

Scripture Alone; Bible Study

5 Truths from the Reformation: We approach God by **CHRIST ALONE**, the authority for faith is the **BIBLE ALONE**, we are saved by God's **GRACE ALONE**, we are justified by **FAITH ALONE** and the glory for our salvation goes to **GOD ALONE**.

1. What are some of the indications that someone has authority over you?

They can tell you what to do and get you in trouble if you don't.

2. What does the Bible say about **itself** in the following passages? Gal 1:6-9; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:12-21, 3:15-16; Rev 22:18-19.

God has revealed his word, the gospel of Jesus is his ultimate revelation, this is not to be altered in any way without incurring judgement, it is to be repeated / remembered / reminded of. His word is final. It is enough to thoroughly equip us for the life of faith.

3. From the above verses, it's clear that the Bible itself claims that the Bible is God's authority to rule our lives. Some call this a 'circular argument' and call into question the Bible's authority. Is that a fair conclusion?

If the authority of the Bible came from outside itself, that would be our authority, not the Bible.

4. If all Scripture is "God-breathed", what does that mean about the human authors? Were they just puppets or 'scribes' while God dictated to them? Read again 2 Pet 1:20-21?

*This is what's referred to as the "dual authorship" of the Bible. God spoke and moved people to write by his Spirit. They wrote in their own language and in terms they understood – their brains and hearts were fully engaged, but God oversaw the whole process so that what they wrote was **his** word.*

5. The medieval church had added many teachings to that of the Bible, and expected people to accept these teachings as God's truth with authority over them. In 1521, Martin Luther was on trial for his life for daring to call some of the church's teachings into question. How is his response (below) helpful in understanding the phrase "Scripture alone"?

"Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason—I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they contradicted each other— my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen."

Martin Luther before the Diet (assembly) of Worms (Rhineland, Germany), 8 April 1521

6. Read Rom 12:1-2 & Heb 4:12-13. What expectations should we have when we read the Bible?

That it will show us God more clearly and reveal our own hearts too. It will unsettle us where we are going our own way and speak to our hearts of how God would have us live – that we love what he loves, hate what he hates "test and approve what God's will is". ie don't expect to read the Bible like you would a novel, in a comfy chair with a relaxed mind and inattentive heart! Expect God to speak!

7. Far from being a problem, it is a great liberation for us that the Bible is it's own authority. As Martin Luther was ready to die for, the Bible alone must convince and convict us of the truth about God. So we can have great confidence in the Scriptures. However, what might be the result if we stop reading the Bible and hearing it taught?

We must do our best to keep hearing and reading the Bible, surrendering our wills to God's as he has revealed it. "One generation believes something. The next assumes it. And the third will forget and deny it." D.A. Carson

Spend some time praying together in response to God's revealed word.