

# The Sufficiency of Scripture

Note: Much of this material has been taken from the paperback tape series, *The Sufficiency of Scripture* by John MacArthur.

## I. Subtle Attacks on the Sufficiency of Scripture

**Management:** We are duped into thinking that management techniques are required to build the church. Note the new science of "Church Growth."

**Entertainment:** Churches need to use Christian "celebrities" to further the cause of the gospel. Without entertainment, the Word of God is just too boring to be accepted by the average person.

**Mysticism/Occult:** People are becoming preoccupied with the occult in order to visualize success, have miracles occur in their life, or have some wonderful spiritual experience. Peter Wagner says, "The simple gospel is no longer adequate without signs and wonders." Others are claiming authority over the devil, rebuking disease, and all other kinds of mystical healing and helping activities. We can call these people SWAMIs, (Signs, Wonders, and Miracle Idiots).

**Marriage and Family:** Many are adding things to the Scripture to deal with family problems. It is interesting that although we have the most material on the family today, we have the greatest number of problems ever recorded. The new material is not working.

**Sociology:** We need to redefine the role of women and homosexuals in the Church. The Bible needs to be reinterpreted in light of modern social theory. After all, it was written thousands of years ago during the time of man's ignorance of modern science and thought.

**Politics:** Men are leaving their pulpits in order to become political lobbyists. The cry is for a "Christian Congress" instead of the need for people to become transformed through the power of the gospel.

**Psychology:** Pastors are being told that unless they have a degree in Psychology they are incompetent to counsel. The Bible is not sufficient to help people with their problems. There is a wholesale exodus of men from the ministry back to college to get a degree in psychology so they can better help their members. There is a mentality that the Bible does not contain the necessary information to help people with deep-seated emotional and psychological problems. This ends in a psychological salvation that makes people feel good, but does little for the real problem of sin.

## II. Is The Scripture Sufficient? - What Does the Bible Say?

2 Corinthians 3:5

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

2 Corinthians 9:8-9

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

John 17:17 - It is the word that fully sanctifies the believer.

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

1 Corinthians 2:13

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Matthew 4:1-10 - The Scripture is sufficient to deal with the Devil.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Hebrews 4:12 - The Scripture is the most powerful weapon we have available.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Luke 11:28 - Blessedness is linked to hearing and obeying the Word of God.

But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

1 Peter 2:1-2 - The Scriptures are the source of spiritual nourishment and strength.

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

2 Peter 1:3 - The Scripture gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Colossians 2:3 - In Christ we find all treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

1 John 2:20 - We know spiritual truth by the Holy Spirit.

But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 - The Thessalonians received the message of Paul as the Word of God.

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Job 23:12 - Job considered the words of God more than his necessary food.

Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

Acts 17:11 - The example of the Bereans

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

2 Timothy 3:15-17

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

III. The Sufficiency of Scripture - Psalm 19:7-11

7: The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

8: The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9: The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

10: More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11: Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

12: Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

13: Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

14: Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

A. Six Names for the Word of God

1. Law - instruction for man.
2. Testimony - the testimony of the Lord about Himself - His self-disclosure.
3. Statues - precepts for living.
4. Commandments - Scripture is sovereign - obligatory - what we must do.
5. Fear - euphemism for worship - how to worship God.
6. Verdicts (judgments) - decisions from the Divine bench.

B. Six Characteristics and Results of Scripture

1. The Law of the Lord is Perfect - converting the soul

The word "perfect" means "perfect, comprehensive, all-sided so as to cover all aspects of a thing." Convert means to transform, soul, *nephesh*, refers to the whole person.

2. The Testimony of the Lord is sure - making wise the simple

It is trustworthy, without deceit or error. Simple comes from a word which means "open door." Wise is *schacham* - living with skill in the spiritual dimension.

3. The Statues of the Lord are right - rejoicing the heart  
Literally it means that the Scriptures give us the right path to walk on. In distinction to the way of man which leads to death.
4. The Commandment of the Lord is clear - enlightening the eyes  
It "turns the light on" and enables us to see. It gives meaning to life and also gives ultimate answers to life's greatest questions.
5. The Fear of the Lord is Clean - Enduring Forever  
The Scriptures are without error and untouched by sin. Because of that, it will endure forever. We do not need to have the Bible updated to accomodate modern thoughts and ideas.
6. The Statues of the Lord are True - and Righteous Altogether  
The Bible is true. It is accurate in all of its content. As a result, it is able to produce rightness.

C. Five things to be recognized:

1. v. 10 - It is our most valuable possession. "more to be desired than gold"
2. v. 10 - It is our most valuable pleasure. "sweeter than the honeycomb"
3. v. 11 - It is our most valuable protection - "moreover by them is thy servant warned."
4. v. 11 - It is our most valuable source of profit - "and in keeping of them there is great reward."
5. vv. 12-13 - It is our most valuable purifier - "

D. Our response - v. 14 - that our words and thoughts will be pleasing to God - Joshua 1:8.

IV. New Testament Counterpart to Psalm 19

2 Timothy 3:15-17

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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

A. The Sufficiency of the Scripture

1. Doctrine - *didaskalia* - knowledge  
The Scriptures tell us what we need to know.
2. Reproof - *elegchon* - conviction  
The Scriptures tell us when we are doing wrong.

3. Correction - *epanorthosin* - to correct

The Scriptures tell us what to do when we are doing wrong.

4. Instruction in Righteousness - *paideian tan en dikaiosuna*- to teach in righteousness

The Scriptures tell us how to stay on the correct path.

B. The results

1. That we may be perfect - mature (*artios*)
2. That we may be fully fitted for every good work.