Inerrancy

Definition of Inerrancy

Inerrancy, in the context of Christian theology, is the belief that the Bible, in its original manuscripts, is without error or fault in all its teaching. This doctrine asserts that Scripture is wholly true and reliable in all the matters it addresses, whether those matters are historical, doctrinal, or moral.

Well-Known Christians, Theologians, and Authors Who Ascribe to Inerrancy

1. **B.B. Warfield** - A leading theologian of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, known for his robust defense of biblical inerrancy.

2. **Carl F.H. Henry** - An influential evangelical theologian and one of the founders of modern evangelicalism.

3. **John MacArthur** - Pastor and theologian known for his expository preaching and staunch support of biblical inerrancy.

4. **R.C. Sproul** - Theologian and founder of Ligonier Ministries, noted for his strong defense of Reformed theology and biblical inerrancy.

5. **Norman Geisler** - Christian apologist and co-founder of the Evangelical Theological Society, well-known for his work on biblical inerrancy.

6. **Wayne Grudem** - Theologian and author of "Systematic Theology," which includes a detailed defense of inerrancy.

7. **J.I. Packer** - Evangelical theologian and author, renowned for his book "Knowing God" and his commitment to biblical inerrancy.

8. **Al Mohler** - President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a prominent advocate for the doctrine of inerrancy.
9. **William Lane Craig** is a renowned Christian philosopher, theologian, and apologist. He is a Research Professor of Philosophy at Talbot School of Theology and Professor of Philosophy at Houston Baptist University.
10. **Billy Graham** was one of the most influential Christian evangelists of the 20th century. Known for his worldwide crusades, Graham preached the gospel to millions of people and was a spiritual advisor to several U.S. presidents. He firmly believed in the inerrancy of the Bible, often stating that Scripture was the authoritative word of God.
11. **Paige Patterson** is a prominent figure in Southern Baptist circles and a key leader in the Conservative Resurgence within the Southern Baptist Convention, which emphasized a return to traditional evangelical beliefs, including the inerrancy of Scripture.
12. **Michael Heiser** was a scholar in the field of biblical studies, known for his work in the Hebrew Bible, Semitic languages, and the context of the Ancient Near East. He served as a Scholar-in-Residence at Faithlife Corporation, the makers of Logos Bible Software. Heiser authored several books, including "The Unseen Realm" and "Supernatural," which explore the spiritual dimensions of biblical texts. Although his approach often involves

nuanced interpretations of Scripture, Heiser upheld the inerrancy of the Bible, advocating that the original manuscripts are without error and that a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural context enriches the appreciation of its inerrant nature.

Biblical Argument for Inerrancy

1. **Scriptural Self-Testimony**: The Bible claims to be the Word of God, and God is described as truth itself. Key passages include:

   o **2 Timothy 3:16**: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

   o **2 Peter 1:21**: "For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

   o **John 17:17**: "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."

2. **Jesus' View of Scripture**: Jesus affirmed the truthfulness and authority of Scripture. For example:

   o **Matthew 5:18**: "For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

   o **John 10:35**: "Scripture cannot be set aside."

3. **Fulfilled Prophecy**: The fulfillment of biblical prophecy demonstrates the reliability and divine origin of the Bible. Examples include the detailed prophecies about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (e.g., Isaiah 53, Psalm 22).

4. **Consistency and Unity**: Despite being written over 1,500 years by more than 40 authors from diverse backgrounds, the Bible maintains a consistent message and unity, which points to divine authorship.

Philosophical Argument for Inerrancy

1. **Nature of God**: If God is perfect, omniscient, and omnipotent, then any revelation from Him would be perfect and without error. Since the Bible is claimed to be God's revelation, it must be inerrant.

   o **Premise 1**: God is perfect, omniscient, and omnipotent.

   o **Premise 2**: A perfect, omniscient, and omnipotent God would produce a perfect revelation.

   o **Conclusion**: Therefore, the Bible, as God's revelation, is inerrant.

2. **Epistemological Foundation**: The doctrine of inerrancy provides a solid foundation for knowledge and truth. If the Bible were errant, it would undermine the certainty of Christian doctrines and moral teachings.

- o **Certainty in Doctrine**: Without inerrancy, doctrines could be questioned, leading to uncertainty and relativism in Christian beliefs.

- o **Moral Authority**: An errant Bible would lack the authority to definitively guide moral behavior, undermining its role as a moral compass.

3. **Historical Reliability**: Archaeological and historical research has repeatedly confirmed the accuracy of biblical accounts. This external evidence supports the claim of inerrancy.

- o Examples include the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which demonstrated the remarkable consistency of the biblical text over centuries, and archaeological findings that corroborate events and places described in the Bible.

Conclusion

The doctrine of inerrancy is foundational for many Christians because it upholds the Bible as the ultimate authority and guide in all matters of faith and practice. Biblically, the Scripture's own claims, Jesus' affirmation of Scripture, the fulfillment of prophecy, and the unity of the Bible provide strong evidence for inerrancy. Philosophically, the nature of God, the need for a solid epistemological foundation, and the historical reliability of the Bible further support this doctrine.