

Why the Bible Contains Real News, Not Fake News
2 Tim. 3:16

Good morning! Last Monday, there was a celebration that probably you didn't celebrate. What was it? Halloween? No, I'm not talking about that worldly and pagan celebration. As followers of Christ, of course we don't celebrate it. What I'm talking about is a celebration called Reformation Day. How many of you are familiar with it? As the word implies, Reformation refers to the time when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the castle at Wittenberg, Germany on the evening of Halloween of 1517. This document is a list of his arguments why he believed that the Catholic church was practicing or believing in things that were out of line with what the Bible taught. So, Reformation Day is observed throughout the Christian Church every year since the mid 1500's. In fact, today it is a public holiday in 10 states in Germany and in some parts of Europe where stores and businesses are closed.

If you're a Christian, I'm sure you've heard about the Reformation which is otherwise known as the Protestant Reformation. You see, Martin Luther was a monk who set out to not establish a rival institution against the Catholic church but to just spur discussion and debate about what he thought were excesses of the church in order to reform the church. Well, his intentions were not well-received by the church, and he was denounced as a heretic and later on was excommunicated. He was welcomed nevertheless by certain German nobles and some western religious leaders. In time, this led to the establishment of the Protestant denomination of which we are a part of.

During the Reformation period, Five Solas were formulated by the emerging new religious movement. Sola is a Latin word which means "Alone". And so, if you're going alone, we say you're going solo, right?

These Five Solas summarize the Reformers' convictions about the essentials of Christianity. What are these Five Solas?

Sola Scriptura – Scripture Alone

Solus Christus – Christ Alone

Sola Fide – Faith Alone

Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

Soli Deo Gloria – To the Glory of God Alone

Folks, today we're starting a new series based on these Five Solas. I think it is important for us Christians to really know the fundamentals of our faith. And these Solas express these fundamentals well. The Reformers took us back to the roots of our faith, what the early fathers of the church really believed in and taught.

So, I hope you're not gonna miss any part of this series in the next few weeks. In fact, if you're here next week, we're going to give you a gift. It's a pamphlet called "Reformation Time Line". The next few slides show sample pages from that pamphlet.

So, the title of this series is "Alone Again Naturally (The Five Solas)". Our theme song is guess what? But instead of being melancholic like Gilbert O'Sullivan we're gonna be rejoicing like the Reformers, amen? Because we're gonna declare AGAIN that it is Scripture Alone, Christ Alone, Faith Alone, Grace Alone, and To the Glory of God Alone. And as Christians, that is something we should declare NATURALLY, Amen?

So, today, we start at the first Sola – Sola Scriptura. I have entitled this message, "Why the Bible Contains Real News, Not Fake News". Our text is taken from 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

I'm sure you've heard of the phrase "Fake News", right?

It was so often used by the former president and still being used by him that many people think that he coined this term. Well, that's fake news because this phrase is more than 130 years old. The first documented uses of the phrase occurred in the 1890s according to Merriam Webster. But I will say that that is still fake news because the first fake news was actually delivered in the Garden of Eden according to the Bible. And you know what I'm talking about, right? When the evil one, Satan, said that by taking the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam and Eve would become like God then that was fake news. And that fake news had devastating effects on the whole world and on the descendants of Adam and Eve.

Today, Satan continues to deliver fake news all around us. He has deceived billions of people already since the beginning of time. This fake news consists of things like "I'm the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul". "What the mind can conceive it can achieve", "The fetus is not a human life, therefore it may be killed", "It's okay to be gay", "Living together before marriage is a good way to know whether you're meant for each other", "If you're sick you don't have enough faith", "A Christian should be healthy and wealthy", "All religions lead to the same God", "God loves everyone and, therefore, everyone goes to heaven in the end", "I'm a good person and so I'll go to heaven", "Getting married will cure me of my sex addiction", "It's only a sin when you get caught", and so on and so forth.

Folks, many people have believed such things to their own detriment. It has put them in trouble personally and in their relationships, in their careers, in the way they live their lives. Many people have been misled by this fake news. All this fake news has so distorted the truth that many are confused and are living a life that is without direction and purpose. There is truth decay in our society.

One guy said, "Truth is relative. There is no absolute truth." The other guy said, "Do you believe that is the absolute truth?" The first guy replied, "Yes".

And the second guy said, “Then, you just contradicted yourself because I thought you said there was no absolute truth”. Folks, no matter how truth-bashers deny it, there is absolute truth. And that’s real news.

We are so grateful to the Reformers because they pointed us to the source of real news. It helped that the printing press had just been invented by Gutenberg and so real news spread throughout Europe quite rapidly. You see, the Reformers believed that real news can be found only in the Scriptures, the Bible, God’s Word.

So, let’s talk about the Bible. What do mean when we say, “Scripture Alone”? Here is a good definition from Matthew Barrett, author of “God’s Word Alone”, “[Sola Scriptura] means that Scripture alone is our final authority. Authority is a bad word in our day of rugged individualism. But the Bible is all about authority. In fact, sola Scriptura means that the Bible is our chief, supreme, and ultimate authority. Notice, however, that I didn’t say the Bible is our only authority. . . . *sola Scriptura* is too easily confused today with *nuda scriptura*, the view that we should have ‘no creed but the Bible!’ Those who sing this mantra believe that creeds, confessions, the voices of tradition, and those who hold ecclesiastical offices carry no authority in the Church. But this was not the Reformers’ position, nor should it be equated with sola Scriptura.”

What he is saying that there are other authorities apart from the Bible which the Bible itself mentions like governmental, religious authorities, even parental authorities. But when these authorities speak contrary to what the Bible teaches, then the Bible is the final and ultimate authority. The problem in our society today is that many people, even those in some churches, have it in reverse.

So, folks, I urge you to go to the source of real news, the Bible. Please study your Bible. Read your Bible. Please see what God says about many issues of our day. It’s so easy to get caught up with what we read about what people say.

Social media is contributing to the spread of truth decay. There's got to be a measuring stick. If we don't have a measuring stick, then everyone can create their own truth.

The Bible alone is the source of truth. It is infallible and inerrant. In other words, it is without errors whatsoever. That is what the Reformers wished to emphasize. It is God-breathed as our text says. God-breathed means inspired by God which is how other versions render it. In any case, it means the Bible is from God directly and God used human instruments to write down his word. Now, the question is, how do we know that it's the source of truth? How do we know that the Bible alone can be trusted as the final and ultimate authority?

So, after that long introduction, let me share with you why we can trust the Bible, why it contains real news. You see, the authenticity and veracity of the Bible is based on facts. And this morning I want to share with you some of these facts. These are facts, not fakes. There are so many of them but in the interest of time I'm going to give you just three of them. **3 Facts About the Bible**. And when we're done, there are two things you can take away.

So, let's start by looking at the first fact.

1. The Fact of Archaeological Proofs

Folks, for the past 100 years there have been archaeological discoveries in the Near East that prove the reliability and trustworthiness of the Bible. I wish we all could travel and look at some of these proofs but because it is so expensive and unless a person named Rey Canlas can sponsor our trip all I can do is just show you some pictures to illustrate the proofs I'm talking about.

Now, critics of the Bible once said that writing was unknown in the ancient Near East at the time of Moses, 1500 BC, and, therefore, there was no way that Moses could have written the first five books of the Bible because he didn't know how to write.

Now we know that ancient people in the Near East, based on recent archaeological discoveries, knew how to write and did write all the way back to 3000 BC. We have literally thousands of documents that have been unearthed, everything from sales contracts to codes of law to sailing records, which prove that writing was common in ancient times and surely at the time that Moses lived. **This slide shows an example of writing in the ancient world.** It says that around 3400 BC, the first evidence of writing appears. It was called Pictographs. Then came Cuneiform.

So, the critics were wrong. Moses knew how to write, and he did write. Remember, he grew up in Pharaoh's palace under the care of Pharaoh's daughter herself. He undoubtedly was trained under the great minds of Egypt at the time and, therefore, was fully qualified as someone who wrote the first five books of the Bible known as the Pentateuch.

Now, it used to be claimed that the Hittites, mentioned over fifty times in the Old Testament, were an invention of biblical writers. There were no historical records of them. It used to be that only the Bible mentions the Hittites. Then, in the late 19th century, several excavations unearthed a number of Hittite cities and many of their written records were recovered. These demolished every one of the critic's arguments. **That map shows the Hittite Empire as determined by archaeologists.**

These two examples I've shown you are just a couple of the many, many archaeological proofs that attest to the genuineness and accuracy as far as history is concerned of the Bible. I hope the fact of archaeological proofs convinces anyone that the Bible can really be trusted.

But you go, "Wait a minute. Ok the critics are wrong, I get it. They didn't do their research or they were just plain biased. Still it doesn't prove anything. The Bible may be historically accurate but it can be just as accurate as any reliable historical book out there. The Bible just talks about history and nothing else."

Ok. So, you don't want to deal with the past. Let's deal with the future.
Which leads us to the next fact which is

2. The Fact of Fulfilled Prophecies About Jesus

The books of the Old Testament contain many passages about the Messiah — all prophecies Jesus Christ fulfilled. For instance, the crucifixion of Jesus was foretold in Psalm 22:16-18 approximately 1,000 years before Christ was born, long before this method of execution was even practiced. It says, “Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.”

Some Bible scholars suggest there are more than 300 prophetic Scriptures completed in the life of Jesus. Circumstances such as his birthplace, lineage, and method of execution were beyond his control and could not have been accidentally or deliberately fulfilled.

In the book *Science Speaks*, Peter Stoner and Robert Newman discuss the statistical improbability of one man, whether accidentally or deliberately, fulfilling just eight of the prophecies Jesus fulfilled. The chance of this happening, they say, is 1 in 10¹⁷ power. That is 1 and 17 0's after it. Stoner gives an illustration that helps visualize the magnitude of such odds:

“Suppose that we take 10¹⁷ silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote using their own wisdom.”

The mathematical improbability of 300, or 44, or even just eight fulfilled prophecies of Jesus stands as evidence to his messiahship.

On the screen are just 10 of the prophecies in the Old Testament that were fulfilled by Jesus as recorded in the New Testament. Now, critics say that Jesus could have just lived his life in a deliberate way so that he would fulfill the prophecies. They assert that he even arranged circumstances in order to make it appear that he fulfilled the prophecies. The big question is, if he did so, did he also arrange that his parents, Mary and Joseph, **while he was still in his mother's womb**, to travel to Bethlehem so that he would be born there to fulfill Micah 5:2? That seems far-fetched and wild, wouldn't you agree?

Folks, throughout history there have been literally hundreds of men and women who claimed to be the Messiah. Included in the list are Sun Myung Moon, founder and leader of the Unification Church in South Korea, and our very own Apollo Quiboloy, founder and leader of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in Davao. It's so easy to debunk all of these claimants because they don't or didn't fulfill any of the Old Testament prophecies.

Only Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, is the true Messiah, Amen?

But then, you go, so what if he's the Messiah. What does it mean to me? Maybe it proves the Bible is accurate after all. But what is its relevance to me?

Which leads us to the third and final fact I want to present to you this afternoon

3. The Fact of Changed Lives

This is something that you can attest to if you're a Christian. The Bible has changed your life and that is a fact. You know that in your heart. And people around you who knew you before you became a Christian and compared that to what you are now can say that is a fact as well. The fact of the matter is (no pun intended) the Bible really does change lives.

2 Cor. 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” The Bible is saying if any person makes a commitment to follow Christ, that person becomes a new creature. A transformation takes place. Old things that characterize my life like my coarse language, unwholesome thoughts, destructive behavior, and such are peeled off and new things, things that are holy, wholesome, and honorable to God begin to dominate my life. And the Bible says that it is a transformation that is driven not by human energy, not by feel-good therapy or by Oprah-Winfrey-inspired theology but this is driven by supernatural transformation that happens because of the supernatural power of the Spirit of God living inside of me as a follower of Jesus Christ, a supernatural transformation that changes me inside out. This is the same story that is repeated over and over again in the lives of people who have been transformed by the power of God.

For example, there’s the story of **Idrissa** from Niger I read from the web site of The Voice of the Martyrs. Idrissa was a Muslim Shaman who had mastered the mystical arts of his religion. He regularly mixed occultic enchantments with Muslim traditions to cast spells upon people. But when a Christian evangelist visited his town and Idrissa tried to cast an evil spell on the minister, it had no effect. “When I encountered the power of Jesus Christ, I was very surprised to see that this power has no comparison,” he said. Idrissa later spoke with the evangelist, who explained the gospel to him and gave him an audio Bible. God’s Word transformed Idrissa’s life. “The Lord Jesus started to change me, and I started to hate mystical and devilish things, and started to repent of all the sins I had done,” he said. He has since learned to read and write, attended a Bible school, and now serves in ministry.

That is what I call a radical transformation. I’m sure that’s the same kind of transformation that many of you here today had experienced.

You may not have been a Muslim Shaman, you may not have been involved in the occult, but the changes in your life had been so radical that you yourself are astonished by what had happened. You realize that only God can do such a thing.

Folks, those three facts are irrefutable proofs or arguments that the Bible is true and we can trust it. We can trust it with all our lives. And yet, all of these facts are nothings if they're all just in our heads. They should penetrate our hearts and we should let the Bible do its work in our lives. How do we that? Let me share these three things with you. Consider these three things which will help as we seek to apply the Scripture to our everyday lives.

A. Know it

God expects for us, as His children, to know His word. The man who will not read his Bible is no better off than the man who has no Bible to read. How can a person claim to be born again, to be filled with the Spirit of God who inspired the very words of Scripture and have no appetite for the word of God?

How can a person claim to have Jesus on the throne of their heart and have no desire to receive instruction from the One they claim is their Master? It doesn't add up. If you have no desire for the word of God, you need to take a long hard look to see if you are a child of God.

If we are truly in love with God, if we have really been born again, then we will say with the Psalmist who says in **Psalm 119, "I have treasured Your word with all my heart; don't let me wander from Your commands. I delight in Your commands, which I love...Instruction from your lips is better for me than thousands of gold and silver pieces. How I love Your teaching! It is my meditation all day long. Your word is completely pure and Your servant loves it."** (Psalm 119:11,47,72,97, &140)

Colossians 3:16 says, *"Let the message about the Messiah dwell richly among you, teaching admonishing one another in all wisdom and singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with gratitude in your hearts to God."*

Know it. But secondly, understand it.

B. Understand it

Many people read the Scripture like literature but fail to understand the spiritual significance of what they read. But such should not be the case for Christians.

Jesus promises us in John 14:26 that the Holy Spirit will, *"...teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you."*

In 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 says, *"But the natural man does not welcome what comes from God's Spirit, because it is foolishness to him; he is not able to know it since it is evaluated spiritually. The spiritual person, however, can evaluate everything, yet for himself, cannot be evaluated by anyone. For: who has know the Lord's mind that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ."*

So as Christians who have the Holy Spirit, we should be able to see clearly into the spiritual truths of Scripture.

But you see here's the problem. Our ability to understand the Scripture will ever be dependent upon the degree to which our hearts and lives are surrendered to the influence and control of the Spirit of God. The more control He has, the more illumination or insight we have. The less control He has of our hearts and lives, the more opaque and obscure the Scriptures will become. The question is, who is controlling your life, the Holy Spirit or the world?

I believe one of the reasons many Christians have difficulty understanding Scripture is because they need to get things right with God in their lives. If you are walking with Him, he will give you light;

He will give you understanding so that you can obey. But if you are not walking in fellowship, then you will find little joy in reading Scripture and its depth and meaning will be hidden from you.

To understand it you must be right with God. But not only are we to know it and understand it. The ultimate goal of Scripture is for us to put it into practice.

C. Practice it

Somewhere along the way we got the idea that all we had to do with the Bible was to study it and understand it. We substituted knowing for doing, illumination for application. But the purpose of Scripture, at the end of the day, is action oriented. It was given so that we can do it.

James 1:22 says, *"But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."*

Our problem is not that we don't understand what it says; our problem is that we don't want to do what we understand.

Jesus puts it about as plainly as it can be stated in **Matthew 7:24-27**,
"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

After all is said and done, will you believe in the Bible as the Word of God and let it change your life? Will you be like the wise man who built his house on the rock? Or will you be like the foolish man who built his house on sand?

Folks, you just received real news this morning. It's good news because believing in the Lord Jesus will transform your life. If you're tired of going it

alone, why don't you trust God's Word alone regarding what it says about the salvation that Jesus brings to your life?