

THE FIVE SOLAS

Talk 2: Scripture Alone (*Sola Scriptura*)

“Let the man who would hear God speak, read Holy Scriptures.” Martin Luther

Introduction

1. The Bible and the battle for authority

Reason

Institution / Tradition

“He who does not accept the doctrine of the Church of Rome and pontiff of Rome as an infallible rule of faith, from which the Holy Scriptures, too, draw their strength and authority, is a heretic.” - Sylvester Prierias, Dialogue concerning the Power of the Pope

Experience

Sola Scriptura:

“Scripture alone, because it is God’s word, is our inerrant [without error], sufficient and final authority.”

2. “Here I Stand”

- Luther and the Diet of Worms

“Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they often err and contradict themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, may God help me, Amen.” – Martin Luther

3. “What Scripture says, God says”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Acts 13:34 And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, [God] has spoken in this way.

“‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.’ [Isaiah 55:3]

Acts 13:35 Therefore [God] says also in another psalm,

“‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’ [Psalm 16:10]

Heb. 3:7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,

“‘Today, if you hear his voice... [Psalm 95:7-11]

New Testament

John 16:12-25

2 Peter 3:15-16

1 Timothy 5:17-18

Divine and Human

“The whole of Scripture in all its parts and in all its elements, down to the least minutiae, in form of expression as well as in substance of teaching, is from God; but the whole of it has been given through the instrumentality of men.” – B.B. Warfield

- **The inerrancy of Scripture**

“Scripture is trustworthy because the God behind Scripture is trustworthy.” – Carl Trueman

Deuteronomy 23:19 God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind.

1 Samuel 15:29 He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a human being, that he should change his mind.”

Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God proves true;
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.



➤ Pick and mix Christianity

- **The clarity of Scripture**

“The task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church.” – The Documents of Vatican II, 1966

“God has something to say, and he is very good at saying it.” – Mark Thompson

Isaiah 55:10-11

“All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.” – Westminster Confession 1.7

- **The sufficiency of Scripture**

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

“Scripture is not merely helpful but is the source we turn to for all of life as a Christian.” – Matthew Barrett

4. **Sola Scriptura Today**

- **The Bible and ministry**

- **The Bible and you**

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Sola Scriptura Chant (To the tune of 'That's Amore!')

When you get all you need from the word that you heed - that's a sola!

When you order your self round the Book on the shelf - that's a sola!

When you subject the rest to the Scriptural test - that's a sola!

When you find that you've grown 'cause of God's word alone - that's a sola!

The Reformers on Scripture:

"Let the man who would hear God speak, read Holy Scriptures." Martin Luther

"If God spare my life, before very long I shall cause a plough boy to know the Scriptures better than you do!" William Tyndale

"Let us diligently search for the well of life, in the books of the Old and New Testament, and not run to the stinking puddles of human traditions, devised by human imagination, for our justification and salvation." William Tyndale

"These books therefore, ought to be much in our hands, in our eyes, in our ears, in our mouths, but most of all, in our hearts." William Tyndale

"Let us night and day muse, meditate and contemplate the Scriptures. Let us ruminare, and (as it were) chew the cud, that we may have the sweet juice, spiritual effect, honey, kernel, taste, comfort, and consolation of them." Thomas Cranmer

Recommended Reading:

- Taking God at his word, *Kevin DeYoung*
- God has spoken, *J.I. Packer*

