

# Why Study the Bible? Part Two

June 30, 2019

## Last Week:

1. **Scripture is written by man but “breathed out” by God. Men writing as moved along by the Holy Spirit produced an inerrant result.**
2. **Because Scripture is the Word of God, it is authoritative**

## **Sufficiency: Nothing beyond Scripture is necessary to do God’s will**

Returning to 2 Timothy 3:16-17

2Ti 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Scripture provides:

1. Teaching: what God wants us to do.
2. Reproof: points out error
3. Correction: provides steps to correct the error.
4. Training in righteousness: demonstrates right from wrong

## **Each of these 3 aspects of God’s word stands or falls on the other two**

- If Scripture is not really “God-breathed” but is merely the writings of man, it is not authoritative: Man can err. God cannot.
- If Scripture is not really “God-breathed” but is merely the writings of man, it is not sufficient: How can man know sufficiently everything God would have him to do without God telling him?
- If Scripture is not authoritative, then it is not “God-breathed”: An all-powerful God speaking commands necessarily holds authority. So, if one argues that the Bible is not authoritative, then God didn’t say it.
- If Scripture is not authoritative, then it is not sufficient: if I cannot trust the Bible to tell me God’s will authoritatively, then I must seek God’s will somewhere else.
- If Scripture is not sufficient, then it is not authoritative: If I must go elsewhere to seek God’s will, then that other source is the authority
- If Scripture is not sufficient, then one must question the source of the writing – i.e. whether or not it is truly God-breathed: the Scripture itself claims sufficiency, so if we conclude it is not sufficient then it cannot be said to come from a perfect, infallible source.

## **Practical Implications of Holding to all 3 Criteria**

- Red-Letter Christianity is to be avoided: all of Scripture is as authoritative as the words Christ spoke during his ministry.
- Sola Scriptura: We must reject teaching that seeks to add to God’s Word or worse, seeks to deny the authority of God’s word.
- Culture, opinion, changing times, etc. have no bearing on the weight of Scripture – Scripture – not culture or public opinion-establishes truth.
- A God-breathed, authoritative, sufficient source must be studied to glean one’s purpose and direction and to determine right from wrong.

## **Addendum: Application of these truths in the Church**

### **Recommended Reading:**

Dr. Albert Mohler: “A Call for Theological Triage and Christian Maturity”

<https://albertmohler.com/2004/05/20/a-call-for-theological-triage-and-christian-maturity-2/>

While all Scripture is inspired, authoritative, and sufficient, we must consider the relative importance of each of the teachings gleaned from the Scripture. All are important for the reasons discussed, but some carry more weight considering the content of the teaching. Dr. Mohler considers three levels of teaching to be derived from Scripture.

### **First-Level**

These separate Christian and non-Christian. They are fundamental teachings, denial of which is considered heresy.

- Trinity – Jesus is God
- The full deity AND full humanity of Christ
- Justification by Faith
- Authority of Scripture

### **Second-Level**

Typically, these are not considered to separate Christian from non-Christian. However, they do tend to separate Christians from one another in the gathering of the saints in local churches.

- Meaning and mode of baptism
- Women’s role in the church – can they serve as pastors

### **Third-Level**

People within a local body may disagree and still fellowship together.

- Eschatology
- View of tithing

### **Comments**

- Statements of Faith and Confessions are good tools to delineate first and second level teaching.
- It is not uncommon to have third-level issues rise to second-level within a local church
- Because placing teaching in a first or second level order of importance necessarily creates division, we should be very cautious in elevating something from the third level.