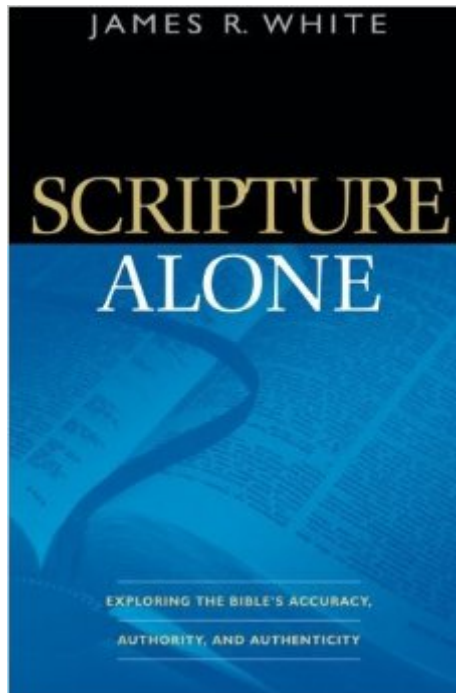


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Scripture Alone: Exploring The Bible's Accuracy, Authority And Authenticity



Synopsis

The denial of the Bible as God's truth is ravaging our culture. A leading theologian and apologist provides the vital defense of Scripture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As the title implies, *Scripture Alone* is a book which seeks to explain and defend the Protestant doctrine of *Sola Scriptura*. White focuses primary on the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture, which he defines as follows: The Scriptures are not in need of any supplement; their authority comes from their nature as God-breathed revelation; their authority is not dependent upon man, church, or council. "The Scriptures are self-consistent, self-interpreting, and self-authenticating. The Christian church looks to the Scriptures as the only infallible and sufficient rule of faith, and the church is always subject to the Word, and is constantly reformed thereby." (28) The length of this definition shows that there are several areas involved in the issue of the sufficiency of Scripture, and White tackles them well. He takes an interesting approach in the book. Much of the book contains argument and explanation, as would be expected. But perhaps a quarter of the book is comprised of dialogues between two people. While the dialogues are fictional, they are based on White's extensive experience debating issues of Christian theology with people of other faiths. The dialogues not only contain sound teaching, but also give the reader an idea of how the doctrinal issues the book deals with might play out in every day life. They do, however, present a somewhat unrealistic illustration. The Christian in the dialogue always has the perfect response and the right quote, whether from Scripture or the Church Fathers. While it is hard to imagine how White could

write it any differently, this is not always an accurate picture of real dialogue.

James White is a Reformed apologist who specializes in defending the faith against the doctrines of Roman Catholics and Mormons - two groups which deny the doctrine of sola scriptura or Scripture Alone. He is uniquely qualified to write such a book as he is intimately familiar with the arguments against the Bible's sufficiency. The book comes at a time when much of Protestantism has lost sight of this doctrine and has been slowly denying it. White defines this doctrine as "Scripture alone as the sole infallible rule of faith for the church." Thus he teaches that Scripture has been given to govern and guide what we believe and why we believe it and is the only guide that can do so infallibly. He has written this book to "lay a foundation for all Christians who desire a deeper understanding of biblical sufficiency" (from the back cover). The book is targeted not at theologians and apologists, but at laypeople who are interested in being able to defend their faith and have firm convictions regarding the Scriptures. The book explores the themes of the Bible's accuracy, authority and authenticity. Interestingly, much of the book takes the form of dialogues between a Protestant believer and a Catholic or Mormon apologist. That should go to prove that this book is not targeted at intellectuals and theologians, though I have little doubt White has the knowledge to write such a book. I found the dialogues a very helpful way of explaining difficult issues in a "could happen" type of environment. While the dialogue itself is sometimes almost comical (when was the last time you spoke to someone on the subway and said "Ever considered that the primitive Christian church was hardly in a position to be chasing down copies of pseudepigraphical gospels penned by their enemies?

James White is an interesting guy. Most people who talk about him come out on polarizing extremes, either you love him or you hate him. Perhaps this is because he tends to tackle issues that are laced with theological explosives. In his book Scripture Alone Dr. White does not part with his tradition... "...every attack upon the Christian faith includes, in some form or another, a denial of sola scriptura. Whether it takes the form of blatant denial of scriptural inspiration or comes in the subtle assertion of the need for an 'infallible authority' to interpret the Bible for you, the goal is the same. God's voice is either completely muted or blended in the voice of man so that one is never sure which voice is speaking. In either case, the authority of God's Word is compromised and room is made for man's ideas and schemes." (p. 25) As expected White pinpoints the unbiblical teachings of those who deny sola scriptura, the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, and Roman Catholics to name a few. However, the contemporary evangelical church is not without thoughtful

inclusion in the list of those who undermine the Bible's sufficiency. Sadly many today have a preoccupation with God speaking to them through impressions, dreams, and even audibly. In the first four chapters White explains the biblical doctrine of sola scriptura. He spends a healthy time unpacking what Scriptural Sufficiency actually is, as opposed to the all too common unfair characterization of it by its opponents. "Sola scriptura literally means 'Scripture alone.' Unfortunately, this phrase tends to be taken in the vein of 'Scripture in isolation, Scripture outside of the rest of God's work in the church.

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