

Sola Scriptura 1

by Anton Bosch

Anton Bosch's sermon emphasizes the importance of Sola Scriptura and the authority of Scripture in the life of a believer.

Duration: 45:44

Scripture: Psalm 119:89-96

Topics: "Sola Scriptura"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of discerning whether the words spoken from the pulpit are truly the Word of God. He highlights how the church has been conditioned to believe whatever they are taught, even if it contradicts the Scriptures. The preacher emphasizes the authority of the Bible and warns against blindly following the teachings of preachers or gurus. He references Acts 17:10, where Paul preached in Berea, and Galatians 1:8, where Paul warns against accepting any other gospel. The sermon serves as a reminder to carefully examine and compare teachings with the Word of God.

Transcript

Turn with me please to Psalm 119. We read together from Psalm 119 this morning and I'm going to read another section from Psalm 119. And as you know, Psalm 119 deals with the Word of God, with the Scriptures, and that's what I want to speak with you about today and next week, the next two weeks.

So let's read from Psalm 119 from verse 89. You'll see that, you'll know that this is the longest chapter in the Bible, the longest Psalm, and it is divided up into sections and you'll see at the head of each section there is a strange word and at the head of the section from 89 to 96 is the word Lamed, which are the Hebrew letters of the Hebrew alphabet. And so if you go to the beginning of Psalm 119, you'll see it begins with Aleph, which is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

So these sections are titled by those Hebrew letters and in fact in some translations you will see the actual Greek symbol on the side of that heading. So let's read from 89 through to 112. Psalm 119 verse 89.

Forever O Lord, your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations. You established the earth and it abides.

They continue this day according to your ordinances, for all are your servants. Unless your law had been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have

given me life.

I am yours, save me, for I have sought your precepts. The wicked wait for me to destroy me, but I will consider your testimonies. I have seen the consummation of all perfection, but your commandment is exceedingly broad.

Oh, how I love your law. It is my meditation all the day. You through your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep your precepts. I've restrained my feet from every evil way that I may keep your word.

I have not departed from your judgments, for you yourself have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through your precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep your righteous judgments. I am afflicted very much.

Revive me, O Lord, according to thy word. Accept, I pray, the freewill offering of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me your judgments. My life is continually in my hand, yet I do not forget your law.

The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I have strayed from your precepts. Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined my heart to perform your statutes forever to the very end.

Verse 89, where we began, it says, Forever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven. The word of God is established. The word settled there means it is established.

It is firm. It does not change. And it is forever established in heaven.

Jesus said, Heaven and earth will pass away, but my word will endure forever. And that is what I want to speak with you over the next two weeks. One of the war cries, as it were, of the Reformation is the word sola scriptura, or the two-word sola scriptura.

That is Latin. Many of you speak Spanish, and you'll be able to figure out what it means. Sola means only, only.

And scriptura, even if you don't speak Spanish or Latin, you'll understand that that is scripture, only scripture. Martin Luther and the other Reformers, but particularly Martin Luther, had a number of things which they said are the only things on which we will build our faith and what we believe. One of them was only faith, sola fide.

And the other was only the scriptures, sola scriptura. And that is very, very important. In fact, that is the most important principle on which this church and our belief and our teaching is established.

And so I want to spend some time to understand that we understand this principle very, very clearly. And when we say sola scriptura, we mean that there is nothing outside of the word of God that is necessary or important for us in our life and in our faith. Martin Luther said that sola scriptura means that what is

asserted without the scripture may be held as an opinion but need not be believed.

In other words, if anything is said that is not in the Bible, it is a opinion. Anything that I tell you which I cannot back up with the scriptures is my opinion. And you can listen to that, and you can say, well, that's a good idea or a good opinion, but you don't have to believe it.

In other words, what we believe is based on the scriptures and on the scriptures alone. Now, there are two main attacks today against Christianity, and those attacks come from within. They come from amongst Christians and from teachers and spiritual leaders.

The one is to say that the scriptures are not sufficient. The scriptures are not complete. And I'm going to look at some of the ways in which this is expressed by various groups this morning.

That's the one problem, and that's the thing I'm going to address for the next two weeks. The other problem is that we remove from the scriptures those sections which we don't like. In other words, what we do is either add to the scriptures--so many people believe the Bible.

They say, yeah, we believe this is the Word of God. We believe the whole of the Bible. We believe that this is infallible, that this is definitely what God has to say to us.

But then we add to this various things, which I'm going to look at in a moment. That's one problem. The other problem is that we take away from the scriptures.

So we say, we believe the Bible, but we don't believe that those scriptures that deal with this issue or that issue are relevant to us today any longer. And you'll be familiar that one of the big arguments amongst Christians and non-Christians at the moment is the one about homosexuality. And so, oh, but that was the way it was in Bible times, but that doesn't mean that God really intended for us here in the United States in the--what year are we? 2006.

That that really applies to us. In other words, what we're doing is we're taking away. These are the two problems--adding to the scriptures or removing from the scriptures.

And these are ancient problems. These are not new problems. Now, the way in which we add to the scriptures are a number of ways, and various groups of churches in the world today apply these or do these various things.

And I'm not going to put names to them. You can put names to them if you like. I'm sure each one of us know one or more of these people who do this kind of thing.

Some add to the scriptures. They say, yeah, we believe the scriptures, but we add to it the apocrypha. Now, the apocrypha are the writings which we do not, which are not commonly accepted to be inspired scripture.

So you can get some Bibles that have the apocryphal books added to them. So not just the 66. It's the 66 plus, I don't know, 14 or whatever number of apocryphal books there are.

So it's the scripture plus those books. It's the scriptures plus the magisterium, the church's authority to teach and interpret divine truth. Now, this is not just common to the Roman churches.

This is common to many churches. That we say, well, you know, it's not just what the Bible teaches, but it's also what the pastor has to say about the Bible that forms what we believe. So it's the teachings of the church.

Then there are the ex cathedra pronouncements of the Pope. When he speaks ex cathedra, meaning from his seat, speaking officially, he is infallible. And that is at the same level as the word of God.

Now, I think one of the issues is where we put these things in our priorities. How important we attach or what importance we attach to these things. And so as Martin Luther said, we can have opinions, but they can never be at the same level of authority as the Bible.

And they can never be higher than the Bible. They have to be underneath, they have to be subservient to, they have to be inferior to the Bible. The Bible has to be the highest and the most supreme authority.

The moment anything else is put at the same level as the Bible or higher than the Bible, we have serious problems. And so there are the ex cathedra pronouncements, there is canon law, there are all sorts of other things that are added to the scriptures. Then there are the groups that add to the scriptures their own, their own scriptures.

Like the Book of Mormon, like Mary Baker Eddy's book called Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, like Joseph Smith's writings, many other writings. And I've mentioned just some of the major cults there, but there are many other cults that also have their own leading teachings of their gurus. Now, this is not just mainstream cults that do this.

Good Christian churches also do this, because they'll say, but our founder, he taught this. Or our pastor teaches this. Or we will quote some name and we'll say, but he taught that.

And we, in our minds, put that at the same level of the scriptures. That's very, very dangerous. Yes, it's good to know what teachers teach, and it's good to remember what teachers teach when they teach the scriptures.

But those teachings should only be there to be able to explain the scriptures to us, for us to have more insight into the scripture. They can never be the same level of power or authority as the scriptures. Now, let's make this practical.

Because what we believe comes out in what we do. Remember, James says that faith is evidenced by works. And so what I believe is manifest, and I can see what someone believes by the way that they live.

So when you ask people, why do you do this thing? Whether that be in their private life, or whether it be in their church life, why do you do what you do? Why do you do it that way? The moment they quote anything other than the scripture, you know that there's a problem. So why do we remember the Lord's death? Because the scripture teaches us to do so. Jesus said, do this in remembrance of me.

It's taught in the Gospels, it's taught in Paul's letters, particularly the book of Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 11. The scripture teaches us to remember the Lord's death. So should we do that? Yeah, we must do that.

The scripture tells us to do so. Why do we celebrate, what was yesterday? Tres Reyes? Eh? Oh, Friday. Twelfth day of Christmas.

Why do we celebrate the twelfth day of Christmas? Well, we don't. Some people do. Why do they celebrate the twelfth day of Christmas? Does the Bible teach us to celebrate the twelfth day of Christmas? No.

So why do we do that? Oh, the church says we should. Or our tradition says we should. Now, this is just a very topical--yeah, it's topical right now because it's just a couple of days ago.

You know that I was just thinking that there are so many problems with that whole idea. First of all, let me rattle your cage a little bit more. Does the scripture say we must celebrate Christmas? No.

There's nothing in the scripture that says you have to celebrate Christmas. Now, that would fall in the category of what we would call maybe an opinion or a tradition. You can celebrate Christmas if you like, but you can't make a doctrine about it.

You can't say you have to celebrate Christmas and you have to have a tree and it must be a real tree because the scripture has nothing to say about that. And so you cannot cause division about that. You cannot say, I will not fellowship with Dale because he will not celebrate Christmas.

And so we cannot have fellowship together because he's a heathen. He doesn't celebrate Christmas. Now, I don't know if he does or doesn't.

It doesn't matter. But we cannot divide over that issue because the scripture has nothing to say about it. It doesn't tell us that Christmas was on the 25th day of December.

Jesus was born on the 25th day of December. The scripture does not tell us that we must celebrate his birth. It tells us we must celebrate his death, but not his birth.

So you can do that if you like, but don't make a doctrine of it. Don't make an institution of it. And then of course, you know, 12 days from Christmas.

I'm not sure how they figure that out because that's supposed to be the day, the three Kings. Now remember again, the scripture says nothing about three Kings. Speaks about wise men and doesn't say how many there were.

But now we have this whole thing built on this idea that we know that he was born on the 25th of December, that we have to celebrate that, that we have to celebrate the 12th day when the three Kings, there were no three and there were no Kings. But we have this whole thing built on what? Man's opinion. Not on the word of God.

So not only do the cults do this, but Christians do that. You know, God forbid that if Jesus doesn't come and this church is still here in 50 years time, and they asked your great-grandchildren who come here in 50 years time, why do you meet at 1045 on a Sunday morning? They said, but that's the way it's got to be. That doesn't have to be the way it's got to be.

Scripture has nothing to say about meeting on 1045 on a Sunday morning. What does it teach us about? It says that we must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. We must meet together.

We must teach the word of God. We must worship God. We must do many of the things that we do this morning.

But why do we have the service, the order in which we have it? We have a time of singing and of worship, and then we take the offering and we do the announcements and then we preach and then we go home. Do we have to do it that way? No. But you know what, if we came next week and I just got up at 1045 and I started preaching, some people would be very upset.

Why? Because we've put our traditions at the same level as the scriptures. All right. So then we have--so we've spoken about scripture plus tradition.

I haven't got that on the screen yet. Sinner decisions, creeds. Creeds are important.

They're helpful because they define what we believe. But they, unfortunately to some people, have been elevated to the same level importance as the scriptures. We can never do that.

Now, let's get a little bit more modern and up-to-date. Spiritual gifts. Teachings of the leaders.

This is one of the really big issues and has been for the last 20 or 30 years. In fact, for the last 100 years, but more specifically the last 20 or 30 years. So prophecy in the sense of someone getting up in the church and saying, that says the Lord.

Why the Lord I'm telling you this and this and this and this and this. And sometimes those things that are said are contrary to the scriptures or they are not supported by the scriptures. They are in addition to the scriptures.

But because somebody went off in a high-pitched voice and said, that says the Lord, we now have something which we add to the word of God and that becomes scripture to us. Well, not to us, I trust, but to some people. That's very, very dangerous.

Now I don't deny the importance and the need for spiritual gifts for tongues and interpretation and prophecy, but it can never be at the same level as the word of God. It can never be contrary to the word of God. It can never be in contradiction to the word of God.

It has to be in line with the scriptures and in support of the scriptures. That's the only role those sorts of utterances can play. But the moment we have any declaration, whether it is by a spiritual gift or whether it is because of a teacher, that we revered with such, and we elevate at such a level that when he speaks, we say, no, this is the word of God.

In South Africa and many of the churches, they have a--and I'm sure we haven't noticed them, but I'm sure you've seen them--sort of a cloth thing that drapes over the front of the pulpit, and it has a message on it. In nice gold letters, invariably it's a velvet--what would you call it? Banner. And it normally has a pertinent message.

And one of the most popular messages that you find on the front of these pulpits is, thus saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord. Now, that creates an impression that everything that is being said from the pulpit is what God is saying.

But is everything that I say what God is saying? Is that the word of God? It may not be. If I say to you that I think that everybody in this church should be giving 30% of their income, well, obviously, because it's your pocket, you're going to reject that one immediately. But is that the word of God? No, it's not.

And so the speaker or the preacher or the teacher is human. I am human, and I make mistakes. And sometimes I listen to my messages that I preached a long time ago, and I say, you know, I didn't quite understand that thing at that time.

And I was preaching according to the understanding I had, but my understanding was incomplete. I thank God for His grace and His mercy in my life that I've not had to change my opinion on any of the major doctrines that I've ever believed. It doesn't mean I haven't examined them, and I haven't been very careful to check whether, in fact, this is the truth.

And what I'm preaching to you today and what I preach every day is not because that is my tradition or because it is just the way I've grown up, but I have examined every one of these teachings, and for me, I am sure that that is the truth. But I could be wrong. I could be wrong.

And so it is important for you to build your faith not on what I teach you, but on the word of God. Now, I don't think many preachers will warn you about that. Most teachers will tell you, you need me if you're going to understand this book.

And what I'm telling you is the word of God. And I even speak about--I have this little phrase, I speak as the oracles of God, the mouthpiece of God. I am not the mouthpiece of God.

I have a gift to understand the Scriptures and to explain the Scriptures. God has been gracious in giving me that ability. God has given you other abilities, and other people have--we each have different gifts and abilities.

But it doesn't mean that I am infallible. It doesn't mean that my word is the end of the conversation on the teaching of Scriptures. And you remember that, and we're going to come back to the book of Acts.

In fact, let's go there, Acts chapter 17. And I know that I've said some of these things to you in the past, but I'm putting them together in this form, in this package, because it's very, very important that we understand these things, that these things are deeply ingrained within our hearts, because these truths are being undermined every day in Christian churches, by Christian teachers, and by Christian books. And in Acts chapter 17, we have the account of Paul preaching in a city called Berea.

And verse 10, Acts 17:10, Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded--the old King James says noble--than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Now remember, this is not some upstart preacher.

This is Paul the apostle. Where did Paul get the things from that he was teaching? He says, that which I received from the Lord, I deliver to you. And he asserts this a number of times in his epistles.

Now in Paul--and we have to remember that Paul is one of those men who was divinely used by God to write some of the New Testament Scripture, or most of, a lot of the New Testament Scripture. At that time, the Scriptures were not complete. They only had the Old Testament.

They didn't have the New Testament. Somebody had to write the New Testament, and Paul was one of those vessels that God chose to do that. And Paul, I believe, was caught up into heaven the same way as Moses was caught up--he went up into the mountain, and God gave him the law.

Paul was caught up, he says, into the third heaven, and I believe that God revealed to him things that he wrote. Now that level of revelation was unique to Paul. This is very, very important.

Many modern prophets and teachers will say, God revealed to me this or that or the other thing. When that revelation is in addition to the Scriptures, you have to reject it, because Paul was the last of the men in the Scriptures that was called and gifted to receive that kind of revelation. That was a unique gifting and calling in order to write the Scriptures.

Once the Scriptures have been completed and written up, there is no longer any need for that kind of revelation. Now, this is Paul preaching. He was schooled in the Old Testament Scriptures.

He had received revelation from God. And yet, what were these people doing? Remember, these were not Christians. These were Jewish believers.

They were Jews, and he was preaching in the synagogue. And it says in verse 11 that they received the word with all readiness. So they said, that's a good message.

That's great. Did they just swallow what Paul had to say, hook, line, and sinker? No, it says they searched the Scriptures. Now, Paul was preaching about what? He was preaching about Jesus.

He was preaching about the second coming. He was preaching about the resurrection. He was preaching about all of these things that we read about in the New Testament.

But these people went to the Old Testament, and they checked in the Old Testament to see whether what Paul was preaching was true. Now, many modern preachers will say that's not a good thing. Now, I'm encouraging you--and in fact, I didn't at the beginning of the service--but I want to encourage you to check whether I'm teaching whether that is in fact in the Scriptures.

I want you to be following in your Bibles when I read to make sure that that is in fact what the Bible says. Many churches discourage that. Many churches discourage people bringing in their Bibles.

Many churches will dim the lights so that you cannot read the Scriptures, and so that you can only read what is put up on the PowerPoint. We don't have PowerPoint, but we have an overhead. That's what Paul used, right? But you need to check the Scriptures.

If Paul was checked out, you better be checking me out, because I'm nowhere near Paul. And if you want to be safe, you need to be going home. And that's one of the reasons why we have the Bible studied the way we do on a Wednesday night, so that we can go over what was preached, and people can say, but I didn't understand that.

I didn't agree with you. Because when I read the Bible, it said something different. Now, would you God that you would have the courage on a Wednesday night to say, brother, I don't agree.

Now, let's not disagree in an uncharitable, unkind way, but let's have the courage to say, but you know, I looked at the Scripture, and I just don't see how you get that. That's important. It's important for you, and it's important for me, because I'm learning the same way as you're learning.

And it says concerning the--it doesn't say that Paul looked at these guys and said, you know, you guys have got the Jezebel spirit, you know. You rebellious lot, how can you question me? I'm your teacher. No, it says they were more noble-minded.

They were more--what does this translation say? I've lost it. Seventeen. More fair-minded.

More fair-minded. In other words, this was a good thing. Anyone who tells you it's not a good thing for you to be checking out what the preacher is saying, just get out of there as fast as you can.

Now, folks, this is real, because we have today what we have never had before, and that is that we have a whole generation of Christians, millions and millions of Christians all over the world, who have been conditioned over the last 30 years to accept what is being said from the pulpit unconditionally. And preachers are saying the most outrageous things, and people are believing that, because they are no longer being like the Bereans and saying, let me check whether this is true. And you can't believe the things that preachers are saying.

It is unbelievable that logical, rational people can believe the things that they are being taught. But they are, because over years--and I can explain to you in great detail how that over the last 30 years, through a whole series of events and series of doctrines and teachings, the church has been conditioned to come to this point where people just believe whatever they are being taught, because the word of the preacher, especially if he's on television, has become more authoritative than the Scriptures. Oh, we believe the Bible, but we also believe what our Guru says, whoever that Guru may be.

About three years ago, I was touring the United States, preaching in different places, and I was invited to attend a conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Quite a mind-blowing experience--5,000 people, 5,000 pastors in the auditorium at a time, some of the biggest names in evangelical circles preaching at that time. And this was not a cult, this is a very prominent evangelical church which is renowned for its methodical teaching of the Scriptures.

But you know, I never heard the Bible being preached. And in my discussions with various people, as I would bump into people in the cafeteria in different places, and I would say, but what about this? And these people were preaching and teaching and quoting the Gurus, like you or like I quote the Scriptures. And I would say, but the Bible says, and they say, oh no, no, no, but that man says.

And I was at a stalemate. I had no basis for discussion or for debate with them, because my form of reference or my frame of reference with the Bible, their frame of reference was the teaching of the teachers. And they were two totally different things.

We're speaking about worship in the evening service on Sunday evenings, and I just received a thing in the mail on Friday promoting a workshop or a seminar on worship--four pages. I'll make reference to some of this again this evening. But you know, in all of that, there is not a single statement to say, we are going to teach you what the Bible teaches about worship.

The Bible is not even mentioned in all of the blurb and all of the promotional material for people to come and to learn how to lead worship. No reference to the Bible or to the Scriptures or to the Word of God whatsoever. Nothing.

It has nothing to do with the issue. The Bible is irrelevant today, because we have grown out and beyond, and we've got to beyond the Scriptures. And so it's Scriptures plus spiritual gifts, teaching of the leaders, and experiences.

You know, this is going a lot slower than I thought. I'm getting more sidetracked than I imagined. So it's going to be three weeks, I think.

Experiences. Should I do this or that? Oh yeah. You know, it happened to me, and therefore it has to be true.

Should people be running up and down the aisle in the church, barking like a dog? Don't laugh, they do that. I think it's dying down a little bit, but it was very big a few years ago. But the Bible doesn't say that you should do that.

Oh no, but God made me do it, and I felt that that was very real. So what happens? My experience becomes--my frame of reference--my experience becomes equal to or greater than the Word of God, because it happened to me. It's got to be true.

Now we know that our experiences are changing, and our experiences are not--we'll get back to that. Why do I need the Word of God? Because I need something which is firm and unchanging. You can't build on preachers because preachers change.

You look at the gurus today, the guys who are at the cutting edge--one of the part of the language they use--at the cutting edge of Christianity today. Why are they at the cutting edge? Because they change every day. They change with the culture.

They change with whatever's popular. And so you look at these guys 10 years ago, and you look at them today, and you see two different men. What they believe, what they teach, how they live--totally different, because they're changing all the time.

But the Word of God--forever your word, O Lord--is settled in heaven. I cannot build on teachers because teachers change. I cannot build on my experiences because my experiences change.

I feel good some days, and I feel bad other days. I have a lot of faith some days, and I have very little faith on other days. And I'm sure that it's not very different for you, but your word endures forever.

All right, let me see. Let me deal with one more argument, and I know we're dealing with all the negative stuff, but hopefully next week we can move on to--and in fact, I'm going to try in the few minutes that I have left to just deal with these two other modern arguments. The first is that God is not limited by His word.

Have you ever heard that statement? My God is not limited. I serve an unlimited God. God is not in a box.

Don't box in the Holy Spirit. God is greater than His word. Surely God can do many more things than He has written down in His word.

And of course, the scripture that I've quoted there--John chapter 21, verse 25--is the favorite verse that these people like to quote, because it says that all the world would not be able to contain everything that had to be written concerning what Jesus did and what He said. Yes, that's true. But what that is saying is that the word of God is incomplete.

And so God is still writing, and in fact, many of these preachers will say--and folks, I'm not speaking about cults. I'm speaking about mainline evangelical Christianity today--will say the Bible is not complete. God is still revealing Himself.

God is still speaking to us. God is still giving us progressive and more revelation. Now, I'm going to address that, and I'm not going to get into the argument about that today, but simply to say to you that God

is limited by His word.

Now, that is a revolutionary statement today. Thirty years ago, people would say, well, of course He is. Today, people have been so conditioned to believe that God is not limited by His word, God is not confined or boxed in by the scriptures, that He can operate outside of the scriptures and outside of His word and outside of His laws, that when I say to you God cannot operate outside of His word, that is revolutionary.

In fact, it's not. That has always been accepted. Forever your word, O Lord, is settled in heaven.

And I'll prove to you the degree to which God is held by His word. I'm just going to introduce this, and I'll pick up on this again next week. The emphasis is we've been speaking about the special gifted ones, the need for us to search the scriptures daily, as the Bereans did in Acts chapter 17 verse 11.

Deuteronomy chapter 30 verse 11 to 14, you can read it for yourself. You will not need to send overseas, and this message is particularly pertinent to Africans who believe that the only truth comes from America. You don't need to send for someone to come from over the sea or down from heaven, but the word of God will be written on your hearts.

And I know that I'm leaving gaps, but I'll just conclude. Galatians chapter 1 verse 8, let's conclude with that verse. And I'm sure you should know that verse off by heart.

And I want you to look at what Paul is saying. Even if we, in other words, Paul is speaking, he says, even if I, Paul, or an angel from heaven. Folk, listen to this.

Even if Paul himself appeared here and preached from this pulpit, or an angel appeared out of heaven one Sunday morning and stood in this pulpit, and preached any other gospel to you than that which we have preached, let him be anathema, accursed. What is the message that Paul preached? It's defined in the scriptures, in the New Testament. And folk, there are many messages that are being preached today which are not the message Paul preached, and men are swallowing it.

Paul says those people should be accursed. It doesn't matter who it is. Paul says, even if I change my message, even if I, Paul, change my message and I preach another message, he says, let him be accursed.

And just in case we think that he didn't mean what he said, he says it again. Verse 9, as we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than you have received, let him be accursed, or anathema. Folk, the Word of God is complete, and it is sufficient.

It's all you need. If you were living on a desert island, and you had contact with nobody else but you only had the scriptures, you would have everything you need to order your life here on earth, and to establish your relationship with God, and to get to heaven. You don't need anything more.

And today, you still don't need anything more. Sola Scriptura, only the scriptures. Thank God for preachers, and for teachers, and for books, and for 2,000 years of history, and of tradition, and all of these things that help us to understand some things.

But at the end of the day, we don't need them. Remember, the believers in the book of Acts didn't even have the New Testament, they only had the Old Testament and the sayings of Jesus. That's all we need.

Father, as we speak about these things, we pray that we first of all, Lord, not go from here feeling proud and saying, we're not like those down there who believe all sorts of fables, and stories, and things that men say. But Lord, that we may fear each one of us, lest we find ourselves drifting from the truth. And Lord, that we may affirm in our own hearts that we will believe nothing outside of your word.

And Lord, if it cannot be proven, and if it cannot be established from your scriptures, Lord, we will not accept it, not individually, nor corporately as a church. But we will believe your word. We believe your word does not change.

We believe, Lord, that it is forever settled in heaven, that heaven and earth will pass away, but your word will endure forever. Lord, give us grace not just to believe that in theory, but Lord, to live it. And Lord, when as we face a new day tomorrow and a new week tomorrow with all of its challenges, Lord, that we may find the solutions in your scriptures, that we may be the people you want us to be.

Part us with your blessing, Lord. And as we enjoy a time of fellowship upstairs, we pray that it may be rich and it may be sweet, we ask these things in Jesus' name. Lord, we also pray for Margaret, who's badly shaken this morning and who's not well.

We pray that you would just be with her as she deals with the trauma of this accident and the financial and other consequences. And Lord, for others who are not here, we pray that you'd be with them. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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