



SOLA SCRIPTURA

Oikos Apologetic Series

By Owen Daniels

Sola Scriptura - Definition

Scripture alone is the governing authority and source for all doctrine, faith and practice in the Christian life. It is sufficient for every aspect of the Christian life and contains all that God wants us to know during this earthly age prior to the judgment.

Tradition that flows from the Scriptures should be embraced. Tradition that cannot be found in Scripture or is purported to supercede Scripture should be abandoned.

Sola Scriptura - Tradition as a Friend

R.C. Sproul, Jr. on Tradition and Protestantism...



There is an "Anabaptist error that we call solo Scriptura. Here the person affirms that all he needs is himself and his Bible. The wisdom of the church in history, the community of believers, are all deemed irrelevant to understanding the things of God. Solo scriptura is reprehensible and ignorant and a-historical.

Sola Scriptura, like the Scriptures themselves, recognizes that God has gifted the church with teachers and pastors. It recognizes that the church has progressed and reached consensus on critical issues in and through the ancient ecumenical creeds. It affirms with vigor that we are all standing on the shoulders of giants. But it also affirms that even these giants have feet of clay. And there is where the Bible does in the end teach sola Scriptura.

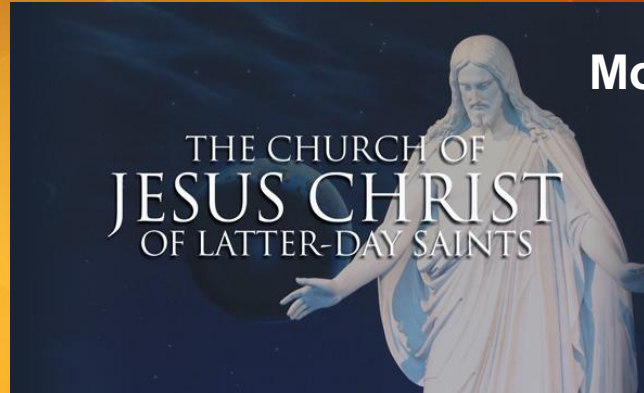
Sola Scriptura - Implications

- **Direct Revelation** - The Bible has been superintended by God and given directly from Him. It is thereby Divinely authoritative.
- **Sufficient Revelation** - The Bible contains everything needed for faith and practice.
- **Authoritative Revelation** - Scripture is the final court of appeals for life and doctrine.
- **Clear Revelation (Clarity is Perspicuity)** - The Bible has clarity for all the essential teachings that we need to understand.
- **Scriptures Interprets Scripture** - If you have a difficulty with a text, you turn to other Scripture.

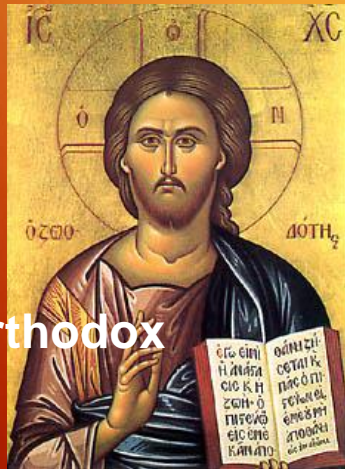
Sola Scriptura - Contrasting Viewpoints



Roman Catholic



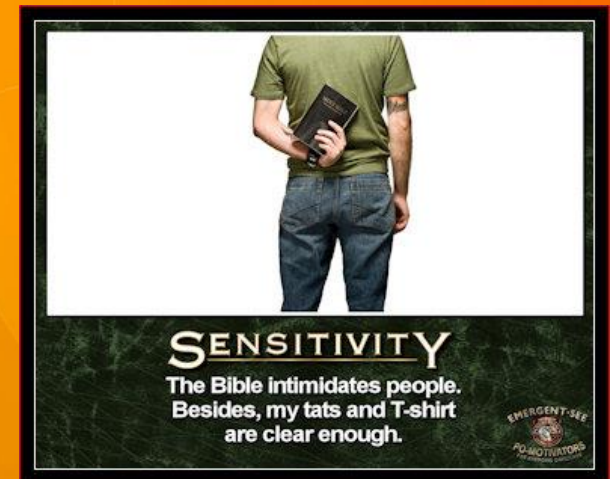
Mormon



Greek Orthodox



Charismatic Community



Experience Crowd

Sola Scriptura - Contrasting Viewpoints



Greek Orthodox

Lest any be mistaken or confused, let me be clear: the Orthodox approach to the Scriptures is not based upon "scientific" research into the Holy Scriptures. Its claim to understand the Scriptures does not reside in its claiming superior archaeological data, but rather in its unique relationship with the Author of the Scriptures. The Orthodox Church is the body of Christ, the pillar and ground of the Truth, and it is both the means by which God wrote the Scriptures (through its members) and the means by which God has preserved the Scriptures. The Orthodox Church understands the Bible because it is the inheritor of one living tradition that begins with Adam and stretches through time to all its members today. That this is true cannot be "proven" in a lab. One must be convinced by the Holy Spirit and experience the life of God in the Church.

http://orthodoxinfo.com/inquirers/tca_solascriptura.aspx

Sola Scriptura - Contrasting Viewpoints - Summary

- All spiritual authority is vested in a man or group of men as well as in Scripture – Pope and Magisterium/Prophet and Apostles/Patriarchs
- There is no such thing as spiritual authority – Anarchy
- Spiritual authority is vested in the individual to find their own way – Relativism

Sola Scriptura - From the Scriptures

Paul on Sola Scriptura

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - 2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

2Ti 3:17 that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Direct Revelation from God
Fully Authoritative
εξηρτισμενος = Fully Equipped

Sola Scriptura - From the Scriptures

Sola Scriptura from the Word

Matthew 15:2-3 - 2 "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." 3 He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"

Colossians 2:8 - 8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

Mark 7:6-8 - 6 And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, "'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 7 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' 8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

Sola Scriptura - History

Church fathers on the authority of Scripture

Gregory of Nyssa confirms the supremacy of Scripture over Tradition. The Arians claimed that their tradition (or “custom”) did not allow for the Trinitarian position. Gregory responded with the following:

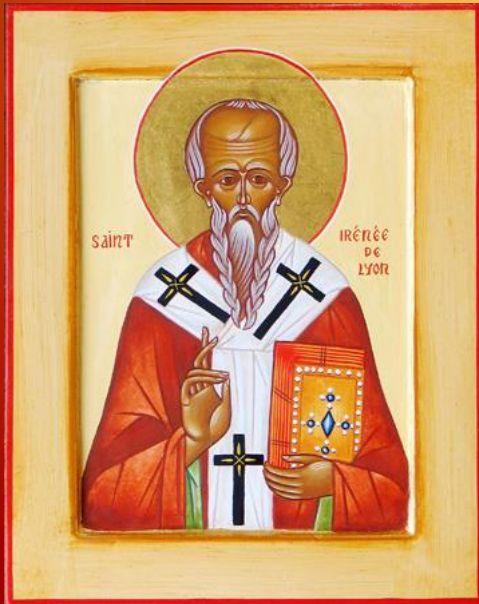


What then is our reply? We do not think that it is right to make their prevailing custom the law and rule of sound doctrine. For if custom is to avail for proof of soundness, we too, surely, may advance our prevailing custom; and if they reject this, we are surely not bound to follow theirs. Let the inspired Scripture, then, be our umpire, and the vote of truth will surely be given to those whose dogmas are found to agree with the Divine words. (Dogmatic Treatises, Book 12. On the Trinity, To Eustathius.)

Sola Scriptura - History

Church fathers on the authority of Scripture

Irenaeus of Lyons

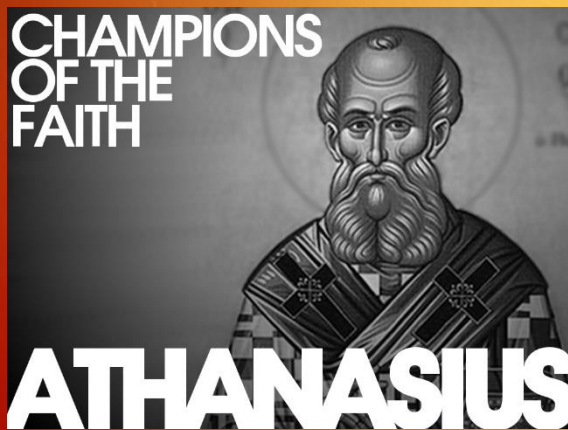


We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith. (Against Heresies, 3.1.1)

Sola Scriptura - History

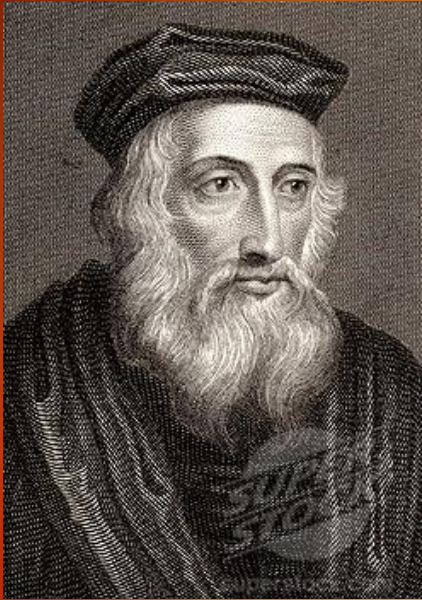
Church fathers on the authority of Scripture

Athanasius of Alexandria (after outlining the books of the Bible...)



These are fountains of salvation, that they who thirst may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone is proclaimed the doctrine of godliness. Let no man add to these, neither let him take ought from these. For concerning these the Lord put to shame the Sadducees, and said, 'Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.' And He reproved the Jews, saying, 'Search the Scriptures, for these are they that testify of Me.' (Festal Letter 39, 6–7)

Sola Scriptura - History



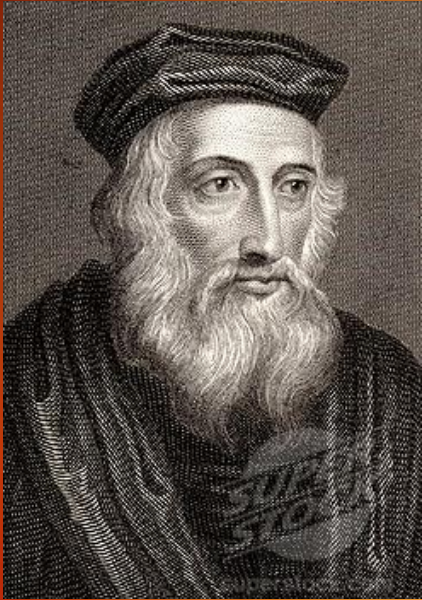
John Wycliffe (1320 - 1384)

Wycliffe was one of the first to stand up to the Roman Catholic Church and its Traditions.

- Justification - “Trust wholly in Christ, rely altogether on His sufferings; beware of seeking to be justified in any other way than by His righteousness. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for salvation. There must be atonement made for sin according to the righteousness of God. The person to make this atonement must be God and man.”

- Predestination - “This predestination is the principle gift of God, most freely given, since no one can merit his own predestination. Since it cannot be present without being present at the first moment of existence of the predestinate, it follows what is commonly said of grace that this is the principle grace. It can never be lost, since it is the basis of glory and bliss, which equally cannot be lost.” Therefore such predestination is a divine decree rather than the personal choice of any man.

Sola Scriptura - History



John Wycliffe (1320 - 1384)

He completed his Bible translation directly from the Vulgate into vernacular English in the year 1382.

Wycliffe taught and commissioned evangelists known as the Lollards to teach the Scriptures to the common people.

His theology was not perfect (purgatory/paradise), but it was close to our own.

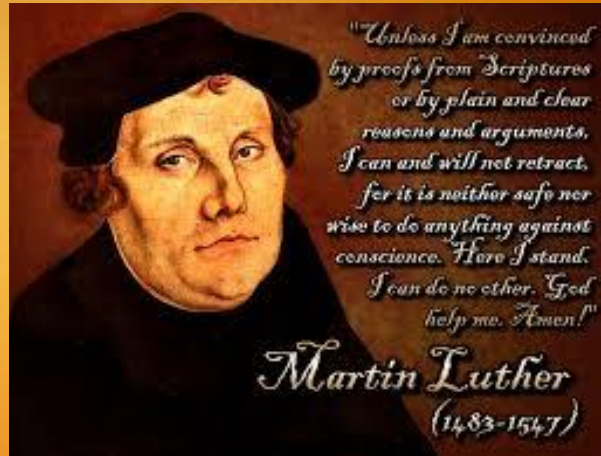
His view of Scripture:

- The Bible is free from all error and contradiction.
- It is the yardstick by which all doctrines, dogmas, and teachings are to be judged.
- Since the Bible is the word of God and directs him to salvation in Christ, every man should have it made available to him.

Sola Scriptura - History



Erasmus - Greek NT
(1469 - 1536)



Luther - German Bible
(1483-1546)



Tyndale - English Bible
(1490 - 1536)

Sola Scriptura - History

Council of Trent (1546 - 1563)

- Beginning of Counter Reformation
- Roman Catholics added the Apocrypha as accepted Scripture to justify certain traditions (e.g. prayers for the dead, c.f. 2 Macc. 12:45-46)
- COUNCIL OF TRENT: FOURTH SESSION, DECREE CONCERNING THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES (No Eastern Orthodox or Protestants attended):

•And it has thought it meet that a list of the sacred books be inserted in this decree, lest a doubt may arise in any one's mind, which are the books that are received by this Synod. They are as set down here below: of the Old Testament: the five books of Moses...the first book of Esdras, and the second which is entitled Nehemias; Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, ...Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, ...Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggaeus, Zacharias, Malachias; two books of the Machabees, the first and the second. Of the New Testament... But if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately condemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema.

Sola Scriptura - History

Council of Trent (1546 - 1563)

6th Session, Canon 9: If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification...let him be anathema.

6th Session, Canon 12: If anyone shall say that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone by which we are justified: let him be anathema.

Sola Scriptura - History

Council of Trent (1546 - 1563)

6th Session, Canon 30: If anyone says that after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either in this world or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened, let him be anathema.

7th Session, Canon 4: If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law [canons and decrees of the Church] are not necessary for salvation but...without them...men obtain from God through faith alone the grace of justification...let him be anathema.

Sola Scriptura - Detractors



Modern Day Defamers And Their Arguments

"Sola Scriptura cannot be found in the Bible!" Note how they appeal to Scripture to attempt to make their point...

Matthew 23:2-3 - "2 The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, 3 so practice and observe whatever they tell you--but not what they do. For they preach, but do not practice."

- Does "Moses' seat" constitute the validation of receiving, believing and practicing Church Tradition? NO!

2 Thessalonians 2:15 - "15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter. " (also see 1 Corinthians 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:6)

- Do these traditions include the Assumption of Mary, purgatory, the salvific work of the Mass, papal infallibility, the creation of a hierarchical priesthood, salvation by works, etc.? NO!
- "Tradition" is a reference to the Gospel.

Sola Scriptura - Detractors

Modern Day Defamers And Their Arguments



Acts 17:11 - 11 Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

- CA argues that the Jews were receiving Oral Tradition.

- In their mind...

ORAL TRADITION = Purgatory, doctrine concerning Mary, and other "essentials" only contained in Tradition

- In our mind....

ORAL TRADITION IS CONGRUENT WITH NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE - "TRADITION" IS THE GOSPEL!!!



Sola Scriptura - Detractors

Modern Day Defamers And Their Arguments



"Sola Scriptura leads to anarchy! After all, look at all the Protestant Denominations! There are too many interpretations."

- As if Roman Catholicism was a monolith (one stone)! Look at all the divisions - Vatican II, liturgy, disagreements on saints, rampant liberalism, popes disagreeing with popes, papal infallibility, role of women in the clergy, seperated brethren or anathematized heretics . The pointed finger is turned back on itself.
- Roman Catholicism is syncretistic - it molds itself to the religions around it (e.g. Voodoo elements to Catholicism in Haiti).
- There is one true meaning of Scripture and we sometimes mess that up due to sin. The Scriptures are clear, but we are sinful. That does not give us a need for a pope or another authority - This gives us need for repentance!



Sola Scriptura - Detractors

An Example - Sacred Tradition and Indulgences

World Youth Day 2013 Indulgence

Pope Francis granted a plenary and partial indulgence to all those who participate in World Youth Day 2013 in Rio. The Vatican made the news public through a Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary.

Bishop Nykiel recalled that the sacrament of penance not only forgives sins, but “has great therapeutic power...”

The indulgence can be received only once a day, unless it is received a second time in articulo mortis – that is, if the person is in danger of death. It can be received on behalf of departed loved ones.

Those who cannot go to World Youth Day may also obtain the indulgence if they go to confession, receive communion, pray for the intentions of the Pope, and participate in World Youth Day rites with devotion and piety through the media.

“Wherever they are, the faithful can also gain a partial indulgence, provided that with a contrite spirit they pray to God, concluding with the official World Youth Day prayer and invocations to Mary, Queen of Brazil, under the title of Our Lady of the Concepción Aparecida, as well as other patrons and intercessors of the meeting.”

Sola Scriptura - Detractors

An Example - Sacred Tradition and the Indulgences

The Year of Faith Indulgence

According to a decree . . . made public October 5, 2012,, Benedict XVI will grant faithful Plenary Indulgence for the occasion of the Year of Faith. The indulgence will be valid from the opening of the Year on 11 October 2012 until its end on 24 November 2013.

- Plenary Indulgence for the temporal punishment of sins, imparted by the mercy of God and applicable also to the souls of deceased faithful, may be obtained by all faithful who, truly penitent, take Sacramental Confession and the Eucharist and pray in accordance with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff.
- Each time they attend at least three sermons during the Holy Missions, or at least three lessons on the Acts of the Council or the articles of the Catechism of the Catholic Church...
- Each time they visit, in the course of a pilgrimage, a papal basilica, a Christian catacomb,...and there participate in a sacred celebration, or at least remain for a congruous period of time in prayer and pious meditation, concluding with the recitation of the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form, and invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary...



Sola Scriptura vs. Infallible Tradition?

"Sacred Oral Tradition" in the Indulgences?

There is a reason why indulgences became the flashpoint of the Reformation (Tetzel, Luther and the 95 Theses)!

If these be true, then none of our other beliefs are true concerning justification, sanctification, the autonomy of the local church, the priesthood, Sola Scriptura, etc.



Sola Scriptura

Why is Sola Scriptura Important?

- Where does our authority come from?
- Sola Scriptura is what the Bible claims for itself...
- Anything else opens us to anarchy and the whims of men.
- Sola Scriptura - Affirming it is Soli Deo Gloria!

Are you prepared to defend it?

“The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.” — Westminster Confession of Faith