

There are three very important qualities of God's Word that we must remember and trust. The first is that God's Word/Scripture/the Bible is God's **inspired** Word. This means that as you read the Bible it is God's very words that you are reading. Scholars have debated about how this came to be. For example, did the Holy Spirit "possess" the various authors to write what they wrote. Did God sit by their writing table and dictate scripture to them? We do not know how it came about, just that we know that what we have is God's actual Word.

The second important quality of God's Word is that it is **inerrant**. This description means that God's Word has no errors. God did not make any mistakes as to details, facts, theology, etc. What we have in the pages of scripture is perfect. But this inerrancy refers only to the original manuscripts, not to the many, many people that have copied God's Word over the centuries. There are many translations of the Bible out there that are thematic in nature and thus one must be careful when reading them. Many have taken liberties with various translations to distort God's Word. Those translations are NOT inerrant. Therefore, when choosing a particular translation, one needs to do their research. We use the ESV (English Standard Version) at Bethlehem. This is a reliable translation. Other translations that are reliable would be the NIV, NRSV, and there are more. Basically, when you get a reliable version of the Bible, you can trust it's content.

And lastly, God's Word is **infallible**. This refers to a characteristic that is essential to God's nature. Infallible means that it can not error, or it is incapable of error. This is not a limiting characteristic of God but rather the fact that God is sovereign and holy, perfect in all things. God can not error because God has all knowledge and power. He has always been and always will be.

All of this is to say that God's Word can be and should be trusted. But also, God's Word should never be something in which to tamper. Many have done so and thus have twisted its meaning. Those who do so will need to answer to God someday. The Bible says many things that people do not like but it does not make them any less true or irrelevant. As a theologian once said, one in whom I highly respect, "God's Word is more relevant than tomorrow's news." News we hear today is biased and becomes irrelevant very quickly, but God's Word is timeless. It does not change. It does not need to be updated. It never becomes old or tasteless.

Trust His Word and all His words. Study them. Meditate upon them. Pray over them asking for understanding. Seek Christ in all of scripture for he is there in every verse. And those verses you do not like, trust God even in those words. Finally, never, ever, fall for someone's "new" interpretation of scripture. God's Word is GOD'S Word for you now and forever. Trust it and know it.

Praise be to God, always and forever, Amen.