



Lecture # 14 Part 1

Specific Claims for the Inspiration of the New Testament

Guidance in teaching

Not only were the apostles **promised the guidance of the Spirit in their preaching** about Jesus, but they were also **promised that they were to be guided by the Spirit in their teaching**.

1. According to Matthew's account of the Great Commission, the guidance of the Holy Spirit was to extend to what the disciples taught about Christ, as it stated:

Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

2. The promise that the Holy Spirit would bring "**all things**" to their remembrance and lead them into "**all the truth**" (**John 14:26; John 16:13**) obviously applies to the fullness of apostolic teaching as well as preaching.

John 14:26 (NASB)

²⁶ "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you **all things**, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

John 16:13 (NASB)

¹³ "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into **all the truth**; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."

3. Further confirmation of this fact is directly implied in the book of Acts, which was the record of what Jesus "**began to do and teach**" (**Acts 1:1-2**). Properly speaking, then, **Acts is the book of the acts of the Holy Spirit through the works and words of the apostles**.

Acts 1:1-2 (NASB)

¹ The first account I composed, Theophilus, about **all that Jesus began to do and teach**,

² until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

4. A very practical manifestation of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit through the apostles is that the first church continued in "**the apostles' teaching**" (**Acts 2:42**).



Lecture # 14 Part 1

Acts 2:42 (NASB)

⁴²They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Apostolic preaching ([Acts chaps. 2, 4, 10](#)) and teaching ([Acts 2:42](#); [Acts 6:4](#)) were the foundation stones of the early church.

Acts 2:42 (NASB)

⁴²They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 6:4 (NASB)

⁴“But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

It is in that sense that the church was “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone” ([Ephesians 2:20](#)).

Ephesians 2:20 (NASB)

²⁰“Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*.”

That is, the church is built upon their teaching, which, as Jesus repeatedly promised, was the result of the ministry of the Holy Spirit through them.

Briefly, Jesus promised that the Spirit of truth ([John 5:26](#)) would guide the apostles in the teaching of “all things,” or “all the truth” (obviously meaning all truth necessary for faith and practice; cf. [John 20:31](#); [John 21:25](#)).

John 5:26 (NASB)

²⁶“For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself.”

John 20:31 (NASB)

³¹“But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

John 21:25 (NASB)

²⁵“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written.”

There is no more reason to believe that the guidance of the Holy Spirit was limited to their verbal teaching than there is to believe that the Old Testament prophets were Spirit-directed only in what they spoke (see [previous sections # 4–5](#)).

In fact, in direct continuity with the promise of Christ, virtually every New Testament writer claims that his writing was divinely authoritative. Furthermore,



Lecture # 14 Part 1

when knowledge of the apostolic teaching is traced to its original documentary record, the pursuit ends in one, and only one, definite document, that is, the New Testament.

Thus, the New Testament is the only primary source for study of the Spirit-directed teaching of the apostles, which teaching was promised by Christ in the gospels.

Formally stated, this argument takes the following form:

**Whatever the apostles taught was Spirit-directed.
The New Testament is what the apostles taught.
Therefore, the New Testament is Spirit-directed teaching.**

THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS CLAIM THAT THEY WERE SPIRIT-DIRECTED

In full consciousness and fulfillment of Jesus' oft-repeated promise to guide them unto "all the truth," the apostles claimed divine authority for what they taught orally and in their writings.

New Testament writers compared their message to Old Testament prophets

Remembering how highly esteemed the Old Testament prophets were and how divinely authoritative their writings were considered, the comparison of the New Testament message to the Old Testament Scriptures **amounts to a claim for the same authority and inspiration.**

Such is the case in [Hebrews 1:1–2](#), which declares that God, "after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets" ... "in these last days has spoken to us in His Son," and adds that "after the message was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard" ([Hebrews 2:3](#)).

Hebrews 1:1-2 (NASB)

¹ "God, **after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets** in many portions and in many ways,

² **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world."

Hebrews 2:3 (NASB)

³ "How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? **After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard.**"

In other words, the message of Christ as given by His disciples **is God's voice today just as much as the message of the prophets was in time past.**



Lecture # 14 Part 1

New Testament writers claimed their message was the foundation of the church

According to [Ephesians 2:20](#) the church is “**built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.**” The word *apostle* should not be limited to only the twelve apostles.

[Ephesians 2:20 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁰“**Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*.**”

Paul was an apostle ([Galatians 1:1](#); [2 Corinthians 1:1](#)), as was Barnabas ([Acts 14:14](#)).

[Galatians 1:1 \(NASB\)](#)

¹“**Paul, an apostle (not *sent* from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead).**”

[2 Corinthians 1:1 \(NASB\)](#)

¹“**Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia.**”

[Acts 14:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴“**But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out.**”

James wrote with divine authority ([James 1:1](#)), and there were others with prophetic gifts (cf. Agabus in [Acts 11:28](#)).

[James 1:1 \(NASB\)](#)

¹James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

[Acts 11:28 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁸One of them named Agabus stood up and *began* to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the *reign* of Claudius.

The gift of either an apostle or a prophet would qualify one to receive a revelation (cf. [Ephesians 2:20](#)), and several New Testament writers fit into the “**prophet**” category (e.g., Mark, Luke, James, Jude).

[Ephesians 2:20 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁰“**Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*.**”

In [Acts 2:42](#) the first church “**were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship.**” The authority of apostolic teaching, then, is seen not only by its equality with the prophets but by its fundamentality to the church.



Lecture # 14 Part 1

Acts 2:42 (NASB)

⁴² **“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship”, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.**

The reasoning can be summarized as follows:

The New Testament is what the apostles taught.

What the apostles taught is the authoritative foundation of the church.

Therefore, the New Testament is the authoritative foundation of the church.

New Testament writers claimed their message was authoritative for the church

Throughout Acts the pronouncements of the apostles were final (**Acts 21:11**).

Acts 21:11 (NASB)

¹¹ **“And coming to us, he took Paul’s belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, “This is what the Holy Spirit says: ‘In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’”**

- By their voice the church was born (**Acts 2**);
- miracles were performed (**Acts 3**);
- rulers were restricted (**Acts 4**);
- the disobedient were judged (**Acts 5**);
- the Holy Spirit was given to the Samaritans (**Acts 8**) and
- the Gentiles (**Acts 10**).

Thus, in accordance with the promise of Jesus that His disciples would be Spirit-directed in what they spoke and taught, the New Testament writers considered their pronouncements and teachings to be equally authoritative with the Old Testament prophets, as well as fundamental to and authoritative for the New Testament church.