

The Necessity and Sufficiency of Scripture

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Systematic Theology

The necessity and sufficiency of Scripture

Why is the doctrine of the sufficiency of scripture critical in holding to absolute truth and the biblical worldview?

Let's begin with definitions:

- **Biblical worldview** we mean viewing all aspects of life through the lens of God's created order as revealed according to Scripture
- **Truth** we mean that which conforms to reality according to God's revelation through nature and according to scripture.

Statistics:

Arizona Christian University Research

Biblical Worldview

- **6 - 9%** percent of *Americans* now have or hold a Biblical worldview
- Church studies again suggest that approximately **12 - 15%** of *self-professed Christians* hold a biblical worldview
- Sadly, these same studies suggest that approximately **22 - 25%** of *clergy*, composed of Catholics and Protestants, hold a biblical worldview.

Truth

- Survey of adults 36 years and older revealed that 64% of those adults said quote there are no moral absolutes
- Only 22 % claim that there are moral absolutes
- Those from the ages of 18 to their early 20s, the number of those adults who reject any moral absolutes actually skyrocket to 75 percent
- The survey concluded by asking teenagers ages 16 through 18 the same questions. The study reported that the numbers spiked again to
 - 83 percent of those rejected moral absolutes

Again... today, 83 percent of teenagers say that morality and truth depend upon one's individual preference and circumstances.

So the younger you are, the more likely you'd embrace the idea that there are no moral absolutes.

At this rate, if current trends continue, no one will be able to tell you about the ideas or truths that transformed their lives, as no one will claim absolute transformative truth.

So the issues of Truth and biblical worldview are critical, and the biblical worldview is of great value.

Sadly, far too many Evangelical pulpits today have pastors who have compromised preaching the truth of Scripture and too often bend the knee on cultural issues in the hopes of **remaining relevant** rather than **standing on the revelation** of the Word of God.

We are teaching Systematic Theology and tonight's lesson, the necessity and sufficiency of Scripture because we MUST be prepared and and followers of Christ MUST be equipped with God's Word.

And this comes with a cost!

The cure for what ails the cultural Christian today is a heavy dose of Scriptural sufficiency. We must return to the Word of God.

A Biblical worldview begins with the sufficiency of God's Word.

Holding to absolute truth requires the same.

The writer of Hebrews explains:

Hebrews 4:12 CSB

¹² For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

It is the Word of God that transforms the human heart.

It is the Word of God that shapes and re-shapes the minds of men.

It is the Word of God that restores the soul.

It is the Word of God that renews one's life.

Hebrews 6:19 CSB

¹⁹ We have this hope as an **anchor for the soul**, firm and secure.

Psalm 130:5 CSB

⁵ I wait for the LORD; I wait

and put my **hope** in his word.

[Psalm 119:62](#), The Word of God is our joy.

[Ephesians 6:17](#), The Word of God is a sword

[Proverbs 30:5](#), The word of God is Flawless

[Proverbs 19:7](#), The word of God is wisdom

[Matthew 4:4](#), The Word of God sustains you

and in

[Luke 1:37](#), The word of God will never fail

Isaiah 55:11 CSB

¹¹ so my word that comes from my mouth

will not return to me empty,

but it will accomplish what I please

and will prosper in what I send it to do.”

As Christians, we MUST understand the power of the Word of God. We MUST proclaim its truth and share it with all we encounter.

Why? Because there is a lost world that will ultimately die and go to hell.

THE BIBLE IS NECESSARY.

Why? Because most Christians do not hold a consistent Biblical worldview.

Why? The Word of God is intended to shape every aspect of life, including, but not limited to, politics, finances, relationships, and ethics.

And, what we will discover tonight, not only is the Word of God NECESSARY, it is SUFFICIENT for Christians in whatever circumstance he/she faces.

[PRAYER]

Part I: Necessity of Scripture

The necessity of Scripture means that the Bible is necessary for knowing the Gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing God's will, but it is not necessary for knowing that God exists or for knowing something about God's character and moral laws.

Romans 1:20 CSB

²⁰ For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse.

A. THE BIBLE IS NECESSARY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOSPEL

1. *Several Passages Emphasize That Salvation Only Comes through Faith in Jesus Christ*

Romans 10:13–17 CSB

¹³ For **everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher?

¹⁵ And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: **How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.** ¹⁶ But not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, **Lord, who has believed our message?** ¹⁷ So *faith comes from what is heard*, and *what is heard comes through the message about Christ.*

Saving faith comes from hearing the gospel message, and **this hearing of the gospel message comes about through the word of Christ** (that is, the preaching about Christ). The implication seems to be that without hearing the preaching of the gospel of Christ, no one can be saved.

Rob's Remember Point: Salvation only comes through the belief in Jesus.

There is no other way to eternal life!

This saving knowledge is in the Word of God. Therefore, Scripture is essential and absolutely necessary.

However, I have NO AUTHORITY.

Christ is the Authority

He is the Word

These are His words:

John 3:18 CSB

¹⁸ Anyone who believes in him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God.

John 14:6 CSB

⁶ Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 10:7–9 CSB

⁷ Jesus said again, “Truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁹ I am the gate. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.

John 6:35 CSB

³⁵ “I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again.

John 11:25 CSB

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live.

John 8:24 CSB

²⁴ Therefore I told you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am he, you will die in your sins.”

Matthew 7:13–14 CSB

¹³ “Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. ¹⁴ How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.

Peter - on trial before the Sanhedrin:

Acts 4:12 CSB

¹² There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.”

Paul

1 Timothy 2:5–6 CSB

⁵ For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time.

The necessity of Scripture is that one must either read the Gospel message in the Bible for oneself or hear it from another person. Even those believers who came to salvation in the old covenant did so by trusting in God’s words that promised a Savior to come.

Sinful people need more on which to rest their faith than just an intuitive guess that God might provide a means of salvation.

The only foundation firm enough to rest one’s faith on is the Word of God itself (whether spoken or written).

2. Different Views of How People Can Be Saved

A. Universalism: All people who ever lived will be saved (because God loves everyone and won’t judge anyone).

B. Pluralism: All sincere religious people from all religions will be saved (because all religions are different paths to the same God).

C. Inclusivism: The theological or philosophical belief that while one set of beliefs is uniquely true, aspects of truth and salvation can be found in other religions or worldviews.

D. Annihilationism: People who have not believed in Christ will not be saved, but after they die they will not be punished (or not for very long) because they will be annihilated and cease to exist.

E. Postmortem evangelism: After unbelievers die, they will be given another opportunity (or a first opportunity) to trust in Christ, and most or all of them will be saved in this way.

F. Exclusivism: Only those who have heard of Christ and trusted in Him will be saved.

This is why many people say that Christianity is offensive. It is the Christian's way or no way.

Reply: Yes!

B. THE BIBLE IS NECESSARY FOR MAINTAINING SPIRITUAL LIFE

Matthew 4:4 CSB

⁴ He answered, "It is written: **Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"

Our spiritual life is maintained by daily nourishment with the Word of God, just as our physical lives are maintained by daily nourishment with physical food.

To neglect regular reading of God's Word is as detrimental to the health of our souls as the neglect of physical food is detrimental to the health of our bodies.

Similarly, Moses tells the people of Israel of the importance of God's words for their lives:

Deuteronomy 32:47 CSB

⁴⁷ For they are not meaningless words to you but they are your life, and by them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”

Peter encourages the Christians to whom he writes,

1 Peter 2:2 CSB

² Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation,

The Bible, then, is necessary for maintaining spiritual life and for growth in the Christian life.

C. THE BIBLE IS NECESSARY FOR CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL

No certainty of God's will is possible without the Word of God.

We live in a fallen world.

- You may go to a friend who is wise. But his wisdom cannot replace the Word of God.
- You may pay for a professional counsellor... even a Christian counsellor, but their advice cannot compare to the Word of God.
- You may go to a great theologian like Keith Shorter, but he, too, is human, and even his word cannot stand beside the Word of God.

The Word of God gives us clear and definite statements about God's will.

God has not revealed all things to us, but he has revealed enough for us to know his will:

Deuteronomy 29:29 CSB

²⁹ The hidden things belong to the LORD our God, but the revealed things belong to us and our children forever, so that we may follow all the words of this law.

As it was in the time of Moses, so it is now with us: God has **revealed** his words to us that we might **obey** his laws and thereby **do** his will.

To be “blameless” in God's sight is to “walk in the law of the LORD” ([Ps. 119:1](#)).

The “blessed” man is one who does not follow the will of wicked people ([Ps. 1:1](#)), but delights “in the law of the LORD,” and meditates on God's law “day and night” ([Ps. 1:2](#)).

To love God (and thereby to act in a way that is pleasing to him) is to “keep his commandments” ([1 John 5:3](#)).

If we are to have a certain knowledge of God's will, then, we **MUST attain it through the study of Scripture.**”

The Bible is necessary for certain knowledge about anything.

A philosopher might argue as follows: The fact that we do not know everything requires us to be somewhat uncertain about everything we do claim to know.

This is because some fact unknown to us may yet turn out to prove that what we thought to be true was actually false.

For example, we think we know our date of birth, our name, our age, and so forth. But we must admit that it is possible that some day we could find that our

parents had given us false information, and our “certain” knowledge would then turn out to be incorrect.

If we do not know all the facts in the universe, past, present, and future, then how can we ever attain certainty that we have correct information about any one fact?

Ultimately, there are only two possible solutions to this problem.

- (1) We must learn all the facts of the universe in order to be sure that no subsequently discovered fact will prove our present ideas to be false; or
- (2) someone who does know all the facts in the universe, and who never lies, could tell us some true facts that we can then be sure will never be contradicted.

This second solution is in fact what we have when we have God’s words in Scripture.

God knows all facts that ever have been or ever will be.

And since God is omniscient (all-knowing), He has absolutely certain knowledge: there can never be any fact that he does not already know; thus, there can never be any fact that would prove that something God thinks is actually false.

Now it is from this infinite storehouse of certain knowledge that God, who never lies, has spoken to us in Scripture, in which he has told us many true things about himself, about ourselves, and about the universe that he has made. No fact can ever turn up to contradict the truth spoken by this one who is omniscient.

“Thus, it is appropriate for us to be more certain about the truths we read in Scripture than about any other knowledge we have. If we are to talk about degrees of certainty of knowledge we have, then the knowledge we attain from Scripture would have the highest degree of certainty: if the word certain can be

applied to any kind of human knowledge, it can be applied to this knowledge.” - Grudem

In this way the Christian who takes the Bible as God’s Word escapes from philosophical skepticism about the possibility of attaining certain knowledge with our finite minds. In this sense, then, it is correct to say that, for people who are not omniscient, the Bible is necessary for certain knowledge about anything.

Part II: Sufficiency of Scripture

Questions:

Is the Bible enough for knowing what God wants us to think or do?

Are we to look for other words from God in addition to what we have in Scripture?

The Doctrine of the Sufficiency of Scripture addresses these very things:

Definition:

The sufficiency of Scripture means that Scripture contains all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly.

Paul:

2 Timothy 3:15–16 CSB

¹⁵ and you know that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All

Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,

James 1:18 CSB

¹⁸ By his own choice, he gave us birth by the word of truth so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1 Peter 1:23 CSB

²³ because you have been born again—not of perishable seed but of imperishable—through the living and enduring word of God.

Psalms 119:1 CSB

¹ How happy are those whose way is blameless,
who walk according to the LORD's instruction!

All that God requires of us is recorded in His written Word.

It's simple... do all the Bible commands and we will be blameless in His sight.

To be morally perfect in God's sight, then, what must we do in addition to what God commands us in Scripture?

Nothing!

Nothing at all!

If we simply keep the words of Scripture, we will be "blameless," and we will be doing "every good work" that God expects of us.

Let's assume that we agree that the Bible is the Word of God, that we accept its words as true and that it is without error.

You also don't believe that it's sufficient, because it doesn't do you a whole lot of good to believe that your Bible is trustworthy in all that confirms if you also believe that it's not sufficient for all matters of faith and practice, because **then you have a trustworthy source that has to be supplemented with something else.**

And by the way, since the Bible is our only inerrant rule of all matters of faith and practice, once we supplement the Bible, we supplement it with something that is not inerrant.

But once you've supplemented, you now have something that will contain errors.

You lose that inerrancy.

If we believe that we have to go to other sources, then God was somehow deficient in that He could not foresee an issue that would be significant enough that would not be included in His Word.

If God gave us this inerrant Bible and has forced us to look to something that does have errors in order to complete us in our sanctification and service of the God who gave us the inerrant Bible... we have a problem.

As stated at the beginning, there are many Christians who think the Bible is not sufficient to speak to every are of life.

Example: **Human sexuality.**

Many discussions today. About the nature of human sexuality. And who we are as human beings.

The very essence, the nature of what needs to be a man, or be a woman.

Again, we're for us to have discussions about these issues, what we have to do is we have to supplement our Bibles with sources that are more authoritative than the Bible on issues of human sexuality.

The basics of God's Word are being watered down (or completely ignored).

Once we bring whatever it is that we've learned back into the Bible, we actually have to correct the Bible in order to make that fit, which means we really don't believe that the Bible is inerrant.

Deuteronomy 4:2 CSB

² You must not add anything to what I command you or take anything away from it, so that you may keep the commands of the LORD your God I am giving you.

Revelation 22:18–19 CSB

¹⁸ I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share of the tree of life and the holy city, which are written about in this book.

We cannot add to or take away from the Word of God, it is sufficient.

But it's happening all over the place.

With increasing regularity.

What about the environment?

Here again, is the Word of God not sufficient?

Do you honestly believe that the God who created the world did not give us a sufficient theological understanding of how to be stewards of the world that he created?

This Is it not just a theological discussion.

This is as relevant as it gets.

And if you're raising children, you've probably had discussions along these lines. You've probably watched your children as their faith crumbles. Because they're being indoctrinated within the context and confines of a culture that hates our God.

Many issues then get magnified to primary importance and if you find yourself on the wrong side of the argument, you can be cancelled, have your FaceBook account suspended, be ridiculed, and it may even cost you your job and the dignity of being acknowledged as a human being, worthy of respect.

And our children are trying to figure out how to live in the world where you told them that the Bible's in inerrant.

The world is telling them that it's deficient and hateful and evil.

So what do we do?

2 Timothy 3:1 CSB

¹ But know this: Hard times will come in the last days.

The phrase that is used in the last days, we think, like, at the very end, right?

Paul uses this phrase in the last days to refer to the time between Christ and the Second Coming.

So when Paul uses this phrase, the last days, he understands himself to be living and occupying those last days.

[Usually Scripture will use “on that day” to refer to the end of time.]

2 Timothy 3:2-5 CSB

² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, demeaning, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, without love for what is good, ⁴ traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ holding to the form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid these people.

2 Timothy 3:6-9 CSB

⁶ For among them are those who worm their way into households and deceive gullible women overwhelmed by sins and led astray by a variety of passions, ⁷ always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so these also resist the truth. They are men who are corrupt in mind and worthless in regard to the faith. ⁹ But they will not make further progress, for their foolishness will be clear to all, as was the foolishness of Jannes and Jambres.

Now, there is an amazing contrast that happens beginning of verse 10.

Verses one through nine, we've just seen a picture of them.

And this chapter is really divided into **us**, and **them**.

What is that difference?

2 Timothy 3:10-12 CSB

¹⁰ But you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, and endurance, ¹¹ along with the persecutions and sufferings that came to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured—and yet the Lord rescued me from them all. ¹² In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted**.

In verse 12, I can't read verse 12 without taking a little aside here.

You know, they're individuals who love to claim verses in the Bible.

Every promise in the Bible is mine.

Really?

You will bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus, because he will save his people.

I rest my case.

You can't claim every promise in the Bible.

That's ridiculous.

However, if you're looking for one, then you don't even have to play into context, right?

You don't have to exegete it to fit it to our modern day.

You don't have to do anything to it. Just grab this and make it yours.

It's verse 12.

2 Timothy 3:12 CSB

¹² In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted.**

2 Timothy 3:13 CSB

¹³ Evil people and impostors will become worse, deceiving and being deceived.

[Example... why the prosperity gospel seems to bring the masses and the money.]

How do you respond?

Because the Bible is true.

2 Timothy 3:13 CSB

¹³ Evil people and impostors will become worse, deceiving and being deceived.

The Bible's true.

It is the affirmation that God's word is true, and it is the judgment on people who want something other than Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:14–15 CSB

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. You know those who taught you, ¹⁵ and you know that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

And here's our familiar texts.

2 Timothy 3:16 CSB

¹⁶ **All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,**

Praise the Lord.

There's the sufficiency of Scripture.

The Bible is sufficient.

Why is it sufficient?

Verse 16 just crystallizes the point of the entire chapter.

2 Timothy 3:17 CSB

¹⁷ **so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.**

Scripture is sufficient first and foremost because as Keith said last week, **Scripture is breathed out by God.**

And so first answer the question, it could be the last answer to the question.

It was kind of like when Mama said, 'Cause I said so.

You remember those times, right?

I just felt like that was so unfair.

I made myself a promise that I would never say this to my children... then we had children.

Sometimes, children don't need to be given everything they want, but rather **they need to hear the Truth of God from the Word of God and see it modeled by a biological male and a biological female that proudly call themselves Mom and Dad.**

Sometimes it's absolutely appropriate, and the only right answer. Because I said so.

And oftentimes with God, the answer is, **because I said so.**

Aren't you glad that when God said, Let there be, that light didn't say want to know a reason or what was in it for the light?

Aren't you glad that when He spoke the world into existence, and put the stars in the sky that not a single atom in all of creation paused to get out of step with His plans?

He's God.

And **that's enough.**

He's God.

And only is he God, but he's the God who speaks.

He's the God whom we know, because he speaks.

God is so close with the word that when God the Father sent His Son, God the Son.

What does He tell us?

John 1:1-3 CSB

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.

And later on, we find that the word became flesh and tabernacle among us.

Why is scripture sufficient?

Because it is breathed out by the God who speaks, and the God who creates reality through His speech.

Things are what they are, because God spoke.

So, First and Foremost, Scripture is sufficient because it's breathed out by God, but that's not all.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 CSB

¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

They're profitable, which means that they're suitable for a purpose.

For what purpose, for **God's purpose!**

Not, first and foremost suitable for my purpose, but suitable for God's purpose.

Why is that so important?

Why is that so significant?

I am finite.

I am limited

I am broken

I am sinful

And if you have not proven this to yourself, then keep living.

Get married. Have kids.

And if you have lived a while and are married, and have children, and still don't believe that you're limited, finite, broken, and wrong, that just proves that you're extremely limited, finite, broken, and wrong.

What do you just have to do with anything?

See, I don't want my will to be the one that determines the purpose for things, because my will is the will of one who is limited and broken and founded and wrong.

For the time will come, when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth, and will wander off into error.

As for you, always be so reminded, end your suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Believing in God and His Word will cost you!

When the hard times arrive, you will be tempted to ease up, to think about “did the Bible really mean it this way.”

Don't add to. Don't take away. His Word is SUFFICIENT For you! Even in your suffering.

Close:

Psalm 19 CSB

For the choir director. A psalm of David.

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the expanse proclaims the work of his hands.

² Day after day they pour out speech;
night after night they communicate knowledge.

³ There is no speech; there are no words;
their voice is not heard.

⁴ Their message has gone out to the whole earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.

In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun.

⁵ It is like a bridegroom coming from his home;
it rejoices like an athlete running a course.

⁶ It rises from one end of the heavens

and circles to their other end;

nothing is hidden from its heat.

⁷ The instruction of the LORD is perfect,

renewing one's life;

the testimony of the LORD is trustworthy,

making the inexperienced wise.

⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right,

making the heart glad;

the command of the LORD is radiant,

making the eyes light up.

⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure,

enduring forever;

the ordinances of the LORD are reliable

and altogether righteous.

¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold—

than an abundance of pure gold;

and sweeter than honey

dripping from a honeycomb.

¹¹ In addition, your servant is warned by them,

and in keeping them there is an abundant reward.

¹² Who perceives his unintentional sins?

Cleanse me from my hidden faults.

¹³ Moreover, keep your servant from willful sins;

do not let them rule me.

Then I will be blameless

and cleansed from blatant rebellion.

¹⁴ May the words of my mouth

and the meditation of my heart

be acceptable to you,

LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.