Elenctic Theology: Bibliology

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*The Nature of Proof & Proof of Inspiration*

## The Proof of Inspiration & Inerrancy

### Introduction

#### Ultimately, biblical inspiration and inerrancy are related to the truthfulness and authority of the Bible. Either the Bible is true and inerrant or it is false and errant with respect to its claims, either wholly or in part.

#### If the Bible is not true, it is not worthy of our trust, obedience and confidence.

#### Christians must offer argument and proof of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, rather than mere assertions.

#### Below is a brief overview of the concepts and problems with Truth, Knowledge, Proof, and Arguments.

### Truth & Knowledge

#### **Truth**

##### ***The Correspondence Theory of Truth***

###### In sum, truth is a property of propositions that correspond to reality, that is, an existing mind-independent world.

###### That to which a proposition or statement corresponds is called a **fact**.

###### The process of proving this correspondence with a mind-independent reality is called **verification**.

###### Example:

##### ***The Coherence Theory of Truth***

###### Definition: A statement (proposition, thought, belief) is true if it can be put logically, systematically, and consistently into a coherent body of knowledge.

###### Example:

##### ***The Pragmatic Theory***

###### Definition: A statement (proposition, thought, belief) is true if it works or has practical results.

###### Example:

##### ***Other Concepts of Truth***

#### **Knowledge**

##### ***Knowledge Distinguished from Truth***

##### ***Particularism v. Methodism***

##### ***The Problem of Skepticism***

##### ***The Problem of Postmodernism***

## The nature of proof

### Proof and Argumentation

#### **Proof**

##### In juridical methodology, proof is a sufficient reason for the truth of a juridical proposition by which a party seeks either to maintain her own claim or to defeat the claim of another. In sum, proof is the confirmation of a fact by evidence.

##### Proof is what the trier of the fact requires to be satisfied to the level of persuasion required to make a decision.

#### **Argument**

##### A form of expression consisting of a coherent set of reasons presenting or supporting a point of view

##### A series of reasons given for or against a matter under discussion that is intended to convince or persuade the listener

### Burden of Proof & Persuasion

#### In the law of evidence, this is the necessity or duty of affirmatively proving disputed facts.

#### This duty is usually divided into the burden of production and burden of persuasion.

##### *Burden of Production or Going Forward with Evidence* This is the duty of a party to produce evidence for all elements of the case. If there is no offer of evidence for each element, the party with the burden risks a directed verdict against him. This burden may shift between parties during a trial.

##### *Burden of Persuasion* This is the duty of the party with the burden to persuade the trier of fact of all elements of the case. This duty, generally, does not shift between parties.

### Quantity or Level of Persuasion

#### ***Certainty & Doubt***

#### ***Quantity or Level of Proof*** This category relates to the quantity or level of proof required to prove the existence or non-existence of the fact in issue. The levels are as follows.

##### *Absolute Certainty*

###### This means the proposition is impossible to doubt.

###### Example: A triangle has 3 sides.

###### This is also known as Tautological Certainty or Axiomatic Certainty.

###### The items that belong in this category are true by definition.

##### *Psychological Certainty*

###### This means the individual holding the view has no doubt about some state of affairs.

###### Example: The sun will rise tomorrow.

##### *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*

###### This means the trier of fact is fully satisfied, entirely convinced, or satisfied to a moral certainty that the fact is true.

###### This is the standard for criminal cases.

###### Practically, this standard represents a high level of conviction in an individual that causes him to act in accordance therewith.

##### *Clear and Convincing*

###### The trier of fact is convinced the truth of the fact asserted is highly probable.

###### This standard requires more than the preponderance standard, but less than the reasonable doubt standard.

##### *Preponderance of the Evidence*

###### The trier of fact is convinced the truth of the fact asserted is more likely true than not.

###### This is the standard for most civil cases.

##### *Probable Cause*

###### **In criminal law, probable cause is where known facts and circumstances, of a reasonably trustworthy nature, are sufficient to justify a man of reasonable caution or prudence in the belief that a crime has been or is being committed.**

###### **This level of certainty is required for an arrest.**

##### *Reasonable Suspicion*

###### This is defined as the common-sense conclusions upon which people are entitled to rely.

###### This requires facts or circumstances that give rise to more than a bare, imaginary, or purely conjectural suspicion.

#### ***Application of the Burden Rules to Inspiration***

###### Christians carry the burden of proof to demonstrate the inspiration of the Bible.

###### However, if one asserts the contrary, that is, the Bible is not inspired, they carry the burden of proving the case.

###### Christians should not assume the burden of proof for the opponent.

###### Christians should not begin to refute or rebut the claim until the opponent has actually made a credible argument.

### The Duty of Intellectual Inquiry

#### When do we have a duty to investigate a claim?

#### The PxG=B Formula: Probability x Gravity = Burden (e.g., Level of Duty of Inquiry)

#### PG=B Applied to the Doctrine of Inspiration

## common evidences for the inspiration of the bible

### Introduction

#### It is the task of the Christian apologist to give evidence and argument for the inspiration of the Scriptures (I Pet. 3:15).

#### Proofs of inspiration should demonstrate the three elements of inspiration:

##### *Divine Causality*-God, who prompted the prophets to write, is the Primary Cause of the Scriptures.

##### *Prophetic Agency*-God works *through* the personality of the writers of Scripture to convey His message to man.

##### *Divine Authority*-The words of the biblical writers are the words of God.

#### There are two basic lines of evidence for the inspiration of the Bible: internal and external.

##### Internal evidence is the evidence that comes from within the Scriptures.

##### External Evidence is the evidence that attests to inspiration from outside the Scriptures themselves.

### Internal Evidence for Inspiration

#### *Self Authentication of the Bible*

##### The Bible speaks with its own authority

###### Mk. 1:22 – He taught them as one who had authority.

###### Job 38 – God spoke to Job out of the whirlwind.

###### The roar of a lion is self-authenticating of the power of the lion.

##### There are many examples of self-authenticating documents. The common law and modern hearsay exceptions make it easy to admit *“ancient documents” in evidence as self-authenticated if:*

###### The document is at least 30 years old;

###### The document is unsuspicious in appearance, and;

###### The document is shown to have come from a place of custody natural for such a writing.

#### *The Testimony of the Holy Spirit*

##### The authority of the Word of God is confirmed by the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

##### The inner witness of the Holy Spirit as the believer reads the Bible is an evidence of its divine origin.

##### The Holy Spirit testifies in our hearts that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16) and He testifies to the Word He inspired (I Cor. 2:1-16; II Pet. 1:20-21).

#### *The Transforming Power of the Bible*

##### The Bible has the power to convert unbelievers and edify believers.

##### The Bible is powerful (Heb. 4:12).

##### Believers grow in the faith by studying the Bible (I Pet. 2:2).

##### God Himself vindicates the authority and inspiration of the Bible by its evangelistic and edifying powers.

#### *The Unity of the Bible*

##### The Bible comprises sixty-six Books written over a period of 1,500 years by nearly forty different authors in several languages.

##### The Bible has an amazing unity of theme for a Book constructed by so many people over a long period of time.

##### This is evidence of a single ultimate Author Who inspires the various writers (I Pet. 1:10-11).

### External Evidence for Inspiration

#### *The Historicity of the Bible*

##### The Bible is a historical document and is subject to verification of its claims.

##### Archaeology confirms the Bible and no archaeological find has ever invalidated a biblical teaching.

#### *Evidence from Biblical Prophecy*

##### Fulfilled prophecy is an evidence that God inspired the Scriptures.

##### Examples from prophecies about Jesus Christ:

###### Is. 7:14

###### Dan. 9:24-27

###### Mic 5:2

##### Other books claim to be divinely inspired, but have no meaningful predictive prophecy, such as the Koran and the Vedas.

##### Some other books make clearly false prophecies, such as those made in the Book of Mormon (Alma 7:10).

#### *The Influence of the Bible*

##### The Bible is more widely disseminated than any other religious book.

##### The influence of the Bible in modern western civilization and, historically, in the middle east is not subject to debate.

#### *The Indestructibility of the Bible*

##### Many have attempted to eradicate the Scriptures and have failed (e.g. Diocletian A.D. 303)

##### The Bible remains as the most influential and widely distributed Books in the world.

##### Mk. 13:31-

#### *The Candor and Integrity of the Human Authors*

##### The evidence is that the human authors were honest and sincere men.

##### Evidence of this can be seen in their own writings about their own failures (See John 20:28).