

The Sufficiency of the Word – Part 1

Please Stand and Open Your Bible to 2 Peter 1

For the next two weeks we are going to be dealing with a subject that separates us from most of the other churches out there. This has to do with the very name of our church:

Calvary Solid Ground

Calvary because of our roots as a Chuck Smith style Calvary Chapel and Solid Ground because of what we are standing on.

Our By-Laws:

ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 3 – Slogan

Our church slogan is “Standing on the Solid Ground of God’s Word”.

But don’t most churches say that? In our Statement of Faith, we say...

SECTION 1 – THE SCRIPTURES

We believe all Scripture as originally written is inspired of God and accept it as final authority in all matters of doctrine and practice. II Timothy 3:16,17; II Peter 1:21

And we say later on...

SECTION 15 – FINAL AUTHORITY

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe.

After these messages we are going to update this to reflect in more detail what we are standing on. Most churches will agree that the Bible is the Word of God by inspiration:

The Word of God is:

INSPIRED

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Bible, the Old and New Testaments, are literally “God Breathed” that is what is meant by inspiration. It does not just contain the Words of God but IS the Word of God.

The Word of God is:

INERRANT

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. Psalm 19:7

The Bible contains no errors at all in the original manuscripts. What we see today as errors are only small copyist mistakes as they were making and translating the originals. But just to let you know how well God preserved the Bible you hold in your hands you can look no further than the dead sea scrolls. In Israel they have a complete copper scroll of the book of Isaiah from 200 BC maybe older that when translated is 99% accurate to what you have. The differences are so minor and do not in any way change its message.

The Word of God is:

INFALLIBLE

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11

For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Matthew 5:18

The Word of God will not fail in all that it says. But as we move into today's study you see that one can say this but then say that it is not literal. More on that in a little bit.

But what we say that many churches will not is that...

The Word of God is:

SUFFICIENT

... as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue... 2 Peter 1:3

How do we know he is talking about the Word of God and not just knowing Jesus? A prequel of our next book...

John 1:1,14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us

Jesus is the very Word of God. After all, how do you get to know Him? Through the Word! Remember what Jesus said?

John 5:39

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

Jesus is the Word and the Word is sufficient for you for all life and practice. You do not need anything else for you to grow in Him and to get to know Him. It is also Sufficient to guide you in everything in life. But in order for that to be the case you need to approach the Word with the correct method. If you do you will never fail to have the right doctrine to defend what you believe in...

1 Peter 3:15

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear

The word defense here is where we get our word for apologetics. It means to give a ready defense to what you know to be true. But in order to do this we need to follow some simple rules. It is what we call Biblical Hermeneutics

Biblical * hermeneutics is the study of the principles and methods used to interpret the Bible. It provides the framework for understanding what the original authors intended to communicate and how those ancient texts apply to modern life, helping readers avoid misinterpretation

But did you know that there are different ways and rules that some will use to come up with the doctrine that they espouse.

What we follow:

The Consistent use of a plain, normal, literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation

We will come back and unpack that some more but here are the other ways that people use.

Allegorical:

Interprets texts as containing secondary, spiritual meanings, often viewing Old Testament people or events as foreshadowings (types) of Christ and the New Testament

This is the method that the Roman Catholic and most Reformed Churches use for Israel and Old Testament passages. The modern vernacular for what we call

“Replacement Theology” or “Supersession” is “Covenant Theology” More on that in a minute

Moral:

Focuses on extracting ethical lessons and behaviors to guide daily life

These are people that have no belief in God or the supernatural origin of the Bible but see it as a great book of moral rules to live life by. They usually add to other works and believe in “Virtues” like Benjamin Franklin

Anagogical:

Looks at Scripture through an eschatological or mystical lens, focusing on prophecies and the life to come.

This is an interesting one that I am familiar with having been into witchcraft and eastern mysticism. When I was in those circles they used much of the Bible that fit their beliefs especially Revelation.

But getting back to this and what it means

What we follow:

The Consistent use of a plain, normal, literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation

Consistent means that we use the same process to study scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

Plain and Normal means we read it just like we would read anything else

Literal we will explain in our rules but as it says unless we have no reason to, we take all scripture literally.

Grammatical-Historical means that we need to understand the bible in its original language and put it in its historical meaning. It's original meaning does not change.

When we use this form of interpretation, we will naturally develop a form of what we call "Dispensationalism". This view is being unfairly attacked right now by many people who are very reckless in their accusations. You need to know why and how they come to their conclusions

Here is the best description:

Dispensational Theology is a System of Theology

Traditional-normative dispensational theology is a system that embodies three essential, fundamental concepts called the **sine qua non** (lit. “without which is not”)

1. The **consistent** use of a plain, normal, literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation;
2. Which reveals that the **Church is distinct from Israel**;
3. God’s overall purpose is to bring **glory to Himself** (Ephesians 1:6, 12,14).

Dr. Charles Rylie, Dispensationism, pp. 38-41

But what is “Covenant Theology” and how do they approach the Bible?

Covenant theology:

is a framework for interpreting the Bible that views the entire story of redemption as being structured around a series of divine covenants.

The Covenant of Redemption: A pre-temporal agreement within the Trinity where the Father chose a people, the Son agreed to pay the penalty for their sin, and the Holy Spirit agreed to apply this salvation to them.

The Covenant of Works: Established in the Garden of Eden, where God promised Adam eternal life in exchange for perfect obedience, with death as the penalty for failure. Adam failed as humanity's representative, plunging the world into sin

The Covenant of Grace: God's loving response to the fall of humanity. Introduced in Genesis 3:15, this is the promise of salvation through a Savior (Jesus Christ) who perfectly fulfilled the Covenant of Works on humanity's behalf.

This system was developed after the Reformation around 1650

How do they come up with this?

Israel and the Church:

Covenant theology views the church as the continuation and spiritual fulfillment of Israel (the "true Israel of God"). It emphasizes one unified people comprising all believers from the Old and New Testaments under one Covenant of Grace.

Interpretation of Prophecy:

Covenantalists argue that the New Testament interprets and "spiritualizes" these Old Testament prophecies, seeing them fulfilled in Christ and the global Church.

Eschatology:

Covenant theologians are typically amillennial or postmillennial, believing the Millennium is a spiritual reign of Christ in heaven and the present Church age.

In order for these things to work that have to approach the Bible allegorically. We reject this form of Bible Study and if abused can make the Bible say whatever you want it to say.

Next week we will look at three simple rules that we will put into practice to show you how simple it is to make the Bible sufficient for you for all life and practice. Before we leave today let's look at the plain statements of scriptures on this subject...

Joshua 1:8

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Psalms 1:1-3

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted

by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

Psalm 19:8-11

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold,

Yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

Hebrews 4:12-13

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in

righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

John 5:24

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

Did you see that? You are not even saved without His word! How much more for the rest of your walk with the Lord. Read it, believe what it says and apply it to every area of your life!