

# Sola Scriptura?



The Protestant Reformation began when the Augustinian monk and parish priest, Martin Luther nailed to the church door his 95 theses against the Roman Catholic practice of selling indulgences. The intention of the Reformation was to correct the perceived errors of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Reformation unleashed a tsunami of new doctrinal interpretations resulting in a slew of competing and contradictory denominations, and yet somehow they see each other part of one church.

The general spirit of the Reformation was divorce from the practices of the Roman Catholic Church that were not expressed explicitly in the Bible.

*Sola scriptura* is one of the five *solas* considered by many to be the theological pillars of the Protestant Reformation. *Sola Scriptura* is Latin for “by scriptures alone.” The Bible alone is the source of all Christian doctrine and practice. Traditions not expressed in the Bible cannot be practiced. Luther said, “A simple layman armed with Scripture is greater than the mightiest Pope without it”. According to this new tradition (liturgical worship, apostolic authority, etc.) not expressed in the Bible must be abolished. The Church no longer had authority; suddenly the Bible was the sole authority.

Under this doctrine, man is the sole authority to interpret the Word of God. Ironically the Bible does not give man this authority. This *new* tradition is extra-biblical. It violates its own principle, since it is found nowhere in the Bible. Paul calls the house of God, which is the Church of the living God the pillar and ground of truth. (cf. 1Tim 3:15)

None of the writings of the early Church support the notion of *Sola Scriptura*. The early Church functioned for at least thirty years before the first book of the New Testament was even penned and

for over 300 years the Church did not decide conclusively what books were canonically a part of what we call the New Testament.

Contrary to the doctrine of Sola Scriptura, Protestants embrace many traditions that are not in the Bible, most significantly Trinitarian theology. Protestants are Trinitarian, but the doctrine is not in the Bible. It arises from the teaching of the Church. To no extent is the Bible a systematic theological treatise or catechism of any sort. While there are some descriptions of worship in the Bible, there is no order of worship.

For the Orthodox, the Bible is our most important Tradition. Nothing in the Church can contradict the Bible. It is a book written by the Church, within the Church and for the Church and **can only be properly understood within the confines of the life of the Church. To read it correctly requires the light of the faith, tradition, and unbroken apostolic succession of the early church.**

Source: [http://discovertheearlychurch.org/?page\\_id=40](http://discovertheearlychurch.org/?page_id=40)