

With respect of Inspiration, either Scripture is inspired (God-breathed) or it is not. Either men spoke from God or they did not. In the nature of the case, degrees are not possible.

With respect to authority, we must make a distinction between the authority of historical truth and the authority of contemporary normativeness. With regard to the authority of historical truth, we must say: either this account of Scripture is historically true (i.e., factual) or it is not; either this person said a thing or he did not; either this event happened or it did not. There are no degrees of historical truth! With regard to the authority of contemporary normativeness, we must say: either this law, exhortation, teaching, or example is binding upon our obedience today or it is not; there are no degrees involved.

With respect to value, it appears that it is permissible and proper to speak of degrees. Although no portion of Scripture is more inspired than another (either it is God-breathed or it isn't), and although no portion is more authoritative than another (either historically or normatively), yet some portions of Scripture are more valuable than others. Of course, we must admit that certain portions of Scripture can be more valuable or less valuable, depending on the context or need. But even in an absolute sense, it would appear obvious that a command or promise related to spiritual things is more valuable than one related to physical things. And a crucial condition of salvation is more valuable than the mention of an obscure personage in a tribal enumeration. Therefore we should probably understand II Timothy 3:16 to mean that some portions of Scripture are profitable for teaching, some are profitable for refutation of error, some are profitable for correction of faults, and some are profitable for discipline in righteousness.

Element #3 -- Not one truth of Scripture can be set aside, nullified, or omitted.

This element is found in John 10:34-36, which reads:

Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, I said, you are gods? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture is not able to be set aside; are you saying to the one whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming!' because I said I am the Son of God?"

Interestingly, this reference to the "law" is found, not in the first division of the Old Testament (the Torah), or in the second division (the Prophets), but in the third division (the Writings), specifically in Psalm 82. The implication is that all of the Old Testament had the force of law, i.e., was binding on the faith and obedience of the Israelite.