

Sola Scriptura!

By J.C. Ryle

Next to praying, there is nothing so important in practical religion as Bible-reading.

By reading that Book, we may learn . . .

what to believe,
what to be,
what to do,
how to live with comfort,
and how to die in peace.

The Bible alone is "able to make a man wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:15. It alone can . . .

show you the way which leads to Heaven,
teach you everything you need to know,
point out everything you need to believe,
and explain everything you need to do.

It alone can show you . . .

what you are--a sinner,
what God is--perfectly holy,
the great giver of pardon, peace, and grace--Jesus Christ.

The Bible applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit, is the grand instrument by which souls are converted to God. In this way the Bible has worked moral miracles by thousands! It has made . . .

drunkards become sober,
immoral people become pure,
thieves become honest, and
violent people become meek!

The Bible has wholly altered the course of men's lives!

It has caused their old things to pass away--and made all their ways new.

It has taught worldly people--to seek first the kingdom of God.

It has taught lovers of pleasure--to become lovers of God.

It has changed the stream of men's affections--to run upwards instead of running downwards.

It has made men think of Heaven--instead of always thinking of earth.

The Bible can enable a man . . .

to bear afflictions without murmuring, and say, "It is well."
to look down into the grave, and say, "I fear no evil."
to think on judgment and eternity, and not feel afraid.

Is a man drowsy in soul? The Bible can awaken him.

Is he mourning? The Bible can comfort him.

Is he erring? The Bible can restore him.

Is he weak? The Bible can strengthen him.

Is he in company? The Bible can keep him from evil.

Is he alone? The Bible can talk with him. (Proverbs 6:22)

All this the Bible can do for all believers;
for the least--as well as the greatest;
for the richest--as well as the poorest.
It has done it for thousands already--and is doing it for thousands every day!

It is in Scripture alone that infallibility resides. It is not in the Church. It is not in the Councils. It is not in ministers. It is only in the written Word.

All other books in the world, however good and useful in their way--are more or less defective. The more you look at them--the more you see their defects and blemishes. The Bible alone is absolutely perfect. From beginning to end, it is "the Word of God."

A man must make the Bible alone his rule. He must receive nothing, and believe nothing, which is not according to the Word. He must try all religious teaching by one simple test: Does it square with the Bible? What do the Scriptures say?

The only question is: Is the thing said Scriptural?

If it is--then it ought to be received and believed.

If it is not--then it ought to be refused and cast aside.

The churches which are most flourishing at this day, are churches which honor the Bible.
The nations which enjoy most moral light, are nations in which the Bible is most treasured.
The godliest families are Bible-reading families.
The holiest men and women are Bible-reading people.
These are simple facts which cannot be denied.

Every one who cares for his soul ought . . .
to treasure the Bible highly,
to study it regularly, and
to make himself thoroughly acquainted with its contents.