

Sola

• Sola Scriptura • Sola Gloria • Soli Deo Gloria •
• Sola Fides • Sola Gratia • Solus Christus •

If the foundations be destroyed, what
can the righteous do?

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

The 5 Solas

- Sola Scriptura - Scripture Alone
- Sola Fide - Faith Alone
- Solus Christus - Christ Alone
- Sola Gratia - Grace Alone
- Soli Deo Gloria - Glory of God Alone

WHY STUDY THE 5 SOLAS?

- They express the essentials of the Christian Faith
- These governing principles provide a sure foundation for the expositor of scripture
- The Fruit of these principles turned the world upside in the early church and yet again in the 16th century where light again shined out of darkness

WHY STUDY THE 5 SOLAS?

- Have you ever wondered how someone can quote the Bible and say it means one thing and another person can quote the same Bible and say it means another thing?
- Have you ever asked yourself, why are there so many different denominations within Christianity? Who's right and who's wrong?
- Have you ever seen apparent "contradictions" in the Bible and wondered why that appears to be the case?
- Have you ever tried witnessing to a Roman Catholic and you found out it didn't matter what the Bible says?

WHY STUDY THE 5 SOLAS?

Understanding the five solas provides a biblically based foundation for interpreting the word of God.

Having a sure foundation and framework in which to interpret the Bible is required of us all. We are to handle it and interpret it accurately.

Study to shew thyself approved unto
God, a workman that needeth not to
be ashamed, rightly dividing [handling]
the word of truth.

As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are **unlearned and unstable wrest**, as they do also the other **scriptures**, unto their own destruction.

Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.**

For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

SOLA SCRIPTURA – SCRIPTURE ALONE

What Sola Scripture means:

- Assumes scripture is of divine origin
- Being “theopneustos” (God-breathed), it is the Ultimate & Final Authority for Christians
 - Scripture alone as the sole infallible rule of faith for the church
- Scripture is Sufficient alone
- All assertions of truth are to be interpreted in light of and under the authority of scripture

SOLA SCRIPTURA – SCRIPTURE ALONE

What Sola Scripture does NOT mean:

- It is not a claim that all truth of every kind is found in Scripture.
- It does not claim we have everything Jesus or the Apostles ever taught or said (John 21:24-25).
- Only the Bible has Authority
 - Tradition, Church Councils, Patristic Writings, Pastors, Bishops, Elders, Science, Philosophy, logic, reason, etc, have authority but cannot subjugate the scriptures authority or become its equal.
- Anybody can read the Bible and interpret it however they choose.

SOLA SCRIPTURA – SCRIPTURE ALONE

Before looking at what Sola Scriptura means, and looking at the biblical text itself that supports this belief, let us look at some of what the early church fathers said about scripture.

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Clement of Rome (1st century)

- "Look carefully into **the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit**. Observe that nothing of an unjust or counterfeit character is written in them."
- "Ye understand, beloved, ye understand well **the Sacred Scriptures**, and ye have looked very earnestly into **the oracles of God**."

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Tertullian of Carthage (2nd century)

- “It will be your duty, however, to adduce your proofs out of the Scriptures as plainly as we do, when we prove that He made His Word a Son to Himself. . . . All the Scriptures attest the clear existence of, and distinction in (the Persons of) the Trinity, and indeed furnish us with our Rule of faith. (Against Praxeas, 11)”

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Irenaeus (2nd century)

- “[We are] most properly assured that the Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they were spoken by the Word of God and His Spirit ... all Scripture, which has been given to us by God, shall be found by us perfectly consistent ...” (Against Heresies, II, xxviii).
- “We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith.” (Against Heresies, 3.1.1)

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Basil the Great (3rd century)

- "No single syllable of the sacred writings is to be neglected."
"Every word or action must be accepted on the testimony of inspired Scripture."

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Athanasius of Alexandria (3rd century)

- After listing the books of the Canon of Old and New Testaments he goes on to say:
 - "These are fountains of salvation, that they who thirst may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone is proclaimed the doctrine of godliness. Let no man add to these, neither let him take ought from these. For concerning these the Lord put to shame the Sadducees, and said, 'Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.' And He reproveth the Jews, saying, 'Search the Scriptures, for these are they that testify of Me'"
- Ironically after this, he mentions non canonical books that are good to be read for instructional purposes only but not considered inspired – then lists the books Roman Catholics canonized in the 16th century at the council of Trent.

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Eusebius of Caesarea (3rd century)

- "What they [the heretics] say might be plausible, if first of all the Divine Scriptures did not contradict them. . . . They have treated the Divine Scriptures recklessly and without fear. They have set aside the rule of ancient faith; and Christ they have not known. They do not endeavor to learn what the Divine Scriptures declare, but strive laboriously after any form of syllogism which may be devised to sustain their impiety. And if any one brings before them a passage of Divine Scripture, they see whether a conjunctive or disjunctive form of syllogism can be made from it. (Church History, 5.28.4, 13–15)"

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Gregory of Nyssa (4th century)

- During the Trinitarian controversy, the Arians appealed to their tradition that there was no Trinity
- Gregory countered by stating this:
 - “What then is our reply? We do not think that it is right to make their prevailing custom the law and rule of sound doctrine. **For if custom is to avail for proof of soundness, we too, surely, may advance our prevailing custom; and if they reject this, we are surely not bound to follow theirs. Let the inspired Scripture, then, be our umpire, and the vote of truth will surely be given to those whose dogmas are found to agree with the Divine words.** (Dogmatic Treatises, Book 12. On the Trinity, To Eustathius.)

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Cyril of Jerusalem (4th century)

- "We ought not to deliver even the most casual remark without the Holy Scriptures: nor be drawn aside by mere probabilities and the artifices of argument. Do not then believe me because I tell thee these things, unless thou receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of what is set forth: for this salvation, which is of our faith, is not by ingenious reasonings, but by proof from the Holy Scriptures...Let us then speak nothing concerning the Holy Ghost but what is written; and if anything be not written, let us not busy ourselves about it. The Holy Ghost Himself spoke the Scriptures; He has also spoken concerning Himself as much as He pleased, or as much as we could receive. Be those things therefore spoken, which He has said; for whatsoever He has not said, we dare not say. (Catechetical Lectures, 4.17ff)"

SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

Augustine of Hippo (4th century)

- “Whereas, therefore, in every question, which relates to life and conduct, not only teaching, but exhortation also is necessary; in order that by teaching we may know what is to be done, and by exhortation may be incited not to think it irksome to do what we already know is to be done; what more can I teach you, than what we read in the Apostle? For holy Scripture establishes a rule to our teaching, that we dare not “be wiser than we ought;” but be wise, as he himself says, “unto soberness, according as unto each God hath allotted the measure of faith.” Be it not therefore for me to teach you any other thing, save to expound to you the words of the Teacher, and to treat of them as the Lord shall have given to me. (The Good of Widowhood, 2)”

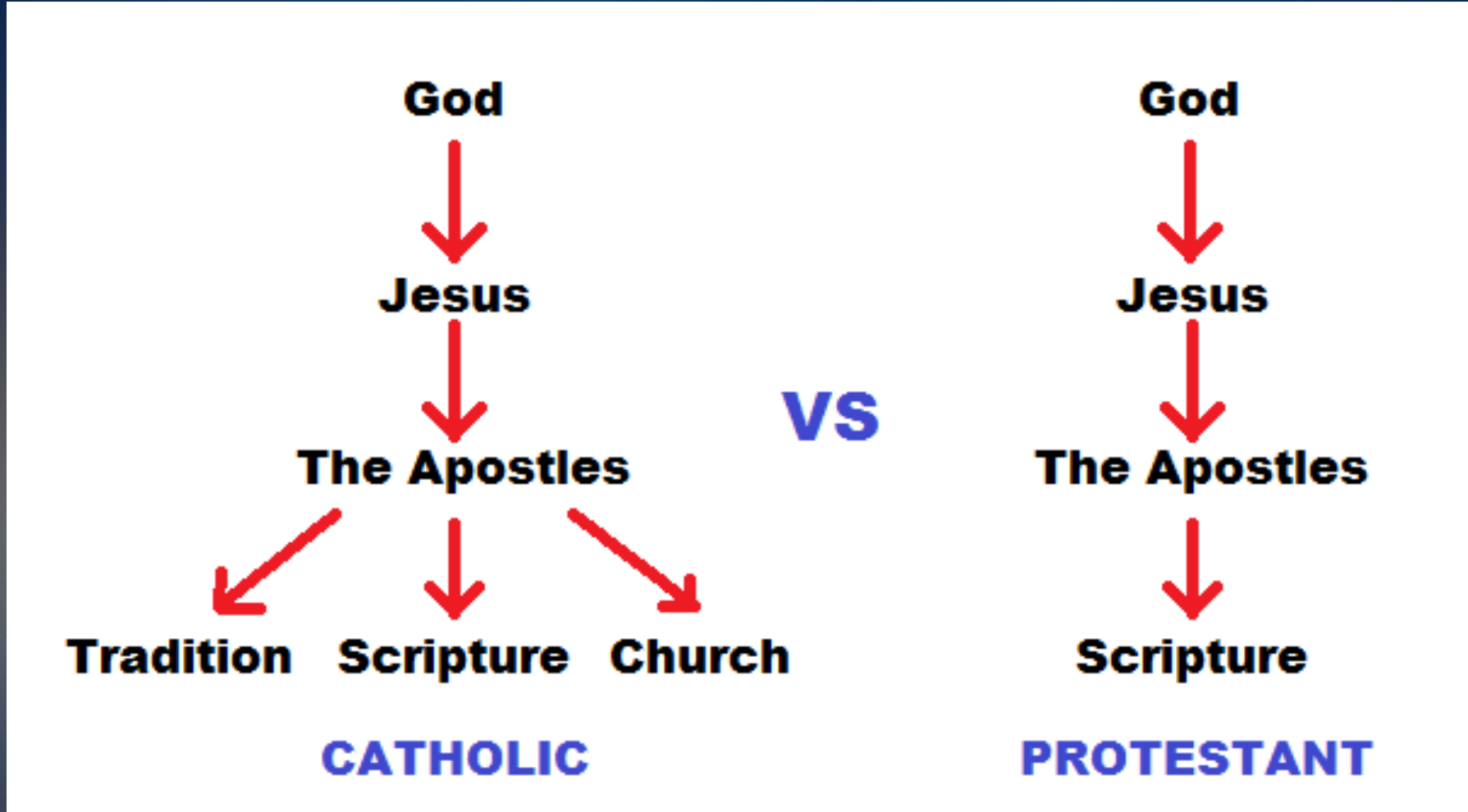
SOLA SCRIPTURA – CHURCH FATHERS

- The Church fathers had a high view of scripture
- Jesus, the Apostles, and Prophets had a high view of scripture (we shall see next week)

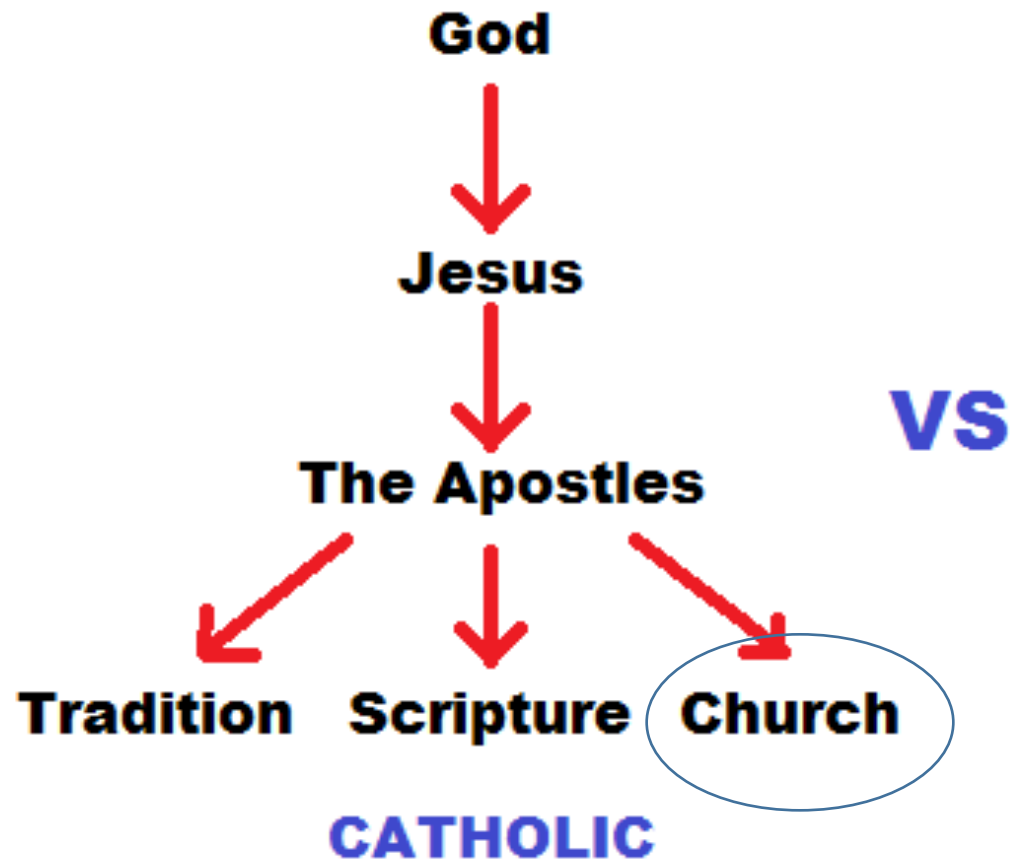
So what is the main difference between Romanism and Protestantism?

Answer: What is the final authority.

SOLA SCRIPTURA – Romanism vs Protestantism



SOLA SCRIPTURA – Romanism vs Protestantism



Scripture is infallible

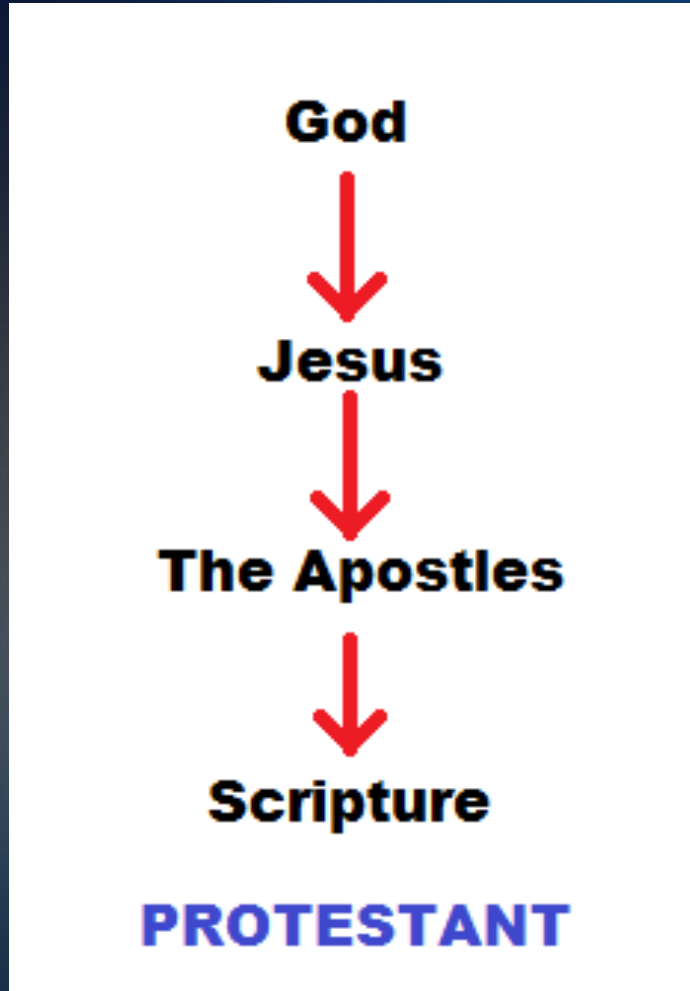
Tradition is infallible

* The Church is capable of infallibly defining and interpreting both

In practice, the Church of Rome functionally exalts itself above Scripture and Tradition since they alone claim they are able to interpret infallibly both.

So functionally they are "sola ecclesia",
The church alone

SOLA SCRIPTURA – Rome vs Protestantism



Scripture is infallible

Tradition is fallible

*The Church is incapable of infallibly defining and interpreting both

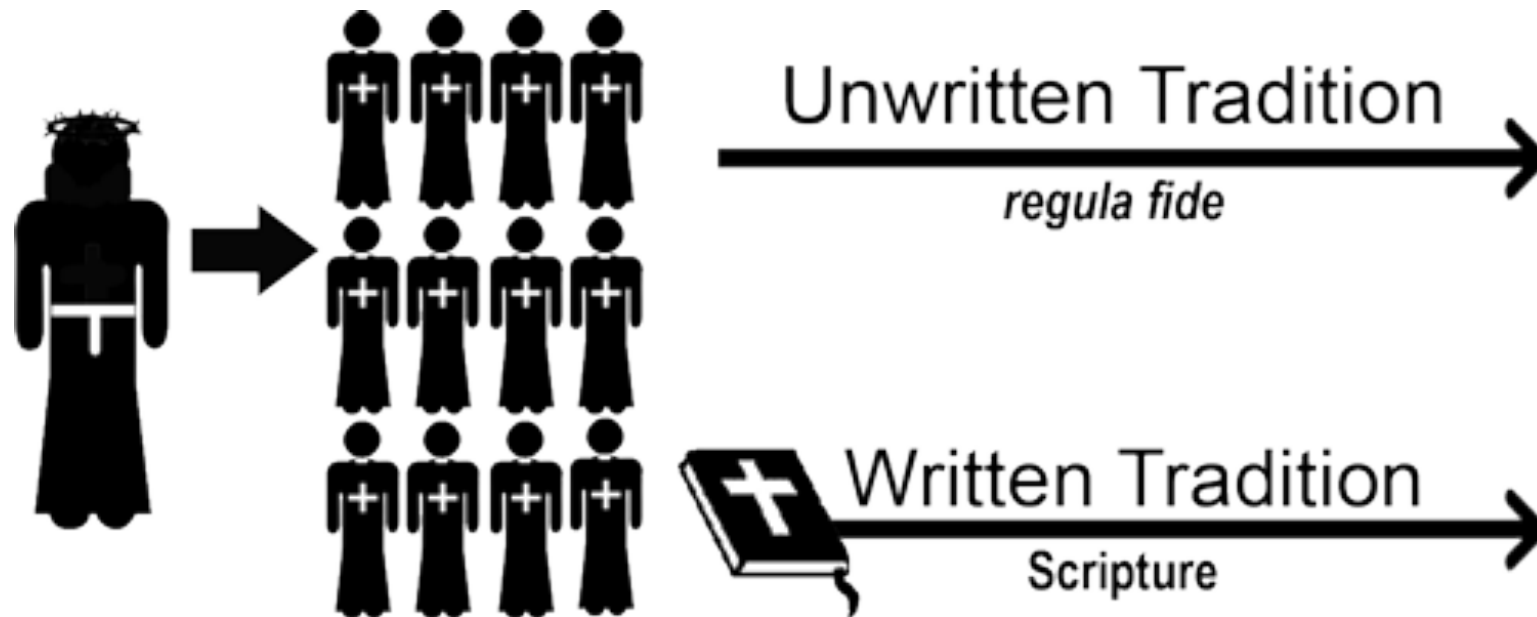
That does not mean we are unsure of what the canon is.

That does not mean you cannot understand the scripture

That does not mean tradition is bad and can be ignored.

It means all things are subject to scripture and it is error to make scripture subject to any other authority

SOLA SCRIPTURA – Romanism vs Protestantism



SOLA SCRIPTURA – Romanism vs Protestantism



SOLA SCRIPTURA

Is Scripture Above All Other Authorities?

- Romanism and Protestantism affirms scripture is of divine origin.
 - So if it is of divine origin, what could trump it?
 - Is tradition of divine origin in the same sense that scripture is?

SOLA SCRIPTURA

- “Is Apostolic Tradition inspired? In one sense it is, but in another it isn't. When God initially revealed doctrines to the apostles he determined the form in which these teachings came to them, so the original giving was inspired. **But God did not directly fix the way the apostles expressed these teachings to others.** The apostles might express a single doctrine from God in a variety of ways. **So while the original giving of Apostolic Tradition was inspired, the words in which it has been passed down to us are not inspired.”**

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/ANSWERS/INSPIR.htm>

SOLA SCRIPTURA – THE REAL ISSUE

Bible says x, Tradition says x = Good

Bible says x, and Tradition says y:

1. The Bible is right, Tradition is wrong
2. Tradition is right, the Bible is wrong
3. Both are right, they don't contradict
 1. Tradition contains revelation apart from scripture

SOLA SCRIPTURA – QUESTIONS

- Is anyone including the Roman Catholic Church, willing to make the claim that some undefined and vague body of “traditions” are “God-breathed”?
- What do you do when tradition contradicts scripture?
- What do you do when tradition is adding / removing from scripture?
- Isn't it easy for anyone to claim my tradition is of God vs your tradition: what is the final arbiter in such situations.
- If the scripture says its profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction, can scripture be used to reprove tradition? The church?

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.

SOLA SCRIPTURA

- Whatever Rome defines as “tradition” functions as a wild card that allows them to do whatsoever they choose, accusing or excusing one another (Romans 2:15), since scripture cannot be used to correct them.
 - This is what is so dangerous, they have become beyond reproof and correction from the God-breathed scriptures.
- Romanism in its doctrine, has exempted itself from being possible of erring, since they determine infallibly correct interpretation of scripture and tradition, and they can pick and choose what they like and dislike out of each, and spin what needs spinning.

SOLA SCRIPTURA – QUESTIONS

- What does the scripture say about itself?
- How did the Apostles, Prophets, and Jesus himself view scripture?
- Is there any scriptural foundation for believing in sola scriptura?

Is Scripture Above All Other Authorities?