

Sola Scriptura - The Sufficiency of the Scriptures

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[0:00] Matthew 7, 24 Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto And it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto A foolish man, which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for your precious word. Let it be that rock upon which we build our lives. Let it be that word that we hear, and act upon, and do.

Lord, let us not build our lives upon the sand, but upon your word, upon your truth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. 2 Timothy 3, if you'd like to find me there.

[1:33] Another familiar one. 2 Timothy 3. Talking about the word of God. The word of God. The holy scriptures. The scriptures. And really the doctrine of the sufficiency of scripture.

It's something we've heard before about, and we can't really hear more than we need to hear about it, because it's so vital, it's so critical. Sola scriptura.

Scripture alone. Scripture alone. It's one of the solas. We'll cover some of the other solas. The other alones. But number one is scripture alone.

The Bible alone. And 2 Timothy 3, from verse 14. Paul writes to Timothy, But continue thou in the things which thou hast learnt, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learnt them. 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.

[2:44] 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.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God. It's profitable. God's word is something precious to us. It's something vital. It's something essential. It's something we must hold dear, hold fast. The word of God, it lives and abides forever. The Lord Jesus says that nothing of my word will fail or drop to the ground.

Not one. One minutest part of it. Not one jot or toots or not one stroke of the pen shall be lost from his word. It will abide forever.

It's living. It's a powerful word. It's his word. And Paul says to Timothy, continue in it. Continue in it. Continue in those things which thou hast learnt, and hast been assured of.

[3:55] One of the most important truths for us today, and one of the most important issues for the church today, is the authority of the scriptures.

The authority of the word of God. We're living in a world where there's a disregard of authority. As you heard mention of what's going on in the world, we know it's so topical.

It's so horrific, isn't it? And could it be in the streets of Australia before too long? Where there's a challenge against authority.

I know some folk who are in positions of authority, and positions in the police force for example, they're constantly under attack. There's no regard for authority today.

And it's a question we all need to consider. Who or what has the right, the authority to determine what we believe, and how we are to live.

[4:54] God's authority is being challenged today. The authority of God's holy word. Paul says to Timothy, continue in the things which thou hast learnt, and hast been assured of.

God's authority is something we can hold fast to. In the authority of his word. We ought to continue steadfast in that. The centrality of scripture.

There's a great need of discernment in the world today. Where people are astray from the Bible.

Not only is the world rejecting and despising authority, but it's missing in the church.

We're living in a lawless, godless, Christless world. As we see so evidently. We see the fruits of the abandonment of God's authority.

And we need the gospel. We need the gospel. Paul continues on. The precious truth of God's authority.

[6:05] The precious truth of God's word is that contained within these covers is the message of salvation.

Contained within these pages is the message that is soul-saving. Scripture is able to make you wise unto salvation. It's in here that we read what salvation is and how it can be received.

Scripture produces faith in Christ. It says that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. It's as we take these pages and God draws us to himself.

And God illuminates these truths to our minds. That we can understand. We can read and learn what faith is all about.

And how we can be granted it. In 1 Peter 2 verse 2. We read that we can grow as a Christian. We can grow in our faith. How, as we desire the sincere milk of the word, we can grow thereby.

[7:14] We grow in faith through God's word. It's not only the source of salvation. The source of faith. And from the very beginning, Satan has attacked God's word, hasn't he?

Right from the very first words that Satan mouthed. Yea, have God said. Has God really said it? Has God really said such and such? And then he twists it and turns it and uses it for his own ends to deceive man and woman. To lead them to sin.

He tries to cast down. And Satan does that still. He continues his attack still. Satan still hates this precious word. He still hates the word of God.

And he still wants you to doubt it. He even writes in some people's Bibles. These words are not found in some manuscripts. As if you can doubt his precious word.

[8:18] This word is true. It is true. And it is authoritative. It is undeniable. It is absolute. It lives and abides forever.

The word of God. The Bible urges us not to tamper with the words of Scripture. In Deuteronomy 4 verse 2, he says to us, You shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it.

Don't add. Don't take away. Every word of God is pure. We read in Proverbs 30 verse 5, He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. Revelation 22, 18 and 19 likewise cautions us that the word of God is not to be trifled with.

We're not to add to it or take away, lest we face his severe judgment. Salvation. Salvation. The message is here.

[9:30] It's able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The source of the word of God is God himself, the divine authority himself, his very person.

He's inspired it. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. This book from beginning to end has been given by inspiration of God.

It means he's actually breathed it out of his mouth. It means God has spoken it into existence. It means that every word in our Bible, every comma, you could put it in a sense, every stroke of the pen, every part of this book has been given by the inspiration of God, by his direct authority.

It's his word, and it's life transforming for those who will heed its truth. Every promise of the Bible calls for our unshakable trust in its fulfillment.

Every command of the Bible is the directive of God himself, and therefore demands our willing observance. Of course, there's some commands that are specific to specific people and specific seasons.

[10:57] But the word of God is authoritative for our lives, and we need to take it that way. We need to understand it that way, that these are the principles for life, for living, for character and conduct, the source of truth, the word of God.

And that Scripture is sufficient. It's a vital truth we need to grab a hold of, that it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect.

It's got the sense of complete, of being equipped, of being fully furnished unto all good works. There's a wonderful sufficiency about the word of God, the wonderful sufficiency of the Bible for our faith and practice.

The Scriptures are here to train us, to equip us, to furnish us with God's equipment, for our lives. And the doctrine of the authority of the Bible prompts us to have that assurance, that confidence that His word is sufficient and carries the full authority of God.

Every single statement calls for our unqualified attention. every doctrine of the Bible is the teaching of God and requires our full agreement.

[12:26] The Bible contains everything that we need to know to obtain salvation and to live the Christian life. The Bible is sufficient of itself to be the final authority of Christian doctrine.

You know, we're living in a world where I heard it mentioned Richard's message yesterday of how the world's culture is training people to say you've got your truth and I've got mine.

You know, let's agree to disagree. Let's just, you know, put everything in that kind of middle ground where it's all a shade of grey. There's no blacks or whites. There's no, you know, everything's just a different shade of grey.

But something's out clearly plain to see. Things such as salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The wonderful drama of Calvary that was played out for man's sin to be able to be taken away and completely erased.

You know, that's a wonder, isn't it? And to think how we are to live, it's clearly outlined for us in his word. These are things that we need to grasp and apply personally.

[13:46] The roadmap for living, it's here. It's contained here. You know, I was talking with someone earlier today and they got some nice people knocking on their doors trying to give them Watchtower magazines and trying to give them all kinds of information.

And yet, they're disregarding the clear teachings of the word of God. And that is dangerous. These people are dangerous because they are of strain from God's word.

This is what is the roadmap for life. And everything must be subordinate to the word of God and corrected by it. To truly know him, we need to turn to his word.

And to know how to learn, we need to turn to his word. And the Bible contains all the revelation that we need. We don't need any more special revelation.

You know, I've seen, as I've referred to before, some footage of some crazy stuff going on. Some crazy things going on. Where people are having peculiar experiences.

[14:56] Yet, there's no biblical support for such things. You must question that. You must question that. I must question it. We must question it. The Bible is adequate to guide us as to what God's voice to us is.

In 2 Peter 1 verse 3 it says, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

Think of some of the ways we can even today add to the word of God and deny the sufficiency of scripture. Here's some of the different ways I heard listed.

Philosophy is one way. Philosophy is one way we can disregard the sufficiency of scripture. We shouldn't but we can do.

We ought not but we can do. And sometimes we even innocently may do. But philosophy, what is philosophy? It's resorting to our own sacred traditions.

[16:08] Again, I was talking to someone earlier and their tradition has been that they call the presiding person, the priest, as they would think of them as father.

father. And they question, why don't you want to be called father? I have to go to the word of God to answer that. In Matthew 23, where the Lord Jesus, and you can't get any higher authority than him, he says, and call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your father which is in heaven. So any church that has preachers or ministers calling themselves or being called father is astray from the word of God.

The Bible is not sufficient to them. They're resorting to philosophy, to traditions of man, sacred traditions, but unbiblical traditions that must be rejected.

Philosophy, it can include worldly wisdom that deals with spiritual issues. Worldly wisdom to deal with spiritual issues. For example, in some quarters, sin is now treated as some disorder that you can treat by psychological means.

[17:23] Psychological treatment for your sin rather than repentance. In some quarters, that is the philosophy that people follow. Some churches hold that the traditions of the church are as equally authoritative with the Bible.

This is not true. It is not true and we must reject it. Such things are astray from the sufficiency of scripture, philosophy. Another area is legalism.

Legalism. Majoring on the minors. And that's not to say that some minors we need to take attention to. Some minors are not minor. The world might consider them minor, but some things are not minor.

But I'm talking about majoring on trivial things. Trivial things. We can stray from the scriptures when our own views are taken to extremes.

The sufficiency of scripture must guide us. It must guide every question, every decision, every thought, every practice. We can be astray from the sufficiency of scripture when we stray into legalism.

[18:35] A third area is pragmatism. Pragmatism is another area where we can stray from the doctrine of the sufficiency of scripture, where pastors get more concerned about what works, rather than what is biblical.

We're not here to drag a massive crowd by any means, including contrary means to scripture.

We must not. We dare not. God forbid that we ever do. Pragmatism.

Whatever it takes, anything goes. If it works, do it. We're not to take such a track. So we've seen the sufficiency of scripture is denied by those who would follow philosophy, legalism, pragmatism.

Fourth one, mysticism. Mysticism is a big one today. It's a big one today where people are denying the sufficiency of scripture. They feel like they've got to have something else, something other than the word of God.

[19:49] Mysticism. They've got to have some special revelation from God that they can base their theology on some experience, whether it be dreams or visions, whether it be something other than the scriptures that guides their life, that guides their doctrine, that guides their practice, other than the sure foundation of God's word.

We must be cautious about that. It's quicksand, it's sinking sand, it's building a house on those faulty foundations as the man in Matthew 7, the foolish man.

He heard the word but he didn't do it. He wasn't constrained by the pages of scripture, he just wanted to have something more, whether it be philosophy, whether it be legalism, whether it be pragmatism, whether it be mysticism, something other than the word of God.

We must be cautious of that people, we must be cautious when there are false prophets, as I believe there are false prophets in this present day. And they're lauded, they're applauded, they're popular, they're loved, they're followed.

But they're not following the scriptures and in that case we must reject them. We must reject them. The Bible is God's final and complete revelation.

[21:14] There's no more revelation required. Everything necessary for your salvation, everything necessary for you to grow as a Christian, it's in here that you may grow thereby.

It's in here, exceeding great and precious promises. It's in here as we dig deep, though it had to be mined, like the precious gold that is deep.

We've got to dig deep to find the gold and to receive and grow thereby. The cults have no commitment to the sufficiency of scripture. The cults think they must have something more, something other than, something extra biblical, something outside of the Bible, something then that they hold equal to or superior than the Bible.

God forbid. That's the dangers of cults today. That's why the Watchtower Society, why the Jehovah's Witnesses are here today.

That is why Joseph Smith and his Mormon band are here today, because they wanted cult leaders to claim extra biblical revelation.

[22:26] That's why the Seventh-day Adventist church has been led astray, because they see a latter-day prophet or prophetess. Virtually every cult, every cult, every false movement wanted to have something more, something more.

God's pages are not enough, they say. But we do not need the Watchtower. We do not need the Pope. We do not need any other source of latter-day extra biblical revelations.

We don't need some hungering after miracle signs and wonders. We need the authoritative word of God, the more sure word of prophecy. We need his word.

This must be the absolute guide for faith and practice. Otherwise we are building on sinking sand. Don't make that mistake.

All the scripture is adequate to equip us to every good work, and we must not presume. And I have done. I have done in the past.

[23:35] To speak one word falsely or presumptuously in the Lord's name. That is dangerous ground. That is sinking sand. It is getting astray from the word of God.

God forbid that we dare do such a thing. And I repent of having done so in the past when I was in the Pentecostal movement. Friends, we must not add to or take away from the word of God.

It must be thus saith the Lord. What is in here? What is in here? If it doesn't line up with that, it is dangerous ground. Dangerous ground. God's word is certain, it's reliable, and it's true.

Does this mean that God has stopped speaking? No. But he speaks today in accord with the word. It must line up. Line upon line, precept upon precept, if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them.

Does the spirit of God move our hearts and impress us with specific duties or callings? Yes. Yes.

[24:43] But he works through his word. Through his word. The experiences we might experience are not prophetic or authoritative.

They are not revelation. But they are the effect of illumination. It's as the word of God is illuminated. It's as he sheds his light upon his word. As he lights up his word to our understanding, then he will guide us.

And yes, we'll be impressed. Yes, God will speak to us. Yes, God will prompt us. Yes, God will reach into our hearts and grab a hold of us as his word penetrates, as his word pierces, as his word draws us to himself.

And he opens our spiritual eyes to the truth. And we'll apply it as he helps us to, by his spirit. The danger is, friends, today, when churches rely on worldly methods or extra-biblical practices, there's dangers there.

And we need to be alert to that in this church. In this church, that nothing will take us away from God's authority. And whether it be extra-biblical revelations, entertainment, whatever works kind of mentality, whether it be psychological kind of counselling, that's dealing with a sin kind issue.

[26:24] These are things we don't want to bar off. It must be that God's precepts guide that which we believe and practice. As the Lord Jesus says, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Let's hear his voice. Let's be those sheep. Let's hear his voice. Let's follow him. And his voice is here. The scriptures are his voice. Completely and utterly sufficient.

God's word is sufficient. That the man of God may be perfect. Now, I know I'm not quite there yet. I'm getting closer, I hope. But, you know, perfect, now the sense of it isn't as you would think of perfect as in you've got everything totally down pat.

But the sense is of fulfilled, of completed. The completing of us as people, as a church people, the completing, the fulfilling of, making us who he wants us to be, is as we're attuned to his word, as he

shapes us and moulds us and perfects us, as he makes us more like Christ.

That's what the sense of it here is, that the man of God may be perfect, completed, fulfilled, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. And, friends, I trust that will be your experience today.

[27:48] I know the son, you've yet to trust him. It starts with that. It starts with that. To hear his voice, to follow him.

You might be hearing his voice, but you might not be receiving it. You know, we could pray for every soul that every soul will have a receptive heart.

That you won't rest until you find your rest in him. The wicked are like a restless seat.

If you're outside of Christ, you're on dangerous ground. Dangerous ground. You should be very afraid.

Very afraid. But perfect love casts out all fear. His love has made wonderful provision.

[28:59] Yet some will reject it. I pray you're not in that number. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for your word. That your word is truth.

Your word is life. Your word is the authority, Lord. There's nothing more or less. We need that word. Help us, dear Lord, to take it, to obey it, to receive that word of salvation.

That we can be amongst those who will come. Who will bow the heart, the will.

That we'll be amongst them. That we'll trust the saving grace, the perfect blood, the only means of our forgiveness.

Lord, we'll trust the worthy lamb of God that taketh away the sin. Lord, we thank you for that wonderful truth.

[30:02] Help us, Lord, to be led by your spirit into all truth. Help us to question everything that is outside of your word. That we'll be a spirit-led people. That we'll be a scripture-led people.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.