

“The Bible is the inerrant word of God.”

Have you ever driven through a town and noticed one, or more than one religious marque that tout that their particular group, or denomination follows “The Bible as the inerrant word of God”? (or some such).

What does inerrant mean? On the surface inerrant is defined as Incapable of being wrong; free from error. It is most commonly used to describe texts, particularly sacred texts such as the Bible, that are believed to be completely accurate and without any flaw in terms of fact or truth” (Ultimate Lexicon).

Etymology

The term “inerrant” originates from the Latin word *inerrans*, which is a combination of *in-* (meaning “not”) and *errans* (meaning “erring” or “wandering”). The use of “inerrant” in English dates back to the mid-19th century and has predominantly been used in a theological context.

That being the case why is there so much confusion in the religious world?

Consider the following: Inerrancy

It does not demand rigidity of style and verbatim quotations from the Old Testament. The inerrancy of the Bible means simply that the Bible tells the truth. Truth can and does include approximations, free quotations, language of appearances, and different accounts of the same event as long as those do not contradict” (Charles C. Ryrie, What you should know about inerrancy, pg. 16).

E. J. Young, in his classic work on the inspiration of the Bible, gives us [a] good definition of inerrancy: “By this word we mean that the Scriptures possess the quality of freedom from error. They are exempt from the liability to mistake, incapable of error. In all their teaching they are in perfect accord with the truth.”

Inerrancy:

- A. Allows for variety in details in explaining the same event
- B. Does not demand verbatim reporting of events.
- C. Allows for departure from standard forms of grammar.
- D. Allows for problem passages
- E. Demands the account does not teach error or contradiction.