



Scripture Alone: Authority

Lesson Six

The Reformation: A Struggle Between Scripture **ALONE** vs. Scripture **PLUS**

- ❖ Today we are **STILL TEMPTED** to let many things have **equal** or **greater** authority in our lives.

Scripture ALONE	Scripture EQUAL	Scripture UNDER
Scripture ALONE Has Final Authority OVER Traditions Reason Experience Authorities Science Culture	Scripture EQUAL in Authority Traditions & Authorities Reason & Science Experience & Culture	Traditions Reason Experience Authorities Science Culture OVER Scripture

- ❖ Sola Scriptura is not just something we say but a lifestyle we **LIVE OUT** on a daily basis!

Back to the Bible: Scripture Alone as Taught in **2 Timothy 3:14–4:8**

- ❖ The Apostle Paul taught that Scripture Alone is **ESSENTIAL** to fulfilling one's ministry and finishing well!
- ❖ Scripture Alone: The Bible Is **UNIQUELY NECESSARY** in bridging the gap to know and glorify God.

*"Sola Scriptura means that **only Scripture, because it is God's inspired Word, is our inerrant, sufficient, and final authority for the church.**"*
 – Matthew Barret, *God's Word Alone: The Authority of Scripture*

See Handouts of 1) *The London Baptist Confession (1689)*; 2) *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978)*;
 3) *The Cambridge Declaration (1996)*

Why Is Scripture Alone Uniquely Necessary?

AUTHORITY: The Bible Is God Speaking Uniquely and Absolutely with DIVINE Authority.

15 ...the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; **2Timothy 3:15-16**

1. What Does Inspiration Mean?

All Scripture is breathed out by God in the original writings (autographs) and, therefore, is God Himself speaking to us!

2. What About the NT? Are the NT Writings Inspired? **YES!**

- ❖ Jesus promised that when He went up, the Spirit would come down and would lead the Apostles to into all truth.
John 14:25-26
- ❖ Paul makes it clear that what the apostles were teaching was **from** the Spirit and **by** the Spirit and can only be understood **with** the help of the Spirit because the writings of the apostles were not the result of human wisdom or human words. *1Corinthians 2:10-13*
- ❖ The Apostles recognized one another's writings as being "Scriptures" and equal to them. *2Peter 3:15-16; 1Timothy 5:18*

3. If the Scripture Is God Speaking to Us, Then What Role Did the Human Authors Fulfill?

2 Peter 1:20-21 tells us how inspiration (= God breathing out His words through human writers) took place.

- ❖ God spoke through men as they were **CARRIED ALONG** by the Holy Spirit, so that whatever was written was what God willed to be written without violating the personalities of the human authors.
- ❖ The Bible is the result of **DUAL AUTHORSHIP** but there is **only one divine Author** who spoke by the Holy Spirit **through many human authors**.

4. How Much of the Bible Is Inspired?

- ❖ The Bible itself teaches what theologians call **“Verbal Plenary Inspiration”** – All of the original writings down to the very words and even the “smallest letter and stroke” are God-breathed. *Matthew 5:17-19*
- ❖ Jesus and the apostles both debated doctrine based on the tense and number of a word. *Matthew 22:31-32; 41-45; Galatians 3:16*

5. What Does Inspiration Not Mean?

- ❖ It does not mean that the human **AUTHORS** were “inspired” like a great poet or artist.
- ❖ It does not mean that the human **READERS** are somehow “inspired” like when they read a great poem or look at a great work of art and have spiritual experience.

6. How Have Other Theologians Defined Inspiration?

“Inspiration is, therefore, usually defined as a supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of God, by virtue of which their writings are given Divine trustworthiness.” – Benjamin B. Warfield, Presbyterian Theologian

*“Inspiration is a superintendence of God the Holy Spirit over the writers of the Scriptures, as a result of which these Scriptures possess Divine authority and trustworthiness and, possessing such Divine authority and trustworthiness, are free from error.”
– Edward J. Young, Presbyterian Theologian*

“God superintended the human authors of the Bible so that they composed and recorded without error His message to mankind in the words of their original writings.” – Charles C. Ryrie, Baptist Theologian

“By inspiration of the Scripture we mean that supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation or which resulted in what they wrote actually being the Word of God.” – Millard J. Erickson, Baptist Theologian

Baptist Theologian, Paul Enns, Identifies 5 Important Elements of a Biblical Definition of Inspiration

- 1) The **divine element**—God the Holy Spirit superintended the writers, ensuring the accuracy of the writing.
- 2) The **human element**—human authors wrote according to their individual styles and personalities.
- 3) The **result of the divine-human authorship** is the writing of God’s truth without error.
- 4) The **extent of inspiration** includes the very of words selected by the writers.
- 5) The **act of inspiration** applies directly to the original manuscripts.

Read Articles VI-IX from the Chicago Statement on Inerrancy

7. So What Does Inspiration Have to Do with Scripture Alone?

- ❖ The Bible is God **SPEAKING** to us in a **unique way** unlike any other book or any other being.

“The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands; it lays hold of me.” – Martin Luther

- ❖ The Bible is God speaking to us with His **FULL DIVINE AUTHORITY** in a **unique way** unlike any other book or any other being.
 - 1) All Scripture is breathed out by God and, therefore, speaks with **His authority!**
 - 2) All Scripture is breathed out by God and, therefore, speaks with His authority **in whatever it says!**
 - 3) All Scripture speaks with God’s authority **for a purpose: to bridge the gap in knowing and glorifying God in all of life!** *2Timothy 3:15-17*

Read Articles 2–5 from the London Baptist Confession 1689 on the Inspiration and Authority of the Scriptures



Podcast



Series