation 22:14 – 15).

--Kenny Westmoreland (Celina, TN)

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**If you want to be popular, preach happiness. If you want to be unpopular, preach holiness.**

--Vance Havner

# DO YOU KNOW?

Job answered the Lord, *“I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me which I did not know”* (Job 42:3).

The word kangaroo means *“I don’t know.”* When Captain Cook asked the Australian Aborigines the name of the strange-looking animal, they answered *“kangaroo”* (I don’t know).

In Acts 8, Philip asked the Ethiopian, *“Do you understand (know) what you are reading?”* He replied, *“How can I except someone guides me?”* This sincere man was searching for truth. Philip preached Jesus to him.

The Bereans were more noble than the people in Thessalonica in that they *“received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so”* (Acts 17:11). We must go to the right source to find answers!

The tenderhearted Jeremiah pleaded with his people to follow God. *“Oh Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps”* (Jer. 10:23).

Paul wrote that Jesus will return *“in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who do not know God and that do not obey the gospel”* (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

The same apostle wrote with confidence, *“I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed to Him until that day”* (2 Timothy 1:12).

--Cecil Burch (via *Old Paths*) adapted