

LESSON 3

BIBLICAL SUPPORT FOR THE DOCTRINE OF VERBAL PLENARY PRESERVATION (I)

(by Miss Carol Lee)

I. REVIEW

A. Meaning of Verbal Plenary Preservation

“Verbal” = words

“Plenary” = total, complete, 100%, all (to the minutest jot and tittle)

“Preservation” = kept free from corruption, safeguarded

B. What “words”?

The “words” of God that are being preserved by God refer to the words in the original languages that were inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:21).

The “words” are the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words that God took upon Himself not just to inspire holy men of God to write down but also to preserve.

II. THE BASIS OF THE DOCTRINE OF VPP

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-2, 7-9, 13-17.

This passage warns us that as we live in these last days, we are living in perilous times (2 Tim 3:1), i.e. DANGEROUS times.

One of the many dangers the Church faces in these last days is that men (pastors, church leaders included) “shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy...,ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” (2 Tim 3:2, 7, 13).

Before we point our fingers at others, let us first check ourselves that we DO NOT fall into this category. Let us examine ourselves honestly before our omniscient God. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

While Paul warns Timothy of the dangers, he also gave Timothy the shield against these dangerous men in 2 Tim 3:14-15: “continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned [them]. And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

The shield against them is the SCRIPTURE, the Word of God, the Bible.

The scripture made Timothy “wise unto salvation through faith” (v 15), that is the Bible gave Timothy the good news of salvation and Timothy was saved. BUT, he is not to throw out the scripture once he is saved.

Paul instructed Timothy to “continue thou in the things which thou hast learned” (v 14), that is Timothy is to continue to know the Word of God and be guided by the Word of God. In other words, the Bible is given to us NOT only to show us the way to heaven.

Paul goes on to describe scripture and what it is given to us for.

“All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for DOCTRINE, for REPROOF, for CORRECTION, for INSTRUCTION in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim 3:16-17)

That is, God’s Word is given to:

- let us know God’s teachings
- admonish us when we have failed to do right
- correct us when we have done wrong
- instruct/direct us in the right path to take.

And all these are for the purpose that the believer (having received salvation) will grow/mature in his faith and be equipped to serve God, to live for God.

So, be very careful about people who say: “We are all going to end up in heaven, and that is enough. Never mind about the other teachings in the Bible.”

Brethren, it is not enough that we are all heading for heaven. Yes, scripture shows us the way to heaven, BUT scripture is given also to show us WHAT God wants to us to know and HOW we are to live on earth while we are on the way to heaven and that we are to GROW in maturity.

“All scripture [is]... profitable for DOCTRINE...” So, what does scripture say about the Doctrine of the PRESERVATION of the inspired Word of God?

III. AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE’S TEACHING ON VPP

A. The Bible teaches the Doctrine of Preservation

Psalm 12:6–7 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 33:11 The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

Psalm 78:1–7 Give ear, O my people, [to] my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide [them] from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength,

and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know [them, even] the children [which] should be born; [who] should arise and declare [them] to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Psalm 100:5 For the LORD [is] good; his mercy [is] everlasting; and his truth [endureth] to all generations.

Psalm 105:8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word [which] he commanded to a thousand generations.

Psalm 111:7–8 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.

Psalm 117:2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD [endureth] for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

Psalm 119:89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Psalm 119:152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

Psalm 119:160 Thy word [is] true [from] the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments [endureth] for ever.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Isaiah 59:21 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.

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Matthew 5:17–18 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 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 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

1 Peter 1:23–25 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.

B. The Bible teaches the preservation of all the words (not just doctrines) of God

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1 Peter 1:24–25 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.

C. The Bible reveals that the purpose of the Verbal Plenary Preservation of God's words is to sanctify God's children when they obey His Word

Deuteronomy 4:2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [ought] from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret [things belong] unto the LORD our God: but those [things which are] revealed [belong] unto us and to our children for ever, that [we] may do all the words of this law.

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Psalm 78:1–7 Give ear, O my people, [to] my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide [them] from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and

appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know [them, even] the children [which] should be born; [who] should arise and declare [them] to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Proverbs 5:7 Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

John 20:30–31 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Romans 10:17 So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Revelation 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed [is] he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

IV. OUR STARTING POINT

Want to know whether the doctrine of the 100% preservation of the God-breathed Hebrew and Greek words is true or false? Check it out in the Bible. We will never go wrong when we look first to the Word of God. And the Bible teaches that God Himself will ensure the preservation of His own inspired words as we saw above.

**THE WAY THAT PLEASES
GOD**

Start with: What the Bible says

God's wisdom

Faith

Inspiration

Preservation

Inerrant Bible

Infallible Bible

End with: Perfect Bible today

**THE WAY THAT DISPLEASES
GOD**

Start with: What men/scholars say

Man's wisdom

Facts

("subjective interpretation")

Inspiration

Deny Preservation

(Preserved with mistakes/No preservation/Ltd preservation/Only autographs are preserved but don't have it today)

Errant Bible

Fallible Bible

End with: Imperfect Bible today

V. CONCLUSION: OUR RESPONSE

The Bible is certainly NOT silent about the verbal, plenary preservation of God's Word. And therefore we must by faith believe what it says.

Read Luke 1:34-38.

Let us respond with the faith of Mary (Lk 1:38) and say "Be it according to Your Word, O Lord."

Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

With God nothing is impossible. If God says He will preserve His words, He is ABLE to keep His promise and He WILL preserve His words.

Pray for faith to believe.

Application Question:

How will you respond to those who attack the Verbal Plenary Preservation of God's Word by saying "VPP is a new teaching" or "VPP is a theory"?

"The devil and his agents have been blowing at Scripture light, but could never blow it out; a clear sign that it was lighted from heaven....The letter of Scripture has been preserved, without any corruption, in the original tongue."¹

¹ Thomas Watson, "A Body of Divinity" (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1965, First published in 1692), 27.