

The Wednesday Word, June 7, 2017: What Does That Mean? (Part 4)

Sola Scriptura

“We’re not just dogmatic about this, we’re bulldog-matic. Sola Scripture (Scripture alone) is a non-negotiable” (Dr. Steven Lawson).

The teaching of Scripture alone refers to the sufficiency of Scripture as our supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice. Sola Scriptura was another great rallying cry of the Reformation. For centuries the Papal Communion had declared its traditions to be superior in authority to the Bible. This resulted in many practices that were horribly contradictory to the Scripture. For example

Prayer to the saints,
Prayer to Mary,
The Immaculate Conception,
Transubstantiation,
Baptismal regeneration,
The supremacy and authority of the Pope.

The Bible alone is our ultimate authority—not the Pope, not traditions, not church councils, not subjective feelings, but Scripture alone. Therefore, if any teachings differ from Scripture, they are to be judged by the Bible and rejected, rather than vice versa.

The Bible is the final authority, that’s what we mean by Sola Scriptura.

The Reformers believed the Bible to be their final authority. Likewise, we believe that it is the final court of appeal on all doctrinal and moral matters. All Popes and Councils are fallible. The Bible alone is infallible.

At the Diet of Worms (AD 1521), when called on to renounce his supposed errors. Martin Luther replied,

"Unless I am convinced by testimonies of Scripture or by evident reason ..for I believe neither the Pope nor Councils alone since it is established that they have often erred and contradicted themselves-I am the prisoner of the Scriptures cited by me, and my conscience has been taken captive by the Word of God. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen."

This is Sola Scriptura.

Our opponents, however, insist that the Bible nowhere teaches Sola Scriptura. This is nonsense! Although no one verse declares Sola Scriptura, the Bible clearly states “All scripture is given by inspiration of God ... 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

The Greek word for "inspired" describes ships sails filled, being carried along over the seas. Our scriptures are quite literally God breathed!

Since God is the author of the Scriptures, we can be confident that any teaching which is at variance with the truth of His Word is wrong.

This is Sola Scriptura.

Every Scripture is the product of the Spirit's work. He inspired the Bible writers and gave them His words. And even though God's Word and the scribe's personality were in some way intertwined, every Word came from God Himself.

This is Sola Scriptura.

We must, therefore, either recognize the divine origin of the Bible or deny it. However, if we deny the Bible as being the very Word of God, we deny the fact that what the Bible says, God says. We will then eventually deny the reliability of the glorious promises of the Word and will soon deny salvation by grace alone and other precious truths. We will then be like a rudderless ship on its way to disaster.

Jesus held to the authority of Scripture.

Finally, let us look to the Master. He was a man of the Scriptures. Three times, in the wilderness, He was tempted by the Devil, and each time He boldly replied "IT IS WRITTEN" (Matthew 4:1-11).

Also, consider these sayings of His; "And Jesus answering said unto them, "Do ye not therefore err because you know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?" (Mark 12:24).

"The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him" (Matthew 26:24)

"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 marvelous in our eyes?" Matthew (21:42)

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify of Me" (John 5:39)

"But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matthew 26:54)

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

Jesus believed in the authority of Scripture.

So do I!

And that's the Gospel Truth!