

Subject: *Here We Stand: Scripture Alone*

Scripture: *2 Timothy 3:13-17*

This month we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It is an important time to remember, refocus, and rededicate ourselves to the truths that changed the course of history. After many centuries of false teaching and spiritual ignorance in the church, God used a group of Christian leaders to call attention to what was wrong and lay the foundation of truth again.

It is important to remember the history of the church and the Christian faith for at least two reasons: We need to know where we came from and how we got here. It is a matter of perspective. We need to know the truth and stand for it in our day. It is a matter of priorities.

There are some hills worth dying on. Some truths are absolutely foundational to our Christian faith and the health of the church. In 1517, Martin Luther took a stand and others stood with him. When he was challenged by the corrupt Roman Catholic Church of which he had been a part, they religious authorities asked him to recant his position, but he responded: “Here I stand. I can do no other, so help me God.” Luther and other Reformers stood for these pillars of truth and it is our duty and privilege to stand with them.

Five “Solas” of the Reformation

- *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone)
- *Solus Christus* (Christ Alone)
- *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone)
- *Sola Fide* (Faith Alone)
- *Soli Deo Gloria* (For the Glory of God Alone)

The key word in each of these truths is the word “alone.” The Roman Catholic Church claimed to believe in Scripture as their source of authority, but not in Scripture alone. The same holds true for each of these five main truths. Our text in 2 Timothy describes the sufficiency of Scripture.

1. The authority of Scripture

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Literally, all Scripture is God-breathed. The Bible contains the words of God. Notice that ALL Scripture is inspired by God and that means it is all important. When the Bible speaks, God speaks.

Matthew 4:3-4³ *And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.* ⁴ *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

Of all the things we do as a church, none is as important as preaching, teaching, and sharing the Word of God. This Book is unlike any other book.

2. The accuracy of Scripture

Since God is the author and He has all knowledge and He cannot lie, we know the Bible is 100% reliable. It is inerrant and infallible. That means it has no error and it cannot be wrong. We know there are many false teachers and false teachings in the world (vs. 13). Some say there is no absolute truth. Like Pontius Pilate, they ask: "What is truth?" We have the truth.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Scripture is accurate in every way. It is historically and scientifically accurate, so we reject the false teaching of evolution. It is spiritually and doctrinally accurate, so we reject the false teaching of pluralism and relativism.

3. The ability of Scripture

Scripture may not tell us everything we want to know, but it tells us everything we need to know. This is what we call the sufficiency of Scripture. Look at our text in verses 15-17.

- Scripture tells us what we need to know for salvation (vs. 15)

Luke 16:22-31 ²² And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; ²³ And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. ²⁴ And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. ²⁵ But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. ²⁶ And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. ²⁷ Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: ²⁸ For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. ²⁹ Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. ³⁰ And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. ³¹ And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

- Scripture tells us what we need to know for Christian living (vs. 16-17)

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. We don't believe in apostolic succession, but we do believe in the succession of apostolic doctrine found in the New Testament.

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

God's Word is sufficient for evangelism, for education, for edifying and equipping God's people.

Psalms 19:7-11 ⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. ⁸ The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹ The fear of the LORD

is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.¹¹ Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

How Firm a Foundation

*How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word
What more can He say, than to you He hath said
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?*

4. The application of Scripture

Someone asked an experienced Bible teacher: “What is the best translation of the Bible?” He said it’s when you read and study the Bible and translate that into your everyday life. That’s the best translation.

In *The Valley of Vision*, there is this prayer:

Dear Lord, help me to carry into ordinary life portions of divine truth and use them on suitable occasions, so that its doctrines may inform me, its warnings caution me, its rules guide me, and its promises comfort me.

Is that your attitude toward Scripture? Would you make that your prayer?