

What Every Christian Needs To Know – Scripture Alone

You have a friend who has just become a Christian. What are some of the first few things you want to share with him? Predestination? The mode of baptism? Making marital choices? How to be baptized in the Spirit?

I like to begin a series of articles on “What Every Christian Needs To Know”. The first thing every new Christian needs to know is that the Bible alone is the infallible rule of faith for the church. The Reformation summarized this critical truth in a Latin phrase, “Sola Scriptura”, or “Scripture alone”.

At the time of the Reformation, the medieval Roman Catholic Church insisted that the oral traditions of the early Church were as important as the written record of Scriptures. But men like Luther stood up against this combination of Scripture and tradition and insisted that the Bible alone is to be our authoritative rule in faith and doctrine.

Why is the Bible so important? First of all, it is the Word of God. God wrote it. Although He used men to write the Bible, God gave these men the truths as well as the choice of words. The result is that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

Then secondly, the Bible is important because it alone tells us what we must believe about God and life. When we disregard God’s revelation about Himself in the Bible, we will never be able to have a true knowledge of God. Without the Bible, the Christian religion is but a belief about God pieced together by human opinions. The Bible, of course, does not tell us everything about God and life. But it tells us what we need to know about God’s existence, love and His divine purpose. It certainly does not tell us the secrets to a successful career, but it does tell us something far more important – our happiness in life.

Then thirdly, the Bible is important because it alone tells us how we can have a true saving relationship with God. The Bible puts together 66 books written by different prophets and apostles written over a span of two thousand years and more. But all of their writings contain the same message - Jesus Christ came to save sinners. While the Bible does give us insights about politics, life and culture in the ancient times, it is not a book about anthropology. It is a book about theology, that is, God. Its central purpose is to lead us to know God in Jesus Christ.

I can go on and add some more points about the Bible’s importance. But for now, let me say some things that are practical. Do you read the Bible regularly? Do you let the truths challenge your thinking? Or is your mind mould by the trends and tastes of our consumer’s culture? Many Christians I know go through their lives feeling some measure of guilt that they do not love the Bible more. People feel guilty in this way because they have allowed their work and leisure to take away their Bible reading time. When you don’t take time to read God’s Word, you will quickly lose interest. And when you lose that interest you will find yourself asking why you did not love God’s Word more.

The first thing you need to know is the Bible. The first thing you should do at the end of each day is to ask yourself “have I read the Bible?”

By Pastor Cheah Fook Meng