

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE

HEBREWS 1:1-4

INTRODUCTION

1. GOD HAS TOLD US ALL WE NEED – THROUGH JESUS, IN HIS WORD

- “Once for all time” - *hapax*

^{ESV} 1 Peter 3:18, For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit

^{ESV} Jude 1:3, Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

- **The Bible’s sufficiency: other key Bible texts**

^{ESV} Hebrews 1:1-4, Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

In the past...	<i>But in these last days...</i>
...God spoke...	<i>... he has spoken...</i>
...to our forefathers...	<i>... to us...</i>
...through the prophets...	<i>...by his Son</i>
...at many times and in various ways,	.

^{ESV} 2 Timothy 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.

^{ESV} 2 Peter 1:3-4, His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Because of the ways in which God has chosen to relate himself to Scripture, Scripture is sufficient as the means by which God continues to present himself to us such that we can know him, repeating through Scripture the covenant promise he has brought to fulfillment in Jesus Christ. (Tim Ward, Words of life, page 115.)

2. GOD CALLS US NOT TO RECEIVE NEW REVELATION BUT TO REMEMBER WHAT WE HAVE HEARD

- **The apostle Peter – 2 Peter 1:12-2:2, 3:1-2**

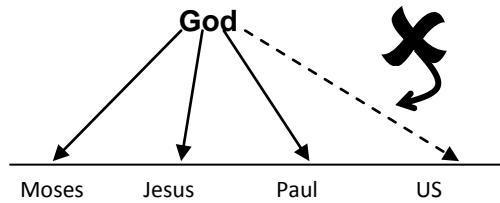
- **The apostle Paul – 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:2, Ephesians 3:2-5**

^{ESV} 2 Timothy 1:13, Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

^{ESV} 2 Timothy 2:2, ... and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

^{ESV} Ephesians 3:2-5, assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you,³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly.⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ,⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

- **Summary and a warning: be suspicious of other voices**



3. GOD IS STILL SPEAKING WHAT HE HAS SPOKEN

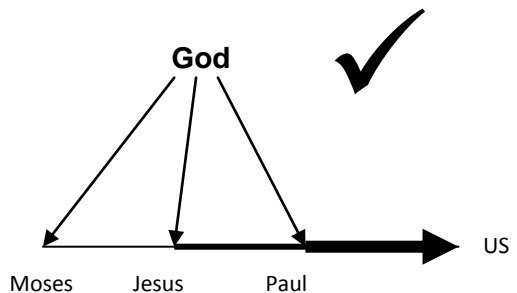
- **What he told them back then was for us now**

^{ESV} Romans 15:4, For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

^{ESV} 1 Corinthians 10:6,11 Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did... ¹¹ Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

^{ESV} 1 Peter 1:10-12 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

- **What he told them back then he is speaking to us now (Hebrews 3:7)**



4. IMPLICATION: A NEW RESPECT FOR SCRIPTURE

- Through Scripture...
- Next: *Prophecy and the sufficiency of Scripture*
Guidance and the sufficiency of Scripture

POSTSCRIPT: DENIALS AND AFFIRMATIONS OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE IN CHURCH HISTORY

Medieval error:

- Non-Scriptural church traditions →
- Church tradition reinforces the Bible →
- Church tradition necessary to interpret the Bible →
- The Spirit speaks not through Scripture, but through the Roman church

Radical Protestant / Anabaptist error:

Reformation orthodoxy:

Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation (39 Articles of Religion, Article 6)

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

Westminster Confession of Faith (1.6)

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.