

2. HUMAN ATTEMPTS TO KNOW GOD ARE WICKED AND FUTILE

- **We are too small**

^{ESV} Isaiah 55:8-9, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Job 40:9-15, 41:1-3, 42:1-3

- **We are too sinful**

^{ESV} Romans 1:18-21, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

- **The implication: humility**

3. OUR GOD IS A SPEAKING GOD:

WE CAN KNOW HIM BECAUSE HE HAS REVEALED HIMSELF

- **Definition: “revelation”**
- **General revelation**
Psalm 19:1-6, Romans 1:19-20
- **The limits of general revelation (“without excuse”)**
- **Special revelation: God addresses his people verbally**
Psalm 115:4-7, Hebrews 1:1-3, John 1:1, John 7:16
- **Implications: we can know God... we must listen to God!**

THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE: THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

1. THE “INSPIRATION” OF SCRIPTURE

- **What the Bible says is what God says**

^{ESV} 2 Timothy 3:16, All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...

God-breathed = *theopneustos* = inspired by God

Acts 4:25

Psalm 110 (Acts 2:34, Hebrews 1:13, Matthew 22:43)

^{ESV} 2 Peter 1:21, For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- **Implication: How we treat the Bible shows what we think about God**

Sin – Genesis 3:1, Did God actually say...

Godliness – Psalm 1:1-2

2. Only God can confirm that the Bible is His Word

Hilary of Poitiers: *“God alone is a fit witness to himself”*

Jesus – John 3:13, Hebrews 1:2-3

John 3:13, No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

3. Jesus confirms that the Bible is God’s Word

- **Jesus’ view of the OT: it is the word of God**
- **Jesus’ view of his own words: they are the words of God**
- **Jesus’ view of the New Testament: the Spirit-inspired words of God**
- **Implication: our confidence in Scripture rests on Jesus Christ**
- **Implication: how we treat the Bible shows how we treat Jesus**

4. Other evidence for inspiration

- What the Old Testament says about itself
- What the NT writers says about the OT
- What the NT writers say about themselves
- What the early church did (and didn't) do

5. A common objection

- A circular argument? “The Bible is God’s Word because the Bible says so”
- Other evidence: inside and outside the Bible

6. We need the Holy Spirit to convince us the Bible is God’s Word.

^{ESV} John 3:19-20, And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

^{ESV} 1 Corinthians 2:14, The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

Distinguish:

Inspiration (of Scripture)

Illumination (to us)

- **Implications: confidence and praise!**

For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men’s hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded.” (John Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.7.4)

HOMEWORK

- Read the full transcript of this session, available online at www.immanuelbrentwood.org
- Consider: what difference does the inspiration of Scripture make to:
(a) My daily life; (b) relationships with other Christians; (c) evangelism