

# 12/29/19 - Sufficiency of Scripture

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[ 0 : 00 ] And so I wanted to kind of transition us into this teaching with talking about the sufficiency of Scripture and what it means, because I'm sure we've heard that term before, the sufficiency of Scripture.

What exactly does Scripture being sufficient mean? So we will use Hebrews chapter 1, the first four verses, three verses, to set the tone, because we can't just do a topical.

We have to exegete a text to support what we're trying to teach on. So that'll be our text for today. But there's a couple of things that I want to read as we begin to kind of give us an understanding of what the sufficiency of Scripture actually means.

So straight from the Baptist faith and message of 2000, there's various, and you can go online and read all of this, and basically it just talks about, you know, if you're a Baptist, what do you believe?

Like what's the difference between a Baptist and somebody who's in the Presbytery? And most commonly, it's baptism. There are some branches that flow from there, but that's the main difference is do you baptize believers?

[ 1 : 03 ] Do you baptize infants? What does that look like? That's one of the biggest differences. The sufficiency of Scripture, though, is for the most part pretty common among confessional churches.

If you subscribe to a confession, there's always something in there about Scripture. So the Baptist faith message specifically says about Scriptures, The Holy Bible was written by men, divinely inspired, and is God's revelation of himself to man.

It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.

It reveals the principles by which God judges us and therefore is and will remain to the end of the world the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried.

All Scripture is a testimony to Christ who is himself the focus of divine revelation. And then underneath that, they have numerous examples of Scripture that you can view and point to the Bible that confirms the Bible is sufficient.

[ 2 : 08 ] So it's not just something that man made up in order to exalt the Bible over man's teaching. The Bible itself says that the Bible is sufficient. Another point that I wanted to read from Founders Ministry, Dr. Tom Aspell, he says, While assuming the Scripture's full authority, some influential evangelical leaders are ignoring its sufficiency.

So that's where most people would say, yeah, you know, the Bible is the Bible. Of course, it has authority, it has power, everything like that. But the question then comes down to, is the Bible sufficient? The result is that God's Word is no longer regarded as the sole foundation of our identity as Christians or determiner of how we are to view the world or our responsibilities in it.

We desperately need to take a closer look at and come to a fresh conviction of the sufficiency of Scripture. When we consider what the Bible itself has to say about its authority and sufficiency for Christian living, what we discover is that Scripture claims to be all that we need to guide us in what we are to believe and how we are to live before God.

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture, unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation of the Spirit or traditions of men.

So that's a brief foundation. And we say that because that's where we build from. And so it's, we mentioned this during Christmas Eve, but I think it fits perfectly here because the Christmas season, you know, church becomes very popular.

[ 3 : 50 ] But we were intentional about making it known that this is what we do week in and week out. And in order to do that, I think your view of Scripture needs to be sufficient.

It needs to be higher than anything else. We also would say that Scripture contains, as Peter says, all that we need for life and godliness.

So if you were to sit down with myself or with Pastor Brent or Pastor Rick, whenever Rick comes back, I don't know if Rick is coming back. He might just stay in Arkansas for the rest of the year.

If you were to sit down with us, what we would do is we would open Scripture. We would expound upon the Word in order to counsel or to teach or to provide support in any circumstance that you were going through.

That's what sufficiency of Scripture means. Again, the Bible speaks about the sufficiency of Scripture as well. And I think we see that in the book of Hebrews. Now, if you know me, the book of Hebrews is my favorite book in the Bible.

[ 4 : 50 ] It is a beautiful picture of God's work in the Old Testament through the Levitical priesthood system. And then it also compares the work of Christ, the finality of his work.

So I want to read Hebrews chapter 1, the first three verses. And we will spend some time focusing on, I'm going to give some background on the book of Hebrews, but we'll focus specifically on the supremacy of God's Son, which is the Word of God, as John 1 says.

And then we will talk about the finality of God's Word as being the authority for believers. Hebrews chapter 1 says, A brief moment of prayer as we begin.

Father, take your Word and apply it to our hearts this morning. We pray that we are changed and that we leave here inspired by the text to go and make much of Christ to all that we come in contact with, families, friends, coworkers, whoever it might be this week.

Watch over your text as we seek to learn more about you through it. In Jesus' name, amen. So a quick background on the book of Hebrews. I'm sure most of us are familiar, but just a couple of things that I want to mention.

[ 6 : 29 ] First, I think it's fitting to be reminded of this text because this speaks of the Word never changing and always being the foundation of what we have as believers.

So think about it this way. The Bible is not going to change in 10 years. We're not going to be in our 50s and 60s and learn that all of our time studying the Bible was in vain because the Bible is now false.

There's not going to be something that comes out and says, well, the book of Hebrews shouldn't have been in the canon. We need to remove it. And so therefore, anything you taught on the book of Hebrews is null and void. We understand that it is Scripture.

It has held up for 2,000 some odd years, and it does not seem that it is going anywhere. And we're confident because God tells us that His Word will last. He also says that He will watch over His Word, that He will take care of His Word.

Therefore, we can devote our lives to the study of His Word and to the understanding of His Word. But it's important to remember that, that there are always new trends and there is always something new going on.

[ 7 : 39 ] There are some new systems that are always adopted. There's something that needs to be changed in anything that you do. But it is a good reminder that there is one thing that remains unchanged, and that is the supremacy of the Word of God.

To take it a step higher than that, it is the excellency of Jesus. The submission we as Christians exhibit to Him as Lord of our lives never changes because He says it will never change.

A quick couple of points on the background of Hebrews. Many of you know the biggest thing about the book of Hebrews is the mystery surrounding the author. If you've studied it at all, there are numerous debates on who the author was.

Some say it was Paul. Some say it was Apollos. Some say it was Peter. Some say this or that. It was some person we don't even know. I think if you read and study through the book of Hebrews, in my opinion, I don't think it was Paul.

I think it was Luke who wrote it. I think it was a sermon that Paul preached. I think Luke was just simply jotting down what Paul was preaching. What we do know, though, it was written by a believer.

[ 8 : 50 ] It was under inspiration from the Holy Spirit. It was written to a suffering, persecuted group of Jews somewhere in the east outside of Israel. But I also think it's unique that we don't know the author because the point of the book of Hebrews is to exalt Christ.

When we look at Scripture, it always points to Christ. We know that. But how often, if I were to say the book of Romans, your immediate thought of the book of Romans is what? Paul's letter.

He wrote it in prison. If I say 1 Peter, what's your immediate thought? That's Peter's letter. How fitting, though, that the book of Hebrews, the main point of it is to point to Christ being greater than anything.

We don't know the author. And it's interesting also with this letter, when it was delivered to the people, it literally was just a scroll, and then there was a note on the outside, and it said, to the Hebrews.

So there was no, it's not like they redacted the author later on. There has not been, as scholars will say, there has not been an author on any of the original letters. But the document was to be read aloud to a specific local congregation.

[ 9 : 56 ] So this is an actual church that we see this letter being written to. And we're familiar also, I'm sure, with these, they're called warning passages in the book. There's five, depending on how you look at it, there's two big warning passages.

And basically what the author is saying to this congregation is that, listen, like you've learned about Christ. The first warning is, by this time you should be teachers. But you can't be a teacher because we need to go back and start over because you think that you've arrived.

You think that you have gotten to the point to where you no longer need knowledge of Christ. And they call this apostasy. Apostasy is basically saying, I've had enough. I know enough about Christ.

I am willfully turning away, and I am doing my own thing. That's what apostasy is. And it's very dangerous. And that's why the author warns this group. And the group is probably under persecution from those around them because this is, you have to remember, this is a setting of shortly after Christ's death, and Christianity is just getting going.

And so there's so many people that are looking upon this group of Hebrew Christians and thinking, what in the world are you guys doing? Why would you go down that route? And so there's many that are thinking, you know what, they're right.

[ 11 : 09 ] Why am I going down this route? And so they turn. They turn away from following Christ, and they follow these man-made traditions. And so I think it's important that that's why the author begins.

He says, listen, long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke. Now that's important to remember because God speaks. We serve a God that has interacted with us in a way that he has spoken to us.

And he speaks to us today through his word. Let's not forget that. This is not some text that is just sitting on the shelf, and there's nothing that happens when you read it. This text, as the book of Hebrews says again and later in chapter 4, is what?

It's alive and it is active. It is doing something today through the power of the Holy Spirit. So the author says, hey, just remember that God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

That was the system that he used in the past. But now, in these last days, and that term last days can be interpreted in a couple of different ways, but I think it means from the time of Christ's ascension to the literal last day.

[ 12 : 11 ] I think he's talking about a large group of time. And how does he say that he has spoken? He says, to us by his son. So that's what we have to remember as we kind of begin and we look at a couple of main points through the book.

First, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. Pretty clear. That's an indication of how God wrote the Old Testament. Its purpose was to prepare for the coming of Christ.

Like we did with Advent, we looked from the Old Testament to the current time and then we took it the current time and looked at what is happening now and then we also looked at the future. This beginning of Hebrews reminds us that the Old Testament was there to prepare for Christ.

It also reminds us that, so think about our senses. Think about what we can do. We have the ability to see and to smell and to touch and there's so many marvelous things that we can do as humans.

But for us to know anything about God, he has to tell us. Because we're not capable of reaching beyond the natural world unless God tells us.

[ 13 : 17 ] So we would never be able to know God if he did not speak to us. Thus, in the Old Testament, the writer reminds us that God spoke.

He gave us the Old Testament. We can discern a certain amount about God, like the book of Romans says, that God has made clear to all the people around him what is going on.

They can look upon creation and realize that something happened here. It's like if you were to walk down the street and you see a watch laying on the ground, you would be able to pick that watch up and look at it and go, somebody made this.

You would not have an excuse. You would know that somebody made that watch. And it's the same thing with creation. The first three chapters of Romans basically says man is without excuse.

God's invisible attributes are clearly perceived among the natural world. But in order for us to go beyond that, because what does the book of Romans later say in chapter 10?

[ 14 : 16 ] That faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. So it's not enough to just look upon natural creation and think to yourselves, because this will not happen because of the way the Bible sets it up.

But sinners, man apart from Christ, cannot just look upon the world and go, okay, I'm going to follow this creator. Because it says that they've suppressed the truth. So in order for them to understand more about God, something else has to happen.

And that's why we get faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. I am not ashamed of the gospel because why? It is the power of God unto salvation. So God has to interact with us in some sort of way in order for man to know anything about him.

There are also many times and in many ways that God spoke. But mainly it says here that God used the prophets. He used men as instruments. He still uses man today.

But God himself is behind those men, those prophets that spoke in the Old Testament. Sometimes God would use a vision. Sometimes God would use a parable.

[ 15 : 19 ] Sometimes through a type. Sometimes through a symbol. There are various ways, but it is always God speaking. Even the words spoken by men and angels are included because God wants us to know those words.

Men were used. Their minds were used. Their personalities were used. And you can see that because the authors have specific ways of writing. Paul does not write the same way as Peter.

Peter does not write the same way as John. John does not write and so on and so on. There is a uniqueness to each one of the authors because man is writing those things, but God is the one inspiring the message.

The Old Testament also includes many types of different content. Some of it is law. Some of it is prophecy. Some of it is just long stories that seem to go on and on and on forever.

Some is genealogy. There's different types. But it is always God speaking. But it says here, from God, through his messengers, this message, this word was given to us.

[ 16 : 25 ] And this also sets the tone for a big theme of the book of Hebrews. Now a big theme here is the comparison of Christ to the Old Testament, to the Old Covenant system, saying that Christ is greater than that system.

It also talks about the priesthood. That was the system that God had instituted in the Old Testament, that a priest would, he would speak to God for man.

But we also know, because of the book of Hebrews, that the priest is what? Just as sinful as man was. And as we talked about before, the sacrificial system that would continuously be offered, man, the priest, would have to offer a sacrifice on behalf of himself, because why?

He was just as sinful. But he was the person who was appointed to interact between man and between God. The priest would take man's problems to God.

But the prophet, as we see here, he would take God's message to men. Whether it be a warning, whether it be a rebuke, whether it be encouragement, the prophets always spoke on behalf of God.

[ 17 : 33 ] Both of these things, they are true. But if they are, in fact, true, if you doubt that, you have to remember that they're commissioned by God, that God was behind the institution of these things.

But their ministries are quite different. Again, the theme of the book of Hebrews is about priests. It is about Christ being our great high priest. And you might ask, well, what does that mean?

I'm sure many of us have heard the term priest in a different context. Christ being our great high priest means that he is willfully acting on your behalf if you are a believer in front of God the Father.

That he is standing in our place advocating for you. He is praying for you. He is your great high priest. And that is encouraging to us because we do not have to represent ourselves in front of God.

That we have Christ, our great high priest, to do that for us. Then in verse 2, again, it says that he has spoken to us by his son. Now, we'll kind of brush over that phrase, these last days, because again, I think it speaks to the last days being from Christ's ascension to the end of time.

[ 18 : 46 ] But the phrase is very familiar to the Jews of that day. So, that phrase would have caught their attention. Whenever a Jew, if they saw or heard these words, they immediately had messianic thoughts.

Because the scriptural promise was that in the last days the Messiah would come. So, they were familiar with that. Since the letter was written to Jews, then that's probably what it means.

That these last days talks about the coming of Christ, the ascension of Christ, and then the reappearance of Christ at the end of time. Another thing we have to remember, too, is that the Old Testament was given in pieces.

So, each, so if we were to go through chapter 11, let's say, of the book of Hebrews, because that's the, one of the well-known sections. Chapter 11 is known as the Hall of Faith, that it lists off these great men and women that have gone before us, and it talks about what they did, but the message is the same, that they did these things by faith.

But each of those people, they received a different piece of revelation about Christ, really, is what happens. For example, Noah, he was revealed which part of the world the Messiah would come.

[ 20 : 01 ] Micah was given the town, so he was given a little bit more. Daniel was given the time of his birth. Malachi was sort of a forerunner. He was told about John the Baptist, so he got that piece.

To Jonah, that is a typography, if you will use the term, of the resurrection. Each one of those pieces was given uniquely to them, but they all connected to point us to Christ, to point us to the final word of Christ in the New Testament.

Jesus is the completion and the, again, finality of God's speaking message to us. The revelation of God himself was full and complete in the giving of Christ.

There is, there's nothing else. Again, we're not waiting on something else. The canon is closed. The revelation is complete. Therefore, to add anything to the message of Christ to the New Testament is simply blasphemous.

To add to it the Book of Mormon, for example, or Scientology, or anything else that claims to be some sort of unique revelation from God is blasphemous because God says in these last days he finalized his revelation through what?

[ 21 : 22 ] Jesus. It is finished. There is no need to search for anything else. So what do we do? That's a pretty big statement. Because it's one thing to just believe that.

You can sort of hear it and apply it and think, yeah, that's an interesting truth that Christ came and it's the final authority of God, but what does that mean to us as believers? And what does that mean to you if you're not a believer?

What do you do with that? So God interacting with his creation, this was the plan all along. This was not something that God came up with and when Adam and Eve sinned, he kind of said, well, I didn't think that was going to happen so what are we going to do now?

And so he thought to himself, he looked around heaven and he thought, what am I going to do? And he pointed at Christ and he said, Christ, you're going to have to go in and take care of him because they screwed it up and I didn't know this was going to happen, we didn't anticipate this so let's just kind of figure it out along that we go.

That's not what happened. This was the plan all along. So the message, again, of the New Testament has always been about Christ. The message of the Bible has always been about Christ.

[ 22 : 29 ] The Gospels, specifically looking at the New Testament, the Gospels tell his story. They give an account of the very words of Christ. The Epistles offer some sort of like a commentary almost on it, if you will.

They expound on the message of Christ. And then the book of Revelation tells of its completion. From beginning to end, the New Testament is about Christ. Jesus brought the final, all those pieces that were given to Old Testament prophets and messengers, the little bits of information, they were made final in Christ.

He is God's full and final revelation. So a term that is used here is the preeminence of Christ. Christ is the full and final revealed expression of God.

In John 1, it talks about how in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was what? God. It talks about you can't separate the two.

God, the Father, God, the Son, Christ, they are equal. They are co-heirs. There's not a ranking system. I was talking to a friend yesterday about this and we were talking about the Trinity.

[ 23 : 45 ] I have this friend from Norway that I've connected with and he is always interacting with Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses and if you're familiar with their wording, they have changed John 1.

John 1 says very similarly, in the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God but what does it say after that? It says the Word was a God and that's big.

I mean, that's a really big change. It doesn't speak to Christ being God. It speaks to Christ being what? One of the gods and so we were talking about the nature of the Trinity and he was telling me about a person that he's been ministering to who does not believe in the Trinity as we would believe in the Trinity and I said, well, what do you mean by that?

Because there's different, there's modalism which means that there's one being that manifests itself in three different ways and then there's people that just don't believe in the Trinity at all that it's hard to understand and so they've just rejected that notion but this person does not believe in the Trinity because they think that Christ is second.

It would go, God the Father is number one and then Christ is number two and then the Holy Spirit just sort of catches up and is in third place. That's their twisting of what they believe the Trinity to mean but that's separating.

[ 25 : 00 ] That means that there's something going on between the three of them that causes God the Father to be higher which causes Christ to be lower which causes the Holy Spirit to be even lower and that opens up all kinds of questions because if you believe that you're in Christ, how does Christ dwell in you?

Through the Holy Spirit. So then if the Holy Spirit causes Christ to dwell in you, then how do you have access to Christ before God the Father and then do you have to cross your fingers and hope that Christ is advocating for you enough or that God the Father might listen to Christ and we know that not to be true.

We know that the Trinity works hand in hand, that Christ is as equal to God as the Holy Spirit is and Christ being the final authority of God, he is given this title the heir of all things but it's also interesting to know that it says here through whom also he created the world.

So again, that speaks to Christ was not a plan that came later on because notice the pattern here. So we're familiar with Genesis 1 in the beginning was the word, right, and God spoke and he created and he said it was good.

So we're familiar with that from the context of God the Father. But then this says here through whom also he created the world. So who's he talking about there? Who's the whom?

[ 26 : 26 ] Jesus. Jesus. So if Jesus is whom God created the world through, when did Jesus exist? Before the foundation of the world. So if Jesus was there before the foundation of the world, he was there before Adam and Eve.

He was there before any one of us. Which means, again, this has to be the plan from all along. So if that's the plan, we learn about the plan through what?

The Bible, the Bible now has sufficiency. It has authority. It has power. Because the agency through which God created was Christ.

All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made. So God, how did he create? He spoke. He simply said and it happened.

How was the word given to us? He simply spoke and it happened. He used messengers. Christ brought a message. John the Baptist prepared the message.

[ 27 : 25 ] But there is a uniqueness to this word. And I think what happens so often, now listen, I'll be transparent.

And we kind of joked about this before. I love, like, like, Bibles. Like, I know, like, this is gonna sound, like, I just, like, I love Bibles.

I have, like, a nice little collection at home. So this is, like, my teaching Bible. This is the only thing I do with this. I don't write in it. I just teach from it. I have a Bible that I use for my daily reading. I have a Bible that I use for studying.

Now, and this is not me saying that, like, I am, like, some sort of holier-than-thou person. That's not at all what I'm trying to say. What I'm trying to say, though, is I have all of these Bibles and they're so easily accessible.

And I even joked, and we were just on a call the other day. Brent and I were planning for Christmas Eve. And I was on the computer with him and I clicked on my Bible software and our Bible software takes a long time to load because it's a big program.

[ 28 : 24 ] And I said to him, I was like, I've got 14 Bibles sitting right next to me and I could have grabbed one of those and yet I click on here. What's the point behind that? We've become so accustomed to the Bible just being everywhere that it doesn't, it's almost like a magazine that you can go to the store and pull off the shelf and at most stores you can.

You can get the Bible just about anywhere. So what happens to that then? If it's so common, it sort of loses its power. It sort of loses its authority because it's just everywhere.

There's no uniqueness to it. And even those of us that are in ministry, it can become something that is just there for us. It can become a collectible. It can become an item that we seek to have on our shelves and not a word that we seek to apply to our hearts.

So I think it's important to talk about the sufficiency of Scripture because we need to be reminded about the sufficiency of Scripture. Scripture. And we can leave today and we can what's January 1st, right?

And I'm guilty of this and this is something new because I normally don't do Bible reading plans but this year I'm seeking to commit to doing some specific Bible reading plans and I'm trying to map out some stuff.



[ 29 : 38 ] I'm trying something new. So January 1st can come around and we can start in Genesis 1, right? And if you're doing like a 90-day Bible reading plan you're reading on the first day is Genesis 1 through Genesis 15.

That's 15 chapters. It's a lot to get through on day one. Then you get into Exodus. Exodus is a pretty good book of the Bible. But then after that something happens. You get into Leviticus and you're like what?

I don't know any of these words and then by the time you're in Numbers you're just like okay. So what happens? And you just pick it up every once in a while and now what we've done with the Bible is we've sought to make it some sort of event that we chase after and not something that we've just applied to our lives on a daily basis.

It could just become a check box and I'm very guilty of this because again the Bible can be used in a way that I have to teach this week so therefore I need to make sure that I'm in the Bible. Brent had to teach on Christmas Eve so therefore he has to make sure that he's in the Bible.

If we're writing papers you have to make sure that you're in the Bible. If you have an assignment due in school you have to make sure that you're in the Bible. There's all of these things. If I'm doing an interview with a podcast guest I want to make sure that I'm in the Bible so I have sufficient questions.

[ 30 : 50 ] And so many things can be done with the Bible and the Bible cannot do anything to you because it's become just this add-on to life. And that's why I think the sufficiency of Scripture is so important.

So then what do we do? So how do you make the Bible get in you and not just you in the Bible? So what do you do?

Because again I can give you assignments upon assignments and let's say we're going to read through this as a church and we're going to do a 90 day plan we're going to do a year plan we're going to talk about it in a week we can do all of these things and we can just become pragmatic.

Like we can offer program after program after program and we can teach every day of the week and we would enjoy doing that. However if the Bible is not causing you to be changed what happens?

You are going to dread doing that. You are going to get to Leviticus 13 and think this is not for me. You are going to get to the genealogy in Matthew 1 and think why is this important?

[ 31 : 51 ] But we remember because the Bible tells us about the Bible that it is alive and active. Okay? So if the Bible is alive and active that means right now it is alive and active.

That means every Sunday that we get up and we preach our goal is to preach the word. Why?

Because it is alive and active. If it was not alive and active we would have to figure something else out. Like if you came to one of us and said okay so I am not a believer and I want to become a believer we would say to you okay so if you confess with your mouth and you believe in your heart you will be saved.

That in its simplest of forms is how you become a believer. The message that you hear is Christ crucified. Christ crucified. He put on flesh. We just celebrated this.

He was born. He was a child. He grew. He became strong. He became this man. Just an average 30 year old man as they say.

[ 32 : 53 ] And during his time of ministry what did he say? He spoke and he said if you don't deny yourself and follow me you can't be my disciple. And if you don't eat of my body and drink of my blood you can't follow me.

And sort of there's a lot of times where Christ is speaking in front of a crowd and he gives this message and he just walks away. And there's often times where he says something really strong and you would think that he doesn't necessarily mean that and what happens?

He walks away. He says if you don't do this you can't be my disciple and he leaves. And why do you think he's doing that? And I think it's to emphasize this is it.

Okay? This is it. This is what we would point to if somebody were to come to us and say how must I be saved? What must I do to be saved?

We would say well you believe on the Lord Jesus. Well how do you believe in the Lord Jesus? You have two options. We can seek to explain who Christ is from a historical perspective.

[ 33 : 53 ] we can seek to explain him from what scholars have discovered throughout the years. Like they've proven that the crucifixion actually happened.

Like they've proven that Christ was a real person. Okay? So even from that perspective like you have to do something with Christ. Whether or not you believe that he is who he says he is you at least have to believe that he was a real person.

Okay? So that at least gives us a foundation. Like we can start with that. Like if you don't believe that Christ came there's thousands of years of expert like witness that says that Christ was a real person.

There's more manuscripts of the New Testament than any other writing in the world. They've proven it to be reliable. That the message is the same today in this Bible as it was when it was given to the original authors.

Like that's been proven throughout years. And honestly I think even if you need one more fact to prove that Christianity is in fact real or that scripture is sufficient in and of itself it is about to be 2020.

[ 34 : 59 ] So 2020 years this message has gone forth. And it's still going like think about it. There was we read it in the past and I'm going to really badly paraphrase it but it was a guy that was involved in Watergate.

and he basically said do you know how I know that Christianity is true? And he said and again I'm paraphrasing and I apologize but he said the people that were involved in Watergate squealed immediately that they couldn't keep that a secret at all.

That they weren't willing to take that to the grave. They weren't willing to die for that message. He says and look at the New Testament not one of these people anyone that we learn about said you know what we made it all up.

I don't want to die for this message. Okay so then you think alright so that's 2000 years ago how do we prove that? Let's fast forward to like the 1500s. Like we have accounts of people that were burned alive for the message of Christ.

That they went willingly to you know and I mean like that's like what actually happened. Like there's stories if you've never read Fox's book of martyrs if you need an ignition for your faith I would encourage you to do that.

[ 36 : 12 ] Because it speaks of the stories of those that carried the message before us that we're willing to die and die in gruesome ways. That they were boiled alive.

There's sometimes that they would put people in boiling water and they wouldn't die so they would pull them out of the water and then they would light them on fire. And we learn about these people and they sang psalms as they were going to these deaths.

There was also a time where a man was being martyred for his faith. He was given the chance to recant and he said I can't so I will die willingly and happily for the faith of Christ.

And so they bring his entire family out to witness this and they put him in a box and they nailed the box shut and they threw him in a river and away he went and that's how he died.

And so then they turn to the family a wife and a child and they say to this wife and the child well you have an opportunity now you saw that we're serious do you wish to give away your message and they say we would willingly follow our husband and our father just the same and so if it causes us to die we do it gladly.

[ 37 : 25 ] So then we fast forward to now. There are numerous pastors and teachers around the world there are the persecuted church if you're interested in learning about that there are videos that have come out from these areas of where there should not be videos coming out from where people receive Bibles for the first time and it's as if they were given a new heart.

Their excitement around that that they're willing to die in 2019 they're willing to die for this message of Christ. So again you don't just do that because it's an interesting book.

we don't gather every Sunday to talk about an interesting book. Like we don't spend hours upon hours laboring over text and talking about text and counseling people with the text because we think oh you know what I think I'm going to go be a pastor and that sounds like a fun career and I'm not going to make a lot of money and I'm going to spend a lot of hours being by myself and you're going to have you know what I'm trying to say.

There is a uniqueness to this message therefore you must do something with it. Like you have to. It's been proven reliable enough. So you have two options.

Jesus said what in John 14 6 I am the way I am the truth I am the life no man can come to the Father except by what? Him. So there's two options with that statement. It's either true and we would believe it is true because the Bible asserts that it is true or it's false and if that statement's false then we're gathering for what?

[ 39 : 02 ] just to get together on Sunday mornings because we like each other. We feel like waking up early to come in on a Sunday morning and we drive through the snow or whatever. We mold our vacations around it just because we think it's fun.

We know that not to be true. So you have to do something with it. You have to do something with this book. And again it is alive and active. There is something going on with this book.

If it used to be alive and active we would have a different message. We would say okay well we've got to come up with something new now because the Bible is no longer sufficient.

If it's not alive and active right now if it was alive and active in the past then that means something changed. Because Old Testament the Old Testament people they were saved just as the same way we are saved.

They weren't saved because of the old covenant system. Like doing those sacrifices and things like that did not save them. That's the system that God had instituted in order to point them to Christ.

[ 40 : 09 ] Like that was their that was their glimpse into what was to come. And so they were saved by faith in Christ. They were saved the same way. Then Christ comes.

People in the New Testament how were they saved? Well they heard the message of Christ. They hear about Christ. They learn that he was more than just a good teacher.

He was the savior of the world. He was God dwelt in flesh and that he came to earth and as John 1 says that he was exegeting the Father.

He was explaining God the Father to the people around in order that they might be saved through this message through this word of God. It was the same way. And so then today how are we saved?

You know we can each go around the room and tell our stories and some are from many years ago and some are very recent. But the one common denominator among all of those salvation stories if you will is there's one thing that's the same.

[ 41 : 15 ] You heard the word of God. Because in order to be saved you have to hear the word of God. That's what the word says. Like it's not what we're making up. It's what the word says. Faith can only come by hearing the word of God.

And so in order to follow Christ you have to place your faith in him. So then how do you place your faith in him? You hear about Christ. What do you have to hear about Christ? That he was killed on your behalf because we are sinners, because we can't save ourselves, because if we stood before God there would be what?

Condemnation. As Romans 8 says. But now there's not condemnation for those of us that are in Christ Jesus. Why? Because Christ is standing on our behalf. That when God the Father looks at you if you are a believer he sees Christ.

That the righteousness of Christ has been imputed to us. It's like a forensic term. It doesn't necessarily mean that like when you put a different shirt on you now have that as your righteousness.

This is something that is ingrained into you. That if you are in Christ that's something that's not going away. That God the Father has given through Christ the righteousness of God.

[ 42 : 22 ] R.C. Sproul he always had a great demonstration of that fact. That we were in the water and let's say we were on a ship and the ship went down and we're in the water and they throw a life jacket to us and the only way to be saved from the water is to watch.

Go over to that and they'll pull us up and so that's how we're saved. Salvation is God Christ jumping in the water saving us and then jumping back in the water and taking the punishment that we deserved.

Because we don't want that life preserver. You might think in your head well yeah clearly. But again as we talked about in the beginning what happens? Man suppresses this truth.

So they don't want it. Ephesians 2 says what? That you were dead. So for those that aren't in Christ like you're not just like we're not going to paint some nice picture for you like we're going to tell you what the word says.

That you're dead. Like you're not just a little sick. Like you are dead. But we at all one time we were dead. That we you can be made alive in the same way that those of us that are believers are made alive.

[ 43 : 41 ] That if you place your faith in Christ and you trust in his finished work because he said himself what? It is finished. Te telestah. It is finished. There is nothing else that is coming.

That he is the final authority. And you can again like if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is the Lord and you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved.

That's the gospel message. And that's how you're saved today. So the Old Testament they were saved that way. The New Testament they were saved that way.

Today they're saved that way. And so that's why like we're so that's why we're so strong on scripture being the authority because what else are we going to do?

Like and we'll close with this like we're not funny people. Like that's what like gets me like amped up like when you when you try to have you have like like pastors that have turned themselves into motivational speakers because they think that is going to win the culture.

[ 44 : 50 ] They think that if they're funny enough you're going to invite your unbelieving friend because your pastor is funny. But they're not going to come to church they can just go on YouTube and watch that. Well you would say okay well we have good coffee.

Like I love good coffee. If I was an unbeliever that's not good enough to get me to go to church. Like well you could say that on and on and on all of these lists but there's there's got to be something that that that causes that person to change.

And and that's why the the teaching and preaching of the word of God is so important. Because we we we are going to be judged one day more strictly because the book of James says what you shouldn't aspire to be a teacher because you're going to be judged more strictly.

There's going to be a time that comes that he and I are going to have to answer and God's going to say what did you feed my flock? And and so that's why it's important for us to recognize that the foundation of everything that we do is because of the sufficiency of scripture.

That that it is the final revelation of God that it is given to us because of God wanting to speak to us because we would not know anything about him outside of that but ultimately to bring sinners to himself.

[ 46 : 06 ] And so so take that message with you as you leave today and use it as your encouragement to like chapter 12 of the book of Hebrews says looking to Jesus.

That's how you persevere. That's how you run this race. You you look to Jesus. He's he's the founder the author the perfecter of our faith and he endured all of these things so that that we might look to him and be able to endure these things as well.

So again don't leave and think well I gotta read my Bible today and I gotta do this and I gotta don't don't get into that mindset because that that defeats the purpose slowly like like realize that you we've committed our lives to the study of this book.

You're not going to figure it out on a weekend. You're not going to figure it out in a week. It is a lifetime of being in the word and allowing the word to transform you by the hearing and the preaching and the doing of God's word.

That's how we are changed. Well, Stick calnut by the an favor and -...

[ 47 : 22 ] and an hint that is ■■■■