

## **“SCRIPTURE ALONE” – A BAPTIST DISTINCTION**

N. Sebastian Desent, Ph.D.; Th.D.; D.D.; Pastor, Historic Baptist church  
March, 2013

Baptists through the last two thousand years have had their issues, persecutions, and disagreements; but one thing that is common among them all: an unyielding love and esteem for the word of God to dictate all matters of faith and practice.

*Sola scriptura* (Latin for “by scripture alone”) has been the Baptist position from the first century when the New Testament was first completed. And *sola scriptura* – not as defined by Protestants, who taught that for some people (the ignorant) the scripture requires interpretation by “ordinary means”<sup>1</sup>; but rather, Baptists say, that it means “*scripture interprets scripture*” – declaring that scripture is *its own* final authority. Anytime one uses a commentary, lexicon, dictionary, tradition, or other interpreter to define the truth of scripture, that source is placed above scripture; and scripture is no more the final authority.

The scriptures are the only infallible source of truth and the Christian way. And a lost man can find the way of salvation (for it is nigh) regardless of his intellect should he be able to read and understand, and once he is saved, by the power of the Holy Ghost he will be guided “into all truth” (John 16:13). God will help every believer to understand his word, because the believer is sealed with the Author of the Bible, which is the Holy Spirit.

And for us Bible Believers who know the scriptures are *the* Final Authority, we have done our homework to identify exactly the only infallible Bible the English-speaking people should use. That Book is the *Authorized Version of 1611*, otherwise known as the *King James Version*.

Those who have not realized the perfection of the *Authorized Version* have not done a diligent study of verse comparisons from the variety of English translations. They likely have not researched the manuscripts that were used as a basis of the manifold English translations. For a simple example, those versions that use an Old Testament not translated from the *Massoretic Hebrew Text*, likely use the *Septuagint* (LXX) instead – which is a Greek translation of the Hebrew found in *Codex Vaticanus* (B). That uncial manuscript has the name *Vaticanus* because of who is its owner and where it is kept. For me, I do not want an English translation based on a Roman Catholic corrupt manuscript, which was a translation created by an unbelieving textual critic by the name of Origen Adamantius, created in Alexandria, Egypt. From where does your Old Testament come?

And if your New Testament is not based on the *Majority Text*, it is likely based on the corrupt *Westcott and Hort Greek New Testament* (1881). A simple research of who these men were would offend even the babe in Christ. And from the W/H text, we got the *UBS* and *Nestle* versions, which are still being revised to correct translations based on faulty manuscripts.

But the not-so-funny-thing is that most good-hearted Christian believers use a “Bible version” for which they have no idea of its accuracy or where it came from. They use their version for some weak reason like, “it’s easy to read,” or, “it’s what I am used to.” May God help our brethren to realize how important it is to have the good word of God on which to build their lives.

Lastly, to give an answer to those who build doctrines that claim to be scriptural but conflict with other groups who claim the same; the problem is usually not the word of God, but an incorrect method of learning the truth of God.

God has made the way clear to learn what the scripture saith – we learn **his commandments first**, and do them; and then all flows from that. It is by reason of *use* that our senses are exercised to discern both good and evil (Hebrews 5:14).

For any proposed doctrine, regardless of the number of verses supplied to “teach” what the Bible says, or whatever “pictures,” “types,” or “examples” are given to show what God desires of the New Testament believer; have the wisdom to first identify the applicable commandment given by God that is the basis of the assertion. For example, and teaching on salvation, baptism, prayer, worship, etc. will have underlying commandments that cannot be broken.

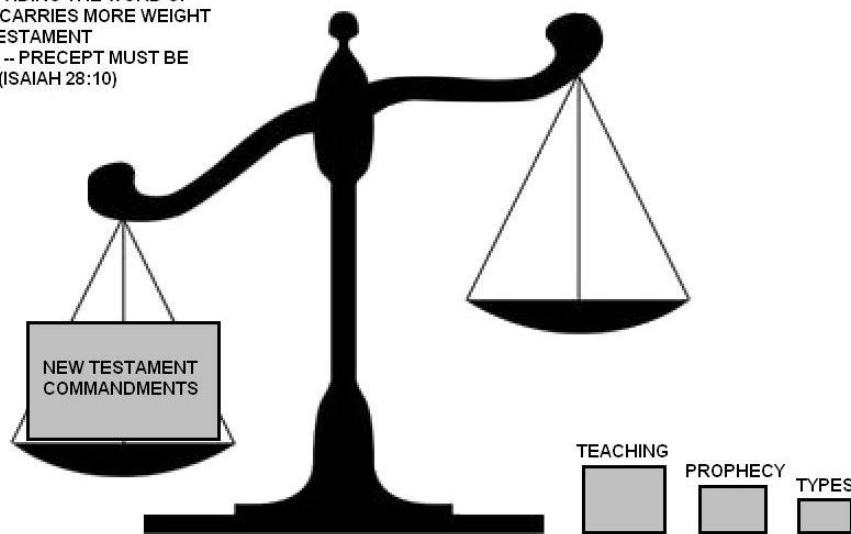
For example, God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). That violates libraries written by Calvinists who have attempted to teach God predestines some and rejects others. That is one verse (a commandment) against a library. Which will you believe?

Then, in Acts 10:48, Peter *commanded* the Italian brethren to be baptized. Since they were commanded, they had to decide to obey. And, in the absence of any commandment found in scripture to baptize a baby, this simple commandment rejects centuries of infant baptism.

I John 3:23 says God’s commandment is that we should believe on the name of Jesus Christ. John 3:15 says whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We understand then the eternal security of those who obey and believe. That commandment destroys a thousand years of false teaching that one can lose his salvation.

You see, all error is purged through the commandments of God. All doctrines should be proved by the commandments of God. All works are proved by the commandments of God.

WHEN RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH, NOTHING CARRIES MORE WEIGHT THAN THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMANDMENTS – PRECEPT MUST BE UPON PRECEPT. (ISAIAH 28:10)



ALL TEACHING, PROPHECY, AND TYPE SHOULD BE EXPLAINED AND DEFINED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMANDMENTS

1. Westminster Confession of Faith, Article VII, which reads: VII. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.