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THE REAL STORY BEHIND THE TRANSLATION OF 2 TIMOTHY 3:16

Four years ago I wrote an article in which I discussed the mistranslation that is found almost universally in 2 Timothy 3:16. While I mentioned that this verse contains a mistranslation, I should really have pointed out that IN OUR CONTEXT TODAY in the KJV this verse actually contains THREE mistranslations, as well as very likely one unauthorized addition to the text of Paul's original letter to Timothy. FOUR PROBLEMS IN ONE VERSE!

This present article is intended to replace my previous article from October 2004, which was entitled "What Do You Mean ... All Scripture Is Given By Inspiration Of God?". The present article presents a great deal of additional information. It also reveals the story behind this very deliberate mistranslation, which was foisted upon an unsuspecting Christian world. It is a story that involves a Dutchman, a Frenchman, and an Englishman, a story that I believe has never before been adequately exposed to objective scrutiny. The deliberate mistranslation of this verse was essential for making a very specific claim that certain people wished to make.

To correctly understand this verse, we need to be aware of the things that are exposed and explained in this article. Whenever possible in my writings I try to avoid presenting too many technical points of grammar. It is thus with some reluctance that in this instance I am forced to present a great deal of technical information. It is the seemingly small, yet highly significant technical details that expose the motivation underlying this deliberate mistranslation.

Let's first look at the facts, and then we'll look at the story behind the mistranslation of 2 Timothy 3:16.

THE MISTRANSLATIONS IN 2 TIMOTHY 3:16

We are familiar with Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 3:16, which in the KJV reads:

ALL SCRIPTURE *IS* GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Exactly what did Paul mean when he wrote this statement to Timothy? Did he mean that *every statement in the Bible* is an expression of God's will? Did he mean that the men who wrote the various books of the Bible did not in any way at all use their own minds in writing those books, but that they were simply moved by God to write every single word they wrote exactly as God (supposedly) dictated it to their minds? And what part did the Protestant Reformation play in the translation of this verse?

As it happens, the King James Version presents us with an incorrect translation, which unfortunately creates a completely misleading impression. To see this, let's start by examining the Greek text. We'll look at the whole verse, though it is really only THE FIRST FOUR WORDS that affect our discussion in this article. Here is the Greek text.

"Pasa graphe theopneustos kai ophelimos pros didaskalian pros elegchen pros epanorthosin pros paidaian ten en dikaiosune." (2 Timothy 3:16 TR)

The meanings of the 13 different Greek words in this verse are as follows:

- 1) "**pasa**" is AN ADJECTIVE which means either "all" or "every", depending on context;
- 2) "**graphe**" is A NOUN which means "writing";
- 3) "**theopneustos**" is AN ADJECTIVE which means "God-breathed";
- 4) "**kai**" is A CONJUNCTION which means "and";
- 5) "**ophelimos**" is AN ADJECTIVE which means "profitable";
- 6) "**pros**" is A PREPOSITION which means "unto, with, for", etc.;
- 7) "**didaskalian**" is A NOUN which means "teaching, learning, doctrine";
- 8) "**elegchen**" is A NOUN which means "convincing evidence or reproof";
- 9) "**epanorthosin**" is A NOUN which means "correction";
- 10) "**paideian**" is A NOUN which means "chastening, instruction";
- 11) "**ten**" is THE DEFINITE ARTICLE meaning "the";
- 12) "**en**" is A PREPOSITION meaning "in";
- 13) "**dikaiosune**" is A NOUN which means "righteousness".

A literal unpolished translation of this verse into English would read as follows:

"Every (or all?) writing God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for convincing evidence, for correction, for chastening (or instruction) in the righteousness."

The last twelve Greek words in the above verse (the word "pros" is used four times) have no impact whatsoever on the discussion that follows. There are no problems with the way those last twelve words are translated, and so we need not concern ourselves with them in any major way, other than taking note of what parts of speech they represent. It is only the first four Greek words in the above text (i.e. pasa graphe theopneustos kai) that are involved in the mistranslation of this verse. So don't be intimidated by the length of the above Greek text; we really only need to examine the first four Greek words in this verse.

In biblical Greek an adjective may precede or follow the noun it describes. While we do not use such a grammatical construction in English, placing an adjective after the noun is quite common in several other languages. One need only think of Italian expressions like "mamma mia" (rather than "mia mamma") to see an illustration of this grammatical construction. In the above Greek text of this verse we see one adjective preceding the noun "graphe", while the second adjective follows this noun "graphe". That is a perfectly normal grammatical construction for biblical Greek. However, what is more important to understand than just the position of the adjective "theopneustos" is whether this adjective "God-breathed" is an attributive adjective or whether it is a predicate adjective. And this question we will shortly examine in detail.

One point about 2 Timothy 3:16 that should immediately attract our attention is that THE GREEK TEXT OF THIS VERSE DOES NOT CONTAIN A SINGLE VERB!

Verbs convey actions. Verbs are required to convey complete sentences. Without a verb a sentence is always incomplete. The fact that the Greek text for this verse does not contain any verbs at all should immediately tell us that THE THOUGHT OF THIS SENTENCE CONTINUES IN THE NEXT VERSE. The translators really should have presented the texts of verses 16 and 17 as ONE VERSE. In fact, to my knowledge the Wycliffe New Testament is the only English language version that actually correctly presents these two verses as one verse. (We'll look at that version later.)

[COMMENT: Robert Estienne (also known as Stephanus and as Robert Stephens) was the first one to divide the New Testament into verses in his 1551 Greco-Latin New Testament. The first English language translation to ever appear in verse form was the New Testament section of the Geneva Bible in 1557, produced by William Whittingham. Prior to Stephens and to Whittingham the text of each book was continuous, with only small breaks at the end of a chapter. The Latin Vulgate has always shown verses 16 & 17 as one sentence. Erasmus also showed these two verses as one sentence in his text. So there was really no justification for dividing that one sentence into two verses. Anyway, this division of the whole text into verses by Whittingham (for the English text) was then copied and extended to the OT (and also to the Apocrypha) by all subsequent translations. Since that time, apart from some minor variations, this system has been generally accepted by all translators and publishers.]

Verses 16 and 17 together form *one sentence and one thought* that Paul wanted to convey to Timothy, and verse 16 only expresses *the first part of that one thought*. If we ignore verse 17 in our examination of verse 16, then we are almost certain to draw a wrong conclusion regarding exactly what Paul was telling Timothy here. To quote verse 16 without also considering verse 17 is quoting only the first part of a sentence, without considering the concluding part of that sentence.

The KJV of this verse implies the action of GIVING, by use of the expression "IS GIVEN". But the Greek text does not at all imply any "giving", and there is no verb in the Greek text of this verse. Where the KJV has the verb "is" in italics to show that it is not a part of the Greek text, the KJV really should have printed the TWO WORDS "IS GIVEN" in italics, because this verb is simply not contained in the Greek text.

I will show that the verb "given" was initially added to the English text as an unfortunate mistake, but that thereafter it was rather deviously expanded into the expression "IS given". We need to recognize the ULTERIOR MOTIVE of those who coined the translation "IS GIVEN".

The three inappropriate translations in the KJV of this verse are:

- 1) The Greek word "pasa" should in this verse be correctly translated as "EVERY" and NOT as "ALL".
- 2) In our present age the Greek noun "graphe" should be translated as "WRITING" and NOT as "SCRIPTURE". The word "scripture" is an interpretation and not a translation of the Greek word "graphe".
- 3) The Greek adjective "theopneustos" should have been translated as the adjective "GOD-BREATHED" and NOT as the clause "IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD".

Before we continue looking into these words, we should also examine the possibility of a fourth problem, that this Greek text available to us today contains a word that was added to the text Paul actually wrote to Timothy. Consider the following information.

WAS A WORD ADDED TO THE GREEK TEXT?

I have never looked to the explanations of Bible commentators for my understanding of the Bible. However, this does not mean that commentaries have no value at all. It is just that their value does not lie in the opinions and explanations they provide. The real value of commentaries and of other biblical reference works is that they can, and in very many cases do, provide **FACTUAL INFORMATION**, which information we can then examine for ourselves.

Telling us which Greek words (for the NT) are used in specific manuscripts in a specific passage is factual objective information. Telling us what those words actually **MEAN** in that specific context could also be objectively factual information; but it could equally well be a subjective interpretation on the part of the commentator, who happens to have his own religious bias. So while I will accept information from a commentary regarding which Greek words appear in the text (something I can in most cases verify by then looking at various Greek versions), I am always on my guard when it comes to examining that commentary's interpretation regarding the meaning of those specific words within that specific context.

I mention this because I do not accept the *religious views* of the Bible commentator Adam Clarke (who lived from about 1760 - 1832). However, while I firmly reject many of Adam Clarke's explanations and interpretations of the Scriptures, I recognize that he was nevertheless one of the greatest biblical scholars of the last 500 years, who took 40 years to write his commentary on the whole Bible. He was fluent in Hebrew and Greek and Latin, and he personally examined a vast number of manuscripts in all of these languages.

Simply because some times (or even many times) his understanding of what the Bible teaches happens to be wrong, that does not mean that he didn't have access to the correct information found in various source documents. And Adam Clarke did personally examine very many manuscripts in his time. The credibility of Adam Clarke's comments regarding the content of specific source documents in Hebrew or Greek or Latin is completely independent of Clarke's religious views on any number of subjects. I see no reason to doubt Clarke's objectivity in the area of documentary evidence.

In his commentary on 2 Timothy 3:16 Clarke makes the following statement:

Verse 16. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God". This sentence is

not well translated; the original "pasa graphe theopneustos ophilimos

pros didaskalian, k. t. l." should be rendered: "Every writing Divinely

inspired is profitable for doctrine", etc. *The particle "kai", "and", is omitted by almost all the versions and many of the fathers, and certainly does not agree well with the text. (my emphasis)*

Regarding this last statement, I have checked all the Greek versions of the NT that are readily available, and this is what I have found:

I have not found any Greek version of the NT that does not include the word "kai" in the text of this verse. But in the Critical Edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament I came across a comment which states that "kai" is omitted in the Old-Latin, the Clementine Vulgate, and the Syriac Peshitta. No Greek manuscripts are listed in support for this statement. This does not mean that there aren't any such supporting manuscripts; it only means that the word "kai" (or the symbol for it) is not omitted from any of the manuscripts which **TODAY** are considered to be significant.

[COMMENT: The Clementine Vulgate was first published in 1592, and it became the standard edition for the Roman Catholic Church. The Old-Latin, on the other hand, had preceded Jerome's Vulgate translation.]

However, this could very easily be due to the dominant position which the Latin Vulgate text enjoyed for well over a millennium, that in some cases translators simply back-translated from the Latin the word for "and" (in the old texts "and" is frequently only represented by the symbol "&" or even by its Tironian symbol, which looks like a rather small "7"), something that thereafter would have been copied by others. However, the more likely possibility is that "and" was added to both, the Greek text and the Latin text, only in the Middle Ages. More on this later when we examine some of the old translations.

Regarding Clarke's statement that "many of the fathers" omitted "kai", I have found the following:

"The fathers" Clarke is referring to all wrote in Latin. The Latin equivalent for Greek "kai" is "et" or the suffix "-que" or the symbol "&" or the Tironian small "7". And in his 4th century Latin commentary on 2 Timothy 3:16 the commentator Ambrosiaster (i.e. Pseudo-Ambrose, so-called because he certainly was not Ambrose, as was previously thought) also leaves out the word or symbol for "and" in this verse. Since the Latin text Ambrosiaster used for his whole commentary on Paul's epistles differs considerably from the Latin Vulgate text we know today, he most likely used a Latin text known as "Itala", which pre-dated the Vulgate. Later we'll see a number of other Latin texts that also leave out "and".

[As far as the man Ambrosiaster is concerned: in contrast to most other Catholic church fathers of that time, who mostly looked for allegorical and mystical meanings in all of the Scriptures, Ambrosiaster made the obvious and logical meaning of all scriptural statements the focus of his commentary. And, unlike other Catholic leaders of that time, Ambrosiaster also clearly believed in the coming millennial rule of Christ.]

Apart from Ambrosiaster I myself have thus far not found any other Catholic church father who also leaves out "kai" in this verse, though Adam Clarke states that there were a number of them.

An English translation which made use of many ancient manuscripts, and which had been completed shortly before Adam Clarke's time, is the Mace New Testament, translated by Daniel Mace in 1729. Here is the text from this particular translation:

for all divinely inspired writings are conducive to instruction, to conviction, to reformation, and the practice of virtue; (2 Timothy 3:16 Daniel Mace N.T., 1729)

Daniel Mace did not include a translation for "kai" in the first part of this verse. This suggests that the manuscripts he consulted did not include "kai".

Let's consider these facts:

As far as ancient copies of the Greek New Testament text are concerned, there are presently about 98 papyri, 299 uncials (text in large letters), 2812 miniscules (text in small letters) and 2281 lectionaries (books written in minuscule or uncial), which contain some or (rarely) all of the New Testament. Within this large number of texts there are *thousands of variant readings* for a vast number of the nearly 8000 verses in the New Testament.

None of the Greek texts available today (in print or in computer Bible programs, etc.) are based entirely on one single document. This is true for the "Majority Text" and the "Received Text" and the Erasmus text and the "Byzantine Text", and the Nestle-Aland text, and all the other Greek texts available. All the

Greek texts of the New Testament that are available have been produced by the "eclectic method". This word "eclectic" comes from the Greek and literally means "to gather out", i.e. "to select". An eclectic text is one that is based on selecting, on a case-by-case basis, from amongst a number of variant readings found in different source documents for each specific verse or passage. It is typically, though not always, the majority opinion, selected from among variant readings for specific verses, that is then selected to become a part of the accepted "eclectic" Greek text that is produced, whether that is the Byzantine text or the Received Text of Erasmus or any other Greek text.

Now it is a fact that in this process the early translators and printers (like Tyndale, Erasmus, Luther, Beza, etc.) also gave major consideration to the Latin text of the Vulgate, because certain phrases in their translations and editions are clearly based on the Latin text, rather than being translations of the Greek text. The Latin Vulgate translation was clearly a major consideration in the eclectic method employed by all the early translators and printers of the Greek language versions of the New Testament. Every single Greek text of the complete New Testament that is available today is to one degree or another a product of this eclectic method. There isn't a single copy of a "pure" text available anywhere. This may be something some of us may not want to hear, but it is the truth nonetheless.

[COMMENT: Erasmus produced his own new Latin text, in which he changed 40% of the words of the text of the Latin Vulgate. He made changes wherever he believed the text should be changed. Erasmus then used his own Latin text, along with a number of incomplete Greek texts, in the process of compiling his Greek text for the New Testament. When he didn't have a specific verse or passage available in the Greek texts he was consulting, Erasmus simply back-translated from his Latin into the Greek for his Greek New Testament text. Later, Theodore Beza also published his own Latin text of the New Testament in 1556, one that also challenged the text of the Latin Vulgate in very many places. And, like Erasmus, Beza then also relied on his own Latin text to a considerable extent in constructing the Greek text he produced nine years later, in 1565. We'll examine some of these things in more detail later. Neither of these scholars ever had access to a "pure" text, let alone producing such a "pure" text themselves.]

So while I have not found any specific Greek text for 2 Timothy 3:16 that does not contain the conjunction "kai", apart from the above references to Ambrosiaster and to the Critical Nestle-Aland edition of the Greek text, this does not mean that there may not be many instances amongst those variant readings that omit the word "kai" in this verse, and that in his time Clarke had personal access to such variant readings. I have no reason to doubt that Clarke was telling the truth when he stated that this conjunction "kai" was omitted by many of the versions to which he had access. Since Clarke's explanation of this verse does not differ in any significant way from the commonly accepted explanation (though Clarke states that here Paul was referring specifically to the OT), we cannot really ascribe any ulterior motive to Clarke for making this statement regarding "kai" being omitted from manuscripts to which he had access. Also, we'll see a great deal of support for Clarke's statement as we go along.

So I accept that there is a great likelihood that Clarke's statement, that the conjunction "kai" was omitted in the original text of this verse, is correct. However, while there may perhaps be some uncertainty about finding a Greek text without the word "kai" in this verse, what is not uncertain at all is that the last part of Clarke's statement is certainly correct!

It is a fact that in the Greek text of this verse the conjunction "kai" "CERTAINLY DOES NOT AGREE WELL WITH THE TEXT"!

You don't have to be an expert on Greek grammar to understand this (even though some of "the experts" do argue about this one amongst themselves). Here are the facts:

1) "Kai" is a CONJUNCTION which means "and".

2) Conjunctions join together words, clauses, phrases and sentences.

3) When this conjunction is used at the start of a sentence, the purpose is to join what follows to the previous sentence. That is not the case in this verse, since "kai" does not appear at the start of the sentence.

4) When joining two clauses, this conjunction MUST be preceded by at least one verb. That is also not the case in 2 Timothy 3:16, since there is no verb anywhere before "kai".

5) The only words that precede "kai" in 2 Timothy 3:16 are one noun and two adjectives.

6) So A CONJUNCTION SIMPLY DOES NOT MAKE ANY SENSE IN THIS CONTEXT!

7) That is why the literal English translation of the first four Greek words (i.e. "every God-breathed writing AND") does not make any sense!

8) A conjunction is totally inappropriate after the three Greek words "pasa graphe theopneustos".

NO WONDER ADAM CLARKE SAID THAT KAI CERTAINLY DOES NOT AGREE WELL WITH THE TEXT!

Clarke was a highly qualified scholar of biblical Greek. And in his Commentary he repeatedly points out obvious anomalies in the numerous texts to which he had access.

The point is that using the conjunction "kai" in this context implies that the author of the text (i.e. the Apostle Paul) would have had a very poor grasp of Greek grammar, that he only knew "pidgin Greek". And that is simply not true, as is evident from the rest of Paul's writings.

We might also consider a statement by Henry Alford (1810 - 1871), the great philological scholar of the NT who wrote "New Testament in Greek" (4 volumes). This work is not so much theological in character, as it is philological, being an examination of the Greek words in the text in relation to grammatical requirements, without a real focus on the theological implications of such an examination. Even though Alford argued in favor of "kai" in 2 Timothy 3:16, yet he nevertheless acknowledged that the presence of "kai" in this verse is an awkward one, which really deprives the sentence of symmetry. This admission tacitly acknowledges that in this verse we are dealing with an attributive construction (explained below). And Alford's admission is in agreement with Adam Clarke's assessment (i.e. "kai" does not agree well with the text).

In all fairness, it is true that there is considerable debate amongst some "experts" of New Testament Greek regarding the correct translation of this verse. The debate concerns the status of the adjective "theopneustos". In an attempt to justify the awkward inclusion of the conjunction "kai" in this verse, some scholars have claimed that in this sentence "theopneustos" should be a predicate adjective, when in reality it is an attributive adjective. The difference between these two grammatical constructions is that the attributive is an incidental description of the subject (note!), while the predicate presents an additional statement.

A simple example with the adjective "red" should illustrate this. "Red" is an *attributive adjective* in the sentence: "The red book is lying on the table"; and "red" is a *predicate adjective* in the sentence: "The book is red and it is lying on the table". Notice that the construction with the predicate adjective requires a verb (here "is") and a conjunction (here "and"), while the attributive adjective is joined directly to the noun without requiring a linking verb or a conjunction.

[In 2 Timothy 3:16 a predicate adjective would translate as "every writing is God-breathed and it is profitable for ...", while an attributive adjective would translate as "every God-breathed writing is profitable for ...", demonstrating the difference between presenting an additional statement versus simply presenting an incidental, though important, descriptive detail.]

Now if we add the adjective "all" to our example above, then we can see how the meaning between the attributive and the predicate can change things very dramatically. Thus, the attributive example would be: "All red books are lying on the table", whereas the predicate example would read: "*All books are red and they are lying on the table*". The inclusion of the adjective "all" has created a major difference between these two statements, with the predicate presenting a change in focus and perspective from the focus of the attributive statement. The predicate has introduced a completely different focus.

The key factors in the Greek text of 2 Timothy 3:16 are: first of all there is no verb in the text to make "theopneustos" a predicate adjective. And secondly, there is no article in the first part of this Greek sentence, thus making "theopneustos" an anarthrous adjective. Now in anarthrous constructions (i.e. without using the article) in biblical Greek the predicate adjective normally precedes the noun, while the attributive adjective normally follows the noun (which is the case in this verse). So in this verse BOTH THESE FACTORS (the absence of a verb, and the adjective following the noun it describes) make this an attributive adjective construction. That is precisely why Adam Clarke said that here the conjunction "kai" certainly does not agree well with the text.

Let's also look at another well-known reference work on New Testament Greek, which is "Vincent's Word Studies", written by Marvin R. Vincent in the 1880's. Vincent was a professor of New Testament Greek, and this work combines a verse-by-verse commentary with a Greek lexicon. Vincent brings out the fullness of the precise Greek meaning, history, grammatical structure, derivation, and usage of the Greek words used in the NT. Regarding 2 Timothy 3:16 Vincent's Word Studies states the following:

THEOPNEUSTOS: from "theos", God and "pneo", to breathe. God-breathed. The word tells us nothing of the peculiar character or limits of inspiration beyond the fact that it proceeds from God. In construction OMIT IS, AND RENDER AS ATTRIBUTIVE of "graphe", "every divinely-inspired Scripture". (my emphasis)

It was quite clear to Marvin Vincent that in this verse "theopneustos" is the attributive of the word "graphe". So Adam Clarke and Henry Alford and Marvin Vincent (and also Daniel Mace, for that matter), all recognized scholars of Greek, are agreed that in this verse we are dealing with an attributive adjective. Their statements are all based on their knowledge of NT Greek, and not on any specific doctrines they personally happened to believe. Others, who assert that "theopneustos" should really be a predicate adjective base their presentations on REASONING about the unacceptable (to them!) implications of this being an attributive adjective. They do not base their views on the rules and requirements of NT Greek grammar. Instead they try to reason around the obvious difficulties (i.e. the absence of a verb, the absence of the article, the positioning of this adjective in this anarthrous construction, and the grammatical inappropriateness of the conjunction "kai" in this context) in claiming that this is a predicate adjective.

Now let's consider the next point, whether the Greek adjective "pasa" should in this verse be translated as "all" or as "every".

THE CORRECT TRANSLATION OF "PASA" IN THIS VERSE

Most people in the churches of God don't think about the enormous implications that are involved here. However, the "scholars" who vigorously discuss this question are well aware of the distinction between

translating "pasa" as "all" or as "every" in this verse. And a controversy rages between those who want to translate this strictly correctly, in accordance with the requirements of biblical Greek, and those who want a translation that will uphold their own personal positions regarding the Bible.

Simply put:

The translation "ALL God-breathed writing (or scripture) is profitable for ..." at least allows for the possibility to try to translate this as an affirmative statement that is all-inclusive, like "all scripture is God-breathed and it is profitable for ...". This (translating "pasa" as "all" in this verse) is really needed as a prerequisite for claiming that "theopneustos" is a predicate adjective.

But the translation "EVERY God-breathed writing (or scripture) is profitable for ..." very clearly implies that there are indeed writings (or scriptures) that are NOT "God-breathed". And THAT is a possibility that is simply not acceptable to certain people. So while many of us may not immediately grasp this significant distinction between here rendering "pasa" as "every" versus rendering "pasa" as "all", we need to understand that there is a very clear reason why so many people argue very vociferously against the translation "every". They NEED this verse to say "ALL scripture" to uphold their doctrinal position, even when their position is contradicted by the rules of biblical Greek grammar.

Note! It is the presence of the adjective "theopneustos" that creates this particular controversy. Without this adjective the argument over "ALL scripture" versus "EVERY scripture" would disappear. Without additional qualifications "all scripture" and "every scripture" could refer to the identical body of writing. But when we introduce the adjective "God-breathed" into this mix, THEN there is suddenly a big distinction between these two expressions.

Around 1930, about 40 years after Vincent had written his "Word Studies", another great scholar, Archibald Thomas Robertson, wrote another commentary on the Greek text of the NT, entitled "Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament" (RWP). In RWP we find the following comment for 2 Timothy 3:16.

"EVERY scripture inspired of God is also profitable (pasa graphe theopneustos kai ophelimos). There are two matters of doubt in this clause. One is the absence of the article "he" before "graphe, whether that makes it mean "every scripture" or "all scripture" AS OF NECESSITY IF PRESENT." (my emphasis)

What Robertson (1863 - 1934) is here saying is that, BECAUSE THERE IS NO DEFINITE ARTICLE IN THE GREEK, THEREFORE this should really be translated as "EVERY scripture inspired of God". Notice that this is also how Robertson himself presents this Greek text in the above quotation.

Now Robertson himself was very much aware of the enormous implications in the distinction between "all" and "every" in this verse. He also knew that there is enormous resistance on the part of many people, including those in his own denomination (he was a Baptist), against translating this as "every", because such a translation would threaten their claims for the whole text of the Bible. That is why Robertson worded this rather cautiously, to try to avoid giving offence. As a scholar of Greek he really KNEW that the correct translation here is "EVERY scripture inspired of God", and that is how he himself translated this expression. Yet he also knew that this translation opened the door to there being OTHER scriptures which are NOT "inspired of God".

While the presence of the article would make this text, OF NECESSITY (note!), mean "ALL scripture", Robertson held back from stating that THE ABSENCE of the article OF NECESSITY makes this mean "EVERY God-breathed scripture", even though Robertson himself did not hesitate to translate this as "every scripture".

"Every God-breathed scripture" clearly opens the door for there to be some other scriptures that are NOT God-breathed! "All scripture" (with the attributive adjective "theopneustos" converted into a predicate adjective), on the other hand, at least seems to offer the possibility of taking a position against there being other scriptures that are not God-breathed.

We should be able to see the ulterior motive on the part of all those who vehemently argue against the grammatically correct translation "EVERY God-breathed scripture". The people who argue for the translation "all" argue equally vehemently for the predicate construction "is given by inspiration", because they need BOTH these factors to make their case.

However, a large number of scholars of biblical Greek clearly recognize that here "pasa" should be translated as "every" and not as "all". The following translations, many of them made before Robertson's time, represent some examples of this recognition.

EVERY scripture inspired of God (*is*) also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. (2Ti 3:16 ASV, American Standard Version, 1901)

EVERY scripture (*is*) divinely inspired, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; (2Ti 3:16 Darby, 1884)

EVERY scripture inspired of God (*is*) also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: (2Ti 3:16 ERV, English Revised Version of 1885)

EVERY Scripture passage is inspired by God. All of them are useful for teaching, pointing out errors, correcting people, and training them for a life that has God's approval. (2Ti 3:16 GWV, God's Word to the Nations Version)

EVERY Scripture (*is*) God-breathed and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16 LIT, Green's Literal Translation, 1985)

EVERY scripture, (*is*) God-breathed, and profitable - unto teaching, unto conviction, unto correction, unto the discipline that is in righteousness, - (2Ti 3:16 Rotherham, 1902)

EVERY Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16 WEB, World English Bible)

EVERY Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for convincing, for correction of error, and for instruction in right doing; (2Ti 3:16 WEYMOUTH NT of 1912)

EVERY Writing (*is*) God-breathed, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for setting aright, for instruction that *is* in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16 YLT, Young's Literal Translation, 1898)

JEDE Schrift ist von Gottes Geist eingegeben und nützlich zur Belehrung, zur Berührung, zur Zurechtweisung, zur Erziehung in der Gerechtigkeit, (2Ti 3:16 German SCHLACHTER Bibel, 1951) (Comment: "jede" is German for "every")

Notice that some of the above translations, while acknowledging that "every" is the correct translation for "pasa" in this context, nevertheless attempt to support a predicate adjective construction (e.g. GWV, WEB, etc.). They have at least acknowledged that here "pasa" means "every" and not "all"; but they have not grasped that this admission has most assuredly undermined any possibility for a predicate construction in this text.

Let's also not forget Robertson's own translation as "EVERY scripture inspired of God". And lastly, Joseph Henry Thayer (1828 - 1901) in "A Greek-English Lexicon of the NEW TESTAMENT" under entry #1124 for the word "graphe" presents the translation of "pasa graphe" as "EVERY scripture" (see page 121, Baker Book House Edition).

It should be clear that unbiased scholars of Greek understand that in this verse "pasa graphe" without the article should be correctly translated as "EVERY scripture". And that translation is then qualified by the attributive adjective "theopneustos".

The inevitable consequence of this conclusion is that the Apostle Paul assuredly was not claiming that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God"! That is simply not what Paul was telling Timothy.

To return to the discussion of the attributive adjective versus the predicate adjective:

Every translator who attempts to turn "theopneustos" into a predicate adjective is forced to provide a verb that is simply not found in this text! And he is also forced to ignore the implications of the anarthrous adjective following the noun it qualifies. Adam Clarke and Henry Alford and Marvin Vincent were simply not willing to stoop to that level in order to force a certain meaning into this verse.

Furthermore, the translations which render this verse as "every (or even "all") God-breathed scripture" correctly recognize "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective. Those translations that deliberately omit the verb "is", even when they have the word "God-breathed" follow the word "writing" or "scripture" [i.e. "every (or "all") scripture God-breathed is profitable ..."] have also recognized "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective in this context. But all the translations that render this verse as "all scripture is God-breathed" have wrongly treated "theopneustos" as a predicate adjective.

To summarize this section: while thus far I have not been able to find an old Greek text of this verse without the conjunction "kai" in it, to confirm Clarke's statement, the internal grammatical evidence against the word "kai" having been a part of the original text is certainly very significant. This is something very few other scholars, if any, are willing to address, even when they can obviously recognize the awkwardness of the word "and" in the Greek text of this verse, and when they resort to various ways to get around this awkwardness (like translating "kai" as "also" instead of as "and", etc.).

But I also want to make quite clear that the conclusions I will present in this article are based neither on the word "kai" being omitted from this verse, nor on "pasa" having to be "every". Even if "kai" really was a part of the original text of this verse, and even if people insist that "pasa" must really mean "all" in this verse, that still does not affect the conclusions I will present. The conclusions are really based on understanding the correct meaning of Paul's statement to Timothy. I have presented Adam Clarke's comments and Robertson's comments because they represent a correct understanding of Greek grammar; and this is something that very few, if any, other scholars of the ancient manuscripts seem willing to mention. The closest they come is to admit, like Henry Alford, that the construction is "awkward".

Shortly we will look at different translations of this verse. When we examine the OLDER translations make a note of just how many of them completely omit the word "and", which is something that supports Adam Clarke's statement. And with the more recent translations (therefore not always based on ancient documents) make a note of just how many translators have made an effort to substitute "and" with the word "also", because they recognize that "and" simply does not fit into the structure of this verse, even if they don't openly acknowledge this.

Let's now look at the Greek noun "graphe".

THE GREEK NOUN "GRAPHE"

This is an old secular GREEK word that means: writing, written characters, written statement, piece of writing. The word has no inherent religious significance, and certainly didn't have any religious significance 2000 years ago. This word is used to designate all writings, including religious writings.

The LATIN word "scriptura" means: writing, composition, document. It also is a secular word without any special religious significance in old Latin.

"Scriptura" is in fact the perfect translation into Latin of the Greek noun "graphe".

Now our ENGLISH word "scripture" is clearly derived from this Latin word "scriptura". And several centuries ago this English word "scripture" still had a more diverse meaning from what this word means today.

The Unabridged edition of Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary presents four definitions for the word "scripture". Those four definitions are given in this order:

- 1) OBSOLETE: a writing, anything written, as manuscripts, documents, etc.
- 2) THE BOOKS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS; THE BIBLE
- 3) a passage or text of the Bible
- 4) any sacred or religious writing or books. (my emphasis)

The point is that since the Middle Ages the meaning of the English word "scripture" has been narrowed down! It USED TO MEAN the same as the Greek word "graphe" and as the Latin word "scriptura", i.e. it referred to ANY piece of writing. But today that more general meaning is OBSOLETE!

Today any person hearing or reading the English word "scripture" assumes that this word refers to, as pointed out by Webster's Dictionary, A VERY LIMITED CATEGORY OF WRITINGS, i.e. the Bible. Today the English word "scripture" has an EXCLUSIVELY religious meaning. Today we would not use the word "scripture" to refer to any secular writings. No modern author's writings are to be considered on a par with the writings recorded in the Bible, and therefore the word "scripture" with its present meaning should never be used to refer to such writings of modern authors.

So where the Apostle Paul wrote "all God-breathed WRITING", it is not really correct to translate this TODAY as "all God-breathed SCRIPTURE", because the Apostle Paul simply did not use a word that had an exclusively religious meaning to his audience. Rather, he used an adjective to precisely pinpoint the specific category of writings he was speaking about.

Regarding our subject here, it is really only the English language that has evolved to the point of having

two distinct words to classify all writings: the word "writings" covers all writings, where the word "scripture" TODAY covers only the writings that make up the Bible. This distinction does not exist in other languages (Greek, Latin, German, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, etc.). Those languages do not have one word to designate "all writings" and another word to designate "the writings that make up the Bible". They only have one word to designate ALL writings. And when a language does not have a specific word to designate only the books of the Bible, then it is absolutely vital to provide a qualifying word or expression (an adjective, etc.) whenever the writer wants to direct his readers to the books of the Bible.

It is only in English that translators (with both, religious and secular texts) have to choose between "writing" and "scripture" when they translate the Greek word "graphe". Translators into other languages are not faced with such a choice for the translation of "graphe". Translators into other languages are always forced to translate "graphe" as "writing", because that is the only option available in their language, even as Greek itself 2000 years ago had only one word available.

So let's notice some translations that demonstrate the correct meaning of "graphe" by using the word "writing" and not the word "scripture" in this verse.

The 1865 New Testament Diaglot translates this verse as follows:

ALL WRITING INSPIRED OF GOD and profitable for teaching, for proof, for correction, for turning up that in righteousness; (2Ti 3:16 Diaglot)

The 1898 Young's Literal Translation reads:

EVERY WRITING (*IS*) GOD-BREATHED, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for setting aright, for instruction that *is* in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16-17 YLT)

The Dutch language Statenvertaling translates this into Dutch as follows:

AL DE SCHRIFT is van God ingegeven, en is nuttig tot lering, tot wederlegging, tot verbetering, tot onderwijzing, die in de rechtvaardigheid is; (2Ti 3:16 SVV)

Luther's translation into German reads as follows:

Denn ALLE SCHRIFT, von Gott eingegeben, ist ntze zur Lehre, zur Strafe, zur Besserung, zur Zchtigung in der Gerechtigkeit, (2Ti 3:16 LUT)

[COMMENT: "Schrift" means "WRITING" in both, German and Dutch, and the word is not reserved for an exclusively religious meaning like the English word "scripture".]

The 1953 Afrikaans translation reads:

DIE HELE SKRIF is deur God ingegee en is nuttig tot lering, tot weerlegging, tot tereg wysing, tot onderwysing in die geregtigheid, (2Ti 3:16 AFR1953)

[COMMENT: "Skrif" is the Afrikaans word for "WRITING", which word is also not reserved for a religious meaning.]

Now it is certainly true that in practical terms the word "graphe" is never used in the New Testament to refer to anything other than parts of the Bible, the Scriptures. And in the context of speaking to a Jewish audience (i.e. throughout the gospels) it would have been extremely unlikely for the audience to expect anything else. However, even then the context often provides additional clues that "graphe" is indeed a reference to books of the Old Testament. But, just as with our example with the adjective "red" above, we need to recognize that the introduction of the word "every" (or "all") really introduces a new element, which demands some qualifying statements.

While the noun "graphe" is used 51 times in the New Testament, there are ONLY TWO PLACES where "pasa" and "graphe" are used in the same expression. The one place is here in 2 Timothy 3:16, and the other place is Luke 24:27, which reads:

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES the things concerning himself. (Lu 24:27 AV)

Here the Greek expression for "in all the scriptures" is "en pasais tais graphais". This represents the following:

"En" is the Greek preposition for "in"; "pasais" is the dative case feminine plural of "pas", meaning "all"; "tais" is the dative case feminine plural of "he", the definite article (i.e. "the"); "graphais" is the dative case feminine plural of "graphe", meaning "writing".

Notice that in this verse we have the plural, and we also have the definite article. So HERE this particular expression certainly means "in ALL the writings" (plural), rather than "in every writing". Notice also that here THE CONTEXT has already identified that the "writings" which are being talked about are two specific sections of the Old Testament known as "the Law" (i.e. Moses) and "the Prophets".

Only a few short verses later, in verses 44 - 45, all three sections of the Old Testament are clearly defined as "the scriptures". So while here in Luke 24:27 "all the scriptures" are not qualified by any adjectives, they are nevertheless clearly linked to "Moses" and to "all the prophets". This does not leave any room for doubts regarding which "writings" are being talked about, and there is no need for any further adjectives to qualify "all the writings". Note also that "inspiration" does not enter the discussion in this verse.

In 2 Timothy 3:16, on the other hand, Paul was writing to a man who was half-Greek and who lived within a Greek culture, and who was a minister to other Greek people. And this passage is the only recorded place where the Apostle Paul ever used the words "every" (or "all" for that matter) and "writing" within the same phrase. And because this is the only recorded time that Paul ever used the expression "EVERY writing" he of necessity had to qualify this in some way.

So the Apostle Paul used a common word that means "WRITING", and he then qualified this noun with two adjectives: all + God-breathed. It should be apparent WHY the Apostle Paul had to use the adjective "God-breathed". Surely we can all recognize that the statement "ALL WRITING IS GOD-BREATHED" (as presented above in Young's Literal Translation) IS WRONG, UNLESS IT IS QUALIFIED IN SOME WAY! The writings of Plato and Socrates and Aristotle were a part of "all writing" for people living in the Greek culture of the first century A.D.; and those writings had to be emphatically excluded from the statement Paul wished to make. And Paul achieved this exclusion with the attributive statement "all GOD-BREATHED writing".

We can reason that in most cases Paul could have expected his non-Jewish readers to know that any reference to "writings" would mean either books of the Old Testament, or it would be a reference to

Paul's own writings (some of which did NOT become scripture!). But when Paul introduced the adjective "every" (or "all") into any statement about "writings", then it was imperative that Paul would establish distinct parameters to clearly define which "writings" he had in mind. Paul's use of the attributive adjective "theopneustos" perfectly fits this requirement.

Now let's examine this adjective "theopneustos".

THE GREEK ADJECTIVE "THEOPNEUSTOS"

Notice a number of translations that have tried to retain the features of an adjective for their translations of this word, rather than resorting to using the noun "inspiration".

We have already seen Young's Literal Translation which reads: "every writing (is) GOD-BREATHED".

Rotherham's 1902 NT translation reads:

Every scripture, (*is*) GOD-BREATHED, and profitable - unto teaching, unto conviction, unto correction, unto the discipline that is in righteousness, - (2Ti 3:16 Rotherham)

Jay Green's 1985 Literal Translation reads:

Every Scripture (*is*) GOD-BREATHED and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16 LIT)

Notice also a fairly recent translation, Gary Zeolla's 2007 Analytical Literal Translation of the New Testament (ALT). I have stripped away the bracketed terms Zeolla included in the text, which represent either words not found in the Greek text or else Zeolla's additional commentary on the text, to leave Zeolla's literal translation of the Greek text.

ALL SCRIPTURE GOD-BREATHED AND BENEFICIAL FOR TEACHING, for verification, for correcting faults, for instruction in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16, ALT, 2007)

Gary Zeolla's literal translation basically agrees with Jay Green's earlier Literal Translation, since there isn't really any question about the meaning of the Greek words in this verse.

Now let's look at Murdoch's 1851 NT Translation, which reads as follows:

All scripture THAT WAS WRITTEN by the Spirit, is profitable for instruction, and for confutation, and for correction, and for erudition in righteousness; (2Ti 3:16 Murdoch)

Notice that Murdoch does not imply that "all scripture was written" by the Spirit. Rather, Murdoch focuses on that section of "scripture" (i.e. writings) THAT was written by the Spirit. Better would have been "all writing that was God-breathed". But Murdoch at least represented a step in the right direction. Note also that Murdoch *avoided* using the word "and" (or "also") before the word "profitable", because "and" doesn't really fit. Murdoch clearly treated "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective, and he completely avoided using "and" in the first part of this verse. Did he translate this passage from a Greek text that also omits "kai" in this verse? Makes you wonder.

Likewise the 1865 Diaglot, which we have also already looked at, states: "All writing inspired of God and profitable for teaching". Again, this wording leaves open the possibility for there to be writings that are NOT "inspired of God".

The 1885 English Revised Version reads as follows:

Every scripture **INSPIRED OF GOD** (*is*) also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: (2Ti 3:16 ERV)

The focus here is that those scriptures (writings) that are inspired of God, are the ones that are also profitable for various uses. This is also clear from the ERV's translation as "every". Note also that the ERV opted for the translation "also" rather than "and" before the word profitable, a passive acknowledgment that "and" doesn't fit this context. This translation has also treated "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective.

The 1750 Catholic Douay-Rheims-Challoner revision of the original 1609 Douay-Rheims translation delineates the expression "inspired of God" with commas, in an attempt to retain the attributive character of the original adjective. Here is this translation.

All scripture, **INSPIRED OF GOD**, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice:" (2Ti 3:16 Douay, 1750 and 1899)

First of all the Douay Rheims Version did not provide the verb "is" or "is given". This is in agreement with the Greek text not containing a verb. Next, they acknowledge that this should be an attributive adjective, by clearly separating the phrase "inspired of God" with commas from the rest of the sentence. It would obviously have been more accurate if they had translated this as "all God-inspired writing", but at least they have also taken a step in the right direction, away from the KJV's wrong precedent.

And lastly, this Catholic translation does NOT provide the word "and" in any part of this verse! The absence of "and" here strongly suggests that the Latin text used for the original Douay-Rheims translation (NT was translated in 1582, OT was translated by 1609) did not have the word "and" in this verse. More on this later.

Let's also look at the 1901 American Standard Version for this verse.

EVERY SCRIPTURE INSPIRED OF GOD (*IS*) **ALSO PROFITABLE** for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. (2Ti 3:16 ASV)

Here the wrong focus has also been completely removed from anything supposedly being "given". Instead, the sole focus has been correctly directed at something "being profitable". This has removed **THE ARTIFICIAL DOUBLE FOCUS** of the flawed KJV text (created by treating "theopneustos" as a predicate adjective), where the first focus is on what was supposedly "given", and the second focus then is on what "is profitable". Furthermore, the ASV also tacitly acknowledged that "and" would be awkward, and the ASV therefore resorted to using the word "also" before "profitable". And they translated "pasa" as "every".

[COMMENT: The wording "inspired of God" in the ERV, Douay-Rheims, ASV and in any other translation is primarily a translation of the Latin Vulgate text, as I will show later, rather than being a translation of the Greek word "theopneustos". However, this translation (the ASV) at least still avoids the

wrong focus on anything supposedly having been given.]

EARLY TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH

Now we come to the story of how these mistranslations found their way into this verse.

Let's start with a look at the earliest translation of this verse into English. The first translation of any significance was the 1380 John Wycliffe Translation of the NT, which was made from Jerome's Latin Vulgate text, not from the Greek NT text. Middle English was the language spoken in 1380. Below is the text from this 1380 translation (which was revised by John Purvey around 1388, edited by Sir Frederic Madden, keeper of the MSS in the British Museum, and then printed in 1879). Most of the words we should be able to figure out, except perhaps the Middle English word "lerud", which meant "instructed, learned". Notice that this verse actually includes the text of TWO verses in other translations.

[COMMENT: I have most of the ancient versions and translations I will now quote on my computer in the form of scanned images. I will present all of them with the original spelling, as it appears in my copies. In some cases there are spelling variations for a word between different editions of the same text, and in some cases there are even spelling variations within the same edition. I have attempted to reproduce all of them faithfully as they appear in the original texts.]

For al scripture inspirid of God is profitable to teche, to repreue, to chastice, to lerne in riytwisnes, that the man of God be parfit, lerud (i.e. instructed) to al good werk. (2 Ti 3:16, John Wycliffe NT, 1380)

You may come across a version of this text in which the spelling has been modernized as follows:

FOR ALL SCRIPTURE INSPIRED OF GOD IS PROFITABLE TO TEACH, to reprove, to chastise, to learn in rightwiseness, that the man of God be perfect, learned to all good work. (2 Ti 3:16, John Wycliffe NT, 1380, my emphasis)

John Wycliffe made this translation before the text was divided into verses, and also before the invention of printing. It was hand-written. Later, when verses were first introduced into the NT text, in the Wycliffe Translation verses 16 and 17 were correctly presented as ONE verse, verse 16. The reason is that John Wycliffe's grammatical structure and the punctuation he used had clearly presented the text of verses 16 and 17 as ONE SENTENCE! This is also true for all the Latin versions; they all present the above text (in Latin) as the last sentence in chapter 3. This means that any break in this sentence (to form two separate verses) is clearly very artificial. Thus the later revisers and printers of the Wycliffe NT opted correctly to leave this all as one verse.

If you do a search on the internet, you may come across websites with this Wycliffe text shown as one verse (e.g. <http://bibledatabase.org>; select "Online Bibles", then "Wycliffe NT", then "2 Timothy 3"), though some places now also show it as two verses.

Notice the correct focus in this, the oldest English translation available. Wycliffe did NOT introduce the verb "given" into this verse, since Jerome's Latin Vulgate also does not contain the verb "given". Thus this verse has the correct SINGLE focus of "all scripture is profitable", with Scripture being qualified by "inspired of God". Wycliffe presented an attributive statement, not a statement with a predicate adjective. Keep this in mind.

Translating from the Latin text it was natural for Wycliffe to translate the Latin word "scriptura" into English as "scripture". In Middle English the word "scripture" still had the more general meaning of

"anything written, a manuscript"; and so Wycliffe's use of the word "scripture" back then was certainly acceptable.

Notice also that Wycliffe omitted the word "and" in his translation, even though the modern Latin Vulgate available to us today says "and". I suspect strongly that Wycliffe's Latin text did not contain the word "and", thereby agreeing with Adam Clarke's comment. Also keep in mind that Wycliffe's rendering "inspired of God" is a translation of the Latin text; it is not a translation of the Greek adjective "theopneustos".

Wycliffe's correct single focus in this verse was still largely retained by William Tyndale over 140 years later in his 1526 NT Translation. Tyndale's translation was the first one made into English from the GREEK text of the NT. However, Tyndale unfortunately made the mistake of introducing the idea of "given" into this verse. Tyndale's translation reads as follows.

FOR ALL SCRIPTURE GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, IS PROFITABLE TO TEACH, to improve, to inform, and to instruct in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, and prepared unto all good works. (2Ti 3:16-17 William Tyndale NT, 1526)

Notice that Tyndale only used the word "given" with a qualifying meaning. His expression "given by inspiration of God" still correctly represented an attributive statement for the word "scripture". Tyndale treated "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective. Specifically, Tyndale did NOT say "IS GIVEN", the predicate adjective form, because he knew that this is not how the Greek text reads.

NOTE THAT THIS VERY FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION FROM THE GREEK TEXT TREATED "THEOPNEUSTOS" AS AN ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVE!

The other thing we should take note of here is that in this first English translation from the Greek text Tyndale also did NOT use the word "AND". This is significant because (as we'll see later) the first Greek NT text, which had been published in printing about 10 years earlier by Erasmus, INCLUDES the word "and" in both, the Greek text and also in the second column Latin text. Yet Tyndale did NOT include the word "and". This strongly suggests that the Greek text from which Tyndale was translating also did not contain the Greek conjunction "kai", thereby further supporting Adam Clarke's unequivocal statement that "kai" was omitted in so many of the old manuscripts to which Clarke had access.

It seems extremely unlikely if both, the Greek text and the Latin Vulgate text had included the word "and", that then Tyndale would somehow have omitted this conjunction. The only plausible explanation is that Tyndale had access to one or more copies of the Greek text which did not include the conjunction "kai". It is also clear that the text Erasmus had produced (both, his Greek and his Latin) prior to Tyndale's translation is not particularly reliable, as I will show shortly.

We might also consider one other translation made at that time, and that is Martin Luther's German language translation. Martin Luther completed his translation of the New Testament in 1522, about 4 years before Tyndale made his translation into English, but 6 years after Erasmus had published his Greek text. For his translation Martin Luther had also made use of both, the Greek text and the Latin text. Here is Luther's translation from his unrevised 1545 edition (ULU).

Denn alle Schrift, von Gott eingegeben, ist nutze zur Lehre, zur Strafe, zur Besserung, zur Zchtigung in der Gerechtigkeit, (2Ti 3:16 ULU)

A translation of this German text with Luther's own punctuation reads: "All writing, inspired by God, is useful for doctrine, for correction, for self-improvement, for instruction in righteousness".

The points to notice in Luther's translation, also made well before the theological slogans of the Reformation had been precisely formulated, are that Luther very clearly presented the translation of "theopneustos" as an attributive statement, and that Luther also did not include the conjunction "and" in his translation. This strongly implies that the Greek texts and the Latin texts Luther used also did not include the word "and".

The English translations following Tyndale's NT included the Coverdale Bible (1535), the Matthew Bible (1537) and the Great Bible (1540). They were all made before the text was divided into verses. Here is the last sentence in chapter 3 of the 1535 Coverdale Bible:

"For all scripture geue by inspiracion of God, is profitable to teach, to improue, to amende, and to instructe in righteousnes that a man off God maye be perfecte, and prepared vnto good workes." (2 Ti 3:16-17, Coverdale Bible, 1535, original spelling)

Below is the text of the Matthew Bible of 1537. Note: The word "God" is once spelled with a small "g" and once with a capital "G". That is how it appears in my text. There are chapter divisions, but no verse divisions. As we can see, it is virtually identical to the Coverdale text.

"For all scripture geue bi inspiracion of god, is proffyttable to teache, to improue, to amende and to instructe in rightwisnes, that the man of God maye be perfecte and prepared unto all good workes." (2 Ti 3, last sentence of the chapter, Matthew Bible, 1537, original spelling)

This text was also basically repeated in the Great Bible, with some spelling alterations. Of interest is that these three translations (Coverdale, Matthew, Great Bible) all translated "theopneustos" as an attributive statement, and that all three of them also did NOT contain the conjunction "AND" in the first part of this verse.

Anyway, after Tyndale had been brutally killed in 1536, English Protestant leaders like William Whittingham, etc. fled to Geneva. In this regard we should take note of the following four things.

1) The undisputed theological leader in Geneva was the Frenchman John Calvin. John Calvin's alter ego, his most loyal defender and the man who took over the leadership after John Calvin's death was the Frenchman Theodore Beza. Prominent English speaking Protestant leaders who went to Geneva included John Knox and William Whittingham.

2) In 1556 Theodore Beza published a Latin text for the New Testament, which challenged the text of Jerome's Latin Vulgate translation, departing from the text of the Vulgate in very many places. In 1565 Beza then published his Greek New Testament, which consists of three columns: the left-hand column has the Greek text. The center column is Beza's own translation into Latin of the Greek text. The right-hand column gives the Latin text of Jerome's Vulgate translation. This central placing of Beza's own Latin version already tells us that Beza considered his own Latin version to be the most important text, certainly more important than Jerome's Latin text.

[COMMENT: As Jerome's Latin Vulgate was the translation of the Catholic Church, Protestants like Beza really wanted a Latin text that would grant them independence from the Catholic Church. Having their own version of the Latin NT was intended to prove that independence. Whether or not their Latin text was a more accurate translation was a secondary matter. To show their independence from the Catholic

Church, Beza in some places used Latin synonyms in place of established Latin Vulgate terms and expressions. In some other places Beza also used his own Latin text to slant the meaning towards the pet doctrines of the Protestant movement. We will find an example of this right here in the verse we are discussing.]

3) Meanwhile William Whittingham married the sister of John Calvin's wife, and upon the death of John Knox Whittingham succeeded John Knox as the English pastor in Geneva. In 1557 Whittingham translated the New Testament into English. This translation became the New Testament text of the Geneva Bible which was then published in 1560. While Whittingham translated from the Greek text, it is well-known that he also made extensive use of Beza's recently produced Latin text for the New Testament. Beza and Whittingham were birds of a feather.

4) Robert Stephens had been the first one to divide the New Testament into verses in his 1551 Greco-Latin New Testament. But the 1557 Geneva New Testament was the first ever English language NT printed with verse divisions and in Roman type. It was William Whittingham who established the verse divisions for the English language Bibles. He also provided the punctuation for this text, often departing from the previously established punctuation in the Greek and Latin texts.

Because of the influence they had on Whittingham (and therefore on the English translations), it becomes important for us to examine the three column text of Theodore Beza. And when we examine the three columns in Beza's translation, we find something very interesting.

For a start, Beza has divided all three columns into verses (this was in 1556). And in this passage all three columns are clearly divided into verses 16 and 17. As far as punctuation is concerned, verse 16 in Beza's Greek text ends with a period (full stop), but in both of his Latin versions he has verse 16 ending with a colon. So in his Greek text Beza implies that verse 16 concludes the thought that is being presented, whereas in his two Latin texts he concedes that the thought being presented really continues into verse 17.

The period at the end of verse 16 in Beza's Greek text is clearly a mistake, albeit a deliberate one, which is not supported by previous Greek texts. This mistake is ipso facto acknowledged by the punctuation Beza employed in the two Latin texts. But this punctuation change in his Greek text also reveals quite clearly that Beza really WANTED to separate the text of verse 17 from the text of verse 16.

The question is: WHY did Beza, by means of a period at the end of verse 16 of his Greek text, try to ARTIFICIALLY separate the text of verse 17 from the text of verse 16? Beza knew full well that the Greek text of verse 16 did not contain a single verb, and that in Greek the text of verse 17 was absolutely essential to complete the thought of verse 16, as clearly demonstrated in the verse divisions of the Wycliffe Bible.

Beza's Greek text is identical to the Greek text we find today for this verse (except that other Greek texts do not place a period at the end of verse 16). So let's now examine FOUR different Latin texts for this verse: BEZA's own Latin text, Jerome's Latin Vulgate text in Beza's third column, the Latin Vulgate text of the 1517 Complutensian Polyglot Bible, and the Latin Vulgate text that we have TODAY.

1) HERE IS THE LATIN VULGATE TEXT BEZA PRESENTS IN HIS TRANSLATION:

"Omnis Scriptura divinitus inspirata utilis est ad docendum, ad arguendum, ad corrigendum ad erudiendum in iustitia:" (Beza's 1556 Latin Vulgate text)

Translated this basically reads:

"Every (or all) scripture divinely inspired useful is for doctrine, for reproof, for correction for instruction in justice:"

COMMENTS: THIS Latin text was clearly the official Latin text at that time. It is identical to the Clementine Vulgate of 1590. Beza had to present it because all the scholars at that time would have been familiar with this text. Beza had to present the "official" Latin text to try and make a case for his "improved" Latin text. But in providing this "official" text Beza has acknowledged that prior to his time the verb "is" did not appear before the word "inspired" in the Latin text, and also that previously the next part of this sentence had NOT contained the word "and".

2) HERE IS THE 1517 LATIN VULGATE TEXT OF THE COMPLUTENSIAN BIBLE:

"Omnis Scriptura divinitus ispirata utilis est ad docedu: ad argueduz: ad corripiendum: ad erudiendum in iustitia: (2 Ti 3:16 Complutensian text)

COMMENTS: Apart from some spelling mistakes / variations the Latin text of the 1517 Complutensian Bible is in agreement with the 1556 Vulgate text Beza provided, which is also the 1590 Clementine Vulgate text.. Thus the same comments apply (i.e. the words "is" and "and" were not in the text). The existence of this Complutensian Latin text (amongst others) ensured (in the context of this specific verse) that Beza had to acknowledge the absence of "is" and of "and" in the official Latin text, which acknowledgment he duly provided in his third column.

3) HERE IS THE LATIN TEXT ORIGINATED BY BEZA (with Beza's own punctuation):

"Tota Scriptura divinitus est inspirata, & utilis ad doctrina, ad redargutionem, ad correctionem, ad institutionem, quae est in iustitia:" (Beza's own 1556 Latin text)

Translated this basically reads:

"The WHOLE scripture divinely IS inspired, AND useful for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for institutions, which is for justice:"

COMMENTS: Beza has included the verb "is" in the first part of the sentence, thereby emphatically making that first part a predicate statement. The emphasis on this first part is strengthened by placing a comma after "inspired". And then Beza also includes the conjunction "and", to link his first stand-alone statement to the rest of the verse.

We should note one other subtle change Beza introduced. As a Latin and Greek scholar Beza was very much aware of the fact that in this verse the Greek "pasa graphe" really means "EVERY writing". Here it does not mean "all writing"! He also knew that the Latin "omnis scriptura" clearly includes the meaning "EVERY writing". In an attempt to completely exclude any possibility of this expression meaning "every", in an attempt to FORCE the meaning of "all" into this expression, Beza used the Latin word "tota" (from "totus"). THIS WAS A DISHONEST TRANSLATION INTO LATIN!

The difference between "omnis scriptura" and "tota scriptura" is that "omnis scriptura" includes both meanings: "every scripture" and "all scripture", depending on the context. But the expression "tota scriptura" totally eliminates any possibility of translating this as "every scripture". The expression "tota scriptura" only means "ALL scripture", the whole lot in its entirety, with nothing being excluded.

Obviously, this expression "tota SCRIPTURA" also requires the Latin word "scriptura" to have no meaning other than "the scriptures"; it requires the Latin word "scriptura" to reject its common meaning of "all categories of writing", because applying that correct meaning to "scriptura" would make Beza's

translation patently flawed. (i.e. The correct meaning of "scriptura" in the expression "tota scriptura" would imply that every single pagan writing was also "divinely inspired". So the meaning of "scriptura" had to be artificially restricted to even make Beza's Latin text plausible. His translation was clearly the work of a religious zealot, intent on supporting his own beliefs.)

The Frenchman Beza had dishonestly translated the Greek expression "pasa graphe", and then his dishonest translation required him to attempt to limit the meaning of the Latin word "scriptura" to a very narrow category of writings, the Bible. But that narrow definition of the Latin "scriptura" is also dishonest and wrong.

However:

THIS TRANSLATION LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR THE LATER ENGLISH LANGUAGE GENEVA BIBLE TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE!

This translation by Beza reveals Beza's agenda to make this text read "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, AND is profitable", etc. To further his own agenda, Beza: A) artificially divided this sentence into two verses, B) changed "every" into "the whole", C) provided the verb "is", D) provided the punctuation after "inspirata" to strengthen his predicate statement, and E) then added the conjunction "and" in an attempt to link his incorrect translation to the rest of the sentence.

And Beza did all this to provide a scripture to support John Calvin's teaching that every single verse in the Bible was inspired by God. He was Calvin's most loyal supporter.

4) HERE IS THE TEXT OF THE VULGATE WE HAVE TODAY:

"omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata et utilis ad docendum ad arguendum ad corrigendum ad erudiendum in iustitia" (Today's VULGATE)

Translated this basically reads:

"All scripture divinely inspired AND useful for doctrine for reproof for correction for instruction in justice"

COMMENTS: This text is sometimes incorrectly attributed to Jerome. Beza's Latin Vulgate text and the Complutensian Latin text make clear that Jerome had not included the word "and" in this verse. It was added later. This modern Vulgate text contains one of the innovations Beza introduced: while it does not contain the verb "is", it does however contain the word "and". The modern Vulgate did not accept Beza's word "tota", but retained the word "omnis". As we'll see shortly, today's Vulgate text has basically accepted the text Erasmus had provided, and which Beza then "fine-tuned a bit more". But even before we look at the text of Erasmus, we should be able to see something.

THIS GROUP OF LATIN VERSIONS EXPOSES THE REAL ROOT OF THE PROBLEMS WITH OUR TRANSLATIONS TODAY!

The 1517 Complutensian Latin text and Beza's 1556 Latin Vulgate text by Jerome are in agreement. Neither one of these two Latin versions has the word "AND" in the text. They are in full agreement with Wycliffe's 1380 translation and with Luther's 1522 translation and with Tyndale's 1526 translation. ALL of these early translations (Wycliffe, Tyndale, Luther, Complutensian Latin, Beza's Vulgate text of Jerome) totally support Adam Clarke's statement that "and" is omitted by ALMOST ALL THE VERSIONS.

All of these translations basically say "every (or all) divinely inspired scripture is useful for doctrine, etc.", without the verb "is" in the first part of this sentence, and without the conjunction "and".

Here we might also keep in mind that the first English translation by the Catholic Church was the Douay-Rheims New Testament completed in 1582. Since then the Douay has been edited a few times. Here is the Douay Rheims translation.

All scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice: (2Ti 3:16 Douay)

So this makes one more old Latin version that agrees with Clarke's comment, and therefore disagrees with the present Vulgate text.

In contrast to all the above texts Beza's own Latin text reads:

"The whole scripture IS divinely inspired AND useful for doctrine, etc."

And today's Latin Vulgate reads:

"All scripture divinely inspired AND useful for doctrine, etc."

So where on earth did today's Latin Vulgate text get the conjunction "and" in this text? It didn't get it from the Latin text Wycliffe used; it didn't get it from the Latin text the Complutensian Bible used; it didn't get it from the Latin texts Luther and Tyndale consulted; it didn't get it from the Vulgate text Beza was familiar with; and it didn't get it from the Vulgate text the Douay-Rheims translators used! None of these Latin texts had the conjunction "and" in this verse.

TODAY'S LATIN VULGATE RECEIVED THE CONJUNCTION "AND" FROM THE LATIN TEXT OF DESIDERIUS ERASMUS AND OF THEODORE BEZA!

It was Theodore Beza who changed the attributive adjective into a predicate adjective. It was Erasmus who had added the conjunction "and" to the text of 2 Timothy 3:16, something that Beza then copied. We'll see that in this matter Beza had received enormous help from the Dutch Catholic scholar Desiderius Erasmus.

Beza had the nerve to present his self-composed Latin text right beside Jerome's Latin Vulgate text which was officially recognized at his time. In so doing he clearly exposed his own presumptuousness.

It seems quite clear to me that in the Greek text to the left of his own Latin text Beza also inserted the conjunction "kai" (as Erasmus had also done). It is extremely unlikely that all those old Latin versions (from Wycliffe to the Douay-Rheims, covering about 200 years) would have consistently omitted "and" if "and" had somehow been a part of the Latin text before the time of Wycliffe. And the text before Wycliffe was based on Jerome's translations from the Greek text.

Theodore Beza, the alter ego of John Calvin, absolutely needed a biblical statement to the effect that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God", and so Beza simply manufactured such a statement in his own Latin version of the New Testament. In modern terms Beza had produced "a denomination-specific translation". What the Mormons, the Jehovah Witnesses, and other churches in our age have done in producing their own translations for their own followers, Beza did for the followers of John Calvin. Regarding the content of the Bible, Beza's Latin text said exactly what the Protestants at Geneva wanted

it to say.

And so this verse became the rallying scripture for the whole Reformation. This rallying cry turned out to be so effective, that every other religious movement also accepted it unconditionally, going far beyond John Calvin's immediate followers.

But Beza had received some help from Erasmus. So now let's examine the texts of Desiderius Erasmus.

THE 1516 LATIN TEXT OF ERASMUS

The Dutchman Erasmus was a lifelong Catholic. He had been a monk, but Pope Leo X (1513 - 1521) had absolved Erasmus from his monastic vows. Erasmus desperately wanted to be the first one to publish a Greek New Testament (as opposed to producing hand-written copies). Towards this end Erasmus obtained from both, Emperor Maximilian and also from Pope Leo X, an unprecedented 4-year publishing privilege in the year 1516, preventing anyone else from publishing a Greek New Testament during those four years, until Erasmus himself had managed to produce such a Greek NT text first. This request for a publishing privilege was absolutely staggering, in addition to being extremely selfish, when we consider that the printing process itself had only been invented less than 70 years earlier.

Erasmus knew that the New Testament part of the Complutensian Bible had already been completed. And he felt the pressure to rush out a Greek NT edition to forestall being only second. (Like being the second one to climb Everest after Edmund Hillary, or the second one to break the 4-minute mile after Roger Bannister. Second places don't go down in history. And Erasmus was willing to do anything to be acknowledged as "first".)

The story is well-documented in various places. Below is a quotation from WIKIPEDIA ENCYCLOPEDIA, including the relevant footnotes. This quotation documents Erasmus' work in producing his two texts (Greek and Latin). This same information is also available from various other sources.

"Erasmus's hurried effort (Erasmus said it was "RUSHED INTO PRINT rather than edited"[14]) was published by Froben of Basel in 1516 and thence became the first published Greek New Testament, the *Novum Instrumentum omne, diligenter ab Erasmo Rot. Recognitum et Emendatum*. Erasmus used several Greek manuscript sources because HE DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO A SINGLE COMPLETE MANUSCRIPT. The manuscripts were, however, late Greek manuscripts of the Byzantine textual family and ERASMUS USED THE BEST MANUSCRIPT THE LEAST because "he was afraid of its supposedly erratic text." [15] He also ignored much older and better manuscripts that were at disposal for him.[16] Since the last six verses of Revelation were missing from his Greek manuscript, ERASMUS TRANSLATED THE VULGATE'S TEXT BACK INTO GREEK. Erasmus ALSO TRANSLATED THE LATIN TEXT INTO GREEK wherever he found that the Greek text and the accompanying commentaries were mixed up, or WHERE HE SIMPLY PREFERRED THE VULGATE'S READING TO THE GREEK TEXT. [17]" (WIKIPEDIA, article "DESIDERIUS ERASMUS", my emphasis)

FOOTNOTES 14 - 17, Wikipedia Article:

14 "Epistle 694" in *Collected Works of Erasmus Volume 5*, 167.

15 Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament. Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 102.

16 Paul Arblaster, Gergely Juhsz, Guido Latr (eds) *Tyndale's Testament*, Brepols 2002, ISBN

17 E.g. at Acts 9:6. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 99-100; Kurt Aland - Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament. An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, Translated by Erroll F. Rhodes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 2nd edition, revised and enlarged, 1989, p. 4

Let's also look at another quotation. In 1986, the 450th anniversary of the death of Erasmus, Dr. H. J. De Jonge, a research scholar and lecturer of New Testament at the University of Leiden, Holland published a 4-page article entitled "Erasmus' Method of Translation in his Version of the New Testament". This article is a gold mine! I downloaded it from the university's website. The address is:
https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/1887/1014/1/279_054.pdf

Dr. De Jonge is clearly an admirer of Erasmus. None of his comments are intended to find fault with Erasmus. So here are 5 quotations from the 4-page article by this Dutch researcher (with my emphasis in each case).

1) The new LATIN version of Erasmus was disseminated throughout Europe "IN OVER 250 PRINTED EDITIONS". That is why the Erasmus text, both Latin and Greek, is so dominant in the texts that are available today; it was given enormous publicity.

2) As a translator Erasmus felt that "PEOPLE HAD TO BE CONVINCED of the wisdom of Christ". So as far as possible Erasmus "stripped" the text of "SPECULATION ABOUT THE SUPERNATURAL". That's not exactly a noble approach when God's interaction with mankind obviously involves many things that transcend "the natural" sphere of man's activities. Erasmus saw it as his job to turn the text of the New Testament authors into a "stir to action" presentation, as much as possible. This influenced his choice of words.

3) So Erasmus produced a new revised Latin text for the Vulgate, in which "about 40% of the words were changed". In effect, Erasmus changed almost every other word in the text of the Vulgate, in an attempt to change Jerome's 3rd - 4th century Latin back to the Latin that was in vogue at the time of the New Testament. His goal was to limit himself to Latin words and phrases that were used by the authors "Cicero, Caesar, Sallust, Livy and Quintilian". Erasmus attempted to limit his Latin translation to the vocabulary used by these five pagan authors. That's hardly a suitable standard, since Paul and the other writers of the New Testament didn't have all that much in common with Caesar and Cicero. In 1 Cor. 2:1 - 4, 13 Paul explained that he didn't use "enticing words", etc. to preach to them. That's hardly a-la-Livy or Cicero.

4) Erasmus also published PARAPHRASES on the New Testament books in Latin (except for Revelation, a book Erasmus didn't really like). Regarding these paraphrased translations, Erasmus "was even more attached to this work than to his translation". As far as Erasmus was concerned, "THE CONTENT AND THE MESSAGE OF THE NT WERE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE TEXT, THE PARAPHRASE (WAS) MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE TRANSLATION, AND THE TRANSLATION (WAS) MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE GREEK TEXT". That's a direct quote!

Can we grasp what this is telling us?

The actual Greek text of the New Testament was the LEAST IMPORTANT item in Erasmus' view. His translation (into Latin) of the Greek text was MORE IMPORTANT than the Greek text itself. But HIS PARAPHRASED accounts were still MORE IMPORTANT than the translations. And MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL was what ERASMUS BELIEVED the content and the message of the NT to be! Since he didn't like Revelation, it obviously (to him) could not be of any real value.

What we have here is probably the most arrogant and opinionated translator in the almost 2000-year history of the New Testament text. Erasmus decided for himself what the real meaning of every verse and passage was; and once he had decided what the meaning should be, then he felt free to alter the text to fit in with the meaning he had decided on. This explains why it didn't bother him that he did not even have one complete Greek text of the whole NT available to produce his own Greek text for printing. He only had access to bits and pieces, and that was quite enough for him to construct his own Greek text.

ERASMUS HAD NO RESPECT FOR THE LITERAL GREEK TEXT THAT HAD BEEN HANDED DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES!

5) Erasmus wrote: "I hear that SOME are SO SUPERSTITIOUS that they DO NOT PERMIT ANY DEVIATION WHATSOEVER FROM THE WORDS OF THE EVANGELISTS". And elsewhere he wrote "whoever translates IS REGULARLY OBLIGED TO DEVIATE FROM THE DETAILS AND FINER POINTS OF THE ORIGINAL".

These quotations should suffice. You can download the article yourself. When we couple these last comments with the low esteem Erasmus had for the actual Greek text, it should make clear that, where Erasmus differs from other texts, we cannot possibly extend any credibility to Erasmus; he was just too opinionated to bother to stick with the literal Greek text of the New Testament.

The point is this: Erasmus started out with an extremely selfish motivation. He wanted a place in history, even though he knew that the Complutensian New Testament had already been completed and was ready for publication, if so desired. So he persuaded the authorities to prohibit anyone else from getting ahead of him. (The Pope's support for Erasmus ahead of Cardinal Cisneros proves that Erasmus was a good Catholic. Erasmus' disdain for the literal Greek text proves the same point.) Then he RUSHED (by his own admission) into producing a Greek New Testament text for printing. But he didn't even have access to a single complete Greek New Testament text. What does an ambitious person do in such a situation? Why, you "cook the books", right? And that is PRECISELY what Erasmus did: HE COOKED THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT GREEK TEXT!

Erasmus' Greek text, which became the foundation of the KJV and other translations, is reasonably good when viewed overall in very general terms (because we are able to compare it to other texts). But it is not necessarily reliable when it comes down to ONE SPECIFIC WORD HERE OR THERE! Erasmus tried to produce a Greek text and a Latin text that HE thought would be the best text. He did not approach the production of his text with a fear to in any way meddle with the text. Where he didn't have a Greek text, he made up his own by back-translating from the Latin. In other places where HE believed the Latin was better than the Greek text available to him, he altered the Greek text to fit in with the Latin text. He also was quite sensitive to outside pressure (that's why he included the text of 1 John 5:7-8 in his later editions), something very common to people who seek recognition.

We need to recognize that Erasmus is to the publication of the Greek New Testament text what the scientist, who fabricates (or theorizes) some of his supposed experimental results to supplement the other results he has been able to achieve, is to science. And many famous scientists in the past have fabricated some of their supposed "experimental" results, and often they have still managed to produce very helpful information. But along the way they also faked it some of the time.

It is not that all of Erasmus' text is wrong or bad. And even in the places where Erasmus back-translated into Greek, he may quite possibly have been right or almost right in many cases. But there are also many cases where his text, LIKE EVERY OTHER TEXT (!), exhibits genuine problems. That's just the way it is, and we can't really get around this evidence.

So now let's look at Erasmus' text for this verse.

The Textus Receptus we have today is based on the Greek text Erasmus (who was never a Protestant at any time in his life; he lived and died a Catholic) produced. That Greek text includes the conjunction "kai". I strongly suspect that this is one example of where Erasmus used his "editorial licence" to force his own understanding of Paul's statement into this verse. My reason for this suspicion is explained below.

I have two different copies of the text by Erasmus. The first one is from the year 1516, and it has a one-page "Apologiae Finis" in Greek as a Preface. The other copy is from 1522, and it belongs to the City Library of Zurich. This one includes a February 1516 dedication in Latin to Pope Leo X, and another dedication dated September 1518.

Neither version has any verse divisions. In the 1516 edition there is a very small space after the last word of chapter 3, before the text of chapter 4 commences. In the 1522 edition chapter 4 is started on a new line (thus a slightly larger space left blank). Both copies have a Greek column and a Latin column on every page. And Erasmus made sure that his Greek and Latin texts were compatible.

Let's look at the Latin column for this passage in the 1516 edition.

In both versions verses 16 & 17 very clearly form one sentence. Apart from five spelling changes the wording of the two Latin texts is the same. But there is a punctuation change. Here is the 1516 edition of Erasmus' Latin.

"Ois (short for omnis) scriptura divinitus, inspirata & utilis as doctrina ad redargutione, ad correctione, ad institutionem, quae est in iusticia, ut integer sit dei homo, ad omne opus bonu apparatus." (Erasmus 1516 Latin text, continuous text without verse divisions, this is the last sentence in chapter 3. Punctuation as in the original text.)

Translated, retaining the punctuation of Erasmus, this basically reads:

"All scripture divinely, inspired & useful for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is for justice, so that the man of God may be whole, equipped for all good works."

THE PUNCTUATION ERASMUS HAS USED HERE HOLDS A MAJOR KEY!

By placing a comma after the word "divinitus" Erasmus KNEW that he was making a very artificial division here! Erasmus KNEW that the TWO words "divinitus inspirata" should not be divided, because those two words were the Latin translation of the ONE Greek word "theopneustos". When you first translate the one Greek word "theopneustos" by the two Latin words "divinitus inspirata", and you THEN separate those two words from one another by punctuation, YOU UNAVOIDABLY CHANGE THE MEANING that was originally conveyed.

In plain language: When Erasmus placed a comma between the words "divinitus" and "inspirata" in the Latin text, that is the same as placing a comma between "theo" and "pneustos" in the Greek word "theopneustos"! Erasmus divided this word as if it was supposed to express two completely different thoughts.

An analogy in English is if in the translation of the word "butterfly" you place a comma between "butter" and "fly", associating "butter" with the text that went before, and associating "fly" with the text that

follows. THAT'S WHAT THE COMMA ERASMUS PLACED IN THIS TEXT DOES! IT GROSSLY DISTORTS THE ORIGINAL MEANING!

This illustrates why the two words "divinitus inspirata" were not really a good translation of the Greek "theopneustos", because this Latin translation allowed people to focus on each word individually. The Greek "theopneustos" really should have been translated by a one-word adjective, even if Jerome would have had to coin a new Latin word for this. When anyone focuses on either of these two Latin words (i.e. divinitus & inspirata) to the exclusion of the other word, then the meaning of the original Greek text is unavoidably distorted, like separating "butterfly" into "butter" and "fly".

According to the meaning of the Greek text, the Latin word "inspirata" must be linked to the word "divinitus". Erasmus, however, chose to link the word "inspirata" to the word "utilis" by providing the conjunction "and"!

For a scholar this was a very dishonest translation, albeit very subtle! Never underestimate the power of punctuation! The comma after "divinitus" in effect FORCES the reader to read a verb into the text of the first three words. This comma, in effect, forces us to read: "all scripture IS divine, inspired and useful for doctrine", etc. The comma in this text implies that "divinitus" by itself is an adequate translation of "theopneustos", leaving the verb "inspirata" free to be joined to the rest of the sentence. But a Greek scholar like Erasmus surely knew perfectly well that the GREEK text does not have any verb equivalent to "inspirata" in it! But I don't think that this really bothered Erasmus.

My reason for believing that this is one instance where Erasmus "cooked the books" is very simple. Erasmus KNEW that the Latin text of his time (i.e. as found in the Complutensian NT) did NOT contain the conjunction "and". Over 40 years later at the time of Beza the official Latin text still did not contain the conjunction "and", and twenty years later (when the Douay-Rheims was translated) the official Latin text STILL did not contain the conjunction "and". Beza at least openly acknowledged that HE was providing the word "and" into his own personal version of the Latin text, by also presenting the official Latin text without the word "and" in the next column. But Erasmus didn't even do that!

In his haste for fame and a place in history Erasmus simply inserted whatever changes he thought should be made without any documentation. When Erasmus inserted "and" into this verse, in BOTH, his Greek and his Latin text, he knew full well that this was not supported by the available copies of the NT. The fact that Tyndale's English translation from the Greek text (made almost 10 years after Erasmus had first published his Greek text) does not include the conjunction "and" is proof that the Greek text Tyndale used did not include "kai". So the incomplete Greek text Erasmus had available was likewise extremely unlikely to contain this conjunction. Adam Clarke also knew that "kai" was not in the text at that time. But that didn't stop Erasmus from inserting this conjunction here.

Erasmus wanted "kai" in the Greek text, and so he provided it. To Erasmus himself providing this little conjunction "kai" in Greek and "et" in Latin was no big deal, in view of the many other places where he clearly was forced to improvise. I don't believe that we can extend any credibility to the Latin text and the Greek text, that Erasmus has provided for this verse. As far as this verse is concerned, Erasmus is simply at odds with everyone else at his time in history! And his punctuation clearly and objectively exposes his unjustified bias, as do also his own words quoted earlier.

That's how Erasmus started out with his text in 1516. It seems that some scholars pointed out to him this problem with his punctuation, and so in later editions Erasmus moved the comma one word to the right. In his 1522 edition (which contains some minor spelling changes) Erasmus punctuated the Latin text as follows:

"Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata, & utilis ad doctrinam", etc. (1522 edition)

While on the surface that may have appeased the objectors, it still revealed the bias Erasmus had regarding this verse. YOU DON'T PLACE A COMMA AFTER THE FOUR WORDS "ALL SCRIPTURE DIVINELY INSPIRED" UNLESS YOU IMPLY THAT THOSE FOUR WORDS INCLUDE THE VERB "IS"!

You don't place a comma after an opening attributive expression! You only place a comma (in our context here) after a predicate statement! Can we understand this? The comma in front of "and" only makes sense if "and" is preceded by a predicate statement.

So even though someone forced Erasmus to concede that his comma between "divinitus" and "inspirata" was totally wrong, yet Erasmus nevertheless determined to FORCE THIS EXPRESSION TO BE A PREDICATE STATEMENT!

This is a very common trait of human nature. It can be seen repeatedly in situations where a man has introduced a new teaching (in religion or in secular education, etc.). He has presented his premise based on some or other "proof" he provided. His ideas become accepted by certain followers (e.g. the theory of evolution, etc.). Then his supposed "proof" is exposed as flawed and without any merit. What does the man do in this situation? Does he concede that he was wrong? CERTAINLY NOT! He staunchly continues to defend his original ideas by simply appealing to "other" proof! Religious reformers have done this, the apostles of evolution have done this, and Desiderius Erasmus did this!

Someone might have forced Erasmus to concede that his comma after "divinitus" was clearly wrong; but that admission was not going to change THE BELIEF that Erasmus had desired to establish with that comma! So even when Erasmus moved the comma one word to the right, this STILL supported the belief he originally intended to establish.

To be very clear: Erasmus determined, by the use of punctuation, to force the Latin equivalent of "pasa graphe theopneustos" to be read as a predicate statement. This was in violation of the rules of biblical Greek grammar (as we have seen earlier), but a little technicality like Greek grammar could not stop Erasmus from imposing his own interpretation on this sentence.

The key in this whole matter is this: When someone is so concerned to be the very first one in history to do something, to the point of enlisting the civil and religious powers of an empire to prevent anyone else from getting ahead, then we should certainly examine their work with the utmost caution! Such selfish motivations are never very conducive for producing objective scholarship.

Thus, as far as this verse is concerned, I cannot possibly extend any credibility to the texts (Greek and Latin) that Erasmus produced!

Now let's look at the next English language translation of the Bible (i.e. next after the Great Bible), which is the Geneva Bible.

THE GENEVA BIBLE

In 1560 the Protestants in Geneva (primarily Whittingham) completed the English language Geneva Translation of the Bible, which exhibited considerable influence from John Calvin and from Theodore Beza. It was this Geneva Translation that for the first time, 180 years after Wycliffe's basically correct translation, introduced THE DOUBLE FOCUS into this verse in an English language translation! Whittingham changed Tyndale's ATTRIBUTIVE PHRASE "given by inspiration" into a predicate statement with the words "IS GIVEN". Whittingham got this from Beza's Latin text, and perhaps also from Erasmus. Here is the Geneva Translation of this verse.

For the **WHOLE Scripture IS GIVEN** by inspiration of God, **AND** is profitable to teache, to improve, to correct and to instructe in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16 Geneva Bible, 1560; there are some spelling & word changes in later editions)

I believe that this change in the Geneva Bible was **DELIBERATE AND CALCULATED**, just as it had been with Beza's translation! We need only recall that by 1560 the doctrinal principle of the Protestant Reformation was expressed in the battle-cry "sola scriptura", Latin for "BY SCRIPTURE ALONE". The marginal comment to this verse in my Geneva Bible reads: "a pastour must bee wise **BY THE WORDE OF GOD ONELY**: wherein we haue perfectly deliuered vnto vs, whatsoever pertaineth either to discerne, knowe and establish true opinions, and to confute false ..." (original spelling, my emphasis), demonstrating just how much significance the Geneva reformers attached to this specific verse.

The expression "the **WHOLE Scripture**" in this translation is clear proof that Whittingham was not translating the Greek "pasa graphe" or its Latin equivalent "omnis scriptura", but rather that he was translating Beza's homemade Latin text "TOTA scriptura". Whittingham's use of the expression "the **WHOLE Scripture**" exposes that his own private agenda, to force a certain meaning into this verse, was identical to the private agenda of Theodore Beza.

Furthermore, this column in the Geneva Bible covers 2 Timothy 3:9 - 4:10, almost twenty verses. The big bold heading at the top of this column reads: "The Use of Scripture", a clear reference to this verse. This shows that the Geneva translators singled out verse 16 in this column for special attention. For them this was the most important verse in this column, and one of the most important verses in the whole New Testament.

The addition of this little word "is" to Tyndale's text of 2 Timothy 3:16 was essential to express and to justify the vital principle of the Protestant reformers who had gathered in Geneva. They **NEEDED** the Bible to say "THE **WHOLE (or ALL) SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD**"! And so Whittingham introduced this wrong focus, so essential to their movement, into this verse of his English translation.

Note that every Greek and Latin text they could have used for their translation presented the text of verses 16 & 17 as one sentence. The Geneva Bible was the first English language New Testament to be divided into verses. Even if Whittingham did use Erasmus' faulty Greek text, he **STILL** knew that verses 16 & 17 form one single sentence. Yet he chose to divide that sentence into two verses, copying Beza's precedent, to highlight the changed meaning he and Beza had assigned to this verse.

Note also that the Geneva Bible was the first English translation to present the Greek "pasa graphe theopneustos" as a predicate statement, which we saw earlier involves "making **AN ADDITIONAL STATEMENT**". In the five English translations before the Geneva Bible "theopneustos" (or its Latin equivalent) had always been correctly treated as an attributive statement.

[COMMENT: This was also the time when the word "scripture" began to be used more and more with the primary meaning of "the books of the Bible". By limiting the meaning of the word "scripture" to books of the Bible, the Protestant reformers were able to claim this verse for their cause. It is only in the English language that this has happened, and this linguistic development (limiting the meaning of the word "scripture" to the books of the Bible) is a direct consequence of the promotion of a private agenda regarding this specific verse. Translating this verse as "the **WHOLE Scripture**" also gave an urgency to limiting the meaning of this word "scripture", since non-biblical works had to be emphatically excluded from the meaning of "scripture".]

Notice that these translators also introduced the word "and" into Tyndale's English text. The reason should be clear: when they changed Tyndale's "given by inspiration of God" into the predicate statement

"IS given by inspiration of God", they absolutely NEEDED a conjunction to connect with the rest of the sentence. They absolutely needed the text to say "AND is profitable". Erasmus had certainly provided them with some help in this regard.

Recall that it was only about 5 years before Beza produced his own Latin New Testament that Robert Stephens had for the first time ever divided the NT into verses in his Greek-Latin text. And a couple of years later, by 1560, this system of verses was not yet fully established, certainly not yet for any English translation. There were still some variations in how different publishers divided the NT text into verses. We have already seen the example where in the Wycliffe translation verses 16 and 17 are presented as one verse.

The Geneva Bible set the precedent for the English language translations of the NT for the division into verses. And Theodore Beza certainly also had a dominating influence in that process, as witnessed by his precedent in dividing this sentence into two verses.

We need to recognize just how important it was to the cause of those Protestant reformers in Geneva, that 2 Timothy 3:16 would STAND ALONE and separate from the rest of the sentence of which it is a part! A stand-alone statement of "the whole scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable to teach", etc. was vital to their cause. They were not about to combine the whole sentence in verses 16 and 17 into one verse, because that would have turned the focus of attention towards the verb that is contained in the last part of this sentence, in verse 17. It would have diluted the impact they wished to achieve. That is something they simply did not want.

I suspect that Tyndale, working with a continuous NT text that had not yet been divided into verses, innocently introduced the word "given" into this text, in an attempt to clarify this verse for his readers. It was an unfortunate mistake by Tyndale. However, the translators of the Geneva Bible then seized upon this unfortunate mistake by Tyndale in a very calculated way, in order to get the Bible to say what they wanted it to say. Using Beza's Latin text and also the text of Erasmus as a foundation, slipping the verb "is" in front of Tyndale's word "given" would go almost unnoticed, yet it would achieve an enormous shift in the meaning of the whole sentence, a shift they desperately desired.

[COMMENT: Martin Luther had done the exact same type of thing (i.e. forcing his own ideas into the text of the Bible) with a different verse in his 1522 German language translation of the NT. In Romans 3:28 Luther translated the biblical word for "by faith" into German as "ALLEIN durch den Glauben", German for "by faith ALONE". And the Catholic Cardinal Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros had also done the same type of thing in his 1517 Complutensian Polyglot Bible with the text of 1 John 5:7-8 ("there are three that bear record in heaven ..."). And we have already discussed Erasmus in this regard. I mention this to illustrate that these "reformers" and translators were not above modifying the biblical text to express support for their own ideas. What Luther did with Romans 3:28, and what Cardinal Cisneros did with 1 John 5:7-8, and what Beza did with his Latin text, and what Erasmus did with the text of 2 Timothy 3:16, the translators of the Geneva Bible likewise did with 2 Timothy 3:16. We need to recognize this!]

The seemingly innocuous introduction of the little word "is" into the Geneva text had created A COMPLETE CHANGE IN FOCUS for Paul's statement to Timothy, changing it from an attributive statement to a predicate statement. The word "is" achieved a profound alteration in the meaning of this verse. [The unwarranted introduction of the word "is" here is of exactly the same magnitude as the equally unwarranted introduction of the word "is" in Colossians 2:17 ("but the body *is* of Christ"). These seemingly small additions can and do have profound consequences.]

The Bishops Bible translated a few years later, in 1568, was a reaction by the Anglican bishops against the Calvinistic flavor (and especially against the marginal comments!) of the Geneva Bible. However, the Bishops Bible did retain the changed predicate statement for this verse. The 1595 edition, which

included some spelling changes from the 1568 edition, reads as follows for 2 Timothy 3:16:

All scripture (is) given by inspiration of God, and (is) profitable to doctrine, to reprove, to correction, to instruction which is in righteousness, (2Ti 3:16, Bishops Bible, 1595)

That translation printed the first two occurrences of "is" in this verse in italics, to indicate that the word is not present in the Greek text. The Bishops Bible in turn then became the foundation for the 1611 King James Translation, which reads as follows:

All Scripture is giuen by inspiration of God, & is profitable for doctrine, for reproofe, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished vnto all good workes. (2Ti 3:16-17 KJV, 1611, original spelling)

So the KJV retained the flawed focus first introduced into the English text in the Geneva Bible and then endorsed by the Bishops Bible. Later came the 1769 revision of the 1611 text. This is the KJV text we mostly use today. Here it is:

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. (2Ti 3:16-17 AV, 1769)

Both occurrences of the word "is" in this verse are printed in italics, to indicate that this word is NOT found in the original Greek text.

HOWEVER:

We need to recognize that no amount of printing the words "is" in this verse in italics can undo the damage done by the change in focus that has resulted from the introduction of the words "is" and "given". The readers' minds have been conditioned to focus on something having been "given". Unless both of the words "*is given*" are printed in italics, the error is still mostly hidden. [In a correct translation the words "is given" should not even be used!] The proof for this fact (that the error is still hidden) is that the vast majority of English translations have indeed retained this general foundational statement of the whole Protestant reformation, that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God", including those translations that have placed the verb "is" in italics. Those translators may very well understand Greek, but they simply don't understand what Paul was really telling Timothy.

NOTE! WITH THE CHANGE INTO A PREDICATE STATEMENT, THE TRUE MEANING OF THIS VERSE HAD BEEN SEVERELY DISTORTED!

We should recognize that it took about 180 years for this incorrect translation (i.e. from Wycliffe to the Geneva Bible) to be introduced into our English language translations, and then to become firmly established. But this mistranslation had not been present in the five earliest English language translations. And the most important factors that influenced this wrong translation were: first Erasmus' flawed text, then Beza's presumptuous Latin translation, followed by Whittingham's distorted translation in the Geneva Bible.

Now let's examine the next verse which completes the thought of verse 16; first the text of the KJV and then the Greek text.

2 TIMOTHY 3:17 EXAMINED

That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:17 AV)

Here is the Greek text for this verse.

hina artios he ho tou theou anthropos pros pan ergon agathon exertismenos (2 Timothy 3:17 TR)

Here are the meanings of the Greek words used in this verse:

- 1) "**hina**" is A CONJUNCTION meaning "that" or "so that";
- 2) "**artios**" is AN ADJECTIVE meaning "perfect" or "complete" or "equipped";
- 3) "**he**" (Greek) is the 3rd person singular of THE GREEK **VERB** for "to be" (i.e. "he is");
- 4) "**ho**" and "**tou**" are both forms of THE DEFINITE ARTICLE "the";
- 5) "**theou**" is A NOUN which means "of God";
- 6) "**anthropos**" is A NOUN which means "man";
- 7) "**pros**" is the PREPOSITION we saw in the previous verse, meaning "unto, with, for";
- 8) "**pan**" is AN ADJECTIVE meaning "all" or "every";
- 9) "**ergon**" is A NOUN which means "work" or "deed";
- 10) "**agathon**" is AN ADJECTIVE meaning "good";
- 11) "**exertismenos**" is A **VERB** which means "to accomplish" or "to complete".

So a literal unpolished translation of the Greek text of verse 17 reads:

"So that he is equipped (or complete or perfect), the man of God, for all good works to accomplish."

Without becoming too involved in the Greek, notice that this verse contains TWO VERBS, firstly the third person singular of the verb "to be", and then the verb "to accomplish".

When we view verses 16 and 17 together, since they form one sentence, it is clear that THE VERB "EXERTISMENOS" (a form of the verb "exartizo") IS THE REAL FOCUS OF BOTH OF THESE VERSES, removing the need for any verbs in the opening phrases of this sentence (i.e. in verse 16).

To make this quite clear: Paul's focus in these verses is NOT ON HOW the Scriptures are given, but on THE USES we are to put SPECIFIC SECTIONS of the Scriptures to, in order to help us grow in godly character. Paul clearly used "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective, and NOT as a predicate adjective.

THIS MISTRANSLATION IN THE KJV HAS CREATED A TOTALLY WRONG FOCUS FOR THIS

VERSE, ONE THAT UNFORTUNATELY AGREES WITH OUR OWN PRECONCEIVED IDEAS.

Now our own preconceived ideas really go back to the premise that the Protestant Reformation had established. It was the Protestant reformers who placed every single verse in the Bible on a par with every other verse. The subtle twisting in the translation of 2 Timothy 3:16 was their tool for establishing this premise. And even when we can recognize the mistranslations in this verse, the underlying assertion (that ALL the verses in the Bible are inspired by God and are therefore of equal importance) seems so self-evident to us that we will continue to believe in that premise, "even if 2 Timothy 3:16 does not say what we always thought it said"! In many cases we don't bother to establish whether or not THE BIBLE actually supports the assertion that "every verse is inspired by God and therefore one verse is just as good as another verse".

Getting back to this verse: putting the whole sentence contained in these two verses together, we get the following literal translation:

"All God-breathed writing (is) profitable for teaching, for convincing evidence, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God IS EQUIPPED TO ACCOMPLISH all good works."

The ASV renders these two verses as follows:

Every scripture inspired of God (is) also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 ASV)

[One mistake that the ASV unfortunately still contains is that it has ARTIFICIALLY divided this thought into two separate sentences, by placing a period (full stop) after the word "righteousness". This mistake in punctuation is due to the desire to conform to the artificial break in this sentence, which was promoted especially by Theodore Beza and the translators of the Geneva Bible. You simply must have some form of punctuation at the end of a verse to justify separating it from what follows; and so the ASV translators provided a period. However, from a simple reading of the above ASV text it is obvious that this division into two separate sentences is totally inappropriate. Note that these translators also used the word "also" rather than "and" before "profitable", a tacit acknowledgment that Clarke's comment (that "kai" does not agree well with the text) is correct.]

To summarize these verses: the word "graphe" used by Paul does not have the narrow meaning of the English word "scripture", but rather the more general meaning of "writings", without any direct religious connotation. So when Paul used it in conjunction with the adjective "every" (or "all"), it was essential for him to use the adjective "God-breathed" to identify the specific writings he was speaking about. Secondly, Paul's focus was not on THE GIVING PROCESS of anything; rather, his focus was on "all God-inspired writings are profitable for various uses".

So Paul most assuredly did NOT say: "all writing is inspired of God, AND is profitable for". No, what Paul actually said was: "all GOD-BREATHED writing is profitable for". The wrong focus was simply slipped into this text first by the Catholic Erasmus, and then by the Protestant reformers who were responsible for the Geneva Bible, and who needed some support for their vociferous assertion of "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible". Most other translations since then have taken up and retained this wrong focus.

We have now traced how this mistranslation developed in our English language translations. But we can trace it back even further, to Jerome's Latin Vulgate translation of the Greek NT writings.

THE LATIN VULGATE TRANSLATION OF 2 TIMOTHY 3:16

Earlier we examined the Greek text for this verse, and we saw that the Greek word "theopneustos", which Paul used in this verse, is in fact an attributive adjective. It does nothing more than qualify the word for "writing".

Here is the Latin text that is TODAY generally viewed as Jerome's Vulgate.

omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata et utilis ad docendum ad arguendum ad corrigendum ad erudiendum in iustitia (2Ti 3:16 VULGATE)

We only need to examine a few words here.

The expression "*omnis scriptura*" means "every writing" or "all writing". That's a correct translation into Latin of the two Greek words "pasa graphe".

Next, where Paul used the Greek attributive ADJECTIVE "theopneustos", Jerome used the TWO LATIN WORDS "*divinitus inspirata*". The word "divinitus" is a Latin ADVERB. And the word "inspirata" is a form of the Latin VERB "inspiro".

Perhaps Jerome also added the Latin word "*et*", which means "*and*"? But, based on the omission of "and" by Wycliffe and by the Douay-Rheims translation and even in Theodore Beza's own Latin Vulgate text, it seems far more likely that Jerome himself did NOT add the word for "and" to his Vulgate text. We have seen that the internal evidence of the Greek text also strongly opposes the inclusion of the word "and" in the Greek text. And so Jerome's text most likely agreed with the Greek text in this regard, in omitting the word "and". It seems far more likely that the word "and" was only added to both, the Greek text and the Latin text, starting with the time when Erasmus composed his two texts (Greek and Latin), followed by Theodore Beza making his own Latin version of the New Testament.

Most likely the sign for "and" was only added to the Latin Vulgate text at some time during the early years of the Protestant Reformation.

Consider also the first book that was ever printed. In the 1450's Johann Gutenberg printed a copy of the Latin Bible. There are two copies of the Gutenberg Bible in the British Library, one on paper and the other on vellum. While there are some differences in some places between these two copies, for 2 Timothy 3:16 they have the identical text.

Let's compare the text of the currently accepted Vulgate with Gutenberg's Vulgate text.

The first 8 words of the current Latin Vulgate text, quoted earlier, are:

"omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata et utilis ad docendum"

And the corresponding words in the Gutenberg Bible in the British Library are:

"Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata utilis e ad docendu"

Notice that while the Latin Vulgate text available today has the word "et" before the word "utilis", the Latin text Gutenberg printed almost 70 years before the Protestant Reformation did NOT have the word "et" preceding the word "utilis". The Gutenberg Bible did not have the word "and" before the word "profitable". This represents more support for Adam Clarke's statement regarding this conjunction.

You may examine the text of both Gutenberg Bibles for yourself at the British Library at their website: <http://molcat1.bl.uk/treasures/gutenberg/search.asp>

At a minimum we have to say that the case for "kai" not having been in the original text of this verse is becoming very compelling. But let's accept the Latin Vulgate text that is generally accepted today.

In the Latin Vulgate Jerome made the following conversion:

1 GREEK ADJECTIVE = translated by 1 LATIN VERB + 1 LATIN ADVERB

The Latin verb "inspiro" means "to inspire" or "to breathe into". And the Latin adverb "divinitus" means "divinely" or "from God".

We need to recognize that every English translation that uses the phrase "INSPIRED OF GOD" is actually presenting a translation of this LATIN expression "divinitus inspirata", rather than presenting a translation of the Greek adjective "theopneustos". That is the translation Wycliffe coined, and he only had access to the Latin text. And many subsequent translators have simply accepted Wycliffe's rendering. Furthermore, the English word "inspired" is a verb just like the Latin word "inspirata" is a verb, whereas the Greek word "theopneustos" is an adjective.

TO MAKE THIS ABSOLUTELY PLAIN:

IT IS NOT THAT JEROME CHOSE LATIN WORDS WITH MEANINGS THAT ARE INCORRECT! THE MEANINGS OF THE LATIN WORDS ARE JUST FINE! THE PROBLEM IS THAT IN PROVIDING A VERB JEROME HAD OPENED THE WAY TO CHANGE AN ATTRIBUTIVE STATEMENT INTO A PREDICATE STATEMENT AND IN THAT WAY TO COMPLETELY CHANGE THE FOCUS OF THIS VERSE! IN SO DOING IT COULD CHANGE THE MEANING OF PAUL'S STATEMENT!

To use our earlier analogy: Jerome's change opened the door to changing the statement "all red books are on the table" into the statement "all books ARE RED AND they are on the table". It is not the meanings of any specific words that have changed; it is the type of words (i.e. a verb) Jerome used that opened the door to later produce incorrect translations. And by providing two distinct Latin words as the translation of the one Greek word "theopneustos", it opened the door to focus on each of these two Latin words individually, to the exclusion of the other word. And THAT is the problem to which this Latin translation opened the door. Neither of these two Latin words in this text should ever be examined alone, because each one of them only represents half a word in the Greek text.

So it is not the actual meanings of the Latin words "divinitus" and "inspirata" that are the issue. The problem is that Jerome provided a verb where there should not be a verb, and that he provided two distinct words when he really should only have provided one word; and these things had the effect of potentially changing the focus of the whole statement. An example of this, which we have already looked at earlier, is the punctuation Erasmus provided for the first edition of his Latin text. Providing two words for one introduced the opportunity for someone (in this case Erasmus) to try to separate those two words and thereby change the meaning.

However, there is also one positive thing we should note about Jerome's Latin translation:

Even though Jerome translated a Greek adjective with a Latin verb and an adverb, Jerome nevertheless **RETAINED THE ATTRIBUTIVE CHARACTER OF THE ADJECTIVE!** His expression "inspired of God" was still an attributive to "scripture"; Jerome did NOT introduce a predicate statement. That is why

Wycliffe and also Douay-Rheims present attributive statements in their translations. "Divinitus inspirata" is still an attributive expression.

It was Beza's homemade Latin text ("tota scriptura divinitus EST inspirata" = "the whole scripture IS divinely inspired") that incorrectly translated "theopneustos" as a predicate statement.

Now the fact that Jerome's Latin Vulgate had treated "theopneustos" as an attributive (even though it introduced a verb into the translation), means that the conjunction "and" could not possibly have been a part of the original Latin Vulgate text. Can we grasp this? Without a predicate statement in this verse the conjunction "and" is completely out of place! That is why Wycliffe and Douay-Rheims (translated from the Latin) omit the conjunction "and"; the text from which they translated could not possibly have included the conjunction "and". "And" is simply not compatible with an attributive statement.

So the original Latin Vulgate got something a little bit wrong, but it also got something right (making an attributive statement).

[COMMENT: I say "a little bit wrong" because any reader who approaches the Vulgate text of Wycliffe and of the Douay-Rheims and of Gutenberg without a bias (and without the conjunction "and" in the text) will still understand this text to be an attributive statement, and that means he will understand the intended meaning basically correctly, even though there is a verb and an adverb in the first part of this sentence. See also the summary of Latin texts below.]

A SUMMARY OF THE LATIN TEXTS OF THIS VERSE

With all these Latin texts it is easy to get confused. So let's summarize what happened with these various Latin texts. We only need the first 7 words of each text to see the picture emerge (I've corrected the spelling in some cases).

Note: "est" = the verb "is". The symbol "&" = same as "et", meaning "and". I've used "&" for consistency in all 7 examples below, though today's text uses "et" rather than "&".

- 1) Gutenberg Vulgate of 1450: omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata utilis est ad ...
- 2) Complutensian text of 1517: omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata utilis est ad ...
- 3) Beza's Vulgate text of 1556: omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata utilis est ad ...
- 4) Erasmus Latin text of 1516: omnis scriptura divinitus, inspirata & utilis ad ...
- 5) Erasmus Latin text of 1522: omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata, & utilis ad ...
- 6) Beza's own Latin text of 1556: tota scriptura divinitus est inspirata, & utilis ad ...
- 7) Today's accepted Vulgate text : omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata & utilis ad ...

Thus:

The first 3 texts read: "every scripture divinely inspired useful is for ...

Erasmus 1516 reads: "every scripture divine, inspired and useful for ...

Erasmus 1522 reads: "every scripture divinely inspired, and useful for ...

(Erasmus' differences are achieved by the location of the comma in his text.)

Beza's own Latin text reads: "the whole scripture is divinely inspired, and useful for ...

Today's Vulgate reads: "every scripture divinely inspired and useful for ...

(This is the same as the 1522 text of Erasmus.)

The reading of the first 3 texts is also the basis for, or in agreement with: the 1380 Wycliffe translation, the 1582 Douay translation, Luther's 1522 translation, and Tyndale's 1526 translation.

What emerges quite clearly from the above comparison is:

1) ERASMUS clearly departed from the Latin text that was accepted before his time, at his time, and even after his time. Erasmus exchanged the word "est" (meaning "is") for the word "et" (meaning "and"), and then also switched the position of this changed word. He provided punctuation to reinforce his changes. His changes resulted in a drastically changed meaning for this verse.

2) BEZA accepted Erasmus' introduction of the word "et" ("and") in the same position where Erasmus had placed "et". But then Beza ALSO brought back the original word "est", but moved it forward in the text to where it would provide the meaning he wanted this verse to have. In an attempt to totally eliminate any possibility of an attributive statement, Beza also replaced "omnis" with "tota".

3) TODAY'S TEXT, both Latin and Greek, has fully embraced the change that Erasmus introduced. The Latin and Greek texts current today no longer reflect the meaning this verse had before the time of Erasmus.

So today we really have the text, in both Greek and Latin, that Erasmus and Beza wanted us to have (though not going quite as far as Beza wanted to go). Their change has infiltrated almost every text and translation that is available. The text that existed before Erasmus and Beza made their changes is still "out there", but it is hard to find. We've looked at a few examples of that text in this article.

Now here is something that I find strange.

Here we have the documentary evidence that Erasmus and Beza perverted the translation of this verse, in order to further a personal agenda. We can acknowledge: yes, Erasmus and Beza really didn't handle this sentence from the Greek text honestly. So we reject the changes they introduced into the text. YET IN SPITE OF THIS most of us will continue to believe EXACTLY, and I really mean exactly, WHAT ERASMUS AND BEZA WANTED US TO BELIEVE. In essence most of us will continue to believe that THE WHOLE BIBLE was divinely inspired. We will continue to believe in this premise even though we can see that the only supposed support for this claim was a fraudulently composed translation!

And some of us will even try to rush out there and find SOME scriptural statement SOMEWHERE, ANYWHERE, to allow us to continue to hold this belief. It's like saying: yes, you may have demolished the support for this belief we had always accepted, but we have OTHER SCRIPTURES which allow us to continue to believe that THE WHOLE BIBLE was inspired by God.

Beza may not have succeeded in getting his perverted Latin translation accepted. But he has certainly succeeded in getting vast numbers of people to fully embrace the real concept he wanted to establish, even if they don't accept his translation.

That's something I find very strange.

Anyway, one major consequence that Jerome could not have foreseen was that, in placing A VERB into the first part of this sentence in his Latin text, Jerome had also opened the door to later SPLIT THE SENTENCE INTO TWO VERSES! Now each verse could justifiably claim its own verb. Beza and the translators that followed him were far more familiar with the Latin Vulgate text than they were with the Greek text. However well they knew the Greek text, they knew the Latin text even better.

Specifically, even though William Tyndale translated from the Greek text, his rendering of "theopneustos" as "given by inspiration of God" was based totally on his understanding of Jerome's LATIN phrase "divinitus inspirata". The proof for this is that Tyndale provided the verb "given" because the Latin text also contained a verb. Tyndale did not provide the verb "given" because of any word in the Greek text. In fact, Tyndale did NOT translate the Greek adjective "theopneustos" into English at all! No, instead he translated the Latin expression "divinitus inspirata" into English, retaining the attributive quality of this Latin expression, because Tyndale could see that the Greek "theopneustos" is also an attributive.

Even though he provided the verb "given", Tyndale undoubtedly believed that he was translating this Greek text correctly. If Tyndale had been deliberately trying to mislead his readers, then he would surely have added the word "is" to his text, making this a predicate statement, as did the Geneva translators a few decades later.

Anyway, the original Latin Vulgate text gave Paul's statement a slightly changed focus. It was not yet wrong. But that "slightly changed focus" created the possibility, by means of employing some very minor "tweaking", to achieve an enormous change in focus. Desiderius Erasmus and Theodore Beza were the men who took care of "tweaking" both, the Greek text and the Latin text of 2 Timothy 3:16, to achieve the result they desired. Whittingham did his share of "tweaking" in the Geneva New Testament he produced, and Luther had earlier "tweaked" Romans 3:28. And still earlier Cardinal Cisneros had "tweaked" 1 John 5:7-8, demonstrating that the Catholics could "tweak" the scriptures just as well as the Protestants.

[COMMENT: There are also some other Latin versions. In 1590 Pope Sixtus V had published a Revised Latin Vulgate Bible, which after his sudden death the College of Cardinals promptly destroyed. However, two years later, in 1592, Pope Clement VIII published the First Clementine Vulgate, which became the official version of the Catholic Church from 1592-1979. In 1979 Vatican Council II brought out the Nova Vulgata, and this has been the official version of the Catholic Church since that time. These specific translations have nothing to add to this discussion. So I am leaving them out.]

The Bible simply does not say that "ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God". We may WANT to believe that ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and Theodore Beza certainly wanted to teach this, but that claim is simply not supported by the Bible itself.

Now does a correct understanding of 2 Timothy 3:16 mean that there actually are "SCRIPTURES", i.e. places in the Bible, which are NOT "GOD-INSPIRED"?

YES, THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THIS MEANS!

I realize that for many of us this statement flies in the face of one of our most basic foundational premises about the Bible. But no matter how basic any of our convictions may seem to be, they must always be in agreement with an examination of the facts.

So let's examine God's instructions to us more closely.

WHAT MAN IS TO LIVE BY

First of all, let's understand exactly what the Apostle Paul was referring to when he used the expression

"all GOD-BREATHED writing". Paul did not use this adjective "God-breathed" to refer to every word recorded in the OT, but to refer to THE THINGS GOD HIMSELF HAS SPOKEN.

Paul was referring back to the instruction Moses had given Israel, and which Jesus Christ Himself later repeated. Notice what Moses had written:

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE LORD DOTHTH MAN LIVE.
(Deuteronomy 8:3 AV)

Any words that proceed "out of the mouth of God" are also "God-breathed". Those are simply two different ways of saying the same thing. Jesus Christ quoted this passage to Satan in the New Testament.

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 4:4 AV)

These are the statements Paul had in mind when he wrote 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Instead of using the adjective "theopneustos" Paul could equally well have expressed the same thought as follows:

"Every writing that HAS PROCEEDED OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD is profitable for".

So here is the point:

In Deuteronomy 8:3 Moses was NOT speaking about EVERY WRITING, or even every part of the Bible. Moses was only addressing EVERY WRITING THAT WAS SPOKEN BY GOD HIMSELF.

In Matthew 4:4 Jesus Christ was likewise NOT speaking about EVERY WRITING, or even every part of the Bible. Jesus Christ was only addressing EVERY WRITING THAT WAS SPOKEN BY GOD HIMSELF.

And in 2 Timothy 3:16 Paul also was NOT speaking about EVERY WRITING, or even every part of the Bible. Paul was only addressing EVERY WRITING THAT WAS SPOKEN BY GOD HIMSELF.

Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4 and 2 Timothy 3:16 all speak about the exact same parts of the Bible. It was the Protestant reformers in Geneva who changed the focus of 2 Timothy 3:16, to make this apply to EVERY VERSE in the Bible. And we in God's Church have always simply accepted this Protestant perspective.

Even though we may intellectually concede that we are dealing with a mistranslation in 2 Timothy 3:16, we are likely to continue to still hold fast to that position. But in so doing we are actually diminishing the importance and the value of "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God". We diminish the value of words that God Himself has spoken by elevating words spoken by other individuals to that same level.

To be quite plain:

THE MISTRANSLATION IN 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 DIMINISHES THE VALUE OF MATTHEW 4:4!

QUESTION:

So what Scriptures (texts of the Bible) are not "God-inspired", or not "God-breathed" or not "spoken by God"?

ANSWER:

All the Scriptures that record the words of human beings or even spirit beings, when they were not speaking under direct inspiration from God.

And we are to live by "every word that GOD has spoken". But that is NOT the same as saying that we are to live by "EVERY WORD IN THE BIBLE"! There are most assuredly "words in the Bible" by which God does NOT want us to live! And those "words whereby we are not to live" are mostly words that express the speech, thoughts or actions of individuals who lived contrary to God's instructions.

And there are numerous examples of those in the Bible.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE BIBLE

In the past we have frequently made statements like this: "About one third of the Bible is prophecy; another third is history; and the remaining third consists of God's commandments and God's moral instructions for mankind."

Now the exact proportions are totally immaterial. It really doesn't matter whether 33% of the Bible is prophecy, or whether only 20% or even only 10% is prophecy. It really doesn't matter whether history makes up 33% of the Bible, or whether it makes up 20% or 50% of the Bible. Exactly what percentage of the whole Bible consists of God's commandments and instructions for mankind is also immaterial.

What is important to understand is that the Bible very clearly contains DIFFERENT CATEGORIES of information for us. The different categories of information are important for us to be aware of; but the percentages of the total Bible content each of those categories may comprise are immaterial. Forget percentages and focus on categories.

It is quite clear that the Bible does contain PROPHECIES. It is equally clear that the Bible also contains GOD'S COMMANDMENTS and additional instructions for mankind, to guide us in the way we should live our lives. And it is also clear that large sections of the Bible present HISTORICAL RECORDS of things that have occurred in the past. It is equally clear that the Bible also presents the words and deeds of many individuals who LIVED IN OPPOSITION TO GOD'S LAWS.

Now while all of these things together make up the whole Bible, these different categories do NOT all carry the same degree of importance! It is the words that God Himself has spoken (in both the Old and the New Testament) which carry the greatest importance. All other words are on a lower level of importance before God!

So what parts of the Bible are "the words that God Himself has spoken"?

They are:

1) ALL of God's commandments and all other laws of God.

[Comment: God also says in Ezekiel 20:25 that He gave Israel SOME statutes and judgments whereby they really should NOT have lived.]

- 2) ALL the prophecies that God has given through His servants in both, the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- 3) All 413 sections of the Old Testament that are introduced in the KJV by the words "thus saith the LORD".
- 4) All of the more than 1300 additional places in the Old Testament that show God speaking, but without using the exact phrase "thus saith the LORD".
- 5) Very many of the statements in the Book of Psalms are in fact records of what God Himself has said.
- 6) ALL of Jesus Christ's words, quoted in the four Gospels, as well as in other New Testament books (e.g. in Revelation).

Basically, the two broad categories of the Law and the Prophets to a large degree represent the words of God Himself.

Now what parts of the Bible are NOT "words that God has spoken", are NOT "words that have proceeded out of the mouth of God", and therefore are not necessarily "words whereby man is to live", though in many, if not most, cases these may also be very helpful examples and guidelines for living a godly life?

They include:

- 1) The words of Satan and of any other demons recorded in the Bible.
- 2) All the words of human beings, including especially the words that were spoken, and the deeds that were done, by people who disobeyed God.
- 3) Historical records, unless they were divinely revealed to the writer by God Himself (as was the case with God giving Moses the historical information recorded in Genesis, etc.).
- 4) Descriptions of events, unless it is made clear that God Himself provided those descriptions.

Basically, a large part of what we might term "biblical history" and a large part of the third section of the OT ("the Writings") consists of "words that were NOT spoken by God", words that have NOT come out of the mouth of God.

So we need to recognize that the Bible contains BOTH, words that have come out of the mouth of God, and also words that have come out of the mouths and hearts of human beings and in a few cases even of Satan. And these two categories are not on the same level.

God has gone to EXTREMELY GREAT LENGTHS to make very clear as to exactly "which words" have come "out of His mouth". That is why the Old Testament (in the KJV) introduces 413 sections with the phrase "THUS SAITH THE LORD". And that is why over 1300 additional places in the Old Testament record God as speaking. And that is why the Gospel accounts are so specific in attributing specific statements to Jesus Christ. And that is why the Book of Revelation makes very clear that Jesus Christ is the One who spoke to John. And that is why the Apostle Paul makes quite clear when he is quoting Jesus Christ.

GOD DOES NOT WANT US TO ASSUME THAT EVERY WORD IN THE BIBLE REPRESENTS THE THOUGHTS OF GOD HIMSELF, BECAUSE THAT IS SIMPLY NOT THE CASE!

God has made very clear exactly when something was said by God Himself. And it is the things that GOD has said that are "inspired". And when something has indeed been inspired by God, then the authors of the various books of the Bible were always very conscientious in crediting such inspiration to God.

Let's now look at some clear examples of statements in the Bible, which we obviously should not accept as correct, because the context shows those statements to be wrong.

SOME EXAMPLES OF "SCRIPTURES WHEREBY WE SHOULD NOT LIVE"

1) Genesis 3:4 : We are not to believe the biblical statement "YOU SHALL NOT SURELY DIE". Satan is the one who spoke those words, and they are a lie. This statement "you shall not surely die" most certainly does not reflect God's mind or God's thinking, even though God chose to include this statement in the Bible. These words by Satan are in fact at the heart of the false "immortal soul belief".

2) Judges 11:30-31 : We are not to follow the example of Jephthah who made a foolish vow to God. This is included in God's Word to show us what we are NOT to do. Jephthah's vow does not represent God's thinking, and God is certainly not the One who "inspired" Jephthah to make this foolish vow.

3) Genesis 27:19 : When Jacob lied to his father Isaac, this was certainly not "inspired" by God. This verse does not represent any "inspiration" from God. God did not approve of Jacob lying to his father.

4) Ecclesiastes 6:3 : There is nothing whatsoever "inspired" about Solomon's assertion here that an aborted fetus is somehow "BETTER" than someone, who, after he has lived a long life and then died, has not received a proper burial. In fact, the opposite is true before God. Hebrews 11:37 shows that some of God's servants were "destitute, afflicted and tormented" and "slain with the sword"; their form of burial is insignificant when compared to how they lived their lives before God. Our future potential destiny in the presence of God has nothing whatsoever to do with whether or not we receive a proper burial after death. God allowed this statement in Ecclesiastes 6:3 to be a part of the Bible, even though it contradicts God's views.

5) Ecclesiastes 8:15 : It is NOT THE MIND OF GOD that tells us here that "a man has no better thing under the sun than to eat and to drink and to be merry". This statement is in fact the opposite of Jesus Christ's instruction (now we are talking about GOD-BREATHED words!) in Matthew 16:24 that we are to "DENY OURSELVES"! God does not contradict Himself. So since the words in Matthew 16:24 were spoken by God (i.e. by Jesus Christ), therefore Ecclesiastes 8:15 could not possibly also have been "INSPIRED" by God. And without contradiction God expects us to live by Matthew 16:24 and NOT BY ECCLESIASTES 8:15!

6) Ezekiel 20:25 : God Himself here tells us that He gave Israel some statutes "that were NOT GOOD and some judgments whereby they should NOT LIVE". This is not speaking about the sacrificial and ceremonial laws, but laws that influence HOW PEOPLE LIVE. And so there are even some laws in the Old Testament, given by God through Moses, which God did not really want Israel to apply in their lives. Since God does not here in Ezekiel chapter 20 spell out exactly to which laws He is referring, it is clear that God expects us to use our minds to establish about which laws God is speaking. It should not be too difficult to figure out that the laws that regulated polygamy, divorce, slavery and military service are certainly included in the group referred to in Ezekiel 20:25. These laws actually go against God's most basic intentions for mankind. The laws that regulated divorce and polygamy and slavery and military service are NOT at all an expression of what God desires for mankind; they are nothing more than a punitive response from God to man's hard-hearted rebellion against the ways of God.

7) Revelation 19:10 : It was not "God's inspiration" that caused the Apostle John to fall down at the feet

of an angel with the intention of worshipping him. This was simply John's own response to the powerful visions he had been given. The angel corrected John, and we certainly should never attempt to copy John's example of falling down before an angel, even though the Bible shows that John had done this. John simply faithfully recorded what he had done, even though what he had done was contrary to God's intentions.

Now let's examine another Scripture.

JOHN 10:34 - 35 EXAMINED

Here are two more verses that we should also consider.

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, AND THE SCRIPTURE (Greek "graphe") CANNOT BE BROKEN; (John 10:34-35)

Here we have an example of God, in the person of Jesus Christ, speaking about a statement in the Old Testament, and stating that THIS SCRIPTURE cannot be broken.

What does this statement mean? Did Jesus Christ here give carte blanche approval for EVERY VERSE IN THE BIBLE being correct and an expression of the will and the mind of God? Many people have drawn unjustified conclusions from this statement by Jesus Christ, conclusions that Jesus Christ Himself never intended to be drawn.

Was Jesus Christ speaking about every single verse in the Old Testament?

NO, HE WAS NOT SPEAKING ABOUT EVERY VERSE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT!

Consider the following points:

1) Here Jesus Christ used the singular for "scripture". When Jesus Christ meant THE WHOLE BIBLE (or the whole Old Testament), THEN He used THE PLURAL "THE SCRIPTURES". For example, in Matthew 21:42 we read:

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in THE SCRIPTURES, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

2) When Jesus Christ used THE SINGULAR expression "THE SCRIPTURE", THEN He was referring to ONE SPECIFIC PASSAGE. And that is precisely what we have here in John 10:35. Jesus Christ was here referring to ONE SPECIFIC STATEMENT in the Old Testament, which had been SPOKEN BY GOD!

3) Jesus Christ was quoting Psalm 82:6, which reads:

I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the most High. (Psalm 82:6 AV)

The expression "I HAVE SAID" is not a reference to something David had said, but to something GOD HAD SAID! It is just like Psalm 110:1, where David also quoted the words of God the Father Himself.

So the three little words "I HAVE SAID" at the start of Psalm 82:6 make clear that the following statement is in fact "God-breathed". And it is that following statement that Jesus Christ singled out in John 10:35 as something that "CANNOT BE BROKEN", by using the singular "the Scripture".

4) But by no means did Jesus Christ in John 10:35 show unconditional approval for ALL Scriptures in the Old Testament as being "above being broken".

Notice what God tells us in Ezekiel chapter 33.

WHEN I SHALL SAY to the righteous, *that* HE SHALL SURELY LIVE; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, HE SHALL DIE for it. AGAIN, WHEN I SAY unto the wicked, THOU SHALT SURELY DIE; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; *If* the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; HE SHALL SURELY LIVE, he shall not die. (Ezekiel 33:13-15 AV)

So right here God is telling us that He Himself makes certain statements to people, but that THOSE STATEMENTS WILL BE BROKEN IF PEOPLE CHANGE! These verses show something that also becomes very apparent in many other places of the Bible, that MANY STATEMENTS in the Bible are in fact CONDITIONAL ON HUMAN CONDUCT!

True repentance by a sinner will "break" the penalty that God had pronounced against the sinner. And willful sinning by a man who had previously lived in obedience to God's laws will "break" God's promise of future immortality in God's kingdom for the man who had previously lived a righteous life. Most of God's dealings with us are CONDITIONAL on how we respond to God.

5) Another example is in 1 Kings chapter 2. In verse 20 Solomon very clearly told his mother 'I WILL NOT SAY THEE NAY'. But not only did Solomon say his mother "nay"; he went one further and had Adonijah put to death (verse 24). So the Scripture in 1 Kings 2:20 is "broken" a mere four verses later.

Don't misunderstand.

It is not at all a matter of wanting to relegate certain parts of the Bible to a lower status. Not at all! Rather, we need to recognize that LARGE PARTS of the Bible were spoken by God Himself. And those are the parts by which we are instructed to live our lives.

But there are also large sections in the Bible which did NOT proceed "out of the mouth of God". Those sections provide us with VERY HELPFUL INFORMATION; they describe events and circumstances; they give us historical and genealogical information; they show us how and where many individuals either obeyed God or else sinned; they in some cases even present us with man's ideas of what is right and how we should live. But God never intended for us to put THESE SECTIONS on the same level as the words God Himself spoke. AND THESE SECTIONS ARE NOT NECESSARILY "INFALLIBLE"!

Never ever did God want us to base any belief on the biblical statement "YOU SHALL NOT SURELY DIE"! Never ever did God want us to base our lives on the biblical statement "eat, drink, and be merry". God certainly does not want us to accept the premise of the (paraphrased) biblical statement that "an aborted fetus is better than someone who has lived a long life but then did not get a proper burial".

In John 10:35 Jesus Christ was speaking about one specific statement that God had spoken; He was not referring to every single verse in the Bible.

So now let's examine what Paul was really telling Timothy in these verses.

2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17 EXPLAINED

Verse 14 reads as follows:

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; (2 Timothy 3:14)

Paul himself had instructed Timothy in the Old Testament scriptures. Here Paul is telling Timothy to continue in the way of life which Timothy had learned in that process, and to hold fast to the whole Old Testament. (The principle in this statement would today certainly include the whole New Testament as well.)

Then Paul said:

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. (2 Timothy 3:15)

By "the Holy Scriptures" Paul very clearly meant THE WHOLE OLD TESTAMENT! In our context today this, without question, means THE WHOLE BIBLE! Notice what Paul is actually saying here. Keep in mind that the things Paul here says for the whole Old Testament apply in our context today to the New Testament as well, to the whole Bible.

In this verse Paul says that Timothy, through his Jewish mother, had been exposed to the teachings of the whole Old Testament in his youth. Timothy was like someone today who has grown up in the Church of God. Now look at the purpose for which Timothy was to use the whole Old Testament. Notice:

Paul told Timothy that the whole Old Testament (in our context today read "the whole Bible") reveals God's plan of salvation. So by studying the whole Bible we can become wise and we can come to understand God's plan for mankind. As far as learning wisdom and getting understanding is concerned, the whole Bible is vital in that process. And so the whole Bible is rightly called "the Holy Scriptures". "The HOLY writings" are writings that are SEPARATED from all other writings, conforming to the modern meaning of the word "scriptures".

It is important to understand what Paul has actually told Timothy in verse 15, because Paul's next statement is going to BUILD ON WHAT HE HAS ALREADY SAID! The Apostle Paul is here developing a line of reasoning.

Note!

In verses 16 -17 Paul does NOT REPEAT what he has already said in very 15! No, Paul builds on what he has already told Timothy. In verse 15 Paul addressed ALL "the Holy Scriptures". And in his next statement Paul ZOOMS IN ON VERY SPECIFIC PARTS OF THE WHOLE BIBLE. This is something the Protestants (and also the Catholics, for that matter) have never understood.

Can we understand this?

The WHOLE Bible is holy, and reveals God's plan of salvation, and is indispensable to us receiving real wisdom and true understanding of God's plan and purposes. And so it is certainly appropriate for us to

quote from the whole Bible in our sermons and Bible Studies.

But within that context of the whole Bible it is THE GOD-BREATHED WRITINGS that are very specifically provided by God for establishing right doctrines (i.e. right teachings), and for reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness.

It was GOD who decided to produce the Bible as a collaborative effort between God and man, with men at times recording many direct statements from God and writing under divine inspiration, and with men at other times presenting information from their own perspectives. It was THE PROTESTANT REFORMERS who decided to elevate everything in the Bible to the level of divine inspiration. This shows that they clearly did not grasp that not everything in the Bible was recorded for the same purposes.

Verses 16-17 should correctly read as follows:

Every God-breathed writing (i.e. specific parts of the whole Bible) is profitable for (establishing) doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness so that the man of God may become mature (perfect) and fully equipped to produce all good works (in his life).

Isn't it obvious that we are not to establish doctrines by looking at the Books of Job or Ecclesiastes or Psalms or Proverbs or the Song of Solomon or the Books of Kings and Chronicles? All of these books are certainly a part of "the Holy Scriptures" of verse 15, and they serve important purposes. But they were NOT included in the Bible by God for us to search for the purpose of establishing doctrines. These books can SUPPORT doctrines and present guidance in how to live a righteous life, but these books were NOT given to ESTABLISH doctrines, etc.

The whole Bible is helpful for giving us understanding; but when it comes to seeking to understand the right doctrines, when it comes to seeking reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, THEN we should really (according to Paul here in verses 16-17) focus on all those scriptures that "have proceeded out of the mouth of God", all the scriptures that are "God-breathed". This includes all direct "do" and "don't" statements, as well as all statements of principles.

Paul was not putting down any part of the Old Testament. He was simply showing THE HIGHER PURPOSES for very specific parts of the Bible, those parts that God Himself spoke for our benefit.

Consider what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:13.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity. (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Was Paul here "putting down" faith and hope because he didn't consider them to be as important as love? Not at all! He was simply ELEVATING love (charity) above the others. Likewise here in 2 Timothy 3:15-17: Paul was not in any way putting down the rest of the Old Testament; he was simply ELEVATING THE WORDS THAT GOD HIMSELF HAS SPOKEN TO THEIR RIGHTFUL LEVEL!

Let me give you some biblical analogies in this regard.

Solomon built the Temple for God. Now the whole Temple was "holy". But there was an inner area that was known as "the Holy of Holies". So was every part of the Temple as important as every other part of the Temple? NO, IT WAS NOT! Without contradiction the Holy of Holies was more important than the

rest of the Temple. And this in no way questions that the rest of the Temple was also holy. But the Holy of Holies had a higher status that was never applied to the rest of the Temple.

God created a large number of spirit beings, to whom we refer collectively as "angels". But within that group some spirit beings are designated as "cherubim" (Genesis 3:24, etc.), and some others are designated as "seraphim" (Isaiah 6:2,6). So are all spirit beings equal? No, they are not, because they are not all also "cherubim" and "seraphim".

Jesus Christ selected 12 apostles. But when the time came to give them a vision of the yet future Kingdom of God (i.e. the vision of the transfiguration), did Christ give this experience to all 12 of them? No, He did not. He specifically selected only three men (Peter, James and John) to experience this vision. This experience clearly conferred additional responsibilities on these three men, which were not conferred on the other nine men, who had not been given this experience.

The whole Old Testament has always been divided into three parts: the Law, the Prophets and the Writings. Are these three parts of equal value and importance before God? No, they are not. THE LAW is without question the most important part of the whole Old Testament. And even as with the Temple, this in no way questions the importance of the rest of the Old Testament. Just like the Holy of Holies was the most important part of the Temple, even so the Law is the most important part of the Old Testament.

Regarding the above examples: it is not a matter of questioning the importance of "the rest of the Temple", or "the rest of the spirit beings", or "the rest of the apostles", or "the rest of the Bible". It is simply a matter of recognizing that "a certain part of the Temple" served a higher purpose, and that "a certain part of the created spirit beings" were given higher responsibilities, and that "a certain part of the twelve apostles" were likewise given higher responsibilities, and that "certain parts of the Bible" were given for very specific purposes.

We see this pattern continuing even into the future. There will be a distinction between those who enter God's Family at the time of the first resurrection, and those who will come from the millennium and from the second resurrection. When the Family of God is finally complete, every member of the Family will then be "holy", but that does not mean that all will be equal. Those who will be in the first resurrection will clearly have positions that will not be available to those who come from a later resurrection.

Within the things God does and plans it is quite common for some things to be more important than other things; that is what the above examples illustrate. So WHY should it be strange that God all along intended for some parts of the Holy Scriptures to be more important than other parts of those Holy Scriptures?

Surely we can see that the words which God Himself took the trouble to speak for our benefit (e.g. the ten commandments, etc.) are on a higher level than some statement in the Book of Kings about the age of a certain king at a certain point in time? Can we not see that a statement God Himself has made must be accorded a greater value than some statement king Solomon may have made in the Book of Ecclesiastes or in Proverbs?

In verse 15 Paul addressed the whole Bible (applied to our context today), and in the next verse Paul ELEVATED all the "God-breathed statements" within the Bible to a higher level, because those parts were spoken by God for more important purposes than just presenting general information. In analogy, where the whole Bible is like the Temple, the "God-breathed statements" within the Bible are like the Holy of Holies within the Temple.

This is something none of the Protestant leaders ever understood.

Paul, who could recite most, if not even all, of the Old Testament from memory was fully aware of the fact that certain parts of the Old Testament recorded the actual words of the Almighty Creator God Himself. And Paul understood that all those God-breathed statements were the most important parts of the whole Bible, spoken for very specific purposes, which purposes Paul here spelled out in verse 16.

There is no statement anywhere to the effect that "the whole Bible is infallibly correct". That is a flawed teaching that came out of the Protestant Reformation, and the reformers used their mistranslation of 2 Timothy 3:16 to promote that flawed teaching. They did this by deviously twisting and slanting the text of the original Greek sentence in this verse.

We need to understand that the Protestant reformers established this teaching (that every verse in the Bible is given by inspiration of God) in order to justify their use of ANY VERSE ANYWHERE IN THE BIBLE to establish the teachings they wanted to establish. This gave them far more scope to justify whatever teachings they wanted to establish; they just had to find a verse somewhere to somehow tie into the teaching they wanted to promote!

That's not the way we are to preach!

We need to understand that God expects us to use THE GOD-BREATHED STATEMENTS IN THE BIBLE to establish doctrines, and for correction and reproof and instruction in righteousness. Whatever has first been ESTABLISHED by appeals to God-breathed statements can THEN BE SUPPORTED by statements and examples from all the other parts of the Bible. But we need to keep our priorities sorted out correctly. Every doctrine must have a God-breathed statement at its foundation.

The process Paul outlined here to Timothy in verses 14-17 is something we should keep in mind when we consider the abundance of false doctrines that float around in the Christian churches of this world. Can we grasp how many false doctrines just disappear into thin smoke if they are required to produce a "God-breathed statement" (be it a law or be it a principle) for their foundation, not just some verse from anywhere in the Bible? Paul was here giving a younger minister some guidance regarding how to tell true doctrines from false doctrines. Every minister needs to understand (as Paul was here explaining to Timothy) that, when it comes to establishing doctrines, there are indeed some sections in the Bible that are far more important than other sections.

What is "infallible" as far as the Bible is concerned are the things that God Himself has said! Everything else is simply not on the same level of being infallibly correct. People who try to find faults with the Bible, people who try to find contradictions in the Bible always make the "everything else" the focus of their attention. Such attacks on the validity of the Bible have no merit; they are meaningless, and God's people should never be intimidated by such silly criticisms. It is the words which God Himself spoke (obviously including Jesus Christ in the NT) that are the infallible anchors for converted Christians to rely on.

It is important that we understand correctly what Paul was actually telling Timothy in these verses, without being taken in by the grand sweeping claims that were made by the Protestant reformers.

Now let's examine another passage.

MATTHEW 5:17-18

Here are these verses in the KJV.

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 5:17-18 AV)

First of all, notice that here Jesus Christ addressed only two of the three major parts of the Old Testament: THE LAW and THE PROPHETS. Notice that Christ did NOT at all address the third major part of the Old Testament, THE WRITINGS (or THE PSALMS). Why not?

THE LAW was given by God Himself. And the section known as THE PROPHETS was written by people who stated categorically "THUS SAYS THE LORD".

THE WRITINGS certainly also include many statements made by God, but they really express OVERWHELMINGLY THE IDEAS OF MEN.

For example:

The Book of Job contains 1070 verses. How many of those 1070 verses were "spoken by God"? How many of those 1070 verses are we supposed to "live by"? VERY FEW! The greater part of the Book of Job expresses nothing more than the thoughts and ideas of men.

The Song of Solomon does not even contain any word for "God". God is never even remotely mentioned in this book. This book is a discussion of the sexual relationship between a man and his wife, that's all. So how many of the 116 verses in this book represent instructions from God for us to "live by"? VERY FEW, IF ANY!

The Book of Proverbs contains 915 verses. It gives us "the proverbs of Solomon" (Proverbs 1:1), and "the words of Agur" (Proverbs 30:1), and "the words of king Lemuel" (Proverbs 31:1). But it doesn't necessarily give us "words that have proceeded out of the mouth of God". Mostly the proverbs are statements of wisdom based on expounding godly principles, which we would do well to incorporate into our own ways of living. But they are not words God Himself spoke to Solomon or to Agur or to Lemuel.

The Book of Psalms contains 150 psalms. In many of them David recorded, under inspiration, the words of God Himself, as evidenced by prophetic statements contained in many psalms. In other places David also records his own feelings towards his enemies, which enemies were at the same time also hostile to God and to God's ways. But some of those particular statements do not really reflect Jesus Christ's instruction to "LOVE OUR ENEMIES, TO BLESS THEM THAT CURSE US, AND TO PRAY FOR THOSE WHO DESPITEFULLY USE US" (see Matthew 5:44). This is not a matter of finding fault with David, because if I had the enemies David had, I would most likely also have the same sentiments David expressed for his enemies? But we should recognize that some of those statements in the Psalms don't really agree with Matthew 5:44. And therefore those statements did not proceed out of the mouth of God; they simply give us the words of David himself.

When we compare the books of Kings and of Chronicles, then we can find some minor discrepancies ascribed to the lives and the reigns of some kings. Now we can reason that originally those numbers must have agreed in Kings and in Chronicles, and that LATER some scribal errors crept into the one or the other account; OR we can accept the possibility that even the original scribe of either the Books of Kings or of the Books of Chronicles recorded an incorrect number for the reigns of certain kings. EITHER WAY THE END RESULT IS THE SAME: we today ONLY have access to accounts for those reigns that in some cases record slight differences for the ages and the reigns of some kings that are recorded in the other book. And so we have to use our minds to try to reconcile those minor discrepancies.

BUT THE POINT IS THIS!

The Books of Kings and of Chronicles don't really represent (except for occasional statements) words that were spoken by God Himself. They are mostly just historical records, recorded in sincerity and with the best of intentions by their respective writers. And yes, they may very well include some minor discrepancies. But those minor discrepancies have nothing whatsoever to do with "words we are to live by". Whether Ahaziah was 22 years old (2 Kings 8:26) when he began to reign, or whether he was already 42 years old at that point (2 Chronicles 22:2) does not in any way affect how God wants us to live; this is not a part of "words we are to live by". And neither 2 Kings 8:26 nor 2 Chronicles 22:2 is a record of words "that proceeded out of the mouth of God". The same applies to other examples in these books.

So now let's get back to Matthew 5:17.

Jesus Christ was God in the flesh. Jesus Christ never made any mistakes. And He always knew exactly what He was saying. Luke 24:44-45 shows quite clearly that Jesus Christ recognized the three major divisions of the Old Testament: THE LAW, THE PROPHETS, and THE PSALMS (or THE WRITINGS).

So in Matthew 5:17 Jesus Christ very deliberately OMITTED any reference to THE THIRD SECTION of the Old Testament. This was no accident. "The Writings" are simply not on the same level as "the Law and the Prophets". Right here in this context Jesus Christ Himself chose to ignore "the Writings".

But it still goes one step further.

There are THREE parts to the Old Testament. In verse 17 Jesus Christ addressed only TWO of those three parts. And in verse 18 He then addressed only ONE of those three parts.

After referring to the Law and the Prophets in verse 17, Jesus Christ then referred to ONLY THE LAW in verse 18. So the statement in verse 18 does NOT APPLY to the Prophets, and it certainly is not a reference to the Writings. Verse 18 is a reference specifically to THE LAW, and that means it is a reference to "WORDS THAT HAVE PROCEEDED OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD"!

The Apostle Paul understood that Jesus Christ's statement in Matthew 5:18 did not apply to the Prophets. That's why Paul was able to write: "whether there be prophecies they shall fail (i.e. become inactive)" (1 Corinthians 13:7). We have already looked at God's own statement regarding what will happen when the righteous man turns to sin and when the sinner repents, that promises previously made by God would be changed.

The point is that THE LAW is an expression of the mind of God. THE WHOLE OLD TESTAMENT, on the other hand, includes also the expressions of the minds of other individuals, both human beings and also spirit beings. It is the law of God and the words of God that stand above all else.

It is the mistranslation of 2 Timothy 3:16 which has created the unjustified bias in favor of assuming that ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God. This mistranslation was introduced into our English translations by Erasmus and by Protestant reformers like Theodore Beza and William Whittingham who had their own agenda. (This does not mean, and is not intended to mean, that they were necessarily insincere. Many, or even most, were most likely sincere in their beliefs, even when they wrote their own ideas into the text of the New Testament. But at the very least they were sincerely wrong. And many of the teachings they accepted and taught are clearly contrary to the correct teachings of the Bible.)

Without this particular mistranslation here in 2 Timothy 3:16 this whole question would not be an issue. It was the Protestant Reformation, starting with Desiderius Erasmus and then Theodore Beza and then the Geneva Bible translation, that elevated every other verse in the Bible to the same level as every "thus says the LORD" statement in the Bible.

THAT IS A BIG PROBLEM! It opened the door to the foolish argument: "IF I can find a clear contradiction between any two different biblical statements, THEN that (supposedly) proves that the Bible can't be the infallible Word of God."

NOWHERE DOES THE BIBLE BESTOW INFALLIBILITY ON EVERY STATEMENT WITHIN THE PAGES OF THE BIBLE! INFALLIBILITY OF THE WHOLE BIBLE IS A FOOLISH CLAIM THAT WAS PERPETRATED BY THE LEADERS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION!

And they used their mistranslation of 2 Timothy 3:16 to make that claim.

The truth is that it isn't really difficult (for anyone who wants to be picky) to find some biblical statements that don't really stack up with certain other statements. So what? Conflicts between statements involving chronologies and numeric values have nothing to do with "words that have come out of the mouth of God". The underlying principle, or the foundation, of the way of life that God expects us to live is consistent and has never changed. That was summarized by Jesus Christ as the two great commandments: to love God above all else, and to love our fellow human beings equal to self love (see Matthew 22:36-40). These two great laws are "God-breathed", as are very, very many other instructions in the Bible. But whether some technical detail recorded in one place is somewhat at odds with a slightly different description somewhere else has got nothing to do with establishing the words God wants us to live by.

I cannot over-emphasize the enormous consequence of the foolish Protestant Reformation claim that "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God". This claim has exposed the Bible to completely unnecessary criticism as to its value. People can see some minor contradictory statements, and we are then forced to engage in enormous convoluted reasoning to somehow, by whatever means possible, try to win the argument that there isn't really a contradiction. And where the issue involves genuinely contradictory statements (because many claims of contradictions are not contradictions at all; they are simply a lack of understanding on the part of the questioner) we are actually forced to deal dishonestly with the question, by refusing to acknowledge evidence we are not able to refute.

That is something politicians like to do (deal evasively with questions that expose their weaknesses and flaws), but for Christians the God-breathed principle of "but it shall not be so among you" (see Matthew 20:26) should really apply. We should always be willing to face up to the facts. And the facts are that it is impossible to claim divine inspiration and absolute infallibility for every single verse in the Bibles we have access to today, without running into serious problems. All the problems that could be raised in this regard involve verses that have nothing to do with divine inspiration, and therefore they become non-issues. So what if there are minor discrepancies between some statements?

Here is something else we might think about:

WHY is it that a considerable number of those people who SERIOUSLY study the original languages and then make translations or write commentaries, end up questioning the inspiration of the very things they have devoted their lives to studying (e.g. James Moffatt)? And, on the other hand, a large part of church-going people, who never get beyond a, by comparison, superficial study of the Bible, end up believing unwaveringly that every word in the Bible was inspired by God? Is that coincidence? Is it that faith is not something for intellectual people? What if those people who studied the original languages and made translations of the Bible or wrote in-depth commentaries, started out WANTING to believe that it is all the infallible Word of God, does that make a difference?

Consider this possibility:

What if someone decided to seriously study the Bible, in a professional way, because he accepted the premise that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God"? What if that person ASSUMED that there could never be any contradictions within the pages of the Bible, and he then set out to prove that there are no contradictions? So he argues against any and all challenges that are brought forward by any number of people, people who themselves clearly reject the inspiration of the Bible. And then in his own studies over a decade or two or three he comes across things that he simply cannot reconcile, things for which he has no REAL answers. What happens to such a person?

In some cases the person will accept "on faith" that there are just some things he doesn't understand, and he ignores the contradictions he can't solve, or he brushes them aside as "inconsequential" (which happens to be a correct assessment!). But in other cases it has also destroyed the faith of the serious student who started out so enthusiastically.

It is the serious student who sooner or later will come across details that make "a blind faith" impossible to maintain. There simply is no denying the fact that the texts of both, the Old Testament (e.g. Jewish scribes changing YHWY for Adonai, etc.) and the New Testament (e.g. 1 John 5:7-8, etc.) have been tampered with! How much tampering is really immaterial. The fact that there has been SOME tampering cannot be denied except by someone who will refuse to face the facts. So how do we handle that with our position of "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God"? Does God allow some of it to be tampered with and lost?

Consider the case of Joseph Henry Thayer, who lived from 1828 - 1901. He was a brilliant scholar of New Testament Greek and he was also fluent in Latin. His greatest work was the production of his "Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament". During the Civil War he had served as an army chaplain for the North. Yet in February 1891 this scholar published a lecture in which he expressed disagreement with the position of biblical infallibility. He stated that, even though he could see various errors in the Bible (historical details, etc.), this did not in any major way detract from his belief in the overall soundness of Christianity. (Paraphrased from comments in the Wikipedia article on Thayer.)

There are many other scholars who have very seriously and meticulously studied the Bible, and who sooner or later came across contradictory statements that cannot really be reconciled, statements that most superficial students of the Bible never have to grapple with. Some may deal with this situation like Thayer did, while others may turn away from religion.

The point is:

ALL THIS WOULD NEVER HAPPEN IF THE PROTESTANT REFORMERS HAD NOT SET THE BAR TOO HIGH!

If all along we had been able to accept the fact that the Bible CONTAINS the very words of Almighty God, words by which we are to live our lives. But at the same time the Bible ALSO CONTAINS descriptions, conversations, ideas and opinions of men, and historical records preserved by MEN. If we had never elevated this latter category to the level of the former, the serious Bible student would never get discouraged when he discovers some contradiction or other. The words of men are NEVER on the same level as the recorded words of God. That is not to say or even imply that the words of men may not be helpful and constructive in explaining God's way of life to us. But they certainly don't start out on the same level as words spoken by God. And any real contradictions within the Bible always, without fail, involve the words of some or other man, not the words of God.

Now let's examine some of the ramifications of understanding 2 Timothy 3:16 correctly.

APPLYING THIS CORRECT UNDERSTANDING

The Bible contains God's instruction manual to tell us how we should live our lives. It also reveals certain details about the future God has planned for us. Large parts of the Bible record the actual words God spoke. In the Old Testament God ensured that His words were recorded accurately. In the New Testament Jesus Christ gave the same assurance, that HIS WORDS would be recorded correctly.

Other parts of the Bible give us descriptions of events, provided by eyewitnesses or by other people in their own words, who in the integrity of their hearts recorded these things as faithfully and as accurately as they knew how. When other people later recorded the same events, also with the best intentions to present a faithful and an accurate record, they in some instances introduced, totally unintentionally, minor differences to what had been recorded earlier. Except for numeric discrepancies, the vast majority of these minor variations would go totally unnoticed, if it were not for our clinical, almost mathematical, scrutiny of these passages, with our desire to extract the maximum mileage out of each word in the text, usually with a desire to find support for some position or other that we have already accepted as true, and for which position we simply need some "scriptural support". (This process is obviously not right before God.)

In its most extreme form this involves using some statements by the Apostle Paul, or by any other writer, to somehow DIMINISH the obvious meaning of a statement made by JESUS CHRIST, or a statement made by GOD in the Old Testament. I've seen people use Paul to argue against what Jesus Christ said. And it all goes back to this wrong Protestant premise that "one verse in the Bible is just as good as another".

BUT THAT IS WRONG! ONE VERSE IN THE BIBLE SOMETIMES IS NOT EVEN REMOTELY AS GOOD AS ANOTHER VERSE!

The statement "you shall not surely die" is NOT EVEN REMOTELY as good as the statement "you shall surely die"! (See Genesis 2:17; 3:4)

And no statement that contradicts something that God the Father or Jesus Christ have said is ever remotely as good as what God has said. It is the words that have proceeded "out of the mouth of God" that must always, without exception, be given priority. Anything said by anyone else, or any description provided by any human being, must always take second place to the words of God Himself.

Sometimes people refer to certain statements in the Books of Chronicles which contradict certain other statements in the Books of Kings. And there are indeed such contradictory statements. But these contradictions are all, without exception, totally inconsequential as far as how God wants us to live is concerned. And none of them involve any "words that have proceeded out of the mouth of God".

Whether the accounts in Kings and in Chronicles originally agreed and were later unintentionally changed due to some scribal errors, OR whether the discrepancies were introduced by the original writers themselves is really immaterial. It seems extremely unlikely that these differences were deliberately introduced (unlike some others, like in Deuteronomy 16, etc.), as there was nothing at all to be gained from such changes; they serve no doctrinal purposes at all. These differences do exist in the only accounts we today have access to. But they do not represent the words God had spoken at some point. They (i.e. here in Kings and in Chronicles) represent nothing more than conflicting human observations which have been recorded in writing.

There is one major area in which a correct understanding of 2 Timothy 3:16 should help to clarify things. And that is in the matter of the four different gospel accounts.

THE FOUR GOSPEL ACCOUNTS

Many people have made unjustified assumptions about the gospel accounts. A key Scripture in many of those assumptions is John 14:26. Let's look at this verse.

But THE COMFORTER, *which is* the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE, WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU. (John 14:26)

Here Jesus Christ said that the Holy Spirit would bring "ALL THINGS" back to their remembrance. So therefore, some people reason, EVERY WORD IN THE GOSPELS IS WRITTEN EXACTLY AS GOD INSPIRED IT TO BE WRITTEN.

In the Greek text of this verse the word "all" is used twice. The last part of this verse should read:

"... and bring ALL to your remembrance, ALL I have said unto you." In the KJV the second "all" has been replaced by the word "whatsoever".

Now these are the words of Jesus Christ, and they CANNOT be broken. So let's see exactly what Jesus Christ was here asserting.

This is NOT a promise or a guarantee that the Holy Spirit would "GUIDE EVERY WORD THEY WOULD WRITE"! This is only a promise that whatever words of Jesus Christ those original apostles would quote, be it in sermons, be it in counseling, or be it in writing an account of Christ's ministry, THOSE QUOTATIONS WOULD BE ACCURATE!

Jesus Christ clearly qualified the "ALL" (or "all things") with the expression "ALL I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU". But "all that Jesus Christ had spoken to them" was only a small part of "all that they had experienced in their three-and-one-half years with Him". There was no promise that they would all use the exact same phraseology in describing any number of EVENTS that occurred during Christ's ministry. In describing events they were likely to use their own words, and they were also likely to describe events from their own particular perspectives. And God certainly gave them the freedom to do this.

The Apostle John was likely to describe an event that involved the Apostle Peter in slightly different terms than the way Peter himself would describe that particular event. In describing certain events they themselves had not witnessed (e.g. events involving certain women after Christ's resurrection) the writers of the gospels were also likely to use slightly different terminology from one another, based on which of the women they themselves had spoken to.

People can in the integrity of their hearts do their absolute best to present a faithful and an accurate account of what took place, and they may STILL end up with slight differences in their accounts, when compared to the accounts written by other people. That is the way things normally happen. If ten people spend one day together in the country and then write up their experiences, driving out in the morning, eating a picnic lunch, going on an afternoon walk, and then driving back into the city that evening, it is guaranteed that you will not have two accounts that will be worded identically, even though all ten of these people would have experienced the same things. Some people would mention some things that other people had not included in their accounts. Where they recorded the same events, people are likely to use verbs and nouns and adjectives that differ from the words other people use to describe those events. But such "differences" would not mean that one account is somehow "more correct" than another account. They are all just presented from different perspectives. And that is precisely what we find in the different gospel accounts.

It seems fairly clear that Mark's gospel was dictated to Mark by the Apostle Peter. And it was the first of the four gospels to be written. Matthew and Luke wrote their gospel accounts later, and it is clear that they used Mark's account as a framework, around which they built their particular accounts. John then wrote his gospel account many years later, and he saw no need to follow the outline that Peter had originally dictated to Mark. Rather, John felt the need to add information that had not been presented in the other three gospel accounts, with enough overlap to tie his account correctly into the overall flow of events.

Now consider the following facts:

Over 90% of the material presented in MARK'S gospel account is repeated in Matthew and in Luke.

But MATTHEW also includes 10 parables and 3 miracles that are not mentioned in any of the other three gospels. MATTHEW is the only one who recorded Christ's genealogy through Joseph, His stepfather.

And LUKE records 18 parables that are not mentioned in any of the other three gospels. LUKE also records Jesus Christ as praying 11 different times, where none of the other three gospels record more than 4 of those occasions when Jesus Christ prayed. Luke is the only one who recorded Christ's genealogy through Mary.

Finally JOHN records 6 miracles not recorded in any of the other three gospels. JOHN is also the only one who recorded the footwashing at the last Passover observance, and the lengthy discourse that evening. JOHN also states that there are still many other things which Christ did, and which are not recorded (John 21:25).

Now let's examine this from the perspective of those who claim that these writers only wrote EXACTLY what the Holy Spirit "inspired" them to write.

This approach would mean the following:

- 1) At first the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to dictate a very brief account of Christ's ministry to Mark. This resulted in the shortest of the four gospels.
- 2) Then the Holy Spirit decided that MORE INFORMATION would be helpful. And so the Holy Spirit inspired Matthew to record 10 more parables and 3 more miracles, that the Holy Spirit had earlier not felt the need to inspire Peter to include in his dictation.
- 3) But that still didn't include all the parables. So the Holy Spirit then inspired Luke, who had not come into the Church until years after Christ's crucifixion, to record another 18 parables that had not been recorded earlier. The Holy Spirit also decided to inspire Luke to include additional information about John the Baptist.
- 4) But so far the Holy Spirit had not felt the need to have anything recorded about the footwashing that had taken place at the last Passover. So about 60 years after Christ's ministry the Holy Spirit then decided to inspire John to record the facts about the footwashing, as well as 6 more miracles that the other accounts had still not recorded.

And in each case these four gospel writers are supposedly only writing down EXACTLY what the Holy Spirit was inspiring them to write. Does this really make sense?

I don't believe that it makes sense at all!

What the gospel accounts with all their differences tell me is that GOD GAVE EACH WRITER THE FULL FREEDOM TO RECORD ONLY THOSE THINGS HE, FROM HIS OWN PERSPECTIVE, CHOSE TO RECORD! IT IS IN QUOTING THE WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST THAT GOD GUARANTEED THAT THE EYEWITNESSES WOULD RECORD THESE WORDS CORRECTLY, AS JESUS CHRIST HAD SPOKEN THEM!

But even then God STILL gave these different writers the freedom to decide WHICH of the things Christ had said they would record, and which sayings they would not record. Whatever sayings of Christ they, the eyewitnesses, decided to record, God guaranteed that the quotations would be accurate.

Jesus Christ's ministry had taken place in one short span of time, in a period of three-and-one-half years. It doesn't make sense to claim that about 20 years later GOD decided to inspire an incomplete record of that ministry to be written down, with gradually more and more information being written down: first 10 more parables, then a few years later another 18 parables, and about 30 years later still an account of the footwashing plus 6 more miracles that had not been recorded earlier.

If the writing of the gospel accounts was so completely under God's control, then God would have recorded everything He wanted recorded in the first account that was written, and no new information would have been provided in the following three accounts. It is precisely because God allowed the authors themselves to decide what to include and what to leave out, as well as HOW to say it, that we find these differences in these different accounts of Christ's ministry.

Thus:

In the gospel accounts THE WORDS JESUS CHRIST SPOKE are accurate. BUT THE DESCRIPTIONS of various events, while also accurate, may differ slightly from one account to the next. Such slight differences are due to nothing more than slightly different perspectives for the different writers, and they do not affect the correctness of what is said. John 14:26 was a promise to the original apostles who had witnessed Christ's ministry. However, John 14:26 was not really a promise to Luke, who had not personally witnessed any part of Christ's ministry.

So when we are looking at THE DESCRIPTIONS OF EVENTS in the gospel accounts, it follows that with any MINOR differences (and that is all we find in the wording, very minor differences) in such descriptions the reports of THE EYEWITNESSES must be given priority over the report presented by the historical researcher Luke. While Luke had done his research diligently and conscientiously, not having experienced those events himself, he might at times present a slight variation to the sequence of events presented by the eyewitnesses. And that is what we find in Luke's account, some very minor variations, which are really of no consequence, UNLESS people try to hang some "new understanding" on such minor variations. THEN such minor variations suddenly become a big issue.

Let me give you one example I have come across in recent years.

When we compare the accounts of Christ's last observance of the Passover in the different gospel accounts, we find that Matthew, Mark and Luke record many of the same things. All three of these accounts record, amongst others, the following 4 things:

- 1) Jesus Christ spoke about Judas' role in betraying Him;
- 2) Jesus Christ introduced the new emblems of the bread and the wine;
- 3) They concluded the Passover and went out to the Mount of Olives;

4) Jesus Christ spoke about Peter denying Him.

Now all three of these gospel accounts record these four things. Luke has certainly recorded CORRECTLY what happened that night. However, on a minor level Luke has in his account presented these four things in a slightly different sequence of sentences from the sequence we find in the accounts of Matthew and Mark. Matthew and Mark are agreed in their sequence of these events. This becomes an argument not about what Luke did or didn't say. No, it becomes an argument about A SPECIFIC SEQUENCE OF SENTENCES! While Luke also says the same things that Matthew and Mark say in their accounts, it is asserted that LUKE'S SEQUENCE OF SENTENCES MUST ALSO BE CORRECT.

[Comment: It goes without saying that any "new teaching" which completely depends on Luke's changed sequence of sentences also being correct, without going quite as far as saying that Matthew's and Mark's sequence of sentences must be wrong, is on very shaky ground indeed. It is hardly the kind of rock-solid proof anyone should stake their salvation on.]

Thus:

1) Matthew and Mark mention Jesus Christ speaking about Judas' role in betraying Him BEFORE Jesus Christ introduced the new emblems of the bread and the wine. But Luke mentions Jesus Christ speaking about Judas' role in betraying Him ONLY AFTER Jesus Christ had introduced the new emblems of the bread and the wine.

2) Matthew and Mark mention the Passover concluding and the group leaving to go to the Mount of Olives BEFORE Jesus Christ spoke about Peter denying Him. But Luke mentions the Passover concluding and the group leaving to go to the Mount of Olives ONLY AFTER Jesus Christ had spoken about Peter denying Him.

Now has Luke said something that is wrong? NO! Does Luke's different sequence for these statements really make a difference? NO! Did God want ANYONE to ever build some "biblical teaching" on Luke's sequence of sentences for these events? NO! Should Luke's sequence of sentences take precedence over the sequence of those same sentences presented by the eyewitnesses Matthew and Peter (who dictated Mark's gospel account)? NO! Is there any promise anywhere that God would "INSPIRE" a specific sequence of sentences into the minds of people who had not witnessed those events themselves? NO! Does Luke ANYWHERE claim that GOD somehow gave him certain information supernaturally or through inspiration? NO!

Let's keep a correct translation of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 in mind!

Where Paul states quite clearly that he received his information about the New Testament Passover "from the Lord" (see 1 Corinthians 11:23), Luke makes clear that he got his information from research and from eyewitnesses (see Luke 1:1-3). Did Luke know HOW he had gotten the information he presents in his account: whether God had simply put the information into his mind without Luke having to consult anyone else, or whether Luke had obtained ALL of his information from other people? YES, Luke knew this. And IF God had simply put some information into Luke's mind, if he somehow "knew" things without anyone ever having told him these things, would Luke have openly given GOD credit for such information? YES! He would have been AFRAID to not give God credit for such divinely revealed information!

Now is the sequence of sentences for these four things listed above "God-breathed" in ANY of the gospel accounts? NO! Originally Peter had simply dictated a correct sequence of sentences to Mark, based on Peter's own personal experience of those events. Then later Matthew, also an eyewitness to those events, presented the identical sequence in his account. There was nothing that God had to

"reveal" to Peter and to Matthew in this regard; they simply had to correctly recall what they had experienced. Luke, without any personal experience to assist him, obtained all the correct information, but recorded the same sentences in a slightly different sequence.

We see God giving various writers the same latitude in many other places as well. For example, God told John to "write what you see in a book" (Revelation 1:11), leaving it up to John to decide HOW to describe the things he saw. And so in the Book of Revelation the quotations are the words of God, but THE DESCRIPTIONS (e.g. "like a lion", "like a calf", Revelation 4:7; "tails like unto scorpions", Revelation 9:10; etc.) are John's.

It does not in any way challenge "the inspiration of the Bible" to admit that Luke really should have presented these sentences in a different sequence in his account of the gospel, because the sequence of sentences we are examining is not "God-breathed" one way or the other. We simply have three descriptions of certain events, two by eyewitnesses and one by a non-eyewitness researcher. The "God-breathed" words in these three descriptions all agree; they record accurately what Jesus Christ said.

So here we have one example of people attaching unjustified significance (i.e. claiming divine inspiration for THE SEQUENCE OF SENTENCES presented by the non-eyewitness historical researcher Luke) to things that have nothing to do with "inspiration", and drawing conclusions from that sequence of sentences that God did not intend to be drawn. I mention this example because someone has used Luke's account to justify changing the sequence of events during the observance of the Passover, by placing the footwashing AFTER the bread and the wine. It is easy to show that this is not the way it happened at Christ's last observance of the Passover, but some people have used Luke's account to justify making this change. They claim "divine inspiration" for the sequence of events presented in Luke's Gospel, even though this sequence is contradicted by the other gospels.

At this point it might be helpful to examine one other mistranslation, and that is found in Luke 1:3. Here is how this verse appears in the KJV.

It seemed good to me also, having had PERFECT understanding of all things FROM THE VERY FIRST, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, (Luke 1:3)

There are in fact TWO mistranslations in this verse as it appears in the KJV. First of all, the Greek adverb "akribos" is here incorrectly translated as "perfect". This Greek adverb really means "accurately" or "diligently" or "circumspectly". The word "akribos" is derived from "akron" which means "the topmost point". It refers to having a good view of everything. But being "diligent" and "circumspect" is not the same as "PERFECT"!

Secondly, the expression "from the very first" is another mistranslation. It is supposed to be a translation of the Greek adverb "anothen" which really means "from above" or "from a higher place". For example, the expression "born AGAIN" in John 3:6 is "gennethe ANOTHEN" and in John 3:7 it is "gennethenai ANOTHEN"; and this expression really means "born FROM ABOVE", rather than "born again". The word "anothen" does NOT mean "from the very first". It is incorrect to believe that Luke was somehow claiming a good understanding "from the very first". Luke was simply referring to his intention to diligently present everything "from a HIGHER perspective", i.e. from a GODLY perspective.

The reason why Luke makes this statement is because HE HAD SEARCHED OUT THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION which he presents in Luke 1:5 - Luke 3:38, and which information the other writers do not present. Now all of that information Luke had SEARCHED OUT DILIGENTLY, but it is not information that God had somehow put into Luke's mind. Luke depended for this information on what

other people had told him. Realize that with this English language expression "from the very first" Luke is NOT claiming to have been "around" from the start of Christ's ministry. He is referring to the information he had searched out through making diligent enquiries, like Luke 1:5 - 3:38, as well as the many other places where Luke presents information that is just not found in the other gospel accounts. Luke had done his research as carefully and as conscientiously as possible.

Green's Literal Translation of this verse actually captures the thought Luke was expressing far better than the KJV. Here is Green's rendering of this verse.

it seemed good also to me, HAVING TRACED OUT ALL THINGS ACCURATELY FROM THE FIRST, to write in order to you, most excellent Theophilus, (Luke 1:3, Green's Literal Translation)

It would have been more accurate still had Green translated this verse as: "having traced out all things DILIGENTLY FROM ABOVE, from a higher perspective, to write in order to you". But at least Green presents a start in the right direction.

This scripture is also discussed in my article "The Sequence of Events at Christ's Last Passover".

Let's now get back to 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

When we understand 2 Timothy 3:16-17 correctly, when we recognize that this Scripture only refers to the exact same things that Matthew 4:4 and Deuteronomy 8:3 refer to, THEN this should help us to deal correctly with both, perceived contradictions and real contradictions in the Bible. When we understand that 2 Timothy 3:16-17 is not nearly as all-encompassing as we have tended to assume, then it should not be a problem for us to acknowledge that there are indeed SOME CONTRADICTIONS in the Bible between words "that were spoken by God" on the one hand, and statements made by some human beings and even by some spirit beings (i.e. Satan and some demons) on the other hand. The same goes for some conflicts between different accounts of the same historical event. And it is always, without exception, the words SPOKEN BY GOD that take precedence over any other statement by any other person or being. The words that GOD has spoken cannot be broken!

To be fair to Luke, it is not as if the other gospel accounts don't at times also unintentionally create a wrong focus in some minor ways. They do! In another article, dealing with "the feeding of the 5000", I have shown where all of the first three gospel accounts, Matthew and Mark and Luke, unintentionally create a misleading impression, which the Apostle John then determined to correct in his gospel account. I say this so that you don't feel that I am somehow "against Luke", because that is not the case.

The point we need to understand is that, in most cases, DESCRIPTIONS OF EVENTS are not necessarily "inspired"; they are simply based on the personal perceptions of the writers, which may at times differ slightly from the perceptions of other people who were also involved in those events. And perceptions of non-eyewitnesses are also likely to differ somewhat from the perceptions of eyewitnesses. And we find examples of these things in the different gospel accounts.

This is precisely why the Apostle John tells us that he bare record of "THE WORD OF GOD, AND THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, AND OF ALL THINGS THAT HE SAW" (Revelation 1:2). Of these three things, the first two (i.e. the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ) are GOD-BREATHED. But the third thing (i.e. all things that he saw) represents JOHN'S OWN PERSONAL PERCEPTION, EXPRESSED IN HIS OWN WORDS!

God WANTED John to record the things he had seen IN HIS OWN WORDS! And so God commanded John: "write the things which YOU HAVE SEEN, and the things WHICH ARE, and the things which

SHALL BE HEREAFTER" (Revelation 1:19). God required John to think and to describe the visions in his own words, while also correctly recording THE GOD-BREATHED STATEMENTS! John's descriptions of the visions he saw are very helpful, but it is the GOD-BREATHED words that are most important, and by which we are to live.

IN SUMMARY:

In the KJV, and also in many other versions, we are faced with a mistranslation in 2 Timothy 3:16. Here are the main points for us to consider regarding this verse.

1) The Latin Vulgate translated the Greek adjective "theopneustos" into Latin with a verb and an adverb, but yet retained the attributive character of the Greek word "theopneustos". While the translated meaning is not necessarily wrong, it did open the door to later changing what is an attributive expression in Greek into a predicate statement in translation. This could not have happened as easily if "theopneustos" had been translated by a one-word Latin adjective.

2) The inclusion of the Greek word "pasa" (every, all) in the Greek expression used in this verse means that there is a major difference between an attributive statement and a predicate statement. The introduction of a verb into this Latin translation also provided the excuse for later dividing this sentence into two separate verses.

3) Adam Clarke stated that the Greek conjunction "kai" was not a part of the original Greek text. He also stated that from a grammatical point of view "kai" didn't really fit into the Greek text of 2 Timothy 3:16.

4) Henry Alford acknowledged the same thing, that the inclusion of "kai" in this verse was awkward. Unless the Apostle Paul only knew "pidgin Greek", the implication is that "kai" was added to this verse at a later stage, in an attempt to justify a predicate construction for the adjective "theopneustos". From all the evidence we examined, it is most likely that "kai" was added at the time of the Protestant Reformation. The most likely people involved in this addition to the text were Desiderius Erasmus and Theodore Beza and William Whittingham.

5) Marvin Vincent in his reference work made clear that in 2 Timothy 3:16 the Greek adjective "theopneustos" is an attributive, and not a predicate.

6) From "Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament" we see that the Greek grammatical structure of this verse really requires "pasa" to be translated as "every", and not as "all". The reason is that we are dealing with the singular case, and there is no definite article. Singular can only be either "EVERY writing" or "ALL THE writing"; plural can only be "ALL THE writings". Since this is singular and since there is no article "the" in the text, therefore "every writing" is the only correct option.

7) Joseph Thayer in his "Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament" also shows that here "pasa" must mean "every", and not "all".

8) A considerable number of different translations acknowledge the same thing, by also translating "pasa" in this verse as "every". We looked at a sampling of such translations.

9) The ramifications of "pasa" meaning "every" in this verse are very significant, because "every" combined with the adjective "theopneustos" very clearly implies that there are "other scriptures" that are not "God-breathed". Scholars and theologians are well aware of this ramification, and therefore there are those who try to make a case against "every" in this verse. All opposition to "every" in this verse starts with a theological position that is being defended; it does not start with the grammatical requirements of biblical Greek, which are actually fairly clear.

10) The first significant English translation of the New Testament was made by John Wycliffe in 1380. In that translation Wycliffe provided the attributive phrase "inspired of God". Also, Wycliffe did NOT have the word "and" in the first part of this verse. This indicates that the Latin Vulgate version from which Wycliffe did his translation did not include the word "and" in this verse.

11) We should keep in mind that in 1380, which was well prior to the Protestant Reformation, there was NOT YET A NEED for either a predicate adjective or the conjunction "and" to defend a very specific theological position. The doctrinal position of "sola scriptura" had not yet been proclaimed by any religious leader. So Wycliffe really had nothing to defend when he made his translation. For this specific verse Wycliffe had no agenda to defend.

12) Johann Gutenberg's Latin Bible from the 1450's also does not include the word "and" in this text. The Gutenberg Bible was printed before the Reformation had started. So Gutenberg's Latin Vulgate also did not contain the word "and" in this verse.

13) Over 140 years after Wycliffe, in 1526, William Tyndale made the first translation from the Greek text into English. It was still early days in the Protestant Reformation, which had started less than ten years earlier with Martin Luther in Saxony, Germany. (At this stage John Calvin was only 17 years old.) The Protestant position of "the Bible, the WHOLE Bible, and nothing but the Bible" (a position that depends on 2 Timothy 3:16, and which position places every verse on an equal footing to every other verse) had not yet been formulated in 1526. Tyndale ALSO treated "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective, and Tyndale ALSO did not have the conjunction "and" in the key part of this verse. This strongly implies that the Greek MSS Tyndale was working from also did not have the conjunction "kai".

14) Martin Luther's 1522 German translation of the NT also presented the German translation of "theopneustos" as an attributive construction, and it also did NOT include the conjunction "AND". So Luther's Greek and Latin texts also did not include "and" in this verse.

15) The Latin text of the 1517 Complutensian Bible likewise does not contain the conjunction "and".

16) The Coverdale Bible (1535) and the Matthew Bible (1537) and the Great Bible (1540) also all treated "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective, and they also did not include the conjunction "and" in the first part of this verse. Neither did Daniel Mace include "and" in this verse in his 1729 translation of the New Testament.

17) So in practical terms Wycliffe in 1380, and the Gutenberg Bible in the 1450's, and Tyndale in 1526, and Luther in 1522 and the Coverdale Bible and the Matthew Bible and the Great Bible, and lastly Daniel Mace in 1729 all support Clarke's statement that "kai" was omitted by almost all the old versions. They also all treated "theopneustos" as an attributive adjective.

18) Realize that without "kai" in this verse the debate is over! Without "kai" the adjective "theopneustos" must be attributive. Without "kai" it cannot be a predicate adjective. But even with "kai" in this verse, "theopneustos" is still an attributive adjective, as witnessed by the scholars I have quoted in this article.

19) Desiderius Erasmus hastily compiled a copy of the Greek New Testament, accompanied by his own Latin version (in which he had changed 40% of the words found in the Latin Vulgate text), even though he actually did not have a single complete Greek New Testament text to refer to in his preparation. His work was rather selfishly motivated, and his scholarship should certainly be questioned. While in general terms his text represents a fair copy (since ALL copies of the NT exhibit some problems), it cannot really be relied upon for this verse, because for this specific verse all the contemporary evidence contradicts Erasmus.

20) Specifically, Erasmus introduced two errors into his Greek and Latin texts of the New Testament. First of all Erasmus introduced the conjunction "and" into both texts, without any kind of manuscript support to justify this addition. And secondly, Erasmus inserted punctuation (a comma) into the first edition of his text which is blatantly dishonest. Even when he later shifted his comma one word to the right, he still insured that readers of his text would be forced to read a predicate statement into the first part of this sentence which covers verses 16 - 17. This is in spite of the internal evidence of the Greek text clearly establishing an attributive statement which makes a comma totally inappropriate. These errors by Erasmus are at the root of our wrong translations today. Erasmus never did get it right as far as this specific verse is concerned.

21) By the time we get to 1560, Martin Luther had been dead for 14 years, and Geneva had become the most influential center of Protestant theology (with leaders like Calvin, Beza, Whittingham, etc.). The leaders of the Protestant movement had been refining their theology for several decades. And that was when they produced the Geneva translation. Regarding 2 Timothy 3:16, the Geneva translation did the following: it was the first translation into English to present "theopneustos" as a predicate adjective; and it was the first translation into English to include the conjunction "and" (which was absolutely essential for claiming any plausibility for a predicate adjective argument). And thirdly, it was also the first English language translation to divide the New Testament text into verses.

22) Now it is well-known that Whittingham, in preparing the New Testament part of the Geneva Bible, made considerable use of the Latin New Testament that Theodore Beza had recently produced. Specifically, the Geneva's translation of "the whole Bible" was copied from Beza's personal Latin text. While Beza's Greek text is the same as the standard Erasmus Greek text of today, we saw that Beza's Latin Vulgate text actually differs from today's Vulgate text, and that Beza's own Latin text also differs from the Latin Vulgate text he has presented.

23) A comparison of the different Latin texts (Beza's own Latin text, Beza's Vulgate text, the Complutensian Vulgate text, and today's Vulgate text) reveals the story. Prior to Beza the Latin Vulgate text had always treated the translation of "theopneustos" as an attributive, and it had also always omitted the conjunction "and". Beza's own Latin translation introduced the verb "is" into this expression, to force a predicate statement into this expression, and Beza then also provided the conjunction "and". Beza may well have consulted the Latin and Greek texts of Erasmus in the preparation of his own work.

24) What we now find is that the introduction of the conjunction "and" into this verse by Erasmus and by Beza has become firmly and universally established in the major Latin texts. The Latin Vulgate text of today has clearly undergone a change from the Latin text of 500 years ago.

25) The absence of "and" from the Latin texts prior to Beza's own text (and certainly prior to Erasmus) strongly implies that the Greek texts before that time also did not contain the conjunction "and". Tyndale's translation and Martin Luther's translation (both made from the Greek text) both omit the conjunction "and". This also strongly implies that "and" was previously not a part of the Greek text. Adam Clarke's statement made this same point.

26) When the Wycliffe New Testament was first divided into verses, verses 16 and 17 of 2 Timothy 3 were presented as ONE VERSE, something you can verify at some websites on the internet. Presenting this whole sentence as one verse dilutes the effectiveness of the (wrongly inserted) predicate statement in the first part of this sentence, because the verb in the latter part becomes the clear focus. So it didn't stay as one verse for very long. The Geneva Bible singled out 2 Timothy 3:16 for a specific marginal comment, because the Geneva Protestants made 2 Timothy 3:16 a rallying Scripture for their cause.

27) This changed focus and meaning for 2 Timothy 3:16 was retained by the Bishop's Bible, and then later endorsed by the KJV. From there the changed meaning for this verse, first introduced by the

Geneva Protestants, has gained near universal acceptance today.

28) The Greek word "graphe" should today correctly be translated as "writing" rather than as "scripture". In general use Christians in the first century A.D. could be expected to understand that any references to "graphe" within a church context would always be to "the scriptures". But when "graphe" is joined to the adjective "every", this meaning could no longer be assumed. It was unavoidable that the Apostle Paul would in some way have to qualify the "every graphe" he was speaking about. That is why Paul provided the attributive adjective "theopneustos".

29) However, we need to recognize that in verse 16 Paul was NOT directing Timothy to "every single verse in the scriptures"! Rather, Paul was showing Timothy the higher purposes for those sections of the scriptures that were actually spoken by God Himself.

30) Even if we can intellectually acknowledge that we are dealing with an incorrect and inappropriate translation in 2 Timothy 3:16, we will in many cases mentally still hold fast to that Reformation slogan of "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible". And we certainly should hold fast to the WHOLE Bible! But we also need to recognize that Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4 and 2 Timothy 3:16 really direct our attention to very specific parts of the Bible, to words that were spoken (or breathed) by God, rather than directing our attention to the whole Bible.

31) All the other parts of the Bible are also helpful and important and significant and instructive. Certainly they are! But they are not on the same level as the words that God Himself has spoken. And God did not intend for us to use the other parts of the Bible as a substitute for the purposes for which we are to use the "God-breathed statements" in the Bible. Other parts of the Bible can support doctrines, but they were not intended by God for us to use to establish doctrines. It's a matter of priorities. And THAT is what Paul was pointing out to Timothy in this section of scripture.

32) It was not right for the Protestant Reformers to elevate the opinions of men (as expressed in books like Proverbs and Job and Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon) and the historical records recorded by men (as found in Kings and in Chronicles) to the same level of infallibility as the words that God Himself has spoken. It is foolish to attempt to make things more holy than God Himself makes those things. God expects us to treat the words He Himself has spoken with far greater respect than we treat words spoken by anyone else, whether they are recorded in the Bible or not. That is why God prefaced so many statements to the prophets of old with "THUS SAYS THE LORD", to teach us to attach the highest importance to God's words.

33) By claiming "infallibility" for the entire Bible (as opposed to only claiming infallibility for all the God-breathed statements) the Protestant leaders opened the Bible up to unnecessary strife and arguments. People hostile to the Bible could search for "contradictions" in the most insignificant details in their attempts to discredit the Bible. Those who accepted the inspiration of the whole Bible, on the other hand, were forced to resort to any number of complicated arguments in their attempts to counter this onslaught. (Think of the flawed arguments presented by those people who insist that THE KING JAMES VERSION was inspired by God, that it is the only translation into English that is a perfect and flawless translation from the originals.) And neither of these two sides is really open to evidence that challenges their positions. So both positions require a certain degree of intellectual dishonesty from their supporters.

34) As long as we remain shackled to the mantra of the Protestant Reformation, that EVERY SINGLE VERSE in the Bible was directly inspired by God, and is therefore just as important as any and every other verse, we can never deal honestly with genuine problems about the Bible that are brought to our attention. We must continue to seek refuge from arguments for which we have no answers by appeals to inspiration and to infallibility. And in so doing we don't understand that we are only perpetuating a part of the deception that Satan has cast over "the whole world" (Revelation 12:9).

35) Whether or not something is "inspired" does not affect whether it is true or not. Many statements in the Bible may perhaps not have been directly inspired, yet they are nonetheless true! It was the false Protestant claim of inspiration that diverted the focus AWAY FROM THE TRUTH to supposed inspiration. We are instructed by Paul to think about "whatsoever things are TRUE" (Philippians 4:8), and whether or not those things are also "inspired" is not the primary consideration. This is not intended to in any way detract from inspiration where inspiration is involved. It is just that inspiration is the wrong focus. The correct focus should be, and has always been, TRUTH.

It is only the truth that can make us free (John 8:32). Will you accept the truth regarding 2 Timothy 3:16, or will you remain shackled to a doctrine that was established very deviously by a succession of theologians at the time of the Protestant Reformation, starting with Erasmus, followed by Beza, and culminating with Whittingham?

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