

Chapter 8: The Four Characteristics of Scripture: (4) Sufficiency

Define Sufficiency of Scripture.

a. Scripture _____ all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly.

— 2 Timothy 3:15; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

How do Protestants differ from Romans Catholics in the sufficiency of Scripture?

a. Romans Catholic theologians would say that we have not _____ all that God says about any particular subject until we have also _____ to the official teaching of the church throughout its history.

— The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "The Church ... to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, 'does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.'

b. Response from Protestants: Our search for answers to theological and ethical questions is not a search to find what various believers have thought in the history of the church but a quest to find and understand what God himself says to us in his _____ words, which are _____ in Scripture and only in Scripture.

Practical Applications of the Sufficiency of Scripture.

1. We can teach theology and ethics.

a. Lifelong growth in understanding Scripture will thus include growth in the skill of rightly _____ the Bible's teachings and _____ them to specific questions.

2. We should add no other writings to Scripture or alongside Scripture.

a. It should also be noted at this point that whenever challenges to the sufficiency of Scripture have come in the form of other documents to be placed alongside Scripture (whether from extra-biblical Christian literature of the first century or from the accumulated teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, or from the books of various cults such as the Book of Mormon), the result has always been:

(1) to deemphasize the _____ of the Bible itself.
(2) to begin to teach some things that are _____ to Scripture.

3. We should consider no modern revelations from God to be equal to Scripture in authority.

a. We must remember that the Holy Spirit will never lead us to _____ any command of Scripture, nor should our sense of the Holy Spirit's individual guidance ever carry the same _____ as Scripture in our thinking.

4. We should consider nothing to be sin that is not forbidden by Scripture (Either explicitly or by implication).

a. In every generation, there is a _____ to add to the list of _____ that are already forbidden by Scripture.

b. Whenever we add to the list of sins that are _____ by Scripture itself, there will be _____ to the church and to the lives of individual believers.

c. The Holy Spirit will not empower _____ to rules that do not have God's approval from Scripture, nor will believers generally find _____ in obedience to commands that do not accord with the laws of God written on their hearts.

5. We should consider nothing to be required of us that is not commanded in Scripture (Either explicitly or by implication).

a. The opposite ought to be true. Christians who are _____ of the sufficiency of Scripture should begin eagerly to seek and find God's will in Scripture. They should be eagerly and regularly _____ in obedience to God, knowing great freedom and peace in the Christian life.

6. We should emphasize what Scripture emphasizes and be content with the Scriptures that God has given.